HEBREW STYLE AND NARRATIVE SEQUENCE IN II SAMUEL I-VII

# HEBREW STYLE AND NARRATIVE SEQUENCE IN II SAMUEL I-VII

Ву

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## ABSTRACT

Hebrew Style and Narrative Sequence in II Samuel i-vii

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II Samuel i-vii is the story of David's accession to the throne after the death of King Saul. Numerous studies of these chapters have concluded that particular aspects of style are evidence 1) that the narrative is a combination of several originally distinct sources, 2) that these sources were edited at a later date to form larger narrative sequences, 3) that the historical David is different than the David depicted in the narrative and 4) that the narrative is sufficiently disunified so that it cannot be read as a sequence of events which culminate in II Samuel vii.

The purpose of this dissertation is to argue that the aspects of style used to justify these various conclusions can be more adequately understood as purposeful uses of the Hebrew language for the creation of a narrative. When the details of style are rightly understood, the chapters can and should be read as a coherent sequence of events. The purpose of this story is to depict the actions of several individuals, but David in particular, from a time shortly after the death of Saul to the point at which God makes several promises to David in II Samuel vii. The depiction of the actions of various individuals reveals a richness and complexity of motives, and this complexity is exemplified in the person of David as well. However.

the story also represents David as being guided by 1) restraint in response to the house of Saul because Saul had been the anointed of the Lord, 2) a desire to unify both Judah and Israel as a political and religious entity, and 3) a willingness either to consult the ways of God prior to his actions or to conform to God's direction when necessary. David is sufficiently obedient to the stipulations of God in these chapters that God's original anointing of David as king is brought to completion and God makes several new and generous promises to him for the future.

The dissertation is divided into two parts. Part I is a review of the most important previous studies on or relating to II Samuel i-vii. In this section I note in detail the stylistic characteristics which are used for the justification of the various readings of the passages. Part II is an inquiry into the style of each of the chapters. This section involves an evaluation of the accounts of style given in Part I as well as a determination of the purposes of other aspects of style of the chapter not yet adequately appreciated. Part II presents the ways in which the Hebrew style of the narrative functions purposefully in the creation of a unified and forceful depiction of this portion of David's life.

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He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God. And he shall be as the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds; as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain.

King David in II Samuel xxiii 3b-4 (KJV)

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## Abbreviations

AB Anchor Bible.

AJSL American Journal of Semitic Lanuages and Literature.

ANET Ancient Near Eastern Texts, ed. J.B. Pritchard, 2nd ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955.

BASOR Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research.

BDB F. Brown, S.R. Driver, C.A. Briggs, eds. of W. Gesenius'

Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.

Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1907.

BHK Biblia Hebraica, ed. R. Kittel. 3rd ed. Stuttgart:

Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1937.

BHS Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, eds. K. Elliger and W.

Rudolph. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1966-67.

Bib Biblica.

BJRL Bulletin of the John Rylands Library.

BWANT Beitrage zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament.

BZ Biblische Zeitschrift.

CBQ Catholic Biblical Quarterly.

CJT Canadian Journal of Theology.

CTA Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabetiques, ed.

A. Herdner. 2 vol. Mission de Ras Shamra X. Paris:

Imprimerie Nationale, 1963.

GKC Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar.

HSM Harvard Semitic Monographs.

HTR Harvard Theological Review.

HUCA Hebrew Union College Annual.

JAAR Journal of the American Academy of Religion.

JAOS Journal of the American Oriental Society.

JB La sainte Bible.

JBL Journal of Biblical Literature.

JJS Journal of Jewish Studies.

JNES Journal of Near Eastern Studies.

JPOS Journal of the Palestine Oriental Society.

JSS Journal of Semitic Studies.

JSJ Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic and Roman Period.

JSOT Journal for the Study of the Old Testament.

JTS Journal of Theological Studies.

KAI Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften. H. Donner and W. Röllig. 3 vol. Weisbaden: Harrassowitz, 1962-64.

KAT Kommentar zum Alten Testament.

KJV King James Version, 1611.

KTU M. Dietrich, O. Loretz and J. Sanmartin, <u>Die keilalpha-betischen Texte aus Ugarit</u>. Bd 1. Transkription. Butzen & Becker Kevelaer, 1976.

Lut. <u>Die Bibel</u>. tr. D. Martin Luther. Stuttgart: Privileg. Württemb. Bibelanstalt, 1937.

LXX Septuaginta. ed. Alfred Ralphs. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1935.

LXXA Codex Alexandrinus.

LXXB Codex Vaticanus. The Old Testament in Greek. eds.

A.E. Brooke, N. McLean and H. St. J. Thackeray. Vol.

II, part I, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

1927).

the so-called Lucianic manuscripts (boc2e2) of Samuel-Kings.

MT Masoretic text.

NEB New English Bible, 1970.

NIV New International Version, 1978.

OBO Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis.

Orientalische Literaturzeitung. OLZ

Oudtestamentische Studien. OTS

PEQ Palestine Exploration Quarterly.

PRU Le Palais royal d'Ugarit.

Q Qumran

RSV Revised Standard Version, 1946, 1952.

SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies. SBLSCS

SR Studies in Religion.

The Old Testament in Syriac. According to the Peshitta Syr. version. I and II Samuel prepared by P.A.H. de Boer.

Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1978.

TB Tyndale Bulletin.

Tg. Neb. The Bible in Aramaic: II The Former Prophets (Targum

Jonathan). ed. A. Sperber. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1959.

The Bible in Aramaic: I Pentateuch (Targum Ongelos). Tg. Onq.

ed. A. Sperber. Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1959.

UF Ugarit-Forschungen.

UT Ugaritic Textbook.

vs. vss verse, verses

٧g Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem.

VT Vetus Testamentum.

VTSup Vetus Testamentum, Supplements.

ZAW Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.

ZDPV Zeitschrift des deutschen Palastina-Vereins.

ZTK Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche.

4QFlor Florilegium from Qumran Cave IV.

4QSama Samuel manuscript from Qumran Cave IV.

#### Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to study the Hebrew style of II Samuel i-vii in order to demonstrate 1) that the chapters form a coherent narrative sequence and 2) that the purpose of these chapters is to depict David's obedience immediately prior to the promises that are made to him in II Samuel vii. The thesis involves an evaluation of former studies (Part I) and a careful examination of the way Hebrew style is used in the creation of the narrative in these chapters (Part II).

This inquiry into a specific section of II Samuel arose from a study of the purposes of the books of I and II Samuel. It began as an examination of the ways that different styles of language are used in the creation of narrative in these books. What kinds of prose and poetic styles could be recognised, and what effect do they have on the story? In preparation for this inquiry I had studied the works of several writers, E. Auerbach, J. Muilenburg, R. Alter and L.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> E. Auerbach, <u>Mimesis</u>, trans. Willard R. Trask, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953). <u>Idem</u>, <u>Literary Language and its Public</u>, trans. Ralph Manheim, (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1958). <u>Idem</u>, <u>Scenes from the Drama of European Literature</u>, trans. Catherine Garvin and Ralph Manheim, (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1959).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> J. Muilenburg, "Psalm 47," JBL 63 (1944), pp. 235-256. <u>Idem</u>, "A Study of Hebrew Style: Repetition and Style," <u>VT I (1953)</u>, pp. 97-111. <u>Idem</u>, "Form Criticism and Beyond," JBL 88 (1969), pp. 1-18.

<sup>3</sup> R. Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative, (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

Alonso-Schökel, who sought to elucidate the style of Hebrew prose and poetry. The examination of the style of the narrative seemed a particularly useful point of departure because it was already widely used in previous studies on I and II Samuel and because style provided a way of both being in constant contact with the actual uses of language in the narrative and at the same time of not limiting the range of literary, philosophical and religious sense that might be encompassed in the narrative. As J. Baxter writes in Shakespeare's Poetic Styles: "The analysis of style leads out to larger questions, whereas the pondering of larger questions seldom stoops to find proof in the minutiae of style."

In the sustained reading of I and II Samuel a problem began to emerge that appeared central to the story. There is a distinction made between two of the central figures in the books, Saul and David. Saul is anointed king by the prophet Samuel and thus his kingship receives theological legitimacy. Saul, however, is almost immediately rejected as king. David is anointed in his stead. David's anointing, like Saul's, is by Samuel. David, in contrast to Saul, is not rejected as king. David does not actually become king until much later, but

<sup>4</sup> Luis Alonso-Schökel, S.J., "Die stilistische Analyse bei den Propheten," VTSup VI (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1960), pp. 154-164. Idem, "Erzählkunst im Buche der Richter," Bib 42 (1961), pp. 143-172. Idem, "Hermeneutics in the Light of Language and Literature," CBQ 25 (1963), pp. 371-386. Idem, Narrative Structures in the Book of Judith, (Berkeley: The Centre for Hermeneutical Studies in Hellenistic and Modern Culture, 1975). Idem, "Hermeneutical Problems of a Literary Study of the Bible," VTSup 28 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1975), pp. 1-15.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> J. Baxter, <u>Shakespeare's Poetic Styles</u>, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), p. 3.

he eventually ascends to the throne, is the recipient of subsequent favour and promises by God and is maintained on the throne until his death. The question emerges: Why is Saul rejected and David accepted?

There seem to be two possible solutions in the story. Saul could have been rejected because of disobedience and David accepted because of obedience. Or, Saul's rejection and David's acceptance may have nothing to do with their own actions; their destinies are the result of the inscrutable selection of the divinity. According to the former alternative the story would depict characters as having at least a measure of freedom to act in different ways, and would evaluate their actions in relation to their obedience to the commands of God. The latter alternative would reveal that the story stresses the election of God rather than the response of this divinity to the actions of individuals. The story would depict the choices of God as primary; the will of the divinity determines, perhaps even predestines, what takes place. But these two alternatives may not be mutually exclusive. The story may vary from chapter to chapter, at least to some extent, and it is necessary to be cautious about imposing one alternative at every point of the story. Yet if the story maintains a distinction between Saul and David, it needs to justify this distinction.

In seeking to sort out this issue I knew I could not give an adequate account of the whole of the life of Saul or of David in this inquiry. I chose rather to focus on II Samuel i-vii. This section of narrative relates a strategic part of the life of David because it depicts his actions from the time of the death of Saul to the time of the promises that are made to David in II Samuel vii that his son would

build the house of God and his descendants would remain on the throne of Israel forever. II Samuel i-vi immediately precede this account of the bestowing of immense favour on David. Would these chapters shed any light on the problem? Was David obedient or disobedient in this section? The chapters seemed to provide opportunity for fruitful consideration of the alternatives. The study of these seven chapters would be limited; important parts of David's life are depicted in I Samuel xvi-xxxi and in II Samuel viii-I Kings ii, and these sections could not be part of the study. The conclusions of this inquiry might then need to be modified at a later time when all the story regarding David could be adequately studied. But provisional conclusions could be reached, and the inquiry could have merit even in this limited way.

As I turned to secondary studies on the narrative for assistance and correction in my understanding, I observed certain directions that previous inquiry had taken. It became clear that L. Rost's <u>The Succession to the Throne of David</u> had been immensely influential in the reading of II Samuel i-vii since its original publication in 1926; indeed Rost's work was instrumental in the general abandonment of the attempt to find Pentateuchal-like sources in the Former Prophets. Rost argued for the existence of an ark narrative in I Sam iv-vii 1 and II Samuel vi. The identification of this source had immediate

<sup>6</sup> L. Rost, The Succession to the Throne of David, trans. Michael D. Rutter and David M. Gunn, intro. by Edward Ball, Historic Texts and Interpreters in Biblical Scholarship 1 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1982. The original German publication is L. Rost, Die Überlieferung von der Thronnachfolge Davids, BWANT, Dritte Folge Heft 6, ed. R. Kittel, (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1926).

implications for our inquiry. If II Samuel vi was originally independent of its present context, and if another source, entitled the history of David's rise to power, ended in II Samuel v, then II Samuel vii, either as a whole or a particular section of it, would not be a part of a continuous narrative with the earlier chapters. The promise made in chapter vii would not be the climax toward which the narrative of the preceding chapters moved. Even if II Samuel i-vii at some point were edited to make the narrative we have now, the full force of the story in II Samuel i-vi would not lead to II Samuel vii. I noticed, however, that O. Eissfeldt had criticised Rost shortly after the publication of Rost's study, not so much on the detailed stylistic examination upon which Rost's sources were distinguished, but on his notion of 'style' in general. TEissfeldt simply pointed out that an author need not be limited to one style, and that, therefore, Rost's claim to have identified two styles, one in the ark narrative and the other in the succession narrative, need not result in the positing of two independent authors. $^8$  An author could use different styles in

<sup>7</sup> O. Eissfeldt, "Noch einmal: Text-, Stil- und Literarkritik in den Samuelisbüchern," OLZ XXXI/10 (1928), pp. 802-812.

<sup>8</sup> Eissfeldt quotes from the following passage in Eduard Norden's Die Antike Kunstprosa:

Der Stil [im Altertum] war damals eine erlernte Kunst, deren Regeln im allgemeinen keiner seiner Individualitat zuliebe übertreten dürfte, wie ja überhaupt das Altertum in viel hoherem Masse als die moderne Zeit vom Individuum die Unterordnung seiner Eigenart unter die Autoritat der von hervorragenden Kunstrichtern sanktionierten Tradition, die Zuruckdrangung des Genialischen, verlangt hat.

<sup>...</sup>ein und deselbe Schriftsteller konnte nebeneinander in ganz verschiedenen Stilarten schreiben.

different stretches of narrative for the purposes of that part of the story. There is nothing in Rost's study that could provide an answer to Eissfeldt's criticism, but Eissfeldt's criticism has been virtually ignored by most students of I and II Samuel in the past fifty years. Most readers appear more interested in Rost's conclusions than his reasons for establishing them. Moreover, as I studied Rost's stylistic analysis, it also became clear that he considered the two styles the Hebrew equivalents to the Classical Greek and Latin high and low styles which had, for example, been the subject of discussion by Goethe and Schiller in their writings on epic and tragic poetry. 9 Again this parallel confirmed that the styles need not be the product of two distinct authors; one poet could write both epic and tragedy. 10 Furthermore, Rost's detailed analysis of the styles, though insightful in explaining various characteristics of Hebrew prose, could not be maintained as he wished. From these discoveries there was reason to ask anew whether II Samuel i-vii should indeed be read as a continuous narrative.

At all stages this study has been conducted as an inquiry or exploration into particular problems. G. Whalley provides an example

Eduard Norden, Die Antike Kunstprosa, vom VI. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis in die Zeit der Renaissance, (Stuttgart: B.G. Teubner, 1958), p. 11.

<sup>9</sup> L. Dora Schmitz, trans., Correspondence between Schiller and Goethe from 1794-1805, vol. I and II, (London: George Bell, 1877), pp. 313-314.

<sup>10</sup> Baxter presents how Shakespeare juxtaposes the high and low styles for particular effects. Baxter, op. cit., pp. 75-76.

of what inquiry in the humanities is engaged in. He insists that the inquiry must be heuristic. He writes:

We sadly need a philosophy of heuristics - a study of the ways we hunt for and find out things when we aren't certain what we are looking for. Is there indeed (coming back to abstract nouns) any such thing as <u>curiosity</u>, except by back-formation from the fact that some people have a nagging habit of looking intently and asking questions about what they see? 11

...the method, the line of approach, wants to be heuristic, an alert way of open-minded seeking which does not prejudge either the nature of the materials or the final issue; an attitude of discovering, a rigorous and delicate sense of relevance; an embracing hospitality for all sorts of ideas and evidence which at first sight might seem to have nothing at all to do with art. 12

I have sought in this inquiry to learn to hunt well, to persist in those serious and humane questions that are the reason for studying ancient religious texts, to seek to be aware when the hunt led to dead ends and when I had lost my way, and to try to return to surer ground and begin again. This type of inquiry is as far from serving doctrinaire or political revolutions as possible. It is a state of inquiry which allows for and even fosters a change in the inquirer.

Whalley also insists that heuristic inquiry is different from attempts to study according to a model of positivist science.

By putting on a particular pair of methodological spectacles it would seem that we could correct our aberrations of vision. But the analogy of spectacles does not apply to aesthetics and ethics; neither does it apply (I suspect) to any philosophy

<sup>11</sup> G. Whalley, Studies in Literature and the Humanities, Innocence of Intent, selected and introduced by B. Crick and J. Ferns, (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), p. 99.

<sup>12</sup> G. Whalley, <u>Poetic Process</u>, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1973), p. xxi.

which is regarded in its ancient sense as the persistent search for wisdom and fullness of life. 13

If the line of approach is to be exploratory, it cannot be fixed from the beginning. If we seek to be attentive to the flexibility and variety of uses of language and the complexity of human experience language can explore, it would be necessary to be wary of ways in which our sight is being impaired by preconceptions. Specific aspects of style and stretches of narrative would have to be studied with as much attention to their uniquenesses as possible. Whalley writes:

Looking back over the book I find that this [heuristic inquiry] is the method which has emerged by allowing the materials to discover their own coherence. I do not claim that this essay is a model of method. Only now at the end can I see at all clearly what the method was. If, with that in mind, I were to rewrite the whole book as a formal exposition or example of that method, clarifying and stylizing the procedure, the book would be an essay in method and not an essay in poetics. 14

The coherence or unity of the materials, if they have such qualities, must be discovered to be intrinsic and not created by a method. The 'method' is only what one should see at the end of the inquiry, and it results from the attempt to be true to the materials in question.

Whalley does not seem to be alone in his caution against accepting a 'method' from the outset. E. Auerbach makes a general statement about what he is doing only in the four page epilogue to his five hundred and fifty page book, Mimesis. The rest of Mimesis is the study of the styles of particular passages. L. Alonso-Schökel also reveals a reluctance to be preoccupied with method. He writes:

<sup>13 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

I discovered that usually the great critics are better at doing criticism than at explaining how they do it. When they try to explain they are at pains to differentiate. There is e.g., Riffaterre against Leo Spitzer, trying to show how new and different his approach is from the latter's, while actually it is similar. Often the description Spitzer gives of his activity is worse than his activity. This is why my idea was only to give points of orientation. If mentioning the New Criticism [in the United States] is disorienting I withdraw it. Any method that first tries to get the meaning through close reading and secondly tries to get the unity before or beyond the parts, is to the point. 15

The phrase "close reading" as Alonso-Schökel uses it here is plain language and is unencumbered by methodological jargon. He also expresses in this quotation a concern we will need to unravel in the course of this inquiry: Can the study only of the 'parts' of the narrative, that is, for example, specific aspects of style, ever recognise the unity of the narrative unless it is admitted that the parts may serve a greater whole? 'Method' has the danger of focusing on certain aspects of style to the exclusion of others and to the exclusion of an account of the cumulative effects of all aspects of style in the creation of a story.

An inquiry of this nature is also engaged in criticism. In my reading I became aware of how few studies seemed to have precise knowledge of Rost's account of the styles of the ark and succession narratives, despite his influence over subsequent work. The essential character of criticism, however, is precise evaluation of detail. I witnessed in secondary studies how often the comments on aspects of style, considered significant by some critics, were ignored by

<sup>15</sup> Alonso-Schökel, Narrative Structures in the Book of Judith, p. 45.

by other critics because it was thought that different 'methodologies' meant that judgements on details of style would also be different. Method too often became a way of ignoring the judgements of style in other writers' works. But evaluation, it appeared to me, needed to be the other way around. Criticism of accounts of specific judgements of style needed to be paramount; an evaluation of another writer's 'method' should follow from numerous evaluations of what he says about aspects of style. This notion of criticism inevitably means that the critic is involved in 'sorting out' what is correct or misguided in another study rather than pronouncing a priori generalizations about the study's worth. I have neither completely agreed with anyone who has written on these chapters nor completely disagreed, and I have learned from everyone. Criticism is often misconstrued as an affront rather than as a congenial challenge; it is necessary to insist that collaborative inquiry is more often fostered in gentle challenge than in intellectually facile agreement.

Although this is a study of Hebrew rhetoric, I have attempted to learn as much as possible regarding the meaning of the text from the ancient versions. In II Samuel i-vii the Hebrew is especially terse, and the ancient translations provide possible ways of understanding what is stated. The Hebrew text that I am studying is the text of <u>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia</u>. This text is one point in a long history of textual transmission. It does not represent an 'ideal' text, nor do I wish to argue that it is the only text or

<sup>16</sup> Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia, eds. K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. 1984).

version which ought to generate the type of stylistic study I wish to do here. In order to study the style of biblical narrative it is necessary to concentrate on the style of a particular language, whether the language be Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, Syriac or Latin. The focus of this study thus is on the Hebrew text. The ancient translations in languages other than Hebrew however can serve to reveal what sense others have made in the past of the Hebrew style of these passages.

Nevertheless, the study of the MT is inevitably involved in a long-standing controversy over the worth of various versions for the establishment of the correct readings in these chapters. I say long-standing because the controversy is at least as old as Jerome's rejection of Augustine's advocacy of the Septuagint (LXX) rather than a Hebrew text as the basis for the translation of the Bible for the church. The controversy is particularly acute in regard to the books of I and II Samuel because of the general acceptance that the Hebrew text is in a poor state of repair and warrants numerous corrections on the basis of a superior Hebrew text which is the Vorlage of the LXX. The fragments of the books of I and II Samuel which have been found at Qumran have added recent support to the argument that the LXX is a translation of a Hebrew Vorlage other than the MT.

While this study is limited to II Samuel i-vii, and therefore cannot offer solutions to these questions in regard to the books of I and II Samuel as a whole, it is still necessary to evaluate the quality of the MT and variant readings, and a study of the texts cannot be made without an awareness of more general problems. Before I give a summary of the current state of inquiry into the respective value of

the versions, it is necessary to make three points. First, in regard to the general force of the story in II Samuel i-vii there is not sufficient difference in the versions to claim that the variant readings alter the essential import of the narrative. The force of the story is preserved in the Greek, Aramaic, Syriac and Latin translations. Each of the versions contain their own difficulties: the most significant problem in the LXX, for example, for the reading of the story is the naming of Ish-bosheth (or Ishbaal) as Mephibosheth in II Samuel iii and iv, and the LXX is universally emended on this point. On the whole, however, the versions present a sufficiently similar story to that in the MT so that the significance of variant readings should not be overestimated. The questions whether II Samuel i-vii is to be read as a narrative sequence and how David's actions are to be understood in these chapters can be answered without resolving the question definitively whether the MT preserves the 'best' Hebrew manuscript tradition. In the evaluation of particular variant readings in Part II of this study, I seek to provide a sense of the significance of the major variants for the rhetorical development of the story. Due to the general agreement of the versions on the import of the story, however, the discussion of manuscript traditions is an ancillary rather than primary task of this inquiry.

Second, the MT remains central to the study of the narrative in I and II Samuel because the most important arguments in the secondary studies have been developed from an examination of the Hebrew of the MT. Rost's stylistic analysis, for example, is based upon the MT. As I will show at various points in Part II, the identification

of the styles of distinct sources can not always be sustained in a Hebrew text underlying the LXX. Therefore, in order to answer accounts of style given in earlier works, the MT must form a central part of our inquiry.

Third, the study of style has a contribution to make to the ongoing inquiry into the value of respective manuscript traditions. There are numerous examples in II Samuel i-vii in which it is supposed that the MT is corrupt, but which are thought to be problematic only because the purpose of the Hebrew rhetoric has been misunderstood. A better appreciation of Hebrew style will not clear up all difficulties we experience in reading the narrative, but it does indeed solve some. Driver, for example, despite his frequent use of the LXX to correct 'faulty' MT readings, also often elucidates Hebrew usage simply through his extensive knowledge of biblical Hebrew; see, for example, the defense he gives to the phrase ki-kol-cod napši bi which occurs in II Sam i 9.17 Yet there is a danger when there is frequent resort to text-critical explanations for difficulties that arise. Textual corruption is only one of several reasons for a difficult text. Even those, such as E. Tov, who wish to establish a science of 'textual-criticism', say that the sense of the passage is important at all points. He writes:

Before embarking upon any analysis of the exegesis of the [LXX] translation and its text-critical use, one has to understand its meaning. This stage is so fundamental that it hardly needs to be mentioned. Nevertheless the reader needs to be reminded of it, because it is apt to be forgotten that the

<sup>17</sup> S.R. Driver, Notes on the Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel, (2nd ed; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), p. 233.

LXX (as well as the other translations of the OT) can be understood in different ways. 18

If we avail ourselves of Tov's cautionary remarks, we will also study the MT and the versions as if the account of the 'meaning' of the passage is our central concern. Grammar is not separable from the sense of the language, and in any particular passage the usual usage or 'grammar' of the language may be used flexibly for particular effects. We might be greatly mistaken if we say that a phrase is grammatically impossible if we have not already considered that the sense of the passage as a whole may require flexibility with grammatical 'laws'. Alonso-Schökel says that stylistics and poetics must be taught along with Hebrew grammar as it used to be done with Greek and Latin. 19 As long as the language 'works', that is, as long as it makes sense, it is unnecessary to resort to conclusions that the Hebrew grammar is faulty and is best repaired by referring to a variant. The analysis of the style will encourage us to study the concrete detail of the text without ignoring the force of the story in all its philosophical and religious complexity.

The present state of the evaluation of the quality of MT and the versions is summarised well in two recent works, E.C. Ulrich's, Jr., The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus (1978)<sup>20</sup> and S. Pisano's,

<sup>18</sup> E. Tov, The Text-Critical Use of the Septuagint in Biblical Research, Jerusalem Biblical Studies 3 (Jerusalem: Simor, 1981), p. 67.

<sup>19</sup> Alonso-Schökel, "Hermeneutical Problems of a Literary Study of the Bible," p. 14.

<sup>20</sup> E.C. Ulrich, The Qumran Text of Samuel and Josephus, HSM 19, ed. F.M. Cross, (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1978).

S.J., Additions or Omissions in the books of Samuel (1984).<sup>21</sup> Pisano's work in particular gives a history of the alternatives. J. Wellhausen's Der Text der Bücher Samuelis (1871)<sup>22</sup> and S.R. Driver's Notes on the Hebrew Text and the Topography of the Books of Samuel (1913)<sup>23</sup> are historically two of the most significant studies on the books of Samuel, and they set a definite precedent in advocating that the LXX be used frequently in I and II Samuel for the emendation of the MT. Due largely to these latter two works, it has become generally accepted that the MT of I and II Samuel is in a state of poor repair. The LXX was believed to have translated a superior Hebrew Vorlage.

The discovery of fragments of I and II Samuel from Qumran led to an important breakthrough in confirmation of the use of LXX readings. The fragments often support LXX rather than MT readings, and they attest to what appears to be a distinct Hebrew <u>Vorlage</u> from the MT. Several articles by F.M. Cross gave initial direction to the determination of the value of these fragments.<sup>24</sup> Cross claimed that

<sup>21</sup> S. Pisano, S.J., Additions or Omissions in the Books of Samuel, The Significant Pluses and Minuses in the Massoretic, LXX and Qumran Texts, OBO 57 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984).

<sup>22</sup> J. Wellhausen, Der Text der Bücher Samuelis, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1871).

<sup>23</sup> Driver, Notes.

<sup>24</sup> F.M. Cross, "A New Qumran Biblical Fragment Related to the Original Hebrew Underlying the Septuagint," BASOR 132 (1953), pp. 15-26. Idem, "The Oldest Manuscripts from Qumran," JBL 74 (1955), pp. 147-172. Idem, "The History of the Biblical Text in Light of Discoveries in the Judaean Desert," HTR 57 (1964), pp. 281-299. Idem, "The Evolution of a Theory of Local Texts," 1972 Proceedings of the IOSCS, ed. R. Kraft, SBLSCS 2 (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1972), pp. 108-126.

the fragments of I and II Samuel would cause a revolution in text-critical study of these books which would favour the <u>Vorlage</u> of the LXX.

Ulrich's book is the first major study of the fragments; he concludes that the fragments most often support LXX readings. In light of these discoveries, P. Kyle McCarter's recent commentaries in the Anchor Bible series, <u>I & II Samuel</u>, <sup>25</sup> support more emendation of the MT than either Wellhausen or Driver advocated.

There are, however, those who are more reserved in their evaluation of the problems of the MT than Wellhausen, Driver, Cross, Ulrich and McCarter. P.A.H. de Boer, 26 Dominique Barthélemy, O.P., 27 and S. Pisano 28 judge that the MT does not require such frequent emendation. Barthélemy's comments need to be quoted in full. He writes:

Dan l'état actuel de mes études, je suis arrivé aux conclusions suivantes, que je qualifierai volontiers de 'only programmatic' et que je ne me permets de formuler ici que parce que je n'ai pas la patience d'attendre indéfiniment la publication des fragments de 4QSam:

1 à haute époque la lignée archétypale de l'ensemble de la tradition textuelle de Samuel a subi un certain nombre de

<sup>25</sup> P. Kyle McCarter, I & II Samuel, AB, 8 and 9 (New York: Double-day. 1984).

<sup>26</sup> P.A.H. de Boer, Research into the Text of I Samuel I-XVI, (Amsterdam: H.J. Paris, 1938). Idem, "I Samuel XVII. Notes on the Text and the Ancient Versions," OTS I (1942), pp. 79-103. Idem, "Research into the Text of 1 Samuel xviii-xxxi," OTS VI (1949), pp. 1-100. See also the textual apparatus of BHS.

<sup>27</sup> Dominique Barthélemy, Études d'Histoire du Texte de L'Ancien Testament, OBO 21 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978). Idem, et al., Critique Textuelle de L'Ancien Testament, OBO 50/1 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982).

<sup>28</sup> Pisano, op. cit.

grosses corruptions textuelles de la part de scribes peu soigneux.

- 2 la branche textuelle proto-massorétique a subi ensuite plus de mutilations accidentelles que ses rivales et elle a subi en outre les retouches de scribes théologiquement innovateurs, mais elle a été transmise par des scribes littérairement conservateurs.
- 3 les branches textuelles non-massorétiques ont subi moins de mutilations accidentelles et moins de retouches théologiques, mais elles ont été transmises par des scribes <u>littérairement</u> innovateurs.

Or je redoute beaucoup plus une tradition textuelle littérairement innovatrice qu'une tradition textuelle théologiquement innovatrice. Dans le second cas en effect on dispose de beaucoup plus d'indices que dans le premier pour déceler l'innovation. J'aborderai donc le TM de Samuel avec une confiance a priori en son honnêteté littéraire, bien que je sois conscient préjugés théologiques et inattentions de ses scribes. J'aborde au contraire le texte grec et 4QSam avec une défiance a priori à l'égard du manque de scrupules de leurs scribes, tout en étant conscient qu'ils renferment des éléments très utiles pour réparer certaines des mutilations ou des corrections théologiques qui défigurent le TM.[The underlining renders Barthélemy's italics]<sup>29</sup>

Barthélemy's valuation that the MT is transmitted by literary conservatives is for him a reason for caution against quick emendation. If Barthélemy's comments sound as if he judges that the books of I and II Samuel are still some of the least well preserved of the MT, it is necessary to remember how cautious these remarks are in comparison to the changes suggested by McCarter and Ulrich. 30 In a more recent essay on the quality of the Masoretic text of Samuel, Barthélemy makes a stronger statement in support of the MT. He writes:

Étant donne cette situation, la très faible créativité littéraire du TM le rend infiniment précieux pour la critique du texte de l'A.T. Il nous a conserve de nombreux trésors que, depuis Thenius, on a pris l'habitude de dire trop souvent

<sup>29</sup> Barthélemy, Études, pp. 296-297.

<sup>30</sup> Compare Barthélemy's comments to the conclusions of Ulrich, op. cit., pp. 257-259.

inintelligibles. Certes, le TM cause bien des difficultés aux traducteurs tentes de lui preferer les "voies larges" des formes textuelles non-massorétiques. Mais dela tient surtout au fait que depuis plus de cent ans l'exegète, celui-ci est oriente par les commentaires et les dictionnaires dont il dispose vers des échappatoires dont la variété même devrait inquiéter.31

Barthelemy's preference is for the MT of I and II Samuel. Pisano ends his study of the pluses and minuses in I and II Samuel with a similar affirmation:

The text of LXX, and frequently that of 4QSam<sup>a</sup>, have been shown to have modified the text in the overwhelming majority of the cases which we have studied here.

It is undeniable that in the long history of transmission of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament corruptions have crept into the text and that the texts of LXX and 4QSama are helpful for their restoration. Where it is a question of these long pluses and minuses, however, especially those which facilitate the reading of the less carefully elaborated text which MT seems often to witness to, perhaps more caution must be used before emending MT too quickly on the basis of another text, and the particular characteristics of MT, LXX and 4QSama must be respected. 32

Pisano's study, too, urges caution in the dismissal of the MT of I and II Samuel.

The Qumran fragments of the books of I and II Samuel remain unpublished, and there are numerous instances in which it is impossible to judge the value of certain readings without actual examination.

Nevertheless, there are a number of readings which attest to LXX variants, and to the so-called "Lucianic" LXX readings in particular, rather than to MT readings. But the extent and reason for the agree-

<sup>31</sup> D. Barthélemy, "La qualité du Texte Massorétique de Samuel," The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Samuel, 1980 Proceedings IOSCS, ed. E. Tov, (Jerusalem: Academon, 1980), pp. 1-44.

<sup>32</sup> Pisano, op. cit., pp. 284-285.

ment between the LXX and the Qumran fragments remains disputed. In a article published in 1979, E. Tov makes a number of criticisms of Ulrich's book. 33 Although generally admitting a measure of agreement between LXX and Qumran variants, Tov's criticisms point out how Ulrich skewed the interpretation of the fragments to support his argument in favour of their "Septuagintal" character. In another essay by E. Tov published in 1980 on 4QSama and 4QSamc, he is even more reserved, though not completely denying the agreement between these fragments and the LXX.34 He says that the similarities between the LXX and Qumran fragments for Samuel are at least in part based on the current understanding of the textual recensions of the Pentateuch. Tov claims that the three witnesses to the Pentateuch, the MT, the LXX and the Samaritan Pentateuch, have usually been thought to be three recensions, but he argues that they are simply three texts with an intricate web of agreements, differences and exclusive readings. He raises a fundamental question whether differences in manuscripts, either for the Pentateuch or for rest of the Hebrew Bible, should be attributed to differences of recension or to other causes, such as translational techniques or varieties of interpretation.

Whatever the value of the Qumran fragments, two problems still remain. First, it is necessary to ask the extent to which we should attempt to create an 'eclectic' text, that is, a Hebrew text which is

<sup>33</sup> E. Tov, "The Textual Affiliations of 4QSama," The Hebrew and Greek Texts of Samuel, pp. 189-205.

<sup>34</sup> E. Tov, "Determining the Relationship between the Qumran Scrolls and the LXX: Some Methodological Issues," <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 45-67.

a conflation of Qumran and MT readings. 35 The Qumran fragments themselves cannot form an independent Hebrew manuscript, nor is anyone to my knowledge actually working on an edition of a Hebrew manuscript from the combined resources of the fragments and retroversions of Hebrew from the LXX. Second, even if the fragments and the LXX attest to another recension of the Hebrew text, it is necessary to ask how we would know whether this recension is 'superior' to the MT. Although the manuscripts upon which the MT are based are late (the Leningrad manuscript B 19a is dated 1008 A.D.), the readings of the MT are old. They are attested in the Mishnah and Gemara, Targums Onqelos and Jonathan and the Peshitta. 36 Moreover, P. Kahle's claim that Hebrew manuscripts were corrected to conform to the simplifications of Masoretic grammar requires considerable scruting. 37 Kahle maintains that the Masoretes sought to create an 'ideal' Hebrew language analogous to the attempts by Arabs to create an 'ideal' language for the Koran, and that the Masoretes corrected Hebrew pronunciation under the influence of Arabic and Syriac. I am uncertain whether the task of the Masoretes can be understood well with a notion of an 'ideal' language;

<sup>35</sup> The justification of the attempt to create an 'eclectic' text is enucleated by de Lagarde. See Driver's summary of de Lagarde's principles for the recovery of the original LXX text in Driver, Notes, pp. xliv-xlvi. S. Walters has recently rejected such an attempt to create what he calls a 'hybrid' text. S. Walters, "Hannah and Anna: The Greek and Hebrew Texts of 1 Samuel 1," JBL 107 (1988), pp. 385-412.

<sup>36</sup> Although Driver claims that the Peshitta readings in I and II Samuel are often similar to the text of Lucian. Driver, Notes, p. lxxi.

<sup>37</sup> Paul E. Kahle, The Cairo Geniza, The Scheich Lectures of the British Academy (London: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 108-110.

it is certainly possible for a tradition to honour Scripture and at the same time maintain that the "Torah speaks in the language of men." There is further need to determine what influence Arabic and Syriac have had on Masoretic pointing. Furthermore, Kahle's desire to produce a 'scientific' Hebrew grammar that is better than the 'pious' Masoretes were capable of is a shaky foundation to make for the study of language. 38 'Grammar' is a generalization of usage, and is not a set of inviolable, scientific laws which can be applied universally. 39 It is not clear why native speaking Hebrew Masoretes would not have an advantage over Europeans in knowing what constitutes proper usage or 'grammar'. Finally, the recent work by E.J. Revell has shown that the accentuation of the MT is attested in the oldest known Septuagint papyri, the John Rylands Greek Papyrus 458, which is dated to second century B.C.40 Revell's discoveries indicate the preservative rather than the innovative character of the Masoretes' work. Given these various considerations, it is necessary for further inquiry to determine the value of Masoretic tradition without assuming that it is an imposition on older Hebrew texts.

Apart from apparent differences between Cross, Ulrich, Barthelemy and Pisano, what is common in their work is a tendency to treat

<sup>38 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 110.

<sup>39</sup> Ian Robinson, <u>The New Grammarians' Funeral</u>, A critique of Noam Chomsky's linguistics, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975).

<sup>40</sup> E.J. Revell, "The Oldest Evidence for the Hebrew Accent System," BJRL 54 (1971-72), pp. 214-222. Idem, "Biblical Punctuation and Chant in the Second Temple Period," JSJ 7 (1976), pp. 181-198.

textual questions as distinct from inquiries into the meaning and purposes of texts. But if Alonso-Schökel, amongst others, is correct in saying that what is vital is "to get the unity before and beyond the parts", then the inquiry wherein this unity exists is essential at all points. It is, therefore, necessary to conduct an inquiry which does not operate as if the parts can be isolated and examined according to text-critical categories prior to and in separation from the 'sense' of the text. The determination whether there is a unity in II Samuel i-vii "before and beyond the parts" remains the central burden of this dissertation. 41

<sup>41</sup> D.W. Gooding shows how textual questions cannot be isolated from literary questions in the essay "An Approach to the Literary and Textual Problems in the David-Goliath Story," in D. Barthélemy, D.W. Gooding, J. Lust and E. Tov, The Story of David and Goliath, Textual and Literary Criticism, OBO 73 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986), pp. 55-86.

## Part I

## Introduction

The purpose of the first part of this thesis is to summarise the stylistic characteristics of II Samuel i-vii that have been identified by studies of the narrative, and to show how these characteristics are used to identify 1) the literary form of either a part or the whole of the narrative, 2) the separation of the narrative into sources of distinct origin, 3) the social setting in which the form or forms originated, 4) the editorial insertions which link together originally disparate material and 5) the meaning or purpose of the narrative.

## Chapter One

### A: J. Wellhausen

Wellhausen's study of the historical books of the OT is conducted as if the literary and historical questions arising from the study of the narrative are inseparable. The following paragraph introduces Wellhausen's analysis of the historical books.

Bei dem gänzlichen Mangel positiver Angaben über die Enstehung der Geschichtsbücher des Alten Testaments, die ebensowie der Hexateuch allesamt anonym sind, bleibt nur die Analyse des Inhalts übrig, um irgend welchen Aufschluss zu gewinnen. Dabei lassen sich die formalen und literarischen Fragen nicht unter Ausschluss der sachlichen und geschichtlichen behandeln. 1

J. Wellhausen, Die Composition des Hexateuchs und historischen Bücher des Alten Testaments, (3rd ed; Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1899), p. 208.

The central task of his study is the examination of the contents of the historical books; he is not invoking archaeological or other external evidence to determine the sense of the narrative. By a careful reading of the story, difficulties arise which bring into question the historical veracity of certain parts. Wellhausen separates out two strands of the narrative: one strand is the historical sequence of events, the other strand is a series of additions which interrupt the historical sequence. Wellhausen calls the sequence "the historical thread" (der historische Faden).<sup>2</sup> Through literary analysis the insertions can be distinguished from this historical sequence of events.

Wellhausen's endeavour to distinguish the historical thread from insertions can be illustrated in II Samuel i-vii. II Samuel i-vii is, for Wellhausen, part of the first history of David; the history runs from I Sam xiv 52 to II Sam viii 18. While Wellhausen admits there are insertions in this history, he maintains that there is a continuous thread of events in the narrative.

Nach Sauls Tode wird David König von Juda zu Hebron und nach Isbaals Tode König von Israel zu Jerusalem, worauf dann eine Gesamtübersicht über seine Regierungstaten den Schluss bildet 2. Sam. 2-8. Die seit 1. Sam. 14,52 laufende Geshichte Davids kann nicht mit 1. Sam. 31 abbrechen, sondern muss ihren Helden weiter begleiten, bis er am Ziel steht.<sup>3</sup>

II Samuel vi and vii are considered by later writers, Gressmann and Rost, for example, to be originally independent of the chapters immedi-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Wellhausen's phrase is contained, for example, in the following sentence: "Der historische Faden setzt sich von 21,2-7 her fort in Kap. 22." Ibid., p. 251.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 253.

ately preceding them, II Samuel i-v. Wellhausen does not advocate such a separation of the narrative. He writes:

Die Beziehung von Kap. 6 zu I Sam. 4,1-7,1 ist nur eine sachliche, keine literarische; denn Kiriathjearim heisst heir Baale Juda und Eleazar abgekurzt Uzza. Das 7 Kapitel ist abhangig von Kap. 6 und ziemlich jungen Datums.4

II Samuel vi and vii are an integral part of the narrative in which they are found.

Wellhausen does, however, discover blocks of material which are insertions into the narrative of I Sam xiv 52-II Sam viii 18.

Two of the insertions are in II Samuel i and v.

The first insertion is identified because of the problem that arises out of the contradiction between the two accounts of the death of Saul found in I Samuel xxxi and II Samuel i. Wellhausen admits that II Sam iv 10 presupposes II Samuel i, but maintains that when one is required to decide whether I Samuel xxxi or II Samuel i is the proper account of the death of Saul, it is necessary to conclude that I Samuel xxxi is the better account. He argues that I Samuel xxxi is more credible (glaubwurdiger) than II Samuel i: it is impossible for the Amalekite to have been near Saul's camp in the thick of battle and to have carried off Saul's crown and bracelet. Moreover, Wellhausen judges that it is not simply that the story of the Amalekite is false (erlogen), but rather that II Samuel i is not as historical as I Samuel xxxi. Wellhausen says the historical thread is discontinued in I Sam xxxi 13 and is resumed again in II Sam ii 8. He argues that the reason the elders of Judah make David king is due to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 254.

spoil David gives to them in I Sam xxx 26-31, and this proves the direct continuation of I Sam xxx 26-31 in II Sam ii 1-8. Wellhausen concludes:

und dass endlich 2,8 der Faden da aufgenommen wird, wo er 1 Sam. 31 fallen gelassen ist. Von da an setzt sich dieser Fadenin Kap. 2-5 ununterbrochen fort.<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, the lament of David over Saul and Jonathan is not part of the historical narrative because it is poetry. II Sam i 1-27 is, therefore, an insertion.

The second insertion in II Samuel i-vii is found in II Samuel v. Wellhausen argues that one and the same author (Schriftsteller) could not have written both pieces of narrative in II Sam v 1-3, 17-25 and vss 4-16. He cites two stylistic characteristics of the passage in order to conclude that vss 4-16 are an insertion. His first observation is the use of yarad in vs 17. In the phrase "and he went down into the hold, wayyered el-hammesuda, yarad is a verb of motion, and signifies that David had to move to go to the hold. The hold, then, in vs 17 cannot be the same hold which is spoken of in vs 7 (měsudat siyyôn hî' cîr dawid) and vs 9 (měsûdâ). The hold of vs 17 is not Jerusalem. Wellhausen supports his argument by maintaining that the construction of a palace for David is "without a doubt" (ohne Zweifel) later than the war with the Philistines. The war follows directly upon the anointing of David by the tribes of Israel. This sequence of the anointing of the king followed by war would thus be identical to the sequence with Saul in I Sam x 1-xi 15. Another

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 253.

argument in favour of the pericope on the war preceding the construction of David's palace is that II Samuel vi and vii are dependent upon the construction of the palace, and it is, therefore, sensible that the narrative describing this construction immediately precedes these two chapters. But Wellhausen's reading of II Samuel v entails more than simply a rearrangement of vss 4-16 because these verses are judged to be a later addition to the original narrative. He does not say whether they are less historical. The original parts of the chapter, II Sam v 1-3 and 17-25, are part of the larger continuous narrative found in I Sam xiv 52-II Sam viii 18.

In summary, Wellhausen discovers literary characteristics of II Samuel i-vii that cause him to argue that an original narrative strand has had additions made to it. From these literary observations he is able to judge what parts of the narrative are historical and what parts are legendary, what parts are written by one author and what parts are written by a different author, and the places in which parts of the narrative are not in the proper sequence.

Wellhausen's detailed analysis of the books of Samuel needs to be supplemented by his earlier work, <u>Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel</u> (1878), in which he argues that the historical narratives in the books of Samuel have been redacted by writers with theological concerns, and that these writers have diminished the historical nature of the narratives. Wellhausen claims that there are two

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> J. Wellhausen, <u>Prolegomena to the History of Ancient Israel</u>, trans. Mr. Black and Mr. Menzies, (Gloucester, Mass: Peter Smith, 1973).

historical writings within the books of I and II Samuel. The first work is I Sam xiv 52-II Sam viii 18, and the second is II Sam ix 1-I Kgs ii 46. He writes:

Both works are marked by an essentially historical character. The treatment is much more detailed, while not nearly so poetical as in the history of Saul (I Sam. ix. seq.). There are no exaggerations such as xiv. 46 seq. The second is the better work of the two, and frequently affords us a glance into the very heart of events, showing us the natural occasions and human motives which gave rise to the different actions.

The first work (I Sam. xvi.-2 Sam. viii.) gives a less circumstantial narrative, but follows the thread of events not less conscientiously, and is based on information little inferior to that of the second. The author's partisanship is more noticeable, as he follows the style of a biographer, and makes David the hero of the history from his very first appearance, although king Saul is the ruling and motive power in it. 7

Wellhausen's comments provide a way for us to judge what he means by historical narrative. Historical writing depicts "a glance into the very heart of events, showing us the natural occasions and human motives which gave rise to different actions." In an earlier section of the book Wellhausen explains his view of the genre of historical writing: "Only it may stand as a general principle, that the nearer history is to its origin the more profane it is." In judging what portions of the narratives are historical, then, two of the central ingredients, according to Wellhausen, are that historical narrative reveals human motives and shows the profane nature of events.

In contrast, Wellhausen sees the religious or ideological elements of a narrative as a diminishment of their historical value.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 262.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 245.

The first work depicts David as a hero who evades and honours a vengeful and jealous king. The second work shows David the man, caught in
the aftermath of his own sin and in the midst of desperate family
conflicts. The sorely tried David of the second work is historical;
the heroic David of the first work is less historical.

Furthermore, the historical narratives in Samuel have undergone a comprehensive revision. Wellhausen calls this revision the Deuteronomistic revision (hereafter the adjective is abbreviated Dtr.). The individual works of the narrative are brought together in order to complete a comprehensive story of the history of Israel. The Dtr. editing is done for religious purposes, and intrudes upon many sections that were originally historical. The Dtr. redaction is manifest in what Wellhausen calls chronological formulas and religious formulas. The formulas constitute an "artificial frame" which is not an intrinsic part of the narrative, and into which originally distinct blocks of material are positioned. The chronological formulas are introduced in order to mark the time from Israel's exodus from Egypt to the building of the temple. The key verse in this development is I Kgs vi 1 in which the beginning of the construction of the temple is marked as the four hundred and eightieth year after Israel came up from the land of Egypt. The chronological references, such as the ones found in II Sam ii 10-11 and v 4-5, are part of the framework used to unite various traditions.

The religious formulas are even more central to an understanding of the Dtr. revision because they reveal that the Deuteronomist's purpose is theological. His theology is summarised in particular formulas; an example of one such formula is I Sam vii 2-4. The formulas state that if Israel turns away from her strange gods and worships the Lord, then the Lord will deliver her from her enemies. These formulas summarise a pattern of rebellion, affliction, conversion and peace that is established in Israel. The redaction of the entire history of Israel from the death of Moses to the end of the kings in Judah and Israel is written to illustrate the nature of Israel's struggle against God, and the reason that Israel is rejected by God in the exile.9

The purpose of the Deuteronomist is to give a theological reading to a variety of traditions. Some of these traditions, such as the two historical works in the books of Samuel, were not written with this theological end in mind. Furthermore, the theological redaction of these narratives diminishes their original historical nature. What remains in the narratives is a combination of original material, which in sections of the narratives represents good historical writing, and material from a later redaction, which is either legendary or written for blatantly theological reasons. The insertions by the Deuteronomist into II Samuel i-vii consist of the two chronological formulas found in II Sam ii 10-11 and v 4-5. There are no religious formulas in these chapters. Wellhausen does not argue that the insertions of II Sam i and v 4-16 are Dtr.

Wellhausen accounts for the variations that exist between the composition of II Samuel i-vii and I Chronicles x-xvii in the same

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 246-247. See also Wellhausen's discussion of the same pattern in the book of Judges, ibid., pp. 229-232.

way that he argues that the historical narratives in the former have been altered by later Dtr. editors. He writes:

The Books of Samuel and of Kings were edited in the Babylonian exile; Chronicles, on the other hand, was composed fully three hundred years later, after the downfall of the Persian empire, out of the very midst of fully developed Judaism. We shall now proceed to show that the mere difference of date fully accounts for the varying ways in which the two histories represent the same facts and events, and the differences of spirit arise from the influence of the Priestly Code, which came into existence in the interval. 10

The Priestly code is, like the Dtr. redaction, a theological redaction; it was made by priests who sought to secure their authority by reworking older material so that it would support the priesthood. According to Wellhausen the work of this priestly group is the foundation of Judaism. The editors of Chronicles sought to diminish the human elements in David's accession to the throne. They, therefore, excluded from the text of Chronicles what is found in II Samuel i-iv, the story of the Amalekite who came to David to tell how he had killed Saul and the story of Ishbaal, because these chapters show human instead of theological motives at work. Furthermore, the story of the return of the ark from the house of Obed-edom, found in I Chronicles xv-xvi, includes a more extensive account of the role of the Levites in the movement of the ark than the parallel story in II Samuel vi. While there are also other variations between the narratives in Samuel and Chronicles, these two alterations reveal the purposes of the Chronicler. In summary, II Samuel ii-vii is more historical than the nar-

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 171-172.

ratives of Chronicles: the Chronicler's theological version of earlier traditions diminishes the historical veracity of the narratives.

Wellhausen's study of II Samuel i-vii can be summarised in the following manner. First, by a detailed examination of the narrative he identifies features that are evidence of insertions into an original text. In II Samuel i-vii, chapters i and v 4-16 are judged to be insertions. Moreover, II Sam ii 10-11 and v 4-5 are part of a Dtr. chronological framework. Second, Wellhausen's judgements about the insertions into the narrative are founded upon aspects of the narrative which appear to be anomalous. The arguments to support the differentiation of the central "thread" of the narrative from secondary insertions are based upon literary features of the narrative. Third, the standard of judgement Wellhausen uses to evaluate whether the narrative contains insertions or not is derived in part from his understanding of historical form. By historical form Wellhausen does not simply mean that the narrative provides an accurate representation of events external to the narrative. Historical form is characterised by a depiction which lacks theological concerns and which reveals the human motives that are at work in events. Theological or religious concerns, such as are manifest in the Dtr. redaction of Josh i 1-II Kgs xxv 30 and the Priestly redaction of the books of I and II Chronicles, are later additions to or rearrangements of originally historical material. Fourth, historical form is best exemplified in the two works found in the books of Samuel, I Sam xiv 52-II Sam viii 18 and II Sam ix 1-II Kgs ii 46 (II Sam xxi-xxiv are not included in this second work). The second of these two works is more historical than

the first because there are fewer references to intervention by God, and David is presented in a less heroic and, therefore, more historical manner.

## B: H. Gressmann

Hugo Gressmann's <u>Die alteste Geschichtsschreibung und Prophetie</u>

<u>Israels</u> was published in 1921.<sup>11</sup> The book undertakes to apply Gunkel's form-critical analysis of the Pentateuch to the books of Samuel and Kings. He discusses six major sections of II Samuel i-vii.

The first section is II Sam i 1-27. Like Wellhausen, Gressmann sees the primary problem in II Samuel i as the contradictory account of the death of Saul to that presented in I Samuel xxxi. Gressmann's solution, however, is not the same as Wellhausen's. Gressmann argues that there are two sources in II Sam i 1-16. The first source is the older report, and consists of II Sam i 1-4,8 and 11-12. Gressmann describes the report as "simple and trustworthy" (einfach und vertrauenerweckend). The report consists in the statement made to David by the Amalekite that Saul and his sons had been killed. The Amalekite does not claim to have killed Saul; the Amalekite simply delivers the news to David. The second, younger report consists of II Sam i 5-7, 9-10 and 13-15. Gressmann says that the report is "longer and more unbelievable" (länger und unglaubwürdiger). 13 The report contains

<sup>11</sup> Hugo Gressmann, <u>Die älteste Geschichtsschreibung und Prophetie Israels</u>, Die Schriften des Alten Testaments in Auswahl, Sect. II, Vol. 1, (2nd ed; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1921).

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

<sup>13 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>.

those parts of the chapter which indicate that the Amalekite either provides an alternate account of the death of Saul or is lying in order to win David's favour. Gressmann's literary analysis provides three reasons for the division of the narrative into two sources. First, the Amalekite could not have been a comrade with the Israelites in battle and have escaped to tell the tale of the victory of the enemy. Gressmann claims that the Amalekite's answer to David that he came by chance to the battle is inconceivable. "Dieser Zufall ist unbegreiflich; wenn der Mann ein Kampfgenosse der Israeliten war, muss er sich notwendig dort befunden haben."14 Gressmann concludes that there is a contradiction (Widerspruch) in the narrative which is proof of originally independent sources (Quellenscheidung). Second, Gressmann considers the repetition of David's question and the Amalekite's answer in vss 8 and 13 an unnecessary repetition (überflüssige Wiederholung) that would not exist in one source. Third, the end of the narrative contains two difficulties. In vs 12 David breaks off his conversation with the Amalekite and he and all his men lament over Saul until evening. Vs 13, however, continues the conversation between David and the Amalekite without any apparent recognition of the space of time suggested in vs 12. Moreover, in vs 16 David states the reason for the condemnation of the Amalekite after the Amalekite has already been killed. David's sentence of death seems to be said to the Amalekite, but according to the sequence of the narrative, the Amalekite is already dead. Both these difficulties show that the

<sup>14 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 118.

narrative is problematic following vs 12, and Gressmann says that vss 13-15 belong to the second and less believable source, and that vs 16 is an addition which ties the two sources together.

According to Gressmann the two sources are two distinct literary forms. The first report is trustworthy (vertrauenerweckend); it is the material of history. The second report is unbelievable; it is the material of saga. When the second report is compared with I Samuel xxxi, an historical section, the lack of historicity in the second report is verified further. The change in literary form accounts for the differences between the two chapters. In I Samuel xxxi both Saul and his armourbearer kill themselves. In II Sam i 10 Saul is killed by a stranger, and we hear nothing about an armourbearer. Gressmann concludes that the historical sequence of events can be traced through I Samuel xxxi, the old report in II Sam i 1-4,8 and 11-12, and the narrative as it continues in II Sam ii 1-v 5. Gressmann writes: "Der ältere Bericht dagegen stimmt nicht nur mit 4,10f., sondern auch mit I 31 überein, da der Bote nur die sichere Kunde vom Tode Sauls übermittelt."15 The historical account does not include the Amalekite's claim that he killed Saul. The second report, then, is more inconceivable and imaginary than the first report. The second report is a saga, whereas the first report is history.

Gressmann concludes his discussion of II Samuel i with a commentary on II Sam i 17-27. He calls the poem a song of lament (Leichen-lied). As a song of lament he compares it with certain other expres-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 119.

sions of lamentation in the OT, and emends the first line of the poem on the basis that all lamentation begins with the cry "alas"  $(\underline{hoy})$  as in I Kgs xiii 30 and Jer xxii 18. The purpose of the lamentation is the glorification (<u>Verrherrlichung</u>) of those fallen in battle. The lamentation is in the proper place in the development of the narrative.

The next section of narrative extends from II Sam ii 1 to v

5. Although Gressmann divides this section into eight parts for the sake of explanation, he understands the narrative to be continuous.

Moreover, the narrative is historical. 16

Die Darstellungen der Kampfe Davids mit Esbaal (II. Sam. 2-5), von Amnon und Absalom (13-14), von Absalom und Seba (15-20) gehoren zweifellos zur Geschichtsschreibung und sind wohl sicher nur schriftlich verbreitet worden, schon des grossen Umfangs wegen. 17

Longer sections of narrative could not have been transmitted orally, and they were, therefore, originally written as opposed to oral. The literary characteristic that Gressmann uses to identify historical narrative in this section is length. However, in the commentary on these chapters Gressmann remarks on two aspects of the depiction of the narrative that suggest that the popular art of the saga is present as well. First, II Sam ii 12-32 tells of the battle that ensued between the army led by Joab and the army led by Abner. In II Sam ii 16 the place, Helkath-hazzurim, is named where the battle takes place. Gressmann says that the story of the naming of places is a motif of a saga (Sagenmotiv). Second, in II Sam ii 18 Asahel is said to be as

<sup>16 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. XIV.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

light of foot as a wild roe. Gressmann claims that the painting of detail and the description of the character of Asahel is evidence of the art of the saga. 18 Gressmann remarks that Homer praises Achilles because he is a fast runner; the comparison with Homeric epic is evidence that a motif of popular saga is present in these biblical chapters. 19 Despite these characteristics of the saga in the narrative, Gressmann does not alter his judgement that the form of the narrative is history.

The next section of the narrative is II Sam v 6-16. He concludes that these verses are saga rather than historical narrative because they do not provide a sufficient explanation of the events of the capture of Jerusalem. He writes: "Von der Einnahme Jerusalems durch David berichtet die Sage nur ein kurzes Wort, dessen Verständnis nicht sicher erschlossen werden kann."<sup>20</sup> Neither the account here in II Sam v 6-16 nor the similar account in I Chr xi 4-9 can be judged to be completely historical. Another characteristic also confirms the existence of the saga form. The purpose of the challenge of the blind and the lame to David as he enters the city of the Jebusites is to account for the popular proverb in II Sam v 8. The proverb explains the reason that the blind and the lame cannot enter into the house of David; proverbs are indicative of saga. Gressmann says the Chronicler recasts this episode by placing the emphasis on David's reply to the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 128.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

challenge that whoever smites the Jebusites will be chief; Joab succeeds in being chief (I Chr xi 6). The recast episode, however, cannot be any more historical than the account in II Sam v 6-16 because Joab is leader prior to the assault on Jerusalem (II Sam ii 13). Gressmann, therefore, concludes that II Sam v 6-16 is a saga.

The next section is II Sam v 17-25.21 This saga is distinguishable from the previous saga because this one is a saga of place (Ort-sage). The saga provides the name of the place, Baal-perazim. The name was originally the name of an Amorite god, and it has been used to identify a geographical place in Israel. The saga is important because it was at this place that David consulted an oracle twice before he went into battle against the Philistines.

Gressmann claims that the two sagas in II Sam v 6-25 are in the proper sequence. Although the sagas have different purposes, he does not propose, as Wellhausen does, that II Sam v 17-25 was originally the sequel to II Sam v 3.

II Sam vi 1-23 is a saga as well, but it is a cult saga (Kult-sage).<sup>22</sup> II Samuel vi is the conclusion to the first part of the story of the ark found in I Sam iv 1-vii 1. Gressmann suggests that the differences that exist between I Sam iv 1-vii 1 and II Samuel vi, the change in the name of the place from Kiriath-jearim to Baale of Judah and the change of the name of the priest from Eleazar to Uzza, are simple variations in the narrative and are not evidence of different

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. XV.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

sources. The literary character of the two narratives is the same. By literary character Gressmann means that the elements which are unbelievable persist in both narratives. Later rationalistic historians have attempted to remove or reinterpret these unbelievable elements, but they remain, and are evidence that the narratives are originally sagas.<sup>23</sup> The element that Gressmann uses as an example is the miracle. On the basis of this identification of the form of the narrative Gressmann maintains that the chapter is unified with the chapters on the ark in I Sam iv 1-vii 1, and is not originally part of the narrative here in II Samuel.

In regard to II Sam vii 1-27 Gressmann separates II Sam vii 8-29 from II Sam vii 1-7 for stylistic reasons. Gressmann says that II Sam vii 1-7 exhibits a good, concise, almost taciturn prose, while II Sam vii 8-29 is a half-poetic, lengthy, tiresome prose. Gressmann admits that metre is not present in II Sam vii 8-29, but the verses resemble poetry in 1) their strikingly long speeches which are unusual in the historical books of the OT, 2) the powerful forms of expression in vss 12 and 14 and 3) the peculiarities of style which suggest that the verses are from an ancient poetical text. His singular example of peculiarity is the repetition in vs 16.24 He says that the poetry has undergone a prose revision which accounts for the loss of the

<sup>23 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 134.

<sup>24 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 138.

indications of poetry.<sup>25</sup> In contrast to the poetry of vss 8-29, vss 1-7 are prose.

Gressmann does not state explicitly what literary forms the different parts of II Samuel vii are. The only clue is provided in the distinction between poetry and prose. Poetry is the language of saga, and prose is the language of historical writing. 26 Since II Sam vii 1-7 are more prosaic, then the verses are also more historical. But even this formulation for Gressmann is not without its complexities because vss 1-7 contain an original poetic oracle in vss 4-7. The poetic oracle had indeed been added to by prose, but the oracle itself remains. This complexity allows him to argue for the poetic character of the oracle, while suggesting that vss 1-7 as a whole are more historical than vss 8-29. A further proof that Gressmann thinks vss 1-7 are historical is the comment that he makes in a comparison between II Sam vii 1-7 and I Chr xxii 1-5. In I Chr xxii 1-5 David accumulates material for the building of the temple. Gressmann says that the account in I Chr xxii 1-5 is a legend, and one

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>26</sup> Gressmann does not make a definite statement about the relation between prose and poetry in the introduction to the books of Samuel. Gunkel, who provided Gressmann with the definition of forms, makes the link between, on the one hand, poetry and saga, and, on the other hand, prose and history. Gunkel writes: "But the important point is and will remain the poetic tone of the narratives. History, which claims to inform us of what has actually happened, is in its very nature prose, while legend [Saga] is by nature poetry, its aim being to please, to elevate, to inspire and to move." Hermann Gunkel, The Legends of Genesis, trans., W.H. Carruth, (New York: Schocken Books, 1964), p. 10.

which makes additions to the account that are not part of the more historical account found in II Sam vii 1-7.27

In light of the poetic elements both in II Sam vii 1-7 and II Sam vii 8-29, Gressmann attempts to bolster his arguments about the poetic nature of the second part of the chapter. Gressmann says that II Sam vii 8-17 is a royal song (Königslied), and is similar to what we would find in many Psalms, Psalm lxxxix, for example. The prayer of David, II Sam vii 18-29, is the expression of David's devotion toward God, and is also similar to the Psalms. Gressmann again uses the example of Psalm lxxxix. In summary, II Sam vii 8-29 are poetry, and, as poetry, the verses are legendary rather than historical.

Gressmann also points to another reason for thinking that vii 8-29 are poetry. There is a wish for an eternal king in vii 8-29. But the king here is not a superhuman (<u>ubermenschlicher König</u>) or spiritual king (<u>Messias</u>), but rather a physical descendant of David (<u>leiblichen Nachkommen Davids</u>). Gressmann states that the wish to have a descendant on the throne forever is nothing new or uncommon for kings. But the wish is another proof that the verses are poetic.

In summary, Gressmann's examination of the first seven chapters of II Samuel is a discussion of the stylistic characteristics which are indicative of literary forms. The two principle forms found in these chapters are saga and history. Once the literary form has been identified, the understanding of the passage is derived from the sense of the form.

<sup>27</sup> Gressmann, op. cit., pp. 139-140.

The significance of these two forms is presented in Gressmann's introduction to Die älteste Geschichtsschreibung und Prophetie Israels. In this introduction Gressmann delineates what literary forms he finds in the ancient near east, and what forms are present in the historical books of the Bible. Gressmann's aim is to show the origin of the development of historical writing. He argues that the historical writing of the Bible did not grow out of the court annals of the Egyptians, Phoenicians or Persians, nor from temple chronicles represented in biblical literature (I Kgs vi-vii). Historical writing grew out of sagas (Sagenerzählung). Sagas arise from the popular (volkstumlich) traditions of the people, and are originally oral. Gressmann claims that there were only two ancient peoples that truly developed both sagas and historical writing, the Greeks and the Israelites. The reason for development of this form is found in the constitution (Verfassung) of the nations. Amongst the other nations of the near east the king was everything and the people nothing. But in Greece and Israel the individuals were free citizens (freie Burger). Their freedom made possible the popular tradition of song and short narrative, that is, saga. This tradition gradually developed into a form of literature that was both written and historical. Historical writing was the culmination (Vollendung) of these ancient cultures of Greece and Israel.<sup>28</sup>

Historical form grew out of the form of saga. Gressmann says the history writers went to the same school as the composers of saga,

<sup>28 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, pp. XII-XIII.

and learned their technique from the composers of saga. The two forms are similar in the following aspects. First, they are both governed by a law whereby they move from the unimportant to the important. Second, both create suspense by the insertion of acts (Zwischenakte) which retard the movement of the story to its completion.

Third, both depict heroes in pairs, whether the pairs be good or evil. Fourth, both have a story (Handlung) that ascends slowly to a high-point and then drops off quickly. Fifth, both forms withhold much that is necessary to the story until curiosity has been sufficiently aroused. The slow progress of the narrative due to manifold repetitions causes the reader to enjoy every situation to the fullest. These five characteristics are similar in the two literary forms.<sup>29</sup>

The difference between history and saga consists in the 1) subject (Stoffe) and 2) the forms' relation to reality (Wirklichkeit). The subject of history is the present or the immediate past. The heroes of history are kings, princes, leaders and prophets, the leading men of state. The events which are the subject of history are political events, but the form sustains an interest in individuals. History also represents what actually happens, although Gressmann only offers literary criteria to identify historical sections of narrative. In contrast, sagas depict the distant past. Its characters are patriarchs, women and children and powerful men of earlier times, such as Moses, Joshua and the judges. Saga touches mainly on private life, and is political only as it shows the relationships of private life.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. XIII.

Saga demands the belief that it is a true likeness (getreues Abbild) of the past, but it does not deserve to make this claim because only history has a sense of reality (Wirklichkeitssinn). Miracles, for example, are the offspring of saga, and cannot be found in history, any more than they are found in, as Gressmann says, the sober present (nuchternen Gegenwart). Saga seeks to reveal God in the fictitious breaking-through (marchenhaften Durchbrechung) of natural law. In history, God is known in the natural overflow (Ablauf) of events, what Gressmann refers to as the will of providence (im Walten der Vorsehung). Moreover, history is objective, presenting the weaknesses of its heroes without embarrassment. Gressmann says that this objectivity amounts to an inability of the author to criticise his heroes, and it is both a strength and a weakness to historical writing. 30

In a later paragraph, Gressmann elaborates this distinction between saga and history. Saga and history are products of the same artistic spirit (kunstlerische Geist), but saga is created by the imagination. Gressmann does not make an explicit connection between historical form and a rational faculty, but he does speak of historical form as depicting reality. In his inquiry into the nature of OT narrative, he shows that a transformation (Umwandlung) takes place whereby historical form grows out of saga. This transformation develops when imagination (Phantasie) is held in check, and the true depiction of reality can be accomplished. In any one portion of narrative, there may be a mixture of fantasy and reality, of saga and history,

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. XIV.

and the narrative itself shows the transformation taking place. As the narrator writes, there is always a temptation to resort back to fantasy, since the people are more accustomed to saga than history. The historian, in his creative art, always seeks to hold in abeyance the popular imagination of the masses.<sup>31</sup>

It is now possible to appreciate what Gressmann is attempting in his commentary on II Samuel i-vii. He is attentive to any aspect of style which will help him to distinguish one of these two forms. When he has found a detail of style, or several details of style, he concludes that the section of narrative is either saga or history or a combination of the two. Once he has established that one section is saga and another history, the distinction has immense implications for the understanding of each section of narrative, and for the relation of one part of the narrative to another. For example, the historical narrative of II Sam ii 1-v 5 is very different in origin, purpose and meaning from the saga of the ark in II Samuel vi. The identification of different forms also allows for the reorganization of the narrative: those parts of the narrative which are sagas have more in common than two adjacent chapters which represent different forms. II Samuel vi has, according to Gressmann, more in common with I Sam iv 1-vii 1 than with the immediately surrounding material in II Samuel.

Gressmann, like Wellhausen, seeks to distinguish the historical aspects of the narrative from the less historical aspects. In regard to II Samuel i-vii both Gressmann and Wellhausen derive their judge-

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

ments concerning the historicity of the narrative on the basis of stylistic characteristics which they say are features of historical writing. In both Gressmann and Wellhausen the question of the historicity of the narrative, and subsequently of unity and meaning, is not, at least for II Samuel i-vii, a question of proving the accuracy of the literary depiction of the narrative by resort to archaeological discoveries or other criteria external to the style of the texts.

## C: L. Rost

Rost's study, <u>Die Überlieferung von der Thronnachfolge Davids</u>, was published in 1926.<sup>32</sup> This study has had the most influence on the subsequent delineation of the sources of the books of Samuel.

Rost's aim is to provide a study of what he calls the succession narrative. In the course of his study he argues that the succession narrative is composed of II Sam vi 16 and 20b-23, vii 11b and 16, most of II Sam ix 1-xx 26 and most of I Kgs i 1-ii 46. Prior to his actual study of the succession narrative, Rost makes an inquiry into the nature and boundaries of the subsidiary sources (Unterquellen) of the succession narrative. These sources consist in 1) the ark narrative, I Sam iv 1-vii 1 and II Sam vi 1-15 and 17-20a, 2) the prophecy of Nathan and David's prayer, II Samuel vii, and 3) the account of the Ammonite wars, II Sam x 6-xi 1 and xii 26-31. The first two sources are central to our study.

Rost argues strenuously for the unity and coherence of the ark narrative. Rost opposes those, like K. Budde and R. Kittel, who

<sup>32</sup> For bibliographical information see above, p. xii, n. 6.

attempted to prove that the Pentateuchal sources J and E continue throughout the historical books. These writers sought to identify two continuous strands in the books of Samuel which were interwoven to make the narrative in its present form. Budde maintained that there are doublets in I Sam iv 1-vii 1 and that these doublets are evidence of two sources that have been conflated. Kittel claimed that I Sam iv 1-v 12 belong to one source, and I Sam vi 1-vii 1 and II Sam vi 1-23 belong to another. Budde's and Kittel's arguments then must be answered by Rost if he is to make a lasting argument for the unity of the ark narrative. Rost must show that the arguments for two sources running through the ark narrative, and, hence, throughout the entire books of I and II Samuel, are incorrect.

Budde notes that I Sam iv 1-vii 1 contain doublets which he considers evidence of the two sources. The doublets are as follows: a word followed by a synonym in the following examples, bamma araka bassadeh in I Sam iv 2, baboqer mimmahorat in v 4, 2et-2asdôd we'et-gebûlêha in v 6; the phrase kabeda me'od yad ha'elôhîm sam which follows a sentence of the same content in v 11; the repetition of verbs, qehû and wa'asû, in vi 7; bêt semes following derek gebûlê in vi 9; and the phrase wenôda' lakem lamma lo'-tasûr yadô mikkem following terape'û in vi 3. Budde also argues that the repetitions in iv 7-8 and iv 9 are evidence of two sources which have been placed beside one another. Moreover, Budde, following Kittel, argues that I Sam vi 1-vii 1 contains a source distinct from I Sam iv 1-v 12 because I Sam vi 4,5,11 and 18 include both emerods and mice (epolê zahab and akberê zahab) as part of the trespass offering, and hence part of the

plague, while I Sam v 6 and 12 describe the plague simply as emerods (epolim). Budde claims the emerods (Pestbeulen) in I Sam vi 1-21 are editorial insertions, and the mice are symbolic representations of the plague. I Sam v 1-12, then, is part of one source, and I Sam vi 1-21 is part of another source. Budde's conclusion is that the ark narrative is not unified, but contains the interweaving of two distinct sources. Budde's argument for the continuation of Pentateuchal sources into the books of Samuel then is founded upon an examination of the style of the narrative, but not on the alternation of the divine names.33 Rost answers Budde's arguments by saying that the doublets are explanatory glosses or expansions. In the examples in I Sam vi 3 and 5, the doublets are a result of a later redaction, but not from an identifiable source. Moreover, Rost says that the repetition in I Sam iv 7-8 is an example of anaphora, and the repetition in I Sam iv 9 is an inclusio. He maintains that anaphora and inclusio are rhetorical devices germane to Hebrew style and, therefore, are not evidence for sources. His answer to Budde's account of the style is to show that at least some of those details which Budde considers evidence of sources are purposeful stylistic aspects of the story.

The unity of the ark narrative has been denied in another way. There is a change between the names Kirjath-jearim (qiryat-ye-earim) and Baale of Judah (ba ale yehuda) and Eleazar and Uzzah in I Sam vi 21-vii 1 and II Samuel vi. These two alterations suggest that I Sam vi 1-vii 1 and II Samuel vi could not be part of a unified and

<sup>33</sup> Rost, The Succession to the Throne of David, pp. 9-10.

continuous narrative. Rost's literary judgement about this difference agrees with that of Kittel. Both note that according to Josh xv 9 and 60 and xviii 14 Kirjath-jearim and Baale of Judah are names for the same place. Baale of Judah is considered the older of the two names, but was not changed in II Sam vi 2 because it was not recognised as a place name. The change between Eleazar and Uzzah is explained by Rost in two possible ways. First, either Eleazar is the name used in I Sam vi 1 because there was a need for a theophoric name for the priest in Kirjath-jearim or, second, the sons of Abinadab in II Sam vi 3 (bene jabinadab) are the grandsons of Abinadab. What is important is the lineage rather than the exact relation of kinship. Thus, Rost seeks to answer the objections that have been raised against understanding I Sam vi 1-vii 1 and II Samuel vi as a unified narrative.

Rost supplements his reply to the objections to the unity of the ark narrative by a study of the vocabulary, style, structure, purpose, date of composition, historicity and religious concepts of the ark narrative itself.

Rost compiles a list of the words which are used by the author of the ark narrative. These words are a part of the author's individual style; the vocabulary of one author can be distinguished from the vocabulary of another author, and therefore a consistent vocabulary is evidence of a unified source. Rost lists a number of words, and cites their frequency of use both in and outside of the books of Samuel.

It is difficult, however, to use frequency of usage as a criterion of the style of a particular author. A key word in a stretch

of narrative may be used only once. Moreover, the words that Rost cites do not reveal the boundaries of sources that Rost suggests they do. For example, the first word is the hithpael form of 'bl; Rost cites it as an example of the distinct vocabulary of the ark narrative. In the ark narrative it is found only once, in I Sam vi 19 in the form of wayyit'abelu. As cited by Rost, the hithpael form of the verb is found six other times in I and II Samuel: I Sam xv 35, xvi 1, II Sam xiii 37, twice in xiv 2 and xix 2. This evidence renders dubious Rost's use of vocabulary in delineating sources. The word is used more frequently outside the ark narrative than in it, and outside the ark narrative it is used in both the source of the history of David's rise to power and in the succession narrative. The second word in Rost's list of typical vocabulary of the author of the ark narrative is adir (adirim in I Sam iv 8). It is used only once, however, in the ark narrative. It is not used elsewhere in I or II Samuel, although it is found in numerous locations in the OT (Ps viii 2, Exod xv 10, et al.). Again it is difficult to see how this word contributes to the identification of an individual style of the ark narrative. Rost's vocabulary list is impressive in its labouriousness, but its value in the identification of style is tenuous. 34

<sup>34</sup> The correctness of Rost's word list is also questioned by F. Schicklberger. Schicklberger says:

Von den über 50 registrieren und für die sog. Ladeerzählung als typisch ausgegebenen Begriffen kommen nur drei sowohl in 1 Sam 4 als auch in einem der anderen zur Ladeerzählung gerechneten Kapitel vor.

Es fallt auf, dass von den von Rost als typisch fur die ganze Ladeerzählung angeführten Begriffen allein deren 19 sich nur in 1 Sam 4 finden.

After distinguishing the distinct vocabulary of different sources, Rost then proceeds to a description of other aspects of the style of the ark narrative. He writes:

The style of the ark narrative is relatively simple and straightforward. The sentences are short, often consisting of no more than subject, object and predicate or predicate, subject and object. There are practically no subordinate clauses such as relative and conditional clauses. Participial constructions are also very rare. Similarly there are almost none of the constructions with <a href="https://doi.org/10.10/">https://doi.org/10.10/</a> at temporal phrase or an infinitive and a subsequent <a href="main clause which are so favoured elsewhere">main clause which are so favoured elsewhere</a> (I Sam 4.18; 5.9 and 10). One looks in vain for comparisons and metaphors. 35

Rost also says that the ark narrative does not use rhetorical devices: the anaphora in I Sam iv 7-8 and the inclusio in iv 9 are exceptions, and even these are imperfectly formed. The prose style is simple, but is not the result of the crudity (Kunstlosigheit) of the author. Rhetorical decoration is eschewed in order to achieve simplicity. Rost admits that his account of the style of the ark narrative could also be true of Hebrew prose style in general. But the proof that Rost intends his account to be limited to the ark narrative, and that it will be central to his distinction between the ark narrative and the succession narrative, is found in a different type of prose

He concludes:

Ein erster, freilich sehr vorläufiger Schluss kann gezogen werden: Die Wortschatzstatistik bei Rost vermag nicht zu leisten, was sie vorgibt. Sie spricht eher gegen eine genuine Zusammengehörigkeit von 1 Sam 4 mit 1 Sam 5; 6 und 2 Sam 6.

F. Schickberger, Die Ladeerzählungen des ersten Samuel-Buches, Eine literaturwissenschaftliche und theologiegeschichtliche Untersuchung, Forschung zur Bibel 7, eds. R. Schnackenburg and J. Schreiner, (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1973), pp. 12-13.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

that he describes in the succession narrative.<sup>36</sup> In contrast to the terse prose of the ark narrative, the succession narrative possesses an epic expansiveness. In the succession narrative the sentences are longer, the expression is fuller and the imagery is richer. These two prose styles are, for Rost, a way of identifying two sources of distinct origin and purpose, and a way of showing the internal unity of each source.

Rost identifies other aspects of the narrative art (der hebraischen Erzählungskunst) of the author of the ark narrative. He distinguishes three purposes in the use of speech in the ark narrative. First, the speeches enliven (beleben) the story by occurring at turning points in the narrative. For example, the ark, which forms the central focus in the following narrative, is introduced by a speech in I Sam iv 3. Furthermore, what the Philistines do in response to the coming of the ark into the Israelite camp is described in part of a speech that is made by the Philistines in iv 6-9. Second, the speeches have been chosen by the author because they express moods. Rost says that the author uses the speech of the characters to express these moods because the author does not have the words for making subtle discriminations necessary in the portrayal of emotion. Due to these limitations the author only describes emotions in a general way: the Philistines are afraid (I Sam iv 7), David is afraid (II Sam vi 9) and the people of Beth-shemesh mourn (I Sam vi 19). The only compensation for this lack of ability to express emotions is that the speeches of the narra-

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

tive possess a vividness and immediacy.<sup>37</sup> The speeches are also used for a third reason. The Hebrew narrator either does not wish or is unable to depict either the external appearance of a person or his way of thinking and acting. The author is not able to depict the nature (Wesen) of a person. Rost admits that the appearance of certain individuals is described, such as Eli, who is said to be a heavy man, and whose eyes are dim (I Sam iv 15 and 18), but the descriptions are limited. To compensate for this limitation the author uses speeches to carry the story. Yet even these speeches do not reveal the purposes of the thought and action of a person. These three uses of speeches in the narrative confirm Rost's earlier comments about the simplicity and lack of artistic decoration in the depiction of the ark narrative.

Rost turns next to the mode of narration as a whole (Erzählungsweise als Ganzes). The author rarely depicts the situation, but
allows the listener to experience the actions (Handlungen). For
example, the Philistines and Israelites prepare for battle, the Israelites are beaten and 3,000 Israelites are killed. Only as much of the
situation as is necessary to the progress of the action is depicted.
The result, according to Rost, is a narrative that is full of motion
and life. The narrative rolls on; it is tireless and relentless like
a film. The separate elements merge together without breaks and
seams. Rost says that there is a certain restlessness in the narrative
that pushes the reader to the end. Although there is detail and

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17.

expansiveness, as in the account of the birth of Ichabod, the narrative moves quickly and without diversion. The retarding moments are reduced to a minimum.

Rost gives next an account of the structure of the narrative. The narrative begins with the battle between the Israelites and the Philistines. The climax occurs when the ark is lost, and at this point there are two stories, the story of the death of Eli and the story of the birth of Ichabod, which do not heighten the effect of the story, but show the effect of the loss of the ark on the people of Israel. The narrative then turns to its completion by telling of the return of the ark to Israel. The purpose of the narrative is to give an account of the fate of the ark from the time of its removal from Shiloh to the day of its return to Jerusalem. 38 Each of the parts of the narrative is necessary to this whole. The individual scenes are linked together by a common theme, and it is impossible to strike out any scene without loss to the whole. Rost says that the structure is too systematic (planmassig), too integrated and interwoven (aneinander- und ineinandergefügt) to have had deletions or additions. The narrative is unified.

Rost concludes his description of the ark narrative by an examination of the depiction of God in the narrative. God's presence is found in both his position above the ark itself, and in his direct intervention in parts of the story, as, for example, when Uzzah is struck dead (II Sam vi 7). God's presence brings judgement and des-

<sup>38 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 23.

truction; the Philistines are destroyed by the plague, the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh are smitten because they look in the ark and Uzzah is killed because he touches the ark. The human response to this severe judgement is awe and fear.<sup>39</sup> There are, however, occasions when God's presence brings joy: God allows the ark to be brought to Jerusalem. Thus God is depicted as one who brings both ill-fortune and salvation. Religious devotion (Frommigkeit) consists of fear and joy.

Rost establishes the unity of the ark narrative 1) by showing that the change of the names in the narrative is not sufficient reason for dividing the narrative into parts, 2) by arguing for a consistency of style in the narrative with characteristic vocabulary, simplicity of prose, the use of speeches, and brevity of depiction, 3) by pointing to the presence of a mode of narration and a deliberately planned structure which are used to unite the narrative with a common theme and 4) by noting the consistent depiction of God and religious devotion in the story. These various literary elements are, according to Rost, the style of the narrative.

Rost says that the form of the narrative is that of cult legend. The legend explained to visitors of the shrine in Jerusalem the significance of the ark. Rost substantiates his definition of form by saying that the names that occur in the ark narrative, Hophni, Phinehas, Eli, Eleazar ben Abinadab, Uzzah, Ahio and Obed-edom, are mentioned because they are guardians of the ark; the writer of the

<sup>39 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 30-34.

narrative is a priest, and pays special attention to those who attend the ark. David, Rost claims, is an exception. The narrative contains an element of historical veracity in that the historical conditions in the Philistine cities, the Israelite cities of Beth-shemesh and Kiriath-jearim, and David's actions in bringing the ark to Jerusalem, all seem to be probable. But the narrative is a legend, and functions as a legend in the cult in Jerusalem; it has some historical parts and some legendary parts.

In summary, Rost's procedure is to argue strenuously for the unity of one particular source, and by proving its unity, to exclude other parts of the books of I and II Samuel from the source. His chapter on the ark narrative does not argue that I Sam i 1-iii 21 or that II Samuel i-v are independent sources in the books of Samuel. The argument for internal unity is sufficient to rule out other connections. Rost, in fact, says very little about other chapters in the books of Samuel which are not part of the succession source or one of the subsidiary sources. The argument for the unity of the ark narrative requires the particular chapters of the ark narrative to be removed from their present location and placed together with each other. II Samuel i-vii cannot be read as a narrative sequence.

The source divisions that Rost makes as a result of the identification of the ark narrative have been fundamental to all further study of the books of Samuel. Although Gressmann, too, had posited the existence of an ark narrative, later chapters will show that the major source divisions that persist in the studies of Samuel derive from Rost's stylistic analysis. The ark narrative makes a major source

division in II Samuel between v 25 and vi 1, another division at the end of chapter vi and another narrative, called the succession narrative, begins, according to Rost, in vi 16, 20b-23. An examination of I Samuel i-vii, like any study of I and II Samuel, needs to take into account Rost's source divisions.

Another subsidiary source to the succession narrative, which is also part of the narrative under inquiry in this study, is II Samuel vii. Rost divides II Samuel vii into three parts, 1-7, 8-17 and 18-29. He begins his analysis with vii 18-29, the prayer of David. Rost argues that the phrase "uncovered the ear" (galita 'et-'ozen) is ancient style, and the sentence "I will build thee an house" in vii 27 must be from the time of the monarchy. He gives no reason for these assertions. He concludes, however, from this observation that there can be little doubt that David's prayer is early, probably from the time of the monarchy in Israel. Moreover, the prayer contains a motif of submission in vii 18. The motif is present in other biblical passages, Gen xxxiii 11, I Sam ix 21 and xviii 18. Rost links this motif to the time of the monarchy, and it is, therefore, a stylistic aspect of the narrative which is evidence that the passage is from the period of the monarchy. Vss 22-24, however, are not original due to stylistic considerations: in vss 18-21 the first person singular and the third person singular are alternatives: in vii 22 the number changes, without apparent reason, to the plural. The theology of vii 22-24 is similar to that found in Deut iv 34-35: the Lord is unique and the Lord is praised for his mighty act of bringing Israel out of Egypt. The verses focus on the nation, and God's redemption of a

people rather than on the king or his house. In vs 25 the narrative returns to the person of David and his house, and the third person singular replaces the first person plural. Rost concludes that the verses are an insertion made by a Deuteronomist. The prayer of David then contains both the theology of the monarchy, and the revised theology of the exile in the redaction of the Deuteronomist. 40 Rost identifies a structure in vss 18-29 of the source which is typical of prayer: the structure is proof of a prayer form. The structure contains an introduction (vss 18-21) which is a declaration of the unworthiness of the individual to receive the mercies of God, a transition (vs 25) which is the realisation of the promise of prosperity, and a conclusion (vss 28-29) which is a plea that the promise should be fulfilled. Rost argues that this prayer form is also found in Gen xxxiii 10-13 and I Kgs viii 23-53, both of which are from the time of the monarchy.

Rost concludes his analysis on II Sam vii 18-29 by noting the difference in the feeling of the prayer from that of the Dtr. insertion. Each section reflects the historical situation in which it arose. The insertion speaks directly about the nation, and exhibits therefore a religiously based national feeling (religios begründetes Nationalgefühl). The insertion is from the period of the exile, a time when the nation of Israel was in ruins. The religious feeling (Frömmigkeit) of the people in exile is an attempt to express their joy and confidence in God despite their circumstances. The feeling

<sup>40 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 36.

of David's prayer, expressed with humility, shows the great distance perceived between God and man at the time of the monarchy. The prayer, unlike the insertion, is individualistic, showing the individualism of the religious devotion of the monarchical period.

According to Rost's stylistic account of II Sam vii 18-29 the oldest sections of the prayer refer to a promise made to David alone that a dynasty would be established for him. The Dtr. insertion, made later, is the point at which the people of Israel are included in this promise made to David. The most ancient parts have nothing to do with building a temple.

In II Sam vii 8-17, Rost calls his different sources "strata" (Schichten). Rost's archaeological metaphor is worth pondering as the reader digs and sifts to sort out the complexity of his examination. He argues that there is an old stratum in 11b and 16, a later stratum in 8-11a,12,14,15 and 17 and finally an interpolation in 13. The oldest stratum is identified in 11b because 1) there is a sudden change from the first to third person, 2) there is no previous mention of a revelation from God, 3) vss 10-11a are speaking about Israel and not specifically about David and 4) vs 12 follows naturally from vs 10. The earliest stratum recalls a promise made to David that his dynasty would be established forever: it does not, however, make any promise of the perpetuation of David's seed nor of the building of a temple. Vs 16 is part of this old stratum because it harks back to David's house (bayit) or dynasty (mamlaktěkā), and does not refer to

David's seed. Vs 16 does not specify that one of David's descendants would reign.41

The second stratum is in vss 8-11a,12,14,15 and 17. These verses speak of the seed of David. The purpose of the verses is to show that God seeks to preserve the dynasty of David, though God does not seek to contribute to the further rise of David nor the people of Israel. The verbs in vss 8-10 up to and including wesant1 must then be rendered as perfects: the enemies of Israel have been routed, the Israelites have found their place. The question arises whether vs 10, which makes promises to Israel rather than simply to David, is an insertion. Rost claims that it is not, in part because no distinct stylistic variations can be detected and in part because divine favour extends to the people as well as David. He writes:

The enumeration of the favours shown by Yahweh towards David would be incomplete if there were no mention of the people, whose state of prosperity depends in ancient Hebrew thought upon the favourable attitude of Yahweh towards the royal household, and bears witness to, therefore, the divine favour towards David. 42

Even though it is the Dtr. redaction that introduces the significance of the people of Israel more fully into the chapter, there is a recognition of the importance of the people introduced in this strata.

The third stratum is vs 13. Prior to vs 13 the house was simply the house of David. But in vs 13 God says that he will build himself a house. Rost proposes that it is an insertion because there is nothing in the whole prophecy that refers to the building of the

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 44.

<sup>42 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 46.

temple, but rather the prophecy speaks only of the building of a dynasty for David. Vs 13 is an interpolation by the Deuteronomist. 43

The third section in chapter vii is composed of vss 1-7.

These seven verses are, in fact, two sources, 1-4a and 4b-7. The division into sources is based on 1) the obvious disagreement in the prophet Nathan's instruction to David between the two sections and 2) the use of "and it came to pass" (wayhi) in vs 4 at the beginning of the sentence which is not the mark of an adept author.

He argues that neither of these sources is a conclusion of the ark narrative. Rost admits that there is a direct reference to the ark in vs 2, but argues that the sources in vss 1-7 do not exhibit the laconic (kurzen), breathless style of the ark narrative, with its absence of infinitives, the limited use of hayah as an auxiliary verb and the lack of subordinate clauses. Vss 5-7, in contrast to the style of the ark narrative, have three infinitives. The absence of the style of the ark narrative is more important, for Rost, than the reference to the ark in vs 2. The purpose of vss 1-7, despite their distinct origin, is to reject David's request to build a temple.

According to Rost the promise of the building of a temple and the perpetuation of David's offspring are not part of the oldest strata in II Samuel vii. They are later insertions to alter the import of the chapter. The oldest stratum is a political promise made to David that his throne would be preserved.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

In summary, it must be remembered that the central purpose of Rost's work is to give an account of the style of the succession narrative. The contrast between the styles of the ark and the succession narrative is highlighted in the following quotation by Rost.

Coming from the simple, terse prose of the ark narrative, we are struck all the more by the individuality of our source. The sentences are longer, the expression is fuller, the description is richer, the language is more sonorous and richer in imagery. The rapid flow of the narrative is restrained. Each individual scene is neatly detached from those adjoining. Speeches, arguments, are no longer used merely occasionally to depict moods and character or to underline important turning points, but they have a purpose of their own. 44

On point after point where the ark narrative uses a certain type of style, the succession narrative uses a contrasting style. Where the ark narrative is terse, the succession narrative displays epic expansiveness and detailed touches (epische Breite und behagliche Kleinmalerei). Where the ark narrative moves quickly to its conclusion the succession narrative is leisurely and pleasurable.

In these aspects of style, Rost has identified the distinctiveness of the succession narrative. This distinctiveness shows that the narrative was written by a different author than the ark narrative, and for different purposes. Rost draws attention to the artistry of the succession narrative as opposed to the plain style of the ark narrative. The artistic nature of the succession narrative makes it difficult for him to decide whether the narrative is history or fiction. He concludes that the succession narrative is the presentation of real historical facts (wirkliche Geschichtstatsachen) in a

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

strongly stylized dress. Everywhere there is the impression of probability and realism (Wahrscheinlichkeit und Wirklichkeit). The form is historical narrative that rushes along with the excitement of a drama. Rost, in agreement with Wellhausen, maintains that the succession narrative is the best stretch of historical writing in the books of I and II Samuel.

Rost's sources form blocks in the books of Samuel; the sources are not continuous sources, such as J and E, running through the books of Genesis to II Kings. Except for minor textual insertions, individual sources include all the verses within the boundaries of the source. Rost's aim is to establish the internal unity of the individual sources; the relation of these sources to any larger work is not his concern. The success of Rost's study has led to the widespread abandonment of the attempt to find Pentateuchal sources in I and II Samuel.

The internal unity of the various sources is established by an examination of the style, structure, form and theme of each source. By style, Rost means the aspects of the writer's work that make his work individual. Rost says:

But style is and will remain a person's most individual creation - which is always being fashioned anew, creatively producing singularity and stubborn idiosyncracy, the more singular and stubbornly idiosyncratic the writer's own nature. 46

Individual writers use distinct vocabularies and phrases which distinguish them from one another. Style includes the manner of formation

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 104.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

of sentences, the vocabulary, the selection of forms and tenses, the techniques of depiction used by the author, such as the use of speeches, of graphic description, of metaphors, of the representation of character and the purpose of the structure of the narrative. The style is also however the literary representation of the events the author seeks to imitate. If, for example, the author writes in the expansive style of epic, as the author of the succession narrative does, the style seeks to slow us down, to retard our progress to the conclusion, and to cause us to enjoy each scene and each detail along the way. Any aspect of the author's style, however minute, which achieves this end will contribute to the overall effect of the work. Style is on one hand idiosyncratic mannerism and on the other hand creative depiction for the purpose of particular effects.

The criticism of Rost's stylistic account of II Samuel vi is reserved for Part II of this dissertation. However, in summarising his work it is necessary to keep several aspects in mind. First, in Rost's two distinct senses of the word style, he raises a central question: When is style the 'mannerism' of an author which can be used to identify sources, and when is style the creative technique of an author which can be used as the author chooses? Style in this second sense is vital to the meaning, but need not be the property of only one author; several authors may imitate this style because they seek to produce a similar effect. Even if Rost has identified two styles in the ark and succession narratives he has not proven two distinct authors. Second, as we have noted earlier, Rost's vocabulary list is not a reliable way of identifying an author or source. Third,

on certain aspects of style, Rost seems simply to be making valuable observations about the nature of Hebrew prose in general. Rost's examination of the co-ordination and subordination of Hebrew sentences, for example, does not adequately recognise that in comparison with other languages such as Greek or English, Hebrew uses co-ordination to a greater degree. Hebrew phrases are joined by either a simple waw or a waw-consecutive, and the phrases may continue to great lengths. The customs or conventions of the language cannot be attributed to the peculiar style of a source. Fourth, Rost's model of expansiveness derives from what he considers the style of the literary form of epic, as can be seen from his reference to the 'epic' expansiveness of the succession narrative. Rost's account of the laconic nature of the ark narrative is similar to the classical literary style of tragedy. Rost's standards of literary style are the result of his awareness of the high and low styles of classical poetry. Rost claims, for example, that the style of the ark narrative is a primitive or plain style which does not retard the progress of the action. The style of the succession narrative is a high, rhetorical style which retards the action constantly. $^{47}$  While there is nothing

<sup>47</sup> In a series of letters between Goethe and Schiller in April 1797, the two writers speak of the retarding element in Homeric poetry. They conclude that the retarding element is the law of epic poetry. Epic poetry tries to slow down the progress of the action, and all aspects of style will have this effect on the narrative. The epic poet uses an expansive style, replete with rhetorical figures, metaphors and sentences that use many types of subordination. They contrast the epic style to the tragic style. Tragic style has no retarding element and is not expansive and rhetorical. The purpose of the style is to encourage the progress of the action and to fill the reader with suspense (Spannung). Schmitz, trans., Correspondence between Schiller and Goether from 1794-1805, vol. I, pp. 313-314.

particularly out of place in attempting to discover classical poetic styles in biblical narrative, the parallel is further proof that these styles do not need to represent individual authors. The high and low styles of classical poetry are known to be two styles of one and the same author. He fifth, Rost's use of the terms 'structure' and 'action' are ways in which he attempts to show the unity of the sequence of actions in the narratives: by action he means those series of actions of the characters, placed one after the other, which provide a unified and complete effect. In Rost's identification of the effect of the sequence of action, what Wellhausen called the thread of the narrative, Rost is recognising a central aspect of the nature of narrative. We shall return to these five observations of Rost's writing in subsequent chapters.

## D: O. Eissfeldt

The two most important writings of Otto Eissfeldt on the books of Samuel are an article entitled "Noch einmal: Text- Stil- und Literarkritik in den Samuelisbuchern," published in 1928<sup>49</sup>, and a book entitled <u>Die Komposition der Samuelisbucher</u>, published in 1931.<sup>50</sup> We shall review these two writings in the order they were written.

See also Auerbach, Mimesis, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> Baxter, op. cit., pp. 75-76. Baxter shows how Shakespeare juxtaposes the high and low styles for particular effects.

<sup>49</sup> Otto Eissfeldt, "Noch einmal; Text- Stil- und Literarkritik in den Samuelisbüchern," OLZ, XXXI/10 (October, 1928), pp. 801-812.

<sup>50</sup> O. Eissfeldt, <u>Die Komposition der Samuelisbücher</u>, (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1931).

The substance of Eissfeldt's article is a criticism of Rost's book on the succession narrative; Eissfeldt's review was published two years after Rost's book was published. Eissfeldt makes two main criticisms of Rost. First, Eissfeldt criticises Rost for examining only parts of the narratives of I and II Samuel. Eissfeldt writes:

Zünachts geht er nicht vom Ganzen aus, sucht nicht die Frage zu beantworten, wie sich die heutige Gestalt unseres Samuelis-Buches erkläre, sondern er beschränkt seinen Blick von vornherein auf einen Teil, der ihm eine Einheit zu sein scheint, notabene aus sachlichen Gesichtspunkten, nicht etwa aus literarischen und stilistischen; denn die Frage nach dem Thema einer Schrift ist ein sachlicher Gesichtspunkt.<sup>51</sup>

Eissfeldt criticises Rost for limiting his viewpoint from the beginning to particular parts. Rost does not seek to determine the relation of these parts to the greater whole. Eissfeldt says the whole is a test (eine Gegenprobe) by which the ambiguity of the part is understood. He says:

Das Ergebnis der Untersuchung des Ganzen ist sozusagen die Gegenprobe auf das am Teil gewonnene Resultat, eine Gegenprobe, die bei der Vieldeutigkeit der Einzelerscheinungen nicht entbehrt werden kann. 52

Eissfeldt goes on to say that the examination of only the parts is dangerous. The whole, or rather the wholes, that Eissfeldt is pointing to are the continuous narrative threads (<u>durchlaufender Erzählungsfäden</u>), J and E, that run through the books of the Hexateuch and in different forms in Judges, Samuel and Kings.

Eissfeldt provides examples of the oversights of Rost's examination. Rost argues that I Sam iv 1-vii 1 form the first part of the

<sup>51</sup> Eissfeldt, "Noch einmal," p. 805.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., p. 806.

ark narrative. Eissfeldt questions why this part of the ark narrative can be severed from I Sam ii 17-36 in which a man of God tells Eli that his sons, Hophni and Phinehas, will die on the same day and this comes to pass in I Sam iv 11. Morover, Eissfeldt counters Rost's argument that the account of Michal's infertility, II Sam vi 16, 20b-23, is part of the succession narrative because these verses do not suit the literary form of the ark narrative. Eissfeldt suggests that the verses may be proof that the chapter is not part of a cultlegend. At another point Eissfeldt says that in II Kgs ii 32 David's injunction to Solomon to hold Joab responsible for Abner's death depends on the story in II Sam iii 6-39, the account of the murder of Abner. Eissfeldt provides more examples. He seeks to show that Rost's narrowness of vision in the examination of the parts makes it impossible for him to see other possibilities.<sup>53</sup>

Eissfeldt makes a second criticism of Rost. Rost claims that a narrative-work is unified on the basis of style, and that the borders of the narrative coincide with the boundaries of a particular style. Eissfeldt points out that an individual writer may use several styles. He quotes Eduard Norden in support:

Ein und derselbe Schriftsteller konnte nebeneinander in ganz verschiedenen Stilarten schreiben ... Der Stil war im Altertum nicht der Mensch selbst, sondern ein Gewand, das er nach Belieben wechseln konnte.<sup>54</sup>

Norden's metaphor of clothing is striking: an author may use different styles in the same way that we change clothes. A truly great author

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp. 803-805.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 807.

has variety and flexibility in his use of styles. Eissfeldt claims that different styles do not indicate different authors or different sources.

Eissfeldt's study of the books from Gen i 1 to II Kgs xxv 30 attempts to identify long, continuous narrative threads. Eissfeldt calls these "narrative-works" (Erzählungswerke). The work is, according to Eissfeldt, made out of small units, but finally forms a whole. Eissfeldt says that the narratives of the OT are not loose connections of sagas and tales, but are literature.

Die Erzählungsbücher des AT sind nicht eine lose Sammlung einzelner Sagen und Märchen, und sie sind ebensowenig ein Corpus offizieller Verträge, Berichte und Listen, sondern sie sind Literatur, bald mehr schöngeistiger, bald mehr gelehrter Art.<sup>55</sup>

The individual units are part of a larger whole.

Die Äusserungen des gelebten Lebens, volkstümliche Erzählungen hier und offizielle Dokumente dort, liegen des öfteren zugrunde und sind gelegentlich auch erkennbar, aber sie sind schriftstellerischen Planen oder besser religiös-theologishgeschichtsphilosophischen Konzeptionen dienstbar gemacht und wollen in erster Linie als Glieder solch eines grösseren Ganzen verstanden sein. 56

It is only when these wholes are understood that an adequate account of the parts can be appreciated. These wholes Eissfeldt does not call sources (Quellen) but narrative-works (Erzählungswerke). Source is used only of the smallest parts of these narrative-works. The narrative-works are continuous; they each possess a thread (Faden)

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 809.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

which shows the relation of the parts.<sup>57</sup> Rost and Eissfeldt, therefore, maintain two incompatible conceptions of sources. Rost seeks to establish the inner unity of smaller sources which have definite boundaries. Eissfeldt seeks to establish the continuity of long narrative-works which run from Genesis through II Kings. Their differences are accounted for by the different literary judgements that each makes about particular aspects of the style or styles of the passages in the books of Samuel. II Samuel i-vii is a prime example of a narrative in which these two views have come into conflict; it is necessary to give Eissfeldt's account of these chapters.

In <u>Die Komposition der Samuelisbücher</u> Eissfeldt begins by stating that the books of Samuel are not a literary unity. The parts, however, are made to form narrative complexes; Eissfeldt seeks to trace these complexes throughout the books of Samuel. He does not call these complexes L, J and E, as he did with the book of Judges, but limits himself to calling them I, II and III. He says that he is not, in this investigation of I and II Samuel, going to determine whether these works are continuations of Hexateuchal sources.<sup>58</sup>

II Sam i 1-27 is a compilation of two narratives. The most important reason that Eissfeldt gives for the division of the chapter into sources is that Saul, and not Jonathan, is mentioned in vss 6-10 and 13-16. In vss 4,11,12 and 17-25, both Saul and Jonathan are mentioned. There seems to be, then, one narrative that speaks exclu-

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., pp. 809-810.

<sup>58</sup> Eissfeldt, Die Komposition der Samuelisbücher, p. 4, n. 1.

sively about the death of Saul, and another narrative that includes Jonathan in the story. Eissfeldt includes vs 5 in the narrative exclusively about Saul because, although Jonathan is mentioned, his name appears as an insertion in the verse. The first narrative, vss 5-10 and 13-16, does not contain David's lamentation of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan; David speaks to the Amalekite, and the Amalekite is killed. In the second narrative, vss 4,11,12 and 17-25, David breaks into a lamentation which lasts until evening (vs 12). This lamentation interrupts vss 13-16 which tell of David's execution of the Amalekite. This variation of the story substantiates Eissfeldt's argument that there are two narratives in this chapter. Eissfeldt adds, although he admits that this evidence is not strong, that the two dates listed at the beginning of the chapter show that there are two narratives present from the beginning. Vs 1 begins, "And it came to pass after the death of Saul", and vs 2 begins, "And it came to pass on the third day". These alternate dates are additions to both narratives to bind the two strands together.59

Eissfeldt argues that the second narrative, vss 4,11,12 and 17-25, is a continuation of II. He establishes this continuity because the second narrative in II Samuel i emphasises the friendship of David and Jonathan. This links the narrative with those chapters in I Samuel, specifically xviii 1-4 and xx 1-42, which Eissfeldt has already argued belong to II. The first narrative, in which reference to Jonathan is omitted, is a continuation of I. I Samuel xxxi is also

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> <u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 22-23.

from I, and, like strand I in II Samuel i, has limited references to Jonathan and the sons of Saul (although the sons are mentioned in I Sam xxxi 2).

Eissfeldt also argues that the scene in II probably took place in Hebron, while what happens in I took place in Ziklag. The section of poetry, vss 17-25, looks back from Judah to the cities of the Philistines, and declares that the deaths of Saul and his sons are not to be celebrated there (vs 20). Strand I is from Ziklag, and continues from the strand in I Sam xxvii 1-xxxi 13. Eissfeldt intends the narrative accounts to depict two distinct events at two different locations.

There is an incompatibility in narrative I between I Samuel xxxi and II Sam i 5-10 and 13-16: the Amalekite's account of Saul's death is not identical to the account given in I Samuel xxxi. Such incompatibility between the two parts could be used as a firm argument for the establishment of two sources in these chapters in Samuel, as is done by Wellhausen and Gressmann, for example, but Eissfeldt does not use the observation in this way. II Sam i 5-10, part of narrative I, relate the Amalekite's story; they belong to the same narrative strand as I Samuel xxxi. He argues that the Amalekite does not give a completely false story, but an intentionally incomplete message (absichtlich unvollständige Botschaft), as is similarly done, according to Eissfeldt, in II Sam xviii 28-29. The apparent incompatibility of the parts of narrative I in the two chapters is thus resolved by concluding that the true account is given in I Samuel xxxi, and the

Amalekite's account is a misrepresentation in order to gain a reward for himself.60

II Sam ii 1-7, according to Eissfeldt, belong together. This pericope is from narrative I because it presupposes what has happened in I Sam xxvii 1 to the end of narrative I in II Samuel i: the oracular questioning, the reply to the people of Jabesh-gilead in II Sam ii 4b-7 and the same tendencies of expression show the continuity between narrative I and this pericope. Moreover, II Sam ii 1-7 speaks only of Saul, and not of Saul and Jonathan. These differences also suggest that II Sam ii 1-7 is from I.

Eissfeldt argues that II Sam ii 8-viii 18, with the exception of iv 4 and all of chapter vii, form a continuous narrative, and are all part of the same source, source II. The first and central reason for the unity of this narrative is that the chapters form a meaningful succession of events (eine sinnvolle Folge von Ereignissen). In contrast to II Sam ii 8-viii 18, in I Sam viii-xv, xvi-xx and xxi-xxx Eissfeldt claims that the reader misses the continual uniform progression of the action ("ein stetig gleichmässiges Fortschreiten der Handlung, u. d. h. einen verständlichen und sinnvollen Aufbau der Erzählung").61 Several motifs occur two or three times: the condemnation of the request for a king, viii 1-22, x 17-21, beside the process of selection of a king, ix 1-x 16 and x 22-27, Saul's military pursuits, xi 1-13 and xxiii 14-15, alongside David's respect

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-24.

<sup>61 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 25.

toward Saul, xxiv 1-22 and xxvi 1-25. These distinct motifs alongside one another could only be the result of two parallel narratives that have been edited to form one narrative. Moreover, xvii 1-58 is a prime example of the existence of those two narratives in one chapter, with many stylistic characteristics to prove the existence of the two narratives. The narrative in I Samuel, therefore, does not depict the same meaningful succession of events as is evident in II Sam ii 8-viii 18.

II Sam ii 8-viii 18 form a continuous narrative sequence. However, Eissfeldt argues that there are a number of difficulties that need to be solved in this narrative, even apart from iv 4 and vii 1-29. He suggests that these difficulties show that there have been secondary insertions (sekundarer Zusatz), although these insertions are not from a parallel narrative.

In ii 8-iii 1, ii 10-11 are chronological verses stating the length of Ishbaal's rule and David's rule in Hebron; the verses are an insertion. Eissfeldt says the other arguments to divide the narrative into sources are unnecessary. ii 17a, although a general statement, cannot be used as an alternate account of the battle that is provided in ii 11 and 14-16. And ii 28b, although another general statement, is a continuation of what precedes it rather than an alternate account. Nor can the change in the naming of the followers of Ishbaal and Abner from 'Israel' in ii 9,17 and 28 to 'Benjamin' in ii 9,15,25 and 31 be the basis for determining sources. The narrator simply uses a comprehensive term in one place and a narrow term in

another. With the exception of ii 10-11, the narrative is part of one source, and is a continuous sequence.<sup>62</sup>

Eissfeldt also argues that, despite the difference in style between II Sam iii 2-5, and what precede or follow them, the verses stand in a suitable place. David lived in Hebron for seven years and six months (ii 11 and v 5). iii 1 and 6 suggest a duration of time between what happens in ii 8-32 and in iii 6-39. It is probable, then, that the birth of David's children in Hebron, as stated in ii 2-5, took place during the war between the house of David and the house of Saul, as the sequence of the narrative suggests.

In II Sam iii 6-39 Eissfeldt admits that there are several secondary insertions, but again he insists that these insertions are not from a parallel narrative. Eissfeldt says that 'el-'ehayw we'el-mere'ehû, in iii 8, is an insertion: it is plausible for Abner to speak of Ishbaal's father, but not Saul's brethren and friends. Eissfeldt claims that iii 13b is an insertion because the phrase would be redundant. iii 14-16 have also been considered a piece from another narrative because 1) David replies to Ishbaal this time instead of Abner who made the request in vs 12 and 2) Michal is said to have travelled only as far as Bahurim rather than all the way to Hebron. Eissfeldt accounts for these two problems in iii 14-16 by saying that there is a variety of representation (farbigen Darstellung) in the

<sup>62 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 26.

narrative rather than an insertion. 63 The narrative, for the most part, remains intact.

Eissfeldt answers briefly other reasons for dividing the narrative into sources. The change between Israel (iii 12,17,19 and 21) and Benjamin (iii 19) is not a sufficient reason for establishing the existence of sources, even as it was insufficient in ii 8-iii 1. Despite the repetitions of events in vss 19 and 20 and the events in vss 22 and 23, the verses are necessary for the narrative. The repetition of "and he went in peace" four times in vss 21-24 (including the last phrase in vs 24). Eissfeldt says, underlines the significance of the peaceful relations between David and Abner. The final phrase in vs 25 is indeed an insertion because it is repetitive, but it is not from a parallel narrative. "For the blood of Asahel his brother" (vs 27) is an insertion because it is unnecessary. Vs 30, too, is an addition because it repeats what has been said already. Vss 38 and 39 appear as an addition because vs 37 seems to be a conclusion, and 38 and 39 simply repeat, with Abishai included, David's curse, stated earlier in vs 29. But Eissfeldt judges that vss 38-39 are simply an excess (ein Nimium) of expression. Except for the short insertions the narrative is unified.

Eissfeldt makes certain alterations to II Sam iv 1-12, but argues on the whole that the additions are not from a parallel narrative. The reference to the family of Baanah and Rechab in iv 2b and 3 are glosses. Vs 4 is clearly an insertion. The two accounts of

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

the death of Ishbaal in vss 6-7 are resolved by resort to the LXX. In place of vs 6 in the MT, the LXX has "And, behold, the keeper of the house was cleaning wheat, and nodded off and fell to sleep, and Rechab and Baanah the brothers escaped notice." The Greek removes the repetition.

II Sam v 1-25 is a controversial chapter; Wellhausen, Gressmann and Rost divide it into various pericopes. Eissfeldt, in contrast, argues that it is a unity. He notes two insertions; vs 3a is an unnecessary statement following what has been stated in v 1a, and vss 4 and 5 are secondary chronological insertions.

A fundamental problem of II Sam v 1-25 is the use of the verb yarad, "to go down", in v 17: if David were in the hold, that is, the city of Jerusalem, then why does he "go down" into the hold in vs 17? Eissfeldt answers this argument by showing that the parallel passage in I Chr xiv 8 uses the verb yasa? instead of the verb yarad. yasa? means simply "to go out", but does not suggest "to go down". In I Chr xiv 8, then, there is no confusion as to what the hold is; it is Jerusalem. The Greek verb used in the LXX of I Chr xiv 8 is exelthen meaning simply "to go out", and, therefore, the LXX confirms the use of yasa.

Eissfeldt also notes that the word yarad is not always used in the sense of "to go down". yarad is used in Judg xv 8, where the KJV translates: "and he went down (yarad) and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam." The verb cannot in this passage indicate direction. The verb is also used in Judg xi 37 where the KJV translates we'eleka weyaradtî 'al-heharîm as "that I may go up and down upon the moun-

tains". Eissfeldt claims that the verb <u>zurückziehen sich</u>, "to go out", would be as suitable as <u>herabsteigen</u>, "to go down". The range of usage of the verb <u>yarad</u> is more flexible than is usually thought, and this accounts for the confusion in its use in II Sam v 17.64

It is certain, according to Eissfeldt, that the hold is Jerusalem, as is indicated in II Sam v 7 and 9. The hold cannot be the cave of Adullam from II Sam xxiii 13 even if the naming of the valley of Rephaim may suggest that the battle was the one that is depicted in II Sam v 17-27. The actual place of the hold of Adullam is unknown. In vss 7 and 9 the hold is the city of David, and there is no reason to say that the hold in vs 17 is another place.

Eissfeldt goes on to say that there is a proper arrangement of the actions in II Sam v 1-25. There is the anointing of David (vss 1-3), the capture of Jerusalem (vss 6-8), the fortification of Jerusalem (vs 9), the help from Hiram (vs 11) followed by the attack of the Philistines (vss 17-25). David's anointing, in itself, only potentially causes problems for the Philistines, but the capture and fortification of Jerusalem is a real threat. Moreover, vss 10 and 12, which appear to be concluding statements, are truly antecedents (Vordersatz) to what follows.65

II Sam vi 1-23 is a continuation of the narrative from v 25; the bringing of the ark to Jerusalem presupposes that Jerusalem is the city of David, and that there is sufficient military security

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., pp. 28-31.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., pp. 29-30.

from the Philistines to bring the ark there. II Sam vi is unified, although there are doublets, vss 3 and 4, and 12 and 15, and there is an alteration between "the ark of God" and "the ark of the Lord". Eissfeldt suggests that these variations can be solved by textual emendation rather than by postulation of a parallel narrative.

According to Eissfeldt II Samuel vii does not follow from vi for two reasons. First, vii 1 and 11, which state that David had rest from his enemies, could not come before viii because it is only as David wars against his enemies that he conquers them and has rest. Second, David's piety (Frommigkeit) is different in the two chapters: in vi his piety is cultic, in vii it is spiritual. Third, Eissfeldt allocates vii to his narrative strand III. That vii belongs to III is suggested by a comparison of II Sam vii 6 with I Sam viii 8 and xii 6, II Sam vii 7 and 11 with I Sam xii 11. II Sam vii 18 with I Sam vii 6, all of which belong to III. II Sam viii forms the fitting continuation of II Sam vi 23. II Samuel viii provides an account of David's victory in war with other nations, and a small summary in vs 15 of the manner of his reign in Israel. viii 18 ends the history of David in II Samuel which began in II Sam ii 8. Eissfeldt notes that the literary procedure of this narrative is to have a lengthy account of the rise of the king to power, and a short account of his reign and end. The rise of David in ii 8, the anointing over Israel as well as Judah, the capture of Jerusalem and the victory over enemies is provided, with only a brief statement in vs 15 about the rule itself. This procedure, Eissfeldt says, is also used in the narratives of Gideon, Jephthah and Saul, and is the sign of a popular view of

history (volkstümlicher Geschichtsbetrachtung): the procedure entails a dramatic rise of a man who struggles against immense opposition.

This historical observation is what fascinates the folk spirit. 66

In summary, Eissfeldt's study of the books of I and II Samuel is an attempt to sort out what amounts to three narratives running through the two books. He is constantly looking for patterns of repetition and duplication which suggest that two originally distinct narratives have been molded together to form the unified narrative that we have. Repetition occurs because the two narratives tell the same story, although with variations. The parallel accounts are often contradictory, and the contradictions are a key to the discovery of the sources. The sources themselves are narrative works: they are long continuous accounts of the history of Israel. Actions occur in a sequence in these narratives and are not vastly different from the account in the finished text.

Even though Eissfeldt seeks to distinguish these narrative works in II Samuel i-vii, he argues that ii 8 through viii 18, excluding iv 4 and vii 1-29, are substantially a unity. He does not, therefore, accept Rost's delineation of the ark narrative, and instead argues that II Samuel vi follows directly and necessarily from v 25 and is followed by viii. Moreover, v is unified in the order it is, and vii is a unified whole, though not part of the same narrative. Eissfeldt offers a number of challenging criticisms to Rost. Most of the major source division postulated by Rost are opposed by Eissfeldt.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

Eissfeldt's inquiry throughout has been, like the three writers we have reviewed already, to move from style to judgements about the narrative's unity and historicity. He stresses the textual nature of his arguments. He separates sources in II Sam i 1-27, but not, as Wellhausen does, on the basis that one source is more historical than the other.<sup>67</sup> In the discussion of v 1-25 he says that his concern is not with proving the historical probability of the events, but whether there is any reason to suppose that the chapter is or is not a literary unity.<sup>68</sup> Eissfeldt does not use the historicity or lack thereof of a passage to determine whether it belongs to a particular source: in other words, the literary form of the passage, history or saga, is not a reason for source division, as it has been in Wellhausen, Gressmann and Rost. Eissfeldt says very little about the definition of form.

## Summary to Chapter One

There is one central point of agreement between these four writers. Each writer seeks to provide an account of the style of the narrative. Their arguments move from the literary characteristics of the narrative to conclusions regarding the delineation of sources, the historicity or legendary nature of the text and the purpose of the story. Their arguments are not based, essentially, upon a reconstruction of an historical situation external to the literary docu-

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., pp. 22-24.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

ments. No argument is derived from archaeology. The arguments are based upon the study of particular literary characteristics.

The four authors differ on what constitute the essential aspects of style in each chapter which reveal what material is primary and what material is secondary and therefore what aspects of style are more significant than others for sensing the force of the passage. Occasionally certain problems persist, as in the possible contradiction in the account of Saul's death given in I Samuel xxxi and II Samuel i, but there is no unanimity with regard to what aspects of style are essential to the task of identifying different authors or sources and of reading the chapters adequately. Nor is there agreement on how style should be explained. Rost, for example, criticises Budde for not perceiving that aspects of style are rhetorical elements that are used intentionally for particular effects in a part of the story and are not evidence of insertions. Rost's judgements at this point seem correct, yet later he will go on to use style to distinguish authors and sources as well. Eissfeldt's criticism that Rost does not account for the possibility that two styles may be used by one author is a serious criticism of Rost's work and his delineation of sources. Furthermore, if Rost has identified different styles, one in II Samuel vi and others in II Samuel i-v and vii, it is necessary to ask whether the styles are used in different passages for particular effects.

Although each writer concludes that there are sources and insertions in II Samuel i-vii, they also seek to establish, and have ways of determining, the unity of a narrative. The ways of pointing to these unities tell us much about what they expect a narrative to

be. Their principles are often instructive. Wellhausen seeks to chart out the thread of the story and to determine when this thread is interrupted. He makes a judicious distinction between the thread of the narrative and the "artificial frame" of the Dtr. editor; the thread, according to Wellhausen, is more central to the stories than the artificial frame. Although Gressmann allows too much to hinge on his identification of the form as either saga or history, he, too, recognises that sagas and histories have a progression of action (Handlung). Rost uses the notion of the sequence of actions (Handlungen) or plot as a way of showing how narratives are unified. Eissfeldt's attempt to show continuous narratives in the books of Samuel leads him to see connections in the story over larger stretches of text than Rost's independent sources placed end to end allows. Each writer is aware of the significance of a sequence of actions in the chapters which are depicted for some purpose. Although they often, especially in the case of Rost in II Samuel i-vii, disrupt the sequence of actions that are given in the text, they all seem to recognise at some point that narrative is a story, it is a depiction of action. Several fundamental questions emerge. Can the story be told in a different way and the effect remain the same? When is style best understood as gloss or insertion from a different source and when is it purposeful rhetorical usage by the author for a desired effect? Can we tell the difference? What effects are produced by the various aspects of Hebrew style in II Samuel i-vii?

One of the central concerns of these writers in regard to II

Samuel i-vii is to elucidate the stylistic depiction of historical

narrative. Although these writers discovered several forms in the chapters, legends, prayers, chronological insertions and histories, the most important for the study of the chapters is the understanding of historical form. Wellhausen argues, for example, that history shows profane human motives at work in events. Therefore, the court history of David which depicts David amidst his mistakes is more historical than a source of the history of David's rise which depicts, according to Wellhausen, an heroic David. Moreover, historical narrative is freer of divine intervention than other literary forms, and this too makes the succession narrative more historical than the history of David's rise. What is the stylistic depiction appropriate to historical writing? Why is it more historical to depict a character's faults than his virtues? Are the interventions of God and miracles the products of the vivid imaginations of pre-scientific accounts of life?

Finally, the separation of II Samuel vii from the chapters which precede it in the writings of Gressmann, Rost and Eissfeldt causes an insufficient inquiry into the purpose of the narrative sequence in II Samuel i-vii. The promises made to David in II Samuel vii appear to be made independently of David's actions prior to this chapter. And even Wellhausen who recognises a continuity between the majority of the stories in II Samuel i-vi and II Samuel vii does not draw out the implications of the sequence of actions for the understanding of II Samuel vii. The concern of these four writers to identify details of style which can be used to isolate sources appears to have led away from a pondering of the full force of the sequence.

## Chapter Two

In the early 1940s a shift in emphasis took place in the type of research that was done on I and II Samuel. This shift was inaugurated in 1943 by M. Noth in a study entitled Uberlieferungsgeschicht-liche Studien. Subsequent study of Deuteronomy through II Kings has been strongly shaped by the directions of Noth's study.

Noth argues that the various sources in Deuteronomy through II Kings were brought together by an author during the time of the exile in order to explain why God has caused Israel to be taken into exile. The final editing of the Dtr. history took place not long after the final event depicted in II Kgs xxv 27-30, the decree by Evil-merodach that Jehoiachin, the king of Judah, was to be freed from prison in 562 B.C. Since II Kgs xxv 27-30 accounts for the beginning of the end of the exile, Noth says that it mitigates but does not overturn the story that the Deuteronomist had to tell of the end of the Judaean and Israelite kings. The Dtr. history is a combination of early independent sources which were combined to make a compre-

<sup>1</sup> Martin Noth, Überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien, (3rd ed; Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1967). Chapter 1 of this work, entitled "Das deuteronomishtische Werk (Dtr.)" is the most important part of the study for our purposes. This first chapter was translated into English in 1981. Martin Noth, The Deuteronomistic History, trans. Jane Doull, John Barton, Michael D. Rutter, D.R. Ap-Thomas and D.J.A. Clines, (Sheffield: JSOT, 1981). In this study, when the Deuteronomistic history is referred to as a whole, the abbreviation 'Dtr.' is used for the adjective. The author of the history, whether an individual or a group, is referred to by the term 'Deuteronomist'.

hensive story of the history of Israel from Moses' charge to Israel on the east side of the Jordan river to the end of II Kgs xxv 30. Subsequent studies of these books have proceeded in two directions, either 1) in the study of the independent sources, their style, form, purpose and original setting or 2) in the study of the finished product of the Dtr. history as a whole, its distinctive style, the ways in which the Deuteronomist linked disparate sources or the purposes and setting of the Dtr. history. Chapter two of this inquiry concentrates on those studies which seek to enucleate the purposes of the Dtr. history as a whole. The purpose of the Dtr. history has especial significance for II Samuel i-vii because II Samuel vii contains the promise made to David that his descendants, that is, the Judaean kings, would reign over Israel forever. The main lines of inquiry regarding the Dtr. history, as we shall see in this chapter, focus on whether the covenant made with Israel is a conditional or unconditional covenant. Does the Dtr. history depict the history of God's promises to his people despite their rebellion or does it depict the consequences of Israel's disobedience to the covenant or is there some combination of these two alternatives? In particular, are the promises of an eternal kingdom made to David and his descendants to be brought about because of their obedience?

## A: Martin Noth

M. Noth wrote three studies relating to II Samuel i-vii, The Deuteronomistic History (1943), an essay entitled "David und Israel

in II Samuel, 7"(1955)<sup>2</sup> and <u>The History of Israel</u>(1958).<sup>3</sup> These studies are reviewed in the order in which they were published.

Noth's <u>The Deuteronomistic History</u> is divided into three sections dealing with 1) the structure of the Dtr. work, 2) the structure of the parts, and 3) the character of the history as a whole.

Noth's first task is to show that the Dtr. history is unified (section A). He does this by calling attention to previous work that has been done on establishing the Deuteronomist's style. Noth writes:

The language of Dtr. is very straightforward and dispenses with any particular artistry or refinement; it is the simplest Hebrew in the Old Testament. The limited variety of expression has led to frequent repetition of the same simple phrases and sentence constructions, in which the "Deuteronomistic" style is easily recognised. 4

Noth says that the characteristics of this style have been well delineated by others; he does not, however, have a reference, either in the text or in a footnote, to someone whom he recommends at this point. Noth's account of the simple style of the Deuteronomist is similar to Rost's account of the style of the ark narrative, and suggests that Rost's observations may extend to other parts of the biblical text than Rost originally proposed. Noth stresses that the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> M. Noth, "David und Israel in II Samuel, 7," Mélanges Bibliques: Rédigés en L'Honneur de André Robert, (Bloud & Gay, 1955), pp. 121-130. An English translation is found in M. Noth, The Laws in the Pentateuch and other studies, trans. D.R. Ap-Thomas (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1966), pp. 250-259.

<sup>3</sup> M. Noth, The History of Israel, (2nd ed: New York: Harper and Row, 1960).

<sup>4</sup> Noth, The Deuteronomistic History, p. 5.

Deuteronomist's style is uniform in contrast to the variety of styles present in the sources of the Dtr. history. Noth proceeds to point out that the Dtr. history is characterized by the insertion of general retrospective and anticipatory reflections (<u>Rückblick und Vorausschau allgemeinere Betrachtungen</u>) made by important people at a crucial point in time. These reflections consist in Joshua's speeches to the people in Josh i 10-15 and xxiii, Samuel's warnings to the people in I Samuel xii, and Solomon's prayer to God in the dedication of the temple in I Kgs viii 14-61. The speeches give a simple and unified theological interpretation of history. Noth writes:

Here we merely draw attention to the recurring emphasis on obeying the "voice" of God, which manifests itself by making specific demands on human conduct.<sup>6</sup>

According to Noth the Deuteronomist gives a reading of Israel's history which involves her obedience to the stipulations of God; it is necessary for Israel to be obedient in order for the covenant to be continued. Thus, the covenant is 'conditional'. Although, according to Noth, the 'commands' which may be present at various points of the history are not identical with the full legal code in Deut iv 44-xxx 20, there are nevertheless "specific demands on human conduct", and these commands constitute a 'legal' reading of the history. These speeches, and the theology of history they present, are the primary indication of the unity of the Dtr. history.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>6 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 6.

Noth shows initially how the Deuteronomist achieved this legal sense of Israel's history by the way the book of Deuteronomy has been put together. He argues that Deut iv 44-xxx 20 constitute the legal section of the book and were originally independent from the rest of the book. The Dtr. author took the other sections of Deuteronomy, Deut i 1-iv 437 and xxxi 1-xxxiv 12, and placed them at the beginning and end of the legal section in order to show the narrative structure into which the law fit. The Dtr. author, thus, took the law and placed it at the beginning of his long narrative work; the effect of this procedure was to foster the legal reading of history that he sought in the books from Joshua through II Kings.8

Noth concludes the overview of his book by showing that continuity in the Dtr. history is achieved through chronology. The Deuteronomist summed up the chronology of the pre-monarchic and monarchic periods in I Kgs vi 1; this verse marks the beginning of the building of the temple by Solomon. The temple began to be built in the 480th year after God brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. It is of interest to II Samuel i-vii that for each of the monarchs the Deuteronomist gives a formulaic introduction (Ein-

<sup>7</sup> Noth is equivocal whether Deut iv 1-43 belongs to the Dtr. narrative framework of Deuteronomy or is part of the legal code. See ibid., pp. 13-14. The problem with the chapter as a part of the framework is that it speaks explicitly throughout of law. In vss 14-40 in particular the prohibition is against idolatry. In a reference to Deuteronomy iv in a later section of the book Noth says: "According to Dtr. the moral decline reaches a sort of climax in the people's demand for a human king (1 Sam. 8:4ff.)" Ibid., p. 80. Although the monarchy is the pinnacle of the apostacy, the moral decline is evident in other ways as well.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 12-17.

führungsformel), Saul in I Sam xiii 1, Eshbaal and David in II Sam ii 10a-11 and David in II Sam v 4-5. Noth does not claim that the chronological references of the Deuteronomist make a completely accurate chronology, but they simply show that the Deuteronomist is interested in a schematic chronological development. The chronological scheme is proof of the unity of the Dtr. history.

Section B of Noth's writing on the Dtr. history is an inquiry into the structure of the parts. Noth's chapter eight accounts for the composition of the narratives of Saul, David and Solomon. The Deuteronomist took the old tradition on Saul (I Sam ix-xvi 13, excluding xii), the story of the rise of David (I Sam xvi 14-II Sam v 25) and the story of the succession to David's throne (II Samuel vii, ix-xx and II Kings i-ii, to which Noth added the ark narrative, I Sam iv-vii 1 and II Sam vi 1-16 and 18-19, as a subsidiary source, following Rost) and fit them together to make the narrative. I Samuel ix-xi is a combination of elements from an old Saul source and Dtr. elements, and is especially significant for the Deuteronomist because of its condemnation of the monarchy. The request for a king is considered the primary example of the apostasy of the people; the desire for a king was the paramount rejection of God and led to the destruction of the nation. Noth writes:

Dtr. thought that the rise of the monarchy was of fundamental importance; with hindsight afforded by the situation in his time, he inevitably concluded that the monarchy had led the

<sup>9 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 18-25. For a summary of Noth's account of the chronology in table form see J. Gray, <u>Joshua</u>, <u>Judges</u>, <u>Ruth</u>, The New Century Bible Commentary, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 4-5.

Israelite nation to destruction - a theme that he developed in his treatment of the details of the history. 10

The story of Saul fits well into this theological schema because the story depicts the foolish consequences of wanting a king.

In the identification of the major boundaries for the sources in I and II Samuel, Noth shows his dependence upon Rost's work on the ark and succession narratives. Noth says that one of the important sources for the period of Samuel is the ark narrative. Moreover, when Noth marks the end of the story of David's rise, it is II Sam v 25, the final scene preceding the ark narrative. Noth, therefore, agrees with Rost that the ark narrative is unified, that the history of David's rise ends with it and that the narrative of the succession to the throne of David begins where the subsidiary source of the ark narrative ends (II Sam vii 1).11

The Deuteronomist made several changes to the text of II Samuel i-vii. The formulaic introductions of Eshbaal and David were added, as we have noted, by the Deuteronomist. In II Sam ii 10a-11 there is an introduction for Eshbaal, and a provisional introduction for David. The complete introduction for David is not given until II Sam v 4-5, when the unification of Israel and Judah is finally complete. The Deuteronomist also changed the proper sequence of events in II

<sup>10</sup> Noth, The Deuteronomistic History, p. 47.

<sup>11</sup> For an indication of Noth's acceptance of Rost's division of I and II Samuel, see Noth's comments on the purpose of the ark narrative in <u>ibid.</u>, p. 47 and in the designation of the sources of I and II Samuel on p. 54. See also p. 124, notes 1,2 and 3. If we compare the sources that Noth accepts in I and II Samuel with what we found in Wellhausen, Gressmann and Eissfeldt in chapter 1, the reliance of Noth on Rost's sources is even more evident.

Samuel v; Noth claims that v 17-25 belong after v 1-3 because vs 17 follows directly from vs 3. The central question is whether the two battles with the Philistines at Rephaim took place before or after David's conquest of Jerusalem, the building of the fortress at Jerusalem and the building of a house for David by Hiram of Tyre. Noth agrees with Wellhausen's and Rost's suggestion that a rearrangement of the order of events in chapter v would be more historical and Noth simply adds that it was the Deuteronomist who ordered the chapter as it is now. Noth follows Rost's analysis of II Samuel vii; an original stock, vss 1-7, 11b, 16, 18, 21, 25-29 was added to by, first, vss 8-11aand 13b-15 and 17 and, second, by the Deuteronomist with vss 13a and 22-24. The Deuteronomist inserted 13a in order to make the prohibition against building a temple apply to a particular time rather than as a matter of principle. The Deuteronomist added vss 22-24 in order to limit the promise concerning the institution of the monarchy to the time in the past rather than extend it into the future. After the exile of Israel, there could not be any hope for a monarchy in the future. 12 Noth, however, revises some of his comments on chapter vii in a later article.

Section C of Noth's book is a summary of the central historical and theological tasks of the Deuteronomist. The Deuteronomist was an historian. Noth says: "He wished to present it [the history of the Israelite people] objectively and base it upon the material to which

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

he had access." 13 The Deuteronomist, therefore, took all the various sources at his disposal and unified them in one composition. The purpose of the composition is explained in light of the circumstances under which he and Israel were at the time of exile. The Deuteronomist wrote in order to give a theological interpretation of the history of the nation; he had to explain to an exiled people why their nation had been destroyed. The Deuteronomist thought that Israel had a unique position in the ancient world by being given the law.

Noth reaffirms that the keeping of the law was the essential obligation (Verpflichtung) of the covenant. He writes:

He [the Deuteronomist] did find the extremely unusual concept of a "chosen people" in the Deuteronomic law (Deut. 14.2) and its framework (Deut. 7:6), but does not himself use it to characterise the position of the people of Israel. However it seems that, following tradition, he liked to describe the relationship between God and people as "covenant"; here he did not have in mind the act of making a covenant in its original sense but rather the permanent regulation, as defined in the law, of the relationship between God and people. 14

Noth stresses the centrality of law to the covenant rather than that Israel is 'chosen' or elected by God. Israel had an obligation because of the covenant to obey the law of God. Israel's election did not guarantee that God would overlook disobedience to the law.

Israel's disobedience was manifest pre-eminently in her desire for a king. The Deuteronomist pictured the monarchy as the height of Israel's disobedience, and he sought to show in the stories of the kings of Israel that the monarchy was indeed the cause of Israel's

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 84.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 90.

rejection, notwithstanding the seemingly positive assessment of the monarchy in the Deut xvii 14-20.15

What is left indefinite in Noth's study is the relation of the older sources to the Dtr. redaction. The sources do not present a univocal picture of monarchy. The Saul traditions could be used to show that the first king was a failure; Israel reaped the consequences of her desire for a king. But can the same be said of David? According to the Deuteronomist, the Davidic monarchy could not have been a success either, yet there is constant reference in II Kings to David as the model king. In von Rad's essay on "The Deuteronomic Theology of History in I and II Kings" 16, von Rad cites eighteen references in I and II Kings in which it is said that David walked in the statutes and ordinances of God. Of these eighteen references Noth does not speak directly about any. The only reference he mentions is I Kgs iii 3, but his point is to show that although Solomon is praised in vs 3a, in vs 3b this assessment is modified. 17 David, too, is praised in this passage, but Noth makes no reference to him. Noth's negative valuation of the monarchy as a whole makes it impossible for him to

<sup>15 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 88. Noth's comments on Deut xvii 14-20 (p. 82) cannot be justified. Noth claims that the law in Deut xvii 14-20 says that the king is under the restriction of law, but the law does not tell the king what he is to do. Noth concludes from this that Josiah was not working in the spirit of the law when he put the law into public force. But a king is not necessarily acting contrary to law by giving it public sanction. Quite the contrary, Josiah is recognising that law is public and binds everyone including himself to it.

<sup>16</sup> Gerhard von Rad, "The deuteronomic Theology of History in I and II Kings," The Problem of the Hexateuch and other essays, trans. E.W. Trueman Dicken, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), pp. 205-221.

<sup>17</sup> Noth, The Deuteronomistic History, p. 58.

provide an account of these numerous verses that praise David. Noth also says very little about the depiction of David in the sources, either in the history of David's rise, the ark narrative, or the succession narrative. Of II Samuel vii, which appears to support the monarchy, he writes:

We cannot possibly claim that the latter section [Nathan's prophecy] is Deuteronomistic, since neither the prohibition of temple-building nor the strong emphasis on the value of the monarchy are in the spirit of Dtr. 18

Kingship is not an enduring institution according to the Deuteronomist. Noth makes no comment on the fact that even Rost, whom he initially agrees with in regard to this chapter, and who read vss 9-10 as if they referred primarily to the past, allows the verbs in vs 10 after sakan to be futures, and, therefore, these verbs speak of the preservation of Israel and the monarchy in the future. Furthermore, Noth's mention of the other two kings who are praised in the Dtr. history, Hezekiah and Josiah, is cursory. He says that Josiah's actions are but the retardation of the impending judgement of God. 19

One of the difficulties that these elements show is the tension that exists in Noth's writing between the purposes of particular sources and the unified history of the Deuteronomist. It is possible that the Deuteronomist used sources that may have been at cross-purposes with his intention. David may have been depicted more favourably in the sources than the Dtr. historian wished to present kings in general. It is necessary to determine whether II Samuel i-vii

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 55.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

reveals a more positive account of kingship in general and David's accession to the throne in particular than Noth allows.

The presence of II Samuel vii in the Dtr. history which appears

1) to justify the institution of kingship and 2) to offer an unconditional covenant with David and his house also raises the question of the purpose of this crucial chapter in the Dtr. history. Does II Samuel vii oppose the theology of the entire history? Is II Samuel vii a denial of the value of obedience to the covenant?

Noth's essay on II Samuel vii, published in 1955,20 modifies considerably his earlier acceptance of Rost's work on this chapter. In this article Noth argues that after it is recognised that at various points in the chapter there may be textual corruptions rather than editorial insertions, it is necessary to reconsider the question of the literary unity of the chapter.<sup>21</sup> The textual corruptions occur in a) the change from the first to the third person in vs 11b, b) the sentence in vs 19b which is usually translated as a question but which does not have a grammatical indication for a question and c) the change in vss 22-23 from the second to the third person for God. As textual corruptions they do not indicate editorial activity, and are, therefore, not obstacles to the unity of the chapter.

Noth claims that attempts to find the unity of the chapter in the theme of the "building a house" (Hausbauens) are problematic.

<sup>20</sup> Noth, "David and Israel in II Samuel VII." The following footnotes are to the English translation of the article. Where a German word or phrase illumines the force of Noth's point, I have taken it from the parallel passage in the original German article.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 122.

The unity of the chapter cannot be found in the juxtapositioning of the two sentences, vs 5b "Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?" and vs 11b "Also the Lord telleth thee that he will build thee an house". Noth rejects the reading that the chapter turns on these two sentences for four reasons. First, he says that the sentences are placed too far apart. Second, two different verbs are used; in vs 5, the verb is tibneh, in vs 11, the verb is ya'a'seh. Third, in vs 5, the "you", 'attâ, is stressed by being placed in front of the verb; but in vs 11, "house", bayit, is stressed by being in front of the verb. Vs 13a, which appears to have the same rhetorical emphasis on "you", Noth maintains, as he did earlier, is a Dtr. insertion. Fourth, the word "house" has a different meaning in the two verses. Thus, Noth concludes that the central thought of the chapter is not found in the "building of a house".

In establishing the proper reading of II Samuel vii, Noth criticises Rost for not raising the question of the reason for the use of the name of God in David's prayer; David affirms that the "Lord of hosts is God of Israel" (Jahwe Zebaoth (ist) Gott Israel) in vss 26 and 27. Moreover, David expresses a wish in vs 26 that this name be made great. The way in which this name is made great is through David.

This juxtaposition [between the promise to David and the exaltation of God's name] is particularly worthy of note, for in itself it is not necessary, and can only be understood if we presuppose that a definite relationship between the promise to David and his dynasty and the name of God of Israel was important in the author's eyes.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 253.

The word 'Israel' is used in vss 26 and 27 in the ancient sacral sense of the confederation of tribes (<u>Verbandes der Stamme</u>). The notion of Israel is rooted in the past. The promise to David in II Samuel vii is in continuity with the great acts of salvation of Israel in the past.

Noth makes the people of Israel, conceived as constituted by the sacral confederacy, the subject of the entire chapter. The the people of Israel are referred to in vss 8,10,11a,23,24,26 and 27, although Noth still suspects that 11a is not original. The notion of a people of God, however, persists throughout the chapter, and is the basis for its unity. The reference to people cannot be determined to be a later Dtr. insertion; in fact in this article Noth says the Dtr. material cannot be singled out with any certainty. The continuation of the 'people' of the sacral confederacy is the state governed by David. By this reference to the past, Noth is able to subdue the view that the chapter is primarily about the exaltation of David as a king; it is the people of Israel who are the focus of II Samuel vii.

Noth supplements this argument for the continuity of the chapter with the traditions of the tribal confederacy by pointing out the use of the word  $\underline{nagid}$  in vs 8. The word is used in the traditions associated with the league, in I Sam ix 16 and x 1 it is used of Saul, and its use here assigns a function to David within the language of the league.

In maintaining the link between the teaching of the tribal confederacy and II Samuel vii, Noth seeks to establish that the chapter

is not simply a fiction created by Judaeans to justify their claim to the throne. The chapter is not a literary fiction because such a postulation is simply unnecessary and not apparent from the chapter. Moreover, the traditions of the league are further confirmed in the story of the transfer of the ark, the old sacred tribal object of the tribes (Stammeheiligtums), to Jerusalem. II Samuel vii naturally follows II Samuel vi.

Noth continues the article by saying that the unity of II Samuel vii is not secure unless the chapter is a unified literary form (Gattung). Noth says that the chapter shows Egyptian influence, and he agrees with a study by S. Herrmann that II Samuel vii is an example of an Egyptian Königsnovelle. Along with a few similarities in stylistic details, Herrmann points out that the two main themes of the Egyptian Königsnovelle, temple building and kingly theology, also occur together in II Samuel vii. According to Noth, therefore, the form has been identified and contributes to the appreciation of the unity of the chapter.

Noth finally argues that vii 1-7 are a unity as well. He claims that vss 1-7 are unified because vs 3, Nathan's first reply to David, and one that is later corrected, is a usual form of polite address to a king (<u>ubliche Höflichkeitsformel</u>). In a footnote he argues that the Masoretic space (<u>setûmâ</u>) between vss 3 and 4 cannot be considered a reason for source division because it is a Masoretic addition and was not in the original hand-copied traditions.

In summary, the essay argues for the unity of II Samuel vii, a unity established on the proper understanding of the content, and

upon a parallel in form with the Egyptian Königsnovelle. Noth's reading of the chapter is based upon its continuity with the tribal confederacy. The article, however, gives an inadequate answer to the problem posed by the apparent legitimation of kingship and the apparent creation of an unconditional covenant in II Samuel vii. At best Noth seeks to make David out to be a nagid rather than a king. II Samuel vii remains a problem in his formulation of the purposes of the Dtr. history. He is correct, however, to note the intricate relation throughout the chapter between the people of Israel and the king. The Lord of hosts is the god of Israel (vs 27) prior to the promises that are made to David.

In order to have a complete sense of Noth's account of II

Samuel i-vii, it is necessary to turn to his The History of Israel
(1958). Noth says that an historiographical tradition begins with
the stories concerning David. In the earlier traditions, found in
the books of Joshua, Judges and I Samuel, there are popular stories
and traditions concerning prehistoric times. These traditions were
based upon religious confessions, and did not achieve historical
awareness nor the ability to write history. It is, according to
Noth, only during the time of political development and of active
participation in history that historical narrative emerges. It is in
the history of David's rise to power and in the succession narrative
that we see the achievement, amongst the Israelites, of genuine
historical writing.

Noth's account of David in the narrative of David's rise to power is of someone who shrewdly waits until power is within his

grasp before he actually assumes leadership.<sup>23</sup> David is willing to be a mercenary for Achish of Gath even though he is serving the Philistines instead of Israel. Noth says that David knows of the death of Saul before the Amalekite comes to him in II Samuel i, and that David has planned what he would do. The Amalekite, therefore, plays into David's hands, and David makes it look as if he truly respects the throne of Saul when in fact David wants Saul killed. The anointing of David by the elders of Judah in II Sam ii 4a, Noth says, is for merely political purposes and has no religious foundation. Noth writes:

It is purely a political act. That is typical of David's rise to power. His own personality and connections and his military entourage were the basis of his accession to the power represented by the kingship over the house of Judah.<sup>24</sup>

Upon David's anointing as king over Judah, Abner establishes
Eshbaal as king over Israel. Noth says that Eshbaal's rule, although
established by heredity, has no religious foundation either. When
Eshbaal accuses Abner of taking one of Saul's concubines, the unscrupulous Abner betrays Eshbaal and begins to make peace with David. Noth
says Abner knows that David seeks the throne of Saul, and grants
David's request for the return of Michal to be David's wife. Once
Michal is his wife, the house of Saul and the house of David would be
united in David himself, and Abner and Eshbaal would have no more
right than David to be king. But Abner is killed. Noth admits that
it is improbable that David wants this murder. He also admits that

<sup>23</sup> Noth, The History of Israel, p. 181.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 183.

when Eshbaal is killed in II Samuel iv, David does not plan such a convenient murder of his rival to the throne, but that David, as he had done before, shrewdly waits for events to turn in his direction. He must, however, make it appear that these deaths are dishonourable, and he respectfully buries both Abner and Eshbaal.<sup>25</sup> By the end of II Samuel iv no one stands in the way of David's accession to the throne.

In II Sam v 1-3, the elders of Israel anoint David as king. Noth says that they have no choice, for they have to cling to the monarchy even if the king is a Judaean and not a Benjamite. Again Noth says that this anointing is purely a political act with no religious foundation. Noth admits that the "contract" is made before the Lord, but it is a matter of the elders placing the anointing under divine protection rather than the anointing being initiated by God. The reference to David in II Sam v 2b as a nagid is, according to Noth, from an unknown prophet and we cannot know what sense it has for David's rule. This is an unusual judgement for Noth to make given his understanding of the term nagid as an indication of David's links with the confederacy.

Noth follows the sequence of events in II Samuel v that he outlined earlier; the battles with the Philistines follow the anointing by the elders of Judah and the conquest of Jerusalem ends the chapter. Following the conquest of Jerusalem, the ark is brought up from Kirjath-jearim in II Samuel vi. David brings the ark to Jerusalem

<sup>25 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 186.

in order to give Jerusalem the dignity that would accrue to it because it possesses the central relic of the old tribal confederacy. Thus, David brings the ark to Jerusalem as a political act in order to unify the northern and southern tribes of Israel under his kingship.

Noth does not speak of II Samuel vii in this history: he moves on to the political victories David wins in II Samuel viii.

In summary, there are three main points that arise from Noth's writings. First, he accepts the major divisions of sources in the books of I and II Samuel that were set out by L. Rost. The sources are not continuous sources throughout the books, but small independent stretches of narrative that are fitted end to end. Noth thus rejects the earlier view that the sources of the Former Prophets are continuations of Pentateuchal sources. He says very little by way of criticism of O. Eissfeldt's study which was published in 1931, only twelve years before the publication of his The Deuteronomistic History. And although Noth accepts Rost's essential source divisions in I and II Samuel, the reasons that Rost gives for the divisions are not evaluated in Noth's studies; the reader gains no sense of Rost's account of the two different styles of the ark and the succession narratives, and Noth actually describes the style of the Dtr. historian in a similar way to Rost's description of the style of the ark narrative.

Second, the three studies of Noth that we examined show very different types of work. The first gives an account of a long stretch of Hebrew narrative as it was put together by an author in the sixth century B.C.; Noth accepts that the narrative contains many different

"traditions", or units of material, which have different authors, were written at different times, and possess different literary forms and different social settings. The second study, the essay, is on one specific text. II Samuel vii, and attempts to show what type of tradition it is. The third study is a history of Israel: Noth uses the biblical texts as one kind of source amongst others for a reconstruction of the actual events of Israel's history. Using the methods of the "objective" historian and the scientific archaeologist, the reader is able to write the real history of Israel. 26 This last type of study follows the actual story-line of the text more than the others, even when Noth judges that the story-line as it is presented in the narrative is incorrect. Noth says that the best works of history in the Bible are the history of David's rise and the succession narrative; these historical forms are not theological and are not based upon religious confessions. The other literary forms, found, for example, in Joshua, Judges and I Samuel i-xiv, are religious confessions, and are poor history.27 Noth concurs with the same separation between 'theology' and historical writing as we noticed earlier in the writings of Wellhausen and Gressmann. To write histor-

<sup>26</sup> Noth says that the Deuteronomist was "objective" in his treatment of older material. Noth, <u>The Deuteronomistic History</u>, p. 84. For the phrase "objective historical point of view (<u>sachlichen Gesichtspunkten</u>)" see p. 57. Noth also invokes the standard of objective description on p. 127, n. 34.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 179.

ically is to write independently of religious belief.<sup>28</sup> The two major sources for David, the history of David's rise and the succession narrative, depict a man who is motivated not by religious concerns, but by political self-interest. One central indication that the sources are historical is that they show a politically ambitious David; at least part of the determination of literary form depends on the narrative depiction of the selfish motives of David.

Third, Noth does not resolve the tension in his work between the Dtr. rejection of the monarchy and the use of the sources, especially II Samuel vii, which suggest that David is given full authority by God to be king. Moreover, if David's accession to the throne is through political self-interest rather than obedience, Noth is admitting that the election of the second monarch in Israel is not conditional on David's obedience to the covenant.

## B: Gerhard von Rad

In 1947 von Rad wrote an essay entitled "The Deuteronomic Theology of History in I and II Kings". 29 At the beginning of the

<sup>28</sup> Noth writes as if the Deuteronomist weds theology and history because the Deuteronomist is working as an objective historian and is also writing a theological interpretation of history. Compare, for example, in The Deuteronomistic History, the first paragraph on p. 84 to the first paragraph on p. 89. The only way that these comments on the Dtr. history are compatible with his later comments in The History of Israel is if the word "interpretation" means to Noth a kind of addition onto history.

<sup>29</sup> Gerhard von Rad, "Die deuteronomistische Geschichtstheologie in den Königsbüchern", Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament, Theologische Bücherei, I, Band 8 (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1958), pp. 189-204. For the English translation see The Problem of the Hexateuch and other essays, pp. 205-221. Von Rad uses the word "Deuteronomic" to refer to both the law in Deuteronomy and the work of the historian who compiled Deuteronomy through II Kings. The original German text

essay von Rad acknowledges the need that was filled by Noth's work on the Dtr. history. Von Rad agrees that the Deuteronomist was indeed an historian who welded together many different texts into a single whole, while at the same time who allowed the sources to speak for themselves. Von Rad's concern is with the theology of this historian. The Deuteronomist does not seek to judge the history of Israel by the "positivist ideal of objective history" (an dem positivistischen Ideal einer 'exakten Geschichtsschreibung').30 The Deuteronomist seeks to judge the history by the standards set forth in Deuteronomy. Von Rad agrees with Noth, at least initially, that these standards are obedience to law, and that God's rejection of Israel is the consequence of their disobedience.

Although these standards are applied to all of the Dtr. history, von Rad speaks of the kings in particular. The standard meant that the kings had the power to choose freely for or against the Lord.<sup>31</sup> Von Rad contrasts the Dtr. historian, however, with the classical historians in Israel; by classical historians von Rad means the writers of the sources on King David and the succession narrative.

uses the abbreviation Dtr. for either one, whereas the English translation does not use an abbreviation. We shall continue our practice of only using the abbreviation Dtr. as an adjective for 'Deuteronomistic'. Von Rad gives two reasons why he chooses to limit his essay to the books of I and II Kings. He studies these books because "the reign of Solomon marks a new departure in every sense, and it is only at this point that he [the Deuteronomist] broaches what is really his main theme." Von Rad, The Problem of the Hexateuch and other essays, p. 206, n. 2.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., p. 205.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 206.

The best example of historical writing is the narrative of succession. These classical historians "depict humanity as the passive object of God's purpose in history". 32 Von Rad repeats the view in a footnote:

His [the Deuteronomist's] method is thus very different from that of the writer of the history of the succession to the throne of David. This earlier writer shows his reader the problem of the human and political entanglements in which the King is involved, and presents it as a succession of inescapable consequences.<sup>33</sup>

In an endeavour to resolve how the Dtr. historian can bring the standards, that is, the subjective judgements of one time and place to another, von Rad claims that the objective referent for the Deuteronomist is the way God acts in history. Once God's word is spoken, it invariably comes to pass.

Von Rad proceeds to show the existence of a pattern of "prophetic predictions and exactly observed fulfillments" (prophetis-chen Weissagungen und genau vermerkten Erfüllungen) in the Dtr. history. Von Rad lists twelve cases in which a prophecy is made in one part of the history, and reference made to its fulfillment in another part. These prophecies are self-fulfilling (sich auswirkende Korrespondenzverhältnis), once they are spoken they come to pass. Although von Rad says that these prophecies are not originally Dtr., they form the theological structure of the history. The theology of the Deuteronomist is essentially prophetic. Von Rad writes:

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., p. 207.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 206, n. 3.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., pp. 209-211.

It is interesting to notice how the deuteronomist proceeds from the basic assumption that the history of the two kingdoms is nothing more or less than the historical expression of the will and word of Yahweh. 35

The history of the two kingdoms in I and II Kings is the history of the fulfillment of God's prophetic judgement against them.

When von Rad begins to apply this theology to the kings, he gives an account of David in the history. The prophecy or promise made to David by Nathan in II Sam vii 13 is reaffirmed in I Kgs viii 25, xi 13,32,36, ix 5 and II Kgs viii 25. Moreover, David is held up as a model of obedience. Von Rad lists the eighteen references in I and II Kings which praise David's obedience to law: I Kgs iii 3,14, v 17 (Eng. v 3), viii 17-21, ix 4, xi 4,6,33,38, xiv 8, xv 3,5,11, II Kgs xiv 3, xvi 2, xviii 3, xxi 7 and xxii 2. As a prototype of obedience, David is also the model of the theocratic monarch.

But von Rad admits that this Dtr. account of David is not the David of the succession narrative. The sources and the final redaction of the Dtr. history present different depictions of David. Von Rad speaks simply of two traditions that the Deuteronomist is molding together; the one tradition presents a disobedient David, shown in all his humanity, the other tradition shows a perfect David who is messianic in conception. The conflict is resolved, according to von Rad, by establishing the precedence given to prophecy over law; the Dtr. history is writing a history to show not the centrality of law, but the centrality of the fulfillment of God's word in history.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 213.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., pp. 218-219.

David's disobedience to law, presented in the sources, is less significant to the final theology of the Dtr. than God's promises to David.

The Dtr. account of David supersedes the David of the sources.

Von Rad's formulation at this point is clearly intended to distinguish 'legal' religion from Christianity. Von Rad writes:

We are thus led to the important conclusion that in the deuteronomic presentation of the matter Yahweh's word determines the history of Judah, and that it does so under two particular forms: first, it is a law which controls and destroys; secondly it is a "gospel", a continually self-fulfilling promise to David, which brings salvation and forgiveness. The promise made through Nathan is a kind of katechon, the restraining force which runs through the history of Judah, warding off the long-deserved judgment from the kingdom "for David's sake".37

Gospel or promise takes precedence over law; the law, in contrast, is negative. The Dtr. history is primarily not a history of law, but a history of prophecy and fulfillment. The history ends with the mention of Jehoiachin's release from prison (II Kgs xxv 27-30) which reaffirms that the promise to David would be brought to completion. The history ends in hope rather than dissolution.

It would be helpful if von Rad had added a fuller discussion of David in his writings. In a few comments in his Old Testament

Theology von Rad says that the David in the historical works of David's rise to power and the succession narrative is portrayed "in all the frailty of his human nature, and on occasion [the writers] even portray him in extremely scandalous situations." The contradic-

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 219.

<sup>38</sup> Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, trans. D.M.G. Stalker, (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), I, pp. 308-309.

tion between the David of the sources and the David of the Dtr. history is unresolved.

Moreover, it is evident from Old Testament Theology that von Rad accepts the source divisions argued by Rost. Von Rad agrees with Rost's argument for the unity of the ark narrative<sup>39</sup>, Rost's division of a source on the history of David's rise ending in II Sam v 12<sup>40</sup>, Rost's work on II Samuel vii<sup>41</sup> and Rost's delineation of the succession narrative.<sup>42</sup>

In summary, four years after Noth's publication of his work on the Dtr. history, von Rad published an essay which both accepted Noth's work as correct in its general presentation of the Dtr. history, and which also tried to emend it in a certain way. For Noth, the Dtr. history is a history of law; for von Rad, the history is one of prophecy or grace over law. Noth's study ends in the defeat of Israel, von Rad's ends with a faint but definite glimmer of hope for restoration.

But the contrast between these two lines of reading of the Dtr. history goes deeper than this. According to Noth the principle of election is not as central a part of the covenant as for von Rad; according to Noth the covenant is one governed by the stipulations of God. God's dealings with humans are based on a covenant of law.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 45.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 308.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 310.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 312.

Israel either obeys or disobeys this law, and is judged by it. Thus, human action, according to Noth, is of immense significance. Disobedience means judgement. According to von Rad's account, in contrast, the purpose of the history is to show the fulfillment of God's word rather than the story of human obedience or disobedience. It is God's promises which create or determine history rather than the interplay of divine stipulation and human response. According to von Rad the Dtr. history shows the faithfulness of God's election of Israel. In the same way, God elects David to be his chosen king. Despite David's actions, the promises to him are maintained. Whatever depiction we have of David in the sources does not in the end matter; David is elected in I Sam xvi 1-13 and II Samuel vii, and this election means David's disobedience is not a determining factor in the story. Why God rejects Saul and accepts David cannot be known. The Dtr. history is a history of promise and grace. 43

Von Rad's presentation of the framework of prophecy and fulfillment for the Dtr. theology must be taken seriously as a necessary criticism to Noth's formulation of the purposes of the history. We have observed in our study of Noth that he embarrassingly omits

<sup>43</sup> There is a remarkable coincidence of two deterministic views of theology in the writings of the German Lutheran G. von Rad. As a Protestant, von Rad places a strong emphasis on the inscrutability of God's election and on God, rather than man, determining what is to take place in history. As an historian, he thinks historical situations determine human action. It is significant that von Rad suggests that the classical historians in Israel present David as caught in "inescapable circumstances". If 'history' places individuals in inescapable circumstances, they cannot be held responsible for their actions. 'History' as an external agent to human will determines human action. See "The deuteronomic Theology of History in I and II Kings," p. 206, n. 3.

any reference to the eighteen times in which David is praised as one who fulfills the law in I and II Kings. What seems unfortunate in both studies is that there is no attempt to reconcile the contradictions that exist between the sources for David's life and the purposes of the Dtr. historian; David may be represented one way in one source or tradition and another way in another. Nor do they seek to account for the inclusion of contradictory accounts of David in the larger Dtr. history.

## C: H.W. Wolff

In 1961 Wolff published an article entitled "Das Kerygma des deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerkes". 44 Wolff's essay is a response to the earlier writings of Noth and von Rad. Wolff agrees with Noth that there is a Dtr. historian who brought together the material from Deuteronomy to the end of II Kings. Wolff agrees, too, that the Deuteronomist highlighted traditional material by adding certain passages which consist of speeches of major historical figures in the history.

Wolff's reading of the history accepts the theological emphasis of the work that is argued by von Rad. Wolff writes:

History is understood as the accomplishment of the word of God which prophets had proclaimed, and more especially, as

<sup>44</sup> H.W. Wolff, "Das Kerygma des deuteronomistischen Geschichts-werkes", ZAW 73 (1961), pp. 171-186. The English translation is H.W. Wolff, "The Kerygma of the Deuteronomic Historical Work", trans. Frederick C. Pressner, eds. Walter Brueggemann and H.W. Wolff, The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions, (2nd ed; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), pp. 83-100.

the fulfillment of the words of Moses that stand at the beginning of the whole of the work in Deuteronomy. 45

Prophets occupy a central place because they proclaim the word of God.

Wolff's concern for the proclamation of the word of God is revealed in the title to the essay in the use of the Greek word kērygma. The noun is related to the verb kērysso, "to preach", which is taken from NT usage: see the use of the verb in Matt iv 17. The attempt to establish a link between OT prophecy and NT fulfillment is present in Wolff's use of the word. Moreover, Wolff seeks to show that the OT texts have a kerygmatic intention; the literary traditions were brought together at a later date to form the sources, J,E,D and P, for the purpose of showing what the community of Israel finally affirmed theologically. Each of the major documents has a kerygmatic import, although the force of each is distinct. The purpose of study of these sources is to determine the proclamation (kērygma) of each.

In two introductory essays to the volume in which the English translation of Wolff's article is found, W. Brueggemann traces Wolff's emphasis on kerygma to von Rad, K. Barth and the Confessing Church of Germany prior to and during the reign of National Socialism. 46 Von Rad, in regard to the Pentateuchal sources, was interested in the credo, the essential affirmation which the community thought was central to its faith. This credo is the message or confession of the community, and it is essentially theological. The OT, although compos-

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 84.

<sup>46 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., pp. 26 and 31.

ed of different literary types such as saga, is not fundamentally history or literature, but the confession of a community. 47

Despite Wolff's affinities with von Rad's understanding of the Deuteronomist as a theologian, Wolff seeks to improve upon both Noth's and von Rad's accounts of the Dtr. history. He begins by asking what the Deuteronomist wants to say to his contemporaries in exile.

Wolff notices a pattern of apostasy, repentance and forgiveness in the Dtr. history. The apostasy begins at the time of the occupation of the land (Judg ii 11-15). But the apostasy does not lead to the termination of the history of Israel. The reason for the continuation is that Israel cries unto God. Wolff cites Judg ii 16 and 18 as showing Israel's repentance. Wolff restores the text of Judg ii 16 in order to obtain his reading on the basis of similar verses in Judg iii 9 and 15: Judg ii 16 should read, according to Wolff, "When they cried to Yahweh, then Yahweh raised up judges". Israel repents, and God allows Israel's history to continue. Israel's apostasy is not without consequences, however, and God says that he will not drive out the peoples which Joshua left at his death (Judg ii 21-22). Wolff says that Israel's repentance brings about a completely new enactment in history. 48

The second instance, or what Wolff calls a "moment", in the Dtr. history is the request for a king (I Sam viii 5). The request is disobedience, but again God responds by not only choosing a king,

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. p. 26.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 87.

first Saul and then David, but also choosing a place, Jerusalem, for his name to dwell. The element of repentance is not in this moment, but God remains faithful.

The final instance is at the time of the exile. The exile represents the most severe judgement of God on Israel. The question arises whether the judgement is final or whether there is any room for hope. Wolff, at this point, follows Noth who suggested that the justification of the exile for Israel is found in the great speeches of the narrative.

Wolff argues that the word  $\S\hat{u}b$ , "return", is used at important junctures by the Deuteronomist. The word is found in Samuel's address to the people to repent in I Sam vii 3. Israel obeys, and the Philistines are defeated. In II Kgs xvii 13 the Deuteronomist meditates on the demise of the northern tribes; the prophets say that Israel should turn back  $(\S\hat{u}b)$  from her evil ways. The northern tribes fall because they do not heed the call to repentance. In II Kgs xxiii 25 Josiah is praised as someone who turns  $(\S\hat{u}b)$  to the Lord with all his heart. The idea of repentance is central to the theology of the Dtr. history.

Wolff substantiates this observation by showing that <u>sûb</u> is not subordinate to judgement even in passages which refer to times of judgement. At Solomon's prayer at the dedication of the temple in I Kgs viii 12-61, the word <u>sûb</u> is used four times. In this passage the Deuteronomist affirms that judgement may overtake Israel and she may be sent into exile. But the prayer also presents the possibility of

repentance and restoration in the land. 49 Wolff also discovers the use of what he calls the catchword sub in two passages in Deuteronomy. The passages are Deut iv 29-31 and xxx 1-10, the second of which is included by Noth in the legal code of Deuteronomy. Wolff argues that the passages have close thematic and linguistic relations with the traditions in Jeremiah. 50 Both passages in Jeremiah speak about possible exile, and both contain the word sub (iv 30 and xxx 2,8 and 10). On the basis of the affinities with Jeremiah, Wolff suggests that these passages are not rightly allocated to the old legal source of Deuteronomy, but are more closely aligned with the work of the Deuteronomist. However, he does not argue that they are part of the

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., pp. 92-93.

 $<sup>^{50}</sup>$  The similarities consists in 1) the hiphil use of ndh in Deut xxx 1 and Jer xvi 15, xxxii 37 and 1x 28, 2) the formation of the root sub with the noun sebut in Deut xxx 3 and Jer xxix 14, xxx 3, 18 and elsewhere, 3) the use of the piel form of qbs for the gathering of the dispersed in Deut xxx 3-4 and Jer xxiii 3, xxix 14 and xxxii 37, 4) references to the circumcision of the heart in Deut xxx 6 and Jer iv 4b and ix 25-26, 5) the use of the phrase "the delight of the Lord" in Deut xxx 9 and Jer xxxii 41, 6) the repetition of phrases in a passage which Wolff calls the appendage to the curses, Deut xxviii 45ff., 7) the use of the phrase "the nation from afar whose language thou dost not understand" in Deut xxviii 49 and Jer v 15 and 8) the description of extreme distress when the flesh of sons and daughters is consumed in Deut xxviii 53 and Jer xix 9. The use of ndh for such conclusions is problematic because of its use in passages such as Prov vii 21, et al., the combination of sub and sebut by their use in Ezek xvi 53 and xxix 14 and the use of qbs by its use in Neh i 9, Ps cvii 3, et al. The frequency of the use of certain words or phrases is a dubious practice for the identification of the style of a source, and Wolff encounters the same problems that Rost does. Languages can admit a great deal of flexibility in usage, and the occurrence of these terms or phrases in other contexts that are not Dtr. reveals that language does not fit into rigid models. Wolff also underestimates the place of idiom in language. Two authors speaking at different times about the same topic and using the same language will often use the same expression or idiom.

work of the Deuteronomist, but instead they are from a second writer from the Dtr. circle. Wolff posits the existence of a second writer cautiously. Nevertheless, the reading of these two passages in Deuteronomy as part of the Dtr. circle strengthens his argument for the element of repentance being central to the Deuteronomist and not subordinate to judgement.

Wolff says that the preaching or kerygma of the Deuteronomist does not have legalistic elements; the Deuteronomist is presenting a picture of salvation history. In this emphasis Wolff remains true to von Rad as opposed to Noth. The hope for the exiles is in this return to God with the confidence that he is controlling history.

In summary, Wolff's most important debt is to von Rad's formulation of the Dtr. history as the story of God's word proclaimed in history, and the word brought to completion by God in history. But Wolff claims that the kerygma of this history is the summons to return to the Lord in prayer, confession and obedience. Thus Wolff suggests that human action is efficacious; Israel can repent, and must do so if she is to be brought back into the covenant with the Lord. Wolff's kerygma is not a simple proclamation of judgement and of what God will do, but a call to what humans can do, and a promise of how God will respond if Israel returns.

Wolff is not opposed to Noth's conditional formulation of the theology of the Deuteronomist, although he does not adequately recognise that the notion of repentance requires that a standard has been transgressed. It is impossible to use moral language such as repentance unless there has been some moral or legal code that has been

violated. Wolff does not indicate sufficiently what this law is, at least in this exposition of the nature of the Dtr. history. Is the trespass against a law forbidding idolatry, or against the decalogue or in the desire for a king? As with the case of von Rad, Wolff's stress on God's promises and God's actions to fulfill these promises gives law only a nebulous place in the Dtr. history.

## D: E.W. Nicholson

Nicholson's first major work on the Dtr. history, and the one which is most important for our inquiry, is <u>Deuteronomy and Tradition</u>. The book is primarily on the origin and purpose of the book of Deuteronomy, but in the course of delineating the traditions in the book, and the geographical area from which they originate, he enucleates the purposes of the Dtr. history as a whole.

Nicholson agrees with those, such as Alt, who have argued that the book of Deuteronomy (that is, <u>Urdeuteronomium</u>, Deuteronomy v-xxvi) stems from the Israelite tribal league or amphictyony. A festival of covenant renewal is held at various places, Shechem, Gilgal, Bethel and Shiloh, and the covenant institutions of law are formulated, preserved and used as standards of legal judgement in these locations. The traditions of this tribal league are preserved in northern Israel after the split of the two kingdoms by a series of prophets or their prophetic circles. As the covenant traditions are essentially legal, the covenant is conditional; the northern kings

<sup>51</sup> E.W. Nicholson, <u>Deuteronomy and Tradition</u>, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967).

are judged in respect to their obedience to the law, and found to be in rebellion. The northern kingdom is destroyed as a result.

Nicholson stresses that the traditions are preserved by the prophets; the traditions underlying the book of Deuteronomy and the entire Dtr. history constitute the preaching of the prophets to the people. Nicholson claims that the style of Deuteronomy and the Dtr. history is hortatory or parenetic. His emphasis on preaching resembles Wolff's stress on kerygma.

Nicholson's study begins with the reformation of Josiah in 621 B.C. Nicholson consents to the generally accepted view that Josiah discovered part of the book of Deuteronomy, and this law code formed the basis of Josiah's reformation. Nicholson seeks to answer how the book of Deuteronomy, which originated in the covenant league and in northern prophetic circles, came to be present in southern Israel. His answer is that following the destruction of the northern kingdom, the prophets who preserved the traditions of the book moved to the southern kingdom in one last hope that the law and covenant would be continued amongst the Judaean authorities.53

But the theology of the northern tribes was not the same as the theology of Judah. First, the Judaean authorities believed that the invisible presence of the Lord sat between the cherubim on the

<sup>52</sup> Nicholson continues this emphasis on prophetic preaching in a second book on the Dtr. history in which he argues that the prose "sermons" in the book of Jeremiah are also written by the Dtr. circle. See E.W. Nicholson, <u>Preaching to the Exiles</u>, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), p. 134.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 94.

ark. The northern tribes developed a name theology; the Lord resided only in the heavens (I Kgs viii 27-30), and the name of God was set amongst the people rather than his presence. The name is the substitute for the presence, and represents a more sophisticated account of God's nature than to say that he resides between the cherubim. Second, according to Jerusalem tradition, Mount Zion, or Jerusalem, was to be the center of worship. Prophets from the north would see this as a threat to their loyalty to Bethel and Dan or to the earlier amphictyony sites. Third, the Jerusalem traditions had an accepted place for the monarchy as an institution; monarchy was opposed to the traditional charismatic leadership of the northern tribes. Fourth, in the south David was elected unconditionally by God to be king over the people forever. The theme of unconditional election was not as central to the legal traditions of the league.

Nicholson argues that there is a merging of two kinds of tradition. The one type stems from the north, and is related to the ancient covenant renewal festival with its links with Sinai/Mosaic traditions. The other type is from the south, and is based upon Mount Zion/Davidic traditions.<sup>54</sup> The northern prophets accept the merging in order to preserve their teaching. The book of Deuteronomy and the Dtr. history, thus, represent two theologies. Although these theologies are not wholly different, they are not originally in harmony because they arise from two different social settings, one from the tribal league, the other from Judaean authorities.

<sup>54 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 108.

Nicholson addresses the question of the origin of the theme of unconditional election. Von Rad had argued earlier that there were two festivals during the time of the amphictyony with different traditions associated with each. The Sinai covenant traditions (Exodus xix-xxiv) were part of a covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem; the festival was held in autumn at the Feast of Tabernacles. According to these legal traditions the election of Israel was in some sense conditional on her obedience. The exodus-conquest theme was, according to von Rad, a celebration of Israel's ancient credal statements which recalled a pre-legal patriarchal religion (Deut vi 20-25 and xxvi 5b-9); the festival was held at Gilgal, and was the Feast of Weeks. In von Rad's explanation of these two festivals of the amphictyony, unconditional election stems from the theme of the exodus-conquest.

Nicholson disagrees with the separation of the election theme from the covenant theme in von Rad's delineation. Nicholson writes:

But furthermore, to separate the election theme from the covenant demands robs the latter of all motivation. It is precisely because of what Yahweh had done on Israel's behalf that she undertook to serve him. By the same token the election theme itself would become devoid of any real meaning, for the covenant can only be seen as the natural outcome of Yahweh's choice of Israel at the exodus. It was the covenant at Sinai which defined the relationship between Israel and Yahweh, the elected-elector relationship, brought about by the deliverance from bondage. 55

Nicholson sees election as intrinsically connected to the 'legal' covenant of Sinai.

The theme of unconditional election Nicholson finally attributes to the royal ideology of Jerusalem. In the discussion of the

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., pp. 42-43.

law regarding the centralization of worship in Deuteronomy Nicholson traces the language to Jerusalem traditions.

It is significant too that in formulating the centralization law they [the authors of the Dtr. history] employed a terminology which we have reason to believe was used in the Jerusalem traditions to describe Yahweh's choice of Mount Zion. As in these traditions Yahweh was believed to have chosen (bāḥar) Mount Zion, so also in Deuteronomy it is legislated that Yahweh will choose (bāḥar) a place in which to make his name dwell. 56

Nicholson agrees with R.E. Clements on this point.<sup>57</sup> Nicholson writes:

Following the suggestion of G. Quell and S. Amsler, he [Clements] argues that the verb bahar was in use from the time of David onwards to describe the belief in Yahweh's choice of David and his successors to be his anointed rulers over all Israel and the authors of Deuteronomy adopted this terminology and applied it to Yahweh's election of Israel as his peculiar people.<sup>58</sup>

After a discussion of the degree to which it is possible to detect whether the Deuteronomist censured the monarchy in Deuteronomy, Nicholson concludes:

Here [that is, in locating the election terminology in Jerusalem traditions], however, there is every reason to believe that he [Clements] is correct in his suggestion concerning

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>57</sup> Clements argues that there is a distinction between the Abrahamic covenant and the Sinaitic covenant over the issue of whether the covenant is conditional. Clements says that the Abrahamic covenant must have arisen from the same historical period as the Davidic covenant because they both represent the covenant as unconditional. R.E. Clements, Abraham and David: Genesis XV and its Meaning for Israelite Tradition, Studies in Biblical Theology, 5, (Naperville, Ill: Alec R. Allenson, 1967). For a discussion of Clement's formulation, see N.E. Wagner, "Abraham and David?" Studies on the Ancient Palestinian World, presented to F.V. Winnett, eds. J.W. Wevers and D.B. Redford, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), pp. 117-140.

<sup>58</sup> Nicholson, Deuteronomy and Tradition, pp. 97-98.

the origin of Deuteronomy's election terminology [underlining mine].59

The origin of the language is not Sinai traditions, but the Jerusalem traditions.

Nicholson says that the covenant with David was considered by the Jerusalem circles as an unconditional covenant (II Sam vii 11b-16).60 The Dtr. theology of law, however, overruled this unconditional element (Deut xvii 18-20 and I Kgs ii 4).61 The kings of the kingdom of Judah are judged by the law, and only Hezekiah and Josiah are praised. Nicholson writes:

That is to say, he [the Deuteronomist] has imposed the conditional nature of the older Sinai covenant between Yahweh and Israel, which could be terminated by Israel's disobedience, upon the Davidic covenant. 62

Thus the Dtr. history represents a conditional theology; if the law is disobeyed, Israel will be rejected.

According to Nicholson this conditional theology is used by the Deuteronomist to explain why Israel was exiled. Moreover, he even affirms that the prophetic passages in the Dtr. history, noted by von Rad, are evidence of the centrality of the law. God's word must be obeyed, and when it is not, God's word in condemnation does not fail. He also says that von Rad's prophecy-fulfillment schema is proof of the significance of the 'law' to the Deuteronomist, although

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 111.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

in von Rad, God's word is essentially promise rather than judgement. Moreover, Nicholson says that the schema confirms the prophetic nature of the history and the prophetic circle who wrote it. And although, according to Nicholson, the Deuteronomist holds law as central, and the exile as the result of disobedience, Nicholson claims there is always hope that Israel will turn in repentance to follow the Lord. 63

Nicholson represents a combination of the emphases of both von Rad and Noth. He resembles Noth in the exposition of the centrality of law to the Dtr. history. He also accepts that von Rad is correct in noting the prophecy-fulfillment schema, and in the stress von Rad places on God's word coming to pass in Israel's history.

Nicholson resolves the central conflict between von Rad and Noth over whether the Dtr. historian is presenting a legal account of Israel's history by resort to an argument that the two themes in the Dtr. history arise from two historical points in Israel's history. The legal tradition originates from the amphictyony. The teaching that the covenant is unconditional, that God elects Israel permanently, originates with those who support the perpetuation of the line of Judah at a later date (during the time of Manasseh). The contradictions between conditional and unconditional covenants are from various places and time periods which reflect different theologies.

## E: F.M. Cross

Cross's two most important essays for our study are "The Ideologies of Kingship in the Era of the Empire: Conditional Covenant

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., p. 124.

and Eternal Decree" and "The Themes of the Books of Kings and the Structure of the Deuteronomistic History".<sup>64</sup> We shall begin with the second essay because it provides a more general presentation of the nature of the Dtr. history.

Cross outlines the alternatives of Noth, von Rad and Wolff.

According to Cross Noth's account of the Deuteronomist is one of
judgement, von Rad's of grace and Wolff's is an admission that both
are correct, and are mediated by the requirement for repentance.

Cross says that Wolff notices the qualification of the eternal decree
to the Davidic throne in I Kgs ix 6-9 and II Kgs xxiv 2-3, although in
Wolff nothing is said of the restoration of David's house. Cross
criticises Wolff's failure to appreciate the significance of the
promises to David, and looks for a solution which is at the same time
not in complete agreement with the priority of grace over law as is
found in von Rad.

Cross turns the differing accounts of the Dtr. history into two themes. One theme is judgement; Cross says that it is expressed in the verdict that is stated against northern Israel because of Jeroboam's sin (I Kgs xiii 34) which is finally fulfilled in the slaughter of Ahab's sons and Jezebel in Jezreel and Samaria (II Kgs ix 1-x 11). The second theme is the faithfulness of David, and the promises made to him. Although ten tribes were torn away because of the sin of Solomon, the sins of the Judaean kings did not sever the

<sup>64</sup> F.M. Cross, Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1973), pp. 219-289.

promises made to David (I Kgs xi 12-13,39, xv 3-5 and II Kgs viii 18-19).

Cross argues that the juxtaposition of these two themes is the basis for the reform of Josiah. The Deuteronomist criticises the northern tribes, and shows that the true promises are for the southern kingdom. Jerusalem is to be the center of worship. Cross says the Dtr. history is a propaganda work for Josiah. Josiah is to be the new David, and the hope is with the Judaean monarchy. Cross's account of the purposes of the Dtr. history relates the themes to the interests of an historical situation and to a party at the time of Josiah who were defending Judaean supremacy over the northern tribes. The interweaving of the material to portray these two themes results in the first edition of the Dtr. history.

A second edition is made during the time of the exile. The exilic editor must explain to the exiles why Judah has fallen. The key passage for Cross's argument is II Kgs xxi 2-15, the passage explaining the sins of Manasseh. Even Judah, which had been ruled by Josiah, the only perfect king in the Dtr. history, would not be spared because of the sins of Manasseh. The second edition of the Dtr. history does not end with hope for restoration, and in this sense, according to Cross, Noth is correct. The hope is expressed elsewhere in the great literary works of the exile.

Cross's second essay "The Ideologies of Kingship in the Era of the Empire: Conditional Covenant and Eternal Decree" reconstructs two ideologies of kingship in the texts of the Dtr. history and a number of related Psalms. One ideology is derived from the covenant

league of the twelve tribes. Law is one of the central institutions of the league, and, therefore, an ideology of kingship that resembles the league makes the preservation of the king conditional upon the fulfillment of the law. Saul's kingship is conditional upon his obedience to law, and when he disobeys, the kingship is taken from him. After the split between the northern and southern tribes, the northern tribes continue in this ideology of conditional kingship. The northern kings are not only limited by law, but also by the criticisms of prophets, Ahijah, Jehu, Elijah, Micaiah ben Imlach and Elisha. This conditional ideology is finally exemplified as the northern kings are judged to be apostate and the northern kingship is ended. 65 The second ideology of kingship is the Davidic or Judaean kingship. At first the kingship is essentially conservative; there is a continuity between the institutions of the league and the Davidic kingship. The Davidic kingship is, at this point, conditional. The sources that Cross uses to show this conditional kingship are early poems, Ps cxxxii and II Sam xxiii 1-5; these poems contain the "lore" of the Davidic kingship. 66 Ps cxxxii 12 states that the covenant stipulations are required. In II Sam xxiii 5, David speaks of an eternal

<sup>65</sup> Cross follows the direction of Alt in his view that the traditions of the league are continued in the early monarchy of Saul and then into the northern tribes of Israel. See Albrecht Alt, "The Formation of the Israelite State in Palestine," Essays in Old Testament History and Religion, trans. R.A. Wilson, (New York: Doubleday, 1968), pp. 225-309.

<sup>66</sup> Cross, "The Ideologies of Kingship in the Era of the Empire: Conditional Covenant and Eternal Decree", Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic, p. 232.

covenant with the Lord. Cross, however, prefers to call it a perpetual covenant, and says that perpetual is not necessarily unconditional.

Cross studies two sources for this change to an eternal king-ship ideology in Judaea at the time of Solomon's monarchy; one source is II Samuel vii and the second source is Ps lxxxix 20-38. We shall concentrate on the first of these passages.

Cross divides II Samuel vii into a prose oracle in vss 1-7, which opposes the building of the temple, and vss 8-29 which, in proper Dtr. fashion, support the building of the temple. In order to establish that the first oracle in vss 1-7 opposes the building of the temple permanently, Cross must answer others who have suggested that the oracle is not against the construction of a building, but only against David's building of it. Cross rejects the reading that the

<sup>67 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 239.

first response of Nathan to David's inquiry, found in vs 3, reveals that Nathan supported the building and that David and Nathan had changed their minds only for strategic reasons. 68 Cross follows Noth's reading of vs 3 that the verse shows Nathan's polite reply to a king. Moreover, Cross claims that vss 5-7 are meant to oppose the building of the temple permanently. The reason Cross gives for this reading is simply that the ark had always been with the tent shrine. If Yahweh had wanted a temple he could have built one himself. Vss 5-7 preserve the traditions of the league regarding the ark. Cross, at this point in his argument, simply reasserts that the verses support the covenantal traditions of the league. He does not show how the verses themselves indicate that the prohibition of the building of the temple is permanent. Gese is one who says that vss 1-7 do not indicate a prohibition against the building of the temple, but only a limitation on who is to build it. 69 Gese stresses that the force of vs 5 is that David is not to build the temple; the question begins with "you" ('atta), that is, David. The temple may be built, but not by David. Cross's reply to Gese is that vss 5-7 indicate that the Lord is to take initiative; the reason for the promise of a house to David would not be due to the establishment by David of a temple for the ark in Jerusalem. Cross insists that the building of a house would be solely by divine initiative. God would decide when and who would build it. Cross's reply to Gese does not actually support his

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., p. 242.

<sup>69</sup> H. Gese, "Der Davidsbund und die Zionserwählung", ZTK 61 (1964), pp. 10-26.

earlier claim that the prose oracle prohibited the building of the temple permanently.

Cross also rejects a reading of vss 5-7 which says that the lešibtî in vs 5 means literally "to dwell in"; he prefers the figurative sense, "for my enthronement". J. Schreiner supports the translation "for my dwelling" by reference to a distinction Cross made elsewhere between skn and ysb. According to a previous argument by Cross skn is used in the sense of "to tent", and refers to Yahweh's immanence in his shrine; ysb is used in the sense of "to dwell", and is not usually used of the deity. Schreiner's argument is that since ysb is used of human dwelling, this unusual instance when applied to God means that God will dwell in a temple. Cross reassesses his earlier distinction, and concludes that it does not hold for the material dated at the time of the Nathan's oracle. Cross cites I Sam iv 4 "enthroned on the cherubim", yoseb hakkerubim, Exod xv 17 "the dais of your throne", makon lesibteka, and I Kgs viii 12, liskon, as examples of ysb used of God. He maintains that the distinction does hold for later texts, such as the priestly code. Cross's reference to I Kgs viii 12, however, is imprecise because it is the verb skn that is used in this verse in reference to God; ysb is used in I Kgs viii 13 (LXX, vs 53), but it refers to Solomon's dwelling and not God's. Nevertheless, Cross claims that it is not unusual that ysb be used of God's dwelling, but insists that the translation of lesibtî should be in mythological sense of "for my [God's] enthronement". 70

<sup>70</sup> Cross, "The Ideology of Kingship in the Era of the Empire: Conditional Covenant and Eternal Decree", pp.245-246.

Cross does not argue that vs 5 rules out the possibility of God's dwelling in a temple, but simply that Yahweh preferred the tent to a temple.

Cross seeks next to show why the unity of the passage cannot be advocated on the basis of a play on the word "house". Cross does recognise that the royal palace is compared with the divine palace with the words bet David and bet Yahweh. The explication of this relation, however, only begins later in the oracle in vs 8. But Cross says that a new oracular formula is present in vs 8, thus indicating a distinct source. Vs 11 focuses on the bet David, as Cross translates it, "the dynasty of David". Vs 13 says that one of David's sons will build a house or temple for God; the "symbolic symmetry", as Cross call it, on the word "house" is Dtr, but not original. Vs 14 is a liturgical fragment worked into the sequence which was borrowed from the Canaanite context of divine kingship. The Lord is to be the father, and the descendant of David will be the son. David's house in vss 11b and 16 is eternal and secure. The Canaanite fragment substantiates this eternal aspect of the covenant because the Canaanite formula also affirms perpetual or eternal kingship. The bringing together of these diverse elements, vss 1-7, vss 8-16, the Canaanite fragments, and the prayer of David in vss 17-29, are the work of the Deuteronomist.

Cross argues that the similarities in form between II Samuel vii and the Egyptian Königsnovelle suggested by S. Herrmann are unconvincing. First, Cross says that the Egyptian sources teach that the king is divine; such a parallel to the human king David is inappropri-

ate. Moreover. Cross considers that the most immediate source for notions of divine kingship are Canaanite and not Egyptian. Second, the Konigsnovelle tells of the origin of the building project, but the building is not built in II Samuel vii. Third, the interruption of the plans of the king are impossible in the Egyptian court. Fourth, the style of the introduction of the passage is not as similar as Herrmann suggests. The Königsnovelle depicts the general circumstances as the king sits in his hall of audience (d3dw) whereas the setting is less specific in II Sam vii 1. David simply sits in his house. Fifth, Cross argues that the phrase "to make a name" or "to make a great name" (in II Sam vii 13 "a house for my name") is not necessarily Egyptian idiom, as Herrmann argues, but is also Akkadian and Aramaic. Herrmann's argument, therefore, does not establish an Egyptian expression in II Samuel vii. Cross claims that the phrase is Dtr. idiom. Cross's criticisms of Herrmann's comparisons are correct, and there is no need to invoke the Egyptian texts to understand II Samuel vii. However, Cross's identification of the usage of "to make a name" in several Semitic languages also makes his own attempt to use it to identify a distinctive Dtr. idiom difficult.71

Cross suggests that the best case for the unity of II Samuel vii is presented in D. McCarthy's article "II Samuel 7 and the Structure of the Deuteronomic History". 72 McCarthy does not seek to recover the sources in the chapter, but argues that the chapter as a whole is

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp. 248-249.

 $<sup>^{72}</sup>$  Dennis McCarthy, "II Samuel 7 and the Structure of the Deuteronomic History", <u>JBL</u> 84 (1965), pp. 131-138.

one of the Dtr. speeches. Cross does not examine McCarthy's essay in detail, nor shall we at this point. However, McCarthy's essay causes Cross to review the themes of the Dtr. history.

What Cross adds in this essay to his account of the Dtr. themes which is not stated as strongly in the first essay we examined is an insistence on a "pattern" established in the Dtr. history. The pattern consists in 1) violation of the covenant, 2) punishment for the violation and 3) new hope. From the beginning of the history, at the time of Moses, the promise of a good land is unconditional.

Moses and his generation sin, yet the covenant is renewed with the next generation. Israel is apostate during the time of the judges, and as a result not all of the nations are cast out of the land, but the promise is reaffirmed (Judg ii 1). Cross calls this pattern a "dialectic", and claims that it is central to the Dtr. history.

After each failure there is a new beginning. The promise is unconditional.73

Cross argues that this unconditional promise of the Dtr. history is focused upon David in II Samuel vii. The reworked and finished chapter indicates that the promise is unconditional even if vss 1-7 depict the older conditional covenant of the league.

Since Cross's account of the Dtr. redaction of the sources in II Samuel vii is essential to his reading of the chapter, it is necessary to study the proof that he offers for the Dtr. redaction. Cross seeks to show the presence of Dtr. idiom which is evidence of a final

<sup>73</sup> Cross, "The Ideologies of Kingship in the Era of the Empire: Conditional Covenant and Eternal Decree", pp. 249-251.

Dtr. editing. He lists twenty-four phrases which he calls Dtr. clichés. 74 We shall examine five examples at this point. The first example is the use of the hithpael form of the verb hlk, "to walk". The verb is used in II Sam vii 6 and 7 of God's walking about. This expression is used of God outside the Dtr. history, in Gen iii 8 and Lev xxvi 12. A second phrase is "I brought (the children of Israel) from the land of Egypt" as in II Sam vii 6, ha aloti et-benê yisra el mimmisrayim. The phrase is used outside the Dtr. history in Amos ii 10 and ix 7. In a footnote Cross admits that the phrase is used outside of Dtr. material, and that it cannot not be used exclusively to identify Dtr. cliche. A third phrase "and I shall make for you a (great) name" as in II Sam vii 9, we asiti leka sem gadol, which Cross admits is found in both Egyptian and Akkadian sources, is also used outside the Dtr. history in Gen xi 4. A fourth example is the use of the word nagid; it occurs outside the Dtr. history in Ps lxxvi 13, Prov xxviii 16, Job xxix 10, xxxi 37, et al. A fifth example is "to pray the prayer", lehitpallel et-hatpilla, in vs 27, that is, the verb pll with a cognate accusative. The only other place that Cross cites for this cliche is I Kgs viii 29, and it does not actually show the same grammatical formation. McCarter lists ten examples of Dtr. idiom in his commentary on II Samuel vii; eight of these are taken from Cross's list, and we will examine them in Part II, chapter seven. McCarter explicitly rejects one of the phrases identified by Cross, heniah-lo missabib; we shall examine its usage in chapter

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., pp. 252-254.

seven as well. In each case the idioms are used with sufficient frequency outside the Dtr. history that they cannot be regarded as characteristic of Dtr. idiom.

What Cross is identifying is Hebrew idiom and Hebrew metaphor. Hebrew, like any language, has phrases that may appear in many different locations, regardless of the author or time. It is difficult to argue that these cliches or idioms are the distinctive characteristics of one writer or of a group of writers with similar intentions. Cross's task is similar to Rost's attempt to define an author by a particular style. In one of the cases the phrase is also found in texts in other Semitic languages; this makes it next to impossible to conclude that the expression is the distinctive style of a particular group of Israelite authors.

Cross concludes his study of II Samuel vii by determining what parts were originally Canaanite poetic fragments. Cross seeks to reconstruct the poetry in vii 2b,11b,14 and 16; these verses contain some type of repetition which Cross uses to create the two cola in parallelism. The most significant verse for his reading of the chapter is vs 14 in which the phrases "and I will be to him a father, and he will be to me a son", 'anî 'ehyeh-lô le'ab//wehû' yihyeh-lî leben, are placed in parallelism. The identification of these phrases as originally poetic allows Cross to suggest that the origin of the poetry is Canaanite. The ideology of kingship, then, is not essentially Israelite, but a foreign ideology is being used to bolster the import of the chapter. Cross claims that the Canaanite sonship formula presents the king as divine. The relation between father and son in

this formula is permanent or eternal. The Canaanite depiction of kings is, therefore, in contrast to the theology of kingship in the tribal league in Israel. During the reign of Solomon, Canaanite influences were being adopted in Israel. These influences are present in the Dtr. history, and specifically in the texts which were reworked by the Deuteronomist. In II Samuel vii, according to Cross, the Deuteronomist is adding the Canaanite divine kingship formula in order to strengthen his claim that the Davidic throne would be a permanent throne. To In vii 14b-16, immediately following the sonship formula, there is the assertion that the throne would be eternal. The unconditional selection is made by divine decree. The conditional covenant of the league is overruled by the decree of an eternal covenant.

The theology derived from the sources of the southern kingdom of Judaea is that the throne of David is eternal. That theology is found in its pristine form in the first Dtr. redaction, and is only later modified because of the exile of the southern kingdom. II Samuel vii in its present form represents the first Dtr. redaction.

In summary, Cross continues the distinction, present in previous writers, between the institutions of the covenant league and the institutions of the monarchy. The league represents an order in which divine stipulations are central, and the covenant is conditional. In contrast to earlier studies, Cross claims that the early monarchy of David is still governed by this conditional covenantal theology.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>75</sup> Ibid., pp. 255-260.

The conditional covenant is, therefore, one of the themes of the Dtr. history. The institution of the Solomonic monarchy led to the development of a royal Judaean theology which defended the right of the Davidic throne to continue forever. Divine election rather than law is the central part of this theology. This royal theology constitutes the second theme in the Dtr. history.

Cross proposes a double redaction theory to account for the various emphases in Noth's, von Rad's and Wolff's writings. 76 He says that the different elements arose from different historical situations, the conditional covenant from the league, and the unconditional covenant from defenders of the royal theology of Judaea at the time of Josiah. Cross essentially supports von Rad's view of the history in this first redaction. The second redaction, although modifying the unconditional theology to some extent to account for the exile, does not abandon it altogether. Moreover, since Cross accepts Rost's source divisions of the books of Samuel, II Samuel vii is not read in continuity with the chapters preceding it. The sources out of which the chapter is constructed are independent of the history of David's rise.

#### F: R. Polzin

R. Polzin has initiated an extended study of the books which make up the Dtr. history in the publication of Moses and the Deuterono-

<sup>76</sup> Cross's theory of the double redaction is continued in the work of R.D. Nelson. Richard D. Nelson, The Double Redaction of the Deuteronomistic History, Supplement Series 18, (Sheffield: JSOT, 1981). Nelson supports the redaction with a study of different texts in the books of II Samuel and I and II Kings. Nelson's account of the Dtr. history is not sufficiently different from Cross's in regard to the question of conditional or unconditional covenant to warrant study at this point.

mist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History. 77 Polzin's work marks a significant change from earlier studies of the history, and the value of the work has not been adequately determined. The first part of this study is on the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua and Judges; the second part, Polzin informs us, is on Samuel and Kings, but it is not published as yet. Polzin's work, then, is not directly on the chapters of inquiry in this study. However, with recent emphasis on the literary study of the Bible, and on structuralist readings of texts in particular. Polzin's work is an example of an alternate approach to biblical texts to that contained in previous historical studies. Polzin has, in earlier publications, shown what a structuralist reading of OT texts might consist in. 78 Polzin's publication on the Dtr. history is a continuation of earlier pursuits. It is sufficient here to summarise the essential direction of Polzin's work, and its implications for the study of the whole of the Dtr. history. It will become apparent that Polzin's study is an attempt to account for contradictions in the Dtr. history which we have already probed through the examination of previous studies.

Polzin begins his study by pointing out where his inquiry agrees and disagrees with previous work on the Dtr. history. Polzin notes the difference between diachronic and synchronic studies; a diachronic study seeks to show the relation between the text and an

<sup>77</sup> R. Polzin, Moses and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomic History, (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), I.

<sup>78</sup> R. Polzin, <u>Biblical Structuralism</u>, (Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977).

external referent, and a synchronic study examines the text as it is.

Historical criticism is a diachronic type of study, and the new criticism or structuralism is the best known representative of synchronic study.

Polzin sets out three principles in evaluating the two types of study. First, historical study is necessary for an adequate scholarly understanding of the text. Polzin does not see any need to argue this first point because biblical criticism admits the necessity of historical study. Polzin's second point is quoted from his book:

A competent literary analysis of biblical material is necessary for even a <u>preliminary</u> scholarly understanding of what this ancient text means. [The underlining replaces italics in Polzin's statement.]<sup>79</sup>

Polzin's emphasis on the word "preliminary" is essential; he argues that the study of biblical texts must begin with literary or synchronic study, and historical study may be included at a later date. Polzin insists that this order is only one of operation and not one of rank; he does not seek to give literary study priority over historical study. Third, Polzin suggests that both literary and historical study of the Bible uncover principles within the text that are at fundamental odds with the nature of the literary or historical study conducted on them. In particular, both literary and historical study are founded upon the transference of scientific methodology of the natural sciences to textual studies. Polzin writes:

For the scholar who confronts the question whether the Bible has any claim on him, any literary or historical criticism modeled after the supposed objectivity of the natural sciences

<sup>79</sup> Polzin, Moses and the Deuteronomist, p. 5.

will be seen to operate according to hermeneutic principles that are in conflict with the message and spirit of the biblical text: the message that this scholarship uncovers would reject the very method by which it is uncovered. 80

Polzin does not resolve this conflict, and he does not claim that literary study of the biblical text solves it in a better way than historical study. He simply expresses it as a dilemma. He seeks only to carve out a place for the operational priority of literary study while not denying the value of historical study. The place he gives to historical study is clarified later.

In a brief summary of work done on the Dtr. history, Polzin concludes that the work done has been disappointing. He argues that there are two reasons for this. First, Polzin claims that there are unacceptable criteria for the dating of material. Second, the literary study of the texts is still in its infancy. 81 To exemplify the first criticism, Polzin shows that von Rad's distinction between the Sinai and settlement traditions is based on the notion that a shorter historical creed is always older than a longer one. Polzin questions the "shorter is older" guideline, thus rendering von Rad's diachronic reference point invalid. 82 The second point, the infancy of literary study of the Bible, is exemplified in the course of Polzin's book.

<sup>80 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 7. As we observed in our study of Noth and von Rad, and Wellhausen and Gressmann in the first chapter, historical writing according to these scholars is thought to be best described as "objective", and objectivity means that historical writing is independent from religious belief. Even von Rad and Wolff, who seek to show the confessional nature of texts, work from this positivist account of history, as von Rad explicitly says.

<sup>81 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 13.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

Polzin also claims that the fundamental question over the purpose of the Dtr. history, whether it is to show irreversible doom or a destruction muted by grace, is essentially unanswered in previous studies on the biblical books. The debates between the positions of Noth, von Rad, Wolff and Cross have not, according to Polzin, come any closer to the resolution of the basic problem of reading the history. Polzin admits that Cross may well have the best answer to the contradictions. In reference to the weakness of Noth's writings on the Dtr. history, Polzin sets out the purpose of literary study:

the function of literary investigation of a work must be able to explain, not deny, its obvious features.<sup>83</sup>

The theme of conditional hope is essential to the Dtr. history, and, hence, Noth's valuation of it is incomplete.

Therefore, Polzin begins his literary investigation. Incorporating the distinction of V.N. Voloshinov between "reported speech" and "reporting speech", Polzin argues that what is present in the Dtr. history, including the entire book of Deuteronomy, is not simply one voice. "Reported speech" is the speech of someone who is reported by the narrator. "Reporting speech" is the statement of the narrator which interrupts the narrative, and which adds what the narrator says about the speech that he has reported. Polzin's procedure is to point out two points of view found within the texts, one contained in the reported speech, and one contained in the reporting speech.

The points of view may disagree with one another, expressing what

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

would appear as contradictions.<sup>84</sup> In Polzin's analysis the text is not a monologue, but a dialogue between two different voices. A monologue would present only one point of view whereas a dialogue presents two points of view.

What is necessary is to determine where the "ultimate semantic authority" of the text is: Polzin uses "ultimate semantic authority" in the sense of what he calls "ideological stance" or "evaluative point of view of the work." This ideological stance of the texts may reside in either the reported speech or in the reporting speech. In a monologue the ideological evaluation is a single dominating point of view with all other views subordinated to it. In a dialogue one point of view may apparently dominate, but have a hidden second voice which either qualifies or opposes the first voice. A study of the texts would show in which of the two voices the ultimate semantic authority is or whether it is found in the opposition of two voices.

The book of Deuteronomy is the reported speeches of Moses.

Moses in turn is reporting the speeches of God, and the words of the prophet and the words of God are for the most part the same.

But a narrator also adds reporting speech to qualify or change what

<sup>84 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 18-19.

<sup>85 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 20. Polzin appears willing, contrary to some speculation, to equate this ultimate semantic authority with the "intention" of the author, although he only speaks of the author as an implied author. The implied author is the narrator or the one who speaks the reporting speeches. See ibid., p. 24.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., p. 22.

Moses has said. In the Dtr. history this process is reversed. The reporting speech of the narrator dominates, and there are a few reported speeches of major characters or prophets. The question arises as to how much the reporting speech of the narrator changes the reported speech of Moses or other prophets, and wherein lies the ultimate semantic authority of the texts.

At this point Polzin is careful to point out that the identification of the voices in the dialogue is not a matter for historical study. Literary study must predominate since the question is a literary and not an historical one. The rest of Polzin's book is a study of the two voices in the books of Deuteronomy, Joshua and Judges.

Without entering into extensive discussion of these three books, let us see how Polzin identifies the two types of speech in Moses' first address, Deut i 1-iv 40. Reported speech predominates. Reporting speech is found in Deut i 1-5, ii 10-12, 20-23 and iii 9, 13b-14. The reporting speech, ii 10-12, for example, stands out clearly as not part of Moses' words, and serves as explanatory background. Polzin continues by suggesting that some of these reporting speeches alter the text very little while others cause more definite breaks, what he calls frame-breaks. The effect of these frame-breaks is in fact to limit the authority of Moses. We have the sense that the narrator is using the words of Moses, but they are placed in the narrator's context. Polzin calls attention to the phrase "even unto this day" or its equivalent in ii 22 and ii 14. The narrator writes

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 31.

at a different time than the time that Moses spoke to the Israelites in the land of Moab. Moses' reported speech is serving the purposes of the narrator.

Polzin turns next to the reported speech in Moses' first address. Within this reported speech, Polzin finds what he calls a "reflex" of the reporting speech of the narrator. 88 In i 37, iii 26 and iv 21-22, Moses says how the Lord was angry with him because of the people. These statements also limit Moses' unique position in Israel. Even as the reporting speeches had the effect of limiting Moses' unique position, so these reflections in the reported speech do the same thing.

But not only does this reported speech limit the unique status of Moses, the voice limits the unique status of Israel as God's elect. We learn that the children of Esau (ii 5), the children of Moab (ii 9) and the children of Ammon (ii 19) were also given a piece of land.

Polzin suggests, moreover, that in chapter iv the first voice, the reported speech, found in iv 1-28, speaks in terms of sin, judgement, exile and ends on a note of despair. This first voice is coupled with the diminishment of the unique status of Moses and Israel, and emphasises the retributive aspects of the covenant. A second voice, the reporting speech, found in iv 29-39, emphasises the unique status of Israel's election, and is summarised in God's promise to be merciful and to keep the covenant (iv 31). In summary, Polzin locates the two prongs of the dilemma that have dominated previous inquiries of the

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

Dtr. history, (i.e., the tension between unconditional promise or election of Israel and the necessity of Israel's obedience to the law) in two voices in dialogue within these chapters. The contradiction is an essential part of the text; the text was composed with full awareness of the contradiction.

Polzin does not argue which of these two ideological voices wins out in the Dtr. history; he simply says they are there. In concluding remarks to the book, he shifts the attention away from these concerns in order to establish that the fundamental function of the dialogue is to show that the word of God of the Dtr. history is not static. The book of Deuteronomy depicts Moses primarily as an interpreter of God's word or law. At points it is difficult to say whether we are hearing God's word or Moses'. Polzin writes:

The boundaries between God's word and Moses' interpretation have been deliberately blurred to illustrate the condition of all interpretation.<sup>89</sup>

The word in Deuteronomy is not immediate, transparent or univalent. Moses becomes the first interpreter, and the second voice the second interpreter, and these two levels of interpretation already in the text reveal that the word must be constantly reinterpreted. The inadequacy of holding that the laws of Deuteronomy represent an unchanging standard is indicated in Joshua and Judges as, for example, when Joshua exempts Rahab and her family from the ban, or when the Israel's obedience or disobedience to the law has no bearing upon Israel's destiny during the time of the Judges.

<sup>89 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 205.

Polzin's reading of the Dtr. history is best exemplified in two principles operating in his work. Polzin states:

The dominant hermeneutic ideology of Joshua, as uncovered by the literary approach of the preceding pages, promotes the validity of multiple and contradictory interpretations as a primary paradigm for understanding God's intervention in the affairs of men. $^{90}$ 

Although this statement is said in the context of Polzin's summary of Joshua, it is applicable to his understanding of what is possible in the entire history. Polzin attributes this insight to M. Heidegger. Polzin claims that this modern insight is also recognised by this ancient text, the Dtr. history. Polzin opposes this hermeneutical position of both Heidegger and the Deuteronomist to that of E.D. Hirsch who defends the necessity of historical study to determine the original sense of the text. Hirsch seeks only to determine an original author's intent, and to see whatever is added by later interpreters as subordinate to that. Hirsch rules out multiple and contradictory readings of the text.

The second principle, also derived from Heidegger, is that all readings are historical. There can be no ideology of a text that is true for all situations. Polzin says all reading is provisional, and will be superseded by later readings. Thus, Deuteronomy cannot have a teaching which can be used to judge the situation at the time of Judges. Although Polzin initially appears as if he is opposed to historical study, he in fact radically subordinates all texts to

<sup>90</sup> Ibid., p. 208.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., pp. 211-212.

historical situations. In this formulation law cannot be understood as a kind of permanent obligation.

In summary, Polzin's study of the Dtr. history begins with an initial operational priority of literary over historical study, although he admits that historical study is of value. As he undertakes this literary study, he discovers that the Dtr. history is not a monologue but a dialogue between two different voices. These voices often represent the much debated problem of the purpose of the Dtr. history, that is, whether the history depicts the reasons for Israel's exile, or whether it depicts the fulfillment of God's promises.

Whereas previous studies sought to relate the contradictions in the text either to 1) the contradiction between the purpose of the Dtr. and the purposes of the sources (so Noth, von Rad and Wolff) or 2) to different social and historical situations (so Nicholson and Cross), Polzin leaves them as parts of the text. According to Polzin, texts are not static; they arise out of a definite historical situation, and multiple and contradictory readings are equally valid.

### Summary to Chapter Two

We can make the following conclusions. First, the theory that the books of the Dtr. history were compilations of two continuous Pentateuchal sources was replaced in the work of M. Noth by the theory that a number of shorter sources were placed end to end and edited by a Dtr. during the exile (1943). In the books of I and II Samuel, the arguments by Rost for shorter, unified sources was necessary for Noth's work to have the direction that it did. Noth's study was readily accepted: four years after its publication (1947), von Rad

confirmed Noth's rejection of the theory of continuous Pentateuchal sources. Subsequent study of Deuteronomy through II Kings has worked within the initial directions of Noth. There have been debates only over 1) the precise delineation of the sources used by the Deuteronomist and 2) the purpose of the history as a whole.

Second, the central problem in understanding the purpose of the Dtr. history is in determining the place it gives to obedience to divine stipulations. Is obedience to law necessary for Israel if God is to fulfill his promises toward her? Is the exile a final judgement on Israel? Is the Dtr. history a story of God's unconditional favour toward Israel regardless of Israel's disobedience? Various texts in the Dtr. history lend themselves to one of the two main answers to this question. II Samuel vii is the most important chapter in the entire history with which to raise these questions because of its apparent unconditional promise to David's house. There appear to be three possible solutions to the contradictions that arise in the Dtr. history: 1) the texts appear to be contradictory but are not, 2) the texts are contradictory, and the contradictions arise from the different historical situations in which they originated or were redacted or 3) the contradictions are essential to the texts as a kind of compositional strategy to show that the Deuteronomist does not speak univocally.

Third, the studies which are concerned with the Dtr. redaction of the narrative Deuteronomy through II Kings identify particular texts and particular stylistic elements as significant for the discovery of the purposes of the Deuteronomist. There is in this type of

study a movement away from the story-line of the narrative. What unifies the narrative is what Wellhausen perceptively called the "artificial frame", and not the story itself. The significance of this observation can be stated as follows. The story or narrative may not indeed depict the matter of an unconditional or conditional covenant in the same way at all points. II Samuel vii certainly presents an unconditional covenant with the house of David. The promise made in II Samuel vii does not, however, imply that David was unconditionally accepted for these promises from the time of his anointing in I Samuel xvi. Is, perhaps, the covenant with David conditional prior to II Samuel vii? Does the story between I Samuel xvi-II Samuel vii provide answers to this problem? If the story in II Samuel i-vii can be read as a narrative sequence, then II Samuel vii is not an isolated unit, as Rost's work supposes. II Samuel vii may be the culmination of a longer stretch of narrative which addresses the question of the nature of the covenant. Is the purpose of the story from Deuteronomy through II Kings discovered through the identification of Dtr. insertions scattered throughout these books or is it embodied in the rhetorical force of the story-line?

# Chapter Three

Chapter three reviews the major studies devoted to the source which is usually called the history of David's rise to power.

# A: H.-U. Nübel

Following Rost's general delineation of the sources of I and II Samuel, the first major study on the story of David's rise to power is a doctoral dissertation written by H.-U. Nübel in 1959. The title of the study is <u>Davids Aufsteig in der frühe israelitischer</u> Geschichtsschreibung. 1

Nübel's study is an unusual synthesis of some of the arguments of early attempts to distinguish Pentateuchal sources in the books of Joshua to II Kings with certain of Rost's arguments supporting shorter, more unified sources. Nübel accepts Rost's argument that there is a source of David's rise, but he seeks to show that it is composed of an initial foundational writing (Grundschrift, abbreviated to Gr. in his study) which had been edited by someone at a later date (Bearbeiter, abbreviated to B.). The Gr. is a precursor of J, and B. is the redaction by a circle of priests; it is not difficult to see that Gr. and B. represent two Pentateuchal-like sources. Moreover, these two documents received further editorial changes due to the Dtr. historian.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> H.-U. Nübel, Davids Aufsteig in der frühe israelitischer Geschichtsshreibung, (Bonn: Freidrich-Wilhelmms-Universität dissertation, 1959).

Nübel is aware of the arguments that had been made by Gressmann and Noth that the material in I and II Samuel could only be rightly understood through an extended examination of the history of each individual tradition or blocks of tradition (die überlieferungsgeschichtliche Studien). Nübel argues, however, that the emphasis on the history of individual traditions does not account for the literary characteristics found in the books of Samuel. The support for Nübel's argument for continuous sources is found in the continuity that exists between pericopes which are usually considered to have had different origins and different authors. Amongst several examples that Nübel cites as proof, he calls attention to the literary connections between the supposed two meetings of David with Saul (I Sam xvi 14-23 and xvii 55-xviii 2).

K. 17 setzt dennoch im Mittelstück (V. 31-39) die in K. 16 geschilderte Bekanntschaft der beiden voraus; das Stück 16, 14-23 setzt sich aber 18,10f,; 19,9f. (20,33a?) mit genauem Anklang, also literarisch fort.<sup>2</sup>

Chapters xvi and xvii are interlaced (verflochten), and attempts to separate pericopes do not account for what is present there. The argument for two continuous sources, or more specifically, a main source which has been edited, provides a better explanation of 1) the presence of continuity between pericopes and 2) the presence of various types of repetition and insertions in the narrative. Núbel thus rejects the attempt to distinguish independent pericopes of separate origin in the way that Gressmann, Noth and Rost had advocated. In this

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., pp. 11-12.

argument Nübel reveals more agreement with the understanding of the sources proposed by Wellhausen and Eissfeldt.

Nübel's study is composed of a stylistic analysis of the chapters in the source of David's rise (I Samuel xvi-II Samuel xii), a discussion of historical considerations of the origin and purposes of the two sources and a clarification of an earlier argument made by Ed. Meyer that behind the history of David's rise (Vorgeschichte) there lies the rubble (Trümmer) of a great work of history, older than J, which is the foundation of Israel's historical writing and historical consciousness. Nübel's aim is to determine the extent to which the Gr. is this great historical work.

Núbel's detailed study of the individual chapters reveals the stylistic aspects which cause him to separate the Gr. from the B.

The bulk of II Samuel i is from the Gr.; there are only a small number of insertions by the B. The difference between the two accounts of Saul's death in I Samuel xxxi and II Samuel i are not due, according to Nübel, to different sources. Both I Samuel xxxi and II Samuel i belong to the Gr. and have only minor additions by B. He judges that the narrative contains a false report, and this is not a basis for the division of the chapters into distinct sources. Nübel cites an example of Doeg's report to Saul in I Sam xxii 9-10 which is not identical to what Ahimelech is said to have done for David in I Samuel xxi. Nübel claims that the Gr. in II Samuel i presents how David came to know of Saul's death.

The B. can be detected at other points. Vs 1 is an addition by B. because it is an attempt to show that Saul's defeat and death

at the hand of the Philistines is contrasted to David's victory over the Amalekites through the attempt to make it appear that both events occurred on the same day. If vs 1 is removed such an identification is impossible. Vs 5 also contains an addition because the phrase hanna'ar hammagid 10 is repeated in both vss 5 and 6 and is therefore stylistically difficult. In vs 12b the phrase "and upon the people of the Lord and upon the house of Israel" is added by B. Nübel argues that the defeat does not bring down the "house of Israel" by the sword, but results only in the deaths of Saul, his sons and a few men. What is being included by B. is the emphasis that the king rules over all the people of God. Vss 13-16 is an insertion by B. because it separates the mourning rites from the lament. Moreover, vs 13 has the same repeated phrase as vss 5 and 6. Vs 18 is an addition because it is the superscription to the lament. Vs 20 contains a motif used by B.; that is, the Philistines are known as the uncircumcised. This designation is also found in other places where there are insertions by B. such as I Sam xxxi 4. Nübel's study of this chapter shows that the bulk of the chapter is part of the Gr., although there are a few additions made by B. to make the Gr. conform to later expectations.

II Samuel ii has several insertions by B. as well. The opening phrase, wayhî 'aharê-ken, is an insertion by B. in order to link David's accession to the throne in Hebron by chronological sequence to the death of Saul. Vs 9b has an insertion because of the change in preposition from 'el to 'al. The first three territories listed represent an older formulation of the territories ruled by Saul, while the last three were thought to be proper designations of this

kingdom which are introduced, albeit improperly, by B. at a later date. Vs 10a is inserted by the Deuteronomist.<sup>3</sup>

B. makes insertions into II Samuel iii at several points. Vss 2-6a disturb the movement of the narrative, and are, therefore, an insertion. Vs 17a is an insertion; originally Abner's conversation is with the Benjamites, and, thus, vs 19a needs to be substituted in place of 17a. B. is, at a later point, attempting to identify all Israel with the Benjamites. Vs 18b adds a theological reason for David's accession to the throne in addition to the practical reason stated in vs 17b; the theological reason was added by B. Vss 28-30 are an addition to the movement of the narrative which flows well from vss 27 to 31 without any apparent awareness of the need for verses in between. Vss 38-39 are also insertions because they are unnecessary for the story. The insertions of vss 28-30 and 38-39 are made in order to insist that the anointed of God is free from blood-guilt in the death of Abner. 4

In chapter iv, vss 2b and 3 are insertions, although the notoriously problematic vs 4 is considered part of the original Gr. because it is indispensible for II Samuel ix (II Samuel ix is considered by Nübel to be a part of the history of David's rise). The repetition in vs 7 of what has been said in vs 6 is due to an insertion by the B. of 7a. Vs 10 is an addition because it recalls chapter i, but in contrast to chapter i where the Amalekite is presented as

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 67-69.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., pp. 69-72.

being in an unlucky position, the B. here refers to the Amalekite as one who brings good news (mebasser). The conception of what has happened in chapter i is different between the Gr. and the B.5

In chapter v, 2b is inserted by the B. because it presents a theological reason for David's coronation over Israel. Vs 3a repeats what has been said in vs 1a and is, therefore, an insertion by the B. Vs 7b is an insertion by the B. The reason that Nubel gives for this is that Jerusalem is only named the "city of David" by the Gr. in vs 9 but not at this early point in vs 7. Vs 10b is by the B. because it is a theological and a support formula (Gottes- und Beistandsformel). Vs 12b adds "my people Israel" in order to stress that David's rule is not simply for his own sake, but for all the people of God. Vss 13-16 are Dtr. Nubel argues that the accounts of the two wars are, contrary to other studies, a part of the original Gr. Moreover, the account of the two wars follows David's victory over Jerusalem. He argues that měṣūdâ is the standard expression for David's residence; the měşûdâ in both vss 7,9 and 17 is Jerusalem. Since the meşûdâ in vs 17 is identified in vss 7 and 9, vss 17-25 cannot truly be placed before vss 4-16.

Nubel includes chapter vi as part of the history of David's rise. He argues, however, that II Samuel viii and ix are to be placed between vi 1 and vi 2. Chapters vi and vii, thus, conclude the source. Chapter viii follows from vi 1 because 1) the war continues following the two battles with the Philistines in v in order to establish David's

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 72-73.

kingdom and 2) the large number of choice men in Israel is more appropriate for the introduction to a war than the movement of the ark.

Chapter ix follows chapter viii because it is consistent with David's attempt to placate the supporters of Saul's throne.

The B. inserts the following verses into vi: vss 5,9,13,14b,15 and 18; these verses include mention of David's sacrifice and music or rejoicing. They are insertions by priestly writers to change the import of the story to include the priesthood. The insertion of bet yisrael in vss 2,5 and 15 are also insertions by the B. Contrary to Rost, however, the Gr. does include those verses which comprise the scene of Michal's ridicule of David.

In vii, the B. makes insertions into the chapter in vss 4b,8a aa bb,8b,9a,10,11a aa,15,16,21b,25-27a aa and 27b. The Dtr. historian inserts vii 2-4a,5a cc-7,13a,14 and 22b-24. The B. includes those places where 1) there is a <u>Botensformel</u>, <u>kōh 'āmar YHWH</u>, or some variation, 2) where God is called Zebaoth or 3) where David is said to be king over all Israel. The Gr. focuses primarily on David rather than the people of God as a whole.<sup>6</sup> The prayer of David to God is at the end of the entire history. It summarises the main point of the Gr., namely, to show the relation between the Lord and David.

Numbel substantiates his arguments for the differentiation of a source and a redaction by drawing up a list of the vocabulary (Wortschatz) of the two distinct authors. Numbel calls this list a study of the style of the authors. He uses Rost as an example of

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 82-91.

what this stylistic analysis shows about the authors. Vocabulary is the mark of the individuality of an author; two authors and therefore two sources can be distinguished by their vocabulary. Nübel, however, is not critical of any of the inadequacies of counting the frequency of word usage in order to determine style.

In the concluding section of his dissertation Nübel argues for the dating and purpose of both the Gr. and the B. The dating of the Gr., Nübel suggests, is near to the actual time of David. Nübel writes: "Die als bekannt vorausgesetzten Tatsachen und die anschaulichen Einzelnachrichten weisen die Entstehung der Gr. zeitlich in Davids Nähe." As far as the purpose of the Gr., Nübel has two views which he expresses at different points and which are not in complete harmony. First, he says that the history depicts a David who rises to power through his political strategies. David seeks to win the support of the people, and through this support, to have access to the throne. For example, he writes:

Dies zeigt das neue Ziel seiner [David] Politik; er will nicht gegen Saul antreten, sondern neben ihm sich Verdienste erwerben, die ihm die Gunst 'ganz Israel' erhalten oder neu gewinnen, wenn Sauls Durchgreifen zünachst die Gemüter eingeschüchtert haben sollte.9

David secures the popularity of the amphictyony through the defeat of surrounding enemies and the transport of the ark back to Israel.

Nübel writes: "Davids entscheidende Tat war die Lösung des Saul prob-

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 100-121.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Ibid., p. 124.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 131.

lems; er hat die Amphiktyonie mit dem Konigtum ausgesohnt." David was even able to summon 30,000 men to go with him to war in II Sam vi 1. Thus, David is presented as being a political strategist.

Second, Nubel also writes as if the central purpose of the Gr. is to reveal a particular sense of what history and historical writing are. The Gr. shows that God directs history so that the one who is anointed (I Sam xvi 1-13) will indeed come to power. The events of the story and God's word or actions are one and the same thing. Nubel writes:

Die Ereignisse selber reden 'Gottes Wort'. Das Wort tritt deutend am Anfang und Ende der Darstellung selbständig hervor. Jahwes Wort, der Gang der Geschichte und ihre Darstellung haben ein und dasselbe Ziel. Wort und Ereignis treten sich nicht entgegen. 11

History is the fulfillment of God's promise, and is, therefore, fundamentally hopeful. What happens must be God's will. David stands in a relation of trust (<u>Vertrauensverhältnis</u>) to God who is David's lord. Through this identification of God's word with history, Nubel finds the answer to Ed. Meyer's question regarding the origin of historical writing in ancient Israel. Nübel writes:

Wir fanden unversehens Antwort auf eine Frage, die Ed. Meyer sich nicht gestellt hat. Worin wurzelt denn das "lebendige Interesse an den wirklichen Ereignissen", wenn nicht in dem Glauben, dass ihr Fluss Vertrauen zu dem göttlichen Meister begründet? Für den Christen ist dieses Vertrauensverhältnis in Geschichte Jesu und nicht David begründet, aber in beiden Fällen wird eine vergangene, wird eine fremde Geschichte zur

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 139.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. 142.

Offenbarung Gottes als des lebendigen Herrn; ein Herr weist sich durch Taten aus. 12

The Gr. shows the theological origin of the philosophy of history of the source. The Gr. is the first history to be written, and later historical writing in the OT follows the same pattern. Historical writing in the OT, according to Nübel, is religious. The motive for its creation is to show that God's word and event are the same. In this affirmation Nübel distinguishes himself from earlier writers such as Wellhausen and Noth who argued that the early historical writings were independent of 'theology'.

The B. is done by the same circle that produced the Elijah pericopes at the end of I Kings. Nübel agrees with a study done by G. Fohrer on these Elijah pericopes and notices certain similarities between the emphasis of the B. and this circle. The similarities exist in several areas. First, there is a stress on YHWH as God. The formula, YHWH 'ĕlōnê yiśrā'ēl, is found in both. Second, there is an emphasis on repentance. Third, both are written by priests. Fourth, both exhibit a conception of historical writing that is different than the Gr. Nübel writes:

Das 'Wort' ist noch nicht 'geschichtsschopferisch', da es nie in Frage gestellt wurde. Ereignis und Wort stehen nebeneinander. 13

There is not an exact identification between God's word and the events of history. The prophets speak God's word even if the kings do not carry it out. Prophets, then, take on an important role in the account

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 148.

of history of the  $B.^{14}$  Fifth, the circle of editors is not interested in the success of an individual, such as David, but wishes to show God's relation to all the people of God. The insertions made into the Gr. are due to these concerns of B.

In summary, Nübel combines two views regarding the nature of the sources in I and II Samuel. He accepts, at least in part, Rost's divisions of the ark narrative, the succession narrative and the history of David's rise. He continues to support the existence of a history of David's rise, but extends the boundaries further than Rost to include the narrative from I Samuel xvi-II Samuel xii. At the same time, Nübel's study is indebted to those who argued that there are two continuous sources running through the books of Samuel. This is especially evident in his rejection of the investigation of the history of traditions and in the use of two major source divisions, Gr. and B., in the books. Moreover, Nübel's account of the final redaction of this narrative is similar to that argued in Pentateuchal criticism because, except for the additions by the Deuteronomist, the final editors are priests.

Nübel is interested in studying the origins of historical depiction in earlier Israelite literature. The narrative of David's rise, and in particular, the Gr., represents the first example of historical writing in western civilization. The endeavour to write historical narrative is first motivated by the endeavour to give a theological account of events. Nübel, however, is not entirely consis-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ibid., p.149.

tent in attributing theological motives to this history work because he describes David as operating out of political ambition as he ascends to the throne. Or, to state Nübel's double emphasis another way, if the history shows a politically ambitious David, then the history is also saying that God who is the direct cause of all actions in the narrative is also the real cause of David's actions. David's ambition is given theological justification.

### B: A. Weiser

Weiser published an article on the history of David's rise in 1966 entitled "Die Legitimation des Königs David. Zur Eigenart und Entstehung der sogen. Geschichte von Davids Aufsteig". 15 The title of the article is a summary of Weiser's thesis that the source functions as a legitimation of David's kingship.

Weiser's argument hinges on a distinction he makes between the source called the history of David's rise and the source immediately following it, the history of the succession to David's throne (<a href="https://doi.org/10.1001/journal.org/">Thronfolgegeschichte</a>). He summarises the distinction he makes between the two sources as follows:

Schon ein überschauender Vergleich mit der in 2 Sam. ix einsetzenden Thronfolgegeschichte lässt einige Züge erkennen, durch die sich die Struktur des vorausgehenden Erzählungs-komplexes von dem Aufbau der Thronfolgegeschichte unterscheidet und abhebt, was auf verschiedene Verfasser hindeutet. Während die Thronfolgegeschichte ein mit künstlerischer Gestaltungs-kraft geformtes Werk ist, in dem die Einzelszenen ineinander greifen, so dass kein Stück in Zusammenhang entbehrlich ist, aber auch nichts fehlt, was zum Verständnis der einzelnen Erzählungen notwendig ist, ergibt sich bei den Erzählungen

<sup>15</sup> A. Weiser, "Die Legitimation des Königs David. Zur Eigenart und Entstehung der sogen. Geschichte von Davids Aufstieg," VT 16 (1966), pp. 325-354.

der Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids kein solch in sich geschlossenes Bild. Zwar ist auch heir nicht zu verkennen, dass eine ordnende Hand am Werk war, die, wie die erzählerischen Verknüpfungen der einzelnen Stücke noch deutlich machen, bestrebt war, diese in den Rahmen einer zeitlichen Abfolge einzugliedern, und damit die Absicht verrät, eine Art "Geschichte" -darstellung zu geben, die besonders dort auffällt, wo ein sachlicher Zusammenhang mit dem unmittelbar vorhergehenden Erzählungsstuck fehlt. 16

Whereas the succession narrative is a work formed with artistic genius (künstlerischer Gestaltungskraft), with each individual scene catching hold of (greifen) the next so that no piece is unnecessary, the narrative of David's rise is not such an integrated picture (geschlossenes Bild). The succession narrative is composed of individual scenes (Einzelszenen), not individual pieces (einzelnen Stucke). The narrative of David's rise is a composition of various types of tradition with independent origins. Moreover, an ordinary hand, not a hand with artistic genius, incorporated the different elements to make up the narrative of David's rise. This ordinary hand arranged the elements in chronological sequence (zeitliche Abfolge) with the intent to represent historical narrative, even though there are places where the factual connection of one part of the narrative with what precedes it is questionable.

The parts of the narrative in II Samuel i-vii that presuppose a different historical situation than what immediately precede them are II Sam ii 1, v 17, the insertions of the lists of the sons of David in ii 2-5 and v 14-16 and the reiteration of the report of Saul's death in II Sam i 1-16. Weiser also supports his argument by pointing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 329-330.

out that the early part of the source also reveals similar historical problems. Another situation is presupposed before I Sam xxiii 15, xxxi 1, xviii 6, xxviii 1, and the death and burial of Samuel is repeated at two points, I Sam xxv 1 and xxviii 3.

Weiser concludes from these historical problems that the author of the narrative used independent traditions, and placed them in the order they are now. In contrast to the succession narrative, Weiser says that the narrative of David's rise has a mosaic character. This character is further demonstrated in the inclusion of pieces of poetry in I Sam xviii 7b and II Sam i 17-27, iii 33-34.

Weiser summarises his account of the composite nature of the narrative as follows:

Die Aufstiegsgeschichte ist nicht wie jene ein Werk aus einem Guss, sondern eine Komposition von einzelnen, in Gestalt und Umfang verschiedenen Überlieferungselementen, die den Schluss unausweichlich machen, dass der Verfasser mit vorgegenbenem Material gearbeitet hat. 18

What unifies the narrative finally is not so much the artistic quality of the depiction of the characters, although the narrative of Abigail in I Samuel xxv contains both artistic depiction of character and dramatic suspense (dramatische Spannung); the unification is accomplished by the presence of common motifs, such as the battles with the Philistines or David's flight from Saul. The historical problems and the diversity of the narrative are evidence of the original indepen-

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., p. 331.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 331.

dence of the pieces of the narrative. Moreover, the narrative betrays a common hand, that is, an inept hand at work. 19

Weiser says that the narrative of David's rise begins with I Sam xvi 1 which therefore includes David's anointing by Samuel to be king. Weiser readily admits that I Sam xvi 1-13 is not as old as other pericopes in the narrative, and therefore is less historical. 20 But to the author the historical veracity of the pericope is less central than the value it has for the overall purpose of the source. The placement of I Sam xvi 1-13 at the beginning of the narrative is an attempt to show that David was not a self-made man, but was legitimately appointed by God. This legitimization of David's kingship is the purpose of the source as a whole, and the narrative has been assembled in order to confirm David's place. Weiser calls this purpose of the narrative its Tendenz, the 'slant'. He repeats the word Tendenz often in the article; it becomes the central way of describing the purpose of the narrative. I Sam xvi 1-13 is included in the source, not because it is as historical as other parts of the narrative, but because it sustains the author's Tendenz.

The <u>Tendenz</u> of the source is also expressed in two motifs.

The first is the expression "God is with him", found in I Sam xviii

14,28 and II Sam v 10. The second is the frequent consultation with
the oracle of God, found in xxii 2,4,9, xxx 7, II Sam ii 1, v 19 and

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 332

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p. 326.

23. Both motifs seek to show that David is king due to the will of God. The Tendenz of the source is religious.<sup>21</sup>

Weiser continues his argument by saying that David is depicted as the legitimate ruler of the sacral tribal confederacy. Therefore, the anointing of David by Samuel in I Sam xvi 1-13 is all the more central to the source because it confirms a continuity with the traditions of the tribal confederacy concerning Samuel and Saul.

Weiser argues that the source does not end at II Sam v 12 as Rost thought it did. Weiser claims that the source also includes both II Samuel vi and vii. He does not deny that II Samuel vi may originally have been part of an ark narrative. But the final section of the ark narrative, II Samuel vi, is included in the narrative of David's rise. Weiser summarises Rost's arguments against the inclusion of II Samuel vi in the narrative of David's rise into one argument: he says that Rost excluded the chapter because it does not contribute to the greater glory of the king, namely, David. Weiser suggests that the movement of the ark to the king's palace in Jerusalem is for the honour of the king:

dass sie jedoch in ihrer jetzigen Stellung und Form mindestens auch mit der Ehre des Königs sich befasst, ist angesichts von vi 21 und dem liturgischen Reflex, den diese Überlieferung in Ps. cxxxii hinterlassen hat, kaum zu leugnen.<sup>22</sup>

The conclusion to the ark narrative, thus, has a purpose for the author of the narrative of David's rise. Moreover, the references to

<sup>21 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 335. On page 339 Weiser calls the <u>Tendenz</u> of the source "der religious Grundtendenz".

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., p. 344.

the conflict between Michal and David at the end of the chapter, which Rost separates from the rest of chapter vi, are a vital part of this chapter according to Weiser. Weiser's argument consists in the reference to the promise of the kingship made to David in vi 21. This promise (Königsverheissungen) is a central theme of the source as a whole, and the segment on the conflict between David and Michal is, therefore, a continuation of the purposes of the source.<sup>23</sup>

If it is admitted that II Samuel vi is part of the source, then the question arises whether II Samuel vii is also part of the source. Weiser concludes that it is. The initial connection between chapters vi and vii consists in the reference in vii 2 to the ark of God dwelling in a house of curtains. The statement presupposes what has happened in vi. Weiser rejects arguments which suggest that the forms of chapter vii, that is, the prophecy of Nathan and the prayer of David, are not consistent with the narrative of David's rise. Weiser claims that these arguments are made because the source is thought to be an historical depiction (in historischer Darstellung). But when it is realised that the author is using pre-existing traditions (vorgefundene Überlieferung) of uneven historical value, then the variety of forms in II Samuel vii is not problematic. At this point Weiser repeats his central argument about the nature of the source:

Andererseits hat sich gezeigt, dass er bei aller Bemühung, die verwendeten Traditionen an einem zeitlich geordneten Faden aufzureihen, die Tendenz hat, den David von Jahwe erwählten und geführten König über Israel zu legitimieren.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 344.

<sup>24 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 345.

The source cannot be considered an evenly constructed history.

Weiser also accepts the argument of S. Herrmann that chapter vii is patterned after the Egyptian Königsnovelle. This pattern accounts for the unity of the chapter, and combines the elements of the plan for building the temple and the promise made to Solomon. The chapter functions as a legitimation of both David's throne, and of the throne of his son Solomon.

At this point in his argument Weiser suggests that the historical background for the source is the kingdom of Solomon. The line of Solomon needed to be defended against rebellion, either in the form of rebellion within the tribe of Judah, as in the case of Absalom (II Samuel xv), or from renewed animosity from the Saulides, as in the cases of Shimei (II Sam xvi 5-8) and Sheba (II Samuel xx). The way to defend the Judaean monarchs was to give them theological legitimation (göttliche Legitimation). The purpose of the source as a whole is the theological justification of David's kingship, and through David, the kingship of Solomon. II Samuel vii serves to legitimate both David and Solomon and, thus, is an essential part of the story of David's rise.<sup>25</sup>

Weiser speaks even more strongly of the need to include chapter vii as part of the narrative of David's rise.

Die Fermate, in der die Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids mit 2 Sam. vii ausklingt, umschliesst in nuce Anfang, Motive und Ziel der Gesamtkomposition; sie ist der Höhe- und Endpunkt, der wie oft in ähnlichen Fällen erst das volle Verständnis des Ganzen ermöglicht, zugleich aber auch der Kernpunkt, an dem

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 347.

die Erforschung der Eigenart und näheren Entstehungsverhältnisse der Aufstiegsgeschichte einzusetzen hat.<sup>26</sup>

Chapter vii is the kernel (Kernpunkt) which explains the purpose
of the whole composition.

Weiser concludes his article by reflections on the beginning of historical writing in ancient Israel. He says that the awakening of historical consciousness (Geschichtsbewusstseins) began at the time of David and Solomon. The source which most perfectly depicts this awakening of historical writing is the succession narrative.

The narrative of David's rise, although it shows the growing awareness of historical interests, is not the achievement that the succession narrative is. The succession narrative is the standard of the artistic creation of historical writing by which the historical veracity of other sources, such as the narrative of David's rise, can be evaluated. The narrative of David's rise has a religious tendency (Tendenz) which is not consistent with historical consciousness. Weiser writes:

aber die Entstehung einer Geschichtsbetrachtung von solch ausgesprochen religiöser Tendenz wie die Aufstiegsgeschichte Davids, die den König in den Bereich einer Art heilsgeschicht-licher Darstellung einbezieht, kann von daher allein nicht erklärt werden. 27

The way in which historical consciousness grew out of the religious tendency of the source is not clear. The succession narrative, written at about the same time, succeeded in writing historical narrative without the religious tendency. Weiser concludes by saying that, although the traditions found in the narrative of David's rise are of

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 349.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 351.

uneven historical value, the author is arranging them in a chronological succession which shows the author's attempt to write history.<sup>28</sup>

In summary, Weiser stresses that the narrative of David's rise is composed of numerous traditions of independent origin and of even historical value. This valuation allows him to accept I Sam xvi 1-13, II Samuel vi and vii as integral parts of the narrative, although they are of different origin and age than surrounding pericopes. The arrangement of the various traditions into one source is due to the religious <u>Tendenz</u> of the author who sought to give a theological justification to David's rise to the throne.

### C: R.L. Ward

Ward's dissertation is entitled <u>The Story of David's Rise: A Tradition-Historical Study of I Samuel xvi 14-II Samuel v.29</u> The work is a study of the history of David's rise. In the introduction Ward acknowledges his indebtedness to the writings of H. Gressmann and L. Rost. Although Ward does not review Rost's work, Ward accepts Rost's account of the sources in I and II Samuel as the point of departure for his study.30

Ward also accepts Gressmann's view that it is necessary and possible to study the history of the individual pericopes contained in the books of I and II Samuel, and in the source of David's rise in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 354.

<sup>29</sup> R.L. Ward, The Story of David's Rise: A Traditio-Historical Study of I Samuel xvi 14-II Samuel v, (Ph.D. dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1967). Obtained through University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

<sup>30 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 2-3.

particular. Ward's study, then, is an inquiry into the history of traditions, or as he calls it a traditio-historical study. Following Gressmann, Ward postulates that various pericopes of the source of David's rise were originally independent of the location in the text in which they are presently found. Moreover, some of these pericopes or traditions were originally oral.

Ward distinguishes what he is doing from the work of Gressmann because he claims that Gressmann was only interested in the individual pericopes whereas Ward seeks to identify blocks or complexes of tradition. 31 Ward divides the source of David's rise to power into six blocks of material. The blocks are: 1) the young hero, I Sam xvi 14-xix 7, 2) the fugitive, I Sam xix 8-xxi, 3) the condottiere, I Samuel xxii-xxvi, 4) the vassal prince, I Samuel xxvii-II Samuel i, 5) king over Judah, II Samuel ii-iv and 6) king over Israel, II Samuel v. Each block is divided into those pericopes that are part of the original history of David's rise to power and those pericopes, phrases or words that are additions to the story. The initial task of literary criticism is to distinguish the original source from the additions. The next task is to determine the geographical origin of the original source and if possible the geographical origin of the additions. Ward traces each of the blocks to a city or region. This procedure of seeking to determine the social setting of the traditions is in agreement with Gressmann.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

In regard to II Samuel i-vii, II Samuel i is considered part of a complex beginning in I Sam xxvii 1 and ending at II Sam i 27. Ward calls the complex "The Vassal Prince." The complex marks the time that David resolves that he must flee from Saul to live amongst the Philistines (I Sam xxvii 1). The complex ends when David asks God whether he should move from Ziklag to the cities of Judah in II Sam ii 1-3. The complex contains two pericopes, I Sam xxviii 3-25 and xxxi, which do not originate at Ziklag where the majority of pericopes arise.

Ward's detailed discussion of II Sam i 1-16 states his general agreement with studies which argue 1) that the account of Saul's death in I Samuel xxxi is correct and 2) that the Amalekite's story in II Sam i 1-16 is false. He therefore opposes the older source critical divisions of I Samuel xxxi and II Sam i 1-16. According to Ward both chapters are historical.<sup>32</sup>

Ward does not address the question of David's reason for ordering the killing of the Amalekite in II Sam i 13-16, whether the motive be one of genuine respect for God's anointing of Saul or one of feigned respect for Saul motivated by the desire to secure the control of both Judah and Israel. Ward concludes that II Sam i 1-16 depicts a David who is not concerned with the veracity of the Amalekite's claim to have killed Saul, but who abhors even the thought that someone might contemplate the murder of the Lord's anointed. Ward writes:

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., pp. 127-132.

To David, (as depicted by the writer of "David's Rise," who probably added this tradition [vss 13-16]) the idea mouthed by the Amalekite is as offensive as the wrong he claims to have committed. 33

Ward says that this depiction of David in the story of David's rise reveals the 'ideological' position of the source. The purpose of the source is to depict an heroic David. II Sam i 13-16, in particular, reveal this ideology; these verses represent the ideology of the source rather than the historical depiction of the pericope and for this reason is an insertion. 'Ideology', in this account, is something added on to history. We need to return to a discussion of this word in a valuation of the purposes Ward assigns to the source; Ward uses the word at a number of key points in his argument.<sup>34</sup> Ward subtly confirms in this passage that the ideological depiction of David exaggerates the heroism of the historical David. He is more definite and explicit about David's devious motives in his account of other parts of the story of David's rise.

In regard to II Sam i 17-27, Ward says that we cannot know whether David genuinely wrote the poem or not, but from the point of view of the author of the story of David's rise it is thought that the poem represents David's genuine attitude toward Saul.<sup>35</sup>

The next block of material is II Samuel ii-iv, and is called "King over Judah". The events depicted take place in or around Hebron, beginning with David's inquiry whether he should go up from Ziklag to

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., p. 132.

 $<sup>3^{4}</sup>$  Ibid., see, for example, pp. 32,40,76,86,132 and 183.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., p. 133.

one of the cities of Judah to the time immediately preceding David's accession to the throne of both Judah and Israel.36

II Sam ii 1-4 show that the author of the story of David's rise wanted to present David's move to be king in Judah as being sanctioned by a divine oracle. Ward opposes Alt's and Noth's views that David's rise to kingship is different from the charismatic and theologically ordained view of kingship held by the northern tribes. Ward argues that, although the oracle is abbreviated in II Sam ii 1, the instruction to David to go up to Hebron implies that the oracle also confirms that he should be king over Judah.37

Ward describes David's rise to rule over Judah and Israel as a 'career'.<sup>38</sup> His accession to the throne of Judah took place at the initiative of the oracle. The next series of events, the accession to the throne of Israel, is accomplished by David's attempts to expand his sphere of influence.

Ward says that once David is in Hebron he quickly seeks to woo the men of Jabesh-gilead. Jabesh-gilead is in the tribal territory of Manasseh, a northern tribe, and the town is on the east side of the Jordan river, as is also the town of Mahanaim where Ishbaal and Abner will establish their forces in defence of the northern tribes later in this chapter (vs 8). Wooing the men of Jabesh-gilead is, therefore, a way of winning the confidence of the northern tribes who

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 141.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 146.

are apt to follow the Benjamite house of Saul rather than the Judaean house of David. David's strategy is to pursue his own career and his actions do not reveal any genuine loyalty to the house of Saul.<sup>39</sup>

Although David did not wish to escalate hostilities between the northern and southern tribes, Abner takes an army from Mahanaim to Gibeon and confronts Joab (II Sam ii 8-32). Ward claims that the reason that this pericope is part of the story of David's rise is due to its account of the death of Asahel. Asahel's death will lead Joab, his brother, to seek blood revenge against Abner in the pericope in II Samuel iii, and disrupt David's initial attempt to secure the control over the northern tribes.

Ward argues that the purpose of II Samuel iii is to show how David is free of any complicity in the death of Abner. Ward writes:

How the king, here represented as the politician and conspirator par excellence, cleared himself of any involvement in the death of Abner is the subject of chapter iii. 40

David is in need of clearing himself because his military captain,

Joab, interferes with David's and Abner's negotiations for peace and

kills Abner. David even seeks to secure these negotiations by demanding that Michal be returned to him (iii 13). Ward says that David

demanded Michal because 1) marriage to Michal would mean that David

stands in nearest succession to the throne of Saul, even closer than

Abner who is Saul's uncle (I Chr viii 33, ix 36 and I Sam xiv 50-51)

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., pp. 146-147.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 155-156

and 2) it would demonstrate David's strength over Ishbaal. 41 Joab's murder of Abner is a political blunder in David's eyes. Ward writes:

Who will now believe that David, ambitious and cunning as he was, had nothing to do with Abner's death? Had not David lured the murdered man to Hebron, feted him and his men to put them off their guard, thus allowing Joab to do his dirty work?  $^{42}$ 

David must, therefore, demonstrate his innocence before the people.

David leads the funeral procession in Hebron, and recites a dirge in honour of the fallen hero. David's grief is a display, however, because David knows that Abner's death is to his advantage.

David's desire to curry favour with the house of Saul is also evident in David's denunciation of Baanah's and Rechab's murder of Ishbaal. Ward admits that Ishbaal's death is not as serious a threat to David's interests in the throne as was Abner's because Ishbaal is not a serious contender for the throne by this time. Ward insists that despite Ishbaal's weak position, David wants to make a show of his esteem for the house of Saul.

The final complex in the source is II Samuel v, and it is called "King over Israel". Ward argues that II Samuel v contains a number of additions, and that it is out of order as it is. The sentence in vs 8, "The blind and the lame shall not come into the house", is an obscure aetiology whose origin is difficult to determine. The emissary of Hiram in vs 11 is out of place because David needed to obtain international reputation due to the victory over the Philistines

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>42 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 160.

at Rephaim before Hiram would have known to contact David. Ward argues that vss 11 and 12 belong to the annals of II Sam viii 9-12. David's family register in vss 13-16 also fit well with II Sam viii 16, and would have been recorded by David's scribe, Jehoshaphat. The chronological notice in vss 4 and 5 is an addition by the Dtr. historian. What is left then are three pericopes, vss 1-3, vss 6-8a,9-10 and vss 17-25.

Ward stresses that vss 1-3 depict David's rise to the throne as a religious matter: David is the Lord's anointed. Ward, thus, disagrees with Noth's argument that it is presented simply as a political move. Ward writes:

Nonetheless, this conclusion [that David will be king] is for the tribes of Israel as much a theological insight as an acknowledgment of the political facts of life. 43

In such a statement Ward allows for both the theological zeal of the author of the story of David's rise and a recognition that the facts of the case may show a David devoted to the perpetuation of his career at all costs. Ward stresses that the pericope shows the continuity between the kingship of Saul and the kingship of David; at this point he is criticising both Alt and Noth who sought to draw a distinction between the charismatic and theological leadership of the northern tribes and the political leadership of the southern tribes.

Ward seeks to argue that the second pericope, II Sam v 6-8a, 9-10, depicts David as being congenial toward the Jebusites, and is thus trying not to repeat Saul's sins toward the Gibeonites in the

<sup>43 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 170.

land (II Sam xxi 1). Ward thinks that David's words in vs 8 grant amnesty to the Jebusites.

The final pericope of the source, II Sam v 17-25, depicts the war between the Philistines and the Israelites at Rephaim. Ward argues that the pericope actually follows v 1-3 for two reasons. First, the Philistine invasion follows immediately from the news of David's anointing by the tribes of Israel. Second, there is some confusion over the meaning of the term 'hold' in vss 9 and 17. In vs 17 therefore David is going down to a stronghold in the wilderness, the stronghold that is mentioned in I Sam xxiii 14, xxiv 1 and 23 or perhaps the cave of Adullam spoken of in II Sam xxiii 13-14. The 'hold' in vs 9 is, therefore, not the 'hold' in vs 17. The true historical sequence of events is vss 1-3, vss 17-25 and vss 6-8a, 9-10.44

The author of the history of David's rise rearranged the historical order for ideological reasons. The pericope of the capture of Jerusalem is included to show David's generosity. The ideological reason for the account of the wars is to show David's victory over the Philistines through his consultation of the oracle. The victory over the Philistines, although not the final event of the story of David's rise, is depicted as the final event to stress that one of the major thematic objectives of the source is to show the defeat of the Philistines, and this is accomplished by its hero, David. 45

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>45 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 183.

Ward concludes his thesis by a discussion of the narrative technique of the story of David's rise. In particular he compares this source with the source of the succession narrative in order to determine similarities and differences. It has often been argued that the succession narrative is more historical than the story of David's rise. 46 Ward says that it is not possible to judge one as more historical in the sense of being a better 'eyewitness' account. Moreover, both sources have a similar theological orientation: they both seek to show that David's reign over Israel is part of God's plan.

Ward proceeds to account for the differences in technique of the two sources. First, and most important for our sense of what the story of David's rise is depicting is the difference between impartial or objective depiction and ideological depiction. Ward writes:

> Both [the source of David's rise and the succession narrative] seek to exculpate David, but the reserve and impartiality of "the Succession History" distinguish it from the other writing. The former refers to the actions and judgments of Yahweh only at three points in the narrative and then in brief, unobtrusive asides; "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord" (II. xi 27), for example (cf. II. xii 24 and xvii 14). Repeated references to such motifs as "the Lord is with him" or "he inquired of the Lord" do not occur here. Moreover, the case for David's innocence is less impressive, not only because David murders Uriah but also because his final actions as king bring about the execution of Joab and Shimei, another member of the house of Saul. To a narrative as convinced of David's virtue as is "David's Rise," the objectivity of the sister writing would hardly be acceptable.47

<sup>46</sup> von Rad, "Der Anfang der Geschichtsschreibung im alten Israel," Gesammelte Studien zum alten Testament, pp. 173-178.

<sup>47</sup> Ward, The Story of David's Rise: A Traditio-Historical Study of I Samuel xvi14-II Samuel v, pp. 196-197.

The ideological and theological colouring of the story of David's rise is less historical than the succession narrative. Second. the story of David's rise is less tightly constructed, and this disconnectedness of the form reflects the disconnectedness of David's life while fleeing from Saul. Third, the author of David's rise typically depicts an event, and then has it repeated by someone later on with a slightly different import. The three examples he gives are 1) Doeg's report of David's meeting with Ahimelech (I Sam xxii 9-10) following the depiction of the event in I Samuel xxi, 2) the two accounts of Saul's death in I Samuel xxxi and II Sam i 1-10 and 3) the two versions of the Amalekite's death in II Sam i 15 and iv 10. Fourth, the source builds up its ideological pattern by way of repetition of similar incidents, such as repeated formulas being used in two different oracles (I Sam xxiii 1-13 and II Sam v 17-25). Thus, Ward seeks to show the difference in narrative technique between the sources and how that serves the purposes of the narratives.

The purpose of the story of David's rise is only discovered in the ideological presentation of the source. 48 At other points he calls this aspect of the source its "propagandistic interests" or its "dogmatic pattern". 50 That this ideology is added onto the original traditions is indicated by such quotations as the following:

Abigail's sudden shift from plea to prophecy in verses 28b-31

 $<sup>^{48}</sup>$  Ibid., see, for example, pages 32,40,76,86,132 and 138.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., p. 214.

<sup>50 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 16.

betrays the ideational directions which the official theology has superimposed upon this narrative. 51

Underneath the grand theological design of "the Vassal Prince," however, lies a lighter and more provincial vein, which may indicate the provenance of many of these traditions.<sup>52</sup>

The original traditions are folk traditions, and were built into complexes and then into a completed source by those interested in their propagandistic value.

The purpose of the redacted source is to defend the Judaean kingship, especially David's right as granted by God to rule. Its provenance is, therefore, the courtly circles in Judaea. It was probably written by someone in the court of Solomon prior to the division of the two kingdoms. While the source defends the right of the southern kings to rule over all Israel, the source presents a variety of pictures of David so that Saul and his house are not always depicted as the villains. The source, thus, is written to unify the northern and southern tribes. 53

Nevertheless, the ideological purpose of the source is to show that David is the hero.<sup>54</sup> He is depicted as Israel's "most complete hero".<sup>55</sup> That Ward intends this as a term of moral approbation is confirmed by Ward's description of David as the "model of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., pp. 101-102.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., pp. 190-191.

<sup>54 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, David is called a hero on pages 49,53,58,60,63,105,106 and 191.

<sup>55 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 191.

piety". 56 Yet this ideological or theological evaluation of David is an addition to the folk narratives because we often see a David who acts out of selfish desires for power and ambition. In fact, the ambitious David is the account of David most true to the individual pericopes. In relating the progress of the narrative, Ward says that David takes advantage of his friendship with Jonathan (I Samuel xx)57 and the priest Ahimelech (I Samuel xxi),58 betrays the Philistines (I Samuel xxvii), 59 woos the men of Jabesh-gilead in order to secure the northern tribes (II Sam ii 4b-7),60 is ambitious and cunning in his treatment of Abner (II Samuel iii)61 and desires remarriage to Michal to secure the northern kingdom (II Sam iii 13).62 Ward calls David "the politician and conspirator par excellence" 63 and a "self-righteous orator.64 Despite the attempts of the author to depict a heroic and pious David, David's ambition shines through. Moreover, since the traditions of the source and not the ideological additions present the less pious David, the ambitious David is more historical.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>57 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 40-41.

<sup>58 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 49.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 105.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid., p. 147.

<sup>61 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 160.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., p. 157.

<sup>63 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 155.

<sup>64 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 191.

In summary, Ward seeks to study the story of David's rise within the framework set out by Rost and Gressmann. Rost supplies the essential boundaries of the source and Gressmann the method for his study. We need to note two points of difference, however, between Ward and Gressmann. Gressmann has a more complete account of the oral nature of certain forms, especially sagas. The differentiation between saga and history in any particular pericope becomes absolutely essential for Gressmann because the definition of literary form is the key to understanding the content. Although Ward occasionally refers to oral traditions, he does not give an adequate account with regard to any of the complexes of the difference between oral and written traditions or what difference it makes to the story. Moreover, in my repeated readings of Ward, I found only one possible characteristic of the entire story that is in any way stylistic or literary proof of oral language. In Ward's account of David's defeat of Goliath (I Samuel xvii), the word "assembly", qahal, is used, and Ward says that its use here instead of cam is proof that the pericope was of cultic origin. 65 Gressmann does not always give an adequate account of this oral language either, but through definition of form Gressmann links pericope and oral tradition. On these two points, Ward does not seem aware of the nature of Gressmann's study of the history of traditions.66

<sup>65 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 25. Ward is agreeing with Hertzberg on this point.

<sup>66</sup> The relation between oral and written language is a difficult problem. Most modern writing is logically written before it is spoken, thus accounting for the priority of well-developed syntax in prose to other aspects of language more closely related to the spoken word,

Ward's account of David's motives throughout the story is that he is ambitious for power. Although the ideological, theological or dogmatic interests of the final redactor of the traditions are to show David's innocence of intent, the original and more historical, and, therefore, more true, traditions of the source show an ambitious David whose religion is mere show. The purpose of the source is propaganda for Judaean self-interest.

## D: J.H. Grønbaek

The most extensive study on the history of David's rise is

Jakob H. Grønbaek's book entitled <u>Die Geschichte vom Aufstieg Davids</u>,

published in 1971.67 The source, according to Grønbaek, begins in I

Sam xv 1 and ends in II Sam v 10 (Grønbaek agrees with Wellhausen's rearrangement of II Samuel v; the history of David's rise also includes

II Sam v 11-25).

The source is divided into six segments, 1) I Sam xv 1- xvi
13, 2) xvi 14-xix 17, 3) xix 18-xxii 23, 4) xxiii 1-xxvii 4, 5) xxvii

such as rhythm. See, for example, the essay by I. Robinson on a Middle English prose in which rhythm is more important than syntax, and notice the signficance he attributes to that characteristic on Renaissance and subsequent prose. Ian Robinson, "Prose and the Dissociation of Sensibility", The New Pelican Guide to English Literature, ed. Boris Ford, (New York: Penguin Books, 1984), pp. 260-272. Recognising the relation between spoken and written language need not, of course, commit one to Gressmann's view of saga or to the views of those trying to establish that the repetitive nature of biblical prose or that repeated word pairs in biblical poetry are evidence of oral compositional techniques.

<sup>67</sup> J.H. Grønbaek, <u>Die Geschichte vom Aufstieg Davids: (1 SAM. 15-2 SAM. 5)</u>, <u>Tradition und Komposition</u>, Acta Theologica Danica, German trans. Hanns Leisterer, (Copenhagen: Prostant Apud Munksgaard, 1971).

5-II Sam ii 4a and 6) ii 4b-v 10. The fifth and sixth segments are significant for II Samuel i-vii.

In the introduction to his work, Grønbaek reviews the earlier work that was done by Rost, Nübel, Weiser and Ward. 68 Grønbaek accepts Rost's delineation of the sources of I and II Samuel. He argues, in contrast to Nübel, that the sources are not similar to Pentateuchal sources. The stylistic characteristics are better accounted for if a study of the history of individual pericopes is undertaken. Grønbaek, therefore, agrees with Weiser and Ward that the pericopes are of originally independent origin. The method used to study the pericopes must be in accordance with the principles of the history of tradition studies by Gressmann and Noth. Grønbaek criticises Ward's history of traditions, however, because it does not account for the compositional processes at work in the making of the narrative. 69 He also disagrees with Ward's attempt to trace the pericopes to an exact geographical location.

Grønbaek uses the word <u>Vorgeschichte</u>, "prehistory", throughout the study for the designation of the source. Grønbaek's study is not as conscious of the question raised by Nübel and Weiser over the stylistic characteristics of Israelite historiography, and the significance that question has for the separation of sources of the narrative

<sup>68</sup> Grønbaek also reviews the dissertation of Friedrich Mildenburger, <u>Die vordeuteronomistische Saul-Davidüberlieferung</u>, (Bonn: unpublished doctoral dissertation, 1962). Mildenburger extends the beginning of the chapter to include I Samuel xiii and xiv as well. For Grønbaek's review see <u>Die Geschichte vom Aufsteig Davids</u>, pp. 27-30.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, p. 18.

in I and II Samuel. Yet Grønback in this designation agrees with the argument that the succession narrative is the best example of Israelite historical narrative, and that the history of David's rise represents a less historical type of literary depiction. The <u>Vorgeschichte</u> is narrative depiction before the creation of real historical writing.

Grønbaek begins his detailed study of II Samuel i by recognising the "remarkable contradiction" (ausserordentliche Gegensätzlichkeit) between I Samuel xxxi and II Sam i 1-16 in the account of the death of Saul. He summarises previous alternatives as to the cause of this contradiction in three possible source critical arguments: 1) I Samuel xxxi and II Sam i 1-16 may arise from different sources, 2) II Samuel i may be composed of two different sources and 3) I Samuel xxxi and II Sam i 1-16 belong to the same source, although the story of the Amalekite is false.

Grønbaek's argument is that the two chapters contain two independent traditions ("Derlieferungen"); I Samuel xxxi originates in the north and II Sam i 1-16 originates in the south. Moreover, he suggests that the southern tradition is partially based upon the northern tradition. That the southern tradition is secondary is proved by 1) the reference to chariots in II Sam i 6 whereas I Sam xxxi 3 speaks only of archers (the early report would not have chariots because chariots were not invented at the time) and 2) in xxxi 2 Saul's three sons are mentioned whereas in i 5 only Jonathan is mentioned; the more authentic account would refer to three sons. Neither reason is sufficient to establish an early or late tradition. Nevertheless, these two points are the basis for the positing of two distinct origins

for these traditions, and for suggesting that one tradition is secondary.70

What connects the traditions is their relation to a larger whole, that is, the source of the history of David's rise itself. The placement of these two traditions together makes a vital link between traditions related to Saul and traditions related to David. I Samuel xxxi marks the death of Saul and the termination of any traditions based upon him and II Sam i 1-16 is a connecting link (Bindeglied) between the traditions of Saul and David's coronation over Judah in II Sam ii 1-4a. Grønbaek sees this connecting link as revealing the central purpose of the source as a whole because it shows both the end of Saul's and the beginning of David's rule: the source includes both elements in its purpose. Grønbaek uses this argument to establish the boundary of the beginning of the source with I Samuel xv, the rejection of Saul, rather than simply the anointing of David in I Sam xvi 1-13. The function of II Sam i 1-16 in expressing the purpose of the source is enhanced because the crown (nezer) is taken to David (i 10); the crown is a sign that David is the legitimate heir of Saul's throne. Grønbaek also suggests that at this crucial point in the source, as David begins to receive power, an Amalekite is involved, in the same way that at the beginning of the source the Amalekites are involved at Saul's rejection. 71 The source reveals a unity of purpose with the repetition of this common element. Grønbaek

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pp. 217-218.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., pp. 219-220.

thus concludes that although II Sam i 1-16 is the less historical tradition of Saul's death, it is still central to the purposes of the source as a whole.

with regard to II Sam i 17-27, the lament of David over Saul and Jonathan, Grønback argues that the poem is indeed an addition to the narrative, but that it is fitted into the main themes. Vs 18a is a Dtr. insertion after the pattern of Deut xxxi 19. It is a formula (Zitationsformeln) for introducing poems or songs. Grønback says that the title of the book from which the poem is taken, the seper hayyasar (vs 18b) is to be translated as "the book of the righteous" (Buch der Aufrechten). The designation is not a gloss or it would have no purpose in being given. In a discussion whether the poem is of Judaean or Ephraimite origin Grønback concludes: "Wie die Dinge auch liegen mögen, das Klagelied hier in 2. Sam. 1,19 ff. ist zweifellos in Jerusalem überliefert worden." And although the poem is placed in the mouth of David, it was not composed by him.

by the author of the history of David's rise; the piece is not a fragment with a previous history. He bases his argument on the terseness (Knappheit) of the style. The aspects of the style that he uses as proof are: 1) the Philistines are not mentioned, 2) David's accession to the throne is depicted as the will of God, as would be consistent with the purpose of the source as a whole, 3) both David's wives are mentioned, although without apparent purpose, 4) the expression

<sup>72</sup> Ibid., p. 221.

"cities of Hebron" in vs 3 is obscure as it could mean any one of the cities mentioned in I Sam xxxi 27-31. These characteristics prove that the pericope is not a tradition-fragment (<u>Überlieferungs-fragment</u>), but a composition of the final redactor (Grønbaek calls this redactor a Verfasser, "author", throughout his book).

The anointing of David as king by the men of Judah is one step in David's ascent to power. In order to appreciate the significance of this affirmation for Grønbaek, it is necessary to indicate a major question he addresses in his study, namely, whether the state of 'Israel' includes Judah at the time of the creation of the source. His argument is that Judah is finally subsumed in the state of Israel. The author of the source is not in the end interested in the southern tribes, but in the continuation of the northern tribes after Saul's demise, albeit under the leadership of David, who is a Judaean. The traditions of the amphictyony are preserved by the northern tribes, and the southern tribes come to be included in this larger kingdom. David's final coronation, and most important one for the source, is his anointing by the elders of Israel (v 3).

The next section of the source is II Sam ii 4b-v 10. Grønbaek further divides this section into four parts. The first part is the civil war between Judah and Israel.

David's coronation in ii 4b-7 is, according to Grønbaek, only a temporary step (<u>Durchgangsstadium</u>) on his way to the throne in Israel. The suggestion that 4b-7 along with 8-11 form the foundation for the war between Abner and David is rejected by Grønbaek. Problems exist over the names that are included in the territory of Eschbaal.

Why is Eschbaal made ruler in Gilead if so much territory is still in his possession in Israel? Does Eschbaal possess some of the land as a fief (<u>Lehen</u>) from the Philistines? Grønbaek concludes: "Das israelitische Reich Eschbaals beruht demnach sicher auf einer ausgesprochen illusorischen Grundlage."<sup>73</sup> The report, then, of the nature of Eschbaal's kingdom is not genuine.

Eschbaal's kingdom is rather a remnant of the kingdom of his father Saul. Vs 9 ends with the phrase "all Israel"; the designation refers to the kingdom of Saul. The word "Israel" refers to the unity of amphictyonic tribes under Saul, a unity that is established again through David in II Samuel v. The southern tribe of Judah is included in this designation "Israel". The separation of Judah from Israel in vs 10b is only temporary.

Grønbaek argues that II Sam ii 12-iii 1 is composed of two originally independent pericopes, in vss 14-16 and vss 18-25. Vss 14-16 are distinguished from the rest of the chapter because they constitute a saga of place (Ortssagen, eine volksetymologischen Legende). The saga ends with the naming of the place, Helkath-hazzurim. The saga is about a kind of play-war (Kampfspiel), rather than a real war, between twelve members of the people of David and twelve members of the people of Eschbaal. Vs 17 connects the two pericopes together. In contrast to the pericopes which are about individuals, vs 17 gives a summary of the real conflict between the house of Saul and the house of David.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., p. 227.

Vss 18-25 is also not a part of the main war that takes place in Israel. It is a form of foot-race between two individuals which becomes the reason for the blood revenge of Joab against Abner. Grønbaek argues that this pericope, like vss 14-16, is also a play-war. The object of the play, stated by Abner, is to tear away the belt (Gürtel) of the opponent; Grønbaek suggests that the translation of halişâtô in vs 21 should be "belt" rather than "armour" (Rüstung).

These two pericopes function to show how a struggle over the territory of Benjamin is used to illustrate the regular war between the people of David and the state of Israel. Grønbaek writes:

Sollte unsere soeben vorgenommene Deutung von V. 14-16 und V. 18-25 richtig sein, so hat der Verfasser zwei ihm bekannte Überlieferungen über im Gebiet Benjamin stattgefundene Kampfspiele zwischen Eschbaals und Davids Leuten dazu benutzt, um einen regularen Kampf zwischen Juda, oder besser Davids Leuten, und Israel um die Herrschaft in einem geeinten Reich zu illustrieren. 74

The regular battle takes place between the people of David and the people of Israel and not between individuals. Vss 17, 28 and iii 1 give us knowledge about this real battle, and these verses form the platform (Gerüst) upon which the play-war pericopes are included.

Grønbaek's primary concern is with the designations used in the chapter to indicate the parties involved. He argues that Benjamin in vss 15,25 and 31 simply means 'Israel', the term used in vs 17 for the opponents of David. Grønbaek prefers to call David's warriors 'the people of David' because the real opposition here is not between

<sup>74 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 231.

the tribe of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin but between followers of David and the established kingdom of Saul.

The next section of the source, iii 2-39, relates Abner's death. The chapter begins with a list of the sons born to David while he was in Hebron. Contrary to Noth, who suggested that the list was inserted by the Deuteronomist, Grønbaek argues that the list gives us the family or house of David and explains what house of David means in both iii 1 and 6. It is not an insertion.<sup>75</sup>

In iii 6-39 the battle between the two houses enters, according to Grønbaek, a new phase. We know little about the actual war, but we learn of a court intrigue in Mahanaim. Grønbaek suggests that Abner is truly a pretender to the throne (Thronprätendenten) in Hebron, but is not presented as such by the author of the section. The author seeks to cover up the true relationship between Abner and Eschbaal. In fact Abner turns out to be a traitor to Eschbaal. Grønbaek writes: "Ausserdem sei darauf aufmerksam gemacht, dass das, was Abner in V. 12-21 treibt, nur als schändlicher Verrat bezeichnet werden kann." 76 The chapter ends with David's praise of Abner and condemnation of Joab and Abishai.

Grønbaek argues that David praises Abner and condemns Joab because praise of Abner means that David can secure his position over the throne of Israel. David's actions are politically good, even if Joab continues to be David's general. Joab supports the

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., pp. 234-235.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., p. 236.

tribe of Judah, and does so until his death at the order of Solomon.  $Gr\phi$ nbaek sees this rejection of Joab as consistent with the <u>Tendenz</u> of the entire source:

Mit der Thronbesteigung Salomos kommt es zur endgültigen Liquidierung des Einflusses der "judäischen Partei" in Jerusalem. Dieser Umstand gibt in bezug auf die Abfassung der Vorgeschichte einen Fingerzeig für den terminus ante quo. Die Vorgeschichte ist erst nach der Thronbesteigung Salomos nach David denkbar. Und die Kreise, in denen man ihre Entstehung vermuten darf, sind vornehmlich jerusalemische Kreise, die gegen die Judäer Front machen. Die ungeheure Abneigund gegen Joab – und die Zerujasöhne – ist also nicht ausschliesslich persönlich gegen Joab rerichtet, sondern gegen Juda ganz allgemein. Die antijudaische Tendenz lässt sich auch anderen Stellen in der Vorgeschichte abspüren.77

David no longer supports the Judaeans because it is in his interest to support the northern tribes, and the tribe of Benjamin in particular, if he is to be king over Israel. The origin of the source is a pro-Benjamite circle in Jerusalem; David is shown as appealing to this Benjamite circle. The pro-Benjamite Tendenz is also present in the source's praise of the Benjamite Abner.

Grønbaek proceeds to argue that the <u>Tendenz</u> of the source is so strong that it causes two distortions of the actual history. First, it suggests that Abner sought an alliance with David when in fact Abner originally wanted the throne. Grønbaek writes:

Abner, der ürsprunglich durch seine Verbindung mit Sauls Nebenfrau die Macht an sich zu reissen beabsichtigte, später wahrscheinlich aber von diesem Vorhaben wieder Abstand nahm, hatte Verhandlungen mit David in Hebron eingeleitet.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 236-237.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., p. 237.

Abner's strategies are, of course, brought to an end with his death. Second, David's demand that Michal be brought to him is depicted as if Michal and David were already married. The earlier reference to this marriage in I Samuel xviii is legend however. David seeks marriage to Michal as a confirmation (Bekräftigung) of his claim to Saul's throne. David continues his political moves to be king of Israel. The actual history is different than what is presented in the chapter.

The source also justifies David's actions theologically. In iii 9-10 Abner says that he will transfer the kingdom to David as God had sworn to do. The background of such a statement is David's anointing as king at the beginning of the source. The <u>Tendenz</u> of the source is to show, not a politically motivated David, but the whole series of events as reflecting God's will that David be king. Abner's actions in support of making David king are, according to the source, only revelations of God's will for David.<sup>80</sup>

Grønbaek sees in the use of the word 'Benjamin' in iii 19 the author's attempt to raise the status of the tribe of Benjamin amongst the tribes of Israel. The reference is confirmation, then, of the source's pro-Benjamite emphasis.<sup>81</sup>

Grønbaek says that the account of Eschbaal's murder in II
Samuel iv has many similarities with II Samuel i, but he stresses
that there are differences as well. The Amalekite professes to have

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 238.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 240.

<sup>81 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, pp. 241-242.

killed King Saul in II Samuel i, but Eschbaal is not a king in II Samuel iv. David and not Eschbaal is the true heir of the kingdom of Saul. Eschbaal is not given the same status amongst the northern tribes; even the tribe of Benjamin seems to be unsure of his ability to lead them as two Benjamites bring about his death. Moreover, the opposition against Eschbaal is not like the opposition against Joab and Abishai. The two sons of Zeruiah are representatives of the house of Judah, and David's rejection of them shows the anti-Judaean Tendenz of the source. Eschbaal's murder is not opposition to a tribe, but only against an individual because he does not represent the tribe.82

Along with the majority of studies, Grønbaek concludes that iv 2b-4 are insertions into the narrative. Grønbaek states that it is difficult to determine whether vss 2b-3 are original or an addition, but vs 4 is indeed meaningless in the present context. Vss 2b-3 confirm, however, that Benjamites were responsible for the murder of Eschbaal and, therefore, the Benjamites recognise that David will be king. Grønbaek's treatment of II Samuel v follows the rearrangement set out by Wellhausen. The proper historical order of events is 1) the anointing of David as king over Israel, 2) the battles with the Philistines and 3) the capture of Jerusalem and the building of David's house. Vss 13-16 are later additions to the story of David's rise. This rearrangement is made primarily because the battles with the Philistines more logically follow David's accession to the throne

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 243.

than his capture of the city of Jerusalem. Grønbaek argues that the present arrangement was created by the Deuteronomist. He says there is no way of knowing with certainty where the "stronghold" in vs 17 is.

Vss 1-3, the anointing of David by the elders of Israel, mark the most important part of the chapter and also the high-point in the entire story of David's rise. The elders of Israel refer to the elders of the kingdom of Saul. Thus, David is anointed as the true heir of Saul's kingdom. The central aim of the entire history is to show David's rightful place as ruler over Saul's kingdom.

Grønbaek says that the source in its entirety is not written out of theoretical historical interest. It has a definite intention. He writes:

Selbstverständlich ist die Vorgeschichte nicht aus einem theoretischen historischen Interesse erwachsen! Der Verfasser hat sich von einem "praktischen" Gesichtspunkt leiten lassen. 83

Wenngleich er naturlich von vornherein an diesen Überlieferungsstoff gebunden war, hat er doch zugleich aus einer bestimmten Intention heraus, die er mit dem Bericht verfolgte, diesen Stoff dem Ablauf des Geschehens anzugleichen versucht. 84

Although the author worked with historical material and gave the sequence of events the appearance that they were arranged in historical order, the interest of the author finally reshaped the source and gave it a distinct slant.

The particular intention (<u>Grundintention</u>) that the author wanted to give the source was to show that David was the sole and

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>84 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid</u>., p. 259.

legitimate heir of Saul's kingdom. 85 David is depicted as politically ambitious in the source, able to use situations to his advantage and willing to betray old friends such as Joab and his own tribe Judah, yet the source seeks to justify David's actions by repeating that God is with David. The sequence of events in the source is designed to show the outworking of God's will for David. The 'theology' of the source is thus part of the ideology or bias of the author which is added to the actual historical events.

Grønbaek's study is most markedly distinguished from other studies by his argument that the term 'Israel' means the kingdom of Saul, and that the source is written by a pro-Benjamite author rather than a defender of the tribe of Judah. Although David is a Judaean, he is depicted as the true heir of Saul's kingdom. This kingdom is composed of all the tribes of Israel, including Judah.

Grønbaek stresses the separation of the tribes of the north from the tribes of the south in this source, and draws attention to a corresponding separation of the kingdom of Israel following Solomon's death (I Kings xii). Grønbaek concludes from this similarity that the Vorgeschichte was written following the death of Solomon (after 922 B.C.). After Solomon's death there were battles between the north under the leadership of the Ephraimite Jeroboam and the south under the leadership of the Benjamite Rehoboam (I Kgs xiv 30). The source is written as a defense of Rehoboam against Jeroboam; Rehoboam is the true leader of all Israel, and he is so because his

<sup>85 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 260.

grandfather David was the legitimate heir of Saul's kingdom. The <u>Vorgeschichte</u> is thus a justification of the Benjamites, and a condemnation of the Ephraimites. The source depicts not so much a conflict between Judah and the northern tribes, but one between Benjamin and Ephraim. The emphasis in the source on the rejection of Saul followed by the anointing of David reinforces that David is the sole heir of Saul's kingdom.

In summary, Grønbaek argues that the stylistic characteristics of the text can only be rightly understood through a study of the history of the traditions of the narrative. The pericopes are of distinct origin and represent a variety of literary forms. They are placed together due to the specific <u>Tendenz</u> of the author. The purpose of the source is to justify David's claim to the throne of all Israel. Israel means specifically the northern amphictyonic tradition as it was perpetuated in the kingdom of Saul, and was led by a Benjamite as opposed to an Ephraimite circle in Jerusalem.

## Summary to Chapter Three

The review of these four authors has been devoted to a detailed study of the stylistic characteristics that they have used as a foundation for their recognition of the purpose of the narrative of David's rise. As the aspects of style which are important in each chapter are not the same from study to study, it is necessary to examine the studies of these authors in detail in order to identify the subtle differences in their arguments. Despite the variety of stylistic

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., pp. 275-277.

characteristics that are used to identify authors or sources, there is general agreement in principle that sources can be identified by stylistic characteristics of the narrative. The different evaluations of the purpose and effect of the styles lead to different types of literary sources that are thought to exist and different readings of the narrative.

All four authors are interested in the type of literary depiction that is germane to good historical writing. There is general agreement amongst all four authors that proper historical writing is characterised by a neutral or value-free depiction of events, and therefore the history of David's rise is not judged to be good historical writing. They all confirm the argument presented by Wellhausen, Gressmann, Rost, Noth and von Rad, that the succession narrative is better historical writing than the history of David's rise. Nubel is the only one of the four who offers slightly different conclusions regarding the nature of historical depiction in the narrative art of the source in suggesting that the attempt to write history was motivated by a theological account of the world. But in Weiser, Ward and Grønbaek, the history of David's rise has a Tendenz, a 'prejudice'; it is a document to justify politically David's claim to the throne. The narrative is propaganda in the service of political interest groups at some point after David's reign, although there is no unanimity on the historical provenance of the source or what interests are being defended. As propaganda the source misrepresents the true history of David's rise to power. The 'theology' of the narrative is the creation of and is in service of certain political interests.

The reconstruction of David's actions show him to be ambitious and ruthless in his ascent to the throne.

Finally, although Weiser argues that II Samuel vii is a conclusion to the final redacted source, the narrative in II Samuel i-vii is not read as a sequence. The acceptance of Rost's separation of II Samuel vi from the narrative by all the studies limits the significance of reading the chapters as a sequence. If the chapters are not a sequence, the problem of the incongruity between the politically ambitious David and the promises made to him in II Samuel vii is not raised. Within the boundaries of the source itself, the providential elements of the story are considered redactional insertions which reflect the Tendenz of the final author or authors. David's actual accession to the throne is brought about by his ruthless desire for power even though the source misrepresents this accession as caused by God.

## Part II

Part II is a detailed study of the Hebrew style of each of the chapters in II Samuel i-vii. The review in Part I revealed that the style of a passage may be explained in several ways, a result of a gloss by an unknown hand, an insertion by a redactor, a mannerism of a particular author, an error in transmission of a manuscript or an intentional usage of an author for particular effects. Part II seeks to give an account of the Hebrew style of II Samuel i-vii in order to evaluate these alternatives and to determine whether aspects of style function to create a unified narrative.

## Chapter One

II Samuel i is divided into a section of Hebrew prose (vss 1-16) and a section of Hebrew poetry (vss 17-27). The prose is a narrative which tells the story of how an Amalekite brings the news of Saul's death to David. The poetry is David's response to the news. In these two sections the chapter presents a forceful depiction of David's respect for Saul because Saul is the anointed of the Lord and of David's loyalty to Saul and Jonathan as defenders of Israel in battle.

The chapter begins by presenting the situation necessary for the understanding of the events in II Sam i 1-16. Saul is dead, and David has returned from the victory over the Amalekites (I Samuel xxx). Nübel, however, excludes vs 1 from the original narrative

because he considers it an intrusion by the B. rather than a part of the original Gr.; the B. seeks to make Saul's death and David's victory over the Amalekites occur on the same day. 1 Driver suggests, in contrast to reading the line as an editorial insertion, that wedawid šāb mēhakôt 'et-hā'amālēq is rightly translated as a circumstantial clause, "when David had returned from the slaughter of the Amalekites."2 In this translation Driver is in agreement with the rendering of the Vg and this reading is perpetuated in the KJV, RSV and in Lut. Although the Hebrew prose of vs 1 contains three phrases linked by co-ordination rather than subordination, the use of a circumstantial clause to translate the prose maintains the emphasis of the Hebrew. Vs 1 introduces the chapter with an explanation of the geographical and temporal situation. In vs 2 the main clause of the sentence begins with the word "Behold", wehinneh. Thus, the movement from circumstantial clause in v 1 to main clause in vs 2 highlights this shift from geographical and temporal introduction to story. Vs 1 need not be considered the insertion of an editor.

The purpose of vs 1 is related to the development of the chapter for two other reasons. First, the temporal references in vss 1 and 2 confirm that David's victory over the Amalekites and the defeat of the Israelites at Mt. Gilboa occurred on about the same day even though an exact correspondence is not indicated. Since three days would be the approximate time it would take for someone to travel

<sup>1</sup> Nübel, see above, pp. 130-131.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 231.

from Mt. Gilboa to the vicinity of Ziklag, a distance of about eighty miles, vs 1 affirms that David did not have any knowledge of the outcome at Gilboa.<sup>3</sup> The Amalekite is the first to arrive with the news. There is, thus, no reason to suggest that David's shocked response is feigned.<sup>4</sup>

Second, the reference to David's battle against the Amalekites reveals that the events of II Samuel i follow shortly after those in I Samuel xxx. There has been insufficient recognition of the importance of the story of David's defeat of the Amalekites in I Samuel xxx to the understanding of II Samuel i. Only three days pass between the smiting of the Amalekites and the events of II Samuel i. David's vivid memories of the battle with the Amalekites make it improbable that David has much sympathy for an Amalekite who brings him the news of Saul's death. As the identity of the messenger in II Samuel i is a key element of the story, the chapter begins by recalling the conflict between the Israelites and the Amalekites.

Vs 2 introduces us to a man who comes to David from the camp of Saul. The man appears to be mourning; his clothes are torn and dirt is upon his head. He comes to David with actions of reverence;

<sup>3</sup> The actual site of Ziklag is unknown. For the recent suggestion that it is to be identified with Tell esh Shari<sup>c</sup>a, see R.P. Gordon, 1 & 2 Samuel: A Commentary, (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1986), p. 191.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> There is no real support for Noth's claim that David knew of the outcome of the events of the battle prior to the story of the Amalekite; the length of time suggested in vs 1 recommends the opposite conclusion. Noth, see above, p. 79.

he falls to the ground and does obeisance.<sup>5</sup> The man is introduced as if he respects David's leadership.

Vss 1 and 2 are statements by the narrator, but after this introduction the narrator says very little. What is given in vss 1 and 2 is not a lengthy account of the place or personal characteristics of the people involved. We are told only as much as we need to know for the development of the story in this chapter. In vs 3 the narrative switches to dialogue; the story is presented through the speech of the participants. The conversation between David and the man is used to reveal who the man is, and how David responds to him.

David's first question is blunt: "From where have you come?"

The reply is brief: "From the camp of Israel have I fled." The man's reply begins with the indirect object of the verb of the sentence, and hence the usual Hebrew prose word order is reversed. The stress lies on the place from which the Amalekite comes. Further, there is a hint already of the grim news that the man has to tell David in this verse because the man says that he has "fled" from the camp. The camp no longer provides protection; the Israelites must have been beaten. In reply, David's second question is stated urgently: "How went the matter? Declare now to me." The hiphil imperative combined with the particle of entreaty, <a href="hagged-na">hagged-na</a>, expresses the force of David's concern. The man's answer is given in a gradual progression from the least to the most severe news as if he seeks to break the

 $<sup>^5</sup>$  The addition "upon his face", <u>epi prosopon (autou)</u>, by LXX<sup>LA</sup>, Vg and certain Syr. manuscripts is an appropriate Hebrew idiom, but the MT makes sense in its present form and an alteration is not necessary.

news to David slowly. "The people have fled (nus), many have fallen (napal) and are dead (mut), and Saul and Jonathan are dead." David's question in the next verse, vs 5, asks only about the deaths of Saul and Jonathan; David is most intently concerned with these two deaths. David's inquiry not only reflects that he is interested in those whom he knows well, but as a king represents power and order, Saul's death in battle is the primary indication that the war is lost. Through this initial dialogue between David and the man, the man presents himself as having been on the side of the Israelites, and tells the news of Saul's and Jonathan's deaths as if he is sympathetic with the shock that it will be to David.6

David's response in vs 5 is to question the authority of the man's statement: "How do you know that Saul and Jonathan are dead?"

In asking this question, David wishes to know the identity of the man. David raises a crucial element for the development of the chapter. The question of the identity of the man is also raised in vs 5 by calling the man "the lad who is declaring to him", hanna are hammagid 10. This expression is used two more times in II Samuel i, in vss 6 and 13, and the participle "the one declaring to me", hammagid 11, is

<sup>6</sup> In vs 4 'aser is used as an equivalent for ki. The usage is infrequent in Hebrew, though it is found elsewhere. In I Sam xv 20 'aser is used following the verb 'amar as is found here also. GKC cites a number of examples in 157c, of which II Sam i 4 is one. The reading is attested in most LXX manuscripts (except bovbc2e2) and Tg. Neb., although not the Syr. The Vg has "that" as the first word of what is said (quod est verbum quod factum est indica mihi/qui ait fugit populus e proelio). Yet given the sufficiently attested use of aser for ki, and the readings of LXX and Tg. Neb., the Vg's reading is the less valuable of the two. There is very little alteration of sense in the various translations.

used in II Sam iv 10 where David refers to this man of chapter i. The repetition of this phrase at three points in the prose section of the chapter causes Nübel to suggest that it is stylistically hard and is evidence that an editor added to the prose. The phrase is repeated in most of the ancient versions except the Syr. and a few LXX manuscripts. The Syr. omits "who told him" in vs 6, but retains the phrase in vs 13 and iv 10. With only these exceptions, the versions do not appear to recognise that the phrase is "stylistically hard." Can the expression be considered purposeful in the development of the chapter?

If the phrase calls attention to the identity of the man, how does it do so? The narrator first presents the lad in vs 2 with the most general term, a "man", 'îs'. In vs 5 as the conversation progresses, he is called a "lad", na'ar. "Lad" itself expresses youth, and is one of the first indications of the naivety of the man's actions. This emphasis is picked up nicely by the ancient versions where "lad" is translated by a term meaning youth: LXX, to paidario, Tg. Neb., 'ûlêm (see the Aramaic usage in Tg. Onq. in Num xi 28), Syr., 'lym, and the Vg, adulescentem. The naming of the lad as a na'ar is a deliberate usage of the author to present the lad as naive to the implications of his actions.

But does the rest of the expression, "who told him", have any rhetorical force in the story? It is possible that the repetition in vs 6 is scribal dittography from vs 5. Again, the perpetuation of

<sup>7</sup> Nübel, see above, p. 131.

the translation in the versions would suggest that they did not judge the phrase to be out of place, or if it was dittography it was not serious enough to require correction. The phrase is introduced in vs 5, and it isolates the lad's function at this point in the story; he is bringing news to David. But the phrase does not give his identity. In the repetition of the phrase in vs 6, the question of the lad's identity is again stressed, though again not completely revealed. The author of the story, like David in vs 16, will allow the lad to say who he is. Yet the story has started to build in a particular direction. A young lad comes bearing news of the defeat of the Israelites. Who is this youth that David should listen to him? The author not only has David ask the question, but through a type of repetition he reinforces the significance of the question as well.

This type of repetition introduces us to one of the central conventions of Hebrew prose; Hebrew is repetitive. Repetition is found elsewhere in this chapter. In vs 4, for example, we read: "And many have fallen (napal) from the people and have died (wayyamutû)." The usage of napal in itself would be sufficient to indicate the deaths of the people, as the usage of napal alone in I Sam xxxi 1 indicates. But two verbs are used in II Sam i 4. Repetitions often give the initial impression that the prose is either purposeless and primitive or that there have been insertions. Often repetitions are called 'doublets' and are considered ways of identifying sources. But recently both J. Muilenburg and R. Alter have called attention to

<sup>8</sup> See Rost's discussion of the doublets that Budde identifies in the ark narrative. Rost, see above, pp. 25-26.

patterns of repetition to the workings of the prose rather than to insertions. They claim that it is often the slight variations on the repetition that develop delicate emphases in the narrative. At any point in the story it is necessary to judge whether the repetition is typical of the conventions of Hebrew prose and whether it is used for particular effects in the passage. I have made the case that <a href="https://passage.name.com/harmagid/harmag

The man is not only depicted as young and naive, but he is incapable of producing a credible account of how he obtained Saul's crown and bracelet. The phrase, "As I happened by chance", niqro' niqretî, 10 in vs 6 is a sign of the lad's vagueness. The niphal of qrh, "to meet", often has the sense of "to meet by chance" (BDB, p. 899). Although the sense of the verb itself would make the point, the infinitive construction further reinforces the chance meeting of the Amalekite with Saul. The man affirms unequivocally that he did not plan to discover Saul; he claims no responsibility for the situation he was in. He avoids an explanation of a central problem in his story. Why was he "happening by chance" in the Israelite camp in

<sup>9</sup> Muilenburg, "A Study in Hebrew Rhetoric: Repetition and Style," p. 99. Alter, op. cit., pp. 88-113.

<sup>10</sup> An aleph appears in the infinitive absolute instead of a he, which is the usual final consonant of the root (qrh). This variant spelling is explained because \*" verbs and n" verbs often have the consonants aleph and he exchanged. Moreover, they are pointed after the analogy of the other or have a combination of consonants and vowels which are more appropriately germane to the other (GKC 75 nn-rr). See, for example, II Sam xii 17.

the midst of battle? And why did he have access to an unguarded king? The lad seeks to cover up any reasons he might have had for being on a field of battle. He may well have been a mercenary for the Philistines; in II Sam iv 10, as David recalls the events depicted here, David ascribes a motive of reward, perhaps financial, to the Amalekite. The lad's phrase strikes as evasion; he makes out that he innocently discovers Saul.

The lad's unlikely story is also evinced in his description of his encounter with Saul in vss 7-9. After presenting Saul's plight, the lad tells David that he responded to Saul with simple obedience. In vs 7 the lad replied to Saul with "Behold me", <a href="https://ninequal.com/hinnen1">hinnen1</a>. The response is the same kind that we get from the obedient lad Samuel in I Samuel iii (see especially vss 4, 5 and 6). The Amalekite is not saying casually "Here I am", but "Your dutiful servant awaits." The lad suggests his utmost respect for Saul, as he suggested his respect for David in bowing before him. In vs 8 Saul had questioned the lad's identity, and for the first time we are told that the lad is an Amalekite. But why would an Amalekite seek to be obedient to Saul and to try subsequently to please David? The Amalekite's profession of his obedience to Saul is suspicious.

In vs 9 Saul asks the Amalekite to slay him. The noun "anguish", šābās, is a hapax legomenon. A verb šbs is found twice in the Hebrew Bible in Exod xxvii 20 and 39 with the sense of "plaited", but its relation to the usage of the noun is remote. The LXX has "a dreadful darkness", skotos deinon, Tg. Neb. has simply "terror" retêt, and the Vg has "anguish grips me", tenant me angustiae. There has

been speculation that the sense should be "dizziness" or "giddiness" because of the Syr. <a href="mailto:swrn;">swrn;</a>; 11 the entry in Payne's Syriac dictionary cites the fourth usage of <a href="mailto:swr">swr</a> as "to see confused images, to be dimsighted, dizzy". 12 The translation as "dizziness" itself is weak, for if Saul has already been pierced by his spear he is more than dizzy. Even the Syriac word is stronger than what is suggested for if it means "to see confused images" it is a way of saying that Saul is severely troubled. Saul appears to say that "confusion has seized" him; it is the turmoil of a mortal wound. Both the LXX and Tg. Neb. translate the word with a stronger sense than "dizziness"; Saul is afflicted with an inner terror due to his wounds.

Vs 10 gives the Amalekite's account of what he did as a result of Saul's request. The reiteration of the same verbs used by Saul in his request, the qal of <u>\*amad</u> and the polel of <u>mut</u>, are part of the Amalekite's deliberate strategy to show his perfect obedience to his 'master' Saul. As a faithful servant he was simply doing his duty for his wounded king. He killed without hesitation. Yet in the same breath, in the conclusion of vs 10, he explains that he is also being faithful to David by bringing to David the crown and bracelet of Saul. He even calls David "lord" to show that he respects David. The shift in loyalties from Saul to David in the space of one verse

<sup>11</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 232. Gordon, op. cit., p. 209. McCarter, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>12</sup> J. Payne Smith, A Compendious Syriac Dictionary, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1903), p. 476.

without so much as suggestion of remorse is striking. The casual change in the Amalekite's concern betrays his insincerity.

The Amalekite's actions here are in contrast to the actions of the armourbearer in I Samuel xxxi, and the proximity of these two stories in the narrative reveals an interanimation which elucidates both. The armourbearer's actions are genuinely reverent toward his king. He refuses to kill his wounded king even when the king's death is imminent and the king has requested it. He chooses to die with the king rather than be responsible in any way for the king's death. The contrast between the two stories sharpens the sense of the Amalekite's treachery and reinforces either the implausibility of his story or the despicability of his actions if he did kill Saul.

In all this the Amalekite underestimates David's regard for Saul. David's response in vs 11 to the Amalekite's speech is in contrast to what the Amalekite expects. David does not reward the Amalekite, he tears his clothes in lamentation. The shift in the narrative from dialogue to narration is a technique used by the author to highlight the different responses of the two men. David does not speak, he acts, and in a way that forcefully reveals his regard for Saul. The dialogue for the time being is ended because David wishes to mourn Saul. The definiteness and immediacy of David's response provokes one to wonder why David laments so fully the death of an enemy. Are David's actions here a deliberate strategy to win him the throne? 13

<sup>13</sup> So Noth, see above, p. 79.

technique of the shift from dialogue to narration is deployed with the force of enhancing and not diminishing David's loyalty to Saul.

David's actions are not depicted as political strategy. The rhetoric of the passage betrays no other emphasis.

Vs 12 confirms the depiction of David's loyalty. The concatenation of the three verbs at the beginning of the line, "and they lamented and they wept and they fasted", indicates the intensity of the grief. The depth of the mourning is further heightened by an explanation of the length of time; the mourning lasted "until evening".

The narrator also lists precisely those who are being mourned; Saul, Jonathan, the people of the Lord and the house of Israel. A variant in the LXX makes a slight change of sense in the line and is worthy of note. The LXX has "the people of Judah", ton laon Iouda, instead of "the people of the Lord" as is found in the MT. Tg. Neb., Syr. and Vg have the same reading as the MT. The LXX reading suggests an awareness on the part of the author of a distinction between Judah and Israel, and that both are defeated when Saul is killed. Support for the LXX reading exists in rabbinic texts. J. Weingreen, in explaining various kinds of textual errors recognised by the rabbis, cites the Mishna Sopherim V2 as an account by the rabbis of how "Judah", yěhūdâ, and the divine name, yhwh, are mistaken by scribes. As the consonants of the two words are very similar, the words could be mistaken for one another. Mishna Sopherim V2 lists II Sam i 12, our

occurrence, as an example. Thus certain rabbis thought that the original in vs 12 was "Judah" rather than "the Lord". 14

As there is no way of determining which of the two variants is the better reading, we shall remain with the MT reading at this point. The Hebrew usage is repeated in II Sam vi 21 where David says to Michal that he is appointed as a ruler "over the people of the Lord, over Israel." The LXX for II Sam vi 21 has "over his people, over Israel", epi ton laon autou epi ton Israel; there are no LXX manuscripts which replace yhwh in this passage with "Judah". The LXX, at least in the early part of II Samuel, 15 does not persistently read yhwh as "Judah".

If we retain the MT, David uses the two phrases to affirm that the "house of Israel", that is, the followers of Saul, are "the people of God" as much as the Judaeans are. Although the northern tribes could be David's enemies, David does not treat them as such. He recognises that their defeat is also a loss for the Judaeans and himself. 16

of the Hebrew Bible, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 22-23.

<sup>15</sup> H. St J. Thackeray distinguished this section of the LXX as belonging to what he calls the bb section of the books of I-IV Kingdoms. The section consists of II Kgdms i 1-xi 1 (II Sam i 1-xi 1). The seven chapters under inquiry in this dissertation are thus thought to be the product of the same translator and revisor. H. St J. Thackeray, "The Greek Translators of the Four Books of Kings," JTS 8 (1907), pp. 262-278.

<sup>16</sup> Nübel's view that the phrase is an insertion by the B. fails to appreciate the force of the expression in the passage. Nübel, see above, p. 131.

Vs 13 resumes the dialogue between David and the Amalekite. although it also presents a problem in the development of the story. We do not know whether the dialogue that begins in vs 13 is the first meeting between the two or a second meeting at some later time; it appears that time has passed in vs 12. The failure of the narrative to account for this difficulty is one of three reasons that Gressmann argues that the entire chapter is composed of two sources. He suggests that vss 13-15 are part of a second source added to the original story. He also ascribes vs 16 to a later source because the temporal sequence of events is unusual there as well. According to vss 15-16 David gives the Amalekite the reason for his execution after he kills him. Gressmann claims that the narrative fails to represent a sequence of events that occur in orderly progression. 17 Eissfeldt also argues that the difficulties in vss 13-16 indicate that another source is found here. He includes vss 12 and 17-27 as part of the one source, and vss 13-16 as part of the other source. 18

There is no question that Gressmann and Eissfeldt correctly identify a difficulty in the narrative's depiction of the order of events. The Masoretes place a setûmâ between vss 12 and 13 which indicates that they too recognise the shift in the narrative; it is the only setûmâ or petûmâ in vss 1-16. It is possible that vs 13 describes a second meeting between David and the Amalekite; but it is speculative to make a definitive judgement on this matter due to the

<sup>17</sup> Gressmann, see above, pp. 12-13.

<sup>18</sup> Eissfeldt, see above, p. 49.

brevity of the depiction. There is, however, deliberate purpose in this laconic style. The compositional strategy of the author at this point is to reduce details to a minimum. When and where David and the Amalekite meet again, if indeed this is a second meeting, is irrelevant to the force of the story. There is a deliberate exclusion of what we would call 'background'. 19 The effect of the style is to focus the story completely on 1) David's response to the deaths and on 2) the Amalekite's apparent lack of awareness of what he claims to have done. In the same way, whether David told the Amalekite the reason for his death or not is also irrelevant. The Amalekite's claim marks him already as a condemned man. The author exercises a deliberate terseness to concentrate the story on these two aspects.

In vs 13 David asks the man where he comes from and the man replies that he is the son of a stranger, he is an Amalekite. Both the question and the reply are repetitious because the Amalekite has already revealed his identity in his initial account of slaying Saul (vs 8). Gressmann argues that this repetition is a second reason that vss 13-15 belong to a distinct source. According to Gressmann, such repetition would not occur in one source.<sup>20</sup> Grønbaek argues, in contrast to Gressmann, that David's reiteration of the question following his lamentation over Saul is a sign of the seriousness of the offense.

Dass Davids Frage an den Boten nach seiner Herkunft in V. 13 von einem Redaktor stammen musste, da dieser beriets in V. 8

<sup>19</sup> See E. Auerbach, Mimesis, pp. 3-23.

<sup>20</sup> Gressmann, see above, p. 12.

diese Frage beantwortet hatte, ist keineswegs überzeugend. David wollte sich offenbar seiner Herkunft noch einmal vergewissern, ehe er seine Hinrichtung wahrmachte!<sup>21</sup>

David wishes to establish again and by the man's own words who he is.

David's second question in vs 14 follows directly from the first. What kind of man would not be afraid to kill the anointed of the Lord?

Gressmann's criticism of the repetition in v 13 fails to appreciate how the repetition reveals the force of the story.

The Amalekite's answer is not repeated <u>verbatim</u> from vs 8. We learn that the man is a "son of a stranger", <u>ben-'îs gēr</u>. The Amalekite's tribal origin is not Israelite. The reason that the man does not understand David's regard for the anointed of the Lord is in part because he is a youth but, more significantly, because he is an Amalekite. There are few peoples so severely condemned in the books of Samuel and indeed in the whole of biblical history as the Amalekites. Vs 1 reminds us that David has just returned from a battle with these loathed people. In calling himself a "stranger", the Amalekite betrays his ignorance of how an Israelite might respond to the news of Israel's defeat in battle.

The phrase <u>ben-'îs gēr</u> has been used by some studies to argue that as a <u>gēr</u> the Amalekite had the status of legal protection in Israel. Driver, <sup>22</sup> McCarter, <sup>23</sup> Gordon <sup>24</sup> and others argue that <u>gēr</u>

<sup>21</sup> Grønbaek, Geschichte, p. 218.

<sup>22</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 233.

<sup>23</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 60.

<sup>24</sup> Gordon, <u>Samuel</u>, pp. 209-210.

should not be translated as "stranger" but rather as "resident alien". Driver says that ger is the term used in legal texts to account for those who are not the sons of Jacob but who live amidst the Israelites. He uses the example in Exod xii 48. But the phrase in this verse in Exodus shows that it is not a precise modern legal term such as "resident alien". Exod xii 48 qualifies the sense of stranger to make it legally precise: "And when a stranger shall sojourn with thee, wekîyagur 'itteka ger." The law makes provision for protection of strangers, but the usage of ger by itself does not invokes the sense of legal protection. There are also a number of uses of ger in other texts. In Gen xv 13 the seed of Abraham are to be strangers in a land that is not theirs; the usage does not suggest a legal claim and in fact the Israelites are enslaved in Egypt. In Pss xxxix 13 and cxix 19 the Psalmist declares that he is a stranger on earth which is not the assertion of a legal claim on earth, but of the recognition of the transitoriness of life and his dependence on God. 25 Various uses of the Greek translation paroikos do not suggest that the word implies a legal claim (Deut xxiii 8, Luke xxiv 18, Acts vii 6 and

of ger as 'stranger'. According to C.H. Gordon gr is used twice in Ugaritic texts, UT 2:27 and 1 Aqht: 153. In either instance there is no reason to assume that the Israelite law regarding sojourners applies or that there is a Canaanite law of the same nature. However, there is some question regarding the text because in the same passages in KTU 1.40:27 and 1.19 III 53 the passages are reconstructed as if the noun gr is not in the text. KTU 1.19 III 53 is found in CTA 19 iii 153-154. Gibson produces the text as amd.gr bt il/nt.brh.pclm.h., "Be continually a seeker of sanctuary. Be a fugitive now and evermore." The translation could be "Be a sojourner in the house of El" in which case it certainly reveals that the noun need not constitute a legal claim.

Aristotle's Rhetoric 1395a 18; see also the verb parokesen in Deut xxvi 5). Moreover, in II Sam iv 3 we are told that two Benjamites have fled to Gittaim and are "sojourners", garîm (paroikountes), there; this usage does not invoke their legal status. They are reckoned as Israelites without being called garîm. But they are strangers from their original Israelite locality. The Amalekite, therefore, is not making a legal claim in II Sam i 13, but is simply explaining that he is a stranger. Moreover, even if the man was an Israelite or had a legal claim to certain kinds of protection under Israelite law, David's response need not have been different; David chides Abishai for wanting to kill Saul in I Samuel xxvi because, as David affirms, Abishai cannot kill the anointed of the Lord and be guiltless.

Charles Mabee, in a recent article, stresses that "the Amale-kite has acted with utter disregard for the Israelite societal norm concerning the mšyh yhwh."<sup>27</sup> Mabee seeks to establish that the story in II Sam i 1-16 exhibits a legal structure and is, therefore, a legal vindication of David from complicity in Saul's death. Mabee's attempt to find a legal literary structure in the passage cannot be sustained;

<sup>26</sup> The study of F.A. Spina on gerim does not adequately recognise that "resident aliens" and "immigrants" are anachronisms when used as translations. He does, however, use the term "sojourner" both in the title to the essay and in many places in the body of the essay. The change in translation between "resident alien" and "sojourner" is decisive because the phrase "resident alien" constitutes a legal claim. F.A. Spina, "Israelites as gerim, 'Sojourners' in Social and Historical Context," The Word of the Lord Shall Go Forth, eds. Carol L. Myers and M. O'Connor, (Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 1983), pp. 321-335.

<sup>27</sup> C. Mabee, "David's Judicial Exoneration," ZAW 92 (1980), pp. 89-107.

the passage is a story of the coming of a messenger, and does not reflect procedures in a court of law. Nor is it clear why mšyh yhwh is a "societal norm"; the phrase itself, mšyh yhwh, suggests the anointing of a divinity. But his judgement is correct that the phrase "the anointed of the Lord" is a central theme in the conflict between David and Saul as it is depicted in I Samuel and also here in II Samuel i.

The phrase "the anointed of the Lord" is the rationale of David's actions in this passage. The phrase is repeated in vs 16 for emphasis. The same phrase was used by David on two previous occasions, I Samuel xxiv and xxvi, when he had opportunities to slay Saul. On both these previous occasions, David refused to kill Saul because Saul was the "anointed of the Lord" (I Sam xxiv 7[MT] and xxvi 9-11). I Sam xxvi 10 serves as a foreshadowing of II Samuel i because in I Sam xxvi 10 David says that the Lord may smite Saul, or Saul may die a natural death or he may die in battle, but David will not kill him. We notice a progression in David's respect for Saul between I Samuel xxiv and xxvi; in chapter xxiv David cuts Saul's robe, but later his heart is grieved because he has been disrespectful in this way; in chapter xxvi David does not allow Saul's person to be touched but commands Abishai to take only Saul's spear and cruse of water. The Amalekite, like David's men in I Samuel xxiv and xxvi before him, does not recognise that David might act out of different motives than self-interest and political ambition. The depiction in the prose narrative in vss 1-16 is a delicate but forceful presentation of David's restraint in taking the life of the anointed of the Lord and

his condemnation of anyone who thought he might be pleased. Mabee writes:

It is the climax of a major theme within [the] Saul/David complex, namely, that David consistently refused to raise his hand against the mayn yhwh. The onus of responsibility for Saul's death falls upon a stranger, an Amalekite, not upon David and his supporters.<sup>28</sup>

Mabee correctly judges how this theme in the story of Saul and David is central to the purpose of our passage as well.<sup>29</sup> Given David's restraint in this story and his respect for God's anointing, the chapter has a very definite 'religious' element to it.<sup>30</sup>

There are several aspects of style of II Sam i 1-16 that can only be adequately addressed by examining the entire passage. First, 0. Eissfeldt argues that there are two sources in the chapter because certain verses speak of only Saul (vss 6-10 and 13-16) and others speak of both Saul and Jonathan (vss 4,11,12 and 17-25). Eissfeldt substantiates this selective use of names by other aspects of style discussed earlier. The variation in names, however, does not have the significance Eissfeldt maintains. The places in which Jonathan's name are deleted are the two places in the chapter in which the Amale-

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

There is a <u>qere</u> in vs 16 which changes the plural "your bloods", <u>dāmeykā</u>, to "your blood", <u>dāmkā</u>. The <u>qere</u> represents the more usual usage, but Driver correctly notices the plural with suffix used of <u>dām</u> in Lev xx 9 and Hos xii 15 of a singular subject. To these two usages we should add II Sam iii 28. The <u>kethib</u> can be maintained as a rare but attested spelling.

<sup>30</sup> Noth's claim that the story is without religious foundation cannot be sustained. Noth, see above, pp. 78-79.

<sup>31</sup> Eissfeldt, see above, pp. 49-50.

kite is telling of how he killed Saul (vss 6-10 and 13-16). The Amalekite makes no claim to have killed Jonathan, and there is no reason for him to bring up Jonathan's name in either place. Eissfeldt fails to consider what is taking place in the story itself.

Second, the reading of II Samuel i is influenced by the presence of I Samuel xxxi. Indeed, it was Wellhausen's judgement that II Samuel i is secondary to the main narrative because the chapters give two irreconcilable accounts of the death of Saul. II Samuel i interrupts the thread of the narrative, and it is necessary to judge which of the two stories is more historical. 32 Wellhausen makes the judgement that II Samuel i is the less historical of the two according to a criterion of credibility (glaubwürdiger); he says it is not credible that the Amalekite was near Saul's camp in the midst of battle and was able to obtain Saul's crown and bracelet. It is not, however, impossible that the Amalekite was there. He may well have been a mercenary for the Philistines and arrived at the place where Saul fell before the generals of the Philistine army did. If he found Saul dead, it would have been simple for him to remove the crown and bracelet in recognition of the advantage they might gain him with David. Given that the Amalekite's entire story is evasive and suspicious, an element Wellhausen does not adequately point out, the stress on the contradictory nature of the two chapters is difficult to sustain.

<sup>32</sup> Wellhausen, see above, pp. 3-4. Grønbaek, see above, pp. 163-165.

Gressmann agrees with Wellhausen that there is a contradiction in the two chapters, but explains the contradiction in a slightly different way. 33 Gressmann claims there are two reports in II Samuel i, the first, the older and more historical report is simply the Amalekite's story of the deaths of Saul and Jonathan. The second, the younger and less historical report, tells of the Amalekite's killing of Saul. For Gressmann, I Samuel xxxi is the historical account of Saul's death. Gressmann agrees with Wellhausen that if the Amalekite were fighting on the side of the Israelites, he could not have escaped the massacre to report to David. It is incredible (unglaubwurdiger) that the Amalekite should have escaped. He concludes that the account of the Amalekite's action in the story is a legendary insertion. This argument is Gressmann's third reason for supposing that two sources are interwoven. It is subject to the same criticism as Wellhausen's argument, and it is necessary to remember that Gressmann's other two arguments have already been answered. And neither Wellhausen nor Gressmann explain why the other option, that the Amalekite is fabricating at least part of his story, is impossible.

If the Amalekite has indeed made up his story, there is no contradiction between I Samuel xxxi and II Samuel i. The study of the style of the passage supports this reading. The lad who came to David feigned obedience to both Saul and David, was evasive in producing a plausible story, and seemed naive regarding the effect his tribal origin would have on David. There are numerous other studies

<sup>33</sup> Gressmann, see above, pp. 11-14.

that conclude that the Amalekite's story is fraudulent; they include 0. Eissfeldt, 34 R.L. Ward, 35 P.K. McCarter, R.P. Gordon, D.F. Payne 36 and H.W. Hertzberg. 37

The stylistic arguments which are used to support an historical reconstruction of the passage have arisen from inadequate accounts of the style. If the historical David is different than the depiction of David in the narrative, the historical David is inaccessible to us and attempts to reconstruct his actions and motives are speculative. The depiction of the narrative in II Samuel i 1-16 is not a 'neutral' account because the author does not perceive the actions he presents as neutral actions, and the passage is not necessarily unhistorical because it is written with such a purpose. The criticism of the historicity of the passage because it has a <u>Tendenz</u> or is the embodiment of value is not in itself sufficient justification for the attempt to reconstruct a "neutral history".

David's regard for the anointed of the Lord does not dismiss that David might have felt vengeful toward Saul. But what is significant in this passage, as in I Samuel xxiv and xxvi, is that he does not act vengefully. David is restrained by the 'religious' sanction to

<sup>34</sup> Eissfeldt, see above, pp. 50-51. Eissfeldt's view that the Amalekite gives an "intentionally incomplete message" does not seem to recognise that the Amalekite's story of how Saul died is contradictory to the account in I Samuel xxxi.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup> Ward, see above, pp. 149-150.

<sup>36</sup> D.F. Payne, <u>I & II Samuel</u>, gen. ed. J.C.L. Gibson, (Philadel-phia: Westminster Press, 1982), pp. 157-158.

<sup>37</sup> H.W. Hertzberg, I & II Samuel, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1964), pp. 234-238.

respect the one whom God has anointed. David's life is not always characterised by such restraint, but that he acts in such a way here is a vital part of the rich complexity of the narrative depiction of the life of David.

The deaths of Saul and Jonathan cause David to compose a lament over the fallen warriors. The introduction to David's lament in vss 17 and 18 states explicitly that the poem in vss 19-27 is originally from the book of Jashar, a distinct source from the present narrative. Whatever the previous location of the lament, the content shows that it could only have been composed as a result of Saul's death. The poem follows naturally from the prose narrative preceding it, and confirms and supplements the depiction of David's response to the death presented in the narrative.<sup>38</sup>

Vs 17 introduces the poem as a lament over Saul and Jonathan. The poem indeed focuses substantially on these two people. It, how-ever, does not overlook others who were killed. Saul and Jonathan are representatives of Israelite warriors and of the Israelite people. David calls all Israel to recognise that there has been genuine loss at their passing.

Three problems arise in the reading of vs 18, and they have caused much speculation as to the sense of the line. First, why are only the sons of Judah mentioned? Second, is "bow" the proper word in this context? Third, what is the "book of Jashar"?

<sup>38</sup> Grønbaek judges that although the poem is from a distinct source it fits well into the context of the story here in II Samuel i. Grønbaek, see above, p. 165.

The phrase "the sons of Judah" is used at the beginning of the poem in order to implicate the Judaeans in the war against the Philistines. As vs 12 notes, the defeat itself had been primarily against the "house of Israel". The lament praises two Benjamites. David urges his tribe, the Judaeans, to lament the deaths of these Benjamites and to fight on behalf of the house of Israel. As the Jewish commentator Isaaki says; "David said, now that the mighty men of Israel have fallen, it is necessary that the Children of Judah learn war and draw the bow." The special challenge which David presents to the Judaeans reveals that David insists that there will be no disunity between the tribes.

The use of the word "bow", qaset, is also questioned in this context. It is not found in many LXX manuscripts (except for LXXA, Aquila and a few other manuscripts). Tg. Neb. has "the string of the bow", migad beqasta; Syr. and Vg agree with the MT. The use of "bow" is at least partially difficult because of the verb "to teach", lelammed, preceding it. Although the LXX manuscripts that do not contain "bow", tochon, appear to diminish any military sense to this superscription, they may rely upon the import of didaxai; the LXX may assume that didaxai be read as teaching war to the sons of Judah.

O. Eissfeldt has argued that the usage of "to teach", <u>lelammed</u>, here is a military-technical term. 40 <u>lmd</u> is used in the phrase "to

<sup>39</sup> As cited in H.P. Smith, <u>The Books of Samuel</u>, The International Critical Commentary, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1899), p. 259.

<sup>40</sup> O. Eissfeldt, "Zwei Verkannte Militär-Technische Termini im Altem Testament," <u>VT</u> 5 (1955), pp. 232-238.

teach war", lelammed milhamâ, or some variation, in Judg iii 2, II

Sam xxii 35=Ps xviii 35 [MT], Isa ii 4=Mic iv 3, Ps cxliv 1 and Cant

iii 8. II Sam xxii 35=Ps xviii 35 has "bow" in parallelism with

"to teach war"; melammed yaday lammilhamâ//wenihatâ qeset-nehûsâ.

llmd is also used in Ps lx 1-2 as part of a superscription in a Psalm

of war. Eissfeldt claims that it is a military ethos that has inspired

the writing of the lament, and the "technical" usage of lmd is part

of the evidence for that. The words "ethos" and "inspired" are too

general to be used to account for the writing of poetry, and it is

unclear why the adjective "technical" is appropriate in the identifica
tion of Hebrew idiom. But certainly Eissfeldt has adequately identi
fied a well attested military usage of lmd. The translation of vs

18a as "And he said to teach the sons of Judah the bow" is an appropri
ate rendering of the line.41

S. Gevirtz has offered a complete reworking of vs 18 in order to make it the first line of the poem rather than a superscription. 42 The attempt to make the line fit a pattern of parallelism was first suggested by A. Klostermann. Gevirtz's reworking is accepted with only slight modifications by W.L. Holladay. 43 Gevirtz's reading of the line requires emendation of the consonantal text of seven of the ten words in the line and the change in vocalization of one of

<sup>41</sup> See also Barthelemy, <u>Critique Textuelle</u>, p. 226. Barthelemy retains the MT.

<sup>42</sup> Stanley Gevirtz, Patterns in the Early Poetry of Israel, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), pp. 72-96.

<sup>43</sup> William L. Holladay, "Form and Word-Play in David's Lament over Saul and Jonathan," VT 20 (1970), pp. 153-189.

the remaining words. Gevirtz's aim is to establish two parallel cola and to show that they exhibit the fixed word pairs yěhûdâ//yiśrā'ēl and bkh//spd. His desire to form proper parallelism and fixed word pairs to the extent that he is willing to emend the text, often quite radically, is exemplified in his study of the rest of the poem as well. In this type of procedure, certain aspects of style of Hebrew poetry are given precedence over all other aspects, and changes are made until the poetry fits Gevirtz's model. Vs 18 does not need to be part of the poem; it may not possess parallelism. Moreover, it indeed functions as a superscription in the MT and LXX. Eissfeldt's reading remains the better alternative.

Vs 18a thus is a command for the Judaeans to learn to fight.

They are to fight in defense of both Israel and Judah. David's praise of Saul and Jonathan and other Israelite warriors in the subsequent poem establishes them as examples to the Judaeans.

The recognition of this usage of  $\underline{lmd}$  in various places in the OT also rules out the suggestion made by  $Gr\not on$  back that the likeness of the phrase to Deut xxxi 19 is evidence of Dtr. idiom and what we have here is an insertion by the Deuteronomist.

The second phrase in the superscription, "Behold, as it is written in the book of Jashar," also makes sense without emendation. A similar Hebrew phrase is found in II Chr xxxv 25 of Jeremiah's songs of lament over Josiah: "And, behold, they are written in the lamentations," wehinnam ketûbîm 'al-haqqinôt (see also Josh x 13).

<sup>44</sup> Grønbaek, see above, p. 165.

The phrase itself is not unusual at the beginning of a lament. In the early versions the sense of yasar is preserved. The LXX and the Vg have "the book of the righteous", tou euthous, Iustorum, and Tg. Neb. "the book of the law", 'orayta'. The book is referred to one other time in the MT in Josh x 13. The LXX omits the reference to the book in Joshua but makes reference to a "book of odes," en biblio tes odes, in III Kgdms viii 53. From this last LXX reference, it is suggested that what ought to be in II Sam i 18 is "song", 'sîr, as in the Syr. There is however nothing particularly problematic with the MT at this point. "The book of the righteous" is a preferable translation to the book of Jashar because it preserves the sense of the Hebrew.

The translation of the first word of the lament as "the beauty", hassebî, can be maintained despite alternatives which have much to commend them. sby has three other possible translations, 1) "gazelle", sebî, 2) "to stand oneself", a hiphil of the verb nsb and 3) "to consider", a hiphil of the Aramaic root ysb. The Syr. has the reading "gazelle", tby; LXXB, steloson, and Tg. Neb., it atadtûn have verbs meaning "to stand"; LXXL has "to consider", akribasai, and the Vg has two readings, incliti and considera. The four alternate readings thus go back to the ancient versions. The best argument in support of "beauty" is the sense of the line itself. sebî is in parallelism with "the mighty", gibborîm. As the lament develops we know that the gibborîm are Saul and Jonathan. sebî, then, invokes the presence of the two men about whom the poem is written.

Other alternatives are possible, however. "The gazelle of Israel" uses a metaphor of the speed and agility of a warrior. The metaphor is used in ii 18 of Asahel and it is easy to see how the proximity of these passages commends the use of the metaphor here. Moreover, sby is used in an Ugaritic passage in which a metaphor for "prince(s)" is present. In CTA 15 iv 6-8 we read: "Summon my seventy peers (lit. "bulls")/My eighty lords (lit. "gazelles")/The nobles (lit. "bulls") of Great Huber" (sh.šb'm[]try/tmnym.[z]byy/tr.hbr [.rbt]).45 On the basis of the Ugaritic McCarter translates the word as "prince" because "gazelle" is the "literal meaning of sebî" and "gazelle" is used metaphorically for "prince".46 The Ugaritic usage is plausible. I have chosen the MT only because it is not possible to tip the balance in favour of one usage.

The translation of sby as a verb "to stand" parses the word as a hiphil of nsb. If the word is translated as a verb it is impossible to account for the yod. The verb cannot be a feminine singular imperative with the subject Israel because Israel in Hebrew is not feminine (see, for example, the masculine suffix in ii 9). If the verb is "to consider", ysb, it is the only use of ysb in the Hebrew Bible and only the second time (the other occasion in the Aramaic section of Daniel, Dan vii 16) in the entire Bible. As a verb, too, the parallelism of the line is broken. The LXX has "Stand, O Israel, over your dead, on your high places, of the slain", stēloson Israel

<sup>45</sup> The translation is from Cross, op. cit., p. 122.

<sup>46</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 74.

hyper ton tethnekoton epi ta hypse sou traumation. The doublet that is created in the line probably indicates that the LXX is reading a line in which bamôteyka is repeated twice, or that there is a conflation of alternate Hebrew readings. While any one of the four readings is possible and have been available from the time of the ancient versions, "beauty" commends itself by not requiring any changes in form, by being an adequate parallel to "mighty", by being a well attested noun in Hebrew, and as setting the tone of the lament in a powerful way. 47

"Upon your high places", <al-bamôteyka, is best translated in a geographical sense, and refers to the mountains of Gilboa. Gevirtz argues that "high places", <a href="bamôt">bamôt</a>, is a "technical" term in Hebrew usage for a place of worship and Gilboa is never mentioned as such a place. He says that <a href="bamôt">bamôt</a> can also mean "back" and through a development parallel to <a href="gwh">gwh</a> "back" which becomes <a href="gwyh">gwyh</a> "body" or "corpse", <a href="bamôt">bamôt</a> also comes to mean "body". He cites Deut xxxiii 29 as an example. But there are two errors in Gevirtz's argument. First, there is no "development" between <a href="gwh">gwh</a> and <a href="gwyh">gwyh</a>. The two words have the same root but are used in two independent senses. Second,

<sup>47</sup> Dhorme favoured "glory" to "gazelle" because it expressed metaphorically that the "best" had been slain. Dhorme translates the word as l'élite (Lut. Edelsten). Paul Dhorme, Les Livre de Samuel, (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1910), p. 270. What is in question here is the nature of the metaphor; Should the metaphor be "beauty" or "gazelle"? Luther's and Dhorme's translations of sby as "nobles" uses the word in the same way as in the Ugaritic passage. For a list of others who chose the translation as "gazelle" see O. Thenius, Die Bücher Samuels, Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zum Alten Testament, (2nd ed.; Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1864), p. 142.

<sup>48</sup> Gevirtz, op. cit., pp. 77-82.

even if there were a common sense between gwh and gwyh, this fact does not constitute an argument that a parallel exists with another word; it is a non sequitur to conclude from this type of argument that "body" is one of the senses of bamot. Gevirtz refers in his footnote to a comment made by E.L. Sukenik that in Deut xxxiii 29, bamot means "body", but he also admits that Sukenik retracts the argument in a later work. Gevirtz does not explain why bamôt in Deut xxxiii 29 cannot mean "high places", as is its usual rendering (KJV and RSV). bamot can be used in the sense of "back" (Gordon, UT 480). The usage is also attested in the War Scroll from Qumran (col. xii 10). The occurrence in the Qumran scroll is similar to II Sam i 19 and needs to be noted. The text says: "Set your hand on the neck of your enemies,/And your foot on the backs of slain", tn ydkh bewrp 'wybykh/ wrglkh 1 bmwty hll. bmwty is parallel with "necks", wrp, and bmwt should indeed be translated as "backs". Although the usage of bmwty and hll together suggests a phrase that might illumine our passage, there is no indication why "back" is the usage in vs 19.49

<sup>49</sup> Gevirtz's argument also depends upon an emendation of the final colon of vs 25 because according to his rendering of bamoteka it would be translated nonsensically as "Jonathan, over thy bodies of slain". Gevirtz emends "Jonathan" by separating it into the verb "to be", yhw, the waw is a simple scribal error for yhy and the verb "to give", ntn. Gevirtz proceeds to argue that ntn is used twice in Ugaritic texts as a substitute for bky "weeping", citing Ginsberg as the one who made the observation. But the attested idiom in Ugaritic is "the giving of voice" (ytn gh) as in CTA 16 i 13, et al. and this idiom is a substitute for bky. The controversial passage in Ugaritic is lntn tq (CTA 16 i 4-5 amd 18-19) in which ntn, as Ginsberg does say, is a survival of ntn in Ugaritic for the more usual ytn. In a recent article by M. Dietrich and O. Loretz it is argued that to means "howl" or "mourn" in which case ntn need not lose its sense of "give" in the expression, nor be considered a verb with the meaning of "mourn". The usage is "to the giving of mourning" which is quite

McCarter argues for the alternate reading "slain standing erect". He says, following the discussion of P.H. Vaughn on the word bāmâ, that there is a "primitive" usage of bāmâ which means "rib cage of human or animal" and that other usages such as "back" and "high place", in his words, "arose from this". 50 What both McCarter and Vaughn argue is that there is a "basic meaning" to the word which informs all subsequent usage. But the sense of a word is the way it is used in a particular text; two words may have the same spelling or the same root but completely independent senses. McCarter uses this type of philology to say that in II Sam xxii 34 the phrase "he sets me upon my high places" means "he stood me upon my back", an idiom for the sense of "standing upright". Thus in II Sam i 19 bāmôt means he was slain while standing up. But if the phrase, that is, the verb and plus bamôt, in II Sam xxii 34 is an idiom, the idiom is not used in II Sam i 19 and he has no guarantee that bāmôt is somehow used in the sense of "back".

Rather, there is a usage of <u>bamôt</u> as "high places" (BDB, 2a and b). See Deut xxxii 13, Ps xix 34=II Sam xxii 34, Amos iv 13, et al. These usages are often with a military sense. The <u>bamôt</u> are

suitable in the passage. In conclusion the Ugaritic usage does not support the sense of ntn in itself "to mourn" as Gevirtz suggests. See M. Dietrich and O. Loretz, "Die Wehklage über Keret in KTU 1.16 I 2-23 (// II 35-50)," UF 12 (1980), pp. 189-192. U. Cassuto includes ytn gh bky as one of the stereotyped formula that is found in both Ugaritic and Biblical literature. "Stereotyped formula" refers to language that is dead cliche, and Cassuto must be criticised for this designation. He has recognised a common Semitic idiom in the two languages. U. Cassuto, The Goddess Anath, trans. Israel Abrahams, (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1971), p. 39.

<sup>50</sup> McCarter, op. cit., pp. 74-75.

valuable in time of war. An army will choose a high place to ward off the enemy because they can see the enemy coming and they can fight downhill. To lose a "high place" is a severe setback. It is this sense that is used here. To be slain upon your high places is to say that the warriors were slain at a strategic military position and the war is lost.<sup>51</sup>

A caesura occurs following "slain". The second colon is "How are the mighty fallen", 'eq napelû gibbîrîm, and is in parallelism to the first colon. The parallelism does not extend to all members of the two cola, however, because there is no equivalent in the second colon for "upon thy high places". The second colon is repeated two other times in the poem, vss 25 and 27. It has been called a refrain by D.N. Freedman. The places in which the phrase occurs are at the beginning, at a point of transition in the poem to extol Jonathan alone (vs 25) and at the end of the lament. They mark the central theme of the poem, and unify it. Their location is a strong argument against attempting to reconstruct a poetic line out of vs 18. Indeed those, such as Gevirtz and Holladay, who have used a greatly emended vs 18 as the first line of the lament say very little about this repeated phrase or where it occurs. Freedman, in contrast, says the "refrain" functions as an inclusio which envelops the entire lament,

<sup>51</sup> This usage of bamôt is confirmed in P.C. Craigie's comments on Deut xxxii 13. P.C. Craigie, The Book of Deuteronomy, NICOT, ed. R.K. Harrison, (Grand Rapids, Mich; Eerdmans, 1976), p. 381.

<sup>52</sup> D.N. Freedman, "The Refrain in David's Lament over Saul and Jonathan," Ex Orbe Religionum I, Festschrift for G. Widengrin, eds. C.L. Bleeker, et al., Supplements to Numen, 21 (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972), pp. 115-126.

and he judges that Gevirtz and Holladay have exaggerated the difficulties of vss 18 and 19.53 According to Freedman the lament begins in vs 19.54 Freedman's comments at this point are more sensitive to the stylistic elements which create the poem.

The expected Hebrew word order in this first line is altered; the subject is first, followed by the indirect object and then finally the verb. This collocation of the elements of the sentence lays stress on the subject, the beauty of Israel. From the first word of the poem, the loss of Saul and Jonathan is introduced. Moreover, the term "beauty" invokes the attitude of the poet to them; they are Israel's glory.

Vs 20a consists of two cola each beginning with a particle of negation, <u>Jal</u>: "Tell it in not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon". Gevirtz, Holladay and Freedman all have trouble with the line as it stands. Their explanation of the difficulties give us occasion to evaluate general principles of poetry which they use throughout their studies.

Gevirtz makes the following statement about vs 20a:

Nevertheless, one senses a curious imbalance in the lines; for, while it is not uncommon in Hebrew poetry to have more terms in one line than in its parallel, it is most unusual in such strictly synonymous parallelism for the second of the two cola to contain a significant element without a correspondent term in the first. Despite the evidence of Mic. 1:

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 119. n. 2.

<sup>54</sup> Freedman's analysis is preferred to other accounts in a recent article by William H. Shea, "David's Lament", BASOR 221 (1976), pp. 141-144. Shea makes a valuable point at the beginning of his article. He says: "Emending poetry not only runs the risk of altering what the poet has said but also the form in which he has said it."

10, therefore, there is lacking in the first colon a word for which hwst serves as a parallel in the second.55 Gevirtz uses "plazas", rhbwt, as a "fixed word correspondent" to hwst; the pair occur nine times in biblical poetry. What is left out of the first colon, therefore, is rhbwt. But what is this "strictly synonymous parallelism"? Do we dare say that in any line of Hebrew poetry there is strictly synonymous parallelism? And even if we find what we think are a few examples (vs 20b is the only line that would qualify in this poem), why must this passage possess strictly synonymous parallelism? Vs 19 does not exhibit this parallelism (though Gevirtz changed it as well). Gevirtz is applying a rigid law that "strictly synonymous parallelism" must exist here, and he changes the text when the line does not fit his pattern. Moreover, Gevirtz wants to show the use of fixed word pairs, and his emendation creates a pair. But the line is not worse poetry for not having a fixed word pair, nor is there a problem with the sense. 56

Holladay agrees with Gevirtz's insertion, albeit he expresses some reservations about changing a "perfectly good text". 57 Holladay confirms Gevirtz's insertion, however, on the further evidence that since there is already assonance in the line the insertion would

<sup>55</sup> Gevirtz, op. cit., p. 83.

<sup>56</sup> Robert Alter says there may be a broad and varied interplay of semantic relations between versets (what I have called cola). He introduces a number of categories which try to account for the variety. One such category recognises that in the second verset there is "focusing, heightening, intensification, specification" but not exact synonymity. R. Alter, The Art of Biblical Poetry, (New York: Basic Books, 1985), p. 29.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>57</sup> Holladay, art. cit., p. 168.

create more. Holladay's article is interested in what he calls "wordplay"; by word-play he means the repetition of sound between two words or phrases. 58 In the first colon of vs 20, the gimels "balance assonantically" (taggidû and gat). However, it is a bit speculative to conclude that the gimels sound alike. Holladay assumes that gimel without lene is pronounced the same as gimel with lene; the daghes forte in the hiphil of taggidu hides the daghes lene, but the lene still exists. We have no way of knowing whether these sounds were close enough at the time the poem was composed to say they are evidence of assonance. Nevertheless, Holladay maintains that the gimels balance in the first colon and the sibilants  $(\frac{1}{2})$  and  $\frac{1}{2}$  balance in the second colon. He is willing to support Gevirtz's emendation of the line on the basis of the assonance. Holladay deletes the consonants in the second colon that serve as "grammatical tags", the prefixes and suffixes (though he gives no reason why prefixes and suffixes should not be part of the assonance as well) which leaves only the consonants b, r and h in the second colon. These consonants would fit nicely in assonance with the consonants in Gevirtz's suggested emendation, birhôb. Holladay's argument is that there must be a balance of sound in the poetry. Apart from the considerations of whether the gimels do sound alike, and why the "grammatical tags" can be ignored while emendation is made to create assonance with other consonants, the line is still not inferior poetry nor is it incoherent if the assonance does not exist. What Holladay suggests is that sound ought to take

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 157.

priority over other aspects of the style, including the sense. Holladay is not incorrect to seek to discover assonance, but it remains necessary to show how the deliberate use of the assonance influences the sense. It is a dubious procedure to emend lines to make assonance. Whereas Gevirtz applied a law of parallelism, Holladay applies a law of assonance to change the poet's lament.

Freedman admits that Gevirtz's and Holladay's emendation may be correct although in the end he does not choose it. But Freedman too has a 'law' that he expects to find in every line. This law is metre. By metre he means the counting of syllables; there must be the same number of syllables on either side of the caesura in a line. The stressed syllable count in vs 20a is 2:3 or 3:4, depending on whether all is stressed or not. The syllable count is 6:11. The syllable count in the line is twice as long in the second colon as the first, and he says there is an "obvious imbalance" between the two cola. Freedman keeps vs 20a only because if it is compared with 20b there is a "general balance" between 20a as a whole and 20b as a whole (17 syllables in 20a and 19 syllables in 20b). He suggests that the reading of a number of manuscripts and versions be accepted which would add a waw before the second 'al. If the article is deleted from ha arelim then there is a "perfectly parallel structure for the bicolon, 9:9" and "the overall structure of the vs would be 18:18."59 He says the imbalance is caused by a "deliberate displacement of the caesura producing a 6:11(12) pattern instead of the more normal 9:10

<sup>59</sup> Freedman, <u>art. cit.</u>, p. 121.

(9)." That would mean that he suggests that the caesura should follow tebasseru. It is difficult to know what kind of sense to make of his new line. A caesura is marked by the delicate co-ordination of syntax, parallelism, rhythm and sense. Freedman's new line fails to take account of any of these aspects of vs 20a.

Apart from the thorny problem of knowing what constitutes a syllable in ancient Hebrew, Freedman's syllable counting overlooks two difficulties. First, cola do not need to have the same number of syllables. The same numbers look nice on Freedman's chart, but balance of syllables is not what makes a line poetic. Second, syllable balance does not make metre. The rhythm of a phrase or colon is the occurrence of natural stresses. One can only ask: When we read the line how does it seem to want to be read? Hebrew poetry can be read rhythmically, and the best guide remains the Masoretic accentuation, but the line is not following a pattern of a balanced number of syllables on either side of a caesura.

In each of these three studies of the early part of this poem, a particular aspect of style has been given priority over all other aspects of style. Gevirtz is concerned with synonymous parallelism and fixed word pairs. Holladay identifies word-play (alliteration and assonance). Freedman counts syllables. What is necessary, however, is to attend as fully as possible to the full force of all aspects of style and to see how they are used together to create the sense of a line. 'Laws' must be made to conform to the particularity

<sup>60</sup> For a discussion of rhythm in poetry see I. Robinson, Chaucer's Prosody, (Cambridge: University Press, 1971).

of the lines and not the other way around. Although Gevirtz, Holladay and Freedman continue in their attempts to make the poetic lines fit their patterns throughout the rest of the poem, the difficulties that we have noted make it unnecessary to make an exhaustive discussion of their articles.

Vs 20a intensifies the plaintive cry of the poet in vs 19 by invoking the possible joys the enemies would have this day over the defeat of Israel's beauty. The first two cola are separated emphatically by the particle of negation. The first colon is terse: "Tell it not in Gath". It is the sharp outburst of bitterness at the possible joy of the enemy. The second colon expands the first colon by adding the image of "streets"; the victory would be proclaimed in the streets of the enemy amidst rejoicing. The second Hebrew verb, bér, indicates not only an announcement, but "good news": see II Sam iv 10. The poet cries out that such a joyful announcement in the enemy cities is the bitter result of defeat in war.

Vs 20b is a continuation of vs 20a, as the athnah and silluq indicate. But the two cola of vs 20b are not in parallelism with 20a; they are an elaboration of what will go on in the enemies' cities. The two cola are set off from one another with the opening word of each, "lest", pen. Parallelism exists between each of the elements in the two cola. The verb "rejoice", smh, is in parallel with "triumph", clz), which makes a total of three verbs in vs 20 suggesting joyousness. The metaphor of "daughters" is especially vivid in expressing the bitterness in the enemies' rejoicing. Enemy women are used elsewhere in OT poetry to humiliate valiant warriors. The women

sing David's praise and not Saul's in I Sam xviii 7. The virgin daughter of Israel is used in Isaiah's taunt of Sennacherib in II Kgs xix 21. So in vs 20b, the joyous singing of the daughters of the enemy is bitterness to Israel. The word "uncircumcised" is pejorative; the defilers of the covenant triumph. The language and metaphors of vs 20 are military.

Vs 21 begins with an address to the mountains of Gilboa. The address is a curse that is placed on them because it has been upon them that Saul and Jonathan have been slain. The curse is that no dew or rain or fields of offerings would be upon the mountains; Gilboa ought to be completely barren. Nature itself is charged with complicity in the deaths of the two warriors. Vs 21b explains the reason beginning with the particle  $\frac{\hat{\Lambda}}{2}$ . The parallelism is not like any we have noticed thus far; it is a kind of incremental repetition of short phrases "no dew, no rain upon you, nor fields of offerings." A similar kind of short repetition of phrases, each building upon the first, is also in vs 21b; "the sword of the mighty, the sword of Saul, as though not anointed with oil."

Although the phrase <u>usede</u> terumot is the subject of much debate in the verse, the translation as "fields of offerings" remains the best alternative. The strongest argument for this translation is the sense of the line itself. The mountains of Gilboa are being cursed by the poet who desires that no dew or rain would fall upon them. The development of the line moves to its logical conclusion in the last phrase. Without rain the mountains will not yield harvest for offerings. There is nothing odd about the translation of

terûmôt as "offerings" as this is the most usual usage of the word (see Exod xxv 2, Numb v 9, et al.).61 The translation is supported by the LXXB, agroi aparchon, Aquila, "fields of tributes", agroi aphairematon (see Exod xxxv 21 and Num xviii 27 where aphairematranslates terûmat in both cases), Vg, agri primitiarum, and Tg. Neb. with a paraphrastic but similar rendering "rain will not be entering in you sufficiently that they might make from it the dough offering", wemitra la tehê bekôn alela kemsat deya bedûn minah haleta.

LXX<sup>L</sup> has "mountains of death," hore thanatou, and several nineteenth century scholars choose this alternative. 62 Theodotian has "fields of death", agroi thanatou; Dhorme suggests "montagnes perfides", sede tarmût, following Jer xiv 14 (the kethib is tarmiwt). 63 H.L. Ginsberg in an article published in 1938 argues that the phrase ought to be emended to read "upsurgings of the deep", sr' thmtm. The alteration is based upon an Ugaritic passage from CTA 19 i 44-45: "without dew, without showers, without waterings of the two deeps", rpt.bl.tl.bl rbb bl.sr:thmtm. Ginsberg's suggestion has been followed in totality by the RSV, and to a more modest degree in the emendation of sede to sr' by the NEB. The fourfold repetition of a short phrase in the Ugaritic text is similar to the kind of development in the

<sup>61</sup> J. Milgrom, "The Sôq Hatterûmâ," Studies in Cultic Theology and Terminology, Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity, 36, ed. J. Neusner, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1983), pp. 159-170. After citing many references to terûmâ in the Hebrew Bible, Milgrom says: "In all these occurrences terûmâ means 'gift' which is intended for the Lord or for his servant the priest." Milgrom, op. cit., p. 159.

<sup>62</sup> see Driver, Notes, p. 236.

<sup>63</sup> Dhorme, op. cit., pp. 271-272.

poetic line that is found here. The other suggestion that is offered in this century has been "fields of heights"; terûmot is translated as "high places" because of the root rûm meaning "to raise." While there is no question that rûm is a cognate to terûmot, this does not mean the usage is identical, especially since terûmot has a well attested usage in Hebrew. All the alternate readings are possible, although they are unnecessary. Given the usage of terûmot as "offerings" - a usage that is too often ignored in the discussions of this passage - and given the powerful completion that such a rendering gives to the entire line, the various suggestions cannot be offered as improved readings to what is present in the MT.

Ws 21b supplies the reason for the curse; the shield of the mighty is cast away. The line moves from the mighty to the person of Saul. This is the first mention of Saul in the poem. The movement from the mighty to Saul indicates that the lament is not simply a lament for Saul, but is also a lament for all the mighty of Israel that were slain in the defeat. The "mighty" in vs 19 and here include others not mentioned. Saul and Jonathan become the representatives of the mighty.

The last phrase of the line, "as though not anointed with oil" has caused difficulties in translation because there is no grammatical indication of the subordinate clause. beli, however, is used

<sup>64</sup> Freedman, art. cit., pp. 121-122. Gordon, op. cit., p. 211. Shea, art. cit., pp. 141-142.

<sup>65</sup> Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, pp. 227-228. Barthélemy defends the Masoretic pointing, and reads the phrase as "fields of offerings."

elsewhere as an adverb of negation where subordination of a second colon is necessary; in Ps xix 4 bělí introduces the second colon of a line with a relative clause (so LXX, Vg, KJV, NIV). The subordination is only implied in vs 21b due to the sense and the grammatical cues to mark it are omitted because of the terseness of the poetry. That subordination is probable is indicated by the Vg, quasi non esset unctus oleo. The subject of the phrase is somewhat ambiguous in Tg. Neb., but it is translated as a relative clause. Harrington and Saldorini translate the Aramaic phrase dimšiyah kad běmišha as "who was the anointed as with oil." The LXXB does not have a relative pronoun and produces the terseness of the MT, ouk echristhe en elaio.

The phrase "anointed with oil" has also caused difficulties because the exact sense of the phrase is questioned. Does it mean that Saul is the anointed one of God and is he slain as if he did not have divine protection? Or does it mean that a shield that is not oiled in preparation for battle is one that is cast aside because its bearer is slain? This latter reading is advocated by Driver, Keil and Delitzsch, 66 and more recently by R.P. Gordon, McCarter and Millard. The anointing of a shield for the purposes of battle is found in Isa xxi 5, mišņū magen. Tg. Neb. and the Syr. omit the particle of negation and simply affirm that Saul is the anointed.

<sup>66</sup> F. Delitzsch and C.F. Keil, <u>Commentary on the Old Testament</u>, trans. J. Martin, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), II, pp 290-291,

<sup>67</sup> A.R. Millard, "Saul's shield not anointed with oil," BASOR 230 (1978), p. 230.

The Vg also perpetuates this reading although it includes the negative adverb.

The decision as to which of these two readings is better is at a stalemate for want of better understanding of Hebrew usage. I judge that the reading that Saul is anointed by God is correct out of considerations of the praise of Saul in the poem as a whole. The sense of the line as "the shield prepared for battle" is flat beside the affirmation that the anointed of the Lord has been killed in battle. David is stating, as he has on three previous occasions (I Sam xxiv 6, xxvi 11 and II Sam i 14-16), that Saul is anointed by God.

Vs 22 praises the courage of first Jonathan and then Saul for their ability to slay the enemy. The phrases of the line invoke the goriness of war; the blood and the fat of the enemy do not cause the courageous to falter. The enemy is introduced at the beginning of vs 22a with two prepositional phrases. The first colon in vs 22 is completed with the affirmation that Jonathan does not turn back from this blood and fat. The final colon of the verse includes Saul in this ruthless action of a good warrior. The eulogy of Jonathan and Saul praises their courage in war. 68

Vs 23 continues to extol the virtues of Saul and Jonathan.

Driver says that the placement of the caesura in the MT (so KJV and

<sup>68</sup> The verb "he turned",  $\underline{nasog}$ , is best translated as a finite verb in agreement with the verb to which it is parallel rather than as an infinitive. According to the form it could be either one (GKC, p. 524). The verb is masculine because of the attraction of Jonathan, even though qeset is feminine. See McCarter, op. cit., p. 72.

RSV) which is indicated by the zagep gaton is incorrect. 69 He says that the zagep should be on the final syllable of "pleasant", hanne imim; he translates the verse as "Saul and Jonathan, the beloved and the pleasant, /In their lives and in their deaths were not divided; /They were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions." Although there is not a great difference between Driver's proposal and the translation of the RSV, Driver's reading suggests that there was never any disagreement between Saul and Jonathan in their lives - which is not quite true (I Sam xiv and xx 29-34). The copulative verb however may either be implied in the first colon or the participle and adjective may form the predicate. If the MT reading is used, then "their lives" and "their deaths" are parallel, although the other elements in the two cola are not, and the parallel words form a nice transition from one colon to the other. $^{70}$  The first two cola of the verse thus speak of two aspects of Saul's and Jonathan's lives, the pleasantness of their lives and their loyalty in death.

The third colon in the line uses two powerful metaphors for the abilities of the two in war. The emphasis of the colon is on the metaphors of eagles and lions due to their placement at the beginning of their respective clauses.

The daughters of Israel are addressed in vs 24. They are commanded to weep specifically over Saul because he brought them rich

<sup>69</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 238.

<sup>70</sup> For a defense of the Masoretic placement of the <u>zaqep</u> see P.A.H. de Boer, "Sur la Massore de 2 Samuel I,23," <u>Henoch</u> 3 (1981), pp. 22-25.

garments and gold ornaments. As the daughters of the enemy are referred to in vs 20 so here the daughters of Israel are to lament Saul. 71 It is especially significant that Saul is singled out for praise by the daughters of Israel; the women had chided Saul earlier because he had not killed as many as David (I Sam xviii 7). David's lament requires the women to recognise what Saul has done for them.

In vs 25 the phrase that begins the lament is repeated again with an appended prepositional phrase to explain how the mighty fell. The second colon of vs 25 also repeats part of the phrase found in the first colon of the lament, "upon your high places is slain." In vs 19, the subject of this first colon is both Saul and Jonathan, and as we have seen, also includes the rest of the warriors of Israel as they are represented in Saul and Jonathan. In vs 25 the subject is Jonathan. This recollection of the beginning of the lament through the repetition of key phrases is one way of marking the transition to the person of Jonathan. Although David has lamented both Saul and Jonathan in the first part of the poem, he now singles out his loyal friend Jonathan for special mention.

Vs 26 continues David's lament over Jonathan. Vs 26a contains two cola with the caesura after "Jonathan" (marked by the <u>zaqep qaton</u>). The two cola state David's love for Jonathan. The first colon tells of the distress it is to David that Jonathan, his brother, is dead;

<sup>71</sup> The suffix on the first participle is masculine although it refers to the daughters of Israel. It is generally recognised that an emendation is not necessary as there are numerous examples in which a feminine suffix is changed to masculine (GKC 1350).

the second colon says that Jonathan's friendship was pleasant for David.

Vs 26b is part of the line beginning in vs 26a; the <u>silluq</u> is placed after "women". It represents the third colon in the line, and is the third statement made about Jonathan. There is no need to divide the first word "she is wonderful", <u>niple' atāh</u>, as Freedman argues on the basis that the word is "anomalous"<sup>72</sup> nor to suppose with Hertzberg that originally <u>niplā'ot</u> and <u>niple'ā</u> (an infinitive absolute construction) were both present in the text.<sup>73</sup> Driver points out that the form is not unusual; X" verbs are sometimes formed after the analogy of \(\textit{n''}\)? The sentence is comparative. The love of Jonathan is more wonderful than the love of women. Tg. Neb. adds a humorous touch; "your love is more wonderful to me than the love of two women."

Vs 27 ends the lament by repeating the phrase found in vss 19 and 25. To this phrase it adds a second colon. This second colon calls Saul and Jonathan "weapons of war"; the phrase is a forceful metaphor summarising the qualities of these two men which the poem is honouring. To read "weapons of war" in the sense of "The heroes have perished (either) with their weapons (or) by the instruments of

<sup>72</sup> Freedman, art. cit., p. 123.

<sup>73</sup> Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 236.

<sup>74</sup> Driver, <u>Notes</u>, pp. 238-239.

<sup>75</sup> Smolar and Aberbach seem to miss the humour in the passage in their comments. M. Aberbach and L. Smolar, Studies in Targum Jonathan to the Prophets, The Library of Biblical Studies, ed. H.M. Orlinsky, (Baltimore: Ktav Publishing, 1983), pp. 44-45.

war", as Freedman does, is to miss the point of the metaphor or perhaps reveals that he wishes to apply the metaphor to the enemy but not to Israel. 76 Saul and Jonathan are the weapons. 77

David's lament is a powerful poem in honour of Saul, Jonathan and other unnamed Israelites who fell in battle at Mt. Gilboa. The cumulative effects of all aspects of style of the poem, parallelism, repeated elements, diction, and metaphor, to mention only a few, create the full sense of the poem. Particular studies that focus on one aspect of style have the tendency to identify this aspect as the quality which makes the lament 'poetry', and to alter the poem so that this particular quality is manifest throughout. On the whole the MT preserves an intelligible text.

The purpose of David's lament is primarily to praise Saul and Jonathan as Israel's warriors. Although other qualities of these two men are mentioned, such as their pleasantness in vs 24 and Jonathan's love for David in vs 26, the thrust of the poem is to honour them as fierce and capable warriors. Saul and Jonathan are pitiless in battle (vs 22), they are completely loyal in death (vs 23), they are swift and powerful (vs 23), they bring booty to the daughters of the people (vs 24), and they are weapons of war (vs 27). At least part of the purpose of this praise of warriors is expressed in the superscription of the lament; the sons of Judah are to be taught to emulate the qualities of good warriors that are presented in this

<sup>76</sup> Freedman, art. cit., pp. 123-124.

<sup>77</sup> Several nineteenth century readers maintained this reading. See Driver, Notes, p. 239.

poem. In remembering the deaths of warriors in the past, the poem challenges warriors in the future.

David's valuation of Saul is not what we might first expect in the lament. David nourishes rather than diminishes respect for his 'enemy' Saul. David even elevates this enemy as an example to the warriors of his tribe. Yet the poem is in agreement with the narrative in II Sam i 1-16 in this regard. And as in vss 14-16 the poem also affirms that Saul is the anointed one. David appears ever conscious that Saul was anointed, and it is not for David to disrespect God's anointing regardless of Saul's hatred toward him.

The claim that David is feigning his praise for Saul in both the narrative and the poem cannot be derived from the stylistic analysis of the chapter itself. The style depicts David as respecting the anointed of the Lord. The argument that the historical David is different from the David depicted in the chapter depends upon the ability to identify stylistic characteristics which can definitively be proven 1) to belong to an editor and 2) that this editor was guided by the aim to misrepresent the historical David. Both endeavours are speculative. This does not mean that the 'historicity' of the chapter can be determined in any easy manner. The possibility that archaeological details will ever prove or disprove the episode represented here is very slim. What we have is a narrative depiction of events and a poem. The stylistic aspects of the narrative section which have been used as the foundation of theories of editing can be shown to be purposeful uses of language by the author.

## Chapter Two

II Samuel ii is a prose narrative which depicts three events which occur following David's lament of Saul and Jonathan. The three events consist in 1) the movement of David from Ziklag to Hebron and the anointing of David by the men of Judah, 2) the sending of messengers by David to thank the men of Jabesh-gilead for burying Saul and 3) the initial outbreak of civil war between the forces of the northern tribes under the leadership of Ish-bosheth and Abner and the Judaeans led by Joab.

The chapter begins with a phrase, wayhî Jaharê-kên, that is used frequently in I and II Samuel to introduce a new part of the story (I Sam xxiv 6, II Sam viii 1, x 1 and xiii 1, see also I Sam xxiv 9 and II Sam xv 1 for minor variations). The phrase marks a temporal sequence between events preceding and following it. Nübel claims that it is an insertion by the editor B. who sought to stress that David's anointing followed Saul's death. According to Nübel, the phrase itself is preferred by the B. and the other places in which it occurs are also insertions by the B. 1 An examination of the occurrences of this phrase exemplifies how Hebrew idiom may be misunderstood as stylistic characteristics of a particular author or authors of a source.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Nübel, see above, p. 131.

The numerous examples of the uses of this phrase outside the boundaries of the source delineated by Nübel make it impossible that the phrase can be evidence of the style of an editor. The phrase is used in II Sam xiii 1. A minor variant to this phrase which includes the preposition min before 'anarê' is also found outside of the source (II Sam xv 1). The variation found in II Sam xv 1 is also found as the translation of wayhî 'anarê-kēn in II Sam ii 1 and viii 1 of the Syr., and it thus appears as an alternate phrase rather than a stylistic characteristic of a particular author. A phrase similar though not identical is found in Gen xxii 1, xl 1 and xlviii 1: the phrase is wayhî 'anarê hadêbarîm ha 'elleh. There are numerous examples, therefore, where the phrase or phrases similar to it are not found exclusively within the boundaries of Nübel's source. The phrase cannot be considered a stylistic peculiarity of a particular author.

The phrase is being used as a convention in narrative prose for marking temporal transitions between events. In the case of II Samuel ii, the phrase indicates that the events of chapter ii occur after the events of chapter i. Nubel is correct when he says:

Seine [B.] Absicht liegt auf der Hand; er will das Nacheinander von Sauls Tod und Davids Inthronisation besonders betonen.<sup>2</sup>

The phrase stresses that Saul is dead before David's anointing by the Judaeans takes place. What is problematic if the phrase is identified as a stylistic characteristic of B. is that the temporal progression between chapters i and ii is a creation by this later editor rather than being a link between the original depiction in the two chapters.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Núbel, op. cit., p. 67.

The effect of reading chapter ii as a continuation of chapter i is that the sequence confirms David's regard for Saul's anointing; David does not actually put himself in a position to be anointed by any of the people until after Saul's death (ii 1-4a) and David seeks to honour those who have buried Saul (ii 4b-7).

The story in ii 1-4a depicts David as inquiring of the Lord whether he should go from Ziklag to one of the cities of Judah. The story reveals a reluctance on David's part to move from the territory of the Philistines to Judaean country. David knows he is the rightful heir to the throne due to his anointing, yet, as on earlier occasions, he does not aggressively seize the throne.

Noth argues that David's actions here are for purely "political reasons" and are without any religious foundation. Noth makes this argument on the basis of a distinction between the depiction of the source and his reconstructed history. Vss 1-4a represent the ideology of the source and are not historical. Ward agrees with this separation between the "ideological" stance of the source and what we can glean about the historical David from the source. Grønbaek also agrees with this judgement. The Tendenz of the source is to justify David theologically. These three readings are based on the distinction between the stylistic characteristics of historical narrative and the stylistic characteristics of an ideological and theological inclination

<sup>3</sup> Noth, see above, p. 79.

<sup>4</sup> Ward, see above, p. 151.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Grønbaek, see above, pp. 165-166.

of the source. In particular, historical narrative is characterized by the absence of oracular interventions by the deity and 'miracles'. 6

The presence of the depiction of a conversation between David and God is the reason that vss 1-4a are considered as the creation of an editor for political or ideological purposes.

While it is impossible either to prove or disprove the depiction of the intervention of a god into human affairs, the passage is not unhistorical for simply that reason. The problem here in reading this biblical text is not unique in the study of biblical religion: similar divine interventions are present, for example, in Islamic, Buddhist and Hindu texts and it certainly is possible to proceed with the reductive principle that all these elements are superstition and are the product of political schemers. A serious student of these religious traditions, however, even if not convinced of the truth of the tradition in question, need not conduct his inquiry of the text as though the divine intervention must be superstition and unhistorical. When reading stretches of text difficult to verify, the student must return to discern other, more accessible, parts of the story and make a judgement on the worthiness of the text in these other passages. If other aspects are judged to be sensible, then it may be more plausible to accept that which is more difficult to verify.

There can be no demonstration that David spoke with God in

II Sam ii 1, though the pericope depicts such a conversation. Neither

can it be shown that this 'theological' element in the story is the

<sup>6</sup> Gressmann, see above, p. 22. Weiser, see above, pp. 142-143.

invention of the editor and is therefore unhistorical. What is necessary in the two apparently irreconcilable readings is to find the common point at which the two readings may be evaluated. The common point of discussion is style. Are there aspects of the style which betray another hand and which, therefore, can be suggested as evidence that an account has been altered or invented completely for the political purpose of justifying David? Does the style reveal that there is an historical David who is acting out of political ambition in his movement from Ziklag to Hebron and who is to be distinguished from the obedient, but fictitious, David depicted in II Sam ii 1-4a?

An extended account of the style of vss 1-4a is conducted by Grønbaek. He argues that the pericope is the product of a final editor and that it is not a fragment, nor does it contain a fragment, from early tradition. He bases his argument on the assertion that a terse style is evidence of an editor's hand. The terseness exists in four areas: 1) the Philistines are not mentioned, 2) the accession is depicted as being the will of God and the fuller account of the accession which would include political reasons is excluded, 3) although David's wives are mentioned, there is no reason given that they are included and 4) the expression "cities of Hebron" is obscure because it could mean that David could settle in any one of the cities mentioned in I Sam xxxi 27-31.

Grønbaek's analysis of the style in vss 1-4a cannot be sustained. First, even if the style is terse, this quality of style is not

<sup>7</sup> Grønbaek, see above, pp. 165-166.

evidence of the hand of an editor. Second, the actual account of the style is inadequate. There is no reason that the Philistines need to be mentioned in the verses. David's reason for being in Philistine territory is due to his fear of Saul, and when Saul is dead, David does not have the same reason for being in exile. That David's accession is sanctioned as the will of God and excludes political motives is only an example of terse style if David's political motives are a more historical account of David's movement. David's political motives may be excluded because they did not constitute an adequate account of how David came to the throne. In respect to the purpose of the mention of David's wives it is necessary to note that the "houses", that is, the families of David's men are also mentioned in vs 3. David's move to the cities of Hebron is not a raiding party but a move; he and his men and their families settle in the cities. David returns to live amongst his people. The plural "cities" in vs 4 should also be considered intentional. David had at least six hundred men (I Sam xxx 9-10) and it is not implausible that they lived in various cities surrounding Hebron. These four aspects of the pericope do not, therefore, constitute sufficient account of the style.

The pericope is terse, however, in one vital aspect. There are two one-word replies that God makes to David. It is possible that the story at this points reflects the use of an oracular device, such as the Urim and Thumim, for determining God's will; but we have no means of determining whether such was the case or not. This abruptness of style creates definiteness in God's answer to David. God affirms that it is time for David to go back to Judaea, and in so

doing David is in a position to take over the kingship. David's response is, in Auerbach's words to account for Abraham's actions in Genesis xxii, punctual obedience. The dialogue between God and David ends as David acts; there is the same kind of narrative shift from dialogue to narrative that occurred in i 11 and with similar effect. The sign of David's obedience is prompt action. Grønback, who sought to discern the terseness of the narrative, did not point out this element of style.

The change from the feminine to the masculine gentilic ending from the first to the second wife of David is not peculiar; it is Nabal and not Abigail who is said to be a Carmelite.

Driver prefers the LXXB over the MT in vss 2 and 3. Driver, Notes, p. 239. Driver accepts the LXX reading of "the men", hoi andres, in vs 3 instead of the Hebrew "his men" because the repetition of the Hebrew suffix is awkward although LXXL agrees with MT on this point. Driver also omits he elâ dawid with the LXX at the beginning of vs 3. According to Driver the verb from vs 2 continues in vs 3. Wellhausen notes in regard to the first point that the LXX in i 15 uses the possessive pronoun where the MT does not so that it is not possible to assume that the LXX is following a Hebrew text in ii 3 that is different from the MT. Wellhausen, Der Text, p. 153. In regard to the second point, the LXX seems to represent a smoothing of the reading of the two lines in order to correct an unusual Hebrew word order, but it is not necessarily a different text. The placement of the object at the beginning of the sentence reverses usual Hebrew word order to emphasise that David brought his men as well, and the order, therefore, is intentional. Tg. Neb. includes the verb and uses the same forms and word order as the Hebrew. The Syr. has wdwyd wgbrwhy emh slqw which is very close to the Hebrew because it has the equivalent to the Hebrew 1h. The LXX and Syr. are a smoothing of the word order but remove at least some of the force of the Hebrew. It cannot be argued that they attest to a better or a different text. McCarter accepts the LXX reading. McCarter, op. cit., p. 81.

<sup>8</sup> Auerbach, Mimesis, p. 10.

<sup>9</sup> The omission of the aleph in the spelling of Jezreelitess, yizre elit, in vs 3 is unusual; for the usual spelling of Jezreel see ii 9. In the spelling of Jezreel the aleph is quiescent, however, and there are numerous examples of words in which quiescent aleph drops out (GKC 23f). Tg. Neb. keeps the usual spelling in this passage and the Syr. adopts its usual spelling of Jezreel as yzreyl. The variant spelling in the MT does not influence the sense of the line.

According to vs 4a the men of Judah come and anoint David king over them. They have been aware of David's loyalty to them in his raids against the cities of the Philistines because he returned the booty to them (I Sam xxx 26-31). David had not always been well treated by the Judaeans because a clan of the Judaeans, the Ziphites, on two occasions (I Sam xxiii 19 and xxvi 1) had told Saul of his whereabouts. The Judaean anointing of David, however, is an act of valour on their part for the Philistines have just defeated Israel under the leadership of Saul, and setting up another king immediately after Saul's death is a confirmation that the Judaeans do not intend to acquiesce to Philistine rule. Moreover, from David's direct challenge to them in his lament the Judaeans knew that they would be required to fight on behalf of the northern tribes if they anointed David.

What is learned from II Sam ii 1-4a? These verses represent David's respect for the will of God before moving to Hebron, and the voluntary acceptance of David as king on the part of the Judaeans. The attempts to identify stylistic elements which are evidence of a later editor have not been successful. It is impossible to distinguish between the motives of an 'historical' David in his accession to the throne, and the motives of the David depicted in these verses. David is neither depicted as being disrespectful toward religion nor as someone who comes to rule over Judah against the wishes of the Judaeans. He is restrained in his pursuit of the throne until he is permitted by God. The verses reveal a similar respect for God to that depicted in II Sam i 1-16.

II Sam ii 4b-7 support further the argument that David respects the house of Saul. David is told that the men of Jabesh-gilead have buried the body of Saul. David's response is to send messengers to the Jabesh-gileadites to bless them for their deed. The passage is, of course, to be read in continuity with the account of the burial by the Jabesh-gileadites in I Sam xxxi 11-13. And although no reference is made to the favour that Saul had done for them earlier (I Samuel xi) either here or in I Sam xxxi 11-13, the continuity in the narrative cannot be dismissed. The Jabesh-gileadites remember Saul's goodness toward them. Their recovery of the corpses of Saul and his sons required considerable courage on their part, especially since the Israelites had just been defeated in war. At least part of David's respect for the Jabesh-gileadites is due to the demonstration of their loyalty toward Saul.

David's blessing is twofold. First, he wishes them the blessing of the Lord. Notice that David uses the passive participle to avoid any inference that he speaks unequivocally in the name of God. A passive sense is the customary usage for those who wish others the blessing of God; see, for example, Gen xiv 19 and Ruth ii 20, amongst others (GKC 121f). In each case the phrase is almost identical to the one here. Second, David himself promises them favourable treatment (vs 6). The verbs yacaś and jeceśeh in vs 6 are imperfects. The LXX translates the first as an aorist optative; David expresses a wish that God will be kind to them. The second is a future; the full

implication of the blessing (hattoba hazzot) will come to be in the future. The blessing is a promise by David to treat them well. 11

McCarter argues that the passage depicts how David seeks to make a covenant with the Jabesh-gileadites. 12 Since their covenant with Saul is ended, they can now enter a relationship with David.

David's purpose in making this covenant is to ingratiate himself with the northern tribes as he had done with the Judaeans by giving them booty (I Sam xxxi 26-31). David ends his message by calling the men to his service, and he reminds them that the house of Judah has anointed him as king. 13

The reading of this passage is not based, as are other passages, upon the distinction between the narrative depiction and the real history. There are no stylistic arguments that are used to conclude that an older passage was reworked for political reasons. The problem then is simply to determine David's motive as it is presented to us. The arguments which suggest that David is being politically ambitious tend to move beyond the depiction of the text. David's call to the people to make strong their hands and to be sons of

<sup>10</sup> It is possible that the use of the feminine noun hattôba is due to the attraction of the feminine noun emet.

<sup>11</sup> The 'aser in vs 6 should be translated as "because", following the LXX, hoti, and the Vg eo quad: de Boer notes the use of 'aser in the sense of "because" in Deut xxviii 47 and I Sam xxvi 21, although in both cases the phrase is tahat 'aser. Wellhausen and Driver suggest that hazzo't should be emended to tahat because there is no reference to any good deed David has done.

<sup>12</sup> McCarter, op. cit., pp. 84-85.

<sup>13</sup> For readings similar to McCarter see also Hertzberg, op. cit., pp. 248-249. Gordon, op. cit., p. 213.

strength is not in itself requiring that the Jabesh-gileadites be in his service. The foes, according to David in II Samuel i, are the Philistines, and not other Israelite tribes. David's call is thus an attempt, as David had also attempted in II Samuel i, to unify the house of Israel and the house of Judah in a common purpose. Moreover, David's statement that he has been anointed by the Judaeans does not in itself suggest that David requires the north to recognise him as Saul's natural successor. Although David has known for some time that he is the rightful king, he adopts the same restrained attitude toward the tribes of the north as he had with Saul and his fellow Judaeans; David will wait until his kingship is recognised.

That David is genuinely showing respect for Saul is confirmed in the later account of David's movement of Saul's and Saul's sons' bones to a grave in Benjamin (II Sam xxi 12-14). At this point David is king, and, therefore, his actions cannot be understood as political strategy. In II Samuel xxi David is not under threat by either Absalom or Adonijah, nor in this passage which records the hanging of seven of Saul's sons is David seeking to ingratiate himself to the northern tribes. Despite David's awareness of God's judgement against the house of Saul, David is still able to respect Saul as the anointed of the Lord. 14

There are two places in vss 4b-7 for which there are Qumran variants. The sense of the passage does not change with these variants. The first consists in the preposition <u>al</u> instead of <u>im</u> before "your lord" in vs 5; McCarter says the LXX <u>epi</u> points to <u>al</u>. It is necessary to be cautious with this example of a preposition because there is probably no more fluid aspect to language than prepositions. The Q variant seems odd in that the MT repeats the preposition three times with the verb <u>asah</u> in vss 5 and 6. Unfortunately the fragment

Vs 8 begins the story of a rift that takes place between the northern and the southern tribes that is not settled until chapter v. The north, under the leadership of Abner, establishes Ish-bosheth, the son of Saul, as king.

Whether Ish-bosheth is the man's original name is a matter of debate. The name "Ish-bosheth" is not the name used of him in I Chronicles, and many commentators suggest that the man's original name is either Esh-baal (I Chr viii 33 and ix 39) or Ish-baal, a combination of the two forms. Their argument is that the word "lord", bacal, has been excised from certain places in the MT and replaced by "shame", boset, as a way of denigrating Baal worship at a time when the word baal was used unequivocally in the sense of the Canaanite god Baal. M. Tsevat has recently called this Masoretic practise "dysphemism" because it is intentionally making the name more pejorative. 15 McCarter thinks it is a euphemism for a name which contained bacal, the name of a pagan god. 16 For Barthélemy, it is an example of Masoretic theological retouching. 17

does not contain the other two passages. Moreover, the LXX uses two different prepositions in the two verses, epi and meta, which makes it difficult to postulate exact Greek equivalents to Hebrew prepositions. The second Q variant is 'lhm lmlk (=LXXB) instead of lemelek 'alehem of the MT and LXXA. Although the sense does not change, the order of the words in Q is in agreement with the order in LXXB.

<sup>15</sup> Mattitiahu Tsevat, "Ishbosheth and Congeners: The Names and Their Study," HUCA 46 (1975), pp. 71-87.

<sup>16</sup> McCarter, op. cit., pp. 85-87.

<sup>17</sup> Barthelemy, Critique Textuelle, pp. 228-230.

There are several points to ponder in the long and detailed discussion that has taken place over this proposed account of what an original Hebrew manuscript might have said. First, the theory is more broadly based than simply the name of Ish-bosheth. It includes Mephibosheth for Meribaal in iv 4, Jerubesheth for Jerubaal in xi 21, and the change from the Akkadian vowel a to o in Hebrew references to divine names of the Assyrian gods due to the attempt to distinguish, for example, between the Hebrew common noun melek and the god molek. Tsevat expresses a reservation about this third part of the argument because he points out that the vowel class in Akkadian for the god is a u-class vowel in Mari. The Akkadian pronunciation of the name may well be with an o vowel, and if so, an o vowel in Hebrew is not another example of dysphemism. Second, McCarter rightly observes that boset is used as a synonym of ba<sup>c</sup>al in Jer xi 13 (although W. Rudolph who prepared the textual apparatus for Jeremiah of BHS suggests that mizbehot laboset should be deleted following the LXX) 18, and Driver notes that the LXX in I Kgs xviii 19 and 25 have "shame", tes aischunes, for the Hebrew bacal. 19 Baal is also called "shame" in Jer iii 24 and Hos ix 10. Third, "man of shame" is certainly a pejorative appellation for this man in II Sam ii 8, and the name is not inconsistent with his shameful acts in the story. These observations are strong support for the recognition of a play on words in the MT.

<sup>18</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 86.

<sup>19</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 254.

There are also several problems which make it difficult to arrive at a final resolution at this point. First, if euphemism or dysphemism is occurring in the Former Prophets, it is unknown why there is not greater consistency. Judg vi 23 and I Sam xii 11 have Jerubbaal but not Jerubesheth. Second, why does the change not also occur in I Chronicles? Why did the change seem necessary only in the Former Prophets? Driver's only answer to this problem is that the books of Chronicles are read less than the books of Samuel, though this does not really answer the question. Third, in the change in the name of Jonathan's son from Meribaal in I in I Chr viii 34 and ix 40 to Mephibosheth in II Samuel, the theory accounts for the change to boset but not from merib to mepi in Mephibosheth. The same holds for the change from es to is in Ish-bosheth. Fourth, the name Ish-bosheth is well-attested in the versions. The MT, LXX, (except for LXXL, mempheibosthe in boc2, and eisbaal in e2) and a Q fragment to ii 10 all agree that the name here is Ish-bosheth so that the issue does not contribute to showing the superiority of LXX to MT.20 "Ish-bosheth" is also in Tg. Neb. and Vg and in a slightly different spelling in the Syr. Fifth, it is not clear whether the change from Ish-baal to Ish-bosheth is euphemism or dysphemism. Neither name is particularly flattering. ba'al may not, however, have had the pejorative sense that we suspect; the god of Israel is called the lord (ba al) of breaking forth in II Sam v 20, as I shall later argue. Mephibosheth too seems to have been an original name for Saul's and Rizpah's

<sup>20</sup> For the Qumran evidence see McCarter, op, cit., p. 82.

son who is mentioned in II Sam xxi 8. Sixth, there is no reason that one person cannot have at least two names, and it is not clear why this is not a possibility in regard to Ish-bosheth. There are numerous examples in which individuals have more than one name: Gideon is also called Jerubbaal (Josh vi 32 and I Sam xii 11). Solomon is called Jedidiah (II Sam xii 25). The numerous names for God is an example, and although it is controversial, no one that I know of actually maintains that God must have only one name. The theory of dysphemism, which Tsevat traces back to an article by A. Geiger published in 1862, needs further attention, and the solution is by no means settled. In any case, it is possible to remain with the name found in II Samuel ii and iii in order to follow the story there as closely as possible.

Which Ish-bosheth is made king. Ish-bosheth seems to have been in power over all the northern tribes. The list, however, is somewhat confusing because it includes both geographical areas, Gilead and Jezreel, and tribal units, Ephraim, Benjamin and the Ashurites. The sense of the word "Ashurites" is uncertain. Tg. Neb. took it to be the tribe of Asher (bêt 'ašer); we should also note that Tg. Neb. took all the references as designations for tribes by putting the word "house of" in front of all of them. The house of Gilead would thus be the tribes that were in Gilead. The Syr. and Vg change the aleph to gimel in "Asher" and thus have gswr, "Gesuri". D. Edelman has recently argued that the group is an Asherite enclave on the

western borders of Ephraim and Benjamin.<sup>21</sup> She claims the spelling should be a <u>yod</u> instead of a <u>waw</u>, and thus there is an i-class vowel of the word Asher (<u>Jašer</u>) rather than the u-class in the present spelling. Edelman's suggestion is actually a variation on Tg. Neb.'s reading as the tribe of Asher. Given the difficulty of determining tribal groups at this time, there are few reasons to commend one explanation over another, and Edelman may be correct in identifying an Asherite enclave. Whatever the case, Ish-bosheth's kingdom seems to have included all the northern tribes of Israel as the last phrase in the list suggests.<sup>22</sup> Although the Philistines had penetrated Israelite territory up to Jezreel, there was still a great portion of the northern tribes that remained in the control of Ish-bosheth.

It is unwise to suggest that the hand of an editor is present in the variation of the prepositions (from <code>jel</code> to <code>cal</code>) in vs 9.

Nübel maintained that the change is indicative of an addition by B.<sup>23</sup>

The addition includes the later three designations for the territories of Saul because, according to Nübel, in the original narrative only the first three names described this territory. Driver comments on the interchange of these two prepositions in his introduction and

<sup>21</sup> Diana Edelman, "The 'Ashurites' of Eshbaal's State," PEQ 117 (1985), pp. 85-91.

<sup>22</sup> The suffix 'h' in <u>kulloh</u> replaces the more usual 'o' in Hebrew. According to Driver the suffix is retained eighteen times with this word. Driver, <u>Notes</u>, p. 241. The suffix is used both in Ugaritic (see Gordon, UT 6.17.3), Aramaic and in the Mesa inscription. John C.L. Gibson, ed., <u>Testbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions</u>, vol. 1, Hebrew and Moabite Inscriptions, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971), p. 73. See also GKC 7c and 91e.

<sup>23</sup> Nübel, see above, pp. 131-132.

cautions on an exaggerated sense of the significance.<sup>24</sup> The attempt to identify the style of an editor with the variation in prepositions is speculative.

Vss 10 and 11 introduce chronological statements which summarise the length of Ish-bosheth's entire reign and David's reign in Hebron. These chronological statements are commonly judged to be formulas that are evidence of a Dtr. redaction. The argument for this goes back at least to Wellhausen as he says that these formulas, along with religious formulas, are a frame, albeit an artificial frame, imposed upon the story.<sup>25</sup> The frame serves a theological purpose in marking the time from Israel's sojourn in Egypt to the building of the temple (four hundred and eighty years).<sup>26</sup>

An alternate reading of the chronological statement is to see it as a convention of Hebrew narrative. As a convention it is not a stylistic characteristic of a particular author, but is available for any one who would choose to use it. The convention is used at various points in the narrative for the purpose of indicating the significance of the age and length of reign of a particular king. The convention places the events in a larger narrative sequence, but does not detract

<sup>24</sup> Driver, op. cit., p. xxxvi, n. 1. See also the comments by 0.H. Boström on places in Samuel where these prepositions are used interchangeably. Boström calls attention to I Sam xiv 10 and 12, xxv 17, xxvii 10 and II Sam ii 9. Otto. H. Boström, Alternative Readings in the Hebrew of the Books of Samuel, (Rock Island: Augustana Book Concern, 1918), pp. 19-20.

<sup>25</sup> Wellhausen, see above, pp. 7-8.

<sup>26</sup> Noth agrees with Wellhausen's judgements regarding the purpose of these chronological statements. Noth, see above, pp. 67-68.

from the centrality of the sequence of events. Various anonymous writers of the books from Deuteronomy to II Kings could well have used the convention as they saw fit.

If the convention is not necessarily the stylistic characteristic of a later redactor, it is easier to recognise the purpose of the chronological statement to the story in which it is embedded. Ish-bosheth's rule is shortlived; he reigns only two years. Moreover, at the time he is reigning over all Israel, David is reigning concurrently over Judah. The Judaeans did not follow Ish-bosheth, and the divided loyalties of the tribes lead to the civil war depicted in the following passages. The contrast between Ish-bosheth's and David's kingdoms is contrasted by the "but", ak, in vs 10 and this small but decisive word functions as a foreboding of the war that ensues. Wellhausen's comment that vs 10b is a natural sequel (Driver's translation of die unmittelbare Fortsetzung) to vs 9 fails to recognise the contrast that is being established in these verses; 27 the duration of Ish-bosheth's reign is established and then the verse turns to the portentous contrast of the house of Judah which is following David. The chronological statement, though a convention, contributes to the story.

The chronological statement is one of the types of repetition in Hebrew prose. In a comparison of other places in which there is a chronological statement, there is no exact repetition throughout; compare, for example, the statement of Abimelech's three year reign

<sup>27</sup> Wellhausen, Der Text, p. 154.

in Judg ix 22, a summary of Samson's life in Judg xvi 31 and the summary of the length of David's rule in I Kgs ii 11. There are similarities in the statements inasmuch as they are all speaking about the length of time of a particular ruler. There are numerous variations in the statements: some give the age of the ruler, some only the length of time, some use the perfect form of the verb malak, others the infinitive construct form, some use the verb sapat and others the verb sarar. The convention is deployed with variation.

The consistency in the use of these chronological statements in the Former Prophets lends credence to the view that one author (or group of authors) edited the Former Prophets in their entirety. It is the most persuasive argument in my judgement for the editing of the Former Prophets during or after the exile. I have argued, however, that conventions in language are not exclusive to one author or group of authors at one point in time. Moreover, the recognition of a unity of the Former Prophets based upon a chronological framework deflects attention away from the question of the unity of purpose in the story itself. The question remains whether the final basis of unity is in the frame or in the sequence of events.

It is Abner who seeks to preserve the house of Saul on the throne of Israel by making Ish-bosheth king. The story does not present Abner's actions as resulting directly from a threat from David. This element in the story is at least partially affirmed because of the brevity of details given in the narrative regarding the beginning of Ish-bosheth's and David's respective reigns. It is not possible to sort out whether the coronation of Ish-bosheth coincid-

ed with David's anointing, whether it took place at some point during David's reign or whether it took place during the last two years of David's reign. David is king in Hebron for seven and a half years and Ish-bosheth is king over Israel for two years.

The rest of the chapter, vss 12-32, tells the story of the first conflict of the civil war. Although vss 10 and 11 give a portentous hint of war, there are indications in what we have examined already that David did not actively seek this battle, nor that his blessing to the Jabesh-gileadites provoked the north to battle.28 But why is David so absent from the story? David's men go to war, but he does not give an order to fight. Joab is the leader. David's absence cannot serve to absolve David of responsibility for his troops, although it does create a sense that David may not be completely identified with the events of this day nor that David considered civil war a necessity. There is enough said in II Samuel i of David's regard for Saul and David's call to the Judaeans to fight with the Israelites in defense of all Israel to affirm that David did not seek civil war. A portion of this chapter, vss 18-23, is devoted to showing how the conflict is escalated by the rashness of one of the sons of Zeruiah, the fleet-footed Asahel.

David is implicated in this civil war however because Joab is the leader of his troops. The sons of Zeruiah are presented as zealous defenders of Judah and of David, but they also are a strain to David.

Joab is both a fierce supporter of David, and as is presented in

<sup>28</sup> In contrast to the reading of McCarter. See McCarter, op. cit., pp. 94 and 97.

chapter iii, is rashly destructive in ways that are unnecessary.

Joab acts somewhat independently of the king.

The meeting between the two armies takes place at Gibeon.

Gibeon is in the tribal territory of Benjamin, and is about five miles northwest of Jerusalem. Gibeon is not far, therefore, from Judaean territory. As Ish-bosheth rules Benjamin (vs 9), the presence of David's troops on that territory signals problems. The specific reference to Benjamin in vs 15 indicates the leadership that the tribe of Benjamin is giving to the northern tribes.<sup>29</sup>

The armies are positioned on opposite sides of the pool.

Abner, who is described as leading his men first to Gibeon, is now

<sup>29</sup> Gibeon is identified as the modern el-Jib, and has been excavated by J.B. Pritchard. He says of el-Jib: "The most conspicuous physical feature of Gibeon, as it is known from the ancient sources, is its adequate supply of water." J.B. Pritchard, Gibeon: Where the Sun Stood Still, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962), p. 53. Pritchard explains that el-Jib has a total of eight springs around it, and it is, therefore, known as having an abundant water supply (Jer xli 12). This conspicuous feature of Gibeon is mentioned in our story as well.

There are a number of textual details to clarify in vss 12-15. The he at the end of the word Gibeon in vs 12 is the locative he; the word has caused some confusion in early versions as Aquila and Theodotian (not LXXB) and Tg. Neb.f translate it as "mountain" (gib at). De Boer notes the use of the locative he with Gibeon in I Kgs iii 4 to confirm the MT reading. Q also agrees with MT. LXXB adds "from Hebron" after "went out" in vs 13 but the addition may simply reflect further elaboration of the LXX. McCarter is silent about any Q reading but he agrees with MT. There is nothing out of order with the adverb "together" with the verb "to meet" in vs 13 even though Driver says the adverb is "superfluous". The construction noted by Driver in vs 13 of using two identical words such as "from this" (mizzeh) ... "from this" (mizzeh) is Hebrew idiom to contrast parts of the sentence (see also I Sam xiv 4). Driver, Notes, p. 106. Q and LXX (LXXB, paidon, LXXL, huion) have "sons of" (lbny) before "Benjamin" in vs 15; this reading is in contrast to other versions, Tg. Neb., bet binyamin, Syr. and Vg. The Q fragment agrees with the reading of the LXX rather than MT.

also the first to engage battle. His short conversation with Joab "Let the young lads arise (yaqûmû) now and play before us" is met with Joab's terse reply using the same verb, "Let them arise" (yaqumu). Abner uses the verb "to play", sahaq, which causes some to read this section as if the encounter began as play but deteriorated into bloody battle.30 C.H. Gordon considers this episode as the bloody sport of belt-wrestling which is known throughout the Near East, and he further uses the name of the belt, the halisato, as the prize of this contest. Asahel is thus encouraged in vs 21 to pick up the belts of fallen warriors as a prize. 31 On the other hand Eissfeldt argues that the battle was serious from the outset. 32 He says that "play", sahaq, is used in the Hebrew Bible with the sense of "fight". He uses the example of Ps civ 26 which describes how God has made leviathan to "play" in the sea. He substantiates that the relation between God and leviathan is that of battle from another passage, Ps lxxiv 14 in which God breaks the heads of leviathan. sahaq is also used in the sense of mocking in Gen xxxix 17 and Judg xvi 25. In the two examples of "mocking", however, the mocking only exists because

<sup>30</sup> L.W. Batton made an argument in 1906 that the battle was intended to be play, but the Benjamites betrayed this sportive aspect and slew their opponents. L.W. Batton, "Helkath Hazzurim, 2 Samuel 2, 12-16," ZAW 26 (1906), pp. 90-94. See Grønbaek for the recent argument along this line. Grønbaek, see above, pp. 167-168.

<sup>31</sup> Cyrus H. Gordon, "Belt-Wrestling in the Bible World," HUCA 23 (1950), pp. 131-136.

<sup>32</sup> O. Eissfeldt, "Ein gescheiterter Versuch der Wiedervereinigung Israel," La Nouvelle Clio 3 (1951), pp. 110-127. <u>Idem.</u>, "Noch einmal: Ein gescheiterter Versuch der Wiedervereinigung Israels," <u>La Nouvelle</u> Clio 4 (1952), pp. 55-59.

someone is serious and another is not, and, therefore, the serious element is not removed in these passages. Moreover, in II Sam vi 21, David dances,  $\frac{1}{100}$  insolutionally before the Lord. His dance, though in sheer joy, is still serious worship. The usages cited here are not definitive, but they do attest to a subtle range of meaning of the word. 33

The seriousness of the battle is also questioned because the initial confrontation between the two armies is between twelve warriors from each side. But an initial confrontation with a select group is not a substitute for the battle; it is the first indication of who the victor might be.<sup>34</sup> In the battle between David and Goliath, Goliath stood for many days challenging an opponent from Israel. The outcome of these first limited battles is concentrated in the fiercest warriors on each side. And as in the case of Goliath, the battle was not over when he was slain, but the outcome was more sure. The initial confrontation here in II Samuel ii serves as a representative of battle, but is not sport and not a substitute for battle. Abner commands the battle to begin, to be acted out on a more limited scale before everyone joins in.

<sup>33</sup> In Shakespeare's The Tempest, Alonso commands the Boatswain to "Play the men." in I,i,9. The word has the sense of "work" the men or the boat will be lost in the storm. The English usage may rely upon a Hebrew range of meaning for sahaq. W. Shakespeare, The Tempest, ed. N. Frye, (New York: Penguin Books, 1970), p. 29.

<sup>34</sup> F. Charles Fensham, "The Battle between the men of Joab and Abner as a possible ordeal by battle," <u>VT</u> 20 (1970), pp. 356-357. Fensham is incorrect to say that the initial battle is "to avoid an open battle".

Nor is the manner in which the men seize each other (vs 16) an example of the sportive element of the war. An effective way to slay an opponent is to hold him so the sword does not glance off or push the opponent away. The twenty-four warriors have the same strategy and are all slain together.

The story is interrupted at this point in order to explain that the place where these twenty-four warriors fell is called "the field of stones" or "field of flints" (helqat hassurîm).35 şûr is a Hebrew word for "stone" and in certain usages it has the sense of "flint" as in Josh v 2 (harebôt şurîm, "stone knives"). The "stones" or "flints" thus would be a reference to the weapons used to slay the men. The LXX has another reading, the "field of treacheries", meris ton epiboulon, and is derived from the understanding of the consonantal text as hassarîm. Driver summarises several alternatives which suggest that there should be an emendation of the consonantal text from resh to daleth.36 When the purpose of such naming is recognised, however, it is unnecessary to resort to such emendations. The name refers to the battle by making reference to the soldiers' weapons.

The naming of the place is a way in which the author marks the momentous events that took place at this place. The "field of stones, which is in Gibeon" reminds the readers of this memorable day. The occasion is the outbreak of civil war that is fought between tribes in Israel. It is a sad and disgraceful day for the tribes,

<sup>35</sup> McCarter suggests "field of flints" is a better translation. McCarter, op. cit., p. 93.

<sup>36</sup> Driver, Notes, pp. 242-243.

and to remember it is to seek to prevent such happenings in the future. The day is remembered by the deaths of the twenty-four warriors who slew one another in a remarkable way at the beginning of the battle. The naming of places to recall events is not unique to this passage; another example in the books of Samuel is in I Sam xxiii 28. David calls the place in which he narrowly escapes Saul "the erag of divisions." In II Sam v 17-25 the place where God delivers the people from the Philistines is called Baal Perazim. The naming draws attention to a central aspect of the event which evokes the entire story. The name, thus, serves as a mnemonic reference to the story.

The designation of vss 14-16 as an etymological folk-legend (Ortsagen, eine volksetymologischen Legende) by Gressmann and Grønback deflects the reading away from the story itself and concentrates the purpose of the passage on the etymology.<sup>37</sup> The point of the passage concerns the civil war rather than the naming of a place; the naming of the place is a way of recalling the story. Determining the form on the basis of its use of etymology gives a secondary aspect pre-eminence over the primary part, namely, the force of the story.

Vs 17 is a summary of the war. The initial confrontation which ends in a stalemate is not indicative of the progress of the battle. Abner and his men are beaten before Joab's warriors.

Vss 18-23 isolate a particular event of the battle on this day that destroys Abner's attempt to end the civil war in chapter iii. Asahel, the brother of Joab, is killed by Abner. The force of

<sup>37</sup> Gressmann, see above, pp. 14-15. Grønbaek, see above, pp. 167-168.

the metaphor of a gazelle is without doubt; Asahel is a fast runner.<sup>38</sup> Gressmann's claim that the metaphor is one of the stylistic indications that the literary form of the passage is saga fails to give any reason why historical narrative cannot use such a metaphor.

The sons of Zeruiah are known as fierce and eager warriors; Joab is the commander of David's troops, and Abishai and Asahel belong to David's thirty mighty men (II Sam xxiii 18 and 24). Asahel's eagerness for battle is evinced in this passage as he pursues Abner. Asahel is proud of his greatest weapon, namely, his speed as a runner. Vs 19 describes his pursuit of Abner as unwavering. In vs 20 Abner turns to speak with his opponent, and asks whether he is indeed Asahel. Asahel replies that he is.<sup>39</sup> When Asahel's identity is confirmed by Abner, Abner seeks to ward off a confrontation by urging Asahel to turn aside and collect some booty from slain warriors. In this statement Abner admits that he probably cannot outrun his opponent, but that does not mean he cannot be the victor in battle. Abner urges Asahel to turn aside a second time (vs 22), and this time Abner explains his reason for doing so. Abner wishes to avoid a conflict in which he is forced to kill a brother of Joab. Abner is willing for the house of Saul and the house of David to do battle, but he is unwilling to have the conflict aggravated by Joab's desire to avenge his brother's death. Asahel refuses to turn aside, and when he over-

<sup>38</sup> The dual form for gazelles in vs 18 is used also in I Chr xii 9, although an aleph is added to the spelling (seba yim).

<sup>39</sup> The alteration of spelling in the two verses of the word "right", <u>semo'wl</u>, is a spelling variation on this word (BDB, p. 969). Kittel recommends an emendation in BHK.

takes Abner, Abner proves the stronger warrior. The author does not refrain from including six details about the killing that demonstrate Abner's superiority in battle. First, Abner slays Asahel with the back of his sword (be aharê hahanît). Jaharê is used in the same way as in Exod xxvi 12, "the back of the tabernacle". We cannot surmise what was the actual type of sword used by Abner, but the reference here suggests Asahel is struck with a dull edge of the sword. It is with brute strength that Abner runs his sword through Asahel. Second, Abner places his sword under the fifth rib, the choice target for quick slaughter of the enemy (iii 27 and iv 6). Abner had sufficient control of the combat to choose the best place. Third, Abner's sword goes right through Asahel. Asahel does not die of a slight wound inflicted in a closely fought battle. Fourth, the author adds that Asahel dies "in his place", that is, on the exact spot at which the mortal blow is delivered. For a similar usage of the word tahat, see I Sam xiv 9. Asahel was not wounded to die at a later date, but decisively slain. Fifth, at the end of vs 23 the people who see Asahel dead stand in awe that one of the sons of Zeruiah has been slain; it took a mighty warrior to slay a son of Zeruiah. Sixth, if the accentuation is an intrinsic part of the ancient story, the tifha on the final syllable of wayyamot lengthens the vowel and strengthens the importance of the verb in the sentence. The sentence does not move quickly on to the next subject. The purpose of these details is to affirm that not only is Abner a remarkable warrior, but that he had properly estimated his ability to kill Asahel earlier in the account. In

killing Asahel, Abner is forced to escalate personal hostility between himself and Joab in a way that he did not seek. Abner is depicted as someone loyal to Saul and yet reticent to be involved in endless bloodshed between David's and Ish-bosheth's troops.

The use of the word halisatô in vs 21 is, according to Gronbaek and Gordon, another one of the indications that the passage tells the story of the ancient custom of belt-wrestling. halisatô is used only twice in the MT, here and in Judg xiv 19. There is no indication in either of these two passages that the word signifies a 'belt' that is the prize of the battle. The verb halas is used many times and means "equipped for war" (see Isa xv 4). The word is best translated simply as "armour". Armour is part of the spoil of war and Abner is appealing to Asahel's desire for the spoils of armour rather than a special belt. "Armour" is the translation of the LXX, Tg. Neb. and Syr.40

The two remaining sons of Zeruiah, Joab and Abishai, pursue Abner (vs 24). But the sun is setting, and a final resolution to the battle is not settled. Abner's troops are on the run, but they are not completely defeated.

The geographical locations of "the mountain of Ammah" and "Giah" are unknown, and, therefore, it has been impossible to determine the extent or direction of Abner's retreat. There have been various attempts to find clues to the whereabouts of these places. LXXB translates the terms as proper names, "the mountain of Ammah" and

<sup>40</sup> The gere should be followed in vs 23.

"before Giah". Aquila, Theodotion, Tg. Neb. and Syr. translate amma as "aqueduct", (hydragogos, Syr. ymm)) and the Vg combines this sense with that of a proper noun, Aquaeductus. With regard to giah Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, and the Vg opt for a translation as "valley", (pharaggos, vallis), reading the word as the Hebrew word gaye. There is no support, however, in Tg. Neb. or Syr. for the replacement of a beth with an aleph. The tendency of Aquila and Theodotion to translate according to sense rather than as proper names is also found in the use of bounos for gib'on at the end of the verse (see also vs 12b). According to the current state of knowledge it is not possible to judge between these alternatives. With regard to "Gibeon" at the end of the line, Driver41 and Hertzberg42 choose Geba (geba6 as is spelled in Isa x 29) as the proper place in this verse. Both claim that there is confusion in the MT in this passage between Gibeon and Geba which are, according to the reference in Isa x 29, distinct. Hertzberg says that Geba has a wilderness, but Gibeon does not; he gives no justification for this assertion. But there is no reason that Gibeon cannot be maintained even if, as in the case of the former two nouns of place, the exact location of the wilderness of Gibeon is not known. Abner, however, has truly lost the Benjamite city of Gibeon.

Abner and the sons of Benjamin gather together on the top of a hill (vs 25). The advantage of a hill in war is discussed in

<sup>41</sup> Driver. Notes, p. 244.

<sup>42</sup> Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 246.

regard to the "high places" in i 19. It is from this hill that Abner calls out to Joab. Abner's speech consists in three questions. The first begins with the noun for time, "forever", lanesah; "Shall the sword devour forever?" In the second question Abner gives the reason that the battle ought to cease; the war can only bring bitterness in the end. And finally, Abner asks Joab how long he will refrain from telling his men to pursue their brothers. Abner's question "how long", 'ad-matay, reveals that he wishes the battle to be over. He ends his questions with an appeal to Joab to remember that this is a war amongst brothers. Although Abner is partially responsible for initiating the civil war, he does not wish its continuation.

There are two possible readings for vs 27; the difference causes two different valuations of Abner's responsibility in the story in this chapter. The first is: "unless you had spoken, surely after the morning each man would go up from following his brother."

This reading, followed by Joab's cessation of the pursuit in vs 28, understands the story as if Joab took Abner's comments seriously at this point in the battle. Otherwise, the men would have fought all night, and ceased only in the morning. This reading is that of the LXX and the translations, KJV, NEB, RSV and the NIV. The second reading is: "If you would have spoken, so from the time of the morning, each man would have gone up from pursuing his brother." Hertzberg supports this reading and offers the paraphrase; "If only you had

spoken (earlier)! Then the men would (already) have given up ."43 In this translation, the battle, at least according to Joab, was unnecessary and could have been stopped by Abner that morning. Abner certainly was a major instigator of the battle (vss 12-14), and this lends credibility to the reading. This reading is supported by Tg. Neb., and is used by Lut. in subsequent translation.

The first reading is supported by Driver, though he handles the alternatives in a cursory fashion. Most commentators indeed overlook the problem in the verse; Wellhausen and McCarter do not discuss it. Driver makes three grammatical points on the verse, all of which are correct. First, the second  $\underline{\mathbf{ki}}$  in the sentence resumes what is begun with the first  $\underline{\hat{ki}}$ , and does not require translation (see I Sam xiv 39). Second, the  $\frac{\sqrt{az}}{az}$  is best translated with the  $\frac{\sqrt{a}}{az}$  as "surely" after the pattern of II Sam xix 7. Third, the preposition min can be used in the sense of "after" as in "after two days" (miyyomayim, Hos vi 2), and is therefore not restricted to "from" in the sense of "from this morning." But Driver misses a sentence construction almost identical to the one in vs 27 that would substantiate his argument. The construction is found in I Sam xxv 34; there is an oath, "as the Lord, God of Israel, lives", a ki lûle (lûle and lule are alternate spellings) formation followed by ki in the sentence and the verbs following ki lule are perfects, just as the verb following ki lule? is a perfect in II Sam ii 27. The sentence in I Sam xxv 34 is David's reply to Abigail which says that unless she hastened and came to meet

<sup>43</sup> Hertzberg, op. cit., pp. 247 and 253.

David surely there would not be left unto Nabal by morning light any males in Nabal's house. The construction does not refer to anything in past time, but to what would have occurred that night if Abigail had not come to David. This sentence is the best precedent to follow to sort out II Sam ii 27. Therefore, the right reading is that Joab is not harking back to the beginning of the day, but saying that on the next morning the men would have stopped killing the followers of Abner. Joab, however, agrees with Abner's suggestion to discontinue the battle. Joab is not saying that Abner alone is responsible for the events of this day. Joab is, at least on this occasion, willing to set aside blood vengeance.

Vs 28 tells that Joab sounded the trumpet and stopped the battle. Vs 29 says that Abner and his men walked all that night on the plain through which the Jordan flows. Abner's men were heading back to Mahanaim. "Bithron", habbitron, is a hapax legomenon. Various readings have been offered. BDB, Vg and KJV transliterate the word as a proper noun. Harrington and Saldarini translate the same word in Aramaic as "the forenoon". He beter (an i-class segholate) is a noun in Hebrew with the sense of "half"; it may be used in a geographical sense as "half a mountain", that is, a "cleft" or in a temporal sense as "forenoon". Although a solution will not be reached until there is improvement in our knowledge of language and perhaps archaeology, the best cue to follow at present is that the word is in a sequence

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup> Daniel J. Harrington, S.J., and Anthony J. Saldarini, intro., trans. and notes, <u>Targum Jonathan of the Former Prophets</u>, The Aramaic Bible, 10, gen. ed. M. McNamara, M.S.C., (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1987), p. 166.

of place names, Jordan and Mahanaim, and Bithron should be transliterated as another name. The Bithron, however, is an area of land because the word  $k\bar{o}l$ , "all Bithron" would be unsuitable for a city. 45

The numbering of the dead in vss 30 and 31 proclaims the victors. Joab's side lost nineteen men and Asahel; Abner's lost three hundred and sixty men. Vs 31 specifically mentions Benjamin, as had been done in vss 15 and 25, in order to reiterate that it is the tribe of Benjamin that is giving leadership to the north.

Vs 32 tells how Asahel is lifted and carried from the battle-field. He is buried in the grave of his father in Bethlehem. As the men of Abner journeyed all night, so too, the men of Joab journey all night. Joab's men reach Hebron at the break of day. The day was long and wearisome; it marked the beginning of a long civil war.

## Summary

In the first two parts of the story in this chapter, the movement of David to Hebron and his message to the Jabesh-gileadites, David is not depicted as acting out of ambitious pursuit for power.

<sup>45</sup> The LXX translates bitron as ten parateinousan, "the stretch", which refers to a stretch of land as well.

The LXX and Vg translate Mahanaim in vs 29 as "camp". Q has [mh]nymh. The preposition preceding "men of Abner" in Q is min; min is the preposition in the appositional phrase before it, and the same preposition would make more sense. The LXX renders both phrases as genitives, but this translation does not guarantee that the LXX is translating the same preposition in Hebrew. The Syr. has min in both cases. Though in a slightly different construction, the sequence of prepositions, min and be, are followed by Tg. Neb., and, therefore, are not unusual. And although Driver suggests that the verb mut at the end of the word is "superfluous", it should be maintained because of the common enough usage of a verb with much the same sense preceding mut; see, for example, i 4. There are two verbs in the same sequence in Tg. Neb. as well.

He is restrained in his attempts to seek the throne because he seeks divine guidance before moving to Hebron, he does not solicit the anointing of the Judaeans, he seeks to honour the Jabesh-gileadites' respect for Saul and he attempts to challenge the Jabesh-gileadites to prepare for further battle against a common enemy. The depiction of David's loyalty to Saul as God's anointed is not substantially different than what it is in chapter i.

The depiction of David in the outbreak of civil war is far more complicated. David is absent from the battlefield, and we know of no command that he gave either to initiate or end the war. The story depicts the difficult relation that David has with the sons of Zeruiah; these brothers are on one hand his most fierce allies, and yet at the same time they constantly and rashly choose bloodshed over all else. Compare, for example, Abishai's response in I Sam xxvi 8 with Asahel's in ii 19-23 and Joab's in iii 26-27. There is sufficient account of David's desire for unity of all the tribes in II Sam i-ii 7 to conclude that David did not seek this civil war. Nevertheless, both Joab and Abner engage in battle, and David does not stop it. Although we know very little about Joab because this is the first major story involving him in the books of I and II Samuel, there is already a sense that David is not in complete or adequate control of him. This judgement will be confirmed in the next chapter. Yet the war also escalates in a way that Abner did not choose. Another of the sons of Zeruiah, Asahel, desires to prove his valour in war and forces his own death. His brother Joab will in the next chapter seek revenge of his brother rather than peace with the north. David

is at least not directly responsible for Asahel's complicating maneuvers, nor Joab's eventual revenge.

Abner is depicted both as a valiant warrior and as someone hesitant to allow civil war to destroy the people of Israel. Abner sets up Ish-bosheth as king over the northern tribes out of loyalty to his master Saul. Abner defends the kingdom of Saul, but he does not seize the throne himself. He remains a warrior. Abner is not afraid to begin the battle. With numerous fine details, the strength and skill of Abner as an accomplished warrior is manifest in the account of Asahel's death. On the other hand, Abner is capable of realising the need for limitations in this civil war. He does not seek Asahel's death, even though he is aware that he is capable of killing him. He knows that Asahel's death will escalate hostilities between himself and Joab. Abner also has a desire to stop the war. His request to stop the war is at least in part due to his defeat. But it is also a reminder that Abner's troops would not give in easily and there would be more bloodshed. It might easily be thought that Abner is the villain in this story that ends with the rise of a Judaean to the throne, but the rich and varied presentation of Abner does not allow such a reading. In the midst of his fierce defense of the kingdom of Saul, he is presented as someone who realises that civil war is a bitter path for any people.

Joab is presented as a zealous and energetic warrior and yet he, too, is willing to discontinue the battle even when he is the victor. Joab is able to listen to the man who has just slain his brother.

The arguments proposed that the depiction of the events of this chapter have been reworked by editors in order to make the story conform to the ideology of the history of David's rise cannot be sustained. Moreover, the view that there is some type of bloody sport of belt-wrestling which is evidence that part of the chapter is saga rather than historical narrative remains insufficiently supported. The battle begins as a serious conflict between the two sides. A particular event in the battle (vss 18-23) is singled out for further elaboration because of its significance for the story in the next chapter.

## Chapter Three

The civil war that began in II Samuel ii continues in II
Samuel iii. Abner distinguishes himself as the central defender of
the house of Saul. Ish-bosheth nevertheless accuses Abner of a fault
regarding one of Saul's concubines. The accusation causes Abner to
abandon his efforts to defend Ish-bosheth further and Abner seeks to
negotiate the peaceful transfer of the kingdom to David. Abner is
willing to admit at this point that God has chosen David to rule over
both Israel and Judah. Joab interrupts these negotiations between
David and Abner by killing Abner to avenge the death of Joab's brother
Asahel. David disavows Joab's actions and offers a lament in honour
of Abner.1

An alternate reading suggests that Ish-bosheth is the loyal defender of the house of Saul and that Abner, who is politically ambitious, seeks to rule over Israel in place of Ish-bosheth. It is claimed that Abner betrays Ish-bosheth and begins to deliver him into the hands of David. David seizes the opportunity to take command of Israel, and entertains Abner royally. When Joab slays Abner, David considers the action a political blunder on Joab's part, and David mourns for Abner in order to convince Israel that he should still be

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Josephus agrees substantially with this reading of the chapter. Josephus, <u>Jewish Antiquities</u>, <u>Books V-VIII</u>, trans. H.St.J. Thackeray and R. Marcus, The Loeb Classical Library, vol. V (London: W. Heinemann, 1935), vii. 21-45.

ruler over them.<sup>2</sup> Although a substantial part of this reading is derived from the actual depiction of the story itself, various studies support the reading by suggesting that editorial insertions reveal that the chapter was reworked to make David appear in a better light. As in earlier chapters, the existence of an editor is used to argue that the <u>Tendenz</u> of the source gives a somewhat false account of the actual events.<sup>3</sup>

Vs 1 is a summary statement of what has transpired in the war between the house of Saul and the house of David, and in giving this summary vs 1 raises the question of the relation between chapters ii and iii. Do the events of chapter ii and iii follow immediately from each other or is there a passage of time between the events? If the word 'arukka is used in the sense of "long", a passage of time is recognised. But the versions read the sense of 'arukka variously; Tg. Neb. has "fierce", taqip, the LXX's epi poly can be either "great" or "long", and the Syr. simply says "there was war". Moreover, the events of the two chapters are interrupted by vss 2-5 which give an account of the birth of David's sons in Hebron, and it is argued in several studies that these verses are an insertion into the story. For example, Noth claims that vss 2-5 were not part of the original tradition and were inserted, although not by the Deuteronomist. Which is a summary to the story of the claims that they interrupt the flow of the narrative, and are

Noth, see above, pp. 79-80. Ward, see above, pp. 152-153. McCarter, op. cit., pp. 120-122.

<sup>3</sup> Grønbaek, see above, pp. 169-172.

<sup>4</sup> Noth, The Deuteronomistic History, p. 125, n. 11.

an insertion by the B.<sup>5</sup> The translation of <u>arukka</u> and the judgement whether the list of David's sons are an insertion are essential to the determination of the purpose of this early part of the chapter and the relation of these events to chapter ii.

The feminine adjective arukka is used only three times in the MT; it is found in Jer xxix 28, Job xi 9 and in II Sam iii 1. Job uses the term in the sense of the "measurement", that is, the length of God; this use is not temporal. The other occurrence, Jer xxix 28, uses the word in the temporal sense of "long", and is an appropriate parallel to II Sam iii 1. Taken in the temporal sense the length of time from the battle in chapter ii to Joab's revenge in chapter iii could have been the time that David was king in Hebron, seven years and six months. Or this length of time, which begins in ii 11, may end when David captures Jerusalem in v 7, and, thus, the events in chapter iii occur at some point in this story. We are not given exact temporal references between the time of David's return to Hebron and his move to Jerusalem so that the different events that occur between these two points cannot be placed on an exact chronological line. Between ii 11 and v 7 the reference to the long war between the house of Saul and the house of David is the only temporal comment in the narrative. The usage of Jarukka as "long" suggests that a good part of the movement in time is summarised in the first

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Nübel, see above, p. 132.

verse in chapter iii. The terse statement in vs 1, thus, deletes the details of many battles and simply explains the general outcome. 6

That the stories in chapter ii and chapter iii depict events that do not follow in close temporal succession is also indicated through the interruption of the story in vss 2-5 to list the six sons that are born to David while he is at Hebron. This section initially appears obtrusive in the movement of the story from chapter ii to chapter iii. However, a sense of the passage of time is in part created in the narrative by the record of the births of David's sons. The list, therefore, confirms what has been suggested with the use of <code>jarukka</code> that a length of time passes between the events of chapters ii and iii. The list functions purposefully in the creation of the temporal movement of the story. The list explains what the "house of David" means as it is used in vss 1 and 6.8 R.A. Carlson

The idiom at the end of vs 1, holek wehazed followed by holekim wedallim, is adequately discussed in Driver's Notes, p. 36 in his commentary on I Sam ii 26. He lists numerous uses of this idiom in the Hebrew Bible. No one to my knowledge has argued that this Hebrew idiom is the characteristic style of an editor.

<sup>7</sup> The argument is also made by Eissfeldt. Eissfeldt, see above, p. 53.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Grønbaek, see above p. 169.

The two <u>qĕrāyîn</u> present in this list should be followed instead of the <u>kĕthābîn</u>. Wellhausen suggests that the consonants of the <u>kethib</u> in vs 2 could be pointed as a pual or piel on the basis of contracted forms after <u>waw-consecutive</u> which occasionally occur in these stems (GKC 69u). Driver denies Wellhausen's analogy, though Driver must mean only that there is no other attested contraction with this particular verb. See Driver, <u>Notes</u>, p. 246. The niphal form of this verb is so frequently used in like passages that it readily commends itself (see v 13). Notice, too, in the second <u>qere</u> in vs 3 that the Masoretes correct a yod when it is a consonant, but

correctly points out that the verses recording the birth of David's sons reveal God's blessing of David, and this depiction of David is consistent with the stories preceding and following it.<sup>9</sup> David is not only prosperous in the war (vs 1), he is prosperous in his family life.

Wellhausen claims that the list was inserted because vs 6a is a direct continuation of vs 1, although he notes that vs 6b would be a more adequate continuation from vs 1.10 In defense of the purposeful placement of the verses it is possible to affirm that vs 6a continues the depiction of events from vs 1 while at the same time recognising that there has been an interlude.

At least part of the reason for the list itself is for purposes of primogeniture. The sons are listed in order of birth from the first to the sixth. Three of these sons, Amnon, Absalom and Adonijah, will play a significant role in the story following David's sin with Bath-sheba (II Samuel xi-xii). Although we do not know what happens

do not replace the yod in vs 2 in the word hayyizre elit when it is a mater lectionis.

David's second son, kil'āb, is also known by other names, both in the MT and in the versions. In I Chr iii 1 his name is dāniyyē'l. The LXX for II Sam iii 3 has dalouia, and LXXA has dalouia in I Chr iii 1 instead of the usual daniēl. Tg. Neb. agrees with MT, Syr. has klb and the Vg agrees with MT in both II Sam iii 3 and I Chr iii 1. Q has dl[ which agrees with LXX. There is no way to judge whether one of these names perpetuates a more ancient version, and he may well have been known by several names.

<sup>9</sup> R.A. Carlson, <u>David</u>, the <u>Chosen King</u>, A Traditio-Historical Approach to the Second Book of Samuel, trans. Eric Sharpe and Stanley Rudman, (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1964), p. 50.

<sup>10</sup> Wellhausen, Der Text, p. 157.

to the second son, Chileab, 11 the first son and the third and fourth sons are central to the question of the succession to the throne of David, and they become prominent in the story in the order of their birth.

The reference to a long war between the two houses confirms that Abner was realistic in ii 26 when he claimed that the bloodshed would continue. After the decisive victory of Joab's troops in that first battle we might not suspect that the house of Saul would muster any opposition to the house of David. But the summary in iii 1 bears out Abner's claim. Abner carried on a defense of the house of Saul for some time, and this support for the house of Saul affirms his genuine loyalty to it.

Before it is possible to examine the story of the conflict that develops between Abner and Ish-bosheth it is necessary to sort out the most important difference between the MT and the LXX in this chapter, namely, whether the proper name of the man in vs 8, in the rest of this chapter and in the following chapter is Ish-bosheth (MT) or Mephibosheth (LXXBL, though not LXXA). It is possible that LXXBL are claiming that there is another man introduced in this chapter, although I have not discovered anyone who actually supports this view. If the man is not Ish-bosheth, then he is not the same person whom Abner established to be king in II Samuel ii. In vs 7 of the LXXBL Mephibosheth is said to be the son of Saul, and it would seem

<sup>11</sup> Thackeray adds a note to his translation of Josephus that according to rabbinic tradition, Chileab is really Nabal's son who was born after David's marriage to Abigail. Josephus, op. cit., p. 369.

that it is the same Mephibosheth that is killed in chapter iv. There are in fact two other Mephibosheths in the story of David; in II

Sam iv 4 we know of a Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, who is lame, and in II Sam xxi 8 we learn that Saul's concubine Rizpah had two sons for Saul and the name of one son is Mephibosheth. It is possible that Rizpah's son is the Mephibosheth mentioned in iii 7 and that Mephibosheth is speaking of his mother in iii 7. If it is the case that Rizpah is his mother, it is not evident why he should be offended that Abner takes his widowed mother as a concubine unless Abner's actions constitute a claim to the throne of Saul. It would seem unusual for Mephibosheth to intend to take his mother as his concubine, and it appears that the Mephibosheth in iii 7 is killed in chapter iv. At any rate, I did not find anyone who argues that the Mephibosheth in xxi 8 is the same Mephibosheth as iii 7.

It is generally concluded that the LXX manuscripts are in error in iii 7 in preserving a text with the name Mephibosheth. 12 McCarter claims that the error once existed in the MT as well, but was suppressed:

LXX<sup>BL</sup> here have "Mephibosheth son of Saul," a reading originally shared by MT, where, however, it has been suppressed as obviously in error (so Targ.). 13

McCarter gives no reason for his statement that the MT shared this reading, and his argument reveals an eagerness to affirm that if certain LXX manuscripts contain a particular type of error, the MT

<sup>12</sup> McCarter, op, cit., p. 106. Ulrich, op. cit., pp. 42-45.

<sup>13</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 106.

must have had the same one. This problem in the LXX is the first major difficulty in evaluating the internal coherence of the LXX in the first three chapters of II Samuel.

The conflict that develops between Abner and Ish-bosheth in iii 6-11 is essential to the discernment of the loyalties of each of these two men. The conflict arises due to Abner's supposed taking of one of Saul's concubines, Rizpah. The presentation of the problem, however, is through a conversation between Ish-bosheth and Abner.

The narrator does not tell us of Abner's actions in relation to Rizpah, and we do not know if he actually took her or not. Given the laconic style of the narrative at this point, it is necessary to be precise regarding what can and cannot be affirmed about this passage. What is necessary to sort out is 1) whether we can know if Abner took the concubine Rizpah or not, 2) if he did take her, whether such an action indicates that Abner sought the throne of Ish-bosheth.

The narrative is very terse in vs 7 which makes it difficult to determine if Abner actually took Rizpah as a wife or not. Many commentators immediately assume that Abner did take her, although it is as difficult to prove that Abner took her as it is to prove that he did not take her. Although Josephus' passage is subtle, he appears to read Ish-bosheth's charge as false; Ish-bosheth unjustly

<sup>14</sup> The following commentators assume that Abner did take Rizpah as a concubine. Not one produced an argument in support. Carlson, op. cit., p. 51. Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 257. Grønbaek, see above, p. 169. McCarter gives a judicious evaluation of the problem. He says that it is impossible to be certain whether Abner is guilty, but he assumes that we are intended to suppose that he is. McCarter, op. cit., p. 113.

accuses Abner. 15 LXXL adds "And Abner took her," kai elaben auten abenner.

The movement of the narrative is significant to the understanding of the import of Ish-bosheth's accusation. In chapter ii Abner has been the one who has defended Israel. In iii 6 it is emphasised that Abner has grown strong for the house of Saul through the long war.

We have no indication in Abner's defense of Israel that he actually sought to usurp the throne; Abner is the one who makes Ish-bosheth king over the northern tribes in ii 8-9; Abner could have established himself as king at that time. Moreover, Abner's military prowess alone, displayed so well in chapter ii, is sufficient explanation for his growing power in Israel. Ish-bosheth already appears weak; he relies upon the military defense of Abner. In this context, iii 7 introduces Ish-bosheth's complaint against Abner. It is a complaint against someone who has persistently defended the house of Saul.

There is sufficient evidence in other biblical stories that the taking of the concubine of a king, even if that king is dead, may be either an indication of the desire to take the position of king or a confirmation that a new king has now replaced the position of authority of the old king. Absalom takes the ten concubines of David in II Sam xvi 21-22 as a forceful statement of his open rebellion against his father's authority as king. The example, however, is different from the one we have here because David is still alive during Absalom's seizure of his concubines. A more important parallel is Adonijah's

<sup>15</sup> Josephus, op. cit., vii. 23.

request made through Bath-sheba to Solomon that Adonijah wants David's concubine Abishag the Shunammite as a wife (I Kgs ii 13-25). The parallel is closer to II Samuel iii because the king in I Kgs ii 13-25 is dead as is Saul in II Samuel iii, and, therefore, the concubine in each case has no husband. Solomon rejects the request because it would be a threat to his throne (II Kgs ii 22). In another instance, the case in which David commits adultery with Bath-sheba and kills Uriah, Nathan challenges David that God had been generous with David and had even given David the wives of his lord Saul (II Sam xii 8). In this case, however, the acceptance of these wives by David is not truly a political challenge to Saul's throne because Saul is dead, but rather it remains a vivid indication that David had taken Saul's place.

What distinguishes Abner's case from the incidents with Absalom and Adonijah is that all that we know of Abner thus far is that he has been loyal to the house of Saul. On the basis of the story in chapter ii and what is said of Abner's continued defense of the house of Saul in chapter iii 1-6, Abner has not betrayed the house of Saul to this point. If Ish-bosheth thought Abner was a traitor, it is unclear why he would acquiesce so completely to him in the transfer of Israel to David later in the chapter. Further, Abner's political ambitions for the throne of Israel are by no means clear. Abner certainly does not need to take Rizpah to bolster a claim to the throne; Ish-bosheth is no obstacle if this is Abner's intention. Moreover, if Abner did seek the throne of Israel, there is no explanation why he sought to transfer the kingdom to David. Abner's move to make a

covenant with David is accompanied by a strong recognition of David's right to be king (vss 9-10). There is nothing in the passage, as we shall continue to see in these subsequent verses, that reveals any attempt on Abner's part to manipulate this transfer for his own ends. If Abner had wanted to continue to defend the north, there was nothing to stop him. The war at this point has not been lost, and Abner could have continued the defense of the north as easily without Ishbosheth's support as with it.

Abner's rejection of Ish-bosheth is due to Ish-bosheth's failure to recognise his dependence upon Abner. It is only because of Abner that he is on the throne of Israel. Abner finally realises the extent of Ish-bosheth's ingratitude, and moves to transfer the house of Saul to David. Abner's reply in vss 8-10 is a defense of his loyalty to the house of Saul. His first statement in vs 8 begins with a summary of what his relation is to the house of Saul, and then after this reminder he asserts that Ish-bosheth still has the nerve to accuse him of guilt regarding Rizpah. There have been various senses made of the first part of Abner's reply, haro's keleb anokî asser lîhûdâ. The Vg translates it as numquid caput canis ego sum adversum Iuda and this translation has been continued in the KJV, "Am I a dog's head, which against Judah", and Lut., "Bin ich denn ein Hundskopf, der ich wider Juda." To read the phrase in this way is to translate the preposition lamed in 'aser lîhûdâ as an adversative. 16

<sup>16</sup> Mitchell Dahood, Psalm III: 101-150, The Anchor Bible, (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1970), see p. 394 for uses in the Psalms in which lamed is used in the sense of "against".

The LXX has me kephale kunos ego eimi, which omits 'aser lihuda, makes the statement a positive affirmation rather than a rhetorical question and reads ro's keleb as a metaphor. 17 The Syr. has rys klb' <sup>2</sup>n<sup>3</sup> dyhwd<sup>3</sup>; although the dalat may indicate an adversative, it is most probable that it has the more common force of an indication of a construct, thus requiring the translation as "of Judah" as in the case of the RSV. The Syr. does confirm that there is an jaser linua in its Vorlage. Tg. Neb. is paraphrastic. Harrington and Saldarini translate Tg. Neb. as follows: "Am I not the head? Since when did I become a common man for the remnant of the house of Judah?" In Tg. Neb. the metaphor of "dog" is removed. "A common man (gebar hidyot) for the remnant of the house of Judah" is a common warrior in defense of Judah. Abner is asking whether he is head of the defense of the house of Saul or a common servant for Judah. The contrast between the two makes the designation of a common man for Judah pejorative. Tg. Neb. does not have 'aser yehûda', but it does maintain that there is a reference to Judah in the verse. Tg. Neb.'s translation asserts emphatically that Abner as the military head of the house of Saul would not stoop to serve Judah. Despite the variety of readings found in the versions, the actual sense of the line is the same; Abner claims he is faithful to the house of Saul.

To the ancient readings there must be added one more recent alternative. Winckler's account is that keleb may be repointed as

<sup>17</sup> Barthélemy says that LXX omits the phrase 'aser lîhûdâ because the translators euphemistically shun any suggestion that Judah is spoken of pejoratively. Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, p. 233.

kālēb; "Am I the head of Caleb". 18 Abner questions whether he is a lackey for the Calebites, that is, of the Calebite family of the tribe of Judah. McCarter picks up on this reading and says that rō'š keleb was "evidently understood" in the tradition behind the MT as "the chief of Caleb". 19 He claims that 'ašer lîhûdâ is a gloss added by the Masoretes. There is no reason, however, that the family of Caleb should be singled out as a representative of Judah. David is of the Bethlehemite family of Ephrath (Ruth i 2 and I Sam xvii 12). Moreover, McCarter offers no ground for concluding that the tradition behind the MT "evidently understood" klb as kālēb even if 'ašer lîhûdâ is a gloss; the Vg reading represents an ancient reading in agreement with the MT; the LXX is against McCarter's reasoning at this point in preserving the metaphor of a "dog's head". This recent reading actually is the least plausible of the alternatives.

The MT pointing of keleb commends itself because of the frequent use of the metaphor in I and II Samuel with the force of someone who is worthless (I Sam xvii 43, xxiv 15, II Sam ix 8, xvi 9). Abner is asking whether he, Abner, is "a dog's head", that is, one with a worthless head that he should support Judah. The other phrase, 'aser lînûdâ, can be used in the sense of "belonging to"; see the examples in BDB, pp. 82-83, n. 7. Thus the sense of the Hebrew is adequate: "Am I a dog's head of Judah?" (so RSV). Or if lamed is taken as an adversative, the sense of the KJV, Lut. and Vg is also appropriate.

<sup>18</sup> A discussion of Winckler's reading is found in Dhorme, op. cit., p. 292.

<sup>19</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 106.

In either case, with the vivid metaphor and the following phrase, Abner forcefully affirms his loyalty to the house of Saul.

Abner continues in the next part of vs 8 to insist that he has been kind to the house of Saul. Through repetition he emphasises that he has been loyal to the house of Saul, his brethren and his friends. Moreover, Abner has not caused Ish-bosheth to be discovered by David. Only at the end of this defense does Abner raise the question of his own guilt.<sup>20</sup> Abner does not allow Ish-bosheth to reply (vs 9). Abner swears that as the Lord does to David, so will Abner do to him; he, Abner, will transfer the kingdom to the house of David (vs 10).

Although there is no previous mention that Abner knows that God has sworn to give the house of Saul to David, there is one earlier occasion, and one in which it is not far-fetched to assume that Abner was present, that Saul tells David that the kingdom would one day be David's (I Sam xxiv 21, MT). From someone who has carried on a defense of the house of Saul for some time, Abner's statement here is a final resolution that his battles are in vain, and that he will continue them no longer. The recognition is Abner's affirmation of God's anointing of David. Moreover, the story is not obscure simply because

<sup>20</sup> Gordon is diverted away from the import of Abner's defense by claiming that Abner's says that a trifle such as a woman should not be a matter for accusation. Gordon, op. cit., pp. 217-218. The omission of the article before woman in the LXX and Vg, which both Wellhausen and Driver say is a better reading, supports Gordon's argument. If the article is omitted the word could be understood generically, that is, for all women rather than for this one woman. But Abner's defense as it is in the MT is not a pejorative statement against women in general, and the LXX and Vg need not be read in this way either. Syr. and Tg. Neb. have an article.

the author requires the reader to accept that Abner knew of God's anointing of David.

Furthermore, as we suggested earlier, Abner's resolution to transfer the kingdom to David is an indication that Abner did not take Rizpah for political reasons. His rejoinder silences Ish-bo-sheth's accusation, yet Abner could have continued the battle against the Judaeans if he sought the throne of both Israel and Judah. But rather, Abner chooses to transfer all Israel to David.<sup>21</sup>

The story continues as Abner sends messengers to David to make a covenant with him. Vs 12 contains several difficult expressions which have caused many to emend the MT, and thus to alter the sense of the verse. There are at least three different ways of reading "Whose is the land?", <a href="Lemi-"ares">Lemi-"ares</a>; it may mean that the land is God's or Abner's or David's. If Abner says that it is his, the question may contribute to the reading that Abner's alliance with David is only interim and that he sees himself as the true ruler of all Israel and will recover the kingdom at an appropriate time.<sup>22</sup> Or, it may simply affirm that Abner has the right to make the covenant because Israel is truly in his command rather than Ish-bosheth's. If Abner affirms that the land is David's or God's, then the phrase is less easily construed to affirm that his offer of a covenant is out of his own

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Although Hertzberg says that Abner did take Rizpah, he does not say that it was for political reasons. Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 257.

<sup>22</sup> Grønbaek, see above, pp. 170-171. Hertzberg, op. cit., pp. 255 and 258.

ambitious motives. Finally, if the line makes no sense as it is, then it is possible that a very different reading should be adopted.

The spelling of the word thtw is properly corrected by the qere to thtyw. There are two alternatives for its sense. Driver claims that it is a corruption for the LXXL reading "to Hebron", eis hebron. Josephus agrees with LXXL, although with a different spelling of the place, chebrona. Driver says that if tahtaw were to remain, it is a unique usage of the word because it should "naturally" refer to the subject of wayyislah, that is, to Abner rather than to David. But according to Driver tahtaw cannot be construed in the sentence in this way. Driver cites several examples in which tahtaw follows a verb (see Driver's comments on I Sam xiv, 9) as more appropriate usages of the word. Grønbaek, in contrast, maintains that the word can indeed refer to Abner, although in a different sense. He says that the word means "an seiner Stelle", that is, "in his place" or "on his behalf". Abner sends messengers on his behalf and in vs 20 Abner himself goes to David. Grønbaek's translation is supported by the Vg "before him", pro se, (and so the KJV "on his behalf" and Lut., "fur sich"). Driver does not give an adequate account why this traditional Latin, English and German rendering is incorrect. LXXB and others have "And Abner sent messengers to Thailam where he [David] was at the moment", apesteilen abenner aggelous pros daueid eis thailam hou en parachrema, which appears to render thtw as both a place name and as the adverb "at the moment", parachrema. This reading supports that taḥtaw can refer to the place where David is. Whether Gronbaek

or the LXX is correct here, either reading is possible. I concur with Grønbaek that the word is best translated as "on his behalf."

The repetition of "saying", le'mor, and the omission of the article before "land" are also difficulties in the verse. According to Driver the least change that can be made to make the sentence intelligible is to delete the first le'mor and to add an article. 23 As in the example cited in i 10, Driver insists that the article is necessary, although there are a significant number of occurrences in which an article is omitted where we would expect one that it is not necessary to change the text simply because the article is lacking (see II Sam iii 20 and xvii 10 for two examples). Moreover, le'mor is a rhetorical indication of direct speech, and it is not unusual for le'mor to be repeated in Hebrew with the same subject; see, for example, the blind and the lame in II Sam v 6 and Rab-shakeh in II Kgs xix 9-10.24 Tg. Neb. perpetuated the two uses of 1'mr, and thus did not consider them awkward or unnecessary. Given these examples Driver's recommendation that one le'mor needs to be deleted should not be followed. Further, McCarter's comment that "The repetition of 1° mr is suspicious"25 cannot be maintained.26

<sup>23</sup> Driver, Notes, pp. 247-248.

<sup>24</sup> Barthélemy uses the first example in support of the Hebrew idiom. Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, pp. 233-234.

<sup>25</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 107.

<sup>26</sup> Although the Syr. deletes <u>tahtaw</u> and omits the second <u>le'mor</u> the sense of the Syr. is the same as the MT: "saying, whose is the land", <u>lm'mr mn' hy'r'</u>.

If tahtaw makes sense in the verse and the repetition of le'mor in a sequence is recognised as germane to Hebrew idiom, it is necessary to determine the sense of the question "Whose is the land?" In the paraphrastic expression of Tg. Neb., the expression is read as a theological statement: "We are establishing what he who made the earth is saying". Tg. Neb. reads the question as if the answer is "The land is the Lord's." Yet even in this theological paraphrase the affirmation that the land is God's is not different from a reading to the effect that Abner says that the land is David's. If Abner is saying that the land is God's, he is also indicating that the land is granted to David. The question stresses, whether it refers to God's or David's possession, that David is to be the sole king over all Israel. Given that Abner states directly in vs 9 that God has appointed David, and that Abner seeks a covenant which would make David king over Israel in the rest of the verse, the rhetorical question "Whose is the land?" is further support that Abner recognises that the land is not Ish-bosheth's and not his own.

Barthélemy supports the MT in vs 12 but says that Abner's question affirms that the northern tribes are in his command. 27 Barthélemy notes the usage in I Sam ix 20 where a similar question is asked of Saul with the sense that the land is Saul's: "And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee?" ulemi kol-hemdat viśrā'ēl halô' lekā. Barthélemy says that what follows indicates that the idiom means that the land is Abner's and David is implored to

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

make a covenant with him. But the parallel also strongly supports the reading that Abner says the land is David's, which is the reading that I suggest is appropriate here. In either case, vs 12 makes sense with no alteration but the <u>qere</u>. Moreover, in either reading, Abner is prepared to give the rule of the land over to David.

David agrees to a covenant with Abner, but makes a request to have Michal, Saul's daughter, returned to him. There are three main views of what David's request signifies. First, it is argued that marriage to the daughter of Saul secures him a legitimate claim to the throne, and it is, therefore, a political strategy on David's part.<sup>28</sup> Second, it is argued that David wants a token of good faith from Abner to show he is serious about the covenant.<sup>29</sup> Third, it is argued that David wants an old injustice committed by Saul set right.<sup>30</sup>

David's actions in his accession to the throne do not indicate that he used marriage to Saul's family, either to wives or concubines, as a claim to the throne. In the two accounts we have already discussed, Absalom's and Adonijah's cases, it is possible to affirm that taking the king's concubines or wives is a claim to the throne.

David did indeed take the wives of Saul, but we only learn of that in Nathan's condemnation in II Sam xii 8 of David's adultery and murder.

<sup>28</sup> Noth, see above, p. 79. Ward, see above, pp. 152-153. James C. Vanderkam, "Davidic Complicity in the Deaths of Abner and Eshbaal: A Historical and Redactional Study," <u>JBL</u> 99 (1980), pp 521-539. See especially, p. 530.

<sup>29</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 114.

<sup>30</sup> Gordon lists two reasons, the correction of an old injustice and for political benefits. Gordon, op. cit., p. 218. Josephus combines the second and third readings. Josephus, op. cit., vii. 25.

The taking of the wives is a benefit of David's accession, but does not function as a significant event in the story prior to David's enthronement. In this matter, as in the condemnation of the Amalekite and in the lament over Saul, David is restrained in the manner of his rise to kingship. He does not aggressively seize whatever means are available to him to usurp Saul's throne.

The recognition that David does not take Saul's wives as a claim to the throne is not adequately appreciated. In a recent article M. Tsevat argues that a pattern exists in an Akkadian Ugaritic text and in four cases in biblical texts in which the proper sequence of succession is marriage followed by kingship rather than the achievement of kingship followed by marriage to the king's wives.31 The four biblical cases that Tsevat discusses are those we have mentioned, Absalom's, Adonijah's, Abner's and David's. But Tsevat does not make a necessary discrimination between these cases, and fails to discern that in David's case there is no part of the story where David's taking of Saul's wives plays a role in David's accession to the throne. Nor does Tsevat actually argue in establishing this point that although the depiction of the narrative is that David did not come to power through marriage to the wives of Saul, the 'reconstructed' history shows that David did in fact seize Saul's wives during his rise to power and as a key strategy in that rise. The sequence in the case of David is kingship and then marriage. And in the case of Saul's

<sup>31</sup> M. Tsevat, "Marriage and Monarchical Legitimacy in Ugarit and Israel," JSS 3 (1958), pp. 237-243.

daughter Michal, Tsevat does not say that the incident with Michal is an example of David's assertion of his claim to the throne.

But does David's request for Michal, a daughter of Saul, constitute such a claim? Does David seek to make his ascent legal by marriage to Saul's daughter? First, there is no indication that marrying a king's daughter constituted a challenge to the throne in the way that marriage of either wives or concubines did because the daughters were not the sexual partners of the king and there is no legal assault on the king in marrying his daughter. To have intercourse with the king's wives was an odious act against him; Ahithophel rightly counsels Absalom that he will be abhorred, nib asta, by his father (II Sam xvi 21). Second, the principle of primogeniture is part of these stories in I and II Samuel even when it is reversed, as in the anointing of David over his brothers. Thus, David's marriage to Saul's daughter does not provide grounds by which David can displace the rightful claim of others such as Ish-bosheth, Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, or other sons of Saul (II Sam xxi 8) to the throne. David's marriage to a daughter is only useful to David if no prior claim exists, and any of Saul's or Jonathan's sons constitute such a claim. Third, Michal is David's rightful wife, and the fact that she had been given as a wife to another man did not do away with the legal right that David has to her. In vs 14 David calls Michal his wife, 'isti, and he uses the language of betrothal ('rs, see also Deut xxviii 30). Moreover, David recalls the number of Philistines Saul had required for the marriage (I Sam xviii 25-27). David cites only the number that Saul required for the betrothal rather than the

actual number he killed in order to be legally precise. David calls attention to the legal bond that Saul had broken in giving Michal to Paltiel (I Sam xxv 44). At the point when the house of Saul is attempting reconciliation with the house of Judah, David insists that an old offense that Saul committed against him needs to be rectified.

Noth and Grønbaek dismiss any legal claim that David might have to Michal in II Sam iii by saying that the earlier story of David's marriage to Michal in I Sam xviii 27 is legendary. However, Noth does not justify his argument for the unhistorical nature of I Sam xviii 27, and mentions it only in a footnote to his comments on II Sam iii.<sup>32</sup> In this footnote Noth also states that the reference to the tradition in II Sam iii 14 is an insertion because the "context" requires that David's request is made to Abner and not Ish-bosheth; vs 15 also should have Abner as the subject rather than Ish-bosheth. The mention of both leaders of the north, however, can be explained as due to the endeavour to show that both of them submit to David's request. Grønbaek questions the historicity of the tradition in I Sam xviii 27, but says that the inclusion of Ish-bosheth is appropriate because Ish-bosheth's assent to the marriage further justifies David's claim to the throne, 33

In a recent article Z. Ben-Barak's presupposes the historicity of the tradition in I Sam xviii 27, but argues that there is a legal

<sup>32</sup> Noth, The History of Israel, p. 184, n. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Grønbaek, see above, p. 171.

background to the story which explains the passage. 34 Ben-Barak seeks to answer three questions. First, why did Ish-bosheth agree to give Michal to David? Second, why is Michal allowed to be remarried twice, once to Paltiel and the second time to David? Third, why is David allowed to remarry Michal given the law in Deut xxi 1-4 which prohibits such remarriage? Ben-Barak answers the first question by saying that since David had been married to Michal, Ish-bosheth did not want to appear as if he undermined marriage. Ish-bosheth calculates that his support for marriage will win the house of Saul to him. In answer to the second question Ben-Barak gives examples of Mesopotamian laws which state that if a man is forced to be away for some time and his wife needs support she may remarry and if her first husband returns she is required to go back to him. Any offspring are under the authority of their blood father. Ben-Barak gives examples of such a law in the laws of Eshnunna, the code of Hammurabi and Middle Assyrian laws. He claims this custom is also true in Israel. David's absence from Israel made it legal for Saul to give Michal to another man, and made it legal for David to ask for her back when he returned. In answer to the third question, Ben-Barak claims that the law in Deut xxi 1-4 is Dtr. and is not in force during the time of David; the reference to the law in Jer iii 1 is evidence of its lateness.

<sup>34</sup> Zafrira Ben-Barak, "The Legal Background to the Restoration of Michal to David," <u>Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament</u>, ed. J.A. Emerton, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), pp. 15-29. Mc-Carter accepts the historicity of the II Sam xviii 27 and also Benbarak's explanation of the legal background of the story. McCarter, op. cit., p. 115.

Ben-Barak's central argument requires that the Mesopotamian laws must also be the custom in Israel. He does not, however, other than in the incident with David, give an example of where the law is also reiterated in Israelite religion. What Ben-Barak needs for a strong argument are references to Israelite laws which give some sense that the Mesopotamian law is also in force in Israel. Furthermore, the Mesopotamian laws that he cites apply in cases where the husband is forcibly detained by an enemy. Yet it is not an enemy that causes David to flee but Saul himself: Saul is in the cumbrous situation of both causing David's exile and then using David's exile as an excuse to give his wife to another man. This difference between the Mesopotamian laws and David's case is not adequately addressed. The more appropriate law in Israelite religion that pertains in this case is the seventh commandment which prohibits adultery; it is a command that is operative in the stories in I and II Samuel. as can be seen in the account of David and Bath-sheba. Saul is responsible for the breaking of this command because he gives Michal to Paltiel.

Saul's actions, however, in giving Michal to Paltiel were consistent with Saul's treatment of David. In the stories in I Samuel xvii and xviii, Saul is depicted as being especially fraudulent in the matter of promising David one of his daughters and then defaulting on the promise. Saul had promised that the man who slew Goliath would be given his daughter (I Sam xvii 25), and yet this promise was not fulfilled when David was the victor. Later Saul promised to give David his eldest daughter Merab if David would fight the Lord's battles. When it was time to give Merab to David Saul gave her to Adriel

the Meholathite (I Sam xviii 17-19). In the cases of both Merab and Michal David was hesitant at first to marry the daughter of a king, but Saul cajoled him by appealing to David's zeal to fight the Lord's battles against the Philistines (I Sam xviii 17 and 23). According to the story Saul's reason for offering Merab and Michal was that he wanted David killed by the Philistines. It is quite in keeping with Saul's broken promises of wives for David that Saul gave Michal, who indeed had been given to David as wife, to Paltiel in I Sam xxv 44.

In vss 14 and 15 David makes known the requirement for the return of his wife to both Abner and to Ish-bosheth. It is a bold move on David's part because it requires the house of Saul to admit Saul's treachery against David. As we have already noted, David's request to Ish-bosheth is an attempt by David to confirm that Ish-bosheth does not have plans independent of Abner. Ish-bosheth responds in his usual spiritless manner and sends Michal to David; in doing so Ish-bosheth is acquiescing to David's authority. Ish-bosheth's weakness is further evinced in the passage when Abner takes charge again as he orders the weeping Paltiel to stop following Michal (vs 16).

Abner also goes to persuade the elders of Israel that they should make David king over them (vss 17-18). Driver correctly remarks that heyitem mebaqsim means "have been (continuously) seeking" (see Deut ix 4).35 I Sam xviii 6-7 and 16 speak of both Judah's and Israel's loyalty to David shortly after his anointing, and although these

<sup>35</sup> S.R. Driver, A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew, (Oxford: Clerendon Press, 1892). See section 135.5. See also GKC 116r.

passages do not actually say that they sought to make him king, Saul's jealousy arises because David is a threat to the throne.<sup>36</sup> Abner reminds the elders of Israel that they have wanted David to be king.

Now the elders are to make him king as the Lord had promised (vs 18).<sup>37</sup>

There is specific reference to Abner's going to Benjamin as well. As Saul was of the tribe of Benjamin, the Benjamites could be the most resistant to an alliance with Judah. The Benjamites are referred to twice in order to reinforce that the house of Benjamin accepts Abner's proposal.<sup>38</sup> Eissfeldt is correct in affirming that the shift from Israel to Benjamin is not an adequate reason for a division of sources or editorial insertions, but rather that such a shift is purposefully used by the author to show that all Israel, even the

<sup>36</sup> R.W. Klein makes the following statement in regard to I Sam xviii 16: "These tribes' love for David is a kind of de facto recognition of him as king." R.W. Klein, I Samuel, Word Book Commentaries, Vol. 10, eds., David A. Hubbarb and Glenn W. Barker, (Waco, Texas: Word Book, 1983), p. 189.

<sup>37</sup> The change from first person to third person in vs 18 is difficult. There are three possible solutions. First, the text may be corrupt. Second, the phrase may be read as "by the hand of David my servant, he will save," which places special emphasis on David. There are at least two other places in the MT where it is possible that a he is substituted for an aleph, Ezek xi 7 and Ps cxlii 5. In Ezek xi 7 the usage expresses resolution. Third, the change may be made due to the attraction of a similar phrase, complete with hôsîa, in I Sam ix 16; note the waw before hôsîa and the change of word order. Barthélemy says that it is not possible to know for certain whether the MT is corrupt, and therefore, he suggests it be maintained. See Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, pp. 234-235. The second alternative is preferable as a rare but sufficiently attested usage of the purposeful alteration of the number of the verb.

<sup>38</sup> Nübel thought that his editor B. added the reference to Benjamites at a later point in an attempt to identify all Israel with the tribe of Benjamin. Nübel, see above, p. 132. Grønbaek, too, identifies pro-Benjamite emphasis with these references. Grønbaek, see above, p. 170.

Benjamites, accept this covenant.<sup>39</sup> The story from vss 9-19 develops a progression which finally includes everyone; first Abner accepts David's kingship, then Ish-bosheth, then Israel, including the house of Benjamin.

Vss 20 and 21 tell of Abner's meeting with David. By noting that Abner's expedition consisted of only twenty men, the author affirms that Abner's visit could not possibly be to challenge David militarily. David greets Abner with the sign of friendship conveyed by having a feast for Abner's contingent. Abner's resolution to complete the covenant is expressed in his usage of three cohortatives in vs 21. Abner recognises that the covenant is not between equals as he addresses David as "my lord the king" and says that David shall be king over all that his heart desires (vs 21). The repetition of the phrase "and he went in peace" three times in the MT and four times in the LXX in vss 21-24 stresses that the meeting between the two men is peaceful. 40

When Joab returns from his exploits, he learns that Abner has been to see David and that David has sent him away in peace (vss 22-23). 41 Joab challenges David on his actions; Joab expresses surprise that Abner has been allowed to go in peace (vs 24). Joab seeks

<sup>39</sup> Eissfeldt, see above, p. 53.

The daghes forte in the prefix of wayyesallah in vs 21 is unusual. See GKC 20m.

There is a <u>sebir</u> in vs 22 which replaces  $\underline{ba^2}$  with  $\underline{ba^2\hat{u}}$ . So LXX, Tg. Neb., Syr. and Vg. But there are rare exceptions where a singular verb is used instead of a plural; see GKC 146e.

<sup>41</sup> Notice Barthelemy's fine comment on the purposeful use of "unto the king" in vs 23. Barthelemy, Critique Textuelle, p. 235.

to create doubt in David about Abner's true intentions by saying that Abner has come to spy on David (vs 25). Joab uses the phrase "your going out and your coming in"<sup>42</sup> as a military expression, as is pointed out by McCarter (Josh xiv 11, I Sam xviii 13, 16 and xxix 6).<sup>43</sup>

In vs 26 Joab leaves David and sends for Abner. Abner has not travelled far. He is at the well of Sirah which, according to Josephus, is twenty stades or about two and a half miles north of Hebron. The end of vs 26 reminds the reader that David does not know of Joab's actions.

According to vs 27 Abner returns innocently to Hebron because of the newly established trust between himself and David and he falls prey to Joab's designs. Joab meets Abner at the gate of the city before he has opportunity to come under the protection of David,

<sup>42</sup> Following the reading of the qere in the line is the best solution to a problematic spelling. Driver repoints mbw'k as mebo eka, that is, as the noun mebo, plus the suffix. Driver's reasoning is that the hiphil active participle of bô, is mebî, aka as in Deut viii 7 and the MT points it here after the analogy of a "" 9 verb such as the one preceding it. Driver maintains the consonantal text and rejects the Masoretic qere. The Masoretes alter the consonantal text by moving the waw and point the word on the basis of the analogy. The reason that the qere can be supported is that as a participle the verbal and active character of the word is preserved in accordance with the active sense of mosa aka. In the places listed at the end of the paragraph in which the phrase is found elsewhere in the former prophets, the two words are either both active participles or both infinitives. In each the verbal character, that is, the action of the words in the phrase is preserved which is quite in keeping with its military sense. The qere, which draws its pointing from the analogy of the preceding noun rather than the usual pointing of the active participle of bo, is seeking to preserve this verbal force.

<sup>43</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 117.

<sup>44</sup> Josephus, op. cit., vii. 34.

takes him aside for a private conversation and kills him. 45 The reason is also given; Joab is avenging the death of Asahel. The reason is repeated again in vs 30. The possibilities of peaceful unification of Israel and Judah are of less significance to Joab than the desire to avenge his brother. One of the dominant elements in the story in chapter ii is the detailed account of Asahel's death in a way that excuses Abner of malice toward Joab in the killing of his brother. Yet Joab does not admit that his brother Asahel forced Abner to defend himself and that Asahel brought on his own death.

David's immediate response (vs 28) upon hearing of Abner's murder is to declare his own innocence. David's statement begins with the noun "innocent",  $\underline{\tilde{naqi}}$ , in order to emphasis his claim. He insists on his innocence before the Lord since he recognises that it is before the Lord that he may be accountable for the killing of Abner.

David places the guilt for the murder on Joab and curses Joab and his family (vs 29). The subject of  $y\overline{a}hul\overline{u}$  is literally "bloods" from vs 28; "let the guilt writhe upon the head of Joab"

<sup>45</sup> The Hebrew 'el-tôk in vs 27 is properly translated "in the midst of the gate" (so Tg. Neb., KJV, RSV). The LXX has ek plagion tes pyles, which confirms this reading. The MT and LXX do not need to be opposed to one another in this case as McCarter seeks to argue. McCarter, op. cit., p. 109.

A preposition is not necessary before hahomes. In GKC 11711 it is stated that a "second accusative may more closely determine the nearer object by indicating the part or member specifically affected by the action." Seven examples are cited in the paragraph as illustration, one of which is our passage, and in each of the examples there is no preposition nor particle of any kind in front of the "part or member affected by the action."

(for the idiom see Jer xxiii 19=Jer xxx 23).46 The curse David utters is for physical ailments and calamities against the house of Joab.47 In vs 30 David also states the actual offense. Both Joab and Abishai have killed Abner because Abner killed their brother. David stresses, however, a central difference between Asahel's death and Abner's; Asahel was killed in war, and Abner, in contrast, is killed at a time of peace.

David's opposition to the murder is also evinced in the burial and mourning of Abner. In vss 31 and 32 David gives Abner an honourable burial. David even commands Joab along with all the people with him to rend their garments, and to put on sackcloth and to lament over Abner (vs 31). David himself follows the bier. David does not treat Abner as an enemy because he has Abner buried in Hebron. We are told that the people also follow David's example.

Vss 33 and 34 give David's short lament over Abner. As in David's funeral procedures the lament is a vindication of Abner. The

 $<sup>^{46}</sup>$  McCarter uses the singular form following Q <u>yh]wl</u> and points it as a jussive, <u>yāḥōl</u>, which is possible although the word may simply be an imperfect with imperative force. See McCarter, op. cit., p. 110.

bapelek ought to be translated as "one who makes repairs among the corvée." pelek refers, according to Holloway, to corvée labour after the Akkadian usage of pilku II and the use of pelek in Neh ii 7-8 for labour battalions. The curse is condemning Joab's offspring to be slaves. S.W. Holloway, "Distaff, Crutch or Chain Gang: The Curse of the House of Joab in 2 Samuel III 29," VT 37 (1987), pp. 370-375. I retain the translation as "spindle". Although the word pelek is not used very often in the Hebrew Bible, Prov xxxi 19 provides a definite example of the word used in the sense of "spindle". David is condemning Joab's mighty warriors to be effeminate. This has been the reading of Tg. Neb., Syr., Vg, Aquila and Symmachus. But LXXBLA have "staff", skytales; the Karatepe inscription (KAI 26 A II 6) is the only example of pelek being used in the sense of "crutches".

first line is a question: "Died Abner as a fool dies?" (KJV, RSV);

Driver properly notes the sense as "Was this the end reserved for

him?"48 The question itself goes unanswered and is a pungent statement

of David's bitterness at Joab's deed. David speaks as if Abner deserv
ed a better death, not this unnecessary death through treachery. But

the next line marks that Abner had a measure of dignity even in this

death; his hands had not been bound, nor his feet tethered. 49 Abner

is honoured through this lament as a warrior. A warrior regularly

faces death, but the worst death is a dishonourable one, that is, to

die as a fool or to die bound in captivity. In the final line of the

lament David calls the sons of Zeruiah "sons of unrighteousness"

(běnê-cawlâ). Abner has fallen by treachery.50

In the prose that follows the lament, it is affirmed in several ways that David did not seek Abner's death. In vss 35 and 36 David persists in a fast all day, and denies the bread that the people bring to him. He even swears by God that he would persist in the fast. The result is that the people recognise that David is resolute in his mourning for Abner, and David's mourning seems good, that is,

<sup>48</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 251.

<sup>49</sup> yadeka should be spelled as a plural yadeyka as the Masoretic lengthening of sewa to seghol indicates. Although there is no qere, the pointing reflects the reading as a plural.

<sup>50</sup> The LXX has the proper noun "Nabal", nabal, twice in the lament. The first time it occurs in vs 33 instead of the noun nabal, the second time it occurs in vs 34 is place of the infinitive kinpôl. The LXX recalls the story of Nabal in I Samuel xxv, and says that Abner died like the fool Nabal died. The sense of the second use of Nabal by the LXX is obscure. Q has knb[1] in vs 34 and thus agrees with the LXX. McCarter thinks the LXX and Q are incorrect here and emends vs 34 to knpwl bn whh nplt, "As a criminal falls, you fell."

is appropriate to the people. Vs 37 further confirms that the people recognise that it was not of David to have Abner killed. Tg. Neb. makes the translation of vs 37 more forceful in its affirmation of David's innocence in plotting Abner's death. Tg. Neb. translates the MT "from the king" as "it was not in the plan of the king (be'esat malka') to kill Abner"; the force of the line is thus placed firmly in David's internal volitional processes and not simply his outward actions and words.

Vss 38 and 39 conclude the chapter with David's statements regarding Abner's death. The verses are a repetition for emphasis of David's respect for Abner. David says that with Abner's death a captain and a great one has fallen in Israel; as in the lament over Saul and Jonathan, David's principal concern is that Abner, a fierce and loyal defender of Israel and a warrior that was much needed, has been killed. David also condemns the sons of Zeruiah for being too hard. David says that he in contrast is weak though he is anointed king. And finally, David affirms that it will be the Lord who will repay evil for evil.51

The last part of the chapter, vss 28-39, is devoted entirely to David's response to the death of Abner. In particular David is depicted as horrified at Abner's death, as someone who honours Abner as a great warrior in Israel, who curses Joab and Abishai and who

<sup>51</sup> Nübel's hypothesis that vss 28-30 and 38-39 are additions by B. to vindicate David as the anointed of the Lord from blood-guilt is arbitrary. Nübel, see above, p. 132. They read well from the verses preceding and following them, and they are consistent with David's evaluation of Abner and Joab in the lament.

leads the people in lamentation over Abner. In numerous ways the rhetorical presentation of the section forcefully affirms that David is innocent of the death of Abner.

## Summary to Chapter Three

The depiction of the chapter presents a rift that occurs between Abner and Ish-bosheth which leads to Abner's and David's attempt to end the civil war between the house of Israel and the house of Judah. Abner recognises the legitimacy of David's rule over all Israel. The peaceful negotiations between David and Abner are thwarted by Joab who slays Abner to avenge his brother. David honours Abner in his death, as he had Saul earlier, and condemns Joab's actions.

But the question arises, as it does in earlier chapters, whether the <u>Tendenz</u> of the depiction of the narrative reveals David's true motives in these actions. Is a truer account of the dynamics of these events one that we could reconstruct behind the narrative?

Does David seek to ingratiate himself with the northern tribes by honouring Abner, and do the events thus reveal David's political ambition? The difficulty in either 'proving' or 'disproving' the historicity of these events remains monumental. I have entered into criticism with attempts to reconstruct the history only at the point at which the reconstructions are justified by literary arguments. This procedure may appear to pick up on only one part of the arguments made for a reconstructed history, but in fact literary arguments are the only ones used in this particular chapter, as Part I of this inquiry repeatedly showed. The various kinds of insertions that have been proposed to show that the chapter was reworked for a particular

Tendenz are not necessary accounts of the rhetoric of the chapter.

Nor is it clear why the presentation of the chapter, what has been called the Tendenz or 'slant' of the account, is a priori unhistorical. Furthermore, the reconstructed history is not 'neutral' to questions of value. It proposes, for example, that Abner is a traitor to the house of Saul, that Joab is justified in his blood revenge and that David honours Abner as a political strategy to win him control of the northern tribes.

## Chapter Four

II Samuel iv presents the story of how two men, Rechab and Baanah, gain access to the house of Ish-bosheth and murder him. The murder is especially treacherous because the two men are Beerothites, and as Beerothites they belong to the tribe of Benjamin, the tribe of Saul. They cut off Ish-bosheth's head and take it to David expecting that they will be rewarded for this deed. David condemns the murder of Ish-bosheth, as he condemned the Amalekite's admission in II Samuel i and Joab's actions in II Samuel iv, and he executes Rechab and Baanah for their doings.

The story begins in chapter iv with an account of the effect of Abner's death on Ish-bosheth and all Israel. Ish-bosheth, who has shown himself dependent upon Abner, is afraid when he learns of Abner's death. Will Joab or David rise up against the house of Saul now that Abner is dead? The tribes that follow Saul are also troubled because they have lost their military leader. What originally appeared to the house of Saul as an agreement with David has turned into treachery. At signs of defeat two opportunists arise who seek to impress David of their loyalty to him. Abner's death gives occasion for two men who belong to Saul's tribe to kill Saul's son Ish-bosheth.

 $<sup>^{1}</sup>$  The problem of the use of Mephibosheth instead of Ish-bosheth by LXX $^{\mathrm{BAL}}$  and Q continues in this chapter. As in chapter iii the use of Mephibosheth is universally recognised as an error.

Vss 2-3 give an account of who Baanah and Rechab are. They are captains of the bands,  $\frac{\sqrt{4\pi^2-gedudim}}{\sqrt{2\pi}}$ , for Ish-bosheth; as captains they are in a position of trust and authority for the house of Saul. The lineage of these men is given; they are brothers and their father is a man called Rimmon who is a Beerothite. The purpose of giving this lineage is to indicate that the two brothers are from the tribe of Benjamin.

That the brothers are from the tribe of Saul is significant to the force of the chapter. The Beerothites were originally residents of the city of Beeroth, one of four cities that had made an alliance with Israel when Israel had entered the land. The four cities were Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth and Kirjath-jearim. The people of the cities are called Hivites in Josh ix 7, and are not Israelites. The peoples of these cities remain as part of the Israelites throughout the biblical period, and join in the fate and convictions of the children of Israel; Ismaiah the Gibeonite is one of David's thirty mighty men (I Chr xii 4); ninety-five Gibeonites are the first to return from the captivity (Ezra ii 20 and Neh vii 25); seven hundred forty-three people from Kirjath-jearim, Beeroth and Chephirah are also among the first to return (Ezra ii 25 and Neh vii 29); some Gibeonites worked on the wall of Jerusalem (Neh iii 7). God requires the alliance that is made with these peoples to be honoured in the story of the famine that he sends to purge the land (II Samuel xxi); the famine ends when the people deliver to the Gibeonites seven sons of Saul to expiate Saul's poor treatment of the Gibeonites. According to Josh xviii 21-28 these four cities were officially assigned to the

tribe of Benjamin. The purpose of the comment in II Sam iv 3 is to affirm that although the Beerothites had at one time fled from Beeroth to Gittaim they are still Benjamites; Gittaim is considered a Benjamite city in Neh xi 33. Although Rechab's and Baanah's ancestry is not Israelite, as Beerothites they had been reckoned of the tribe of Benjamin for some time. This notice of the ancestry of the brothers, thus, begins the story of the murder of Saul's son with a statement that the murderers are from Saul's tribe. And yet the notice of the ancestry reveals the possible duplicity in these men's actions. They should be loyal to Benjamin, but as foreigners they may not be truly loyal to Israel.

There has been much debate over whether vss 2b-3 are an insertion. Nubel claims that they are additions by B. to affirm what is introduced in vs 2a.<sup>2</sup> Grønbaek suggests that it is difficult to determine whether vss 2b-3 are an insertion.<sup>3</sup> But if the purpose of the verses is to stress that Rechab and Baanah are from Saul's tribe, the verses are included purposefully. McCarter emphasises that what is to be learned from vss 2 and 3 is that the men are Benjamites; he opposes those who suggest that since there may have been a longstanding resentment of these men of Beeroth against the house of Saul for deeds Saul committed against them, the men of Beeroth may be seeking revenge. McCarter says:

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Nübel, see above, p. 132. Eissfeldt thinks vss 2b and 3 are glosses. Eissfeldt, see above, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup> Grønbaek, see above, pp. 171-172.

On the contrary, they [the sons of Rimmon] are themselves Benjaminites, <u>not</u> indigenous Beerothites at all, and are officers in Ishbaal's army. Their treachery is born not out of revenge but of crass opportunism and the hope of a reward from David.<sup>4</sup>

McCarter diminishes the foreign ancestry of these brothers too much in this statement, but his judgement that the central purpose of the verses is to note that the brothers are from the tribe of Saul is sensitive to the developments in the early part of the chapter. And because we do not know what Saul did to the Gibeonites to bring on the problem in II Samuel xxi it is speculative to ascribe a motive of revenge to Rechab and Baanah. Vss 2 and 3 are a central part of the purpose of the story.

Vs 4 appears more obtrusive than the preceding verses, and has been regarded as an insertion by several writers. On the other hand Wellhausen argues that the verse is not a gloss for two reasons. First, he says that the verse is too distinctive to be a gloss. Its purpose is to show that after the death of Ish-bosheth no one of royal descent remained among the tribes of Israel to claim the kingship. The verse is thus a prerequisite to chapter v 1. Second, he says that its place is to be judged in the same way as I Sam xiv 3. I Sam xiv 3 gives information about a key person which is necessary for the story. Wellhausen discerns correctly that Hebrew narrative may have

<sup>4</sup> McCarter, op. cit., pp. 127-128.

<sup>5</sup> Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 264. Carlson, op. cit., pp. 51-52, n. 3. Grønbaek, see above, p. 172.

<sup>6</sup> Wellhausen, Der Text, p. 161. Nübel says that vs 4 is part of the original Gr. Nübel, see above, p. 132.

these notices which explain who certain people are that are significant for the story but whose place in the story is not initially evident. But the purpose of the reference to Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, in II Sam iv 4 seems to be for the opposite reason to what Wellhausen argues. Mephibosheth is mentioned to remind us that Ish-bosheth is not the last of the lineage of Saul. It is possible that Mephibosheth is excluded from being king because he is lame, although we have no biblical examples to support this view. It is also possible that Mephibosheth is excluded as a possible claimant to the throne because of his age. He is between the ages of five and twelve, though probably closer to twelve; he is five when the events of I Samuel xxxi take place and as we noted in respect to the introduction of chapter iii the war between the house of Saul and the house of David was long. A twelve year old could come to the throne; Manasseh begins to reign when he is twelve (II Kgs xxi 1). Thus, the purpose of vs 4 indicates that even if Ish-bosheth is slain he is not the last of Saul's house who can claim the throne by legal right of inheritance. 7

There remains, however, a certain obscurity with the verse because even if Mephibosheth is mentioned as a possible claimant to the throne, there are at least two other sons and five grandsons of Saul mentioned in II Sam xxi 8 who are also heirs to the throne. There is no reason why they might not be noted here as well, especially as two of them are Saul's sons rather than a grandson as Mephibosheth is. None the less, vs 4 is included purposefully because Mephibosheth

<sup>7</sup> So McCarter, op. cit., p. 128.

is an example that the sons of Rimmon would not end the line of Saul with the death of Ish-bosheth.

Another rhetorical link that can be established between vs 4 and vss 1-3 is the repetition of the phrase the "son of Saul" (ben-ya'ûl, vss 1,2 and 4). Ish-bosheth is not mentioned until vs 5 (so MT, Tg. Neb. and Vg), although there is no question that he is the subject of the verses. The LXXBAL include the name Mephibosheth in vss 1,2 and 4 preceding ben-sa'ûl and some manuscripts have Ish-bosheth in each case. The Syr. has 'sbswl in vs 1, again preceding ben-ya'ûl, and otherwise it follows the MT. The repetition of ben-sa'ûl places the emphasis on Saul and his offspring, especially in those versions which omit the son's name so that the son is referred to only in his relation to Saul. Saul's progeny are central to the introduction of this story, and form a link between the opening verses. The presence of ben-sa'ûl in vs 4 further supports the argument that the reason that the verse is included here is to affirm Mephibosheth's relation to the king.

In vs 5 the two sons of Rimmon begin their actions against

Ish-bosheth. Through the phrase "the heat of the day", kehôm hayyôm,

and the word "noon", hassahorayim, the strategy of the brothers becomes

evident; they come to the house at noon when Ish-bosheth is asleep.

The brothers enter under the pretext of fetching wheat, an activity

<sup>8</sup> Barthélemy says that Ish-bosheth has been intentionally deleted from iv 1 and 2 due to the theological retouching of a scribe. Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, pp. 232-233.

that is perfectly acceptable in the middle of the day; they slay Ish-bosheth as he sleeps and flee.

The LXX has a different reading of vs 6 from the MT.9 The LXX reads: "And behold the portress of the house was cleaning wheat from stones, and she slumbered and slept, and Rechab and Baanah [the brothers] slipt in" (Driver's translation, see also RSV and NEB, for kai idou he thyroros tou oikou ekathairen pyrous kai enystaxen kai ekatheuden kai rekcha kai baana hoi adelphoi dielathon); McCarter reconstructs the Hebrew Vorlage as which swert hbyt lqth(?) htym wtnm wtysn; Driver makes the same reconstruction but replaces lqth with sqlh. The repetition that exists in vss 6 and 7 is considered part of the problem with the Hebrew style in the passage. Nübel claims that the repetition is evidence of an insertion by an editor. 10 Driver favours the LXX reading because the MT appears corrupt:

henna thither is redundant: b'w and wykhw both anticipate prematurely 7a; lqhy htym is inappropriate, and the rendering 'as though fetching wheat' illegitimate. 11

But henna can be retained. Given the propensity for repetition in Hebrew prose, we ought to be cautious in using repetition as evidence of a corrupt text. The repetition of an action in two consecutive lines as is found in vss 6 and 7 is also found elsewhere in Hebrew prose: see for example iii 22-23 in which Joab's arrival is mentioned

<sup>9</sup> The LXX has been considered a better reading by many commentators. Wellhausen, Der Text, pp. 161-162. Thenius, op. cit., pp. 157-158. Smith, op. cit., p. 285. Eissfeldt, see above, p. 55. McCarter, op. cit., pp. 125-126.

<sup>10</sup> Nübel, see above, p. 132.

<sup>11</sup> Driver, <u>Notes</u>, p. 255.

twice; v 1-3, where it is mentioned that both the tribes and the elders of Israel come to Hebron though these names must only be two different designations for the same group of people; 12 and iv 5b and 7a, where there is also a significant repetition of events. The repetition, however, is accompanied by variation, and this variation is what is brought to attention through the repetition. Further, in Driver's treatise on Hebrew tenses, he gives examples of participles that are used as secondary predicates which initiate circumstantial clauses. 13 These examples rule out his own claim that the participle following the main verb is "illegitimate"; two of Driver's examples of such use of participles are Num xvi 27 and Jer xvii 25. logepê hittîm is properly translated as a circumstantial clause (so KJV, Lut. and NIV). Driver's three reasons for claiming that the MT is corrupt cannot be sustained.

Moreover, Tg. Neb., Vg and the Syr. contain readings that agree with the MT. Tg. Neb. has "like those buying wheat", kezabne hittin. The Vg manuscripts have two readings, one supporting the MT the other the LXX; MT= adsumentes spicas tritici, LXX= et ostiaria purgans triticum obdorminuit. The Syr. has "the sons took (perfect) wheat", wnsbw bny ht? (the Syriac verb nsb "to take" is used as an equivalent to the Hebrew lqh). Given the variations in ancient versions, it is surprising that the LXX manuscripts agree so completely. Nonetheless, it must be admitted that the translators of Tg. Neb.,

<sup>12</sup> Keil and Delitzsch, op. cit., p. 310.

<sup>13</sup> Driver, Tenses, 161, 2,

Vg and Syr. recognise that the MT makes sense as it is. 14 The LXX reading is coherent in its own right, and it is not possible to determine which is the more ancient or superior reading. It is unnecessary, however, to conclude that the MT is corrupt and contains insertions by editors and that this constitutes the reason that the LXX is a better reading.

Barthelemy accounts for the difference between the MT and the LXX by saying that they are distinct because of literary reasons rather than because they preserve different Hebrew recensions. He writes:

On serait tenté de considerer les deux formes très limpides de 6a offertes par le \*G et par le \*M comme littérairement distinctes et de se refuser a voir là un cas de critique textuelle. 15

Barthélemy prefers the MT because 1) the pronoun  $\hat{\mathbf{hu}}$  in vs 7 is probably more primitive than the full name in the LXX, 2) there are examples of repetition in Hebrew prose, such as the ones cited above and 3) the improvisation of the Greek translators is evinced in the attempt to make the niphal of  $\underline{\mathbf{mlt}}$ , "to escape", mean "to slip through", dialanthanein. The LXX is satisfying because it tells us how the

<sup>14</sup> It is necessary to be cautious in claiming that the MT is corrupt when Tg. Neb. and the Syr. are in agreement that the MT makes sense. The <u>native</u> tongue of the translators of Tg. Neb. and the Syr. is either Aramaic or Hebrew, and they probably knew both very well. These translators were saturated in a culture of Aramaic and Hebrew and it seems to me they must have a far better sense of what works in Hebrew than Europeans and Americans do two thousand years later. We are rash if we are quick to judge that all the advantages that these ancient translators had over us can be dismissed easily.

<sup>15</sup> Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, p. 238.

brothers were able to enter the house so easily, but the arguments made that it is a "better" reading remain unjustified. 16

In the repetition of the act of killing Ish-bosheth in vs 7 there are several points that are not found in vs 6. Through the repetitive statement "and he was dwelling on his bed in the chamber of his room," it is stressed that Ish-bosheth did nothing to provoke his murder. Ish-bosheth is killed, his head is cut off and taken with the brothers as they journey through the plain between Mahanaim and Hebron to David. Not only is Ish-bosheth dead, the brothers take proof of their killing, as the Amalekite had done with Saul. By taking Ish-bosheth's head they reveal the motive they have in performing the deed; they seek to win favour with David. When Israel is frightened about the death of Abner, these captains are disloyal and act only in their own self-interest. The repetition in the Hebrew style need not be considered an insertion by an editor, as Nübel argued.

Their self-interest is confirmed further by the pious statements that they make to David in vs 8. They seek to remind David that
Ish-bosheth was David's enemy and sought David's life. They also
ascribe their actions to the ways of God; the Lord is giving vengeance
(for the expression natan neqamôt see II Sam xxii 48=Ps xviii 48)<sup>17</sup>
to David against Saul and his seed. The brothers are also solicitous
as they call David "my lord"; David has not been their lord in the

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. pp. 237-239.

<sup>17</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 255.

past and their desire to be on the winning side is the main reason that they seek his approval now. And lest David forget their accomplishments, the phrase "this day" is added to remind David what they have done.

David's reply to the sons of Rimmon is found in vss 9-11. David begins his statement by claiming God's protection of him. David's 'theological' statement is in direct opposition to that of the brother's claim of theological sanction. David condemns their actions by recalling the event in chapter i in which a man came to David with the news of Saul's death and expected a reward. 10 David states explicitly what is embodied in the story of chapter i; the Amalekite is as a "bearer of good news" in his own eyes. 18 The force of David's account of his response to the Amalekite is contained in the cohortative of 'hz and the following verb hrg; although hrg is not cohortative (perhaps due to the suffix), the force of the cohortative is carried through into the second first person singular verb; David says he took immediate and strong action against the Amalekite. David adds that the "bearer of good news" expected a reward; aser letitti-10 is best explained by Driver as "to whom I ought, forsooth, to have given a reward for his good tidings" or more literally "to whom it was for my giving"; the infinitive is used as the sole predicate, as in II Kgs xiii 9, for example. 19 According

<sup>18</sup> be enaw is "in his eyes", that is, in the Amalekite's eyes. The LXX enopion mou, "before me", says the same thing and Tg. Neb. makes it even more emphatic with "in the eyes of his own soul", be enapseah.

<sup>19</sup> Driver, Tenses, 204, p. 276.

to Driver, David is not giving his own view, but what the Amalekite, or other men would do who could not appreciate David's regard for Saul. The implication is that the brothers of Rimmon have misunderstood David's regard for Saul in the way that the "bearer of good news" did in chapter i. Although Driver's Notes is primarily a book of grammatical comments, his observations on David's speech indicates that he is one of the few modern readers who recognises that both of the stories in chapters i and iv reveal David's respect for Saul.<sup>20</sup> Nübel's claim that vs 10 is an insertion because it refers to chapter i is without foundation.<sup>21</sup>

In vs 11 David charges the brothers with a similar but more grave fault than that of the Amalekite. Pap ki is used in the sense of "how much more so" (see II Kgs v 13), and it compares what David has just said with the condemnation he makes of the brothers. David calls the brothers "unrighteous men"; their "unrighteousness" is manifest in slaying a "righteous man", sadiq, in his house on his bed. David calls Ish-bosheth righteous simply because Ish-bosheth is not responsible for any crime worthy of the end he meets even if he was a weakling in defense of the house of Saul. The manner of Ish-bosheth's death, in his house upon his bed, affirms here, as it did in vss 6 and 7, that Ish-bosheth does not die because of a fault. The brothers of Rimmon, like the Amalekite, fail to realise that David

<sup>20</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 256.

<sup>21</sup> Nübel, see above, p. 132.

did not seek Saul's death and David does not begin a process of extermination of any of Saul's sons or grandsons after Saul's death.

The story in chapter iv concludes as David commands his servants to kill the brothers of Rimmon. The brothers are slain, their hands and feet are cut off and their bodies are hung over the pool in Hebron; they are disgraced in their death. Ish-bosheth's corpse, in contrast, is treated with respect in death; his head is buried in the grave of Abner. The hanging of the bodies over the pool is a sign of a final public humiliation and is consistent with the law in Deuteronomy to hang the bodies of those who commit a sin worthy of death (Deut xxi 22-23, see also Josh xx 22-27). The mutilation of their bodies is an added condemnation indicating David's abhorrence of their deed.

The repugnance that David feels towards Rechab and Baanah can only be appreciated if David's loyalty to the people of Israel, that is, to a unified Israel, is recognised. David's praise of Saul and Jonathan in II Samuel i is primarily because they are warriors who defend Israel; David's respect and praise for Abner is due to Abner's abilities as a warrior, and even though Abner is an enemy, David respects the value of such men to the tribes. Saul and Abner both displayed their loyalty toward Israel, and died for what was good for Israel. Rechab and Baanah, like the Amalekite in chapter i, are moved only by crass self-interest, and, to warriors such as David, their treasonable actions toward their lord make them abhorrent. The brothers of Rimmon fail to recognise that David might not seek the death of his enemies and that he would distinguish between those of

his enemies who defend Israel and those who are treasonable. The story in chapter iv is generated out of this value for loyalty.

There is no indication that Ish-bosheth represented a threat to David's rule of all Israel. To warriors such as David and his thirty mighty men, Ish-bosheth was no obstacle. But it does not follow from this affirmation that David would have sought Ish-bosheth's death or that Ish-bosheth would have opposed David had David and the elders of Israel agreed to a covenant.

## Summary to Chapter Four

The narrative depiction as it is gives no hint of David's complicity in Ish-bosheth's death. McCarter, nonetheless, says that the tone of the chapter is apologetic, suggesting that it is in some way covering up for David.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, he says that when it is asked who benefits from the death of Ish-bosheth, it is David that appears to be involved in Ish-bosheth's death. But McCarter has not pointed out elements of style which constitute this apologetic tone; his detailed study stands quite apart from his comments on the whole of the chapter. Vanderkam admits that the "brief narrative" does not permit the conclusion that David arranged the death of the Ish-bosheth, but Vanderkam affirms that "one may suspect that the ambitious drives of David lurk somewhere in the background" and "the arrival of the sons of Rimmon in Hebron with the head of Eshbaal could only be an embarrassment for David's public image"; Vanderkam thus casts suspi-

<sup>22</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 129.

cion on David.<sup>23</sup> But suspicions are not accounts of the story and Vanderkam's comments are derived from general considerations rather than on close study of the details of the narrative; a study of the prose reveals a narrative created to present the story that David neither planned nor sanctioned Ish-bosheth's murder, and Vanderkam must give an account of the style of the chapter to justify his reading of the story which is directly opposed to the depiction of the text.

Nor are the arguments adequate which have sought to identify an editor whose purpose is to make the chapter confirm to the ideological purposes of the source known as history of David's rise to power.

There are a number of commentators who read the story in chapter iv as if its purpose is to both disapprove of the actions of the brothers and at the same time to show how God is marvelously using their misdeeds to bring David to the throne. We shall cite three commentators who write from what would appear to be different theological traditions but who end up with the same account of the 'providence' of God in the chapter. David F. Payne writes:

David, then, executed Ish-bosheth's murderers and made it plain to all Israelites that he did not approve of achieving power by such methods. Nevertheless the assassination did his cause no harm, and once again the narrator wishes the reader to see that God stood over the events of history, manipulating them to David's advantage. God can work by means of, as well as in spite of, human misdeeds.<sup>24</sup>

It is not self-evident that chapter iv is an example of God's "manipulating" the misdeeds of the sons of Rimmon. The story can be read

<sup>23</sup> Vanderkam, art. cit., p. 534.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Payne, op. cit., p. 176.

simply as David's refusal to accept the attempts of the sons of Rimmon to give him the throne through murder. Such a reading is consistent with David's regard for Saul throughout the chapters immediately following Saul's death. Another commentator, H.W. Hertzberg, makes much the same association of human misdeeds and God's actions:

Infamous as the deed is, even in David's eyes, from a loftier standpoint it represents a great step forward towards his goal. This is not actually said, but it is the real reason for the account. What the murderers say to David, blasphemous as it sounds in their mouths, is nevertheless apposite. The divine righteousness has used even this evil act by murderers as a vehicle for carrying forward its design.<sup>25</sup>

Hertzberg's account of providence is similar to that of Payne's, and it ends up saying that Rechab and Baanah were doing the will of God. The same comment is made by J. Carl Laney:

Although David rightly recognized the guilt of the assassins, God was clearly in control of those events. The sovereign God of Israel allowed the evil actions of those evil men to accomplish His will, for the death of Ish-bosheth cleared the way for David to be anointed king over all Israel (cf. 5:3).26

It must be asked why the most important theological affirmation of this chapter is God's action in bringing David closer to the throne. Why might not the better reading be that David is in a position of being free to choose either to reward or condemn Rechab and Baanah? The narrative allows for a careful recognition of the consequences of human doings rather than simply affirming that God's actions are subtly behind all human actions.

<sup>25</sup> Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 265.

<sup>26</sup> J. Carl Laney, <u>First and Second Samuel</u>, Everyman's Bible Commentary, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1982), p. 93.

## Chapter Five

II Samuel v depicts a series of events; the anointing of David as king by the northern tribes, the capture of Jerusalem, a list of the names of the sons of David that are born in Jerusalem and two battles that David fights with the Philistines. The chapter is a turning point in the story of David because in it David comes to rule over a unified Israel, he moves to a city which will become of central importance to all subsequent biblical tradition and he conducts the first two major victories against the Philistines since the Israelites were defeated at Gilboa in I Samuel xxxi.

Although there are numerous aspects of style of the chapter that are thought to be evidence of editorial reworking, the most significant argument against the unity of the chapter is one that was initiated by Wellhausen. He argues that the sequence of the parts of the chapter as it is presented in the MT and in the versions is incorrect; vss 17-25 should follow directly from vss 1-3 rather than in the order in which they are found. Wellhausen's arguments need to be addressed.

The chapter is also considered by some studies as the concluding chapter of the source of the history of David's rise to power,
and therefore the events of this chapter, especially the capture of

Wellhausen, see above, pp. 4-5. Noth agrees, see above, pp. 80-81.

Jerusalem and the statements in vss 10 and 12 that God is with David, are essential in determining the purposes of the entire source.<sup>2</sup> It is necessary to make a judgement as to the validity of the textual or stylistic arguments that are used to make these assertions.

The chapter is also the first in II Samuel that has a parallel account in the books of Chronicles. The parallels allow us to begin to compare the compositional strategies of the writers of both Samuel and Chronicles and to evaluate the extent to which problems in the reading of the chapter arise from manuscript corruptions, editorial insertions, independent Hebrew textual traditions or independent authors who highlight different points in the telling of the story. The ever recurring problem of the style of depiction which constitutes historical narrative is present in II Samuel v as it is in other chapters in the history of David's rise because it is necessary to discern whether one depiction of the events is more historical than the other. Has there been a Dtr. redaction of II Samuel, and is the Deuteronomist's 'theology' different from the Chronicler's 'theology'?

Vss 1-3 are the story of David's anointing as king by all the tribes of Israel. The first problem that arises in these verses is the apparent repetition of the events of vss 1 and 2 in vs 3, especially because vss 1 and 3 begin with a similar phrase. The repetition may exist because there are two events depicted, or because one event is depicted in two ways by two writers. McCarter claims that vss 1-2 are a later insertion to an original account of the story; a

Noth, see above, p. 81. Ward, see above, p. 155. Grønbaek, see above, pp. 173-174.

remnant of the original is found in vs 3; he thinks that vss 1-2 are

Dtr. He gives three reasons for this assertion. First, vss 1a and

3a are a "word-for-word duplication". The word "tribes", sibtê, in

the passage is incorrect and he changes it to "staff-bearers", sobetê,

following a suggestion made by Reid. Second, the Israelites' description of themselves as being David's "bone and flesh" is anachronistic

because as McCarter says "from the perspective of the oldest materials"

the Judaeans and the Israelites did not have a common ancestry. By the

oldest materials it is not clear whether McCarter is using Noth's

theory of the amphictyony or some other more current explanation. 
Third, and most important, the reference to the promise in vs 2 is a

point of contact with chapter vii, and supplemented with the Dtr.

term sobetê in vs 1, is evidence of the Dtr. insertion of vss 1-2.5

McCarter's account of the style of these verses can be answered in the following manner. First, the repetition in vss 1a and 3a need not be considered the conflation of two originally independent stories;

<sup>3</sup> Patrick V. Reid, "sbty in 2 Samuel 7:7," CBQ 37 (1975), pp.
17-20.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See Barnabas Lindars, "The Israelite Tribes in Judges," <u>Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament</u>, <u>VTSup XXX</u>, ed. J.A. <u>Emerton</u>, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), pp. 95-112. Lindars says that the works of A.D.H. Mayes and C.H.J. de Greus bring about the "complete defeat" of Noth's amphictyony theory. Lindars, however, is not arguing for a more traditional reading of the origin of the tribes from the patriarch Jacob because he is convinced that the Pentateuch does not give us an accurate account of the origins of the tribes. In the tradition of scholarship following Wellhausen the beginnings of Israel are not found in the Pentateuch but in the emergence of independent tribes which coalesce during the period we associate with the Judges. Lindars too thinks the tribes are of independent origin.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 131.

as we noted in iv 6 and 7, and in other examples, the repetitions of lines with slight variations is a technique utilized in Hebrew prose style. McCarter's phrase "word-for-word duplication" is imprecise to account for what actually is being said in the two lines. Amidst the repetition there is also variation. The variation is manifest through the change from "tribes" in vs 1 to "elders" in vs 3. The use of "tribes" in vs 1 emphasises that all Israel is willing to recognise that David is king. It is doubtful that everyone from the north went to Hebron to anoint David king; the elders are sent to represent the people, and the actual covenant is made with them. The laconic nature of these verses has been recognised, but to add a background to the story to make up for this terseness fails to appreciate the place of representative "elders". Furthermore, the use of "tribes" and "elders" as near synonyms is attested elsewhere: the "elders of Jabesh" ziqne yabes (I Sam xi 3) is used as a synonym for "men of Jabesh" anse yabes (I Sam xi 5). McCarter's account of vss 1a and 3a is compounded because of his acceptance of a suggestion made by Reid that sibte in vs 1 should actually be sobete, "staff-bearers". Reid's article is based upon the use of sibte in II Sam vii 7 and the substitution of sibte with sopete in the parallel account to II Sam vii 7 in I Chr xvii 6. However, Reid recognises that the LXX translates sibte in II Sam vii 7 with phylen and sopete in I Chr xvii 6 with the same word, phylen; he suggests therefore that the consonantal text of the Hebrew in II Sam v 1 and vii 7 be maintained but with a different vocalization

<sup>6</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 133. Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 267.

to make the word "staff-bearers". The word would then be a better synonym for "elders" in chapter v 3. But the purpose of the variation between v 1 and 3 goes unrecognised in this alteration, and the difficulty of the text seems to arise because of a failure to appreciate the role of representative leadership. Moreover, the parallel to II Sam v 1 in I Chr xi 1 does not support the change. I Chr xi 1 has "And all Israel gathered unto David", wayyiqqabeşû kol-yisra'el, which deletes the construct noun preceding "Israel" altogether; Chronicles confirms that the phrase is intended to insist that all Israel accepted David as king; in II Sam v 1 "all Israel" is better conveyed by "all the tribes of Israel" than "all the staff-bearers of Israel".

McCarter's second reason for attempting to prove that there is a Dtr. redaction in these verses is that the phrase "your bone and your flesh" is anachronistic. McCarter judges rightly that the phrase means blood kinship, but he denies that the tribes are kinsmen. He uses an example in II Samuel which he thinks indicates the independent ancestry of the tribes; McCarter says that David in II Sam xix 13 appeals to the Judaeans as being his blood kinsmen, and David excludes the northern tribes with the use of the phrase. McCarter says therefore that the phrase cannot also be used to claim kinship with the northern tribes. However, David's statement in II Sam xix 13 is not made to deny that the northern tribes are his "flesh and blood";
David simply wonders why the Judaeans who are closest in kinship to him of all the tribes in Israel are the last to support his return to Jerusalem. While it is impossible at this point to enter a lengthy discussion of origin of the twelve tribes, it is certainly consistent

with the story in II Samuel thus far that the Israelites and Judaeans act as kinsmen; for example, David appeals to the Judaeans to defend the Israelites in his lament, Abner reminds Joab that their battle is between "brothers" and Abner agrees to transfer the northern tribes to the leadership of a Judaean. McCarter's third reason for Dtr. editorship, the promise made to David in vs 2, reveals a conflict that exists between those studies which argue that the source of the history of David's rise was written for the purpose of theological justification of David's kingship and those studies which stress that the theological justification enters with the Deuteronomist. Nübel for example attributes the promise to the  ${\tt B.7}$  and  ${\tt Grønbaek}$  also says vss 1-3 belong to the final redactor of the source. 8 But both the theory of the redaction of the source and the redaction of the Dtr. history, as we have noticed before, require a separation to exist between neutral history and theology, the latter being the invention of certain groups for political reasons. But there are no stylistic reasons that these verses cannot be integral. Furthermore, there is a closer relation between story and redactional activity if the narrative from David's anointing in I Sam xvi 1-13 to II Sam v 1-3 is the outworking of the story of how his anointing actually leads to kingship rather than if we read his anointing as a Dtr. addition to stories told for other reasons; the theory of the redaction of the source allows a more integral relation to exist between story and redaction

<sup>7</sup> Nübel, see above, p. 133.

<sup>8</sup> Grønbaek, see above, p. 173.

than the theory of the Dtr. editing. McCarter's reasons are not sufficient to maintain a Dtr. redaction of the verses.

R.A. Carlson argues that there is a Dtr. redaction of vss 1-2 for a different reason. He says the term nagid is Dtr. usage, and it establishes a link between chapter v and chapter vii (see vii 8).9 He criticises the notion that a nagid is a "charismatic leader" synonymous with "judge", sopet, but argues that it is a Dtr. synonym for "king", melek. According to Carlson nagid is always associated with the monarchy rather than with tribal confederacy. He claims further that nagid is found in connection with the 'shepherd' motif, and, therefore, it means "ideal shepherd" to the Dtr. editors.

It remains, however, a speculative task to identify a redaction by vocabulary, either through the presence of the term nagid or the verb "to shepherd", racah, used as a metaphor for rule. The word nagid is used in Ps lxxvi 13, Prov xxviii 16, Neh xi 11, et al.; as far as we know these three books have not undergone a Dtr. redaction. The verb racah occurs metaphorically in the sense of feeding a people in Isa xiv 30 and xliv 28, and at least the first passage is not usually thought to be Dtr. The presence of a Dtr. editor in these verses cannot be established on the basis of vocabulary.

In the endeavours to discern editorial activity in this passage much of the force of the passage is lost. The northern tribes recognise that even when Saul was king, it was David who was fighting for them. They also recognise, as Abner did in iii 9-10, that the Lord

<sup>9</sup> Carlson, op. cit., pp. 52-55.

had appointed David to be king. The metaphor of the king as 'shepherd' (vs 2) is indicative of the kind of rule the king should exercise; the king should guide and defend the people. The force of the metaphor is noticed by Tg. Neb., although in its typical fashion Tg. Neb. removes the metaphor by translating the verb as teparnes, "you cared for" (the Syr., rc3, and the LXX, poimaneis, retain the metaphor). The metaphor is used in a striking way of David because he started out in the humble capacity of a shepherd, and in its usage the northern tribes challenge him with God's command for him to continue his good habits as a shepherd when he is a king. 10 Vss 1-3 are a coherent and powerful account of the anointing of David by the northern tribes.

Furthermore, there is nothing in the depiction of the anointing that can be taken to mean that David solicited or forced the northern tribes to make him king. There were still sons of the house of Saul who could have fought to defend the north. The northern acceptance of David as king stems from two admissions that are contained in their speech to David in vs 2; David was the true defender of Israel even in Saul's lifetime and David was appointed by God. The threefold repetition of the emphatic pronoun "you" in vs 2 is the way in which the author's rhetorical emphasis affirms what the Israelites acknow-

<sup>10</sup> The metaphor is used of David again in II Sam vii 7 and Ezek xxxiv 22-24. The metaphor is not limited to David in biblical texts; it is used, for example, of Cyrus in Isa xliv 28.

ledge of David. 11 The northern tribes come willingly to anoint a Judaean as king.

Noth's claim that the elders of Israel anoint David because they must cling to the institution of monarchy whether it is occupied by a Benjamite or a Judaean does not answer certain questions. 12 Why did they not anoint one of Saul's other sons? Or, why could they not have anointed anyone in the north to be king if they sought only to perpetuate the monarchy? Moreover, the animosity between the north and David is not as strong as is often assumed because David does not seek revenge against the house of Saul and he claims that he intends to defend the northern tribes against common foes.

As in the case of the chronological notice in ii 10 and 11, the length of David's reign in a particular place is given at the beginning of David's reign (vss 4-5). The verses are missing in the account in I Chr xi, and are reserved by the Chronicler for the end of David's reign (I Chr xxix 27). S. Pisano stresses that the compo-

<sup>11</sup> The repetition of the waw-consecutive imperfect followed immediately by the infinitive of mr in vs 1 is used with sufficient frequency not to require emendation. Driver lists the following examples; II Sam xx 18, Exod xv 1, Num xx 3, Jer xxix 24, Ezek xxxiii 10, xii 27(LXX) and Zech ii 4. The versions, with the exception of Tg. Neb. and the Vg, omit the infinitive. I Chr xi 1 omits the waw-consecutive imperfect.

Both qerayın in vs 2 should be accepted. The necessity of the second qere is more dubious because quiescent alephs are often omitted in writing. See GKC 74k. But the Masoretes almost always correct by means of a qere the omission of a quiescent aleph at the end of a word. For an exception see Mic i 15. I Chr xi 2 has the spelling of the qerayın as two hiphil participles. Chronicles also omits the verb hyh in vs 2 (although the LXX has estha). McCarter claims that the verse in Chronicles is a "shorter, more primitive" reading. McCarter, op. cit., p. 130.

<sup>12</sup> Noth, see above, p. 80.

sitional purposes of the Chronicler are to be distinguished from those of the writer of Samuel, as for example in the listing of David's chiefs following I Chr xi 9.13 The omission of the verses is not in itself a reason to conclude that Chronicles reflects a better manuscript tradition or a more unified composition. Vss 4 and 5 can be maintained in the present context in II Samuel v as a purposeful part of the author's presentation of the chapter.

Vss 6-8 depict David's conquest of Jerusalem. The elders of the tribes of Israel journey to Hebron in the territory of Judah to anoint David. But David does not make Hebron his capital city; he moves to and captures Jerusalem, traditionally a Jebusite city in the land. The story is laconic at vs 6 so that it is difficult to know exactly why David chose Jerusalem. However, if we study the references to this Jebusite stronghold during the period of the conquest, there are certain clues that illumine David's actions.

The city itself lies on or near the border of two tribal territories, Judah and Benjamin. Although Josh xv 63 suggests that the Judaeans lived alongside the Jebusites, the city itself is reckoned as being part of the inheritance of Benjamin in Josh xviii 28. But Jerusalem was never completely taken by either tribe during the conquest. When the tribes of Judah and Simeon go up in Judges i to continue the conquest, the Judaeans defeat and burn the city, but they do not remain to live in it and move to the south to continue the conquest (Judg i 7-9). Later in the same chapter we are told

<sup>13</sup> Pisano, op. cit., pp. 98-101.

that the Benjamites did not drive out the Jebusites who lived in Jerusalem and that the Jebusites live with the Benjamites to this day (Judg i 21). Jerusalem is mentioned in Judg xix 10-12 where the Levite who has gone to fetch his concubine refuses to stay at the city because it belongs to the Jebusites rather than to an Israelite tribe. Jerusalem is briefly mentioned in I Sam xvii 54 as the place to which David took the head of Goliath; the reference does not seem to indicate that the Israelites possessed Jerusalem, but that the action was done as a taunt by David against a foreign stronghold in the land. That David's action is a taunt is further evinced because David does not give Goliath's armour, which would assist them in war, to the inhabitants of the city. Jerusalem is one of the last bastions of the Amorite fortresses that the Israelites have not conquered.

The reasons for David's choice of Jerusalem can now be made clear. First, David moves to capture this Amorite outpost, and in doing so demonstrates by military victory a central task that he has in delivering Israel from her enemies. Second, David fights the battle for the Benjamites because Jerusalem is reckoned to belong to the territory of Benjamin. David fulfills the claim made in II Samuel i 17-27 that he would defend all Israel and not simply the Judaeans; David's actions are a confirmation of his good will toward the northern tribes. Third, the city occupies a strategic location on the border between the northern tribes and Judah, and thus David cannot be accused of being partisan.

The history of the rivalry between the Jebusite Jerusalem and the Israelites confirms and elucidates the import of vss 6-8.

There has been much recent debate over the sense of this difficult passage.

Vs 6 is read as a taunt by all the ancient versions except

Tg. Neb., and translated as a taunt by Lut., KJV, RSV and NIV. As a

taunt it asserts that even the blind and the lame could ward off

David and his men. Tg. Neb. changes the reading by translating the

terms "blind", 'iwrim, and "lame", piskim, as "sinners", hatā'ayā',

and "guilty", hayāybayā'; Tg. Neb. reads the terms as metaphors and in

its typical fashion removes the metaphorical import of the words.

According to Tg. Neb. God instructs David that he cannot go up into

the city except by removing the sinners and the guilty. As the subject

of wayyō'mer is not explicitly given, Tg. Neb. identifies it with

God. In Tg. Neb. the extent of the Jebusites challenge to David is

found in the phrase, "David shall not enter here." This rabbinical

rendering is derived, according to H.P. Smith, from a parallel with

Ps cxv 5-7; the idols and the godless are blind and lame. 14

Y. Yadin has proposed that the blind and the lame in this text have the same function that the blind and the lame have in a Hittite text found at Baghazkoy (ANET, pp. 353-354). 15 In the Hittite text the blind and the lame are paraded before troops and the troops are charged that if they are disloyal they will be cursed to be like the blind and the lame. The ceremony seeks to frighten the troops to loyalty. Yadin says that in a similar ceremony conducted by the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Smith, op. cit., p. 288.

<sup>15</sup> Yigael Yadin, The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands, (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1963), II, pp. 268-270.

Jebusites on the walls of Jerusalem the Jebusites seek to strike fear into David's men by cursing them to be like the blind and lame. G. Brunet carries Yadin's argument further by suggesting that this ceremony involved the swearing of oaths, and, therefore, David is bound by this magic not to fight. The parallel however to the Hittite text is too remote. The usage of the 'ceremony' is essentially different; in the Hittite text the curse is for the king's own troops, in II Samuel v the curse is against the enemy. The parallel also presumes that II Samuel v is to be understood through the background of superstition. However, as the story progresses in II Samuel v the actors are tough warriors who are willing to hurl abusive taunts at each other.

McCarter proposes another solution which he argues on the basis of a Qumran fragment. 17 Although little of the scroll is found for this section, a fragment contains <a href="https://example.com/hsyte">hsyte</a>, which McCarter infers to be a hiphil perfect third person plural of <a href="https://example.com/sût-meaning">sût meaning</a> "to incite", where the MT has <a href="https://example.com/hsireka">https://example.com/hsireka</a>, "to cast out". McCarter translates vs 6b as "For the blind and the lame had incited them, saying, David shall not come in here!" In this translation the statement by the Jebusites remains a taunt. McCarter uses two other grammatical points to question the present condition of the MT. First, the verb <a href="https://example.com/hisiareka">https://example.com/hisiareka</a> is awkward if the plural nouns, haciwrîm and happishîm, are the subjects.

<sup>16</sup> Gilbert Brunet, "Les Aveugles et Boiteux Jebusites," <u>Studies</u> in the Historical Books of the Old Testament, <u>VTSup</u> XXX, ed. J.A. Emerton, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), pp. 65-72.

<sup>17</sup> McCarter, op. cit., pp. 135-136.

Wellhausen had made this observation as well and changed the pointing of the verb to hesiruka, "they cast you out". Second, McCarter follows a comment by Driver that we should expect a finite verb rather than an infinitive after ki im. McCarter's recommendations are, at least at present, too dubious to be followed. Ulrich, Pisano and de Boer do not mention the fragment. Further, it is impossible to determine whether the verb is finite or infinite from the fragment. Moreover, McCarter only represents part of Driver's argument regarding what should be expected after ki im. Driver does not limit the verb following ki oim to a finite verb; he lists a finite verb as one of two possibilities, and another variant given by Driver is an infinitive prefixed with bet. 18 Driver does not say bet is required with the infinitive and he may allow for other possibilities. Although Driver does not cite examples of uses of ki im followed by an infinitive, they are numerous; Gen xlii 15, Deut x 12, Josh xiv 5, Qoh v 10, et al. (see also II Sam iii 35). For the usage of the infinitive with the suffix supplying the subject, see II Sam iv 10, and especially Driver's proper identification of the usage in regard to that verse. The LXX makes the blind and the lame the subject of the sentence, but with the verb antestesan, "they stood in opposition"; the verb hsyt[, "to incite", is not an equivalent. In the two occurrences of sut in I and II Samuel (I Sam xxvi 19 and II Sam xxiv 1) the LXX has the verb episeio, "to stir up". In the LXX, vs 6 remains a taunt against David.

<sup>18</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 258.

Although speculation is not to be discouraged in difficult texts, sufficient problems remain in the alternatives that they cannot be accepted as yet. In sifting the arguments in this passage, it is best to err on the side of caution. Driver's identification of the usage of the infinitive in II Sam iv 10 is a justification for the translation in v 6 as literally "your casting out the blind and the lame." In the context of a history of bitter relations between the Israelites and the Jebusites it is appropriate that the first word of the Jebusites to the man who gave them Goliath's head is a taunt. The blind and the lame are better warriors than David. 19

Vs 7 tells of David's victory over the city. The terseness of the verse reinforces the effectiveness of David's assault. The victory is decisive, and the fortress is defeated. The verse ends by adding that the fortress becomes David's city.

Vs 8 describes an event that took place at the beginning of the battle. In the author's return to the initial events, the writer is utilizing a prose technique that we observed in iv 6 and 7, and elsewhere; the events are related and then a subsequent line repeats them with some variation. Vs 8 has been a difficult verse because it is difficult to know who the blind and the lame in this verse are referring to and also because the word sinôr in this verse is only used twice in the Hebrew Bible and its meaning is not entirely clear. Moreover, the account in I Chr xi 5 breaks off after makkēh and presents an aspect of the story not found in II Samuel.

<sup>19</sup> Josephus also considers the passage as presenting a taunt of the Jebusites against David. Josephus, op. cit., vii. 61.

sinnôr is used here and in Ps xlii 8. The Psalm as a whole invokes water as the central image used to depict the Psalmist's thirst for God, and in vs 8 the poem breaks into a transition from the poet's thirst to God being the source of water: těhôm-'el-těhôm qôrē' lěqôl sinnôrêkā, "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy waterspouts". The next line places "waves", mišbārêkā, and "billows", gallêkā, in parallelism to sinnôr. This usage alone is sufficient to make it highly probable that the sinnôr in II Sam v 8 is a waterway into the city. The usage is further attested in Mishnaic Hebrew as "canal" or "pipe"(see BDB, p. 857). A word very similar to sinnôr, santěrôt, which is made by inserting a taw, is used in Zech iv 12 with the sense of "pipes" for oil.

The early versions have several translations indicating that there has been difficulty with the meaning from early times. LXXB has "dagger", paraxiphidi, Aquila has "watercourse", krounismo, and Symmachus has "battlement", epalxeos. Tg. Neb. has "let him begin to conquer the fortified place", wîsarê lemikbas karka?; Tg. Neb. gives some support to the translation as "waterspout" because the shaft carrying water to the city would certainly have been a vulnerable and, therefore, fiercely protected part of the city. The Syr. too may preserve this sense in translating sinnôr as skr, "shield", that is, "smite (qrb) in the shielded place". The Vg translates sinnôr as fistulas, "pipe".

Albright proposed that the word means "joint of the neck"

according to the usage of sinnôr in Arabic.<sup>20</sup> He suggests that the sense needed is "joint" or "socket" and claims that David did not seek to kill the Jebusites but simply to lame them, "to smite in the joint". E.L. Sukenik notes that Onqelos translates the three occurrences of the Hebrew mazleg in the Pentateuch as sinnôrtâ, "flesh-hook", (Exod xxvii 3, xxxviii 3 and Num iv 14), and the modern Arabic term sinnârah is used in the same sense.<sup>21</sup> These hooks, according to Sukenik, are thought to be used for scaling the walls of a city (the NEB adopts this translation). Sukenik claims at the end of the article that Albright abandoned his earlier position and accepted his own.

McCarter revives an earlier argument by Wellhausen that sinnôr is used in the sense of "throat" which is the natural extension of the use of the word as pipe; McCarter says that David's command is not to lame the Jebusites, but to deliver the fatal blow to the throat.<sup>22</sup>

The Ugaritic uses of the term have not been studied in regard to our verse, and they shed some light on the problem. <u>snr</u> is found four times in the Ugaritic texts; one of these uses support the translation as "waterpipe".<sup>23</sup> snr is found in KTU 4.35.I 16, KTU 4.15.

<sup>20</sup> W.F. Albright, "The Sinnor in the story of David's capture of Jerusalem," JPOS 2 (1922), pp. 286-290.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> E.L. Sukenik, "The Account of David's Capture of Jerusalem," JPOS 8 (1928), pp. 12-16. A flesh-hook may be a kind of dagger and, therefore, Ongelos' translation may be in agreement with LXX<sup>B</sup> with paraxiphidi. In the three passages cited, however, LXX<sup>B</sup> does not use paraxiphis.

<sup>22</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 140.

<sup>23</sup> Claude F.-A. Schaeffer, ed., <u>Le Palais royal d'Ugarit</u>, (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1965), p. 95. PRU includes a sketch of the cuneiform script on the tablet.

10, KTU 4.103.7 and KTU 4.370.7. The first three uses are as personal names. The fourth usage is in a tablet of a list of personnel who are in service of the king. The tablet begins with the words "A list of the personnel of the king who are requesting a shipment", spr bnš mlk/dtarśn msn, followed by a list of eleven names. What follows the list is a summary phrase "the workers of houses", hrs btm. Following this phrase is another list of fourteen names (some names have been obliterated) and the concluding phrase of the tablet is pslm snr "the craftsmen of snr". The men whose names are found on the tablet are identified by their occupation, some are builders of houses, and some are builders of anr. The only complicating factor in the reading of snr is that the resh has been partially destroyed; the supposition that it is a resh is made because it is the last letter on the tablet and what is present looks like a resh. The judgement that it is snr is substantiated because there is no known Ugaritic word with an as the first two letters and a letter other than resh as the third. That the word is snr is accepted by all the editions of the text, and it is probable this judgement is correct. The context is a fairly good indication that a snr is something that is built, either as part of houses or part of a city. The names listed on this tablet are two groups of workers, those who build the houses and those who construct waterworks. These builders may have been responsible for the construction of either one main watershaft into a city or for diverting the watershaft to houses in the city or both. The Ugaritic usage is more

likely than references to Arabic, and makes more sense than the Aramaic "flesh-hook". The Ugaritic usage confirms the usage in Ps xlii 8.24

The translation of <u>sinnôr</u> as "watershaft" is thus the best alternative.<sup>25</sup> David commands his troops to strike the city at the watershaft, a vulnerable but also well protected part of the city.

David's men are to smite "the blind and the lame". David replies to the Jebusite taunt with a command to fight and he returns the Jebusite insolence by calling them the blind and the lame. The phrase is now a metaphor; the Jebusites are the innocuous warriors. David's fierce denunciation of the Jebusites is continued in the next part of the sentence; the Jebusites are the ones hated of David's soul. 26 Vs 8 ends with a saying that was repeated after the events as a reminder of the antagonism between the Jebusites and David at this time. The saying appears to be a play on words. It is Pentateuchal law that the physically blind and lame are not to approach the tabernacle to make an offering (Lev xxi 18). But the blind and

<sup>24</sup> One of the Hebrew disjunctive accents is called a <u>sinnor</u>. Israel Yeivin, <u>Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah</u>, Masoretic Studies 5, trans. and ed. by E.J. Revell, (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1980), pp. 266-267. I have not been able to discover how the accents received their names. It is possible that the accent <u>sinnor</u> looks like a dagger or hook. The uses may, however, be unrelated.

<sup>25</sup> Yefet ben Ely affirms this reading, although he thinks it is a sewer; he translates sinnor as mrz'b. Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, p. 239. Barthélemy concurs with this sense.

<sup>26</sup> The qere properly corrects the MT. The qere not only corrects the pointing but the consonantal text as well with the replacement of waw with yod. Although the Q fragment has sn'h which makes the subject "the soul of David", the import of the line is the same. Barthélemy advocates a repointing of the kethib to make it "they who have hated", sane'û. Barthélemey, Critique Textuelle, pp. 239-240.

the lame is a metaphor used for the Jebusites in vs 8, and, in the context refers to them.<sup>27</sup> The proverbial saying then is invoked in a new way in this narrative. The house here refers to the temple; the LXX makes it more explicit "the house of the Lord", eis oikon kyriō. The Jebusites are not allowed to enter the temple even though after the conquest of Jerusalem many still remain in or around Jerusalem.<sup>28</sup>

In summary, vs 8 presents the fierce conflict between David and the Jebusites. The failure to recognise David's metaphoric usage of the "blind and the lame" weakens the force of this conflict. An exposition of vss 6-8 as reflecting the antagonism between the Israelites and the Jebusites is consistent with what we know of their history prior to this event.

I Chr xi 6 preserves a different aspect of the battle, but it also confirms the fierce antagonism expressed in II Sam v 8. In Chronicles David inspires his men by claiming that the one who smites the Jebusites first will be made head and captain. Joab is the victor. Although the actual aspects of the battle preserved in the two texts are different, both present David as challenging his troops as they go into battle. I Chr xi 6 thus reiterates the emphasis of the passage

<sup>27</sup> Gressmann uses the presence of the proverb in this section as part of the reason to identify vss 6-16 as a saga. The section is less historical than previous chapters. Gressmann, see above, pp. 15-16. The purpose of the verses, however, is found in the story itself, rather than the story being told as an aetiology for the proverb.

<sup>28</sup> In a subtle way that is typical of the Bible's inclusion of foreign peoples, the Jebusites are still significant to Jerusalem and to the temple. Ornan the Jebusites' threshingfloor is purchased by David for an altar after David's sin in numbering the people, and this place becomes the site for Solomon's temple (II Chr iii 1).

in II Sam v 8; vs 8 is not a strange oath ritual with the blind and the lame or an expression of David's whimsical hatred of deformities, but the challenge of David to his warriors as they go into battle.

Vs 9 is a succinct summary of David's actions over a period of time after his conquest of the city. David moves into the fortress, měsûdâ, which he has captured. He also begins a building project in and around the city. Vs 10 is a summary of God's care for David. The placement of the verse at this point causes the recognition that David's prosperity is not solely of his own doing. With this theological statement in vs 10 many studies conclude that the history of David's rise ends. The first to suggest the division at this point was L. Rost and he did so because he had hitherto identified a distinct style of the ark narrative in II Samuel vi. An evaluation of Rost's stylistic examination is reserved for our study of chapter six. But Rost's division is accepted essentially by Noth, von Rad, Ward, Grønbaek, McCarter, et al. There is some debate over the exact verse which marks the end of the source but there is general agreement that the source ends somewhere in vss 9-16.

Those who have argued that vss 9-16 are an ending of the history of David's rise are recognising certain qualities of the style of these verses. Vss 9-16 are terse: they are a summary of various matters and thus have the characteristics of a compilation of independent elements. Vs 9 is a brief summary that David lives in Zion, that the city is called the city of David and that he undertakes various building projects. Despite the brief description the construction was extensive; Millo seems to have been the fortress of

Jerusalem itself.<sup>29</sup> the surrounding area would be outside that fortress though perhaps still part of the city, and inward ("housewards") would be inside the walls. The construction projects summarise events that take place over a period of time, but we do not know how much time is involved; the projects may have taken months or even years. Vss 10 and 12 are theological statements. Vs 11 tells how Hiram, king of Tyre, sent materials and craftsmen to David to build him a house; 30 as in David's building projects, Hiram's construction would take some time. Solomon's house took thirteen years to build (I Kgs vii 1). Vss 13-16 are a list of the children born to David in Jerusalem. The sons mentioned are not born all at once; for example, Solomon is listed and we know from the story that he is not born until the events told in II Samuel xii. In all these examples, a variety of events which take place over a period of time are presented in a terse style; one possible effect of this presentation is to suggest that the verses do not form a whole.

McCarter claims that vss 11-12, the story of Hiram's construction in Jerusalem, are chronologically out of place. McCarter writes:

If the traditional assignment of a forty-year reign to David (5:4; I Kings 2:11) is even approximately correct, the events

<sup>29</sup> Solomon built up the Millo (see I Kgs ix 15,24 and 27) as did Hezekiah (see II Chr xxxii 5). In the cases of David and Hezekiah the building of Millo seems to have been done for purposes of war.

<sup>30</sup> In the discrepancy that exists between the MT of II Sam v 11 and I Chr xiv 1, Barthélemy defends the phrase harase jeben qir of the text of Samuel over harase qir of Chronicles. Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, p. 240.

described in the present passage belong late, not early, in David's reign (cf. Bright 1972:199 and n. 49).31

McCarter agrees with Josephus' account of the beginning of the reign of Hiram: Josephus says that Hiram the king of Tyre ruled either eleven or twelve years prior to the time that Solomon began to build the temple; the king of Tyre at the time of David's assault on Jerusalem was Hiram's father, Abibaal. 32 But McCarter's judgement should not be accepted for two reasons. First, there is no chronological reason that the Hiram of II Samuel v cannot also be the Hiram in I Kings v. David reigns thirty-three years after coming to Jerusalem, although McCarter implies that the dating needs to account for David's forty year reign. Solomon rules four years before beginning to build the temple (I Kgs vi 1). These two dates make the length of time from the beginning of David's reign in Jerusalem to the beginning of the construction of the temple thirty-seven years. If Hiram, for example, were twenty-five years of age when David conquered Jerusalem, he could easily reign for thirty-seven years. Several comments on Hiram's friendship with David (I Kgs v 1,7 and II Chr ii 3,11 and 12) confirm that Hiram in II Samuel v is the same Hiram in I Kings v. Second, McCarter gives no justification why Josephus needs to be accepted as a more genuine account of the events than that found in

<sup>31</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 145. Gordon also provides a precise date for when Hiram became king in Tyre.

This aspect of David's building activity may, strictly, belong to the later part of his reign, since Hiram I of Tyre did not become king until about 969 BC.

Gordon, op. cit., p. 228. Gordon gives no source for this date.

<sup>32</sup> Josephus, op. cit., viii. 62.

either Samuel or Chronicles. Therefore, the house Hiram builds for David may well have started soon after David's conquest. That the project extended over a period of time does not mean that the verses are out of place at this point.

The list of sons of David at this point also presents a chronological problem. The sons were born over a period of time; Solomon, we know, was born after the events in II Sam vi-xii 23. The central reason for the placement of the list at this point is in keeping with the author's practice to list the sons of the king near the beginning of his reign in a particular city, and this consideration was more important than giving the births of each son as they occurred in the story. The placement of the summary of the sons in this chapter enhances the affirmation of David's prosperity.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Driver claims that the syntax of vs 14 requires a participle. Driver repoints the noun hayyillodim as a participle hayludim as is found in I Chr xiv 4; Chronicles also has the verb "to be". But it is not clear why a participle is required by the syntax. Verbless sentences are sufficiently attested that such a change is unnecessary. See the study on nominal sentences in the Pentateuch by F.I. Andersen, The Verbless Clause in the Pentateuch, Journal of Biblical Literature Monograph Series XIV, ed. Robert A. Kraft, (New York: Abingdon Press, 1970).

In the two lists of the sons born to David in Jerusalem in I Chr iii 5-8 and xiv 4-7 there are two more sons listed than in II Samuel. Moreover, in I Chr xiv 5 the name be elyada is written in place of elyada as it is found in II Sam v 16 and I Chr iii 7. If Chronicles preserves primitive ba al names it is unclear why the spelling in I Chr iii 7 is as it is. Carmel McCarthy says that the spelling in I Chr xiv 5, with a Beel- form rather than a Baal-, is an attempt to camouflage the presence of a ba al in the name of one of David's sons. She does not provide any reason for the presence of elyada in I Chr iii 7. Carmel McCarthy, The Tiqqune Sopherim, OBO, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1981), pp. 223-225. Barthélemy suggests that the variation between Samuel and Chronicles cannot be attributed to the removal of ba al forms in Samuel, and that the man simply is listed as having two names. Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, pp. 240-241.

Although the presentation in vss 9-16 is a terse summary, the verses 'work' in the present context and do not require rearrangement. The entire section from vss 6-16 fits the progression of the story. David's movement to Jerusalem is an important point in David's life and for the children of Israel. The theological statements affirm this monumental event in the story. Moreover, David's prosperity is not only evinced in the victory at Jerusalem, but in the rebuilding of the city, in a foreign king's construction of David's house and in the birth of many children. Each element in the verses that follow David's capture of Jerusalem contributes to the affirmation of David's establishment and prosperity in Jerusalem.

O. Eissfeldt says that vss 6-16 are essential in the development of the chapter.<sup>34</sup> In contrast to Wellhausen's view that vss 17-25 follow directly after vs 3, Eissfeldt notes that the events of vss 6-16 make the conflict between David and the Philistines more imminent. He says that the anointing only represents a potential threat, but the various events depicted in vss 6-16, the conquest of a formerly resilient stronghold, the building of the fortress, the recognition of David by a foreign king who builds David a palace and the prosperity of his family, constitute the real threat to the Philistines. Moreover, Eissfeldt says the theological statements in vss 10 and 12 are not summaries but antecedents of what follows in subsequent chapters. The only correction that is required to Eissfeldt's valuation is that the theological statements serve both as summaries and antecedents.

<sup>34</sup> Eissfeldt, see above, pp. 55-56.

Eissfeldt accurately judges how the chapter develops to foreshadow the conflict in vs 17.

In those studies which argue that the 'theology' of the narrative is used to justify David's monarchy and the true history is a story of David's overweening desire for power, there is a failure to appreciate a statement that is made in vs 12. In the verse the author presents David's accession to the throne as an event which David recognises as due to God's aim to preserve his people Israel. David's kingdom was not simply for David's glory, but for the continued fulfillment of God's promises to Israel (ba'abur'ammô yiśrā7ēl). David is established for the sake of the people of Israel.

The story continues with two battles against the Philistines (vss 17-25). Vs 17 presents two reasons that vss 17-25 are thought to be a direct continuation of vs 3 rather than vs 16. These two reasons are set out well by Wellhausen and have not been improved upon. 35 First, the verb wayyered in vs 17 suggests that David went down somewhere other than the place he was living; yrd would not be used if David was already living in Jerusalem. Second, the word "the hold", hammesûdâ, would seem to refer to the "fortress of Zion", mesudat siyyôn, referred to in vss 7 and 9. However, with the use of the verb "to go down", yrd, it is possible that the fortress is at another location. Wellhausen suggests that the mesûdâ is the cave of Adullam, a former mesûdâ of David (I Sam xxii 1 and 4). If one author had written both passages, there would be no confusion over

<sup>35</sup> Wellhausen, see above, pp. 4-5.

the location of this "hold". These initial two reasons are substantiated by Wellhausen by two further observations of types of narrative sequence which Wellhausen judges are most plausible. First, Saul's anointing is followed immediately by a battle (I Sam x 1-xi 15), and such a sequence in II Samuel v would make the two passages parallel. Second, he asserts that the story of the conquest of Jerusalem and the building projects that were begun are antecedents to the stories of the return of the ark (II Samuel vi) and the promise to David (II Samuel vii) rather than the battle with the Philistines. 36

The problem of sorting out these difficulties is compounded further. II Sam xxiii 13-17 (=I Chr xi 15-19), which is part of a list of David's mighty men and a summary of some of their victories, tells the story of how three of David's mighty men went out from the cave of Adullam, broke through the army of the Philistines and took water from a cistern in Bethlehem for their leader David. According to the story the Philistines are encamped in the valley of Rephaim. The parallels between the story and II Samuel v suggest that the two accounts arise from the same battle. If they do, the passage in II Sam xxiii 13-17 confirms that David and his men go down to Adullam in II Sam v 17. To discern what takes place in II Samuel v thus requires a judgement of its relation to II Sam xxiii 13-17.

<sup>36</sup> For a recent summary of various accounts of the proper place of vss 17-25 in the chapter see C.E. Hauer, Jr., "Jerusalem the Stronghold and Rephaim," CBQ 32 (1970), pp. 571-578. See especially p. 1, notes 1,2 and 3. Hauer argues that the sequence of chapter v is correct and that the stronghold in vs 17 is the cave of Adullam.

Furthermore, the sequence of the story in the parallel account to II Samuel v-vi in I Chronicles xi-xiv suggests that II Sam v 17-15 was a distinct pericope from the narrative which could be placed in different places by different authors. In I Chronicles, the narrative in II Samuel v is broken into two parts: II Sam v 1-3 and 6-10 are found in I Chr xi 1-9, II Sam v 11-25 is found in I Chronicles xiv.

II Sam v 11-25 is treated as an independent unit from II Sam v 1-10. What interrupts the sequence after I Chr xi 9 is the list of David's mighty men and a few of their noteworthy endeavours. The story of the adventure to recover the water by three of these men is part of this list. The list is also found in II Sam xxiii 8-39. The composition of the book of I Chronicles, therefore, can be used to support the judgement that II Sam v 17-25 is an independent unit.

Let us consider each of the objections to the unity of the chapter in turn. Wellhausen's first criticism is of the use of the verb yered. Eissfeldt makes two rejoinders to Wellhausen's objection. 37 He points out that the verb yrd is not always used in the sense of "to go down". He uses Judg xv 8 as an example: "and he went down (yered) and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam". The verb is not used in this instance to indicate geographical direction. Eissfeldt also calls attention to a usage of the verb in Judg xi 37 where it also means simply "to go out". Eissfeldt's recognition of the range of usage of this verb is accurate, and no commentator addresses and refutes Eissfeldt's remarks on the use of the verb.

<sup>37</sup> Eissfeldt, see above, pp. 55-56.

Eissfeldt also calls attention to the parallel phrase in I Chr xiv 8 as a point of confirmation that yered can be used as a synonym with yese'. The phrase in Chronicles is wayyese' lipnehem "and he went out before them". Chronicles gives no indication of a retreat or establishment in a fortress, but a movement toward the battlefield. Eissfeldt's comparison does not strengthen his original observations because the parallel phrases in Samuel and Chronicles do not mean precisely the same thing. But the variation in the phrases is not as great as is often thought. David is confronted with war. In order to meet the challenge we suspect he would both secure his position in the fortress and go out to meet the enemy. The author of II Samuel v preferred to emphasise the preparation in the fortress as a continuation of the stress of the previous verses on the conquest of Jerusalem. In both the Samuel and Chronicles accounts of the story the battles are fought out in the valley of Rephaim rather than in the city of Jerusalem. Rather than reading the parallel phrases as saying exactly the same thing, we have read them as different but not contradictory affirmations.

But does the use of the word mesuda itself indicate the cave of Adullam? Klaus-Dietrich Schunck argues that it does. 38 He distinguishes between the defective (mesad or mesuda) and plene (mesuda) spelling of the word in passages relating to the monarchy. He writes:

Zugleich steht das Wort an diesen Stellen aber [II Sam v 7,9, I Chronicles xi 5 and 7] auffälligerweise stets auch nur in der defektiven Schreibung mesudah, und zwar in Sam. ebenso

<sup>38</sup> Klaus-Dietrich Schunek, "Davids "Schlupfwinkel" in Juda," VT 33 (1983), pp. 110-113.

wie in Chr. Sollte meşûdah= "Festung" ürsprunglich eine parallele Wortbildung zu meşûdah= "Schlupfwinkel", "Versteck" gewesen sein, abgeleitet von der gemeinsamen Grundform \*mşd mit der Grundbedeutung "schwer zugänglicher Ort"? 39

And at the end of the article:

Hinsichtlich der Bedeutung der Nomina mesad und mesudah aber heisst das: In den Überlieferungen um Saul und David werden diese beiden Nomina immer in der Bedeutung "Schlupfwinkel", "Versteck" verwendet. Die Bedeutung "Feste", "Festung", die stets mit der defektiven Schreibung mesudah verbunden ist, ist demgegenüber auf drei (bzw. vier) Stellen, die sich sämtlich auf Zion/Jerusalem beziehen, beschränkt.40

According to Schunck the difference between the defective and <u>plene</u> spelling in II Samuel v is significant: the defective spelling refers to Jerusalem and the <u>plene</u> spelling refers to a "hiding-place" other than the fortress of Jerusalem, apparently the cave of Adullam.

Schunck's suggestion fails, however, because of the uncertainty which is part of an old problem in the MT. There is little known regarding the reasons for defective and plene spellings. 41 The use of the argument for II Samuel v is, therefore, too speculative.

Does the story in II Sam xxiii 13-17 (I Chr xi 15-19) arise from the same battle as is depicted in II Sam v 17-25? McCarter says that it is probable that the event related in II Sam xxiii 13-17 took place when David was a fugitive from Saul, at the time, for example,

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

<sup>41</sup> F.I. Andersen, A. Dean Forbes, <u>Spelling in the Hebrew Bible</u>, Dahood Memorial Lecture, preface by D.N. Freedman, Biblica et Orientalia, (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986). Werner Weinberg, <u>The History of Hebrew Plene Spelling</u>, (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1985), see especially pp. 4-7.

of I Sam xxii 1-4.42 McCarter's main reason for making the judgement, and it seems a good one, is that II Sam xxiii 14 says that there was a Philistine outpost at Bethlehem at that time; II Sam v 17-25 makes no reference to such an outpost. McCarter's conclusion can be maintained for another reason. In the sequence of the story in I Chronicles the list of David's mighty men follows immediately after David's anointing and his capture of Jerusalem rather than near the end of David's life as it is in II Samuel. The list is placed at this point in the story in I Chronicles because David's anointing and the capture of Jerusalem represent an achievement, not only for David, but also for all the warriors who had shown their loyalty in times of trouble. In I Chronicles the story of the battle with the Philistines is located in chapter xiv 8-17, after the account of the exploits of David's warriors. The sequence in I Chronicles therefore suggests that the stories of the warriors occurred earlier. The links, therefore, between the story in II Sam xxiii 13-17 and II Sam v 17-25 are not sufficient to be used to argue that they refer to the same battles.

The objections raised that II Sam v 17-25 does not follow from II Sam v 1-16 are not insurmountable. The meşûdâ, that is, Jerusalem actually forms a link between vss 7 and 9 and 17.43 From this newly won and newly fortified fortress David moves out to battle against the Philistines in the valley of Rephaim.

<sup>42</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 495.

<sup>43</sup> Eissfeldt, see above, p. 56.

out to battle until he has consulted with the Lord whether he should go to battle. David is promised a victory and he proceeds. The place where the battle takes place becomes central to the story. The place is named Baal Perazim because, as David says, the Lord "breaks forth", paras, against David's enemies. The phrase bacal-perasim means "lord of breaches", and is powerful affirmation that the God of Israel is victor. The place, Baal Perazim, would be a constant reminder to the Israelites of what was wrought on this day. Although the name contains a term that is also a name of a Canaanite deity, the author boldly uses it here of Israel's lord. bacal is used in the sense of "ruler" or "master" and the usage is military. It is the Lord that is the lord of breaches.

The versions do not adequately translate the phrase bacal perasim. Tg. Neb. translates the phrase as "valley of breaches", mesar perasim, and as the targum replace the verb paras with tebar, the play on the verb is not conveyed in the Aramaic. In the passage Tg. Neb. also translates temeq in vss 18 and 22 as mesar. The Syr. simply reproduces Baal Perazim, and by remaining closer to the MT throughout the verse makes it more difficult to know if its sense varies in any way from the MT. But like Tg. Neb. the verb is changed;

<sup>144</sup> Driver correctly notes that the title "lord of breaches" is Israel's god and bafal means master. Driver, Notes, pp. 263-264. Gressmann identifies vss 17-25 as a saga of place because it results in the naming of a place. Gressmann, see above, p. 16. As in other instances of Gressmann's study of form, if the pericope has a particular form which is not identical to the form preceding or following it, the continuity of the narrative is not an important concern.

the Syriac uses the verb tre meaning "to break forth". In both Tg. Neb. and the Syr. the sense of the Lord's breaking forth would not be missed, but the vivid relation between the verb and the name in the Hebrew is not maintained. The LXX in II Sam v 20 has kai elthen daueid ek ton epano diakopon, "and David went from the high breaches." epano is used in this instance as an adjective in the same way that it is used for example in a phrase from Herodotus' Historicus 3.54 ho epano pyrgos, "the upper tower". ba al is thus translated as "high" or "height" which does not carry the implications of the Hebrew. The place is named epano diakopon. The LXX in I Chr xiv 11 transliterates the first ba'al perasim; the play on the verb is recognised because the name given to the place at the end of the line is diakope pharasin, "the breach of Perazim" after the Greek verb diekopsen. The Vg uses a simple transliteration in both occurrences which loses the sense of the Hebrew. A few old Latin manuscripts listed by de Boer follow the LXX for II Sam v 20, a summo, de super, de superioribus. The various versions use a variety of translations but do not adequately maintain the force of the Hebrew.

The first victory is sufficient to cause the Philistines to forsake their images. The passage in I Chr xiv 12 adds that David causes the idols to be burned.

But the Philistines muster themselves again. Vss 22-25 give the account of a second battle. David again asks the Lord whether he should go to war. The Lord replies by instructing David in the right military strategy. The purpose of this instruction is to test David's loyalty to God's command; proper military strategy was not

essential in the first battle nor very important here either because God himself is fighting the battle. David is instructed to go behind the Philistines and to come to them in front of the mulberry trees, mimmul békā'îm.45

Vs 24 continues the instructions. David and his men are to wait until they hear the sound of marching in the tops of the trees, and then they will know that God will defeat the enemy. The marching in the tops of the trees is the sound of the armies of God (see also II Kgs vii 6). The request that God makes of David is a deliberate test to see whether David would follow God's instruction. It would determine whether David thought he could win the battle on his own or whether he acknowledged that it was God who would bring the victory. After the first defeat it was especially significant that David was not proud of his own military prowess. 46

Vs 25 tells that David did as he was instructed. The second battle was a victory for all Israel as well. The extent of this victory is summarised in the cities that are listed at the end of the verse. Gezer is in the tribal territory of Dan, and this victory

<sup>45</sup> For the use of mimmul see Lev v 8, Num xxii 5, et al. beka im is read in the ancient versions as a type of tree. Tg. Neb. has 'îlanaya', "trees", the Syr. has bkym (McCarter mistakenly renders the Syriac as bwkyn, op. cit., p. 156), the LXX of II Sam v 23 has klauthmonos, "the balsam (?) trees", the LXX of I Chr xiv 14 has apion, "pear trees", and the Vg has pirorum "pear trees". Josephus agrees that it refers to some kind of tree. See Josephus, op. cit., vii. 76. The precise determination of the type of tree is probably no longer possible, but the difficulty does not detract from the story.

<sup>46</sup> The qere in vs 24 is not recommended. For at least one other example of the preposition bet prefixed to an infinitive construct with the verb "to be" preceding see Gen xix 29. The Masoretes do not correct the text in Genesis. See also GKC 111g.

represented a major retreat of the Philistines away from the vicinity of Jerusalem. The location of Geba is more questionable. Geba may be another spelling for Gibeon (so LXX in both II Sam v 25 and I Chr xiv 16), or it may be another city north of Jerusalem. Tg. Neb. gb<sup>c</sup>, the Syr. gb<sup>c</sup> and Vg Gabee all maintain the reading as Geba. In either case the victory extended both north of Jerusalem as well as to the far west. It was the first great defeat of the Philistines after Saul's death. These two short accounts of the battles of David are substantial proof that David would deliver the Israelites from their enemies.

In a recent article N.L. Tidwell questions the extent and significance of these two battles. 47 Tidwell's article provides an example of how textual arguments are used to recreate the depiction of the events. Tidwell begins by summarising the general problems of the unity of the chapter as a whole. He justifies his renewed inquiry with the following statement:

Behind every solution that has been proposed, however, there lies what appears to be a largely unexamined assumption that the historical reference of the stories in 2 Sam. v 17-25 in their present setting is essentially, or in some cases very specifically, correct and original.<sup>48</sup>

The criticism of previous studies is gratuitous; neither Wellhausen nor Rost, for example, whose studies of this chapter have been formative, assume or even explicitly say that vss 17-25 are in their origin-

<sup>47</sup> N.L. Tidwell, "The Philistine Incursions into the Valley of Rephaim (2 Sam. v 17 ff.)," Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament, VTSup XXX, ed. J.A. Emerton, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1979), pp. 190-212.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 190.

al location. They argue precisely the opposite. Tidwell fully admits that the present location of the verses in the narrative give them the significance usually assigned, but he argues that this location is not their original location. The separation of the verses from the present context and a revaluation of their contents reveals that the accounts present plundering skirmishes rather than extensive battles. The reading of the verses as skirmishes is more historical than the reading as significant battles.

Tidwell claims that he is doing historical work, that is, that he is discovering the historical events which the text in part depicts. Yet Tidwell's procedure at this point in the article is to turn to textual arguments. His first task is to determine the form (Gattung) of the passage. He affirms that the form is that of "short battle-report" (Schlachtbericht) because the text exhibits characteristics which are found in this form as it exists elsewhere; these characteristics are; 1) there are verbs of motion which recount four different stages of action and 2) there are certain similarities of structure and content. To these two elements Tidwell adds that terminology also aids in the identification of the form. Thus the way in which Tidwell determines the 'history' is by the employment of a certain kind of literary method. His revaluation of 'history' in the verses is derived from textual argument. It is possible and necessary to enter into debate with his argument not at the level of what the actual history of these verses is, which in the end is a much more difficult task than he admits, but in the kinds of textual arguments he uses to support his account of the history.

Tidwell states without discussion that the form of battlereport as it is identified by points 1) and 2) above also exist in II

Sam v 17-25. He moves quickly on to terminology. He argues that

nts, the verb used in vss 18 and 22, and pst, the parallel verb in I

Chr xiv 9 and 13, both mean "to spread out for purposes of plunder" and refer only to a small raiding party. But his argument is a case of legerdemain. He writes:

On the three cases of nts (Niph.) for which a general sense of "spread abroad, be  $\overline{let}$  go" is given, BDB comments that in these three cases accompanied by  $\underline{b}$  loc the sense is to spread out "for purpose of plunder". Here then is apparently a term describing that particular type of military activity, the razzia, whose aim is not to engage a foe in any decisive confrontation or pitched battle but to gather spoils, and whose distinctive tactics would be the use of a limited number of troops who could strike suddenly and swiftly withdraw.  $^{49}$ 

Tidwell does not tell us that of the three cases in which BDB cites nts in this sense, two are found in this passage (BDB, p. 644). The other instance is in Judg xv 9 in which the Philistines camp against Lehi in order to bind Samson; the Philistines do not want plunder, they want Samson. They are "spreading out" for war. Tidwell also refers to the story in I Samuel xxx where both pst and nts are found. nts is used in I Sam xxx 16 (qal) in the action of spreading abroad in revelry, but not in the sense of "plundering". pst, as it occurs in I Sam xxx 1 and elsewhere, in contrast, is used of a raid, but it too can be used in the sense of "invade" without necessarily suggesting plundering. Judg ix 33 and xx 37 use the word pst of battles in which there is no motive of plundering. Unless there is some other

<sup>49 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 195.

clue in the passage the term alone does not carry the implications that Tidwell affirms.

Tidwell further substantiates his argument by saying that the standard military division in Israel was either two or three hundred men. The implication that he wishes to draw is that the battles were fought with a very small division. He does not cite any textual characteristic that gives any hint why only one or a few divisions were involved in this battle. Tidwell's final arguments consist in seeking to show that 1) II Sam xxiii 11 refers to a "troop", lahayya, and the passage is one more example of a small raiding party conducting a battle, and that 2) Rephaim refers to a valley that was accustomed to battles of small bands of highly trained warriors. His first point here has no necessary bearing on the story in II Samuel v. In regard to the second point Rephaim refers to a valley which is named after a people who are giants without suggesting that these ancient people have any bearing on the size of the present conflict.

There are two details of the style of the verses which weaken Tidwell's argument but to which he makes no reference. II Sam v

17 says that all the Philistines go out to seek David; the Philistines come in strength and not as a raiding party. The extent of the victory, from Geba to Gezer, also indicates a substantial battle with extensive geographical gains for the Israelites. These two detailed points indicate a more significant victory than Tidwell supposes.

The story of the battles in I Chronicles xiv adds a verse to the conclusion which rules out Tidwell's 'historical' reconstruction as well. I Chr xiv 17 relates how David's name went out to all the

lands and the Lord set his (David's) fear upon "all the nations".

Even if we suspect the Chronicler of exaggerating, two plundering skirmishes could not have had this significance.

Tidwell's literary arguments cannot be sustained, and thus they cannot be used to support the reconstruction that he purports. Summary to Chapter Five

A detailed study of the chapter reveals that it is unnecessary to conclude that the text is disunified or that the order of the events must be rearranged in order to establish the "true historical account" of the events. Wellhausen's arguments are the best ones offered against the unity and they are sufficiently answered, especially in the work of Eissfeldt. That the chapter exhibits transitions in content has been recognised from the work of the Masoretes who marked several "paragraphs", pisqot, in the chapter by the presence of petunot (before vss 1,4,11,17 and 22) and a setuma (before vs 13). The chapter presents numerous events in a cursory style which makes it seem that the chapter is not whole. Indeed, parts of the chapter, vss 6-8, are among the most difficult passages in the first five chapters of II Samuel; these verses have from the time of the ancient versions caused difficulty in reading. Nonetheless, the cursory style and the difficult stretches of text do not detract from the recognition of a coherent and powerful story of the chapter.

Although the author writes in a terse Hebrew style, much has taken place in the story of David from the beginning to the end of the chapter. David has been anointed king over all Israel, Jerusalem has been captured, fortified and rebuilt, a house has been made for

David, David has had a plethora of children and two decisive battles have been waged against the Philistines which mark the first major victories of the Israelites over the Philistines for some time. The chapter forms a nice progression over a variety of events and material. The chapter is the story of a series of successes for David. Yet the chapter does not depict David as achieving these successes due only to his own political strategy or power. The elders of Israel come to David and give their consent to have him king over them. David defeats a city of foreign people and establishes his city on the boundary separating the northern tribes and the house of Judah. David defeats the Philistines twice because on both occasions he seeks God's direction in the battles.

## Chapter Six

II Samuel vi presents the story of the movement of the ark from Kiriath-jearim to Jerusalem. There are two parts to the story. In the first part the ark begins its journey, but the attempt is interrupted because Uzzah, one of the bearers of the ark, steadies the ark with his hand and is struck dead by God. David is afraid to continue to transport the ark and it is placed in the house of Obededom. In the second part of the story David succeeds in bringing the ark from the house of Obed-edom to Jerusalem. David is able to bring the ark up on this second attempt because he recognises the need for more adequate preparations for movement of the ark. There is also an indication that the movement of the ark should have been done with priests in attendance and sacrifices should have been made during the move. Uzzah was not a priest, and this fact may also have contributed to his death. Moreover, David is allowed to fulfill part of the role of a priest as he dons a priestly ephod and leads the ark to Jerusalem. The ark is transferred amidst great celebration; the joy, however, is not shared by David's wife Michal, and she is cursed with barrenness for her failure to recognise God's blessing of David.

L. Rost considers II Samuel vi (omitting vss 16 and 20-23) the conclusion to the ark narrative. Rost distinguishes the style of the ark narrative from the style of both the succession narrative and the narrative of the history of David's rise. II Samuel v and vi

belong to different sources and, therefore, are written with different purposes. Rost identifies a style of chapter vi which is similar to that of other parts of the ark narrative; this is the main reason for regarding chapter v as the termination of the history of David's rise. The continuity of the story in II Samuel v and vi cannot be maintained unless it is shown that Rost's account of the style of the two chapters does not work. Although aspects of Rost's account of the style will be examined in the detailed inquiry into the sense of each verse, an examination of Rost's stylistic analysis of this chapter is reserved until the end of this chapter.

Vs 1 tells of a gathering of a great number of David's choice men for battle. In the first two Hebrew words the question of the relation of this chapter to preceding material is raised. "And David gathered again" suggests immediate continuity with the battles that took place in v 17-25. Rost does not delete either word nor suggest that they are later additions to the narrative. These two words pose an initial problem if the chapter is in continuity with the end of the first part of the ark narrative in I Samuel vii 1 because there is no battle immediately preceding it. Driver, in contrast, and writing before Rost's study, recognises that vs 1 may be a sequel to v 25. At least part of the problem is the root of the first verb. Wellhausen says that wayyōsep is misunderstood as derived from the root 3sp "to gather" rather than ysp "to do again, continue"; according to Wellhausen the 4od is unnecessary with ysp. But Driver, and most commentators since, acknowledge that the verb is 3sp, "to gather",

with the omission of an <u>aleph</u>, as in Ps civ 29. All the versions include an adverb "again". The two words thus suggest the continuity of chapter vi from chapter v.

The references to the choice men in Israel and the number who go to fight are also an indication of continuity with the battles in v 17-25. David is prepared for a fierce war and gathers both the best and a goodly number (30,000) of troops so that his intent will not be thwarted.<sup>2</sup> The gathering of troops for this endeavour also shows that David is interested in the preservation of the ark, and at this point he has good intentions. That David gives undue attention to the gathering of warriors for this task rather than making other preparations is, however, an oversight on his part because, as the rest of the chapter depicts, David's first attempt is characterised by tragedy.

The phrase mibacale yehuda in vs 2 has been translated in several ways, as "Baale of Judah" (KJV, RSV, Lut., de Vaux), or "the lords of Judah" (LXX, Syr., Vg) or "the cities of Judah" (Tg. Neb.).

According to BDB ysp means either 1) "to continue" or 2) "to do again" and 'sp usually means "to gather". But 'sp is also used in the sense of "to continue" as in I Sam xviii 29. McCarter judges correctly when he says that there may be an example of 'sp in II Sam v 22.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The LXX raises the number from 30,000 to 70,000. See a similar procedure in the LXX of I Sam xi 8. McCarter makes no comment on the higher number in the LXX, but he claims the number in the MT is too large. He follows an argument by Mendenhall that an 'elep is a small military contingent, perhaps 5-14 men. Thirty contingents are about 150-450 men. McCarter does not give us a reason for saying that the numbers are too large and his judgement should not, therefore, be accepted. In both I Sam xi 8 and II Sam vi 1, McCarter accepts the MT rather than the LXX.

The versions do not translate the phrase as a place name. McCarter suggests an omission of "Judah" and retains the place name "Baalah". 3

The reading of the phrase is significant to the question of the existence of an ark narrative because in I Sam vii 1, the final verse of the first part of the ark narrative, the ark is left at Kiriath-jearim. If miba'ale yehuda is a place name, the question is raised why two different names for the same place would be used in the space of three verses. As a place name the phrase is evidence against the notion of a continuous ark narrative from I Sam vii 1 to II Samuel vi.4

Rost answers this objection, and argues that the translation should be that of a place name, by noting the numerous occurrences in which Baalah is identified with Kiriath-jearim (ba'ala, Josh xv 9) or Kiriath-jearim is identified with Kiriath-baal (Josh xv 60 and xviii 14). He thus suggests that Baalat-judah was an older name which fell out of use. The recognition that the place has two names is generally accepted. But it is easier to understand how a synonym is used if numerous chapters are set between I Sam vii 1 and II Sam vi 1 than if the verses immediately follow one another.

The phrase is best understood as a place name. Although Rost does not use the passage in I Chr xiii 6 as part of his argument, it supports the view further that the phrase is a place name and that the two names are identified with one city. Moreover, if there is no

<sup>3</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 162.

<sup>4</sup> Rost, The Succession to the Throne of David, p. 7.

place mentioned before the adverb missam in II Sam vi 2, the adverb has no antecedent.

The translations of the phrase as either "the lords of Judah" or "the cities of Judah" are supported by the ancient versions. The yod at the end of bacal is unusual if the word is the place bacala; the yod would suggest that the word is a common noun in construct form. The only reply to this consideration is that yod is often a variant for he as it seems to be here. The pointing of the MT is not necessarily as a common noun. Moreover, there would be no reason at this point why the "lords of Judah" are singled out for special mention in David's army.

The preposition mem preceding the place name can be maintained despite Wellhausen's recommendation to strike it and read the text as bely yhwdh. The preposition initially appears awkward because the preceding verb is hlk which suggests that David and the people are going to Baale of Judah. Rost correctly judges that the preposition is proleptic. The sentence is terse; it moves immediately to the action of bringing the ark from its resting place. Pisano observes that the preposition mem is attested in all the ancient versions even if the translation of baeal is not always the same.

What remains of the Q fragment at this point supports the explication of the phrase according to I Chr xiii 6. Q has: b'lh hy' qr[yt y'rym 'sr] lyhwdh.6 McCarter does not accept either the Q

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Pisano, op. cit., p. 103.

 $<sup>^6</sup>$  Ulrich records the word from the fragment as qry[. Ulrich, op. cit., p. 194.

reading or the LXX reading at this point as being the original Hebrew, but says that originally only Baalah existed as the shorter and more primitive reading.

Vs 2 also presents us with another problem in the repetition of sm, which, according to the Masoretic pointing, is the noun meaning "name". The Syr. and Tg. Neb. preserve both words, although the Syr. translates the first as tmn, "there". The LXX and the Vg delete one sm, as numerous others have done as well. But it is possible to see in the repetition of the noun a point that the author is making in the story. God's presence is most completely manifest in the revelation of his name (Exod iii 14 and vi 3), and this presence or name abides above the ark. God, however, is incorporeal; there is no body or image that can depict the nature of God, and the Israelites have known of God's nature in the revelation of his name. In the story in II Samuel vi, which is the account of the movement of the ark to Jerusalem, the stress is placed on the presence of God as indicated by his name. The first sem is the subject of the relative clause, "whose name is called", and the second sem is the beginning of the phrase, "the name of the Lord of hosts who dwells between the cherubim."

Vss 3 and 4 tell of the placing of the ark of God on a new cart and of the beginning of the journey to Jerusalem. Vs 4 repeats what is said in vs 3; in particular, from the last word of vs 3, hadasa, to the fifth word in vs 4, baggib'a, there is an exact repetition. It has been generally accepted that the repetition is an example

It is possible that the phrase could be an example of omission by the LXX manuscripts rather than a dittography in the MT. As we have noticed several times already, Hebrew narrative has a propensity for repetitiveness which often seems unnecessary in Greek or English. It is possible that the Greek texts omitted the phrase because it made cumbrous Greek rather than due to a Hebrew Vorlage that did not contain it. The Semitic versions, the Aramaic and Syriac, retain it. The MT also recognises it as part of the transmitted text. In the list of dittography found in the Babylonian talmud, Nedarim 37b-38a, II Sam vi 3-4 is not mentioned. Furthermore, the accents of the MT, the athnah, silluq and zaqeph qaton, in both vss 3 and 4 are at points which require all words in the present MT to be maintained. The rabbinic tradition advocated that the phrase be read.

If the repetition is maintained, does it make any contribution to the sense of the passage? The repetition may be to emphasise

<sup>7</sup> Barthélemy, op. cit., p. 242. Pisano, op. cit., pp. 272-277.

<sup>8</sup> The Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nashim, III, ed. I. Epstein, (London: Soncino Press, 1936), pp. 117-118.

who kept the ark to this point, and where he lived. What is added following each phrase are the sons of the man who housed the ark, Uzzah and Ahio. Furthermore, it is repeated that the ark is put on a new cart. This second aspect will be significant later in the story. The repetition has the effect of slowing the movement of the story so that certain elements are repeated. However, the omission of the article with the adjective at the end of vs 3 is a strong argument for an example of dittography, and there is only a marginal change in the sense of this passage in the LXX and the MT. It is impossible to judge that one is a better reading than the other.

That the ark comes from the house of Abinadab, and that his sons accompany the ark, points to a problem that is developing in the story. Although a man named Eleazar was sanctified in I Sam vii 1 to guard the ark when it was first placed in the house of Abinadab, we do not know that he was a priest. According to the story in I Samuel, a succession of priests through Eli's family ends brutally in I Samuel xxiii with only Abiathar escaping; Eleazar is not said to be part of this succession. Uzzah<sup>9</sup> and Ahio are not mentioned in I Sam vii 1 and we have no reason to believe they are priests. McCarter, who supposes that Eleazar, Uzzah and Ahio are priests, does not make a sufficient argument for his case. He writes in regard to I Sam vii 1:

Abinadab, father of the priests Eleazar, Ahio (II Sam 6:3,4;

<sup>9</sup> There is no reason to support one reading over the other in the translation of hyw. The MT points it as a proper name. The LXX has "his brothers", hoi adelphoi autou. Tg. Neb., Syr. and Vg have the same reading as the MT. The name Uzzah is spelled in two different ways in the MT of this passage, although not in I Chronicles xiii.

I Chron 13:7), and Uzzah (II Sam 6:3,6, 7,8; I Chron 13:7,9, 10,11), lived "on the Hill."  $^{10}$ 

For the claim that these men are priests, McCarter suggests that the names of these sons of Abinadab are also names of priests. Moreover, he says that the name 'uzzah is a variant spelling of 'el'azar and the variants refer to the same man. 11 The examples that McCarter cites to reveal that names with 'z are sometimes spelled 'zr do not account for the omission of '1 in Uzzah. Further, the ark was at Kiriath-jearim for some time; twenty years between the events in I Sam vii 1 and 3,12 either twenty or forty years during the reign of Saul, 13 depending on the length of Saul's reign, and about eight to ten years into the reign of David, for a total of either fifty or seventy years. Uzzah can not easily be identified with Eleazar, and he and Ahio are probably grandsons of Abinadab. Any connection of these men to the priesthood is speculative. In his commentary on II Samuel vi McCarter, however, simply repeats that Uzzah was the "officiating priest" on this occasion. 14

<sup>10</sup> McCarter, op. cit., vol. I, p. 137.

<sup>11</sup> McCarter, op. cit., vol II, p. 169. Hereafter all citations are from volume II unless otherwise marked.

<sup>12</sup> Klein says that the twenty years referred to in I Sam vii 2 are from the time the ark is brought to Kiriath-jearim to the battle in I Samuel vii. R.W. Klein, op. cit., p. 65.

<sup>13</sup> The length of Saul's rule is difficult to determine. Josephus contradicts himself in saying that it was either twenty or forty years. Compare Josephus, op. cit., x. 143 and vi. 378. Hertzberg claims the number forty may have been part of I Sam xiii 1. Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 103.

<sup>14</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 174.

Vs 5 tells how the movement of the ark was accompanied with great rejoicing. The verse lists many instruments used to celebrate this occasion.  $^{15}$ 

Vss 6 and 7 depict the incident in which Uzzah is killed. The event appears innocent enough. Uzzah seeks to steady the ark at one point on the journey. As he seizes the ark he is smitten by God. Uzzah's action is called an "error", sal; Tg. Neb. and the Syr. use the verb sly, "to err"; the LXXAL and others have epi te propeteia, "on account of rashness"; the Vg translates sal as "temerity", temeritate. Uzzah's action is not presented as innocent.

The reason for the severity of God's action at this point is found in what the ark signifies. As is said in II Sam vi 2, the Lord dwells above the ark. From the story of the sojourn of the ark with the Philistines and the destruction that the ark caused to the people of Beth-shemesh, the ark is a fear-some object. As signifying God's presence with the people, the ark had to be approached with caution and respect. What is wrong with David's preparations is his failure to recognise the due caution that is necessary in moving the ark.

Uzzah's best intentions do not excuse his error in touching the ark.

There have been a variety of proposals regarding the nature of Uzzah's error. McCarter says:

The ancient Israelite understood that all sacred things were to be approached with great care and that the manipulation of sacred objects was an activity necessarily insulated by ritual precautions and taboos. The transference of the ark from one

<sup>15</sup> The variation between the LXX and MT of II Sam vi 5 and I Chr xiii 8 cannot be traced to deteriorations from a common Vorlage.

place to another, therefore, was not a task to be taken lightly; it amounted to a sacred rite. 16

Since, according to McCarter, Uzzah is a priest, there is nothing out of order in Uzzah being the one to transport the ark. The problem is that there is some kind of "ritual accident". 17 Hertzberg says that Uzzah had disregard for the "usual precautions" taken in serving the ark. 18 Gordon claims that the point of the story is that the ark is not to be handed familiarly; David was manipulating it to serve his ambitions as "king and would-be emperor." 19 Gordon also says that the Chronicler stresses that the proper arrangement was for the ark to be carried on the shoulders rather than in a cart as the Philistines had done when they sent it on its journey from Ekron to Beth-shemesh (I Chr xv 15; the Pentateuchal regulations regarding the movement of the ark for the Chronicler are Exod xxv 12-15, Num iv 15 and vii 9). In II Sam vi 12-15, after Uzzah's death, the new cart is not mentioned. Josephus says that there were priests with David from the outset of his journey, but the ark was attended by Uzzah, who was not a priest, and Uzzah was killed for this reason. 20 I Chr xv 2 and 15 say both that the Levites were to move the ark and that they were to carry it on their shoulders.

<sup>16</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 170.

<sup>17 &</sup>lt;u>Ibid.</u>, p. 174.

<sup>18</sup> Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 279.

<sup>19</sup> Gordon, op. cit., p. 232.

<sup>20</sup> Josephus, op, cit., vii. 81-82.

Although it is beyond the scope of our inquiry to attempt to clarify the extent to which Pentateuchal laws regarding the ark were in force in this story in the Former Prophets, several affirmations can be made from the chapter itself regarding the purpose of God's severe action. There is general agreement that the ark was a holy object, and as such was to be treated in a particular way. When we compare the movement of the ark before and after the incident with Uzzah, we note three differences. First, the ark is carried in vs 13 and we hear nothing more about the new cart. Vs 13 notes that those who carry the ark take steps; the description is more appropriate for humans than for cattle. Second, there are numerous sacrifices made both at the beginning of the movement and when the ark is placed in the tent David had made for it. Third, the significance of the priesthood is suggested in David's donning of the linen ephod, a priestly garment. These elements must be given sufficient support in a discussion of subsequent verses. However, they are indications of changes that David makes in the second attempt, and are a vital part of the story. They are the clues that are found in this chapter for the reason that Uzzah is killed.

According to vs 8 David is troubled by the outbreak of God. The phrase wayyihar ledawid is best translated as "and David was troubled" rather than "and David was angry"; the same phrase, verb plus the preposition <u>lamedh</u>, is used of Samuel in I Sam xv 11 as he mourns Saul's sin. The phrase wayyihar-'ap is used of God in the preceding verse in the sense of "God is angry" against Uzzah. The

force of the two phrases needs to be distinguished. David is grieved at the outcome, but he is not necessarily angry in return.

David calls the name of the place Perez Uzzah because God broke forth against Uzzah at that place. The use of the verb paraş and the naming of a place with pereş in the title recalls chapter v 20. There is a continuity in the depiction of God's ways in the two chapters and in the precise verb used to draw the similarity. This continuity suggests that the author intended the two passages to be read together. Just as God broke forth against the Philistines, so he breaks forth against Israelites who do not maintain the ordinances set out for them.

David's distress causes him to discontinue his attempt to bring the ark to the city of David (vs 10). David sets the ark in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite (vss 10-11). The story is laconic in that it does not make explicit the significance of placing the ark in the home of a Gittite. The gentilic term Gittite is used of anyone from a village named Gath. Goliath is called a Gittite because he is from the Philistine city of Gath (see II Sam xxi 19). There is, however, an Israelite city named Gath-rimmon (Josh xix 45 and xxi 24-25), and Obed-edom may well come from this place.<sup>21</sup> There are three Psalms which use the word "Gittite" in their superscriptions (Pss viii 1, 1xxxi 1 and 1xxxiv 1); the precise force of these uses

<sup>21</sup> It is also possible that a Gittite is from the city of Gittaim (II Sam iv 3 and Neh xi 33). The LXX supports this identification. That Obed-edom is a Gittite is not necessarily evidence against his Levitical ancestry. The Levites were reckoned as belonging to those tribes in which they lived; see Josh xvii 7.

is not understood, but they indicate that the word Gittite does not only refer to foreigners. There are however insufficient grounds for arguing from II Samuel vi alone that Obed-edom is a priest.<sup>22</sup>

The placement of the ark in the house of Obed-edom is a recognition by David of a possible error. Obed-edom and his house are blessed because of the presence of the ark, and David realises that the ark is to bring blessing if it is treated properly. David returns in three months to bring the ark of God to the city of David with gladness (vs 12).

Vss 13 and 14 are the central verses in the chapter which mark the changes David makes in the second attempt. There is no mention of a cart or cattle in this second movement. It seems rather that individuals are carrying the ark. Note the same participial form of the verb naśa is used in II Sam xv 24 of those who are carrying the ark at that time. Vs 13 also says that after the procession has marched six steps, David sacrifices an ox and a fatling. The sacrifices take place after the first six steps as a precaution against offending God again and in gratitude for being allowed to continue the journey. It is possible that the sacrifices were offered every

<sup>22</sup> Josephus perpetuates the tradition that Obed-edom is a Levite. See Josephus, op. cit., vii. 83.

six steps,  $^{23}$  but the use of  $\frac{^{3}}{\text{ki}}$  can also simply introduce a temporal clause for one event in past time.

Vs 14 states that David dances before the Lord with all of his strength and that he wears a linen ephod. Whether the linen ephod is a priestly garment or not is a matter of dispute; the significance of the question pertains to whether the reference to it in II Samuel vi suggests that a priest or priests were necessary for the movement of the ark. A. Phillips seeks to deny the priestly character of this ephod because as he says in I Sam ii 18 the boy Samuel wears such a linen ephod and a priestly ephod would be out of place for a child.<sup>24</sup> But the point of I Sam ii 18 is that Samuel is ministering before the Lord as a young priest or priest-in-training. There are also a number of other instances in which the mention of an ephod is an indication of priestly function. Gideon makes an ephod which is his attempt to set up priestly functions in Ophrah (Judg viii 27). In I Sam xiv 3 Ahiah, one of Eli's descendants, is wearing the ephod, and is consulted by Saul. Ahimelech possesses an ephod in I Sam xxi 9 and when he flees to David in I Sam xxiii 9. The best example is in I Sam xxii 18 in which the phrase "to wear a linen ephod" is synonymous with

<sup>23</sup> Patrick C. Miller, Jr. and J.J.M. Roberts, The Hand of the Lord, A Reassessment of the "Ark Narrative" of I Samuel, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1977), pp. 17 and 96, n. 157. Miller and Roberts do not consider II Samuel vi as part of the ark narrative, although they seem to dismiss Rost's stylistic analysis without adequate criticism.

<sup>24</sup> Anthony Phillips, "David's Linen Ephod," VT 19 (1969), pp. 485-487.

being a priest. The mention of a linen ephod in II Sam vi 14 thus indicates that David is wearing priestly attire for the celebration.

But three questions remain. What kind of sacrifices are being made? What kind of priestly function is present here? And in particular, why is David clothed in a priestly garment? "Oxen", sor, and "fatlings", merî, (vs 13) are used elsewhere in the Former Prophets as sacrificial animals: sor in Judg vi 25, merî, in I Kgs i 9. The "burnt offerings", colôt, and "peace offerings", selamîm, (vss 17-18) are also used in the Former Prophets; colôt and selamîm are used in I Sam vi 14-15, in relation to the movement of the ark as well, and I Sam xiii 9-10, et al. The sacrifices in I Sam vi 14-15 and xiii 9-10 serve in some way to appease God, thanking him or encouraging his favour. These elements are also present in II Samuel vi. David sacrifices before the ark has gone more than six steps as a precaution. He also offers the "peace offerings" as thanksgiving. David begins the second attempt by sacrificing.

Although we do not know from II Samuel vi alone whether there were other priests at either the first or second attempt to bring the ark to Jerusalem, vs 14 explicitly notes that David wears a priestly garment. David's linen ephod appears to be the only ephod present on this day, and there seems to be no particular offense in wearing it.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Milgrom says that the selamim is an offering 1) expressing thanks, 2) completing a vow or 3) of free-will. J. Milgrom, "A Prolegomenon to Leviticus 17:11," Studies in Cultic Theology and Terminology, (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1983), pp. 96-103. See especially p. 100.

<sup>26</sup> See also my comments on II Sam vii 18 for a further examination of the possibility of David being allowed the privileges of a priest. See further II Sam viii 18.

If, however, there is an accepted priesthood, such as a Levitical priesthood, at this time, it is more problematic for David to wear this garment. In any case, David is allowed to bring the ark to Jerusalem without further complication.<sup>27</sup>

Although the movement of the ark is accompanied by singing and dancing, there is no distinction made between the two attempts to move the ark on this matter. In vs 5 David and the house of Israel play before the Lord. Vs 14 says David dances with all his might. In vs 15 the entire people of Israel bring up the ark with a great shout. The word mekarker is used in vss 14 and 16 to describe David's actions; these are the only occurrences of the word in the Hebrew Bible. The traditional translation as "dancing" is confirmed by the use of the word in Ugaritic. 28 It is David's exuberant rejoicing manifest in dance that causes Michal to despise him as he enters the city (vs 16). The author of the passage insists that this dancing is "before the Lord." The phrase "before the Lord" is one that David will emphasise at the end of the chapter as well.

The waw with the perfect form of the verb "to be" in vs 16 has caused difficulties in the reading of the passage. In narrative

<sup>27</sup> Nübel concludes that those passages in the chapter which speak of David's joy are insertions by a later priestly writer. Nübel, see above, p. 134.

<sup>28</sup> Y. Avishur argues against the translation as "dancing". See Y. Avishur, "KRKR in Biblical Hebrew and in Ugaritic," VT 26 (1976), pp. 257-261. G.W. Ahlstrom argues in response to Avishur's article that the word is best translated "dancing", and Ahlstrom has made the better argument here. G.W. Ahlstrom, "Short Note: KRKR and TPD," VT 28 (1978), pp. 100-101. Ugaritic, however, is certainly not necessary to determine the sense of the word. The word is well known in Aramaic. Jastrow, p. 670.

the <u>waw-consecutive</u> with the imperfect is expected. Rost concludes that it is an aspect of style which is evidence of an insertion. He writes:

V. 16 raises doubts on account of the rather awkward whyh which disturbs the flow of the narrative. It gives the impression of being an insertion. As will be shown later, we have here the beginning of the succession source which is dovetailed into the end of the ark narrative by means of the Michal scene and the preparatory statements in v. 16.29

The movement of Rost's argument at this point must be unravelled with precision. Rost's conclusion from the observation of the unusualness of the perfect is that the "awkwardness" results from an insertion.

Rost's judgement, however, is only one of several alternatives.

Awkward style may result from failures of the author to say exactly what needs to be said; awkwardness need not be evidence of an insertion. Or, what appears as awkward style may in fact simply be variation which shows the flexibility of the language or which is used intentionally for a purpose that has not been understood; what appears as awkwardness may not be. Rost makes a quick identification between what he perceives as awkwardness and the characteristics of an insertion without pointing out why other alternatives are incorrect.

Another solution that has been adopted by many is that the combination of waw and perfect is a textual error and the waw-consecutive should be restored. P.A.H de Boer provides a list of those who accept this view in a note to a recent article on the problem of the

<sup>29</sup> Rost, The Succession to the Throne of David, p. 13.

usage here in II Sam vi 16.30 See also GKC 112uu where numerous instances of the waw with perfect are emended. The parallel passage in I Chr xv 29 and more recently a fragment from Q with wyhy supports the view that the text should have a waw-consecutive and the imperfect. The conclusion that the passage requires textual emendation is not the same solution as Rost put forward. Stylistic awkwardness and incorrect textual transmission are two rival answers to the problem in the passage, and one must choose one or the other.

In his article P.A.H. de Boer tries to combine two of the alternatives listed above. He argues that the usage has both a definite grammatical sense and is evidence that there is an insertion. He cites numerous places both in the books of Samuel and elsewhere in which a waw is used with a perfect and in which it is unnecessary to opt for a textual emendation. He begins with the observations in Davidson's study on Hebrew Syntax that waw with perfect appears in narrative and is merely copulative. Davidson states moreover that the form "seems occasionally to resume and restate briefly an event previously described in detail."<sup>31</sup> De Boer develops his point by showing instances where the form is used as a conclusive statement or a resumption of events already described. He suggests that the proper translation for this usage is "Well, thus it was"; he translates the phrase in II Sam vi 16 as "Well, thus it was, the ark of the Lord

<sup>30</sup> P.A.H. de Boer, "The Perfect with Waw in 2 Samuel 6:16," On Language, Culture, and Religion, eds. Matthew Black and William A-Smalley, (The Hague: Mouton, 1974). p. 44, n. 1.

<sup>31</sup> A.B. Davidson, Hebrew Syntax, (3rd ed; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901), p. 85.

coming into David's city." This translation itself is awkward English, and the force of the word "well" is unclear. De Boer also seeks to argue that vs 16 is an interruption in the narrative. He notes that in codex Ambrosianus of the Peshitta two marks are placed after the word "David" in vs 16 which note a liturgical break in the reading of the story. The Peshitta, however, seems alone on this affirmation as all the other versions are without any such mark; neither the MT nor the LXX have a pisqâ.32 De Boer concludes:

2 Sam. 6:16 is unnecessary for the scene at David's house in verses 20 to 23. This, together with a consideration of the place at which it interrupts the story of the bringing up of the ark, indicates its secondary character.<sup>33</sup>

De Boer's initial suggestion that the usage is intentional is supported by the usages he cites. But Davidson is more precise in his description of the import of the form; the usage is copulative and often resumes the story in some way. Driver's examination of this Hebrew form certainly gives the most exhaustive study of this problem that I have found and his work has been unnoticed in the discussions. The property of the discussions of the discussions. The problem that I have found and his work has been unnoticed in the discussions. The property of the form is unusual but he gives too many examples to say that it needs emendation or that it shows the influence of Aramaic on Hebrew. He states:

by no longer representing the idea conveyed by the verb as part of a continuous series, it may allow it [a fact] greater

<sup>32</sup> Note in Ralph's edition that the <u>pisqot</u> for II Samuel v are marked either as a paragraph (vs 17) or with a line (vss 3,10,12 and 21).

<sup>33</sup> De Boer, art, cit., p. 49.

<sup>34</sup> Driver, <u>Tenses</u>, 130-134.

prominence and emphasis than it would have otherwise received. 35

According to both Davidson and Driver, the form is used occasionally to mark a shift in narrative in order to emphasise a certain point.

In II Sam vi 16 the shift foreshadows a problem that arises because of Michal's resentment of David's actions on this day. Michal's specific error is initially presented in vs 16 and is in direct contrast to the two verbs immediately preceding the verb "despise", the participles mepazzez and umekarker which reveal the extent of David's joy. De Boer's judgement that vs 16 is unnecessary to the story in vss 20-23 should be rejected.

The numerous participles in vss 14-16 are used rhetorically to create the lively actions of this day. There are five participles in these three verses, all describing the actions of David or the people as they rejoice with great vigour. The safe movement of the ark to the city of David reveals God's support for David, and this causes joy for David and blessing for all the people. The blessing for the people is manifest in a material way as David gives to all the people "a cake of bread and a piece of flesh and a flagon of wine." The generosity of David's actions is shown in that not only the representative of each house is given the portion, but every adult, both men and women, is given a portion.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 133, p. 161.

<sup>36</sup>  $\frac{9}{\text{espar}}$  is used only here and in the parallel passage in I Chr xvi 3. Rabbinical sources treat the word as a choice portion of meat and the LXX as bread or cake. If it is a valuable portion of meat, the gift is not slight because thousands of animals would have had to have been slaughtered for all the people of Israel.

Vss 20-23 ends the story with the account of David's return to his own house to bless it. He is challenged by Michal for his actions of this day. Her complaint is that David has acted immodestly; she says that he has uncovered himself in the eyes of his handmaids as one of the foolish men uncover themselves. Michal's comment is strongly stated; in a formation nowhere else attested in the Hebrew Bible as far as we know, an infinitive construct is followed by an infinitive absolute to strengthen the force of Michal's accusation of David's foolishness.<sup>37</sup>

David's reply is cryptic; the verb is deleted at the beginning of the sentence and the reader must continue to the end of the verse to find what verb is used.<sup>38</sup> David's first assertion is in the phrase "before the Lord"; it is before the Lord that David dances and sings and not before the handmaids of his servants. The contrast is deliberate and reveals the point of the entire passage. David is allowed to bring the ark to his city because of God's favour. David's insouciant dancing is in sheer delight over God's blessing toward him. David

<sup>37</sup> See Driver's excellent discussion of the formation. Driver, Notes, p. 272. Although the ancient versions vary on the sense of the phrase, all but Tg. Neb. reflect one verb used twice as it is in the MT. Tg. Neb. replaces the infinitive construct with a verb of a different root hls, "to strip".

<sup>38</sup> The LXX includes the verb <u>orchesomai</u> immediately after the first phrase "before the Lord"; in doing so it recognises what the Hebrew is doing, but simply smooths the cryptic nature of the line so that the Greek makes better sense.

reminds Michal that he has been chosen over her father and all Saul's house. David will be the prince over Israel.<sup>39</sup>

The charge of indecency reflects on two elements of the story already developed: David's garment, which is a priestly ephod, and David's joyous dancing. Both elements are part of David's recognition of God's relation to him, and, thus, Michal's complaint is raised against David's praise of God. We do not know the extent of David's indecency. David does not deny the charge; he turns attention rather toward what has been done this day, namely, God has shown his acceptance of David through allowing David to bring the ark to his city. Michal does not share in this joy. The story develops by affirming that joyousness in response to God's favour toward David is of greater value than the claims of modesty invoked by Michal.

In vs 22 David further explains his actions. David claims he is low in his own eyes; if his joyous dancing causes scorn, he does not seek glorification in his own eyes. David uses Michal's reference to handmaids as a synecdoche for the common person; the handmaids represent all Israel. All Israel will honour him for being appointed by God as king and the appointment is confirmed in the movement of the ark to David's city. His own wife, in contrast, does not honour him. Barthélemy notes that the cohortative at the end of the verse rightly refers to the honour that will be given to David in

<sup>39</sup> A preposition is unnecessary before <u>nagid</u> even though it is added by many Hebrew manuscripts. De Boer notes another usage of the word also without a preposition in I Kgs i 35.

the future. 40 The events of this day mark only the beginning of David's glorification.

Michal is cursed by God for her complaints. She is barren from this time on. Vs 23 is not said by David, and we have no reason to think that it was David who did not go in to Michal from that day. The author intends us to recognise that it is God who has cursed Michal for her rejection of David's appointment. 41

As Part I demonstrated, L. Rost's study on the succession narrative and subsidiary sources has been the most influential in the delineation of the sources in I and II Samuel. Eissfeldt made an initial criticism of Rost's procedure, however, on the basis that a change in style need not indicate a change in authorship. In this Eissfeldt is correct. A second task in the evaluation of Rost's study is to determine whether his account of the style is correct. Rost may be wrong in his identification of author and style and still be correct in what he has said about the style of a particular passage. If he is correct in regard to stylistic distinctions, then it is necessary to determine what rhetorical effect different styles have in different stretches of narrative.

Rost's account of the style of the ark narrative, explicated in Part I, can be summarised as follows. First, Rost's account of the Hebrew prose of the ark narrative is that it consists of short, simple sentences, few subordinate clauses, few participial constructions, few

<sup>40</sup> Barthelemy, Critique Textuelle, p. 244. Barthelemy's comments are in the midst of his support for the MT in regard to the word cena.

<sup>41</sup> Gordon, op. cit., p. 235. Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 281.

comparisons and metaphors and few rhetorical devices. Second. the author uses speeches to enliven the narrative. Speeches occur at crucial points in order to reveal what people think as well as how they will act. The speeches are also used to express moods because the author has difficulty expressing emotions in any other way. The author can only give a rudimentary description of emotion, but he makes up for it through speeches. Speeches are also used because the narrator either does not wish or is unable to present the external appearance of a person, and we know who they are because of what they say. The narrator is unable to depict a person's nature. Third, the mode of narration as a whole is vivid and characterised by a minimum of details. The narrative moves quickly and briefly to its conclusion; it is seamless and without pauses. The structure of the narrative is closely interwoven. Fourth, since the whole of the source is devoted to the ark, the story is a cult legend rather than a political history. Fifth, the depiction of God is of a fearful and terrible god who brings punishment; occasionally he is a gracious god who brings salvation.

Rost's study of these aspects of Hebrew style are, however, characteristics of Hebrew narrative depiction in general and cannot be limited to one chapter or one source. Hebrew prose uses co-ordination of clauses frequently in contrast to other languages. Where there are circumstantial clauses in Hebrew they are not always marked with a grammatical indicator. I discovered ten marked circumstantial clauses in the section of II Samuel vi which Rost ascribes to the ark

<sup>42</sup> Driver, Tenses, 157.

narrative, vss 1-15 and 17-19: there are six relative clauses marked with <a href="#">yaser</a> (vss 2 twice, 3,4,12,17), one temporal clause marked with <a href="#">kî</a> (vs 13), three causal clauses marked with <a href="#">kî</a> or <a href="#">al 'aser</a> or <a href="#">ba-</a> <a href="#">căbûr</a> (vss 6,8 and 12). The KJV and RSV translate three other sentences with circumstantial clauses (vss 6,13 and 18) which indicates the tendency to add circumstantial clauses to render the Hebrew in English. Despite these usages in II Samuel vi it is still necessary to affirm that the prose has a tendency to co-ordination; see especially vss 3,7 and 17 in which three verbs in each verse are in co-ordination in the Hebrew.

But other passages, even in the succession narrative, have a tendency to co-ordination. I chose II Sam xvi 1-19 as a chapter for comparison only because it is about the same length. Chapter xvi has thirteen marked circumstantial clauses; there are four relative clauses marked with 'aser (vss 4,8,11 and 14), three relative clauses marked with either ka'aser or ki 'aser (vss 16,19, and 18), a relative clause marked by an infinitive construct (vs 2), two conditional clause marked with ki (vss 10 and 11), a temporal clause marked with an infinitive construct (vs 9) and two causal clauses marked with ki (vss 8 and 10). Again KJV and RSV add two circumstantial clauses in translation (vss 1 and 5). Notice the co-ordination in a chapter that is primarily dialogue (vss 8,13 and 14). Although there are a few more circumstantial clauses in chapter xvi, the difference is not sufficient to distinguish a distinct style.

The style of the ark narrative is also, according to Rost, characterised by few participles. In the same sections examined

above, there are eight participles in II Samuel vi; there are only three participles in II Samuel xvi. Rost also says the ark narrative has few metaphors; in chapter vi there are no metaphors; in chapter xvi there are three metaphors, David is called a bloody man twice (vss 7 and 8) and Abishai calls Shimei a dead dog (vs 9). The frequency of metaphor is one of the few aspects of style that fits Rost's account.

Rost's second claim is that the style of the ark narrative uses speeches to enliven the narrative; they reveal character and display emotion and there is little depiction of appearance. These characteristics again do not seem limited to the ark narrative.

Speech is one of the central ways in which biblical narrative depicts who people are; for example, the conversation between Michal and David, a section not in the ark narrative, characterises each of these people. Again chapter xvi is almost entirely the depiction of conversations between different people. The depiction of appearance is minimal in both chapters vi and xvi. We know David wore a linen ephod because that is necessary to the story. In chapter xvi we do not know what any of the characters look like or what they are wearing on this eventful day. The depiction of human character through action and speech is central to many passages in biblical narrative.

Is the ark narrative characterised by brevity and seamlessness? Chapter vi is certainly an example of a terse style; this can be noted especially in contrast to the account of the same events in I Chronicles xiii, xv and xvi. But brevity more often creates seams, that is, rifts or gaps, in the narrative which are not filled in.

Brevity creates unplumbed depths in the story; a terse style often bewilders the reader and makes it seem that the story is leaving elements out. II Sam vi 2, for example, omits much; David arises, and the next verb is one of bringing the ark back. In the episode with Uzzah, there is much more that could be said between the death of this man and the movement of the ark again three months later than is said in five verses (vss 8-12). The succession narrative leaves gaps, too; what, for example, are we to learn from David's inaction towards the sins of Amnon in chapter xiii? A persistent characteristic of biblical narrative is its brevity, its stripping of events of background that we might think essential for the understanding of the events and the requirement that we follow its own presentation with discipline however much we are tempted to add to it.

The fourth distinction, that the ark narrative is a legend while the succession narrative is political history is also difficult to maintain. The stylistic distinction between legend and history has been raised often enough in this study; the equation of different styles with historical or legendary depiction remains exceedingly difficult. Moreover, a story of the ark itself does not make this story a cult story as opposed to a political story. One of the central problems in chapter vi in David's initial error is to suppose that the movement of the ark was a political and military matter and not a religious matter. David was required to learn that politics and religious law are inextricably interwoven.

Finally, God's depiction in chapter vi is both severe and gracious. He is severe against Uzzah at the beginning and at Michal

at the end. He is gracious to David the anointed one. But God too is severe to David in the succession narrative as bloodshed arises within David's house as a result of his carelessness in regard to the law in the story of II Samuel xi.

In summary, Rost's account of the style of the ark narrative raises central questions in the study of Hebrew style and narrative depiction. The styles he identifies, however, are not limited to particular sources, and cannot be used to identify sources. An author may use a particular style or styles at any point to create the force of the story. The separation of chapter vi from what precedes and follows it cannot be done on the basis of Rost's inquiry. 43

Summary to Chapter Six

David's initial attempt to bring the ark to his city is a failure because David overlooks that there are precautions that need to be taken in its transfer. The changes that are depicted in the narrative accounts of the two attempts reveal what is different in the second try: 1) the ark is carried on foot rather than on the cart, 2) many sacrifices are made during its transport

<sup>43</sup> Many of the aspects of style that Rost studies are also explained in Auerbach's account of biblical style, although Auerbach makes the point that the style is part of the biblical depiction of events. Auerbach, Mimesis, see especially pp. 3-23. Rost's account of the style of the succession narrative is similar to Auerbach's account of classical Greek epic. Although Auerbach rightly judges that the laconic style of biblical depiction is more "pieced together" than Homeric epic, he is not arguing for the existence of sources on the basis of style. A weakness of Auerbach's work is that he uses too few examples of biblical style to support his generalizations. In contrast, it is possible in principle that Rost could have distinguished two styles in I and II Samuel. If Rost's stylistic analysis is noting some characteristics of Hebrew narrative, it remains to show the effect of this style on the presentation of the story.

and 3) David wears a priestly garment. The story does not depict either a static or perfect David, but indeed one that is willing to learn and to change. As we noted in earlier chapters, the depiction of David, and other characters as well, are not as flat stereotypes of piety, but as living, changing entities who must come to recognise what is required of them.

The story moves plausibly from chapter v to chapter vi.

Chapter v depicts the capture of the city of David and the first major defeats of the Philistines for some time. The movement of the ark to David's city can only be accomplished when the city is free of immediate military threat. In contrast to Saul, who never attempted to bring the ark to Gibeah, David's capture of a city for a permanent residence is followed immediately by bringing the ark, the object which symbolizes the presence of God amongst the people, into his city.

## Chapter Seven

II Samuel vii is a crucial point in the story of David because of the promise that is made to him that his descendants would rule over an everlasting kingdom (vss 15-16). The chapter begins with David's inquiry of the prophet Nathan whether David could build a house for the ark. Nathan at first agrees, but is subsequently given a revelation from God that David is not to build the house (vss 4-7). On a play on the word house, God promises that he will build a house, that is, a succession of David's descendants on the throne of Israel forever (vs 11). The chapter ends with David's response of prayer in gratitude for this promise that has been made to him (vss 18-28).

There have been a number of suggestions that parts of the chapter were originally distinct, and have been edited to create the text as we now have it. These arguments will be addressed as they arise in the verse by verse study of the chapter. The chapter is also considered a redactional insertion into the narrative by the Deuteronomist, and it is believed to have numerous expressions which are evidence of Dtr. idiom. The stylistic arguments for the intrusions of this Dtr. editor need to be examined in detail. Moreover, once we have given a stylistic examination of the chapter, an inquiry can be made into the reason that an unconditional promise is made to David at this time. The question of the continuity of the story from II

Samuel i-vii is essential to this problem. If II Samuel vii, either

in various parts or as a whole, is originally distinct from II Samuel i-vi, then the study of II Samuel i-vi has no bearing on the covenant made in II Samuel vii. The covenant is made with David without reference to his prior obedience or disobedience to divine instruction. If, in contrast, the narrative in II Samuel i-vii is a continuous story, then it is possible that the covenant is based at least in part on David's respect for God's ways.

Rost's distinction between the styles of the ark and the succession narrative is commonly the foundation upon which it is argued that there is no continuity in the stories in II Samuel i-vii or that the continuity is imperfect because the sequence is only established by a later Dtr. editor. As Rost's work is problematic, however, a new inquiry must be initiated into the relation of chapter vii to the earlier chapters. 1

The unity of chapter vii has been argued on the basis of parallels with near eastern literature. S. Herrmann proposed that there are literary parallels between the Egyptian Königsnovelle and II Samuel vii.<sup>2</sup> As we noted in Part I, Chapter Two, Herrmann's arguments are accepted by Noth and rejected by Cross. There have been

<sup>1</sup> Weiser accepts that the ark narrative in II Samuel vi may have been originally distinct, but he argues at the same time that it is also part of the source called the history of David's rise. Weiser, see above, pp. 143-144. Weiser says that the movement of the narrative from chapter v to chapter vii is deliberate. The three chapters show three stages in the progressive honouring of King David. The episode with Michal also fits into this purpose.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> S. Herrmann, "Die Königsnovelle in Agypten und Israel," <u>Wissenschafteliche Zeitschrift der Karl-Marx-Universität, Leipzig</u>, 3 (1953)

754) <u>Gesellschafts- und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe</u>, Part 1, pp. 51-83.

other attempts to draw parallels between II Samuel vii and certain ancient near eastern texts. Philip J. Calderone, S.J., makes the argument that the Davidic covenant in II Samuel vii is patterned after Hittite suzerainty-vassal treaties.3 Tomoo Ishida argues that Israelite dynastic ideology bears similarities with certain Assyrian documents.4 Cross's criticisms of Herrmann's Egyptian parallel are sufficient to question the value of Herrmann's parallel both in regard to style and content. 5 The arguments of these comparative studies note similarities on the basis of the presence of common "motifs", "ideologies" or "themes". There are, however, certain limitations in this type of parallel. What we call a "motif" or "ideology" or "theme" may indeed be present in the texts of two religious traditions, but in the context of the passage the motifs may function quite differently. The study of comparative literature and religion must be sensitive to points of difference in the patterning. It is too often assumed that if Hittite or Assyrian texts are from an earlier historical period to II Samuel vii, then the presentation of the relation between king and divinity in II Samuel vii is probably similar to that of these antecedents.

Philip J. Calderone, S.J., <u>Dynastic Oracle and Suzerainty</u>

<u>Treaty</u>, Logos 1 (Ateneo de Manila University: Loyola House of Studies, 1966).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Tomoo Ishida, <u>The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel</u>, A Study on the Formation and <u>Development of Royal-Dynastic Ideologies</u>, (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1977).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Cross, see above, pp. 109-110.

In this chapter I seek to argue for the unity of the chapter in a different way. Whether there are parallels or not to ancient near eastern texts, II Samuel vii must be internally coherent. An author may have literary and religious models in mind as he writes, but he may still produce a text that is disunified, that is, a text that is incoherent in itself. Regardless of the impressiveness of the parallels, II Samuel vii can and must be studied independently to determine what the language is saying therein. Comparative study may fulfill a secondary task of determining what similarities and differences exist in the various texts. This chapter is devoted to the study of the "sense" of II Samuel vii without resort to comparative studies.

II Sam vii 1 begins by saying that David was in his house and he had rest round about from all his enemies. The reference to David's house certainly suggests continuity with II Sam v 11, and introduces the word "house" which will be so important in this chapter. The other phrase, "and David had rest round about from all his enemies" is more problematic in determining the continuity of this chapter with earlier chapters. II Samuel viii and x would not suggest that David had rest from his enemies in II Samuel vii. The phrase is omitted in I Chr xvii 1; McCarter claims that it is an addition in II Sam vii 1. The "addition", however, is also found in all the versions except LXXB; LXXB has katekleronomesen auton, "had given him possession", which appears to be based on the misreading of the word as nhl (see I Sam ii 8). Driver and Cross treat the phrase as Dtr., but

the understanding of the Deuteronomist that David did not have rest from his enemies during this period (I Kgs v 17-18). Carlson, in contrast, argues that the motif of rest is "intimately connected with the demand for the centralization of the cultus"<sup>6</sup>, and is, therefore, Dtr.

Let us begin our inquiry of this phrase by seeking to determine whether it is Dtr. idiom. Cross says that hnyh (lw msbyb) is Dtr. idiom, that is, either simply the verb (he lists the hiphil form, but seems to include the qal form as simply another variation; see Josh xxi 44) or the verb with an addition, usually the adverb msbyb. The verb is used in Exod xxxiii 14 and Isa xxviii 12 in the sense of rest, although these particular chapters are not usually thought to have undergone a Dtr. redaction. Moreover, the expression is found in I Chr xxii 9 and II Chr xiv 5,6, xv 15 and xx 30. It is possible that these usages in Chronicles are modelled after the Dtr. redaction of the Former Prophets, but the phrase is not used in any of the passages in Kings which parallel the passages in Chronicles; in the passage in I Kgs v 18 in which the phrase occurs, the parallel in II Chr ii 3-10 does not have it. The Chronicler is using the idiom quite independently from its usage in the Dtr. history. These discoveries support McCarter's contention that the phrase is not Dtr.

Can the occurrence of the phrase at the beginning of chapter vii be considered plausible? Even though Carlson maintains that the idiom is Dtr., he also says that the phrase is associated with the

<sup>6</sup> Carlson, op. cit., p. 100.

"nagid task" of delivering the people from enemies round about (I Sam x 1). David is engaged in defending the people in his victories over the Jebusites and the Philistines in chapter v; moreover, as Carlson claims, the movement of the ark to David's city also represents a victory against the Philistines; the possibility of war at that time was attested in chapter vi 1. Thus, Carlson concludes that the wars continue after chapter vii, and the usage cannot mean that war is ended. Chapter vii still marks a stage in David's establishment of the kingdom. Hertzberg, too, says chapter vii is a climax in the whole David tradition, but that the phrase simply attests to David's successes to this point.7

The other explanation of the phrase is that it is simply an idiom of the language rather than the characteristic style of a redactor. The usage of the idiom in books that are not Dtr. commends this explanation. There has not been an adequate refutation of this view by those who advocate that the phrase is Dtr.

Vss 1 and 2 also presuppose the events of chapters v and vi. The references to David's cedar house hark back to the cedar trees that Hiram uses to build David a house in v 11. David's concern that the ark is in a house of curtains arises directly from the reference in vi 17 that the ark was placed in the midst of the tent which David made for it. Rost recognised the possibility of the continuity of the ark narrative into II Sam vii 1-7; he dismissed this conclusion only on the basis of the distinctions he posited between the styles

<sup>7</sup> Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 284.

of the ark and succession narratives. He adds that II Sam vii 1-7 shows the expansive, leisurely style of the succession narrative. As Rost's argument has been adequately criticised earlier, it is unnecessary to repeat the argument here. It is valuable to note, however, that the presentation of Nathan in the first part of chapter vii, Nathan's first appearance in biblical narrative, is made in a laconic style. We know nothing about Nathan other than that he is a prophet (vs 2). Where he came from, what he looks like, and why he is a prophet, are all absent in this introduction. And the narrative depiction of character in this particular fashion serves the purposes of the specific part of the narrative; it need not be explained as a result of an author who is limited to one kind of character depiction; in the case of Nathan, all that is important is that he is a prophet. Vss 2 and 3 present only the cryptic conversation between David and this mysterious prophet regarding the subject of the chapter. The suggestion that Nathan represents Jebusite interests to thwart David or a party that is against the building of a temple because it is a Canaanite institution remain speculation since there is nothing in the text to confirm it.<sup>8</sup> The depiction strips the story of unnecessary description.

Nathan's initial instruction to David that he should go ahead and build a house for the ark confirms that Nathan perceives David's intentions as laudable, as later tradition in I Kgs viii 17-19 re-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> The suggestion was put forward by Ahlström. G.W. Ahlström, "Der prophet Nathan und der Tempelbau," <u>VT</u> 11 (1961), pp. 113-127. See pages 120-121.

lates. David recognises the discrepancy between the quality of his own house and the house of the Lord.  $^9$  But God intervenes in Nathan's instruction, and instructs Nathan that David should not build a house. The content of Nathan's reply to David is found in vss 5-17.

In vs 5, God sends Nathan to David with a question: "And shall you build a house for my dwelling?" The sentence is rhetorical, and requires the answer "no". The parallel passage in I Chr xvii 3 does not have a rhetorical question but the direct statement "You shall not build for me an house to dwell in". In both passages, the force of the line is the same; the pronoun 'atta precedes the verb in the sentence and places the emphasis on David. This is an indication that God is rejecting David as the one to build the house, but may not be prohibiting its construction altogether. Cross argues, in contrast, that the oracle is prohibiting the construction of a temple permanently. 10 Cross rules out that Nathan's initial acceptance of David's request is Nathan's genuine response to David. Cross says that Nathan replies with a polite address to the king. 11 According to Cross, vss 5-7 are part of an older source which opposes the construction of a temple. The source preserves "the tradition of the league"; the ark would rest in a tent, but not in a house or temple. Cross's argument is not based primarily upon stylistic criteria to distinguish

<sup>9</sup> Hertzberg, op. cit., p. 284.

<sup>10</sup> Cross, see above, pp. 106-107.

<sup>11</sup> Cross, see above, pp. 106-107. This understanding of Nathan's reply was suggested by Noth earlier. Noth, "David and Israel in II Samuel VII," pp. 257-258.

the source from the final redaction of II Samuel vii, but on the basis of what he thinks are tribal traditions as known through other texts. His main point in this context is that the best sources for the traditions of the league are found in the early poetry of Israel, and are not in "certain folkloristic prose sources which refer to the Shiloh shrine as a temple (hêkal)," that is, I Sam i 9 and iii 3. These poetic sources refer to the tent either as an Johel or a miškān. Cross proceeds to substantiate the argument by one stylistic comment; he says that the effect of the poetic tradition is found in II Sam vii 6 in the formulaic pair be-Johel ûběmiškān, a pair which is found also in Ps lxxviii 60.

While Cross's study of early Hebrew poetry has merit for other reasons, the presence of two words in II Sam vii 6 which are near synonyms is not a substantial argument that they are a fixed word pair and, hence, are evidence of the poetic influence on the prose of this section. Moreover, the citation of only one reference in the poetry to the use of these two words in parallelism is insufficient to establish that they are a "formulaic pair".

Furthermore, Cross does not pinpoint why the passage rules out a permanent house altogether. Why is the alternative unacceptable? Why is it not possible that the statement prohibits David from building the house at this time? Narrative traditions in I Samuel i-iii suggest that the building at that time was permanent enough to call it a <a href="height: height: hei

McCarter maintains Cross's argument, although he does not argue on the basis of Cross's views of the presence of early poetry in the passage. McCarter does not criticise Cross's use of arguments in regard to the influence of the early poetry, but McCarter affirms that Nathan's oracle rules out the building of a house permanently. 12 He also adds that part of the issue at stake is the propriety of human initiative in suggesting a house for the Lord. 13 McCarter argues that the rhetorical force of the two emphatic pronouns in vs 5, one for David and one for God, and the pronoun \( \frac{\sqrt{\s

McCarter's recognition of the force of the pronouns is accurate, although his stylistic analysis need not serve his conclusions. The import of the pronouns, as we have already noted, can be taken to stress the question whether David should be the one to build the house, without suggesting that the oracle opposes the building altogether. McCarter realises that the real problem in reading the passage does not arise on the basis of literary difficulties which lead to the positing of sources, but upon thematic difficulties. He writes:

We must rely as much on identifiable thematic inconsistencies as on more strictly literary criteria. Indeed, the chief indication of the presence of diverse materials in the oracle is its fundamental conceptual inconsistency. I refer not to

<sup>12</sup> McCarter, op. cit., pp. 196-197.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

the presence of the two oracular motifs of temple and dynasty, for these are in themselves entirely compatible ideas. As we shall see, the promise or gift of a dynasty is a conventional response to the erection of a temple by a king. But it is precisely in light of this convention that Nathan's oracle takes on an anomalous appearance, for here a dynasty is promised while a temple is refused. 14

McCarter sees the problem primarily as conceptual and not stylistic. He suggests that one of the objections present in the prophecy of Nathan is to human initiative. McCarter bases this objection, however, on what he calls the indignation of God's response to David in vss 5-7. But there is nothing in the rhetoric of these verses which requires them to be read with a tone of indignation; the rhetorical questions in vss 5 and 7 do not make the tone indignant. The subsequent summary of David's life and promises in vss 8-16 are not an angry response to David. At a later point in the Dtr. history, David is praised for his desire to build the temple (I Kgs viii 18). Moreover, McCarter does say that vs 13a is the "linchpin" of the passage because it connects the motifs of building a temple and establishing a dynasty. 16 Here McCarter provides stylistic reasons for arguing that vs 13a is a Dtr. addition used to link these two motifs, and therefore the verse is not an original part of the chapter. We will analyze vs 13 later in this chapter, and evaluate McCarter's stylistic comments at that point.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 221.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Ibid., p. 198.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 222.

Let us return to the study of the force of vss 6 and 7. The reason that the question is asked in vs 5 is stated in vs 6; God says that he has not lived in a house, <u>bayit</u>, from the day that he brought Israel up from Egypt. Are these verses part of an old oracle forbidding the building of a temple altogether? The purpose of the summary from the time of the exodus is to remind David that God has never asked nor required that a <u>bayit</u> be made for him. The statements are not directly against such a <u>bayit</u>, but only that God has not commanded such a building project.

The force of vss 6 and 7 continues from vs 5b. The stress on who is going to build such a house is found in vs 7 as it was raised in vs 5. Vs 7 contains the second rhetorical question: "spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel?" In vs 7 it is affirmed that none of the tribes of Israel was asked why it did not build a house of cedar. Vss 5-7 thus concentrate on the individuals who might have been responsible for such an undertaking. The rhetoric of the passage suggests that Nathan's prophecy simply questions the person who is to make this temple without prohibiting the institution itself or claiming that human initiative is at fault.

The word "tribes", sibte, in vs 7 has been the subject of much debate. It has been suggested by Reid in regard to II Sam v 3 and vii 7 and supported by McCarter in both instances that sbty ought to be repointed as "staff-bearers", sobete. I argued in regard to II Sam v 3 that the Masoretic pointing makes sense. 17 The principle

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> See above, pp. 315-317.

reasons for making a change here are fourfold: 1) the parallel passage in I Chr xvii 6 reads sopete. 2) II Sam vii 11 refers to the sopetim in a similar context, 3) there is no incident in which a tribe is asked to lead the Israelites and 4) Dahood proposes that sbt and spt are dialectical variants with the same sense of "rulers". Philippe de Robert has argued for the MT in regard to II Sam vii 7 by pointing out, amongst other considerations, a criticism of several comments of Dahood which pertain to the passage. 18 Robert cites the criticism that J. Barr makes against Dahood's view that one of the evidences that Qoheleth is influenced by Ugarit is due to the fact that bet and pe are dialectical variants in both Ugaritic and Qoheleth. The question arises in relation to the words spt and sbt. Barr says that 1) spt occurs in Qoh iii 17 in its normal Hebrew usage and 2) even if sbt is a possible variant, it must be shown that the word in context does not make sense. 19 Barr's criticism of Dahood on this point is correct; it seems more probable that there could be a scribal mistake between bet and pe than that the two words are a dialectical variation. However, it also seems necessary to ask, as Barr encourages, what is šibte, "tribes", has support wrong with the sense of the MT as it is? from all the versions and the LXX even changes the Hebrew in I Chr

<sup>18</sup> Philippe de Robert, "Juges ou Tribus en 2 Samuel VII 7?" VT 21 (1971), pp. 116-118.

<sup>19</sup> J. Barr, Comparative Philology and the Text of the Old Testament, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), pp. 100-101. S. Gevirtz has recently sought to reveal independent proto-Semitic roots for sbt and spt and yet to maintain that they have the same usage of "ruler" in certain contexts. Stanley Gevirtz, "On Hebrew sebet = "Judge", "The Bible World, Essays in Honour of Cyrus H. Gordon, ed. by G. Rendsburg, et al., (New York: Ktav, 1980), pp. 61-66.

xvii 6 from sopete to phylen, "tribes". The word "tribes" in this context need not be used in the sense of the totality of the tribe, but only a member or members who are chosen to represent the tribe, as is the case in II Sam v 1. Robert also says that II Sam vii 7 should be read as if the tribes were instituted (swh, as in vs 11) to judge the people of Israel, "que j'ai instituées de façon à faire paître." Barthélemy notes that in the list of leaders in Josh xxiii 2 and xxiv 1 and the comparable list in Deut xxix 9, sbt replaces spt in Deut xxix 9.20 Barthélemy also points out that in Gen xlix 16 Dan, as a sbt leads the tribes of Israel. The word "tribes" can be maintained in the passage.

The <u>fatta</u> at the beginning of vs 8 is appropriately placed to mark a transition from the questioning in vss 5-7 to a summary of David's past, and the preparation for the promises about to be made to him. The repetition of a phrase from vs 5, "thus says the Lord", <u>koh jamar yhwh</u>, in vs 8, invokes the authority that the Lord is speaking through the prophet and David should listen. Vs 8 is a summary of David's humble origins as a shepherd, and of the way that God has made him ruler, nagid, over his people.21

The account of what God has done for David is continued in vs 9, and this account becomes the basis of what God is doing for David now and for David's seed after him. The movement of the narrative in vss 8-16 is crucial to its understanding, and the tenses of

<sup>20</sup> Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, pp. 245-246.

<sup>21</sup> Driver notes how me ahar is confirmed by Ps lxxviii 71. Driver, Notes, p. 275.

the verbs play a key role in determining the sense. Rost argues that vss 9 and 10, which appear to include the verb sakan, should be translated as perfects, thus rendering this part of the passage as accomplished fact without reference to a promise for the future. The promise in the future begins with yirgaz. Rost uses this argument to say that the primary purpose of the verses is to say that God wishes to preserve the kingdom, but not to increase it.

The debate over the tenses of the verbs in vss 9 and 10 has in part arisen over the understanding of whether the verbs are prefixed by waw-consecutives or simple waws with Hebrew perfects. The first two verbs in vs 9 (excluding hālaktā) are generally agreed to be waw-consecutive imperfects with the sense of past time, and are best translated as English perfects. A change takes place with "to make", we a sit. Should the verb be translated as waw-consecutive perfect with the sense of a future or should it be translated as a simple waw which thus continues the force of the past tense established by the first two verbs? The problem arises because there is no distinction made in Masoretic pointing between the waw-consecutive perfect and the simple waw with a perfect, although many have denied that perfects are found with simple waw except under the influence of Aramaic. There is, however, sufficient evidence that simple waw followed by perfect in narrative is reasonably well attested; see our discussion

<sup>22</sup> Rost, The Succession to the Throne of David, pp. 44-46.

of II Sam vi 16. Driver says that the shift to the future occurs with we asiti, and thus he translates it as a waw-consecutive. 23

In a recent article Gelston says the most natural reading supports the change at we asiti; he accepts this rendering, but changes the sense of the line by arguing that "place" magom means "temple" and not "place", that is, a land. 24 Gelston's suggestion that maqom refers to the temple is insufficiently supported. His argument is based upon the fragments of 4Q Florilegium which is an extrapolation of part of II Samuel vii. The Qumran text stresses the significance of the temple. Although the Qumran passage only begins in vss 10b and 11 and is fragmentary, it is a proper judgement of that text that the verses are referring to a temple.<sup>25</sup> The rest of the line in the MT, however, does not easily lend itself to such a reading. The word magôm does not necessarily refer to a temple, and Gelston's comment that it is a "technical" term is an attempt to assert that the word has a very precise meaning here. The metaphor of Israel being planted (ntc)in the land is common enough; see Ps xliv 2, lxxxviii 8,15 and Jer ii 21. The usage of a tabernacle being planted appears only to be used once (Dan xi 45).26 Furthermore, it makes more sense for a

<sup>23</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 275.

 $<sup>2^{4}</sup>$  A. Gelston, "A Note on II Samuel 7:10," ZAW 84 (1972), pp. 92-94.

<sup>25</sup> J.M. Allegro, "Fragments of a Qumran Scroll of Eschatological Midrasim," JBL 77 (1958), pp. 350-354. Allegro makes the initial comment that the midrash on II Sam vii 11 refers to maçom in vs 10 as a temple.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> The references are noted by Gordon, op. cit., p. 238. Gordon judges that maqom means "land" rather than "temple".

nation rather than a building to tremble (rgz) and to be saved from affliction (cnh), though Gelston attempts to make "temple" the subject of both. The final expression in the line, "as in former times", also makes little sense if it refers to a temple simply because there has not really been one. maqom refers to the land that God establishes for Israel.

The Syr. supports the translation of we'asita as a future (wo'bd); Tg. Neb. and the LXX translate it as a preterite, wa'abadat and epoiesa, but they change to the future tense at the beginning of vs 10. Nothing is lost or gained in the differences between the Syr., Tg. Neb. and the LXX and they all affirm that at least part of the passage is a promise for the future. There is, thus, strong support for the reading that the passage is a promise, and the Hebrew grammar certainly commends this reading. The movement is from the past to the future, the history of God's concern for David is the foundation for David's trust of God's support in the future.

The movement between vss 9 and 10 is from David to the people of Israel. This movement creates an emphasis not on David himself, but on the people of Israel. David is supported because in the end he is defending Israel. The king is not being glorified for his own sake, but for the sake of the people. The people are being established in the land and are protected from their enemies by this king.

Vs 11 is a continuation of vs 10, and has rightly been translated as such in the KJV and RSV. As in vss 8 and 9, the past is referred to in vs 11 to remind Israel of her experience in the past. The "children of wickedness" in vs 10 are explained in vs 11 as those who afflicted Israel during the time of the judges. But God caused judges to arise to deliver Israel. Thus Israel can trust that God will continue through David and others in the future to give Israel rest from her enemies (wehanihoti, a waw-consecutive perfect as in the RSV but not in the KJV).27 Vs 11 thus confirms that vs 10 is primarily about Israel's protection rather than the protection of a temple.

Vs 11 ends with the introduction of the promise to David that a house will be built for him. There is no question that "he will build", ya'aseh, is future. The purpose of the movement from vss 8-11 becomes clear. The verses reflect on God's selection of David to lead the people in the past; it is through David that the people have received a greater "rest" from their enemies than they enjoyed formerly. The reflection on the past, however, is not limited to an affirmation of David's place in the present. The future tenses in vss 9,10 and 11, however, create the sense of God's continued activity in the future. There is a direct foreshadowing of vs 11b in the reference to the future in these verses. The verses lead to the forceful assertion of David's significance for the future. God will build a house, that is, a dynasty, for David. Thus Rost's argument that vs 11b is a distinct and old layer in this section fails to be sensitive to the force of the passage.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> The LXX translates wehanihoti as a future. In the parallel passage in I Chr xvii 10 the verb wehiknacti is translated as an aorist.

<sup>28</sup> Rost, see above, p. 37.

The only stylistic evidence in support of Rost's contention is the shift to third person (wehigid) in a sequence of first person verbs. McCarter, however, says that the problem is only an apparent one, and that vs 11b is comparable to vs 8; the prophecy is being given to Nathan to be related to David, and Nathan returns to third person at this point.<sup>29</sup> Moreover, the shift to third person allows the name of God to be used as the subject of the sentence. That the name of God is reiterated as the subject in the final phrase of the verse stresses the name of the one who is doing this for David.

Vss 12 and 13 begin the explanation of what "house" means in vs 11. When David dies, one of his children will be established as king after him. "Seed", zera', is often collective as in I Sam xx 42, but the singular verb "he shall go out", yese', the singular suffix on "his kingdom" and the reference to seed coming out "from your loins", mimme'êka, suggest a specific individual. Driver discovers two other occurrences of 'aser yese' mimme'êka, in Gen xv 4 and II Sam xvi 11, both of which refer to a specific individual. The transition, then, to vs 13 is not abrupt. He, that is, a particular son of David will build a house for God; McCarter rightly recognises that the emphatic pronoun here is a direct reply to vs 5.31 This third occurrence of the word "house" in the passage reveals the nature of the play on the word that is being created. David was not to

<sup>29</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>30</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 275. See also Carlson, op. cit., p. 122 for the same argument.

<sup>31</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 205.

build a physical house according to vss 5-7. In vs 11 God promises a house for David, though a physical building cannot be intended, and the next verse speaks of seed who would rule after David. This seed would build a house for the dwelling of God, and thus complete what was denied to David. That the "house" God is building for David is a dynasty is finally stressed at the end of vs 13 as God promises to establish the throne of David's offspring for all time ('ad-'ôlām).

The literary strategy of the author is to use two senses of the same word in a passage to make its central point. McCarter claims that these two senses are a later creation of the Deuteronomist. There is no reason, however, that the double usage could not have been part of the original construction of the passage; any author could have created the word-play as well as a Dtr. editor. The view that there is a contradiction between an older prophecy and the Dtr. editor in regard to the building of a temple diminishes the force of the word-play as a central element in the full import of the passage.

God's promise that the throne of the seed of David would be established forever, 'ad-'ôlām, enhances the significance of the prophecy. Not only will one of David's seed rule after him, the throne will be established for all time. K. Seybold correctly notes that the phrases 'ad-'ôlām or lě'ôlām are used seven times in the chapter, three of which are found in the promise in vss 13-16.32 The promises are intended to be permanent.

<sup>32</sup> K. Seybold, Das davidische Königtum im Zeugnis der Propheten, Forshungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 107, (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1972), p. 33, n. 52.

Vs 14 introduces the metaphoric expression of father and son to delineate the relationship between God and the descendant of David who would continue the throne after him. Calderone 33 argues that this "figure" is one of the elements found in Hittite suzerainty treaties. He uses it as proof that the covenant with David is based upon Hittite suzerainty-vassal treaties and the concatenation of this and other elements is proof that II Samuel vii is unified. He admits that the source of the concept here may indeed be in the Israelite covenant with God. He gives numerous examples in biblical texts to confirm its usage elsewhere; for example, Exod iv 22-23 and Jer iii 19.34 Calderone cites two treaties to support his point that this language is derived from Hittite suzerainty-vassal treaties, but only one of them actually calls the vassal king a "son". In it Suppiluliuma, the great king, expresses a promise to accept Mattiwaza, the vassal king, as a son. Calderone calls this usage an "adoption formula", and says that it is present in II Sam vii 14 as well. But it is problematic to affirm that the metaphor must be derived from Hittite treaties. The analogical language of humans as the sons of God is found elsewhere in the ancient near east; Keret, for example, is called the "son of El" in KTU 1.16 I 10 and 20, and Keret as a divine king is called "our father" in KTU 1.16 I 15.35 The Keret

<sup>33</sup> Calderone, op. cit., pp. 54-57.

<sup>34</sup> Calderone has an extensive list. <u>Ibid.</u>, p. 54, n. 52.

<sup>35</sup> Terence Kleven, "Kingship in Ugarit (KTU 1.16 I 1-23)," Ascribe to the Lord, Biblical & other studies in memory of Peter C. Craigie, eds. L. Eslinger & G. Taylor, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, Supplement Series 67 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press,

text is not a suzerainty-vassal treaty. The metaphor may well appear in II Samuel vii without being derived historically from Hittite or Ugaritic antecedents. Comparative literary and religious study of Hittite, Ugaritic and Biblical uses of these metaphors is a valuable task, but similarities between various texts need not imply historical dependence or a common usage.

The metaphor in II Sam vii 14 evokes the affection of father and son in order to create for David a sense of God's love for him and his offspring. This relation is one of adoption of David's offspring rather than of physical descent. The Krt text is a prime example of divine kingship in which the son is presented as a physical descendant of the gods.<sup>36</sup> The analogical language in II Sam vii 14 does not suggest physical descent. Even though Tg. Neb. rarely preserves anthropomorphic expressions for God or metaphors of any kind, it preserves the metaphors of father and son in this verse.

Vs 14 ends with a statement of what this relation of father and son will mean; if David's seed commit iniquity ( $\underline{beha}^c\underline{awoto}$ ) they will be chastened, even as fathers chasten their children. The relation being established requires obedience. The chastening referred to is probably God's discipline being applied by human agency as in Isa x 5.

Vs 15 begins with a <u>waw</u> which expresses an adversative force, "But my mercy", and promises that the chastisement will not be to the

<sup>1988),</sup> pp. 29-53.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., pp. 51-53.

point of complete rejection. A specific contrast is made between Saul's and David's seed; God's mercy had passed from Saul but would not pass from David's seed. The promise to David is unconditional. The MT of vs 15 can be read as it is even though the LXX, Syr. and Vg read, along with I Chr xvii 13, the third person verb, yasur, as a first person, 'asır. The line makes sense with "mercy", hasdı, as a subject. Moreover, Driver's comment that the repetition of "I took", hasirotı, is "not an elegancy" fails to appreciate that the force of the repetition is to stress that God had departed from Saul. The repetition of the verb is found in all the ancient versions. The rejection is both a reminder to David of God's standards and of the mercy that is being shown toward David. 38

Vs 16 ends the prophecy with the promise of a sure house and kingdom to eternity. "House" here is used in the sense of "descendants" as in vs 11. The usage is striking at the end of the prophecy because it summarises the nature of the promise, and recalls the subtle shift that has been created between David's original sense of the word and what God wishes to bring about for David.

It has been suggested that "before you", <u>lepānêkā</u>, should be corrected to "before me", <u>lepānay</u>, as in the LXX and the Syr. Barthelemy argues against the change, and in doing so gives a perceptive account of the differences between II Sam vii 16 and I Chr xvii 14.39

<sup>37</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 276.

<sup>38</sup> See also Carlson, op. cit., p. 108.

<sup>39</sup> Barthelemy, Critique Textuelle, pp. 246-247.

He says that II Sam vii 16 focuses on David and his seed; the promise is limited to simply the perpetuation of David's seed as kings.

"Before you" refers to the establishment of the kingdom before David.

In contrast, I Chr xvii 14 is messianic; the seed of David will be established "in my [God's] house and in my kingdom before me". Barthelemy cautions against the emendation in II Sam vii 16 because it makes the passage more messianic than it is. He writes: "II [II Sam vii 16] dit seulement que le règne de David sera definitivement affermi et que David pourra constater lui-même, avant sa mort, cet affermissement."40

Vs 17 serves as a transition between the prophecy and David's response of prayer. Although vs 4 says that the prophecy came to Nathan at night, it is only here that we learn that these words came in a vision. The <u>setûmâ</u> marks the transition in the narrative as well.41

Vs 18 says that David came and sat before the Lord. David is allowed to enter into the presence of God. Moreover, the verb "to sit", yeseb, is significant in that it is a position of rest. McCarter says that sitting before God is unknown in the Bible other than in II Samuel vii. 42 The rabbinic tradition that only the Davidic kings were allowed to sit in the temple court (Yoma 25a) probably stems

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 247.

<sup>41</sup> Notice that I Chr xvii 15 marks the same transition with a petûhâ. The LXX marks the Masoretic setûmâ after II Sam vii 17 with a dash, but does not mark the one after vii 24.

<sup>42</sup> McCarter, op. cit., p. 236.

from this verse and from the rather bold statement in Ps cx 1 that David or Davidic kings are commanded to sit, seb, at the right hand of God until the king's enemies are made his footstool. To sit at the right hand of God is a place of honour, protection and rest. The contrast in Heb x 11-13 between the priests standing before God to offer sacrifices and the messiah who has offered the one complete sacrifice and who is "sitting" at the right hand of God also invokes the metaphor of posture; "sitting" represents a more perfect relationship to God than standing. The phrase reveals the honour that is shown David, and seems to be a remarkable passage which reveals David's closeness to God without any priestly intermediary. The suggestion in II Sam vi 13 that David enjoyed some of the privileges of a priest is borne out in this passage.

The prayer is divided into two parts. Vss 18b-24 are a expression of gratitude on David's part for what has been promised. Vss 25-29 are a prayer that it will come to pass. Vss 18b-19a are statements of David's awe at what God has done for David's house. David's use of the word house in both verses expresses no confusion; David refers to the succession of his own seed on the throne and not to the way he used the word in vs 2. In vs 19 David says that the promise at this point is a small thing to God and yet he has spoken of the house of his servant for the future. lemerahôq is rightly translated,

<sup>43</sup> Gordon, op. cit., p. 241.

as Driver suggests, "from afar". The far off point is the present; the future has been promised from this far off point. 44

The import of the final phrase in vs 19 is more difficult.

The parallel passage in I Chr xvii 17 is sufficiently different that it is not easy to tell whether it is saying something similar to II

Sam vii 19. The LXX and the Vg essentially reproduce the MT, and they do not therefore shed any new light on the sense. Tg. Neb. and the Syr. are, however, helpful. Tg. Neb. has weda hazya libne

Janaša, "and this is the vision for the sons of men"; the promise made to David is for the destiny of mankind. The Syr. has hnw ywlpnh d'ns, "this is the instruction of man". ywlpnh could be translated as "doctrine", "teaching" and even "knowledge"; "instruction" is a good rendering of the Hebrew torah. The Syr., thus, has the sense of "this is the teaching regarding mankind".

Walter C. Kaiser has made an argument for a similar reading of the phrase in recent times. 45 Kaiser says that zôt refers to the substance of the promise rather than the graciousness of God's revelation, and that tôrah does mean "custom" or "manner" as in the translation of the KJV. Kaiser says that tôrah overwhelmingly refers to the law or instruction of God; hōq, mišpāt or gôrāl are more suitable for the sense of custom. Moreover, the statement does not have a sign of a question, although he admits that this is not always necessary.

<sup>44</sup> Driver, Notes, p. 276.

<sup>45</sup> Walter C. Kaiser, "The Blessing of David: The Charter for Humanity," The Law and the Prophets, Old Testament Studies Prepared in Honor of Oswald Thompson Allis, ed. John H. Skilton, et al., (Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1974), pp. 298-318.

The phrase is, thus, not the rhetorical question "Is this the custom of man?" and is not an expression of David's awe at how different God's actions are from those of mankind.

Kaiser also notes that ha'adam is generic (as in Ps viii 5), and should be translated as "humanity" or "mankind". The phrase means "this is the instruction regarding mankind." The promise to David's seed is the principle by which all of mankind are blessed. Kaiser translates the phrase "the charter for humanity" because tôrah is a "charter" of the plan and prescription for all mankind. Kaiser's translation is too paraphrastic; the translation as "and this is the teaching of man" is closer to the original. Nevertheless, Kaiser is correct to read the force of the phrase as a recognition by David that the destiny of all mankind is bound up with the eternal promise. The phrase need not be read as any full statement of messianism, but simply as indicating that David knew the selection of his house for all time had implications for everyone, whether Judaean, Israelite or gentile. David recognises the immense favour that is being shown to his house.

Vs 20 expresses David's wonder in that he has nothing to say to God, neither to ask for other favours (as I Chr xvii 18 reads) nor to praise God further. The Lord knows David intimately, and David's words fail. Vs 20 also marks the fourth time that "Lord God", 'adonay yhwh, is used in David's prayer to this point. Its repetition adds a tone of respect to David's prayer. It is also the second time that

David has referred to himself as "your servant", which Rost calls part of the humble style of the introductory part of this prayer. 46

The presence of "your word", debareka, in vs 21 is often questioned because the LXXB has "on account of your servant you have done", dia ton doulon sou pepoiekas. Tg. Neb., Syr. and Vg all agree with the MT, and there is no way to decide which reading is better. I Chr xvii 19 has "your servant", 'abdeka, although the LXX does not have this reading. The LXXB reading in II Sam vii 21 is one of the few instances where the LXX for these chapters agrees with the Hebrew text of I Chronicles against the MT of Samuel.

David says that it is according to God's word and God's heart that mercy is shown to him. The "word" that David refers to is a general promise to his ancestors as is found, for example, in Deut vii 8. Although David has been anointed, and God has made promises to David (II Sam iii 9,10 and 18) there has certainly been no promise of the order found here. David also says that God acts according to his heart; God is free to choose whom he will love. In this prayer David does not claim any merit; the promises are an experience of mercy.

The sense of David's unmerited favour continues in the prayer. The word translated "greatness", gedûllâ, is rare in Hebrew. It is used twice in this passage, vss 21 and 23. The use here refers to the words following, "to make this greatness known to your servant". The sense is not as the "know" in vs 20. The revelation of the know-

<sup>46</sup> Rost, The Succession to the Throne of David, p. 41.

ledge of the promise, not the promise itself, is "this greatness". 47

David is awed that such a promise has been revealed to him. Moreover, in vs 22 David praises God's greatness; there is no God to compare with him. It is a strong statement of monotheism. 48 The repetitive structure is intended to emphasize God's uniqueness. The recognition of God's superiority by David derives directly from his experience of mercy rather than from a denial of the existence of other gods.

David is not in some way forced to pray to God because there are no others; he wonders at God's election of him.

Vs 22 also speaks of the collective experience of Israel. It is not only David who has experienced God's mercy and knows that there is none like him, but the children of Israel as a whole know these things. The final phrase in vs 22 reverts to the plural, "according to all that we have heard with our ears". David here speaks of what Israel hears about the gods of the other nations. McCarter rightly points out that the usual phrase for reference to God's deeds uses the metaphor of sight, "seen with our eyes", as in Deut iv 33, rather than the metaphor of hearing. Israel does not see or experience the gods of the other nations; they know of them only by what is passed on verbally by tradition. But the stories they hear, David affirms, are nothing like the experience of the God of Israel. Tg.

Neb. picks up this sense with "all that we have heard, that is, as they said before us."

<sup>47</sup> See McCarter, op. cit., pp. 236-237.

<sup>48</sup> Gordon, op. cit., p. 241.

Vs 23 turns toward Israel, and begins with a question "Who is like your people, like Israel?"; the phrase is juxtaposed to David's affirmation in vs 22 that there is none like God. The verse wonders at God's election of Israel alone amongst the nations to be redeemed by God. The "one", behad, of the MT is replaced by allo, "other" in the LXX; "one" makes sense, however, and is the reading of Tg. Neb., Syr. and Vg. 49 The force of the line does not change. The phrase halekû-'elohîm, however, is potentially more significant; the plural may be a denial of monotheism. The reading of I Chr xvii 21 is with a singular verb which makes 'elohim "God" (see also the Syr.). waw is omitted in this reading. The LXX in II Sam vii 23 preserves the waw in reading the phrase as hodegesen auton, "he led him", which points the MT consonants as holiko. The difficulty with this reading is, as Driver notes, the usage with the verb following. 50 A third reading is that of Tg. Neb. Tg. Neb. reads 'elohim as "messengers" or "intermediaries" of God, and thus the plural verb is required: "messengers went out". It is most probable that the MT for II Sam vii 23 simply adjusted the number of the verb to the noun without making any theological statement in the agreement. The LXX and Tg. Neb. readings made the change to encourage monotheism. 51 In either case the import of the passage is similar: What God has taken the

<sup>49</sup> Although see the LXX. Barthelemy supports the LXX on this point, although not with a strong recommendation; he says that the change from <a href="#">2 aher</a> to <a href="#">3 ehad</a> is an example of theological touching up. Barthelemy, Critique Textuelle, pp. 247-248.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Driver, <u>Notes</u>, p. 278, n. 2.

<sup>51</sup> Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, p. 248.

initiative to go and redeem for himself the people Israel? Israel is to wonder along with David at God's choice of them.

What God has done for the people is difficult to ascertain because of the the phrase usually translated "for your land", <u>le-</u>

arsekā. The phrase is problematic for three reasons. First, the parallel passage in I Chr xvii 21 replaces it with the verb <u>legares</u>, "to drive out". Second, the usage of the second person suffix is potentially obscure, and raises the question of the use of pronouns in the entire verse. Third, the LXX has "to throw out", <u>tou ekbalein</u> se.

Although the passage in I Chronicles does not use the word "land", it refers as much to the driving out of people in the promised land as vs 23. The word "land" is attested in Tg. Neb., Syr. and the Vg, although the first two paraphrase somewhat. Moreover, the attempt to relate 'rs to the same word as is found in the passage in I Chronicles, grs, is not convincing. The great and wonderful things are being done for the land and for the people. 52

The suffixes in vs 23 are explicable as they are. The third and second person suffixes refer to God. The second plural suffix refers to Israel. Through the suffixes there is a stress on who God is, what he has done, that it is God's land and God's people.

In the last phrase of vs 23 David says that God has saved

Israel from the Egyptian nation and their gods. The redemption from

<sup>52</sup> See Barthélemy's argument for the correction of the MT of II Sam vii 23. Barthélemy, Critique Textuelle, p. 248.

the Egyptian gods is an essential part of the deliverance. David is astonished that Israel has been saved to worship the true God.

It is not, however, only David's seed who are established as kings forever, but, as David states in vs 24, Israel is established as God's people forever. And due to God's redemption of Israel, Israel will have a god.

The rest of David's prayer, in vss 25-29, shifts to a request that all that has been promised will come about. The shift is marked initially by 'atta, a word used, as we noticed, for similar effects in vs 8. In vs 25, David prays specifically that what has been promised will be established forever. The prayer that the fulfillment will be forever continues in vs 26 as David proclaims in an imperative sense, "And let your name be great forever". David then reiterates the name of God, "the Lord of hosts"; David says that the name will be said by others, and it will be recognised that this lord is the god of Israel, and he, David, is chosen before him.

Before moving on to the completion of David's prayer, it is necessary to examine the arguments of Rost and McCarter that vss 22-26, or part thereof, are Dtr. insertions. Rost argues that vss 22-24 are from the exile. His only stylistic reason for such an affirmation consists in what he says is a change in the number used in the verbs and pronouns in this section. 53 He claims that the shift occurs in vs 22 with "we heard with our ears" in contrast to the first and third person singulars of David in vss 18-22. He also adds that in

<sup>53</sup> Rost, see above, p. 35.

vs 25 the third person singular for David replaces the first person plural. But as we have argued the phrase "and we have heard with our ears" is a reference to what the Israelites have heard about other gods, and the purpose of the third person is to show that it is not only David who understands this. Moreover, in the section of the prayer which speaks of God's redemption of Israel, it is not necessary for David to speak about himself. Finally, the use of number in the entire prayer is more complicated than Rost points out. David repeatedly speaks of himself in the second person in both vss 18-21 and 25-29 and the number that is used of God is either second or third person throughout. Rost is correct to say that such formations as "your servant", abdeka, contribute to a humble style, but the number of verbs and pronouns cannot be used to distinguish sources.

He also bases the argument on content. He writes:

The house of David lay in ruins. The prophecy of its lasting forever had come to nothing. This caused the re-interpretation to refer to the people. God had to fulfill his promises and if not through the ruling family, then through the people.<sup>54</sup>

He fails to show why the destiny of the king and the destiny of the people could not have been combined at a date prior to the exile. In the Krt text from Ugarit Keret's son and the people rejoice in the life of the king (KTU 1.16 I 14-15) and lament his demise. Moreover, in II Sam v 1-3 the elders of Israel say that David has defended the people and God has chosen David to shepherd the people.55

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>54</sup> Rost, The Succession to the Throne of David, p. 51.

<sup>55</sup> See also T. Ishida, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

McCarter says that vss 22b-26 are Dtr. insertions. He makes no comment on the worth of Rost's analysis of the number of verbs and pronouns in the passage, but cites ten cliches which he says are Dtr. McCarter's argument is that "Deuteronomistic expressions occur in v. 25 as well as vv. 22-24." But there is sufficient usage of these phrases in other passages to be cautious in using them to identify a Dtr. editor. "There is none like you", 'en kamoka, is used in Ps lxxxvi 8 and a close variant is used in Ruth iv 4, Exod viii 6 and ix 14. "Your people Israel", cammeka yiśra'el, is used in Ps cxlviii 14, Isa x 22, Ezra ii 2 and Neh vii 7. The verb "to ransom", pdh, is used in Ps xxxiv 23, 1v 19 and Job xxxiii 28; although these passages speak of the redemption of the individual rather than the exodus experience, it is more likely that the historical traditions should use the word one way and those books which refer more directly to private experience should refer to personal redemption. "For him for a people", lo le am, is used in Exod vi 7, Lev xxvi 12, Zech ii 15 and viii 8. "Great and fearful deeds", haggedûllah wenora ot, in Ps cxlv 6 with specific use of the rare word gedulah in parallelism with nora ot, and in Ps xlvii 3, Joel ii 11, iii 4, Mic iii 23, Ps xcvi 4, et al., with the use of gadol. "To establish a people" is used with the phrase "your people Israel" in vs 24. Although I did not find any passages outside the Dtr. texts with this phrase, there are numerous passages in which God "establishes his covenant" with an individual and a people; Gen ix 9 and xvii 7 and 19. I did not find the phrase "you...became their god" elsewhere. "Let the thing you promised be confirmed", haddabar 'aser dibbareta, is used in Dan ix 12. "You promised",

dibberû, in Isa xxx 10 and Zech ix 10. "Let your name be great", weyigdal simeka, is found in Ps xcix 3, cxxxviii 2 and Gen xii 2. Cross admits that S. Herrmann is right that this phrase is also found in Egyptian and he goes on to point out that it is also found in Akkadian. Cross says that the idiom in daughter languages has become Dtr. cliche. But the fact that it is idiomatic in several languages rules against its use to identify as Dtr. style. Given the variety of places in which we find most of these words or phrases, there is need to be wary in assigning them to a specific author. The phrases function as idiom in the language, often with variations, and are simply the way the language works.

The movement and force of the rhetoric in this passage also confirms that the passage makes sense without resort to distinguishing between primary and secondary phrases. David begins with an expression of his own wonder at God's selection of him and his house (vss 18-19). David is astonished at what has been made known to him (vss 20-21). Vs 22 then starts with "therefore", marking the logical progression from the experience of God's goodness to the exclamation of his greatness and his superiority to other gods. This experience of God's mercy, and God's superiority, have also been the experience of Israel through the exodus and the conquest (vs 23). Israel, too, is established forever (vs 24). David, then, prays that these promises will come to pass (vss 25-29). The sequence of the passage makes sense.

<sup>56</sup> Cross, see above, p. 110.

David's use of the name <u>Jadonay sebajot</u> twice in vss 26-27 provides a link between vs 23 and the concluding verses of the prayer. The Lord is known as a warrior from the exodus and the conquest. David, too, knows from the victories against the Philistines in v 17-25 that this warrior has fought for him.

In vs 27 David explains why he is saying this prayer. God is building him a house. In vs 28 David reaffirms that the Lord is God, and thus his word is true. In vs 29 David ends the prayer with two imperatives addressed to God: "Let it please you and bless the house of your servant." The word "forever" is repeated twice as a final insistence on the nature of the promise.

## Summary to Chapter Seven

Chapter seven can be read as a coherent and forceful presentation of a promise that is made to David regarding his kingship in the future. There is no need to resort to the numerous attempts that have been offered to use aspects of style or the content of the chapter to identify editors who pieced together very different perceptions of the place of the temple in Israelite religion or the nature of the promise that is made to David.

It is also possible to read chapter vii as a point in a longer sequence of narrative. The reasons offered for the existence of an ark narrative are insufficient to posit the original separation of chapter vi from the narrative in II Samuel i-vii. Indeed, the full impact of II Samuel vii is only perceived when the continuity between it and previous chapters is recognised. The movement from the capture of a city to the transfer of the ark to that city to the construction

of a building for the ark is a plausible arrangement of the material.

The story shows how David is honoured in a series of events as God's chosen king over Israel.

The promise made to David in II Samuel vii is unconditional. He and his seed may be chastised but the covenant will not pass from them. But the question we have sought to answer in this inquiry is whether it was unconditional from his initial anointing, and that question is not as easily answered. David's prayer in II Samuel vii does not claim that he in any way deserves the promises. David is overwhelmed in the prayer that God has chosen him. God's election of him appears to be unmerited favour. But if the Dtr. history is primarily a history of promise, as von Rad has argued for example, there is little place for law, nor what is required for law to have any meaning, real human freedom and human choice and real obedience or disobedience. If we look only to the promise made in this chapter, we would probably conclude that the Dtr. history is primarily about divine election. The argument that has been put forward that II Samuel v ends the history of David's rise and II Samuel vi is originally from a different context, leads to a diminishment of law or obedience in these chapters. II Samuel vii must be read as independent from these earlier stories, and, therefore, whether David was obedient or disobedient is of no consequence to the reading of II Samuel vii. Furthermore, if the narrative is unified, but tells the story of how corrupt David is, as the attempts to write an historical reconstruction conclude, then the promises are not based on his obedience. The source divisions and the types of historical reconstruction defended

in these chapters makes it an inevitable conclusion that God's election of David in II Samuel vii has no relation to David's obedience or disobedience.

But if II Samuel i-vii can and should be read as a sequence, II Samuel i-vi precede and illumine our reading of II Samuel vii. It is possible that the unconditional covenant is not made to David when he is first anointed, but after numerous years. At least part of the narrative which tells this story, II Samuel i-vi, depicts a David who has a measure of respect for divine stipulations so that the covenant can be made with him. The divine stipulations need not be understood as the full Dtr. law. David's reverence for God's stipulations is manifest in his respect for Saul as God's anointed, as is exemplified in II Samuel i-iv, in David's consultation with God before acting on numerous occasions, II Sam ii 1-4 and v 17-25, and his desire to bring the ark back to his city and to build a house for it. David is not depicted as being perfect in these chapters; he encounters problems in chapters vi and vii. But he honours God sufficiently that the promise is made to him. 'Law' or 'obedience' has some place in the story. Reading the narrative as a sequence allows for a more complex sense of the nature of covenant and promise in this section of the Former Prophets than is often recognised.

In an inquiry into the nature of election and promise there will always be attempts to caricature the account that one is arguing by saying that it emphasises excessively either law and human moral choice or their opposite, unmerited favour and arbitrary election. I have not in this argument sought to say that there is no element of

favour shown to David or Israel. I have attempted only to redress an imbalance. If II Samuel vii is independent of preceding chapters and if the historical David is a corrupt manipulator of religion and people to gain political power, his election in II Samuel vii undermines the notion of law and of justice.

## Conclusions

## A: The question of unity

Before it is possible to appreciate the significance of the argument for the unity of II Samuel i-vii, it is necessary to be aware of what the unity of a text does or does not entail. A few analogies to what unity means in art in general will be helpful. In the case of works of art, whether it be poem, concert or story, it is the primary task of criticism to evaluate what is said or heard in a particular piece. At some point the question of the 'coherence' of a work is raised. In the case of books, such as the books of I and II Samuel, that occupy a central place in the history of western religious and philosophical tradition, it is the task of each age to enter into criticism of the coherence of the text. Criticism must seek to judge the nature and value of the work, and to advocate either its contribution or lack thereof to our intellectual, spiritual and cultural life.

In the study of texts, terms such as "coherent", "intelligible", "unified" or phrases such as "the poem works" or "makes sense"

are inevitably used in the account of the work, even if they are used
to point out that the work does not make sense. These terms are indeed
the most difficult to sustain in regard to a work, but the difficulty
arises from the complex nature of the text rather than from inappropriateness of the words themselves. A work of art can only be judged to

be of merit if it in some vital way fulfills these qualifications, however variously they may need to be used in relation to any specific piece. The difficulty of probing the complex discriminations and states of emotional life of a work of art ought to discipline the critic against static and preconceived judgements about what is to be found in art.

G. Whalley states this need to determine the unity of a work in the following way. He claims that a work of art must possess the qualities of "wholeness", "harmony" and "radiance". Whalley appropriates J. Joyce's translation of the terms Aquinas uses to describe universal beauty, integritas, consonantia and claritas. Whalley gives an account of Joyce's usage of these terms as follows:

In the luminous apprehension of the aesthetic image, the thing is apprehended in its integritas, as single and whole, 'as self-bounded and self-contained upon the immeasurable background of space and time which it is not'. The synthesis of immediate perception is followed by analysis, the apprehension of the thing 'as complex, multiple, divisible, separable, made up of its parts, the result of its parts and their sum, harmonious' -- the consonantia of the thing is now discerned. Claritas is less easy to grasp. Joyce dismisses as 'literary talk' the notion that Aquinas may mean either 'a light from some other world, the idea of which the matter is but the shadow, the reality of which it is but the symbol', or that it is 'the artistic discovery and representation of the divine purpose in anything or a force of generalization which would make the esthetic image a universal one. [and so] make it outshine its proper conditions'. Claritas is 'the scholastic quidditas, the whatness of a thing'.

Unless a work of art manifests these qualities of wholeness, harmony and radiance, the work is in some sense a failure. This wholeness

<sup>1</sup> Whalley, Poetic Process, pp. 18-19.

will be a quality possessed by the work itself, and will not be created by nor revealed by a particular method.

But biblical criticism of II Samuel i-vii has not entered sufficiently into the question of the 'wholeness' or 'coherence' of the narrative. It has become an established procedure in the study of these and other biblical texts to define all necessary terms prior to the study of the work, and to proceed by using these definitions. But the formulation of definitions prior to the sustained study of the writing is a way of fixing the sense that the work will have. In an inquiry into the nature of artistic process G. Whalley makes the following affirmation:

This is not primarily an essay in method; but in writing the essay a suitable method of inquiry had to be discovered for it. I did not feel entitled to make any presuppositions about the nature of the materials under inquiry, nor about the method proper to elucidate and correlate them. The inquiry was not to be an analysis of propositions or statements about art, but an inquiry into certain kinds of experience; the method therefore became suspensive and dialectical. No matter how useful the methods of logical analysis might be in refining terms in the approaches to the main inquiry, the integrity of the complex states exhibited in art had to be preserved under inquiry. To suppose that the subject could be exhausted by a succession of propositions, and that the worth of the inquiry could be determined by the logical correlation of those propositions, was an assumption that I could not accept. To demolish by analysis whatever meaning a statement might have been intended to have, is a common enough gambit in positivist argument; it usually shows that the statement did not mean something that it was never intended to mean.2

In order for criticism to exist there must be the full working of the discriminating and critical mind and yet there must also be a sustained recognition that a text may exhibit such complex states of thought

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. xix.

and feeling, such intricate depiction of character and action, that definitions, patterns, structures and methods fixed prior to the study of passages of text are the imposition of strait-jackets which bind the work to patterns we control. Language can be an immensely subtle instrument for the exploration of reality, and it is necessary to be cautious about forcing patterns on it that do not recognise its richness. Whalley points to the obvious but often overlooked problem of a notion of method as something established prior to the inquiry and required to make the inquiry legitimate, that is, to make the inquiry 'scientific'. And if the study of texts and religion is "an inquiry into states of experience" rather than an exercise in the application of method, there must be an unstinting openness to the range of human thought and feeling depicted in a religious text.

It is due also to the intersection of art with morality that the attempt to study art as a neutral positivist science is an impossible exercise. G. Whalley distinguishes rigorously between two habits of mind, the technical or scientific and the contemplative. The technical, he recognises, is a powerful instrument of inquiry for certain tasks, but finally it is a shield to prevent the inquirer from being confronted with the overpowering reality that is presented in well composed texts. Much that passes for criticism is absorbed within this technical way of mind, and it stops short of those concerns about final value and the central purposes that are embodied in a work of art. And because technical habits of mind short circuit final judgements about a piece, the technical habits have a tendency to fragment, to fail to recognise 'wholeness' even if it exists. A

point of detail, an aspect of style, a technique, or a form is given priority over all other aspects of the text; any larger whole or unity of the work is not recognised. There is no attempt to move beyond the details, to see in L. Alonso-Schökel's words whether there is a meaning "before and beyond the parts". As examples, we need only recall how several critics isolated one aspect of the style of David's lament, either parallelism, fixed word pairs, assonance or metre, but failed to give an account of the ensemble of elements of style and how they created the force of the poem. The task of the critic is not complete by examining only one or even several aspects of style.3

The question of neutral method is particularly acute in studies which perceive themselves as historical. Indeed, in the studies reviewed in Part I it was generally accepted - with the exception perhaps of Eissfeldt - that neutral history is better history than history which has a 'slant' or <a href="Tendenz">Tendenz</a>. The theological and political prejudices of the source called the history of David's rise are considered a diminishment of their historical value, and the less theological and less prejudicial view of the succession narrative is better history. Neutral historical method is thought to be the key to unlock the difference between historical and prejudiced accounts of events. But the overcoming of prejudice is a far more difficult task than is often appreciated. E. Fortin writes:

<sup>3</sup> Eissfeldt defends the existence of large, unified narrative works by saying that the whole can serve as a test to see whether the part is adequately understood. Eissfeldt, see above, pp. 44-45.

Il ne suffit pas, pour assurer le caractère scientifique de son enquête, que le chercheur consente une fois pour toutes à faire abstraction des préjugés qui nuisent sans cesse à la pureté de son regard, comme s'il était en son pouvoir de s'oublier lui-même ou de s'effacer complètement devant l'object qu'il contemple.

Autant reconnaître que l'objectivité à laquelle il aspire ne constitué jamais ou presque jamais la condition préalable du travail historique. Elle pourrait toutefois en être le fruit et la récompense.4

The overcoming of prejudice is more apt to result from the fruit of labours of great discipline rather than from an assertion at the outset that the method is neutral. The task of being an historian is too difficult to be reduced to such a facile solution.<sup>5</sup>

In practice, it is not easy to maintain a balance between theological and scientific approaches to the biblical text. It seems wise, therefore, to indicate the basic point of departure that has been taken in the writing of this commentary: the approach to the text might be described as theological-historical, or theological-scientific.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> E.L. Fortin, <u>Dissidence et Philosophie au moyen Âge</u>, Cahiers d'Étude Médiévales, VI (Montreal: Bellarmin, 1981), pp. 13-14

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> That there is such a valuable discussion of the value of scientific criticism outside of biblical studies makes it puzzling why there is not more debate within the field, though there has been more interest recently. There seems general agreement of the merits of scientific method even between those who might at first appear to have little in common with one another. For example, P.C. Craigie, who has argued for the unity of the book of Deuteronomy in a recent commentary, writes the following in the introduction to the commentary in an attempt to reconcile "science" and "theology".

P.C. Craigie, The Book of Deuteronomy, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament, ed. R.K. Harrison, (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1976), p. 77. Craigie's commentary is a fine work for other reasons, but this comment reveals a lack of resolution of difficult issues which influence interpretation significantly. Craigie perceives that the methods of science are appropriate to biblical studies in a way that we also witnessed in many of the studies reviewed in Part I. The deeper reasons for this common element in modern biblical studies are more difficult to ascertain. It may well be that the anti-rationalism of Protestant tradition results in a tension between "scientific method" and faith, but has no way of resolving this tension and so Protestants resort to science in the academy and faith at home. For

In the studies done on II Samuel i-vii this notion that proper history is neutral has led to the attempt to reconstruct an historical David who is a different person than the David that is depicted in the text. The reconstructions are justified by literary arguments. Various aspects of style are thought to be evidence of either 1) the uneven historical value of the passages or 2) the characteristic style of an author of a source or 3) the style of an editor who reworked the narrative to make it conform to his political interests. In any case the David depicted in the narrative is thought to be a misrepresentation of the historical David. In principle there is nothing out of order in attempting to determine whether an ancient text is misrepresenting what actually happened. I have, however, sought to glean from previous studies what the justification of the reconstruc-

an exposition of the anti-rationalism of Protestantism, see J.V. Cunningham, The Collected Essays of J.V. Cunningham, (Chicago: The Swallow Press, 1976), pp. 97-119. But the alternative to Protestant anti-rationalism, that is, Aristotelian "science", manifest in traditional Catholic scholarship, may also be to blame because of the failure of scholars to distinguish between the Latin usage of scientia as "knowledge" and modern usage of science as "value free objectivity". Whalley's writings are an example of the conflict between the technical mind and the contemplative mind, or between positivism and humane studies. He discriminates precisely these two habits of mind, and the province of knowledge in which each are appropriate. The habits of the contemplative mind are, according to Whalley, the superior qualities of mind and the qualities necessary to recognise the complex workings of art. There are numerous writers who confirm Whalley's distinction; I shall list several. George Grant, "Future of an Illusion: A Commentary on Bertrand Russell, Dalhousie Review, 32(1952), pp. 97-109. Eugene Combs, "Spinoza's method of biblical interpretation and his political philosophy", in Modernity and Responsibility: Essays for George Grant, ed. Eugene Combs, (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1983), pp. 7-28. Michael Polanyi, Knowing and Being, ed. Marjorie Grene, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969). Brian Lee, Poetry and the System, (Doncaster: Brynmill Press, 1983). R.G. Collingwood, The Idea of History, (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), pp. 126-133.

entirely literary. It is necessary to insist that in regard to II Samuel i-vii there are no external factors, such as archaeological arguments, that are used to justify judgements as to the historical worth of particular passages. The question is therefore raised in a precise way: Why are the specific aspects of style used as evidence to foster this historical reconstruction and rereading of the narrative? It is necessary to ask: What is the most compelling account of the style of the chapters?

The use of style to identify sources or an editor is a way of focussing on a particular detail of language and giving it immense influence in the reading of the whole passage. If a small aspect of style is proof of an editor, the sense of the entire passage can be transformed to account for the purposes of this secondary hand. Moreover, the language that is the insertion of the editor is not considered a part of a greater whole; the language is not intrinsic to the force of the entire passage.

But some of our best literary critics, G. Whalley and T.S.

Eliot, have claimed that poetry is concerned with creating unities.

Whalley says that the fundamental act of a poet is integrative; it is seeing something whole that has not been recognised as such previously.

In order to qualify as a coherent text the artist must create a considerable measure of integration. A similar recognition of the integrative element of art is made independently by T.S. Eliot. In an essay entitled "The Metaphysical Poets" Eliot writes:

A thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility. When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience; the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, fragmentary. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with one another, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of cooking; in the mind of a poet these experiences are always forming new wholes. 6

Both of these critics affirm that the test of the value of the poem is the degree of integration in the text of elements often considered separate, and that the author is always drawing together disparate experience into new wholes. If the poem is lacking in this integration, it fails to be worthy of attention as an intelligible text.

But wherein does the unity exist? How does one insure that unity is there? Three rejoinders can be made to these questions. First, if the study of religious texts, as in the case of other works of art, cannot be done within the parameters of positivist science, there will not be the kind of certainties that such research seeks to engender. Texts and the realities they point to will be infinitely more complex and difficult to ascertain than we can imagine. There are no simple ways of pointing to the unity of a narrative. Second, it must be insisted that language depicts human experience. Styles of language are ways of representing human life. Language is not a set of laws and correspondences that can be isolated from human life and human values. For all the invaluable comments in Driver's commentary on Hebrew usage, he comments on the text as if 'grammar' and language can be isolated from an account of the final purposes of

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> T.S. Eliot, "The Metaphysical Poets," <u>Selected Essays</u>, (London: Faber and Faber, 1932), p. 287.

the story. But we noticed too that he occasionally gave his understanding of the whole of the passage. Literary depiction of life, whether it makes any pretence to be historical narrative or not, is an account of life. In Eliot's words as quoted above, "A thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility." Third, the unity of the work is the degree of unity of the experience of the work. J.V. Cunningham and St. Augustine make several comments which are significant:

The play is rather the experience of having experienced the play. It is the result of a reconstruction in memory and a summing up in judgment after the play is over. The process is described by St. Augustine in one of those passages in the Confessions in which his extraordinary genius for introspection is given full scope. He is describing the act of reciting a Psalm:

I am about to repeat a Psalm that I know. Before I begin, my expectation is extended over the whole; but when I have begun, how much soever of it I shall separate off into the past, is extended along my memory; thus the life of this action of mine is divided between my memory as to what I have repeated, and expectation as to what I am going to repeat; but "consideration" is present with me, that through it what was future may be conveyed over so as to become past. Which the more it is done again and again, so much the more the expectation being shortened, is the memory enlarged; till the whole expectation be at length exhausted, when that whole action being ended shall have passed into memory. 11.38

So I know a poem or play thoroughly when the beginning, middle, and end are comprehended in one synthetic act of recollection, and that synthetic act of recollection is the play.

That is, one leaves the theater or lays down his book, lights a cigarette, and held within the spell of the experience the experience grows steady; it seems to come together. This is the unity of the work. The process is not wholly intellectual, nor wholly describable in intellectual terms since it is an experience, yet experience never comes together except

when ordered by some principles, implicit or explicit, and the principles are describable.

As we read a portion of text we experience the cumulative effects of the language. As we continue to read and to study the details of the text the experience is altered and refined. We become more sure of what can and what cannot be said about the passage, and in this sense the experience becomes steady. In explaining the experience of the work we will resort to the discussion of the effects of particular aspects of style of the language, but the experience of the work does not rely solely on any one aspect of language. At all points, both in our initial reading, in subsequent study of the details, and at the end we will give some sense of the whole.

If a critic argues that a particular work of art is unified, the judgement needs to be sustained through an argument that will make sense to someone else, but it is not proven by scientific method. At all points it is possible to determine whether the thread of an argument is lost, and the criticism of others is welcomed in this process. Criticism must always be concrete; it must arise directly from specific characteristics of the text; as we set out in the introduction, generalization follows from the concrete and does not precede it. Moreover, criticism is always somewhat reductive because the work of art, if it is of any merit, is superior to the criticism. For example, reading or watching Shakespeare's King Lear, or listening to Pachelbel's Canon, is not the same as reading criticism of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> J.V. Cunningham, <u>The Collected Essays of J.V. Cunningham</u>, (Chicago: Swallow Press, 1976), pp. 143-144.

play or the concert even if it is good criticism. The force of the work of art stands with its own life. The humble critic may clear the ground a little so that its workings can be recognised, but the art exists prior to and in a more complex state than the studies done on it. Furthermore, it is necessary to be very cautious in regard to what constitutes 'demonstration' or 'proof' of the working of the piece of art, for our habits of 'proof' are often drawn from the reductive practices of positivist science. An argument for the unity of a work of art cannot be anything other than attempting to point how the piece 'works', with all the difficulties and failures that will entail. In a narrative such as II Samuel i-vii the aim can only be to point out whether the prose and poetic styles of the chapter create a story or whether the style is so muddled that no sense can be made of it.

There is nothing in what I have said that requires II Samuel i-vii to be unified. It may be the judgement of the critic that it is not. This would seem to be the judgement of most of the studies on these chapters. In making this judgement critics have evoked the standards by which they evaluate the work.

But an unusual situation exists in regard to study of II Samuel i-vii. The studies we have reviewed conclude that in some way the texts are not 'unified' or 'whole'. At the same time, however, there continues to be great industry involved in the study of chapters that have long been recognised as an accumulation of various fragments and editorial insertions. And even if it is argued that a 'unity' exists with the final redactor of the history of David's rise, it is difficult

to see how the designation of this source as political propaganda for Judaean monarchs (so Nübel, Ward and Weiser) or for Benjamites who seek to claim David (so Grønbaek) makes it a compelling story. The studies that argue for the existence of the source conclude that the source is not a good historical document. Its poor historical depiction arises because of the introduction of theology which was created for propagandistic reasons. But if one does not feel entitled to treat the question of religion, theology or morality as a political instrument created by particular authors to justify their own political aspirations, then a serious inquiry will also be critical of these accounts of religion.

Those who have concluded that the text is disunified and the product of political interests leave, however, a number of questions outside of the sphere of their inquiries. Are these chapters determined by the self-interests of particular parties? Is the narrative merely a product of political legitimation of self-serving Judaean monarchs? These conclusions seem to make the chapters a product of the most base human motives. And if the text is not unified, and if it is propaganda, then it needs to be asked why there is so much interest in such a fragmented narrative written for such selfish reasons. Whalley, Eliot and Cunningham, amongst others, would require more consistency in criticism; the judgement of the text's disunity seems to require a greater dismissiveness of the work. If the text, including its 'theology', was created for the selfish aims of a particular party to secure their rule over others, perhaps it would be better to move on to study texts with more integrity. An inquiry

into the books of Samuel is confronted directly with these questions; yet in the interests of value-free science, positivist studies evade them. The questions that Whalley, Cunningham and Eliot raise regarding the significance of unity in texts has not been answered in any of the studies I reviewed in Part I.

The argument for the unity of II Samuel i-vii seeks to present wherein the 'wholeness' of these chapters exists. Such an argument can only be made along the lines suggested above. There are no structures, patterns or gimmicks to 'prove' the coherence of the chapter; there is no method we feel entitled to bring to the text to insure results. There can only be the sustained recognition of a quality of wholeness on the part of the critic and the attempt to explain this quality to others. Analysis is always able to destroy the harmony of a piece of art, but it is not necessarily right in doing so. There is no law which requires the reader to recognise the sense and integritas of a passage; and literary criticism never proceeds by way of forcing someone to recognise unity. But criticism can point to the import of a passage and say that this is how it works and this is why. Literary criticism can attempt only to create an atmosphere where the reader is unwilling to impose himself or his method on the texts. The gentle reader must always be in a state of wanting to know and must voluntarily proceed by way of the most self-discipline that can be mustered.

One final example from music illustrates the problem in a way more readily recognisable than in art made in language. In music perhaps we are more willing to admit that scientific demonstration is

inappropriate. We may acknowledge, for example, that W.A. Mozart's "Concert for Flute, Harp and Orchestra in C major" is an achievement, that is, a better piece of art, and more worthy of study, practise and emulation than much popular music. But the sensibility, the refined intellectual and emotional training, required to give an adequate account of such a piece, and thus provide the reasons for the judgement that it is an achievement, is not something all of us could adequately and easily attain. Moreover, there would be no method, no neutral scientific method, which could be the basis of such a training. The training would always be a discipline of judgement and value and the recognition of the relation between style and the recreation of experience. A judgement about the style of the piece is inseparable from the judgement of its integrity, harmony and radiance. Even the adequately trained critic, the master of the history of music, of composition and performance, cannot give some kind of facile formula that everyone will immediately understand and that will explain why the piece is an achievement. The adequately trained critic would only seek to say that the piece works and then proceed to point out how. The reflex of the technical mind would reply that such a critic is hopelessly subjective; the scientific habits of mind seek something which is more certain, more accessible to the untrained, more easily accomplished. But it is not easy to create or to judge accurately the complexity of great works of art and religious texts and only a few will imitate them with some degree of precision. The rest of us will simply understand in some measure what we hear or read. And even the best works of art will allow all types of untrue

criticism to be made of them; they will wait silently until the disciplined and respectful will perform them or read them with the desire to let them be recreated in all their radiance and harmony.

# B: Style and narrative sequence

This inquiry has sought to give an account of the cumulative effects of the Hebrew style of II Samuel i-vii in order to show that the style does function to create a narrative that can and should be read as a unified sequence. When at the end of chapter vii the memory is extended over the detail and force of the seven chapters, the movement of the narrative can be recognised.

The narrative is simply the story; it is a sequence of actions told to exemplify a purpose. Wellhausen nicely uses the metaphor of a thread to explain this sequence of action; 8 the metaphor creates a sense that the sequence is woven together. Many of the studies reviewed in Part I recognised this element of narrative, but in the preoccupation with details of style, often did not recognise that aspects of language were being used for the purpose of creating a story, that is, a sequence of action. 9 The purpose of the narrative is more clearly revealed in the sequence of action than in specific aspects of style. The coherence of the story is discovered primarily in the purposeful depiction of particular actions.

What is the purpose of the particular story in II Samuel i-vii? It must first be affirmed that the account here is incomplete.

<sup>8</sup> Wellhausen, see above, p. 2.

Gressmann, see above, p. 21. Rost, see above, pp. 31-32. Eissfeldt, see above, pp. 47-48.

There is no guarantee that the purpose of the story will not be seen in a very different light when the entire story of David or the larger story of the Israelites is taken into account. Nevertheless, we can make certain observations. The story begins after Saul's death. David was anointed by Samuel some time earlier to be king over all Israel, but Saul did not give up the throne and sought David's life because David was a threat to his own position. After Saul's death David is now in line for the throne. We might expect immediate ascendancy. The news comes of Saul's death, but David does not rejoice in this death because Saul had been God's anointed, and David perceives the defeat as a setback for all Israel. David is anointed as king by the Judaeans. David's respect for Saul and his house, and his desire to defend all Israel is exemplified in the lament he sings over Saul and Jonathan and in the subsequent stories of the civil war that takes place between the house of Saul and the house of Judah. The story of the conflict between Joab and Abner illustrates the complexity of this civil war as private hostilities escalate the division between the two houses. Finally the northern tribes anoint David as king over them as well. Once the civil war is ended, David's rule is strengthened in various ways. He captures and fortifies the city of Jerusalem. He defeats the Philistines in two decisive battles. He brings the ark of God to his city. Through these events David is confirmed as the anointed of God. At the end of the sequence David seeks to honour God by building a house for the ark, but the prophet Nathan brings a message that David is not to build the house, but

rather God will build David a house, that is, a succession of sons to rule over Israel.

The sequence of events builds from beginning to end. Chapters i-iv present a consistent account of David's attitude toward the house of Saul, and in so doing reveal David's respect for God's anointing. They also present David as someone who inquires of God on several occasions before making significant decisions. In the account of the transfer of the ark, David learns what God's wishes are in regard to the ark and conforms to them. David's accession involves a recognition by David that although he is the anointed king he is not free to take power in any way that he wishes. The 'theology' of the story is intrinsic to its development, and functions as a restraint on David's actions. It is this element of restraint which indicates David's obedience. It is not surprising then that the end of the sequence involves a confirmation of God's election of David as king. 10

But one of the effects of previous literary examinations has been to show that the sequence of action in II Samuel i-vii cannot be read in the present order. Or to be more precise, the order that the chapters are now in are the product of the Dtr. editor who has placed these stories in the present sequence, but they were not originally written together and are not fully integrated in the present context. The most important points of disjunction in the narrative are at some

<sup>10</sup> Weiser claimed that chapter vii was the high point and the end point of the history of David's rise to power. It is the kernel by which the whole is understood. Weiser, see above, pp. 144-145. The significance of chapter vii to the story in the Dtr. history as a whole is attested in the studies on the Dtr. history reviewed in Part I, Chapter Two.

point in II Samuel v, that is, at the end of the source called the history of David's rise and between the ark narrative in chapter vi and the texts preceding or following it. There are also numerous divisions in each chapter which influence the reading of each passage. The 'unity' or sequence of these chapters is one that is imposed by a final editor and is not intrinsic to the story. As a corollary of these source divisions, the full movement of the story cannot be to an explanation of what takes place in chapter vii. Indeed, in Part I we noticed that there is a split between studies on the sources, the history of David's rise and the ark narrative, and studies on chapter vii. Those interested in the Dtr. history are often particularly concerned with II Samuel vii, but not with II Samuel i-vi and any impact these chapters might have on chapter vii. The source divisions influence the understanding the story; in fact, they write a new story.11

<sup>11</sup> Aristotle claims that the plot is the first principle of tragic poetry. The plot or story is told to exemplify a purpose. Character is second to the plot. The unity exists in the coherence of the story, but not necesarily in the homogeneity of the actions of a particular character. Poetics vi 1450 a 36-37. He also says of plot:

so the plot, being an imitation of an action, must imitate one action and that a whole, the structural union of the parts being such that, if any one of them is deplaced or removed, the whole will be disjointed and disturbed. For a thing whose presence or absence makes no visible difference, is not an organic part of the whole. Poetics viii 1251 a 30-36. Aristotle, Poetics, in Aristotle's Theory of Poetry and Fine Art, trans. S.H. Butcher, intro. essay by J. Gassner, (4th ed.; New York: Dover, 1951), p. 35. Those who have divided the books of Samuel into sources are saying that the sequence of the narrative is disjointed and disturbed and only makes sense if it is rearranged.

The effects of the alteration of the story are immense. rereading of the text claims that the historical David is ruthlessly ambitious for power, kills an innocent messenger and laments Saul to make it appear that he honours his fallen enemy. It claims further that David woos the northern tribes, that he betrays his loyal defender Joab to an enemy, Abner, in order to gain power over the northern tribes, that he then is secretly glad when Abner too is killed, that he pretends to disavow Ish-bosheth's death in further hope of winning the house of Saul, that he moves the ark to gain religious support for his cause, that he is immodest in bringing the ark to his city, and finally that he fails to understand that God alone should take initiative in the construction of a house for the ark. The account given is that David is hungry for power and a tyrant to any who stand in his way. Furthermore, David does not honour Israelite religion. In this rereading it is still affirmed that God honours David above all other kings in Israel. God is with him in his rise to power and favours him with the promise of an eternal succession of his descendants on the throne. Yet God's selection of David for such honour is oblivious to David's tyrannical actions prior to chapter vii. God's election of David in II Samuel vii is made in spite of David's lack of respect for justice, law, morality or religion. God's selection of David appears unjust. Why is Saul rejected because of disobedience and David honoured in spite of disobedience? The rereading raises the question of theodicy in this section of Samuel.

#### C. Conditional and unconditional covenant

The argument for the unity of sequence of II Samuel i-vii as

we have it in the versions allows us to read II Samuel i-vi as a precursor to II Samuel vii. We have argued that in chapters i-vi David is not the tyrant that he is often understood to be. David's anointing occurred much earlier in the story and we have not been able to study the entire life of David to see all that led to the promises made to him in chapter vii. But if the sequence in chapters i-vii can be read as continuous, it is possible to affirm that David receives the promises at least in part due to his obedience. The pattern may indeed be that God anoints David, then there is a period of testing in which obedience is required of David or further mercy will not be shown him, and finally the promises are made to David. This reading is not possible if II Samuel vii is independent of II Samuel i-vi, and thus the unity of the sequence is a vital part in the argument.

This inquiry thus supports a different reading of these traditions than is often made. It does not stress only that election is confined to an act of God's mercy, but that a vital place is given to human free-will to choose or reject divine stipulations or law. The anointing of the first two kings begins as an act of mercy, and the reasons are unknown. But the purpose of the story in II Samuel i-vii is to reveal David's restraint or obedience.

This inquiry thus reads this section of the Former Prophets as conforming more with M. Noth's account of the Dtr. history than G. von Rad's. Noth offers a more vital place of law and obedience in the history than others, such as von Rad. Although the nature of the divine stipulations is somewhat elusive in Noth's account of the history, he does recognise that there is a moral element to God's

requirements. The history is not simply a history of the fulfillment of God's promises despite human disobedience.

While what 'law' means in these stories cannot be fully explained without a resolution of problems in Pentateuchal studies, it cannot be denied that some moral, legal and religious code is operative in the II Samuel i-vii. 12 David's obedience is represented in various ways, as respect for the previous king who is the anointed of the Lord, in prayer for direction in regard to accepting the kingship, in respect for Abner who defends the people of Israel, in asking direction and waiting for God to win the victories over the Philistines, by transporting the ark in proper fashion and being joyous as God favours him, and finally by praying to thank God for his mercy. David is also judicious with those about him. He praises his enemy Saul as a warrior, he expresses his love for his friend Jonathan, he praises Abner for his valour in defending Israel, he does not solicit or force the Judaeans nor the Israelites to make him king over them, and he rewards the people with bread, choice meat and wine upon the arrival of the ark in the city of David. These are not the actions of a tyrant, and they attest to a code of justice that David maintain-The promise that is made to David in II Samuel vii does not immediately appear undeserved because of David's 'selfish' and 'law-

<sup>12</sup> Nicholson, who claims that the Pentateuchal law was not in full force during the stories depicted in the Former Prophets, still recognises that the Sinai covenant traditions are part of a covenant renewal ceremony at Shechem prior to the monarchy. Nicholson, see above, p. 99.

less' behaviour. David is not perfect, but he is not the tyrant that is often supposed.

If II Samuel i-vii should be read as a sequence, it has certain implications for the study of the Former Prophets. The question regarding whether the Dtr. history represents a conditional or unconditional covenant is not asked in precisely the way it should be. The redaction of the Dtr. history, as for example in the work of Cross and Nicholson, assigns passages which are conditional to one period of history and passages which are unconditional to another period. The contradictions or tensions in the story are explained by the different origins of the material. But a central problem in this kind of explanation is that it precludes the recognition that the story may not present the same teaching at all points, that is, that the tensions may be purposeful, and are what the story itself is seeking to resolve. The promise made to the Judaeans through David in II Samuel vii is unconditional, but that does not mean that the promises are made to David regardless of what he did prior to chapter vii. The promise appears to have had an element of conditionality in it until such time as David had shown his obedience. Fruitful study of the entire Dtr. history could be carried out to see whether such a reading of the entire history could be sustained. It is possible that exile represents both a rejection of Israel because of disobedience to the law and the beginning of a new way in which the unconditional promise made to the house of David will be fulfilled. Law may have a central place in the history, and it may not be in contradiction to promise in the way that is often conceived.

Furthermore, if the covenant with David is unconditional but has not undermined the need for law, then there may also be reason not to oppose the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants to the Sinaitic covenant to the extent that, for example, R.E. Clements does in Abraham and David. 13 Clements points out the similarities of the covenants with Abraham and David on the basis that they do not involve any legal obligations. He further argues that this unconditional covenant is associated with the historical period after the monarchy because it is not a legal covenant. The legal or conditional covenant of Sinai comes from a distinct period because of its moral obligations on the part of the Israelites. If the Davidic covenant is not contrary to legal elements, however, then there may indeed be greater continuity between the Sinaitic covenant and the Davidic covenants than is recognised.

Finally, it is necessary to insist that the depiction of David in II Samuel i-vii is not of a perfect David. The words "hero" and "pious" 14 to characterise him are stereotypes which make trivial the richness of II Samuel i-vii. In arguing that David is sufficiently obedient so that the promise is made to him, it is unnecessary to adopt the view that David is depicted in a static fashion. The narrative is immensely varied, and this richness is one of the reasons that the view that the designation of it as political propaganda is

<sup>13</sup> R.E. Clements, Abraham and David, Genesis XV and its Meaning for Israelite Tradition, Studies in Biblical Theology, 5 (Naperville, Il: Alec R. Allenson, 1967).

<sup>14</sup> Ward, see above, pp. 158-159.

inadequate. For example, David's relation to Joab is complicated. Joab is one of David's thirty chief warriors who has been faithful to David when David was a nobody fleeing from Saul, and Joab is a mighty warrior for Israel against the Philistines. David has reason to be loyal to Joab. But Joab kills Abner unnecessarily despite Abner's attempt to bring peace from civil war. What ought David to do with this man? David's good intentions in moving the ark are imperfect as he fails to honour God completely in his preparations. Yet David is willing to be corrected, and continues the procession with alterations. He desires his god to reside in a house as elegant as his own, but receives an answer from Nathan that he is not to proceed and is given promises of another kind of house instead. These examples are not of a flat or unchanging person who is heroic on all occasions, but of someone in the midst of complicated situations who makes errors and yet is capable of growth. This richness does not deny the sufficiency of his obedience at this point in the story.

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