



ISRAEL IN TRANSITION 2

FROM LATE BRONZE II TO
IRON IIA (C. 1250-850 BCE):
THE TEXTS

EDITED BY
LESTER L. GRABBE



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From Late Bronze II to Iron IIa (c. 1250–850 B.C.E.).
Volume 2. The Texts

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the Arts and Humanities Research Council)



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edited by
Lester L. Grabbe



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To

Jerry Lynn Garrison Sculley

in memory of growing up together

in Silverton, Texas

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ABBREVIATIONS

AASOR	Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research
AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> . Edited by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols. New York, 1992
ACEBT	<i>Amsterdamse Cahiers voor Exegese en bijbelse Theologie</i>
AEL	M. Lichtheim, <i>Ancient Egyptian Literature</i> . 3 vols. Berkeley, 1976–80
AOAT	Alter Orient und Altes Testament
ARE	<i>Ancient Records of Egypt</i> . Edited by J. H. Breasted. 5 vols. Chicago, 1905–1907. Reprint, New York, 1962
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BAR	<i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
BN	<i>Biblische Notizen</i>
BZAW	Beihefte zur ZAW
CAH	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CIS	Copenhagen International Series
DJD	Discoveries in the Judaean Desert
EI	<i>Eretz Israel</i>
ESHM	European Seminar in Historical Methodology
FAT	Forschungen zum Alten Testament
H&T	<i>History and Theory</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDBSup	<i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: Supplementary Volume</i> . Edited by K. Crim. Nashville, 1976
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
JARCE	<i>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</i>
JEA	<i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i>
JESHO	<i>Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
KHAT	Kurzer Hand-Commentar zum Alten Testament

LAPO	Littératures anciennes du Proche-Orient
LB	Late Bronze
LHBOTS	Library of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
MB	Middle Bronze
<i>NEA</i>	<i>Near Eastern Archaeology</i>
NSK-AT	Neuer Stuttgarter Kommentar, Altes Testament
OBO	Orbis biblicus et orientalis
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Old Testament Monographs
PdÄ	Probleme der Ägyptologie
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestinian Exploration Quarterly</i>
SAHL	Studies in the Archaeology and History of the Levant
SBLABS	Society of Biblical Literature Archaeology and Biblical Studies
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLSymS	Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series
SHCANE	Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East
<i>SJOT</i>	<i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i>
<i>TA</i>	<i>Tel Aviv</i>
<i>ThWAT</i>	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i> . Edited by G. J. Botterweck and H. Ringgren. Stuttgart, 1970–
<i>UF</i>	<i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
VTSup	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i> , Supplements
<i>ZAW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZBKAT	Zürcher Bibelkommentare. Altes Testament
<i>ZDPV</i>	<i>Zeitschrift des deutschen Palästina-Vereins</i>

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Part I

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Lester L. Grabbe

This is the second of two volumes on the period ca. 1250 to 850 B.C.E. Volume 1 (Grabbe, ed., 2008) was on the archaeology, while the present volume focuses more on the textual sources, though some other sources are also looked at (cf. Grabbe, which surveys all the sources [pp. 62–129, below]). Most of the essays were discussed in preliminary form in the meeting of the European Seminar on Historical Methodology in conjunction with the European Association of Biblical Studies in Budapest (2006) and Vienna (2007). Partial funding for these meetings was provided by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) of the UK.¹

When plans for the discussion in the present volume were originally laid out for members of the Seminar, there was considerable scepticism on the part of some as to whether such an investigation was possible. Archaeology was taken for granted as a potential way of understanding the history of this period, but were any biblical texts relevant? Many members of the Seminar were primarily textual scholars, whereas the archaeology was being discussed separately by a group of professional archaeologists. Was the discussion likely to produce anything of interest, or would it only confirm the uselessness of the text that had been concluded in some circles? There are of course some contemporary texts, especially Egyptian ones, but there are not many of these, and those that do exist are often problematic to use for historical purposes (see Grabbe for a survey of these). But the biblical text looms large in the discussions, though not all turned out to be as sceptical as the colleagues mentioned above (for a further discussion of the different views, see the “Reflections” chapter below).

1. The AHRC funds postgraduate training and research in the arts and humanities, from archaeology and English literature to design and dance. The quality and range of research supported not only provides social and cultural benefits but also contributes to the economic success of the UK. For further information on the AHRC, please see its website: www.ahrc.ac.uk.

Summary of the Volume's Content

NB: All of E. A. Knauf's contributions are summarized together, even though one appears as an Appendix to the present volume.

In his "Samuel, Sources, and Historiography," *A. Graeme Auld* poses the question: Need the sources of Samuel be early? He notes that scholars have commonly proposed sources for the various sections of Samuel; but wonders whether the very question "How was the book of Samuel composed?" may imply the (wrong) answer. It is not a matter of "components." For example, the story of David and Goliath differs considerably in the MT and the LXX. It is usually said that the more original LXX was expanded by a pre-existing source to give the MT. But an alternative suggestion is that the explanation is not in terms of rival sources but of natural growth in the narrative. In other words, the narrative grew midrash-like not by incorporating new sources, but by filling in gaps in the narrative from materials already at hand. For example, David's loyalty to the house of Nahash in Ammon (2 Sam 10) has provided the key category for a new narrative in 2 Sam 9 about David's loyalty to the house of Saul. Likewise, much of the story of the ark in 1 Sam 5–6 is a fresh re-combination of elements already present in 2 Sam 5–6, together with the temple of Dagon from 1 Sam 31. Two points can be made about the relationship between the material common to Samuel and Chronicles: one, that the version in Chronicles of the synoptic material is more conservative than the version in Samuel; two, that the shared text, in as far as it can be reconstructed, is our oldest and largest source for the books of Samuel and Kings. This shared text, "The Book of the Two Houses" (BTH), continues at least to the time of Josiah. The accounts of Saul, David, and Solomon were written as a preface to this royal history, drawing on it for inspiration. No source for David and Solomon is earlier than this narrative of the kings in Jerusalem, and the David–Solomon narrative is thus no earlier than the late monarchy.

Marc Brettler ("The David Tradition") begins his study by a lengthy survey of modern trends in historiography, concluding that a consensus is developing which rejects the extremes of postmodernism and scepticism, on the one hand, and those who privilege the biblical tradition and ignore the normal canons of critical historiography, on the other. In spite of its problems, the only course is a literary-critical analysis that makes no a priori assumptions about whether the text is historical or not. A careful examination of the parallel traditions in 1 Sam 24 and 26

concerning David fleeing from Saul offers a useful test-case for understanding the development of the David Tradition, and deciding how that tradition might bear on the historical reconstruction of the early monarchy. This paper attempts to use the canons of general historiographical study to examine these texts, their relationship, and their utility for the modern historian of Israel. It suggests that 1 Sam 24 knew and adapted the earlier 1 Sam 26, although ultimately ch. 24 is better integrated into the book of Samuel than ch 26. It also finds reason to believe that ch. 26, the earlier source, has reworked a now lost source. But in its present form the text of ch. 26 is still far removed from the age and life of David. Given the origin of these chapters, they may not be used to reconstruct the history of the early monarchy. The tendency of the chapters is very clear: it is to glorify the magnanimity and piety of David, while also condemning Saul for malevolence out of his own mouth. Even though it is true that all texts are evidence for something, we know too little about who may have composed these chapters, or when and why they were written, so they should not be used for reconstructing any aspect of the history of Israel.

Philip Davies (“The Beginnings of the Kingdom of Judah”) examines the implications of the reference to *bytdwd* in the Tel Dan inscription. He accepts the authenticity of the inscription (though until it is properly authenticated a question mark hangs over any thesis depending on it), but the positioning of the fragments is still a moot point, as is the restoration at a number of points. The result is a number of interpretations. *bytdwd* is crucial to many interpretations, but does it mean “kingdom of Judah”? The Assyrian reference to “house of Omri” has often been invoked for this interpretation, but the Assyrian inscriptions refer to “Judah,” not “house of David.” Of the 25 biblical references to “house of David” in the Bible, none means “kingdom of Judah.” Some refer to a building/dwelling, but most refer to “the family of David” or the ruling dynasty. Lemaire’s restoration of “David” in the Moabite inscription, even if it is correct (a number of epigraphers disagree with this reading), doubtfully means “kingdom of Judah.” It is unlikely that the Tel Dan stele refers to a kingdom or state of Judah alongside Israel; on the contrary, the kingdom of Judah does not exist in the Tel Dan inscription. Whether there was a state centred on Jerusalem is unclear, but the biblical text indicates Judah in the 9th century was controlled by Israel. There was a “united monarchy”—ruled by the Omrides. So, even though *bytdwd* might yet be read as a reference to a vassal chiefdom of the kingdom of Israel, it remains to be argued that this chiefdom can be identified as a kingdom of Judah, or its leader as *melek*.

Lester Grabbe (“From Merneptah to Shoshenq: If We Had Only the Bible...”) continues to ask the question asked in a number of earlier studies: If we had only the Bible, what might be known about Israel’s history? Unlike the time from the mid-9th century when many inscriptions are available, however, there are few extra-biblical sources in the earlier period (ca. 1250–850 B.C.E.). This makes the problem of testing the biblical narrative more difficult. When we look at the biblical narratives that purport to cover this period of time (mainly Exodus, Numbers, Joshua to 2 Kgs 11), we find little to corroborate them, at least until we come to the narratives of Saul and David. By and large, the archaeology does not support the main biblical narrative of the exodus, wandering in the wilderness, and conquest of the land. When we come to Saul, David, and Solomon, many scholars have thought we had reached a secure period of biblical history. Again, though, the archaeology does not give firm support. The Saul and David narratives may have a historical core, despite many problems, but the Solomon story looks mainly legendary. Here and there may be reliable data in the text, but so far the investigation does not suggest there are many such data. The impression gained from earlier studies seems to be borne out: the later the history of the monarchy the more reliable the text seems to be.

Axel Knauf (“History in Joshua”) asks: How much “history” found its way into the present text of Joshua and also what kind of history? Accepting the historical-critical analysis of biblical literature as basically valid, he surveys the literary history of Joshua: late 7th century (first draft, end of an Exodus–Conquest Story: Josh 6* and 10*); 525–450 (Exodus–Conquest Story becomes D-Composition: Josh 6–11*); 450–400 (first Hexateuch redaction: Josh 1–11*; 15:20–18:1*); 400–375 (second Hexateuch redaction [Josh 13; 20–22; 24] and Joshua–Judges Redaction [Josh 12; 14; 18–19; 23]). There are memories of cities that were seats of rulers in the LB II and some other data. Those from the earliest through the 9th century are as follows:

1. 13th: Josh 15:9; 18:15 (“waters of Nephteah” = “spring-place of Mer-en-Ptah”).
2. 13th/12th: Josh 17:2, 14: Manassite clan from survivors of Merneptah’s Israel.
3. (a) 10th: Josh 10:1–14* (10:12c–13c) (battle of Gibeon).
(b) Josh 15:63 (Jebusites still dominate Jerusalem even after David).
4. 10th/early 9th: Josh 10:13d (“Book of Jashar/the Upright”).
5. 10th/early 9th: Josh 16:10; 17:11–13 (Canaanite cities integrated into Israel).

Quite a few other passages have historical references, but these relate to the 8th to 3rd/2nd century B.C.E. Thus, most texts with references to datable events are post-Iron IIA. Taking all the passages—both early and late—the features from Joshua are evaluated as “possible” or “probable” (the difference between the two being mainly one of chronological precision). The probable/possible features tend to cluster in the pre-exilic period (which is a long one) and the Persian period, with few in the pre-state and Hellenistic periods. That is, the “historical memory” of Joshua tends to focus equally on the pre-exilic and the Persian periods, with the pre-state little remembered and the Hellenistic coming mostly after the completion of Joshua. The oldest piece of text is quoted from the 10th century (Josh 10:13d); larger amounts of text are preserved from the royal administrations of Israel and Judah in the 9th and 8th centuries. The fundamental expectation that the text should reflect best the time of its authors (rather than the time about which they wrote) is fulfilled in that the later features have more text and precision; however, the historicity rate of early literary strata is not necessarily higher than that of later strata. Thus, one cannot read a core narrative uncritically nor ignore possible historical information in redactional additions. Joshua has preserved elements of historical information, but the historical narrative it gives does not correspond with historical reality.

Axel Knauf continues his investigation in “History in Judges.” Less than 25 percent of the book’s contents derive from the 10th to 9th centuries B.C.E. and the LB/Iron I, though almost nothing from the latter. The pre-exilic core grew by adding layers, with the “Book of Saviours” constituting the first addition in response to the loss of the Israel’s king. A Jewish adaptation, turning the anti-monarchic, anti-state attitude into pro-state propaganda, began in the Persian period. A number of passages potentially have a historical basis; of these the following could have come from the 9th century or earlier:

3:12–30:

The defeat of Eglon by the Benjaminite clan Ehud was possible during the period of weak state power, either ca. 1100–875 B.C.E. or 724–716 B.C.E.

3:13:

Moab’s conquest of Jericho was possible once Mesha had conquered Nebo ca. 850/840 B.C.E.

3:22–23:

This presupposes an Assyrian type of toilet, which was possible from 716 B.C.E. onwards, with the Assyrian palaces at Samaria and Megiddo.

4–5:

The Song of Deborah was not composed before the 10th century B.C.E. and first committed to writing in the Omride court (ca. 875–850 B.C.E.). It describes a conflict between the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali, on the one hand, and the Sea Peoples leader Sisera, on the other. Many features of the poem are the common stock in trade of professional singers, while the prose account (ch. 4) is derived from the Song.

8:3–21:

Gideon's eastern campaign may reflect the Midianite involvement in the Rift Valley copper trade from the 11th to 9th centuries (LC). A conflict between the clan of Abiezer and a Midianite raiding party is possible anytime during this period.

8:10:

The Israelites fought a battle with the Assyrians at Qarqar in 853 B.C.E.

8:13–17:

Pharaoh Shishak conducted a campaign that destroyed Penuel and Succoth, though Jeroboam I then rebuilt Penuel.

9:

Shechem was not settled between the late 11th and the late 10th centuries (LC) but was resettled as an Israelite royal residence. The "Abimelech/Shechem" tradition is thus unlikely to predate 1050 B.C.E., but it seems to describe tensions between tribe and town, perhaps David and Jerusalem or even Saul and Gibeon.

The historical memory in Judges is found in texts that are often much later than the events. In collective memory anything over 200 years old is "distant past"; 100 to 200 years ago represent the "past"; while things less than 100 years ago are part of the "present." The examples can be divided into "probable" events (total of 11) and "possible" events (total of 12). Of the *probable* events, 45 percent fall into the 100 years past, 27 percent into the 200 years past, and another 27 percent into the "distant past." Of the *possible* events, 25 percent fall into the "present" within the past 100 years, 42 percent in the "past" up to 200 years before, while a full 33 percent were of the distant past of more than 200 years earlier. There were a number of discontinuities between 1000 and 720, which resulted in breaks in the collective memory. For example, the Omride history has almost no representation in Judges, and of the rich literature only the song of Deborah is preserved in the biblical text.

In his final piece (Appendix), *Axel Knauf* reflections on history with regard to the "Exodus and Settlement." The idea that Yhwh led Israel out of Egypt is already present at the foundational stage of the biblical

tradition, but the view that he led Israel into Canaan is no earlier than the 8th century B.C.E., while it is in the theology of the 7th to 6th centuries that the land becomes a gift from God. It is probable that in the 12th century a group of refugees, descendants of prisoners of war taken by Mer-en-Ptah, arrived in Canaan with the message that “Yhwh led us out of Egypt.” The Exodus creed may have entered the state cult of Israel by the reign of Jeroboam I (end of 10th century), though more likely the reign of Jeroboam II (mid-8th). Moses’ Egyptian name suggests he was associated with the Exodus tradition from the beginning, but his biography has remarkable parallels with that of Jeroboam I and was probably modeled on it. The “baby in the bullrushes,” however, was probably derived from the legend associated with Sargon I, under the influence of the Akkadian Sargonid dynasty. The entry into the land was not an important tradition as long as the nation of Israel existed, but when the people ceased to be a state (though still in the land), Hosea emphasized the Jacob and wilderness traditions. But now the question arose as to who the people were who lived in the land before Israel and what had happened to them. Assyrian theology, centring on subjugation and vassal treaties with subordinate peoples, was very influential. The list of peoples allegedly driven out was derived from the “academic” knowledge of the writers. For example, the Amorites were known from Babylonian texts but probably via Aramaic versions of documents available in Jerusalem. Traditional and even mythic names found their way into the narrative. The concept of annihilation of the native inhabitants seems to have come in with the Assyrians: the *ḥērem* texts belong to the D-expansions of the book rather than the original narrative. The proposed genocide of the original inhabitants had only an “encyclopaedic” existence. Those to be driven out or struck down in the context of D were actually the Benjaminites—an inner-Jewish conflict has been projected onto external foes. The events of the “historical” narrative became part of preserved memory and are celebrated anew each year; the collective memory of the yearly cycle has become a book. The failed history of the monarchy has been neutralized but not forgotten, lest the error be repeated.

Niels Peter Lemche has doubts about whether an examination of history during Iron I and Iron IIA can discover anything of interest (“How to Deal with ‘Early Israel’”). He organizes his discussion around five questions: (1) *What happened in the way of writing a history of the period?* He mentions two works: the revised Miller/Hayes and the recent work of Liverani. The former unfortunately takes a “middle-of-the road”

perspective, which invites being attacked from both sides. It will also produce little new knowledge, but Liverani is more innovative. (2) *What happened from an archaeological point of view?* The recent extensive archaeological excavations have not generally been pertinent to the period of the 13th to 10th centuries B.C.E. The work in Tel Aviv has met little challenge (except from Jerusalem), and we are a far cry from the earlier politically inspired biblical archaeology. The creators of the modern state of Israel chose history as a vehicle for nationalism. The Marxist rebels of 1968 chose history as an object of hate. Archaeology has not changed much in the past ten years: Finkelstein's outline of twenty years ago still holds. The most innovation relates to the later period: O. Lipschits on the 7th to 5th centuries B.C.E. (3) *What happened within social anthropology to help in reconstructing early Israel?* It is the North American tradition of social anthropology that has most influenced archaeology. Cultural evolution is misleading. It was examined in *Early Israel*, but the mistakes of the past keep being repeated (e.g. in S. Cook's *Social Roots of Biblical Yahwism*). Material culture does not necessarily conform to ethnicity. Dever has deservedly been attacked for assuming this, but A. Killebrew could also be criticized. R. D. Miller's work has much to commend it (cf. pp. 167–98, below), but it examines only one model among many. When it comes to incorporating sociological analysis into historical studies, not much has happened. (4) *What happened in the way of reading biblical texts that would allow for new ideas of history and historicity?* Lemche's *Canaanites* and Thompson's *The Bible in History* found more acceptance among literary students than biblical historians. The Copenhagen School is not postmodern but modern, but it has to recognize that if the relativism of postmodernism wins, it will be the death of history as a discipline. The intellectual mood of today does not advance historical interests. Most modern literary theory applied to the Bible is misleading. This is because of a total change of aesthetic norms since antiquity. But it is doubtful that we can escape modern hermeneutics and continue to be biblical scholars. This leads us to present "twisted" readings of biblical and other ancient Near Eastern texts. Then ancient historiography becomes interesting because it tells us what people believed to have happened. (5) *What kind of history can be written?* Liverani's work was divided into two sections. The first ("normal history") was more traditional than might be expected from him, but the second part ("invented history") centres on the meaning of texts: Why were they written? He shows that we do not get from history to ideology but from ideology to history. It is possible to write the history of Palestine without the Bible.

Robert D. Miller II discusses “A ‘New Cultural History’ of Early Israel.” The first part of the essay surveys—mainly by a series of quotations—some recent views about writing a cultural history of Israel. Several concrete issues will be grappled with, the first being house design. The classic “four-roomed house” is typical of the Iron I highlands but not unique to that region. The Bunimovitz/Faust analysis is critiqued, though no generalizations about town design are offered. Gender division of tasks is well known in most pre-modern societies and is indicated for Iron I Israel. Settlement patterns as reconstructed by archaeologists differ from the tribal allotments of the biblical text, which seem to be based on later tribal boundaries in the region. The settlement maps can be compared with artifact distribution maps. Several pottery types are excluded for practical reasons, including bowls, jugs, lamps, and also cooking pots. Storage jars are potentially useful, and their distribution pattern is plotted (though there is a debate over whether they could be transported or not). But the entire typological method of Syro-Palestinian archaeology is to be questioned, since “R-Analysis” is now thought preferable to “Q-Analysis.” The question is asked whether topological analysis is a good way to culture—which would negate the discussion of the first part of the article! Texts are also a cultural artifact. Only a minimum have been found for Iron I—found mainly in small, obscure sites (which itself raises issues). Evidence of religion is found mainly in cult sites, but the evidence is very meagre: the famous “Bull Site” is excluded as an Iron I shrine. Some known sites (e.g. at Dan) are outside the central hill country. The Mt. Ebal “altar” might be cultic. The metal bull associated with the “Bull Site” was not found by archaeologists and is probably MB; otherwise, no evidence for the cult is known for this period. There are some Iron I figurines but even more incense burners (probably, though not certainly, cultic). Mortuary evidence is also skimpy, but there is no evidence for a warrior cult. Some graves have pottery only but others have other sorts of grave goods as well. The new Iron I highland settlements indicate new and different reactions to the cultural meaning imposed on the landscape by the LB inhabitants. The biblical depiction of early Israelite religion is “accurate” in indicating religious practices that do not accord with the standardized religion of later times.

John Van Seters (“David the Mercenary”) points out that in the Davidic narrative David shows considerable reliance on mercenaries in his time; on the other hand, there is hardly any mention of them in the later narratives of Kings. This suggests that the presence of mercenaries might provide an indication of the time and extent of a late revision of the

Davidic narratives. First the question of the use of mercenaries in Greece and the ancient Near East is investigated. From the time of Tiglath-pileser III trained soldiers of conquered peoples were coerced into serving the Assyrians. Psammeticus I (ca. 650 B.C.E.) was apparently the first to use Greek mercenary soldiers, to fortify the eastern Delta. The Saite dynasty seems to have used a variety of mercenaries, including Jews, and Greek mercenaries appear to have been stationed at Mesad Hashavyahu and Arad. This employment by the Saïtes increased significantly the number of Greeks who became mercenaries, understandable in the light of the lack of resources to maintain the Greek population by agriculture alone. The conquest of Egypt by the Persians halted the use of Greek mercenaries for a time, but the practice began again at the end of the 5th century: Cyrus the Younger used mercenaries. However, it is only the use of Greek mercenaries in this later period that is relevant for the David story. In the David story, David himself captains a band of mercenaries in the employment of the Philistine king of Gath (1 Sam 27; 29). They live on the booty taken on their raids. Throughout the narrative David and his men are recognized as highly trained professionals. After David became king he continued to use a professional army to do his fighting, according to the late David Saga (in contrast with DtrH, which has David lead his own citizen conscripts). Benaiah, the commander of David's Greek mercenaries—the Cherethites and Pelethites—is a serious rival to Joab, commander of the regular forces, and eventually replaces him (2 Sam 8:18; 1 Kgs 1–2; 4:4). This account of the Davidic monarchy fits the militaristic regimes of the late Persian period because it is only from the 4th century B.C.E. onwards that Persian rulers and satraps made use of these particular Greek professional mercenaries, the Cretans and the peltasts, with their specialized skills. In conclusion, the references to mercenaries in the David Saga are so pervasive that they cannot be removed by redaction-critical methods, and the narrative cannot be “read against the grain” to extract historical information, because the narrator has freely invented a portrayal of David modeled on the monarchs of his own day. One cannot use any of it to reconstruct the Davidic monarchy of the 10th century.

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Part II

ESSAYS

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SAMUEL, SOURCES, AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

A. Graeme Auld

Introductory

To understand the history of the development of the materials in the book of (1 and 2) Samuel is largely to remove Samuel from the list of potential sources for writing the history of the Levant in the earlier Iron Age. And yet to make such a claim is to fly in the face of what has passed as common wisdom for many generations of scholarship. A more familiar opening statement might go as follows: Historians work with sources. The book of Samuel is history (of a sort, at least). Searching for the sources of Samuel is a sensible and proper thing to do.

Asked about how the book of Samuel was “composed,” many Hebrew Bible scholars will start by identifying discrete sections, and arguing for at least relatively greater original independence for some of these: the birth and call of Samuel (1 Sam 1–3); the ark narratives (1 Sam 4–6; 2 Sam 6); the debate about kingship (1 Sam 8–12); Saul before David (1 Sam 13–15); Saul and David (1 Sam 16–31); David as king (2 Sam 1–8); and so on. They may not be sure about lines of demarcation, but will argue that these sections could have had a life of their own before they were used as they are now. It has been suggested by Thomas Römer (2005) that at least some such collections were part of Josiah’s library.

Many scholars will also draw attention to doublets, especially in 1 Samuel: varying accounts of how David came to the attention of Saul (1 Sam 16–18); David’s double flight from Saul to Achish of Gath (1 Sam 21 and 27); Saul twice in David’s power, and spared by him (1 Sam 24 and 26—see also Brettler’s contribution to the present volume); differing accounts of Saul’s death (1 Sam 31 and 2 Sam 1). Such doublets are held to represent alternative versions drawn from some of the source-material available to those responsible for the book as we know it.

And yet: there is a danger that the answer given is already implicit in the way the question is asked: that “composition” implies “components”—that it is only possible to “compose” by assembling pre-existing