The roots of Jehu's bloody coup: A violent story of religious Zealots, retributive justice or international politics?

BY

Lerato L. D. Mokoena

11215888

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER IN THEOLOGY (MTh)

IN

OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

IN THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

SUPERVISOR: PROFESSOR E. E MEYER

AUGUST 2017

Summary

This dissertation aims to analyse Jehu's coup in 2 Kings 9-10, to investigate all contributing factors and how the use of extreme violence in mass killings finds its justification. In chapter 2, the text will first be analysed be means of historical-critical and literary-critical methodological approaches. The aim of this chapter is to demarcate the text and expose redactional layers, omissions, repetitions and all other literary tools to see how they fit into the larger narrative. Chapter 3 then presents a historical overview of the world of the Omrides, their setting in life and an emphasis on how it is difficult to construct a history of an ancient world due to different obstacles (i.e. chronological gaps, traditional-, ideological-, religious-, and cultural differences) which are different from those of the author's contemporary context. In Chapter 4, Jehu and Omri are analysed as per the Deuteronomistic redactional activity. In the last chapter, the roots of Jehu's coup are analysed independently to set apart their individual contribution and how they cannot be disconnected as they all provide fertile ground for the coup.

It is the conclusion of this study that, Jehu's coup did not take place in isolation; rather, it was influenced by a myriad of events. The bloody coup as documented in the narrative finds no justification as it was discovered in this study that criticism could always be fought with words. This study also reveals that biblical narratives are not social photographs of the world of the texts as we have them, hence, an extensive reconstruction of the history behind the text must be conducted borrowing tools of analyses from archaeology, and sociology. This study then proves that, by showing the discrepancies between the recorded narrative (2 Kings 9-10) and archaeological evidence (i.e. Tel Dan inscription), dependence on a single source defeats the whole purpose of hermeneutics. This study finally argues that historical-critical inquiries are inevitable when dealing with ancient texts and should always be a primary endeavor.

Key words

Biblical Historiography

Diachronic

Synchronic

Omri

Jehu

Deuteronomistic History

Tel Dan

Retributive Justice

Violence

Monotheism

Prophets

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Chapter 1

Background to Study.

The study undertaken in this dissertation developed out of my honours research essay titled "A socio-political view of land acquisition in 1 Kings 21:1-16 as a form of dehumanization." The previous research essay serves as a precursor for the current study. Naboth's loss of his הלחנ (inheritance), resulting in his death under the rule of Ahab, is considered by scholars as one of the possible roots which served as basis for Jehu's coup as retributive justice for Naboth. It is therefore the aim of this paper to investigate all the possible roots of Jehu's coup adopting a holistic approach in explicating all contributing factors and to interrogate the extreme use of violence.

Following the death of Naboth in 1 Kings 21:1-16, and a further mention of Naboth's death and the acquisition of his vineyard in 2 Kings 9-10, the murder of Naboth prompted and sparked a debate of whether Naboth's death was avenged as Jehu executed his coup. An investigation into Jehu's coup opened up more doors of research as it became apparent that many other factors became intertwined with the coup narrative.

The apostasy of the Northern Kingdom also brought an element of idolatry into the scheme. The prophets Elijah and Elisha are introduced into the narrative through the anti-Jezebel redaction to invoke a Yahwism theme. Jehu was then a Yahwistic revolutionary who was being obedient to Yahweh during his bloody extermination of the house of Ahab.

Archaeological evidence (i.e. Tel Dan) would later defy the claims of the narrative as they are presented in the Old Testament, this then led to an investigation and an inquiry of how Jehu is related to all factors tied to him. How is Jehu's coup related to Tel Dan, Naboth, and the prophetic agenda of Elijah and Elisha?

1.1 Research problem

The reasons behind Jehu's coup documented in 2 Kings 9-10 have been a bone of contention in Old Testament discourses and there is little consensus. Three main reasons are usually given:

First, White (1997:45) attests for instance that there were two opposing parties during the Omride rule: a syncretistic (i.e. Yahwist and Baalist) ruling party represented by Ahab and Jezebel, and an exclusive Yahwist party represented by the prophets Elisha and Elijah. For White it was about the struggle between Yahwism and Baalism and thus a religious struggle. Albertz (2009:381) argues similarly that: "Without a doubt, the Jehu revolution is a startling example of religiously motivated violence."

Second, other scholars would argue for other socio-economic reasons for the coup. Omri's dynasty, as described by the biblical text of 1 Kings 16:21-28 was oppressive, exploitative and violent in nature. Policies that Omri implemented, such as international relations with the Phoenicians, were those that strengthened the economy of Samaria, but left peasants exploited, landless and indebted to heavy taxes. Mtshiselwa (2014:214) notes that, "There seems to have been very little regard for the poor during the reign of Omri." Mtshiselwa (2014:205) further argues that, from a socio-economic observation, Jehu's coup was rather a revolution that was aiming at correcting historical injustices. One example of such an injustice is the above-mentioned story of Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-16). Naboth was dispossessed of his vineyard by Ahab and Jezebel and the "revolution" of Jehu was a form vengeance or retributive justice. It was a form of socio-economic redress by removing the oppressive symbol that was "the House of Omri."

Third, the discovery of the Tel Dan inscription at Tel Dan in 1993 further complicates matters regarding the account of the events as they happened. 2 Kings 9:23-24 records that King Joram of Israel met his death at the hands of Jehu and was only injured by Hazael of Syria during battle at Ramoth. The Tel Dan inscription however records a different account. Stith (2008:214) posits that, "the inscription records Hazael's public claim that he had killed Joram, king of Israel, and Ahaziah, king of Judah." Stith

(2008:214) further argues that it might mean that Jehu acted as "an agent or vassal of Hazael." This would mean that what happened to the house of Omri in the time of Jehu had more to do with international politics than with Yahwism or social justice.

Apart from these reasons, a further problem in this narrative is the extreme violence used. White (1997:63-64) points out that the Omrides suffered a series of military and diplomatic setbacks after Ahab's death. This made the Omrides vulnerable and easily prone to a coup, a violent overthrow was predictable. They had lost Moab as their subject and Aram as an ally. Hazael resulting in the injury of the King surprisingly attacked them, all this reduced the Omrides to military failure, and their king was in a weakened condition. The point is, the Omrides were already incapacitated and the question is why the extreme use of violence?

According to Albertz (2009:383), many reforms and revolts had been carried out and were less violent. Criticism was fought with words. Fights against syncretism for monotheism in Israel were pedagogical and as Albertz (2008:382) further argues: "reformers wanted to educate the community for a better religious understanding and ritual and ethical behavior." Massacres like that in the case of Jehu, hardly ever took place. Can the extreme use of violence therefore be accounted for and be justified? Which one of the previously mentioned explanations could provide an answer?

The questions to be addressed in this dissertation are: given the broader scope of the context for Jehu's coup, what were the driving forces? Was it social justice for the Israelite is oppressed by Omri; was it vengeance for Naboth or a religious purge by the prophets? Alternatively, was it simply about an Aramaic king who wanted to extend his power? In addition, this dissertation would like to ask if Jehu's use of extreme violence was necessary and if it could somehow be justified because it was for religious purity?

1.2 Aims and Objectives

1.2.1 Specific Aims

The specific aims of the research to be undertaken in this dissertation can be outlined as follows:

- Through the diachronic and synchronic critical methods, to analyse the text in its final form and how it evolved through time.

- To provide a historical overview of the rule of the Omrides over the Northern Kingdom to create a context for Jehu's coup.
- An overview of the Deuteronomist's editing of 2 Kings 9-10 as a redactor.
- Explore through all possible factors that are regarded as having created fertile ground for Jehu's coup.
- Discuss the discrepancies between the Tel Dan stele and the recorded narrative in the text.
- Interpret Jehu's coup and interrogate the extreme use of violence.

1.2.2 Overall objective

To prove that Jehu's coup was influenced by a myriad of factors. Jehu was a social tool in addressing and redressing all the possible factors which incited his coup. To show that, violence's frustrated intentions beget further violence and that there can be other ways in which this violence can be sublimated/channeled.

1.3 Hypothesis

Upon reviewing and analysing literature concerned with the subject matter, it became apparent that all the proposed reasons behind Jehu's coup are somewhat intertwined. It was not one single event but they all seem to have contributed. The coup was a political agenda propagated by the Prophet Elijah's oracle against the House of Ahab in 1 Kings 21:17-29, who made Jehu a Yahwistic revolutionary and social justice agent. Naboth's death, Jehu's betrayal and the murder of Ahaziah and Joram, and the idolatry of the Northern Kings of Omri's dynasty were catalysts for the revolution.

The coup is thus made to look like a prophetic fulfilment of the Yahwistic extremist party, Naboth's death had been avenged, sanctuaries of idols had been exterminated and the Yahwistic had triumphed. Moreover, there is also textual evidence to prove that Jehu might have been acting out of retribution in 2 Kings 9:25-26. It is here where the extreme use of violence finds its justification. The violence was viewed as zealous obedience to YHWH. It was instrumental in silencing opposition parties but it still stands that it was not all together necessary.

1.4 Methodology

The historical-critical (Diachronic) and literary-critical (Synchronic) methods of textual analysis will be employed in investigating problems surrounding the narrative artistry, and the historicity of the text, to gather the background information necessary to help in the understanding the text. On a diachronic level, the text in question will be analysed by means of redaction criticism, to determine the theological emphasis of the Deuteronomist (Dtr) as a 'redactor', which was central to the message he was conveying. Römer (2007:155) explains how the Dtr had a negative perception of the Northern Kings because, "…no King from the North is judged positively since they all worship YHWH outside Jerusalem, especially Bethel". However, Jehu becomes an exception in the eyes of the Dtr as Römer (2007:156) indicates that, "…The first kings, especially the Omrides, are the worst; in the Deuteronomistic history most of them are targets of oracles of annihilation; the series that starts with Jehu et al. is somewhat better, probably because of Jehu's annihilation of the Omride dynasty."

Furthermore, a comparative analysis of the use of violence in social justice issues and revolutionary politics will be employed in the contextual approach of the paper to gain a more comprehensive understanding on the instrumental value of violence. Therefore, an interdisciplinary approach will be fused in the study to draw from other methodologies to determine patterns of human behavior in relation to violence.

A significant amount of work will be conducted on literature review of the subject matter because this is primarily a research dissertation, hence it will be entirely literature-based.

The data collected will be dealt with on a descriptive level, to describe the problem to obtain more knowledge about it. The aim is to interrogate prescribed views on what has been said before about Jehu's coup and the socio-economic and political conditions of his time and not to theorize anything new. The aim of the methodology employed in this paper is to add to the arsenal of research by means of recent interpretations regarding the subject matter.

1.5 Terminology

Deuteronomistic (Dtr): Adjective describing biblical texts that feature terminology and/or theology like that pertaining the book of Deuteronomy (Carr 2010:265).

Deuteronomic: Adjective that refers to the material found in the core of the book of Deuteronomy (Deuteronomy 5-28).[1]

Deuteronomist (Dt): Noun referring to the pre-exilic edition of Deuteronomy as coined by Martin Noth (Römer 2007:17).[2]

Coup: A systematic overthrow or extermination of a social organization.

Divided Monarchy: 930-722 BCE a time when there were separate monarchies in the south (based in Jerusalem and ruled by descendants of David) and the North (ultimately based in Samaria and ruled by a variety of royal dynasties) Carr (2010:265).

Tel Dan Stele: A broken Aramaic inscription (inscribed stone) discovered during excavations at Tel Dan in 1993 – 1994.

Mesha Stele: Also known as the Moabite Stone, an inscription dating back to the 8th or 9th Century, which records how Mesha, king of Moab paid tribute to Omri.

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[1] 'It should be noted that the terms 'Deuteronomistic' and 'Deuteronomic' are not always applied in the same way. For clarity, Deuteronomic shall be used for, matters regarding the book of Deuteronomy and "Deuteronomistic" for matters regarding the Deuteronomistic History' (McKenzie 1991:2).

[2] A view that is widely maintained by German scholars which is contested by other scholars such as (Römer 2007:17-18).

Historical criticism: a method of doing exegesis to determine the historical authenticity of the text and background necessary to understand the text.

Historiography: The study of writing history.

Historicism: Contextual interpretation of a specific context.

Chapter 2

2. 1 Literary and Historical critical analysis of 2 Kings 9-10.

Textual analysis is critical in helping to explain the text, both on a surface level and in depth. The text in question 2 Kings 9-10 will therefore be analysed as proposed, firstly on a synchronic level, and then later, to get into the world of the text through diachronic methods of analysis.

Noble (1993:130) explains the function of diachronic and synchronic textual analysis methodologies as a way of making us capable of reading literature which was hitherto unintelligible, because for many, discrepancies and dislocations make texts unreadable and we simply don't know how to handle uneven texts.

McKenzie (2010:26) gives a brief and clear explanation as follows:

> Academic methods of Bible study are of two kinds: Diachronic and Synchronic. Diachronic methods are also referred to as historical-critical and synchronic as literary-critical. As the names imply, diachronic methods are concerned with the relationship of the biblical materials to history. They also attempt to trace the development of the biblical literature through time. Synchronic methods, by contrast, concentrate of the literature as such – the artistry and interrelationships within the biblical text as we have it, regardless of how it came to be.

McKenzie's definition which has been widely accepted and used, does not exclude those who like Satterthwaite and McConville (2012:5) use the term "literary-critical" approaches, which mainly consist of; source, form and, redaction criticism, which focuses on the literary history of the text, an alternative term for them is 'historical-critical' approaches.

These approaches have been dominant in Old Testament scholarship for much of the twentieth century, but are now facing the danger of being cast to the periphery, one of the reasons being the recently emerging synchronic approaches like narrative criticism, or

rhetorical criticism, which will be clarified later. Barton (1998:9) comments on historical criticism:

> In the English-speaking worlds, it [Historical criticism] is under a cloud. There is much talk of a "paradigm shift" away from historical methods and towards 'text-immanent' interpretation, which is not concerned with the historical context, and meaning of texts; it is widely felt that historical criticism is now itself of largely historical (or 'academic'!) interest.

If we survey the history of historical-critical methods, it is apparent how this approach is concerned with the evolution of the text through time, how the books as we have them came to be which is nowadays also called "diachronic" methods (Barton 1998:14). In this chapter however, the synchronic approach will take precedence as we attempt to deal with the text as we have it in its final form first and then how it evolved through time. Although narrative criticism acknowledges many of the textual features identified by historical-critical methods, it however interprets them differently as explained by (Satterthwaite and McConville 2012:7-8):

> Narrative criticism focuses on how repetition is intentional, and this is used to slow down the narrative to focus on the events described i.e. Joshua 3-4. One narrative is deliberately written to echo another in what is known as *narrative analogy* i.e. 1 Kings 11-12, the account of Jeroboam's rebellion is told in a way that suggests ironic parallels with the account of Israel's exodus from Egypt. In many of the dialogues, participants are characterized by contrast i.e. David and Michal (2 Samuel 6:20-23), and Obadiah and Elijah (1 Kings 18:7-16). The reader reflects on the difficulties of understanding human nature, its character and motives i.e. Judges 19, a Levite asks his dead concubine to 'get up'. The narrative has gaps, Joshua 22 is an example of *gapping*, the withholding of information to create ambiguity. Most of the narratives has

Pseudo-objective narration, in which the events are narrated without comment to raise questions in the reader's mind.

Alter (1992:166) describes the role of narrative criticism as a tool of the literary-critical (Synchronic) approach as:

A crucial one, I shall argue, finely modulated from moment to moment, determining in most cases the minute choice of words and reported details, the pace of narration, the small movements of dialogue, a whole network of ramified interconnections in the text.

What follows is just brief summary of the outcome of the most important commentaries that approach this text from a synchronic perspective. This dissertation is more interested in diachronic or historical issues, since it is in essence about history.

2.1.2 Literary (Synchronic) Criticism.

Sweeny's (2007:329) synchronic (literary-crMpokitical) commentary on 2 Kings 9-10 is that of a narrative that constitutes the account of Jehu ben Jehoshaphat ben Nimshi to overthrow the house of Omri it also serves Jehu's reign. The unit begins with *we 'Elisa,* (and Elisha) a combination of conjunctive *waw* and the personal name, Elisha, which signals an introduction to a new plot concerned with Jehu's revolution. Sweeny makes a lot of sense because a conjunction grammatically is used to signify a connection of sentences or clauses that occur at the same point. Similarly, combinations of a personal name and a conjunctive waw point to an introduction of a new episode within the larger framework of the revolt.

Sweeny (2007:329) summarizes Jehu's reign as follows:

- 2 Kings 9: 1-10, introduced by *we 'Elisa*, "and Elisha" (the prophet called…),"
relates Elisha's sending of a messenger to anoint Jehu as king.
- 2 Kings 9:11-16, introduced by *weyehu*, "and Jehu" (went out…)," relates Jehu's acceptance as king by the army officers under his command.

- 2 Kings 9:17-23, introduced by *wehasopeh*, "and the watchman (was standing…)," relates Joheram's discovery of Jehu's treason as the latter approached Jezreel.

- 2 Kings 9:24-26, introduced by *weyehu*, "and Jehu (filled his hand…)," similarly recounts Jehu's killing of Jehoram.

- 2 Kings 9:27-30, introduced by *wa'ahazya*, "and Ahaziah, (king of Judah saw…)," relates Jehu's killing of Ahaziah.

- 2 Kings 9:31-37, once again introduced by *weyehu*, "and Jehu (entered the gate…)," relates Jehu's killing of Jezebel.

- 2 Kings 10:1-12, introduced by *ule'ahab*, "and Ahab had (seventy sons…)," relates Jehu's killing of Ahab's seventy sons.

- 2 Kings 10:13-13, introduced again by *weyehu*, "and Jehu (found…)," relates the death the brothers of Ahaziah and the supporters of Baal from throughout Israel by Jehu.

- 2 Kings 10:31-36 employs *weyehu*, "and Jehu (did not observe…)," to introduce the concluding regnal account of Jehu's reign.

In 2 Kings 9:1-10a, these episodes introduce a new plot in Jehu's revolt, focusing on individuals and group killings. The first episode relates to Elisha anointing Jehu as king of Israel. The narrative takes pains to identify its main characters as "Elisha the prophet" and "Jehu ben Jehoshaphat ben Nimshi". It does not disclose Elisha's location, perhaps he is still in Damascus, but it does not identify Ramoth Gilead as the city where Jehu is stationed with the Israelite army as it defends the city.

In the plot of the narrative according to Sweeny (2007:332), the placement of Jehu and the army at Ramoth Gilead explains how king Joram is wounded in battle and must therefore retire to Jezreel to recover from his wounds. The location in this plot suggests the unrelenting pressure of the Arameans, insofar as Jehoram's father, Ahab, was killed in battle at Ramoth Gilead thirteen years before.

For Jehu, this oracle is a form of legitimization for Jehu's bloody coup in exterminating the house of Ahab. Sweeny (2007:332-333) brings to our attention something important, that, when Jehu was anointed to be king in verses 1-6, a theme of secrecy surfaces as being very paramount but in fact, this is a literary strategy by the redactor to tie this narrative back to his earlier work. Firstly, Elisha does not anoint Jehu himself; in fact, Jehu and Elisha never even met in biblical narratives. Instead, he sends a young, unidentified man to anoint Jehu in an inner room.

Sweeny (2007:333) identifies the inner room as important for two reasons, paramount to them, is secrecy, the Dtr likes to present YHWH as one whose powers and cautions are revealed in unseen actions i.e. by anointing a prophet behind the scenes, as much as Samuel anointed David in secret (1 Sam 16:1-13). This suggests that Elisha might have had nothing or little to do with Jehu, and that the present episode serves as a literary link to earlier Elisha traditions.

Alter (1981:92-93) explains the narrative technique which is found in most narratives and evident in 2 Kings 9-10 which is repetition and narrative parallelism/analogy as being a result of oral traditions. Sweeny (2007:330) notes the interrelationship between 2 Kings 9-10 and 1 Kings 17-19 which carries a Baal polemic and find fruition in Jehu's revolt. 1 Kings 19 explicitly mentions Jehu as the man who will be anointed as King of Israel. 2 Kings 9-10 repeatedly refers to Elijah's oracle against Ahab and the house of Omri for the murder of Naboth the Jezreelite (1 Kings 21) to justify Jehu's killing of Jehoram ben Ahab; his brother-in-law Ahaziah ben Jehoram; and his mother, Jezebel (2 Kings 9:7-10, 25-26, 36-37; 10:10-11, 17, 30).

Contrary to all other views, which attribute Jehu's revolt to theological justice, Sweeny (2007:330) then concludes that Jehu's revolt had nothing to do with justice and theology but everything to do with Israel's deteriorating military position against the Arameans. The narrator wants to ensure that the reader understands the issue precisely as a matter of theological justice by including these concerns. Therefore, his analysis of 2 Kings 9-10 is dominated by the military relationship between Aram and Israel.

Robker (2007:35-36) focuses on whether it is possible that the 2 Kings 9-10 narrative begins at 2 Kings 8:28/29 and, when he compares verse 9:15a and verses 10:37-43 there seems to be a partial repetition. According to Robker, in the context of chapter 8, verses 28-29 seem to have been composed to incorporate Jehu's revolution into its new literary context, namely that of Ahaziahu of Judah. Ahaziahu is the subject of 8:28, Joram just going with him to battle. This then makes 2 Kings 8:28-29 relevant for providing a closing frame for Ahaziahu of Judah during the story of Jehu's revolution.

Therefore, I find Sweeny's analysis of the conjunctive waw particularly significant in plot characterization because it not only points to a connection of clauses in the same plot, but also continuation. This is captured well in the translation of The Good News Bible, as 2 Kings 9:1 begins with the phrase "Meanwhile the prophet Elisha called…" which makes sense of Robker's argument that perhaps 2 Kings 9-10 should be read from 2 Kings 8:28-19.

Alter's repetition because of oral transmission seems to be supported as Robker (2007:36) argues for a later dating of 2 Kings 8:28-29 which seems to be copied from an original source whether through royal records, or collective memory transmitted orally. The spelling of לאהזח is only used 6 times, once in 2 Chronicles 22:6 and 5 times in 2 Kings 8 that suggest later dating and used to subsume the story of Jehu into Judean history.

Beal (2014:373) opines that, the narrative is artistically shaped. It begins with Jehu's crowning and ends with a symbolic 'decrowning' as his rule is criticized in Deuteronomistic criteria. The coup progresses in two movements: the first movement is from Ramoth Gilead to Jezreel, the second from Jezreel to Samaria. In the first movement, the royal monarchs and the queen mother are executed; in the second, the extended family of each member is executed. Each panel ends with scatological references that deride the arch-villain Jezebel and her 'relatives', the house of Baal.

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2.1.3 Historical (Diachronic) criticism.

The account of Jehu's revolt is an early narrative that has been incorporated into the larger Elijah-Elisha cycle and then worked into the Dtr narrative framework (Sweeny 2013:330).

Verses that deal with Elijah's oracle and Jehu's anointment, will take precedence in the analysis. This is because 2 Kings 9:7-10a and 2 Kings 9:24-26 have often been treated together because they exhibit omissions, repetitions that are indicative of chronological gaps, redactional layers and secondary materials.   Both bearing their own inherent ideology must be interpreted to see how they fit into the larger narrative. These are the two main verses scholars have used to argue for the presence of redactional layers in the larger narrative and the first two texts to be treated read as thus:

2 Kings 9:7-10a (BHS)	2 Kings 9:7-10a (NRSV)
7התיכהו תיב־תא באחא ד֯ינדא יתמקנו ׀ימד ידבע סיאיבנה ימדו ידבע־לכ הוהי דימ :לבזיא 8 דבאו תיב־לכ באחא יתרכהו באחאל ןיתשמ ריקב רו֯צעו בו֯זעו :לארשיב 9 יתתנו תיב־תא באחא תיבכ סעברי טבנ־ןב תיבכו אשעב :היחא־ןב לבזיא־תאו ו֯לכאי סיבלכה קלחב לאערזי ןיאו 10 רבק	**7** You shall strike down the house of your master Ahab, so that I may avenge on Jezebel the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the Lord. **8** For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; I will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel. **9** I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah.

	10 The dogs shall eat Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel, and no one shall bury her."

1 Kings 21:24-26 (BHS)	1 Kings 21:24-26 (NRSV)
24 תמה באחאל ריעב ו⊙לכאי סיבלכה תמהו הדשב ו⊙לכאי ףוע :סימשה 25 קר היה־אל באחאכ רשא רכמתה תושעל ערה יניעב הוהי התסה־רשא ותא לבזיא :ותשא 26 בעתיו דאמ תכלל ירחא סיללגה לכב רשא ו⊙שע ירמאה רשא שירוה הוהי ינפמ ינב :לארשי ס	**24** Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat; and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the air shall eat." **25** (Indeed, there was no one like Ahab, who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the Lord, urged on by his wife Jezebel. **26** He acted most abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the Lord drove out before the Israelites.)

The aim of the analysis of these two texts is to determine if there are any redactional layers that exist and how they are chronologically related. Robker (2012:35) notes that, traditional methodology dictates that indices for such redactions include tensions, or even contradictions within the text, doublets, and repetitions that are usually regarded as artistic features by narrative critics. Historical critics regard these very features as evidence of layers in texts.

The anointing of Jehu is the final outstanding element of Elijah's commission found in 1 Kings 19:15–18. He is anointed to execute judgment against Ahab's house (1 Kgs

21:20–29) and as an outcome precipitates a coup in Judah that threatens the Davidic dynasty (2 Kgs 11) (Beal 2014:372).

Sweeny (2007:247) argues that 1 Kings 21:20-29 is related to 2 Kings 9:7-10a which relates Elijah's condemnation of Ahab for the murder of Naboth the Jezreelite. McKenzie (1991:66) reiterates this point by stating that the oracle occurs in the context of the story of Naboth's murder and Ahab's repentance wins him a reprieve from seeing the collapse of his dynasty, but it is nevertheless informing the reader that Ahab's entire house is subject to punishment.

According to Robker (2007:18), in verse 7, Elisha says '*You shall strike'* which in Greek reads ἐξολεθρεύσεις 'you shall utterly destroy' which the editors of the BHS in the Hebrew have reconstructed it to mean התיכהו '*You will cut off'*. Presumably, the translators of the LXX either changed this passage, knowingly or unknowingly to be consistent with the promise of Elijah, offered in 1 Kings 21:21. Here one finds the verb "to cut", Hebrew: תרכ. In the Greek, one finds the same term ἐξολεθρεύσεις. It seems probable that this was a willful emendation to the text to fit it in the Deuteronomistic schema of prophecy and fulfilment.

Whatever the reason was for the coup, which will be discussed later in depth, there is a stark difference between the two oracles. McKenzie (1991:68) points the difference out as the following: First, in 2 Kings 9:7 Jezebel seems to be the one who is primarily responsible for Naboth's death, although, ironically, Naboth is not explicitly mentioned and is only mentioned in verse 25.

Secondly, there seems to be a gap between verses 1-3 and verses 7-10. The instructions of Elisha in verses 1-3 are executed in verses 6 and 10. The young man anoints Jehu and then flees immediately. Verses 7-10 indicate an extension to the oracle and proves to be secondary material, an idea that has been widely accepted amongst scholars. The young unnamed man reports verbatim to Jehu what Elisha told him to say in verse 3 but forgets to mention verses 7-10a. This passage is obviously an insertion and has affinities with Dtr's oracles against the royal house. Another reason why this

passage is an insertion is that, this insertion violates Elisha's instructions of not to delay, because the young man is supposed to flee immediately after anointing Jehu.

Lastly, the oracle in verses 7-10a is different in form and purpose from previous oracles against the dynasties. Unlike the oracles in 1 Kings 14, 16, and 21, 2 Kings 9:7-10a is not a judgment oracle. The structure common to the oracles against Jeroboam, Baasha, and Ahab (רשא ועי + ונה ינֵנ) (וכל) + Hiphil active participle is absent from the prophet's word in 2 Kings 9:7-10a.

Beal (2014:373) makes a few observations that, Firstly, in verse 1-3 Elisha the prophet's word activates the prophetic commission given by Elijah (1 Kings 19:16). Although Elisha now carries the prophetic mantle (2 Kings 2:14-15), the commission remains intimately tied to Elijah and he is the prophet of record throughout.

Secondly, Beal (2014:373) mentions that, the 'sons of the prophets' is a group of supporters of Elisha who may function (as here) in prophetic roles. The several imperatival-force verbs that command the young prophet convey both prophetic authority and the urgency of the events. Jehu's own direct speech contains predominantly imperatival verbs, revealing his self-understanding as acting under the same prophetic authority. The young prophet is to attend the battle at Ramoth-Gilead (one of a series of conflicts with Aram; 1 Kgs 20, 22; 5:620–621), anoint Jehu and flee the potentially dangerous situation.

Lastly, Beal (2014:373) argues that, Jehu was unknown to the unnamed young man and he had to identify him amongst the many military men. By addressing whoever he was looking for as 'Captain', this prompted Jehu to answer signaling him out as the leader.

While others recognize the instruction in v.3 to flee immediately by Elisha as warning one of his cohorts to flee a dangerous place full of military men, Brueggemann (2000:382) recognizes that, the young man was instructed to flee because he was going to anoint a king when there is no vacancy in the office and there is a parallel risk in 1 Samuel 16:1-13. This supports the allegations of a coup.

Brueggemann (2000:382) also suggests that in the last sentence in verse 10 "the dogs shall eat Jezebel" is a personal addendum added to echo Elijah because Jezebel drew her venom from prophets, the Deuteronomistic editor wanted to portray YHWH as triumphing Baalism through the oracles of the prophets.

Barre (1988:10) states that, other than Noth, who regards verse 7 as part of the original account, virtually every commentator agrees that these verses expand the original account. Considerable evidence supports this virtual consensus and it is clear that by removing verses 7-10a there is a correlation between the commissions given in vv.1-3 and its execution in vv. 4-6, 10b. This is further supported by Jehu in 2 Kings 9:12 when he only repeats what the 'madman' related to him in vv. 3 & 6 and says nothing about the contents of vv. 7-10a. This betrays the original Dtr's form and language and shows that a post Dtr redactor inserted these verses to insist on the punishment of Jezebel.

A source critical assessment of vv. 25-26 generates a conclusion that these verses are connected to the original narrative in 1 Kings 21:1-16 and vv. 7-10a are an expansion. Whitely (1952:149) agrees with this by stating that, v. 25 is obviously an interpolation to connect this incident (Naboth's murder) with the circumstances of Ahab's death as told in 1 Kings. This according to Whitely shows how the Dtr was not interested in facts of history but rather in the interpretation of history and its reception. Clearly, he was aware of the international significance of the age of Omri and Ahab, but it was his wish to represent this age as one of special religious activity. He employed prophets in his textual strategy who are champions of Yahwism and triumph against idolatry by killing Jezebel and Ahab.

McKenzie (1991:73) comments on the discrepancy between verses 7-10a and verse25-26 and states that, "Also, 1 Kings 21 contains no reference to the execution of Naboth's sons as implied in 2 Kings 9:26. According to the latter verse, Naboth was killed the day before Yahweh delivered the oracle against Ahab, but 1 Kings21:17 does not tell how much time elapsed between Naboth's death and Yahweh's word to Elijah. The oracle attributed to Yahweh in 2Kings 9:25-26 sounds nothing like any of 1 Kings 21:17-29."

McKenzie (1991:74) further mentions many scholars who believe that the two verses contain inserted material i.e. (Barre; Bohlen; Minokami; Schmitt; Schmoldt; Timm; Trebolle). They all agree that v.25 disrupts the link between vv. 24 and 27. Ahaziah is impelled to flee (v.27) by his observation of Joram's assassination (v.24). The narrative's depiction of the quickness and secrecy of Jehu's revolt would hardly allow Jehu pause to give instructions regarding Joram's corpse while Ahaziah flees (Barre 1988:14). The secondary nature of these verses is also indicated by the repetition of Jehu's instruction to cast Joram's corpse into Naboth's field.

Cronauer (2005:7-8) refers to 1 Kings 21:20-19 as the "Elijah and Naboth" fragment, and 2 Kings 9:21b, 25-26 as the "Jehu Apologetic Reaction". The fragments are obviously not a complete story themselves, however, these two old and originally independent fragments are now linked together by means of the Deuteronomistic "oracle of transferal" found in 1 Kgs 21:27-29. Because of the very strong Deuteronomistic "dynastic" emphasis found in the accusations and condemnations in 1 Kgs 21:20b-22,24-26, there was a need on the part of the compiler to facilitate the "transfer" of the clearly individual and personal punishment designated for Ahab, found in the Elijah-Naboth Fragment, to a punishment that would include the whole of Ahab's dynasty.

The information gathered above prove to us that the narrative consists of redaction layers. These layers are indicative of a strong emphasis of the Deuteronomistic activity apparent in 2 Kings 9-10 in the arrangement and presentation of the narrative. This redactional activity is also pivotal in helping to uncover which parts of the narrative are the original version, and which are an adaptation of that original story. It fits into the schema of the history of the two Kingdoms (Israel and Judah), with special emphasis placed on the Northern kingdom, and aligns the information we have in the narrative with that the historiography pertaining to the history of Ancient Israel suggest. This is because the exposition and demarcation of a text reveals to us the world imbedded in the text.

Chapter 3

3.1 Historical overview of the Omride Dynasty.

In this chapter, the processes of understanding the nature and development of the Northern Kingdom, as a society set up in history will be engaged. This process will be able to provide a space and time for the understanding of the Omride dynasty until Jehu's rebellion. Issues to be discussed in this chapter are: (1) The problem of writing the history of Ancient Israel (2) A broader overview of the Omride dynasty leading up to Jehu, (3) The Northern Kingdom through the eyes of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and its relationship with Aram-Damascus, and (4) the socio-economic conditions of Omri's dynasty.

3.1.1 The problem of writing the history of Ancient Israel

The famous assertion of Leopold von Ranke "*Wie es eigentlich gewesen" (*as it actually happened), demonstrates one of the difficulties often encountered in historiography (Barton 1998:12). Difficulties around issues of subjective influences, truth, objectivity on how history should be written and how evidence is evaluated and critically analysed in most cases where material evidence is insufficient. Reconstructing the history of Ancient Israel is no exception to this.

However, as Albertz (2010:32) argues "we cannot say that the biblical text is reliable or unreliable, because it all depends on which episode or text one has in mind." Grabbe (2007:219) does not wish to attack or vilify the Hebrew Bible by categorizing the biblical texts as unreliable. The Bible should be treated like any other source, which should not be privileged nor rejected prior to handling. Biblical scholars often seek the help of empirical evidence, extra-biblical material and /or social scientific fields like archaeology. Material evidence can sometimes be insufficient especially when tracing an ancient society.

Albertz (2010:32) lists some of the difficulties as being the lack of monarchic archives in the form of inscriptions or written documents. This might be because of the frequency of warfare in the area that often resulted in damage of monumental places where records could have been kept. Another reason could be that, official documents and records were written on Papyri, which could not be well reserved at times due to wet climates. The only two fragmentary monumental inscriptions on Palestine that we have come from neighboring states, the Mesha stele from a king of Moab, and the Tel Dan stele, probably from a king of Aram (Damascus).

Albertz (2010:33) notes that, while (Grabbe 2000:217) earlier stressed the significance of "textual material, which provides much of the interpretative framework," stating that "without textual data, the archaeology is much less helpful", he now grants the archaeological data the highest status of objectivity, because they "actually existed in real life," while "a text always contains human invention, and it is always possible that a text is entirely fantasy." Grabbe only later concedes to the paramount importance of archaeology in historiography.

McNutt (1999:1) refers to anthropologist Edmund Leach who by attesting to the difficulty of historiography states that; "trying to recover earlier forms of biblical texts is like trying to unscramble an omelet. And cross-cultural comparison based on social structure and organization, which involves classifying and organizing things according to type and subtype, amounts to nothing more than collecting butterflies." "Unscrambling omelets" and "collecting butterflies" are metaphors that McNutt qualifies as appropriate in categorizing the task of biblical history writing.

Trying to reconstruct history through biblical texts as a primary source has proved to be difficult and begs for critical evaluation. Banks (2006:4) refers to the method employed by John Bright of evaluating texts, the *balance of probability* as a possible synthesis that means in instances where the credibility of the biblical account cannot be established, one will assume the authority of the text. In the absence of countervailing evidence, the biblical text should be accepted as sufficient witness to the events of past.

Using, the stories which are narrated as they are written in the Bible, as primary evidence for events of the past is one of the big obstacles faced by those who are interested in biblical historiography. Issues pertaining to methodology and ideology when talking about the history of Israel are central to this point.

Banks (2006:1) notes that the initial exercise of studying history was to discover evidence for those who wished to legitimate various social or religious claims, or to buttress arguments for a particular telos. Polemical or apologetic history was however disallowed by the professionalization of history during the 19th century that wanted to advance objectivity. It is undeniable that every writer has individual interests and biases; however, this inherent claim presents problems because the recovery of the past has epistemological limitations. The line between truth, facts and fiction becomes blurred.

The historian's own assumptions on history are derived from social perspectives, religious beliefs, class, race, sex, national, ethnic or social affiliations, and economic positions. History however should not be from the standpoint of single men, but rather, a collective memory of the nation. Israel is no exception. Finkelstein (2013:1) points out that the history of ancient Israel in the Hebrew Bible was written by Judahite authors in Jerusalem, the capital of the southern kingdom and the hub of the Davidic dynasty. As such, it transmits Judahite ideas regarding territory, kingship, temple, and cult.

The reasons why historians are challenged by their own assumption, hence making it difficult to reconstruct the history is outlined by Banks (2006: 8-15), where she discusses the philosophical issues and assumptions in the practice of history. She lists the characteristics of historical knowledge into six categories namely:

1. *The choice of subject*: What is the choice of subject for history writing? For some, it is about the state of being, for others it is about the development of social life, particularly for biblical historians, history writing is about identity formations, and more recently about the settlement of the monarchy and postexilic settlement. The choice of subject influences the message conveyed, which is subjective to the historian.

2. *The historian's location*: In the past, the historian's location was often closely tied with polemics and thus disregarded. If we are of the view that the factors that influence the historian's view cannot be transcended, then we must conclude that objectivity remains an impossibility. Therefore, the historian's own location becomes imperative as long as it does not promote biasness.

3. *Historical variety*: The belief that history represents the totality of human life is flawed because history is not static; rather it is evolutionary and dynamic. Historicism repudiates this view that history is a process that is moving towards one predictable human goal. Determinism is not compatible with history.

4. *Moral relativism*: We are in no position to apply our own customs, beliefs, and legal sentiments of our own time to the past and pass moral judgments, because we cannot fully understand the intentions of actors in the past, what then about timeless principles like justice, truth, honor, and, mercy?

5. *Usefulness of history*: We are often exhorted to study history but with no clear explanation why, and told to disregard our own individual biases and preconceived notions. What then is the usefulness of history? Historians have argued against using history as a forecast for the future. Yet it can be used to understand values and interests which are not our own and to discover the variety of human responses to life situations.

6. *The meaning of History*: in Augustine's *City of God*, the reason for Israel's history was to demonstrate evidence of God at work in the world. The meaning of Israelite history has often been linked to theodicy. History writing in general, has gathered the meaning of being a prominent tool for interpretation in explaining historical events.

The arguments presented are mainly about subjective influences of the historian and the countervailing influences of the audience. The message of the historian will affect the reception thereof. Banks (2006:5) makes a clear example referring to Edward Said's well-known concept of *Orientalism*, which argues that the national destiny of biblical Israel has been clearly drawn in terms of Western Imperial consciousness over against the image of Canaan/Palestine as debased and ripe for dispossession. The reception history

of texts and how we interpret them is pivotal in understanding the history of the ancients and reflecting on our own present experiences.

A new methodology of writing and reconstructing the history of Ancient Israel has surfaced in the years since the time of Wellhausen's *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (1994), where he presented a remarkable hypothesis dividing the Pentateuch into four sources. More recent Scholars such as Barton (1995:283) still reserve praises for Wellhausen's contribution to biblical scholarship however, notwithstanding criticism by stating that: "It is not Wellhausen's role as a Pentateuchal critic that commends him to us today, however, for while he did indeed set the agenda for several generations… the modern agenda in Pentateuchal studies owes little to him."

One problem as an example is language, and the failure to introduce postmodern notions of language results in the inaccessibility of the past. As a new methodology, according to Banks (2006:184) by using language, there has been a move to disengage the history of Israel, or the area or entity supposed to have constituted Israel and Judah, from biblical history. The designation Syro-Palestinian history has been employed to indicate distance from the traditional biblical reconstructions and to include a larger contextual basis. New changes and evolutions in how language is used in the construction of history further moves biblical history away from modern historiography.

The two opposing views that have developed over time are known as the "minimalist' and "maximalist" debate. Where the maximalists are known to treat the bible as a primary source of history and the minimalists treat the biblical texts which skepticism regarding both its intent to portray history and reliability in providing historical information (Banks 2006: 206). This then offers us briefly the basic problem of writing ancient history as questions surrounding reliability, authority, and objectivity.

Biblical historiography suffers the most because of interdisciplinary methodologies (i.e. Marxists interpretations, philosophical interpretations et al.) Thus, the history of Ancient Israel is experiencing a major shift begun by Wellhausen, a shift from the province of the church to that of professional academic historians. This means that, a shift occurred from

the time where the biblical authority had precedence over scientific analysis. According to Thompson (1995:694), those who align themselves with this shift understand themselves more as scholars than ministers. However, according to Banks (2006:187) what Thompson would like to refer to as a "paradigm shift", is actually an application of a critical method within the tradition "scientific" model.

The historiography of ancient Israel has introduced new methods of writing the history independently of biblical materials. Books such as Phillip Davies' *In search of Ancient Israel* (1992), and Israel Finkelstein's *The Archaeology of Israel Settlement* (1988), *The forgotten Kingdom: the archaeology and history of Northern Israel* (2013) to mention a few that appeared to offer such a solution. It is because of this new method that even the origins of ancient Israel are no longer argued from one point, i.e. the conquest of Canaan, where Noth had a theory of peaceful infiltration, Bright's view is that of a conquest, and Mendenhall's view is of a peaceful revolt (Banks 2006:196). This shows how methodology evolves and provides us with new ways of interpreting history.

This new methodology presents us with three kinds of direct evidence that can be used concerning the historiography of Ancient Israel namely: 1) material from archaeological excavations and surveys, 2) ancient written remains related to ancient Palestine, and 3) biblical traditions (Thompson 1992:102). Thompson then reaffirms a point he once made that the use of biblical traditions as a source for historical events, is to make the error Wellhausen warned against, to produce an anachronistic reconstruction of Israel because traditions are creations of history long after it happened.

The text of focus in this dissertation, presents another layer in the historiography of ancient Israel, because the text belongs to the corpus of the Deuteronomistic History. Anyone who is interested in the redaction of the Hebrew Bible will inevitably be confronted with the hypothesis of 'Deuteronomistic Historiography' (Römer & de Pury 2000:23). The question of whether such a historiography exists to begin with is debatable. This will be discussed in the chapter to follow.

The historical-critical method of analysis, form criticism as a method of study in relation to the Omride and Jehu dynasties will be central in helping us shape their history, by considering the world of the text. The scene is set up in Ancient Israel, a space and time of which questions pertaining to its historicity are inevitable. Following Phillip Davies' (1992:16) discussion on the literary and historical Ancient Israel, he argues that, there is a difference between the literary and historical Ancient Israel. The former being a literary construction which draws certain ubiquitous elements of the real society to create a biblical theology, as he says (1992:16): "From this point onwards, we are no longer looking for any kind of Israel, but for a society which, in producing the literary Israel, is seeking to create for itself an identity it does not have yet."

As a result, they hold little resemblance to each other, and these conflictions and incoherencies, according to him present a problem to the historian and not necessarily to the reader. According to Davies (1992:16), the historical Israel "is the only Israel an archaeologist or historian… can encounter, and it existed in the northern and central Palestinian highlands between roughly the ninth and precisely the late eight centuries B.C.E".

The Ancient Israel we are perusing here, the one that will point to us how things might have been between the text and the context, according to Davies, "lies between literature and history- or rather, it straddles the two". Hence, the literary world of the texts and the actual context of the ANE will be in constant dialogue (Davies 1992:16).

The standard layout of events as presented above however, do not presuppose a chronological order of events of a specific period, meaning, the events as recorded might not have taken place through a precise timeline. Although the history may be flawed because the data available has undergone numerous stages of editing,

Although the Bible does not offer precise historical records, the events as described during the monarchical period can be contrasted with epigraphic sources directly linked with the history of the Israelite and Judean monarchies and/or dynasties. i.e. sources from Assyria, Babylonia, Egypt as well as other Hebrew inscriptions. In this case Aramaic and

Moabite inscriptions such as the Tel Dan inscription and the Mesha Stele will be referenced in relation to the history of the power relations between the Omrides and other nations and their own dynasty up until Jehu's rebellion.

3.1.2 A broader overview of the Omride dynasty leading up to Jehu

The reign of Omri and his sons until their overthrow is a fact noteworthy in the history of Israel for several reasons. Grabbe (2007:54) points out that, "For the first time since the Merneptah Inscription, it is in the reign of Omri that we finally begin to find extra-biblical data (apart from archaeology) with which to compare the picture given by the biblical text." Biblical texts and non-biblical texts alone, as noted in the prelude of this chapter, are not a reliable source of information but if we combine them then we get a more accurate picture. This dissertation is particularly concerned with Jehu's coup as documented in 2 Kings 9-10, however the space and time of this broad history forces us to go as far back as 1 Kings 16:15-28, where the beginning of the reign of Omri is biblically narrated. According to 1 Kings 16:23-24 Omri reigns for 12 years after he buys a hill and founds the city of Samaria. Samaria geographically was located on the highlands or the central hill country. This area was divided into three areas, Galilee, the Samaria and Bethel hills, and the Hebron hills (Rogerson & Davies 1989:19). It was during the time of the so-called divided monarchy[3] years after the reign of David and Solomon that Omri became the man of the hour after the death of Tibni when he seized power and established his rule.

Whether Samaria was the Capital of Israel or some may debate the Royal residence for Omri and his kin, but it remains that Samaria was a pivotal geographical point. Wright (1959: 69) argues that Samaria as the capital of Israel and the rival of Jerusalem, was the royal residence for Omri and his private possession hence the designation "House of Omri" by the Assyrians.

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[3] The divided monarchy is referred to in speculative terms because the historicity of the united monarchy is under scrutiny. See Na'aman (2007:399-417).

However, Niemann's (2007:203) interpretation is that, Samaria was primarily only a royal residence, and only became a city or capital when Sargon II early in 721 B.C.E besieged it and rebuilt the dynastic residence into the administrative capital for the Assyrians.

Ussishkin (2007:293) who also agrees that Samaria held no central position as a capital also argues that, Omri actually had three royal centers namely, Samaria, Jezreel, and Megiddo. The large city that was only 15 km away from Jezreel shows parallels with Jezreel and Samaria hence it was also a royal center for Omri. According to Ussishkin (2007:306), new archaeological data indicates that:

(1) Megiddo was a central city controlling a major highway before and after the establishment of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. When the Megiddo was founded, it had no walls protecting the city and included several public structures and buildings. These buildings indicate that Megiddo served as a provincial administrative center. The city was conquered and shortly held by the Egyptian army of Shoshenq I in *ca*. 925 BCE.

(2) In 882 BCE Omri ascended to the throne by force, and introduced vast changes to the administration of the Kingdom. Megiddo continued to be an important provincial center, but probably lost some of its special importance. Following his ascent, Omri founded Samaria, a new capital in the heart of the hilly regions of the kingdom. Samaria continued to serve as the capital of the Northern Kingdom until its conquest by Sargon II in 720 BCE.

(3) When Omri developed an army, a military center had to be built. Samaria, located at the hills, was not suitable for garrisoning chariot units. Megiddo, being administrative centers characterized by a number of public monumental buildings and domestic quarters, was also unsuitable for the purpose. Therefore, it was decided to found a new center at Jezreel.

According to Ussishkin (2007:306-307) Jezreel was suitable for a number of reasons because: (1) It was located in a central part of the kingdom, not so far from Samaria and Megiddo, near the roads leading to these cities, and near the road leading to Beth-shean and further eastwards. (2) It was located on a topographically dominating summit, but near the Valley of Jezreel rather than in the hilly region. (3) Water, barley and chaff needed for feeding the warhorses were available in the valley nearby. Thus, it is Usshiskin's conclusion that each of the centers had a special function and emphasis. Probably because of Aramean campaigns, Jezreel was destroyed by Hazael and was never rebuilt; the military center of the Northern Kingdom had to be transferred to Megiddo. Megiddo then remained as a central royal stronghold until the conquest and annexation of northern Israel by Tiglath-Pileser III in 733-732.

Rogerson & Davies (1989:142), juxtapose David and Omri in terms of leadership, because like David, politically speaking, Omri took over a weakened, divided Israel and quickly transformed it into the major power in the region, dominating Syria, Moab, and Judah. From Archaeological evidence Omri (or his son) built new walls to replace those built by Solomon at Megiddo and Hazor, as well as impressive water tunnels at those cities.

Due to this archaeological material, Omri, Ahab, Jehu, and many of the Israelite kings' date of reigns can be confirmed. The Mesha Stele (or the Moabite Stone) which possibly dates from the ninth or eighth century, in relation to Omri reads as such:

> I am Mesha, son of Chemosh-gad king of Moab, the Dibonite. My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I have reigned after my father. In addition, I have built this sanctuary for Chemosh in Karchah, a sanctuary of salvation, for he saved me from all aggressors, and made me look upon all mine enemies with contempt. Omri was king of Israel, and oppressed Moab during many days, and Chemosh was angry at his aggressions. His son succeeded him, and he said I will oppress Moab. In my days he said, let us go, and I will see my desire upon him and his house, and

Israel said, I should destroy it forever. Now Omri took the land of

Madeba, and occupied it in his day, and in the days of his son, forty

years.

(Grabbe 2001:73)

This inscription, with its historicity is contested by scholars such as (Thompson 2001:323), who argues that, the Mesha inscription belongs to a substantial literary tradition of stories about kings of the past... i.e. the phrase "Omri, king of Israel", which sounds more like annals than an inscription, casts a bit of doubt on. According to Thompson, the inscription's fictive essence should be taken seriously. There should be room left for speculation on whether the inscription might be a retelling of actual events or not. However, we also cannot deny that, based on historical context, even if the inscription does not speak of Omri as Thompson argues, it gives us a time of when Omri might have reigned. The case in point is however not to argue the historicity of the Mesha Stele here and now, but rather to put Omri the King of Israel in a date and place. Based on the context of the text and archaeological evidence, Omri's reign can be dated form 884 (5) BCE. – 873 B.C.E.[4] (Boshoff, Scheffler & Spangenberg 2000:99).

3.2 Israel and her neighbors

Apart from the significant archaeological evidence that adds to the arsenal of historical research, Omri's reign set in motion determinant religious, political and social elements that would affect the history of the nation. The space in which Omri was operating in and how it influenced civilian and national life is a fact worthy of noting. The politics of the nation of Israel, did not take place in a vacuum. Rather, Kings like Omri were under Imperial domination where their nations were subjects of the powerhouses.

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[4] The regnal account for Omri in the introductory verse of 1 Kings 16:23 says that, "In the thirty-first year of Asa, King of Judah, Omri ruled over Israel twelve years; in Tirzah he ruled for six years". This would then mean that Omri began to reign in the years 880 B.C.E.

3.2.1 Israel through the eyes of the Neo-Assyrian Empire

Younger (2007:243) divides these periods in relation to Palestine, and Assyrian history. These periods do not point to neat beginnings and endings, but they help to point to periods of the past. These periods are categorized as follows:

- The period of recovery (Ashur-dan II - Tukulti-Ninurta II) (943-884): 50 years.
- The early imperial period (Ashurnasirpal II - Shalmaneser III) (883-824): 59 years.
- The inner crisis period of autonomous rulers (Shamshi-Adad V - Ashur-nirari V) (827-745): 82 years.[5]

The history of ancient Israel can also be categorized into three discernible periods in contrast to that of the Assyrians, namely (Younger 2007:246):
- The early period (from Jeroboam I to the accession of Omri) (c. 931/928-885/882): 46 years.
- The Omride period (from his accession to the usurpation of Jehu) (c. 885/882-842/841): 43 years.
- The Jehuite period (from Jehu's usurpation to the death of Zechariah) (c. 842/841-752/750): 91 to 100 years.

Out of all the Assyrian kings, Shalmaneser III stands out; because of the battle at Qarqar and that, his reign is juxtaposed with the time in Israel when Omri's was still in power. According to Younger (2007:246) his reign is noteworthy again because some of these events are not recorded in the biblical texts but are found in Assyrian inscriptions, nine of which document the conquests and defeats of Shalmaneser III, providing us with extra biblical material.

The first major appearance of the Assyrians on the scene is in 853 BCE, with the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (Rogerson & Davies 1989:145). Stories around his imperial conquests are recorded in Akkadian sources of the ninth century.[6] Shalmaneser III's 853

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[5] Other scholars like Kuhrt (1995: 487-93) refer to these stages as Development of Assyria, Ashurnasirpal II and Shalmaneser III and the problems in Assyria respectively.

[6] Geller (2007:229-241) shows a broader and comprehensive view of the role of Shalmaneser during the divided monarchy when Israel was under imperial domination.

B.C.E coalition campaign at Qarqar that included kings as Ahab as an opposition and in 841 B.C.E, which extracted a tribute from Jehu, is well preserved in the Kurkh Monolith discovered at Kurkh. The monolith is said to end abruptly with the last narrated event being the battle at Qarqar. Scholars have now dated it from 853-852 B.C.E, because it was carved in a haste it resulted in numerous scribal errors (Younger 2007:247).

According to Elat (1975:25), the battle at Qarqar, fought in the sixth year of Shalmaneser III's reign (853 B.C.E) against the Syrian alliance led by Aram-Damascus, is one of Shalmaneser III greatest Assyrian victories. Yet it is clear from accounts of the Qarqar campaign and its results that Shalmaneser III nevertheless failed to extend his rule south of the Antioch valley, since unlike the usual descriptions of such victories, the description of battle of Qarqar does not mention that Shalmaneser invaded the territories of enemies, pursued their armies or exacted booty or tribute from them. Furthermore, Shalmaneser III fought the same alliance on three subsequent occasions - in the tenth year of his reign (849), in the eleventh year (848), and in the fourteenth year (845) and failed each time. It was only in his eighteenth year (841), after the break-up of the alliance, which he then succeeded in defeating the army of the kingdom of Aram-Damascus, which by then confronted Assyria's army alone.

Scheffler (2001:16) argues that this is a clear indication of how imperial domination not only affected directly the nations who were its vassals but also how smaller kingdoms as well became riddled by this effect. This is because, the political dimension of society may be further subdivided into *international* and *internal* politics. International politics being that of Israel in contact with its neighbors either through trade, wars, and politics. Some of these nations (i.e. Assyria) in their prime were world powers who dominated the political scene in the ancient Near East. In terms of internal politics, political *institutions* and *groups* that comprise society are noteworthy. The social institutions in the early days of Palestine, was that Israel as judges and then later monarchies and empires governed a nation.

The constant warfare propagated by the need of imperial domination forced the vassal nations into subjugation and ultimately military seizures of the lands and invasions. This is how Ahab met his premature death at the clash of Ramoth-Gilead. According to Elat (1975:30):

> The clash at Ramoth-Gilead (1Kings 22:2-20) only a short while after the battle of Qarqar (853), had its origins in Ben-Hadad's failure to keep his promise to Ahab and return the cities annexed from Israel in previous years: 'And Ben-Hadad said unto him, The cities, which my father took from thy father, I will restore.. .' (1 Kings 20:34). According to the biblical account, Ahab attacked Ramoth-Gilead, claiming that the men of Aram had not restored the cities and pointing out to his officers: 'Know ye that Ramoth-Gilead is ours, still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Aram?' (1 Kings 22:3). The attempt to restore Ramoth-Gilead to the territory of Israel failed, and Ahab met his death in this battle.

Elat (1975:31) further demonstrates that, it can be assumed then that, after this defeat, Israel's obligations to the Syrian alliance led by Ben-Hadad became more compulsory, and that the king of Israel was one of the 'twelve kings of the seacoast' in the campaigns who fought against Shalmaneser III in 849, 848, and 845. The alliance continued to hold together in its original from until the death of Ben-Hadad and it is this, in his opinion, which accounts for Shalmaneser's failures in those years. It was only its break-up, following Ben-Hadad's murder, which made it possible for the Assyrian army to penetrate as far as the gates of Damascus and into the very heart of the kingdom of Israel.

According to Pienaar (1994:34), the decline of powers enabled smaller nations to develop to such an extent that towards the beginning of the tenth century they were fulfilling major roles in Syro-Palestine. Beyond the woes of the imperial domination, even his predecessors were still expanding Omri's dynasty. Omri developed a strategic plan like the strategy followed by Ashurnasirpal, who was an excellent strategist for the

Assyrians, and developed a security ring around the nation. The alliance Israel established with neighboring countries (Tyre and Sidon, as well as Judah) served their mutual political and economic welfare and neutralized the Philistines in the west and the Aramaeans in the east.

For the Omrides, the decline of the Assyrians, opened doors as well for foreign nations, especially for Phoenicia, a relationship that will be solidified with marriage ties. In purchasing the hill at Tirzah, Omri placed himself right at the roadway of business because it was located near the highway. Tirzah was exposed towards the east, and Omri obviously had a safer and strategic location in mind when he built his capital further westward and on easily defensible hilltop along the strategic route (Dorsey 1987:58). This westward orientation reflects a more positive attitude toward the Phoenicians and a reserved disposition towards the Aramaeans (Davis 1979:105-106).

This is not however a focus only on the domination of superpower nations on vassal ones, but also the coalition of these smaller nations who sometimes revolt against the dominant ones. It is also about resistance to domination. As Younger (2007:256) demonstrates, Ahab of Israel is listed as part of a coalition of 12 city-states — including Damascus, the Arabs, Byblos, and Egypt that engaged Shalmaneser III in battle in his sixth year, as referenced in the Monolith (ii.95a), where the inscription states: "these twelve kings he took as his allies" implying that Irhuleni is the one who organized the coalition.

The mention of Ahab in an Assyrian inscription (Monolith ii.95a), does not in any way suggest that he is the only Northern king who had contact with the Assyrians, as it will be demonstrated below that Assyrians inscriptions often spoke of the "House of Omri" and that Jehu might have paid a tribute as well. Schneider (2002:9) points to the fact that, the difference is that the Assyrians never again used the term 'Israel' in their inscriptions. In three different inscriptions, Shalmaneser III recounts that he received tributes from Tyre, Sidon, and Jehu, son of Omri, in his 18th year usually figured around 841 B.C.E.

In his article, *what is in a Name? Neo-Assyrian Designations for the Northern Kingdom and their implications for Israelite History and Biblical Interpretation*, Kelle (2002:641), points out that, Assyrian records had three designations for the Northern Kingdom spanning over 150 years which all varied as an indication of the changing historical and political situations involving Israel from 853 to 720 B.C.E. In Eleven official Assyrian Inscriptions from the time of Shalmaneser III in 853 B.C.E to Sargon II in 720 B.C.E, the Northern kingdom is referred to as follows (Kelle 2002:640):

Assyrian King	Inscription	Designations
Shalmaneser III	Monolith Inscription (ca. 853)	KUR sir- 'i-la-a-a ("Israel")
Shalmaneser III	Black Obelisk, Calah Fragment Kurba'il Stone, Ashur Stone (ca. 841)	Mar Hu-um-ri-i ("[Bit]-Humrite") "House of Omri"
Adad-nirari III	Rimah Stela (ca. 803)	KUR Sa-me-ri-na-a ("Land of Samaria")
Adad-nirari III	Nimrud Slab (ca. 803)	KUR <Bit>-Hu-um-ri-I ("The land of the house of Omri")
Tiglath-pileser III	Layard 45b+ III R 9, 1 (ca. 740)	KUR sa-me-ri-i-na-a-a ("Land of Samaria")
Tiglath-pileser III	Iran Stela (ca. 739-737)	KUR sa-m[e]-ri-i-na-a-[a] ("Land of Samaria")
Tiglath-pileser III	Layard 50a + 50b + 67a (ca. 738-737)	URU sa-me-ri-na-a-a ("City of Samaria")
Tiglath-pileser III	Layard 66 (ca. 732-731)	URU Sa-me-ri-na ("City of Samaria")
Tiglath-pileser III	III R 10,2 (ca. 730)	KUR E Hu-um-ri-a ("Land of Bit-Humri")
Tiglath-pileser III	ND 4301 + 4305 (ca. 730)	KUR E Hu-um-ri-a ("The land of Bit-humri")

Shalmaneser V	Babylonian Chronicle (ca. 725)	URU sa-ma/ba-ra-'-in ("city of Samaria")
Sargon II	Nimrud Prism Great Summary Inscription (ca. 720)	URU Sa-me-ri-na ("city of Samaria")
Sargon II	Palace Door, Small Summary Inscription, Bull Inscription, Cylinder Inscription (ca. 720)	KUR Bit-Hu-um-ri-a ("land of Bit-Humri")

The Monolith Inscription is the earliest reference to the Northern kingdom as Israel and the only Assyrian use of the name "Israel". The political situation detected from this inscription, for study refers to *a-ha-ab-bu KUR sir- 'i-la-a-a*, which is said to mean "Ahab of Israel'". Kelle (2002:643) provides a reason why this is significant for Israelite history and biblical interpretation:

> The basic issue here is the fact that the biblical materials about Ahab (1 Kings 16:29-33; 20; 22:1-40), which make no reference to the battle at Qarqar, present a different historical picture from the Monolith Inscription: (1) the king of Damascus contemporary with Ahab in the Bible is Ben-Hadad not Hadadezer; (2) Aram and Israel are enemies in the biblical text; and, (3) the Bible describes the Israelite army as small (1 Kings 20:15, 27) with few chariots (1 Kings 20:23-25, 28). There are two major options for dealing with these biblical traditions. First, one could identify the Ben-Hadad in the Bible with Hadadezer and assume that relations between Israel and Aram oscillated during the time of Omri and Ahab.

Samaria was of strategic importance to the survival of Israel as a nation; therefore Omri developed an impregnable fortress that could withstand a prolonged siege (Unger 1957:63). Dan and Hazor formed a defensive line on the northeastern frontier with Aram (Pienaar 1981:151-158). Hazor was a supply city from which the Israelite forces could operate. Jezreel was located at a strategic position commanding the eastern access to

Jezreel valley, as well as the northern approach to Samaria, and serve for operations against Aram in the Ramoth-Gilead area (Oliver 1987:14).

According to Pienaar (1994:41) the strategy Omri developed resembles that implemented by Ashurnasirpal: he developed frontier supply/fortified cities in which a garrison could be accommodated, and from which he could operate against an enemy. Hazor on the Aramaean border is an example of the application of this strategy. Israel and Tyre and Sidon had a parity treaty during the reigns of Omri (whose son, Ahab, married the Tyeian princess) and Ittobaal. This alliance included Judah - Omri's granddaughter married the Judaean prince. This promoted their mutual political and economic welfare and neutralized the Philistines in the west and the Aramaeans in the east. Assyria had gone through the processes of gaining and losing power, which when they eventually gained, was to the detriment and eventual fall of Samaria, as explained by Pienaar (1994:42):

> After the middle of the 11th century, Assyria gradually withdrew from its western and northern provinces, which fell systematically to the hands of the nomadic and semi-nomadic groups, notably the Arameans. From the point of view of the people living west of the Euphrates, Assyria ceased to be a major power for about 150 years. The campaign of Pharaoh Shishak to Palestine in one of his late years (ca. 926 B.C. E.) was likewise no more than an episode having no long-term effect on the history of Israel and Judah. Thus, no external great power played an important - role in the history of southern Anatolia and Syria-Palestine in the 11th-10th centuries. The struggles for hegemony in various parts of this area were fought among kingdoms that either survived the destruction of the "Sea Peoples" or had crystallized in the course of this period. This situation drastically changed with the recovery of Assyria after a long period of external and internal weakness. Assyria started its re-expansion in the days of Ashur-dan II (932-912) and gradually conquered and

annexed its lost western territories during the reigns of Adad-nirari II (911-891) and Tukulti-Ninurta II (890-884). It first crossed the Euphrates in the late years of Ashurnasirpal II (883-859) threatening to conquer and subdue the neighboring Syrian states.

The Northern Kingdom seems to have suffered a series of military setbacks due to the campaigns of the Assyrians. As the Assyrian's power declined, that opened doors for Israel to form alliances with other nations (Aram-Damascus) and form economic tied through marriage with others (Phoenicia).

3.2.2 Israel through the eyes of Aram-Damascus.

As was argued above Elat (1975:30) argues that there were no hostilities between Aram and Israel after the Ramoth-Gilead battle fought shortly after the battle at Qarqar. The clash at Ramoth-Gilead (only a short while after the battle of Qarqar 853), had its origins in Ben-Hadad's failure to keep his promise to Ahab and return the cities annexed from Israel in previous years: "And Ben-Hadad said unto him, the cities, which my father, I will restore." (1 Kings 20:34). According to the biblical account, Ahab attacked Ramoth-Gilead, claiming that the men of Aram had not restored the cities and pointing out to his officers: 'Know ye that Ramoth Gilead is ours, still, and take it not out of the hand of the king of Aram?' (1 Kings 22:3). To attempt to restore Ramoth-Gilead to the territory of Israel failed, and Ahab met his death at this battle

Aramean expansion during the reign of Hazael was immense. Hasegawa (2012:74) argues that, according to archaeological data, destruction levels of Iron Age II sites in Palestine show that Hazael's military expansion in the Northern Kingdom of Israel shows a conquering of cities like Hazor.

Finkelstein (2011:237), arguing according to architecture to prove activity of the Arameans in the Northern Kingdom, argues that, the similarities in architecture between Israel and her neighbor Damascus shows that the Arameans had affiliation with the inhabitants of Hazor. The reigning dynasty in Damascus, founded by Hezion's grandson

Ben-Hadad I initiated aggressive policies against Israel. According to 1 Kings 15:18-20, and 2 Chronicles 16:2-4, Ben-Hadad availed himself of the opportunity to interfere in a Judean-Israelite dispute and broke through the line of fortified cities in Naphtali, from Ijon and Dan to Chinethron, Mazar (1986:104).

Mazar (1986:107) further argues that, much information about Ben-Hadad, Ahab's contemporary, had been preserved in the Bible. It makes sense that Ben-Hadad is none other than Hadadezer, king of Aram, known form the Inscription of Shalmaneser III, king of Assyria. It is even likely that Ben-Hadad (Hadadezer) is not a personal name but a title common to kings in Aram-Damascus; it means "son of the god Hadad". It was during the last years of Ahab's reign that Ben-Hadad would put the Israel, which was enjoying some measure of political and economic prosperity under pressure in hopes of gaining control of the state.

The death of Ben-Hadad at the hands of Hazael and the latter's ascent to the throne, encouraged Ahab's son Jehoram, to repeat his father's unsuccessful efforts twelve years earlier to restore Israel lost territories Elat (1975:31).

According to Morgenstern (1940:358) Ahab's downfall and ultimate demise at the battle is deemed as the main attributer as having been the fact that he did not prepare in advance. As documented in 1 Kings 22:1-2, "And they continued for three years without war between Aram and Israel. And in the third year Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, came down, to the king of Israel". Jehoshaphat, having been summoned, had no knowledge of Ahab's plans for the Ramoth-Gilead campaign and no time to interpret Ahab's urgent invitation to Jehoshaphat. The passage suggest rather that Ahab only communicated his intentions upon Jehoshaphat's arrival. This did not give him time to muster his army and bring it down from Judah. Morgenstern further argues that this internal disharmony alone seems to warrant the suspicion that the record of the campaign against Ramoth Gilead can hardly have been the original sequel to the statement of verses 1-2.

3.2.3 Socio-Economic conditions of Omri's dynasty.

The House of Omri was of enviable status according to its state of wealth and success. 1 Kings 22:39 refers to Ahab's *ivory house.* Ivory and ivory objects were treasured possessions in the Ancient Near East and are an indication of the wealth accumulated during Ahab's reign (Winter 1981:106). Despite the damage done to the ninth-century B.C. ivories discovered in Samaria Crowfoot (1938:49-50) remarked that Egyptian as well as Aramaean influence can clearly be noticed.

Albright (1961:137) was also convinced that some of these ivories originated from the Damascus area. In the Ancient Near East, ivory and ivory objects were treasured possessions or gifts and presumably played an important role as diplomatic presents or booty (Winter 1981:106). Nearly a century later Amos also referred to houses with inlaid ivory (Am 3:14) (Pienaar 1994:42).

The biblical text speaks only of the ivory house, but archaeology points out much more. From her archaeological findings Schneider (2001:2) points out that, the monumental remains which were excavated in Samaria (palace, buildings, and walls) and Jezreel (walls, and towers), reflects a power base that had the necessary wealth and labor with which to accomplish those building projects. The archaeological remains do not only reflect "stone upon stone", but also by implication speak of a period of peace and stability, and of effective government and prosperity.

Although Samaria flourished, it was often at the expense of its residents. The economic realities of Samaria and Palestine have been at the center of debates and scholarly research because of how it was founded. To speak of economy, implies that we compartmentalize social life. Harland (2002:551) notes that; from the point of view of ancient people, aspects of life such as political, social, economic, and religious sectors were a unified whole for those in the ANE. Not that the word economy is all together anachronistic, but a person who resided in the ANE would not easily comprehend it.

Omri is one who would not have fully comprehended it because his way of economics would primarily serve his own interests. Economists define economics as a complex set of activities, through which society manages the production and allocation of goods for the benefit of the group as a whole and not just for individuals and not at the expense of others. For the ANE, economic activities included, (1) the economy was agrarian in nature, (2) trade, (3) distribution and ownership of land, (4) peasantry labor and taxation. The socio-economic conditions during Omri's dynasty do not differ radically from those, which were ubiquitous in the ANE (Harland 2002:552).

Just as the peasantry generally through taxation and rents supported the socio-economic structure, Omri's dynasty employed the same methods. However, the heavy taxation of peasants that left them heavily indebted raises a red flag on Omri's economic policies. Mtshiselwa (2014:214) notes that, as a way of sustaining the relations with the Phoenicians and enhancing economic growth, Ahab intensified agricultural production in Israel. This meant more extraction of forced labor and loss of land for the peasants. This would be detrimental to them if they could not meet the demand to overproduce for the Phoenicians. As a result, small farmers would be declared economically disadvantaged and unproductive, and forced off their lands.

This would then widen the gap between the rich and the poor and intensify poverty (Farisani 1993:6). There seems to have been little regard for the poor during the reign of Omri. Instead of uplifting the poor from poverty, the Omrides seemed to have been more concerned with accumulating wealth for themselves and future generations (Mtshiselwa 2014:214). There are however, scholars who would argue that Omri and his dynasty achieved more than any other King did achieve, and should be remembered with distinction. This cannot be disputed, and so are the foundational ills, which made Samaria the city she was.

In her dissertation *Persuasions of Archaeology: The achievements and grandeur of the Omrides at their royal cities of Samaria and Jezreel*, Schneider (2001:1) argues that, the concentration of the Hebrew Bible on the apostasy of the Omrides rather than their

achievements and abilities has robbed these competent monarchs of prominence allocated to kings like Solomon and David. Well, of course, arguing based on archaeology, her argument would make perfect sense, because the Omrides achieved far more, but a sociological analysis as pointed out by scholars such as Farisani (1993) and Gottwald (1993) proves otherwise.

Implicitly she seems to agree that there was a form of exploitation but nuancing it well to sound in favour of the Omrides by saying (2001:1):

> If we temper Amos' condemnation, of the ivory houses and beds, with a sensible realization of the artistry and time in the creation of the objects from ivory, we still find a connotation of wealth and indulgence, but also a sense of appreciation for the enjoyment of such artists and their crafts.

She further goes on to say (Schneider 2001:1):

> We become aware of the implications of building projects: the labor involved, materials used (home grown or imported), the taxes gathered to pay for everything, and of course, the enemies or friends, who were either to be intimidated by, or impressed by these imposing structures…

The Northern Kingdom under the Omride dynasty saw huge territorial expansion because of the rapid economic growth. Finkelstein (2013:83) attest to this by stating that, in the time of the Omrides, the northern kingdom featured the first monumental building operations and reached its first period of economic prosperity and territorial power. Building activities were the most monumental and prominent features of the period.

The capital is said to be Samaria, which Niemann (2007:184-185) brings under scrutiny because of the following reasons: (1) Never in 200 years did Israel manage to fuse its various tribal and cultural elements into a meaningful 'unity' because Judah, Jerusalem and Israel was always loose and temporary, never developing into a complete political integration, (2) Judah remained more distinct from Jerusalem for 360 years and Israel developed state structures under the reigns of Omri and Ahab while in Judah this

evolution does not start before Uzziah, (3) Israel could not centralize power because the tribal groups were heavily fragmented. As thus, Niemann is of the view that Samaria was a royal residence for Omri and not necessarily a capital.

If Samaria was not an urban capital but a royal residence, how did it become the capital of the Assyrian province Samerina? Niemann (2007:185) summarizes that, it was Sargon who, in 720/10 BCE at the latest, settled a governor in Samaria although Assyria was primarily interested in economic and military reasons. Sargon then rebuilt Samaria, with new settlers, transformed, and enlarged the former dynastic residence for political and propagandistic reasons into the seat of a provincial governor.

Farisani (2005:48) explains how Omri purchased mount Samaria (1 Kings 16:24), an extensive piece of property for two talents from a private citizen named Shemer. He built the city and transferred his residence from Tirzah to Samaria in the sixth year of his reign and this made the city his private possession. Samaria was primarily the center of the Canaanite part of the population in the state of Israel, whereas Jezreel was more the center for the Israelite part. Samaria is therefore no Jerusalem; Samaria held no central position (Niemann 2007:202).

Production in the Omride dynasty reached a peak in the late 10th and early 9th centuries, which include the days of the Omride dynasty. At that, time demand for copper was high- for the military build-up (weaponry and devices for chariots) (Finkelstein 2007:113). Economic resources were abundant; however, they had to come through hard labor of the poor, and political affiliations to nations with wealth. Nevertheless, Israel and Judah were second and even third tier nations economically, when compared to the empires of Mesopotamia and Egypt, which had great river systems to sustain them (Yee 2014:7).

Pre-monarchic Israel was mainly an agricultural economy. There was minimal division of labor, wealth came from the land and there was yet very little commerce (De Vaux 1968:72). Ancient Israel was not yet introduced to a trade economy (McKenzie 1983:26). As permanent leadership grew, a monarchy was established and taxation was introduced

in addition, imposed, and forced labor was exacted from subject (McKenzie 1983:32). According to Rainey (1970:192), the earliest documented evidence of the existence of the system of forced labor is found in administrative texts from Alalakah dating back to the Old Babylonian or Amorite period. Omri was simply utilizing a practice that was ubiquitous in the ANE.

Chaney (1993:15) argues similarly that a considerable degree of wealth never benefited the peasant, whose economic conditions countrywide never improved, but if anything became worse as the empire expanded. Farisani (2005:49) documents how women's maternal duties were made even more difficult. First, young widowhood was a common fate, leaving Israelite mothers and their children more vulnerable to famine and economic exploitation then they would have been with the help of their husband. Secondly, under the Omride dynasty there were probably many widows because the monarchy required vast amounts of corvee (forced labor). Men were alienated from their families and villages to serve as foot soldiers in Omri's armies.

Ahab also continued the foreign policy of his father. He continued the alliances with foreign nations that were initiated by his father. He entered treaties with both Judah and Syria. Ahab also recorded as one of the able military commanders whose military success are remarkable (Gora 2008:61). Ahab paid attention to the defense of his kingdom against Aramean attacks and Assyrian imperialism (Farisani 2005:49).

Land became a central motif in the economy of the Northern Kingdom. Prosperity of an agrarian society depends upon one economic reality- a plentiful supply of cultivable land and labor (Glass 2000:29). To sustain an effective chariot force, land was needed as well as funds to pay for the drivers and the archers on the chariots. All this was beyond the means of ordinary peasants (Wittenberg 1992:78).

One of the consequences of a society divided by means/class is violence.[7] A concept which will be interrogated in depth in the final chapter is however noteworthy to mention

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[7] The author is aware of the anachronistic implications of using terms such as 'class/means' and their Marxist ring to it, they are however only employed for argument purposes and are not literally implied in their preferred definitions.

its role in this given context. Early Israel witnessed many rebellions; Omri's dynasty was no exception. According to Wittenberg (1992:82) the execution of Naboth the Jezreelite and the confiscation of his vineyard, (1 Kings 21) showed the increasing dispossession of the Israelite peasant population of their land. This led to another round of violent social uprising, Jehu's purge of Jehoram and the Omride dynasty in about 824 B.C.E.

Baal worship in the Northern kingdom, which was introduced to maintain a stable relationship with the Phoenicians and Arameans, is unavoidable. According to Farisani (2005:51) in addition, Ahab built a temple in Samaria to Baal as an official sanctuary, not just for the royal house but also for members of his own state. Jezebel, the wife of Omri's son Ahab, was not only a symbol for the politics of the Omrides, for coalition with Tyre and Aram, for the influx of foreign wars, techniques, and thoughts, but also for a type of religiosity that was foreign to the faithful Yahwists (Schulte 2008:143-144).

Religious syncretism was inevitable as farmers, having recognized Baal as the lord of the earth, owner of the land, giver of rain, source of grain, wine and oil, began to use Baalism as a practical religion in the quest for plenty harvest (Dickson & Edy-Ewoh 2013:134). Baal worship was barred; however, Ahab compromised this covenantal stipulation.

In 1 Kings 17:1, Elijah declared to Ahab a disastrous three and half years' long drought. This would affect the socio-economic conditions of the society because it was largely an agrarian society. Cash crops like olive oil, which was a major industry accounting much of the economy prosperity of the region (Hosea 12:2) could no longer yield. According to Mtshiselwa (2014:205), Jehu's revolution was related to issues of social justice, specifically economic redress and land redistribution to address the grievances of the peasants in Samaria. Mtshiselwa's article is a response to Nzimande (2008) and the cause of disagreement is discussed below.

Nzimande (2008: 223-230) firstly begins by outlining the paradigm shift in biblical interpretation methods from the dominant ubiquitous Euro-American epistemologies and modes of biblical interpretation to post-colonial readings of the Bible. She invokes a new

trend in post-colonial readings of the bible as the *Imbokodo* hermeneutics. As per her South African black woman's rendition of biblical interpretations in the post-apartheid era in South Africa, Imbokodo hermeneutics aim to:

> Expose and challenge the historical connection between the dissemination of Western hegemony, power and epistemology by critically investigating biblical texts in the light of the overwhelming presence, role, and influence of empire in their production.

According to Nzimande (2008:224) this hermeneutical tool is comprised of; (a) Post-colonial feminist biblical hermeneutics; (b) Historical and critical materialistic hermeneutics; (c) The hermeneutics of Black theology in South Africa; (d) African women's theologies; and (e) African-American womanist theologies. The semantics of the word *Imbokodo* as explained by Nzimande (2008:223:224) is that:

> *Imbokodo* is constructed from the freedom song sung at the South African Women's Defense Campaign against apartheid pass laws at the Union Buildings in Pretoria in 1956: "*Wathint' abafazi, wathint' Imbokodo, ozokufa*!" translated as "You strike a woman, you strike a grinding stone, you will be crushed!"

In the context of her essay, Nzimande employs this symbolic representation of *Imbokodo* to invoke a hermeneutical tool that will be able to express the socio-political and socio-critical conditions of South African women.

In the case of the Omrides, Nzimande (2008:235) calls for a reconfiguring of Jezebel by invoking a post-colonial *Imbokodo* reading of the Naboth's vineyard narrative. She first outlines the social role of Jezebel (as she also refers to her as Queen Mother). She does not deny the active political role Jezebel exercised as Ahab's wife (ultimately assistant) in political and governmental affairs and the role she played in her cult as a Phoenician descendant.

The focus of her essay however, is the role Jezebel played in the story of Naboth's vineyard. Nzimande (2008:236) mentions that, that traditionally Jezebel has been viewed as having "remarkable power" to be able to convince a King to commit a crime, does not close the door for other possibilities to be considered.

In her reconfiguring of Jezebel, Nzimande (2008:236-237) asks a few questions, firstly, as a Phoenician descendant, to whom was Jezebel's religion a threat and to whom was it a benefit? Secondly, she urges post-colonial readers to need to question whether Jezebel's Phoenicians origins and religion are significant pointers to conceal colonial agendas and motives in Jezebel's role as a Queen/Queen Mother, lastly why is it that Western feminist interpretation of Naboth's vineyard do not emphasize Jezebel's role plan to acquire Naboth's vineyard for Ahab and that ancestral laws on inheritance were violated.

Nzimande (2008:246) echoes sentiments of justice undone. She speaks of Naboth's wife and how Jezebel is audible in the text and Naboth's wife is silenced. Jezebel's cunning dispossession and murder of Naboth, given the socio-economic conditions of women in Ancient Israel was devastating. Farisani (2005:49) also documents that:

> Women maternal duties were made even more difficult. First, young widowhood was a common fate, leaving Israelite mothers and their children more vulnerable to famine and economic exploitation then they would have been with the help of their husband.

This is a resounding sound of lack of justice. Naboth's family was deprived of the need to sustain themselves materially. This then sheds light on Jehu's revolution and whether the extermination of the Omride dynasty as a symbol of empire, oppression and injustice was really for a just cause. More than an *Imbokodo* biblical interpretation of Naboth's vineyard, I think Nzimande is also touching on other many unemphasized issues such as the failure of justice, how did Naboth's family survive after his death, was Jehu's coup a form of justice and was the land ever returned to its original inhabitants.

It is important to understand Nzimande's stance and her worldviews to understand Mtshiselwa's response. Mtshiselwa (2014:205) who often asserts his method of interpretation as "Liberationist", argues according to 1 Kings 21:1-29 that a socio-economic reading of the text can be used to draw parallels between the Omride Dynasty and the South African context to be used a model for socio-economic redress by using the Jehu narrative and Naboth's vineyard as a case study.

Mtshiselwa (2014:205) firstly draws upon the issue of land (commonly referred to as the land question/legacy) in South Africa. He mentions that land dispossession in South Africa is one of the main reasons why there is a need for socio-economic redress in the country.

Giving a brief description to the socio-economic conditions of Omri's dynasty, Mtshiselwa (2014:213-219) does not deny that Omri's dynasty was built on peasant oppression, land confiscation and heavy taxation. It is when he engages Nzimande that the plot thickens. Mtshiselwa acknowledges Nzimande's assertions that the absence of justice in the story of Naboth's vineyard is disturbing.

However, he argues in consensus with Farisani (1998:55) that the elimination of the Omride dynasty contains elements of justice. This is a view I particularly do not agree with and will be explained in my last chapter. Briefly, I disagree with Mtshiselwa because he addresses the socio-economic conditions of a nation and neglects the individuals' plight. Unlike Nzimande who mentions the wife of Naboth, Mtshiselwa (2008:220) is predominantly concerned with the nation's plight to drive his point home in his narrative analogy of Omri's dynasty and South Africa.

Mtshiselwa (2014: 220-221) uses the Mesha Stele and the Tel Dan stele as the backdrop of his argument to substantiate his argument for justice. He argues along with Schniedewind (1996) a scholar who argued that the Tel Dan was not an emergency inscription but a memorial stela much like the Mesha stela, which is quite a convenient coincidence. When reading the lines (i.e. line 2 read in conjunction with lines 3 and 4) which make mention of Land, in the Tel Dan inscription, it was his conclusion that the

focal interest of Jehu's revolt was land. Mtshiselwa (2014:221) states, "As part of a new alliance with Aram, Jehu probably worked with Hazael to eliminate the socio- economic injustice promoted by the Omride dynasty." However, Mtshiselwa acknowledges that engaging one source might not sufficiently account for the possibility that Jehu's revolution was a call for socio-economic redress.

Which is where I sufficiently agree with him because recent scholarship in the research of the Tel Dan Inscription shows that, Aram and Israel were not "co-workers" in battle, rather, Aram wanted to create out of Israel a vassal nation (Kottsieper 2007:118; Na'aman 2001:164), secondly, Hazael did not kill the two kings mentioned in the Tel Dan, rather, it was Jehu acting as vassal of Hazael and Hazael took the credit for it as it was a norm amongst kings (Yamanda 1995:618-19; Hagelia 2006:115).

Tel Dan was more of, for lack of a better word, a "Game of Thrones" and little to do with justice (Sasson 1995:25; Becking 1999; 192, Hagelia 2006:41). Hazael who himself killed his father Hadadezer (Ben-Hadad) to ascend to the throne and is mostly referred to as an usurper, and Jehu who committed treason by killing Joram and Ahaziah to become king, points to a series of military and political unrest, treason and betrayal and not socio-economic redress (Becking 2010:143; Hagelia 2006:32; Athas 2003:259; Tropper 1993:397; Yamanda 1995:612: Robker 2012:273).

Mtshiselwa did not mention other inscriptions (i.e. Arsnal-Tash inscription, Nimrud Inscription, Samos and Eretria Inscriptions, the Zakkur Inscription, and the Tell Deir Inscriptions) which are Aramaic sources that document the rise of Hazael as a means of territorial expansion for the Arameans and mention nothing about socio-economic redress (Hasegawa 2012:59).

This then positions me to agree with Nzimande's views that Jehu's coup did not and was not primarily concerned with land redistribution and further research will show that the socio-economic conditions of the Omrides did not change after Jehu's coup.

Anderson (2007:258) argues that the revolution began when Elisha summoned
one of his "sons of the prophet" to anoint Jehu as King of Israel (2 Kings 9:1-13). With the

rise to power, Omri's dynasty was ended in a terrible bath of blood, and a new chapter in Israel's history began.

The reasons why Jehu overthrew the dynasty of Omri, is intended on being explicated fully in chapter 4 of this dissertation, this is just a fact mentioned in passing. Part of understanding why the Northern kingdom, which was a grandeur of its time, was exterminated, is in understanding the apostasy of the Northern kings and why the prophets opposed it. The socio-economic conditions of Omri's dynasty cannot be questioned, as they are self-explanatory, however, the interest here, is whether Jehu's rebellion was really concerned with alleviation of the conditions which is proven to be otherwise, Jehu was concerned with politics.

3.2.3 Israelite Religion during the Omride dynasty

Deuteronomy 6:4 – עמש לארשי הוהי וניהלא הוהי | דחא

Israel was not an exclusively Yahwistic religious nation from its inception. The rise of monotheism and the exclusive worshipping of Yahweh will be argued to have evolved over time. Despite the varied and fragmented data currently available on the religious life of the Syro-Palestinian people of the second and first millennia BC, scholars attempt to create a "coherent religious vision" (Mondriaan 2010:307).

Römer (2015:86) argues that, Judean and Israelite toponyms, most which date from the second millennium, appear to confirm that Yahweh did not become the god of Israel until the turn from the second to the first millennium because these toponyms are not constructed using the element "Yhwh". Research on the appearance of analogous Ancient near eastern deities- Particularly with reference to *Athirat/Asherah*- indicates that these deities were active in wide spread pantheons suggesting the acceptance in these pantheons of foreign deities and rituals (Mondriaan 2010:251).

Epigraphic evidence will show that, there were a number of pantheons whom the designation *El* was used. In his discussion of how Yahweh became the god of Israel, Römer (2015: 71-72) outlines a few biblical occurrences where Yahweh is referenced as being the god worshiped exclusively in Israel as, (1) Exodus 19-24 documents Yahweh as being the god of Israel after following his revelation on Mount Sanai through a covenant, (2) In the book of Hosea 9:10, we find a simple claim that Yahweh 'found" Israel in the desert, (3) According to Ezekiel 20, the story of Yahweh and Israel began in Egypt with a choice by Yahweh. Although these texts do not have a common place where Yahweh chose Israel and at which particular time, they are in consensus that Israel had had not been Yahweh's people from all time.

The Etymology of the name Yahweh itself will prove true to these findings. According to Schneider (2008:113) it has become a commonly accepted view both in Egyptology and Biblical studies that the name of the later god Yahweh- the Tetragrammaton YHWH – makes an early appearance in Egyptian topographical lists of the New Kingdom, where it is closely associated with a provenance that is characteristic to statements about Yahweh's origin in the Old Testament.

Mondriaan (2010:233) indicates that, the pronounced Yahweh and not Jehovah as was initially believed based on the vocalization of the Masoretes. The word represents an imperfect finite verb, probably form the causative stem formed from the root *hwy-* "to be", "to exist"- possibly from a root related to *hwy-hyy*, "to live". The later suggestion is supported based on many instances in Semitic antiquity of divine names, which have developed from epithets.

Römer (2015:28-29) who agrees that the tetragrammaton Yhwh dates back to Masoretic vocalization for the substitute "Lord" has numerous attestations of a short of form of *Yhw*, which is found particularly in theophoric proper names i.e. names which have been constructed to with an element derived from the name of the god of Israel e.g. *Yirmeyahu* (Jeremiah), *Yesa yahu* (Isaiah), *Yehonathan* (Johnathan), et al.

Geographically, Römer (2015:35) thinks that the origin of the god YHWH does not have Syro-Palestinian roots, in Exodus 3 and Exodus 6 where Moses arrives at a mountain called "Horeb" and in the latter where Moses finds himself in Egypt geographically dislocates YHWH from Syro-Palestine. These two occurrences show that the exclusive veneration of Yahweh as the god of Israel was not there from the inception but came about as a result of certain instances. To show this, Römer examines texts that have parallels in the names they contain which can be linked to that of Yahweh, particularly, Ebla, Ugarit, Mari, Egypt, the region of Sinai, and the south of Negev as possible places for the origin of Yahweh.

According to Römer (2015:36-42) when he concludes the finding of all the possible places of origin for Yahweh, he concludes that; "Yahweh comes from the South". There are four biblical texts, which cites Yahweh's "southern" origin:

- Deuteronomy 33:2" He said: "The LORD came from Sinai and dawned over them from Seir; he shone forth from Mount Paran. He came with myriads of holy ones from the south, from his mountain slopes".

- Judges 5:4-5 "When you, LORD, went out from Seir, when you marched from the land of Edom, the earth shook, the heavens poured, the clouds poured down water. The mountains quaked before the LORD, the One of Sinai, before the LORD, the God of Israel".

- Psalm 68:8-9 "the earth shook; the heavens poured down rain, before God, the One of Sinai, before God, the God of Israel. You gave abundant showers, O God; you refreshed your weary inheritance".

- Habakkuk 3:3 "God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. His glory covered the heavens and his praise filled the earth".

These four verses show that geographically, Yahweh comes from the "south". The entrance of Yahweh into Judean and Israelite religion is recounted for the first time in the

book of Joshua, through the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, meaning Baalism was always a part of Israel. (Römer 2015:88). This is why a large number of scholars (i.e. Lipinski 1986:91-92, William 1984:21-37, Ackerman 1993: 385-401) who consider some aspects of the Yahwistic religions to have had a continuity with Canaanite belief (Gnuse 1999:328). Jezebel did not completely introduce what was alien to the Israelites because they already had been a polytheistic religious nation.

A synthesis of the information gathered above points to a few things: (1) with the constant paradigm shifts in biblical historiography, the writing and reconstruction of the history of Israel becomes more difficult to write. The historian is often faced with many obstacles that should be overcome when writing and reconstructing history of an Ancient society such as; location, presuppositions, chronological gaps et al. It is the historian's job to overcome these obstacles and find a balance between text and context. (2) Omri's dynasty was a grandeur of its time, and although some would praise it for its military and economic prosperity, it is unavoidable that Omri's dynasty was built on peasant oppression and heavy taxation, and Omri's dynasty by his son's marriage to a Phoenician queen for economic trade. (3) Lastly, Israel had hostile and sometimes peaceful relations with her neighbors Assyria and Aram-Damascus through military and economic contentions. These relations would lead to the eventual fall of the Northern kingdom and subsequently the South.

Chapter 4

Jehu and Omri: The Deuteronomist' Perspective

The editing of 2 Kings 9-10 will be analysed based on Noth's theory that there was a single author although various editors frequently supplemented it. This view is supplemented by the belief that 2 Kings 9-10 shows signs of post Dtr editing and redaction, which leave room for various editors. Olyan (1984:653) mentions that, in the case of 2 Kings 9, before a typical editorial analysis that is very important, it cannot lead to an appreciation of the meaning of the story. Hence, a careful study of the literary patterns of the passage is the kind of analysis that we intend to peruse.

4.1 The Deuteronomistic history

Redactors and editors of the Bible are mostly responsible for how the final composition of the Bible is the way it is. They are set apart from the authors because unlike authors, they arrange the material and order it in a way that is set to propagate a certain history, ideology, or theology. With close relation in style, vocabulary, and content, books such as Deuteronomy, Joshua, Samuel, Judges, and Kings display a similarity and coherence in thought. These books then constitute what is known as the 'Deuteronomistic History' (Römer 2007:2). The most pressing question here might be who the Deuteronomist is and why is he or they are so important.

Noth's well known thesis will be discussed in order to show how the Deuteronomistic History has developed since 1943. Noth's initial claim was that, the historical books recorded a different tradition to that of the Pentateuch (O'Brien 1989:4).

In 1943, Noth[8] theorized that Deuteronomy – Kings were one body of literature written by a single author who lived in Israel during exile, as Noth (1991:145) argues:

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[8] For the full bibliography on Martin Noth see Schultz, 1965, *'Bibliographic Martin Noth'*, TLZ 90, pp. 229-38

the Deuteronomistic History might have been the independent project of one man whom the historical catastrophes he witnessed had inspired with curiosity about the meaning of what had happened, and who tried to answer this question in a comprehensive and self-contained historical account.

Unlike the Documentary Hypothesis, which views sources as fragments, Noth's interest was not in the separate elements but in the whole (McKenzie & Graham 1994:32).

Römer (2012:1515) indicates that, in contrast to his predecessors, when Noth wrote his "History of Traditions" in 1943, he aimed to determine the function of Dtr texts in Deuteronomy and in the Former Prophets. He detected in these texts a unity in terms of content and composition. They are the work of an anonymous author, whom Noth called the "Deuteronomist" ("Dtr"). The Dtr composed his work shortly after 560 BCE (the last event in 2 Kgs 25 can be dated to ~562), providing an etiology of the collapse of Judah.

O'Brien's (1989:4-5) describes Noth's theory as follows:

- Noth described the Deuteronomistic History as a unity, composed by a single author.

- There is material Dtr had access to which he used to present the History of Israel.

- Dtr's intention is writing this history in a unique way was to show that God was recognized at work in history, intersecting with the nation when they decline morally, punishing them and then atoning himself with them.

- Dtr had strong theological convictions and his work was thematic.

Noth (1991:26-74) divides the Deuteronomistic History into 5 major sections as: (1) An introduction to the DH in the book of Deuteronomy 1-3, (2) The conquest of Canaan, showing Dtr's prophecy and fulfillment hallmark, (3) Judges – 1 Samuel 7 describing pre-monarchic Israel, (4) 1 Samuel 7-1 Kings 8 describing the monarchic Israel, (5) 1 Kings 9-2 Kings 23:25 describing the decline of the monarchy.

Whether the material is coherent, is debatable, just as the Deuteronomistic History thesis is not wholly welcome by others. The Deuteronomist chooses sources, arranges and modifies them, expands and supplements them with this goal in mind, rather than with a view to reportorial accuracy, verifiability, or exhaustiveness (Walsh 1989:160).

Scholars have gone on to divide the initial thesis by Noth and further schools of thought emerged. Different arguments began to surface regarding Noth's hypothesis of a single redactor (author) and literary and historical critical issues surrounding the DH.

In his compelling work, *The so-called Deuteronomistic History*, Römer (2007:46) asserts that, socio-archaeological evidence and historical research, shows that literacy in agrarian societies such as Judah and Israel was restricted to a very small percentage of the population, which according to some scholars did not exceed one percent of the population in Egypt and Mesopotamia. Thus, it is highly unlikely that an individual who was a nonprofessional could have been the Deuteronomist as Noth argues. Therefore, according to Römer (2007:46), the Deuteronomist's should be located among the high officials of Jerusalem, probably among the scribes, even if one should not exclude that officials from other groups (priests, 'ministers') did support their political and ideological views.

Although Noth had always argued for the unity of DH, according to Person (2002:2) in the 1970s two different schools of thought developed that created a consensus that behind the Deuteronomistic History are various sources and that the Deuteronomistic History has undergone at least two redactions. However, these two schools of thought continue to disagree about the details.

According to Person (2002:3), the main two schools are the Harvard school (Frank Moore Cross and mainly Americans) who argue that the Deuteronomistic History underwent both a pre-exilic and an exilic redaction. The Göttingen School (Rudolph Smend, Walter Dietrich, and mainly Europeans) who argue that the Deuteronomistic History underwent three redactions. Each redaction has a different perspective—that is, a history writer (DtrG), a prophetic redactor (DtrP), and a nomistic redactor (DtrN).

The Harvard school, with Cross as a leading proponent, modified the one redactor hypothesis by arguing for a double redaction. According to the Cross school DtrH was compiled by a redactor (Dtrl) during the reign of Josiah and ended at 2 Kgs 23:25. A Dtr editor (Dtr2) subsequently expanded it around 550 BC to accommodate the disaster of the exile. This editor also carried out a revision of the first edition (O'Brien 1989:10).

Cross (1979:275) lists the following as the reasons why the single redactor hypothesis needs reassessments because:

> Older literary critics, as well as their more recent followers, argued for two editions of the Deuteronomistic complex of traditions, one pre-exilic, the basic promulgation of the Deuteronomistic history, and one Exilic, retouching the earlier edition to bring it up to date. We need not review here the variety of views nor their specific arguments. Some of their arguments are very strong, for example, the use of the expression "to this day," not merely in the sources but also in portions by the Deuteronomistic author, which presumes the existence of the Judaean state, notably 2 Kings 8: 22 and 16: 6. The increase in epigraphic material of the late seventh and early sixth century, including the extraordinary series from Tel 'Arad, has made clear that the complex syntactical style of the Deuteronomist (if not his peculiar archaizing forms) characterized late pre-Exilic prose. The Deuteronomistic editor requires a pre-exilic date for the availability of sources.

Noth discerned both a D source and later redactional material in the book of Deuteronomy; he coined the term "Deuteronomistic" (*deuteronomistisch*) to refer to the later redactional material. Therefore, in Noth's terminology "Deuteronomic" referred to proto-Deuteronomy (*Urdeuteronomium*) that is, Deut 4:44—30:20—and "Deuteronomistic" referred to the later additions in Deuteronomy and the literary unity of

Deuteronomy-Kings, all of which were the product of Noth's 'Deuteronomistic Historian,' Who was heavily influenced by the legal material in proto-Deuteronomy (Person 2002:5)?

The Deuteronomistic history will prove itself as set apart in the next insert of this chapter. Dtr had a distinct view on a number of things (i.e. dynastic succession, apostasy, religions, and politics) of both the Northern and Southern Kingdom.

4.2.1 Jehu and Omri through the eyes of the Deuteronomistic Redactor

The Deuteronomist does not view the Northern Kings in the same way he does with the Southern Kings. There is a very negative perspective regarding the Northern Kings and especially dynastic succession. Römer (2007:155) further explains this by saying, "no King from the North is judged positively since they all worship Yahweh outside Jerusalem, especially Bethel." This is because; David was a paragon for the rulers of Judah. He was faithful and obedient to Yahweh (1 Kings 3:14); therefore, Yahweh promised him an unending dynasty (1 Kings 8:25; cf. 2 Samuel 7:4-16) (Walsh 1989:161).

Carr (2010:93) notes that, the reason these narratives embody a very negative account towards Northern kings is because the Northern kings founded Yahwistic sanctuaries, which provides the book of Kings with a polemic and an anti-northern perspective. After the death of Rehoboam, The tribe of Ephraim anointed Jeroboam as king and he established his capital at Shechem. He then moved to Penuel, where at Bethel, towards the South of Israel, he established royal sanctuaries. He installed statues of calves at each sanctuary and proclaimed; "Here are your gods, Oh Israel, who led you out of Egypt." – 1 Kings 12:28.

This would set in motion a chain of events that would not only affect Israel but would also determine how biblical historians and textual redactors would pen down and interpret the history of the Northern Kings. The tension between Israel and Judah is impossible to ignore.

Schneider (2001:20) makes a distinction between Judah in contrast to Israel, Judah described as much smaller, less fertile and economically weaker than her counterpart Israel does. Which is a clear indication of the biasness of Dtr. Judah however, had a very strong advantage over Israel. Jerusalem was not only it's capital city, but also she was the city in the whole of the two kingdoms where the Temple stood. The temple embodied the center of worship for all Israelites, with its functioning and authoritative priesthood and it is personification of the 'Davidic line' the vessel through which kings would be legitimated

The promise of these kings who inherited this legitimization as documented in 2 Samuel 7:16 states: "Your family shall be established and your kingdom shall stand for all time in my site, and your throne shall be established forever." This was tremendous for the Kings of Judah but posed a serious challenge for the Kings of Israel because they did not possess this 'credential' for their kingships to be legitimated. An example is Omri. Whitely (1952:137), a more conservative scholar is of the view that nowhere does the biblical account appear biased and inadequate as in the treatment of the age and dynasty of Omri. He further supports his statement by saying (1952:137):

> Indeed, the writer has done little more than supply us with the standard formula, which describes the accession and death of each king. It is true 'His might' is mentioned, but it is a brief evaluation of his merits in comparison with the prominence attributed to him in extra Israelite sources. Yet for Israel, the reign of Omri was of the greatest significance. He ascended the throne of Israel in 882 B.C., when a disturbing half century had elapsed since the disruption of the Davidic kingdom. At least three families had reigned over Israel since Solomon, and each reign was characterized by incompetence, bloodshed and treachery.

The Deuteronomist has his/their own representation of the Northern kings and that of dynastic rule and succession. There are features that are common in this representation which cannot be ignored or overlooked, as Whitely (1952:151) points to the fact that, the

Deuteronomic editor in his presentation of the house of Omri used popular prophetic stories without regard to historical accuracy in order to illustrate his theocratic view of history.

Römer (2007:187) points out that, the kings are often overlooked (i.e. Omri) or receive full attention (i.e. Ahab) but only on instances where prophets are involved. For the Deuteronomist, the kings cannot be separated from the prophets because it is the prophets themselves who provide religious grounds for the reigns of the kings. Half of the book of Kings is in fact, dedicated to stories about prophets.

Römer (2014:194) reiterates his point that, another distinctive feature which the Deuteronomist employed is that there is a very negative reception towards Northern Kings and dynasties. All Kings are judged on two criteria, which are taken over from the book of Deuteronomy: the acceptance of the Jerusalemite temple as the only legitimate and exclusive veneration of YHWH. From this perspective, all northern kings are systematically blamed (although with some differentiation) for perusing "Jeroboam's sins", that is, the royal Yahwistic sanctuaries in the North.

Although historical accounts of biblical documents and sources of what really happened can be sometimes skewed, it is necessary at times, to look beyond the texts and discover that the editors and redactors had certain motives and agendas of presenting to the reader information in the way it appears.

As discussed in the chapter 2 about the complexities of writing a history of Ancient Israel, Carroll (1991:108-124) further reiterates that by stating that, a biblical textual strategist, there are textual strategies which help to enforce ideologies which biblical writers want to present as part of their theology. Texts are not photographs of social reality, but complex social constructions generated by such reality in conjunction with various ideological factors controlling their production.

It is therefore the textual strategy of the Deuteronomist to have his/their own representation of the Northern kings and in this case, a negative one of Omri, and a bias favour ing of Jehu. Jehu however, as aforementioned, seems to enjoy a biased favour ing

from the Deuteronomist as opposed to Omri. This is how Jehu is viewed through the eyes of the Deuteronomist, outlined by Lamb (2007:128-129) as follows:

- Jehu has a righteous evaluation by the Dtr.

- As an editor, the Dtr does not include information that appears in Neo-Assyrian sources describing Jehu's relationship to the unrighteous Omride dynasty.

- Jehu's tribute to Shalmaneser III is excluded because it would presumably reflect negative upon him.

- Dtr repeats his prophetic anointing and his divine election in order to emphasize his legitimacy to rule.

- Although not excluded, Jehu's violence is not condemned but rather, Dtr describes it as zealous obedience to the commands of YHWH.

- In contrast, Jehu's contracting borders are only briefly mentioned, with no record of battle details, which would have highlighted Jehu's involvement in these losses.

- Lastly, Dtr uses David as a model of comparison towards Jehu, because David was the ideal ruler to Dtr.

In comparison to other kings, Jehu stands unparalleled, with the help of his speechwriters. The individuals comprising the dynasty are also distinctive. Except for Jehu, no northern ruler is described as righteous, as anointed, or as a recipient of an unconditional dynastic promise (Lamb 2007:1).

The pronouncement "there was none like him" is a popular characteristic in the work of the Dtr as a redactor especially in the history of the Kings. Knoppers (1992:411) refers to this as the 'incomparability formula'; these formulae assert that a given king is incomparable when compared with all previous and successive kings. This formula is both negative and positive; however, the negative formula is not normally cited as critical in isolating redaction layers in the Deuteronomistic History. The commendations of the uniqueness of a king are often more significant clues to the literary history of Kings.

As alluded to in the previous chapter, according to Whitley (1952:137), Omri's reign was a great significance for Israel, in contrast to Jehu. Namely because of his military success by forming alliances and economy success through nuptial alliances with the Zidonians as it had been done during the reign of Solomon, hence we read "the son of Omri, Ahab, took to wife Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians".

Lamb (2007:27) has in interesting argument that also points to the bias of the authors of the Jehu narrative. He uses the work of Schneider (1995, 1996), to argue that based on four Neo-Assyrian inscriptions from the reign of Shalmaneser III, Jehu is actually a blood descendant from the royal line of Omri, which is something Dtr omits because it would not work in his favour, as outlined below:

Annals: Calah Bulls (841? 51)

I received tribute (ma-da-tu) from the people of Tyre, Sidon, (and) from

Jehu (mia-u´-a) son of Omri (DUMU mhu-um-ri-i).

Kurba'il Statue (839-83853)

I received tribute (ma-da-tu) from the people of Tyre, Sidon, (and) from

Jehu (mia-u´-a) son of Omri (DUMU mhu-um-ri-i).

Annals: Marble Slab (83855)

I received tribute (ma-da-tu) from Ba'ali-manze—ri of Tyre (and) from Jehu

(mia-a-u´56) son of Omri (DUMU mhu-um-ri-i).

Black Obelisk (828–82758)

I received tribute (ma-da-tu) from Jehu (mia-u´-a59) son of Omri (DUMU mhu-um-

ri-   i).60

According to Lamb (3007:31), 'son of Omri' only meant 'Israelite', since later Inscriptions connect Omri with Israel. However, they fail to mention that, the reason why 'Israel' was only used once in the Assyrian Inscriptions (i.e. Monolith Inscription) is because as the political situation changed, it changed the way the Assyrians referred to

Israel, not necessarily because it was connected to Omri.[9] This presents problems of whether 'Jehu ben Omri' is understood ancestrally or geographically, or chronologically because Schneider's hypothesis that Jehu was a descendant of Omri is impossible chronologically for it does not allow Jehu to acquire the maturity of years he would need in order to lead a successful coup. However, it is still also possible because Jehu reigned for 28 years, he might have been young when he ascended the throne.

Lamb (2007: 42) cites the significance of this as that; the Dtr paints Jehu as someone who is familiar with the royal household although he omits how he is connected. Hence, Jehu is said to have eliminated the 'house of Ahab' not that of Omri, meaning, Ahab's descendants (Jehu's supposed cousins) are the only ones cut off. The Omrides were not since Jehu was still alive. This explains why despite being as more evil than all the kings before him (1 Kings 16:25), Omri is the first dynastic founder of the northern kingdom not to receive a Deuteronomistic dynastic judgment. Lamb thinks it is because of Jehu's connection to the royal lineage that would explain the absence of an Omride dynastic judgement.

According to Na'aman (1998:236), this does not mean that Jehu is the son of Omri, because, the designation 'son of Omri' in the Assyrian royal inscriptions refers to the ancestral founder of the dynastic house and not to the ruler's father. This suggests, 'Jehu, son of the house of Omri'. Na'aman does not agree with Schneider and argues that Jehu was the son of Jehoshaphat and the grandson of Nimshi (2 Kings 9:2, 14), because according to him, Assyrians did not consider usurpers who were affiliated with an eliminated house as legitimate kings.

To her own defense, Schneider (1996:100) explains how, it is suspicious to say that the Assyrians were not aware that Jehu has seized the throne in Samaria, and disregards the significance of the Black Obelisk and Shalmaneser III's reference. By virtue of having double patronymic references, this already sets Jehu apart in the Hebrew Bible.

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[9] Cf. table above in chapter 2.

Whether Jehu was Omri's son or not, it is still evident, the Dtr redactor looked upon Jehu favorably to legitimize his ascension to the throne, which is considered by some as illegitimate. Either way, in rabbinic literature Jehu is a righteous man, who is celebrated for eliminating the wicked house of Ahab thus, he did well in God's eyes (Josephus 1997:14).

4.2.2 Deuteronomistic Literary considerations in 2 Kings 9-10

We shall argue that the writer's careful employment of certain key words and phrases has created a story of great depth, laced with irony, suspense, and pathos. As we shall see, the writer, through his use of literary artifice, is offering his audience an interpretation of the rise of Jehu (Olyan 1984:653). Before the appearance of Noth's groundbreaking monograph, the most widely held view of Kings was that it was compiled first before the exile of 586 B.C.E. and then revised during the exile (McKenzie 1991:1).

In is article *Author or Redactor,* Van Seters (2007:2) challenges the conventional use of the term 'redactor' and 'redaction criticism'. Van Seters prefers to speak of authors because redactor is an anachronistic term. In his initial arguments that appeared to some as overly ambitious and vigorous, Van Seters first sets his argument on redaction criticism labelling it as "…the most confusing and contradictory of all the methodologies being used in the Old Testament studies today." According to him, this is especially true for the study of the Pentateuch where the once invisible redactors now appear to be everywhere in evidence in the text and are made to account for every feature of literary style and arrangement, the macro-structure, and the unity of composition, as well as every anomaly and blunder, every break and contradiction, every crude literary seam and evidence of disunity.

For Van Seters (2003:487), the redactor is like a proverbial shell game, now you see them, now you do not. Barton (1984:45) defines redaction criticism as a method of biblical study, which examine the intentions of the editors or *redactors* who compiled the biblical texts out of earlier source materials.

Van Seters (2003:488-450) arguments are that: (1) it must be firmly asserted that redaction criticism as it is now practiced did not arise out of source criticism and form criticism in Old Testament studies. Rather, it came into literary criticism of the Hebrew Bible by an old circuitous route from New Testament studies. (2) Redaction criticism did not arise out of form criticism in the Old Testament. Form criticism was viewed as a method that was closely related to source criticism, the investigation of the smaller primitive units of tradition that made up the works of individual authors. It was not editors but authors, the sources, who collected and constructed their works out of these units of tradition.

According to him, because editors do not do all the work in terms of content writing, redaction criticism could equally be called 'composition criticism'. The same way the redactor only composes the work, it could be viewed identical to editing. Since 'redaction criticism' is a rendering of the German term, *Redaktionsgeschichte*[10], its more appropriate translation would be 'editorial history', in other words, how a literary work has been edited over the course of time, which hardly fits the description given above. Van Seter's arguments are simply put as follows; we cannot speak of redactors or redaction criticism rather of 'authors' or 'editorial history/ compositional criticism'.

Ska (2005) writes a response to Van Seters challenging his views on the use of the word 'redactor' and how he charges those who use the word with anachronism and that redaction criticism emanates from the New Testament in his article '*A plea on behalf of the Biblical redactors*'.

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[10] According to Van Seters (2003:490), the term *Redaktion* is used in two different senses. On the one hand, it can have the passive sense of 'edition' as in the edition of a book or periodical. Such a use implies nothing about the activity of an editor in its production. However, *Redaktion* is also used in an active sense in which it means editorial activity. This is the sense in which it is most commonly used in *Redaktionsgeschichte*. Yet there remains a certain ambiguity in the term *Redaktionsgeschichte*. In its basic, and what I believe to be its oldest sense, it could simply mean the history of the various recensions of a text, its 'edition-history'. This relates to the field of textual criticism and has to do with the history of the text *after* its composition and its circulation as a finished work. Only in the eighteenth century when the notion arose in classical studies that redactors or editors intervened in an active way to change texts in the course of their transmission did *Redaktion* take on the active sense of editorial activity within the study of a text's *Redaktionsgeschichte*, its 'editorial history'.

Ska (2005:5) firstly firmly asserts his belief in the existence of redactors. He does agree that a New Testament scholar coined the term in 1955; however, it underwent radical change since then. Scholars such as W. Marxsen or H. Conzelmann spoke of *Redaktionsgeschichte*, a German term that was usually directly translated as 'Redaction criticism' in English. The term then went off to acquire new meaning in different studies, but this does not mean that redaction criticism originated in the New Testament.

Secondly, Ska (2005:5) makes the following objections: (1) that there are 'redactors' in biblical texts and that these 'redactors' are to be distinguished from both ancient 'authors' and later 'editors', (2) that these redactors intervene to 'actualize' the texts; (3) but that they also preserve the tradition(s) and the sources at their disposal, because they interpret ancient texts through corrective additions, not through suppressions and substitutions.

Current research points us in the direction of contention regarding Deuteronomistic redaction. As Van Seters' (1991:161) defines it, by redaction, we mean a limited editorial activity of collecting or combining written materials. So far the attempt of Noth to harmonize Joshua – 2 Kings has been a working hypothesis, however, there still literary overlaps, which are unaccounted for, leading scholars to think that there might have been a second layer in the redaction process.

If there were later redactors building on the work on their predecessors, then we must look at the historical circumstances which gave rise to the different redactions of the history as outlined below according to O'Brien (1989:272-287):

- The first stage was a straightforward account of the decline of Judah down to the exile. It extends from 2 Kings 23:28 and ended at 2 Kings 25:21 (omitting 2 Kings 24:2-4, 13-14, 20a). Due to Dtr's schema of prophecy and fulfilment, his account for pre-exilic Judah was brief because of the fall that would threaten the authority of Dtr. This is the reason why Josiah's reform was incorporated to present a new dawn for Judah, however, Josiah's disastrous end presented more problems that would be a grave disappointment for Dtr's followers.

- The second stage the Dtr had to account for the fall of Judah and Josiah end in a way that would accommodate his theology. In the second redaction, Manasseh is a key figure with which Jeroboam's accusation that he made Israel sin was applied. The second element in the second redaction is the king/prophet relationship evident in many texts. The third element is prophetic fulfilment; Dtr used this to back up his accusations that exile was a result of Manasseh corrupting Judah. The fall could be accounted and Dtr criteria of interpreting Israel's history was preserved.

- The third and identifiable stage is one, which has been described as nomistic. This is a term used to describe a redaction marked by three main characteristics; the use of nomistic language where appropriate; a shift of focus from the monarchy to the people; a different perception from Dtr or the second stage of redaction of the role of the prophet.

This method to decipher, and demarcate texts is pivotal to show that, as Brettler (1995:62) notes, we need to demonstrate that historian A has reworked a composition of Historian B and that A knew of the work of B. The first can be demonstrated using the standard canons of biblical scholarship; the second depends on noting sufficient unusual terminology that is common to the two texts.

The Dtr as a redactor has already provided us with models for how a later historian might rework earlier texts; he can omit episodes, which are unfavorable to his ideology (i.e. Jehu's tribute to Shalmaneser III). Furthermore, he blends texts together to expand on his ideology (i.e. 2 Kings 9:7-10a and 2 Kings 9:26), he creates new themes in the story through close interpretation of earlier sources (i.e. 2 Kings 9:3; 9:12 and 2 Kings 9:6).

The narrative in 2 Kings 9-10, is said to contain secondary material, which is dependent on other texts, and according to McKenzie (1991:70), some of these secondary additions provide important hints about the composition of the Masoretic Text's accounts of that story and the one about Naboth. Firstly, Olyan (1984:656) and McKenzie (1991:70) both agree that verses 7-10 seem to be an extended speech, which is missing in Elijah's initial

oracle in verse. 3 and Jehu's repetition to his fellow officers in verse 12. It can further be argued that verses 7-10a are a doublet of the oracle of Yahweh in verse 26, which is original to the story, and in fact the focus of it.

Jehu reports verbatim what was instructed to him by Elijah in verse 3 to his officers in verse 12, but fails to include the information found in verses.7-10a. The speech in verses 7-10a also differs from the oracle in verse 3 in form and purpose, unlike the oracles in 1 Kings 14, 16, and 21, 2 Kings 9:7-10a is not a judgmental oracle. The common structure of the oracles contains Hiph'il active participles which are absent from the prophet's words in 2 Kings 9:7-10a (McKenzie 1991:71).

Cronauer (2005:20) argues that, we find Naboth material in three verses: 2 Kgs 9:21, 25-26. These verses represent a secondary editing of the narrative in 2 Kgs 9-10, and he refers to these as the "Jehu-Apologetic Redaction." He further argues that traditional scholars have failed to see these verses as redactional, only one scholar Whitley (1952) in his article "*The Deuteronomistic representation of Omri*" asserted that verse 25 is obviously an interpolation to connect this incident with the circumstances of Ahab's death as told in 1 Kings.

Cronauer (2005:21), further explains that, the reasons why this text is a secondary addition is because, if we look carefully at the immediate context of vv. 25-26—at the verse which precedes and the one which follows our verses, it becomes obvious that if one were to eliminate our two verses and read directly from verse 24 to verse 27. The text would make perfect sense and one would detect no break or roughness in the text:

> And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength, and shot Joram between the shoulders, so that the arrow pierced his heart, and he sank in his chariot.... When Ahaziah the king of Judah saw this, he fled in the direction of Bethhaggan. And Jehu pursued him, and said, 'Shoot him also'; and they shot him in the chariot at the ascent of Gur, which is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there. (2 Kgs 9:24, 27)

The fact that the elimination of these two verses from the text causes no roughness in the flow of the text, nor in the sense of the text, is not, in and of itself, sufficient grounds for judging them secondary, but it is a small hint that this might be the case. Another question might be why were these two verses added? These verses connect the two themes of "Naboth the Jezreelite" and "Divine vengeance". This is why Naboth is suddenly mentioned again in verse 21 to serve the purpose of situating the precise location "Naboth's plot".

In the Jehu Apologetic Redaction, another interesting fact arises. The figure Bidkar is mentioned for the first time in the Old Testament, who was he and what was his role? Cronauer (2005:22) suggests that he might have been one of the officers present, which are referenced in verses 5, 11-13. There seems to be a link between v.21 and v.25 by the mention of "the plot of Naboth the Jezreelite", this would suggest that they are already at the plot since verse 21 says they will meet there, then why is the command given to Bidkar, which a specific reference of where to throw Ahaziah if they are already there? The simple interpretation is to say that perhaps the dialogue between Jehu and his officers (*read Bidkar*) happened on the road to the plot.

The term תקלחב from the verbal root קלה meaning, "to divide, share, measure off, apportion," usually in terms of property. This specific noun occurs in both the masculine form קלחand in the feminine form הקלח both of which mean, "apportion of territory". This phrase is understood as referring to all property which Naboth owned in a specific region, and that this property could be comprised of various-sub sections of land (i.e. different fields). The usage of the term in the Old Testament would support the argument that it was refereeing to inheritance.[11] Thus, when *hlqh* is used alone it is most often a reference to property in general. When the term is used with *sdh* it always refers to a specific field that is usually affiliated with agriculture. Thus, *hlqh sdh* does not equal, nor encompass

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[11] Deut 33:21 (the Gadite territory); 2 Kings 3:19, 25 (good properties- possibly fields); Job 24:1 (inherited portions); Jer 12:10 (x2= the Lord's inherited portion = the whole earth in v. 11); Amos 4:6 (x2 = property in general, maybe fields in general); 2 Kings 9:21 Cronauer (2005:23).

the whole, of the owner's property. It is always a reference to a specific part of one's property.[12]

The Dtr also has certain literary patters, which are unique to him to help him advance his ideology. The *Leitwort* in 2 Kings 9-10 according to Garcia-Treto (1990:47) the word "House" is a central motif. The scenes of "the house of House", "the house of Baal", even when Jehu is anointed in "the inner room", are crucial scenes which initiate most of the actions especially those of the protagonist and keep the reader aware to such a point that, even where the word "house" is not mentioned, it is still unimaginable to imagine the scenes without the "house". Similarly, *without* the "house", Ahab's descendant and Jezebel are nothing.

Garcia-Treto (1990:50) further reiterates his point my making a very symbolic observation that the fall of both "houses" as royal house (that of Ahab) and divine (that of Baal), as *mutatis mutandis*, by virtue of the manifold definitions of "house" as: 'Physical shelter for the Ark, house as ruling family; house as patrimony, prosperity, and dynasty; house as temple and sanctuary; house as seat of YHWH's reign'. He suggests that the use of 'house' by the Dtr is because of his history on the view of kingship.

Due to institutional difference in the monarchies of the North and Southern Kingdoms, it is no surprise that Dtr has his own view of kingship. Levinson (2001:533) argues that Dtr's view of Kingship is Utopian and this is why very few were able to meet this standard and often 'did what was wrong in the eyes of YHWH'. Dtr conceptualized the king in a way that rejects all prevailing models of monarchic power both ancient Israel. Dtr submitted to a utopian manifesto that sharply delimits the power of a king, that kingship for the Dtr never attained ultimate power prior to the centralization of the cult and meeting its standards.

Levinson (2001:519) further argues that Dtr always stressed judicial activity because he glorified judicial integrity. However, Dtr's king becomes reduced to a mere titular figurehead of the state, restricted to exercise real military, judicial, executive, and cultic

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[12] Cronauer (2005: 24).

function. He becomes a vassal. His only positive duty is to "read each day of his life the Torah" from the very same Torah which delimits his power. Dtr often claims at the expense of the royal house, because he reassigns the king's authority to the Temple. Other evidence or redaction lies in the oscillation of certain terms, an in this case, 'inheritance' and 'vineyard'. Schwind (2012:3) outlines the four oracles to expose the hand of the redactor as follows:

Comparison of all four Oracles of Judgment Against Ahab			
	God to Elijah	Elijah to Ahab	Elisha to Guild Prophet	Guild Prophet to Jehu
	1 Kings 21:19 (*NRSV*)	1 Kings 21:20-24	2 Kings 9:1–3	2 Kings 9:6–10
Charges	Killing Taking possession [of Naboth's vineyard]	You have done evil in the sight of the Lord You have caused Israel to sin	None	[spilling] the blood of prophets [spilling] blood of servants of the Lord
Condemned	Ahab	Ahab The House of Ahab Jezebel	None	House of Ahab Jezebel
Punishment	Dogs will lick up your [Ahab's] blood.	I will bring disaster on you; I will consume you [Ahab]	None [the loss of his crown could be a punishment on Ahab]	You shall strike down the house of your master Ahab; I will cut off from Ahab every male; I will make the house

		[I] will cut off from Ahab every male; I will make The house of Ahab like the house of…		of Ahab like the house of…
		Dogs shall eat Jezebel Dogs or birds will eat members of the House of Ahab		Dogs shall eat Jezebel

Schwind (2013:5) argues that, the original commissioning of Elijah only mentions killing and taking possession of the vineyard. There is no mention of the charges brought later (causing Israel to sin and the killing of prophets and servants of the Lord). Additional problems arise in 2 Kings 9:6-10 when the sentence is once again pronounced on the next generation through the guild prophet; the accusation makes no direct reference to idolatry and it is not pronounced to Joram (Son of Ahab) who is the ill-fated subjected of the oracle.

According to McKenzie (1991:71) the only previous references to the murder of Yahwistic prophets under Ahab are in 1 Kings 18:12 and 19:10, which McKenzie believes are post-Dtr additions. While the expression "my servants the prophets" is Deuteronomistic, it could be an imitation in this instance.

A prophetic narrative is underlying in the book of Kings as constructed by Dtr. McKenzie (1991:79) however, opines that, Dtr seems to have used individual prophetic stories as the bases for his accounts in 1 Kings 14 and 21. Nevertheless, other stories of his sources (e.g. 2 Kings 9-10) were not prophetic. 2 Kings 9-10 is a narrative which was formed by sources

which were edited and in the process Dtr created a new work of history. He shaped all of his narratives with his own theological perspectives.

Chapter 5

The roots of Jehu's bloody coup and the interrogation of violence.

The reasons for Jehu's coup have been a cause of disagreement in Old Testament scholarship. This chapter aims to explore all possible contributing factors, examining each independently and concluding on how they were all catalysts. The extreme use of violence will also be outlined, why the Dtr as a redactor does not condemn the violence, how this extreme form of violence can be defined and categorized, and whether it cannot be sublimated/refocused.

5.1 International Politics: The Tel Dan inscription.

Tel Dan, formerly known as Tell el-Qadi, located at the foot of Mt. Hermon in Galilee in Northern Israel, is identified with Biblical Dan mentioned in Judges 18:29 and the phrase "from Dan to Beersheba' (Judges 20:1 et al.) (Biran and Naveh 1993:81). During the excavations of the North-Israelite Tel Dan on 21 July 1993, excavator A. Biran and the epigrapher J. Naveh discovered a fragment of an inscription written on a basalt stela and it was immediately published. This finding initiated a controversial debate mainly about the question whether '*bytdwd*' in 1.9 should be interpreted as 'House of David'. In 1994 on 20 June, two other fragments obviously of the same stone were found and published by Biran and Naveh (Kottsieper 2007:104).

The inscription is attributed to the reign of Hazael king of Aram[13] It was probably written in the third quarter of the ninth century B.C.E. and it is the oldest[14] royal inscription written

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[13] Arguments to follow will show that scholars have varying authors they attribute the Inscription to; Hazael is not a standard resolution to this case.

[14] According to Hagelia (2009:1-2), There are other previous discoveries found at Tel Dan. In 1965, a discovery was made of a small inscription was on the surface. In 1966 in his first year of excavations at Tel Dan, Biran found a small potsherd inscribed '*belonging to Amoz*'. Another discovery was made of a similar inscription in Phoenician in 1968. In 1976, a bilingual inscription written in Greek and Aramaic was discovered. There was a discovery of a jar handle with an inscription '*belonging to Immadiyo*' in 1986, another one with a Yahwistic name was uncovered in in 1988 with the personal name Zechariah. These were all important discoveries although very brief; Tel Dan was of paramount importance.

in alphabetic script to have been found in the area of modern Israel (Na'aman 2000:92). The interpretation of this archaeological evidence, however important, was not beyond debate. The two inscriptions were found in two different years respectively and as we will see, they could not be easily identified as belonging to one full inscription because of the following reasons; (1) The fragments were found in different places, (2) The fragments show different scripts, and (3) the lines do not fit (Kottsieper 2007:106).

In their initial publication of Fragment A, Biran and Naveh's (1993:81) initial observation was that, the stone, a fragment of a larger block found, was in the eastern section of a large pavement or piazza at the entrance of the outer gate of the city at Dan. The stele might have been smashed prior to the excavations and this is often attributed to Ben Hadad's attack of Dan mentioned in 2 Kings 12:20.
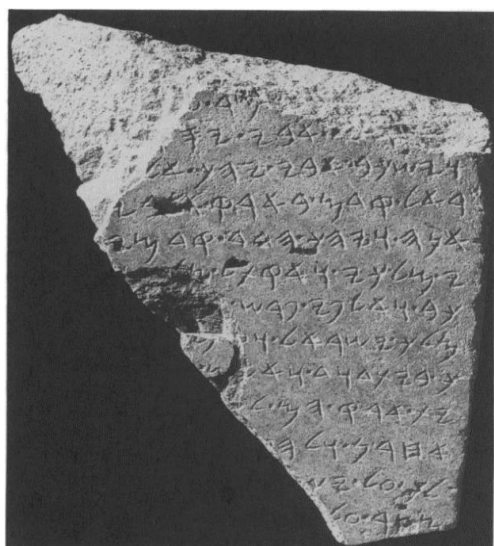
Fig.1 Fragment A. Photograph courtesy of Hebrew Union College- Tel Dan Excavations (Photo: Zeev Radovan) [15]

The interest aroused in the Aramaic stele inscription discovered at Tel Dan in 1993 prompts us to hasten the publication of two new pieces found in June 1994. They have been designated Fragments B1 and B2; consequently, the fragment found last year is called here Fragment A (Biran and Naveh 1995:1). Fragment B, as both (Biran and Naveh 1995) and (Athas 2003) was discovered after a Roman clay pipe from a later stratum had

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[15] Cf. Halpern (1994:63-80).

been removed, when a small paved platform was found. This platform had served as a shrine to three *massebot* found on the northern edge of the platform. This small shrine built over debris dated to Tiglath-Pileser III's conquest of northern Israel in 733 B.C.E.

Fig. 2: Fragment B1 (Tel Dan Excavations, Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem; Photograph: Z. Radovan).[16]

As excavations along the base of the Iron Age city wall continued eastward, five *massebot* were uncovered at the base of the wall. A probe beneath the two easternmost *massebot* revealed that they had been laid prior to the paving of the area with flagstones (Athas 2003:14). Pottery found in other probes under the flagstone pavement support the dating of the period to the end of the ninth/beginning of the eight century. Surveyor Gila Cook, who had found Fragment A, spotted a third piece- designated Fragment B2 while inserting a measuring rod into the base of the wall for about 8m north of the place where Fragment B1 was found (Biran and Naveh 1995:5).

Fig. 8. Fragment B2.

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[16] Cf. Athas (2003:14).

Fig. 3: Fragment B2 (Tel Dan Excavations, Hebrew Union College, Jerusalem; Photograph: Z. Radovan).

Fig.4: The Tel Dan inscription with Fragments A and B1+B2 on display at the Israel Museum. Source: Wikipedia

According to Robker (2012:241), after the discovery and publication of fragment B, it introduced into the arsenal of research new information and raised more questions, namely the connection of the two fragments to each other. Biran and Naveh (1995:3) were initially of the view that the two fragments do not fit in a clear-cut manner with one another, nevertheless, they assumed that the eight lines of the new fragment are in fact a continuation of lines 1-8 of fragment A.

Biran and Naveh (1995:3), based on a joint below the surface at line five, argued that Fragment B belonged immediately to the left of Fragment A. Galil (2001:133), argues that joining fragment A and B1 + B2 seems to be impossible as suggested by Biran and Naveh, instead, fragments B1 +B2 seem to precede fragment A, and the inscription should be dated to the time of Bar- Hadad, son of Hazael.

Galil's (2001:134) proposed reasons for the rejection placement of the fragments according to Biran and Naveh (1995) are as follows:

1. The lines in fragment A are not parallel to those in fragment B (in contrast to the straight lines in which the letters were written in each of the fragments).

2. There is no physical joint between the fragments. The joining of the backside of the fragments is indeed possible, though almost any two fragments may be joined in this way.

3. The completion of line 8 is impossible; according to Biran and Naveh there is only room at the end of this line for up to five letters, yet they completed seven letters in this line (their assumption regarding the haplography is far-fetched).

4. The completion of lines 2-3 is not reasonable, for there is no point in vaguely mentioning the attack of the king of Israel against Aram after giving a precise description of the relationship between the kingdoms.

5. The content of lines 6-7 is artificial and forced.

6. Hazael was not the son of his predecessor and it is difficult to conjecture that he would so thoroughly represent the actions of his fictitious father and devote such a detailed introduction to this imaginary period.

7. Hazael made enormous achievements, as was recently shown in his booty inscriptions (Eph'al and Naveh 1989: 192-200). Accordingly, there is neither reason nor logic in the claim that Hazael was responsible for the death of Ahaziahu and Joram, who were actually murdered by Jehu, Hazael's toughest enemy during the early years of his reign.

Biran and Naveh's (1993:86-90) initial study on the original inscription (fragment A) shows that 13 lines have been preserved, with only three letters in the first of these, five in the last and 14 letters at its widest section, and they read as thus:

1. [… …] and cut […]	‎1. [‏רזגו‏] [ע‏.‏רמ‏]א ‏]
2. […] my father went up [against him when] he fought at […]	‎2. [‏בן‏.‏אב‏.‏המחלת‏]ב‏.‏הול‏ע‏.‏קסי‏.‏יבא‏---]
3. And my father lay down, he went to his [ancestors] (*viz.* became sick and died) And the king of I[s-]	‎3. שי [מלכי‏.‏עיו‏.‏ה‏]אבה‏.‏ואה‏.‏לא‏.‏רהי‏.‏אב‏.‏יו‏בכש]
4. rael entered previously in my father's land. [And] Hadad made me king	‎4. תי‏]א‏[.]‏ה‏דד‏.‏המ‏]ל‏ר‏.‏ו‏[.‏אב‏י‏.‏קראב‏.‏קרסד‏.‏לאר]
5. And Hadad went in front of me, [and] I departed from [the] seven […-]	‎5. ת‏]עבש‏.‏מ‏.‏ן‏ו‏[.‏קדמי‏.‏דדה‏.‏רהי‏.‏הנא‏---]
6. s of my kingdom, and I slew [seve]nty kin[gs], who harnessed thou[sands of cha-]	‎6. ר‏.‏לפ‏י‏[א‏.‏סרא‏.‏ירע‏]ן‏.‏בש‏כ‏[מ‏.‏למ‏]ו‏.‏לתקא‏.‏יכלמ‏.‏י‏]
7. riots and two thousand horsemen. [I killed Jeho[ram son of [Ahab]	‎7. באחא‏]ב‏.‏רב‏]סר‏[.‏והי‏.‏תיא‏.‏תלתק‏.‏שרפ‏.‏ו‏אלפי‏.‏בכ [.]
8. king of Israel. And [I] slew [Ahaz]iahu son of [Jehoram kin-]	‎8. ..‏הרוה‏]מ‏[‏ב‏ר‏.‏והי‏[.‏זחא‏.‏תיא‏.‏תקו‏]ל‏ת‏.‏לארשי‏.‏למ‏ל‏ר מ‏ל‏]
9. g of the House of David. And I set [their towns into ruins and turned]	‎9. ואה‏.‏פ‏ה‏.‏תברח‏.‏מ‏סה‏.‏קירת‏.‏תיא‏[.‏ואשמ‏.‏ביתדוד‏.‏ר א‏.‏ר]
10. their land into [desolation]	‎10. ‏משי‏[ל‏.‏הם‏.‏קרא‏.‏תי]
11. other [… and Jehu ru-]	‎11. ‏מ‏.‏יו‏היו‏א ...[‏הלו‏.‏ואחר]
12. led over Is[rael… and I laid]	‎12. ‏ואשמ ...‏לאר‏[שי‏.‏על‏.‏ר]
13. siege upon […]	‎13. ‏ל‏[ע‏.‏מצר]

According to Stith (2008:43), the basic sequence of "episodes" described by the stele (as reconstructed above) can be summarized as follows:

  a) The author's father fought with an enemy, perhaps at Abel (lines 1-2).

  b) The father died (3a).

  c) The king of Israel invaded the father's land (3b-4a).

d) Hadad enthroned the author (4b-5a).

e) With Iladad's help, the author killed two "mighty kings," Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah, despite their military power (5b-9a).

f) The author visited destruction on the territory of his opponents (9b-11a).

g) A new king, here reconstructed as Jehu, was enthroned in Israel (1 lb-12a).

h) Some kind of siege took place (13).

The archaeological state of the inscriptions is crucial to help in the epigraphical and philological analysis of the stele. Demsky (1995:29) outlines the five steps often used in the analysis of the inscriptions as follows:

> (1) To establish the archaeological context in which the inscription was found. (2) To determine the type of inscription which is indicated by the writing surface. This then allows the researcher to compare the inscription with other known Northwest Semitic inscriptions of the same genre. (3) A paleographical analysis. (4) A linguistic analysis. (5) An historical synthesis.

The dating of the inscription has to be a primary task in order to embark on Demsky's five steps. Scholars have disagreed on the possible dating of the Tel Dan inscription, mostly this was constituted by the varying methodologies that they used to determine the date, and their theories will be discussed in the arguments to follow. Before discussing the possible dating of the inscription, a list of the chronology of Aramean kings in concurrence with the Judean kings are outlined, as well as the political relations between Aram and Israel. Below is a chronological list with textual reference of the Aram-Damascus kings (Hasegawa 2012:58-68):

- Hezion 990-930 B.C.E: Also called Rezon, adversary to Solomon (1 Kings 11:23)
- Tabrimmon 930-885 B.C.E: Son of Hezion, Father of Ben-Hadad (1 Kings 15:18)
- Ben-Hadad I 885-860 B.C.E: Son of Tabrimmon, former alliance with Asa of Judah against Israel (1 Kings 15:18-20)

- Ben-Hadad II 860-841 B.C.E: Fought two wars with Ahab of Israel; besieged Israel a third time; Murdered by Hazael (1 Kings 20; 1 Kings 6:24).

- Hazael 841-801 B.C.E: Anointed king by Elijah; will be a warrior; Elisha predicts his brutality; defeats Israel; captured Gath; went up to Jerusalem; appeased by Jehoash by gold; Israel given into his hand (1 Kings 19:15, 17; 2 Kings 8; 9; 14-15; 10:32; 12:17-18; 13:3, 22-24)

- Ben-Hadad III 807-780 B.C.E: fought wars with Israel; lost cities to Jehoash (2 Kings 13:3, 24, 25)

- Rezin 780-732 B.C.E: allied with Pekah of Israel against Ahaz of Judah; Damascus captured and Rezin put to death by Tiglath-Pileser in 732 B.C (2 Kings 15:37; 16:6-9).

The Jehuite Kings and their textual references outlined by (Hasegawa 2012:9) are as follows:

- Jehu 842-815 B.C.E (2 Kings 10:36)
- Joahaz 819-804 B.C.E (2 Kings 13:1)
- Joash 805-790 B.C.E (2 Kings 13:10)
- Jeroboam II 790-750 B.C.E (2 Kings 14:23)
- Zechariah 750 B.C.E (2 Kings 15:8)
- Shallum 749 B.C.E (2 Kings 15:13)
- Menahem 749-738 B.C.E (2 Kings 15:17)
- Pekahiah 738-736 B.C.E (2 Kings 15:23)
- Pekah 732-722 B.C.E (2 Kings 15:27)

The Aramean kings first appeared on the scene of the ancient Near East around 1100 B.C.E, when a number of Aramean states came into existence. They were spread over a large region between Mesopotamia, Canaan and the Arabian Desert (Boshoff, Scheffler and Spangenberg 200:38). Assyria had been a dominant power in Syria-Palestine since the time of Shalmaneser III (858–824 BCE). Following the Assyrian withdrawal in the 830s, Aram-Damascus under Hazael and his son, Bar-Hadad, became dominant in the

Syro-Palestinian arena for some forty years, until Adad-nerari III resumed military campaigns to that region (Hasegawa 2012:3).

The relations between Aram-Damascus and Israel are narrated in the Old Testament. These relations were not merely the result of political contact through prolonged periods, in war and peace, but in a great measure were also the product of related origins and language, and of common traditions from time long-established (Mazar 1962:98). The rise of Hazael brought territorial Aramean expansion. White (1997:62-63) notes that, the assassination of Hadadezer and the usurpation of the Aramean throne by Hazael ended the alliance between Aram and Israel previously enjoyed by the Omrides.[17] If the dates reconstructed above are roughly accurate, it was not long after Hazael forcefully assumed the Aramean throne (844) that he turned on Aram's former ally and attacked Israel (842), whether personally, or by means of a proxy such as Jehu.

Hazael's military expansion and the series of military setbacks suffered by the Syrians is reflected in a series of destruction layers from Hazael's building activities in the territory of the kingdom of Israel (Hasegawa 2012:74). The available sources for the rise of Hazael and the Aramaean expansion during his rule include four types: (1) Assyrian inscriptions; (2) Aramaic inscriptions; (3) the biblical narrative; and (4) archaeological evidence from the Syro-Palestinian sites (Hasegawa 2012:52).

From Assyrian royal inscriptions, Hazael is mentioned as Shalmaneser III's enemy and the Assyrian inscriptions describe the Assyrian military campaign during Shalmaneser's eighteenth regnal year (841 BCE) and twenty-first and twenty-second regnal years (838-837 BCE) (Hasegawa 2012: 52).

The following Aramaic sources pertaining to Hazael are available: (1) the Tel Dan inscription; (2) the Arslan-Tash Inscription; (3) the Nimrud Inscription, (4) the Samos and

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[17] The identity of the king overthrown by Hazael is unclear. Shalmaneser III's inscription place Hadadezer (Adad-idri) on the Aramean throne in 854 and Hazael on the throne in 841, but according to 2 Kings 8:7-15 Hazael assassinated ben-Hadad. One solution to this problem has been to equate Hadadezer with Ben-Hadad, usually by conjecturing that Ben-Hadad was a royal title of Kings of Damascus (White 1997:62-63).

Eretria Inscriptions; (5) the Zakkur Inscription; and (6) the Tell Deir Alla Inscription (Hasegawa 2012:59).

According to Stith (2008:39), biblical narratives are problematic in helping to reconstruct the history of Ancient Israel, because biblical chronology is not ubiquitous in all the books. Liverani (2012:73) refers to biblical chronology as a 'biblical fairy tale' due to its elusiveness and The peculiar nature of the present debate lies in the difficult relationship, between an archaeological chronology and a text-based (i.e. biblical) chronology, whose mutual interaction seems an obvious and inescapable target.

Archaeological evidence from the Syro-Palestinian sites According to Kottsieper (2007:118) tells us the following about the relations between Aram-Damascus and Israel if the content is analysed based on its function: Firstly, it mentions that Joram, the king of Israel, concluded a treaty with the 'father' of the Aramean king who 'wrote' the inscription. Secondly, the Aramean king wanted to justify his military campaign against Israel and the killing of Joram and Ahaziah. He wanted it to be a justified aggression because an Israelite king attacked Aram despite the treaty concluded before.

The archaeological state of the stele as discovered by Biran and Naveh (1993:81) is that Fragment A was found in the secondary debris in the remains of a wall bordering the eastern section of a large pavement or *piazza* at the entrance to the outer gate of the city of Dan. The outer gates, which formed part of an elaborate gate system of the middle ninth century B.C.E., erected at the foot of the Middle Bronze Age ramparts. This level of destruction covering the piazza was used as the method to determine the dating of the stele. Archaeological evidence according to them shows that in the third quarter of the eight century B.C.E. the gate was destroyed, the time Tiglat-Pileser III conquered North of Israel in 733/2. This went undisputed for a while.

Cryer (1994:5) however later objected to this and the stratigraphy of the area would defy this as well by stating that:

> The excavators date the pottery assemblage found beneath the courtyard
> floor to the second half of the 9th century. Oddly, they suggest an earlier

date for the fragment, although this seems on the face of it unlikely, as both the fragment and the sherds beneath the courtyard were apparently simply fill, the fragment being chosen for its last resting place because of its flat configuration and durability. The wall in question was built over the floor, and is hence by definition younger. Moreover, the dating of the various gates leading to the so-called "piazza" seems to be quite chaotic, leaving doubt as to whether the gates plus piazza/courtyard originally formed an integral complex. There is even reason to question the original siting of the fragment. Fig 6 (p 86) in Biran and Naveh's publication shows the inscription lying on the ground, and clearly lacking the fragment that, in their reconstruction (Figs 7 and 8), has been situated in the depression on the left (broken) edge of the fragment. They also say (p 98) that "one may surmise that Ahab smashed the stele and his builders reused a piece of it in the paving of the piazza". This is confusing, given that we have otherwise been told (and shown, Figs 1 and 3) that the fragment was part of a wall. Against such a complicated and self-contradictory picture, good factual arguments, and not merely presumptions, will be required to justify dating the fragment significantly earlier than its immediate find context. Furthermore, where the inscription has not been badly damaged it is easily legible, meaning that it had not existed long before being covered up…Thus, the original Tel Dan Inscription, while in its primary display position, was contemporary with the piazza rather than the pottery found beneath it. The original inscription, then, cannot have been destroyed at the same time as the piazza was built. Rather, it was produced after the piazza was built because it was not used as a flagstone in the paving, but as a part of the younger wall.

According to Halpern (1994:63), the reconsideration of the stela, by means of philology, suggests that it belongs to the end of the ninth century, when Aramean ascendance over

Israel was on the verge of being broken. The language of the stela also indicates that the Aramaic of Damascus in this era had close connections with Hebrew and Moabite.

Hagelia (2006) in his earlier work concluded that the text should be dated to the royal period of Hazael (the latter part of the ninth century). According to him, scholars have done a great job in establishing the text, but because the text is fragmented, absolute certainty can never be attained.

Athas (2003:5) suggests that the archaeological context in which the fragments were found was partially known at the time of the excavations and it is unfortunate that much information has been placed on partial knowledge. According to him, Biran and Naveh contradicted their information about the exact location of fragment (A) when it was first published in 1993, they failed to understand the entire area that was excavated and the stratigraphy as Cryer (1994) pointed out. This has thus lead to confusions with issues surrounding the dating of the stele. Halpern (1994) and Athas (2005) are of the opinion that the stele was greeted with considerable and understandable enthusiasm and that led to a premature dating of the stele. Halpern was the first to notice that the context in which Fragment A was found might not be as simple as had been initially reported.[18]

Based on the observations of Athas (2003), Na'aman (2000), Hagelia (2006), Halpern (1994) and Cryer (1994), we may conclude the possible date for the Tel Dan stele as the third quarter of the ninth century B.C. Robker (2012:245-246) reiterates the point further by stating that, this would then put the time of composition potentially toward the end of

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[18] Halpern (1994:64-69) agrees that the work of Biran and Naveh is remarkable and they contributed immensely to Biblical archaeology. The archaeological evidence is relatively straightforward: the fragment was incorporated in an inner gate structure that was destroyed in the mid-eighth century B.C.E. presumably in the 730s by Tiglath-Pileser III (Biran and Naveh 1993: 81-86). This means that the monument with which it originated was dismantled and broken up before its destruction. Under these circumstances, what date should be assigned to the stela fragment? The original editors opt for the early ninth century B.C.E., and cite the fact that the author had a royal predecessor. Their choice is to associate the stela with the conquest of Dan by Ben-Hadad son of Tabrimmon son of Hezyan (possibly, but not likely, Rezon), reported in 1 Kgs 15:20. Based on *mlky* in line 6, which they read as "my king," Biran and Naveh argue that the stela's author was a vassal of the Damascene monarch (1993: 96-98). Realistically, however, the other evidence does simply not support the early date that the editors adopt in consequence of this consideration. First, there is no biblical evidence of Judahite alliance with Israel against Aram in the first years after the Solomonic schism. On the contrary, the tradition is exclusively one of conflict until the Omride era (1 Kgs 14:30; 15:7, 16-22). This tradition makes good geopolitical as well as political- emotional sense.

the reign of Hazael, though it is unclear when Hazael died. He further goes on to say that, because the text is certainly in Aramaic, this linguistic fact suggests a provenance from an Aramaic, and not from an Israelite, cultural context.

The narrator references his Kingdom (line 6) and the fact that Hadad made him king (line 4). This suggests an Aramean king, possibly one who has ascended the throne due to questionable circumstances. Based on sources outside the Tel Dan inscription (especially Neo-Assyrian Inscriptions), there is a king who fits these circumstances: Hazael of Damascus. All of the current evidence suggests his authorship of the Tel Dan inscription. The identity of the originator of this inscription has been a cause for disagreement. Several scholars have indicated that the inscription might have begun with the originator's self-preservation, but the opening words are lost (Hagelia 2006:32).

As alluded to in preceding arguments, the problem with Hazael being an author is that he was a usurper to the throne and this view is corroborated in Shalmaneser III's description of him as a '*son of no one'.* The rejection or his rejection of Hazael as the author is that a usurper's father is not normally a king, though there have been times in history in which a son has deposed his father as king. Bridge (2010:143) however alludes to the fact that, 'author' in this case means the person who ordered the Tel Dan inscription and who no doubt gave approval for the text that was inscribed. This then implies a possibility of many options. Becking (1999:188) categorizes the possible identities as follows: an Aramaic king Ben Hadad, Ben-Hadad II, Ben-Hadad III[19], Hazael or Jehu.

1. The Ben-Hadad I as originator theory

The Ben-Hadad I (c. 880-870) theory was defended by the editors themselves in their publication of Fragment A based on 1 Kings 15:20. Biran and Naveh (1993:86) ascribe the inscription to Ben-Hadad's attack of Dan as referenced. They believe that as the stele is inscribed in Aramaic and refers to the incidents mentioned in 1 Kings 15:20. After the

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[19] Hagelia (2006:36) also includes the alias Ben-Hadad III whom Becking refers to him as Hadadezer.

discovery of Fragment B, the editors changed their minds and argued for Hazael, which will be discussed under the Hazael theory. Puech (1994:215)[20] also agrees that Ben-Hadad is the originator due to his analysis of the incomplete lines of the inscription, which according to him suggest that author, the son of Bar Hadad (II) (*read Ben-Hadad II*) of Damascus opposed to the coalition of the Omride dynasty and "the House of David". A very close reading of the written remains reveals the existence of a territorial conflict between Damascus and Israel from Omri until the successors of Ahab who was killed by Bar Hadad. According to Hagelia (2006:33), Knauf, de Pury and Römer (1994:68-69) saw the inscription as the originator's celebration of a victory. A king of the Omride dynasty had dethroned his father, followed by a political upheaval in favour of the Arameans, and the king of Israel was defeated by Ben-Hadad.

2. The Ben-Hadad II originator theory

Halpern (1994:74) argues solely for Ben-Hadad II as the originator of the stele since it originated from his time, he is the one who stamped the Tel Dan. It was probably Joash, or possibly Jeroboam II, who restored Israelite control at the site.

3. The Ben-Hadad III originator theory

Also called Hadadezer, Galil (2001:18) was one of the very few to oppose Hazael in favour of the son of Hazael. Since Hazael was a usurper it is safe to assume that this inscription was actually written by Bar-Hadad, son of Hazael, so fragments B1 + B2 should be placed before fragment A. The main part of the inscription deals with the period of Bar-Hadad son of Hazael. Athas (2003:259) also stands in concurrence with Galil by rejecting Hazael based on the well-known objection that 'he was a son of a nobody'. According to him in Line A5, the author indicates allegiance towards Hadad.

4. The Hazael originator theory

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[20] Gratitude to my colleague from Gossamer, Prague who helped to translate the article from French to English.

The majority of scholars have argued for Hazel as the author, erector, and or originator of the inscription and their arguments were based on Fragment A alone, or B alone and both of them combined (Hagelia 2006:33).

The initial editors (Biran and Naveh 1993:95) themselves did consider Hazael as the author based on Fragment A alone and rejected the idea. Hagelia (2006:33-34) notes that Tropper (1993:397) was one of the very few to find the Hazael theory 'plausible', because, after the death of Ahab Israel lost Moab as an ally. Because of Assyrian pressure, the Arameans were in no position to attack Israel immediately. Nevertheless, Hazel managed to establish power. Based on this, Tropper assumed that Hazael was able to conquer Israel and Judah and commemorated his victory in the Tel Dan inscription.

Basing their arguments on Fragments B only, the initial editors now reassessed their initial rejection of Hazel after the discovery of Fragment B and concluded that the inscription belongs to Hazael, whose *coup d'éta*t precedes that of Jehu in 842 B.C.E. Secondly, Yamanda (1995:612) argues that the evidence is simply overwhelming and that Hazael the author. Yamanda has written extensively on the relations between Aram-Damascus and Israel and concluded from the research conducted that, god Hadad sponsored Aram-Damascus's military success by that makes Hazael the king.

Sasson (1995:25) argues that, the author of the text must have been a 'major historical figure' because: a) he mentions his own father several times; b) he speaks of engaging in war two kings and their armies; c) he claims the speedy aid of the god Hadad; d) he claims massive destruction inflicted on the enemy; e) he speaks of initiating an ensuing siege. Unless he is a braggart, which does not seem likely, the speaker must be considered a powerful king and more than an equal to two kings to the south of the border if the claims made in the text of the inscription are more or less accepted at their face value.

Schniedewind (1996:85) after having discussed how Jehu's revolt is connected to the Tel Inscription concludes that it should be attributed to Hazael. According to him, the

inscription was not an emergency inscription, but a memorial stela much like the Mesha stela.

Kottsieper (2007:119) is very decisive in his conviction that; "there is no doubt that Hazel was the author because it was the war with him in which Joram and Ahaziah had been killed". In addition, the fact that after his 'father's death' he became king through the support of Hadad.

Having lobbied for Ben-Hadad II in his earlier work, Lipinski (2000:376) reassessed his earlier assertion and now advocated for Hazael as the author of the Tel Dan inscription in his book *the Aramaeans: their ancient history culture and religion*.

5. The Jehu originator theory

Many scholars seem to believe that Hazael is the author of the Tel Dan expect for Wesselius (1991, 2001). After his proposal that Jehu was the author there then began an interlocutors relationship between himself (Wesselius) and Becking who responded to him by refuting his claims.

The premise of Wesselius's argument is that, Jehu in 2 Kings 9:14-29 killed the two kings Jehoram and Ahaziah and not Hazael of Damascus. In his article, *The first royal inscription from Ancient Israel: The Tel Dan inscription reconsidered,* Wesselius's new proposal of viewing the "I" as Jehu and is reconstructed[21] by Becking (1999:190) in his article title: *Did Jehu write the Tel Dan Inscription?* In addition, offers counter arguments why Jehu could not possibly be the author of the Tel Dan inscription as follows:
   1. [I, Jehu, was] a head over the se[rvants of the king and his] jud[ge]
   2. [Haz]ael my father hi[t him when h]e battled against [my] fa[ther]
   3. and he laid down (ill). My father went (back) to his [house]. And the
   king of I[s-]
   4. rael had formerly entered the land of my father. [And] Hadad made

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[21] The reconstruction is not found in Wesselius's article it was only implied, this is a reconstruction by Becking.

m[e] king,

5. (yes) me. Hadad went before me. [And] I left . . . [. . .]

6. of my kingdom. I killed[tw]o kin[gs] who had put thousands of cha-]

7. riots and thousands of horses. [I killed Jo]ram, the son of [Ahab,

8. the king of Israel. I kill[ed Ahaz]jahu, the son [of Joram, the k-

9. ing of the House of David. I appointed [

10. their land into [

11. an other one [k]

12. ing over Is[rael

13. siege against

The basis Wesselius (1999:177-190) sets forth for the plausibility of his thesis is that, first, Jehu before his revolt might have good connections with Hazael, king of Aram. In his interpretation, Jehu calls Hazael "my father" (line 2). However, there had never been a situation in Ancient Israel, when Jehu acted in close cooperation with the Aramaic king Hazael, as generally depicted by the Hebrew Bible Syria was a great enemy of the Israelites.

Second, Becking (1999:191) construing Jehu as the "I"-character of the Tel Dan inscription, creates a further problem for Wesselius. Line 4 reads: "[And] Hadad made m[e] king". Line 5 contains an experience of divine guidance: "Hadad went before me". These clauses are easy to understand with an Aramaic king as the main character of the text. The general picture of Jehu in the Hebrew Bible is that of a Yahwistic king.

Third Becking (1999:192) argues that, the language of the inscription is puzzling. With Jehu as the main character, one would expect a Hebrew text and not an Aramaic one or a text written in a mixed dialect. Wesselius takes the inscription to be Aramaic and then points to the fact that, as a vassal of the Aramaic king, Jehu might have preferred the language of those who helped him to his mother's tongue. According to Becking, Wesselius' proposal is ingenious and he blatantly disagrees with this proposal. Becking argues that, it can be observed that he did not bring in new evidence or a new method.

In fact, he has been rearranging existing evidence applying about the same historical methods as other scholars have done before him by merging epigraphic and Biblical data.

In 2001, Wesselius writes back and says that Becking's arguments against him are to be divided into two groups: his use of epigraphy and his use of the Hebrew Bible. Wesselius claimed that it was up to Becking to prove him wrong and that because the text was fragmentary, it could never be certain. Secondly, after a survey of the biblical material, Wesselius (2001:101), an agreement between the biblical text and inscription may be observed due to literal dependency.

Hagelia (2006:41) notes that Athas (2003:257) intervened between Becking and Wesselius by arguing that he also does not agree with the Jehu theory, stating that Wesselius's theory rests on circumstantial evidence solely because the biblical narrative and the inscription cannot be reconciled. Hagelia argues that Wesselius has had strength in that it wanted to try to eliminate the contradiction between the Tel Dan inscription and the Deuteronomistic Historian on the issue of who killed the two kings, Jehu or Hazael.

Younger Jr. (2005:246) provides some concluding remarks to this debate by stating that; "Although it does not preserve the name of its author, a general consensus has emerged that the inscription belongs to Hazael, the king of Aram-Damascus (c. 844/843-803/802 B.C.E). This seems to be the best fit historically, since the restoration of '[Jo]ram, son of [Ahab] king of Israel' in lines 7b-8a seems virtually certain. Dion (1999:153-154) offers a different reason why it is plausible to believe that Hazael is the author of the Tel Dan by stating;

> It is important to realize, in this matter, that our previous sources about the accession of Hazael were not very clear. In most of the Assyrian documents that usher him onto the historical scene, including the most detailed of those, his power in Damascus is simply taken for granted, without any hint at his being a usurper. Only one text [Assur Basalt Statue-RIMA 3: 1 18, A.0.102.40: i.25-ii.61, always quoted, calls Hazael

a 'son of a nobody', and even this text falls short of saying explicitly that

he killed or overthrew his predecessor, the soul of the Qarqar alliance.

On the biblical side, most scholars believe that 2 Kings 8:7-15 tells how Hazael murdered his predecessor by smothering him with a pillow (*blanket*), during a visit of the prophet Elisha; but serious doubt has been cast on this interpretation (Lemaire 1991: 95-96). Even if one does not follow Lemaire, it remains that the evidence branding Hazael, as a usurper is not very convincing, even more so since it originated in the enemy camp. It may well have developed somewhat belatedly, and for propaganda purposes.

Younger Jr. (2005:245) argues that, while the propagandistic motive might be a possibility, the expression 'son of a nobody' is a commonly held expression in in Assyrian and Babylonian documents. Thus, it is ingenious to compare a fragmented inscription with concise inscriptions which kills the rhetoric of propaganda because Shalmaneser III's inscriptions offer a detailed description of how Hazael seized the throne and that Shalmaneser III attacked. This leaves no doubt, why an Assyrian text would refer to him as a 'son of a nobody' for propaganda purposes. Although Dion's argument cannot be ignored all together because the enemy camp will obviously discredit.

Scholars such as Knauf (1996) and Kitchen (1997) reached the negative conclusion that they simply do not know who wrote the Tel Dan Inscription. They dismissed all possible categories of authors (Hagelia 2006:37). The conclusion for them then to the authorship of the Tel Dan inscription is that, it remains relative to the reader, and how they reconstruct the inscription. There is no definite answer.

The obvious relation of Tel Dan and Jehu is Hazael's claim that he killed Joram, king of Israel and Ahaziahu, king of Beth David (Judah), which contradicts the story told in 2 Kings 9-10, according to which Jehu killed these two kings near the city of Jezreel (Na'aman 2006:160). This is a claim inconsistent with other sources and the biblical narrative. These inconsistencies as outlined by Robker (2012:270) are as follows:

1. The biblical narrative (in its current form) presents Hazael's accession preceding the forthcoming conflict between Israel and Damascus, whereas the Tel Dan

Inscription seems to suggest that Hazael reigned only after the advance of the king of Israel against Damascus.

2. Genealogically, the Tel Dan Inscription suggests that Hazael was the son of his predecessor, who seems to be Hadadezer. An inscription of Shalmaneser III denies this in that it identifies Hazel as the 'son of a nobody.' This nomenclature suggests usurpation, which may also be the sense of the biblical story recounted in 2 Kings 8:7-15, though it is by no means explicit there. The biblical text offers no comment on Hadadezer's family.

3. According to the biblical text, Elisha tells Hazael that הוהי has shown Elisha that Hazael will be king over Aram. The Tel Dan Inscription explicitly comments that Hadad made Hazael king over Aram upon the death of his predecessor.

4. The fact that the original tale of Jehu's rise to power fails to mention the difficulties that Jehu had with Hazael after his accession suggest that Hazael's domination of Israel during this period is also most likely historical.

It is then very crucial to ask, what must we do with all of this and what are the theological implications? In his article *Setting the Record straight: What are we to make of the Tel Dan Inscription,* Athas (2006:241) suggests that the Tel Dan Inscription provides us with good historicity. This does not however help us to reconcile the discrepancy between Hazael and Jehu. Who exactly killed king Joram and king Ahaziahu, was it Jehu or Hazael?

Robker (2012: 273) argues that, Hazel's claim to have killed Joram of Israel and Ahaziahu of Judah remains suspicious. According to him, in order to resolve this conflict between the biblical material and the Tel Dan Inscription, Robker cites Yamanda's resolution in his article *Aram-Israel relations as reflected in the Aramaic inscription from Tel Dan,* that reinterpreting the verb לתק in the Tel Dan inscription as "defeat" instead of kill. Robker, however, is of the view that Yamanda's supporting evidence for this is surprisingly weak, most notably the Akkadian verb *daku* and the Aramaic of Targum Jonathan. This suggested change in meaning should thus be rejected. Therefore,

according to Robker (2012:271), Jehu was an agent of Hazael and thus Jehu is the one who killed the kings.

Whether Jehu killed them as an agent or whether Hazael took credit for the killings is a cause of disagreement. Na'aman (2006:162) uses the arguments of Schniedewind (1996:84-85) and Halpern (1996:47:10) about how they employ the analogy of the *Giammu Eposide* documented in two inscriptions of Shalmaneser III namely; the Kurkh Monolith inscription, an earlier edition and the Black Obelisk inscription as an analogy as an analogy to explain that the two kings were killed by an agent. In the former inscription, Shalmaneser III wrote that the inhabitants of the region of Balih killed their own ruler, Giammu, who had risen against Assyria and the excerpt reads as thus:

> I moved out from Nineveh, crossed the Tigris, (and) approached the cities
> of Giammu on the River Balih. They feared my lordship (and) the splendor
> of my fierce weapons and killed (i-du-ku) Giammu, their lord, with their
> own weapon. I entered the cities of Sahlala and Til-sa turahi, brought my
> gods into his palaces and held a celebration banquet in his palaces. I
> opened his treasure house, saw his treasure, carried off his goods and
> property (and) brought (them) to my city, Ashur.

The monolith had gone through years of editing resulting in a myriad of editions, the Black Obelisk documents as thus:

> I approached the cities on the banks of the River Balih. They killed (GAZ-
> *ku*) Giammu, their city ruler. I entered the city Til-turahi.

These inscriptions are however clear about who killed Giammu, it was his people hence Na'aman (2006:162) points out that the attempt to contrast the two instances is a-historical of Schniedewind and Halpern as it provides no helpful historical background concerning the Tel Dan inscription. To overcome this conflict, it is easier to speculate that Jehu rather acted as an agent of Hazael and as a vassal of Damascus. To understand why some scholars, attribute the killing to Jehu and why others are skeptical, an analysis

of the political relations between Aram-Damascus and Israel, point us in the direction of getting a clear answer.

A clear summary by Wesselius (1999:164) is that King Joram goes to war, together with his colleague Ahaziah, against the Arameans of the kingdom of Damascus under their king Hazael, near the town of Ramoth in Gilead (Ramothgilead), and Joram is wounded during the fighting. While he is recovering from his wounds in Jezreel, a prophet arrives at the Israelite garrison in Ramothgilead, and asks for a private interview with their leader, Jehu son of Nimshi. To his utter surprise, the prophet anoints him to be king of Israel, and flees at once. After some hesitation, a conspiracy grows from this, and Jehu hastens to Jezreel, where he kills Joram with his bow and arrows, while Ahaziah, who had come there to visit Joram, is pursued by Jehu's soldiers and killed by them. Afterwards, Jehu slaughters the family, servants and sympathizers of Joram and his father Ahab, and subsequently extirpates the service of the god Baal, which had been strongly favour ed by Ahab, and kills his priests.

Galil (2001:18) notes that, the mention of the king of Israel and the king of Judah *(byt dwd)* and ('their lands'*)* perhaps indicates the subjugation of Israel and Judah to Aram which is mentioned in the Bible (2 Kings 12:19-13:7). The Inscription is also a witness to a period of hostility between the Northern Israelite kingdom (Israel) and Aram (Syria), mentioned in the Bible in such texts as 1 Kings 20 and 22, and 2 Kings 9-10 and 13 (Bridge 2010:142). Na'aman (2006:162-163) notes further that, the Judahite source opens up with the accession of Ahaziahu (8:25-26), followed by a description of the participation of the king of Judah- side by side with the king of Israel- in the attack on Ramoth-Gilead.

According to the pre-Deuteronomistic narrative, Joram alone stood against the Aramaic onslaught on Ramoth-Gilead, and only after he was wounded and brought to Jezreel to recover did Ahaziahu arrive there, probably from Jerusalem (2 Kings 9:14b-15a, 16b). The divergence of the two sources is even more apparent if we ascribe the assumed Judahite chronicle (contra Otto 2001:94). Lipinski (1977:274) suggested that

verse 28 is 'based on the Annals of the kings of Judea', and translated v.28b as 'But the Aramaeans struck Joram'. He noted that the Hiph'il of the verb '*NKH*' is frequently used in such contexts in the sense of 'to kill' and that the original Judahite source described the death of Joram at the hands of the Aramaeans. This runs counter to the narrative according to which it was Jehu who killed Joram.

The death of the two kings appears to be recorded differently, assuming that the narrative is propagandistic in nature and in favour of Jehu. Na'aman (2001:164) states that, according to this textual reconstruction, admittedly uncertain, following the death of his ally, Hadadezer, and Hazael's rise to power on the throne of Damascus, Joram, in alliance with Ahaziahu, tried to expand his kingdom and conquer Ramoth-Gilead, which was held by the Aramaeans. However, he was killed in battle and his death brought about the end of his dynasty. Jehu, one of Joram's commanders, took advantage of the king's defeat and death, rebelled and annihilated all the descendants of the dynasty of Omri.

So who killed the kings? The Ancient whodunit. As it has been stated in the preceding arguments, the answer will lie in scrutinizing the issue surrounding authorship. Bridge (2010:145) makes an important observation that, the more fragments of a fragmentary text are discovered and put back together, the more the historian has to change their understating of the text. This is because, when Fragments B was published, it added to the arsenal of research and presented historians with new information in addition to Fragment A. The *Leitwort* which will point to who authored the Tel Dan inscription, will rely on the controversial lines 2-4 where the author mentions '*my father*' because the author does not reference himself as the one who killed Joram and Ahaziahu, rather, in the context of his father's wars against Israel and Judah.

In the opinion of Yamanda (1995:618-19) as stated in preceding arguments, in order to find out who killed the kings, Yamanda's resolution is that verb should be reinterpreted. לתק in the Tel Dan inscription should be read as "defeat" instead of kill. As he argued that a carefully protected king would rarely die in open battle; it is surprising and even highly unlikely. He does not challenge the authorship of Hazael, however, his attempt to weaken

the usage of the verb לתק is highly challenged and regraded as weak by some scholars i.e. (Na'aman 2000:101).

Sasson (1995:25) a staunched maximalist argued that the author had to be a huge historical figure, defending Hazael as the author of the inscription, later refuting his own claims. Hagelia (2006:115) explains the three reasons why Sasson called into question his own views as: (1) Hazael was very close to the king, [22] (2) 2 Kings 8:15 does not actually say that Hazael killed Ben-Hadad, and (3) the verbs used in 2 Kings 8:15 could very well refer to the king himself, that he actually killed himself, accidentally or intentionally. Hence, according to Sasson, it remains uncertain whether Hazael killed the two kings or whether it was Jehu because the historian 'simply might have had insufficient information available'.

Schniedewind (1996:83-85) argues that Jehu and Hazael were allied. According to him, Jehu actually did it, but in collusion with the Aramean king Hazael. Rather than simply dismissing the biblical text as inaccurate or as fictional account, the fragmentary prophecy in 1 Kings 19:17 already has suggested a preferable solution "Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill…" prophecy and fulfilment are the hallmarks of the Deuteronomistic Historian hence Schniedewind, a maximalist as well, believes Jehu killed the two kings, but in cahoots with Hazael.

Kottsieper (2007:125) a minimalist who draws heavily on epigraphic evidence argues that, had in fact Jehu alone been responsible for this deed, one would expect that Hazael would have blamed him and depicted him as an illegal usurper. Thus, the conclusion is inevitable that Hazael held himself responsible for the killing. Evidently, the statement of our inscription is more reliable than the biblical account.

According to Na'aman (2000:100), who echoes the thoughts of the Copenhagen School,[23] the discrepancy between the Tel Dan and the biblical account as to who killed

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[22] See 2 Kings 8:7-9; cf. 1:1-4
[23] Scholars who identify with this school of thought are those who place epigraphic evidence as primary to biblical accounts and traditions. They are otherwise known as the 'minimalists', and some of them for example are: Niels

the kings Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah, Hazael or Jehu, should be seen in the context of the unstable and rapidly changing political situation between 850 and 840 B.C.E. Na'aman (2000:100) briefly describes the situation as thus:

> It should be noted at the outset that in the late 840s B.C.E., the constellation of the Syro-Palestinian powers was shifting rapidly. With the death of Adad-idri, the leader of 'the southern alliance', and the rise of Hazael to power in Damascus (c. 843/2 B.C.E.), the alliance, which had successfully fought off the Assyrians between 853 and 845, fell apart. The kingdoms of Hamath and Israel, Damascus's chief allies, refused to cooperate with the new ruler, leading to an armed struggle between Damascus and Israel. Shortly after this, Jehu rebelled, put an end to the dynasty of Omri and became king of Israel. In 841, B.C.E. Shalmaneser led a campaign to southern Syria, possibly prompted by news of the collapse of the alliance, and this time was confronted by Damascus alone. Having triumphed over Damascus, the Assyrian ruler reached the border of Israel for the first time, and received tribute from Jehu, 'son of Omri', the king who had recently seized the throne of Israel. It is against this background of rapidly changing constellations of regional powers that we must examine the obvious conflict between Hazael's claim in the Tel Dan inscription that he had killed Joram, king of Israel, and Ahaziahu, king of Beth David, and the story told in 2 Kings 9-10, according to which Jehu killed these two kings when he seized the throne of Israel.

Hence, according to him, the testimony of the inscription should be adopted as the point of departure. Hazael is the one who killed the two kings.

Bridge (2010:146-147) argues that, all of this shows how difficult it is to harmonize the Biblical narrative and the Tel Dan inscription to determine which one is most accurate.

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peter Lemche, Thomas L. Thompson, Friedrick H. Cryer, along with Phillip R. Davies who are gradually consolidating a united front (Hagelia 2006:84).

The Tel Dan inscription for one is too fragmentary to give enough information about its historical setting, especially about the authors name; this is why the argument remains alive even today. The Biblical narrative will obviously contain religious and theological bias in favour of Israel and its God, which suit their interpretation. For example, 2 Kings 11:32-36 does not mention Shalmaneser III defeat in 838 B.C.E, instead, 2 Kings focuses on the Israelite-Aram relations at the time of the Jehu dynasty.

Now that the archaeological, historical findings, erection, and destruction of the stele has been discussed, the crucial part of its relevance to this dissertation is how it relates to Jehu's revolt and if it provided any basis. Jehu as a general who came to the throne in 841 B.C.E. becomes relevant because he ascended to the throne by assassinating king Joram and annihilating the descendants of the Omride dynasty. Schniedewind (1996:83) clarifies that, whether we term this traumatic change of power a conspiracy, a coup, or a revolution is, of course, a matter of perspective.

To king Joram it was a tremendous conspiracy (cf. 2 Kings 9:21-24), the narration of these events in the book of Kings, however, depicts Jehu as a liberator, freeing Israel from the domination of a foreign queen-mother Jezebel. According to the biblical account, Jehu comes to the throne with prophetic support (2 Kings 9:1-13). He is cast in the Deuteronomistic History as a religious reformer (Schniedewind 1996:83). The way in which the narrator of 2 Kings 9-10 contradicts the historical accounts of the Tel Dan inscription is critical not only because of Jehu's enthronement but because of the legitimacy of it hence he was made to be seen as a Yahwistic king. Kottsieper (2007:127) explains it in clear terms that the narrator who has introduced verses 1-13 took over this critical view but set against it the justification that Jehu has acted as an anointed king ordered by God. This may be seen as witness to a controversy during the time of the dynasty – a conspirator had founded it – while the apologists who could not deny the fact of the plot countered with Jehu's appointment.

It is clear that the politics of Aram-Damascus and Israel, with their historical accounts in addition, implications would put Jehu's enthronement under scrutiny. The narrator has cited

the view of the oppressor and did not contradict it but has just contrasted it with the additional information about Jehu's appointment shows the propagandistic skill of the apologists (Kottsieper 2007:127). This is what we call the rhetoric of political persuasion. This was purely politically motivated to set into motion a series of events that would see to the annihilation of the house of Ahab by the death of Joram to be able to ascend to the throne. This will require a person to have developed an appreciation of the artistic narrative art of Hebrew narration to be able to engage the story found in 2 Kings 9-10 (Barre 1988:1).

In conclusion, the significance of the Tel Dan inscription in relation to Jehu's coup is that it confronts us with the question of who killed the two kings? Jehu took credit for the killings in the biblical narrative, however, when the Tel Dan inscription was discovered, it contradicted the information as Hazael claimed that he killed the two kings. This discrepancy in these two assertions created a theological, ideological, and historical implication concerning interpretation and reception and contributed immensely to biblical archaeology. It remains as this, who killed the kings' remains an ancient whodunit, which was used to legitimate Jehu's coup.

5.2 Prophetic Agenda: Elijah and Elisha

> *I shall go to the sons of Israel and shall say to them: the god of your fathers has sent me. But they will ask me: what is his name? What shall I say to them?* – Exodus 3:13

Schwind (2005:1) asserts that, the reason why there is sometimes the special emphasis on the analogy above between Jehoiada and Jehu (i.e. Barre 2007:65) is that both coups were carried out as sacred tasks. Jehu, like Jehoiada who was ushered to restore the house of David, was ushered into overthrowing the house of Ahab as a zealous and obedient servant of Yahweh by the prophets Elijah and Elisha through the hallmark of the Deuteronomistic History through prophecy and fulfilment. The oracles of judgment made

against King Ahab (and against the Omride Dynasty) in 1 & 2 Kings are ambiguous at best. These oracles are given in four different locations and contexts: (1) God's commissioning of Elijah (1 Kings 21:19), (2) Elijah's pronouncement of the oracle to King Ahab (1 Kings 21:20-24), (3) Elisha's commissioning of the guild prophet (2 Kings 9:1–3), and the guild prophet's pronouncement of the oracle to Jehu on his anointing as king (2 Kings 9:6–10).

Olley (1998:25) describes Elijah as someone who enters the scene abruptly, unannounced and with an announcement. He strides across the narrative of 1 Kings 17-19, 21 and 2 Kings 1-2. The first chapter of the Elijah narrative is a portrait of prophetic utopia. Elijah appears from an unknown location and (like a neo-Melchizedek) with no parents (Glover 2006:452).

Elisha, was a man from a priestly family in a small town in Gilead, having failed to successfully join the administration of the temple, he became a successor to Elijah (Knauf 1998:62). Before we embark on a study of how the Elijah and Elisha legends relate to Jehu's coup, a brief study into the historicity of the two figures will be conducted. White (1997:3) explains "Historicity" as the possibility of verifying the text's claim that the description of events that it presents is factual. Defined thus, the historicity of the Elijah legends is problematic.

Among the prophets of the Monarchic and Postexilic Periods, Elijah and Elisha undoubtedly stand out as unique (Lunn 2015:49). Elijah always appears as the extraordinary, too perfect, impressive figure who has zealous obedience for Yahweh and opposes anyone who oppose his God. It is because of these very attributes and his death, how he is simply taken up to heaven that brings into question the historicity of the figure in the Ancient Near east Israel. As research has shown, Elisha and Elijah cannot be divorced from the Deuteronomistic history, which will be explicated in depth below.

Kissling (1996:96) notes that, Elijah had been a reliable character in 1 Kings 17 and 18 only to see this be challenged in chapter 19. It is highly probable that the reader then reassesses inferences previously made. According to White (1997:3) the historicity of

Elijah is problematic because majority of the Elijah narratives consist either of retellings of traditions associated with Moses, Elisha, and Nathan or literary anticipations of Jehu.

Otto (2003:487) argues that the Elijah narratives in the Deuteronomistic History developed in three ways namely: The narratives of Naboth's vineyard, Ahaziah's death and the story of Jehu's coup. The Baal worship cult reform in the history of the Northern Kingdom, and the narratives about the Omride wars were added later and a new theme was introduced, the attitude of the king towards the word of the prophets. The prophets' involvement has already been discussed under the subheading of Naboth's vineyard. Here, the two last themes mentioned by Otto will be brought to the fore, to explain how the Elijah and Elisha cycles are connected to Jehu's coup.

A view by Carroll (1969: 401) is that the Deuteronomist envisaged two possible interpretations in their sketch of the prophet. Firstly, the Deuteronomist might have purposefully intended to create a prophetic figure whom with their statements would become an Elijah protégé in the future. Secondly, they had in mind a succession of prophets of which Moses was a prototype; the institution of prophecy was to be a continuous permanent office constantly supplying the people of Israel with a covenant mediator, which would recreate the role of Moses for the nation.

The parallels between Elijah and Moses are widespread. In his 1981 article '*Why do scribes say Elijah must come first',* Faierstein (1981:75) remarks how in New Testament scholarship, Elijah is closely associated with John the Baptist (Matt 17:11-13) and how there is a consensus in New Testament scholarship that the concept of Elijah as forerunner of the Messiah as a widely accepted Jewish idea in Jesus's day. Over two decades earlier, in an essay titled '*Elijah, John and Jesus',* Robinson (1958:263-264) discusses the problems surrounding the 'Elijah as forerunner' concept and how the methodological flaws raise questions about the validity of the conclusions drawn from the evidence presented.

McKenzie (1991:83) is also one of the scholars, who draws the parallel between Elijah and Moses as very significant given the Mosaic covenant in the Deuteronomist ideology,

that there shall be no other prophet like Moses. According to Steenkamp (2005:76) in the Deuteronomistic History, the prosperity of the nation is understood as the result of obedience to the law that was given by Moses, who was the divinely appointed leader of Israel, the intermediary between the nation and God. A few similarities that McKenzie (1991:84) describes are:

- The provision for Elijah at the brook Cherith (1 Kings 17:6) and Elijah's provision for the widow (1 Kings 17:8-16), recalls the provision of meat and manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16:4-36).

- Elijah's pleading in 1 Kings 17:20 is like Moses's technique of pleading on behalf of Israel (e.g. Exodus 32:11-14).

- Elijah's altar on Mt. Carmel (1 Kings 18:30-32) resembles Moses' alter in Exodus 24:4.

- Elijah's conflict with the priests of Baal, is like Moses' competition with the magicians.

However, it is striking as McKenzie points out how the depiction of Elijah in 1 Kings 21 differs from the other Elijah legends. Quoting Van Seters (1983a:306) he notes that, Elijah does not appear as a great wonder worker in the Naboth story as he does in other stories. Rather, he appears in the traditional, prophetic role, like Samuel in 1 Samuel 13:11-14, 15:10-31, Nathan in 2 Samuel 12:1-15, or Ahijah in 1 Kings 11:29-39; 14:1-16. This shows that there was post Dtr redaction.

Havilah (2006:4) proposes that, while engaging in the narrative analogy between Moses and Elijah, one must be aware that, any comparison of texts immediately raises historical questions of composition, namely, source, dating and redaction. This is just a note to the reader to be aware of not being overly enthusiastic in comparing narratives with considering the abovementioned components. In the effort of not distracting the reader, now, the focus will be mainly on the surface issues surrounding the comparison, a critical attempt to answer other question will not be undertaken here.

Kissling's (1996:113) observation of Elijah is portrayed as filling his work as Yahweh's representative, which involves delivering Yahweh's word and performing certain authorized actions. He both speaks and acts to or before a variety of different people. Elijah is thought to have been a singular prophet over against the prophetic groups, and was only made the master of their leader, Elisha, and so their spiritual father, at a later stage. This explains the literary influence on the Elisha Cycle of the Elijah Cycle (Steenkamp 2005:39).

Before a contrast of Elisha and Elijah can be attempted, the character Elisha as the alleged 'successor' of Elijah will be evaluated. Most readers evaluate Elisha based on how he measures up to Elijah. Kissling (1996:149) warns against this by stating that, sometimes Elisha emerges as a character who is *both more or less, better or worse* than Elijah in his own capacity [emphasis added].

Miller (1966:441) categorizes the Elisha legends as those that deal almost entirely with events of local or individual interest, and their chief purpose seems to be the glorification of Elisha. Most of the narratives, even when Elisha is not a protagonist, he is always portrayed as the one who saves the day. Repeatedly he will be referenced doing or saying things that he recalls from his predecessor Elijah (Kissling 1996: 149).

According to Bodner (2013:21) the Elisha material occupies a prominent position between the division of the Kingdom in 1 Kings 12 and the eventual demolition of Samaria recorded in 2 Kings 17. Owing to the political upheaval and ideological conflicts of this era, if one is going to on a careful reading of Elisha's career, then several components must be considered, most important of those is Elisha as the prophetic predecessor of Elijah.

As Elijah's successor/predecessor, Kissling (1996:150) expands on Bodner by stating that, as Elijah's successor, Elisha does not only continue with the prophetic traditions but he is literarily made to carry on with battle against Baalism as well by anointing Jehu to be a Yahwistic revolutionary although the consensus is that Elisha did not really care much for Yahwism but was rather a wonder worker. He carries on with Elijah's unfished

work. Kissling not only examines this aspect of Elisha as most scholars do, but also evaluates Elisha's reliability on Elisha as prophet from two angles. First, his prophet's work that concerns the delivery of Yahweh's word and lastly, the prophet's work that concerns his being a channel of Yahweh's supernatural power. Bodner (2013) also attempts an approach hence the title of the book is '*Elisha's profile in the book of Kings: A double agent*'.

Carroll (1969:401) shows that two factors emerge in the discussion of prophetic succession in the Old Testament namely: the idea of continuous action, that Yahweh continuously raises up prophets to meet situations, and the Mosaic, nature of such prophets. The idea of continuity is conveyed by translating the terms *aqim* and *yaqim* in a distributive sense, that is, "I will raise up/he will raise up" from time to time.

The Elijah and Elisha narratives together form a ring composition. Bellamy (2013:8) explains a ring composition as:

> A literary form found throughout the ancient world. In it, a series of elements advances, one after the other, until it reaches a center point, whereupon the sequence is reversed and returns to its beginning in inverted order. Hence, the first element is paired with the last, the second with the second last, and so on, with the second half of the ring a mirror image of the first half.

Therefore, Elisha always appears in a parallel correspondence with Elijah. Bellamy (2013:3-4) is arguing for a harmonized reading of the Elijah and Elisha narratives instead of reading them as disorganized components. She uses the poetic device of chiasm to demonstrate the parallels in the rings. Numbers 14:2 provides a very basic example of chiastic patterning within a single verse:

> If only we had died in the land of Egypt; or in this wilderness if only we had died

If only we had died in the wilderness;
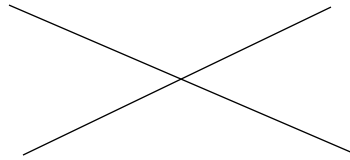
Or in the wilderness if only, we had died

The simple construction as per Bellamy's analysis is of an AB BA chiasm:

> A <u>If only we had died</u>
>
> B in the *land of Egypt;*
>
> C or in *this wilderness*
>
> D <u>If only we had died</u>

Lunn (2015:46) agrees that the narratives concerning Elijah and Elisha contain several unique elements, the most evident of which is that they are without parallel among the other prophets. Their role in the Jehu narrative will prove this true. The slaughter of the house of Ahab by Jehu, finds justification in one of the tree reasons as being a prophetic agenda set up by the prophets as an anti-Baalism campaign.

Rofé (1970:433-435) categorizes prophetic biblical narratives into three: (1) the simple legend accounts, which are brief with little plot development, (2) the biblical narrative as a literary elaboration where a full account with a plot, development and circumstances, and characters precede and proceed from the miraculous act and lastly, (3) the Vita where birth or transformative points are emphasized. Elisha's inauguration into the ministry is a Vita narrative; it introduces an atypical character, while Elijah's narrative is classified as literary elaboration narratives.

According to Rofé's categorization, we then conclude that the Jehu narrative that is included in the Elisha cycle then falls under Elisha's ministry as a vita narrative. Elijah prophesied against the house of Ahab in 1 Kings 21:20b-26 and with his deathless ascension into heaven and Ahab's peaceful death, the punishment was postponed to his sons and Elisha had to see to the fulfilment.

Chung (2014:14) explains that Elisha, having asked for a double portion of Elisha's prophetic power, utilizes messengers to speak his words to others. This typically means that the use of a messenger indicates that the one who sends the message is more powerful than the one who receives it. By Elisha, asking for the double portion of Elijah's prophetic power legitimizes his office as prophet and hence he can perform prophetic duties.

White (1997:36) explains the literary seam connecting Elijah, Elisha and Jehu as Elijah's prophecy in 1 Kings 21:21, 23 and 27-29 and the extermination of Ahab's house by Jehu in 2 Kings 10:18-25. She explains the legitimation of Jehu's overthrow of the Omride dynasty begins with a full legal account of his anointing by one of his prophets under Elisha's authority, which completes the command to Elijah given in 1 Kings 19:16a. White's theory of the entire extermination theory as legitimation for Jehu will be discussed briefly since she has written extensively on the Elijah-Elisha and Jehu narratives.

White (1997:37) continues by arguing that the prophetic anointing, presented as enacted according to royal inaugural protocol both anticipates Jehu's kingship and legitimates it. He is anointed in secret, a typical Dtr hallmark, precluding independent verification, and is proclaimed king by his loyal officers. Jehu then receives his commission to exterminate the Omrides (2 Kings 9:7-10a), verses which are clearly an insertion/expansion to the original narrative as discussed in chapter two of this dissertation.

2 Kings 9:7-10a (BHS)	2 Kings 9:7-10a (NRSV)
7 התיכהו תיב־תא באחא ד֯ינדא יתמקנו ׀ימד ידבע סיאיבנה ימדו ידבע־לכ הוהי דימ :לבזיא 8 דבאו תיב־לכ באחא יתרכהו באחאל ןיתשמ ריקב בו֯זעו :לארשיב תיב־תא באחא תיבכ סעברי טבנ־ןב תיבכו רוצעו 9 יתתנו אשעב :היחא־ןב 10 לבזיא־תאו ו֯לכאי סיבלכה קלחב לאערזי ןיאו רבק	**7** You shall strike down the house of your master Ahab, so that I may avenge on Jezebel the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD. **8** For the whole house of Ahab shall perish; I will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel. **9** I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha son of Ahijah.

	10 The dogs shall eat Jezebel in the territory of Jezreel, and no one shall bury her."

The insertion of these four verses is crucial when it comes to the Elisha-Elijah component of this work because; the initial oracle was only directed towards the house of Ahab. However, verse 10a explicitly mentions Jezebel who is not present in the original oracle verses 24-26, and omits Naboth and instead uses the term 'my servants'. This narrative tension introduces a new theme to the narrative, the anti-Jezebel/anti-Baal component. The reasons why Elijah's initial oracle was modified by a post Dtr redactor in 2 Kings 9:10a is to make the extermination of the house of Ahab primarily about Yahwism and secondarily, about justice.

1 Kings 21:24-26 (BHS)	1 Kings 21:24-26 (NRSV)
24 תמה באחאל ריעב ולכאי סיבלכה תמהו הדשב ףוע :סימשה היה־אל באחאכ רשא רכמתה תושעל ערה יֵניעב וֹלכאי 25 קר הוהי התסה־רשא ותא לבזיא :ותשא 26 בעתיו דאמ תכלל ירחא סיללגה לככ רשא ושע ירמאה רשא שירוה הוהי ינפמ ינב :לארשי ס	**24** Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat; and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the air shall eat." **25** (Indeed, there was no one like Ahab, who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the Lᴏʀᴅ, urged on by his wife Jezebel. **26** He acted most abominably in going after idols, as the Amorites had done, whom the Lᴏʀᴅ drove out before the Israelites.)

Jehu was going to be a tool for the prophets who were part of the Yahwistic extremist party and the extermination of the house Ahab and specifically the death of Jezebel would mean that Yahwism has triumphed over Baalism.

Schwind (2012:1) argues similarly that, when Elijah conveys this message to Ahab, he expands it significantly (1 Kings 21:20-24); the accusation is expanded beyond the murder of Naboth to include "causing Israel to sin" presumably through idolatry, and the sentence spells out not only the death of Ahab but the fall of the entire dynasty as well as the death of his wife Queen Jezebel.

Cronauer (2005:15) coins verse 10a as the anti-Jezebel redaction. This is because Jezebel and her affiliation with Baalism is presented as the one who is responsible for the annihilation of the dynasty as per the prophet's analysis.

The Dtr obviously favour Jehu and portrays his election and anointing as divine. This is to establish prophetic backing of Jehu. This is because, according to Ishida, (1967:135) the origin of Jehu's rebellion lies in Elijah's confrontation with Ahab. In condemning Ahab, Elijah asserted, 'I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house' (1 Kings 18:18). He also predicted Ahab's doom: 'and I will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah' (21:22).

White (1997:42) summarizes the Elijah-Elisha traditions with the Jehuite dynasty into five stages to give an overview summary:

1. Prior to Jehu's overthrow of the Omride government, there existed a legendary rainmaker (Elijah), a story of a contest between Baal and Yahweh and the death of Naboth by Ahab.

2. The first Jehuite stage of the traditions was the composition of the vineyard story together with the extermination prophecy, structured by the double schema of *ex eventu* prophecy-fulfilment and crime and punishment.

3. The second Jehuite stage was the prefixing of the drought legend into which was fitted the miracle stories and the contest legend (1 Kings 17:1-18:46) which enhanced Elijah's prophetic word as pronounced and fulfilled in 2 Kings 9-10.

4. The final Jehuite stage, was the composition and insertion of 1 Kings 19:1-21; 2 Kings 2:1-18, and 2 Kings 8:7-15 to enhance Elijah as Moses and to reinforce the prediction of the coup.

5. Sometime later, probably after the passing of the Jehu dynasty, the legend of the apostate king (2 Kings 1) was composed.

On face value, it looks like Elijah and Elisha are the two zealous prophets of Yahweh who are waging an anti-Baalism war. Elijah was actually one who was concerned with Yahwism-Baalism debacle, while Elisha was seen more as a miracle worker. It has been made clear from the gathered findings that, the narrative is given prophetic categorization because of the office of the prophet to anoint Jehu and legitimize the coup.

5.3 Retributive justice: Naboth's Vineyard

The vineyard story and the Jehuite legitimation of the coup exterminations belong together from the start, and are connected by a scheme of prophecy and fulfilment that is original to both the story and the Jehu narrative (White 1994:67). It is clear that Ahab and Jezebel's crimes cannot be divorced from the Jehu narrative.

Rofé (1988:95-96) makes an observation between the two accounts of the Naboth Vineyard story in 1 Kings 21 and 2 Kings 9: 25-26 that, a comparison of the two reveals important discrepancies regarding the type of property Naboth held,[24] its location, the number of victims, the nature of the crime, the time of day of the crime, the presence and absence of a prophet, Jezebel's involvement.

According to White (1994:67), the vineyard story consistently considers the property as מרכ meaning 'vineyard' (i.e. 1 Kings 21:1, 2, 6, 7, 15, 16, and 17, for ten occurrences). The Jehu narrative just as consistently considers it a הקלח 'helqa' meaning 'field or plot' (2 Kings 9:21, 25, 26, 27), in one account the vineyard is 'next to' (1 Kings 21:1) or even 'right next to' (1 Kings 21:2) Ahab's palace. In one instance Naboth is the only victim, the crime against him is both murder and appropriation (1 Kings 21:9), in contrast to the murder of Naboth together with his sons and no mention of theft and property in the alternative account. There seem to be divergences between the two accounts of Naboth's vineyard. The two diverging accounts have forced scholars to determine which one is the original version.

The issue of the original story between 1 Kings 21 and 2 Kings 9:25b-26a will be the crux of the problem according to White (2003:67) which devolves on the relationship between the two accounts on Ahab's crime against Naboth.

Outside of 1 Kings 21, the only other place in the Bible where we find reference to Naboth is within the context of the so-called "historical narrative" of the *coup d'état* of

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[24] This part was discussed in my previous study, about the true meaning of *Nachalah* and how it is acquired, by whom and why it cannot be sold under Israelite land laws. The land Naboth held was said to have been a portion received from the patriarchal estate through inheritance (Lipinski 1998:320).

Jehu in 2 Kgs 9-10. Within this narrative, we find Naboth material in three verses: 2 Kgs 9:2 and 25-26 (Cronauer 2005:20). The signs of literary reworking that abound in both passages have occupied scholars considerably for years (McKenzie 1991:66). A review of literature on the different meanings and methods surrounding 1 Kings 21:1-16 and 2 Kings 9-10 regarding Naboth's vineyard and Jehu's *coup d'état* are going to be discussed per theory as they developed in scholarship.

1. McKenzie (1991) on 1 Kings 21 and 2 Kings 9

McKenzie (1991:67) argues that the Naboth narrative in 1 Kings 21:1-16 is markedly different in some respects from the report of Elijah's oracle in 2 Kings: 17-19. According to Bench (2002:1) the reason why 1 Kings 21 stands out in its own context is because, it is so different from the sequence of conspiracies, rebellions, prophet centered stories, and regnal report formulae surrounding it.

In McKenzie's (1991:67) analysis, Jezebel is primarily responsible for Naboth's death in one Kings 21:1-16 a distinct and usually later level of composition or redaction from the original word of Elijah beginning in verse 17. This is because McKenzie believes in a double redaction of the DtrH and according to him, in one Kings 21, only verses 17, 18, 19a and conceivably 20a are the oldest remaining segment of chapter 21.

Dtr here followed the same scheme of the structure of oracles against the houses of Jeroboam (14:7-11) and Baasha (16:2-4) which illustrate prophetic curses against dynasties that result it their annihilation. A difference to note is that, in the case of Omri, Elijah's oracle is not directed towards the founder of the dynasty as in the case of Jeroboam and Baasha. He cites Noth's explanation that Dtr changed an individual word against Ahab into an oracle against the royal house in accord with 1 Kings 14:10-11.

On the case of 2 Kings 9-10, McKenzie (1991:70) using the work of Barre (1988) and Minokami (1989) presents an account to show that, the narrative in 2 Kings 9-10 is sprinkled with references which link it to 1 Kings 21. These references are secondary

additions to Jehu's revolt and he separates them during evaluation. From his survey of 2 Kings 9-10, verses 7a, 8-9, 15a, 16a, 25-26, 36a, 37, 10:1, 17, 29-26 are ascribed to Dtr and 2 Kings 9:7b, 10a, 14, 15a, 16a, 27b-29, 36b; 10:18-28 to be from a post Dtr writer.

In his conclusion, Dtr seems to have used individual prophetic stories as the basis for his accounts in 1 Kings 14 and 21 but others of his sources (e.g., 2 Kings 9-10) were not prophetic but he finds a way to link the oracles to serve the prophecy and fulfilment hallmark of his work. As McKenzie (1991:79) puts it:

> Dtr first brought all these materials together within a rubric that he imposed upon them… Dtr's creative hand has been involved in every aspect of the development of the narrative analysed. He has restricted the narratives, revised the oracles, and composed new imitative oracles in order to present a theology of history. This illustrates how Dtr was both an author and an editor.

McKenzie's analysis of 1 Kings 21 is dominated by literary-critical methods where he deconstructs the narrative to expose the number of layers imbedded in the text. As per his findings, not all of 1 Kings 21 includes original material, only verses. 17, 18, 19a, 20a are from the original Dtr redactor. A post Dtr redaction of the narrative was used to legitimize the post Dtr redactor's theology.

2. Rofe (1988) on 1 Kings 21:1-16

Rofé (1988) attempts to detect the origin of the message of Naboth's vineyard. He sets off by first explaining that his methodological approach will be the conventional and common historical-philological approach due to the commonly held view that to understand ancient writing, one must endeavor to reconstruct the circumstances in which the literary opus came into being.

Rofé (1988:89) who employs the same methodology as McKenzie argues that, in the present case, dealing with a story contained in the books of Kings, by determining the number of layers imbedded in the text, this means that the origin of the story must be established. This will be done not only based on the current theories about the date of the Deuteronomistic redaction of the Historical Books (Deuteronomy-2 Kings), but rather because of a study of the story of Naboth itself. Only after completing this internal analysis may one step further and try to determine what is said about the composition of larger units or even of entire books.

Further, in his analysis, Rofé (1988:89) argues that the basic plot of the Naboth story hinges on the tension between necessities and want (the inheritance of a poor peasant versus the desires of a wealthy king). Although the narrative centers on inheritance, Bench (2016:5) disagrees with Rofé's view that if Naboth was a landowner and is to be understood as such, then it is highly unlikely that he was poor because he had to have maintained his material existence by working the land. Given the control kings held over landownership in the ancient world, it seems much more likely that Naboth is to be understood, as an elite landowner who owned a parcel of land so beautiful that even a king like Ahab, who had everything, desired it.

Russell (2014:453) argues using anthropologists Max Gluckman's work on the hierarchy of estates in land to show that Naboth had publicly shown to fail in his duty to honor those with administrative rights in land. He thus forfeited his rights to that land his vineyard reverted to the king.

Russell (2014:454-461) argues that in the light of Gluckman's contribution, more than one individual or group at different levels in any society can hold different kinds of rights in the same piece of land. Gluckman abandoned the analytical distinction between private and communal ownership of property. Instead, he emphasized the extent to which individuals and groups at different levels in society could hold different kinds of rights in the same piece of land.

Relevant to 1 Kings 21:1-16, Russell (2014:461) uses Gluckman's observation that household had the responsibility to render, depending on context, taxes, obedience, respect, support, or tribute to local officials and elites, to the kings, or to the government. Failure to do so jeopardized their rights to land.

Although it may be argued that Ahab had no right to seize Naboth's vineyard (as he only saw it as that), Russell's (2014:468-469) conclusion from his work of Gluckman's research shows that, the narrative logic of the episode of 1 Kings 21:1-16 coheres nicely with understanding of ancient Near Eastern land right which informed Gluckman's work. That is, Naboth's rights to the land entailed and were contingent upon responsibilities.

Rofé (1988:97), in his analysis points out how according to Naboth, the vineyard is an inheritance, when Ahab only sees a vineyard. Their view of the same object of their contention is a literal one and was not the result of redaction; this means that their opposing views on the land rights are a reflection of ancient Near Eastern land rights thus the redactor did not create them. This then for him shows how the account in 2 Kings Nine is contemporary with the events, has more preserved traditions and is more reliable than one Kings 16. According to him, the reason for the narrative is (Rofé 1988:101):

> What then is the message of the vineyard story? If we recapitulate our findings, saying that in the 5th or 4th century an author retold the old story of Naboth, shifting the guilt from Ahab (2 Kings 9:25-6; 1 Kings 21:17-20) to Queen to the *horim* (1 Kings 21:1-16), the aim of the present becomes all too obvious. Jezebel, the sinner and seducer, foreign wife of Ahab. Through her, foreign women in general are stigmatized. The historical setting is the fight of Ezra and Nehemiah against intermarriage.

The comparison of the two stories is instructive on the question of the king's responsibility. In 2 Kings 9 the finger is pointed at Ahab and at him alone: "I will requite you in this field, says the Lord" (2 Kings 9:26). Thus, the story of Jehu's coup corroborates the evidence of 1 Kings 21:7-20, 27-9, that Ahab was originally considered the one responsible for

Naboth's death. The present story of the vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-16) has secondarily transferred the guilt from Ahab to Jezebel and her partners.

3. *White (1996) and Avioz (2006) on 1 Kings 21:1-16 and 2 Kings 9-10*

In order to reveal to the reader how Dtr redactor used the literary design of the characters, a comparison between the Ahab and Naboth narrative 1 Kings 21:1-16 is contrasted with that of David and Bathsheba in 2 Samuel 11 White (1994:68-70) sets out the significant parallels between the two narratives that will be outlined below in a tabulated form:

Ahab, Naboth, and Jezebel	David, Bathsheba, and Uriah
The king is coveting of Naboth vineyard that is in close proximity to his palace. 1 Kings 21:1-2.	The king is coveting of a commoner's wife who was in close proximity to his palace. 2 Samuel 11:2-3.
The royal letter by Jezebel to subordinates directing the death of Naboth through devious means 1 Kings 21:8-10.	The royal letter to subordinates directing the death of the commoner (Uriah) 2 Samuel 11:14-15.
The threefold repetition of instructions followed by the deed and then the report back to the royal initiator (Jezebel) 1 Kings 21:8-14.	The threefold repetition of instructions followed by the deed and then the report back to the royal initiator (David) 2 Samuel 11:14-25.
The king's seizure of property after the death of the owner (Naboth) 1 Kings 21:16.	The king's seizure of the commoner's wife after his death (Uriah) 2 Samuel 11:27.
A surprise encounter of the king by the prophet bearing YHWH's judgement and announcing retribution	A surprise encounter of the king by the prophet bearing YHWH's judgement and announcing retribution

1 Kings 21:17-21.	2 Samuel 12:1-12.
The king's repentance upon hearing his conviction 1 Kings 21:27.	The king's repentance upon hearing his conviction 2 Samuel 12:13.
The deferral of the punishment to the king's son as a result of repentance 1 Kings 21:29	The deferral of the punishment to the king's son as a result of repentance 2 Samuel 7:14

Avioz (2006:115) who also compares the two narratives like White sets out the criteria used in highlighting the analogies between the two narratives as being: (1) similarities in the number and function of the participating characters, (2) style, (3) structure, and (4) language.

The apparent differences between these two narratives according to Avioz (2006:7) are: (1) It is unclear whether Ahab knew of Jezebel's actions or not. In contrast, it is clear that David was aware of what was happening throughout. (2) In contrast to Ahab, who offers Naboth a replacement for his vineyard, David does not offer Uriah anything in place of his wife. (3) David holds no negotiations with Uriah on the subject of his wife, but conceals his true intentions. It looks like when contrasted with David, Ahab is portrayed in a more positive light. Avioz further motivates the aim of his study as trying to show the significance of the analogies as how critical problems can arise because monarchies are accumulating power.[25]

White (1994:69) has another reason why these analogies are significant. According to White, the comparison and contrast of these two narratives help us to discover the original version of the Naboth vineyard narrative. The unusually close correspondence between the vineyard story's divergences from the alternative account of Ahab's crime and its parallels with the David and Bathsheba story suggests that the account of the murder of Naboth and his sons in 2 Kings 9:25-26 is the more original version of Ahab's crime. The

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[25] I deal with this issue on the abuse of power and maladministration in my previous study about how Jezebel manipulated the powers, which they held to plot the murder of an innocent man to illegally acquire his piece of property.

vineyard story is therefore a retelling of Ahab's crime along the lines of the David and Bathsheba story. The intertextual relations between the two cannot be denied, and this comparative approach as Rofé (1988:89) argues is used as a method of validity to discern which narrative is the actual account.

Naboth appears to us in 1 Kings 21:1-16 and 2 Kings 9:25-26. In the former narrative, Ahab, King of Samaria is offering to buy his vineyard, which is next to his palace, Naboth refuses, Jezebel, the wife of Ahab plots his murder, and they take his vineyard. In the latter text, Jezebel is killed and Jehu proclaims her murder as being vengeance for Naboth's death. As the title of White's article suggests, was Jehu's coup to exterminate the house of Ahab retributive/ divine justice for Naboth and who was behind it? The problem in this study is to discover the relationship between Naboth's murder and Jehu's *coup d'état*.

Moore (2003:98) firstly makes us aware of the obvious that, Jehu's tradition (2 Kings 9-10) is complex and difficult. Some interpreters accept the text's Deuteronomistic perspective, viewing Jehu as a king committed to "Yahweh's continuing mastery over Baal and the political machine promoting Baal." He furthermore cautions us that we must approach the divine justice theme with a skeptical eye by saying, "Even among those who accept the story as in some sense historically true, many doubt whether everything Jehu does in Yahweh's name has Yahweh's approval. I.e. Hosea's (1:4 'Then the Lord said to Hosea, "Call him Jezreel, because I will soon punish the house of Jehu for the massacre at Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of Israel. In that day I will break Israel's bow in the Valley of Jezreel') negative appraisal is quite serious."

When some might refer to it as divine/retributive justice that will later be elaborated, Cronauer (2005:42) sheds light on another possibility that Jehu's acts might have been based on the principle of the *Lex Talionis.* According to him, *Lex Talionis* is defined as:

> If one is just and obedient to the law, one will be rewarded, but if one is
> unjust and disobedient of the law, one will be punished in equal measure
> to the crime. The original principle appears to have been established not

so much to "impose" punishment, but rather to "limit" vengeance and punishment to an equal and reasonable measure. The famous Lex Talionis, as a principle of Israelite law, is found in Exodus 21:22-25.

The Ancient Tit-for-Tat biblical law also applied to false witnesses and accusers. As Kensky (1980:231) states that, in biblical law, the idea of equal retribution against the false witness is stated in Deuteronomy, which provides:

> Should a felonious witness arise against a man to testify wrongly against him, and the two men who are the litigants thereupon stand before the Lord, before the priests and the judges who will be in those days, and the judges thereupon examine carefully, and behold (there is) a false witness- the witness testified lies against his brother-(then) you shall do to him as he had plotted to do to his brother, and you shall consume the evil from your midst. In addition, those who remain will hear, will fear, and will do no more such an evil thing in your midst. Your eye should not have mercy: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and foot for foot (Deut 19: 16-21).

There are however questions which arise, to question the existence of Lex Talionis in ancient Israelite law and whether it was not a latter addition, and this can be discovered by comparing ubiquitous laws of the ANE and those of the biblical Israel. Arguing from a sociological analytical view Kim (2006:4) points out how community life in the Bible was close knit, a village of 50-100 people who knew each other and shared in each other's joys and pains, thus the Lex Talionis couldn't have been literal (Kim 2006:4):

Given the small village context, the literal application of the *Lex Talionis* by equal retribution is hardly the case because they know each other very well. The function of the *Lex Talionis* would have been initially to avoid an unregulated revenge but its primary role is support the victim`s family with a virtual compensation. In other words, legal disputes will be dealt case by case with a consideration of the community welfare and individual

costs. How? Village elders, whose primary function is keep, interpret, and deliverer the customary law or tradition, will exercise the administration of justice.

This means that elders take a sort of leadership position in community events. Elders do not constitute a legal court in a strict sense; rather, in case of disputes, they would take a third party role as an interpreter of the tradition and as an arbitrator of disputes. Elders do not have a full power or authority over the cases. Rather, in view of community rapport and justice, elders should treat both parties involved in the case equally so that the result of arbitration might be acceptable for the community as a whole.

Doron (1969:21) stands in agreements that the Lex Talionis was not applied literally, but was a regulatory system that was later replaced by monetary compensation except in cases on intentional homicide. This principle is nothing short of eye for an eye, but only in the case where the Lex Talionis as explained was applicable.

While Cronauer explores the divine justice option, other scholars explore other options of how Naboth's vineyard is connected to Jehu's coup. Olyan (1984:654) sees Jehu as acting as an instrument of Yahweh to restore the šālom *(read Shalom).* In the story, the state of *salom* (=things being right, things in order) is undone by Ahab's murder of Naboth and by Jezebel's "harlotries and sorceries" (v. 22). This then, although nuanced differently, does sound like divine rather than retributive justice. The irony is that Jehu has to shed blood in order to restore the šālom.

First Olyan (1984:660) sets off by introducing *slm* as one of the most common words used in the Hebrew Bible and at the same time, one of its most ambiguous. This is noteworthy according to him because the writer of 2 Kings 9-10 employs the *slm* motif that is highly pervasive throughout the narrative*. Šālom* (read *Shalom*) loosely translated "peace", can be categorized in a number of senses as peace from war (Joshua 9:15) guarded by a covenant 91 Kings 5:26). In addition, peaceful relations between God and man (Isa 54:10) are described as šālom, as are friendly relations between individuals (Jer 20:10). Šālom also refers to health and well-being (Genesis 43:27), and more generally

completeness (e.g. Jeremiah 13:19), as well as soundness and safety (Psalm 38:4). Such a range of meanings can be summarized as "to be in order".

Secondly, Olyan (1984:661-662) focuses on the verbal use of the root *slm*, particularly the Pi'el form found in the oracle in 2 Kings 9:26. Traditionally, the Pi'el has been translated "requite" or "recompense" (i.e., to repay a wrong or injury), but also has a sense of making whole, making good (vows) The Pi'el of slm only ascribed when the state *šālom* is absent. As the story unfolds, the reader is informed gradually that community relations in Israel are very much out of step, (a) because of Ahab's murder of Naboth (v. 26), and (b) because of Jezebel's continuing influence at court (v. 22). The situation is one where the state of *šālom* is lacking. Yahweh has, in response to this, chosen Jehu as king of Israel, and Jehu's bloody wresting of power from the Omrides is understood by the writer as Yahweh's requiting Ahab and destroying Jezebel and, in so doing, his restoring šālom in the community.

White (1994:67) argues similarly that, the vineyard story and Jehuite legitimation of the coup exterminations belong together from the start, and are connected by a scheme of prophecy and fulfilment that is original to both the story and the Jehu narrative.

Jehu's purge on the house of Ahab, which seems to be a post Dtr addition to the original narrative, gives legitimacy to the Lex Talionis. Naboth is literarily avenged, because there is no proof that his confiscated land was returned after his land, it only sounds more like a textual strategy. The views by Russell (2014) totally create an opposite view when he states that according to land rights in the Ancient Near East could absolve Ahab. Naboth's vineyard is an indication of how a single text can have multiple readings based on the motive. It remains unclear of whether Naboth was indeed a victim of a crime, or Ahab was invoking land law rights and could thus be absolved.

5.4 Interrogation of Jehu's extreme use of violence.

"*Come, and see my zeal for the Lord!"* - 2 Kings 10:16

One of the principal problems that engages the interpreter of this story (2 Kings 9-10) concerns a determination of the narrator's disposition towards Jehu's rampant violence. At times, it seems that the narrator is supportive of Jehu's butchery (Barre 1988:1). Until modern times, virtually all warfare was explicitly religious. Even in modern secular societies, wars of national interest are given a patina of religious justification, the myth of redemptive violence (Wink 2007:161). Violence seems to be an undeniable characteristic of human communities and entrenched in patterns of their behavior.

In Jehu's case, violence seems to be justified as 'divine' or 'zealous obedience'. This type of violence is characterized with a different and distinct aesthetic to give it instrumental value and justification. To understand why the author does not condemn Jehu's violence, an analysis of the anthropology of violence and war in the Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel traditions will be engaged in this research. In the end, we will be able to answer the following questions: (1) is redemptive violence a myth and divine violence a possibility? (2) What role does violence play in narrative art, i.e. what is the author's intention? (3) Does ethical violence exist? (4) How can violence be sublimated?

It is important to begin a discussion of violence in Old Testament literature with the understanding that Israel's distinctive view of everything contained in its sacred writings is derived from her historical experience (Mowbray 1989:1). Idolatry had been the biggest enemy of Yahwism; this then makes Jezebel and the Israelites of Samaria as the great enemy of Yahwism. In earlier narratives, the disposition towards Baalism is demonstrated in the Elijah traditions where the bearer, Jezebel, is treated with contempt due to her unwavering alliance to Baalism (Barre 1988:76).

According to Gnuse (1997:63), the ninetieth century saw the full emergence of a critical approach to the study of the Bible. Scholars began to situate the literature within its

Historical and cultural epoch to understand the message, but especially to observe the historical development or evolution of biblical ideas and beliefs.

Hence, the study of monotheism in Israel will show that, it became part of their religious fiber in the late post-exilic period. This is because of gradual paradigm shifts in the study of Ancient Israel, which prompted scholars to begin to question the religious development of Israel. Wellhausen undertook a study into the prolegomenon of writing the history of Ancient Israel with the study of the Pentateuchal sources. His work marked the beginning of a new epoch in biblical scholarship. This new paradigm shift caused scholars to view biblical texts in a different perspective. Gnuse (1997:177) explains how this new way of reading texts exposed the editors/redactors intentions to portray Israel as a monotheistic nation by stating:

> In the Deuteronomistic History, from Joshua to Kings, there was clear evidence of Israel's polytheistic roots, but readers often viewed the material as evidence of backsliding from original monotheism, because they followed the intimations provided by the final editors of the books. The editors were trying to promulgate monotheism in their own exilic age by projecting their religious values idealized fashion back into the past.

Albertz (2011:37) argues similarly that, recent research has challenged the long-held view that Ancient Israel has been purely monotheistic and proved that for most of the pre-exilic period, the religion of Ancient Israel can be categorized as a polytheistic religion without any remarkable differences to the religions of its environment. Only during the late monarchic period, some radical minority groups tried to push it into a monotheistic direction, but not before the period of exile, or even later, did a majority accept monotheism.

The question posed in this chapter however, is not the history of monotheism in Ancient Israel but, does an exclusion veneration of God necessarily must be violent? In *The curse of Cain: The violent legacy of monotheism*, Regina M. Schwartz engages this radical and somewhat uncomfortable and disturbing issue of biblical monotheism and

its relationship to violence. According to her, the claim of monotheism is misleading as she states (1997:17):

> Furthermore, although I will cite the Hebrew Bible because of its immense cultural influences its narratives have had through dissemination by Christianity and Islam, there is, strictly speaking, no such thing as monotheism in it. Monotheism would make an ontological claim that only one god exists. Monolatry or henotheism would better describe the kind of exclusive allegiance to one deity (from a field of many) that we find in, say, Deuteronomy 28:14, 'Do not turn aside from any of the commands I give you today to the right or to the left, following other Gods and serving them," but it sounds cumbersome, and since everyone uses monotheism to mean Monolatry (thereby, with a slight vocabulary, turning allegiance to one god into the obliteration of other gods), I will stick to customary usage. Besides, even the Monolatry variety of monotheism is not strictly synonymous with the theology of the Hebrew Bible.

Since Israel wanted an exclusionary veneration of their God, the need for more and more exclusion was accompanied by violence. Albertz (2011:41-42) gives an overview of how this build up came to be. First, as the religion grew it had to correspond to the societal changes as well.

Secondly, Albertz (2011:42) argues that, connected to this expansion is that the gods of neighboring nations were subordinate to Yahweh. However, there was diplomatic syncretism, i.e. King Ahab built a temple for the Phoenician Baal in his capital Samaria to give his wife Jezebel, a Sidonian princess, and the possibility of venerating her native god. In his eyes, this act of diplomatic syncretism was an appropriate instrument to strengthen his political relations to the Phoenicians.

Thirdly, Albertz (2011:42) argues that, Since the Northern Kingdom was now accommodating Baal worship, this prompted the prophet Elijah to initiate a violent rebellion against the Omride dynasty and Jehu did not hesitate to start the *coup d'état*.

The blood of the hated queen mother (Jezebel), who was the cause of all the problems, was spattered all over and the whole dynasty exterminated. The aim of the bloody, violent and gory rebellion was aimed at annihilating Baal worship and its Temples in Samaria. Without a doubt, the Jehu rebellion is a startling example of religiously motivated violence. Baalism was violently dissolved.

Albertz (2011:46) argues how religious struggles were less violent in the 8th and 7th century. Prophets used to fight criticism with words (i.e. Hosea), Hosea himself criticized cultic abuse in the Northern Kingdom but never initiated any violence, in fact, he criticizes Jehu's massacre. Monotheism then becomes interpreted as a history of violence.

In a response to Albertz, van Henten pens down *Coping with violence in the Bible: A response to Rainer Albertz* firstly acknowledging the initiative Albertz took to discuss the interconnections between monotheism and violence. Van Henten (2011:54) however holds the view that although Albertz explained clearly the concept of monotheism, which was his focus, he fails to elaborate much on the second concept: violence. Which I agree with. Albertz could have explained violence on its own as a concept and not because of monotheism.

In defining 'violence' as a concept, Van Henten (2011:55) gives a few definitions of what violence is according to himself, The Merriam Webster dictionary and Hannah Arendt as:

- Van Henten: Violence is the misuse of power, or the abuse of force; it has mainly or only physical consequences.
- The Merriam Webster online dictionary: [violence is the, JWvH] exertion of physical force so as to injure or abuse.
- Hannah Arendt: Hannah re-defines violence, and analyses it from an instrumental perspective and differentiates between "power", "authority", "force" and "violence". According to her, "Power" is defined as something positive, the human capability to act in harmony; power happens where persons come together and act in harmony; power happens when people come together and act together in fruitful co-operation. Violence occurs

when power is threatened, it is an instrument to maintain or enhance power.

The above definitions with the exclusion of Hannah's definition, violence is physical harm or injury. However, Hannah's definition leaves room for non-physical violence although she does not explicitly distinguish between the two.

Schwartz (1997:20) argues that violence results from the process of identity formation and the demarcation of the borders between "us" and "them", the community of believers and the others. According to her, violence is "the very construction of the other". The identity expressed in various passages about the covenant relationship between God and the chosen people is an identity of particularity, separation from other gods and other ethnic identities. Monotheism contains a lot of violence according her as she states: "Monotheism is a doctrine of possession of a people by God, of a land by a people, of women by men." The demarcation of this identity construction is violence.

I deem violence to be any form of infringement to the being (mind, body, and soul) and existence whether physical or non-physical. Anything that reduces one below what they are is violent.

Buhlan (1985:135) gives a more redefined and inclusive definition of violence as:

> Any relation, process, or condition by which an individual or a group violates the physical, social, and/or psychological integrity of another person of group. From this perspective, violence inhibits human growth, negates human potential, limits productive living, and causes death.

Having discussed the different definitions of what violence can mean, now we have discussed what theories of violence and categories there are. It is highly apparent that Jehu is portrayed as a brutal figure. What is even more striking however is how Dtr redactor justifies Jehu's violence as zealous obedience to Yahweh.

Lamb (2007:81-110) puts in sufficient terms the problem of a violent Jehu and how he is praised instead of being condemned for his use of violence as force. Firstly, before

Lamb looks specifically into Jehu's violence; he discusses briefly violence in the Ancient Near east. He argues that, in the ANE, violence and bloodshed of the innocent was condemned, however, bloodshed in the context of judicial and military situations was viewed positively.

According to Lamb (2007:82), ANE sources speak against violence that causes suffering or that targets the righteous. In a section of the Egyptian 'Dead Sea Scrolls', as proof of his just behavior, the author claims to have not committed violence to a poor man, killed, or caused suffering. Ancient law codes list appropriate punishment for causing injury or death. The Hittite Laws and the laws of Eshnunna mandate fines for personal injury or manslaughter. Justification for divinely initiated violence can be found in the Baal Myth, where Anat brutally eliminates the enemies of Baal. Jehu's purge as argued by some scholars was written to parody Anat's purge in order to ridicule Israel's enemies.

Moore (2003:106-7) cites various parallels between the stories as follows:

Jehu's purge (2 Kings 9:14-10:36)	Anat's purge (KTU 1.3)
One purging tool: Jehu	One purging tool: Anat
Two enemies (Joram & Ahaziah)	Two enemies (Gapnu & Ugar)
Jehu stacks 70 "heads"	Anat kicks "heads" around like "balls"
Jehu "fills his hand" with the bow	Anat's signature weapon is her "bow"
Jezebel adorns herself	Anat adorns herself
Jezebel uses *puk* on her eyes ("antinomy")	Anat uses *anhb* on her eyes ("snail dye")
Jezebel looks out a window	Anat closes "the gates"

Lamb (2007:84) goes on to show how the Deuteronomistic Historian seems to have adopted a similar stance when it comes to violence as the ANE texts indicate. The DH's perspective towards violence is positive if Yahweh (e.g. Joshua mandates it

6:2; Judges 6:14; 1 Samuel 7:3). Violent acts of martial judgement that are commanded by Yahweh are not only acceptable, but are supposed to be carried out to the fullest. Just as the ANE sources, although DH generally accepts military bloodshed, DH is however

very critical of violence meted out on the poor, vulnerable and innocent. Specific to our argument, the murder of Naboth is one of two specific incidents of violent behavior targeting the innocent.

Jehu's violent accession is also a critical component in Lamb's analysis. Jehu is more like the slayer of his kinsmen, Abimelech, than David[26] which is problematic for Dtr's portrayal of Jehu as a righteous king. Scholars are divided on whether Hosea 1:4 addresses Jehu's violent rise to power or not.

McComiskey (1993:93) argues that the term 'visit upon' in Hosea 1:4 does not clearly establish a causative relationship between Jehu's bloody purge and the demise of his dynasty, but establishes a relationship expressing supreme irony. That is, just as Jehu brought the Omride dynasty to an end by his bloody purge at Jezreel, so blood shed at Jezreel would end Jehu's dynasty as well.

According to Olyan's (1984:659-660) perspective, Jehu is a violent bringer of *shalom.* Based on his analysis of the text, Olyan examines all the nine occurrences of the *Leitwort* shalom. He concludes from that that Jezebel's death is to be linked to the motif of restoring shalom which was disrupted with Naboth's death.

Before the massacre is meted out on the house of Ahab, Jehu, in 2 Kings 10:16 exclaims: "Come, and see my zeal for the Lord!", according to the text, Jehu acts violently because he was obeying the prophetic word of Yahweh, to the Dtr Historian divine violence was a possibility and permissible (Lamb 2007:92).

That such utterances and beliefs do not raise ethical and moral questions would be blatant naive. The questions are not about Old Testament ethics and morality in the traditional sense of how and what the OT contributes to the moral life of the reader, rather, they are questions which want to identify the moral beliefs of the people of Ancient Near East and to reconstruct their ethics surrounding various issues and in this case, violence. Jehu's bloody coup begs to ask the question, is there such a thing as ethical or moral

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[26] DH has many significant similarities between Jehu and David (see the previous subheading 5.3).

justification for violence or what are the ethics of violence? Can violence be justified if the perpetrator feels justified and divinely sanctioned?

Why do people engage in violence? What are they trying to resolve by using open aggression against their fellow beings? The first question to ask is, is there a specific ethical and moral justification in violence?

The concept of violence itself belongs to the area of both ethics and politics (Gronow & Hilppo 1970:311). In answering the questions above, the procedure to follow will be an interrogation of the major work of sympathizers of the topic, their repudiation or defense of the moral and ethical justification of violence.

To find out how people process their justification of violence, the normative ethics integrated with their reasoning will be examined. Uniacke (2000:64) argues that, 'the infliction of injury to another person requires moral justification: it is wrong in the absence of some justifying rationale'. Which gives us a position of how we should think about violence.

Ethical reasoning is the preserve of ethical philosophy (Hills 2011:2). According to Grayling (2007:34-35) ethical philosophy aims at rationality, to make valid arguments, logical in form, and based on premises which are "true". It is the aim of this investigation to find out if the makeup of human beings as it is allows humans to be capable of such rational thinking. To be able to construct arguments independent of external influences.

Ethics as a broad philosophy is generally about what is good and bad. Through the lens of applied ethics, specifically the justificatory theories termed deontology and consequentialism (utilitarianism), approaches to the self-perceptions, ideologies, and psychologies of users of political and religious violence will be examined (O'Boyle 2002:23).

Jehu's use of violence can be classified as '*capital punishment.*' Thiroux & Krasemann (2012:171) define capital punishment as "the infliction of death for certain crimes". These crimes often depend on the societies in question, and the crimes vary. In the case of

Ancient Israel, the crime was idolatry, the worshipping of foreign gods and possibly the death of Naboth and his sons.

Thiroux & Krasemann (2012:171) document the three major theories of capital punishment as follows:

- Retributive: Punishment should be given only when it is *deserved* and only to the extent, it is deserved. It should have no other goal than punishing people who deserve the punishment *because* of some immoral act that they committed, and the punishment should fit the crime.

- Utilitarian: Punishment always should have as its aim the good of society. If punishment will bring about good consequences for people, then it should be given; if it would not, then it should not. It always should be given *in order that* some good can be done- for example, to deter future crime, to protect society, or to rehabilitate criminal.

- Restitution (compensation theory): Justice is served only if the victims of a crime or offense are provided with restitution or compensation for the harm done to them.

Their arguments against the morality of capital punishment in all categories is summarized as follows: (1) It is a violation of the value of life principle, capital punishment amounts to murder, (2) Killing or punishing the criminal will not bring back his/her victims it is just to satisfy societies need for revenge, (3) proponents who argue for capital punishment say that it deters crime through society when it is actually ineffective, and lastly (4) capital punishment denies the chance for rehabilitation.

Their arguments for the morality of capital punishment in all categories is summarized as follows: (1) Capital punishment deters the killer from killing again, (2) supporters of capital punishment think that it is much too costly for innocent taxpayers to support killers in prison for long sentences, (3) the person being punished forfeits his rights, (4) the final, classic argument for capital punishment is based upon the idea of revenge, or the "eye-

for-an-eye", if one person kills, the scales must be balanced and they must forfeit their lives.

Mowbray (1989:11) argues that although 2 Kings 10 reports the violence, it does not evaluate it. He categorizes this kind of violence as theophany, where it is supposed to support the idea that the will of the Lord is operative implying justice amid the violence. Although this violence is not moralized in the Old Testament, Mowbray argues that the lessons, which were primary to such literature, is for a collective memory to remember the facts of history. If it is forgotten, it can happen again, that is the logic behind it.

Hills (2011:75-77) uses the term 'Just war Theory' which provides the criteria to judge the rightness of a serious act of political (religious) violence, and a structure to support them (who can do it, what the limits are, and so on). The 'Just war Theory' addresses both the reasons to go to war (usually called *jus ad bellum*) and conduct in war (*jus in Bello*) as follows:

Jus ad bellum-reasons to go to war:

- The war must be fought for a just cause.
- It should be fought for the reason and not for ulterior motives; the right attitude is needed.
- There should be proportionality- the good to be achieved should not be outweighed by the harm that will be done. There must be a reasonable hope of success.
- The appropriate legitimate authority should make the decision.
- There must be formal declaration of war.
- The war should be the last resort.

Jus in Bello – conduct of war:

- The requirement for non-combatant immunity
- Proportionality

The categories above will be used in analysing Jehu's coup and the excessive violence in tabulated form as formulated by my conclusions from the data presented thus far:

Jus ad Bellum – reasons for going to war	Jehu's coup: 2 Kings 9-10
The war must be fought for a just cause	It is dependent upon subjective interpretation to either parties in this case if the Yahwistic extremist party's reasons to exterminate a whole dynasty because of idolatry was a just cause or not. It remains subjective in its interpretation. However, to avenge the death of Naboth can be justified under the compensation theory, where justice was served for a victim of a senseless crime. The moral justification can go both ways, Naboth is now justified, but it does not change that the value of life principle for the Omrides was infringed and now both lives on both sides are taken.
It should be fought for the 'acceptable' reason and not for ulterior motives; the right attitude is needed.	Jehu was acting like a real war man going to battle. However, narrative art critics argue that the violence was exaggerated and has a sadistic ring to it and it almost looks like an 'over-kill'. The author presents the violence in gruesome detail that fails to give Jehu the right attitude of war, fight and go home. i.e. 'Jehu shoots an arrow through Jehorams's heart' 'Dragging bodies outside', 'Killing even children', 'lining up the seventy heads at the city gates' et al.

	Jehu's coup has elements of ulterior motives. He slew Joram, in order to ascend the throne, which is an act of treason. He acted as a proxy for Hazael.
There should be proportionality- the good to be achieved should not be outweighed by the harm that will be done. There must be reasonable hope for success.	Proportionality failed in Jehu's coup because Baal worship continued in Israel even after Jehu's coup. i.e. Hosea 9:10; 2 Chronicles 28:1-2; Jeremiah 2:8; Amos 5:26.
The appropriate legitimate authority should make the decision.	Prophetic offices were held in high regard in Ancient Israel, the Oracle in 1 Kings 21: Elijah, a prophet of Yahweh, gave 20-24 and his message had legitimate authority, YHWH.
There must be a formal declaration of war.	The prophetic message would be authenticated by a specific set off words and actions. The message had to lead people in the way of Yahweh (i.e. veneration of Yahweh alone), the oracle had to come to pass and be accompanied by the words "Thus says YHWH" which declares the oracle formally.
War should be the last resort	As alluded to previously, even Hosea criticizes Jehu's coup, because prophets were known to fight criticism with words.

What then, could be ascribed as the instrumental goal of this violence? As Sorel (1999) understood, violence was a problem for some and a tool for others. If Jehu's coup was only temporary relief, and Baal worship continued, was the instrumental value and function of the violence then to bring across the message.

Wittenberg (1992:82) argues similarly that, it is evident from the scathing attack in the prophecy of Hosea (Hosea 8:4). To respond with violence to the challenges of an autocratic state was obviously not sufficient. It was a mere reaction process of change, not a creative response to the real issues. The second response is therefore more important, it is a theological reflection.

Wittenberg (1992:82) describes theological reflection as a rediscovery of traditions. A collective memory of experiences gained in the past can invoke resistance, instead of using physical violence. Theological reflection of past traditions considering a new historical experience can rekindle hope and mobilize resistance.

This then leads us to talk about the symbolism of violence. The violence meted in the Israelites of Samaria did not offer the solution desired long term, how then, was the violence instrumental in communicating the immediate message and what instrumental goals did it reach?

One of a few things that changed after Jehu's bloody coup as outlined by Schulte (1994:133) is that a political change was ushered which consequently led to the loss of royal authority and the downfall of Israel. This change did however not bring amelioration to the lower classes.

Chapter 6

Summary of Findings and Conclusion of Study.

The summary of the findings leads us to conclude that, firstly, by attempting to embark on a retelling of the history of a nation, the history written on that nation and how it was written is crucial in the understanding. The historian is often faced with obstacles along trying to write the history because, he is misplaced in time.

Banks (2006:8-15) lists the characteristics he ascribes to the knowledge of history writing, and location is one of them as he says:

> The historian's location: In the past, the historian's location was often closely tied with polemics and thus disregarded. If we are of the view that the factors that influence the historian's view cannot be transcended, then we must conclude that objectivity remains an impossibility. Therefore, the historian's own location becomes imperative if it does not promote biasness.

To be able to tell and interpret history, in this case the history of Israel, we should tell it *'as it is'*. Methodology should dictate the course of the history writing.

The history of the Omrides shows us that, the Dtr as a redactor, or historian, wrote the History of Ancient Israel specifically in the DTrH according to his theology and the way he interpreted the events as they happened.

A few things will be noted which Dtr as a redactor in the book of Kings did which are imprinted with his/hers/their ideology.

- Firstly, Dtr used sources that were available to him about the fall of Judah and Jerusalem, which led him to interpret the exile as a 'wayward sin'. It was because of the two kingdom's waywardness that God (YHWH) had chosen to punish them by taking them into exile.
- Dtr edited the book of Kings extensively and his hand is evident where specific traits in writing which are specific to him as a redactor are evident.

(1) Dtr's narratives are marked by the prophecy-fulfilment hallmark that is evident in most of the Dtr narratives. (2) Dtr's work was accepted as primary, while a post Dtr redactor's hand seems to rear itself in certain texts that contain language, schema and the writing that is not specific to the Dtr redactor

- Dtr had a negative perception towards dynastic succession in the North. Dtr observes Jehu positively, and his dynasty omitting all the negative aspects (violence, military defeats, tribute) (Lamb 2007: 206). Dtr seems to favour more charismatic and unconventional founders and not the typical successors. Dynastic succession was regarded as the typical method to come to power. According to Dtr, and as portrayed in the DTrH, evil heirs succeed good kings, a pattern Dtr often repeats. Jehu was a charismatic leader; hence, Dtr prefers him because according to him, charismatic leaders in contrast to elected leaders are more likely to be righteous.

- There appears to be a pro-prophet agenda in Dtr's work. The prophets in Dtr appear to be too perfect, given also the names they bear. The anti-Jezebel polemic is to absolve the prophets.

All these points mentioned above are to form part of the 'Jehu-recipe', to create a charismatic leader who obeys YHWH. Jehu's violence is not condemned because the Omrides were the quintessential of sin and disobedience.

Even in our contemporary and current contexts, violence (religious violence) is a critical and burning issue especially after incidents like 9/11. Ellul (1969:17) describes violence for Christians as something which "…never had official status but has always been represented-albeit in sporadic fashion-in spite of official disapproval." Christians have never accepted nor disapproved of violence because in certain instances, violence for Christians represents the rule of their Law. However, Christians have also represented non-violence.

From our observation, Jehu's coup was not instigated by isolated incidents. The Tel Dan discrepancy, Naboth's murder, and the prophetic support of the prophets were all contributing factors to Jehu's bloody coup. The three seemingly isolated events, brought together through narrative art, archaeological findings (Tel Dan), and rhetoric by Dtr to form a narrative around the extermination of Omri's dynasty all prove true to the findings, that Jehu's coup was influenced by a myriad of factors not only just one.

Omri had established his dynasty by founding an economy that would make him one of the most prosperous kings in the Northern Kingdom. Building that economy, Omri expanded beyond Samarian borders to through arranged marriage to strengthen economic ties. Idolatry in the Northern Kingdom, the killing of Naboth the Jezreelite were the driving forces for Jehu's coup.

To bridge the gap between the text and the context, the contemporary context calls for a theological observation after the text has been analysed. Even in our current contexts, mass killings, religious purges, religious coup's and conspiracies do not fall short in wanting.

Clarke (2014:15) asserts that, violent mass killings are motivated by certain religious convictions even to this day. As evidence, he recounts the Mountain Meadows massacre, an extremely violent killing of civilians instigated by religious believers, the Bartholomew's day massacre of Huguenots in Paris by Catholic mob that led to at least 5000 deaths. The Wadda Ghalughara- a massacre of Sikhs by Muslims-, which took place in 1764, led to the death of 25,000-30,000 Sikhs. The attacks by al-Qaeda on the United States of America on September 11, 2001, resulted in the death of almost 3 000 people. All these incidents prove to one thing: a doctrine can be violent if not properly practiced.

Meyer (2015: 4-7) warns against the 'import' of ancient texts into contemporary contexts without a proper critical engagement with the text. The Jehu story, as analysed through proper historical criticism tools, shows to us that:

- Violent coups and overthrows were ubiquitous in the Ancient near East. Although one as violent as Jehu's was one of the few of its kind. Criticism was often fought with words (i.e. the prophets – Hosea).
- The violence finds justification. There are doctrines created to justify the killing of people by appealing to the movement's principles. The Omrides of Samaria dies because they were practicing idolatry and as retributive justice. In both cases, the violence is justified because they are atoned through blood.

Meyer (2011:7) after an analysis of the work of Schwartz (1997), Albertz (2009), Baumann (2006) and Assmann (2010&2000) opines that:

> This is probably not something that will be received with too much enthusiasm by most churches. Churches and religions are built on certitude. In that sense, Assmann has a point with his 'Mosaic distinction', which is another kind of certitude, which can indeed lead to violence. What role could Bible critics really play in helping people to read the Bible more responsibly? Those of us in teaching positions, where we teach the pastors and ministers of the future probably have the best opportunity to teach our students to read more responsibly. By 'responsible' I mean the kinds of readings (such as Baumann's) which take the ancient contexts seriously, but which also ask about the effect of violent texts on contemporary society (such as those of both Schwartz and Baumann). If future ministers and pastors read biblical texts more responsibly, ordinary readers will follow suit.

Texts like 2 Kings 9-10 should be treated with extreme care, especially if the religion is practiced in a society like that of South Africa, one characterized with violence, mass killings and subjugation. It is however a paradox because the same text that is very violent in nature, appears to be avenging the death of an innocent man. In a theology of reconstruction with proper tools of exegesis and hermeneutics, the same text can be read in a liberatory fashion. To condemn the use of such extreme unnecessary violence.

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