Redressing Clothing in the Hebrew Bible:

Material-Cultural Approaches

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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has
been identified and that no material has previously been submitted and
approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

Abstract

Despite the dynamic portrayal of clothes in the Hebrew Bible scholars continue to interpret them as flat and inert objects. They are often overlooked or reduced to background details in the biblical texts. However, this thesis will demonstrate that the biblical writers' depictions of clothes are not incidental and should not be reduced to such depictions.

This thesis employs a multidisciplinary approach to develop and challenge existing approaches to the clothing imagery in the Hebrew Bible. It will fall into two main parts. In the first part, I draw insights from material-cultural theories to reconfigure ways of thinking about clothing as material objects, and reassessing the relationships between people and objects. Having challenged some of the broader conceptions of clothing, I will turn to interrogate the material and visual evidence for clothing and textiles from ancient Syro-Palestinian and ancient West Asian cultures to construct a perspective of the social and material impact of clothing in the culture in which the biblical texts were constructed and formed. In the second part, I will examine the biblical writers' depiction of clothing through two case studies: Joseph's *ketonet passim* (Genesis 37) and Elijah's *adderet* (1 Kings 19 and 2 Kings 2). These analyses will draw from the insights made in the first part of this thesis to reassess and challenge the conventional scholarly interpretations of clothing in these texts.

In this thesis, I argue that clothes are employed in powerful ways as material objects which construct and develop the social, religious and material dimensions of the text. They are also intimately entangled in relationships with the characters portrayed by the biblical writers and can even be considered as extensions of the people with whom they are engaged. Clothes manifest their own agency and power, which can transform other persons and objects through their performance and movement in a biblical text.

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Introduction

The Hebrew Bible presents myriad items of clothing and a number of portrayals of clothing actions.[1] People, objects, and even landscapes are wrapped and dressed, covered or uncovered in these texts. In contemporary biblical scholarship, many of these references are overlooked, and garments are frequently treated as mundane objects that contribute only incidental or background information to larger biblical scenes.[2] This apparent scholarly indifference to clothing in the biblical texts often appears unintentional and likely occurs as an unfortunate consequence of scholarly interests in other motifs. Nevertheless, I shall argue that the tendency to undervalue the significance of clothing is also reflective of its limited conception and cultural understanding in wider contemporary Western scholarship. In this thesis, I will demonstrate that by purposefully focusing on biblical writers' depictions of clothing in the Hebrew Bible, we can begin to explore and unpack its impact on the social and material dimensions presented in these texts. I will propose that clothing is inherently dynamic and socio-culturally efficacious, and thus it must not be so readily dismissed or forgotten in scholarly interpretations. Rather, it should be recognised for the complex roles it plays in its employment in the biblical texts. I argue that the most effective way to develop

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[1] The term clothing could refer to any material object that is used to cover or modify the body, including jewellery, makeup or tattoos. However, in this thesis I will limit my discussion of clothing to objects that are made from textiles, which can be used to dress and modify the body.

[2] This study shall largely employ the use of 'object' or 'artefact' to discuss clothing and other entities from material culture since these terms are more familiar to biblical scholars. However, it can be recognised that many material cultural scholars employ the term 'thing' in order to avoid distancing something that is manmade from their natural origins and the wider material culture in which they were formed. I concur that this may be a better term to discuss material culture, yet in order to maintain the clarity and flow of my discussion within a biblical studies context the terms above will suffice. For examples of scholars who employ 'thing' over 'object' see, Tim Ingold, "Bringing Things to Life: Creative Entanglements in a World of Materials," NCRM Working Paper (Vital Signs: Researching Real Life, University of Manchester: ESRC National Centre for Research Methods, 2008), 2–14, http://www.socialsciences.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/morgancentre/research/wps/15-2010-07-realities-bringing-things-to-life.pdf; Ian Hodder, "Human-Thing Entanglement: Towards an Integrated Archaeological Perspective," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 17 (2011): 154–77.

our interpretations of these clothing portrayals is to acknowledge that its materiality matters, and that it has a greater impact in its biblical contexts than scholarly interpretations tend to allow.[3]

Approaches to Clothing in Biblical Studies

Whilst clothing imagery is often undervalued in biblical studies, some scholars have sought to open up ways of exploring this imagery in greater depth. Here, I will briefly assess some of the approaches frequently employed by these scholars. Many employ historical-critical approaches to explore the depictions of clothing in the Hebrew Bible. These approaches typically examine the philological and semantic contexts of different clothing terms employed in the Hebrew Bible, and particularly expound upon what sort of garment may have been indicated by these terms.[4] In such studies, scholars typically interrogate the etymological and philological contexts of these terms, often using cognate languages to develop interpretations of the different items of clothing used by the biblical writers. These discussions often seek to identify the connections and similarities between various clothing terms across different biblical texts.

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[3] Materiality is a notoriously difficult word to define, since it is by nature multifaceted. In this thesis, my use of this word is to refer to an object, person, or place's very essence as physical entity; its ability to take up space. This term also comprises an object's material properties and form.

[4] For examples of such studies see Jacob M. Myers, "Dress and Ornaments," ed. George Arthur Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia Identifying and Explaining All Proper Names and Significant Terms and Subjects in the Holy Scriptures, Including the Apocrypha, with Attention to Archaeological Discoveries and Researches into the Life and Faith of Ancient Times* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962); C. De Wit, "Dress," ed. J. D. Douglas and F. F. Bruce, *The New Bible Dictionary* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1962); Ahlström, " 'Addîr ; 'Addereth," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans. John T. Willis, vol. I- 'ābh-bādhādh (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1974), 73–74; D. N. Freedman, Heinz-Josef Fabry, and M. P. O'Connor, "Kuttōnet," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, vol. VII (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974), 383–87; Roger S. Boraas, "Dress," ed. Paul J. Achtemeier and Society of Biblical Literature, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco, Calif.: Harper & Row, 1985); C. Houtman, "On the Pomegranates and the Golden Bells of the High Priest's Mantle," *Vetus Testamentum* 40, no. 2 (1990): 223–229. Many studies have focused on the linguistic and social issues surrounding the identification of the ephod, such as, Anthony Phillips, "David's Linen Ephod," *Vetus Testamentum* 19, no. 4 (1969): 485–487; N. L. Tidwell, "The Linen Ephod: 1 Sam. II 18 and 2 Sam. VI 14," *Vetus Testamentum* 24, no. 4 (1974): 505–507; Philip R. Davies, "Ark or Ephod in 1 Sam. Xiv. 18?," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 26, no. 1 (1975): 82–87.

Some scholars have gone further to propose that these clothing terms can begin to indicate the sorts of clothing that may have existed in ancient Israelite/Judean societies.[5] However, such assumptions are fraught with difficulties, as I shall argue in my analyses of material and iconographic evidence for clothing in this thesis.

It may appear that the historical-critical approach would bring us closer to better understanding the materiality of clothing in the Hebrew Bible. There are, however, considerable limitations to this approach. The ambiguity of many biblical Hebrew clothing terms often means they are open to a number of possible interpretations, resulting in continued scholarly debate about clothing terminology, with little consensus about its meaning. Even when scholars have agreed, they often do not unpack how the suggested materiality of that garment might impact not only the tenor and tone of specific biblical texts in which they are employed, but the social, religious and cultural dynamics presented in these texts.

In contrast to these often exclusively text-centric approaches, my thesis will focus on exploring the impact that the materiality of a garment has in its particular context in the biblical texts. Rather than depending on ambiguous interpretations of clothing terms, I shall concentrate on the material aspects of these garments as indicated by their depiction, performance, and manipulation in specific biblical texts. This is not to suggest that their properties or practical functions as garments are of little consequence; on the contrary, I will argue that their very materiality can impact garments' power and their interactions with people and other objects. This is why I shall be tentative in attributing any unsubstantiated interpretations to the clothing terms I shall discuss. Instead, where I refer to clothing terms that are ambiguous, I shall leave them untranslated, rather than attributing to them loaded assumptions about their materialities.

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[5] Hans Wolfram Hönig, *Die Bekleidung Des Hebräers: Eine Biblisch-Archäologische Untersuchung* (Zurich: Brunner, Bodmer & Co., 1957); De Wit, "Dress"; Myers, "Dress and Ornaments"; Boraas, "Dress."

Another dominant approach in scholarly interpretations of biblical clothing imagery is the exploration of its symbolic or metaphorical meanings. These approaches typically identify the different social, religious, and/or literary connotations that a garment may have in its employment in different biblical texts.[6] Such approaches vary considerably in their critical analyses of garments: whilst some scholars have been more critically rigorous in allowing for some of the complexities inherent to garments, the majority continue to attribute social meanings to garments uncritically.

Some of the problems of this approach are particularly well-illustrated in scholarly discussions of clothing in Genesis 3:21. In this verse, Yahweh makes clothing for Adam and Eve after they disobey him and realise their nakedness (3:7).[7] The theological symbolism of this clothing is the most emphasised feature of this scene in biblical scholarship: Adam and Eve's nakedness in Genesis 3:7 is widely considered to symbolise their shame (Genesis 3:1), so that Yahweh's act of clothing them with garments (Genesis 3:21) is often been considered as an act that rescinds this shame and demonstrates Yahweh's continued protection over humanity.[8] This might imply that these garments were symbols of divine comfort, favour or patronage, yet some scholars stress that Adam and Eve's very need to be

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[6] Edgar Haulotte, *Symbolique du vêtement selon la Bible.* (Paris: Aubier, 1966); Aldina da Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères* (Saint-Laurent, Québec: Fides, 1994); Victor H. Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 20, no. 65 (1995): 25–36; Heather A. McKay, "Gendering the Discourse of Display in the Hebrew Bible," in *On Reading Prophetic Texts: Gender-Specific and Related Studies in Memory of Fokkelien van Dijk-Hemmes*, ed. Bob Becking and Meindert Dijkstra, Biblical Interpretation Series, v. 18 (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1996), 169–200; Ora Horn Prouser, "Suited to the Throne: The Symbolic Use of Clothing in the David and Saul Narratives," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, no. 71 (1996): 27–37; Thomas B. Dozeman, "Masking Moses and Mosaic Authority in Torah," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119, no. 1 (2000): 21–45; Chŏng-hun Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament 268 (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004); Alicia Batten, "Clothing and Adornment," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 40, no. 3 (2010): 148–59; Mark Verman, "Royalty, Robes and the Art of Biblical Narrative," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 30, no. 1 (2016): 30–43.
[7] Genesis 3:7, 'And the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew their nakedness, so they sewed fig leaves and made for themselves loin cloth (חגורות).' Genesis 3:21, 'And Yahweh God made for Adam and his woman כתנות of skin and he clothed them.' Biblical translations are my own unless stated.
[8] Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus*, 12–17.

clothed after their revelation of their nakedness (Genesis 3:7) implies that these garments continue to connote their shame and disobedience.[9] Only more recently have scholarly interpretations developed the social significance of these garments implying that they symbolise the transformation of Adam and Eve's identities and the shift in their relationship with Yahweh.[10]

In the last fifteen years or so, there has been a notable rise in critical studies of clothing and its social values not only in the Hebrew Bible, but also in the New Testament, Second Temple literature, and early Christian texts. Particularly noteworthy is Erin Vearncombe's thesis, 'What Would Jesus Wear? Dress in the Synoptic Gospels', in which she insightfully employs an anthropological lens to interrogate the depiction of clothing in a number of New Testament texts.[11] Vearncombe recognises that clothes can manifest social values in themselves rather than just symbolising such values, as I shall argue in this thesis. This enables her to better engage the importance of clothing itself, rather than simply focusing on the social values it connotes. The recently edited volume *Dressing Judeans and Christians in Antiquity*, which explores the depiction of clothing in a number of different early Jewish and Christian texts, is also illustrative of the growth of social-studies approaches to clothing in the wider discipline.[12] This edited collection insightfully explores various different social roles that clothing plays in shaping its wearer's social, gendered, and religious identities. Whilst these studies address examples of clothing that relate to social and cultural contexts distinct from those in the Hebrew Bible, they are significant, since they develop a richer perspective of ancient clothing as socially complex entities that have an impact on their wearers.

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[9] Implied in, Jonathan Z. Smith, "The Garments of Shame," *History of Religions* 5, no. 2 (1966): 217–238.
[10] Robert A. Oden, *The Bible Without Theology: The Theological Tradition and Alternatives to It*, 1st Illinois pbk. ed (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 92–105.
[11] Erin Kathleen Vearncombe, "What Would Jesus Wear? Dress in the Synoptic Gospels" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Toronto, 2014).
[12] Kristi Upson-Saia, Carly Daniel-Hughes, and Alicia J. Batten, eds., *Dressing Judeans and Christians in Antiquity* (Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2014).

Despite the many insights that can be gained from employing these symbolic and social approaches, I argue that they do not go far enough in their interrogation.[13] They still largely overlook the significance that clothing has as material object(s). Some of the studies employing social approaches explore clothing as a means of expounding our understanding of the relationships between people. But whilst clothing is acknowledged to some extent, it is also rendered an inert prop. These depictions of clothing will be effectively challenged in the light of my discussion of material culture and its impact on how we view our relationships with objects. Although I will argue that clothing can impart information about social relationships in the biblical texts, these depictions can also index the social and material relationships formed between people and these garments.

Before moving to consider my own methodology, it is worth briefly reflecting upon the two recent monographs that have particularly explored the portrayal of clothing in the Hebrew Bible. Claudia Bender's work combines linguistic and symbolic approaches to construct a comprehensive examination of the language of textiles in the Hebrew Bible.[14] She does not restrict her study to Hebrew clothing terms, but also includes an analysis of the terms for raw materials for textiles, and textile techniques, as well as verbs related to clothing, such as 'dressing' or 'covering.' Bender's work is useful as it emphasises the diversity of terms related to clothing employed by the biblical writers (by condensing into one study terms related to textile production and clothing).

Sabine Kersken's monograph principally addresses women's clothing in the biblical texts, offering an insightful overview of various clothing terms

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[13] See my chapter on material culture theory for a fuller discussion of the limitations of symbolic and social approaches.

[14] Claudia Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen: Untersuchungen Zu Kleidung Und Textilien Im Alten Testament*, Beiträge Zur Wissenschaft Vom Alten Und Neuen Testament 9 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2008). See Bender (15-25) for a critical overview of some of the more dated scholarly studies that address clothing in the Hebrew Bible, such as Anton Jirku, "Zur Magischen Bedeutung Der Kleidung in Israel," *Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 37, no. 1 (1918): 109–25; Hönig, *Die Bekleidung Des Hebräers: Eine Biblisch-Archäologische Untersuchung*; Haulotte, *Symbolique du vêtement selon la Bible.*

associated with or employed by female characters.[15] Like Bender, Kersken employs a linguistic approach to her analysis of clothing. But she goes further to address and compare Hebrew clothing terms with their depiction in the Septuagint, indicating some of the wider complexities entailed in interpreting clothing imagery in the Hebrew Bible. Kersken also attempts to incorporate ancient West Asian iconography into her examination. However, these allusions often lack critical discussion, as will be addressed and challenged in my chapter on ancient iconography.

Both monographs are important, given that they offer more extensive examinations of clothing than other studies, mainly thanks to the breadth of textile terms they address. There is an extent to which these studies serve more as 'dictionaries' for the clothing and textile terms in the Hebrew Bible rather than offering in-depth analyses of clothing employed in specific texts. Indeed, most individual clothing items or textile terms are only explored in the space of two or three pages. Given the wide range of terms these scholars seek to explore, there is little room for developing innovative examinations of each term. As such, neither of these studies goes much beyond more conventional symbolic and historical critical approaches of the sort I have outlined above.

Another shortcoming of these scholars' generalised focus on clothing terms is that their studies tend to gloss over the specific contexts in which each garment is employed. This is not to say that such overviews are redundant. But as my thesis shall illustrate, there are considerable advantages to honing in on the particular in order to better contextualise and enrich our understanding of clothing motifs and imagery in the Hebrew Bible. Accordingly, this thesis will offer an extensive analysis of two specific garments depicted in the Hebrew Bible. I will stress that within each biblical depiction of clothing, each garment has its own specific material and social life and context, rendering it unique – no matter what other uses of that clothing

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[15] Sabine Aletta Kersken, *Töchter Zions, Wie Seid Ihr Gewandet?: Untersuchungen Zu Kleidung Und Schmuck Alttestamentlicher Frauen*, Alter Orient Und Altes Testament, Bd. 351 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008).

term may have in other texts, and despite some of the similarities it may share – including the more general social and cultural connotations it may manifest.

Methodology

The nature and status of clothing as material objects remains tacitly implied in biblical scholarship, but is rarely interrogated further. It will be argued here that the tendency to focus on the symbolism of clothing over its materiality in biblical scholarship is reflective of wider tendencies to privilege immaterial ideas or thoughts above material culture in contemporary Western scholarship. Although the materiality of objects has been considered in more depth in some biblical studies, such discussions tend to portray materiality only in one-dimensional or narrow ways; they are also largely restricted to a focus on cultic objects, such as the cult statues and the Ark of the Covenant portrayed in the biblical texts. My employment of material culture theory will challenge these tendencies to undervalue or limit our conceptions of the materiality of objects. I will argue that the materiality of any item of clothing is central to our understanding of its significance and potency in different social and cultural contexts.

Given the increased scholarly interest in the body - particularly in gender studies - it might be expected that conceptions of the dressed body would also be considered in greater depth. However, material objects are typically treated distinctly from bodies, suggesting that scholars consider the body to be a very different type of 'object' – if an object at all. To a certain extent, this reflects a sharp distinction between 'subject' and 'object' – and thus (for the purposes of this thesis) people and clothing. In this thesis, I will therefore employ material culture theories and anthropological studies of clothing to destabilise the dominant assumption of the binary distinction between people and clothing. Instead, I will emphasise that the interrelationships between bodies and their clothing are much more complex than has often been assumed in biblical scholarship. I will particularly draw from discussions of entanglement, agency, and personhood in material culture studies in order to cultivate and challenge our contemporary Western perspectives on these relationships.

Biblical scholars are arguably so accustomed to dealing with the Hebrew Bible as texts and words that it is often forgotten that the ancient cultures in which these biblical texts emerged were societies in which the material world was tangible and potent and its entanglements with people was transformative. I will argue that it is impossible to divorce the portrayal of clothing in the Hebrew Bible from these intense material relationships considering that the biblical writers themselves were thoroughly immersed in ancient material culture. Even when the biblical writers employ clothing to communicate different theological, ideological, or symbolic points, I will argue that these depictions are still implicitly conditioned by the biblical writers' culturally-specific conceptualisations of clothing and its inherently potent materiality.

In the light of my discussion of material culture theories, I will offer a fresh understanding of the impact that the materiality of clothing had in these ancient cultures through my examination of the material and visual evidence for clothing and textiles. My critical examination of the archaeological evidence for textiles and tools relating to textiles will be employed to challenge underlying assumptions that textile production was static or lacked diversity in and across ancient Syro-Palestinian and other ancient West Asian cultures.[16] Instead, I will employ a number of approaches to elucidate on the possible ways in which people were socially and materially entangled with textiles and textile production in these ancient contexts. I will use my exploration of ancient visual evidence to challenge prevalent assumptions that iconography offers historically reliable 'snapshots' of the past. We can turn to a critical lens on ancient visual culture to see how it intersects with the depiction of ancient clothing in the Hebrew Bible by considering it as a resource that offers alternative portrayals of the employment and manipulation of clothing imagery by its ancient artisans.

This thesis will enrich our understanding of the broader social and material interactions and relationships indexed in biblical texts by reintegrating the

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[16] In this thesis, I will employ the term 'ancient Syro-Palestine' to address the geographical area in which the biblical texts were constructed. It can be acknowledged that there are some difficulties with this term in contemporary politics; however, for the purposes of this thesis, this is the best term to use for the specific area on which I am focused.

significance of materiality to the biblical portrayal of clothing. My use of a multidisciplinary approach will enable me to engage critically with the discursive ideologies inherent in the biblical texts and in wider biblical scholarship. My re-examination of the materiality of clothing will develop and extend scholarly perceptions of the social and material dimensions of clothing motifs in the biblical texts to include the intimate interactions and relationships that exist between people and objects. I will argue that by taking these object-person interactions into account, we can also enrich our understanding of the broader social and religious dynamics presented in these texts.

Case Studies

Given the wide range of clothing terms employed in the Hebrew Bible, any number could be examined in this thesis. But in order to most effectively assess the significance of clothing in the Hebrew Bible, I have chosen to concentrate on two particular garments portrayed in the biblical texts: Joseph's *ketonet passim* (כתנת פסם) (Genesis 37) and Elijah's *adderet* (אדרת) (1 Kings 19, 2 Kings 2). These two garments have arguably been attributed with iconic status in biblical scholarship as well as more broadly in popular culture in the West. However, despite our apparent familiarity with these garments, scholars continue to impose upon them limited functions and often reduce their biblical roles to static portrayals. In my examination of these garments I will demonstrate that they are presented as efficacious garments, yet not in the way that scholars have often presumed. It will be argued that the power attributed to these garments derives from their very status as material objects - a materiality which is impacted and enhanced in the ways in which they are manipulated and employed in specific texts.

There are a number of reasons for my selection of these two examples. First, their iconic status in both Western scholarship and biblical cultural reception renders scholarly discussions of these garments rich. They thus offer a bigger platform for challenging the ideologies and assumptions in contemporary biblical scholarship that have skewed or misrepresented the value of these garments. Thus, my case studies provide an opportunity to be more critically reflective about the ways in which biblical scholarship has handled clothing. In

each of these case studies I will first identify and address the various and limiting assumptions contemporary Western biblical scholars have imported into their interpretations of these garments, before turning to offer my own interpretation of their employment in specific biblical texts.

Another factor motivating my choice of these garments as my case studies is that they are illustrative of the ways in which biblical writers portray the same garment in a number of different ways. By examining a number of the richer and dynamic portrayals of clothing Hebrew Bible, I will be able to most effectively demonstrate the multifaceted ways in which the biblical writers employ clothing imagery. This focus will enable me to illustrate the complexity of a garment, which reflect and indicate the biblical writers' complex understanding of clothing itself. In exploring these richer portrayals, my thesis will provide a basis upon which other depictions of clothing may be explored and elucidated in future studies.

Given my deliberately restricted focus on two particular items of clothing, there are inevitably some significant features of biblical clothing imagery that I am unable to engage in detail in this thesis. Such areas are important to acknowledge at this point as they relate to wider discussions that are particularly topical in biblical studies that the moment and must not be overlooked, such as gender performativity and divine materiality.

It is increasingly recognised that clothing is actively employed in the construction of gender roles and gender performativity in the Hebrew Bible. I shall largely be focusing on clothing associated with male figures or masculinity, yet it is important to indicate there are many depictions of women actively employing and manipulating clothing in the Hebrew Bible. The biblical writers' depictions of women's use of and association with clothing is particularly noteworthy, since they frequently seem to challenge the conventional expectations of their gendered performances. For example, the biblical writers portray Potiphar's wife in a dominant and conventionally masculine role in her employment of Joseph's garment (Genesis 39:11-18); Tamar can also be seen to strategically don a garment to disguise herself and deceive Judah, reclaiming her power and agency through her use of garments

and Judah's own dress (his staff and his signet ring, Genesis 38:13-26).[17] These clothing portrayals, amongst others, are already beginning to be critically examined in gender studies. Other biblical studies also explore the relationship between male clothing and gender performance in a number of biblical texts.[18] Thus, I will engage with gender studies in my examination of Joseph's and Elijah's garments where appropriate.

It is not only humans who are depicted as dressed figures. The biblical writers often employ the use of clothing imagery and the language of covering or uncovering in portrayals of divine figures and other non-anthropomorphic entities (such as the physical landscape: the sea or the hills).[19] For example, Yahweh is described clothing the heavens in darkness in Isaiah 50:3 and in Psalm 93:1 Yahweh himself is clothed in majesty and strength. Many of these depictions are taken to be largely figurative or metaphorical. However, I suggest that such employments of clothing imagery, even its depiction as metaphor, continues to evoke the inherent materiality of clothing, or the physical actions of putting on or removing garments. I will argue that clothing imagery connotes material qualities, properties or relations in its very essence, as I will discuss further in this thesis. Therefore, this imagery will have nuanced social and material implications in these texts.

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[17] Kelly Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle," in *Feminist Perspectives on Biblical Scholarship*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins, Biblical Scholarship in North America, no. 10 (Chico, Calif: Scholars Press, 1985), 107–16; Jan William Tarlin, "Tamar's Veil: Ideology at the Entrance to Enaim," in *Culture, Entertainment, and the Bible*, ed. George Aichele, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 309 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 174–81; John R. Huddlestun, "Divestiture, Deception, and Demotion: The Garment Motif in Genesis 37–39," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 26, no. 4 (2002): 47–62.

[18] Katherine Low, "Implications Surrounding Girding the Loins in Light of Gender, Body, and Power," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 36, no. 1 (2011): 3–30; Deborah W. Rooke, "Breeches of the Covenant: Gender, Garments and the Priesthood," in *Embroidered Garments: Priests and Gender in Biblical Israel*, ed. Deborah W. Rooke, Hebrew Bible Monographs 25 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2009), 19–37.

[19] For scholars have begun to look at divine clothing imagery, see Haulotte, *Symbolique du vêtement selon la Bible.*, 181–85; Thomas Podella, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs: Untersuchungen zur Gestalthaftigkeit Gottes im Alten Testament und seiner altorientalischen Umwelt*, Forschungen zum Alten Testament 15 (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 1996); Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus*, 25–28.

One of the added complications in exploring examples of female or divine clothing is the dominant focus on the body in these areas in biblical studies. Indeed, many studies that may seem to address the biblical writers' employment of clothing imagery in relation to women or divine beings often end up focusing on the body and not clothing itself. The prominent issues surrounding the female body and divine materiality are not trivial and must not be sidestepped in exploring depictions of their clothing. Part of my impetus for selecting examples of non-divine, male clothing is to enable my focus to remain on clothing itself and be undeterred by these loaded debates.

Overview of Chapters

This thesis falls into two main parts: the first of these parts will critically explore the efficacy of clothing by looking at its inherent materiality and its complex interactions with people (and other objects) in both its contemporary and ancient cultural contexts. The chapters in this first part will form the groundwork for redressing the clothing that is employed in the biblical texts. As indicated earlier, the biblical writers' depictions of clothing are inseparable from the cultural context in which they were constructed. Therefore, by exploring the impact that clothing and textile production had in these broader ancient contexts we can begin to gain insights into the biblical writers' own perceptions of clothing and their employment of clothing imagery in the biblical texts. The second part of this thesis comprises of two case studies that shall be split into two chapters each. As suggested, these case studies will explore two iconic garments in the biblical texts in order to most effectively challenge some of the misconceptions of clothing prevalent in biblical scholarship. In this second part I will draw from insights in the first part to reassess the significance of these garments and their performance in specific biblical texts.

Part I

The first chapter will illustrate the inherent power of clothes as objects that can shape and transform the social and material relationships they share with the people and objects with which they interact. In addition, it will be proposed

that they manifest something of these interactions in their materiality. I will also argue that the materiality of clothing (and hence its function and efficacy) is constantly in a process of fluctuation through its interaction with other persons and things. These points will be developed by critically exploring some of the key debates in material culture theory and other anthropological studies of clothing, which will be used to challenge some of the conventional conceptions of clothing in contemporary Western scholarship. These debates also challenge conventional conceptions of clothing in biblical scholarship. I will particularly address the tendency for scholars to separate clothing from people, and instead illustrate how they are intrinsically intertwined with one another. These discussions shall effectively demonstrate the need to recognise the inherent efficacy of clothing and to reconsider the roles that it plays in the biblical texts, as well as in its ancient cultural contexts.

The following two chapters will explore some of the material and iconographic evidence for clothing and textile production from ancient Syro-Palestinian and other ancient West Asian cultures. In both chapters I will challenge the scholarly tendency to simplify or generalise the implications that these sources have in informing and shaping contemporary perceptions of clothing in these ancient cultural contexts. Instead, I will argue that both material and visual sources effectively illustrate that clothing and textiles were experienced and conceptualised in dynamic ways in their ancient cultural contexts. We can open up new ways of exploring our own contemporary Western interpretations of these depictions of clothing by reconsidering the impact of these ancient sources.

My examination of the material evidence for textiles and textile production will identify and discuss some of the key examples of this evidence from ancient Syro-Palestinian culture and demonstrate its complexity. I will employ experimental archaeology and other disciplines in archaeology to develop an understanding of the diversity of textiles and use insights from the material evidence and these studies to begin to reconstruct the possible impact that textile production had on ancient peoples social, economic, and cultural lives. These arguments will be developed further by employing craftsmanship

studies to explore the unique interrelationships that are formed between artisans, tools, and textiles in the process of its production. These examinations will contribute to our understanding of the material world of textiles that would have impacted the biblical writers' own conceptions of clothing. Moreover, this develops our understanding of the significance of the materiality of clothing in the Hebrew Bible; even if the biblical writers do not depict a garment's specific material properties we can still discern something of its raw social, economic, and material value through these discussions.

In my exploration of ancient Syro-Palestinian and ancient West Asian iconography, I will call for the need to reassess what sorts of insights this evidence can be thought to contribute to our understanding of ancient clothing. I will particularly challenge conventional assumptions that ancient iconography is comparable to historically accurate snapshots of ancient clothing. Instead, I will argue that iconography contributes an alternative perspective on the roles of clothing in the ancient world. I will employ more recent studies of ancient West Asian iconography to develop my analysis of particular examples of ancient depictions of clothing and explore the ways in which clothing is performed and manipulated in these images to communicate different ancient West Asian ideologies. This chapter will also extend an understanding of the impact that iconographic depictions of clothing may have had on ancient peoples lives. These discussions will enrich our understanding of material agency and its entanglement and the intimacy that it shares with ancient people.

Part II: Case Studies

My first case study will consider the biblical writers' well known depiction of the *ketonet passim* in Genesis 37. This example is significant for a number of reasons in addition to those already suggested: the portrayal of the *ketonet passim* demonstrates one of the fullest depictions of the material 'life' of a garment in the Hebrew Bible. In Genesis 37 the biblical writers evoke the interrelationships that exist between the *ketonet passim* and its maker, and its wearer, it also develops a depiction of the transformation of the *ketonet passim*'s materiality before being returned to its maker. In my examination of

these depictions I will challenge the tendency to focus largely on Joseph's relationship with the *ketonet passim* and interrogate its intimate entanglement with his father and his brothers.

In the first of these two chapters on the *ketonet passim* I will hone in on the exclusive interrelationships that are formed between Israel, Joseph, and the *ketonet passim* through Israel's actions in constructing and giving the *ketonet passim* to Joseph in Genesis 37:3. This chapter will draw from gift theory and insights from my examination of the social and material relationships developed in the activity of textile production that I begin to explore in my archaeological chapter to emphasise the intimate relationships that are constructed through these actions. My particular focus on Israel's actions in constructing the *ketonet passim* will develop conventional scholarly interpretations that typically completely overlook the significance of production in this verse. This chapter will particularly enrich the impact that the actions of giving and making have on Israel's own personhood. The implications of these actions will be developed further by exploring some of the repercussions that they have on his wider household. This chapter shall therefore, demonstrate how the seemingly insignificant detail of how Joseph ends up gaining the *ketonet passim* can broaden our understanding of the various social dynamics in its wider context.

In my second chapter in this case study I broaden the scope of my analysis of the *ketonet passim* to consider Joseph's brothers' dynamic interactions with this garment in greater depth. I will particularly build on how my depiction of the exclusive relationships constructed in Genesis 37:3 impact our understanding of the *ketonet passim*'s materiality and role in the rest of this text. In order to most effectively interrogate the social and material relationships that are formed and transformed in in relation to the *ketonet passim,* this chapter shall examine each of the brothers' interactions with this garment in turn. I will demonstrate that throughout this text Joseph's brothers continue to be excluded from the relationship shared between Israel, Joseph, and the *ketonet passim*, even when they themselves are also intimately entangled with this garment. It will be illustrated how the brothers' interactions

with the *ketonet passim* enables and disables their own actions in distinct ways that are not fully explored in previous scholarship on Genesis 37. This chapter will also begin to unpack the ways in which clothing can be performed or manipulated in ritualistic ways both through ritual practice and ritual violence; the ritual dynamics of clothing will be explored in much greater depth in the following two chapters. This broader discussion of the *ketonet passim*'s employment in Genesis 37 enables us to have a fuller understanding of the sustained impact that the *ketonet passim* has throughout this text on Israel, Joseph and the brothers, through its interactions with and transformation by the brothers in the rest of this text.

My second case study shall focus on the biblical writers' portrayals of Elijah's *adderet*. The biblical writers' portrayal of this garment is particularly useful in interrogating the roles that clothing plays in ritual performance and through different actions. The *adderet* is employed and manipulated through a whole range of actions, which can be examined to effectively demonstrate how one garment can play multiple roles depending on its materiality, action and its relationship to its wearer or practitioner. The first of these chapters will employ a broader examination of the ritual actions and performance of the *adderet*. I will address and challenge the scholarly tendency to undermine and limit the *adderet's* efficacy in ritual performance by reducing it to its depiction as a static prophetic uniform or as a garment that only symbolises Elijah's or Yahweh's power. I will then interrogate the *adderet's* movement and manipulation in three texts in order to illustrate the important role that this garment plays in figuring and refiguring Elijah and Elisha's social and material agency and relationships and as the means by which they access divine realms. This chapter will demonstrate how the *adderet* and other garments may be employed as efficacious objects through their performance in different rituals.

In my final chapter I will construct an in-depth examination of one of the ritual actions in which Elijah employs the *adderet* to wrap his face in 1 Kings 19:13. This clothing action is often treated distinctly from those considered in the previous chapter and unlike the widespread acknowledgement of the

adderet's significant role in these other clothing performances, scholars continue to undervalue or overlook this action. Given the indication that Elijah wraps his face, which is evocative of one's presence and personhood, Elijah's actions are worthy of more focus and attention. It will be considered how Elijah's actions with the *adderet* fit in with the ritual potency of the spaces and movements that are depicted in this text and can be interpreted as ritual actions themselves. This chapter shall particularly explore the implications of Elijah's actions with the *adderet* in relation to his performance in his interactions with Yawheh in the rest of the theophanic scene depicted in 1 Kings 19:9-18. It will be illustrated how the *adderet* enables and empowers his movement and voice in this ritual context, which can be seen to provoke Yahweh to modify his own interaction and relationship with Elijah in this text. This implies that the *adderet* can be considered to have an influential role in this ritual performance and therefore, should not be reduced to a functional or incidental role in this text.

Part I: Methodology: Clothing Beyond the Text

1 Materiality Matters:
Clothing as Object

1.1 Introduction

In biblical scholarship there is a prevailing tendency to interpret clothing as objects that communicate or symbolise social and cultural meanings.[20] The role of clothing in communicating such meanings has long been acknowledged in biblical scholarship.[21] However, scholars have acknowledged this role on a variety of different levels. In this thesis, I will identify and challenge interpretations that continue to reduce clothing to simplistic or essentialist meanings. Increasingly, biblical scholars have recognised the need to draw from other disciplines to inform and develop interpretations of the clothing imagery depicted in the biblical texts. There are a number of biblical studies that insightfully incorporate anthropological and sociological studies of clothing in their interpretations of the biblical texts. As I will demonstrate, such examinations effectively illustrate that clothing is

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[20] Note that biblical scholars often focus on the theological symbolism of clothing. This approach is somewhat distinct, but may still be considered within the social/cultural model for the purposes of this chapter. There are some scholars who limit their depiction of clothing to its functional value, but this is characteristic of an out-dated approach towards clothing, studies that still focus on the more functional aspects of clothing can be noted in L. Bellinger, "Cloth," ed. George Arthur Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia Identifying and Explaining All Proper Names and Significant Terms and Subjects in the Holy Scriptures, Including the Apocrypha, with Attention to Archaeological Discoveries and Researches into the Life and Faith of Ancient Times* (New York; Nashville: Abingdon, 1962); De Wit, "Dress"; Boraas, "Dress"; Kenneth E. Bailey, "Clothing," ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael David Coogan, *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993). Such approaches are now usually integrated with other social/symbolic interpretations.

[21] Both social/cultural and theological interpretations are often combined in unpacking the significance of clothing imagery in the Hebrew Bible, such as in Haulotte, *Symbolique du vêtement selon la Bible.*; Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères*; Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus*; Alban Cras, *La symbolique du vêtement dans la Bible: pour une théologie du vêtement* (Paris: les Éd. du Cerf, 2011).

complex and multifaceted. These studies mark a significant step in drawing scholarly attention towards the significance of clothing, identifying its dynamic role in its social, historical and political contexts.[22] In this chapter, I will outline some of the key points from anthropological and sociological theories of dress that have helped to expand our conceptions of clothing. However, these approaches, although insightful, tend to limit portrayals of clothing to their social and cultural meanings. I will argue that the importance of clothing goes beyond these boundaries.

Whilst anthropological studies of clothing tend to be informative for expounding our understanding of the dynamic nature of clothes in different social contexts, I propose that a broader study of material culture will enable a deeper understanding of the inherent relationships that formed between people and objects. I will use insights from various material culture studies to challenge some of the dominant foundations that have shaped the ways in which materiality has been considered across contemporary Western cultures. I will explore key arguments on the materiality and agency of objects and their entanglement and relationships with persons and other objects. Then I will turn to consider how this may reshape and bring insights to how we can rethink clothing as objects and not only as social or theological symbols. This study shall illustrate how a new methodology that takes the complex materiality of clothing into account may be able to provide biblical scholars with fresh insights and enrich our understanding of the biblical texts.

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[22] McKay, "Gendering the Discourse of Display in the Hebrew Bible"; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative"; Dietmar Neufeld, "Under the Cover of Clothing: Scripted Clothing Performances in the Apocalypse of John," *Biblical Theology Bulletin: A Journal of Bible and Theology* 35, no. 2 (2005): 67–76; Rooke, "Breeches of the Covenant: Gender, Garments and the Priesthood"; Batten, "Clothing and Adornment"; Vearncombe, "What Would Jesus Wear?"; John T. Noble, "Cultic Prophecy and Levitical Inheritance in the Elijah-Elisha Cycle," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 41, no. 1 (2016): 45–60. Also see articles from, Upson-Saia, Daniel-Hughes, and Batten, *Dressing Judeans and Christians in Antiquity*.

1.2 Anthropological and Sociological Approaches to Clothing

Many anthropological and sociological studies of clothing effectively expound some of the complexities that are involved in the task of unpacking the significance of dress, as well as the task of identifying the different social and cultural meanings of clothing customs.[23] These explorations typically engage with the question of *what* social or cultural values a garment may communicate. They can be used to develop a greater appreciation for the depiction of clothing as multifaceted and embedded in specific social and cultural contexts. Such approaches manage to evade the tendencies often observed in biblical scholarship in which clothing is reduced to simplistic and essentialist interpretations. Here I will address some of the key ideas that have been developed in these theories and advantageously employed within biblical scholarship.

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[23] Scholars have endeavoured to elucidate questions, such as: what meanings or values a particular article of clothing communicates, who these meanings are meant for, and how it communicates such values to its wearers and viewers. For key discussions of clothing from the anthropological perspective, see Justine M. Cordwell and Ronald A. Schwarz, eds., *The Fabrics of Culture: The Anthropology of Clothing and Adornment*, World Anthropology (The Hague: Mouton, 1979); Fred Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Ruth Barnes and Joanne Bubolz Eicher, eds., *Dress and Gender : Making and Meaning in Cultural Contexts* (Providence; Oxford: Berg, 1993); Joanne Bubolz Eicher, Sandra Lee Evenson, and Hazel A. Lutz, eds., *The Visible Self: Global Perspectives on Dress, Culture, and Society* (Fairchild Publications, 2000); Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson, eds., *Body Dressing* (Oxford: Berg, 2001); *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007); Jennifer Craik, *Fashion : The Key Concepts* (Oxford: Berg, 2009). See in particular the following articles from these edited collections, Joann W. Keali'Inohomoku, "You Dance What You Wear, and You Wear Your Cultural Values," in *The Fabrics of Culture: The Anthropology of Clothing and Adornment*, ed. Justine M. Cordwell and Ronald A. Schwarz, World Anthropology (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), 77–83; Ronald A. Schwarz, "Uncovering the Secret Vice: Toward an Anthropology of Clothing and Adornment," in *The Fabrics of Culture: The Anthropology of Clothing and Adornment*, ed. Justine M. Cordwell and Ronald A. Schwarz, World Anthropology (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), 23–46; Ruth Barnes and Joanne B. Eicher, "Introduction," in *Dress and Gender : Making and Meaning in Cultural Contexts*, ed. Ruth Barnes and Joanne Bubolz Eicher (Providence; Oxford: Berg, 1993), 1–7; Joanne B. Eicher, "Dress, Gender and the Public Display of Skin," in *Body Dressing*, ed. Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 233–52; Joanne Entwistle, "The Dressed Body," in *Body Dressing*, ed. Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 33–58.

There has been a tendency for contemporary Western scholars to focus on expanding and identifying the social and cultural meanings of clothes in relation to its wearers and observers.[24] Indeed, clothing is perhaps most widely considered to communicate something about the social identity of its wearer; for example, indicating their occupation, status, or gendered identity.[25] There are a number of significant points that can be drawn from

[24] The study of clothing in contemporary culture and consumption studies often focus on the consumer or wearer and their immediate social contexts, particularly thought-provoking amongst these studies are, Michael R. Solomon, "Ritual Costumes and Status Transition: The Female Business Suit as Totemic Emblem," in *Advances in Consumer Research*, ed. Elizabeth C. Hircschman and Moris B. Holbrook, vol. 12 (Provo; Utah: Association for Consumer Research, 1985), 315–18; Karen Tranberg Hansen, "From Thrift to Fashion: Materiality and Aesthetics in Dress Practices in Zambia," in *Clothing as Material Culture*, ed. Daniel Miller and Susanne Küchler (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 107–19; F. Weltzien, "Masque-Ulinities: Changing Dress as a Display of Masculinity in the Superhero Genre," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 9, no. 2 (2005): 229–250.

[25] For examples of studies on different aspects of social identity that can be communicated through clothing, see discussions on social status or class, Dawn Chatty, "The Burqa Face Cover: An Aspect of Dress in Southern Eastern Arabia," in *Languages of Dress in the Middle East*, ed. Bruce Ingham and Nancy Lindisfarne (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press in association with the Centre of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, SOAS, 1997), 129; Susan Vincent, *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Berg, 2003), 79; Lissant Bolton, "Dressing for Transition: Weddings, Clothing and Change in Vanuatu," in *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, ed. Graeme Were and Susanne Küchler (London: UCL Press, 2005), 23; Herbert Blumer, "Fashion: From Class Differentiation to Collective Selection," in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, ed. Malcolm Barnard, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 232–46; Angela Partington, "Popular Fashion and Working-Class Affluence," in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, ed. Malcolm Barnard, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 220–31; Anna-Karina Hermkens, "Clothing as Embodied Experience of Belief," in *Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief*, ed. David Morgan, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2010), 231; Mary Lou O'Neil, "You Are What You Wear: Clothing / Appearance Laws and the Construction of the Public Citizen in Turkey," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 14, no. 1 (March 1, 2010): 167. On the relationship between clothing and age, see Ila Pokornowski, "Beads and Personal Adornment," in *The Fabrics of Culture: The Anthropology of Clothing and Adornment*, ed. Justine M. Cordwell and Ronald A. Schwarz, World Anthropology (The Hague; Paris; New York: Mouton, 1979), 110; Malcolm Barnard, *Fashion as Communication* (London: Routledge, 2002), 61. Gender and sexuality, Barnes and Eicher, *Dress and Gender*; Bruce Ingham and Nancy Lindisfarne, eds., *Languages of Dress in the Middle East* (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press in association with the Centre of Near and Middle Eastern Studies, SOAS, 1997); Ruth Holliday, "The Comfort of Identity," in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 322–23; Lee Wright, "Objectifying Gender: The Stiletto Heel," in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, ed. Malcolm Barnard, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 197–207; Amina Yaqin, "Islamic Barbie: The Politics of Gender and Performativity," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 11, no. 2 (June 1, 2007): 173–88. On relationships between clothing and

such a focus that help to develop a more complex understanding of the social and cultural values that a garment might communicate. A wearer may don clothing with particular conceptions as to the images and meanings they are attempting to present, yet it can be recognised that such processes may be unconscious. Furthermore, the values that a wearer may presume they communicate by wearing a certain garment can easily be misinterpreted, or re-interpreted, by their observers who inevitably bring their own contextualised perspective and interpretations to the same article of clothing.[26] The social and cultural contexts in which such clothes are worn or used are also central to its interpretation by others. This may challenge us to consider whether or not an outfit is considered to reproduce, resist, or subvert the social values and expectations of dress in a specific context. In some contexts dress is frequently used for political or social resistance, implying that it can also represent political or cultural ideologies.[27]

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ethnicity, see Ingham and Lindisfarne, *Languages of Dress in the Middle East*; Paul Khalil Saucier, "Cape Verdean Youth Fashion: Identity in Clothing," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 15, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 49–66. On relations between clothing and political position or power, see U. R. Von Ehrenfels, "Clothing and Power Abuse," in *The Fabrics of Culture: The Anthropology of Clothing and Adornment*, ed. Justine M. Cordwell and Ronald A. Schwarz, World Anthropology (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), 399–403; Bolton, "Dressing for Transition: Weddings, Clothing and Change in Vanuatu," 26; Anne D'Alleva, "Elite Clothing and the Social Fabric of Pre-Colonial Tahiti," in *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, ed. Graeme Were and Susanne Küchler (London: UCL Press, 2005), 47–60; O'Neil, "You Are What You Wear." And on the communication of religious or ethical affiliations, see Eileen Barker, "A Comparative Exploration of Dress and the Presentation of Self as Implicit Religion," in *Dressed to Impress: Looking the Part*, Dress, Body, Culture (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 51–67; Douglas J. Davies, "'Gestus' Manipulates 'Habitus': Dress and the Mormon," in *Dressed to Impress: Looking the Part*, ed. William J. F. Keenan, Dress, Body, Culture (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 123–39; Hermkens, "Clothing as Embodied Experience of Belief"; Daniel Yim, "Wearing Your Values on Your Sleeve," in *Fashion - Philosophy for Everyone: Thinking with Style*, ed. Jessica Wolfendale and Jeanette Kennett (Chichester; Oxford; Maiden: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), 113.
[26] This is explored and discussed further in Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity*, 8–10, 21–27; Barnard, *Fashion as Communication*, 72–79; Daniel Miller, *Stuff* (London: Polity, 2010), 33–39.
[27] For examples, see various articles from, *Fashion Theory*. Particularly see Tim Edwards, "Express Yourself: The Politics of Dressing up," in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, ed. Malcolm Barnard, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 191–96; O'Neil, "You Are What You Wear"; Katherine Feo Kelly, "Performing Prison: Dress, Modernity, and the Radical Suffrage Body," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 15, no. 3 (September 1, 2011): 299–322; Saucier, "Cape Verdean Youth Fashion."

These social and cultural approaches are undoubtedly significant in unpacking the social and cultural meanings of dress. However, studies of clothing must not be limited to their wearer and immediate observers, since there are many other contexts in which clothing is intertwined with people. Following Arjun Appadurai's widely recognised social analyses of objects, many studies have increasingly demonstrated that objects have their own social 'lives', each with distinct 'life' stages.[28] For clothes, these 'life' stages might include their conception, production, distribution, consumption, and their disposal.[29] We can examine these different 'life' stages of a garment in order to cover the broader network of different interactions between people and clothing. It is probable that the conventional scholarly focus on the wearer and their immediate contexts reflects the consumerist culture that influences contemporary Western scholarship. This illustrates how important it is to critically acknowledge our own cultural interpretations, particularly when we turn to examine clothing from a different cultural or historical context.

The various people that engage with clothing at these different 'life' stages will inevitably interpret the same garment in a variety of ways.[30] This raises the possibility that the social and cultural meanings ascribed to clothing by its designers and producers may lie in tension with the values that its wearer attaches to that garment. It is difficult to discern which of these interpretations of the same garment are most valid (or if they are valid at all). In order not to reduce clothing to endless stream of potential meanings, it is their specific contexts, which will help to indicate which interpretations are most

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[28] Arjun Appadurai, ed., *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

[29] These life stages may also include its archaeological recovery, preservation and examination.

[30] See different perspectives on the same garment and further discussions of this problem in Brian Spooner, "Weavers and Dealers: The Authenticity of an Oriental Carpet," in *The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective*, ed. Arjun Appadurai (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 197–98; "Fashion as Communication," in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 139; Colin Campbell, "When the Meaning Is Not a Message: A Critique of the Consumption as a Communication Thesis," in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, ed. Malcolm Barnard, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 161; Osmud Rahman et al., "'Lolita': Imaginative Self and Elusive Consumption," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 15, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 9.

appropriate.[31] Still, it is clear that any garment may be attributed with a multiple number of potential social or cultural meanings, since they are by nature multifaceted objects. Some of these meanings will also probably conflict with other interpretations of the same garment.[32] This allows for a view of clothing that is complex and may have overlapping or fluctuating meanings according to its viewers' perspective and the context in which it is viewed. This may seem somewhat untidy in the light of the clear-cut explanations of clothes that are found in some conventional biblical interpretations, yet I argue that this complex view better reflects the reality and nature of clothing in material culture.

Biblical studies of clothing that incorporate some of the ideas outlined above demonstrate a greater awareness for the multifaceted meanings that may be connoted by a garment. These studies often engage more extensively with the specific contexts in which clothing is worn or displayed and explore the ways in which clothes are used to conform, subvert, or resist conventional expectations of clothing in these contexts.[33] I will also draw from some of these ideas to develop my own explorations of clothing in my case studies. Despite the increasing emphasis on considering clothing at its different 'life' stages, many biblical studies continue to focus on the wearer and its immediate observers. I propose that this is largely due to the biblical writers' depiction of clothing imagery, which often only offers a limited view on the 'life' stages of a garment. Nevertheless, in this thesis I will also develop ways in which we can extend this focus to incorporate a fuller consideration of these inherent 'life' stages. These social approaches to clothing in the Hebrew Bible

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[31] This includes the social, cultural and historical context of its production and use.

[32] This is suggested in Chatty, "The Burqa Face Cover: An Aspect of Dress in Southern Eastern Arabia," 145; Barnard, *Fashion as Communication*, 172; Richard McGregor, "Dressing the Ka'ba from Cairo: The Aesthetics of Pilgrimage to Mecca," in *Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief*, ed. David Morgan, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2010), 252.

[33] See references to biblical scholars that incorporate these anthropological studies listed earlier. It can also be noted that other biblical studies of clothing are increasing beginning to incorporate some of these ideas into their examinations of clothing, particularly scholars who have considered the relationship between clothing and gender, Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle"; Tarlin, "Tamar's Veil"; Huddlestun, "Divestiture, Deception, and Demotion"; Low, "Implications Surrounding Girding the Loins in Light of Gender, Body, and Power."

are insightful, yet, as I have already begun to suggest, they have some inherent limitations that I will now move to explore in further depth.

1.3 The Limitations of Conventional Social Approaches to Clothing

One of the fundamental shortcomings of the approaches addressed above is that they largely overlook the significance of the materiality of clothing. There is a tendency for these approaches to limit depictions of clothing within a model of representation – whereby clothing is understood simply to reflect or symbolise social or cultural meanings. In this model there is unspoken assumption that such garments do not participate in the social and cultural meanings themselves. Bjørnar Olsen raises a similar point as an objection to wider, conventional approaches towards material culture, arguing that in these approaches 'things just "stand in for" and become nothing but a kind of canvas for the social paint we stroke over them to provide a cultural surface of embodied meanings.'[34] Indeed, many of the social interpretations of clothing in biblical studies (and in many anthropological and sociological studies of clothing) only engage with its material status in limited ways. It is almost as if the materiality of clothing is inconsequential in comparison to its symbolic meaning.[35] This implies that through such interpretations objects and clothing are rendered as though they were hollow or inert.

Clothing is inherently material and cannot be easily reduced to signs and meanings as though it were merely a language or text to be inscribed or deciphered.[36] In many of these conventional approaches, it would seem that

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[34] Bjørnar Olsen, "Material Culture after Text: Re-Membering Things," *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 36, no. 2 (2003): 94. For a similar discussion on this scholarly tendency and its limitations see Webb Keane, "Signs Are Not the Garb of Meaning: On the Social Analysis of Material Things," in *Materiality*, ed. Daniel Miller (Durham, N.C.; London: Duke University Press, 2005), 200–201.

[35] This is suggested in arguments, such as, Olsen, "Material Culture after Text," 89–94; Webb Keane, "Semiotics and the Social Analysis of Material Things," *Language and Communication* 23 (2003): 409–11; Keane, "Signs Are Not the Garb of Meaning: On the Social Analysis of Material Things."

[36] For the suggestion that clothes communicate similarly to a language or like a text, see Mary Ellen Roach and Joanne Bubolz Eicher, "The Language of Personal Adornment," in *The Fabrics of Culture: The Anthropology of Clothing and Adornment*,

garments depend almost entirely on humans for them to have any social, cultural or theological significance. This would imply, as Olsen argues, that material objects are not inherently social, instead, they can only be 'included and endowed with history and meaning by some human generosity.'[37] Whilst this might imply the extent to which humans and objects are intricately entwined in culture, such a suggestion also unnecessarily privileges anthropocentric interpretations of clothing and objects over their own material significance. In order to demonstrate the significance of the materiality of clothing and not just its social and cultural connotations, this chapter shall turn to consider its inherent materiality as an object, and explore the broader relationships that are formed between objects and people by drawing from key debates in material-cultural studies. However, we must first address some of the dominant ideas in conventional Western scholarship that have limited many examinations of the materiality of clothing and material culture more generally.

Within contemporary Western scholarship, particularly humanities and social-science disciplines, there is a tendency to overlook or depreciate material objects as a result of privileging humans, or perhaps more appropriately privileging the human mind. Anthropocentrism and individualism is deeply

ed. Justine M. Cordwell and Ronald A. Schwarz, World Anthropology (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), 7–22. This is also implied in a number of biblical studies on dress; for examples, see Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus*; Neufeld, "Under the Cover of Clothing"; Batten, "Clothing and Adornment," 148–49. The inability for clothes or objects to be reduced to texts or a language is particularly stressed in Carl Knappett, "Photographs, Skeuomorphs and Marionettes: Some Thoughts on Mind, Agency and Object," *Journal of Material Culture* 7, no. 1 (2002): 103–4; Keane, "Signs Are Not the Garb of Meaning: On the Social Analysis of Material Things," 185–86; Malcolm Barnard, "Fashion Statements: Communication and Culture," in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, ed. Malcolm Barnard, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 175–76; Mary Weismantel and Lynn Meskell, "Substances: 'Following the Material' Through Two Prehistoric Cases," *Journal of Material Culture* 19, no. 3 (2014): 234. Nevertheless, clothing continues to be interpreted through the lens of inherently linguistic models, Michael Carter, "Stuff and Nonsense: The Limits of the Linguistic Model of Clothing," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 16, no. 3 (September 1, 2012): 343–54.

[37] Olsen raises this point in relation to his discussion of embodiment, indicating the difficulties with this term, since embodiment implies that meanings are imported into objects rather than them being inherently powerful objects, Olsen, "Material Culture after Text," 101.

rooted in contemporary Western cultures.[38] The extent to which anthropocentricism has dominated much of Western scholarship, which identifies humans as the ones that make meaning, has led to the construction of being into binary forms: human and non-human. This is also observable in the social construction of further sharp dichotomies of categorisation between: immateriality and materiality, humans or subjects and objects, minds and bodies, and nature and culture. In Western scholarship, these categories are depicted as fixed and bounded as well as diametrically opposed.[39] As such, it follows that, if humans are considered to be active agents, then objects, as the 'opposite' to humans, are implied to be inactive and inert.

As has begun to be demonstrated, these dichotomies imply that objects or things need to be acted upon and controlled by humans in order for them to have meaning and value. From this perspective, humans (the mind) are set apart from the rest of the world as unique entities, that somehow are able to transcend the 'raw' materiality of objects as wells as 'humanise' spheres such as social relationships.[40] Bruno Latour illustrates that objects are often excluded from scholarly discussions of social relationships, suggesting that it is often assumed that such relationships exist between humans and other living beings, and not with objects.[41] This exclusion of non-humans from social spheres has also inevitably impacted the way in which objects have been interpreted in broader Western scholarship. Furthermore, these dichotomies and conceptions have undoubtedly impacted scholarly interpretations of the material culture that is depicted in the Hebrew Bible.[42]

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[38] This is implied in Ibid., 95; Carl Knappett, "Materiality," in *Archaeological Theory Today*, ed. Ian Hodder, 2nd ed. (Cambridge; Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2012), 191.

[39] As suggested by, Olsen, "Material Culture after Text," 96.

[40] This convention has been noted in Tim Ingold, "Materials Against Materiality," *Archaeological Dialogues* 14, no. 1 (2007): 7; Miller, *Stuff*, 71–72.

[41] Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 64–70. For his broader discussion on this, see 63-78. A similar point is made in Olsen, "Material Culture after Text," 95.

[42] Anthropocentrism of biblical scholarship often observed in environmental studies in biblical studies, for example, see discussions in the edited volume, David Horrell et al., eds., *Ecological Hermeneutics: Biblical, Historical and Theological Perspectives* (London: T & T Clark, 2010).

Indeed, the impact of these perspectives is implied by the limited scholarly engagement with objects, such as clothing, in the Hebrew Bible.

The tendency for biblical scholars to overlook or undermine aspects of materiality in the Hebrew Bible is probably also influenced by ideas depicted in the biblical texts themselves. The exclusive Yahwistic cult that is idealised in many of the biblical texts often seems to be presented as 'aniconic' and seemingly immaterial. These ideas are particularly implied in the prohibition of constructing images of Yahweh or other divine figures (Exodus 20:4; Deuteronomy 5:8), similarly, in a number of prophetic texts that polemicize against other cults by devaluing their use of human-made depictions of their deities in cult statues.[43] These depictions have fostered the idea that the ancient Yahwistic cult was superior to 'material' religion. However, in contrast, it can be argued that the depictions of religious practices in the biblical texts indicate practices that are inherently material. As Francesca Stavrakopoulou has indicated, 'the biblical texts repeatedly attest to the idea that it is materiality itself which crucially mediates and articulates the relationship between the human and the divine.'[44] The prohibition of images and undermining of material depictions of the divine is arguably indicative of the very potency of materiality in these depictions and is demonstrative of the biblical writers' concern with its power. However, rather than recognising this, many biblical scholars perpetuate and develop on the biblical writers' depiction of 'immaterial' or symbolic ideas and beliefs as the ideal.

It is likely that the tendency to devalue and overlook objects (particularly objects employed in rituals) in scholarly interpretations is also due to the influence of ideas developed in Protestantism, which has historically set itself in contrast to the ritualism often observed in Catholic traditions. Most noteworthy of these ideas is the tendency for Protestantism to promote more

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[43] 2 Kings 19:18; Psalm 115:4; Isaiah 40:18-20, 44:12-17; Jeremiah 10, These polemical texts have been discussed further in Saul M. Olyan, "The Ascription of Physical Disability as a Stigmatizing Strategy in Biblical Iconic Polemics," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 9, no. 14 (2003): 1–15.

[44] Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Materialist Reading: Materialism, Materiality, and Biblical Cults of Writing," in *Biblical Interpretation and Method: Essays in Honour of John Barton*, ed. Katharine J. Dell and Paul M. Joyce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 227.

conservative views on the use of material objects in religious practice.[45] The influence of these ideas in biblical scholarship may have also unconsciously dissuaded the attribution of power to objects depicted in the biblical texts. In order to move beyond the assumptions that objects are superficial or powerless, which have influenced interpretations of objects and clothing in the biblical texts, it is necessary to challenge and reassess some of these deep-rooted Western prejudices and presumptions of the wider category of material culture and its relationship with humans. This can best be achieved by engaging with contemporary material culture studies that have effectively debated and shed light on these relationships, as well as further illustrating the importance of the materiality of objects, such as clothing.

1.4 'Flowing, Scraping, Mixing and Mutating': The Material Lives of an Object

As indicated, all objects have materiality.[46] Before being attributed with signs and symbols, objects are already complex entities, and their so-called 'brute' or 'hard' materiality is tangible and tactile to those who encounter them.[47] Tim Ingold effectively demonstrates the need to not skip over the significance of the material properties of objects.[48] Such properties are not 'inert' or passive, instead, they can be recognised as diverse and dynamic parts of an object's materiality. Objects are complex bundles of different material properties and qualities that are experienced as multisensory and multidimensional entities; they are tactile, soft, stony, bitter, smelly, clunky, and so on.[49] Therefore,

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[45] Webb Keane, "The Evidence of the Senses and the Materiality of Religion," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, no. Special Issue (2008): S110–27; Mark Mosko, "Partible Penitents: Dividual Personhood and Christian Practice in Melanesia and the West," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 16 (2010): 215–40.

[46] The phrase in this subtitle is borrowed from Tim Ingold's "Materials against Materiality," 11.

[47] For emphases on the importance of the 'brute' or 'hard' materiality of objects, see Olsen, "Material Culture after Text," 88; Christopher Tilley, "Materiality in Materials," *Archaeological Dialogues* 14, no. 1 (2007): 16–20.

[48] Particularly see Ingold, "Materials Against Materiality"; Ingold, "Bringing Things to Life"; Tim Ingold, *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description* (London; New York: Routledge, 2011).

[49] For the depiction of material objects as complex bundles of material properties, see Keane, "Signs Are Not the Garb of Meaning: On the Social Analysis of Material

before considering the important and inherent relationships that exist between people and objects, it is important to pause to briefly elucidate on the very tangibility of objects and their properties, which often becomes only tacit implied in more general discussions of materiality.

The complexity and multiplicity of objects is such that it seems to deter some scholars from exploring general theories of material culture.[50] Indeed, the myriad different qualities and properties of objects can scarcely be enumerated. These observations make it difficult to comprehend how the complexity of objects could ever have been reduced to the ocular and text-centricism that has dominated social and symbolic interpretations of material culture. It can be acknowledged that the different sensory experiences by which humans encounter objects are often difficult to describe clearly.[51] Still, even if it cannot be fully explained, the tactile and multisensory nature of objects impacts peoples' experiences of them and of the world, as I will go on to demonstrate.

Observations of the material 'lives' of objects demonstrates that they are inherently unstable entities. Their properties are not fixed, but are 'processual and relational.'[52] Tim Ingold highlights this point, emphasising that they are never completed entities:

> Far from being the inanimate stuff typically envisioned by modern
> thought, materials in this original sense are the active constituents of a

Things," 187–89; Ingold, "Materials Against Materiality"; Knappett, "Materiality," 195–97. It must be acknowledged that one's sensory experiences cannot be reduced to the five senses typically identified in the contemporary Western world – sight, sound, touch, taste, smell. In light of ethnographies of other cultures it could be suggested that other experiences such as temperature, balance, speech and kinesthesia could be identified as an important part of sensory experience. For further discussion on the multisensory experience of objects, see David Howes, "The Senses: Polysensoriality," in *A Companion to the Anthropology of the Body and Embodiment*, ed. Frances E. Mascia-Lees, Blackwell Companions to Anthropology 13 (Chichester; Oxford; Malden MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 435–50.
[50] Implied to some extent in Daniel Miller, "Why Some Things Matter," in *Material Cultures: Why Some Things Matter*, ed. Daniel Miller, Consumption and Space (London: UCL Press, 1998), 6.
[51] Olsen, "Material Culture after Text," 93; David Howes, "Scent, Sound and Synaesthesia: Intersensoriality and Material Culture Theory," in *Handbook of Material Culture*, ed. Christopher Tilley (London: SAGE, 2005), 161, 169.
[52] Ingold, "Materials Against Materiality," 1.

world-in-formation. Wherever life is going on, they are relentlessly on the move – flowing, scraping, mixing and mutating.[53]

An object's various properties can transform dramatically over the course of its material life through its interaction with humans and other objects. It must be stressed that objects are not encountered in a vacuum, but rather are experienced through different mediums, such as, air, water and light. As they interface with these different substances and mediums their properties and capacities are transformed.[54] These mediums impact one's encounters with objects – the same object may be experienced in a number of different ways depending on the contexts and the mediums through which it is encountered. Objects are by nature not only unstable, but also exist as a composition of different properties and mediums. This suggests that when we examine an object we must consider it different material properties in that particular context.

In order to better engage with the materiality of objects one must recognise that they do not only connote social values. As has been suggested, they also have material 'lives' and histories that are an inherent part of their materiality. Objects are constructed from natural materials, which are in themselves cultivated or produced through their material interactions with other people and objects. They are used and re-used by different people in a multitude of ways until they are disposed of and slowly corrode and disintegrate. In the more socially led approaches to objects considered earlier, these 'life' stages are indicative of different social perspectives and contexts in which people interact with a garment. However, these different stages of a material object's life are not only indicative of the impact that objects have in humans' lives, but indicative of their own transforming physical 'lives' – the different material properties and qualities that an object manifests in its very materiality in different contexts and through different media.[55]

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[53] Ibid., 11.
[54] Ibid., 4–11; Ingold, "Bringing Things to Life," 6–7.
[55] Similar ideas are addressed in Ingold, "Materials Against Materiality"; Ingold, "Bringing Things to Life."

The fluctuation of the material properties and qualities of an object illustrates that the power, function and efficacy of that object is also susceptible to transformation. Some objects will lose their capacity to function as they were once purposed for as their material properties change: for example, clothes become threadbare, plastic becomes brittle, and metal rusts. Still, in other contexts the same pattern of decay or transformation can imply an object's efficacy, as illustrated in Joshua Pollard's discussion.[56] The transformations of an object may debilitate aspects of its use, yet may also enable it to be used effectively for different purposes. Therefore, it can be suggested that the materiality of objects and their contexts are central to interpreting its power and performance in a particular interaction with humans or other material objects. It must be stressed that any depiction of an object in images and texts portrays only a brief snapshot image of that object and its significance. It is not only the social and cultural values manifested by objects that change over time, their own fluctuating materiality also impacts and transforms these values.

This recognition of the material lives of objects and their inherent value in interpretations of the biblical texts may alone suffice in shifting some perspectives in biblical scholarship. However, it can be observed that the biblical writers' depictions of material culture largely involve humans. Therefore, it is necessary to develop this altered perspective of materiality further to reconsider the relationships that are constructed between humans and objects.

1.5 Entanglement

Humans are utterly entangled with objects and objects with humans.[57] From the moment life begins until after it ends we are bombarded by a myriad

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[56] Joshua Pollard, "The Art of Decay and the Transformation of Substance," in *Substance, Memory, Display: Archaeology and Art*, ed. Colin Renfrew, Chris Gosden, and Elizabeth DeMarrais, McDonald Institute Monographs (Cambridge: McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research, 2004), 47–62.

[57] Hodder, "Human-Thing Entanglement"; Ian Hodder, "The Entanglements of Humans and Things: A Long-Term View," *New Literary History* 45, no. 1 (2014): 19–36.

objects, our day-to-day interactions and experiences are all mediated and constructed through that contact with objects.[58] This may seem to be an obvious statement, nevertheless, the way interactions between humans and objects have sometimes been examined have implicitly suggested that humans are in someway removed from material world in which they exist – they merely come into contact with the material world, implying that they are not part of this same world. Therefore, there is a need to reiterate this point, as I have begun to indicate, that humans are completely immersed and part of the material world, as Ingold argues, 'Like all other creatures, human beings do not exist on the 'other side' of materiality but swim in an ocean of materials.'[59] The culture(s) portrayed in the Hebrew Bible are in no way exempt from these entanglements, since they are depicted and constructed by humans whose only experience is of a material world. Furthermore, as has been indicated, these texts portray a material world in which humans and objects intimately interact with one another and thus, the complexity of these material entanglements are integral to interpretations of the biblical texts.

The social relationships that exist between humans are also material relationships and are also constructed through interactions with objects.[60] It has been briefly implied that explorations of social relationships have implicitly presumed that the social is something that exists principally in the realm of humans. However, Bruno Latour stresses that the majority of our local interactions are with objects and not directly with other humans. Like humans' experiences of the world, social relationships are negotiated, constructed, and sustained through the medium of objects; even to the extent that it might be suggested that material objects are the very activity and medium of the social realm.[61] This implies that any exploration of human relationships, such as those studied in biblical scholarship, cannot be sufficiently examined without

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[58] This is implied in Miller, "Why Some Things Matter," 6; Bruno Latour, "The Berlin Key or How to Do Words with Things," in *Matter, Materiality and Modern Culture*, ed. P. M. Graves-Brown (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 10; Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 75, 78; Ingold, "Bringing Things to Life," 3–4.
[59] Ingold, "Materials Against Materiality," 7.
[60] This is implied in Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 78, 79–80. This point is also supported through the discussions in the rest of this chapter.
[61] Ibid., 75–76, 78.

recognition of the significant role of objects. These material interactions should not be valued differently to interactions between humans, as has they have been in conventional approaches.

Admittedly, as Ian Hodder notably stresses, many material objects *are* dependent on humans for their construction and maintenance and to a certain extent humans are responsible for designing their purpose and function.[62] However, this dependency is not one-directional; instead, humans and objects can be considered as co-dependent.[63] This has already begun to be implied through my recognition of humans' inherent immersion and entanglement with objects, indicated in my discussions earlier, yet this dependency can be elucidated even further. Humans are dependent on objects for their continued existence, such as needing food for one's nourishment and for humans' everyday activities, such as driving to work.[64] The acknowledgement of this co-dependency and human's entanglement with objects allows us to tentatively make the proposal that objects are instrumental in constructing humans.[65]

The suggestion that objects construct humans may at first appear to stand in conflict with the tendency for many objects to go almost completely unnoticed in humans' lives. Daniel Miller elucidates on this apparent contradiction, exploring what he terms as the 'humility of things'.[66] He suggests, as others have done, that objects often do not call attention to themselves; just as the

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[62] As suggested in Latour, "The Berlin Key," 11–20; Hodder, "Human-Thing Entanglement," 154–64; Hodder, "The Entanglements of Humans and Things," 19-22-27.

[63] Hodder, "The Entanglements of Humans and Things." See also, Daniel Miller, "Introduction," in *Clothing as Material Culture*, ed. Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller (Oxford, UK; New York: Berg, 2005), 37, 45. For further discussion on the co-dependency between people and objects see Latour, "The Berlin Key," 18–21; Bruno Latour, "Where Are the Missing Masses? The Sociology of a Few Mundane Artifacts," in *Technology and Society, Building Our Sociotechnical Future*, ed. Deborah J. Johnson and Jameson M. Wetmore (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2008), 153–59, http://www.bruno-latour.fr/node/258.

[64] Miller, *Stuff*, 59–60; Hodder, "Human-Thing Entanglement," 160–62.

[65] This has also been suggested in Daniel Miller, "Materiality: An Introduction," in *Materiality*, ed. Daniel Miller (Durham, N.C.; London: Duke University Press, 2005), 38; Timothy Webmoor and Christopher L. Witmore, "Things Are Us! A Commentary on Human/Things Relations under the Banner of a 'Social' Archaeology," *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 41, no. 1 (2008): 65.

[66] Miller, *Stuff*, 49–53.

frame of a painting often goes unnoticed – objects easily blend into the backdrop of our lives.[67] Bruno Latour similarly proposes that objects are comparable to a 'black box', their intricacies are not always exposed to us in our daily interactions with them, yet one only has to lift the lid off these objects in order to remember the myriad interactions and networks of people (and objects) that are involved in their construction, as well as their importance in shaping our lives.[68] The tendency for objects to drift to the periphery of our attention can be considered not as an indication of their lack of importance, but rather to demonstrate the degree to which they are integrated in our lives – we rely on them without even realising their impact.[69]

In this exploration of material objects, it is worth looking more closely at the seemingly 'peripheral' objects in our everyday lives and purposefully turning our attention towards unpacking the significance of some of these objects by exploring the complex interactions they entail – the meshwork that entangles the lives of humans and objects together.[70] As Miller suggests: 'material culture virtually explodes the moment one gives any consideration to the vast

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[67] Ibid., 49–50. The tendency for things to go unnoticed, yet still have central importance in our lives has also been discussed and argued in Olsen, "Material Culture after Text," 94–95; Latour, *Reassembling the Social*, 79–80. Also see Lemonnier's in-depth exploration of seemingly 'mundane objects,' through which he demonstrates the intricate and nuanced impact of the everyday object on our lives, Pierre Lemonnier, ed., *Mundane Objects: Materiality and Non-Verbal Communication*, Critical Cultural Heritage Series 10 (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2012).

[68] Bruno Latour, *Pandora's Hope: Essays on the Reality of Science Studies* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1999), 185. Also, see an illustrative example in Webmoor and Witmore's brief exploration of glasses, Webmoor and Witmore, "Things Are Us!," 64–65. These ideas are also developed in Lambros Malafouris, "At the Potter's Wheel: An Argument for Material Agency," in *Material Agency: Towards a Non-Anthropocentric Approach*, ed. Carl Knappett and Lambros Malafouris (New York: Springer, 2008), 34.

[69] Miller, "Why Some Things Matter," 12.

[70] Meshwork can be considered to be a more appropriate depiction of the interwoven interactions between humans and objects, over the depiction of networks, as it incorporates the idea of objects and humans that impact each other in the crossing of their paths, rather than always through a purposed connection from one object or human to another, see Tim Ingold's discussion, Tim Ingold, "Writing Texts, Reading Materials. A Response to My Critics," *Archaeological Dialogues* 14, no. 1 (2007): 34–35; Tim Ingold, "When ANT Meets SPIDER: Social Theory for Arthopods," in *Material Agency: Towards a Non-Anthropocentric Approach*, ed. Carl Knappett and Lambros Malafouris (New York: Springer, 2008), 209–16.

corpus of different object worlds that we constantly experience.'[71] This implies that exploring the material and social entanglements between people and objects in the biblical texts can be enriching for biblical interpretation as we can anticipate that it will uncover a web of relationships and interactions that have not yet been fully appreciated.

1.6 Agency

The idea introduced earlier, that 'things construct humans' requires further exploration, since this statement has broader implications that must be considered. It implies that objects are directly and actively involved in transforming humans, yet this would suggest that objects have their own agency, which challenges the typical Western assumption that objects are inert, stationary and ineffective without humans to activate and empower them. In contemporary Western scholarship the concept of agency has typically been restricted as a social power that can only be manifested in human beings.[72] In the traditional view, agency is illustrated through the ways in which humans intentionally exert their influence over other persons and objects to affect change in a particular context.[73] However, this anthropocentric view is limited since it does not sufficiently consider the dynamic roles that objects have had in shaping and constructing human action and behaviour. It shall be argued, as many anthropologists and material cultural scholars now do, that the concept of agency needs to be reconstructed and extended to acknowledge that objects have agency of their

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[71] Miller, "Why Some Things Matter," 6.

[72] As noted in Carl Knappett, *Thinking Through Material Culture: An Interdisciplinary Perspective*, Archaeology, Culture, and Society (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 28.

[73] It must be acknowledged that there have been other ways of defining agency in material cultural studies. For studies that explore these alternative depictions of agency see Webb Keane, "Self-Interpretation, Agency and the Objects of Anthropology: Reflections on a Genealogy," *Comparative Study of Society and History* 45, no. 2 (2003): 231–33; Robert Layton, "Art and Agency: A Reassessment," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 9 (2003): 451–52; Carl Knappett and Lambros Malafouris, "Material and Nonhuman Agency: An Introduction," in *Material Agency: Towards a Non-Anthropocentric Approach*, ed. Carl Knappett and Lambros Malafouris (New York: Springer, 2008), ix–x; Torill Christine Lindstrøm, "Agency 'in Itself'. A Discussion of Inanimate, Animal and Human Agency," *Archaeological Dialogues* 22, no. 2 (2015): 208, 222.

own. However, first one should recognise how this term has been appropriated within biblical studies in order to demonstrate why there is such a need to reconsider the agency of objects in biblical interpretations.

In biblical studies, scholars often use the term agency more liberally, using it interchangeably with interpretations of a person's authority, control or power in a text.[74] In other words, it has become a term that is indicative of that character's efficacy and importance. Although biblical scholars have broadened the boundaries of agency to include divine beings and cult statues, most objects, by virtue of being non-humans and not generally considered to be divine, are still largely excluded from such discussions.[75] Considering that agency has been employed to connote notions of power and efficacy, objects' exclusion from agency severely limits the roles it is suggested to play in the biblical texts. In recognition of the depreciative impact that these connotations have on objects, it becomes even more important to reconsider the boundaries and role of agency in the relationships between objects and humans and to recover its significance in these roles.

Objects transform humans by enabling or empowering and constraining their movement, activity and behaviour.[76] An illustrative example of this may be observed through the use of scuba diving equipment. This equipment enables a diver to swim to depths that would be impossible in their own ability – without it they would run out of breath or react badly to the water pressure or

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[74] This employment of agency can particularly be seen in studies of marginalised or disadvantaged characters in the biblical texts. See examples in Olyan, "The Ascription of Physical Disability as a Stigmatizing Strategy in Biblical Iconic Polemics"; Matthews, Victor H., "Physical Space, Imagined Space, and 'Lived Space' in Ancient Israel," *Biblical Theology Bulletin: A Journal of Bible and Culture* 33, no. 1 (2003): 12–20. See also Tracy Lemos' development of the social and legal agency of women depicted in the biblical texts in T. M. Lemos, "Physical Violence and the Boundaries of Personhood in the Hebrew Bible," *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 2, no. 4 (2013): 500–531.

[75] See recent developments of divine agency in ancient West Asian studies in Beate Pongratz-Leisten and Karen Sonik, eds., *The Materiality of Divine Agency* (Boston; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2015).

[76] Bruno Latour even extends their discussion of the impact of objects to include its impact on ethical actions, blurring the distinction between human and object agency, Latour, *Pandora's Hope*; Latour, "Where Are the Missing Masses?" Cf. Tim Sørensen's response and development of this argument, Tim Flohr Sørensen, "We Have Never Been Latourian: Archaeological Ethics and the Posthuman Condition," *Norwegian Archaeological Review* 46, no. 1 (2013): 1–18.

temperature. This indicates how objects are active in extending the abilities and actions of humans. However, it can also be observed that the person in our example is constrained by the same equipment. It is only possible for the diver to swim under the water for a certain period of time before their air tank runs out; hence, it forces the diver to return to the surface. This perhaps represents a more obvious example of ability of objects to enable and constrain humans, still, many other objects direct or determine human's movement and behaviour.[77] This example is indicative that objects have control and power over humans and are able to transform them, which, in turn, seems to indicate that they have some form of agency.

In an attempt to account for the impact and power that objects seem to have over humans, Alfred Gell proposed that objects could be ascribed with secondary agency.[78] He initially suggests that objects can have passive agency, which may be ascribed to them when humans attribute mental states or intentional psychology to them.[79] However, he goes on to extend his argument to include secondary agency, by which an object indexes a primary agent: its human creator or user.[80] Gell offers an example of soldiers who lay anti-personnel mines in order to elucidate this relationship between primary and secondary agency. He argues that these mines are:

> [not] (primary) agents who initiate happenings through acts of will for which they are morally responsible...they are objective embodiments of the *power or capacity to will their* [primary agent's] *use*.[81]

In other words, Gell implies that objects can embody and index the distributed agency of a primary human user who has intentionality, hence, implying that intentionality is a necessary component of primary agency. This would

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[77] For example, tools empower humans to transform other objects in a variety of different ways, yet most tools require humans to handle and use them in a particular manner thereby 'controlling' their movements through their use. This example shall be explored further in the following chapters.
[78] Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).
[79] Ibid., 18–19, 126–33. See also Torill Lindström's exploration of this portrayal of agency as a projection, Lindstrøm, "Agency 'in Itself.'"
[80] Gell, *Art and Agency*, 20–23.
[81] Ibid., 21.

suggest that the equipment referred to above extends the agencies of its designers, creators and users, by enabling and constraining humans. However, it can also be noted that this argument continues to exclude objects from having their own agency.

A number of scholars have since contested this depiction of secondary agency, since it implies that objects are completely reliant on humans to attribute them with agency.[82] I suggest that this is the type of agency to which Tim Ingold refers in his rejection of the agency of objects, arguing that 'agency is born of the attempt to re-animate a world of objects already deadened or rendered inert by arresting the flows of substance that give them life.'[83] In contrast, Ingold emphatically asserts that objects are alive, implying that they therefore do not require internal animating principles, such as agency.[84] This suggestion develops on his discussion of the material properties of objects that are constantly transforming both with and without the influence of humans. Ingold's objection to agency seems to originate from the type of agency that is thought to animate or empower objects, such as can be seen in Gell's depiction of secondary agency.[85] The radicalism of Ingold's critique of agency, in which he dismisses the use of this term entirely, is not wholly persuasive. Nevertheless, his suggestion that objects are alive and do not 'require' humans to animate them with agency to be powerful makes an effective point that requires further explanation in the present discussion.

Objects may, on one dimension, appear to be controlled by humans, yet it can also be demonstrated that objects constantly evade human control or expectations. This can be seen in the inherent agency that is implied by the very existence of objects, but it can also be elucidated by the recognition that objects are fluid and are constantly in a state of flux, as suggested above.

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[82] See critiques of Gell's depiction of agency in Ingold, "Bringing Things to Life," 7; Martin Holbraad, "Can the Thing Speak?," *Working Papers*, Open Anthropology Cooperative Press, 7 (2011): 5–7. See a broader critique of Gell's arguments in Christopher Tilley, *Body and Image: Explorations in Landscape Phenomenology 2* (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast, 2008), 26–33.

[83] Ingold, "Bringing Things to Life," 7. See also, Ingold, "Materials Against Materiality," 11–12.

[84] Ingold, "Bringing Things to Life," 7.

[85] As has been suggested objects require humans to animate objects, which is often presumed to be in some way 'lifeless.'

Although humans make objects that they use and rely on, objects are not stable and will often decay or break, contrary to their intended purpose. They require a level of maintenance that, in the case of objects on which we rely, can be observed to entrap us, forcing us to constantly repair or replace these objects.[86] The production of objects that enable humans can unintentionally produce effects that also harm them. For example, cars enable humans' movement, yet their use unintentionally produces pollution, which is harmful to humans.[87] Several scholars imply that it is the evasiveness of objects which indicates their agency: Mary Weistmantel and Lynn Meskell propose that objects, are 'substantive agents with the potential to act upon the world in both intentional and unpredictable ways.'[88] Similarly, Pollard argues that 'real agency' resides in materiality for the reason that it 'cannot always be captured and contained.'[89]

The agency of objects can be observed in their very '*stuffiness*', the ability of material objects to take up 'space,' which requires humans to change their movement around such objects. It has been suggested that the agency of objects is particularly visible when they stand in for people.[90] However, objects and humans are not symmetrical, they have their own material properties that impact the world in a way that objects cannot. 'Things are "socially produced"' yet they add something, since 'human consciousness is still incapable of producing for them the real obdurate physicality of things.'[91] For example, although humans may design anti-personnel mines, which stand-in for the human who would kill another, the mines also have material

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[86] For further discussion on the ability of objects to entrap people, see Hodder, "Human-Thing Entanglement."

[87] Miller, *Stuff*, 59–60. Also see Hodder, "Human-Thing Entanglement"; Hodder, "The Entanglements of Humans and Things."

[88] Weismantel and Meskell, "Substances," 239. [Note that this paper particularly addresses figurines and effigies. However, their point here can be attributed to objects more generally.]

[89] Pollard, "The Art of Decay," 60.

[90] Latour, *Pandora's Hope*, 189; Latour, "The Berlin Key"; Latour, "Where Are the Missing Masses?," 157–60.

[91] Webmoor and Witmore, "Things Are Us!," 56.

properties and power that humans do not and cannot manifest.[92] Similarly, humans can construct walls that restrict humans' movement, yet the designer does not physically impact this change in behaviour. Rather, it is the wall's material properties that prevent humans from passing through. Therefore, it can be suggested that objects have agency in their materiality and properties, which cannot be exactly replicated by humans.

Whilst not all scholars are convinced by the suggestion that material objects manifest their own inherent agency, this perspective opens up insightful ways of interpreting the material culture portrayed in the Hebrew Bible that effectively resists falling into traditional patterns that tend to undermine such objects in biblical scholarship.[93] It enables scholars to be able to recognise that objects play a powerful and active role in the world. This agency is not divorced from their relationship with humans, rather it is utterly intertwined with humans and their wider entanglement in material culture. It should not be overlooked that objects can also index human agency. However, it must be stressed that the agency of objects, as has already been suggested, is not limited to the agency of humans. The agency of humans and objects may look somewhat different, since they are not completely synonymous with each other. Nevertheless, humans and objects continue to impact and construct one another through their agencies, which, I will argue, is most visible in practice and activity.

1.7 Blurring at the Boundaries

Humans and objects are entwined to such an extent that it is often difficult to distinguish a clear-cut division between them. As previously suggested, it is impossible to separate human experience from material culture implying that there is no such thing as a 'pure' form of human that is separate from objects.

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[92] Similar points have been made in Carl Knappett, "Materials with Materiality?," *Archaeological Dialogues* 14, no. 1 (2007): 20–21. See Gell's discussion on anti-personnel mines, Gell, *Art and Agency*, 19–21.
[93] On recent studies that illustrate a continued reluctance towards attributing objects with agency, see Lindstrøm, "Agency 'in Itself.'" See also Vearncombe's reluctance to attribute agency to clothing in her discussions of clothing imagery in the New Testament, Vearncombe, "What Would Jesus Wear?," 41.

Humans are nearly always encountered as dressed or modified by other material objects; they are never *just* humans.[94] The stability of these categories and their distinctions is already undermined by their sheer inseparable nature. There is always a intertwining of humans and objects, both in their material form and activity. The disappearance of fixed boundaries between humans and objects, as this section will demonstrate, implies that objects can be incorporated into what it means to be human, and that humans can become object-like.[95] Some of these ideas are tacitly indicated in a number of studies on clothing and material culture, yet the fact that they often remain only implicit observations indicates a possible aversion to the dissolution of the fixed boundaries that are so deeply-rooted in Western culture and its scholarship. However, it shall be proposed that the blending of categories into one another is more reflective of reality than these socially constructed dichotomies.

Bodies occupy a disconcerting position straddled between being human or person and being an object.[96] They illustrate perhaps one of the most lucrative examples that exhibit the fuzziness of boundaries between human and object, materiality and immateriality. The traditional Western dualism of mind and body has often relegated the body as a passive recipient of the mind's intentionality and subjective thought – it is the mind that wills the body that it inhabits to act and perform. Whilst on paper this strict dualism perhaps seems somewhat persuasive, a practical approach illustrates the impossibility

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[94] For more on humans as dressed beings see Eicher, Evenson, and Lutz, *The Visible Self*, 127; Entwistle, "The Dressed Body"; Terence S. Turner, "The Social Skin," in *Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life*, ed. Margaret M. Lock and Judith Farquhar, Body, Commodity, Text (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), 83.

[95] Lynn Meskell and Rosemary A. Joyce, *Embodied Lives: Figuring Ancient Maya and Egyptian Experience* (London; New York: Routledge, 2003).

[96] Here the focus is on human bodies. It has been suggested that there can no be no concept of 'the body' since bodies widely vary both biologically and culturally, Dennis Waskul, "Introduction: The Body in Symbolic Interaction," in *Body/Embodiment: Symbolic Interaction and the Sociology of the Body*, ed. Dennis D. Waskul and Phillip Vannini (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2006), 2; Judith Farquhar and Lock, Margaret M., "Introduction," in *Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life*, ed. Margaret M. Lock and Judith Farquhar, Body, Commodity, Text (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), 1–18; Carol Delaney and Deborah Kaspin, *Investigating Culture: An Experimental Introduction to Anthropology*, 2nd ed. (UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 208.

of clearly distinguishing between body and mind. It has long been established that the relationships between and experiences of minds and bodies are indissoluble. Implying that, it is *as* bodies, not merely through bodies, that one encounters and interacts with the world. Still, the body is an object that is a contingent and divisible entity, prone to decay and disintegration – as such it too is a constantly 'unfinished project'.[97]

There is yet another layer to the ambiguous status of bodies to be considered. In addition to being both object and human, bodies are also regarded as biological entities that are restricted in their movement by their material properties and physical capabilities.[98] In this way, bodies are object-like and yet not object-like, part of the immaterial mind and yet simultaneously not part of it. They are not easily bounded by the same bracketing as man-made objects, and are often viewed separately as biological and scientific objects. However, this view is limiting and, like many social interpretations of objects, devalues the dynamic role that bodies play as both humans and 'living' objects.[99] As biological entities, bodies have not historically been considered as culturally and socially constructed as objects are, nor are they thought to construct culture themselves, since they are considered as 'natural' bodies. However, it can be argued that they do not only move according to their

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[97] John Robb, "Towards a Critical Otziography: Inventing Prehistoric Bodies," in *Social Bodies*, ed. Helen Lambert and Maryon McDonald (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009), 124. See also, Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Making Bodies: On Body Modification and Religious Materiality in the Hebrew Bible," *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 2, no. 4 (2013): 533.

[98] For critical discussions on the scholarly tendency to focus on the body as a biological entity, see Bryan S. Turner, *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory*, 2nd ed., Theory, Culture & Society (London: SAGE, 1996), 29–30; Farquhar and Lock, Margaret M., "Introduction"; Helen Lambert and Maryon McDonald, "Introduction," in *Social Bodies*, ed. Helen Lambert and Maryon McDonald (Berghahn Books, 2009), 1–15; Robb, "Towards a Critical Otziography: Inventing Prehistoric Bodies." This does not intend to undermine the biological and medical depictions of bodies, but rather to consider bodies as social in addition to the biological model of bodies. As is suggested in Turner, *The Body and Society*, 29–33.

[99] See discussions of these problems in Helen Lambert and Maryon McDonald, eds., *Social Bodies* (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009).

'natural' makeup and the 'mind's' intentionality, they are entities that also grow, move and behave in socially and culturally defined ways.[100]

The distortion and liminality of bodies is also observable in bodily movement and practice. Marcel Mauss and Pierre Bourdieu have been instrumental in developing the argument that one's bodily practice and disposition is socially and culturally contingent. They both suggest, though from different approaches, that activities such as, walking, eating, sleeping, digging, jumping, and so on are learnt and ingrained in the body through cultural practice. These often incorporate movements that are distinct from another culture's way of performing these activities.[101] However, it is not just bodies that create ways of being human, as has already begun to be suggested. Tim Sørensen suggests that it is in the relationships between objects and humans that, 'the boundaries of the human organism and the entire notion of the "body" are in many instances breached, which has consequences for how we relate to and situate being human' implying that objects are part of constructing ways of 'being human.'[102] Such arguments can be supported and extended through studies of the practice of making and using objects, indicating that it is not just isolated bodily movement, but also performances with objects that are culturally and materially developed.[103] These activities similarly involve movements that are learnt through culture and are also

[100] Farquhar and Lock, Margaret M., "Introduction"; Lambert and McDonald, "Introduction," 9; Delaney and Kaspin, *Investigating Culture*, 208.

[101] Marcel Mauss, "Techniques of the Body," *Economy and Society* 2, no. 1 (1973): 70–88; Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2000). Also see Fiona Bowie, *The Anthropology of Religion: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (Maiden, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell Pub, 2006), 41–44; Robert Hertz, "The Preeminence of the Right Hand: A Study in Religious Polarity," in *Beyond the Body Proper: Reading the Anthropology of Material Life*, ed. Margaret M. Lock and Judith Farquhar, Body, Commodity, Text (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2007), 30–40.

[102] Sørensen, "We Have Never Been Latourian," 10.

[103] Note that Mauss does not really acknowledge objects in his examination of body techniques. Bourdieu does look at the relationship between body movement and objects to some extent, but tends to focus on wider cultural styles over material relationships between bodies and objects, Bourdieu, *Distinction*. For more discussion on the relationship between bodily movement and objects, see Jean-Pierre Warnier, "A Praxeological Approach to Subjectivation in a Material World," *Journal of Material Culture* 6, no. 1 (2001): 5–24; Jean-Pierre Warnier, "Technology as Efficacious Action on Objects...and Subjects," *Journal of Material Culture* 14, no. 4 (2009): 459–70.

processed and practiced through bodily knowledge or praxeology, rather than necessarily consciously learned as a mental state.[104]

Body modifications and prosthetics are also illustrative examples of the disintegrating line between human and object. Sørensen argues that objects often 'become integral to personhood or extensions of a human,' and illustrates how many objects like wedding rings, tattoos, and implants, can become a part of humans and their power; hence, distorting these boundaries even further.[105] It has been argued that prosthetic limbs seem to become part of the sensory body and bodily movement, since they are used to navigate and move in the world. This implies that prosthetic limbs can become parts of humans or, more appropriately, ways of being human.[106]

Vivian Sobchack proposes that it is not just prosthetic limbs, but other material objects that become incorporated into one's bodily performance. Her point is well-summarised and developed in Sørensen's discussion, 'The supermarket trolley or the crutches…approximate humanness in the same way as an artificial limb, and Sobchack maintains that they are 'literally – if incompletely – incorporated' into the ensemble constituting the lived body.'[107] This example shows that one's experience of 'being human,' or one's experience of bodily wholeness could incorporate a whole manner of objects that become parts of the body, even if only temporarily, such as the supermarket trolley. The incorporation of these more unusual objects to bodily experience and performance indicates the importance of refraining from ascribing fixed ideas to which objects may be considered as extensions of the body. These illustrations of the blurring of distinctions between human and object can also

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[104] This will be considered in more detail later. For key discussions on movement and body knowledge see edited chapters from Trevor H. J. Marchand, ed., *Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluble Relation Between Mind, Body and Environment* (Chichester; Oxford; Malden: MA: Royal Anthropological Institue; Wiley-Blackwell, 2010).

[105] Sørensen, "We Have Never Been Latourian," 9.

[106] Vivian Sobchack, "'Choreography for One, Two, and Three Legs' (A Phenomenological Meditation in Movements," *Topoi* 24, no. 1 (2005): 55–66; Vivian Sobchack, "Living a 'Phantom Limb': On the Phenomenology of Bodily Integrity," *Body & Society* 16, no. 3 (2010): 51–67.

[107] Sobchack, "'Choreography for One, Two, and Three Legs,'" 57. In Sørensen, "We Have Never Been Latourian," 10.

be elucidated from an alternative perspective.

It can be observed that parts of one's organic/physical body that are removed or amputated can feel as though they are part of one's body and yet may simultaneously become distanced or even alien to one's body. Sobchack describes the perplexing sensations of 'phantom limb.' This indicates one's experience when an absent limb feels as though it were physically present through the body's material memory. The experience of pain or sensations related to that limb would imply that it was still somehow physically present. On the other hand, Sobchack describes the experience of seeing her amputated leg that had always been part of her human body and feeling as though it had become only an object unfamiliar to her.[108] This suggests the complex relationships that may develop with the physical body as both body and object. Although the examples of prosthetics and absent limbs are particularly illustrative, the blurring between body and object can also be observed in many different contexts with different bodies – even in the most mundane activities of everyday life it is possible to identify moments of blurring between humans and objects.

A helpful way of considering the ambiguous relationships between humans and objects in actions is to view them as hybrids entities, as has been suggested in the arguments of Bruno Latour.[109] Latour, well-known for developing the actor-network theory (ANT), argues that humans and objects both become equal actors or agents in social networks. He suggests that agency is found in the relationships that exist between objects, rather than simply suggesting that humans initiate this action.[110] In doing so he dismisses the idea that humans have any mastery in their relationships with nonhumans. Instead, Latour proposes that humans and objects are co-responsible for their actions, since it is through these processes that humans and objects can be seen as becoming merged with one another.

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[108] Sobchack, "Living a 'Phantom Limb.'"
[109] Latour, *Pandora's Hope*. See further explanation on Latour's theory of hybridity in Holbraad, "Can the Thing Speak?," 8–9.
[110] Latour, *Pandora's Hope*; Latour, "The Berlin Key"; Latour, *Reassembling the Social*; Latour, "Where Are the Missing Masses?"

This argument is effectively illustrated by the example of humans and guns.[111] Latour considers opposing attitudes towards guns in relation to discussions of the impact or agency of materiality: 'Guns kill people' and 'Guns don't kill people; *people* kill people.'[112] These statements are indicative of materialist and sociological approaches to viewing relationships between objects and people. In the former statement it is implied that the gun is the causative force behind killing another being, it enables the act and transforms the human into a killer; whilst in the latter it is assumed that the gun, although it does add something, it is ultimately, 'a tool, a medium, a neutral carrier of human will.' Latour rejects both of these approaches, and instead, proposes a third way in which the gun and person become a new entity: they become a gunman or a man-with-a-gun.[113] He argues that both gun and man are changed through this social interaction, 'the gun is different with you holding it. You are another subject because you hold the gun; the gun is another object because it has entered into a relationship with you.'[114] This implies that both gun and man are active and causative in killing that being. In this way, it can be suggested that human and objects are transformed by each other, becoming 'hybrids' in the performance of actions.

In these arguments it is not only the boundaries *between* humans and objects that are revealed to be unstable, these entities themselves are demonstrated as unfixed. Both of them can be considered as 'leaky' entities – it is not just objects that are unstable.[115] Indeed, both humans and objects leave material traces of their interaction on each other. There is a mixing of material properties and form, humans leave fingerprints, hair and skin cells on objects; similarly, objects discharge parts of themselves on objects as well as being able to indent human skin or change its colour. This reiterates that objects and humans are both a mix of each other. Moreover, humans and objects can be considered to share and index each others' agencies, which implies that they also share in each other's power and capabilities. Latour's arguments

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[111] Latour, *Pandora's Hope*, 176–80.
[112] Ibid., 176.
[113] Ibid., 180.
[114] Ibid., 179.
[115] Ingold, "Bringing Things to Life," 4. As suggested by Ingold "things leak, forever discharging through the surfaces that form temporarily around them."

largely focus on exploring the hybridities between humans and technologies, which is somewhat limiting since humans engage various different forms of material objects. However, once it is acknowledged that the presumed 'fixed' boundaries of these entities are compromised it is possible to observe this mixing and mingling of agencies and powers in each of these different interactions between humans and objects. Still, these are not the only boundaries that are destabilised through these discussions.

The boundaries and relationships between materiality and immateriality are also challenged in the reconceptualization of traditional Western dichotomies. Materiality arguably pervades even concepts that are commonly assumed to be immaterial or part of one's mind, such as ideas, memories, thoughts and concepts. For example, memories are bodily experiences and are often remembered in multisensory ways.[116] These ideas and thoughts are imbued and constructed through experiences of the material world within which humans live and exist. This includes categories, such as 'belief,' which is commonly considered as a mental state. David Morgan has recently explored the status of belief arguing that it is something that is indissoluble from materiality; it is enabled and enacted through material objects and practices.[117] Whilst these historically 'immaterial' categories sometimes appear to have less tangibility than the physical objects that one encounters in the world, they still cannot escape from the realm of materiality; they still take material form and have material properties and dimensions.

1.8 Personhood

The focus of the present discussion of the material relationships between humans and objects can be extended to include the category of personhood – or what it means for someone to be a 'person' in a particular cultural and

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[116] Jamie Ward, "Multisensory Memories: How Richer Experiences Facilitate Remembering," in *The Multisensory Museum: Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives on Touch, Sound, Smell, Memory, and Space*, ed. Nina Levent and Alvaro Pascual-Leone (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2014), 273–84.

[117] I shall consider the materiality of religious belief through practice more in this thesis. David Morgan, "Introduction: The Matter of Belief," in *Religion and Material Culture: The Matter of Belief*, ed. David Morgan, 1st ed. (London: Routledge, 2010), 12. Quoted in Stavrakopoulou, "Materialist Reading," 227.

historical context. By appealing to the language of personhood, it is possible to shift further away from the loaded dichotomies between human and non-human, since this concept is often not restricted to humans alone. This is particularly relevant to biblical studies, since the biblical writers frequently portray divine beings, which are treated as persons rather than objects. In this thesis, it shall particularly be considered how the biblical writers' portrayals of persons may incorporate or relate to their depictions of clothing imagery. Recent studies on the nature of personhood are particularly informative and also insightfully elucidate some of the relationships that humans have with objects.

Like many of the concepts that have been considered in this chapter, personhood has traditionally been conceptualised as a fixed category in Western scholarship. Chris Fowler can be seen to develop this point further:

> Nineteenth- and twentieth Western discourse often prioritized the individuality and the indivisibility of each person. The person was understood as unique, singular, complete, and contained within and bounded by the body.[118]

This concept of personhood is particularly prominent within Christian and Jewish depictions of the person, which is usually bound up with the notion of the self, soul, or 'spirit'.[119] However, scholars have persuasively challenged the stability of assumptions that this concept of personhood is 'universal,' indicating instead that this view is culturally and historically contingent.[120]

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[118] Chris Fowler, "From Identity and Material Culture to Personhood and Materiality," in *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies*, ed. Dan Hicks and Mary C. Beaudry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 366. Note how many Western studies of personhood, in disciplines such as philosophy and law, have often tried to explore aspects that are thought to be 'essential' and 'indissoluble' from the nature of personhood which is particularly reflective of the presumption that it is something that is bounded. This is discussed in Ibid.

[119] Chris Fowler, "Personhood and the Body," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Ritual and Religion*, ed. Timothy Insoll (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 133–50; Mosko, "Partible Penitents," 216–17.

[120] J. S. La Fontaine, "Person and Individual: Some Anthropological Reflections," in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology, Philosophy, History*, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes, trans. W. D. Halls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 123–40; Marcel Mauss, "A Category of the Human Mind: The Notion of Self," in *The Category of the Person: Anthropology,*

Ethnographic studies have illustrated alternative conceptions of personhood that are not defined by 'fixed' categorising, but rather seem to depict personhood as something that is changeable and emerges through one's complex interrelations with the world.[121]

The recent reconceptualization of personhood, in light of these ethnographic studies, has particularly subverted and challenged the idea of individualism as a necessary and universal feature of personhood. Instead, it has been proposed that in many cultures persons conceptualise themselves not as individuals, but as 'dividual' persons, having collective and composite identities.[122] This already undermines the identification of personhood as a 'bounded' category, since it implies that no person is completely their own person. The implication is that persons are constructed through their relationships with others around them; such as, they are, in part, their mother and their father and their social group. Therefore, in order to explore personhood one must consider a person's relationships as well as considering the prominent values and beliefs of that person's different social groups; rather than only consider how someone is treated within these groups.[123] Moreover, it has been suggested that these interactions and relationships includes those formed with material culture, indicating that objects construct one's personhood, as well as constructing humans.

Philosophy, History, ed. Michael Carrithers, Steven Collins, and Steven Lukes, trans. W. D. Halls (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 1–25; Tracy M. Lemos, "Shame and Mutilation of Enemies in the Hebrew Bible," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 125, no. 2 (2006): 225–241; Nyree Finlay, "Personhood and Social Relations," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology and Anthropology of Hunter-Gatherers*, ed. Vicki Cummings, Peter Jordan, and Marek Zvelebil (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1191–92.

[121] Fowler, "From Identity and Material Culture to Personhood and Materiality," 359–65; Finlay, "Personhood and Social Relations," 1191.

[122] As argued in Marilyn Strathern, *The Gender of the Gift: Problems with Women and Problems with Society in Melanesia*, Studies in Melanesian Anthropology 6 (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1988); Signe Howell, "Of Persons and Things: Exchange and Valuables Among the Lio of Eastern Indonesia," *Man, New Series* 24, no. 3 (1989): 419–38; Fowler, "From Identity and Material Culture to Personhood and Materiality"; Mosko, "Partible Penitents."

[123] Lemos approaches personhood by particularly looking at the social treatment of humans to consider how their personhood is constructed, Lemos, "Shame and Mutilation of Enemies in the Hebrew Bible."

Personhood cannot solely be viewed in terms of dividualism, which indicates that one's personhood is made up of other persons and objects, it can be interpreted as something that is partible or distributed. This suggests that part of one's personhood is manifested in other people and material objects. An object may manifest one's personhood as a result of that person's interaction with it, such as through wearing, making, or using that object. A distributed view of personhood enables a person to be extended in more than one location and context; through clothing or other objects part of one's personhood can even remain after that person has died, continuing to manifest something of that person and their power and presence in its materiality.

The concepts of partible or distributed personhood developed out of specific ethnographies of Polynesian and Melanesian cultures, but are increasingly becoming integrated into mainstream theories of personhood in anthropology.[124] The specific social and cultural contexts of these studies continue to be significant, and concepts of partible personhood are arguably manifested in a unique way within those cultures. Nevertheless, the central features of these depictions of personhood strongly resonate with the re-conceptualisations of relationships between humans and objects as well as the shifting boundaries of traditional dichotomies that have been emerging in material culture studies. Therefore, these studies open up insightful ways of rethinking personhood.[125]

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[124] Strathern, *The Gender of the Gift*; Susanne Küchler, "Malangan: Objects, Sacrifice and Production of Memory," in *Material Culture: Critical Concepts in the Social Sciences*, ed. Victor Buchli, vol. 3 Part. 2, 3 vols., Critical Concepts in the Social Sciences (London: Routledge, 2004), 236–52; Mark S Mosko, "Fashion as Fetish: The Agency of Modern Clothing and Traditional Body Decoration among North Mekeo of Papua New Guinea," *The Contemporary Pacific* 19, no. 1 (2007): 39–83. For studies that illustrate the potential for ideas of dividualism and distributed personhood to be viewed across a number of different cultural contexts, see Trevor Kirk, "Materiality, Personhood and Monumentality in Early Neolithic Britain," *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 16, no. 3 (2006): 333–47; Mosko, "Partible Penitents"; Finlay, "Personhood and Social Relations," 1193.

[125] "Personhood is, to some degree, relational and distributed beyond the human body in contemporary Western cultures too…In all cultural contexts a tension exists between the fixed, individual, and indivisible characteristics of a person and the relational, dividual, and divisible aspects of a person," Fowler, "From Identity and Material Culture to Personhood and Materiality," 372.

This depiction of 'dividual' and 'partible' personhood, I argue, seems to be particularly compatible with depictions of persons in the Hebrew Bible. A number of scholars have proposed that a sense of collective identity can be observed in the biblical texts. This is particularly made visible in the biblical writers' portrayal of corporate identity and responsibility, the judgement of a nation or people group based on the actions of their leader.[126] It has been argued that ancient West Asian texts imply that a whole manner of objects could stand in place of a person, manifesting their power, authority, and personhood in that object.[127] Therefore, it seems appropriate to explore and consider the conception of distributed personhood in relation to depictions of material culture and clothing imagery in the Hebrew Bible.

Material cultural studies have been insightful in establishing these broader discussions about objects and their relationship and entanglement with other persons and objects, yet it can be observed that they often do not wholly rely on macro-level, broad brush approaches. Rather, in recognition the specificity of objects and their complex materiality most of studies explore these theories in relation to particular objects in specific contexts.[128] It may even be proposed that such theories can only be fully realised at a micro-level, since it is in these discussions one is able to, 'unpick the more subtle connections with cultural lives and values that are objectified through these forms.'[129] Therefore, although it is intended that this fuller examination of material cultural theory may provide some insights for considering the materiality of objects in the Hebrew Bible on a larger scale, it remains important to not presume that these conceptualisation of materiality produce a uniform perspective of material culture. Instead, it must be considered how these arguments work in relation to the particular. Thus, this discussion shall return to consider the case study of clothing that this thesis shall consider in further

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[126] This is addressed to some extent in Joel S. Kaminsky, *Corporate Responsibility in the Hebrew Bible*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series 196 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995).
[127] This will be explored further over the course of this thesis. See Bahrani's chapter on bodies in Zainab Bahrani, *Rituals of War: The Body and Violence in Mesopotamia* (New York; Cambridge: Zone Books; Distributed by the MIT Press, 2008).
[128] For more on the importance of the particular see Miller, "Why Some Things Matter," 9, 10, 14; Knappett, "Materiality," 201–2.
[129] Miller, "Why Some Things Matter," 79.

depth.

1.9 A Return to Dress

Having acknowledged and addressed some of the broader discussions that implicitly undergird interpretations of objects, we are now able to return to consider how these discussions impact conceptions of clothing, and its depiction in the Hebrew Bible. As an object, clothing is inherently material. Hence, it follows, in light of the previous discussions, that clothing is also utterly entangled and merged with persons and it can manifest its own power and agency.

In order to not impose a strict - and thereby limited - methodology for exploring different case studies, this thesis shall adopt a method similar to that of Mary Weismantel and Lynn Meskell, which they term 'following the material.' Rather than simply using 'pre-existing categories of social life such as gender, age, or status,' this approach considers how objects (here clothing) engage with 'the material world and have material effects on that world' and consider the 'thing itself in all its material, social and phenomenological aspects.'[130] Moreover, they indicate:

> This approach jettisons static, idealized and artificially complete images of the past in favour of a more realistic picture: a necessarily fragmentary but inherently dynamic reconstruction of the complex, imperfect mosaic of social and material interactions that constitute a human society.[131]

The depictions of clothing in the Hebrew Bible and ancient evidence for clothing and textiles, as will be illustrated, are far from 'complete.' By acknowledging this fragmentary reality as our starting point, the incomplete nature of the depictions of clothing does not present a challenge to this exploration. This approach enables us to examine the materiality of a garment based on its depiction in a specific context, rather imposing a predetermined

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[130] Weismantel and Meskell, "Substances," 234.
[131] Ibid.

pattern with which each garment is analysed.

Even as a distinct area of material culture clothing is still materially diverse. From this it may be stressed that the materiality of clothing must be considered and explored on a case-by-case basis to appropriately unpack its significance. Nevertheless, there are some characteristics that may be associated with a wider range of clothing that may be briefly explored.[132] For example, many clothes are particularly prone to deterioration, wear, tearing, or stains.[133] This is because clothing is made from textiles that are easily impacted and transformed by humans, objects and different material mediums, through which it may also take on different material forms and properties. This makes them particularly malleable and suitable to be worn on the body. However, it also implies that there is a relatively quick turnover of clothing, indicating a constant demand for textile production, even in less disposable cultures.

The malleable properties that many garments share indicate how clothing is impacted by and can impact its wearer's movement and behaviour. For example, the extent to which a fabric is malleable influences its wearer's range of bodily movement.[134] Daniel Miller makes the observation that some clothes, such as saris, require constant adjustment, as it slips and moves as the body moves. The malleability of clothing materials can often be manipulated and reshaped for various different activities.[135] This implies that the materially of clothing and its properties are significant in both reshaping one's body and in reconstructing their bodily behaviour and movement.

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[132] It must be reiterated that this thesis principally considers clothing that are constructed from textiles. Articles of clothing can be made from various materials, and therefore, some of them may not correspond with this more general treatment of clothing as textiles.

[133] There are still many exceptions to this suggestion. For example, armored clothing can be anticipated to have a much slower deterioration process compared with most other clothes.

[134] See examples of the impact that clothes have on body movement in Keali'Inohomoku, "You Dance What You Wear, and You Wear Your Cultural Values"; Aarti Kawlra, "The Kimono Body," *Fashion Theory: The Journal of Dress, Body & Culture* 6, no. 3 (2002): 299–310.

[135] Miller, *Stuff*, 23–31. For an extended discussion on the role and performance of saris see Miller's and Banjerree's work, Mukulika Banerjee and Daniel Miller, *The Sari* (Oxford: Berg, 2003).

Miller's portrayal of the sari, mentioned above, helpfully illustrates how one garment can construct a whole set of specific movements and behaviours that are required for adjusting and readjusting clothing to make one's body socially and practically appropriate for different activities and contexts.[136] It is not only the malleability of clothing that makes it efficacious in people's lives, the various different material qualities of clothing influence their power and agency, impacting human's behaviour and materiality in numerous different ways. Such entanglements between clothing and people illuminate the relationships that are formed between them.

Clothing shares a particularly intimate relationship with people and the lived experience of their bodies. Its intricate and entangled interactions with people's lives is illustrated by its very mundaneness.[137] As dressed bodies the presence of clothing is always subtly impacting people through its different material properties and agency. It frequently goes undetected, except for passing moments in which one is reminded of its presence once more; such as when it exposes or bring discomfort to the body.[138] In light of the discussions of this chapter it can be suggested that the ability of clothing to go unnoticed indicates the extent to which people are enmeshed with their clothing.

In many ways, clothing 'lives' our lives when it is worn on the body, it moves as the body moves, and is influenced by similar mediums as its wearer. This would indicate how clothing is influenced by its wearer and their performance. However, clothing also can be observed to construct different ways of being persons; for example, as has begun to be demonstrated, it also empowers and constricts bodily movements and behaviours. Thus, it can be considered to have its own agency, which, although intertwined with human agency, exerts its materiality over humans. This intimacy is unique, since no two

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[136] Keane, "Signs Are Not the Garb of Meaning: On the Social Analysis of Material Things," 193; Miller, *Stuff*, 30–31.

[137] In conventional scholarship clothing has even sometimes been treated a trivial subject. This tendency has been observed in Barnard, *Fashion as Communication*, 20–21; Miller, *Stuff*, 12–13.

[138] Umberto Eco, "Lumbar Thought," in *Fashion Theory: A Reader*, Routledge Student Readers (London; New York: Routledge, 2007), 315–17.

garments have the exactly the same materiality; each garment can manipulate and impact its wearer and their movement and behaviour in distinct ways through its unique materiality.

Some scholars seem to acknowledge the closeness that exists between persons and their clothing by identifying clothing as the boundary or frontier of a person, as Joanne Entwistle notes, 'this boundary [between self and other] is intimate and personal since our dress forms the visible envelope of the self… and serves as a visual metaphor for identity.'[139] Moreover, Elizabeth Wilson indicates that 'dress is the frontier between the self and the not self.'[140] These suggestions imply that clothing has an intimate relationship with one's identities – they are frontier of that person's identity and as such, have an influential role in shaping how a person is perceived. These points also imply that clothing is in some ways a second skin of the body.[141] However, the depiction of clothing in this way is also somewhat problematic since it places clothing in a liminal place between 'self' and 'not self,' rather than indicating that clothing is part of one's personhood. These scholars' choice of wording implies that clothing is never fully incorporated into one's personhood. It is relegated to the borders and margins once again and is not properly recognised as a significant and distributed part of one's personhood.

In addition to extending one's bodily movement, dress can be identified as an extension of one's personhood. Even when it is not worn, clothing has often been considered to manifest something of the people with which it has interacted. Scholars such as Kate Soper suggest that clothing and jewellery is invested with the residue of people even after their death.[142] Entwistle and

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[139] Entwistle, "The Dressed Body," 37.

[140] Elizabeth Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams: Fashion and Modernity* (New Brunswick; NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 2.

[141] For a similar depiction of clothing as a social skin of the body, see Turner, "The Social Skin."

[142] Kate Soper, "Dress Needs: Reflections on the Clothed Body, Selfhood and Consumption," in *Body Dressing*, ed. Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 24. See also, Elizabeth Hallam and Jenny Hockey, *Death, Memory, and Material Culture* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 43; Laura Peers, "On the Treatment of Dead Enemies: Indigenous Human Remains in Britain in the Early Twenty-First Century," in *Social Bodies*, ed. Helen Lambert and Maryon McDonald (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009), 78.

Wilson imply this in their discussion of clothing in museums, suggesting that they seem eerie and lifeless without their wearers – almost if something of them were still present in the clothes. However, this depiction is also problematic, since it implies that dress is in some way powerless and inanimate without humans, a point which has already been challenged in this chapter. The ability of objects to extend personhood is important; however, it must be acknowledged that it only indicates part of its significance as a material object. This brief analysis, as well as those above, of some of the more prominent characteristics of clothing and its relationships with people is by no means a comprehensive interpretation of clothing. Still, these points begin to unpack some of the ways in which clothing may be reconsidered in light of the wider reconceptualization of materiality and entanglement in this chapter. Such considerations shall be developed further in more depth in relation to specific examples.

A final point worth considering here, before exploring the relationships between people and clothing in more depth in their ancient contexts, is to stress that clothing performs in dynamic ways. As Wilson has indicated: 'Clothes are so much of our living, moving selves.'[143] This point effectively encapsulates the idea that performance and movement is inherent in clothing. Wilson goes on to suggest that clothing that is 'frozen on display in the mausoleums of culture…hint at something only half understood, sinister, threatening.' This indicates how clothing in museums is often removed from their contexts of performance and movement on the body, yet it is also possible to draw another point from this suggestion.[144] Such displays may be considered to highlight its Western viewers' unfamiliarity with clothing that originates from other cultures or moments in history. This unfamiliarity may lead to interpretations of their relationships, movement and performances that is 'only half understood'. It must be recognised that the dynamic performance of clothing goes far beyond our conventional Western conceptions and must be considered as distinct in different contexts.

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[143] Wilson, *Adorned in Dreams*, 1.
[144] It can be recognised that the display of clothing in museums is still performative, but in a comparatively different sense to how it is performed when it is worn on the body.

Ethnographic studies of clothing have been particularly instrumental in broadening the Western perceptions of clothing.[145] Their depictions often assault and challenge some of our conventional expectations of clothing that are assumed in Western scholarship. Whilst studies of contemporary Western clothing have begun to consider its performative role in shaping a body's movement, many studies still focus on the status of clothing on or off a body. In contrast, ethnographic studies seem to be more alive to the different ways in which clothing is performative and dynamic – for example, by absorbing and manifesting power and spirits in its creation, constructing one's dance or ritual movements, extending one's personhood and power when it comes into contact with other bodies, being wrapped around couples to bind their lives together and so on.[146] Although these examples can only be of limited use in

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[145] For insightful ethnographic studies of clothing that challenge us to look at garments in ways that go beyond conventional Western conceptions, see Chloe Colchester, "Objects of Conversion: Concerning the Transfer of Sulu to Fiji," in *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, ed. Graeme Were and Susanne Küchler (London: UCL Press, 2005), 33–46; Chloe Colchester, "Relative Imagery: Patterns of Response to the Revival of Archaic Chiefly Dress in Fiji," in *Clothing as Material Culture*, ed. Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 139–58; Elizabeth Cory-Pearce, "Surface Attraction: Clothing and the Mediation of Maori/European Relationships," in *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, ed. Graeme Were and Susanne Küchler (London: UCL Press, 2005), 73–87; Amiria Henare, "Nga Aho Tipuna (Ancestral Threads): Maori Cloaks from New Zealand," in *Clothing as Material Culture*, ed. Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 121–38; Michael O'Hanlon, "Under Wraps: An Unpursued Avenue of Innovation," in *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, ed. Graeme Were and Susanne Küchler (London: UCL Press, 2005), 61–69; Susanne Küchler and Graeme Were, "Introduction," in *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, ed. Graeme Were and Susanne Küchler (London: UCL Press, 2005), xix–xxx; Mosko, "Fashion as Fetish: The Agency of Modern Clothing and Traditional Body Decoration among North Mekeo of Papua New Guinea"; Hermkens, "Clothing as Embodied Experience of Belief"; Pia Tohveri, *Weaving with the Maya: Innovation and Tradition in Guatelama* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012).

[146] For examples of the diverse performative uses of clothing in ethnographic studies, see Colchester, "Objects of Conversion: Concerning the Transfer of Sulu to Fiji"; D'Alleva, "Elite Clothing and the Social Fabric of Pre-Colonial Tahiti"; Henare, "Nga Aho Tipuna (Ancestral Threads): Maori Cloaks from New Zealand"; Vilsoni Hereniko, "Dressing and Undressing the Bride and Groom at a Rotuman Wedding," in *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, ed. Graeme Were and Susanne Küchler (London: UCL Press, 2005), 103–9; Küchler and Were, "Introduction"; Mosko, "Fashion as Fetish: The Agency of Modern Clothing and Traditional Body Decoration among North Mekeo of Papua New Guinea"; Anna Odland Portisch, "The Craft of Skilful Learning: Kazakh Women's Everyday Craft Practices in Western Mongolia," in *Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluble Relation Between Mind, Body and Environment*, ed. Trevor H. J. Marchand (Chichester; Oxford; Malden: MA: Royal Anthropological Institue; Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 59–75.

this thesis, since they refer to very specific contextual uses of dress, they still are useful for provoking us to consider the nuanced ways in which clothing is manipulated and performed in dynamic ways in the biblical texts; particularly in ways that may not be anticipated by the Western conception of clothing.

1.10 Summary

The dominant models for interpreting clothing in biblical scholarship are based on a number of conventional fixed dichotomies perpetuated in contemporary Western scholarship that has resulted in an underprivileging of the materiality of clothes and other objects. However, these dichotomies are not effectively representative of reality. Instead, through an examination of the inherent materiality of clothes, they have been demonstrated to be complex and powerful material entities. These depictions do not negate the conception that clothing can be attributed with theological symbolism and can connote social values. Nevertheless, these values cannot be separated from a garment's materiality. They manifest such meanings through their own agency, rather than only loosely indexing such meanings and values. I maintain that our interpretations must take also into account the complexities of the materiality of clothing, since such analyses can impact and transform the different values that can be attributed to clothes.

Through a focus on the inherent materiality of clothes, I argue that it is possible to diversify and enrich interpretations of the clothing imagery depicted in the biblical texts. The present approach allows for clothing to be understood as objects that have their own inherent power and agency, which is distinct from, though simultaneously thoroughly intertwined with and impacted by people. They have their own material properties and form, which can never be fully controlled or follow the expectations set by people. This effectively challenges the conventional anthropocentric expectation in biblical scholarship that an object's power and agency is always inevitably reliant on people. Nevertheless, clothes are also able to index personhood through their entanglement with other people. The boundaries between people and things are frequently blurred, since they can be seen to share in each other's power

and agency, imprinting themselves onto the other. The intimate entanglement that exists between clothing and people, as well as acknowledging that clothes can restrict or enable people's power and movement through their own materiality, enables a fresh understanding of the conventional expression that 'clothes maketh the man.' Through my analyses in this chapter it can be recognised that people construct clothing and clothes construct people.

Clothes are not discrete or easily definable entities, instead they are composed of a complex myriad of material properties that are prone to fluctuation. Clothes are particularly adaptable and malleable objects. First, this indicates that clothing cannot be reduced to simplistic or essentialist meanings. As a complex entity, a garment is always able to simultaneously connote a number of different meanings and values. This indicates that it may not only have one role to play in any particular context or its employment in a biblical text. Second, this understanding of the materiality of clothes implies that it is important to recognise the particularity of every garment, by taking into account its unique material and social histories or 'lives.' The same garment may connote different meanings depending on its materiality in a particular context and moment. As suggested, since clothing is adaptable, being able to move with the body's own motion, it is particularly important to be alert to how it moves and is performed or manipulated in different contexts.

In this chapter I have pushed the boundaries of our conventional conceptions and expectations of clothing, perhaps even to the extent that it may seem alien or uncomfortable to us. Other suggestions that I have made, such as the indication that clothes are material, may at first appear to be self-evident. Still, through the examples given this chapter, and over my more detailed analyses of clothing in the rest of this thesis, I illustrate the how such approaches can lead to an enriched and insightful interpretation of clothing and its entanglements with other people and objects. Before proceeding to consider the biblical depiction of clothing it is important to first reassess what we can know about the material world in which these texts were constructed and consider the material status of clothing and textile production in ancient Syro-Palestinian and ancient West Asian cultures.

2 Digging for 'Dress':
Ancient Syro-Palestinian Textiles
and Textile Production

2.1 Introduction

As has been argued, the material lives of clothing, as well as their social
entanglements in the world, are central to understanding their significance
and power in different social and cultural contexts.[147] However, the portrayals
of clothing in the Hebrew Bible are frequently elusive and often lack detailed
descriptions of the materiality and the complexity of clothing's material
lives.[148] Depictions of clothing (or more appropriately textile) production in the

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[147] See discussions in chapter 1.

[148] This is unsurprising, as the biblical texts were almost certainly not intended as
expositions for clothing articles. It cannot be assumed that the biblical writers
employed clothing imagery in a largely descriptive purpose, as is sometimes the
case in the contemporary Western use of clothing. The difficulties of interpreting
clothing terms due to the lack of descriptive language has been noted in Joseph E.
Jensen, "Clothing," ed. David Noel Freedman, Allen C. Myers, and Astrid B. Beck,
Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans, 2000), 265.
It must be recognised that the problem of interpreting ancient textile terms is not
limited to biblical studies. For discussions of some of the wider issues in interpreting
clothing terms in relation to ancient West Asian and Mediterranean cultures, see
articles in Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B. Nosch, eds., *Textile Terminologies in
the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium
BC* (Oxbow Books, 2010). Particularly, Pascaline Dury and Susanne Lervad,
"Synonymic Variation in the Field of Textile Terminology: A Study in Diachrony and
Synchrony," in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean
Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B.
Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), 1–9; Ole Herslund, "Cloths - Garments - and Keeping
Secrets: Textile Classification and Cognitive Chaining in the Ancient Egyptian Writing
System," in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean
Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B.
Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), 68–80; Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise Nosch, "Textile
Terminologies," in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the
Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and
Marie-Louise B. Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), ix – xix; Cécile Michel and Klaas R.
Veenhof, "The Textile Traded by the Assyrians in Anatolia (19th-18th Centuries BC),"
in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from*

Hebrew Bible are insightful for indicating the broader material lives of a number of these garments.[149] However, they are only ever rarely noted and presume the reader's awareness and prior knowledge of such techniques and equipment, this makes it difficult to elucidate on these activities without further material evidence.[150] Still, even though the different textile production stages or the details of material properties implied by clothing terms may often be absent in the Hebrew Bible this does not render these details unimportant. The material lives of clothing and their properties are inherent even in their portrayals in the Hebrew Bible.

The biblical writers' depictions of clothing and its production can be elucidated by an examination of their role and value in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures. In biblical scholarship there have already been many attempts to develop an understanding of ancient 'Israelite' or Syro-Palestinian clothing and textile

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the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B. Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), 267–268.

[149] It is impossible to identify clothing production in isolation, since the same tools and often methods have been employed to make numerous textiles that were used for a number of different purposes, such as, sacks and bags, bedding, coverings, netting and mats and so on. As suggested in Donald W. Garner, "Dress," ed. Watson E Mills and Roger Aubrey Bullard, *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1990), 220; Douglas R. Edwards, "Dress and Ornamentation," ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* (New York; London: Doubleday, 1992), 232; Lawrence E. Stager, "Ashkelon," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leṿinzon-Gilboʻa, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 107; Carol Bier, "Textile Arts in Ancient Western Asia," in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, ed. Jack M. Sasson et al. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2000), 1567. The term 'textiles' primarily refers to products that 'result from interlacing threads made from fibres.' In addition to woven fabrics, this includes materials formed using techniques such as, braiding, looping and knitting, on this description, see Maria Cybulska and Jerzy Maik, "Archaeological textiles—A Need for New Methods of Analysis and Reconstruction," *Fibres and Textiles in Eastern Europe* 15 (2007): 185.

[150] For examples of biblical texts that refer to aspects of textile production see Exodus 35:35; Judges 16:14; 1 Samuel 17:7; 2 Samuel 3:29; Job 7:16; Proverbs 31:19; Isaiah 38:12, 19:9. Even if these production techniques were completely lost to us, it remains that the materiality and lives of clothing are inherent in the biblical writers' adoption of clothing terms. It would still be possible to pursue an examination of the materiality of clothing in the Hebrew Bible by looking at depictions of the relationships and performances that employ clothing terms. Still, such examinations would be restricted for not having incorporated a broader conceptualisation of the impact that textile production and clothing had across ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures, in which the biblical writers wrote these texts.

production in order to better understand people's lives in these cultural contexts. Material evidence from these ancient cultures has particularly been used to clarify details of the garments and textile production methods and techniques that are only tacitly referred to in the biblical texts. However, I propose that many current scholarly interpretations of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing and textile production are liable to impede rather than advance an understanding of these ancient worldviews.

This chapter shall address some of the key underlying issues in some of these approaches in biblical scholarship before turning to consider the archaeological evidence for clothing and textile production itself. This evidence can inform the way we can understand the materiality of textiles and garments and their broader interrelationships in the biblical texts. In order to construct the most plausible picture of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production this chapter explores the limitations of both the material evidence itself and also archaeological interpretations of this evidence. This chapter will show how multidisciplinary approaches can be constructively employed to open up new ways of understanding the archaeological evidence. I will explore the potential of the material evidence to elucidate the different social and material entanglements that are formed during the performance of textile production, between ancient artisans, tools and textiles.

2.2 Addressing the Primary Issues in Interpretations of Ancient Textile Production in Biblical Scholarship

There has been a scholarly tendency to privilege the biblical texts in interpretations of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing and textile production. The biblical texts have frequently been employed as though they offer direct or reliable insights into this production, presuming that they represent historically accurate depictions. Such assumptions are more common within conventional 'biblical archaeological studies.'[151] Somewhat surprisingly, the archaeological

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[151] For a critical overview of changing perspectives and approaches towards 'biblical archaeology' and for the development of fresh methodologies to this evidence, see Ziony Zevit, "The Biblical Archaeology versus Syro-Palestinian Archaeology Debate in Its American Institutional and Intellectual Contexts," in *The Future of Biblical*

evidence itself has frequently been undervalued in these interpretations. For example, Ferdinand Deist relies heavily on outdated works, whilst overlooking more recent archaeological discoveries of textile production from various sites.[152] Some biblical scholars even appear to bypass archaeological discoveries completely, or else swiftly dismiss its usefulness for being too fragmented and problematic. For example, Joseph Jensen asserts, 'no clothing from OT times has been recovered in Palestine', which, this chapter shall illustrate, is a completely misleading claim.[153] Such interpretations fail to recognise sufficiently both the difficulties in interpreting textile terminologies in the Hebrew Bible and the insights that can be gained through considering the archaeological evidence.

Despite examples above, it is increasingly more typical to find interpretations that do employ some archaeological evidence, using it either to support or expound on the depictions of clothing and textile production in the Hebrew Bible.[154] However, when biblical scholars engage with the archaeological evidence there is often a tendency for them to flatten the implications of this evidence. In many cases this is because these discussions are still usually structured around the biblical texts rather than the archaeological evidence, and are often steered by confessionally derived agendas. This problem has

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Archaeology: Reassessing Methodologies and Assumptions: The Proceedings of a Symposium, August 12-14, 2001 at Trinity International University, ed. James K. Hoffmeier and Alan Millard (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 2004), 3–19; Philip R. Davies, *Memories of Ancient Israel: An Introduction to Biblical History - Ancient and Modern* (Louisville; KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 58–84; Shlomo Bunimovitz and Avraham Faust, "Re-Constructing Biblical Archaeology: Toward an Integration of Archaeology and the Bible," in *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism*, ed. Thomas E. Levy (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2010), 43–54; Thomas E. Levy, "The New Pragmatism: Integrating Anthropological, Digital, and Historical Biblical Archaeologies," in *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism*, ed. Thomas E. Levy (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2014), 3–10.

[152] For example, Deist relies on Gustuf Dalman's well-known, but outdated ethnographic work in Palestine, Gustaf Dalman, *Webstoff, Spinnen, Weben, Kleidung*, vol. 5, Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina (Hildesheim: G. Olms, 1937). Ferdinand E. Deist, *The Material Culture of the Bible: An Introduction*, ed. Robert P. Carroll (London; New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 216–218.

[153] Jensen, "Clothing," 265.

[154] When archaeological evidence has been referred to it often lack references or specific examples.

been observed in broader studies of 'biblical archaeology' as Shlomo Bunimovitz and Avraham Faust illustrates:

> In spite of recent claims for the emancipation of archaeology from the tyranny of the biblical texts, the archaeological agenda is still biblical, pursuing questions related to biblical historiography.[155]

In addition, many of these approaches are overtly positivistic in their interpretations of ancient Syro-Palestinian culture and of the material evidence itself, particularly when the evidence appears to corroborate details included in the biblical texts. This positivistic approach tends to smooth over many of the gaps in the evidence and in doing so it presents a seemingly more complete picture of the past. However, this is often inconsistent with the view that is presented by the archaeological evidence itself.[156]

The scholarly tendency to address archaeology only secondarily and at a surface level, if at all, has inevitably skewed contemporary interpretations of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing and textile production; many include inaccurate or sweeping evaluations of the artefacts.[157] For example, a number

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[155] Bunimovitz and Faust, "Re-Constructing Biblical Archaeology," 43. See also, Davies, *Memories of Ancient Israel*, 58–60.

[156] On positivistic approaches in biblical archaeology, see Zevit, "The Biblical Archaeology versus Syro-Palestinian Archaeology Debate," 15. For a broader discussion on the dangers of overly enthusiastic approaches that combine textual and archaeological evidence, see John Peter Wild, "Methodological Introduction," in *Ancient Textiles: Production, Craft and Society : Proceedings of the First International Conference on Ancient Textiles, Held at Lund, Sweden, and Copenhagen, Denmark, on March 19-23, 2003*, ed. Carole Gillis and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2007), 1–6.

[157] It can be noted that such tendencies are not restricted to biblical scholarship, similar uncritical and inaccurate interpretations have been made in more traditional studies of ancient West Asian cultures. These studies have also inevitably impacted the broader view of clothing and textile production across ancient West Asian cultures. For examples of uncritical assumptions in these studies, see Chrysoula Kardara, "Dyeing and Weaving Works at Isthmia," *American Journal of Archaeology*, 1961, 261–66; Lloyd B. Jensen, "Royal Purple of Tyre," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 22, no. 2 (1963): 104–18; Daniel C. Snell, *Life in the Ancient Near East, 3100-332 B.C.E* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1997), 20, 39, 93, 126–127; Karen Rhea Nemet-Nejat, *Daily Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*, The Greenwood Press "Daily Life through History" Series (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1998), 153–155; Susan Pollock, *Ancient Mesopotamia: The Eden That Never Was*, Case Studies in Early Societies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 100–104; Michael Woods and Mary B. Woods, *Ancient Agriculture: From Foraging to Farming*, Ancient Technology (Minneapolis: Runestone Press, 2000),

of scholars present seemingly detailed explanations of different stages of textile production with little reference to any archaeological evidence or acknowledgement of possible variations in these ancient methods.[158] It is also implied that wool was often preferable to linen for the reason that linen was substantially more expensive.[159] However, such claims are difficult to corroborate with the material evidence. As with many of these interpretations, this supposition assumes a view of the history of ancient textile production

27–28; Lionel Casson, *Everyday Life in Ancient Egypt*, Rev. and expanded ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001), 74; Gwendolyn Leick, *Mesopotamia: The Invention of the City* (London: Penguin, 2002), 52–53; Shilpa Mehta-Jones, *Life in Ancient Mesopotamia*, Peoples of the Ancient World (New York: Crabtree Pub, 2005), 13–14; Enrico Ascalone, *Mesopotamia*, Dictionaries of Civilization (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), 215–218.

[158] For example, depictions of spinning and weaving in L. Bellinger, "Cloth," ed. George Arthur Buttrick, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia Identifying and Explaining All Proper Names and Significant Terms and Subjects in the Holy Scriptures, Including the Apocrypha, with Attention to Archaeological Discoveries and Researches into the Life and Faith of Ancient Times* (New York; Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), 651–654; Kenneth E. Bailey, "Clothing," ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael David Coogan, *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 126; Deist, *The Material Culture of the Bible*, 216–218. Also see Jennie R. Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times* (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 57. However, Ebeling's depiction at least allows for the possibility that different methods were used. Moreover, she offers more than one possibility of techniques that may have been employed in spinning in ancient Syro-Palestine.

Other scholars have indicated ancient preferences or standards for a particular style of tool; for example, some have suggested the standard width of ancient looms, or indicated the preferred material employed in producing textiles. The proposal that ancient 'Israelites' primarily used horizontal looms or that some scholars even offer suggestions as to the standard width of looms, both of which are unsubstantiated by the archaeological evidence is suggested in see Edwards, "Dress and Ornamentation," 235; Deist, *The Material Culture of the Bible*, 218. Although it must be noted that Douglas Edwards does at least acknowledge evidence of loomweights, yet still, he does not explicitly relate this to the warp-weighted loom. For studies that suggest a standard width for ancient Syro-Palestinian looms, see Bailey, "Clothing," 126; Deist, *The Material Culture of the Bible*, 218–219.

[159] This assumption is sometimes supported with some, usually textual evidence, however, this claim is still unsubstantiated in view of the archaeological evidence, Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, Library of Ancient Israel (Louisville; KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 147, 265; Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 57; Carol L. Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 418. Oded Borowski also assumes that wool was used as the preferred textile, yet he uses only a biblical reference to infer this assumption, Oded Borowski, *Daily Life in Biblical Times*, Archaeology and Biblical Studies, no. 5 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 32. For a similar claim, see John M Wade and Gerald Mattingly, "Ancient Weavers at Iron Age Mudaybi," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 66, no. 1/2 (2003): 75.

that is uniform and unchanging, rather than dynamic. Such interpretations are not only often unsubstantiated, they also border on developing a view of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing and textile production that is simplistic or 'primitive'. However, I argue that if the archaeological evidence is engaged seriously and critically, it is possible to detect signs of an ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production that is complex and diverse.

There have been a number of biblical scholars who have begun to critically incorporate ethnographic studies of textile production and draw from experimental archaeological studies.[160] Their interpretations are particularly insightful for examining ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production, yet they are often only brief and are not able to examine the archaeological evidence in much detail. In biblical scholarship ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing and textile production is typically discussed as only one amongst a number of different aspects of ancient social lives or material culture; alternatively, it is sometimes briefly noted in examinations of specific biblical texts.[161] Even amongst scholarly discussions that do critically engage with the

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[160] King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 146–162, 259–275; Carol Meyers, "Material Remains and Social Relations: Women's Culture in Agrarian Households of the Iron Age," in *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palestine*, ed. William G. Dever and Seymour Gitin (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 425–43; Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*; Deborah Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," in *Tell Es-Safi/Gath I: The 1996-2005 Seasons*, ed. Aren M. Maeir, vol. 1: Text, Ägypten Und Altes Testament: Studien Zu Geschichte, Kultur Und Religion Ägyptens Und Des Alten Testaments 69 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2012), 467–83; William G. Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel: Where Archaeology and the Bible Intersect* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 2012), 165–167, 174–178, 188–189; Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve*, 133–135.

[161] Deist, *The Material Culture of the Bible*, 216–220; Borowski, *Daily Life in Biblical Times*, 31–32. For more references see the footnote below. This tendency to examine clothing or textile production as one aspect in a fuller exploration of material culture is also frequently the case in studies of ancient West Asian clothing, Harriet Crawford, *Sumer and the Sumerians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 124–127; Pollock, *Ancient Mesopotamia*, 78–104; Bier, "Textile Arts in Ancient Western Asia"; Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood, "Textiles," in *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, ed. Paul T. Nicholson and Ian Shaw (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 268–98; James K. Hoffmeier, "Everyday Life in Ancient Egypt," in *Life and Culture in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Richard E. Averbeck, Mark William Chavalas, and David B. Weisberg (Bethesada, Md: CDL Press, 2003), 344–346; H. A. Hoffner, "Daily Life Among the Hittites," in *Life and Culture in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Richard E. Averbeck, Mark William Chavalas, and David B. Weisberg (Bethesada, Md: CDL Press, 2003), 104; Ascalone, *Mesopotamia*, 215–218.

archaeological evidence constraints on space limit the depth of their engagement with the material evidence for textiles and its production. Many of these engagements enable us to consider the role of textile production in relation to other aspects of daily life in ancient Syro-Palestine, which, it shall be demonstrated, is important not to overlook. Still, this has meant that there are few in-depth, critical examinations of ancient textile production in biblical scholarship.

Another group of biblical scholars are largely disinterested in exploring ancient Syro-Palestinian culture. Instead, these scholars privilege literary portrayals of clothing imagery in the Hebrew Bible. They do not appear to engage with the archaeological evidence for Syro-Palestinian clothing or textile production at all.[162] It might be suggested that such scholars have chosen such an approach to evade the limitations of many historical-critical approaches to the archaeological evidence, as outlined above. Instead, their interpretations of clothing imagery are grounded in literary, linguistic, or more symbolic approaches. However, these text-centric approaches can be effectively developed and challenged by incorporating critically balanced interpretations of the archaeological evidence.

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[162] See for example, Claudia Bender's monologue that focuses on developing a linguistic approach towards clothing in the Hebrew Bible, Claudia Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen: Untersuchungen Zu Kleidung Und Textilien Im Alten Testament*, Beiträge Zur Wissenschaft Vom Alten Und Neuen Testament 9 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2008). Many literary approaches as well as social-critical approaches also demonstrate little engagement with archaeological evidence, Heather A. McKay, "Gendering the Discourse of Display in the Hebrew Bible," in *On Reading Prophetic Texts: Gender-Specific and Related Studies in Memory of Fokkelien van Dijk-Hemmes*, ed. Bob Becking and Meindert Dijkstra, Biblical Interpretation Series, v. 18 (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1996), 169–200; Victor H. Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 20, no. 65 (1995): 25–36; Ora Horn Prouser, "Suited to the Throne: The Symbolic Use of Clothing in the David and Saul Narratives," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, no. 71 (1996): 27–37; Alicia Batten, "Clothing and Adornment," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 40, no. 3 (2010): 148–59; Katherine Low, "Implications Surrounding Girding the Loins in Light of Gender, Body, and Power," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 36, no. 1 (2011): 3–30; Mark Verman, "Royalty, Robes and the Art of Biblical Narrative," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 30, no. 1 (2016): 30–43. See also, Erin Vearncombe's thesis on clothing in the New Testament that even addresses material culture theory, but still overlooks the archaeological evidence, Erin Kathleen Vearncombe, "What Would Jesus Wear? Dress in the Synoptic Gospels" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Toronto, 2014).

In broader biblical scholarship there are many misconceptions as to what the archaeological evidence can be used to demonstrate, particularly in relation to the biblical texts. Alicia Batten, for example, states with surprising confidence that the 'archaeological evidence indicates that ancient near eastern males wore undergarments.'[163] However, I will argue that we unable to identity individual items of clothing from the material remains of textiles that have been discovered. It must be recognised that the archaeological evidence cannot offer a clear depiction of exactly what clothing was commonly worn in these contexts, nor can it present a complete picture of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production. So long as it is used only as 'support' for interpretations of clothing and textile production in the biblical texts the results shall continue to seem inadequate. The archaeological evidence does not directly correlate with many of the depictions found in the biblical texts, particularly those of clothing. Still, it constitutes the only direct evidence for clothing and textile production from ancient Syro-Palestine and, therefore, should not be overlooked. This evidence can go far beyond the scope that has been imposed by studies that privilege the biblical texts. It is arguably more than just ancient textile techniques that is expounded through archaeology.

Archaeological evidence is helpful for developing interpretations of the material agency and value of clothing and textile production in their ancient Syro-Palestinian contexts. It indexes and constructs social and material relationships with both different persons and the material world, as this chapter shall go on to demonstrate. Such insights can deepen our understanding of the worldviews that might have influenced the biblical writers' portrayals of clothing imagery and its production. It shall be demonstrated from these discussions of the evidence that clothing played a dynamic and powerful role in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures. This challenges the contemporary Western presumption that clothing imagery is inert, marginal, or only included as 'background' details in the biblical texts.

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[163] Batten, "Clothing and Adornment," 150.

2.3 The Material Evidence

It may seem counterintuitive, but it is perhaps best to begin to look at the material evidence by stressing what is missing. This contrasts with typical positivistic approaches outlined earlier, however, it is necessary to establish the limitations of this material evidence in order to evade the tendency to resort to speculative interpretations that have little basis in the evidence itself. We are inevitably working with an incomplete and fragmented picture of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing and textile production.[164] It is probable that the fragmented state of the archaeological evidence, as well as its paucity, has contributed to scholarly portrayals of ancient clothing and textile production as simple or unsophisticated. By openly acknowledging that there are gaps in our knowledge it is possible to challenge this tendency to construct such assumptive interpretations.[165]

Lisa Hurcombe insightfully argues that organic materials, such as clothing, are what make up the 'missing majority.' By this Hurcombe means that although organic materials are often absent from archaeological remains, such materials would have been incorporated into all walks of life in ancient cultures; they made up a significant part of ancient material cultures. Therefore, Hurcombe stresses that they should not be marginalised or underestimated even in their absence.[166] To view these materials and their production simplistically erroneously overlooks their inherent complexity due to their being integrated into ancient peoples lives in many complex and dynamic ways. The material evidence for textile production that has been preserved is highly significant, since it sheds light on this largely unknown 'missing majority.' However, it must be reiterated that these materials illustrate

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[164] Emphasised in Linda M. Hurcombe, *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture* (London; New York: Routledge, 2007); Linda M. Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory: Investigating the Missing Majority* (London; New York: Routledge, 2014); Mary Weismantel and Lynn Meskell, "Substances: 'Following the Material' Through Two Prehistoric Cases," *Journal of Material Culture* 19, no. 3 (2014): 233–51.
[165] For a similar approach, see Weismantel and Meskell, "Substances," 234–235.
[166] Hurcombe, *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture*, 119–121; Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*.

only part of a larger, more complex strata of ancient material culture and its production.

Archaeological artefacts related to textile production can be loosely grouped into two main categories: remains of textiles, and objects that were most likely used in textile production – these shall henceforth be referred to as textile tools.[167] As argued, these artefacts represent but a fraction of the number of textiles and tools that were once used in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures; particularly textile remains of which only a handful of examples have been preserved.[168] Still, given the perishable nature of textiles it is fortunate that fragments have even survived.[169] In contrast to these remains, a larger number of textile tools have been preserved and are discovered in various

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[167] The identification of such objects as textile tools should not be considered to be their only identity, still, this term works for the purpose of this discussion to identify objects that were likely to have been employed in textile production.

[168] Only a fraction of original loomweights, Orit Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Horbat Rogem, Horbat Mesura and Horbat Ha-Ro'a," in *Ancient Settlement of the Negev Highlands*, ed. R. Cohen and R. Cohen-Amin, vol. II, The Iron Age and the Persian Period, Israel Antiquities Authority Report 20 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2004), 19; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 470.

[169] For further discussion on the conditions in which textiles have been preserved, see Irene Good, "Archaeological Textiles: A Review of Current Research," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 30 (2001): 209–26; Cybulska and Maik, "Archaeological textiles—A Need for New Methods of Analysis and Reconstruction"; E. Andersson Strand et al., "Old Textiles -- New Possibilities," *European Journal of Archaeology* 13, no. 2 (August 9, 2010): 149–73. Most of the remains from Tel Timna were made of linen or wool, but textiles made from goat's hair have been discovered, Orit Shamir and Alisa Baginski, "Textiles from the Mining Camps at Timna," *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* 16 (1993): 9–10; Orit Shamir, "Textile Production in Eretz-Israel," *Michmanim* 16 (2002): 21–22. Archaeologists have even discovered a fragment of woven human hair from Nahal Hemar (other textile remains from this site are referred to below). It has been suggested that this fragment may have once had a ritual role to play in its ancient context. For further discussion of this textile fragment, see Tamar Schick, "Nahal Hemar Cave: Cordage, Basketry and Fabrics," *Atiqot* 18 (1988): 34; E. J. W. Barber, *Prehistoric Textiles: The Development of Cloth in the Neolithic and Bronze Ages with Special Reference to the Aegean* (Princeton University Press, 1991), 25; Ofer Bar-Yosef, Tamar Schlick, and David Alon, "Nahal Hemar Cave," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leṿinzon-Gilboʻa, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 1083; Susan Foster McCarter, *Neolithic* (New York; London: Routledge, 2007), 141, 181. For examples of the use of hair in ancient West Asian ritual practices, see Lorenzo Verderame, "Means of Substitution. The Use of Figurines, Animals and Human Beings as Substitutes in Assyrian Rituals," *Rivista Degli Studi Orientali* 86, no. 2 (2013): 301–23.

different locations across Syro-Palestinian archaeological sites.[170] Still, it is likely that many textile tools were frequently made from organic materials, such as wood, that also rarely survive over time.[171] The nature of the both textile remains and evidence of tools that have been discovered is also often poorly preserved or damaged.[172] The extent to which the majority of these of textile remains are fragmented indicates that they cannot be definitively

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[170] Evidence for loomweights have been found in almost every Iron age excavation in the Levant, Avigail Sheffer, "The Use of Perforated Clay Balls on the Warp-Weighted Loom," *Tel Aviv: Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University* 8, no. 1 (1981): 81; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468. For example, there are large numbers of textile tools discovered from Jerusalem and Tel es-Safi, Orit Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," in *Excavations at the City of David 1978-1985 Directed by Yigal Shiloh, Various Reports*, ed. Donald T. Ariel and Alon De Groot, vol. IV, QEDEM 35 (Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, University of Jerusalem, 1994), 135–70; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 467.

[171] On the probability that wooden spindle whorls were used in ancient Syro Palestine, see Orit Shamir, "Spindle Whorls from Qiryat Ata," in *Salvage Excavations at the Early Bronze Age Site of Qiryat Ata*, ed. Amir Golani, IAA Reports 18 (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2003), 214. Remains of a wooden spindle whorl with a spun plant fibre wound around the spindle have been discovered at Tell Es-Sa 'idiyeh (12th century BCE), Jonathan N. Tubb, "Tell Es-Sa'idiyeh: Preliminary Report on the First Seasons of Renewed Excavations," *Levant* XX (1988): 41; Alan Clapham, "Tell Es-Sa'idiyeh: Appendix C: The Plant Remains from Tell-Es-Sa'idiyeh," *Levant* XX (1988): 82. Also, at Tell el-Hammah (10th Century BCE), Jane M. Cahill, Gary Lipton, and David Tarler, "Notes and News: Tell El-Hammah, 1985-1987," *Israel Exploration Journal* 37, no. 4 (1987): 282. Wooden spindle shafts have been identified from other areas such as Sudan and Egypt, J. Levy and I. Gilead, "Spinning in the 5th Millennium in the Southern Levant: Aspects of the Textile Economy," *Paléorient* 38, no. 1–2 (2012): 129. It is possible that objects such as vegetables or fruits may have been employed as tools in spinning or other ancient textile techniques. This method has been illustrated ethnographically, E. J. W Barber, *Women's Work: The First 20,000 Years : Women, Cloth, and Society in Early Times* (New York: Norton, 1995), 37–38; Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 57; Levy and Gilead, "Spinning in the 5th Millennium," 129.

[172] As suggested in Jeannette H Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric: Textile Production in Iron Age Transjordan" (University of Groningen, 2013), 30–45. Textile remains usually have been preserved due to the specific context and micro-climate in which they have been discovered, such as caves and burials. When discovered, the micro-climate preserving textile remains is destroyed and many textiles that may have been preserved easily disintegrate upon exposure to a new climate or are damaged in attempts to remove them from excavations or removing them from other archaeological objects. Therefore, it is possible that more evidence of textile remains may have been lost during archaeological work on Syro-Palestinian sites. This problem has been noted in archaeological work on textiles in Egypt, Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood, *Tutankhamun Textiles and Clothing in the Egyptian Museum* (Cairo, Leiden, 1992), http://www.tutankhamuns-wardrobe.com/eng/eng_tut.htm; Joann Fletcher, "Garments Fit for a King," *The Guardian*, August 10, 2000, sec. Science, http://www.guardian.co.uk/science/2000/aug/10/technology1.

identified as fragments of clothing; indeed, most fragments are under five to six centimetres squared in size.[173]

Considering the lack of archaeological evidence from ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures, it is tempting to retreat and rely on the wider range of textile remains and artefacts associated with textile production that have been discovered from ancient West Asian, Egyptian and even Mediterranean cultures to inform

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[173] It has been noted that most of the textile remains from Kuntillet 'Ajrud were only five centimetres in length, yet none of them are complete enough to be identified as part of a particular textile product, Avigail Sheffer and Amalia Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," *Atiqot (1991)* 20: 1, 14, accessed July 30, 2013. Although it must be recognised that examples of clothing are almost certainly amongst these finds the following discussion shall principally address textiles and not clothing. Scholars still often speculate as to the identity of these textile remains. For example, Shamir suggests that it is reasonable to presume textile remains from Kadesh Barnea are remains of garments because they are delicately and fine, Orit Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls," in *Excavations at Kadesh Barnea (Tell El-Qudeirat) 1976-1982 Part 1*, ed. Rudolf Cohen and Hannah Bernick-Greenberg (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2007), 263. However, this does presume some contemporary Western assumptions about the nature of clothing. Linda Hurcombe argues that cordage or basketry materials and weaves could have been used to construct clothing, not only 'delicate' textiles as has been anticipated, Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 36, 41.
Some textile remains have been discovered on skeletons, which could imply that they indexed items of clothing, for example, at Nahal Mishmar (Chalcolithic period), Pessah Bar-Adon, *The Cave of the Treasure: The Finds from the Caves in Nahal Mishmar* (Jerusalem: Israel exploration society, 1980), 153. Similar finds have been discovered at Tell Es-Sa 'idiyeh and at Jericho (Middle Bronze Age), Kathleen M. Kenyon, *Excavations at Jericho* (Jerusalem: British School of Archaeology, 1960), 1:265, 425, 453, 473, 489, 502, 504, 513; James B Pritchard, "Two Tombs and a Tunnel in the Jordan Valley: Discoveries at the Biblical Zarethan," *Expedition* 6, no. 4 (1964): 3–9; Tubb, "Tell Es-Sa'idiyeh: Preliminary Report on the First Seasons of Renewed Excavations," 63. However, even these finds cannot be assumed to be clothes. Orit Shamir's discussion of a number of more recent finds, suggests the possibility that people may have made use of shrouds or old clothing to wrap or cover the dead as an alternative method of burial, Orit Shamir, "Shrouds and Other Textiles from Ein Gedi," in *Ein Gedi - "A Very Large Village of Jews,"* ed. Yizhar Hirschfeld, Catalogue 25 (Haifa: Hecht Museum, University of Haifa, 2006), 57–59. In biblical scholarship it has been recognised that the treatment and burial of corpses is complex and ritually charged. See further discussions on the ritual treatment of corpses in Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992); Francesca Stavrakopoulou, *Land of Our Fathers: The Roles of Ancestral Veneration in Biblical Land Claims*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 473 (London: T & T Clark, 2010); Francesca Stavrakopoulou, *The Social Life of the Corpse: Within and Without the Bible* (OUP, Forthcoming). This suggests that the discovery of textiles on skeletons is more indicative of possible ritual practices for the dead, than necessarily demonstrating evidence of clothing. Still, such discoveries may lead to a broader understanding of textiles that could have been also constructed and used as clothing.

this discussion.[174] Evidence of textile production from these areas is not only comparatively more abundant, it is also better documented and researched particularly over the last couple of decades. It is probable that the wealth of this evidence is partly due to a larger historical interest in these cultures in archaeological scholarship. This has led to more extensive excavations of these geographical areas. Such research is without a doubt significant for the exploration of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production, most importantly for the recent development of critical methodologies that examine archaeological evidence for textiles and its production in new and insightful directions.[175] This

[174] Some scholars draw from this evidence to some extent. For example, Avigail Sheffer tries to identify a preserved embroidered garment from the fourteenth century tomb of Tutankhamen in Egypt with ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing. Sheffer claims that it was probably originally constructed in ancient Syro-Palestine, which is supposedly indicated by the unique Syrian character of the embroidered motifs. Avigail Sheffer, "Needlework and Sewing in Israel from Prehistoric Times to the Roman Period," in *Fortunate the Eyes That See: Essays in Honor of David Noel Freedman in Celebration of His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. Astrid B. Beck (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1995), 542–545. However, there has been no substantiated reasons why this garment may be considered to be of ancient Syro-Palestinian origin. Another example can be noted in Assaf Yasur-Landau, "Appendix 1: A Note on the Late Bronze Age Textile Industry," in *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989-1996*, ed. Amihai Mazar and Robert A. Mullins, Volume II: The Middle and Late Bronze Age Strata in Area R vols. (Jerusalem: The Institute of Archaeology, The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2007), 669–71. Yasur-Landau seems to attribute the lack of loomweights from Beth Shean in the Late Bronze Age to indicate that an Egyptian style of loom that did not require loomweights may have become popular during this period, However, this argument, like Sheffer's, is highly speculative. For a more balanced discussion of the possible reasons for a lack of loomweights from a particular period, see Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 473.

[175] Experimental archaeological studies on textile production has been particularly developed in ancient European archaeology, experimental studies on ancient West Asian textile production has only been developed more recently, Catherine Breniquet and Cécile Michel, "Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean," in *Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean: From the Beginnings of Sheep Husbandry to Insitutional Textile Industry*, ed. Catherine Breniquet and Cécile Michel, Ancient Textile Series 17 (Oxford; Havertown, PA: Oxbow Books, 2014), 5. The Oxbow series on ancient textiles illustrates the recent development in this field, particularly observe, Michel and Nosch, *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*; Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise Nosch, *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography* (Oxbow Books, 2013); Catherine Breniquet and Cécile Michel, eds., *Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean: From the Beginnings of Sheep Husbandry to Insitutional Textile Industry*, Ancient Textile Series 17 (Oxford; Havertown, PA: Oxbow Books, 2014); Mary Harlow, Cécile Michel, and Marie-Louise Nosch, eds., *Prehistoric, Ancient Near Eastern and Aegean Textiles and Dress: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, Ancient Textiles Series 18 (Oxford; Havertown, PA: Oxbow Books, 2014). For other insightful developments on methodologies for

should not imply that studies of ancient Syro-Palestinian artefacts are uncritical, on the contrary, it shall be illustrated that many of these studies have increasingly demonstrated critical and insightful engagements with this evidence. Still, there are only a small number of archaeologists who have specialised in the study of Syro-Palestinian textile production.[176] Therefore, they can inevitably benefit by drawing from the expanding research that being conducted on wider ancient textile production.

It is likely that there are many similarities between ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production and textile production across other ancient West Asian cultures. However, the extent to which the evidence from these cultures can be synthesised with ancient Syro-Palestinian evidence is uncertain. Scholars have already noted distinct differences between these cultures in terms of their textile techniques.[177] Although some of these conjectures may be somewhat premature, it does emphasise that these are distinct cultures with different climates and availability of raw materials and that they, therefore, should not be arbitrarily conflated. There is also arguably an over-reliance on ancient West Asian urban and city-state excavations and their related textual attestations, which will inevitably contrast with evidence discovered from

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studying ancient textile production, see Good, "Archaeological Textiles: A Review of Current Research"; Andersson Strand et al., "Old Textiles -- New Possibilities"; Margarita Gleba, "Ancient Textiles: Sources and Methods," *Kababa* 2 (2011): 2–26.
[176] For example, it can be noted that the majority of in-depth research on ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production has been contributed by Orit Shamir, Deborah Cassuto, Avigail Sheffer, and Elisabeth Crowfoot. Other scholars have worked on textile remains dating to later periods, such as, Hero Granger-Taylor and Joan Taylor, Hero Granger-Taylor, "Byzantium Textiles," in *Byzantium: Treasures of Byzantine Art and Culture from British Collections*, ed. David Buckton (London: Published for the Trustees of the British Museum by British Museum Press, 1994), 16–17; Avigail Sheffer and Hero Granger-Taylor, "Textiles from Masada: A Preliminary Selection," in *Masada: The Yigael Yadin Excavations 1963-1965*, vol. 4: Final Reports (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 1994), 151–282; Joan E. Taylor et al., "Qumran Textiles in the Palestine Exploration Fund, London: Radiocarbon Dating Results," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 137, no. 2 (2005): 159–67.
[177] For example, distinctions have been made between the textile techniques and styles indicated in textile remains from ancient Syro-Palestine and Egypt, Avigail Sheffer, "Comparative Analysis of a 'Negev Ware' Textile Impression from Tel Masos," *Tel Aviv: Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University* 3, no. 2 (1976): 85–86; Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 3–4; Tamar Schick, "The Textiles," in *The Cave of the Warrior: A Fourth Millennium Burial in the Judean Desert*, ed. Tamar Schick (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 1998), 20.

smaller or rural sites from which many of the textile evidence from ancient Syro-Palestine were discovered.[178] In light of these difficulties, the present discussion shall largely concentrate on ancient Syro-Palestinian archaeological evidence, drawing from other ancient West Asian cultures only where particularly relevant.

It was originally intended that this discussion would address Syro-Palestinian archaeological evidence for textiles and its production dating the Persian period, since this most likely correlates with the period in which many scholars now argue most of the texts of the Hebrew Bible were compiled or composed.[179] However, the archaeological evidence dating to this period for textiles and its production is particularly sparse.[180] To my knowledge no textile

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[178] For studies that tend to focus on larger, more urbanised sites, see Stefan Zawadzki, *Garments of the Gods: Studies on the Textile Industry and the Pantheon of Sippar according to the Texts from the Ebabbar Archive*, vol. 1 (Fribourg, Switzerland; Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg ; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006); Pietro Militello, "Textile Industry and Minoan Palaces," in *Ancient Textiles: Production, Craft and Society : Proceedings of the First International Conference on Ancient Textiles, Held at Lund, Sweden, and Copenhagen, Denmark, on March 19-23, 2003*, ed. Carole Gillis and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2007), 36–45; Luca Peyronel, "Spinning and Weaving at Tell Mardikh-Ebla (Syria): Some Observations on Spindle-Whorls and Loom-Weights from the Bronze and Iron Ages," in *Ancient Textiles: Production, Craft and Society : Proceedings of the First International Conference on Ancient Textiles, Held at Lund, Sweden, and Copenhagen, Denmark, on March 19-23, 2003*, ed. Carole Gillis and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2007), 26–35; Maria Giovanna Biga, "Textiles in the Administrative Texts of the Royal Archives of Ebla (Syria, 24th Century BC) with Particular Emphasis on Coloured Textiles," in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B. Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), 146–72; Michel and Veenhof, "The Textile Traded by the Assyrians in Anatolia (19th-18th Centuries BC)"; Hartmut Waetzoldt, "The Colours and Variety of Fabric from Mesopotamia During the Ur III Period (2050 BC)," in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B. Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), 201–9; Catherine Sauvage, "Spinning from Old Threads: The Whorls from Ugarit at the Museé d'Archéologie Nationale (Saint-Germain-enLaye) and at the Louvre," in *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*, ed. Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2013), 189–214. Note that excavations in Syro-Palestine have also been primarily focused on more urban sites, Davies, *Memories of Ancient Israel*, 69–70. Still, many of these sites are still small in comparison with some of the cities that have been focused on in broader ancient West Asian textile production.

[179] On this shift in biblical scholarship on dating the biblical texts see Davies, *Memories of Ancient Israel*, 68.

[180] For studies of textile tools dating to the Persian period see Orit Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbet Nimra," *'Atiqot* 32 (1997): 1–8;

remains have currently been discovered or published from this period. This has necessitated expanding the present exploration to include evidence from Syro-Palestine that dates to a broader time period.[181] Despite the likelihood that there are many similarities between these different periods of textile production, it is also probable that choices for materials and techniques did shift and change over time; therefore, where possible I shall try to identify the time periods from which artefacts are considered to date.

The majority of Syro-Palestinian evidence for textile production dates to the Late Bronze and Early Iron Age periods.[182] It may be conjectured that the availability of evidence from these periods, comparative to evidence dating to the Persian period, is partly due to agendas in 'biblical archaeology' that have motivated the privileging of Iron Age sites for excavation. Philip Davies offers similar comments to account for the lack of evidence dating to the Persian period:

> The archaeology of the Iron Age in Israel and Palestine has been driven above all by the belief that *here* lies the 'biblical period', and *here* the correlation of bible and archaeology will be investigated.[183]

This is an effective reminder that even archaeology and the choice of excavation sites are often motivated by both ideological agendas, some of which have been considered earlier in this chapter, and finance.[184] Hence, it can be indicated that even discoveries of evidence for textile production are

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Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Horbat Rogem, Horbat Mesura and Horbat Ha-Ro'a"; Orit Shamir and Uzi 'Ad, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbat Burin, Israel," *Archaeological Textiles Review* 56 (2014): 35–40.

[181] For the suggestion that textile remains dating to the Persian period have not yet been discovered, Shamir and 'Ad, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbat Burin, Israel," 38.

[182] For example, in excavations at Jerusalem from 1978-1985 the majority of textile tools have been dated to the Iron Age, Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 135.

[183] Philip R. Davies, "Introduction," in *Second Temple Studies III: Studies in Politics Class and Material Culture*, ed. Philip R. Davies and John M. Halligan, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series 340 (London; New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 1. See also, Davies, *Memories of Ancient Israel*, 72–73, 79–80.

[184] Zevit, "The Biblical Archaeology versus Syro-Palestinian Archaeology Debate," 6, 14–15; Levy, "The New Pragmatism," 3–5.

not free from the influence of such contemporary agendas in biblical scholarship.[185]

The influence of religious (and political) agendas in biblical archaeological studies has led to a greater interest, not only in sites that were believed to best correlate to the 'biblical period', but also in evidence that was considered to embody religious or cultic values. Other aspects of material culture from these excavations, particularly clothing and textile production, have often been overlooked. Deborah Cassuto illustrates this point, writing that 'despite their prevalence, loomweights have largely been overlooked in the earlier excavation reports, often mentioned only briefly, with little or no information regarding specific findspots and quantities.'[186] Similarly, discoveries of textile remains are frequently mentioned only briefly in excavation reports; the intricate details of some of these finds have not been published.[187] Still, it is hopeful that an increased interest in textile production in ancient Syro-Palestinian archaeology will result in more fruitful finds and publications in the future. Such interest can be increased through developing an awareness of the value of this largely 'missing' evidence.[188]

It must be stressed that archaeological studies of ancient textiles and its production is an expanding field. It is not just methodologies, as has been

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[185] For an insightful overview of the influence of the agendas in 'biblical archaeological' approaches on archaeological practice, particularly on excavational work, see Davies, *Memories of Ancient Israel*, 68–82. Also see pages 60-66.

[186] Cassuto also indicates that in many of these cases the weight, shapes and sizes of these loomweights were rarely documented, Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468. Carol Meyers observes that many objects found in excavations, which are now recognised as textile tools, lack proper documentation, Meyers, "Material Remains and Social Relations," 432–433.

[187] Note that many older excavation reports include very limited details of textile remains, for example, examinations of textile remains from Jericho (Bronze Age), Elisabeth Crowfoot, "Appendix A Report on Textiles," in *Excavations at Jericho*, by Kathleen M. Kenyon, vol. 1, 5 vols. (Jerusalem: British School of Archaeology, 1960), 519–26; Elisabeth Crowfoot, "Appendix G. Textiles, Matting and Basketry," in *Excavations at Jericho*, by Kathleen M. Kenyon, vol. 2, 5 vols. (London: British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, 1965), 662–63; Elisabeth Crowfoot, "Appendix B. Textiles, Matting, and Basketry," in *Excavations at Jericho*, by Kathleen M. Kenyon, vol. 4, 5 vols. (Jerusalem: British School of Archaeology, 1982), 546–50. Jane Cahill notes upon remains of fossilized cloth from Tell El-Hammah, yet very few details are given, Cahill, Lipton, and Tarler, "Notes and News: Tell El-Hammah, 1985-1987," 283.

[188] See Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*.

suggested, but even some modern technologies for analysing this evidence that are being increasingly developed and refined.[189] In addition, evidence for textile production continues to be discovered from on-going excavation work. This is effectively illustrated by the recent discovery of rich textile remains from tenth century BCE Timna.[190] A notable archaeologist that specialises in ancient 'Israelite' textile production, Orit Shamir, has suggested that these remains 'resemble textiles only known from the Roman era.'[191] This example renews hopes that insightful discoveries will continue to be found. Biblical scholars need to remain aware of the constantly transforming knowledge that we have of ancient Syro-Palestinian textiles and its production in archaeological studies. We should continue to consider how new discoveries may help inform their interpretations of the biblical texts.

Textile Remains

Some of the most noted and best-preserved textile remains from ancient Syro-Palestine were found in caves in the Judean desert that date to the Chalcolithic period (ca. 4700/4500-3700/3600 BCE).[192] In particular, the textile remains that were discovered from the 'Cave of the Warrior' in Wadi el-Makkukh and the 'Cave of Treasure' in Nahal Mishmar.[193] Another notable,

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[189] Further details of refined testing techniques are explored in Good, "Archaeological Textiles: A Review of Current Research"; Eva B. Andersson, "Tools, Textile Production and Society in Viking Age Birka," in *Dressing the Past*, ed. Margarita Gleba and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow, 2008), 83; Andersson Strand et al., "Old Textiles -- New Possibilities," 11; Gleba, "Ancient Textiles: Sources and Methods"; Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 164.

[190] "TAU Discovers Extensive Fabric Collection Dating Back to Kings David and Solomon," *Tel Aviv University*, February 2016, https://www.aftau.org/news-page-archaeology?=&storyid4677=2256&ncs4677=3.

[191] Ibid.

[192] For more detailed discussions of textile remains discovered from the Chalcolithic period in ancient Syro-Palestine, see Orit Shamir, "Textiles, Basketry and Other Organic Artifacts of the Chalcolithic Period in the Southern Levant," in *Catalogue Exhibition "Masters of Fire: Copper Age Art from Israel,"* ed. Osnat Misch-Brandl, Michael Sebanne, and Daniel Master (Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, 2014), 139–52; Orit Shamir, "Textiles from the Chalcolithic Period, Early and Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant," *Archaeological Textiles Review* 57 (2015): 12–25.

[193] For a more detailed study of the Cave of the Warrior textile remains, see Tamar Schick, ed., *The Cave of the Warrior: A Fourth Millennium Burial in the Judean Desert* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 1998). Particularly see Schick, "The Textiles." For a more detailed examination of textile remains from the Nahal

although admittedly much earlier, collection of textile remains was found in the nearby cave, Nahal Hemar, dating to the Pre-Pottery Neolithic period (ca. 6900-6350 uncalibrated BCE).[194] It is likely that the hot and dry climate of the desert in which these remains were discovered has enabled the preservation of these textiles making them some of the oldest attested textiles known to the world. This is probably one of the reasons why these remains have been more prevalently noted in broader contemporary scholarship.[195] However, the arid conditions of these caves has also meant that they were often left unoccupied (mainly only during the Chalcolithic and Roman periods); therefore, the amount of evidence found in these caves is somewhat limited.[196] Still, they are significant discoveries, not least because their existence illustrates early examples of spinning and weaving practices. These

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Mishmar, see Bar-Adon, *The Cave of the Treasure*, 153; Essa Cindorf, S. Horowitz, and R. Blum, "Textile Remains from the Caves of Nahal Mishmar," in *The Cave of the Treasure: The Finds from the Caves in Nahal Mishmar*, ed. Pessah Bar-Adon (Jerusalem: Israel exploration society, 1980), 229–34. For other discussions of the textile remains from these sites, see Barber, *Prehistoric Textiles*, 86, 165; Pesah Bar-Adon, "The Nahal Mishmar Caves," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leyinzon-Gilbo'a, vol. 3, 4 vols. (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 822–27; Diana Fulbright, "Akeldama Repudiation of Turin Shroud Omits Evidence from the Judean Desert," in *Proceedings of the International Workshop on the Scientific Approach to the Acheiropoietos Images* (Italy, 2010); Shamir, "Textiles, Basketry and Other Organic Artifacts of the Chalcolithic Period in the Southern Levant," 140–141; Shamir, "Textiles from the Chalcolithic Period, Early and Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant," 13–15. Note that more recent examinations of these textile remains have identified some errors in the dating of some fragments in these preliminary examinations, Janet Levy and Isaac Gilead, "The Emergence of the Ghassulian Textile Industry in the Southern Levant Chalcolithic Period (c.4500-3900 BCE)," in *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*, ed. Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2013), 27, 32; Shamir, "Textiles from the Chalcolithic Period, Early and Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant," 13–14.

[194] For a detailed discussion of these textile finds, see Schick, "Nahal Hemar Cave." Also see Barber, *Prehistoric Textiles*, 12, 25, 30, 130–131; Bar-Yosef, Schlick, and Alon, "Nahal Hemar Cave."

[195] For example, Cybulska and Maik, "Archaeological textiles—A Need for New Methods of Analysis and Reconstruction," 186; Steven Mithen, *After the Ice: A Global Human History, 20,000 - 5000 BC* (Hachette UK, 2011).

[196] Shamir, "Textiles, Basketry and Other Organic Artifacts of the Chalcolithic Period in the Southern Levant," 140; Shamir, "Textiles from the Chalcolithic Period, Early and Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant," 12.

textiles are also completely diverse attesting to a range of different textile techniques that may have been used or adapted over time.[197]

The initial reports of the recent discovery of Iron Age textiles at Timna Ben-Yosef suggests that 'No textiles have ever been found at excavations like Jerusalem, Megiddo and Hazor, so this provides a unique window into an entire aspect of life from which we've never had physical evidence before.'[198] The textile remains from Iron Age Timna are without doubt significant finds, once the details of these finds are published it shall be possible to say more regarding their contribution to our understanding. They demonstrate perhaps the largest collection of woollen textiles from ancient Syro-Palestine. Furthermore, earlier remains discovered from the same site (14th-12th centuries BCE) also include textiles made with goat hair.[199] These remains also demonstrate a range of textile techniques; particularly dyeing techniques, as a number of different colours are demonstrated in these textiles.[200] However, Ben-Yosef's statement above is over-exaggerated and seems to undermine the contribution that other Iron Age evidence for textiles have made in developing contemporary interpretations.[201]

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[197] For example, the textiles from the Cave of the Warrior include examples of both warp and weft fringes, elaborate knotted finishing borders, and dyed threads on textile fragments, as well as, a partially preserved pair of leather sandals, Schick, "The Textiles"; Tamar Schick, "The Sandals," in *The Cave of the Warrior: A Fourth Millennium Burial in the Judean Desert*, ed. Tamar Schick (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 1998), 34–38. Examples of intricately looped, knotted and twined textiles discovered at Nahal Hemar. Note that amongst these finds is a small knitted fabric most likely made from human hair, Schick, "Nahal Hemar Cave," 34–38.

[198] "TAU Discovers Extensive Fabric Collection Dating Back to Kings David and Solomon."

[199] Few examples of the use of goat hair have been discovered dating to a similar period. Shamir and Baginski, "Textiles from the Mining Camps at Timna." See also, Beno Rothenberg, "Timna'," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leyinzon-Gilbo'a, vol. 4 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 1483.

[200] Shamir and Baginski, "Textiles from the Mining Camps at Timna"; "TAU Discovers Extensive Fabric Collection Dating Back to Kings David and Solomon."

[201] For a good overview of Iron Age textile finds, see Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 23–24.
Note that there is also evidence of textile remains from Bronze Age sites. These finds are important, however, there has been little scholarly discussion of this evidence. For reports on some of these textile remains, see Crowfoot, "Appendix A Report on Textiles"; Crowfoot, "Appendix G. Textiles, Matting and Basketry"; Orit Shamir,

Evidence for Iron Age textiles can be observed on inorganic materials, such as textile impressions on clay or textiles that have been partially preserved through their contact with metal objects.[202] The textiles themselves have largely deteriorated, yet the 'memory' of their materiality is preserved through their enmeshment with these more durable objects. These objects offer further insights into the sorts of textiles that once existed through the details of

"Textile Remains on Metal from Bareqet, Israel," *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* 40 (2005): 20; Orit Shamir and Steven A. Rosen, "Early Bronze Age Textiles from the Ramon I Rock Shelter in the Central Negev," *Israel Exploration Journal* 65, no. 2 (2015): 129–39.

[202] Textiles impressions have been discovered from excavations in: Tel Masos (c. 12th-11th century BCE), Sheffer, "Comparative Analysis of a 'Negev Ware' Textile Impression from Tel Masos." Tell el Hammah (c. 10th-9th century BCE), Jane M. Cahill, Gary Lipton, and David Tarler, "Notes and News: Tell El-Hammah," *Israel Exploration Journal* 38, no. 3 (1988): 191–194., Tel Beersheba (c. Iron Age IIA- Iron Age IIB), Orit Shamir, "Textile Remains and Textile Impressions (at Tel Beer-Sheba)," in *Beer-Sheba III: The Early Iron Age IIA Enclosed Settlement and the Late Iron IIA- Iron IIB Cities*, ed. Z. Herzog and Lily Singer-Avitz (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 1324–27. Tel Qasile (Iron Age), Sheffer, "Comparative Analysis of a 'Negev Ware' Textile Impression from Tel Masos," 85; Orit Shamir, "Re-Examination of the Blue Dye from the Qasile Temple," *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* 15 (1992): 7. Tel Batash (Iron Age), Avigail Sheffer, "Appendix: A Textile Impression from Tel Batash," in *Timna (Tel Batash)*, ed. A. Mazar and N. Panitz-Cohen, vol. II: The Finds from the First Millennium BCE, QEDEM 42 (Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2001), 259. Tell el Qudeirat (c. Tenth-eighth century BCE), Hannah Bernick-Greenberg, "The Negebite Ware Typology," in *Excavations at Kadesh Barnea (Tell El-Qudeirat) 1976-1982 Part 1*, ed. Rudolf Cohen and Hannah Bernick-Greenberg (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2007), 200–206. Kuntillet Ajrud (c. ninth-eighth century BCE), Orit Shamir, "Remains of Cords and a Textile Impression on a Clay Stopper," in *Kuntillet 'Ajrud (Horvat Teman). An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border. Jerusalem*, ed. Ze'ev Meshel (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012), 313–16.
Textile remains discovered on metal objects have been discovered in Beth Shean (c. 12th century BCE), Orit Shamir, "A Twelfth Century BCE Linen Textile Fragment from Beth Shean," *Archaeological Textiles Newsletter* 14 (1992): 4; Orit Shamir, "A Linen Textile Fragment," in *Excavations at Tel Beth-Shean 1989-1996. Vol. III: The 13th-11th Century BCE Strata in Areas N and S*, ed. Nava Panitz-Cohen and Amihay Mazar (Jerusalem: The Israel Exploration Society, 2009), 608–9. Qiryat Shemona (c. 11th BCE), Orit Shamir, "Textile Remains on Metal," in *Qiryat Shemona (S) Fort and Village in the Hula Valley*, ed. Yuval Gadot and Assaf Yasur-Landau, Salvage Excavation Reports 7 (Tel Aviv: Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, 2012), 205. Arad (c. 10th century BCE), Y. Aharoni, "Notes and News: Arad," *Israel Exploration Journal* 17, no. 4 (1967): 272. Tel Dan (c. Late Bronze Age II-Iron Age I), Rachel Ben-Dov and Azriel Gorski, "A Metal Implement Wrapped in Linen from Tel Dan," *Israel Exploration Journal* 59, no. 1 (2009): 80–85. Fabric remains from Tell el-Hammah (c. 10th-9th century BCE) have also been noted in association with an ivory box from the same period, Cahill, Lipton, and Tarler, "Notes and News: Tell El-Hammah, 1985-1987," 282. Horbat Tavat (IA I), Orit Shamir, "Horbat Tavat - Textile Remains on a Bronze Ingot," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot – Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 125 (2013).

textiles that they index, such as thread counts in the weaving pattern and the direction of spun threads. Textile impressions from Tel Masos even includes an impression of what seems to be a double-knotted fringe demonstrating textile techniques unattested in the textile remains that have been discovered.[203] Experimental archaeology can be used to create possible reconstructions of these textiles and can elucidate these original textiles.[204]

These textile impressions and partially preserved textile remains are invaluable to the exploration of ancient Syro-Palestinian textiles. This is particularly since they evidence textiles from a wider range of contexts and from more populated sites; they are not restricted to caves in the desert, seemingly on the fringes of urban society. Furthermore, these objects do not only index textiles, but material relations with humans and other things. They begin to imply the extent to which textiles had permeated into people's lives, being used to wrap items of value, and probably being employed in the production of pottery and so on.[205] These relations develop an understanding of the dynamism of textiles in ancient Syro-Palestine and thus it can be implied that people's interaction with textiles was far from simplistic or one-dimensional.

From the Late Iron age there are two sites that evidence substantial collections of textile remains that also offer major contributions to interpretations of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile cultures, namely at Kuntillet 'Ajrud (ninth-eighth century BCE), and Tell el Qudeirat (also known as Kadesh Barnea; tenth-eighth century BCE).[206] Both of these sites are located in more

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[203] Sheffer, "Comparative Analysis of a 'Negev Ware' Textile Impression from Tel Masos," 84. Similarly, see evidence of a more complex weaving pattern from a textile preserved on a metal artefact discovered from Tel Dan (Iron Age), Ben-Dov and Gorski, "A Metal Implement," 84.

[204] The advantages of using experimental archaeological methods shall be considered in further detail in section 2.5.

[205] Some of these textiles may have also functioned as clothes, or were recycled clothes.

[206] For more on the textile remains from Kuntillet 'Ajrud, see Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd." See also their mention in Lawrence E. Stager and Samuel R. Wolff, "Production and Commerce in Temple Courtyards: An Olive Press in the Sacred Precinct at Tel Dan," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, no. 243 (1981): 98; Zeev Meshel, "Teman, Horvat," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern,

rural, desert-like areas, which has enabled their considerable preservation. These finds represent some of the best preserved textile remains from this period and are informative for developing a picture of what was possible for ancient textiles and their production on a larger scale. This is particularly in the light of some similarities between these remains and textile remains from more central areas that were not so well preserved.[207] The following exploration of archaeological textiles and their production shall particularly draw from examples from these sites, due to the number of textile remains that have been preserved that also include evidence of a range of different techniques and skills that are rarely attested from other textile remains.[208]

Kuntillet ʿAjrud

It is worth pausing to further explore the interpretation of the Kuntillet ʿAjrud textiles at this point, since they represent some of the only textile remains that are consistently mentioned in biblical studies. Kuntillet ʿAjrud is often hailed as one of the most important archaeological sites for biblical scholars and archaeologists because of the discoveries of ritual objects that indicate the practice of Asherah worship in Syro-Palestine.[209] This reiterates the tendency

Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leṿinzon-Gilboʿa, vol. 4 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 1458–1464; Ziony Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel: A Synthesis of Parallactic Approaches* (London: Continuum, 2001), 375–376. For further discussion on the textile remains from Tell El-Qudeirat, see Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls."

[207] These sites are located in the Negev desert near the Sinai Peninsula in Syro-Palestine, Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat ʿAjrûd," 1; Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 109. The textile remains at Kadesh Barnea are notably carbonised and brittle, yet they are incredibly well preserved in comparison with other discoveries of textile remains from Iron Age Syro-Palestine, Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls," 255, 263.

[208] For example, these sites include examples of self-bands. Self-bands are formed when the weft thread has been passed through the warp threads several times in one pick, which disrupts the texture of the textile, by forming a raised, or thicker strip in the fabric. Moreover, different methods of stitch-work have been identified in these textile remains, such as, hemming, seaming and overcast stitches, Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat ʿAjrûd," 5–6, 8–10; Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls," 258, 261–262. For further discussion on needlework and sewing practices in ancient Syro-Palestine, see Sheffer, "Needlework and Sewing in Israel from Prehistoric Times to the Roman Period."

[209] For fuller scholarly discussions that focus on the ancient images from this site, see Brian B. Schmidt, "The Aniconic Tradition: On Reading Images and Viewing Texts," in *The Triumph of Elohim: From Yahwisms to Judaisms*, ed. Diana Vikander Edelman (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 96–105; Othmar Keel and

for archaeologists and biblical scholars to privilege objects that are considered to have a 'religious' nature. I argue that it is also one of the most important sites for the discovery of textile remains from ancient Syro-Palestine; over a hundred textile fragments alongside bundles of threads and other objects relating to textile production at this site. However, where these remains are noted in biblical studies, their interpretation is often conditioned by and limited to how far they may support wider debates of the existence of an Asherah cult in ancient Israel. These discussions are illustrative of the way that textile production has been read through the lens of the biblical texts. A discussion of these textiles will be used to insightfully illustrate some of the limitations of this conventional approach.

The discovery of evidence for Asherah worship alongside evidence for textiles and its production is often associated with depiction of women weaving for Asherah in 2 Kings 23:7.[210] This association may appear to index an alignment between the biblical texts and the archaeological evidence. A number of scholars tentatively draw comparisons between the textile remains at Kuntillet 'Ajrud and the priestly garments. For example, it is stressed that these remains are largely made of linen and that many of them are finely woven. As such, these fragments have sometimes been aligned with details depicted in the biblical writers' portrayal of priestly garments, since these clothes are made with 'fine linen' (שש).[211] Such interpretations are furthered in Avigail Sheffer's discussion of these textile remains:

> As one can observe, the stitching of these textiles was expertly and
> meticulously executed. One may suppose that the extreme care

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Christoph Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 212–235; Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 374–376.

[210] For studies that allude to this verse in discussing the Kuntillet 'Ajrud (or vice versa), see Stager and Wolff, "Production and Commerce in Temple Courtyards," 98. See Susan Ackerman's more comprehensive study for further associations between the goddess Asherah and weaving in ancient West Asian texts and archaeological evidence, as well as, the associations between goddesses commonly likened to Asherah and textile production in wider ancient West Asian and Eastern Mediterranean evidence, Susan Ackerman, "Asherah, the West Semitic Goddess of Spinning and Weaving?," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 67, no. 1 (2008): 1–30.

[211] Implied in Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 14.

bestowed on this stitching was connected to its intended purpose – to enhance the beauty and splendour of the ceremonial attire worn by the priests…[212]

This exaggerated interpretation seems to be heavily influenced by the biblical depiction of garments for priests, since the biblical texts imply that these garments were constructed by highly skilled, and even divinely inspired, craftsmen (Exodus 35:30-35). Furthermore, it is indicated that such garments were constructed, 'for glory and for beauty,' (Exodus 28:2).[213] The discussion of the presumed 'cultic' identity of these preserved textiles does not end here. One of these textile remains has, above all others, generated scholarly interest and continues to be debated in biblical and archaeological scholarship.[214]

The discovery of an unusual small textile fragment that was constructed from linen and wool is often considered to be highly significant, since such a combination of materials appears to be prohibited in some biblical texts (Leviticus 19:19; Deuteronomy 22:11). For some this is evidence that challenges the historicity of the reality presented in the biblical texts, whilst for others this fragment has been used as further support for the construction and use of garments for priests at this site. In contrast, many biblical scholars argue that this combination is prohibited to the majority of Israelites for the reason that it was reserved for garments worn by the priests alone (Exodus 28:6, 8, 15; 39:2, 5, 8, 29).[215] However, it remains difficult to discern from the Hebrew textile terms whether or not the textile combination described in these texts implied garments with mixed wool and linen threads. Despite this uncertainty, many scholars have assumed that this fragment provides further support for the identification of these textile remains as evidence for priestly

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[212] Sheffer, "Needlework and Sewing in Israel from Prehistoric Times to the Roman Period," 550.

[213] 'כבוד' could be translated splendour and not glory in this context.

[214] For a recent discussion of these textile remains, see Orit Shamir, "Two Special Traditions in Jewish Garments and the Rarity of Mixed Wool and Linen Threads," in *Prehistoric, Ancient Near Eastern and Aegean Textiles and Dress: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, ed. Mary Harlow, Cécile Michel, and Marie-Louise Nosch, Ancient Textiles Series 18 (Oxford; Havertown, PA: Oxbow Books, 2014), 298–308.

[215] Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 14.

garments.[216] However, such positivistic claims unnecessarily manipulate the evidence to fit with the biblical depictions of garments worn by priests. They also make unnecessary generalisations since they presume that garments worn by priests across different cultic sites would be uniform.

It often goes unnoticed that this textile fragment alone illustrates a series of techniques and that imply specialist skills or at the least experienced knowledge of weaving and dyeing techniques.[217] It is not only the technical skills that are indexed by this textile fragment that are overlooked. The tendency for biblical scholars to focus on only one fragment from these discoveries or the general material that these garments were made from has devalued the diversity that can be observed from this collection of textiles. For example, William Dever generalises these textile remains suggesting:

> It may be significant that the eighth-century BCE shrine at Kuntillet Ajrud produced more than one hundred examples of linen and woollen textiles, very similar to those mentioned in the biblical passages describing priestly vestments.[218]

This type of interpretation is all too common among scholarly interpretations of these textiles with the exception of specialist archaeological reports. Such interpretations may imply that these fragments are uniform, differing substantially from their portrayal in Avigail Sheffer and Amelia Tidhar's study, 'the textiles vary widely in quality, ranging from extremely fine batiste-like fabric suitable for veils, through domestic soft fabrics, to very coarse material,

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[216] Ibid.; King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 151; Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 58; Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 58; Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 178.

[217] For example, this textile fragment includes threads that are dyed blue and red. They are dyed using different methods, one prior to spinning and the other after spinning. Linen is particularly difficult to dye, therefore, this discovery is notable, Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 6. Moreover, it is likely that dyeing methods were complex and expensive, which may suggest the inherent value of its materiality. For a brief discussion of dyeing methods, see Shamir, "Textile Production in Eretz-Israel," 25.

[218] William G. Dever, "The Silence of the Text: An Archaeological Commentary on 2 Kings 23," in *Scripture and Other Artifacts : Essays on the Bible and Archaeology in Honor of Philip J. King*, ed. Michael D. Coogan, J. Cheryl Exum, and Lawerence E. Stager (Louisville, Ky.: John Knox Press, 1994), 151.

suitable for sacking.'[219] By acknowledging the diversity of the Kuntillet 'Ajrud textiles it is perhaps not so easy to assert that these textiles were necessarily fragments of cultic garments.

In interpretations of the recent remains discovered at Timna, it has already been claimed that these remains correlate with the 'biblical period' – more specifically with the period of King Solomon.[220] Furthermore, biblical archaeologist, Erez Ben-Yosef, who led the excavation team responsible for these finds, even attempts to identify the wearers of these textiles:

> The wide variety of fabrics also provides new and important information about the Edomites, who according to the Bible, warred with the Kingdom of Israel…Luxury grade fabric adorned the highly skilled, highly respected craftsmen managing the copper furnaces.[221]

Such speculations cannot be substantiated; they merely replicate the uncritical tendencies in many previous interpretations of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production that have been highlighted in the present study. The observation that, in addition to new discoveries, such assumptions are still being made demonstrates the need for the construction of critical approaches to this evidence.

Even though textile remains are rarely preserved the diversity that can be observed from the few examples that have survived are indicative that they evidence only a fraction of the complexity and dynamism of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production.[222] Such diversity effectively challenges

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[219] Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 3. These differences are dependent on many variables including: the number of threads going vertically (warp) and going horizontally across (weft); how tightly the thread has been pulled; the thickness of the thread used and so on.

[220] Quoted in "TAU Discovers Extensive Fabric Collection Dating Back to Kings David and Solomon."

[221] Quoted in Ibid.

[222] It must be recognised that materials such as leather or animal skins, which have not been covered in this study, would probably have also been included in materials used for clothing in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures. Examples of leather that has been preserved before the Roman period are very rare. Leather is particularly sensitive to changing climate conditions. It is even more prone to deterioration than textiles and basketry, Schick, "The Sandals," 37. For a more in-depth discussion of ancient leather and leatherworking methods, see Van Carol Driel-Murray,

contemporary Western assumptions that ancient textile production was simplistic or unsophisticated. This variety also suggests that textiles, and most likely clothes, were created for more than their basic functional purpose, be it for decoration, markers of status or for use in ritual, or even reasons that have not yet been considered. It is clear from the evidence that not all textiles were produced by specialists, instead the evidence points to a range of skill-levels, from those that were likely to be inexperienced to those with experience or specialist knowledge.[223]

Non-Organic Elements of Clothing

Whilst this discussion focuses primarily on textiles, it can be briefly noted that 'clothing' is not limited to textiles. Archaeologists have identified a number of artefacts as objects that were most likely employed to fasten or secure clothing on the body, such as, toggle pins, fibulae, and buttons.[224] These objects have sometimes been discovered on skeletons, which may indicate their relationship with the body, even if only with corpses.[225] The identification

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"Leatherwork and Skin Products," in *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, ed. Paul T. Nicholson and Ian Shaw (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 299–319. Linda Hurcombe also critically explores different methods and techniques that were likely to be involved in the production of leather, this indicates a different process that is in involved in making textiles, Linda Hurcombe, "A Sense of Materials and Sensory Perception in Concepts of Materiality," *World Archaeology* 39, no. 4 (2007): 540.

[223] On the emphasis of the discovery of fine worksmanship/skills evidenced in textile remains from Nahal Hemar and the Cave of the Warrior see Shamir, "Textiles, Basketry and Other Organic Artifacts of the Chalcolithic Period in the Southern Levant," 148. This is usually discerned from the degree of regularity and execution of more complex or delicate techniques, Schick, "Nahal Hemar Cave"; Schick, "The Textiles."

[224] Toggle pins are small shafted objects that are pierced, so that that a string or ring might be passed through it. Attached strings can be wound around the pin to secured it on the clothing. Fibulae are similar to toggle pins and often made of metal, but they are more brooch-like in design. They are more commonly discovered in Iron Age burials, whereas the toggle pin seems to have been more common in Bronze Age burials, as suggested in Jill L. Baker, *The Funeral Kit: Mortuary Practices in the Archaeological Record* (Left Coast Press, 2012), 32.

[225] A number of toggle pins were discovered near the shoulder or hip of skeletons from tombs at Jericho (Middle Bronze Age), Crowfoot, "Appendix A Report on Textiles," 520; Kenyon, *Excavations at Jericho*, 1:242, 294, 390, 449, 332, 411, 427, 454, 473, 489, 503; T. A. Holland, "Appendix D. The Metal Objects," in *Excavations at Jericho*, by Kathleen M. Kenyon, vol. 4, 5 vols. (Jerusalem: British School of Archaeology, 1982), 564–69. Similar discoveries are also noted and briefly discussed

of these objects as possible articles of 'clothing' is insightful, partly because it opens up more possibilities for the ways that clothing could be in relationship with the body.[226] Furthermore, it is reasonable to suggest that some of these objects were items of elite clothing, due to their construction from high status materials, such as bronze, silver or gold.[227] Their construction from these materials has also enabled their preservation as opposed to organic ones most likely used by lower classes. These artefacts are useful for extending scholarly interpretations of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing beyond textiles.[228]

Textile Tools

An understanding of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production can be explored further by examining objects that have come to be known as ancient textile tools. It must be acknowledged that only a few types of objects are consistently identified as textile tools and are recorded and examined in excavation reports. Regrettably, some of the textile tools that one might anticipate finding, such as spindles and looms, which are depicted in the Hebrew Bible and are implied by evidence of woven textiles with spun threads, are rarely discovered in complete form from amongst the evidence

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in Sheffer, "Needlework and Sewing in Israel from Prehistoric Times to the Roman Period," 533–534.

[226] Sheffer implies, following the discovery of only small numbers of toggle pins excavated from tombs in Jericho, that only certain clothes may have required toggle pins to secure them, perhaps indicating the existence of a particular style of dress and relationship to its wearer, Sheffer, "Needlework and Sewing in Israel from Prehistoric Times to the Roman Period," 534. However, it must be considered that such objects, especially if made of metal, were likely to have been recycled and reused for other purposes. Non-metal toggle pins or fibulae may also have existed in higher numbers but were not preserved over time.

[227] For example, the discovery of gold and bronze toggle pins discovered from tombs from Tell El-ʻAjjul (Middle Bronze Age), Rivka Gonen, *Burial Patterns and Cultural Diversity in Late Bronze Age Canaan*, Dissertation Series / American Schools of Oriental Research, v. 7 (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 57, 65, 66, 78, 92, 93; Aharon Kempinski, " ʼAjjul, Tell El-," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leyinzon-Gilboʻa, vol. 1 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 51. Note that Gonen also refers to bronze toggle pins discovered from Middle-Late Bronze Age sites: Beth-Shean, Megiddo, and Tell el-Farʻa (see pages, 48, 56, 58).

[228] Note that jewellery and cosmetics may also be included as clothing, yet have not been included here due to my focus on clothing made from textiles.

that has been identified with ancient textile production.[229] It is likely that looms, as well as many other textile tools, were probably constructed with wood and other perishable materials that are rarely preserved.[230] Other tools, such as needles, beaters, and spatulas, are sometimes identified as textile tools, but there have been few extended studies of these objects.[231] It is likely that it is because they are only rarely discovered and they are often difficult to conclusively connect with textile production.[232] Nevertheless, such objects are worth mentioning at this point as it helpfully illustrates that many more textile tools probably existed but have not been preserved or are not yet identified in archaeological reports.

There are two types of tools that are consistently identified as textile tools in archaeological studies: loomweights – weights or objects that are usually perforated, which were probably a component employed in the construction of

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[229] Both of these objects are almost never discovered as completed structures or tools, usually only features have been preserved. It can be recognised that spindle shafts and spindle whorls, elements of spindles have been discovered, but are rarely found together. Whereas, archaeologists are yet to have discovered any convincing loom structures in tact. Some have argued that wooden beams or sticks discovered at a number of sites could be remains of looms. However, it is difficult to substantiate such claims, as they could as appropriately be identified as structural remains of that house, perhaps indicating a second floor. Examples of these contested beams have been discovered from: the Nahal Mishmar, suggested in Bar-Adon, *The Cave of the Treasure*, 180–181; Barber, *Prehistoric Textiles*, 86; King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 149, 153. Contra, Levy and Gilead, "The Emergence of the Ghassulian Textile Industry in the Southern Levant Chalcolithic Period (c.4500-3900 BCE)," 32. Also, Tell Abu Alkharaz (c. 3000 BCE), Peter M. Fischer, "Textile Production at Tell'Abū Al-Kharāz, Jordan Valley," in *A Timeless Vale: Archaeological and Related Essays on the Jordan Valley in Honour of Gerrit Van Der Kooij on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday*, ed. Eva Kaptijn and Lucas Pieter Petit, vol. 19 (Leiden: Leiden University Press, 2009), 109–110. Lachish and Tell Es-Sai'idiyeh, James B Pritchard, *Tell Es-Sa`idiyeh: Excavations on the Tell, 1964-1966* (Philadelphia: University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 1985), 36.

[230] See earlier references on wooden textile tools.

[231] For useful descriptions of these tools and their uses, see Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric."

[232] Objects identified as spatulas have been discovered at a few sites close to loomweights but we cannot prove the connection between the two, as suggested in Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Horbat Rogem, Horbat Mesura and Horbat Ha-Ro'a," 26. Spatulas were most likely made from bone or wood and were probably used for pushing up woven threads up against the cloth during the weaving process, Orit Shamir and Ephraim Stern, "Loom Weights from En-Gedi," in *En-Gedi Excavations I, Final Report (1991-1965)* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2007), 381; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 467.

warp-weighted looms.[233] The other most commonly discovered textile tool are spindle whorls, these are also perforated weights, though usually much smaller than loomweights, which were most likely suspended from spindle shafts to aid in the process of spinning.[234] It may appear to be fairly limited to base much of our knowledge of ancient Syro-Production textile production on these finds. Nevertheless, these artefacts are discovered in large numbers across a number of different Syro-Palestinian sites and from different social and material contexts that date across different periods. Such prevalence is indicative that these tools played an important role in ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production and were involved in techniques that spanned across both periods and locations. As with textile remains, these discoveries demonstrate great diversity, such as, different sizes, weights, forms, and materials. Archaeological studies demonstrate that such objects shed much needed light on possible methods and techniques used in ancient textile production.[235] These objects can be examined in corroboration with their social and material contexts to broaden these interpretations.

The objects associated with ancient textile production are largely identified by their presumed function (loomweights, spindle whorls). However, it must be

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[233] These weights were most likely tied to the ends of warp (vertical) threads in order to keep them taught during the weaving process. Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 467–368. For a good summary of the distribution and dating of Iron Age loomweights, see Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 139–142. For examples of possible non-perforated loomweights see Tell Tuqan (Iron Age), Elena Felluca, "Tell Turqan Iron Age Textile Tools," in *Tell Tuqan: Excavations 2006-2007*, ed. Francesca Baffi, Collana Del Dipartimento Di Beni Culturali 15 (Galatina: Congedo Editore, 2008), 219. For an informative discussion on the use of loomweighted looms in ancient textile production, see Linda Mårtensson, Marie-Louise Nosch, and Eva Andersson Strand, "Shape of Things: Understanding a Loom Weight," *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 28, no. 4 (2009): 373–98.

[234] It has been suggested that the discovery of a spindle whorl with a preserved wooden pin at Azor (Early Bronze Age I) may imply the presence of a spindle shaft, Orit Shamir, "Spindle Whorls from Azor. In A. Golani, C. M. Edwin and Brink van Den, Salvage Excavation at the Early Bronze Age IA Settlement at Azor," *'Atiqot* 38 (1999): 32. A similar example can be noted from Tell 'Abu al-Kharaz (EB II), Fischer, "Textile Production at Tell'Abū Al-Kharāz, Jordan Valley," 109. For a more in-depth discussion of the purpose of loomweights and spindle whorls, see Shamir, "Textile Production in Eretz-Israel," 23–24, 26–27; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 473; Levy and Gilead, "Spinning in the 5th Millennium." Also see pages 25-28 for a fuller discussion of different types of looms that were likely to have been employed in ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production, many of which are harder to identify from archaeological remains.

[235] In ways that textile remains cannot.

acknowledged that their function as textile tools continues to be the subject of some debate in some studies.[236] Archaeological approaches can still be an imprecise tool in discerning the various functions of different objects. Although it is most likely that objects identified as textile tools were used in textile production, it remains possible that they could have been used for various different tasks. This uncertainty reiterates the need to remain critical in interpretations of these objects as textile tools and acknowledge the possibility that they may have had multiple functions.

In addition to their material shape and size and so on, which may be indicative of their original function, there have been other methods for identifying these objects as textile tools. Micro use-wear analyses of objects are frequently employed to identify their probable function. Artefacts from Tel 'Abu al Khara have wear marks suggest similar movements and actions as weaving shuttles.[237] Many loomweights bear grooved lines, probably impressions of

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[236] For example, some scholars have considered the use of objects that resemble loomweights as jar stoppers, clay heaters, or in fishnets. For good overview of this debate, see Sheffer, "The Use of Perforated Clay Balls on the Warp-Weighted Loom"; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468. Many of these theories have now been either challenged or suggested as the secondary use of these objects in Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls"; Glenda Friend, *The Loom Weights* (Birzeit: Palestinian Institute of Archaeology, Birzeit University, 1998), 5. Also see the discussion, Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468.
Sophie Desrosiers indicates the limitations of the identification of artefacts as loomweights. She suggests that the presence of loomweights only demonstrates that threads were held under tension, yet does not necessarily indicate weaving on a loom unless they are found *in situ* in lines, Sophie Desrosiers, "Textile Terminologies and Classifications: Some Methodological and Chronological Aspects," in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B. Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), 42. This opens up the possibility that these artefacts may have served a number of purposes, not all for weaving. This is a fairly extreme position, most agree that these artefacts are evidence for weaving activities. Still, this suggests that caution should continue to be exercised in identifying such objects.
[237] Weaving shuttles are objects that wefts thread can be attached to and passed through the warp threads, see a fuller description, Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 74. For a fuller discussion of these wear marks, Fischer, "Textile Production at Tell'Abū Al-Kharāz, Jordan Valley," 113. Deborah Cassuto suggests that shuttles may have also been used to wrap around excess threads when not in use, Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 467. cf. Micro use-wear analysis and experiments used to support the use bone objects from Bab Edh-Dhra (fourth millennium BCE) as needles, J. M. Adovasio, R. L. Andrews, and J. S. Illingworth, "Basketry Impressions and Weaving Accoutrements from the Bâb Edh-Dhrâ' Town Site," in *Bâb Edh-Dhrâ`: Excavations at the Town Site : (1975-1981)*, by Walter E Rast and R. Thomas Schaub, vol. Part 1: Text, Reports of the Expedition to the Dead Sea Plain, Jordan 2

threads, in their perforation supporting their repeated engagement with threads.[238] These objects are sometimes discovered with material impressions that suggest their contact with other textile remains. The remains of a thread have been discovered wrapped around a spindle fragment from Tell el-Hammah in Syro-Palestine (c. tenth century BCE).[239] Other objects are identified through their material contexts, such as being discovered in conjunction with remains of textile fibers or bundles of yarn.[240] The distribution and arrangement of perforated weights in excavations is frequently used to support their probable use as textile tools. Sometimes these weights have been discovered in straight lines as though they had suspended from the wooden beam of a warp-weighted loom.[241] Such arrangements may indicate the possible width of the loom it indexes.[242]

(Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 603. Also see the excavation report for Nahal Mishmar for an example of a shuttle with a preserved fragment of a thread in the hole, Bar-Adon, *The Cave of the Treasure*, 177.

[238] Grooved lines are identified on loomweights from excavations such as Tell Tuqan, (Iron Age), Felluca, "Tell Turqan Iron Age Textile Tools," 222. Tell Tanaach, Friend, *The Loom Weights*. And Kadesh Barnea, Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls," 264–265. The lack of grooves in other similar objects does not indicate that they were not loomweights. Indeed, experimental archaeology has been able to illustrate that the way in which the loomweights were tied influenced whether or not they had groove marks, Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 143; Shamir and Stern, "Loom Weights from En-Gedi," 388.

[239] Noted in Ackerman, "Asherah, the West Semitic Goddess of Spinning and Weaving?," 25. Similarly, the remains of a plant fibre was discovered wrapped around a wooden spindle from late 12th century BCE Tell Esa'idiyeh, Clapham, "Tell Es-Sa'idiyeh: Appendix C: The Plant Remains from Tell-Es-Sa'idiyeh," 82; Tubb, "Tell Es-Sa'idiyeh: Preliminary Report on the First Seasons of Renewed Excavations," 40–41.

[240] Textile fibers from Ashkelon (Iron Age I) were discovered using flotation or water sieving, which can be used to identify less obvious evidence in the water, Egon H. E. Lass, "Quantitative Studies in Flotation at Ashkelon, 1986 to 1988," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 294 (1994): 23–38.

[241] For further discussions on loomweights found *in situ*, see Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468. For instance, discovered in: Ashkelon (12th century BCE), Stager, "Ashkelon," 199. Tel 'Amal (Iron Age), Gershon Edelstein and Nurit Feig, " 'Amal, Tel," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leyinzon-Gilbo'a, vol. 4 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 1448. Tell Es-Sa'idiyeh (Iron Age), Pritchard, "Two Tombs and a Tunnel," 6; Pritchard, *Tell Es-Sa`idiyeh*, 36; Jonathan B. Tubb, "Sa'idiyeh, Tell Es- : British Museum Excavations," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leyinzon-Gilbo'a, vol. 4 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 1297; Meyers, "Material Remains and Social Relations," 432. And Tell Abu Alkharaz (c.3000 BCE), Fischer, "Textile Production at Tell'Abū Al-

2.4 Further Limitations of Conventional Archaeological Approaches

Historically, archaeologists' primary engagement with artefacts has been to document their features and attempt to determine origins, date and practical function.[243] Indeed, such categorising has dominated many of the discussions of textile remains and tools from ancient Syro-Palestine.[244] This has already been illustrated to some extent through the major focus that has been given to the process of the identification of the function of these objects. It can be suggested that the dominance of these approaches, particularly studies that only use this approach, can lead to a limited portrayal of ancient textile production.

In this approach, there is a tendency for scholars to attempt to identify broader trends and patterns in the archaeological evidence. For example, loomweights

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Kharāz, Jordan Valley," 109–110. Experimental studies have been used to suggest how weights may have dropped if they were destroyed by being burnt, Shamir and 'Ad, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbat Burin, Israel," 38. It is noted that often greatest sign of conflagration is found in conjunction with loomweights, probably because threads used in textile production were highly flammable and were stored at the foot of the loom, as argued in Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 472.

[242] The width of looms is implied in Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 144; Shamir and 'Ad, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbat Burin, Israel," 36, 38. Examples of rows of loomweights measuring from 1-2 metres have been discovered at Nir David in Beth-Shean Valley, Sheffer, "The Use of Perforated Clay Balls on the Warp-Weighted Loom," 82. The distribution of textile fibers discovered at Ashqelon has been used to suggest the existence of a loom that was three-metres wide, Lass, "Quantitative Studies in Flotation," 33; Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 144.

[243] Archaeologists do often engage with the social value of artefacts as will be argued. However, this is often secondary to the documentation and investigatory process of identifying dating and origins and so on.

[244] Many of the studies of evidence for textiles and its production from ancient Syro-Palestine have not been explored much beyond excavation reports; often these are listed and categorised in a very brief report – the reports themselves typically privilege other objects such as metal or pottery. This is much more apparent in earlier excavation reports, Crowfoot, "Appendix A Report on Textiles"; Crowfoot, "Appendix G. Textiles, Matting and Basketry"; Crowfoot, "Appendix B. Textiles, Matting, and Basketry"; Margaret Wheeler, "Appendix F. Loomweights and Spindle Whorls," in *Excavations at Jericho*, by Kathleen M. Kenyon, vol. 4, 5 vols. (Jerusalem: British School of Archaeology, 1982), 622–37; Friend, *The Loom Weights*. Orit Shamir tends to incorporate insightful references to experimental archaeology, as shall be explored further below. Still, these points are sometimes lost in the discussion of the function and styles of these objects, for example in Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls"; Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Horbat Rogem, Horbat Mesura and Horbat Ha-Ro'a."

have typically been categorised by type, many of which have been recognised as typical to particular time periods, which has been used to approximate the dating of loomweights whose dating is less certain.[245] Scholars have begun to suggest trends in weaving patterns of textile remains, since the majority of the textiles remains seem to indicate a balanced tabby weaves and some that are warp-faced.[246] However, interpretations of this evidence on a macro level has sometimes led to premature or generalising suppositions, such as those illustrated in biblical scholars' approaches considered earlier. For example, Shamir makes a generalising remark that '(f)lax was the sole material for the manufacture of textiles in the Southern Levant until the Middle Bronze Age.'[247] However, it is probable that textiles were made from other materials that have not yet been considered. Sweeping statements, such as this one, tend to overlook the reality that evidence of textile production is incomplete and cannot be presumed to reflect wider trends in ancient textile production.

Another problematic tendency that is most likely influenced by this means of examining the archaeological evidence into categories is to depict an evolutionary perspective of ancient textile production. It must be acknowledged that technologies and techniques are subject to change over

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[245] Orit Shamir, "Two Spindle Whorls and a Loomweight from Khirbet Avot," *'Atiqot* 83 (2015): 44–45.

[246] For examples of balanced, plain weaves from, Oiryat Shemona (IA I), Shamir, "Textile Remains on Metal." Tel Masos (c. 12th-11th Centuries BCE), Sheffer, "Comparative Analysis of a 'Negev Ware' Textile Impression from Tel Masos," 83.For examples of tabby weaves see Shamir, "A Twelfth Century BCE Linen Textile Fragment from Beth Shean"; Shamir, "Textile Remains and Textile Impressions (at Tel Beer-Sheba)," 1324. Examples of balanced, tabby and warp-faced weaves were all discovered at Kuntillet 'Ajrud and at Kadesh Barnea, Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 3; Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls," 255–258. Note that even among the textile remains discovered from the Chalcolithic period demonstrate a range of weaves, most use plain weaves or warp-faced tabbies, however, like textile remains from Kuntillet 'Ajrûd, the weaves 'range in density from very loose to very dense,' Shamir, "Textiles from the Chalcolithic Period, Early and Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant," 19.

[247] Israel, Shamir, "Textiles, Basketry and Other Organic Artifacts of the Chalcolithic Period in the Southern Levant," 145; This point is repeated in Shamir and Rosen, "Early Bronze Age Textiles from the Ramon I Rock Shelter in the Central Negev," 135. Another illustrative example of such generalisations can be observed here: "Spinning and weaving techniques remained virtually unchanged from the Chalcolithic to the Roman periods."Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 21. Also see the suggestion that a plain 2-ply weave (frequently discovered in textile remains from Jericho) is a common characteristic of early fabrics, Crowfoot, "Appendix A Report on Textiles," 519.

time, yet it is difficult, with the evidence presently available to understand when and why these changes occurred. Many archaeological scholars are sensitive to such issues, yet some scholars are sometimes quick to dismiss the continued practice of certain techniques that appear to be more 'simple.' This can be observed in the discussion of the ancient Nahal Hemar textile techniques, '(t)hese techniques – looping and knotted netting – do not continue in the Southern Levant into the Chalcolithic period, but were replaced by textiles made by the horizontal ground loom.'[248] The proposal that these methods were not simply lost, but that they were replaced by another seemingly more 'advanced' technology implicitly suggests that more 'simple' techniques were inferior or easily replaceable. This risks imposing our own contemporary judgements of 'sophistication' and complexity onto these ancient techniques, with little basis for making such claims.

The very treatment of some archaeological objects is problematic, although admittedly often necessary. The sterile and scientific methods that are often used to examine archaeological evidence can depersonalise, and in many ways, disempower ancient textile artefacts.[249] Clothing remains and textile tools that are arguably extensions of ancient people's lives and their

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[248] This claim is difficult to substantiate considering the lack of textile remains that have been preserved. Shamir and Rosen, "Early Bronze Age Textiles from the Ramon I Rock Shelter in the Central Negev," 136. For a similar remark, see Barber, *Prehistoric Textiles*, 131. For an alternative, more balanced, perspective on so-called 'simplistic' techniques, such as those found in the Nahal Hemar textiles, see Desrosiers, "Textile Terminologies and Classifications: Some Methodological and Chronological Aspects."

[249] It must be acknowledged that the agency of objects in museums and labs are not completely disempowered, yet they can in many ways be seen to be disempowered from how they originally functioned in their ancient contexts. For discussions on the complex entanglements that museum artefacts share with different people and their agency in these contexts, see Sandra H. Dudley, "Encountering a Chinese Horse: Engaging with the Thingness of Things," in *Museum Objects: Experiencing the Properties of Things*, ed. Sandra H. Dudley, Leicester Readers in Museum Studies (London; New York: Routledge, 2012), 1–15; Sandra H. Dudley, "Museum Materialities: Objects, Sense and Feeling," in *Museum Materialities: Objects, Engagements, Interpretations*, ed. Sandra Dudley (London; New York: Routledge, 2010), 1–17. Cf. Hurcombe's suggestion that the use of illustrations and 'how to' diagrams, rather than depicting bodies in production, is also influential in depersonalising ancient textile tools and practices in archaeological studies, Hurcombe, *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture*, 117. However, observe some of the difficulties that are entailed by using pictures of people engaged in textile production, see section 3.2.

personhood.[250] However, through their treatment in sterile labs and museums they are divorced from their original social and material lives. Textile fragments are separated from and even damaged in their removal from the bodies on which they were found, and even enmeshed with, in order for them to be categorised and analysed. Similarly, in museums many archaeological objects 'end up being used as accessories within the interpretation of something else.'[251] Such treatments of these archaeological artefacts seem to undermine the significance of their complex and meaningful material lives and connections with people in their specific ancient contexts. Sven Ouzman persuasively argues that there is a need to suggest three basic object rights for such artefacts: 'the right to a life history, agency, and home.'[252] This suggestion most importantly recognises the need to recognise the complex social and material entanglements and uses of these objects in their material histories.

Archaeological objects are often viewed and examined in relatively 'sterile' environments, often only being experienced through glass cabinets or as touch-free objects in museums.[253] However, physical touch is arguably a

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[250] The ways in which archaeologists and curators have treated artefacts have particularly been problematized in relation to the treatment of human remains. For example, John Robb makes a similar point about the depersonalisation of archaeological artefacts, primarily in relation to the treatment of human remains. He particularly stresses that it is the treatment of bones by giving them numbers rather than names as well as the tendency for them to be "exhibited in museums as evidence or curiosities" that leads to this depersonalisation, John Robb, "Towards a Critical Otziography: Inventing Prehistoric Bodies," in *Social Bodies*, ed. Helen Lambert and Maryon McDonald (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009), 104–105. Although much of Robb's discussion is somewhat specific to human bones, it implicitly provokes further questions of the treatment of material objects that were once intricately entangled with humans and manifests these relationships in their materiality. For other discussions of the problems surrounding the treatment of human remains, see Laura Peers, "On the Treatment of Dead Enemies: Indigenous Human Remains in Britain in the Early Twenty-First Century," in *Social Bodies*, ed. Helen Lambert and Maryon McDonald (New York; Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2009), 77–99.
[251] Dudley, "Encountering a Chinese Horse," 6.
[252] Sven Ouzman, "The Beauty of Letting Go: Fragmentary Museums and Archaeologies of Archive," in *Sensible Objects: Colonialism, Museums, and Material Culture*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards, Chris Gosden, and Ruth B. Phillips. Wenner-Gren International Symposium Series (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2006), 277.
[253] For further discussions on the limitations of the display of archaeological evidence in museums, see Constance Classen and David Howes, "The Museum as Sensescape: Western Sensibilities and Indigenous Artifacts," in *Sensible Objects:*

crucial part of interpreting and understanding these ancient objects.[254] The arrangement and treatment of these artefacts in museums is also indicative of primacy that is given to vision across contemporary Western cultures.[255] In these contexts objects are experienced in a way that is relatively alien to how they were once employed in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures. The distancing of these artefacts from their original entanglements with people and the limited sensory experience that contemporary scholars now have with these artefacts is disconcerting, since it gives rise to studies of these objects as sterile, static or 'flat' objects.

It has often been stressed that the fragmented materiality of the evidence has impeded archaeologists' interpretations of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing and textile production. However, this is typically noted in association with its documentation in excavation reports, for example, it is often indicated when an artefact is too deteriorated to be measured.[256] It can, therefore, be recognised that the material state of these artefacts also impacts scholars' relations with them.[257] Indeed, it can be recognised that many of these artefacts, particularly textile remains, are too fragile to be physically handled.[258] It is possible to consider these artefacts in relation to Ingold's

Colonialism, Museums, and Material Culture, ed. Elizabeth Edwards, Chris Gosden, and Ruth B. Phillips, Wenner-Gren International Symposium Series (Oxford; New York: Berg, 2006), 209–211; Marian H. Feldman, "Hoarded Treasures: The Megiddo Ivories and the End of the Bronze Age," *Levant* 41, no. 2 (2009): 263; Ouzman, "The Beauty of Letting Go: Fragmentary Museums and Archaeologies of Archive," 279.

[254] Senses, such as touch, are "an essential means of acquiring knowledge" of an object, Classen and Howes, "The Museum as Sensescape," 201. Even when such objects are handled it is usually only for examining purposes, often using latex gloves to handle them. Gloves can also obstruct one's contact with these objects, since one's bare hands are usually much more sensitive to touch than with gloves on, Sally MacDonald, "Exploring the Role of Touch in Connoisseurship and the Identification of Objects," in *The Power of Touch: Handling Objects in Museum and Heritage Contexts*, ed. Elizabeth Pye, Publications of the Institute of Archaeology, University College London (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2007), 116.

[255] Classen and Howes, "The Museum as Sensescape," 199; Ouzman, "The Beauty of Letting Go: Fragmentary Museums and Archaeologies of Archive," 271.

[256] For example, it is noted that 50 loomweights from Tell Es-Safi/Gath were so poorly preserved that their measurements could not be recorded, Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 469. For similar remarks, see Orit Shamir, "Loomweights From Tell 'Amal," *Hadashot Arkheologiyot – Excavations and Surveys in Israel* 125 (2013): 1.

[257] Loosely indicated in Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 2–3.

[258] For example, the textile fragments found wrapped around a metal implement at Tel Dan (Late Bronze Age II –Iron Age I BCE), "crumbled into powder when an

argument that things are alive, always fluctuating and transforming.[259] These objects are being experienced at a different stage of their material lives, at a point where their material properties are substantially transformed from their former status: textiles that were once flexible are now brittle, carbonised or ionised, and weights that may once have been appreciated for their sturdiness are now prone to crumble.[260] However removed these objects are from their former status, some archaeologists have learnt to appreciate these new material properties, knowing how best to engage with and experiment with these objects. Still, it can be suggested that their transformed material properties have limited them from being treated and conceptualised as garments or textile tools.

As an initial effort to address this problem, Susannah Harris explores the materiality of raw materials, threads and woven textiles based on materials that would have been used in ancient textile production.[261] In her paper she outlines different properties of these materials and considers possible ways in which these properties influenced their employment in ancient contexts.[262] In this way Harris begins to demonstrate that explorations of ancient textile production need not be limited by the present materiality of many textile remains. There are additional ways in which we can address some of the limitations of these conventional approaches and re-establish possible social and material connections in our interpretations of the evidence that may correspond with the tone of Harris' discussion.

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attempt was made to remove them for analysis," Ben-Dov and Gorski, "A Metal Implement."

[259] See section 1.4.

[260] For example, carbonised textiles at Kadesh Barnea and Kuntillet 'Ajrud Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls," 255, 263. Most of the textile remains discovered at Jericho are carbonised, Crowfoot, "Appendix B. Textiles, Matting, and Basketry," 546.

[261] Susanna Harris, "Smooth and Cool or Warm and Soft: Investigating the Properties of Cloth in Prehistory," in *North European Symposium for Archaeological Textiles X*, ed. E. Andersson Strand et al., Ancient Textile Series 5 (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2009), 104–12. [Note that Harris largely concentrates on looking at European textiles, nevertheless, this source is still relevant to ancient West Asian textiles.]

[262] Ibid. Hurcombe also insightfully explores different material properties of perishable materials including textiles in Hurcombe, *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture*, 109–145 Particularly 130, 143.

2.5 Movement, Agency and Performance in Textile Production

At its core, textile production indexes particular inter-relationships between an artisan, their tools and the raw materials that are being transformed into textiles.[263] These entangled relations, as well as being inherent to the nature of craftsmanship itself, are performative. In order to develop interpretations and avoid making further limited or assumptive evaluations of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production it is necessary to carefully examine its nature as a social performance. However, it might be suggested that the problem of missing ancient artisans and evidence impedes such interpretations. Nevertheless, there are ways that the archaeological evidence can be re-evaluated to address these 'missing' aspects of textile production as well as reintegrate the impact of its performative role in ancient Syro-Palestinian culture.

Recent and developing archaeological studies have begun to effectively demonstrate the possible dynamics of textile production and its performance through the use of multidisciplinary approaches to inform their discussions, often drawing from experimental and experiential archaeology, socio-archaeological approaches, archaeo-zoology, and archaeo-botany.[264] These

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[263] Studies of craftsmanship have effectively illustrated that there is an intimate relationship that is formed between an artisan, his tools, and the artefact made through the process of its construction. For example, this point is particularly stressed in Trevor H. J. Marchand, "Knowledge in Hand: Explorations of Brain, Hand and Tool," in *Handbook of Social Anthropology*, ed. R. Fardon et al. (London: Sage, 2012), 260; Rachel Philpott, "Crafting Innovation: The Intersection of Craft and Technology in the Production of Contemporary Textiles," *Craft Research* 3, no. 1 (2012): 53–73. This point has been illustrated in a myriad of examples in studies of 'making' yet this point is not always articulated in this way.

[264] For emphasis on the effectiveness of interdisciplinary research, see Carole Gillis and Marie-Louise B. Nosch, "Introduction," in *Ancient Textiles: Production, Craft and Society : Proceedings of the First International Conference on Ancient Textiles, Held at Lund, Sweden, and Copenhagen, Denmark, on March 19-23, 2003*, ed. Carole Gillis and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2007), vii – x; Marie-Louise B. Nosch, "Haute Couture in the Bronze Age: A History of Minoan Female Costumes from Thera," in *Dressing the Past*, ed. Margarita Gleba and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow, 2008), 1–12; Andersson Strand et al., "Old Textiles -- New Possibilities"; Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise B. Nosch, "Introduction: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography," in *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*, ed. Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2013), v – viii; Breniquet and Michel, "Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean,"

studies are employed to elucidate possible interrelations that are constructed through the performance of textile production. This multidisciplinary approach enables scholars to offer a more holistic perspective of ancient textile production and its place in society and culture as well as the social and material relations that it indicates, similar to the approach promoted in Weismantel and Meskell's discussion.[265] This exploration of ancient textile production as performance shall pay close attention to how material relations are transformed and impacted in such performances.

Archaeologists and biblical scholars alike generally do not have expert knowledge of textile production.[266] Whilst it is possible to comprehend a basic technical understanding of textile production from reading explanations of techniques, the unique insights of practicing craftsmen and other practitioners of textile production can hardly be underestimated.[267] Indeed, it has been argued that an observer's understanding and experience of the process of production cannot be compared with that of the artisan's experience.[268] This means that craftsmanship studies can be advantageously employed in conjunction with experimental studies to develop a broader understanding of the entanglements that are subsumed in the performance of craft production, including textile production, and would have been inherent in its practice in

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2014. On the insistence of interdisciplinary approaches in Syro-Palestinian archaeological studies, see Levy, "The New Pragmatism," 3, 8.

[265] Weismantel and Meskell, "Substances." For further discussion of holistic approaches in studies of ancient textiles and other organic artefacts, see Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*.

[266] Hurcombe, *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture*, 113–114; Eva B. Andersson Strand, "The Basics of Textile Tools and Textile Technology: From Fibre in Fabric," in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B. Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), 10–22; Desrosiers, "Textile Terminologies and Classifications: Some Methodological and Chronological Aspects"; Michel and Nosch, "Textile Terminologies," xiii; Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 12.

[267] Such explanations can be found in Barber, *Prehistoric Textiles*, 38–78, 79–125, 126–144.

[268] Charles M. Keller, "Thought and Production: Insights of the Practitioner," in *Anthropological Perspectives on Technology*, ed. Michael B. Schiffer (Dragoon, Arizona: Amerind Foundation, 2001), 34. For arguments, see Marchand, "Knowledge in Hand," 262; Pia Tohveri, *Weaving with the Maya: Innovation and Tradition in Guatelama* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012), 104.

ancient Syro-Palestinian contexts.[269] These studies are arguably central to shifting perspectives of the archaeological evidence and what it can demonstrate.

An inherent part of the performance of textile production, or for that matter any craft production, is movement.[270] This sense of movement can be drawn from micro use-wear analyses of textile tools. It has been demonstrated that such analyses are often employed to identify the function of these artefacts, yet they also effectively emphasise that these objects are not inert, but rather were once engaged in movement. The movement that was once used to make textile remains is etched into their very materiality. These details may begin to indicate that different levels of tension were exerted on the threads using these objects.[271] The uniformity of the thickness of different threads analysed in textile remains is illustrative of the artisans' movement in the practice of spinning; the unevenness in these threads may indicate uneven or shifts in an artisan's movement, possibly due to their inexperience.[272] These

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[269] Archaeologists increasingly emphasise the value of experiential and sensory practice on their understanding of craftsmanship and practice, it is possible to gain from considering these insights. For example, this point is stressed in Hurcombe, *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture*, 112–118; Harris, "Investigating the Properties of Cloth in Prehistory"; Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 6–15. For other discussions that call for a need to develop more archaeological research by using craftspersons' perspectives, see Martin Ciszuk, "The Academic Craftsman: A Discussion on Knowledge of Craft in Textile Research," in *Ancient Textiles: Production, Craft and Society : Proceedings of the First International Conference on Ancient Textiles, Held at Lund, Sweden, and Copenhagen, Denmark, on March 19-23, 2003*, ed. Carole Gillis and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2007), 13–15. Hurcombe also stresses the need for archaeologists to gain practical knowledge and sensory understanding of textiles and textile production techniques, Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 7–15.

[270] For more on the centrality of movement and motricity in crafts, Erin O'Connor, "Embodied Knowledge: The Experience of Meaning and the Struggle Towards Proficiency in Glassblowing," *Ethnography* 6, no. 2 (2005): 183–204; Nicolette Makovicky, "'Something to Talk About': Notation and Knowledge-Making Among Central Slovak Lace-Makers," in *Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluble Relation Between Mind, Body and Environment*, ed. Trevor H. J. Marchand (Chichester; Oxford; Malden: MA: Royal Anthropological Institue; Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 81; Philpott, "Crafting Innovation."

[271] See references to evidence of groove lines above.

[272] Alternatively, such unevenness may be due to the materiality of the raw material, which may have been coarse and difficult to spin evenly. For examples of uneven thickness in spun threads, Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 4; Shamir, "Textile Remains on a Bronze Ingot." This can be compared with

analyses begin to hint at some of the movements that were used in ancient textile production, yet analyses such as these are inadequate on their own in effectively shifting scholarly examinations of archaeological evidence to a more performance centred approach. Experimental archaeology is an effective method for developing these analyses and reconnecting interpretations of ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures with their inherent performative nature and sense of movement.[273]

Experimental archaeology can also be used to reveal gaps in our understanding.[274] It may indicate possible materials that were used or discarded in textile production that were unlikely to have been preserved over time or reconstruct stages of production that are not clearly evidenced by textile remains and textile tools. An illustrative example may be the washing and spinning of woollen fibres. It is difficult to indicate from recovered textile artefacts whether or not wool was washed before being spun. Still, ethnographic and craft studies have shown that it is a stage that is commonly employed in the production of woollen textiles across a number of different contexts. This makes it worth considering the possibility that such stages may have been employed in ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production. Experiments have shown that if one washes wool, the wool loses some of its natural grease making it difficult to spin. Thus, it can be suggested that fibres may have been greased with materials such as olive oil.[275] Shamir indicates that loomweights discovered in association with olive presses at Tel Miqne Ekron (Iron Age II) may be indicative of the use of olive oil in textile

the more uniform thickness of threads discovered at Kadesh Barnea, Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls," 255.

[273] For experimental studies on Syro-Palestinian evidence, see Sheffer, "Comparative Analysis of a 'Negev Ware' Textile Impression from Tel Masos," 83–84; Sheffer, "The Use of Perforated Clay Balls on the Warp-Weighted Loom"; Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric"; Levy and Gilead, "The Emergence of the Ghassulian Textile Industry in the Southern Levant Chalcolithic Period (c.4500-3900 BCE)."

[274] Lise Bender Jørgensen, "The World According to Textiles," in *Ancient Textiles: Production, Craft and Society : Proceedings of the First International Conference on Ancient Textiles, Held at Lund, Sweden, and Copenhagen, Denmark, on March 19-23, 2003*, ed. Carole Gillis and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2007), 8.

[275] Shahal Abbo et al., "Harvesting Wild Flax in the Galilee, Israel and Extracting Fibers - Bearing on Near Eastern Plant Domestication," *Israel Journal of Plant Sciences* 62, no. 1–2 (2015): 58.

production.[276] This suggests that by employing a multidisciplinary approach to explore ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production one can broaden the scope of textile production to consider a range of possible materials and methods that were otherwise lost. Experimental archaeology can thus be used in conjunction with and in addition to more conventional archaeological approaches in order to open up different possibilities for how we interpret different textile remains and tools.[277]

By drawing from these approaches, it is possible to develop an understanding of the possible impacts of the nuanced differences between the materiality of textile tools on the performance of textile production and the textile constructed. For example, experiments have begun to illustrate that lighter loomweights were probably used to produce finer textiles, whilst heavier loomweights can be used to construct thicker or coarser textiles.[278] These approaches demonstrate the complexity of ancient textile production and the numerous methods that may have been employed to construct textile tools and textiles.[279] The location and size of perforations in these weights also has

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[276] Shamir also suggests that olive oil may have been used to lubricate practitioners' fingers when working with threads, Orit Shamir, "Loomweights and Textile Production at Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Preliminary Report," in *"Up to the Gates of Ekron": Essays on the Archaeology and History of the Eastern Mediterranean in Honor of Seymour Gitin*, ed. Sidnie White Crawford and Amnon Ben-Tor (Jerusalem: W. F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research, 2007), 45.

[277] Loosely implied in Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 1–3. Note that experimental archaeology will have it own limitations. For example, it frequently draws from ethnographical studies and textile production techniques performed in different cultures, which may or may not employ similar techniques with similar textile tools. For further discussion on the limitations of experimental archaeological methods, see Wild, "Methodological Introduction," 3–4.

[278] Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbet Nimra," 7; Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Horbat Rogem, Horbat Mesura and Horbat Ha-Ro'a," 26; Andersson Strand, "The Basics of Textile Tools and Textile Technology: From Fibre in Fabric," 12–13; Shamir and 'Ad, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbat Burin, Israel," 38. It has been suggested that the lightest of loomweights may have been used for inserting thinner threads into a tapestry or specific design, Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 470. For a broader in-depth experimental study on ancient loomweights, see Mårtensson, Nosch, and Andersson Strand, "Shape of Things."

[279] The perforations found in spindle whorls and loomweights were made using various methods. For more on the manufacture of spindle whorls, see Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 150; Shamir, "Spindle Whorls from Qiryat Ata," 210; Orit Shamir, "Spindle Whorls from Ashqelon, Afridar - Area E," *'Atiqot* 45 (2004): 98–99. For more on the manufacture of loomweights see Shamir, "Loomweights and

different impacts on the tool and how they may operate. The perforations in spindle whorls are frequently more centralised than loomweights, this was most likely to increase its efficiency and maintain the speed of spinning as has been indicated from experiments.[280] For loomweights the size of the perforation may imply the number of threads that could be tied to them.[281] Such explorations imply the significance of the materiality, particularly the weight, of textile tools on their performance, and the importance of dynamics such as tension in weaving practices. They also begin to indicate the knowledge and skill that the artisans involved in textile production that would have acquired over time.[282]

In archaeological studies, it has been emphasised that spindle whorls and loomweights were quick and easy to construct, and were made from material that was readily accessible; some scholars even stress that they were poorly worked.[283] However, these methods and materials may not have been

Whorls," 150.Ibid., 136; Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbet Nimra," 4; Orit Shamir, "Loom Weights (Tel Moza)," in *Salvage Excavations at Tel Moza - The Bronze and Iron Age Settlements and Later Occupations*, ed. Zvi Greenhut and Alon De Groot, IAA Reports 39 (Israel Antiquities Authority, 2009), 158.

[280] Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Horbat Rogem, Horbat Mesura and Horbat Ha-Ro'a," 25. The location of the perforation on loomweights appeared to be less important for its function. See discussions in Shamir, "Loomweights From Tell 'Amal," 7.

[281] Other experiments have demonstrated alternative methods that may have allowed more threads to be attached to a loomweight, such as attaching an intermediary device (a loop or ring that threads could have been attached to), Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 137, 143, 147; Shamir, "Loomweights and Textile Production at Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Preliminary Report," 46; Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 97. Possible evidence for a loop discovered at Tell Qasile is identified in Orit Shamir, "Loomweights from Tell Qasile," *Israel - People and Land* 7–8 (25–26) (1994): 9. However, it remains that their weight would still have impacted this number, Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbet Nimra," 7; Andersson Strand, "The Basics of Textile Tools and Textile Technology: From Fibre in Fabric," 15.

[282] On the importance of the weight and tension of textile tools, see Shamir and 'Ad, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbat Burin, Israel," 38. The weight of spindle whorls may be indicative of the types of fibres that were used, for example, lighter whorls were likely to have been used to spin short fibers, such as wool, Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 473. Heavier spindle whorls could have been used to achieve a tighter spin, Shamir, "Loomweights and Textile Production at Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Preliminary Report," 46.

[283] For emphasis on the accessibility and easy manufacture of these artefacts, see Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 136; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468; Levy and Gilead, "Spinning in the 5th Millennium," 132.

adopted for reasons of convenience alone. It has been suggested that unfired or sunbaked clay loomweights may have been preferred because they were better at withstanding shock from collisions than baked clay loomweights and better at maintaining tension than other materials.[284] This reiterates that a variety of factors may have influenced decisions made in textile production. This is most likely truer to the dynamic and complex entanglements that are developed between persons and things across different cultures. By recognising multiple explanations in examining ancient textile production it also allows for the possibility that ancient practitioners may have valued the materiality of these artefacts in ways that are different than what we might assume.

It is likely that many textile tools in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures were multifunctional artefacts and many could be modified and reused for other purposes.[285] This can be implied by the discovery of textile tools in unusual contexts, for example, the discovery of weights that resemble loomweights in the mouth of an olive jar has been suggested to indicate its alternative functions, perhaps when weaving was out of season.[286] Experimental studies have also been able to suggest further possible uses for particular textile tools, indicating that some loomweights and spindles may have doubled up as spools to wrap excess threads. Moreover, experimental studies have implied that some lighter loomweights may have also served a use as spindle whorls.[287] While, other textile tools seem to already be functioning in

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[284] Indicated in Felluca, "Tell Turqan Iron Age Textile Tools," 219; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468.

[285] Fischer, "Textile Production at Tell'Abū Al-Kharāz, Jordan Valley," 112–113; David Ben-Shlomo, "Early Iron Age Domestic Material Culture in Philistia and an Eastern Mediterranean Koine," in *Household Archaeology in Ancient Israel and Beyond*, ed. Assaf Yasur-Landau et al., Culture and History of the Ancient Near East, v. 50 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 199.

[286] Such examples have been discovered from, H Rosh Zayit (c. 10th-9th centuries BCE) and Tel Miqne Ekron (Iron Age II), Zvi Gal, "Loom Weights or Jar Stoppers?," *Israel Exploration Journal* 39, no. 3/4 (January 1, 1989): 281–83; Shamir, "Loomweights and Textile Production at Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Preliminary Report," 45.

[287] This has been suggested in relation to lighter 'loomweights' discovered in Early Bronze Age Tel 'Abu al-Khara (in the east of the Jordan valley, c.3000 BCE). The discovery of perforated weights were discovered both *in situ* in a straight line and an example of a similar perforated weight with a wooden stick still attached indicates their double usage, Fischer, "Textile Production at Tell'Abū Al-Kharāz, Jordan Valley," 112–113.

'secondary' or modified use, spindles whorls are frequently made from reworked pottery sherds.[288] In archaeological studies the possible multifunctional nature of textile tools is often overlooked. However, in the light of these examples and considering the probable overlap of household activities that include textile production, which also may indicate the use of these tools in multiple contexts it is appropriate to suggest that ancient textile tools probably had a wider role in ancient society than the single use that is often ascribed to it in archaeological studies. This may imply that their agency in ancient peoples' lives is not limited to a single function or even only to textile production alone.[289]

Textiles were also likely to have been used and reused for multiple purposes. Worn clothing could be patched with smaller scraps of fabric, they could also be stripped into rags or transformed into bags. Evidence of patching and mending has been identified on a number of textile remains, such as stitching and patchwork discovered on fragments from Kuntillet 'Ajrud and Kadesh Barnea.[290] The quantity of patching and mending on textile remains may hint at the economic situation in which these textiles were used.[291] However, I argue that one should be cautious in making such judgements, since it is easy to impose contemporary Western values of clothing, in which textiles are often easily disposable, onto its ancient contexts. The possibility must be acknowledged that the 'secondary' use of textiles or the mending of textiles may not necessarily be indicative of the economic conditions, but could rather imply that textiles were probably highly valued in ancient Syro-Palestinian

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[288] Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 150. For more on the reuse of pottery sherds in ancient textile production, see Shin'Ichi Nishiyama, "Reusing the Object: Rim Sherd Loomweights in the Early First Millennium BC From Tell Mastuma, North-West Syria," *Orient* 33 (1998): 88–102.

[289] It also opens up the possibility that these objects may have been valued for different material properties.

[290] Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 8; Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls," 261. Sheffer and Tidhar even suggest that many of the fabrics from Kuntillet 'Ajrud were mainly in secondary use, Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 14. It has been suggested that some of the textile remains from the Cave of the Warrior and Nahal Mishmar are most likely examples of the secondary usage of textiles, Shamir, "Textiles, Basketry and Other Organic Artifacts of the Chalcolithic Period in the Southern Levant," 148–149; Shamir, "Textiles from the Chalcolithic Period, Early and Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant," 21.

[291] Shamir, "Textile Production in Eretz-Israel," 30.

cultures. They were economically costly and time consuming to produce, moreover, it is likely that their flexibility and ability to be transformed and reused in multiple contexts would have indicated their efficacy in these ancient contexts. Both textiles and tools were likely to have enabled their ancient practitioners in ways that are still unknown to us.[292] Still, we can infer from these contexts and functions that practitioners may have appreciated them for a number of different reasons.

Textile tools clearly had functional uses, yet stylised patterns and scarab seals impressions found on a number of these objects are indicative that these objects probably had social, cultural and even ritual values across ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures; even the different shapes of loomweights possibly had social or other material meanings, rather than only being functional.[293] Graham Davies remarks at the discovery of scarab seal impressions on a number of loomweights from Megiddo (Middle Bronze Age II), 'This is surprising, as they cannot have been worth much.'[294] This is indicative of the tendency for scholars to impose contemporary Western standards of 'worth' and 'value' on ancient objects. In Davies' view, it was presumably the lack of economic worth of these objects that leads to his surprise. It is important to recognise that these tools and their materiality were

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[292] Hurcombe stresses the inevitability that not all possibilities of textile techniques that were known and employed in the past are known to us today, indicating that their impact on ancient practitioners also remains somewhat unknown, Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 165.

[293] Incised or patterned spinning whorls have been discovered from Tell es-Safi/Gath (Iron Age II), Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 474–475. Tel Batash (Late Iron Age), Orit Shamir, "Spindle Whorls," in *Timna (Tel Batash)*, ed. A. Mazar and N. Panitz-Cohen, vol. II: The Finds from the First Millennium BCE, QEDEM 42 (Jerusalem: Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 2001), 259–62. Dotted concentric circles/zigzag/fossil SW from Jerusalem (Iron Age), Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 150. Loomweights with scarab impressions discovered from Khirbet er-Rujum (Middle Bronze Age II), Tel Nami, (Middle Bronze Age II), Tel Kabri, Megiddo, and Tel Ta'nnek (Middle Bronze Age) Ezra Marcus and Michal Artzy, "A Loom Weight from Tel Nami with a Scarab Seal Impression," *Israel Exploration Journal* 45, no. 2/3 (1995): 136–49; Orit Shamir, "Loomweights from Khirbet Er-Rujum," in *Eretz Zafon: Studies in Galilean Archaeology* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2002), 51–52; Nurith Goshen, Assaf Yasur-Landau, and Eric H. Cline, "Textile Production in Palatial and Non-Palatial Contexts: The Case of Tel Kabri," in *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*, ed. Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2013), 51–52.

[294] Graham I Davies, *Megiddo* (Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 1986), 48.

probably valued in a different sense in their ancient contexts; such values may not have only been drawn from their functional purpose.

It can be emphasised that artisans, including those practicing ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production, are (or were) engaged in the process of developing and learning intimate sensory and practical knowledge of their tools, raw materials and environment.[295] An illustrative example of this knowledge in relation to ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production would be that artisans would have had to develop their sensory knowledge and familiarity of the materiality of threads in relation to that of loomweights. Through experimental practice, it has been demonstrated that if too many threads are attached to a particular loomweight it can create an uneven balance in the weaving, whereas the attachment of too few will cause the threads to snap.[296] Considering the uniformity and quality of many surviving textile remains, it can be implied that ancient artisans would have developed a good understanding of the different sizes of weights and their impact on the tension of threads.[297] This demonstrates that even by looking in-depth at this nuanced detail in the materiality of evidence it can be implied that the skills and knowledge required for textile production has been vastly underestimated in many current portrayals. This sensory knowledge is somewhat distinct from more typical conceptions of 'knowledge,' since it is learned in the body

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[295] This can be illustrated at different stages of textile production, including knowledge that is required to judge the length of time that flax need to be soaked in order to extract their fibres. Exactitude in timing for submerging flax in water to ret – critical since it determines the quality of the fibre yield, Levy and Gilead, "Spinning in the 5th Millennium," 130.

[296] For further discussion on these probable textile methods and their impact on their performance, see Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 144; Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbet Nimra," 7; Shamir and Stern, "Loom Weights from En-Gedi," 388. It is likely that an uneven number of threads would be attached to each loomweight, since it is most likely that varying weights were employed in the same loom. For an example of varying weights discovered in situ, see the excavation reports from En Gedi (Iron Age), Ibid., 143.

[297] If the difference between the weight of the loomweights were too large, this could also impact the balance of the weave; experimental studies have suggested that a difference of over 200g would have disrupted the balance of the textile weave. Yet it has also been suggested that the difference in these weights could also be strategically employed to avoid tearing at the edges of the textile being constructed. For further discussion on these impacts, see Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 143; Shamir, "Loomweights and Textile Production at Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Preliminary Report," 46.

through practice and touch.[298] Such knowledge can be seen to physically entangle artisans with their practice and with the materiality of their tools and the textiles constructed.

The centrality of the artisan's body knowledge and sensory familiarity to the performance of textile production can also be illustrated through considering an artisans' movements in relation to their tools and raw materials in the performance of different textile techniques. Textile remains effectively indicate that a broad range of techniques was employed in ancient textile production. This can begin to be illustrated by evidence of different weaving patterns, as well as different examples of stitching on these remains. Each of these techniques would have required different movements and skill levels to perform.[299] Experimental archaeological, ethnographic, and craftsmanship studies have effectively demonstrated that such body positions and movements are learnt through the body – through practice, experience, and repetition.[300] The movements of the artisan become inscribed into their bodily

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[298] It has been suggested this sort of knowledge is embedded in the body and hands rather than in mind and reasoning, Ciszuk, "The Academic Craftsman: A Discussion on Knowledge of Craft in Textile Research."

[299] On different skill levels required for different techniques, see Linda Hurcombe, "Time, Skill and Craft Specialisation as Gender Relations," in *Gender and Material Culture in Archaeological Perspective*, ed. Moira Donald and Linda Hurcombe (Hampshire, UK; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 92. Some of the techniques that were involved in ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production have been indicated in section 2.3. For example, spinning, weaving, sewing and so on. Other stages and techniques in textile production are explored in Julia A. Hendon, "Textile Production as Craft in Mesoamerica: Time, Labor and Knowledge," *Journal of Social Archaeology* 6, no. 3 (2006): 368.

[300] O'Connor, "Embodied Knowledge," 191; Hendon, "Textile Production as Craft," 362–363; Makovicky, "'Something to Talk About,'" 80, 83; Trevor H. J. Marchand, "Introduction: Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluable Relation between Mind, Body, and Environment," in *Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluble Relation Between Mind, Body and Environment*, ed. Trevor H. J. Marchand (Chichester; Oxford; Malden: MA: Royal Anthropological Institue; Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 262; Anna Odland Portisch, "The Craft of Skilful Learning: Kazakh Women's Everyday Craft Practices in Western Mongolia," in *Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluble Relation Between Mind, Body and Environment*, ed. Trevor H. J. Marchand (Chichester; Oxford; Malden: MA: Royal Anthropological Institue; Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 69; Soumhya Venkatesan, "Learning to Weave; Weaving to Learn...What?," in *Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluble Relation Between Mind, Body and Environment*, ed. Trevor H. J. Marchand (Chichester; Oxford; Malden: MA: Royal Anthropological Institue; Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 160–161; Tohveri, *Weaving with the Maya: Innovation and Tradition in Guatelama*, 48, 54–55; Maikel Henricus Gerardus Kuijpers, "The Sound of Fire, Tast

memories, even becoming as though they were second nature to more experienced artisans.[301]

The artisan's body also becomes a tool itself in the performance of different textile techniques.[302] Although ancient artisans would have employed various different tools in textile techniques, it has been suggested that there are various techniques that can be practiced with just the body.[303] For example, some of the textiles at Nahal Hemar include textiles that were produced by a looping technique that could have been constructed without tools (with fingers or with very basic tools).[304] The existence of such finger techniques indicates ways in which textile production could be practiced without leaving behind solid material evidence. It is not only specific techniques in which the body becomes a 'tool,' artisans frequently attest to using their their bodies as tools – wrapping prepared material around their wrists or holding threads between their lips.[305] This effectively elucidates the extent to which the artisan's body and their movements are immersed in the process of textile production.

These techniques not only index a specific set of movements, they indicate a particular way of being in relationship with the material world. It is the whole person that is involved in the performance of these techniques. The specific

of Copper, Feel of Bronze, and Colours of the Cast: Sensory Aspects of Metalworking Technology," in *Embodied Knowledge: Perspectives on Belief and Technology*, ed. Marie Louise Stig Sørensen and Katharina Rebay-Salisbury (Oxford; Oakville, CT: Oxbow Books, 2013), 143. Scholars frequently stress the importance of tacit or bodily knowledge in production, Hendon, "Textile Production as Craft," 356; Harald Bentz Høgseth, "Knowledge Transfer: The Craftsmen's Abstraction," in *Archaeology and Apprenticeship: Body Knowledge, Identity, and Communities of Practice*, ed. Willeke Wendrich (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 2012), 61–78; Philpott, "Crafting Innovation."

[301] Hendon, "Textile Production as Craft," 356; Marchand, "Making Knowledge," 10; Portisch, "The Craft of Skilful Learning," 66, 69; Philpott, "Crafting Innovation."

[302] This is not to disempower the body's agency, but rather to elucidate the intimacy that can be seen between the artisan and their craft in textile production.

[303] Such possible techniques are indicated and explored in Desrosiers, "Textile Terminologies and Classifications: Some Methodological and Chronological Aspects."

[304] Schick, "Nahal Hemar Cave," 37. The possibility that finger weaving techniques were practiced in ancient cultures is also considered in Ibid., 38; Desrosiers, "Textile Terminologies and Classifications: Some Methodological and Chronological Aspects"; Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 54.

[305] For examples of the body being used as a tool, see the method of wrapping prepared material around wrist and the use of fingers in textile production as suggested in Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 55.

hand movements used to perform a technique are important, as suggested, yet equally the artisan's posture and way of bearing the body plays significant roles in shaping the body's movement and in impacting the resulting materiality of the product constructed.[306] It is probable that the warp-weighted loom required its practitioner to be standing; in addition, some of the wider looms would mean the artisan would need to walk back and forth during the weaving process.[307] The artisan would have to negotiate this motion as well as simultaneously maintaining the tension and practice of their weaving movement. This stresses that the artisan must be actively engaged in performing textile techniques. However, it is important to not be misled into thinking that these techniques are simply repetitive movements.

An artisan's movements and techniques must be adjusted to the distinct material quality and form of their tools and the raw materials being used to construct threads and textiles. There is a constant 'dialogue' that is formed between artisan, tools, and the artefact in this process.[308] Similarly, as an artefact's materiality is constantly in flux so too must an artisan's movements fluctuate in the different stages and points of production in response to the

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[306] For the suggestion that the whole body is involved in movements for textile techniques see Tim Ingold, "Beyond Art and Technology: The Anthropology of Skill," in *Anthropological Perspectives on Technology*, ed. Michael B. Schiffer (Dragoon, Arizona: Amerind Foundation, 2001), 20; Marchand, "Knowledge in Hand," 262; Philpott, "Crafting Innovation." On the importance of posture and musco-skeletal positions in techniques and movements, O'Connor, "Embodied Knowledge," 190; Tim Ingold, "The Textility of Making," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 34 (2010): 98; Tim Ingold, *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description* (London; New York: Routledge, 2011), 52, 58; Marchand, "Knowledge in Hand," 262.

[307] These movements and positions have been suggested in Sheffer, "The Use of Perforated Clay Balls on the Warp-Weighted Loom," 82; Shamir, "Textile Production in Eretz-Israel," 27; Shamir and Stern, "Loom Weights from En-Gedi," 381; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 467. Alternatively, as has been suggested, it could be that two or three weavers worked on the same loom, Shamir, "Textile Production in Eretz-Israel," 25. As implied in Levy and Gilead, "The Emergence of the Ghassulian Textile Industry in the Southern Levant Chalcolithic Period (c.4500-3900 BCE)," 39.

[308] Ingold, "Beyond Art and Technology," 23; Jean-Pierre Warnier, "A Praxeological Approach to Subjectivation in a Material World," *Journal of Material Culture* 6, no. 1 (2001): 9; Ingold, "The Textility of Making," 92–93, 98; Portisch, "The Craft of Skilful Learning," 68–72; Makovicky, "'Something to Talk About,'" 82; Venkatesan, "Learning to Weave," 160; Ingold, *Being Alive*, 54–55, 58, 61; Philpott, "Crafting Innovation"; Tohveri, *Weaving with the Maya: Innovation and Tradition in Guatelama*, 59.

changing materiality of the object being constructed.[309] It has been stressed that no two actions are the same in construction – there is always a nuanced change in one's movement.[310] Such adjustments or corrections have been identified as motor algorithms that an artisan must also learn with their whole body as a way of being.[311] The uniqueness of practices of textile production indicates the significance of the materiality of each textile tool that has been excavated. Whilst these tools most likely indicate the practice of prevalent textile techniques, they are also distinct – each tool and material used evokes a slightly different dialogue with its artisan. This can be used to elucidate how each of these artefacts manifest specific relations with their ancient practitioners which are, in turn, influenced by their particular materiality.

These fresh insights into the practice and performance of textile production help us to reassess the possible value and agency that these archaeological text tools may have had in their ancient contexts. An artisan's skills and dexterity to some extent determines and impacts their employment of their tools, the material qualities and materiality of the artefact.[312] For example, a weaver's dexterity and skill is instrumental in effecting the uniformity and consistency of a textile, which in turn may impact its smoothness or durability and so on. As has been proposed, it is these material qualities that make up part of an object's agency. Still, whilst an artisan initiates movements and techniques, their movements are also directed, controlled, and limited by the materiality of their tools and the raw materials used in construction. Thereby textile tools may be considered to exert agency and power over the artisan

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[309] Ingold, "The Textility of Making," 92. The artisan's environment would also have impacted his movements and responses in textile production.

[310] Portisch, "The Craft of Skilful Learning," 72; Ingold, *Being Alive*, 52.

[311] Warnier, "A Praxeological Approach to Subjectivation," 9–13.

[312] Ingold, "Beyond Art and Technology," 23; Roy Dilley, "Reflections on Knowledge Practices and the Problem of Ignorance," in *Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluble Relation Between Mind, Body and Environment*, ed. Trevor H. J. Marchand (Chichester; Oxford; Malden: MA: Royal Anthropological Institue; Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 76; John L. Creese, "Social Contexts of Learning and Individual Motor Performance," in *Archaeology and Apprenticeship: Body Knowledge, Identity, and Communities of Practice*, ed. Willeke Wendrich (Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press, 2012), 43–60. Note that the artisan's impact is not only on the materiality of the textile produced, but also on textile tools, particularly on those that were handmade. For example, see evidence of finger prints on textile tools from ancient Syro-Palestine, Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 147; Friend, *The Loom Weights*, Nos. 15, 16, 25, 26, 31.

and impact the material qualities of the textile formed. This effectively demonstrates that the relationship that is formed between artisan and their tools is a reciprocal entanglement, in which the agencies of both can be seen to impact upon each other.[313]

The performance of ancient textile techniques, which are directly influenced by the materiality of the artisan's tools and the product itself, can transform the artisan's body in ways that are unanticipated or unwanted.[314] Injury and strain are prevalent in textile production, for example, a number of case studies on contemporary hand weavers demonstrated that high numbers of weavers experienced some kind of occupational injury or repetitive strain.[315] Studies in osteology have also gone some way towards indicating that the impact that social activities may have had on skeletal remains, although those related to ancient Syro-Palestinian skeletal remains are usually limited. It is necessary to look further afield to illustrate this point.[316] Bettina Arnold argues that many female skeletons from the 'Neolithic Near East' exhibit bone deformation in their knees and shoulders, which could be linked to the

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[313] Marchand, "Knowledge in Hand," 260. Keller begins to unpack the reciprocal relationship between the artisan and his tools in craft production, however, his depiction of this relationship is limited, Keller, "Thought and Production," 35, 37.

[314] See section 1.6.

[315] Such injuries are caused regardless of whether the artisan is a novice or is proficient in textile techniques. For case studies, see Prasun Banerjee and Somnath Gangopadhyay, "A Study on the Prevalence of Upper Extremity Repetitive Strain Injuries Among the Handloom Weavers of West Bengal," *Journal of Human Ergology* 32 (2003): 17–22; Alireza Choobineh et al., "Musculoskeletal Symptons as Related to Ergonomic Factors in Iranian Hand-Woven Carpet Industry and General Guidelines for Workstation Design," *International Journal of Occupational Safety and Ergonomics* 10, no. 2 (2004): 157–68; Sangeeta Pandit, Prakash Kumar, and Debkumar Chakrabarti, "Ergonomic Problems Prevalent in Handloom Units of North East India," *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications* 3, no. 1 (2013): 1–7. For observations of strain in studies on craft production, see Makovicky, "'Something to Talk About,'" 81; Venkatesan, "Learning to Weave," 153, 159.

[316] For discussions on the limitations of and impediments to the development of osteological studies in skeletal remains from ancient Syro-Palestinian sites, see Yossi Nagar, "Bone Reburial in Israel: Legal Restrictions and Methodological Implications," in *The Dead and Their Possessions: Repatriation in Principle, Policy and Practice*, ed. Cressida Fforde, Jane Hubert, and Paul Turnbull (New York; London: Routledge, 2002), 87–90; Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, "From Womb to Tomb: The Israelite Family in Death as in Life," in *The Family in Life and in Death in Ancient Israel: Sociological and Archaeological Perspectives*, ed. Patricia Dutcher-Walls (New York; London: T & T Clark, 2009), 124–125; Yossi Nagar, "Human Osteological Database at the Israel Antiquities Authority: Overview and Some Examples of Use," *Bioarchaeology of the Near East* 5 (2011): 1–18.

repetitive motion common in activities of grinding corn on stone mortars.[317] It must be acknowledged that it is difficult to identify specific evidence that illustrates of the impact of textile production on ancient bones, since bones that one might expect to find evidence of strain pointing to such activities, such as bones in the hands, often do not survival burial and excavation.[318] Nevertheless, the example above helps to illustrate aspects of the impact that these ancient artefacts would most likely have had on practitioners in their ancient contexts.

Experimental archaeology cannot only be employed to elucidate different possibilities for movements and techniques used in ancient textile production, it can also be used to indicate the time consumption that such techniques and stages required.[319] For example, Janet Levy and Isaac Gilead proposed that the largest of the luxury garments that was discovered at the early site of the 'Cave of the Warrior' might have taken up to six months to make, with numerous people that would probably have been involved in its construction.[320] It is most likely that this garment was a particularly luxury item, therefore, it is probable that other garments could have taken much less time to produce.[321] Still, such studies effectively illustrate that the entire

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[317] Bettina Arnold, "Gender and Archaeological Mortuary Analysis," in *Women in Antiquity: Theoretical Approaches to Gender and Archaeology*, ed. Sarah Milledge Nelson (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2007), 117. For a critical approach that identifies some of the key difficulties that face osteological studies, see Tony Waldron, *Counting the Dead: The Epidemiology of Skeletal Populations* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1994), 92–101.

[318] Tony Waldron, *Counting the Dead: The Epidemiology of Skeletal Populations* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 1994), 92–101. For more on the difficulties of using osteology in biblical archaeology see Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve*, 98.

[319] Most experimental studies that discuss the time consumption of textile production have focused weaving and spinning, yet Shahal Abbo et al. develops such discussions further by exploring the time consumption of other stages in flax production, such as harvesting and preparing fibers for spinning and so on, Abbo et al., "Harvesting Wild Flax in the Galilee, Israel." For similar studies, but in relation to the time consumption of the preparation of wool and so on, see Breniquet and Michel, "Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean," 2014, 5.

[320] They include in their approximation an estimate of the time consumption of other domestic activities and the possible impact that geographical climate and sunlight hours may have had on its construction, Levy and Gilead, "The Emergence of the Ghassulian Textile Industry in the Southern Levant Chalcolithic Period (c.4500-3900 BCE)," 37–41.

[321] Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 317. Experimental studies have demonstrated that some textiles may have been relatively quick to weave, perhaps even only taking

process of textile production was vastly time consuming in ancient cultures.[322] This has been recognised to some extent in biblical scholarship, yet many scholars do not indicate why textile production is so time consuming nor do they seem to consider its impact on the value of textiles and its production in ancient West Asian cultures. In addition to its manual labour requirements, the extent to which textile production is time consuming is also indicative that textiles had social and economic value in ancient cultures. It also reiterates the intimacy that is constructed between artisan, raw materials, and tools in the process of making, this is not only an isolated moment, but a relationship built over time.

Time can even be considered in distinct ways in craft production. Linda Hurcombe indicates the concept of time in craft production is not strictly linear as one might anticipate. Instead, Hurcombe argues, tasks take up the artisan's time in different ways, some tasks only require intermittent involvement, and other stages can be carried out whilst performing other tasks, yet another stage may require the artisan's full attention.[323] For example, it has been suggested that spinning could be performed whilst walking or even performing other tasks such as shepherding.[324] Other tasks such as weaving techniques requires higher levels of concentration, implying that time is spent differently in these different stages of production.[325] This might demonstrate how even the concept of time may be reconstructed in the performance of textile production.

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a few hours, Sheffer, "The Use of Perforated Clay Balls on the Warp-Weighted Loom," 82. Other impacts on time consumption may also include the artisan's skill level and the number of people involved in making a particular garment.

[322] For emphasis on the time, labour, and economic consumption of ancient textile production, see Shamir, "Textile Production in Eretz-Israel," 19. For further discussion of this point in association with crafts production in general, see Hurcombe, "Time, Skill and Craft Specialisation as Gender Relations," 92; Daniel Miller, "The Power of Making," in *The Power of Making*, ed. D. Chaney (London: V&A Publishing, 2011), 14–27; Philpott, "Crafting Innovation."

[323] Hurcombe, "Time, Skill and Craft Specialisation as Gender Relations."

[324] Suggested in Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 149; Shamir, "Textile Production in Eretz-Israel," 24; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 485; Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 37.

[325] Hurcombe, "Time, Skill and Craft Specialisation as Gender Relations" Particularly, 98-99.

2.6 Social and Material Networks

It is important to consider the broader meshwork of social and material relations that were manifested and constructed through ancient Syro-Palestinian textiles and their production, since these networks represent key aspects of the social and material life of textiles; they can also be employed to broaden our perceptions of textile production itself. The potential risk of honing in on particular textile tools or techniques as many scholars seem to is to isolate and limit what is considered 'textile production' to particular stages or techniques, rather than considering other stages of production that may have influenced the construction of textiles or consider how this craft may have been enmeshed with the social and material lives of persons and things with which they interact and engage. The contexts in which archaeological evidence are discovered, as well as the materiality of textile tools themselves, are indicative of the types of people that may have been involved in textile production and the other activities they may have been associated with or performed alongside. This discussion shall particularly consider the domestic, specialised and cultic contexts in which evidence for textile production has been discovered.

The materiality of textile remains and textiles tools implies that ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production was probably an accessible 'craft' that could have been practised by people from different social backgrounds.[326] As suggested, many textile remains and textile tools seem to be made using local materials, particularly artefacts such as loomweights many of which were produced using local clay.[327] There is little evidence that loomweights, spindle whorls and other textile tools were mass-produced. Indeed, their non-

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[326] Archaeologists have stressed the discovery of textiles that reflect skilled craftsmanship at Kuntillet 'Ajrud, Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd," 14. Shamir interprets irregular and inconsistent stitches on textile remains from Kadesh Barnea as an indication of unskilled or careless practitioners, Shamir, "Textiles, Loom Weights and Spindle Whorls," 260–261.

[327] Loomweights could be unfired, sun-baked, or lightly fired, each of these methods could be produced locally. For examples that imply that loomweights were made from local clay, see Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 136; Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbet Nimra," 2; Shamir, "Loom Weights (Tel Moza)," 158; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468.

uniformity may imply that they were produced locally, by hand.[328] It is probable that many of the raw materials used to produce textiles were also acquired locally, although there is some evidence for the trade and distribution of textiles. The consideration that these tools do not appear to be specialised, nor constructed using costly or rare materials supports the suggestion that this craft may have been accessible to most levels of society.[329] This is not to suggest that it did not require skill or any specialised knowledge to produce textiles, still, it is likely that methods for textile production were widely disseminated and skills could be learnt over time. This accessibility is supported by the frequent discovery of textile tools from contexts identified as domestic, indicating that textile production was performed in people's homes, most likely impacting people's lives on a daily basis.[330] A closer examination of these contexts can elucidate the extent of these entangled relationships in the home.

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[328] Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468; Levy and Gilead, "Spinning in the 5th Millennium," 132.

[329] This is implied in Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 136; Levy and Gilead, "Spinning in the 5th Millennium," 132. Still, it can be recognised that some ancient Syro-Palestinian textile tools were made with more costly materials. For example, the discovery of a number of ivory spindle whorls from Megiddo (11th century BCE), Yigael Yadin, "Megiddo of the Kings of Israel," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 33, no. 3 (1970): 78; Yigal Shiloh, "Megiddo," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leṿinzon-Gilboʻa, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 1016. Also, iron and bronze needles discovered at Tell Jawa, Megiddo (Iron Age), Nahal David (Early Iron Age), Nahman Avigad, "The Nahal David Caves," in *The New Encyclopedia of Archaeological Excavations in the Holy Land*, ed. Ephraim Stern, Joseph Aviram, and Ayelet Leṿinzon-Gilboʻa, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society & Carta, 1993), 823; Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 53. This might indicate that some textile tools may have been high status objects that may have been employed in elite contexts. This suggestion is supported to some extent by the discovery of textile production in contexts that were most likely high status sites, such as in Palatial contexts at Tel Kabri (Middle Bronze Age), Goshen, Yasur-Landau, and Cline, "Textile Production in Palatial and Non-Palatial Contexts: The Case of Tel Kabri."

[330] Archaeological evidence for textile production in domestic contexts has been discovered across Syro-Palestinian excavations. For example, at Jerusalem (Iron Age), Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 153. Tell es-Saʼidiyeh (Iron Age), Pritchard, *Tell Es-Saʻidiyeh*, 31. Tell Beersheba (Iron Age), Lily Singer-Avitz, "Household Activities at Tel Beersheba," in *Household Archaeology in Ancient Israel and Beyond*, ed. Assaf Yasur-Landau, Jennie R. Ebeling, and Laura B. Mazow, Culture and History of the Ancient Near East, v. 50 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 275–302. Khirbet Avot (Late Iron Age, Persian Period), Shamir, "Two Spindle Whorls and a Loomweight from Khirbet Avot."

Textile production was intricately embedded within household activities. When evidence for textile production has been located in the remains of 'domestic' houses they have frequently been discovered in main living spaces in the home.[331] The material evidence suggests that in these spaces people often engaged in a number of different activities, such as food production and consumption as well as household rituals.[332] Textile tools have sometimes been discovered in various different rooms, such as storage rooms; however, these artefacts may have been used for a number of different purposes.[333] Such suggestions demonstrate that textile production should not be considered in isolation. It is most likely that its performance intermingled with other activities in the social life of the home. The evidence for several activities taking part in one space is indicative that there were probably overlaps between these activities and the tools employed in them. This consideration illustrates Linda Hurcombe's portrayal of the complexity of time, implying how time may be split across a number of different tasks and stages of production, involving different levels of multitasking. It can be demonstrated

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[331] Note that many houses, particularly from the Iron Age period were four-roomed houses in which the largest or longest room was usually the primary site of domestic activity, such as food preparation and textile production. For more in-depth discussion on this style of house, see Rainer Albertz and Rüdiger Schmitt, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant* (Eisenbrauns: Winona Lake, Indiana, 2012), 26–34. See also, Yigal Shiloh, "The Four-Room House Its Situation and Function in the Israelite City," *Israel Exploration Journal* 20, no. 3/4 (1970): 180–190; Lawrence E. Stager, "The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research Cambridge, Mass.*, no. 260 (1985): 1–35; Avraham Faust, "The Rural Community in Ancient Israel During Iron Age II," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 2000, 17–39; Avraham Faust and Shlomo Bunimovitz, "The Four Room House: Embodying Iron Age Israelite Society," *Near Eastern Archaeology* 66, no. 1–2 (2003): 22–31. Textile production artefacts have been discovered in the main rooms at sites, such as, Tell Beersheba (Iron Age), Singer-Avitz, "Household Activities at Tel Beersheba," 285. Tell es-Sa'idiyeh (c. eight century BCE), Meyers, "Material Remains and Social Relations," 432. Tell Timnah (Iron Age II), Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 72–77.
[332] For example, the discovery of bread production and weaving activities at the same locus in domestic houses in Tell Es-Sa 'idiyeh (c. 825-790 BCE), Tubb, "Tell Es-Sa'idiyeh: Preliminary Report on the First Seasons of Renewed Excavations," 31.
[333] On the discovery of textile production in different rooms, see Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 58; Albertz and Schmitt, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant*, 26–34. It has also been proposed that some activities, such as weaving, may have been seasonal, implying that loomweights may have been stored for the rest of the year, Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 142; Shamir, "Loomweights and Textile Production at Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Preliminary Report," 45; Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 58.

that not only are different activities entangled with textile production, but also various different people are enmeshed and engaged in the practice of textile production in their domestic contexts.

It is probable that certain aspects of textile production were performed in social groups – within families, household groups and local and regional networks.[334] The discovery of evidence for textile production in domestic contexts has led many scholars to suggest that textile techniques were probably practised by different members of a family. It also indexes social relationships that develop between parents and their children through the process of teaching and learning textile techniques and skills.[335] They are entangled in these social relationships through the materiality of shared tools and the performance of textile production. Domestic activities were probably not limited to families, instead, some scholars are increasingly beginning to stress the importance of household complexes.[336] It is argued that a number of houses may have shared social spaces - probably a shared courtyard - in which many domestic activities would have taken place in larger social groups.[337] This may further impact conceptions of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production, since it opens up the possibility that textile production was

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[334] On the likelihood that textile production was performed in groups, see Meyers, "Material Remains and Social Relations," 435; Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 56–57; Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve*, 133–134, 141–142. It can be noted that 'family' groups most likely referred to broader co-residential families. This term recognises that "people beyond kin" such as slaves could be incorporated into the "family household" (p.24). Albertz and Schmitt also indicate "pre-industrial families were in most cases units of production and consumption" (p.24). For a more detailed discussion on these family households and their production, see Albertz and Schmitt, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant*, 21–24.

[335] Indicated in Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 59; Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve*, 136–139, 141–146.

[336] Suggested in Aaron J. Brody, "The Archaeology of the Extended Family: A Household Compound from Iron II Tell En-Nasbeh," in *Household Archaeology in Ancient Israel and Beyond*, ed. Assaf Yasur-Landau et al., Culture and History of the Ancient Near East, v. 50 (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 254; Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Religion at Home: The Materiality of Practice," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Ancient Israel*, ed. Susan Niditch (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 350–352.

[337] Stager, "The Archaeology of the Family in Ancient Israel," 18–20; Stavrakopoulou, "Religion at Home: The Materiality of Practice," 350. Also on the suggestion that weaving was probably performed in open courtyards, see Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 32–33, 58. Cf. Albertz and Schmitt, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant*, 39–41.

performed in larger social groups, in which tools and local resources were shared between amongst those in wider household groups, rather than only in compact family groups.[338]

The suggestion that textile production was probably performed in wider social groups is supported to some extent by the archaeological evidence. Textile tools have frequently been discovered in spaces identified as courtyards.[339] The discovery of a number of piles of loomweights in the same locus may indicate that a number of looms were set up, allowing several artisans to weave side by side;[340] wider looms may have required a number of weavers to operate effectively.[341] The entanglement of textile production in people's social lives effectively demonstrates once again that material relations are at the heart of social relationships between people. It can also be suggested that household activities such as textile production were significant in constructing the social identities of members in these social groups. Although this activity may have been performed in the daily lives of many people in ancient Syro-Palestinian society it can be suggested that amongst these practitioners there were a diverse range of skill-levels – ranging from complete novices to experienced and even specialised practitioners.

A number of archaeological sites indicate that ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production was practiced on a larger scale. For example, regional centres for textile production may have existed in during the Iron Age at Beth Shean, Tell El-Hammah, Tel Miqne Ekron, Tell es-Safi, and Tell Dire 'Alla.[342] These are usually identified by the discovery of large numbers of textile artefacts at a site. Where concentrations of tools are particularly high these locations are often identified as textile workshops. This would have enabled the production

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[338] Suggested in Meyers, "Material Remains and Social Relations," 435–436; Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 32–33, 59; Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve*, 141–142.

[339] See multiple examples in Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric."

[340] Suggested in Carol Meyers, "In the Household and Beyond: The Social World of Israelite Women," *Studia Theologica* 63, no. 1 (2009): 25–26; Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve*, 133.

[341] Suggested in Schick, "The Textiles," 20.

[342] Shamir, "Loomweights and Whorls," 142; Shamir, "Loomweights and Textile Production at Tel Miqne-Ekron: A Preliminary Report," 47; Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 473; Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 270.

of specialised textiles or more high status garments, since some of these specialised contexts included installations of pools that were possibly used for dyeing textiles.[343] It has also been suggested that evidence of textile production from Persian period sites are increasingly discovered in 'public' buildings rather than principally in 'private' or domestic houses.[344] This may indicate that textile production was increasingly practiced as a larger-scale industry, yet one must be tentative with these suggestions without more conclusive evidence.[345] The discovery of specialised contexts for textile productions indicates the development of textile production as a commercialised industry.[346] Such examples indicate the prominence of textiles as both a socially and economically valuable products in ancient Syro-Palestine.

Biblical scholars often assume that it is possible that textile production played significance cultic or ritual role in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures. It has been widely acknowledged that textile production was practiced in the same location as cultic activities. For example, evidence for textile production was discovered alongside cultic paraphernalia at Iron Age sites such as, Kuntillet 'Ajrûd, Khirbet al-Mudayna, Megiddo, Tel Miqne Ekron, Tel Qasile and Tell Taanek.[347] In some of these locations the proximity of textile tools to cultic or ritual objects may be incidental. Textiles may have been required for cultic

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[343] For such a case, see excavation reports at Khirbet Nimra (Persian period), Shamir, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbet Nimra," 4.

[344] Ibid., 6; Shamir, "Textile Remains on a Bronze Ingot," 26; Shamir and 'Ad, "Loomweights of the Persian Period from Khirbat Burin, Israel," 38.

[345] This may also be supported from Deborah Cassuto's suggestion that higher numbers and a wider range of types of loomweights discovered at Iron Age II from Tell es-Safi/Gath comparative to finds from Iron Age I, was indicative of growth in the intensity of textile production both domestically and commercially in this later period, Cassuto, "Weaving Implements," 468. Still, it is difficult to discern whether this is reflective of broader textile production in ancient Syro-Palestine.

[346] Still, it is likely that textiles would have been produced for economic purposes even in sites with smaller-scale production. Moreover, it is probable that even textile workshops were often fairly small and may have still been run by an extended family, as indicated in Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 269.

[347] Sheffer and Tidhar, "Textiles and Basketry at Kuntillat 'Ajrûd"; Friend, *The Loom Weights*, 1–5; Ackerman, "Asherah, the West Semitic Goddess of Spinning and Weaving?," 18–19; Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 283–312. It is suggested that textile production has often been discovered in association with cultic sites or objects in Stager and Wolff, "Production and Commerce in Temple Courtyards," 98.

garments or could have been sold as part of the temple or cultic economy.[348] Still, the possibility that textile production could be seen as part of, and not only in loose conjunction with, cultic or ritual activities should not be overlooked, particularly considering the lack of clear distinctions between the sacred and secular in ancient West Asian cultures.

It can also be tentatively suggested that textile production played a role in ancient domestic or household rituals.[349] It is proposed that the domestic house was a ritual space and that the activities performed in the house were probably incorporated into the cultic activities of ancient household religion.[350] It is difficult to establish an explicit connection between textile production and ritual activities through the archaeological evidence. Still, textile tools have been found in these same locations as household ritual or cult objects, such as figurines, which implies that rituals were at the least practised in the same spaces as textile production.[351] Therefore, they cannot be completely segregated from these ancient household rituals.

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[348] Evidence from various ancient West Asian texts relating to the construction of garments for cult statues and ritual objects implies that cultic garments were required in cultic activities in other ancient West Asian cultures. Examples of such texts are identified and examined in A. Leo Oppenheim, "The Golden Garments of the Gods," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 8, no. 3 (1949): 172–93; Zawadzki, *Garments of the Gods*, 2006; Stefan Zawadzki, *Garments of the Gods*, Volume 2: Texts, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 260 (Fribourg, Switzerland; Göttingen: Academic Press ; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013).

[349] Until recently the activities of household religion have been marginalised and overlooked in biblical studies, yet Albertz and Schmitt's, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant* provides a detailed and comprehensive discussion of household religion and archaeological cultic objects found across Iron Age sites in Israel and the Levant. Particularly relevant to this study is chapter 3, 'Elements of Domestic Cult in Ancient Israel', pp.219, Albertz and Schmitt, *Family and Household Religion in Ancient Israel and the Levant*. Note that Albertz and Schmitt focus largely on archaeological evidence for food production and consumption, rather than on evidence for textile production. For further discussions on household religion, see Carol Meyers, "Household Religion," in *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah*, ed. Francesca Stavrakopoulou and John Barton (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 118–34; Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 266–281; Stavrakopoulou, "Religion at Home: The Materiality of Practice."

[350] This is also explored by Francesca Stavrakopoulou, particularly in relation to materiality, Stavrakopoulou, "Religion at Home: The Materiality of Practice."

[351] For example, Ebeling suggests that amulets have been discovered in the same contexts as weaving implements in domestic locations from Lachish (Eighth Century BCE), Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times*, 108.

In contemporary Western scholarship, textile production is primarily regarded for its functional status, rather than for its social values within ancient cultures. Therefore, it is likely that many scholars are likely to be somewhat hesitant with the suggestion that textile production was probably a ritualised activity. However, ethnographic studies frequently illustrate cultures in which textile production is thought to have ritual efficacy. Garments were often believed to be imbued with or manifest ritual potency or power, including supranatural, spiritual or divine power, through the process of its creation.[352] Whilst such examples must not be imposed on ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures, they can be seen to overturn any contemporary Western presumptions that craft and production must be considered as something that is completely separate or distinct from ritual. In the Hebrew Bible there are a number of texts that also support the suggestion that textile production may have played a cultic purpose, for example, in 2 Kings 23:7 as well as the production of textiles for the tabernacle that was led by divinely inspired craftsmen in Exodus 35:35 as mentioned earlier.[353] The performance of textile production should not be pigeonholed as solely practical and functional, it is probable that it may have held many social connotations and could have manifested ritual potency in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures.

It is possible that textile tools were also active in contributing to the numinous quality thought to be manifested in ancient textiles – they may have manifested ritual agency. This could tentatively be implied from the discovery

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[352] On the ritual potency of textile production in ethnographic studies, see Chloe Colchester, "Relative Imagery: Patterns of Response to the Revival of Archaic Chiefly Dress in Fiji," in *Clothing as Material Culture*, ed. Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 139–58; Chloe Colchester, "Objects of Conversion: Concerning the Transfer of Sulu to Fiji," in *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, ed. Graeme Were and Susanne Küchler (London: UCL Press, 2005), 33–46; Amiria Henare, "Nga Aho Tipuna (Ancestral Threads): Maori Cloaks from New Zealand," in *Clothing as Material Culture*, ed. Susanne Küchler and Daniel Miller (Oxford: Berg, 2005), 121–38; Vilsoni Hereniko, "Dressing and Undressing the Bride and Groom at a Rotuman Wedding," in *The Art of Clothing: A Pacific Experience*, ed. Graeme Were and Susanne Küchler (London: UCL Press, 2005), 103–9; Mark S Mosko, "Fashion as Fetish: The Agency of Modern Clothing and Traditional Body Decoration among North Mekeo of Papua New Guinea," *The Contemporary Pacific* 19, no. 1 (2007): 39–83.
[353] As suggested in Ackerman, "Asherah, the West Semitic Goddess of Spinning and Weaving?," 18–19.

of scarab beetle impressions discovered on a number of loomweights.[354] Scarab beetle iconography has frequently been identified as ritually potent images, which may imply that this image may have manifested apotropaic or ritual power. It is equally possible that these impressions were simply used to demarcate different groups or types of loomweights. Still, it can be suggested that if textile production was performed in a ritual capacity it must be considered that textile tools and textiles themselves were likely to have also been thought to manifest ritual potency. This may begin to broaden contemporary Western conceptions of the possible agency and value of ancient artefacts, yet it is possible to go further to challenge Westernised assumptions or influences in interpretations of this evidence.

Studies of textile production, particularly in biblical scholarship, tend to focus on activities of spinning and weaving, sometimes these may include the discussion of preparatory stages such as combing or cleaning fibres ready for spinning. However, it must be recognised that 'textile production' incorporates more than just these stages, I argue that the domestication and husbandry of animals and the cultivation of plants for materials used to construct textiles should also be identified as stages of textile production. It is probable that these stages have often been overlooked since they do not seem to be directly linked to textile production, yet, however distanced these activities appear, they still have an impact on the quality and material properties of textiles constructed with these raw materials. Such stages are clearly impacted by the environment and climate: for example, rainfall and heat can

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[354] See references to examples of loomweights with scarab beetle impressions in section 2.5.

influence the yield of flax harvest.[355] However, they are also usually dependent on humans' management and exploitation strategies.[356]

The influence of these early stages on the construction of ancient textiles has been explored in recent exploratory studies, which have particularly drawn from archaeozoological and archaeobotanical studies.[357] It can be recognised that there are different species of flax that probably existed in ancient Syro-Palestine.[358] The employment of different species would have had an impact on ancient textiles.[359] This may indicate the importance of the domestication of flax in enabling ancient artisans to produce a greater quantity and quality of

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[355] For more on the impact of environment on raw materials, see Breniquet and Michel, "Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean," 2014, 4; Emmanuelle Vila and Daniel Helmer, "The Expansion of Sheep Herding and the Development of Wool Production in the Ancient Near East: An Archaeozoological and Iconographical Approach," in *Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean: From the Beginnings of Sheep Husbandry to Insitutional Textile Industry*, ed. Catherine Breniquet and Cécile Michel, Ancient Textile Series 17 (Oxford; Havertown, PA: Oxbow Books, 2014), 27; Abbo et al., "Harvesting Wild Flax in the Galilee, Israel."

[356] As emphasised in Hurcombe, *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture*, 121–123; Breniquet and Michel, "Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean," 2014, 2, 4; Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 3–5, 164–165.

[357] For example, Andersson Strand, "The Basics of Textile Tools and Textile Technology: From Fibre in Fabric"; Eva B. Andersson Strand, "Sheep, Wool, and Textile Production. An Interdisciplinary Approach to the Complexity of Wool Working," in *Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean: From the Beginnings of Sheep Husbandry to Insitutional Textile Industry*, ed. Catherine Breniquet and Cécile Michel, Ancient Textile Series 17 (Oxford; Havertown, PA: Oxbow Books, 2014), 41–51; Breniquet and Michel, "Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean," 2014; Vila and Helmer, "The Expansion of Sheep Herding and the Development of Wool Production in the Ancient Near East"; Abbo et al., "Harvesting Wild Flax in the Galilee, Israel." See also examples in Hurcombe, "Time, Skill and Craft Specialisation as Gender Relations"; Hurcombe, *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture*; Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*.

[358] Although often overlooked, it is possible that wild species of flax may have been harvested and used to produce linen textiles. On the probable use of wild flax in ancient Syro-Palestine, see Abbo et al., "Harvesting Wild Flax in the Galilee, Israel." See also, Shamir, "Textiles, Basketry and Other Organic Artifacts of the Chalcolithic Period in the Southern Levant," 143; Shamir, "Textiles from the Chalcolithic Period, Early and Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant," 16. Hurcombe stresses that wild resources for textiles have often been overlooked, Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 5.

[359] It has been illustrate that the yield output of wild flax is significantly lower than domesticated flax. These fibres are harder to spun and create rougher textured threads. For experimental studies on harvesting and producing wild flax, see Abbo et al., "Harvesting Wild Flax in the Galilee, Israel."

textiles.[360] Wool is also not a uniform material. Its quality and length is dependent on factors, such as, climate, the age of the sheep and where on the body of the sheep these fibres originate.[361] Archaeozoological studies also suggest that different ancient West Asian cultures probably selectively bred sheep in order to produce sheep with a desirably quality of fleece.[362] Such factors effectively illustrate how the production of textiles is inseparable from these stages of production. These stages can be used to further elucidate the material histories of a textile and its materiality. It can also be implied that through the process of the production of such materials people develop intimate and complex relationships with these plants and animals.[363] Therefore, it is important to recognise the material and social entanglements of these industries and their impact on the value of clothing and textiles in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures.

By acknowledging these industries as stages of textile production, it is possible to develop an understanding of the social and economic value of textile production and the materials used in this production. It implies that a wider number of people were involved in textile production than indicated by the direct material evidence or even indicated from household groups. This suggests the impact that this production would have had on broader society. The cultivation of plants for textile fibres or domestication of sheep for wool would have required the use of land and water supplies, implying that a whole society was likely to have been impacted in some way even indirectly by this production. Anything that required significant manpower and used resources, like textile production, can be seen to have significance social and economic value in ancient cultures. Material and textual evidence for textile trade in ancient West Asian cultures supports the suggestion that textile production

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[360] Loosely implied in Ibid.

[361] Eva Andersson Strand illustrates how even different methods for obtaining wool, such as plucking, shearing, and combing would have also had an impact on the materiality of the wool and has further impacts on how long it would take until the sheep's wool was ready to be plucked or sheared again. For further discussion see Andersson Strand, "The Basics of Textile Tools and Textile Technology: From Fibre in Fabric"; Andersson Strand, "Sheep, Wool, and Textile Production."

[362] Breniquet and Michel, "Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean," 2014, 2; Vila and Helmer, "The Expansion of Sheep Herding and the Development of Wool Production in the Ancient Near East," 27.

[363] Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 3–5, 16–131.

could have played important in contributing to the economic growth in different locations.[364] These suggestions only begin to unpack the significance that these production stages had in their ancient contexts, yet it still effectively broadens our understanding of the complex relationships and values that are enmeshed in ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production.

2.7 Summary

Material evidence can demonstrate that ancient textiles and textile production was complex. This archaeological evidence also indexes the complex entanglements that was shared between people and their clothes in ancient Syro-Palestinian culture. As such, this material source offers more than a decorative supplement to studies of clothing and textile production in the Hebrew Bible. This complexity cannot be fully recognised until it is interpreted as an independent source apart from the depictions of clothing and textile production methods portrayed in the Hebrew Bible. I have demonstrated how one can construct a critical approach for examining the material evidence for ancient Syro-Palestinian textiles and textile production by drawing from the insights from multidisciplinary approaches. This approach has been used to indicate that archaeological evidence can be used to enrich our understanding of the impact that textiles and textile production would have had in their ancient contexts and on ancient Syro-Palestinian perspectives of the significance of clothing in their lives.

In this chapter, I have illustrated the diverse materiality of textiles that existed in these ancient contexts both through the material evidence and through the gaps between this evidence. Textile remains, though rarely preserved, demonstrates this diversity evidencing a range of different textile techniques

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[364] The economic value of clothing is indicated by the suggestion that ancient West Asian texts indicate that wool could be used as currency in Mesopotamia, Breniquet and Michel, "Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean," 2014. It can be suggested that animals and plants may have also gained social and economic value through its importance to textile industry, as implied in Breniquet and Michel, "Wool Economy in the Ancient Near East and the Aegean," 2. It has conventionally been assumed that animals and plants were largely valued for nutritional needs. However, this indicates their importance in constructing objects used in material culture, such as clothing. For further discussion on this scholarly tendency, see Hurcombe, *Perishable Material Culture in Prehistory*, 4.

that may have also been employed in other contexts to make a diverse range of textiles. Experimental archaeological studies expounds on the nuanced difference between textile tools to broaden our understanding of the different possibilities open to and most likely employed by ancient textile producers in constructing various different textiles. The complexity of textile production is also demonstrated in materiality of the raw products. Its materiality was influenced by its environment and through people's intervention, which also impacts the materiality of the textiles that could be constructed. These different possibilities can begin to indicate the various influences that these textiles may have had on ancient peoples experiences of textiles. Indeed, even the knowledge that ancient Syro-Palestinians constructed wool or linen materials in different densities implies that the material properties of these distinct textiles may have impacted its wearer in different ways (if such textiles were used as clothes).

The lack of evidence is not necessarily a hindrance to archaeological studies, instead our awareness of the gaps in the evidence constantly remind us of that what we have is only a snippet view of the 'missing majority' of decomposable material evidence from these ancient cultures. An acknowledgement of what is missing can be used to prevent scholars from making too many generalisations that may result in a limited and simplified view of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production. It must be reiterated that new evidence continues to be discovered, and testing becomes more sophisticated which indicates the need for scholars, even those looking at clothing in the biblical texts, need to remain aware of the changing face of archaeological studies of this evidence.

Textiles and textile production itself demonstrates that ancient Syro-Palestinian society did not only employ clothing for their basic functional needs as often indicated in conventional scholarly interpretations. Both textiles and textile tools exhibit features that probably had social rather than only practical functions. Textiles and textile production played important social and possibly even ritual roles in its different ancient contexts. This is indicated through the different social and cultural contexts in which evidence for textiles

and textile production has been discovered. By considering the broader networks of textile production it has been possible to suggest that textiles were central to different people's social and economic livelihoods. These processes involved in textile production and the time, labour, and cost of valuable resources, which indicates the probability that it played a significant economic role in different ancient Syro-Palestinian societies. These insights may be used to challenge the assumptions implied in scholarly interpretations of clothing depicted in the biblical texts that clothing only played a functional and arguably trivial role.

The material evidence for textile production, as well as insights from a working understanding of the process of textile production, demonstrates that there is a diversity of different ways in which people were enmeshed with and impacted by the materiality of textiles in ancient Syro-Palestinian culture. It is most likely that clothes were fitted to bodies in a variety of ways, which begins to illustrate different possible relationships that may have been formed between clothing and their wearers, implying that textiles would have restricted and enabled their bodily movements and behaviours in different ways. I have indicated the intimate relationships that may have existed between ancient artisans, their textile tools, and the textiles themselves. In the process of textile production one can recognise the importance that the agency of textiles had on their artisans' movements, it also implies how textiles can be considered to manifest something of their artisans in their own materiality, evidencing their skills or lack thereof. Such physical activities cannot be considered in isolation, instead they may be recognised as an important social activity that entangles various different people and objects together. These suggestions submit that there can be no single perspective on textiles or textile production in their ancient contexts, since they play different roles in ancient society and people would have experienced them in various different ways.

This chapter only begins to open up ways of thinking about the impact of textiles and textile production in ancient Syro-Palestinian culture - the world in which the biblical writers were immersed and influenced - yet it has effectively

been demonstrated that the had a dynamic and powerful role to play, which would inevitably have impacted the ancient biblical writers' perspectives of clothing. It is important not to limit our understanding to the material evidence, it can be acknowledged that there are also many iconographic artefacts that exhibit clothing that may also be considered to shape and construct ways of understanding the impact that the materiality of clothes had in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures.

3 The Impact of an Image: Clothing in Ancient Iconography

3.1 Introduction

In addition to material remains of clothing, archaeological excavations have unearthed a range of iconographic artefacts that feature depictions of clothing.[365] Images are often considered alongside other material evidence for textiles and textile production. However, in this chapter I will address the need for these iconographic artefacts to be treated as independent sources. Unlike material remains for textiles or clothing, iconographic depictions offer us ancient representations of clothes and therefore, they can be explored to help us examine ways in which ancient people conceptualised clothes or at the least how they manipulated and presented clothing in visual form. In turn, these images will be used to demonstrate that people had a complex understanding of and relationship with clothing in ancient Syro-Palestinian and West Asian cultures.

Ancient images of clothing have influenced contemporary perceptions of ancient West Asian dress, although often in implicit or uncritical ways that may at first go unnoticed. Biblical scholars frequently refer to these images in discussions of ancient clothing; they are often cited more consistently than

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[365] The employment of the term 'iconography' in this thesis refers to artefacts that exhibit images as this term has typically come to mean in contemporary archaeological studies. My use of this term must be distinguished from Erwin Panofsky's employment of this term to refer to a particular stage in the analysis of images that is well-known in art history theory, Erwin Panofsky, *Meaning in the Visual Arts* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1983), 26–54. Panofsky's use of iconography, which has often influenced interpretations of ancient iconography, has been criticised in recent studies of ancient West Asian iconography for being too text-centric and reliant on sematic methods of interpretation, see C. Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Widows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right: Remarks on Iconography, Source Criticism and Ancient Data-Processing," in *Understanding the History of Ancient Israel*, ed. H. G. M. Williamson, Proceedings of the British Academy 143 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 184–187.

material remains of textiles and their production.[366] It has perhaps been the perceived dearth of material remains of 'clothing' that has encouraged biblical scholars to rely instead on visual evidence to inform their discussions.[367] Iconographic evidence is typically employed to expound on the appearance of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing. This evidence is similarly associated with the various clothing terms in the Hebrew Bible in order to develop an understanding of the visual correlations of these terms. However, as will be argued, these approaches are inherently problematic as they presume that these images are historically accurate depictions – almost as though they were photographic snapshots of the past.[368]

This chapter will challenge some of the uncritical assumptions that continue to pervade studies of ancient images in biblical scholarship, particularly in the light of the recent development of critical scholarship on ancient West Asian iconography. I shall focus on addressing the common scholarly presumption that ancient depictions of clothing provide a reliable window into the wardrobe of the past in ancient Syro-Palestine. Such approaches, I will argue, are too speculative since they go far beyond what the iconographic evidence is able to demonstrate. It is also necessary to consider how ancient images may have been conditioned and skewed under the contemporary Western gaze of

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[366] For examples, see Edwards, "Dress and Ornamentation"; Jensen, "Clothing." It can also be observed that ancient Syro-Palestinian or biblical clothing is often treated discussed separately from textile production. Where this occurs discussions on ancient clothing are often largely based on iconography, for example: King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 146–162, 259–275; Borowski, *Daily Life in Biblical Times*, 7–8, 30–32.

[367] See chapter 2. Still, biblical scholars typically privilege textual evidence above material and iconographic evidence.

[368] For examples of the assumed exact representation of ancient clothing on ancient West Asian iconography in biblical scholarship, see G. Ernest Wright, "Israelite Daily Life," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 18, no. 3 (1955): 66; A. R. S. Kennedy and J. Philip Hyatt, "Dress," ed. Frederick C. Grant, H. H. Rowley, and James Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963), 222–223; Pauline Albenda, "Western Asiatic Women in the Iron Age: Their Image Revealed," *Biblical Archaeologist* 46, no. 2 (1983): 84–87; Edwards, "Dress and Ornamentation," 233; Volkmar Fritz, *The City in Ancient Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 185; Jensen, "Clothing," 265; King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 262, 266, 272; Borowski, *Daily Life in Biblical Times*, 7. On recent assumptions of the reality of iconographic scenes in ancient West Asian studies, see Aubrey Baadsgaard, "Uniforms and Non-Conformists: Tensions and Trends in Early Dynastic Fashion," in *Critical Approaches to Ancient Near Eastern Art*, ed. Brian A. Brown and Marian H. Feldman (Boston; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 421–50.

biblical scholarship. It shall be stressed, similarly to the previous chapter, that one must acknowledge the limitations of the iconographic evidence, including the lesser-discussed iconography from ancient Syro-Palestine, before reassessing whether or not it can and how it can inform biblical scholarship.

As I will illustrate in this chapter, it is impossible with the current evidence to prove whether or not ancient iconography directly reflected ancient clothing trends. Nevertheless, this does not indicate that these iconographic depictions of clothing are not significant in contributing to our understanding of the role and employment of clothing in ancient West Asian cultures. It shall be argued that images – and even depictions of clothing – are inherently complex and have a powerful impact on observers, both ancient and modern.[369] It will be proposed that the clothing exhibited on iconographic artefacts most probably played an important role in developing the ideologies and social entanglements that are actively manifested and perpetuated in these images. Furthermore, it will be suggested that these depictions of clothing in stone and other materials possess an efficacy and dynamism of their own.

3.2 The Problem of the 'Western' Gaze

A number of scholars have increasingly begun to challenge the presumption that ancient iconographic scenes and motifs can be understood as eyewitness accounts or accurate windows into the past.[370] Some of the major problems of

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[369] This point shall be addressed and developed over this chapter.

[370] This presumption is outlined briefly above, see specific examples of such assumptions in my analyses of iconographic artefacts in this chapter. For examples of studies that have begun to challenge these presumptions, see Christoph Uehlinger, "Clio in a World of Pictures - Another Look at the Lachish Reliefs from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh," in *"Like a Bird in a Cage" the Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE*, ed. Lester L Grabbe (London; New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), 224, 244, 248–262, 303–304; Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 180, 204, 218–219. For similar challenges in wider scholarship, see Wild, "Methodological Introduction"; Catherine Breniquet, "Weaving in Mesopotamia During the Bronze Age: Archaeology, Techniques, Iconography," in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B. Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), 58; Brian A. Brown, "Culture on Display: Representations of Ethnicity in the Art of the Late Assyrian State," in *Critical Approaches to Ancient Near Eastern Art*, ed. Brian A. Brown and Marian H. Feldman (Boston; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 532.

this approach have been effectively addressed by Christoph Uehlinger. He particularly expands on the problems of logo-centrism in scholarly interpretations of ancient iconography and calls for the need re-examine iconographic evidence on its own terms and not primarily as texts or as historical accounts.[371] However, Uehlinger, like many other scholars (including Cohen), is understandably not primarily interested in the depiction of clothing and therefore, he only briefly engages with its portrayal in ancient iconography. Nevertheless, his arguments are still helpful in rethinking the role of clothing exhibited on ancient iconography. In this section I will outline some of the limitations of the more conventional approaches referred to above in order to effectively challenge the uncritical interpretations of clothing in iconography.

I contend that scholarly attempts to employ iconographic depictions to inform our conceptions of ancient Syro-Palestinian dress are more than just methodologically unsound. These studies have a damaging impact, skewing how ancient clothing and its role across ancient cultures has been interpreted. In this thesis, it has already been stressed that the role played by clothing has typically been restricted in Western scholarship. In order to properly re-examine the use of such iconographic depictions, it is important to expose the extent to which such perceptions are perpetuated in biblical scholarship and have impacted the use and interpretation of images in relation to studies of ancient Syro-Palestinian dress. I concur with Anne Porter that it is also important to re-address studies of iconography without transporting ready-made explanations onto interpretations of iconographic artefacts, as is illustrated in many previous approaches to ancient iconography.[372]

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[371] Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right." For similar arguments on the need to examine iconography in its own right, see Catherine Breniquet, "Functions and Uses of Textiles in the Ancient Near East. Summary and Perspectives," in *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*, ed. Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2013), 3.

[372] Anne Porter, "When the Subject Is the Object: Relational Ontologies, the Partible Person and Images of Naram-Sin," in *Critical Approaches to Ancient Near Eastern Art*, ed. Brian A. Brown and Marian H. Feldman (Boston; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 602.

It is probable that these scholarly assumptions of the reliability of ancient iconography are rooted in our own contemporary Western conceptions of 'modern' art to some extent.[373] It is suggested that in contemporary Western thought many artistic depictions, particularly portraits, are considered to physically resemble the object or person being portrayed in some way.[374] Irene Winter argues that this assumption of physical resemblance or mimesis (copy) has been unnecessarily imposed onto interpretations of ancient West Asian iconography.[375] Uehlinger can be seen to develop this point indicating the possible influence that the rise of photography may have had on expectations of ancient artistic depictions.[376] It must be considered that it is most likely that ancient West Asian artistic styles did not conform to these contemporary Western expectations. In recognition of this probability scholars including Winter, Zainab Bahrani, and Marian Feldman, have explored alternative possibilities for understanding and interpreting ancient iconography.[377]

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[373] The employment of the term 'modern' here refers to art constructed in the last few centuries, as opposed to ancient art, as is discussed in this chapter, rather than referring specifically to the 'modernist' art movement.

[374] Irene J. Winter, "What/When Is a Portrait? Royal Images of the Ancient Near East," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 153, no. 3 (September 2009): 254–70.

[375] On this argument, see Ibid., 254–264. For a similar debates, see Zainab Bahrani, *The Graven Image: Representation in Babylonia and Assyria*, Archaeology, Culture and Society (Philadelphia; Bristol: University of Pennsylvania Press; University Presses Marketing, 2003), 122–125; Zainab Bahrani, "The King's Head," *Iraq* 66, no. Nineveh (2004): 117.

[376] Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 190–191.

[377] For examples of such alternative interpretations of ancient art, see Bahrani, *The Graven Image*; Irene J. Winter, "Agency Marked, Agency Ascribed: The Affective Object in Ancient Mesopotamia," in *Art's Agency and Art History*, ed. Robin Osborne and Jeremy Tanner, New Interventions in Art History (Malden, MA: Blackwell Pub, 2007), 42–69; Winter, "What/When Is a Portrait? Royal Images of the Ancient Near East"; Marian H. Feldman, "Object Agency? Spatial Perspective, Social Relations, and the Stele of Hammurabi," in *Agency and Identity in the Ancient Near East: New Paths Forward*, ed. Sharon R. Steadman and Jennifer C. Ross (London; Oakville, CT: Equinox Pub. Ltd, 2010), 148–65; Zainab Bahrani, "Regarding Art and Art History," *The Art Bulletin* 95, no. 4 (2013): 516–17. See also, Porter, "When the Subject Is the Object"; Karen Sonik, "Pictorial Mythology and Narrative in the Ancient Near East," in *Critical Approaches to Ancient Near Eastern Art*, ed. Brian A. Brown and Marian H. Feldman (Boston; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 265–93. It can be noted that these scholars have particularly reassessed the agency of iconographic

Despite the obvious need for a shift in the way we have considered ancient iconography, conceptions of resemblance or representation need not be entirely rejected. Indeed, I am not saying that these images are entirely devoid of any link to their historical contexts, and the objects they represent. Still I argue that it is important to reconsider the emphasis that has often been placed on these iconographic depictions of dress in scholarly interpretations.[378] It is possible that ancient artistic styles may have portrayed the essence or ideal elements of the object or person or idea exhibited rather than depicting the physical resemblance of material culture.[379]

Although contemporary Western expectations of art have most probably influenced scholarly interpretations, it is only to a point. Ancient iconography is frequently distanced and excluded from traditional studies of art and art history. Similarly, conventional studies of ancient West Asian art have not been incorporated such methodologies until more recently.[380] These iconographic artefacts have frequently been interpreted by scholars that are more familiar with interpreting texts and are relatively inexperienced in exploring iconographic evidence.[381] In light of this suggestion, it must also be recognised that studies of ancient iconography in biblical scholarship often continue to be driven by biblical and other text-driven agendas. As with material archaeological artefacts, iconography is also rarely acknowledged as an independent source, leading to surface level analyses of ancient images.[382]

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artefacts and their interrelationship with people, particularly in relation to ancient depictions of 'reality,' which will be considered in more depth later in this chapter.

[378] Implied in Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 181–184.

[379] This will also be developed further in the discussion below.

[380] Indicated in A. A. Donohue, "Introduction," in *Ancient Art and Its Historiography*, ed. A. A. Donohue and Mark D. Fullerton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 1; Marian H. Feldman, "Mesopotamian Art," in *A Companion to the Ancient Near East*, ed. Daniel C. Snell, Blackwell Companions to the Ancient World (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 281–283; Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 176–178.

[381] Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 175.

[382] Indicated in Uehlinger, "Clio in a World of Pictures - Another Look at the Lachish Reliefs from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh," 225; Uehlinger, "Neither

Assumptions of the reality of ancient iconography have not only been influenced by Western conceptions of resemblance and mimesis in art, but by the more traditional 'Western gaze' on objects from cultures that are notably distinct from contemporary Western cultures. Indeed, the contemporary Western gaze on ancient West Asian iconography is still notably tinged by orientalist interpretations that dominated the initial reception of many these artefacts.[383] Like archaeological artefacts, these iconographic items are typically viewed as decontextualized images and are often exhibited as though they were trophies of contemporary Western cultures' continued dominance over the Middle East in Westernised museums. It has been argued that collecting is in and of itself a 'form of conquest.'[384] This includes modern museums which, according to Constance Classen and David Howes, could be interpreted as a model of colonization or foreign dominance.[385] This implies that the very exhibition of ancient iconography reiterates their traditional depiction as 'exotic' art and may be considered to influence and enable their treatment as such in biblical scholarship.

Scholarly interpretations of clothing exhibited on iconographic artefacts often depict them in ways that may be considered to 'other' them from contemporary Western perceptions of clothing. Many scholars only consider singular or unilateral meanings of artistic motifs and depictions of clothing in their interpretation of ancient iconography.[386] Such interpretations, as well as those that assume the reality of ancient images, seems to imply that ancient iconography was simplistic. The absence of in-depth examinations of aspects such as stylistic conventions, ideology, context, and medium of ancient iconographic artefacts that are often explored in relation to contemporary art, particularly in relation to interpretations of clothing in iconography, were

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Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 175, 180.

[383] The initial reception of these images and the influence of orientalism on these interpretations have already been well articulated and elucidated in Frederick Nathaniel Bohrer, *Orientalism and Visual Culture: Imagining Mesopotamia in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

[384] Classen and Howes, "The Museum as Sensescape," 209.

[385] Ibid., 209–211.

[386] As will be illustrated in my examination of specific images in this chapter.

probably not simply disregarded out of ignorance. Instead, it is possible that they were implicitly considered to be unsophisticated. Discussions of iconographic artefacts in biblical scholarship tend to be more concerned with numerous other theological or symbolic debates that arguably impede in-depth critical analyses of these images.[387] Whatever the reason, it can be stressed that to disregard such elements severely undermines the importance and value of ancient iconographic depictions of clothing.

An illustrative example of orientalising undertones in these discussions can be observed in the tendency to uncritically conflate iconography from across ancient West Asian cultures. The majority of these studies in biblical scholarship concentrate almost entirely on wider ancient West Asian iconographic artefacts.[388] A number of the images referred to in relation to ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing purportedly depict ancient Syro-Palestinians; such depictions will be discussed in more depth at a later point in this chapter. Still, other ancient West Asian images of clothing that are frequently employed have no obvious link to ancient Syro-Palestine.[389] For example, Avigail Sheffer relies on iconographic depictions of clothing from ancient Egypt and Mari to inform her discussion of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing. Whilst there is some acknowledgement that these images are from across wider ancient West Asian cultures, Sheffer displays little concern with importing these styles

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[387] For examples of this, see the following section on ancient Syro-Palestinian iconography.

[388] Note that some studies have briefly considered ancient Syro-Palestinian iconographic artefacts, but even these still largely address wider ancient West Asian iconography, Sheffer, "Needlework and Sewing in Israel from Prehistoric Times to the Roman Period"; Adrien Janis Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors,'" in *Samuel and Kings, A Feminist Companion to the Bible*, ed. A. Brenner, vol. 2, 7 vols. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000).

[389] See examples of the use of seemingly unrelated images from ancient West Asian iconography in Kennedy and Hyatt, "Dress"; Roger S. Boraas, "Dress," ed. Paul J. Achtemeier and Society of Biblical Literature, *Harper's Bible Dictionary* (San Francisco, Calif.: Harper & Row, 1985); Philip J Watson, *Costume of Old Testament Peoples* (London: Batsford, 1987); Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors'"; Sabine Aletta Kersken, *Töchter Zions, Wie Seid Ihr Gewandet?: Untersuchungen Zu Kleidung Und Schmuck Alttestamentlicher Frauen*, Alter Orient Und Altes Testament, Bd. 351 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008).

onto her conceptions of ancient Syro-Palestinian dress.[390] Sabine Kersken frequently illustrates her discussion with images derived from artefacts from across ancient West Asian cultures with seemingly little justification of their relevance to ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing or the textile terms used in the Hebrew Bible.[391] Such examples effectively illustrates the tendency for scholars to conflate ancient West Asian portrayals of clothing with ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing. These tendencies must be challenged in order to allow for cultural differences between these societies and their clothing.

Biblical scholars and archaeologists also tend to conflate depictions of textile production in wider ancient West Asian iconography with ancient Syro-Palestinian textile tools and methods.[392] Iconography has been thought to inform textile production methods where material evidence was absent or limited. For example, despite there being an absence of material evidence for use of the horizontal/ground loom from ancient Syro-Palestine, scholars assumed its prevalent use ancient Syro-Palestine on the basis of these ancient images.[393] This implies that scholars have not only conflated textile

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[390] Sheffer, "Needlework and Sewing in Israel from Prehistoric Times to the Roman Period," 536–539. It can be noted that Sheffer also refers to a number of iconographic artefacts discovered from ancient Syro-Palestine, 540-543.

[391] Kersken, *Töchter Zions, Wie Seid Ihr Gewandet?*.

[392] Iconographic scenes of textile production have only been discovered from other ancient West Asian cultures, and particularly from Egyptian art. For example, scholars draw from iconography such as a preserved model of figures conducting textile practices, or depictions of spinning on an iconographic bowl, or textile production scenes painted on walls of the Khnum-Hetep tomb from the eleventh and twelfth dynasties in P. Bar-Adon, "Expedition C—The Cave of the Treasure," *Israel Exploration Journal* 12, no. 3/4 (1962): 217; Bar-Adon, *The Cave of the Treasure*, 181; Meyers, "In the Household and beyond," 26; Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 266; Shamir, "Textiles, Basketry and Other Organic Artifacts of the Chalcolithic Period in the Southern Levant," 147–148; Shamir, "Textiles from the Chalcolithic Period, Early and Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant," 17.

[393] For the use of ancient West Asian iconography in association with ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production methods, see Bar-Adon, *The Cave of the Treasure*, 181; Yasur-Landau, "Appendix 1: A Note on the Late Bronze Age Textile Industry"; Fulbright, "Akeldama Repudiation of Turin Shroud Omits Evidence from the Judean Desert"; Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 65–80; Shamir, "Textiles, Basketry and Other Organic Artifacts of the Chalcolithic Period in the Southern Levant," 146; Shamir, "Textiles from the Chalcolithic Period, Early and Middle Bronze Age in the Southern Levant," 17. On the presumed accuracy of iconographic depictions of textile production techniques in wider ancient West Asian studies, see Richard S. Ellis, "Mesopotamiam Crafts in Modern and Ancient Times: Ancient Near Eastern Weaving," *American Journal of Archaeology* 80, no. 1 (1976): 76–77; Crawford,

tools and techniques from ancient West Asian iconography, it also illustrates the tendency for scholars to assume that depictions of seemingly 'mundane' tasks would have reflected reality. It remains possible that these images are illustrations of such textile tools and methods, but considering the lack of archaeological evidence it is difficult to assess whether or not they were employed in ancient Syro-Palestine. The tendency to conflate such images of ancient textile production presumes that the same textile tools and techniques were consistently employed across ancient West Asian cultures, hence implying they were uniform.[394] However, in the previous chapter it was stressed that both textiles, the clothing made and textile production, was culturally and contextually specific. Even if such differences are only nuanced, this point must not be thoughtlessly undermined by these assertions of ancient iconography.

Scholars sometimes also employ images from the modern Middle East, usually of traditional groups or persons, to illustrate their discussions on clothing and textile production methods from the Hebrew Bible or ancient Syro-Palestine.[395] The majority of these images are incorporated with only indefinite captions included.[396] Their inclusion assumes that there are direct resemblances between these cultures in their clothing. For example, William Dever illustrates his discussion of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile techniques with a photograph of a woman from the modern Middle East engaged in spinning wool (Fig. 1).[397] Interestingly, this photo seems is to be not far removed

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Sumer and the Sumerians, 125–126; Kasia Maria Szpakowska, *Daily Life in Ancient Egypt* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 82.

[394] Scholars have rarely indicated any difficulties that are created in applying these images to interpretations ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production.

[395] John Pilch uses contemporary photos to illustrate his depiction of biblical clothing, John J. Pilch, *The Cultural Dictionary of the Bible* (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 1999), 15–18.

[396] Pilch's captions only identify those in his pictures as 'Palestinian men,' Dever similarly uses a contemporary photo in which he merely identifies a 'Palestinian woman' spinning wool, Ibid., 16; Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 167.

[397] This image contrasts with the woman sitting beside her, who is wearing a more contemporary Western-style of dress, fitted trousers and a patterned long-sleeve top. The dress style is not explicitly 'Western'; moreover, she still wears a covering over her head. However, it still clearly contrasts from the more traditional dress worn by the spinning woman. This implies that this woman's activity is representative of a

from a depiction of a woman spinning threads on a bas-relief from ancient Susa (c. 1000 BCE) (Fig. 2).[398] It cannot be certain whether or not Dever intended to evoke this ancient image. Still, his discussion does imply that modern spinning practices can be associated with ancient spinning practices, as is already implicit in his use of this contemporary image: 'Spinning in this fashion is well known from antiquity in many Levantine societies, and it is still practiced in villages today.'[399] Such allusions conflate these cultures, implying that practice has gone unchanged and unmodified over the years. The use of these modern images implicitly impacts our broader historical imaginations of ancient Syro-Palestine dress and textile production, even though these are contemporary images.[400]

The scholarly tendency to conflate cultural dress and textile production methods from both ancient and modern cultures is highly problematic, particularly since such approaches overlook and undermine cultural difference. In comparison to contemporary Western styles of clothing and methods of textile production, it might appear to some that more traditional Middle Eastern clothing is compatible with ancient West Asian depictions; similarly, ancient West Asian cultures appear to be compatible with each other from a modern perspective. However, this is more indicative of the ignorance

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more traditional approach, Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 167.

[398] A picture of this ancient iconographic scene is not used by William Dever in this book. However, this ancient image frequently used in scholarly discussions of ancient spinning techniques, John Peter Wild, "The Near East in the Iron Age, C. 1100-500 BC," in *The Cambridge History of Western Textiles*, ed. David T. Jenkins, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 49; Gleba, "Ancient Textiles: Sources and Methods," 6. Cf. Wolfram Von Soden suggests its dating between the eighth and sixth centuries BCE, Wolfram von Soden, *The Ancient Orient: An Introduction to the Study of the Ancient Near East* (Grand Rapids, Mich. : Leominster: William B. Eerdmans ; Gracewing, 1994), 105.

[399] Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 165.

[400] It can be noted that other scholars describe or illustrate ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing or clothing depicted in the Hebrew Bible using terms commonly used for clothing from the Middle East, such as kaffiyeh, for example in Pilch, *The Cultural Dictionary of the Bible*, 16; J. D. Douglas, Merrill C. Tenney, and Moisés Silva, eds., "Dress," *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2011). It is probable that these associations were first impacted by ancient iconographic depictions of clothing and allusions of contemporary images in these discussions. Another example of this tendency can be seen in Wright, "Israelite Daily Life," 65.

in contemporary Western scholarship to the significance of cultural distinctions between dress and textile techniques in cultures across the Middle East. These parallels illustrate how the Middle East continues to be identified as the 'other' or the exotic unknown.[401] Such allusions are likely to have been influenced by the historical and geographic associations that exist between ancient Syro-Palestine and the modern Middle East. Indeed, it is these very connections that may have influenced the tendency to 'orientalise' ancient West Asian cultures, since orientalist approaches are particularly prominent in traditional Western or Western-influenced studies of the Middle East. Although such ethnocentric allusions are nuanced in the discussion of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing and textile production, they significantly undermine the specific contexts and meanings of each of these cultures. They demonstrate a lack of consideration as to the dynamic complexity of clothing and the transformational role that it plays across different cultural and social contexts. Having identified some of the broader problems in our Western gaze on ancient iconographic depictions of clothes, I will turn to consider specific examples that have been associated with the biblical texts and examples from ancient Syro-Palestinian iconography itself.

3.3 Iconography and the Biblical Depiction of Clothing

In the light of the ambiguity of clothing terms employed in the Hebrew Bible, it is understandable that scholars have attempted to expound on these terms and their corresponding materialities by appealing to visual evidence.[402]

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[401] On the historical tendency for Westerners to 'other' or 'exoticise' the Middle East, see discussions in the well-known work, Edward W Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003).

[402] For examples of such studies in biblical scholarship, see Albrecht Goetze, "The Priestly Dress of the Hittite King," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 1, no. 2 (1947): 176–85; Oppenheim, "The Golden Garments of the Gods"; Georgina Thompson, "Iranian Dress in the Achaemenian Period: Problems Concerning the Kandys and Other Garments," *Iran* 3 (1965): 121–26; Matteo Vigo, "Linen in Hittite Inventory Texts," in *Textile Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B. Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2010), 290–322. For uncritical associations between iconographic and textual sources in wider studies of ancient West Asian iconography of clothing and TP, see Oppenheim, "The Golden Garments of the Gods"; Seton Lloyd, *The Art of the Ancient Near East*, World of Art Series (London: Thames & Hudson, 1961), 204; Jeanny Vorys Canby, "Decorated Garments in Ashurnasirpal's Sculpture," *Iraq* 33,

Indeed, iconography has also been used to support various interpretations of such ambiguous Hebrew clothing terms. However, the assumption that iconographic depictions of dress can be treated as illustrated guides to clothing terms has often led to unsubstantiated and overly positivistic conclusions. For example, images are sometimes merely included in a study or discussion of Hebrew clothing terms or in discussions of biblical texts, yet their inclusion is rarely clarified critically or robustly.[403] Many scholarly allusions to iconographic evidence are subtle or tacitly implied, yet they are still employed to draw firm connections between the garments depicted in these sources.[404] Particularly illustrative of such approaches is the example of the so-called 'technicolored dreamcoat' or, more appropriately, the *ketonet passim* (to be discussed in further detail below).

The difficulties surrounding the biblical term *ketonet passim* are well known in biblical studies. Its meaning continues to be debated among biblical scholars with little consensus as to its interpretation.[405] Whilst attempts to interpret this

no. 1 (1971): 31–53; Dominique Collon and British Museum, *Ancient Near Eastern Art* (London: British Museum Press for the Trustees of the British Museum, 1995), 38, 142–144, 153; Ascalone, *Mesopotamia*, 215; Eva B. Andersson Strand and Maria Cybulska, "Visualising Ancient Textiles - How to Make a Textile Visible on the Basis of an Interpretation of an Ur III Text," in *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*, ed. Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2013), 113–27; Bernice Jones, "The Costumes of Inanna/Ishtar," in *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*, ed. Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2013), 128–129; Agnete Wisti Lassen, "Technology and Palace Economy in Middle Bronze Age Anatolia: The Case of the Crescent Shaped Loom Weight," in *Textile Production and Consumption in the Ancient Near East: Archaeology, Epigraphy, Iconography*, ed. Henriette Koefoed, Eva Andersson Strand, and Marie-Louise Nosch (Oxbow Books, 2013), 85–86.

[403] As argued in Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 180. Examples of this tendency can be seen in Lisbeth S. Fried, "Why Did Joseph Shave?," *The Biblical Archaeology Review* 33, no. 4 (2007): 36–41; Kersken, *Töchter Zions, Wie Seid Ihr Gewandet?*.

[404] For further discussion on the impact of nuanced allusions to images on conceptions of ancient clothing, see section 3.2.

[405] For overviews and key debates on this clothing term, see John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 2nd ed., The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: Clark, 1963), 444; E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*, The Anchor Bible 1 (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1964); D. N. Freedman, Heinz-Josef Fabry, and M. P. O'Connor, "Kuttōnet," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, vol. VII (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974),

term have largely relied on the various linguistic derivations and cognate roots that relate to the ambiguous Hebrew word, *ketonet passim*, iconographic depictions of dress have sometimes been incorporated into these discussions in support of particular interpretations.[406] For example, a number of biblical scholars have alluded to a section of the wall paintings discovered at the Egyptian site Beni Hasan (c. 15th century BCE) in their interpretations of the *ketonet passim*. This iconographic scene depicts a group, identified in the epigraph below these images as a group of Asiatic traders, wearing coloured, striped garments.[407] This allusion, in relation with the *ketonet passim*, may appear to loosely correspond with either the interpretation of the root 'פס' (ps) as strip, implying a striped garment.[408] Alternatively, this image may be associated with the more widely recognised interpretation of Joseph's garment as 'many coloured' following the Septuagint rendering of this article of clothing, κιτων ποικιλος (followed in the Vulgate, with the interpretation, tunica polymitas).[409] It is probable that the Egyptian setting of the Joseph

383–87; Aldina da Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères* (Saint-Laurent, Québec: Fides, 1994), 38–40; Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors'"; Manfred Görg, "Der Gefärbte Rock Josefs," *Biblische Notizen* 102 (2000): 9–13; Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 110–112; Kersken, *Töchter Zions, Wie Seid Ihr Gewandet?*, 64–67.

[406] For arguments that particularly focus on these linguistic connections, particularly see Freedman, Fabry, and O'Connor, "Kuttōnet"; Görg, "Der Gefärbte Rock Josefs"; Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 110–112.

[407] For studies that allude to this iconography in their discussion of the Joseph story or of Joseph's clothing, see Eric I. Lowenthal, *The Joseph Narrative in Genesis* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1973), 17; Robert Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary* (New York; London: Norton, 1996), 209; Walter C. Kaiser Jr., *A History of Israel: From the Bronze Age Through The Jewish Wars* (Nashville; Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 69; William G. Dever, *Who Were the Early Israelites and Where Did They Come From?* (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2003), 10; Susan A. Brayford, *Genesis* (Leiden; Boston: Koninklijke Brill, 2007), 390; Fried, "Why Did Joseph Shave?" See a similar conflation in Dominique Collon, "Clothing and Grooming in Ancient Western Asia," in *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, ed. Jack M. Sasson et al. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2000), 509. The tendency to employ this iconography in association with the Joseph story has been noted in Susan Cohen, "Interpretative Uses and Abuses of the Beni Hasan Tomb Painting," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 74, no. 1 (2015): 24.

[408] For the suggestion that PAS could be rendered strip or stripe, see its discussion in Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors,'" 65–66. It has been suggested that the root PAS could be translated as variegated pieces, which may also correspond with the proposal of a striped garment, Ludwig Hugo Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1953), 768.

[409] On this interpretation of the Greek and Latin depictions of this garment, see Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors'"; Görg, "Der Gefärbte Rock Josefs."

story (Genesis 39-50) has encouraged allusions to this iconographic artefact. However, it can be argued that the link between this Egyptian iconography and the biblical depiction of the *ketonet passim* is still somewhat tenuous.

In conventional biblical scholarship it has been proposed that the description of this group of traders probably referred to a group of 'Semites', and is frequently considered to give insights as to the appearance and clothing of the patriarchs depicted in Genesis.[410] It is these associations that have enabled scholars to extend the allusion to depictions of Joseph's garment.[411] However, Susan Cohen has recently challenged this interpretation and dismantled many of the explanations behind these conventional affiliations. Cohen claims that the Beni Hassan epigraph cannot be easily corroborated with a specific ethnic group.[412] Instead, she stresses that the paintings from the tomb at Beni Hasan have their own contextual and social meanings that must not be alienated from interpretations of the scene in question. The scholarly focus on one small, albeit significant, section of these paintings has resulted in the undermining of its significance as part of a greater whole.[413] However, despite Cohen's insightful reflection on interpretations of the Beni Hasan tomb paintings, she does not challenge, but rather perpetuates the problematic presumption that these depictions function in ways similar to Western photography, in that they offer a reliable reflection of ancient clothing styles, as suggested earlier. This is indicated in her claim that 'they provide a visual image of the appearance and dress of Asiatic peoples.'[414] This is an illustrative example that indicates that whilst ancient art is sometimes critically

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See alternative interpretations of these Greek and Latin terms in Granger-Taylor, "Byzantium Textiles," 16; John Scheid, *The Craft of Zeus: Myths of Weaving and Fabric*, Revealing Antiquity 9 (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1996), 39, 53–58.

[410] For an overview of these assumptions, see Cohen, "Interpretative Uses and Abuses of the Beni Hasan Tomb Painting." See also, William H. Shea, "Artistic Balance Among the Beni Hasan Asiatics," *Biblical Archaeologist* 44, no. 4 (1981): 219, 228; Jensen, "Clothing," 265.

[411] Loosely implied in Cohen, "Interpretative Uses and Abuses of the Beni Hasan Tomb Painting," 24.

[412] Ibid., 28–3033–35.

[413] Cohen argued that the context of these paintings in a tomb indicates that the different scenes may allude to different ritual practices or at the least manifest ritual significance, Ibid., 33–35.

[414] Ibid., 36.

re-examined in biblical and archaeological scholarship, iconographic portrayals of clothing continue to be misconstrued or simplified.

A number of other iconographic depictions of clothing have been associated with the various interpretations of the *ketonet passim*.[415] It can be illustrated that it is not only the visuality of these iconographic clothes that are imprinted onto the biblical depiction of Joseph's garment, some of the related connotations of these images are also transferred to Joseph's garment. For example, Adrien Bledstein argues that the *ketonet passim* could be interpreted as a sacerdotal garment in its context in Genesis 37 and 2 Samuel 13:18-19. Bledstein develops this argument using a number of iconographic depictions of dress featured on figures identified with priestesses, kings and deities from across ancient West Asian cultures, including Ur and Mari, as well as a couple of images on seals found from ancient Syro-Palestine.[416] Bledstein argues that the depiction of garments on these ritual images, which she describes as 'flounced garments' corresponds with the biblical writers' depiction of the *ketonet passim* as both a cultic and most likely a striped garment. Through this analysis Bledstein claimed that the biblical writers' use of the *ketonet passim* probably indicated a 'flounced garment which indicated high priesthood and was similarly associated with the status of a minor deity in Mesopotamia.'[417]

E. MacLaurin also uses iconographic artefacts to support his interpretation of the *ketonet passim*; in this case, a number of clay figures from Ur. He suggests that details on the figures' garments can be identified as 'pieces' or 'scales,' which arguably corroborates with the interpretation of the root pas which has been associated with more recent Aramaic dialects which would

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[415] For example, note Albright's allusion to garments exhibited on a fresco from the palace at Mari (c. 18th Century BCE), William F. Albright, "From the Patriarchs to Moses: From Abraham to Joseph," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 36, no. 1 (1973): 31–32. For other references to different iconographic allusions, see Bledstein's overview, Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors.'"

[416] For example, a calcite disc from Mari depicting a priestess, Enheduanna and the depiction of a priest-king Naram-Sin on a stele (c.2300 BCE), Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors,'" 67–69, 74–77.

[417] Ibid., 78–79.

indicate a garment formed from 'pieces.'[418] Similarly to Bledstein, MacLaurin purports that these iconographic garments were magic garments, and implied from this that Joseph's garment may have also been magical.[419] Neither MacLaurin's nor Bledstein's arguments seem to acknowledge any of the difficulties that come with making such comparisons, which is unexpected given that these iconographic artefacts do not originate from Syro-Palestine. Their purported compatibility requires further justification than the brief suggestions made in these arguments. Their interpretations appear to be based on seemingly arbitrary links without properly taking into consideration their independent social and cultural contexts and meanings. In my own examination of the *ketonet passim* over the next two chapters I will argue that this garment can be considered to manifest ritual potency. However, it is not necessary two draw such interpretations from features and meanings imported from ancient West Asian iconographic artefacts.

The dating of the iconographic artefacts that have been alluded to in debates over translations of *ketonet passim* must also be taken into account. Most of the images that have been discussed are dated before the fifteenth century BCE.[420] Although this may seem to align with more traditional dating for the biblical period in which Joseph was supposed to have lived, they significantly predate the Persian period, when the biblical narratives concerning Joseph were probably composed (or compiled and significantly redacted).[421] I argue that this substantial distance in dating makes it improbable that the clothing depicted in these images, which have been considered to be reflective of fashions at the time, would have corroborated with the biblical writers' depiction of the *ketonet passim*.[422] It is likely that a more considered examination of these images, in which details such as dating and context

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[418] For the interpretation of PAS as pieces, see Koehler and Baumgartner, *KBL*, 768.
[419] E. C. B. MacLaurin, "Joseph and Asaph," *Vetus Testamentum* 25, no. 1 (1975): 33–34.
[420] For dating of these iconographic artefacts, see Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors,'" 67–69, 74–77.
[421] As suggested in section 2.2.
[422] For such an assumption, particularly see Albright, "From the Patriarchs to Moses," 32.

were given more precedence, would have ruled out many of these alleged connections with the biblical depiction of the *ketonet passim*.

In the light of this discussion on the *ketonet passim*, it seems necessary to scrutinise other interpretations of Hebrew clothing terms that have incorporated ancient iconography. Indeed, as a primarily text-centric discipline we need to become as rigorous in our analysis of ancient iconography as we are with terms in the Hebrew Bible.[423] Scholarly interpretations of Hebrew clothing terms that rely on its association with an ancient iconographic image are largely unreliable. There is no established method for substantiating links between ancient images and terms. The only possible exception in which an image of a garment may more convincingly be associated with a textual term would be if an epigraph adjacent to an image employed a clothing term. Even then, it remains uncertain whether or not such images would even correspond with the biblical writers' employment of the same clothing term. Whilst the tendency for some scholars to associate Hebrew clothing terms with ancient images undoubtedly impact their interpretation, such associations are usually limited to a small number of clothing terms and a limited range of iconographic material. It is necessary to go beyond these interpretations and consider the wider discussion of ancient iconography in relation to ancient Syro-Palestinian dress, as such interpretations have influenced ways of thinking about clothing in the biblical texts more generally, albeit in nuanced ways.

3.4 Representations of Dress in Ancient Syro-Palestinian Iconography

It might be thought surprising that scholarly discussions of ancient Syro-Palestinian and biblical clothing rarely engage ancient Syro-Palestinian iconography itself. However, the tendency for biblical scholars to concentrate on ancient West Asian iconography over ancient Syro-Palestinian iconography is not without reason. There are very few depictions of anthropomorphic images that have been discovered from Syro-Palestinian

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[423] Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right."

excavations and even fewer that exhibit details of clothing.[424] I will argue that even amongst the ancient Syro-Palestinian artefacts that depict images of clothing it is difficult to identify garments or styles that are distinct to ancient Syro-Palestinian culture. However, many scholars do not qualify why they overlook this iconographic evidence. Few biblical scholars properly acknowledge that there are limitations that are inherent with using images that are not constructed within ancient Syro-Palestinian culture. Some of these limitations shall be expounded further in the discussions below. However, first, it is worth illustrating some of the difficulties that face interpretations of iconographic depictions of dress from ancient Syro-Palestinian culture.

It must be recognised that scholarly discussions of ancient Syro-Palestinian iconographic artefacts, particularly those featuring anthropomorphic images, have often been dominated by wider debates on the 'aniconistic' nature of the Yahwistic cult depicted in the Hebrew Bible.[425] As is well known, one of the religious laws promoted in the Hebrew Bible commands that followers of the Yahwistic cult should abstain from producing divine images:

> You shall not make for yourself an image, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them… (Exodus 20:4-5).[426]

This prohibition has traditionally led some scholars to assume that ritual artefacts, as well as objects in general, would have been predominantly aniconic. For example, Benjamin Sass particularly stresses the lack of iconography on seals with Hebrew text from ancient Syro-Palestine.[427] His

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[424] The lack of anthropomorphic iconography or monuments from ancient Syro-Palestine has been noted in Bailey, "Clothing," 125; Ronald S. Hendel, "Aniconism and Anthropomorphism in Ancient Israel," in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and Therise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Karel Van der Toorn, Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 21 (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1997), 205–28.

[425] Such debates often incorporate discussions regarding the presumed aniconism or lack of representation of divine figures in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures.

[426] See also Deuteronomy 5:8-9

[427] Note that Avigad and Sass' catalogue focuses largely on seals with Hebrew script, Nahman Avigad and Benjamin Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals*

emphasis that as 'one would assume' only a few of these seals depicted anthropomorphic images, and that even fewer depicted 'celestial bodies,' seems to convey that his expectation that Hebrew seals would be largely aniconic. This assumption was most likely influenced by the prohibition outlined above.

Over the years, the discovery of various artefacts that may exhibit ritual or cultic images from across ancient Syro-Palestinian excavations have been used to challenge the predominance of the exclusive and assumed 'aniconic' Yahwistic cult in ancient Syro-Palestine.[428] In the light of these discoveries it is unsurprising that biblical scholars, particularly those writing from a confessional perspective, have focused on exploring the possible identities of the anthropomorphic images amongst these finds. These studies are particularly focused on whether or not they can be considered to be divine and identifying their possible function in ancient Syro-Palestinian culture.[429]

(Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society: Institute of Archaeology, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1997). It is probable that seals exhibiting other scripts were also constructed and used in ancient Syro-Palestinian contexts.

[428] Many biblical scholars now dismiss the suggestion that ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures were aniconic. Some have even suggested that the Yahwistic cult portrayed in the biblical texts was not aniconic. For more in-depth debates on these points and the wider discussion of 'aniconism' in ancient Israel/Syro-Palestine, see Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *No Graven Image?: Israelite Aniconism in Its Ancient Near Eastern Context*, Coniectanea Biblica 42 (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1995); Schmidt, "The Aniconic Tradition: On Reading Images and Viewing Texts"; Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, "Israelite Aniconism: Developments and Origins," in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and Therise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East*, ed. Karel Van der Toorn, Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology 21 (Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1997), 173–204; Hendel, "Aniconism and Anthropomorphism in Ancient Israel"; Karel Van der Toorn, "Israelite Figurines: A View from the Texts," in *Sacred Time, Sacred Place: Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, ed. Barry M. Gittlen (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 45–62; Jack M. Sasson, "On the Use of Images in Israel and the Ancient Near East: A Response to Karel van Der Toorn," in *Sacred Time, Sacred Place: Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*, ed. Barry M. Gittlen (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 63–70. There are other feasible explanations for the lack of iconography in ancient Syro-Palestine. It is possible that ancient Syro-Palestinian iconography was not as developed as the artistry evidenced on artefacts from other ancient West Asian cultures. An alternative explanation was that iconographic images might have been depicted on biodegradable materials that have not been preserved.

[429] For example, scholarly discussions that focus on the religious identity of anthropomorphic female plaques and figurines which will be considered in more detail below, see T. A. Holland, "A Study of Palestinian Iron Age Baked Clay Figurines, with Special Reference to Jerusalem: Cave 1," *Levant* 9 (1977): 121–55;

However, the dominance of such debates has meant that other features of iconography, such as depictions of dress, have been underprivileged in scholarly discussions.

Amongst the anthropomorphic iconography from Syro-Palestine only some clearly exhibit depictions of clothing, others feature more ambiguous details that are only sometimes identified as clothing. These details are often overlooked in biblical scholarship, yet it can be argued that they are worth further consideration; even if it is just to effectively elucidate the difficulties that these artefacts pose for scholars who have attempted to expound ancient Syro-Palestinian dress styles. I shall briefly consider female plaques and figurines as well as anthropomorphic seals, which are some of the most widely discussed and prevalent iconographic artefacts that have been discovered across Syro-Palestinian excavations.[430]

Carol L. Meyers, "Of Drums and Damsels: Women's Performance in Ancient Israel," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 54, no. 1 (1991): 16–27; Raz Kletter, *The Judean Pillar-Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah*, BAR International Series 636 (Oxford; England: Tempus Reparatum, 1996); Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, 326–336; John Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament.: Supplement Series 265 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 55, 227; Judith M. Hadley, *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah: Evidence for a Hebrew Goddess*, University of Cambridge Oriental Publications 57 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 188–205; Karel J. H. Vriezen, "Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel," in *Only One God?: Monotheism in Ancient Israel and the Veneration of the Goddess Asherah*, ed. Bob Becking, Biblical Seminar 77 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 58–80; Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 267–270; Mark S. Smith, *The Early History of God: Yahweh and the Other Deities in Ancient Israel*, 2nd ed., The Biblical Resource Series (Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2002), 111–112; Toorn, "Israelite Figurines: A View from the Texts," 47–51; William G. Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?: Archaeology and Folk Religion in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans Pub Co, 2008), 176–188; Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 149–154; Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 278–280. They probably were not used in official cultic religion presented in the Hebrew Bible, Marjo C. A Korpel, "Asherah Outside Israel," in *Only One God?: Monotheism in Ancient Israel and the Veneration of the Goddess Asherah*, ed. Bob Becking, Biblical Seminar 77 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 148.

[429] For a discussion on the biblical silence on female figurines, see Hadley, *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah*, 200–202; Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?*, 2008, 181–185.

[430] This chapter is largely concerned with the iconographic depiction of clothing on figures that may be human and shall therefore, not primarily discuss depictions of divine figures. For further studies of the clothing featured in depictions of deities in

Female plaques and figurines that originate from ancient Syro-Palestine are diverse, yet there are some more common features which are interesting to consider here.[431] Many plaques are clearly depicted as naked female figures and appear to have been more prominently circulated during the Late Bronze age.[432] However, the extent to which other figurines may have been 'dressed' or 'undressed' is less certain, for example: Iron Age female pillar figurines (c. tenth-sixth centuries BCE), commonly known as 'Judean Pillar Figurines', which are characterised by their solid pillar-shaped bases and the prominent depiction of breasts; and hollow figurines (c. tenth-sixth centuries BCE),

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wider Syro-Palestinian and ancient West Asian iconography, see Thomas Podella, *Das Lichtkleid JHWHs: Untersuchungen zur Gestalthaftigkeit Gottes im Alten Testament und seiner altorientalischen Umwelt*, Forschungen zum Alten Testament 15 (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 1996).

Note that my discussion of ancient Syro-Palestinian iconography shall not address the iconographic ivories from Megiddo (c. 13th-12th Centuries BCE), which arguably features some of the most detailed depictions of dress from ancient Syro-Palestine. This iconography has sometimes been referred to in relation to ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing, such as in Bailey, "Clothing," 126–127. An examination of this ivory has been precluded from the current study for the reason that it is uncertain whether or not these ivories were authentic products from ancient Syro-Palestine. For debates on the original construction of these ivories, see Itamar Singer, "The Political Status of Megiddo VIIA," *Tel Aviv: Journal of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University* 1988, no. 1 (March 1, 1988): 101–12; Christine Lilyquist, "The Use of Ivories as Interpreters of Political History," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 1998, 26. Cf. Helene J. Kantor, "Syro-Palestinian Ivories," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 15, no. 3 (1956): 166–169; Glenn E. Markoe, "The Emergence of Phoenician Art," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research*, 1990, 18; Feldman, "Hoarded Treasures," 180, 183. For further discussions of the difficulties in identifying the provenance of ancient ivories, see Marian H. Feldman, "The Practical Logic Style and Memory in Early First Millennium Levantine Ivories," in *Materiality and Social Practice: Transformative Capacities of Intercultural Encounters*, ed. Joseph Maran and Philipp W. Stockhammer (Oxford; Oakville, CT: Oxbow Books, 2012), 199–201.

[431] For examples of variations on female plaques and figurines, see Kletter, *The Judean Pillar-Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah*, 84–85; Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 267–270; Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, "Acculturating Gender Roles: Goddess Images as Conveyors of Culture in Ancient Israel," in *Image, Text, Exegesis: Iconographic Interpretation and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Izaak J. de Hulster and Joel M. LeMon (London; New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 1–18.

[432] Late Bronze Age plaques (c. thirteenth-eleventh centuries BCE), these largely depict naked female figures, which feature prominent breasts and female genitalia or a pubic triangle. For more detailed discussions on these Late Bronze Age plaques, see Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, 164; Hadley, *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah*, 193; Vriezen, "Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel," 62; Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?*, 2008, 185; Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, 152.

known for their hollow conical or bell-shaped bases.[433] Both of these broader types of figurines feature bases which some scholars have noted could be imitations of long dresses or skirts.[434]

As noted, the suggestion that these iconographic artefacts were dressed bodies remains somewhat uncertain. Traces of paint on some of these figurines may imply that at some point details of dress were featured more

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[433] For further discussions on these pillar figurines, see Holland, "A Study of Palestinian Iron Age Baked Clay Figurines," 124; Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead*, 97–98; Kletter, *The Judean Pillar-Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah*; Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, 331; Hadley, *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah*, 199; King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 348; Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 271; Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, 55; Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, 153; Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 279. Note that these figurines do not feature genitalia, Vriezen, "Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel," 62; Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?*, 2008, 179; Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, 153.
Hollow female figurines are often depicted holding a circular object in their hands, and unlike some of the other types the breasts and genitalia are not prominently featured. For further discussion on these hollow based figurines, see Vriezen, "Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel," 62; Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, 153; Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 278. The identification of the round object often featured as part of these figurines is uncertain. Scholarly suggestions have included: a hand drum, a bread cake mould, a dove, and a sun disk, for scholarly discussions on this object, see King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 350; Vriezen, "Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel," 61; William G Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?: Archaeology and Folk Religion in Ancient Israel* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2005), 177–178; Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 278.
[434] For the suggestion of long garment or skirt on the pillar figurines, Robert Wenning, "Wer War Der Paredros Der Aschera? Notizen Zu Terrakottastatuetten in Eisenzeitlichen Gräbern," *Biblische Notizen* 59 (1991): 91. Mentioned briefly in Hadley, *The Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah*, 200; Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, 153. Note that it is possible that the upper body of pillar figurines may have been covered with a tight fitted garment or see through layer that would still prominently exhibit the breasts, still, this remains unclear, Kletter, *The Judean Pillar-Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah*, 50; Vriezen, "Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel," 62. For clothing on the hollow figurines, see Meyers, "Of Drums and Damsels: Women's Performance in Ancient Israel," 19; Vriezen, "Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel," 67; Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, 153. On the difficulty of determining whether or not these figurines depict clothing, see Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, 332. For further discussion of likelihood that the hollow figurines were 'dressed' figurines, see Meyers, "Of Drums and Damsels: Women's Performance in Ancient Israel," 18–19.

prominently, however, if so such details have become lost over time.[435] Still, some have proposed that the location of paint traces on some of these figurines, especially in rare cases where more details have been preserved, suggests that this evidence is more indicative that it was jewellery rather than clothing that was accentuated on these female bodies.[436] The lack of detail on the bases of these figures, such as marks that may indicate dress folds, has also led a number of scholars to suggest that the bases of these figurines were probably not imitations of dresses. It is even argued these bases may not have represented parts of female bodies or were even anthropomorphic features.[437] Instead, it is possible that they could have simply been functional features that enabled the figurine to stand.[438] Alternatively, if they were depictions of the goddess Asherah, they could be imitations of a pole or tree, which were images commonly associated with Asherah veneration.[439] Whilst the prominence of these figurines across ancient Syro-Palestine sites and their locally manufactured features may have proved interesting for studies of local conceptions of dress, the ambiguous nature of their state of dress restricts such discussions.[440]

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[435] On traces of paint on such figurines, see Kletter, *The Judean Pillar-Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah*, 50; Vriezen, "Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel," 61; Zevit, *The Religions of Ancient Israel*, 271–272.

[436] Implied in Bloch-Smith, "Acculturating Gender Roles," 10.

[437] As suggested in Ibid.

[438] On the suggestion that the pillared based only indicated a way of manufacturing these figurines, see King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 349. Bloch-Smith, "Acculturating Gender Roles," 10.

[439] For further suggestions that the bases of pillar figurines probably resembled tree trunks or poles and its possible connection with Asherah, see Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*, 331–332; Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?*, 2008, 232; Bloch-Smith, "Acculturating Gender Roles," 11. Trees were also prominent symbols of fertility often associated with a number of ancient West Asian goddesses, as suggested in Keel and Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*; Nicholas Wyatt, *Space and Time in the Religious Life of the Near East*, The Biblical Seminar 85 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 168.

[440] Holland's and Kletter's catalogues of ancient Syro-Palestinian female plaques and figurines demonstrates that they have been discovered in a wide number of Syro-Palestinian sites, Holland, "A Study of Palestinian Iron Age Baked Clay Figurines," 126–127; Kletter, *The Judean Pillar-Figurines and the Archaeology of Asherah*, 105–113, 141, 147–176. On their discovery in domestic settings and the probability that many of these figurines were probably made locally by hand, see Holland, "A Study of Palestinian Iron Age Baked Clay Figurines," 132; Hadley, *The*

Despite these ambiguities it appears that a number of interpretations are implicitly influenced by the presumed state of dress or undress of these figurines. For example, William Dever presupposes that the earlier 'naked' female plaques were 'Canaanite' figurines, and that the Iron Age Pillar figurines were 'Israelite' figurines.[441] The difference between these artefacts, he argues, is that the former depicts a goddess who was a 'lascivious courtesan of the gods', whilst the latter represents a goddess who was 'much more "chaste."'[442] Here Dever imposes uncritical judgments that seem to be influenced by conceptions of modesty and cultural difference in his interpretation of these figurines. He appears to presume that these figurines and their bases were anthropomorphic, the Pillar figurines are able to be considered 'chaste' or 'modest', since their genitals are not exposed. This assumption seems to impose orientalist conceptions of nudity onto these figurines in which female nudity is always considered to be negative and/or hyper-sexualised.[443] Although this is a discussion concerning exposure or exhibition of the female body, it implicitly enters into the language of covering and uncovering. It can be reiterated that, even if the dress or undress of these figurines remains obscure, anthropomorphic iconography cannot be entirely

Cult of Asherah in Ancient Israel and Judah, 204; Patrick D. Miller, *The Religion of Ancient Israel*, Library of Ancient Israel (London; Louisville, KY: SPCK ; Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 37; King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 348; Vriezen, "Archaeological Traces of Cult in Ancient Israel," 66; Day, *Yahweh and the Gods and Goddesses of Canaan*, 55; Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?*, 2008, 180; Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, 152.

[441] For critical discussions on scholarly tendencies to dichotomise ancient 'Canaanite' and 'Israelite' cultures, as Dever does here, see Herbert Niehr, "'Israelite' Religion and 'Canaanite' Religion," in *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah*, ed. Francesca Stavrakopoulou and John Barton (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 23–36.

[442] Dever indicates that the second goddess figurine could be identified with nursing mothers, Dever, *Did God Have a Wife?*, 2008, 187.

[443] For criticisms of orientalist perspectives as well as a more balanced overview of nudity or nakedness in ancient West Asian iconography, see Zainab Bahrani, "The Iconography of the Nude in Mesopotamia," *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 12, no. 2 (January 1, 1993): 12–19. See an insightful critique of Dever's orientalist tones and his treatment of goddess imagery, see Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "'Popular' Religion and 'Official' Religion: Practice, Perception, Portrayal," in *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah*, ed. Francesca Stavrakopoulou and John Barton (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 44; Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "The Ancient Goddess, the Biblical Scholar, and the Religious Past: Re-Imaging Divine Women," in *Bible, Feminism and Gender: Remapping the Field*, ed. Y. Sherwood (Oxford: OUP, 2016).

separated from the consideration that dressed bodies are usually the 'norm' in any given culture.

As indicated, ancient Syro-Palestinian seals are also known to exhibit clothing imagery.[444] Although discoveries of seals from ancient Syro-Palestinian sites are prevalent, they are frequently overlooked because of their small size.[445] For example, Claudia Bender implies that the small scale of these objects notably limits their ability to contribute to discussions of ancient Syro-Palestinian dress and does not end up incorporating them into her study of clothing imagery in the Hebrew Bible.[446] The iconography exhibited on seals

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[444] Small, inscribed objects usually made from stone, which can be impressed onto other objects, such as legal documents, bullae, and sealings. Such sealings or bullae could be used to seal and protect objects, letters, documents and doors; most likely to avoid tampering and theft, Dominque Collon, *Near Eastern Seals*, Interpreting the Past (Berkeley: University of California Press; British Museum, 1990), 18–19. Seals can be made from hard, often high status, materials, such as, lapis lazuli, haematite, quartz, or softer materials such as, steatite and alabaster. They could also be made from other materials such as, bone, ivory, glass, metal or wood, as suggested in Ibid., 11; Leonard Gorelick and A. John Gwinnett, "The Ancient Near Eastern Cylinder Seal as Social Emblem and Status Symbol," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 49, no. 1 (1990): 45. These objects were probably also used to indicate the identity of its user as well as their ownership of property, indicated in Holly Pittman, "Introduction," in *Ancient Art in Miniature: Near Eastern Seals from the Collection of Martin and Sarah Cherkasky*, ed. Holly Pittman (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987), 11, 17; Collon, *Near Eastern Seals*, 11; Fred S. Kleiner, *Gardner's Art through the Ages: The Western Perspective, Volume 1*, 14th ed. (Boston, MA: Cengage Learning, 2012), 39. There are two forms of seals were most dominant from Syro-Palestine: the stamp seal and the cylinder seal. Both display similar iconographic motifs, yet cylinder seals usually have a larger surface area than stamp seals and therefore, they can feature more motifs or larger iconographic scenes. As their name suggests, cylinder seals are cylinder shaped, with a central hole pierced through the core of its length, this would allow the seal to be hung on a string. Stamp seals are seals that usually only has one face that is inscribed. They can be set in the frame of a ring or they can be pierced and also hung on a string. For more discussion on stamp and cylinder seals, Collon, *Near Eastern Seals*, 18–19; Kleiner, *Gardner's Art through the Ages*, 39. Ancient Syro-Palestinian seals have been discovered across the Late Bronze to the Persian Period, for a catalogue of these seals, see Avigad and Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals*.

[445] See Thomason's discussion on the undermining of portable or minor arts, including seals, in relation to wider studies of art from ancient West Asian cultures, Allison Karmel Thomason, "The Impact of the 'Portable': Integrating 'Minor Arts' into the Ancient Near Eastern Canon," in *Critical Approaches to Ancient Near Eastern Art*, ed. Brian A. Brown and Marian H. Feldman (Boston; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 133–57.

[446] Bender's work focuses mainly on relationship between ancient iconographic and textile terminology here, rather than considering how ancient iconography can inform an understanding of clothing and clothing conceptions in the ancient world, Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 44–45.

is inevitably limited by their size, as Bender suggests, since most seals are only a couple of centimetres in dimension.[447] Many anthropomorphic figures exhibited on these seals are only depicted as outlined or stick figures.[448] Nevertheless, a number of these seals do depict clothing styles, featuring the garments of a number of figures presumably identifying them with different social positions.[449] It seems that many of these figures are depicted as elite persons, such as kings or officials, implying that these may have been idealised forms of dress.[450] Rather than disqualify these depictions on account of their size, I argue these seals should be acknowledged for the details that they do exhibit.

The ancient Syro-Palestine seals that do feature clothing are significant since they evidence the skills of their artisans through the quality of workmanship displayed on these seals.[451] Making incisions on hard stones on this scale is technically difficult and requires high levels of dexterity and experience, as

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[447] Feldman, "Mesopotamian Art," 288; Jennifer C. Ross, "Representations, Reality, and Ideology," in *Archaeologies of the Middle East: Critical Perspectives*, ed. Susan Pollock and Reinhard Bernbeck, Blackwell Studies in Global Archaeology (Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005), 336.

[448] For example, seal nos. 50 and 58 in Avigad and Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals*.

[449] As is implied in Uehlinger's examination of Syro-Palestinian seals from the Persian period in Christoph Uehlinger, "'Powerful Persianisms' in Glyptic Iconography of Persian Period Palestine," in *The Crisis of Israelite Religion: Transformation of Religious Tradition in Exilic and Post Exilic Times*, ed. Bob Becking and Marjo C. A. Korpel (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 1999), 134–82.

[450] Ancient Syro-Palestinian seals frequently portray type-scenes and typical character-types, such as cultic worshippers and attendants, deities, royal figures and military figures in combat, indicated in Tallay Ornan, "The Mesopotamian Influence on West Semitic Inscribed Seals: A Preference for the Depiction of Mortals," in *Studies in the Iconography of Northwest Semitic Inscribed Seals: Proceedings of a Symposium Held in Fribourg on April 17-20, 1991*, ed. Benjamin Sass and Christoph Uehlinger (Fribourg, Switzerland; Göttingen: University Press ; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 54–71; Benjamin Sass, "The Pre-Exilic Hebrew Seals: Iconism vs. Aniconism," in *Studies in the Iconography of Northwest Semitic Inscribed Seals: Proceedings of a Symposium Held in Fribourg on April 17-20, 1991*, ed. Benjamin Sass and Christoph Uehlinger (Fribourg, Switzerland; Göttingen: University Press ; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), 228–237.

[451] The significance of the quality of workmanship shall be considered in more depth in the section 3.5. For further explanation on the importance of the process of making things, for a broader discussion of crafts production see section 2.5.

well as specialised tools.[452] Taking the size of seals into consideration and the difficulties entailed in their making enables a new appreciation for any depictions of clothing and the surprising level of detail evidenced on some of them. This may imply that depictions of clothing may have been valued for the level of dexterity that it indexed. It is likely that such intricate details were more costly and therefore these marks may have indexed the economic value of these seals.[453] Thus the size of ancient seals is not in itself a sufficient reason to devalue or dismiss the usefulness of their depictions of clothing. Nevertheless, it can be suggested that these artefacts are still highly problematic in the quest towards elucidating dress styles or even local depictions of clothing from ancient Syro-Palestine.

The depiction of clothing on ancient Syro-Palestinian seals seems to correspond with motifs and stylistic features that are commonly exhibited on seals and other iconographic artefacts from other ancient West Asian cultures. Scholars have noted the occurrence of Neo-Assyrian, neo-Babylonian, Egyptian, and Persian details in the clothing exhibited in ancient Syro-Palestinian seals. For example, see the portrayal of Persian-style headwear (kidaris) and Persian-style robes (kandys) on a number of ancient

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[452] As suggested in Thomason, "The Impact of the 'Portable,'" 150–151. Also see Marian H. Feldman, "Beyond Iconography: Meaning-Making in Late Bronze Age Eastern Mediterranean Visual and Material Culture," in *The Cambridge Prehistory of the Bronze and Iron Age Mediterranean*, ed. A. B. Knapp and P. van Dommelen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 343.

[453] On the status of seals as high status artefacts, see Tilde Binger, *Asherah: Goddesses in Ugarit, Israel and the Old Testament*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 232 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 29; Feldman, "Mesopotamian Art," 288; Ross, "Representations, Reality, and Ideology," 336. They were probably high status objects not only because of their inscriptions, but also because of the valuable materials from which many of these seals were constructed. For examples of seals made with high status materials, such as: lapis lazuli and green jasper, see seal numbers: 143, 189, 226, 735, 736, 754, 829, 861, 1022, 1090, 1101, in Avigad and Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals*. See also, Collon, *Near Eastern Seals*, 33–35. Others were set in a gold frame for a ring, Raphael Giveon, "Two New Hebrew Seals and Their Iconographic Background," *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 93, no. 1 (1961): 38–42; Menakhem Shuval, "A Seal Impression from Tel Jezreel," *Levant* 26 (1994): 49–50. Many of these luxury materials were rare may have needed to have been acquired from a considerable distance, suggested in Ross, "Representations, Reality, and Ideology," 336; Feldman, "Beyond Iconography," 343; Sonik, "Pictorial Mythology and Narrative in the Ancient Near East," 272; Thomason, "The Impact of the 'Portable,'" 151.

Syro-Palestinian seals dating to the Persian period.[454] This may imply that such clothing styles were disseminated across different cultures, thereby indicating ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing, yet this remains impossible to substantiate. It seems more likely that these details were indicative of the influence of wider artistic styles on ancient Syro-Palestinian artisans.[455]

This suggestion of the 'foreign' influence on ancient iconographic seals could be used to indicate the power that these nations had over ancient Syro-Palestine. However, it is probable that the reality was less clear-cut that this. The iconography on these seals do depict styles that can be recognised from other cultures, yet many are not exact replications of the motifs found in other cultures. It seems likely that these styles were appropriated into ancient Syro-Palestinian artistic styles rather than indicating the monopoly of other societies on ancient Syro-Palestinian artistry.[456] It is improbable that these iconographic seals depicted ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing styles. Nevertheless, these details do attest to skill of their artisans and may begin to imply possible interrelationships between ancient Syro-Palestine with other cultures. This indicates that there is more to be said on these seals and their depictions of clothing than is enabled by a narrow focus on assumptions that they depict 'real' ancient Syro-Palestinian dress.

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[454] Uehlinger identifies Persian dress styles on ancient Syro-Palestinian seals such as seals no. 8-12 and 16 in Uehlinger, "'Powerful Persianisms.'" For further observations on clothing styles associated with different cultures, see the brief descriptions of clothing in the catalogues of seals in Avigad and Sass, *Corpus of West Semitic Stamp Seals*; Sass, "The Pre-Exilic Hebrew Seals: Iconism vs. Aniconism." Note that Beatrice Tessier particularly identifies and discusses Egyptianising motifs on Syro-Palestinian seals from the Middle Bronze Age, Beatrice Teissier, *Egyptian Iconography on Syro-Palestinian Cylinder Seals of the Middle Bronze Age*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis. Series Archaeologica 11 (Fribourg, Switzerland : Göttingen: University Press ; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996).

[455] This is implied by exhibition of both Persian and Neo-Babylonian features on seal no. 26 discussed in Uehlinger, "'Powerful Persianisms.'" This example may illustrate the appropriation and merging of different ancient artistic styles by local artisans.

[456] As suggested in Ibid. The portability of these artefacts also makes it probable that they could have been traded or imported into ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures suggesting that some were not even constructed in ancient Syro-Palestine. This is also indicated in Ibid. For a relevant discussion on the difficulties of identifying the origins of seals, see Christoph Uehlinger, "Introduction: The Status of Iconography in the Study of Northwest Semitic Inscribed Seals," in *Studies in the Iconography of Northwest Semitic Inscribed Seals: Proceedings of a Symposium Held in Fribourg on April 17-20, 1991*, ed. Benjamin Sass and Christoph Uehlinger (Fribourg, Switzerland; Göttingen: University Press ; Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993), xi – xxiii.

My discussion of these ancient Syro-Palestinian iconographic artefacts has illustrated that they are limited by the amount they can imply about ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing styles, or even artistic representations of dress. Nevertheless, I have begun to indicate that this iconography is still informative in demonstrating how the depiction of clothing or lack of clothing on these artefacts continues to impact their interpretation in biblical scholarship. It can also be recognised, as I have implied, that iconographic depictions of clothing play a greater role and influence in their ancient contexts. The employment of details of clothing, and even the explicit lack of clothing, can begin to indicate the different meanings and values that may be attributed to ancient Syro-Palestinian iconographic artefacts.

It must be emphasised that, even if ancient iconographic images were based on clothing that was typically worn in ancient West Asian cultures, the extent to which artisans can imitate 'real,' physical clothes is inevitably limited.[457] Iconographic artefacts discovered from ancient West Asia are typically depicted on mediums such as stone or clay. The material properties of these 'hard' artefacts therefore dramatically contrast with the properties typically associated with soft clothing and textiles, such as flexibility and fragility.[458] These properties are impossible to fully reconstruct and difficult to represent in iconography even to construct an illusion of reality. For example, artistic renderings of a garment depicted on a figure, commonly identified as Hammurabi, appears to imitate details such as the folds of a garment, yet it has been indicated that the garment 'clings' to the figure's arm rather than falling 'naturalistically.'[459]

Although it may seem that these points appear self-evident, the employment of iconographic depictions of clothing as though they resemble 'real' clothing and are almost at times treated as such indicates the need to stress that

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[457] The possibility that these images may well on some level be based on reality is a point that must not be entirely rejected, as implied in Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 181.

[458] As has previously been suggested not all properties of clothing would adhere to these examples, yet these are the more typical properties that characterises a wide range of clothing.

[459] Noted in Feldman, "Object Agency?," 155.

these depictions are still inherently limited by their materiality. That these depictions have been treated in such a manner at all also reiterates the scholarly tendency to reduce clothing to its visual appearance over its nature as a complex material entity. The complex materiality of the mediums of ancient iconographic artefacts must also be taken into account if one is to further understand the impact that these 'stone' garments have on their ancient viewers.

It must also be recognised that most ancient West Asian iconography appears to be schematised, which would indicate that artisans were restricted to following certain conventions in depicting iconographic scenes.[460] Whilst there have been no discoveries of 'pattern-"books"' or guidelines that could better demonstrate the existence of such conventions, artistic formulae are illustrated through the observing similar styles and motifs that are exhibited on many ancient West Asian iconographic artefacts across long periods of time.[461] There appear to be different styles which can be recognised in these iconographic depictions. By recognising the schemata that is at work in ancient iconography it seems even less likely that depictions of clothing would have directly resembled 'real' clothes worn in ancient Syro-Palestine.

In the light of the problems that are inherent in assuming that iconographic artefacts exactly resemble ancient persons or aspects of material cultures, the role and impact of iconography must be rethought. It is possible that some iconographic artefacts were intended to resemble real persons or things, yet, even then, such images are an 'extension of the social context in which they were produced.'[462] They are produced from certain perspectives and are impacted by the ancient gaze, a particular cultural way of looking at the world. Therefore, images can be understood as painted or engraved opinions that

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[460] Indicated in Ruth Jacoby, "The Representation and Identification of Cities on Assyrian Reliefs," *Israel Exploration Journal* 41, no. 1/3 (1991): 131; Mehmet-Ali Atac, "Visual Formula and Meaning in Neo-Assyrian Relief Sculpture," *The Art Bulletin* 88, no. 1 (2006): 69; Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 218.

[461] On the probable existence of 'pattern-"books"' or stock motifs, see its discussion in Sonik, "Pictorial Mythology and Narrative in the Ancient Near East," 269–271.

[462] Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 189.

give the modern viewer an insight into ancient worldviews, as suggested by Uehlinger: 'Images document ways of seeing or looking at reality much more than that reality itself.'[463] Iconographic portrayals are not neutral, they are usually impacted by different ideologies, both social and political, as well as a whole host of other agendas.[464] This indicates the importance of considering the possible functions of iconographic artefacts in their different social contexts, as well as the roles of those producing and commissioning these artefacts. These different motivations, ideologies and functions all would have impacted ancient artisans' depictions and employment of clothing on these iconographic artefacts. This shall be considered in more depth in the following case study.

3.5 Ancient West Asian Depictions of Syro-Palestinians

The 'Lachish Reliefs' from the room XXXVI of Sennacherib's 'Palace without Rival' in Nineveh are probably the most frequently referenced iconographic artefacts in discussions of ancient Syro-Palestinian dress (Figs. 3-6).[465] This is most likely because these images, as well as the iconography exhibited on the Black Obelisk associated with Shalmaneser III (Fig. 7), are perhaps the most well-attested depictions of ancient Syro-Palestinians that were discovered from across ancient West Asia. They are celebrated and privileged in western intellectual culture particularly due to the size and value of these 'oriental' trophies. They also hold an important place in biblical scholarship as some of the few iconographic artefacts that corroborate with the claims made in the biblical texts. The epigraphs exhibited on these artefacts have identified persons and events that seemingly correspond with persons and events

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[463] Ibid., 181. See also, Ibid., 180, 189, 191. Still, it can be observed that it is not always apparent what reality these images were intended to communicate, as implied in Zainab Bahrani, *Rituals of War: The Body and Violence in Mesopotamia* (New York; Cambridge: Zone Books; Distributed by the MIT Press, 2008), 26.

[464] Brown, "Culture on Display: Representations of Ethnicity in the Art of the Late Assyrian State," 518.

[465] For an insightful overview of biblical scholarship on the Lachish Reliefs, see Uehlinger, "Clio in a World of Pictures - Another Look at the Lachish Reliefs from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh."

depicted in the biblical texts.[466] It is for these reasons that they play a prominent role not only in studies of ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing, but also in discussions of the historicity of the biblical texts.

The Lachish Reliefs have gained the particular interests of scholars who argue that the siege of the city of Lachish was a historical event. It has been suggested that the defeat depicted in these reliefs corroborates material evidence from a site that purportedly can be identified as the city of Lachish, as well as with the biblical texts.[467] Although the question of whether or not

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[466] The Lachish reliefs (produced c. 700-692 BCE) are widely considered to depict Sennacherib's siege and destruction of the 'Judean' city Lachish (c. 701 BCE), an event which is also referred to in 2 Chronicles 32:9. An attack on the city of Lachish is also implied in 2 Kings 18:13-17 and 19:8. A another event often associated with these iconographic reliefs is Sennacherib's attack on Jerusalem which is described in Neo-Assyrian annals from the period of Sennacherib's reign, discussed further in Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 353–356. It must be acknowledged that whilst the majority of biblical scholars attribute this relief to the destruction of Lachish (either historically or literarily), there is only one inscription on these reliefs that associates them with this city: 'Sennacherib, king of the world, king of Assyria, took place on the nēmedu throne, and the booty of Lachish passed before him,' this translation is taken from, Uehlinger, "Clio in a World of Pictures - Another Look at the Lachish Reliefs from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh," 239–241. It is possible that this inscription was added later, whilst the original attack may have been intended to depict the attack of a different city or perhaps not even a specific city, but a stereotypical picture of defeat.
The second iconographic artefact is the Black Obelisk, which is a black limestone pillar (Nimrud c. 858-824 BCE) that features a number of iconographic panels that depict kings bringing tributes to the Neo-Assyrian ruler Shalmaneser III. One of its superscriptions identifies a 'Jehu son of Omri', who scholars have identified with the Israelite king Jehu in 2 Kings 9:1-10:36, for example see Dever's discussion of this iconographic artefact in Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 320–323. The biblical king Jehu is not the son of Omri. However, Omri may have been used here as a geopolitical designation to infer Israel rather than a genealogical term, as suggested in Brad E. Kelle, "What's in a Name? Neo-Assyrian Designations for the Northern Kingdom and Their Implications for Israelite History and Biblical Interpretation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 121, no. 4 (2002): 647–651.
[467] For further discussion on the archaeological evidence at "Lachish", see R. D. Barnett, "The Siege of Lachish," *Israel Exploration Journal* 8, no. 3 (1958): 161–64; David Ussishkin, "The 'Lachish Reliefs' and the City of Lachish," *Israel Exploration Journal* 30, no. 3/4 (1980): 174–95; King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 226–232, 249–251; Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 359–360; David Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: The Events at Lachish and Jerusalem," in *Isaiah and Imperial Context: The Book of Isaiah in the Times of Empire*, ed. Andrew T. Abernethy et al. (Eugene, Or: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2013), 1–34; David Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: The Archaeological Perspective with an Emphasis on Lachish and Judah," in *Sennacherib at the Gates of Jerusalem: Story, History, and Historiography*, ed. Isaac Kalimi and Seth Richardson (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2014), 75–103.

the siege of Lachish took place is irrelevant to this thesis, such arguments have inevitably influenced contemporary interpretations of the Lachish Reliefs, and in turn perceptions of the clothing exhibited on the these reliefs.

Indeed, in certain circles of scholarship the reliefs continue to be imagined as accurate eyewitness accounts of this 'historical event', similar to approaches in iconography that have already been noted. David Ussishkin even goes so far as to try and identify the exact vantage point from which the ancient artisan may have overlooked the destruction of the city.[468] In concurrence with Ussishkin's discussion, Dever argues: 'The series of monumental stone reliefs...are so detailed and lifelike (or deathlike) that they can only have been executed based on eyewitness sketches.'[469] Such approaches are often positivistic and are driven by those with presumptions that the different sources which reference this event are compatible with one another. These discussions are fixated on points of mutual confirmation without properly considering areas of divergence and often lack critical analysis of each individual source.[470] Although these scholarly interpretations briefly acknowledge that the reliefs follow schematic artistic styles, any consideration as to how the artists may have manipulated the 'reality' of these pictures seems to be lacking.[471]

The continued prominence of scholarly arguments that presume these reliefs depict eyewitness accounts influences contemporary interpretations of the clothing exhibited on these reliefs. Of all the iconographic depictions that are employed in discussions of Syro-Palestinian dress, the Lachish reliefs are

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[468] Ussishkin, "The 'Lachish Reliefs' and the City of Lachish"; Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2013, 27; Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2014, 88–89. Following a point briefly made in Barnett, "The Siege of Lachish."

[469] Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 356. It can be noted that Dever's engagement with the Lachish reliefs seems to be dependent on Ussishkin's argument, which he describes as follows, 'for a superb visual treatment of the Lachish Reliefs (lavishly illustrated) see now the definitive treatment of Ussishkin (1982).' Ibid.

[470] Uehlinger, "Clio in a World of Pictures - Another Look at the Lachish Reliefs from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh," 224, 238, 303.

[471] For example, on Ussishkin's brief acknowledgement of the use of a schematic style, Ussishkin, "The 'Lachish Reliefs' and the City of Lachish," 184; Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2014, 88.

most consistently considered to exhibit clothing that resembled the general styles of dress worn across ancient Syro-Palestine. It is likely that this is due to assumption that the groups exhibited on these reliefs were considered to represent stereotypical social groups of Syro-Palestinians.[472] In contrast to the dress of specific figures depicted on many iconographic artefacts, such as particular kings or cultic officials, the portrayal of groups of people that at first appear to be representative of a whole city seems to imply that their dress is more typical of the clothing worn across the general population.[473] However, if, like many scholars now argue, the scenes depicted on the Lachish reliefs are not eyewitness accounts, it must be considered that the artisans of these reliefs may not have even been aware of the clothing that was typical in ancient Syro-Palestinian cultures.[474] Even if they had attempted to reconstruct a realistic depiction of this event, they may have been limited by their knowledge, or lack thereof, of this 'foreign' ethnic group. In any case such realistic assumptions must be reconsidered, as has already been suggested.

In his more recent studies, Ussishkin briefly acknowledges that his theory has been contested. However, rather than thoroughly addressing the points of contention against his argument, he simply dismissed them suggesting instead that these scholars 'claim that the city is shown in the relief in a schematic, meaningless manner.'[475] Such a statement appears as an attempt to undermine arguments that reject the comparison between these reliefs and the archaeological ruins of 'Lachish.' Nevertheless, Ussishkin's suggestion

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[472] Indicated in Albenda, "Western Asiatic Women in the Iron Age," 88; Collon and British Museum, *Ancient Near Eastern Art*, 142–144.

[473] As implied in C. H. W. Johns, "Ancient Monuments in the British Museum Illustrative of Biblical History," *The Biblical World* 27, no. 1 (1906): 10; Wright, "Israelite Daily Life," 66; Kennedy and Hyatt, "Dress," 222–223; Albenda, "Western Asiatic Women in the Iron Age," 84–87; Edwards, "Dress and Ornamentation," 233; Jensen, "Clothing," 265; King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 262, 266, 272; Borowski, *Daily Life in Biblical Times*, 7; Dever, *The Lives of Ordinary People in Ancient Israel*, 178.

[474] One can observe a similar suggestion in relation to the Egyptian Merenptah's Karnak reliefs (c. 13th Century BCE) in Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 201.

[475] In response to his critics Ussishkin admits that he cannot prove his case, yet he clearly disagrees with the notion this would diminish his argument, Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2013, 27. [Note that Ussishkin also briefly acknowledges that there are 'different views' in a footnote in Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2014, 89.]

that the alternative is that these reliefs were then depicted in a 'meaningless manner' demonstrates a complete misconception as to the artisans' complex role in constructing powerful images. In contrast to Ussishkin's point, it is argued that the artisan's deployment of visual formulas was both 'conscious and well-calculated.'[476] The complexities of these ideological influences and the artisans' construction can be demonstrated even by considering the seemingly 'mundane' use of clothing in these iconographic scenes. One must reconsider the context of these reliefs in order to reassess the roles they may have played in advancing certain ideologies and worldviews, as I will go on to address.

The scale and grandeur of these reliefs, as well as their original location of exhibition in a high status context implies that they were commissioned by and made for an elite audience, as is the case for many iconographic artefacts.[477] At the very least, this suggests that the artisans would have constructed a selective representation of the events that would favourably reflect and advance elite interests.[478] It is widely argued that reliefs and monuments such as the Lachish reliefs were most probably constructed as royal propaganda to emphasise and idealise the figure of the king and his nation.[479] In biblical scholarship it is sometimes noted that the Neo-Assyrians

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[476] Atac, "Visual Formula and Meaning in Neo-Assyrian Relief Sculpture," 69.
[477] Note that the Lachish reliefs were discovered in the remains a site identified as Sennacherib's palace. For other examples of high status iconographic objects see Amy Gansell's discussion of ancient 'Levantine' iconographic ivories, Amy Rebecca Gansell, "The Iconography of Ideal Feminine Beauty Represented in the Hebrew Bible and Iron Age Levantine Ivory Sculpture," in *Image, Text, Exegesis: Iconographic Interpretation and the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Izaak J. de Hulster and Joel M. LeMon (London; New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 46–47.
[478] Feldman, "Object Agency?," 327–328.
[479] On the depiction of ideologies of kingship and royal propaganda in such iconographic scenes, see Jacoby, "The Representation and Identification of Cities on Assyrian Reliefs," 113; Atac, "Visual Formula and Meaning in Neo-Assyrian Relief Sculpture," 78, 84; Jülide Aker, "Workmanship as Ideological Tool in the Monumental Hunt Reliefs of Assurbanipal," in *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context: Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter by Her Students*, ed. Jack Cheng and Marian H. Feldman (Leiden; Boston: Koninklijke Brill, 2007), 242, 247–248; Stephanie Reed, "Blurring the Edges: A Reconsideration of the Treatment of Enemies in Ashurbanipal's Reliefs," in *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context: Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter by Her Students*, ed. Jack Cheng and Marian H. Feldman (Leiden; Boston: Koninklijke Brill, 2007), 102–105, 107–108; Ann Shafer, "Assyrian Royal Monuments on the Periphery: Ritual and the Making of Imperial Space," in *Ancient Near Eastern*

and the king were intentionally made to look powerful in these reliefs.[480] However, such observations are not often considered in great depth, nor have scholars critically expanded on how the artisans' depictions of material culture may be suggested to play a role in developing such ideologies. Still, it is increasingly argued in studies of ancient iconography that a wide range of details exhibited in iconographic scenes (such as the scale of figures, gestures, positioning, appearance and clothing) were effectively employed as powerful tools to develop the ideologies that are communicated through these images.[481] This indicates that clothing may have been employed as an effective tool that impacts the potency of these images and plays a role in constructing the ideologies at work in these scenes.

The Lachish reliefs exhibit a diverse range of clothing. This diversity is recognised to a certain extent in biblical scholarship and has led scholars to propose a number of possible functions for these depictions. Some biblical scholars acknowledge that ancient iconographic depictions of clothing can be used to identify social identities of their wearers. These portrayals are most frequently recognised as a marker of ethnicity. For example, in the Lachish reliefs, clothing distinguishes between the Neo-Assyrians and Lachishites, whilst also indicating something of their social relationships with each other as either conquerors or captives.[482] Some scholars try to account for the variations observable amongst the dress of the captive party. Dominique Collon limits the role of clothing to ethnicity, suggesting that one of the groups

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Art in Context: Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter by Her Students, ed. Jack Cheng and Marian H. Feldman (Leiden; Boston: Koninklijke Brill, 2007), 136, 140; Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 206.

[480] As implied in Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2014, 188.

[481] Indicated in Ross, "Representations, Reality, and Ideology," 339–343; Aker, "Workmanship as Ideological Tool," 247–248; Brown, "Culture on Display: Representations of Ethnicity in the Art of the Late Assyrian State," 534–536.

[482] For clothing as a marker of ethnicity, see Albenda, "Western Asiatic Women in the Iron Age," 84; Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 179; Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2014, 87. For suggestions that clothing distinguishes between conquerors and captives, see Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2013, 24; Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2014, 101. See Layard's argument quoted in Uehlinger, "Clio in a World of Pictures - Another Look at the Lachish Reliefs from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh," 234.

that appear to wear slightly different clothing refers to depict a group of Nubians, of whom she suggests were historically the neighbouring peoples to the Lachishites.[483] However, this proposal is not widely acknowledged in biblical scholarship. Uehlinger suggests that the Lachish reliefs offer a complex depiction of Iron Age Levantine society.[484] This implicitly indicates that the difference in clothing may imply different levels of society, perhaps different social statuses.[485] Scholarly interpretations of the diversity in clothing often only distinguish between a small number of groups and do not acknowledge the extent of variation that is displayed on these scenes. Furthermore, many continue to only indicate one possible interpretation of these differences rather than recognising the complex role that they may play in ancient iconography.

An illustrative example of these tendencies can be observed through the interpretations of the depictions of ancient Syro-Palestinian's clothing as 'plain' or 'simple.' Indeed, the ancient Syro-Palestinians depicted on the Lachish reliefs wear less-decorated garments in comparison to their Neo-Assyrian counterparts. The resemblance of these sculptured garments to real ancient Syro-Palestinian clothing is rarely questioned, yet some scholars have emphasised that in the context of this iconographic artefact the Syro-Palestinians are stripped of their finery and are instead depicted with 'simple' clothing.[486] Such interpretations imply that this portrayal would have communicated their impoverishment and debasement in the context of these reliefs which would indicate their new subjugated status. However, some of the depictions of Lachishites exhibit nuanced details of clothing; for example, women are still depicted with headdresses (Fig. 4) and some depictions of

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[483] Collon and British Museum, *Ancient Near Eastern Art*, 144. See pages 142-144 for a broader view of her interpretation of clothing as an indicator of ethnicity.
[484] Albenda, "Western Asiatic Women in the Iron Age," 84; Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 179; Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2014, 87.
[485] This is also implied by the assumption that the Lachishites' dress was representative of the general population as argued above. Note more scholarly distinctions between different social groups in these iconographic depictions below.
[486] For example, Wright, "Israelite Daily Life," 66; E. Porada, "Remarks About Some Assyrian Reliefs," *Anatolian Studies* 33 (1983): 15–16; Douglas, Tenney, and Silva, "Dress."

clothing include faint patterns/designs. This would imply that their debasement is not totalising. Nevertheless, the suggestion made above must not be disregarded; rather it picks up on some important points that shall be discussed further in this section. However, it is problematic to generalise and label clothing as 'plain' or 'simple' particularly since it undermines and simplifies the diverse clothing that is featured on these reliefs. The depictions of the Lachishites' clothing should not be boxed in to a single category.

It is likely that these depictions of the subjugated party were still representative of the elite and wealthy, rather than being illustrative of the whole population of Lachish, and probably still portrayed high status clothing.[487] Ruth Jacoby proposes that:

> The portrayal of the foe as a brave people, living in strongly fortified cities in far-off lands, increased the conquest's brilliance and enhanced the fame and reputation of the victorious Assyrian king.[488]

This would imply that it was probably more effective to depict the enemies as wealthy and powerful in order to stress Sennacherib's victory. Jacoby emphasises that portrayals of a powerful people or enemy were communicated through the depiction of the foreign party's material culture. Therefore, although many of these garments were 'plain' they still depicted high status garments. This implies that the distinction between the various garments portrayed on the reliefs may have indicated more than differences in social statuses.

The artisans' portrayal of clothing seems to effectively demarcate variety in the treatment of enemies, in this case the Lachishites, featured on iconographic scenes.[489] This is loosely implied by a number of biblical scholars for which the fate of different figures seems to be an area of some interest. Richard Barnett notes upon these differences in clothing suggesting

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[487] For slightly contrasting view, see Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 218–219.
[488] Jacoby, "The Representation and Identification of Cities on Assyrian Reliefs," 113.
[489] Barnett, "The Siege of Lachish," 162–163.

that the portrayal of distinct groups implied their fates. He argues that the Syro-Palestinian figures depicted nearest Sennacherib's men could be identified as King Hezekiah's men that were 'singled out for particular displeasure.'[490] However, there is nothing remarkable in their clothing or gesture that would necessarily indicate this fate.[491] Ussishkin also attempts to identify details of headwear on one of a group of naked figures impaled on spikes to indicate that this person may have been the governor of Lachish (Figs. 5 and 6).[492] This interpretation is based on preconceived expectations rather than the details implied through the images themselves. Moreover, the nuanced details that Ussishkin alludes to are worn and therefore, slightly obscured making it difficult to even support his distinctions between these figures. Nevertheless, although these ideas are questionable, the suggestion that differences in clothing may indicate differences in their treatment can be developed further.

Stephanie Reed develops an interpretation of the ambiguity presented in the different treatments and fates of enemies depicted in Neo-Assyrian iconography. Reed proposes that such portrayals may have been purposefully employed by the ancient artisans to represent seemingly contradictory perspectives even on the same relief, which effectively depicts multiple outcomes in these scenes.[493] For example, the impaled naked figures featured on the Lachish reliefs (Fig. 6) are depicted within the same relief as a group of dressed captives depicted carrying their possessions as they are presumably leaving the city, they are separated by only a short distance on this relief (Fig. 5).[494] These portrayals do not only highlight the level of detail and complexities constructed on reliefs, but Reed argues that they illustrate multiple levels of meaning and manifests different facets of ancient Neo-Assyrian ideologies, as will be explored further below.[495]

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[490] Ibid., 163.
[491] Argued in Uehlinger, "Clio in a World of Pictures - Another Look at the Lachish Reliefs from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh," 279–282.
[492] Ussishkin, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah," 2013, 23.
[493] Reed, "Blurring the Edges," 102–104.
[494] Ibid., 108.
[495] Ibid., 104–105.

The sense of ambiguity in these motifs may have been used to simultaneously accentuate the Neo-Assyrian king as a victor and bringer of justice, as well as the ideal king that is the protector of the weak. This ideal is illustrated through the difference in the treatment of captives, some appear to be treated harshly whilst others are more favourably depicted and even protected, such as the groups of women and children with possessions who are being led by soldiers from the city. This intentional depiction of the ambiguity of status or roles can also be perceived in the portrayal of Neo-Assyrian soldiers, who occupy a blurred role as guards that can both protect or persecute.[496] The portrayal of such complex ideologies are made possible through the employment of clothing in these scenes. The artisans' use of clothing to distinguish between different treatments, or even through the blurring of life and death in the projected fate of these captives, demonstrates the inherent relationship between clothing and personhood.[497]

The inherent nature of clothing to manifest relationships is also employed as a significant ideological tool in the depictions of 'foreign' peoples in Neo-Assyrian iconography. This role is not uniform across ancient West Asian iconography. It changes over time as ideologies and methods for promoting propaganda was transformed and according to its particular context. Brian Brown argues that earlier Neo-Assyrian iconography tended towards assimilating the appearance of foreigners.[498] For example, the iconographic scenes on the Black Obelisk depict both the subjugated foreign rulers, 'Jehu' and 'Sua', in clothing that was comparable with the Neo-Assyrian style of dress. Both of their garments are similar to, but still not as intricate as, the Neo-Assyrian ruler, Shalmaneser III's clothing.[499] The observation that 'Jehu' and 'Sua's' garments are almost identical to each other, although presumably representing different cultures, may indicate that clothing was not simply

[496] Ibid., 104–105, 107, 115.
[497] As suggested in Ibid., 111.
[498] Brown, "Culture on Display: Representations of Ethnicity in the Art of the Late Assyrian State," 534.
[499] Brown suggests that the artists may that pick a few chosen features to identify these figures with their different cultural backgrounds, Ibid., 522–523.

employed here to stress their ethnicity, but rather their power-positions in relation to that of their Neo-Assyrian overlord.

Other scholars have emphasised that 'Jehu's' gesture, in which he is prostrated before the Neo-Assyrians, indicates his humility and shameful defeat.[500] However, the similarity between their garments implies that the projected relationship between these parties could be more complex. 'Jehu' has been assimilated, becoming notably 'Assyrianised.' This could imply that the depiction of 'Jehu' is perhaps not as negative as has been suggested. By being depicted as 'Neo-Assyrian' one may indicate that 'Jehu' was allied with the Neo-Assyrians and not purely dominated through force.[501] These clothes implicitly empower his agency and position, and manifests 'Jehu's' relationship with the Neo-Assyrians in this scene. This depiction of the clothing of foreigners, in which they are assimilated and Assyrianised, is most likely contextual and not solely due to a trend in wider Asian West Asian iconography. It has been proposed that through these depictions the artisan may have been highlighting Shalmaneser III as an idealised ruler of peace, rather than of conquest. This once again reiterates that clothing plays an active role in developing the ideologies manifest in this iconography.[502]

Neo-Assyrian iconography increasingly seems to differentiate between 'foreign' peoples. This is partly achieved through portrayals of distinctive features on their clothing, as well as the landscape and material culture associated with these nations.[503] Brown suggests that this approach 'stresses much more forcefully the link between people and place.'[504] Dress frequently plays a significant social and material role in connecting people to different cultural and geographical spaces. The sharp distinctions in dress in the

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[500] Indicated in Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 204–209. An example of this view can be seen in Porada, "Remarks About Some Assyrian Reliefs," 15.

[501] Uehlinger also argues that this depiction of these rulers is not simply humiliating but indicates their privileged position. He suggests that it implies that these rulers voluntarily submitted to Shalmaneser III, Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 206–209.

[502] Ibid.

[503] Brown, "Culture on Display: Representations of Ethnicity in the Art of the Late Assyrian State," 523–530.

[504] Ibid., 527.

Lachish reliefs arguably distances their relationship with the Neo-Assyrians. Here, they are not being assimilated, rather they appear to be 'othered.'[505] The clothing and other material objects exhibited in association with the Lachishites were most likely employed to depict them as not as 'civilised' as the Neo-Assyrian party displayed on these iconographic scenes.[506] Such a contrast is dramatically apparent on the relief that depicts a group of Lachishites before Sennacherib and his officials (Fig. 3), the intricacy of these official's clothing compared with that of the Lachishite captives.

Nevertheless, not all depictions of Syro-Palestinians on the Lachish refliefs are 'othered' to the same degree. For example, some figures on the Lachish Reliefs that are often identified as 'Judean' archers appear to wear more Assyrianised dress.[507] This may indicate that some 'foreigners' were 'raised to positions of honour,' in this case it is probable that these figures were part of the Neo-Assyrian army. This again emphasises the complex diversity that is demonstrated through the depiction of clothing on these reliefs. Such suggestions are significant since they challenge the scholarly tendency to interpret depictions of clothing with only singular meanings. The shifts in the depiction of 'foreign' peoples in ancient West Asian iconography, both within iconographic scenes and across different iconographic artefacts, reiterates that clothing was multifaceted and in flux. Thus, it must not be assumed that they always indicate the same meanings when depicted on different iconographic artefacts in distinct contexts. In these contexts clothing is depicted in various ways and construct different relationships in these scenes. However, although these discussions have effectively illustrated that clothing plays a dynamic role in their iconographic contexts, they are still largely focused on the styles and appearance of these iconographic garments.

Given these discussions on the Lachish reliefs it can be argued to a certain extent that ancient West Asian iconography offers an alternative perspective

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[505] As suggested in Ibid., 534–536.

[506] Indicated in Ibid., 523–530. However, this does not necessarily negate my previous suggestion that the Lachishites' garments were still probably depictions of high status garments.

[507] Implied in Ibid., 536.

that can be compared with textual evidence, such as the Hebrew Bible.[508] Some ancient West Asian iconographic artefacts may appear to depict their cultural perspectives of ancient Syro-Palestinian people, however, these portrayals are difficult to directly compare with the portrayals of Syro-Palestinians in the biblical texts. As has been shown, these depictions were probably manipulated by the artisan to construct ideologies within its own context, therefore, these images may have little to do with the depiction of ancient Syro-Palestinians or their dress. Nevertheless, it has been indicated that ancient iconography, like texts, illustrates different cultural perspectives and ideologies that are constructed by their producers. It is these ideological views that might be comparable with those depicted in the biblical texts, particularly considering wider issues such as the treatment of enemies in war or the depiction of ritualistic scenes. However, it can be recognised that images and texts are not exact counterparts, since they are able to depict ideological perspectives and worldviews in distinct ways and have their own specific contexts of influence.[509] Therefore, even when drawing comparisons with textual sources, images must not be reduced to words, as has sometimes been the result from employing 'linguistically motivated frameworks', they must continue to be recognised on their own terms.[510]

The materiality of these garments, particularly those that have been carved or incised into stone or other materials, is also active in developing ancient ideologies and informing an understanding as to their significance in different iconographic contexts. This is arguably illustrated through the very act of carving. It is probable that the carving of larger scale iconographic projects was carried out by a team of artisans.[511] Jülide Aker persuasively proposes that the deployment of these artisans was not arbitrary. Instead, it could be seen to be the result of a strategic decision to position the most skilled

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[508] Uehlinger, "Neither Eyewitnesses, Nor Windows to the Past, but Valuable Testimony in Its Own Right," 224.

[509] Note an insightful alternative perspective on the relationship between words and images in relation to their ontological status and essence, Cory D. Crawford, "Relating Image and Word in Ancient Mesopotamia," in *Critical Approaches to Ancient Near Eastern Art*, ed. Brian A. Brown and Marian H. Feldman (Boston; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2014), 241–64.

[510] Ibid., 241–244.

[511] Aker, "Workmanship as Ideological Tool," 230.

artisans to work on important details of the iconographic scene, such as higher-ranking persons.[512] This point is supported through the varying levels of competence that can be identified on these scenes. For example, particular areas of Assurbanipal's hunting reliefs demonstrate instances of poor or unfinished carving, mistakes, or lack of embellishment.[513] This dramatically contrasts with the impressive intricacy that is often celebrated in these reliefs, such as the portrayal of the king and even the hunting dogs.[514] To consider the impact of carving on the execution of images demonstrates an important step towards recognising the importance of the materiality of ancient iconography. It can be employed to adjust our way of looking at these artefacts and appreciate the various features of these images in a new sense.

The craftsmanship exhibited in the finer details of iconography, such as the minute details that can be identified on garments, can be recognised as a powerful tool for enhancing the ideologies at play in these iconographic scenes.[515] In an earlier discussion it was noted that the ancient Syro-Palestinians exhibited on the Lachish reliefs are depicted in 'plain' garments, which contrasts with the intricate clothing displayed on Neo-Assyrian officials. However, the explanation behind these contrasting portrayals is elucidated in the light of this insightful proposal. It is probable that these details were carved by artisans with different skill levels. This implies that the quality of workmanship displayed in features such as clothing can function to distance figures from one another or indicate the intimacy of their relationships.[516] Those with intricately designed clothing are also arguably empowered by their materiality, since they are indicative of the time, labour, and most likely, economic expense that was required to construct them. Evidence of complex craftsmanship can also be demonstrated through the depth of carving. Such details helpfully readjusts the scholarly perspective to show that these images are three-dimensional, they have different levels and textures that impact the

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[512] Ibid., 230–238.

[513] Ibid., 232–238.

[514] Ibid., 229.

[515] See Jülide Aker's discussion for a wider discussion on workmanship as an ideological tool, Aker, "Workmanship as Ideological Tool."

[516] Implied in Ibid., 247–248.

way they can be experienced. This examination of the significance of material features of images needs to be developed and explored even further.

These ancient West Asian images begin to demonstrate the complex ways in which clothing was portrayed for different purposes in iconographic depiction. The materiality of their shape and detail is suggestive of their artisan's skill and ability to employ the materiality of stone to portray clothing in a variety of forms. Such portrayals imply that their ancient artisans had an understanding of clothing that was dynamic and powerful which enabled them to manipulate the portrayed materiality of clothing to most effectively communicate and manifest different ideologies that would impact their ancient viewers. These depictions help to support the suggestion that the depiction of clothing in the biblical texts was unlikely to be simplistic or trivial, since they offer another source that demonstrates the ways in which clothing was employed as powerful objects that could be creatively manipulated to enrich and construct a larger scene. In the following section I will develop an understanding as to the possible impact that these depictions had on ancient people.

3.6 The Potency of Clothing in Stone

The focus in the previous section on the ideologies that are communicated in these iconographic artefacts helps to elucidate a more complex understanding of the use of clothing in ancient West Asian images. However, there remains the risk that such emphases may lead to an unconscious tendency to separate these 'conceptual' ideologies from the materiality of the images of clothing themselves.[517] However, recent studies of ancient West Asian iconography have stressed - similarly to my arguments about objects elsewhere - that images are not only mediums that carry imported meanings, but 'they are themselves constitutive of meaning.'[518] Similarly, it can be

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[517] For a critique of the tendency to privilege the symbolism and ideologies of ancient iconography over the image itself, see Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 66; Bahrani, "Regarding Art and Art History," 517; Crawford, "Relating Image and Word in Ancient Mesopotamia," 241–244, 246.

[518] Bahrani, "Regarding Art and Art History," 513. For similar arguments see Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 68–80; Feldman, "Object Agency?"; Crawford, "Relating Image and Word in Ancient Mesopotamia," 250–259; Feldman, "Beyond Iconography."

argued that ideology is constituted through, and not separable from, its representation in iconography.[519] This seems to indicate that ideologies are material and not only conceptual. These points emphasise that images of garments can be considered as powerful objects that inherently manifest their own agency.[520]

Even though these 'stone' depictions of garments are not clothes in the conventional sense, they still can be suggested to perform a similar role to 'real' garments. As indicated above, they can be considered to manifest 'real' power. Indeed, these garments play a role in shaping bodies and constructing material and social relations within iconographic depictions. It can also be recognised that the viewers of these images were also inevitably drawn into the social and material entanglements with these 'stone' garments. It has frequently been observed that images impact their viewers and can evoke powerful responses in them; such experiences are also affected by the positioning, medium and wider context in which such images are viewed.[521] Each person engages with images from their own personal and cultural perspective, implying that their experience of such images is in many ways unique.[522] In order to more fully understand the impact that ancient iconographic depictions of clothing had within their ancient contexts it is necessary to consider broader discussions of the potency of images developed in recent iconographic studies. I shall also indicate how these studies correspond with some of the concerns and ideas depicted in the biblical texts.

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[519] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 68.

[520] It can be observed that studies on object agency itself have partly been developed from Gell's discussion that principally focuses on the agency of art, Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[521] For further discussion on the significance of some of these aspects, see Shafer, "Assyrian Royal Monuments on the Periphery"; Feldman, "Object Agency?"; Crawford, "Relating Image and Word in Ancient Mesopotamia," 258; Feldman, "Beyond Iconography."

[522] Although an artist's intended message or meaning may evoke such responses, images often go beyond their creators' intentions and causes people to react to art in ways that are unanticipated, much like has been argued with objects.

In biblical scholarship, studies of the iconographic artefacts discussed here have largely overlooked considerations as to the power of these images to impact its viewers and make an impact on the 'real' world. Despite this, scholars of materiality and visual culture have argued that images would have been equally, if not more, powerful in their ancient contexts. It is likely that illiteracy was prevalent across ancient West Asian cultures, making visual art one of the dominant forms of communication and means of disseminating propaganda and elite ideologies.[523] Ancient concepts of materiality were unlikely to be as clear-cut or simplistic as often presumed in contemporary Western scholarship. By beginning to acknowledge the complexities inherent in ancient iconography, as I have done in this chapter, we are also in a better position to reconsider the efficacy of the materiality of images in ancient West Asian culture. The precise nature of the impact that iconographic artefacts had on their ancient viewers is inevitably lost to history. Nevertheless, given all that we know of ancient Syro-Palestinian and West Asian ideologies and world views, it is possible to construct what is the most plausible portrayal of the impact that these iconographic artefacts had within their ancient contexts.

The power and agency of iconographic objects is indexed through their materiality and the very processes involved in their construction. For example, the large scale of many of the larger imperial reliefs and statues made them physically dominating. They could depict life-sized or supersized figures, or position images so that they would physically tower over, and potentially intimidate, its viewer.[524] The task of quarrying and transporting alabaster panels for some of the Neo-Assyrian palace reliefs was physically challenging and, according to Karen Sonik, would have 'required command of a massive labor force,' in addition to the number of craftsmen already needed to construct these images.[525] This implies that the materials themselves would

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[523] Implied of ancient Syro-Palestine culture in Richard Hess, "Literacy in Iron Age Israel," in *Windows into Old Testament History: Evidence, Argument, and the Crisis of "Biblical Israel,"* ed. V. Philips Long, Gordon J. Wenham, and David W. Baker (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2002), 82–102.

[524] For more examples of the impact of the physical positioning of images on its viewer, see discussions in Shafer, "Assyrian Royal Monuments on the Periphery."

[525] Sonik, "Pictorial Mythology and Narrative in the Ancient Near East," 272. As previously indicated, such objects likely required a whole team of people to craft

have already demonstrated their agency to impact the numerous people involved in this process. These iconographic artefacts could also be considered to manifest the economic and social power of their commissioner.[526] Thus, it can be suggested that its viewer may have been impacted by images they perceive through a combination of both the material medium of the image and the content of the image itself. We must continue to reconsider the way in which these ancient iconographic artefacts were understood in their ancient contexts by considering the agency of the image itself in more depth.

In ancient West Asian cultures there was a blurring between the 'real' and its 'representative' form in ancient iconography. This idea is not new to discussions of ancient iconography.[527] The biblical writers also seem to display a concern with the power of divine images, which is primarily indicated by the aforementioned prohibition of such images in biblical Yahwism.[528] It is possible that the concern was that such images could rival Yahweh's power or, alternatively, they could make Yahweh similarly vulnerable to attack by being abducted or harmed by damage inflicted on his image. In biblical scholarship and other ancient West Asian studies, scholars have frequently observed that the distinction between a deity and a cult statue seems to be obscured. It is likely that across ancient West Asian cultures cult statues were believed to manifest divine presence.[529] This is supported by the suggestion

them, due to the size of these panels they would have been restricted as to where they could carve them, it is likely some of these larger iconographic artefacts may have needed to be carved in the location that they were to be displayed.

[526] The agency of the materiality of iconographic artefacts and of their images must not be confined to larger sculptures, instead it can be suggested that each of these artefacts had the potential to affect its viewers and producers in their own ways, as indicated in Thomason, "The Impact of the 'Portable.'"

[527] For examples of studies that explore the blurring of distinctions between the real and represented, see Bahrani, "The King's Head"; Winter, "Agency Marked, Agency Ascribed: The Affective Object in Ancient Mesopotamia"; Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 79–98; Bahrani, "Regarding Art and Art History"; Crawford, "Relating Image and Word in Ancient Mesopotamia," 250–253; Porter, "When the Subject Is the Object."

[528] See section 3.4.

[529] For further discussions on these debates, see Theodore J. Lewis, "Divine Images and Aniconism in Ancient Israel," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1998, 36–53; Neal H. Walls, ed., *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East*, ASOR Books 10 (Boston, MA: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2005); Nathaniel B. Levtow, *Images of Others: Iconic Politics in Ancient Israel*, Biblical and

that cult statues were sometimes stolen during military campaigns, an act that has been equated with the defeat and abduction of that society's gods.[530] Whilst the biblical writers do not make their reasons for the prohibition of images explicit, this display of concern for divine images implicitly indicates that these objects could have potential to impact followers of the Yahwistic cult and perhaps even extend and impact Yahweh's agency.

These arguments concerning divine images have recently been extended and employed to develop methods for rethinking ancient iconography more generally. It has been proposed that ancient iconography could manifest the presence and agency of that which they represented and, therefore, could impact that person or nation's power.[531] These approaches have been explored in-depth in relation to iconographic depictions of ancient rulers. For example, Anne Porter argues that such iconographic depictions could become a partible or a distributed part of a ruler's personhood. In her exploration of the Akkadian ruler Naram-Sin, she proposes that these '[o]bjects *are* Naram-Sin, and not just pictures of him…they disturb, enthral, and render subject and object as one in the creating of a new political entity.'[532] Elsewhere Porter refers to these iconographic objects as a 'living network of his [the king's] presence.'[533] Porter is not alone in making such arguments, Zainab Bahrani

Judaic Studies from the University of California, San Diego 11 (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2008).

[530] Implied in Bahrani, "The King's Head," 118.

[531] See dicussions in Bahrani, *The Graven Image*, 128–140; Bahrani, "The King's Head"; Winter, "Agency Marked, Agency Ascribed: The Affective Object in Ancient Mesopotamia"; Bahrani, *Rituals of War*; Winter, "What/When Is a Portrait? Royal Images of the Ancient Near East"; Porter, "When the Subject Is the Object."

[532] Porter, "When the Subject Is the Object," 598.

[533] Ibid., 597. As extensions of ancient kings it could be suggested that such images were able to extend and develop their imperial presence and power in the different contexts in which they were established. For example, Ann Shafer argues that the distribution of imperial monuments that depict Shalmaneser III that have been discovered in various different geographic regions was a way of establishing the king's presence on the periphery of the kingdom. Shafer, "Assyrian Royal Monuments on the Periphery," 136, 140. Porter similarly argues that royal monuments could construct imperial power, and suggests that they did not just establish the kings' presence in the periphery – they also constituted the boundary markers of his territory: 'his objects guards the edge of his world as well as extending these edges.' Porter specifically makes this point in relation to the depiction of Naram-Sin, however, her points can be also applied to other royal iconographic

similarly argues that a person's representation in visual art was a material site for the manifestation of their identity.[534] Bahrani develops this view suggesting that images could also effect the 'destiny' of that which they represented, particularly since it was likely that images would outlast the person or object represented and could extend their presence or personhood even beyond death.[535] Therefore, it could be suggested that part of the artisan's task was to inscribe a version of reality that could enhance the power and agency of the person represented.[536]

It is not only depictions of people that may have efficacy in ancient art. Depictions of material culture, including garments, plays a dynamic role in constructing such displays of power, as explored in this chapter. It has been proposed that, 'Monuments *constitute* the objects they represent as much as they mirror them.'[537] Bahrani suggests that images of persons, such as the king, are not simply portrayed through one aspect, but rather through a 'number of visual details of clothing and bodily ideals all of which can be read as the image of the king.'[538] This point implies that, like 'real' clothing, these depictions of clothing constitute a distributed part of one's personhood: they can manifest both the personhood of its wearer within the iconographic scenes as well as the person or group that is represented. This indicates that clothing plays a significant role within an iconographic scene by enabling or disabling characters within it, as well as being able to empower the person or social group represented in iconography in the 'real' world.

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monuments from ancient West Asia, Porter, "When the Subject Is the Object," 612. See also, 610.

[534] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 79.

[535] Bahrani, *The Graven Image*, 137; Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 96. However, such extensions of the kings' presence also make his power vulnerable to attack. This may be supported by the specific vandalism of images of royal figures, such as the deliberate mutilation of Sennacherib's face on the Lachish Reliefs. Bahrani also notes the partial destruction of Ashurbanipal's image in the iconography depicting him at a banquet, Ibid., 118.

[536] For examples of such ideals see discussions in the previous section, particularly see the discussion in Winter, "What/When Is a Portrait? Royal Images of the Ancient Near East."

[537] Crawford, "Relating Image and Word in Ancient Mesopotamia," 253. For a similar point see Bahrani, *The Graven Image*, 127.

[538] Bahrani, *Rituals of War*, 98.

It is possible to elucidate on the impact that ancient depictions of clothing (and the ideologies that are constructed through them) had on the 'real' world. The Neo-Assyrian victory depicted in these reliefs is manifested in the very agency of the stone garments, the minute details of which can contribute to its power as a garment, as well as contributing to the power of the person it manifests. The level of detail and diversity featured on the clothing of different groups of Neo-Assyrian soldiers is active in constructing them as victors. Within these battle scenes the Neo-Assyrians' clothing or armour may be considered to play a protective and maybe even apotropaic role that enables their survival over the comparatively unprotected Lachishites. These nuanced details that indicate the Neo-Assyrian victory also implicitly extends the military power of the Neo-Assyrian nation represented by these figures. Distinct features depicted on their garments that mark them as victors, such as their headwear, also works to reinforce a sense of collective identity and unity as a powerful nation, despite there clearly being a variety of groups represented through the differences in the clothing and weaponry of these soldiers. This construction of a powerful Neo-Assyria has its own agency that is entangled with the 'real' power and impact of the Neo-Assyrian nation, as well as becoming an extension of Sennacherib's influence as its figurehead.[539]

These discussions develop and expound on our understanding of the complex social and material entanglements that existed between ancient West Asian - and by extension ancient Syro-Palestinian - people and their clothing. Ancient West Asian depictions of clothing in iconography are active in illustrating and also constructing conceptions of clothing in these cultures. They do this through perpetuating different ideologies of clothing, artisans construct garments that can empower and disempower the person imaged and the person they represent through covering and displaying their bodies in different ways. As indicated, this also impacts its viewers' perceptions and understanding of the potency of clothing, even the garments that are exhibited

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[539] In contrast, the discussed depiction of the Lachishites indicates not only the destruction of this city, but is entangled with the power of the ancient Syro-Palestinians as a whole people group and therefore, has repercussions on their power. The depictions of the Lachishites have been discussed in more depth in the previous section.

do not exist as 'real' garments worn in these ancient cultures. By considering the material impact of these depictions of clothing we are also able to broaden our understanding on the dynamic impact that clothing had in ancient Syro-Palestinian and ancient West Asian cultures. These discussions are particularly insightful in challenging us not to be too quick in delimiting the agency of clothing to only its material form as textiles. As such, they are an important source for illustrating the role and agency of clothing in these ancient contexts.

3.7 Summary

It is necessary rethink how we have conventionally looked at the clothing exhibited on ancient iconography. Such depictions must not be assumed to replicate the types of clothing worn in ancient societies, nor can they be persuasively aligned with clothing terms depicted in the biblical texts. Instead, like 'real' clothing themselves these 'stone' depictions of clothes can function to construct social and material relationships within the scene or image in which they are portrayed, and even with its artisans, viewers, and the persons whom are represented through this iconography. In order to critically consider how these depictions of clothing in iconography can enrich our perspectives it has been important to recognise the need to critically examine iconography as a source that is independent from the biblical texts, and is materiality distinct from texts and material textiles. Iconographic depictions of clothing have their own materiality that can impact both how it is represented and the details that it can have and its impact on its ancient viewers.

These 'stone' clothes preserve ancient perspectives on and depictions of clothing. These iconographic depictions of garment were constructed and displayed by artisans in a particular social and cultural context and as such, like the biblical writers, they were influenced by ancient cultural perspectives on clothing. Such depictions do not clearly indicate exactly how people felt and experienced their clothing, instead, such depictions illustrate the dynamic ways in which clothing could be employed to communicate different ideologies and material and social relationships. As such, these portrayals are in many

ways comparable to the employment of clothing to construct and transform relationships in the Hebrew Bible. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that such parallels need to be critically and tentatively examined; such interpretations need to take into account that texts and images do function in different ways for varying purposes.

The diverse depiction of clothing exhibited on a particular iconographic artefact suggests that clothing was used to communicate and manifest the social status and personhood of those of whom the clothing was depicted. For example, clothing seems to have been used in various ways to affirm or 'other' relationships between one nation and another. The variance between the depictions of clothes on iconographic artefacts may index different ideologies or cultural perceptions on the different ways clothing can be employed in various ancient contexts over time. This might imply how perceptions of clothing and the ways it might be used and appropriated through ancient art was complex and changeable. In light of this, it is possible to imply this indicates that real clothes were had complex and changing roles to play in ancient social and material relations or at least they were most likely perceived in this way in ancient cultures.

Artisans were also restricted and enabled by the medium through which depictions of clothing were exhibited. Clothing inscribed onto stone could be depicted in ways which 'real' clothes could not. This implies that artisans could employ clothing to construct bodily ideals and include details that were impossible to replicate on clothes. The artisan was able to capture a particular gesture, movement or way of presenting the dressed body in a single freeze-frame moment, constructing clothing that would not lose its shape, or crease, or decay at the same rate as real clothes. This would enable the impact of this image to last over time. Such possibilities could also imply the range of ways artisans could employ and appropriate the materiality of clothes to effectively communicate their ideologies and depict social and material relationships. It also may begin to indicate broader ways in which clothing could be manipulated to construct different relationships and for different effects on different media such as texts. This is not to suggest that texts and images

were the same, instead these ideas challenge us to consider how the biblical writers' have used their own medium of text to manipulate and construct complex portrayals of clothing.

The proposal that these iconographic depictions of clothing had their own agency that could impact real people is important for developing our understanding of the different ways in which clothes may have impacted people in ancient Syro-Palestinian and other ancient West Asian cultures. First, it indicates the impact that clothes, even 'stone' clothes, can have in constructing a relationship with the people that view them. The social and material context in which such clothes were viewed as well as the materiality, its size and specific details portrayed on clothing can impact how a viewer might relate to the person or wider image being depicted. Moreover, the suggestion that iconographic depictions of clothes may function to empower or weaken the person or nation that is represented through such a portrayal broadens our perspective of the ability of clothes to act as distributed parts of people. This elucidates on various possible ways that clothing could be intimately entangled with people and has agency that impacts real people even through their iconographic depiction.

In these past two chapters I have expanded our perceptions of the various ways in which ancient Syro-Palestinians may have been impacted by the agency and materiality of clothes and textiles. The entanglements that have been implied between people and their clothes or textiles in these ancient contexts would have inevitably impacted the biblical writers' own perceptions of clothing and how they might be employed in dynamic ways in the biblical texts. We can now turn to examine these depictions of clothing through a number of selected case studies.

Part II: "Case Studies": Materialising Clothing in the Text

The *Ketonet Passim*:

Beyond the Wearer

4 The *Ketonet Passim* as Uniquely Crafted Gift: Examining the Entanglements Between Israel and the *Ketonet Passim* in Genesis 37:3

4.1 Introduction

This thesis will now engage with the portrayal of clothing in the biblical texts themselves through two selected case studies. By focusing on the biblical texts in these chapters we move from visual and material evidence of clothing and textiles to a notably distinct source. However, this does not mean moving away from the materiality of clothing, nor from the insights gained from these chapters. In my case studies I will consider how the biblical writers employ the medium of text to depict portrayals of clothing and manipulate its materiality in dynamic ways within its different contexts. I will particularly explore the biblical writers' depiction of social and material entanglements constructed between clothing and people within particular biblical texts.

This first case study focuses on the biblical writers' depiction of the *ketonet passim* in Genesis 37. The *ketonet passim* is prominently featured in this text and, as I will illustrate in further depth, this garment is socially and materially intertwined with the key figures depicted in Genesis 37, namely Israel (Jacob), Joseph and his brothers.[540] Biblical scholars frequently engage with and explore the biblical writers' portrayal of this garment, yet it will be

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[540] Although the name Jacob is employed more frequently in the biblical texts, in Genesis 37, which will be my focus, Israel's name is employed more prominently, particularly in relation to Joseph's garment. Therefore, this thesis shall principally address Israel instead of Jacob.

demonstrated that these studies do not go far enough to unpack its dynamic role in this text. Given the prominence that the *ketonet passim* has both in its depiction in Genesis 37 and in scholarly interpretations of this text, this clothing portrayal offers a rich starting point for redressing clothing in the Hebrew Bible. This example also enables me to effectively engage with and challenge some of the broader assumptions made in scholarly interpretations of this clothing imagery. In order to move beyond the wider tendency for scholars to focus on a garment's wearer, in these two chapters I will particularly consider the relationships that are formed between Israel, Joseph's brothers and the *ketonet passim* in addition to Joseph (its wearer). In this first chapter I will hone in on the biblical writers' initial depiction of the *ketonet passim* in Genesis 37:3 and unpack the intimate entanglement that is constructed between Israel, the *ketonet passim* and Joseph.

The biblical writers' initial portrayal of the *ketonet passim* arguably marks a pivotal moment in the text, 'Now Israel loved Joseph above all of his sons for he was the son of his old age and he made for him a *ketonet passim*,' (Genesis 37:3b).[541] Indeed, the majority of biblical scholars readily acknowledge that in this verse the garment symbolises Israel's love and

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[541] Robert Longacre argues that this half verse appears to have climatic significance as a linguistic phrase. To support his point, Longacre compares this unusual linguistic phrase/feature, as a waw-consecutive perfect with an initial perfect verb in the clause, with a number of similar phrases in the Hebrew Bible, which also have a pivotal role in the text, Judges 3:23; 1 Kings 20:21; 2 Kings 14:14, Robert E. Longacre, *Joseph: A Story of Divine Providence: A Text Theoretical and Textlinguistic Analysis of Genesis 37 and 39-48*, 2nd ed. (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 72. In contrast, Donald Redford considers the possibility that this statement was an interpolated addition to text, but ultimately rejects this suggestion for the reason that clothing imagery is prominently employed in the rest of this text and in the Joseph narrative, Donald B. Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph (Genesis 37-50)*, Vetus Testamentum 20 (Leiden: Brill, 1970), 139. On the grammatical ambiguity in verse 37b and various explanations of this phrase, see John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 2nd ed., The International Critical Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments (Edinburgh: Clark, 1963), 444; Claus Westermann, *Genesis 37-50: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (London: SPCK, 1987), 34; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, vol. 2, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word Books, 1994); Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18-50*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1995), 403.

marking the privileging of his son, Joseph.[542] It is frequently proposed that it is through Israel's actions giving this garment to Joseph that it also becomes instrumental in developing a rift between Joseph and his brothers, causing them to hate him (v.4). Such interpretations seem to suggest that the biblical scholars recognise the important role that the *ketonet passim* plays in this depiction. Indeed, this garment has not been completely disregarded nor its role marginalised, as has sometimes been the case in other interpretations of clothing imagery employed in the Hebrew Bible. However, it will be illustrated that even within these interpretations the 'pivotal' role of the *ketonet passim* and its impact on relationships in this text is only acknowledged to a certain extent.

The *ketonet passim's* unique contribution is often undermined, since its significance often is merged with other details that seemingly support the same points in this text. For example, Israel's favouritism and love is already explicitly highlighted in the beginning of this verse, 'Now Israel loved Joseph above all his sons' (Genesis 37:3a). On a superficial level, this might imply that the portrayal of the *ketonet passim* only seems to serve to reiterate a pre-existent relationship between Israel and Joseph; perhaps functioning as a tacked on, parenthetical statement woven in as an additional thread in this text.[543] Such assumptions are implicit in scholarly interpretations that focus

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[542] George W. Coats, *Genesis, with an Introduction to Narrative Literature*, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature, v. 1 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 1983), 267; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:351, 359; Victor H. Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 20, no. 65 (1995): 29–30; Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, trans. Mark E. Biddle, Mercer Library of Biblical Studies (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 387; John E. Hartley, *Genesis*, New International Biblical Commentary 1 (Peabody, Mass.; Carlisle, Cumbria: Hendrickson Publishers ; Paternoster Press, 2000), 310; Jacqueline R. Isaac, "Here Comes This Dreamer," in *From Babel to Babylon: Essays on Biblical History and Literature in Honor of Brian Peckham*, ed. Joyce Rilett Wood, John E. Harvey, and Mark Leuchter (New York; London: T & T Clark, 2006), 258; Susan A. Brayford, *Genesis* (Leiden; Boston: Koninklijke Brill, 2007), 390; Yair Zakovitch, "Disgrace: The Lies of the Patriarch," *Social Research* 75, no. 4 (2008): 1049; Judith Corey, "Dreaming of Droughts: Genesis 37.1-11 in Dialogue with Contemporary Science," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 38, no. 4 (2014): 426. See more references in the points below.

[543] This is indicated in E. A. Speiser's commentary, which suggests that verse 3a and 3b originate from different sources, E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*, The Anchor Bible 1 (Garden City, N.Y: Doubleday, 1964), 289–290. Its implied function as a parenthetical or circumstantial phrase, Ibid., 289; Jan P. Fokkelman, "Genesis 37

primarily on Israel's favouritism rather than exploring the *ketonet passim*'s role in this text.[544]

Whilst the *ketonet passim* initially appears to incite Joseph's brothers' hatred against him, it too is quickly subsumed within scholarly discussions of the broader factors that provoke the brothers hatred, namely: Joseph's bad report of his brothers to his father (v. 2) and his dreams (vv. 5-8).[545] These interpretations imply that the *ketonet passim* does not play its own original role, but functions largely to bolster or support the broader themes in this text. However, whilst the *ketonet passim* does construct and develop the relationships and theme indicated above, I shall demonstrate that this garment has its own impact, which can enrich our interpretations of Genesis 37.

There are two main ways that I will explore the *ketonet passim*'s agency and its entanglement with the different persons portrayed in Genesis 37:3-4. The majority of scholarly interpretations of Israel's actions with the *ketonet passim* in verse three focus on the biblical writers' implicit indication that Israel 'gives' this garment to Joseph, as shall be suggested in more detail below. In the first part of this chapter, I will explore the implied action of Israel giving the *ketonet passim* to Joseph and its depiction as a gift. I will do this by addressing the limitations of conventional scholarly interpretations, and then, developing this

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and 38: Structural Analysis and Hermeneutics," in *Literary Structure and Rhetorical Strategies in the Hebrew Bible*, ed. L.J. Regt de, J. de Waard, and J. P. Fokkelman (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum & Company, 1996), 155. In slight contrast, Claus Westerman suggests that verses three and four seem to be distinct and do not follow easily from verse two, Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 36.

[544] For scholars that tend to separate their interpretation of Joseph's garment and Israel's love, see Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, 2nd ed., Old Testament Library (London: SCM, 1963), 345; Samson Raphael Hirsch, *The Pentateuch: Genesis*, trans. Isaac Levy, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (New York: Judaica Press, 1971), 541; Robert Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary* (New York; London: Norton, 1996), 209; Mignon R. Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story: An Exegetical and Hermeneutic Inquiry," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 27, no. 3 (2003): 312–313.

[545] Although most scholars recognise these motifs as separate, they are still often grouped together in ways that do not fully acknowledge the different roles they play in the narrative, for examples of this see Judah Goldin, "The Youngest Son or Where Does Genesis 38 Belong?," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 96, no. 1 (1977): 39; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:359; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 412; Fokkelman, "Genesis 37 and 38," 155–156.

portrayal by drawing from insights gained from gift giving theories and the material culture theories I have addressed earlier in this thesis.

The next part of this chapter will be focused on the implications of Israel's role in making the *ketonet passim*, and the depiction of this garment as something which was made by him, as is directly suggested in the biblical writers' depiction: 'And Israel made for Joseph a *ketonet passim*' (v. 3). I will explore possible reasons why this portrayal has largely been overlooked in biblical scholarship, particularly in recognition of the observation that most scholars still interpret Israel's actions as making, yet only explore his actions in giving the *ketonet passim*. It will be proposed that the action of making is significant since it expounds the social and material entanglements between the *ketonet passim*, Israel, and Joseph, which are formed through its production. It also may better account for the brothers' dramatic reaction to the making and giving of the *ketonet passim* to Joseph. I shall particularly draw from my discussion of the relationship between artisans and their craft in my archaeological chapter to inform this interpretation.

4.2 The *Ketonet Passim* as a Gift

There has been a tendency for biblical scholars to focus on the impact that the gift of the *ketonet passim* has on Joseph. Many of these scholars suggest that the portrayal of Joseph receiving this garment symbolised a change in his social status within the family and in his wider social context.[546] This

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[546] For examples of the recognition that the *ketonet passim* marks a change in Joseph's social status, see Kelly Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle," in *Feminist Perspectives on Biblical Scholarship*, ed. Adela Yarbro Collins, Biblical Scholarship in North America, no. 10 (Chico, Calif: Scholars Press, 1985), 112; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 37; R. W. L Moberly, *Genesis 12-50* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 33; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative"; Hartley, *Genesis*, 310; Laurence A. Turner, *Genesis*, Readings, a New Biblical Commentary (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 159; Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 322; Ayaz Afsar, "Plot Motifs in Joseph/Yūsuf Story: A Comparative Study of Biblical and Qur'ānic Narrative," *Islamic Studies* 45, no. 2 (2006): 179–180; Brayford, *Genesis*, 390; Judy Fentress-Williams, "Location, Location Location: Tamar in the Joseph Cycle," *The Bible and Critical Theory* 3, no. 2 (2007): 20.1, 20.5; Alicia Batten, "Clothing and Adornment," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 40, no. 3 (2010): 151. George Mendenhall even attempts to indicate that the

transformation is typically identified as part of the broader transformation of Joseph's status that can particularly be observed in Genesis 37:1-8.[547] Joseph is initially only identified as a helper or an apprentice shepherd (נער),[548] a role that was probably subordinate to his brothers. However, through receiving the *ketonet passim* and through his dreams Joseph becomes the one who holds a favoured status and a privileged position in his family.[549] In some scholarly interpretations there is an implicit assumption that receiving the *ketonet passim* transforms or affects his personality. It is often suggested that Joseph comes across as being 'self-absorbed' and acts as a

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meaning of the *ketonet passim* points to its social and political status, George E. Mendenhall, *The Tenth Generation; the Origins of the Biblical Tradition* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 34–35. However, this has been criticised in, Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 408.

[547] Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 37; Jon D. Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1993), 145; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:350; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative"; Isaac, "Here Comes This Dreamer," 239; Brayford, *Genesis*, 390.

[548] The suggestion that Joseph was originally only a helper or apprentice to Joseph's brothers is implied in, Speiser, *Genesis*, 289; Robert Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, The Cambridge Bible Commentary, New English Bible (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 217; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 36; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:350; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 406; Bill T. Arnold, *Genesis*, New Cambridge Bible Commentary (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 311. For a more in-depth discussion on Joseph's role here, see Ron Pirson, "What Is Joseph Supposed to Be? On the Interpretation of נער in Genesis 37:2," in *Recycling Biblical Figures: Papers Read at a NOSTER Colloquium in Amsterdam 12-13 May 1997*, ed. Athalya Brenner and Jan Willem Henten van (Leiderdorp; The Netherlands: Deo Publishing, 1999), 81–92. However, it can be suggested that the biblical writers use a play on words in verse two to allude to Joseph's future status in which he rules over his brothers, for further discussion, see Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 406; Ron Pirson, *The Lord of the Dreams: A Semantic and Literary Analysis of Genesis 37-50* (London; New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 28–30.

[549] As implied in, Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 143. The biblical writers' use of clothing to mark this status transformation is corroborated by the frequently attested employment of clothing to identify changes to one's social status in the Hebrew Bible and in ancient West Asian texts. Victor Matthews stresses that the clothing imagery used across/throughout the Joseph story becomes a literary motif that symbolises significant shifts in Joseph's social status. Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative." Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 37. The investiture and gift of garments is frequently associated with transformations of status and personhood both in the Hebrew Bible and in ancient West Asian texts; e.g. Genesis 3:21; 2 Kings 5; Judith 14:10-19, for more examples, including ancient West Asian examples see Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 30.

'spoiled brat.'[550] Some scholars submit that this presumed 'attitude' is augmented by the change in his status through the *ketonet passim*. For example, Gerhard Von Rad relates his portrayal of Joseph as a 'spoiled and pampered prince' to his relationship with the *ketonet passim*.[551] Such interpretations begin to acknowledge the ability that a garment has in impacting one's social status and personhood.

Other scholars develop the idea that Joseph's social status is transformed through the action of giving by associating Israel's performance with other social ceremonies that usually involve the giving or bestowal of clothing, such as an investiture or enthronement ceremony.[552] There is a tendency for scholars to draw parallels or associations between a number of different motifs that are depicted in the wider Joseph story, such as the imagery of dreams (Genesis 37:5-10; 40:5-22; 41:1-40) and the depiction of his descent into a pit or the underworld (Genesis 37:20, 22, 24; 39:20). It is possible that scholarly depictions of Israel's actions with the *ketonet passim* as an investiture marks an attempt to draw parallels between this clothing performance with Pharaoh's elevation of Joseph's social status, in which Pharaoh invests him with new garments and puts his own ring on him (Genesis 41:42).[553] Such parallels could be seen to accentuate the impact of

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[550] For this interpretation, or similar variations on it, see Hirsch, *The Pentateuch: Genesis*, 1:539; Tikva Frymer-Kensky, "Patriarchal Family Relationships and Near Eastern Law," *The Biblical Archaeologist* 44, no. 1 (1981): 214; Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*, Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 299; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:357; Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 208; David W. Cotter, *Genesis*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry (Minnesota: The Liturgical Press; The Order of Saint Benedict, Inc., 2003), 269.

[551] Rad, *Genesis*, 346.

[552] For the indication that the action of giving can be identified as an investiture, see Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 34. Note that Matthews links Genesis 37:3 to other ancient West Asian investiture ceremonies from texts that correspond with the reign of Sargon II and Ashurbanipal. For its interpretation in relation to enthronement, see Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 300, 304–305; James G. Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1991), 54–55. For other biblical scholars that have suggested that Joseph is treated like a prince in association with the *ketonet passim*, see Gunkel, *Genesis*, 390.

[553] This allusion is implied in, Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 33. For further discussion of the investiture ceremony in Genesis 41:42 see Susanne Binder, "Joseph's Rewarding and Investiture (Genesis 41: 41-43) and

the *ketonet passim* on Joseph's social personhood in Genesis 37:3. The depiction of Israel's actions as an enthronement, or the suggestion that the *ketonet passim* gives Joseph royal or princely status, is evocative of such depictions of the elevation of Joseph's social status.[554] This interpretation also corresponds with the portrayal of Joseph 'ruling' over his family that is implied in his dreams (Genesis 37:7-8).[555]

As proposed, both of these interpretations emphatically indicate the *ketonet passim*'s significance and the action of giving in reshaping and elevating Joseph's social position. However, these allusions can only be extended to Israel's performance so far. Investiture ceremonies usually denote the elevation of a person to a particular position, which includes regalia or official dress; similarly, enthronements imply the investiture of a person into royal status. However, although the Joseph's *ketonet passim* has been interpreted as a 'sign of office,' the biblical writers do not clearly define Joseph's new position, nor do they associate this garment with a particular role.[556] The

the Gold of Honour in New Kingdom Egypt," in *Egypt, Canaan and Israel: History, Imperialism, Ideology and Literature*, ed. S. Bar, D. Kahn, and J. Shirley, Culture and History of the Ancient Near East (Leiden; The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill, 2011), 44–64.

[554] For scholars who associate the *ketonet passim* with royal or princely status see Rad, *Genesis*, 346; Theodor H. Gaster, *Myth, Legend and Custom in the Old Testament: A Comparative Study with Chapters from Sir James G. Frazer's "Folklore in the Old Testament"* (London: Duckworth, 1969), 216; Corey, "Dreaming of Droughts," 438.

[555] Israel and the brothers both question whether Joseph shall 'rule' (מלך) over them which arguably has links with monarchic themes, Claus Westermann, *Genesis* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1988), 45. Interpretations that identify the *ketonet passim* with royalty could be suggested to be an attempt to align the clothing motif with the motifs of royalty in Joseph's dreams. The *ketonet passim* is also considered to connote royal status, since this same clothing term is suggested to be worn by the daughters of the King in 2 Kings 13:18, although it is not necessarily indicative that Joseph's garment also connoted royalty. Its association with 2 Samuel 13:18-19 is frequently referred to, such as in, S. R. Driver, ed., *The Book of Genesis*, 10th ed. (Methuen, 1916), 322; Rad, *Genesis*, 346; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 218; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 37; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:351; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 407; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 30; Hartley, *Genesis*, 312; Arnold, *Genesis*, 318.

[556] Sicker identifies the *ketonet passim* as a sign of office, he briefly supposes that this position may have been a clerical or spiritual position, yet he does not limit his discussion to this interpretation. Martin Sicker, *Jacob and His Sons: The End of the Patriarchal Era* (Lincoln: Nebraska: iUniverse, 2007), 8. This thesis shall continue to consider possible interpretations of Joseph's transformed status and personhood in the *ketonet passim* over the remainder of this chapter.

portrayal of similar performances in other biblical texts are often set in official contexts that incorporate formulaic words and actions, yet there is no indication of these features in the biblical writers' depiction of Genesis 37:3.[557] I will illustrate that there are other more effective ways of exploring the *ketonet passim*'s impact and significance that do not rely on associations with pre-existing clothing ceremonies that have their own specific contexts and meanings.

Despite the biblical writers' stress on the unique relationship shared between Joseph and the *ketonet passim*, Joseph is one of the lesser defined characters in Genesis 37, instead, other characters seem to play a more active role with the *ketonet passim*.[558] For example, the biblical writers emphasise the importance of Israel's love or favouritism and the brothers' hatred, yet by contrast Joseph's emotions and motivations are notably absent, including his own reaction to receiving the *ketonet passim*.[559] The scholarly tendency to focus on Joseph's personality and status has meant that other relationships with this garment are often overlooked. Israel's action in constructing (and giving) the *ketonet passim* has particularly been downplayed.[560] Admittedly, in Genesis 37 there is a shift away from the biblical writers' focus on Israel (Jacob) in Genesis 27-35 and 37:1, as indicated by Mignon Jacobs' suggestion that in Genesis 37, 'Jacob [Israel] is cast in a decentralised role.'[561] Nevertheless, this does not necessitate that Israel's role is not instrumental in Genesis 37 and in his engagement with the *ketonet passim* in verse three.

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[557] See portrayals of enthronement in 1 Samuel 10; 2 Samuel 5:1-5; 1 Kings 1-2; 2 Kings 11.

[558] Adele Berlin identifies Joseph as the least defined of all the characters in Genesis 37, Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, Bible and Literature 9 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1983), 51.

[559] Moberly, *Genesis 12-50*, 35; Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation*, 48–49; Pirson, *The Lord of the Dreams*, 37.

[560] James Williams briefly mentions that Israel makes the *ketonet passim* for Joseph, but hereafter suggests that Joseph receives the coat without even mentioning Israel. This effectively illustrates the tendency for scholars to overlook the significance of Israel's role in this text. Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence*, 54.

[561] This is particularly in comparison to his prominence in preceding chapters which were probably once part of a different biblical tradition, Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 312. Cf. Turner, *Genesis*, 163.

Even when Israel's role in Genesis 37 is acknowledged in biblical studies, his responsibility and his performance in making and giving the *ketonet passim* is often still depreciated, as illustrated through depictions of him as an overemotional and unsuspecting character. This is illustrated in the scholarly portrayal of Israel's love and favouritism, particularly in regard to the giving of the *ketonet passim*, which was been interpreted as 'blind,' 'unconscious,' and even 'clumsy.'[562] David Cotter proposes that the *ketonet passim* was 'intended by its donor probably simply as a gift,' which implies that the depiction of Israel's role in causing a rift in his family was almost accidental.[563] In biblical scholarship, the prevailing portrayal of Israel appears to be as one who does not intend to cause offense.[564] This distances him from his responsibility for the events that unfold in Genesis 37.[565] This particularly contrasts with the biblical scholars' almost condemnatory depictions of Joseph as petulant or self-centred, which are arguably only tacit, if at all, implied in the biblical texts. This indicates that part of the responsibility of the actions to come in Genesis 37 has been shifted from Israel to Joseph.

As mentioned, it is widely acknowledged that the *ketonet passim* is demonstrative of Israel's love for Joseph. This implies that Israel shares a relationship with this gift as a physical marker of his love. However, scholarly discussions tend to emphasise Israel's love over his actions in making or giving the *ketonet passim*. This is illustrated to some extent through the tendency to distance Israel from his actions, as suggested above. Such

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[562] Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph*, 138; Frymer-Kensky, "Patriarchal Family Relationships and Near Eastern Law," 214; Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 300; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:359; Arnold, *Genesis*, 319.
[563] Cotter, *Genesis*, 272. Note that Jon Levenson emphatically stresses that the *ketonet passim* is *not* just an innocent or doting gift indicating the need to distinguish this garment from a 'normal' gift, Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 57–58, 167.
[564] The scholarly depiction of Israel's naivety has been extended to interpretations of the portrayal of Israel sending Joseph to his brothers (v. 14); in such interpretations he has similarly been regarded as 'unwitting' or 'unaware' of the influence of his actions. As implied in, Goldin, "The Youngest Son," 39; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 219; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 39; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:353, 359; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 413.
[565] This depiction of Israel implies that he is able to remain untainted as the head of Israel. Nevertheless, some scholars do acknowledge that Israel is partly at fault, Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:359; Turner, *Genesis*, 159.

interpretations unnecessarily restrict Israel's relationship with the *ketonet passim*. Instead I argue that it is important to explore the fuller implications of the biblical writers' depictions of Israel's actions in Genesis 37:3.

4.3 Gift Theory

Despite the suggestion made earlier, that most biblical scholars refer to Israel's actions in giving the *ketonet passim* to Joseph, many biblical scholars have only engaged with the implications of the act of giving on a superficial level.[566] Few scholars go into any depth exploring the implications of the actions of giving itself. For some it seems that this action is merely a symbol of parental affection, as is particularly illustrated in Cotter's suggestion, noted above, that Israel intended the *ketonet passim*, 'simply as a gift.'[567] Interpretations such as Cotter's and those that attempt to minimise Israel's role in giving this garment devalue the significance of this action and the gift itself. The scholarly tendency to focus principally on the implications of the gift on Joseph's social personhood implies that the gift is in some ways detachable from its giver and even the action of giving itself. I tentatively propose that such interpretations are probably influenced by the wider depreciation of certain aspects of actions of giving and gifts through the impact of commercialisation and consumerism in contemporary Western cultures which would allow us to indicate that an object can be 'simply a gift.'[568] Taking our cue from the narrative itself the brothers' dramatic reaction

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[566] For scholars that principally refer to Israel's actions as giving, see Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 300; Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle," 109; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 34–37; Bob Becking, "'They Hated Him Even More': Literary Technique in Genesis 37. 1-11," *Biblische Notizen* 60 (1991): 42; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:359; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 28–30; Hartley, *Genesis*, 309; Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 322; Afsar, "Plot Motifs in Joseph/Yūsuf Story," 179; Fentress-Williams, "Tamar in the Joseph Cycle," 20.5; Corey, "Dreaming of Droughts," 426.

[567] Cotter, *Genesis*, 272.

[568] This is not to suggest that all gifts have become meaningless in contemporary Western cultures. Still, it can be suggested that the significance of gift giving in such cultures needs to recognise the impact of commercialisation and how it has shifted some ideas about the nature and role of gift giving. The devaluation of gifts and gift giving is implied in MacLaurin's assumption that there is a need to distinguish the

to Israel's actions challenges interpretations that dismiss or downplay the role of Joseph's *ketonet passim* and the actions of giving in this text.

It can be proposed that the act of gift-giving is much more efficacious than many biblical scholars have allowed for in their interpretation of Israel's actions in Genesis 37:3. It is possible to develop on the impact of the biblical writers' indication that the *ketonet passim* is 'given' Joseph by drawing from insights in anthropological studies of gift-giving.[569] In biblical scholarship, theories of gift-giving are sometimes employed to construct a hermeneutical lens to explore examples of gift-giving in the Hebrew Bible.[570] However, some of these studies lack thorough critical analysis of gift theory and over-estimate the extent to which it can be applied to the biblical texts. A more critically balanced examination of contemporary theories of gift-giving can be employed to effectively illustrate how people and relationships are transformed through the power of gifts such as the *ketonet passim*.

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ketonet passim from the 'usual gift,' E. C. B. MacLaurin, "Joseph and Asaph," *Vetus Testamentum* 25, no. 1 (1975): 33.

[569] For good overviews and major works on gift theory see Pierre Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), 98–142; Marshall Sahlins, "The Spirit of the Gift," in *The Logic of the Gift: Toward an Ethic of Generosity*, ed. Alan D. Schrift (New York; London: Routledge, 1997), 70–99; Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (New York; London: W. W. Norton, 2000); Gary Stansell, "The Gift in Ancient Israel," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 65–70; Hirokazu Miyazaki, "Gifts and Exchange," in *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies*, ed. Dan Hicks and Mary C. Beaudry (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 246–64; Olli Pyyhtinen, *The Gift and Its Paradoxes: Beyond Mauss*, Classical and Contemporary Social Theory (Surrey; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2014); Roger Sansi, *Art, Anthropology and the Gift* (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 97–110.

[570] Victor H. Matthews, "The Unwanted Gift: Implications of Obligatory Gift Giving in Ancient Israel," *Semeia* 87 (1999): 91–104; Stansell, "The Gift in Ancient Israel"; Charles H. Hinnant, "The Patriarchal Narratives of Genesis and the Ethos of Gift Exchange," in *The Question of the Gift: Essays Across Disciplines* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2002), 105–17; Nathan MacDonald, "Driving a Hard Bargain? Genesis 23 and Models of Economic Exchange," in *Anthropology and Biblical Studies*, ed. Louise J. Lawrence and Mario I. Aguilar (Leiden; The Netherlands: Deo Publishing, 2004), 79–96; Anne Katrine Gudme, "Barter Deal or Friend-Making Gift? A Reconsideration of the Conditional Vow in the Hebrew Bible," in *The Gift in Antiquity*, ed. Michael L. Satlow (Malden, MA; Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 189–201.

Strengthening Bonds

Across scholarship on gift theory, gift-giving is most widely recognised as an act that establishes or strengthens relations between individuals or social groups.[571] In the context of Genesis 37, Israel's performance of giving can easily be interpreted as an act that intimately binds him to Joseph.[572] Whilst biblical scholars largely recognise the close relationship between these figures, there remains a tendency to imply that Israel's gift-giving represents only a symbolic reiteration of the relationship that is already implied in Genesis 37:3a. This unnecessarily reduces the power that can be seen to be inherent in Israel's action of gift-giving. In gift theory it has been argued that relations in gift-giving 'do not simply renew existing social bonds but they create the very identity of the partners in exchange.'[573] This would imply that Israel's gift-giving has agency in constructing his intimate relationship with Joseph in such a way that, although might affirm the privileged relationship illustrated in verse 3a, is distinct and therefore, must be explored in further depth. Interpretations of Israel's gift-giving should take into account the entanglements that are constructed between Israel, Joseph, and the *ketonet passim* and not just between the two of them.

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[571] For example, Sherry suggests that "Gifts are tangible expressions of social relations…used to create, maintain, modulate, or server relations." John F. Sherry Jr., "Gift Giving in Anthropological Perspective," *Journal of Consumer Research* 10, no. 2 (1983): 158. Also see Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 99; James Carrier, "Gifts, Commodities, and Social Relations: A Maussian View of Exchange," *Sociological Forum* 6, no. 1 (1991): 121–122; Annette B. Weiner, *Inalienable Possessions: The Paradox of Keeping-While-Giving* (Berkeley; Oxford: University of California Press, 1992), 63; Chris Fowler, *The Archaeology of Personhood : An Anthropological Approach* (London: Routledge, 2004), 54–55, 57; Andrej Rus, "'Gift vs. Commodity' Debate Revisited," *Anthropological Notebooks* 14, no. 1 (2008): 83; Sansi, *Art, Anthropology and the Gift*, 99.

[572] This is indicated in Marjorie Lehman's suggestion that the *ketonet passim* 'connects [Israel] to his son,' Marjorie Lehman, "Dressing and Undressing the High Priest: A View of Talmudic Mothers," *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues* 26, no. Spring (2014): 56. Also see Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle," 109–110.

[573] See Sansi's critical summary of Marilyn Strathern's argument, which considers the nature of the distributed person in gift-giving in, Sansi, *Art, Anthropology and the Gift*, 99. For Strathern's study of gift-giving, see Marilyn Strathern, *The Gender of the Gift: Problems with Women and Problems with Society in Melanesia*, Studies in Melanesian Anthropology 6 (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1988).

In light of the suggestions above it can be proposed that, in Israel's actions of giving, the *ketonet passim* also plays an active role in developing relationships between Israel and Joseph. This is acknowledged to an extent in some scholarly interpretations of Israel's actions; for example, the *ketonet passim* has been interpreted as a 'visible link' between Israel and Joseph, and as a badge or material proof indicating Israel's love.[574] This illustrates that it is significant that Israel's love is developed and constructed through objects and actions, since it implies that the materiality of the *ketonet passim* as Israel's gift has its own importance. Indeed, it is arguably through Israel's gift of the *ketonet passim* that his love becomes public to others, particularly to Joseph's brothers (v.4).

Recent gift theory studies have increasingly sought to develop the indispensable role of the gift in gift-giving. This emphasis on the gift is important, whilst this might seem to be an obvious point, all too often the widespread scholarly focus on social relations between persons has tended to relegate the gift as a passive object in gift-giving. Olli Pyyhtinen stresses that without the gift there are no gift relations.[575] This complements Latour's observations that material things have a central role in constructing social relationships between people.[576] In the example of giving, it is the gift itself

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[574] On the suggestion that the *ketonet passim* acts as a visual symbol of Israel's love see Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle," 109–110; Brayford, *Genesis*, 390; Fentress-Williams, "Tamar in the Joseph Cycle," 20.5; Gregg Drinkwater, "Joseph's Fabulous Technicolor Dreamcoat: Parashat Vayeshev (Genesis 37:1-40:23)," in *Torah Queeries: Weekly Commentaries on the Hebrew Bible*, ed. Gregg Drinkwater and David Shneer (New York; London: New York University Press, 2009), 55. As a badge or token that marks his love, see Hermann Gunkel, *The Legends of Genesis: The Biblical Saga and History* (New York: Schocken, 1964), 57; Ronald Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis: An Introductory Commentary*, 2nd ed. (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1991), 244; Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 213; Theodore W. Jennings, *Jacob's Wound: Homoerotic Narrative in the Literature of Ancient Israel* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 178. As a concrete expression or material proof of his love, see Fokkelman, "Genesis 37 and 38," 155; Robert E. Longacre, *Joseph: A Story of Divine Providence: A Text Theoretical and Textlinguistic Analysis of Genesis 37 and 39-48*, 2nd ed. (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 91; Pirson, *The Lord of the Dreams*, 35.

[575] Pyyhtinen, *The Gift in Its Paradoxes*, 7. For a more in-depth discussion of the centrality of the gift in gift-giving, see pp.39-60.

[576] As well as between people and things and so on. See further debates in chapter 1.

that entangles its giver and recipient together, since it is the material link that they share. Therefore, this would submit that Israel's relationship with Joseph is not only constructed through his love, nor through his actions alone, it is also formed through the gift of the *ketonet passim* itself.[577] Gift studies can be used to extend the conventional boundaries of gift-giving relations even further, by emphasising the often unspoken participants in such rituals.

The *ketonet passim* can be considered to play a role in excluding others from the intimate relationship that is constructed between Israel and Joseph in the action of giving. This is implied by the suggestion that 'the gift is inclusive only inasmuch as it is exclusive.'[578] As such, it is clear that gift-giving relationships should not be restricted to the gift, giver, and recipient alone. The suggestion above points to the significance of the excluded party implied in the action of giving. In the context of Genesis 37, it is clear that Joseph's brothers are those who are pointedly excluded from the relationship between Joseph and their father, Israel.[579] The interpretation of the *ketonet passim* as a gift to Joseph implicitly excludes his brothers from sharing the same intimacy with Israel as Joseph. This intensifies their explicit exclusion in the phrase, 'Israel loved Joseph *above* all of his sons' (v. 3, repeated in v. 4).[580] This interpretation stresses the need to consider the brothers' relationship with the *ketonet passim* further, as well as their exclusion in this narrative, which will be examined in-depth in the next chapter. Here it is sufficient to draw attention to the broader impact of the gift in the network of relations with which it is entangled.

The transformation of Joseph's personhood through the giving of the *ketonet passim* also indicates his isolation from others; an isolation which is first illustrated in Genesis 37:3 and is developed further in the following verses.

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[577] In this view, the *ketonet passim* can no longer be considered as simply an extension or reiteration of Israel's feelings.

[578] Pyyhtinen, *The Gift in Its Paradoxes*, 95–96. For Pyyhtinen's fuller discussion of exclusivity in gift relations see pages 95-108.

[579] Indeed, Bob Becking argues that Israel's love is exclusive. Becking, "They Hated Him Even More," 42. See also, Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 300; Coats, *Genesis*, 267; Lehman, "Dressing and Undressing the High Priest," 56.

[580] Italics in this quote are my own. In verse 4, this phrase is slightly modified to, 'their father loved him [Joseph] above all of his brothers.'

His personhood is constructed as one who is 'set apart' through Israel's gift of the *ketonet passim*, since this garment enables him to be in a special relationship with his father.[581] As indicated, the biblical writers make it clear that Joseph is no longer merely one of Israel's sons – he is *the* beloved son (implied in vv. 3-4).[582] This relationship implies that Joseph becomes excluded from his brothers. This is illustrated further by the observation that Joseph is always set in contrast with the brothers – he is rarely depicted as one of the brothers.[583] Many scholars have hinted, knowingly or unknowingly, at the ways in which the implied materiality of the *ketonet passim* makes Joseph 'othered.' This is illustrated through interpretations of the *ketonet passim* as a garment that was too long, delicate, or special to be used by the 'average' working man, such garments are only worn by those who did not need to work.[584] This again suggests that the biblical writers' depiction of *ketonet passim* develops the characterisation of Joseph as special and set apart, yet simultaneously excludes him from within his family and in society.

Reciprocity

It is evident that despite this exclusion from his brothers, Joseph benefits from his intimate relationship with both Israel and the *ketonet passim*. However, it is not only Joseph who might be considered to gain from and be impacted through the performance of gift-giving. Israel also arguably profits from giving the *ketonet passim* to Joseph. The suggestion that giver may benefit from the action of giving is explored and developed in many studies of gift-giving and is

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[581] The depiction of Joseph being set apart by the *ketonet passim* is implied in, Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 37; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 409; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 30; Adrien Janis Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors,'" in *Samuel and Kings, A Feminist Companion to the Bible*, ed. A. Brenner, vol. 2 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 81. It can be suggested that Joseph is also set apart through his dreams (vv. 5-11).
[582] Identification of Joseph as a beloved son, Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 143.
[583] Samson Hirsch suggests that it is only Joseph that does not belong to the 'brothers,' Hirsch, *The Pentateuch: Genesis*, 1:541.
[584] Gunkel, *Genesis*, 390; Arnold, *Genesis*, 318. For similar points see Rad, *Genesis*, 346; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 218; Hartley, *Genesis*, 310. Cf. Jennings, who suggests that the *ketonet passim* prevented Joseph doing work of a 'real man' because it was an 'domestic' garment for women that constructed Joseph as a surrogate wife, Jennings, *Jacob's Wound*, 183–184.

worth considering in relation to Israel's own actions in giving the *ketonet passim*. Reciprocity is often identified as a central and inherent aspect of gift-giving. Marcel Mauss proposes that recipients are obliged to reciprocate a gift with a counter-gift.[585] In Mauss's well-known ethnographic study on gifts, he argues that gifts in certain cultures are considered to have an essence, power, or spirit within them - which he terms as 'hau.'[586] He proposes that this inherent power binds the gift's recipient and compels them to reciprocate. Mauss observes that the reciprocity seems to feature in various different cultures and submits that the ideas suggested above can be extended and considered on a wider scale.[587]

It must be recognised that many scholars - unconvinced by the cultural-specific notion of *hau* as the basis of reciprocity - have sought to develop alternative constructions of reciprocity. For example, it has been suggested that it is comparable to a challenge and riposte model, wherein the need to reciprocate is motivated by social standards of honour and shame.[588] Although these models focus on the more social aspects of reciprocity, they also imply that the gift itself and the shame or honour that it causes through its material value is also an important factor in motivating reciprocity in gift relations. The implication of these arguments in the present case study would be that the *ketonet passim*'s very materiality or the social values it manifests

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[585] For fuller discussions of reciprocity in gift-giving, see Sahlins, "The Spirit of the Gift"; Mauss, *The Gift*, 16–18; Pyyhtinen, *The Gift in Its Paradoxes*, 17–21.

[586] *Hau* is a concept that is derived from Polynesian cultures.

[587] Mauss observes that in some Polynesian cultures gifts are believed to contain the spirit of an object, *hau*, and are believed to manifest part of their giver's personhood, Mauss, *The Gift*, 13–16. For further discussion on Mauss's theory of reciprocity, see Miyazaki, "Gifts and Exchange," 123–125; Sansi, *Art, Anthropology and the Gift*, 97–98. For a slightly alternative model of reciprocity in gift-giving, see Sahlins, "The Spirit of the Gift," 74–76.

[588] Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 100–101. For similar discussions of the challenge and response model of gift-giving see Mauss, *The Gift*, 37, 53, 70; Pyyhtinen, *The Gift in Its Paradoxes*, 20–21. Referred to in, MacDonald, "Driving a Hard Bargain," 83. There is a challenge to respond with a counter gift or risk undermining his own honour and social status and potentially even risks damaging relationships by not reciprocating the gift given, or by offering an inappropriate gift in response, Sherry, "Gift Giving in Anthropological Perspective," 158; Carrier, "Gifts, Commodities, and Social Relations," 124–125; Matthews, "The Unwanted Gift: Implications of Obligatory Gift Giving in Ancient Israel," 94–96; Mauss, *The Gift*, 11, 54.

that could be considered to bind Joseph to Israel and influence him to reciprocate. This in turn open up ways of considering how Israel may benefit from his actions in giving Joseph the *ketonet passim*.

In turning to consider the presumed role of reciprocity in the context of Genesis 37:3, there is a noticeable problem with its application: the biblical writers' depiction of Israel's gift-giving omits Joseph's response to this gift.[589] As such, there is no clear indication of any reciprocation of Israel's gift of the *ketonet passim* on Joseph's part in Genesis 37. It could be conjectured that Israel does receive an unconventional 'counter-gift' of sorts: the brothers manipulate the *ketonet passim* and return Joseph's gift to him (Genesis 37:31-33). In this interpretation the brothers prevent Joseph from the opportunity to reciprocate by destroying the *ketonet passim*'s materiality, and thus, also its power to make Joseph obligated to reciprocate.[590]

An alternative possibility could also be considered here. Scholars particularly argue that reciprocity within familial groups is often delayed until the recipient is in a position to be able to reciprocate.[591] In Genesis 37:3 this would imply that there is no reason to expect an immediate response to Israel's actions. It can be observed that one of Joseph's first acts towards his father after revealing his identity to his family was to send him gifts (Genesis 45:21, 23).[592] However, the plausibility of the suggestion that such a time lapse would suffice in accounting for the absence of an obvious depiction of reciprocation on Joseph's part can be challenged within the narrative itself. The 'reciprocity' that might be identified through Joseph's actions in Genesis 45:21-23 is notably offset from Joseph's accumulation of power some years before (Genesis 41:37-57), or even from his reunion with his brothers (Genesis 42-44). Furthermore, it is Pharaoh and not Joseph that instructs that

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[589] Instead, it is the brothers' perspective that is portrayed in verse four. See points made earlier in this chapter on Joseph's lack of response.

[590] For further discussion on the brothers' interaction with the *ketonet passim*, see chapter 5.

[591] Stansell, "The Gift in Ancient Israel," 70, 75. For more on time lapses in gift-giving, see Bourdieu, *The Logic of Practice*, 105–106; Rus, "Gift vs. Commodity," 84; Gudme, "Barter Deal or Friend-Making Gift?," 194.

[592] However, it might be observed that it is Pharaoh who seems to initiate these actions in giving to his father (Genesis 45:19-20).

gifts should be sent to Joseph's family (45:17-21). This implies that these gifts cannot be substantially regarded as Joseph's reciprocation to Israel's gift-giving in Genesis 37:3. These suggestions, whilst interesting, would unnecessarily manipulate and stretch the text in order to fit the theory and are ultimately unconvincing, they also do not persuasively demonstrate how the *ketonet passim* is active in motivating Joseph to reciprocate.[593]

It is problematic to enforce the idea that reciprocity is a necessary part of the portrayals of gift-giving in the Hebrew Bible. The obligatory nature of reciprocity in gift-giving has been challenged to some extent in gift theory. It is recognised that the obligation to reciprocate seems to be paradoxically in tension with the assumed nature of a gift as an object that is 'freely-given'.[594] Indeed, Jacques Derrida proposes that 'for there to be a gift, there must be no reciprocity, return, exchange, countergift, or debt.'[595] Still, Derrida acknowledges that due to the complex relationships that develop in the context of gift-giving, such a 'pure' act of gift-giving is rare if not impossible.[596]

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[593] Similar problems in applying the concept of reciprocity to other biblical texts can be observed in other biblical studies that employ gift theory, although these studies still try to make the biblical texts fit with gift theory, Matthews, "The Unwanted Gift: Implications of Obligatory Gift Giving in Ancient Israel," 94; Stansell, "The Gift in Ancient Israel"; MacDonald, "Driving a Hard Bargain." Still, Gary Stansell acknowledges the apparent lack of reciprocity in some texts that involve gift-giving, yet he still seems reluctant to dismiss its applicability altogether: 'The Maussian model places great emphasis on the obligation to return a gift, the biblical texts did not demonstrate directly that the Israelites strongly felt this necessity, though obligation may be safely assumed,' Stansell, "The Gift in Ancient Israel," 86. Note, however, that some scholars do acknowledge the need for a more flexible interpretation of gift theory in interpreting the biblical texts, Hinnant, "The Patriarchal Narratives of Genesis," 106; Gudme, "Barter Deal or Friend-Making Gift?," 194.
[594] See Olli Pyyhtinen's discussion, although note that despite these paradoxical elements he retains the concept of reciprocity as a significant part of gift-giving, Pyyhtinen, *The Gift in Its Paradoxes*, 15–37.
[595] Jacques Derrida, *Given Time*, trans. Peggy Kamuf, vol. 1. Counterfeit Money (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 12. See a similar description of gifts in, Pyyhtinen, *The Gift in Its Paradoxes*, 30. It must be noted that neither of these theorists end up dismissing the role of reciprocity in gift-giving, yet they both emphasise the need for the gift's complexity and paradoxical nature to be acknowledged and explored in further depth.
[596] Derrida, *Given Time*, 1. Counterfeit Money:12–13. Further discussion on the paradoxical nature of gifts, see Pyyhtinen, *The Gift in Its Paradoxes*, 19–24; Sansi, *Art, Anthropology and the Gift*, 103.

Whilst perhaps a depiction of 'obligated' reciprocity is insufficiently supported in examples of gift-giving in the Hebrew Bible, in most of these examples there is some gain or return from gift-giving. Israel may not receive a direct 'counter-gift' from Joseph; however, this does not indicate that he does not benefit from this relationship, as might be indicated later in this chapter. Nevertheless, it can be argued that reciprocity, if present at all in this text, does not appear to be central to this portrayal of gift-giving. The lack of reciprocity depicted in Genesis 37 instead highlights Joseph's complete lack of any response to Israel's gift-giving (v. 3). This reiterates the comparatively active role that Israel and Joseph's brothers play in Genesis 37, particularly in relation to the *ketonet passim*. It can be noted that in studies of gift theory, scholars have increasingly begun to decentralise the role that reciprocity is considered to play in gift-giving, and have shifted towards developing the nature of the relationship that is formed particularly between the gift given and the personhood of its giver and its recipient.[597] Such discussions are particularly insightful for the exploration of the present analysis of the transformative impact that the *ketonet passim* has on both Israel and Joseph.[598]

The Inalienability of Gifts

By giving the *ketonet passim* Israel can be considered to 'give' part of his personhood to Joseph. Marcel Mauss notably develops this suggestion submitting that in the act of giving, a person passes something of himself or herself to their recipient through the gift, he argues that 'to make a gift something to someone is to make a present of some part of oneself.'[599] This

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[597] See Miyazaki's overview, Miyazaki, "Gifts and Exchange," 250–252. Note that Charles Hinnant stresses the importance of fraternal bonds over the focus of reciprocity and exchange in gift theory, Hinnant, "The Patriarchal Narratives of Genesis," 107.

[598] Also the material relationships that are formed between persons and garments in the Hebrew Bible.

[599] Mauss, *The Gift*, 16. See discussion, Ibid., 13–16. It must be acknowledged that Mauss's argument of the manifestation of the giver in the gift is not easy to disentangle from his argument regarding the obligation of reciprocity of gifts. For further discussion on Mauss's argument here and the concept of inalienability see Rus, "Gift vs. Commodity," 93–96; Miyazaki, "Gifts and Exchange," 249–251; Sansi, *Art, Anthropology and the Gift*, 100–102.

develops the idea that giving is sacrificial, yet in some more conventional models of sacrifice employed in biblical scholarship this would imply that Israel loses something through giving the *ketonet passim* to Joseph.[600] It is important to distinguish gift-giving from the concept of 'losing,' since this implies that the gift is cut off from its giver in the moment of gift-giving and particularly since such loss is not always considered to be central to sacrifice. Instead, it can be argued that Mauss's point highlights a more important factor about the distribution of one's personhood in gift-giving. In light of my discussions earlier, this depiction may further illustrate how the *ketonet passim* is interpreted as a distributed part of Israel's personhood.

Developing on Mauss's argument, Annette Weiner proposes that many gifts may be considered as inalienable possessions, by which she means that these gifts can be understood as 'possessions that are imbued with the intrinsic and ineffable identities of their owners.'[601] Such gifts are, therefore, inseparable or inalienable from their givers.[602] It is possible to elucidate on the concept of a gift's inalienability even further by proposing that the gift is indissoluble from the moment of exchange through which it becomes a gift. The gift manifests the social and material networks that are formed in gift-

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[600] For overview of the conceptualization of sacrifice in gift exchange, see Pyyhtinen, *The Gift in Its Paradoxes*, 24–28.

[601] Weiner, *Inalienable Possessions*, 6. To some extent this seems to be comparable with Alfred Gell's suggestion that an artist is indexed in their art; Alfred Gell, *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 23, 29, 33. On the intimacy between objects and persons more broadly see my discussions on personhood in section 1.8.

[602] Whilst Weiner is a notable proponent of the concept of inalienable gifts, her depiction of inalienability is too limited in this discussion. Her argument largely addresses things that are passed down within families and lineages that carry some of the value and histories of that group, Weiner, *Inalienable Possessions*, 1–10. The *ketonet passim* cannot easily be considered as inalienable in this context. However, other scholars have employed inalienability in a broader sense, such as in, Carrier, "Gifts, Commodities, and Social Relations," 126–127; Fowler, *The Archaeology of Personhood*, 56–58; Eleanor Casella and Karina Croucher, "Beyond Human: The Materiality of Personhood," *Feminist Theory* 12, no. 2 (2011): 211. It can be observed that Andrej Rus and Chris Fowler both broaden the concept of inalienability to include many commodities as well, Fowler, *The Archaeology of Personhood*, 58–59; Rus, "Gift vs. Commodity," 96. For further discussion on the relationship between gifts and commodities, which is central to the discussion of gift theory and addresses issues of ethnocentricity in more traditional models of gift theory, see Carrier, "Gifts, Commodities, and Social Relations," 125–129; Rus, "Gift vs. Commodity."

giving in its materiality.[603] It can be recognised that all the participants in gift theory, including the gift itself, are transformed through gift-giving. Their very identity as 'gift,' 'giver,' and 'recipient' indicates this transformation. This would indicate that the depiction of the *ketonet passim* as a gift does not only manifest Israel as its giver. Instead its identity is arguably also bound to the relationships that are constructed in the moment of giving, between Israel, Joseph, and the excluded brothers.

The inseparability of the gift from its giver is also illustrated through the concept of keeping-whilst-giving. For Weiner, this indicates that people are able to reproduce themselves and extend their identity through the gift that is given.[604] She argues that the giver can strengthen and reproduce their identity (or family identity) through their gift; moreover, the recipient also becomes an intimate part of these relations and identities by receiving this gift.[605] This stresses that the selection of a recipient is an important part of gift relations. It would imply that the depiction of Israel's decision to give a gift to Joseph was a significant part of his performance in the giving of the *ketonet passim*. The idea of keep-while-giving may be developed in another sense: Roger Sansi posits that a giver can expand himself in the act of giving, illustrating this point by suggesting that objects take with them part of that person – their name and stories travel forth in space and time with the gift.[606] This indirectly elucidates the argument that things manifest living histories in their materiality – they hold in themselves a meshwork of entangled interactions and networks.[607] Such an interpretation implies that by giving the *ketonet passim* to Joseph, Israel extends his name and his story not only by means of the *ketonet passim*, but in the *ketonet passim's* own materiality.

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[603] This point develops on James Carrier's interpretation that 'people are indissoluble from the alliance they make in giving,' by including the gift itself, Carrier, "Gifts, Commodities, and Social Relations," 127.

[604] Note that Weiner suggests that such inalienable possessions are not exchanged as commodities, but only as gifts so as not to risk them becoming alienated, Weiner, *Inalienable Possessions*, 47–51; 63–64. For further discussion on Weiner's concept of keeping-while-giving, see Miyazaki, "Gifts and Exchange," 249; Sansi, *Art, Anthropology and the Gift*, 100.

[605] Weiner, *Inalienable Possessions*, 63.

[606] Sansi, *Art, Anthropology and the Gift*, 98.

[607] See sections 1.4 and 1.5.

In light of these suggestions, the *ketonet passim* can be identified as a distributed part of Israel's personhood. These discussions of the gift and gift relations are not easily compatible with the traditional Western conception of personhood as fixed and bounded. Instead, the concept of the inalienable gift should be understood within the conception of personhood as distributed. These interpretations of Joseph's garment corroborate with my reconfiguration of the intimate relationships between people and objects explored in my first chapter. If the *ketonet passim* is to be interpreted as a distributed part of Israel's personhood, it can no longer be only regarded as an object that is distinct from a person, rather it arguably manifests the personhood of those with whom it is entangled; illustrating the blurring between person and object. This interpretation can be used to reconceptualise the *ketonet passim's* use in Genesis 37 and provokes a new and insightful understanding of the dynamics created between this garment and the characters in this text.

The implied relationships between Israel, Joseph, and the *ketonet passim*, as giver, recipient, and gift, have helped to develop an enriched interpretation of these relationships in the text; particularly since it better accounts for the intimate entanglement they share through the materiality of the *ketonet passim*. These interpretations demonstrate that the giving of this garment cannot be reduced to a symbol of Israel's pre-existent love. Instead, by opening up our understanding of gift-giving, I have illustrated that Israel constructs a new relationship with Joseph through giving him the *ketonet passim* which transforms their personhood. However, these interpretations are still limited since they focus on the moment of giving, rather than fully considering the relationships that are being constructed between Israel, Joseph and the *ketonet passim* in its creation, which precedes the act of giving. In order to develop these interpretations further, it is necessary to turn and consider these relationships between Israel and the *ketonet passim* as that of artisan and artefact.

4.4 The *Ketonet Passim:* Made by Israel the Artisan

The biblical writers make it explicit that Israel made the *ketonet passim*, indicating his role as its artisan, 'and he made for Joseph a *ketonet passim*' (v.3b).[608] However, as suggested, although biblical scholars largely interpret Israel's actions here as 'making', in their discussions this activity is surprisingly neglected. An overwhelming majority of scholars do not attempt to explore the implications of these actions and its impact on Israel's role in this text.[609] The absence of sustained scholarly engagement with Israel's performance in constructing the *ketonet passim* requires further consideration. There are a number of possible factors that have most probably led to this tendency to overlook Israel's role as an artisan and the nature of the *ketonet passim* as his construction that will be considered first before moving to explore the implications of these points in further depth.[610]

The lack of scholarly discussion on Israel's performance of making likely reflects an implicit assumption that Israel 'makes' the *ketonet passim*, only as far as he 'commissions' its making. It is even implied that Israel was only involved in buying the *ketonet passim*, as is suggested by Jan Fokkelman, who directly refers to Israel's 'purchase' of this garment.[611] These suggestions

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[608] The term, artisan, shall be used here over other possible interpretations, such as dressmaker or tailor, since these are particularly loaded with anachronistic connotations. Moreover, it makes the presumption that Israel is a 'professional' textile producer, which cannot be substantiated in the biblical texts. Using the term artisan maintains a focus on Israel's performance of 'making' without making too many speculations regarding the exact nature of Israel's performance. Note that Victor Hamilton refers to Israel's, 'tailoring skills,' Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 407.

[609] Most scholarly interpretations and major translations of the biblical texts retain the interpretation 'made.' For examples of scholarly readings that translate Israel's actions as 'made,' but do not expand on this role see Rad, *Genesis*, 346; Speiser, *Genesis*, 289; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 214; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 32; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 403; Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 209. Cf. Hamilton begins to consider Israel's role as an artisan, Israel 'engages his tailoring skills and makes a special article of clothing for Joseph', Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 407.

[610] Few scholars openly reject Israel's role as artisan, the closest one gets to a dismissal of Israel's role as artisan is Fokkelman's assumption that Israel 'purchases' the *ketonet passim*, Fokkelman, "Genesis 37 and 38," 155.

[611] Ibid. In this interpretation Israel's intentionality and commitment in giving the *ketonet passim* could be misconstrued or undermined implying that the *ketonet passim* is given on a whim, and only unintentionally provokes his other sons.

may be somewhat analogous to interpretations of other biblical texts in which a character is described to be making something yet is not typically considered to be directly involved in the physical process of construction itself. For example, it is presumed that Solomon's performance in making cultic objects for use in Yahweh's temple (1 Kings 7:48) was an act of 'commissioning.'[612] In the context of Genesis 37:3, a similar interpretation would account for the tendency for scholars to focus on Israel's actions in 'giving' the *ketonet passim*, since it implies that Israel is only indirectly involved in the 'making' process itself. However, the scale of both of these activities is completely distinct. Unlike the allusion to Solomon's action of 'making' it is not unfeasible to suggest that Israel made the *ketonet passim* himself.

The biblical writers often portray Israel as a practitioner.[613] Israel/Jacob is depicted making or fashioning a range of different artefacts: he makes food (Genesis 25:29; 28:18), constructs altars or *masseboth* (Genesis 31:45; 33:20; 35:3, 7, 14, 20), booths for cattle (Genesis 33:17) and ritual/magical devices (Genesis 30:37-38). These activities are not completely neglected or overlooked in scholarly discussions, as is the case for interpretations of Israel's making of the *ketonet passim*.[614] The allusion to these activities implies that Israel/Jacob is by no means unfamiliar with the practice of making objects, thus suggesting that tendency to distance Israel from his role in making the *ketonet passim* appears to be unwarranted. Still, there may be

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[612] Or building of Solomon's house (1 Kings 7:8). On the suggestion that Solomon's actions of making indicated an act of commissioning, see Mordechai Cogan, *1 Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible 10 (New York; London: Doubleday, 2001), 261; Marvin A. Sweeney, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 1st ed., The Old Testament Library (Louisville; KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 124.

[613] Interestingly Helmer Ringgren indicates Jacob's actions in 'making' heaps of stones and booths, yet omits any reference to his construction of the *ketonet passim*, H. Ringgren, "'Āśâ; Ma'aśeh," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green, vol. XI - 'zz-pānîm (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 389.

[614] For scholars that imply Israel's role in making these other objects, see Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12-36: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (London: SPCK, 1986), 416–417, 457, 527, 529; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:177, 223–224, 279, 301; Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 128, 150, 174, 187, 198 ; Turner, *Genesis*, 146, 149, 152.

other reasons why scholars are reticent to develop Israel's role as an artisan in textile production.

There is a widespread assumption in biblical scholarship, as well as in archaeological and ancient West Asian studies, that ancient textile production was predominantly performed by women.[615] Such assumptions are likely to have been influenced by prominent biblical scholars such as Carol Meyers and Susan Ackerman.[616] Whilst these scholars do not overlook the possibility that men may have been involved in textile production, their focus on women's role in such activities implicitly to supports more conventional views that textile production was largely performed by women. These proposals may imply that Israel only commissioned the *ketonet passim*, since, from this perspective, it is assumed that women would have made Joseph's garment and not Israel himself.

A number of ancient West Asian and biblical texts portray men who participate in textile production in a derogatory light. This is implied by the portrayal of David's actions in cursing Joab, in which the biblical writers suggest that he will be cursed to always have 'one who holds a spindle' in his family (2 Samuel 3:29). This text is typically interpreted to imply that the association of men with textile production functions to undermine their power by effeminising

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[615] For biblical studies that identify textile production, or spinning and weaving, as women's work, see Volkmar Fritz, *The City in Ancient Israel* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995), 185; Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, Library of Ancient Israel (Louisville; KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 152. Similar suggestions have been made of textile production in ancient West Asian cultures in, Kazuya Maekawa, "Female Weavers and Their Children in Lagash - Pre-Sargonic and Ur III," *Acta Sumerologica* 2 (1980): 81–125; Jeannette H Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric: Textile Production in Iron Age Transjordan" (s.n.], 2013), 265–266.

[616] Carol Meyers, "Material Remains and Social Relations: Women's Culture in Agrarian Households of the Iron Age," in *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palestine*, ed. William G. Dever and Seymour Gitin (Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 425–43; Susan Ackerman, "Asherah, the West Semitic Goddess of Spinning and Weaving?," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 67, no. 1 (2008): 2–3; Deborah Cassuto, "Bringing Home the Artifacts: A Social Interpretation of Loom Weights in Context," in *The World of Women in the Ancient and Classical Near East*, ed. Beth Alpert Nakhai (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2009), 63–77; Jennie R. Ebeling, *Women's Lives in Biblical Times* (London; New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 7–8, 56; Carol L. Meyers, *Rediscovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 133–134.

them.[617] Thus, from some perspectives, this interpretation would imply that the depiction of Israel constructing Joseph's garment was an act that infringed upon his masculine status. It is possible that in conventional biblical scholarship, scholars avoided constructing such an effeminate depiction of Israel's character, since it would arguably undermine Israel's identity as the masculine figurehead and patriarch of the Israelite nation.

The proposal that Israel is effeminised through the performance of making the *ketonet passim*, is not convincingly substantiated, nor is the assumption that this necessarily undermines his 'masculinity' or power in Genesis 37. First, it can be observed that conventional interpretations of gender roles in biblical interpretation are increasingly challenged in scholarship. Many biblical interpretations do not sufficiently allow for a more complex depiction of gender in which gender roles are not so fixed into generalised categories. Instead, it can be recognised that gendered performativity in the biblical texts is much more fluid than has traditionally been acknowledged.[618]

Under the critical lens of gender studies few characters in the biblical texts easily fit into stereotyped expectations of gendered performance. Even the biblical writers' depiction of Israel does not fit into these assumed gendered norms. This is effectively illustrated through the biblical writers' depiction of

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[617] As implied in, Cassuto, "Bringing Home the Artifacts," 69; Deryn Guest, "Gender Trangression: Hebrew Bible," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Gender Studies*, ed. Julia M. O'Brien, Oxford Encyclopedias of the Bible (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 288–289. For a fuller, more critical discussion of this verse see Meir Malul, "David's Curse of Joab (2 Samuel 3:29) and the Social Significance of Mhzyk Bplk," *Aula Orientalis* 10 (1992): 49–67. Note that Malul indexes other ancient West Asian texts that illustrate how spindles are used to defame men, such as the ancient Egyptian text, *The Satire of the Trades*.

[618] For an overview on studies in biblical scholarship on the subversion of conventional perceptions of gender performance in the Hebrew Bible, see Guest, "Gender Transgression." An insightful study by Martti Nissinen argues for the need for a more complex depiction of masculinities in the Hebrew Bible. He argues that the construction of masculinities are always relative to their different social contexts, and cannot be reduced to a unidimensional portrayal, Martti Nissinen, "Relative Masculinities in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament," in *Being a Man: Negotiating Ancient Constructs of Masculinity*, ed. Ilona Zsolnay, Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2017), 221–47. See a broader depiction of this view in relation to ancient West Asian cultures in, Ilona Zsolnay, "Introduction," in *Being a Man: Negotiating Ancient Constructs of Masculinity*, ed. Ilona Zsolnay, Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East (Abingdon; New York: Routledge, 2017), 1–11.

Israel/Jacob staying at home and cooking (Genesis 25:27). This location and the activity of cooking have typically been considered as the primary locus and activity of women.[619] Victor Hamilton proposes a possible connection between Israel's location in the home with his performance of textile production. He uses this reference to support the indication that Israel participates in textile production to make the *ketonet passim* for Joseph.[620] These interpretations illustrate that Israel's own gendered performance is complex and multi-layered. These points also suggest that the depiction of Israel engaging in textile production would not be uncharacteristic of the biblical writers' broader portrayal of him in the Hebrew Bible.

An exploration of Israel's gendered performance in relation to his construction of the *ketonet passim* could prove to be an interesting discussion. However, it still must be recognised that it relies on a presumption that textile production was completely dominated by women. Whilst written evidence, particularly from wider ancient West Asian texts, seem to imply that many women were involved in textile production, it cannot be used to support the elimination of the proposal that men were also artisans in textile production. There are even references in the Hebrew Bible that indicate that men were involved in textile production (Exodus 35:35).[621] Even if in some contexts men's involvement in textile production is used in a defamatory sense, this is not sufficient to surmise that men did not work in textile production, nor does it dictate that this was the only perspective of men's work in textile production.[622] As has been effectively illustrated in this thesis, it is necessary to recognise that the social dynamics in ancient textile production was likely to be much more complex than has been allowed for in many conventional interpretations.

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[619] This contrasts with the depiction of Esau, who goes hunting outside. For further discussion on the queering of Israel's gendered performance, see Jennings, *Jacob's Wound*, 250–257; Michael Carden, "Genesis/Bereshit," in *The Queer Bible Commentary*, ed. Deryn Guest et al. (London: SCM Press, 2006), 47.

[620] Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 407–408.

[621] As noted in, Boertien, "Unravelling the Fabric," 265–266.

[622] Indeed, the biblical writers suggested that the men depicted in textile production in Exodus 35:35 were given such skills from Yahweh; implying these skills were a blessing.

The tendency for biblical scholars to neglect Israel's practical role in constructing the *ketonet passim* could also be explained by the wider undervaluing of the practical role of making in biblical scholarship. It has already been argued that there is a tendency in biblical studies for scholars to focus on the theological, social and, symbolic meanings of objects over their materiality or the process of their construction. This may reflect a wider tendency in contemporary Western scholarship to focus on 'finished' products or commodities over the construction of objects.[623] Such an approach is also implied by the scholarly focus on the impact that the *ketonet passim* has on Joseph, over its impact on Israel as the maker. This section has demonstrated that there is no substantial explanation for why Israel should not be regarded as the *ketonet passim's* artisan, particularly as it is explicitly suggested in in the biblical texts. For whatever reason, the lack of debate on Israel's role as artisan is indicative of the limited perspectives on clothing and textile production in biblical scholarship. In the following section I will demonstrate that by focusing on the role of Israel as an artisan and on the making of the *ketonet passim* we can enrich our interpretations further by building on some of the ideas developed by unpacking the relationships constructed through the actions of gift-giving.

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[623] This is a point that has often been raised within material cultural and archaeological studies. The lack of discussion of craftsmanship and practice has been particularly noted in, Tim Ingold, *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling & Skill* (London; New York: Routledge, 2000), 340; Linda Hurcombe, "A Sense of Materials and Sensory Perception in Concepts of Materiality," *World Archaeology* 39, no. 4 (2007): 534; Tim Ingold, "Materials Against Materiality," *Archaeological Dialogues* 14, no. 1 (2007): 9; Trevor H. J. Marchand, "Introduction: Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluable Relation between Mind, Body, and Environment," in *Making Knowledge: Explorations of the Indissoluble Relation Between Mind, Body and Environment*, ed. Trevor H. J. Marchand (Chichester; Oxford; Malden: MA: Royal Anthropological Institue; Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 3; Maikel Henricus Gerardus Kuijpers, "The Sound of Fire, Tast of Copper, Feel of Bronze, and Colours of the Cast: Sensory Aspects of Metalworking Technology," in *Embodied Knowledge: Perspectives on Belief and Technology*, ed. Marie Louise Stig Sørensen and Katharina Rebay-Salisbury (Oxford; Oakville, CT: Oxbow Books, 2013), 141. The ignorance of the experience and processes of production amongst many contemporary Western scholars and students has also been stressed, see Hurcombe, "A Sense of Materials," 536–537; Daniel Miller, "The Power of Making," in *The Power of Making*, ed. D. Chaney (London: V&A Publishing, 2011), 14–27.

4.5 The Performance of Making the Ketonet Passim

At first, it may seem as though the biblical writers' depiction of Israel making the *ketonet passim* is somewhat vague and non-descriptive.[624] Admittedly, the root used here 'עשה' is a broad term that is used in a variety of contexts. [625] Nevertheless, having considered the various social and material relationships and context of ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production, the biblical writers' depiction of Israel's action of making can be considered in a different light. This action is a culturally loaded term that can evoke a number of possible implications for Israel's actions with the *ketonet passim* and its broader impact in Genesis 37. There are two different areas that are most pertinent to this discussion: first, the implications that the action of making has in characterising Israel's relationship with the *ketonet passim*; particularly considering how these actions transform both the *ketonet passim*'s agency and Israel's personhood. Second, the implications that the biblical writers' depiction of making has in relation to the broader social engagements and contexts of textile production illustrated in my previous discussions on ancient Syro-Palestinian textile production.

The biblical writers' depiction of making rather than just giving is evocative of the broader social and material 'life' of the *ketonet passim*.[626] It implies the whole process of its production from raw material into a garment that is wrapped around or arranged on Joseph's body. The reference to this process of production implicitly alludes to the *ketonet passim*'s potency which is

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[624] It can be noted that some scholars have suggested that the form of the verb, עשה in Genesis 37:3, indicates that Israel's act is a repeated performance, implying that Israel made Joseph a *ketonet passim* as often as he required. This interpretation suggests that Israel 'used to make' (as often as required), Gunkel, *Genesis*, 390. However, most scholars now argue that this verb is in the perfect form, indicating that this referred to a single garment. Still, many of these scholars note the ambiguity of the phrase and its potential to be interpreted in 'used to make,' Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 444; Speiser, *Genesis*, 289; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 34; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 403; Fokkelman, "Genesis 37 and 38," 155; Longacre, *Joseph*, 72. I concur with the dominant view that the text refers to a particular performance of construction and only one *ketonet passim*.

[625] As indicated in, Ringgren, "'Āśâ; Ma'aśeh."

[626] See discussions of material and social significance of ancient textile production in sections 2.5 and 2.6.

manifested in the social and material significance of the raw materials from which it was made, and is illustrated in its malleability to be shaped and transformed into a garment. This process shall be elucidated on in the following discussion, still, it is important to emphasise here that the process of making can draw the readers' attention to the tangible materiality of the *ketonet passim* as a freshly made garment.

As suggested previously, the performance of 'making' is transformative.[627] It cannot only be considered to indicate the *ketonet passim*'s construction and modification into a garment, it also transforms Israel's personhood and his way of being in the world as the *ketonet passim*'s artisan. My discussion in the preceding section effectively began to indicate how the depiction of Israel as an artisan might impact our impression of his social and gendered personhood in the biblical texts. However, this does not go far enough to indicate how Israel's personhood and materiality is transformed through his performance of making. The practice of making can be suggested to impact Israel's social and material relationships with other people involved in textile production, such as distributors of raw materials. My suggestion that textile production was likely to have been performed in groups, indicates other possible relationships that Israel may have constructed or developed through the process of making the *ketonet passim*, which may have also restricted (or enabled) where he could perform these actions. The practice of making the *ketonet passim* implies the transformation of Israel's movements and his development of different textile techniques, which, as I have illustrated, are learnt and incorporated into one's materiality.[628] This only begins to open up ways of considering how the biblical writers' depiction of 'making' connotes the transformation of Israel's social and material relationships and his very materiality.

Although the intimacy between Israel and the *ketonet passim* is already considered to some degree through scholarly interpretations of his action in giving this garment, the performance of making can take our understanding of

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[627] As demonstrated in sections 2.4 and 2.5
[628] Refer back to my discussion of textile production in section 2.5.

this intimacy to a whole new level. As artisan, the implication is that Israel has intimate knowledge of the *ketonet passim*'s materiality and its specific properties. Through the process of making Israel impacts and manipulates the *ketonet passim*'s agency as a garment, his own skills would effect its quality; for example, if the *ketonet passim* was a woven garment his mastery of a technique would effect the uniformity of its weave.[629] As a result of these actions Israel's own materiality is also changed; for example, it could be implied that by making the *ketonet passim* his own skills and the dexterity of his movements become more inscribed into his materiality. In my discussion of textile production it was also made clear that the raw materials being worked would have impacted the artisan's movements.[630] This would suggest that Israel would have to react and change his movements according to the *ketonet passim*'s distinct and intricate materiality; furthermore, indicating that the *ketonet passim* exerts its own agency over Israel by restricting and enabling his movements. Such a process emphasises the unique and intimate relationship that is shared between Israel and the *ketonet passim* in the performance of making.

The intimate entanglement implied in the performance of making also illustrates the blurring of boundaries between person and object – between Israel and the *ketonet passim*. Some scholars suggest that in the process of production and the fluidity of movement one can begin to see a synthesis that occurs between artisan, tools and artefact.[631] This might indicate that the intimacy between them is such that they become extensions of one another and enables them to share in each others' agency. This would imply that Israel extends and shares his agency with the *ketonet passim*'s materiality, such that his skills, movements and personhood are manifest in this garment.

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[629] See further discussion in section 2.5.

[630] For more see section 2.5.

[631] This is implied in, Tim Ingold, "The Textility of Making," *Cambridge Journal of Economics* 34 (2010): 98; Tim Ingold, *Being Alive: Essays on Movement, Knowledge and Description* (London; New York: Routledge, 2011), 56–58, 61, 66. For scholars that particularly focus on this synthesis or synergy between an artisan and their tools, see Jean-Pierre Warnier, "A Praxeological Approach to Subjectivation in a Material World," *Journal of Material Culture* 6, no. 1 (2001): 7–8; Rachel Philpott, "Crafting Innovation: The Intersection of Craft and Technology in the Production of Contemporary Textiles," *Craft Research* 3, no. 1 (2012): 53–73.

However, through this relationship the *ketonet passim* can extend his agency and power to other persons and objects. The extension of Israel's agency and body in the *ketonet passim* is also impacted by its own material properties and agency. It is through the *ketonet passim*'s materiality as a garment that Israel is able to extend his personhood over Joseph as he wears this garment on his body. The *ketonet passim*'s intimacy with Joseph's body, which constructs an intimacy between Israel and Joseph, is only enabled by its materiality and not only by Israel's own agency alone.[632]

The biblical writers' depiction of Israel's actions also implies the uniqueness of this garment as *Joseph's* garment. They clearly indicate that the *ketonet passim* was made especially for Joseph, this can be seen to emphasise that this garment is one of a kind. Many scholars have sought to draw associations between the depiction of Joseph's *ketonet passim* and the portrayal of the same clothing term in 2 Samuel 13: 18-19. However, whatever similarities there may be between these garments it is important that biblical scholars recognise the distinction made in the depiction of Joseph's garment in Genesis 37:3, since the biblical writers' make it clear that only Joseph's *ketonet passim* was made by Israel.[633] The indication that the *ketonet passim* was made for Joseph may well indicate that this garment was 'tailored' to fit Joseph's body alone. This emphasises the exclusivity of the materiality of the *ketonet passim*, its unique relationship with Joseph, and its inaccessibility to his brothers, for whom a garment was not explicitly made.

As has been suggested, the making of a garment inherently alludes to the time, labour, cost, and use of precious resources required for its construction.[634] It is worth reiterating the important role of clothing to a society's - and even more specifically to an individual household's - economic livelihood. Time is a valuable resource: we know that the construction of a garment was a slow process, which may suggest that it could have taken weeks, or even months for Israel to make Joseph's garment. This would

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[632] Some of the implications that the manifestation of Elijah's personhood in the *ketonet passim* has on Joseph will be considered further in the following section.
[633] See earlier references to 2 Kings 13:18-19 above.
[634] Refer to sections 2.5 and 2.6.

emphasise Israel's commitment to the task of making this garment and imply the implicit cost of his actions. These suggestions also emphasise the *ketonet passim*'s implicit social and economic value.

Such points may also be used to elucidate the impact that Israel's actions of making a garment specifically for Joseph had on his broader social relationships with his family. These actions most likely imply that the household's money and resources were being used solely for Joseph's benefit, rather than for the family's benefit, to make this garment. The collective or corporate identity of the household is arguably threatened by Israel's specific actions and the time spent on only one of his sons, indicating that these actions would have had repercussions for Israel's household, both socially and financially. This is well illustrated through the brothers' strong response to Israel's actions in making the *ketonet passim* for Joseph.

The depiction of Joseph's brothers as shepherds (Genesis 37:2, 12-13) could also be used to elucidate the possible implications that Israel's performance in making the *ketonet passim* had on his relationships with them. The biblical writers' portrayal of Israel's actions of making a garment and the brothers' as shepherds might indicate a subtle irony in the text. As I have indicated, the role of sheep rearing is as much a part of textile production as other stages of a garment's construction.[635] This implies the brothers' inherent intimacy with and knowledge of the materiality of textile materials and their complexity, since this is part of their trade. The nuanced indication here is that the brothers intimately realise the lengths that Israel is taking to make the *ketonet passim* for Joseph. An additional implication that is admittedly left only tacit, but still is suggestive in the text, is that Israel may have used the wool nurtured and produced by Joseph's brothers to construct the *ketonet passim*. It is possible that, as some scholars have suggested, the *ketonet passim* was made from other materials such as linen, yet without further elucidation on this elusive term this ironic suggestion remains a possibility worth considering.[636]

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[635] For further discussion see section 2.6

[636] For studies that link the term כתנת or its cognate roots, such as GADA or kitu with linen, see B. Landsberger, "Über Farben Im Sumerisch-Akkadischen," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 21 (1967): 158; Michael Ventris and John Chadwick, *Documents*

It most effectively illustrates the extent of and reason for the brothers'
emotional response to the *ketonet passim* in Genesis 37:4.

4.6 The *Ketonet Passim* as a Distributed Part of Israel's Personhood

The proposal that the *ketonet passim* manifests something of Israel's
personhood, as is illustrated both through the action of giving and making,
also implies how its agency transforms Joseph and the wider family dynamics.
In order to unpack this significance it must first be considered how the biblical
writers depict Israel in this text. The most prominent depiction of Israel in
Genesis 37 is that of a father and the head of the family.[637] The biblical writers
particularly emphasise the father-to-son relationships in Genesis 37;
illustrated by the frequent identification of Israel as father (אב). The bond
between Israel and Joseph as father and son is highlighted in verses 32-33 in
relation to the *ketonet passim*: "'Please recognise whether or not this כתנת is
your son's.'" And Israel recognised it and said, "'It is my son's כתנת.'" This
reiterates the suggestion that the *ketonet passim* is intricately entangled with
the familial relationships in Genesis 37.

The biblical writers' attention to the dynamics between father and son in this
chapter may help to elucidate the broader social significance of Israel's
actions with the *ketonet passim* (v. 3). A number of biblical scholars argue that
his actions with the *ketonet passim* symbolise or construct Joseph as his heir

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in Mycenaean Greek, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: University Press, 1973), 320; Wolfram
von Soden, *Akkadisches Handworterbuch*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (Harrassowitz Verlag,
1985), 495; Stefan Zawadzki, *Garments of the Gods: Studies on the Textile Industry
and the Pantheon of Sippar according to the Texts from the Ebabbar Archive*, vol. 1
(Fribourg, Switzerland; Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg ; Vandenhoeck &
Ruprecht, 2006), 30–31, 46; Matteo Vigo, "Linen in Hittite Inventory Texts," in *Textile
Terminologies in the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean Area from the 3rd to
the 1st Millennium BC*, ed. Cécile Michel and Marie-Louise B. Nosch (Oxbow Books,
2010), 296.

[637] Implied in Coats, *Genesis*, 267; Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and
Evil in the Joseph Story," 312; Corey, "Dreaming of Droughts," 426. Note that Nelly
Furman connects the importance of father-son relationships in Genesis 37 with the
ketonet passim, Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female
Strategy in the Jacob Cycle," 110, 112.

or firstborn son.[638] As the one son who is depicted being favoured above the others, it seems credible that Joseph becomes Israel's heir through these actions.[639] Jon Levenson endeavours to support this interpretation by associating it with Rabbinic sources in which a father may change the identity of the firstborn with a public declaration. He proposes that the giving of the *ketonet passim* can be interpreted as such a declaration.[640] However, such a social practice is not substantiated within the Hebrew Bible and is most likely anachronistic in this context.[641] It is difficult to demonstrate that these actions were connected to an attested social ceremony or practice that signifies the appointing of a new heir.

It does, however, seem fitting to tentatively concur with the suggestion implied in these interpretations that the giving of the *ketonet passim* is depicted as a provocative act that raises Joseph above his other family members. By wearing the *ketonet passim* Joseph also extends Israel's personhood and authority as 'father'.[642] This extension of Israel's personhood through Joseph is most effectively illustrated in the portrayal of Israel sending Joseph to report on the well-being of his brothers and the flocks (vv.13-14).[643] Joseph can be considered to act as an extension of the father, as Israel's own 'eyes' and 'ears' in being sent to his brothers. In view of this suggestion, the brothers' subsequent actions against Joseph and the *ketonet passim* function not only

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[638] Barbara M. Bowen, *Strange Scriptures That Perplex the Western Mind* (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1944), 44; Goldin, "The Youngest Son," 38; Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 304; Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle," 110; Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 57–58; Sicker, *Jacob and His Sons: The End of the Patriarchal Era*, 8; Drinkwater, "Joseph's Fabulous Technicolor Dreamcoat," 55.

[639] There are even inter-textual hints that Joseph is made to become the firstborn son; for example, 1 Chronicles 5:2 describes the passing of Reuben's birthright to Joseph.

[640] Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 58.

[641] Frymer-Kensky suggests that the Deuteronomic law indicates that one's firstborn heir cannot be changed, yet she does acknowledge that this law may not have been known to the biblical writers when it was written. Frymer-Kensky, "Patriarchal Family Relationships and Near Eastern Law," 33.

[642] Some biblical scholars have referred to the *ketonet passim* as garment of 'authority,' or power, Coats, *Genesis*, 268; Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 322.

[643] Implied in Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation*, 49; Coats, *Genesis*, 271.

as actions against Joseph, but also against Israel, implying that Israel's relationship with the *ketonet passim* may also be seen to make himself vulnerable to attack and undermine his own power.[644]

The biblical writers' indication that the *ketonet passim* manifests Israel's personhood evocatively implies other ways in which this gift impacts Joseph and the rest of his family. It is notably 'Israel', rather than 'Jacob' (both names are used in this chapter) that constructs the *ketonet passim*. This name evokes Israel's position as the figurehead of the nation of Israel. Indeed, Gordon Wenham proposes that the writers' use of 'Israel' most likely alludes to his position as 'clan head;'[645] moreover, Martin Sicker suggests that the name 'Israel' is used when it has 'ramifications for the nation to be'.[646] Whilst scholars continue to debate the purpose for the use of Israel's name in this verse, few consider the impact that this name may have on Joseph, to whom the *ketonet passim* manifesting Israel's personhood is given.[647] I argue that Israel's actions in making and giving the *ketonet passim* to Joseph he is offering him something of his identity as the head of the nation.[648] The suggestion that Joseph becomes a figurehead for Israel is perhaps implied by Gordon Wenham's reference to him as a 'patriarch.'[649] This would extend and emphasise the power and authority that might be considered to be manifest in Joseph as he wears the *ketonet passim*.

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[644] For further discussion on the impact that the brothers' manipulation of the *ketonet passim* has on Israel's personhood see sections 5.4 and 5.5 in the next chapter.

[645] Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:351. This is also implied in Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence*, 55.

[646] Sicker, *Jacob and His Sons: The End of the Patriarchal Era*, 7.

[647] Many scholars argue that the use of 'Israel' indicates that a different author is writing, Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 438–439; Speiser, *Genesis*, 289, 292–293; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 36. Cf. Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph*, 131–132; Herbert Block, "Distinguishing Jacob and Israel," *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 34, no. 3 (2006): 155; Sicker, *Jacob and His Sons: The End of the Patriarchal Era*, 7.

[648] Contra. Moberly, *Genesis 12-50*, 33. Moberly argues that, 'there is never any hint…that Joseph typifies or embodies Israel as a people. Joseph is always and only an individual person.' In contrast, Lehman associates the *ketonet passim* with the salvific power by which Joseph saves the nation of Israel from famine by leading them to Egypt, Lehman, "Dressing and Undressing the High Priest," 56. This interpretation arguably identifies Joseph in some ways as the figurehead and savior of the Israelite nation.

[649] Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:37.

An alternative possibility is that the biblical writers' use of Israel evokes his ritual personhood, since it is the name given to him by Yahweh (Genesis 32:28). This suggestion has a number of consequences for how we read and interpret Israel's action in making the *ketonet passim* for Joseph. Indeed, it could imply that this activity evoked a ritualised performance. This corroborates with my earlier proposal that ancient textile production could have had ritual connotations and may have been part of the ritual activities performed in the household. Another possible indication that the biblical writers' depiction of Israel's actions evoked the ritual potency of textile production is its close association with the language and phrasing used to portray Yahweh's performance in making clothing for Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:21).[650] This allusion implicitly associates Israel's actions with Yahweh's performance in making clothes which may emphasise the potency of Israel's performance in Genesis 37:3. Even without this allusion, the suggestion that Israel manipulates the *ketonet passim*'s materiality in a performance that transforms both his and his Joseph's personhood is indicative of its potency that may well have had ritual significance. This suggestion will be developed and built on in the following chapter.

4.7 Summary

Scholarship is accustomed to noting the significance or special status of the *ketonet passim*, but it rarely interrogates this significance further.[651] In the previous chapter and this one it has been recognised that many scholars attempt to portray the special status of the material form of the *ketonet passim*, yet I have alluded to,the various difficulties in getting closer to interpreting the materiality implied by the Hebrew term *ketonet passim*.

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[650] For further discussion on the association between these verses, see Aldina da Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères* (Saint-Laurent, Québec: Fides, 1994), 38–39; Alban Cras, *La symbolique du vêtement dans la Bible: pour une théologie du vêtement* (Paris: les Éd. du Cerf, 2011), 60.

[651] For the tendency to refer to the *ketonet passim* as a 'special' garment, see Gaster, *Myth, Legend and Custom in the Old Testament*, 215; Goldin, "The Youngest Son," 39; Coats, *Genesis*, 267; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:351; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 407, 417; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 31; Corey, "Dreaming of Droughts," 427.

Nevertheless, this chapter has demonstrated that it is possible to indicate the importance of the materiality of the *ketonet passim* by recognising its entanglement with Israel as its maker and giver. We can elucidate our understanding of the pivotal role that the *ketonet passim* plays in constructing and shifting the relationships depicted between Israel, Joseph, and his brothers through exploring their relationships with the *ketonet passim*.

The implied action of giving and the biblical writers' depiction of making has a number of different implications in Genesis 37:3. Both actions effectively illustrate that the *ketonet passim* is a garment through which Israel develops and constructs an intimate relationship with Joseph. The *ketonet passim* can be recognised as an extension of Israel's personhood and agency over Joseph, creating an intimate bond between them. This intimacy is enabled through the *ketonet passim*'s materiality and ability to manifest and extend Israel's personhood through its own agency. The relationships formed through Israel, Joseph, and the *ketonet passim* also excludes other members in the family, namely Joseph's brothers. This exclusivity is particularly illustrated through the actions of gift-giving that point towards the excluded party. This point is elucidated further through considering that Israel's actions in making the garment only for Joseph, emphasising the time and resources committed to Joseph over his brothers. It is through these actions that Joseph is also set apart and isolated from his brothers. These relationships shall be considered further in the following chapter.

My analyses in this chapter have effectively challenged a number of conventional scholarly interpretations of this text. For example, the scholarly assumptions that Israel can somehow be distanced or separated from his role and responsibility in making and giving the *ketonet passim* to Joseph has been overturned. The biblical writers' depiction of Israel's actions seems to imply that they were purposeful and possibly even calculated, particularly considering the suggestion that the *ketonet passim*'s agency becomes an extension of his own personhood. Israel's commitment is most effectively illustrated through the action of 'making' which cannot be reduced to a single moment in time, as may be easier to presume through the action of giving the

ketonet passim to Israel. Instead, the *ketonet passim*'s material and social history is indicative of the time and effort that was required in its construction. The probability that Israel's actions were calculated and purposeful is further supported by my suggestion that by making and giving the *ketonet passim* he transforms Joseph's personhood into the beloved son, and maybe even as the next figurehead of the family. This suggests that Israel also benefits by extending his personhood and agency and through Joseph's personhood.

This chapter has enriched our interpretations of the brother's response of anger in the following verse. In conventional interpretations of Israel's performance in giving the *ketonet passim* the brothers' response with hate towards Joseph, and by proxy Israel, to the point of not speaking peacefully with him (v. 4) sometimes comes across as overdramatic or irrational. However, through exploring the implications of both the actions of giving and making the *ketonet passim* and the impact that its agency has in these actions it has been possible to better account for this response.

The act of giving the *ketonet passim* is important and has an impact on how we understand the relationships in this text, yet I propose that the biblical writers' explicit depiction of Israel making the *ketonet passim* offers a far evocative portrayal. This depiction of making intensifies some of the relationships indicated through the action of giving. Through my employment of the social and material implications of ancient textile production, I effectively demonstrated the multi-sensory nature of the *ketonet passim* and its relationship with and impact on Israel. This rendering evokes a greater sense of the *ketonet passim*'s potency as its material properties are constructed anew and transformed through these actions.

Despite the recognition that the *ketonet passim* plays an important role in constructing and developing Joseph's personhood and relationships, which have been developed over this chapter, I have stressed that the *ketonet passim* does not only share an intimate material relationship with him, as is sometimes implied in scholarly interpretations. This chapter has particularly focused on developing and exploring the implications of Israel's relationship. In the following chapter I shall turn to more fully explore the entanglements

that are constructed and developed between the *ketonet passim* and Joseph's brothers in the broader text in Genesis 37. In turn I will consider how these social and material entanglements have repercussions on the other relationships in this text, as we can see through acknowledging Israel's own interaction with the *ketonet passim*. The interpretation of the *ketonet passim*'s agency and potency that has been constructed in this chapter will be developed further in the next chapter.

5 The *Ketonet Passim* and the Excluded Brothers

5.1 Introduction

Although made by Israel and given to Joseph, it is the depiction of the brothers' dynamic interactions with the *ketonet passim* that most effectively demonstrate that its agency is socially and materially transformative in the context of Genesis 37. The nature of these characters' entanglement with this garment significantly shifts and fluctuates throughout the chapter: they see it (vv. 4, 18), strip it from Joseph (v. 23), take it (v. 31), dip it in goat's blood (v. 31), send it to their father (v. 32), and deceive him by suggesting that it was only something that they 'found' (v. 32). Each of these interactions is multifaceted and must be examined in greater depth. This chapter will build on my examination of intimate relationship formed between Israel, Joseph, and the *ketonet passim* in the previous chapter by turning to consider its greater impact in the broader context of Genesis 37. The brothers' engagement with this garment is notably distinct from Israel or Joseph's intimate experiences of it and therefore, this chapter will explore their unique relationship with the *ketonet passim*. Their interactions with the *ketonet passim* also have significant repercussions on how we interpret Israel and Joseph's relationships with this garment as I will also illustrate in this chapter.

Biblical scholars tend to recognise that, to a certain extent, the portrayal of Joseph's *ketonet passim* helps to elucidate the shifting relationships between Joseph and his brothers in this text. By extension, these scholars imply that the brothers themselves have some sort of relationship with the *ketonet passim* – many observe, for example, that the *ketonet passim* is hated by the brothers.[652] However, such suggestions are often drawn from an interpretation

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[652] For the identification of the *ketonet passim* as a 'hated garment' or similar, see Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 41; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:359; Sicker, *Jacob and His Sons: The End of the Patriarchal Era*, 22; Arnold, *Genesis*, 320.

of the *ketonet passim* as a symbol: it represents their father's love for Joseph - and by implication, his privileged position over them - rather than fully considering the relationship the brothers share with this garment. In these scholarly portrayals the *ketonet passim* seems to be treated as a mere signpost rather than as a tangible and dynamic object in its own right.[653] By contrast, the discussion of the *ketonet passim* here shall be extended to consider its material lives and transformations even beyond its 'life' on Joseph's body; the ways in which this impacts and enriches our interpretation of the text will also be considered and assessed.

As shall be argued below, the biblical writers appear to use the *ketonet passim* in part to effectively illustrate and manifest the power struggle between Joseph and his brothers. This power play is negotiated and depicted as much through their material and somatic performance as through verbal dialogue. The themes of sibling rivalry and the overturning of traditions of primogeniture that are frequently employed throughout the book of Genesis are none so more developed as they are here between Joseph and his brothers.[654] The frequent attestation of these tropes in the Hebrew Bible leads the reader to anticipate the eventual triumph of the younger son. However, although Genesis 37 draws from these themes, this dramatic portrayal represents a more complex use of this motif wherein the power struggles between Joseph and his brothers are less clear-cut. The biblical writers'

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[653] This tendency has been addressed to some extent in the previous chapter, but will also be illustrated and developed in the present chapter.

[654] For further observations on these themes in the Joseph story, see Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph*, 88–89; Goldin, "The Youngest Son," 35–37; Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle," 110; Marc S. Bernstein, *Stories of Joseph: Narrative Migration between Judaism and Islam* (Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2006), 165; Brayford, *Genesis*, 389; Bernhard Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang* (Ashgate, 2008), 94; Bradford A. Anderson, *Brotherhood and Inheritance: A Canonical Reading of Esau and Edom Traditions* (New York; London: T & T Clark, 2011), 68–82; Dohyung Kim, "Genesis 37-50: The Story of Jacob and His Sons in Light of the Primary Narrative (Genesis - 2 Kings)," *The Expository Times* 123, no. 10 (2012): 486–93; Hyun Chul Paul Kim, "Reading the Joseph Story (Genesis 37-50) as a Diaspora Narrative," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 75 (2013): 490. For extended discussion of the themes of sibling rivalry in Genesis, see Frymer-Kensky, "Patriarchal Family Relationships and Near Eastern Law"; Dan W. Forsyth, "Sibling Rivalry, Aesthetic Sensibility, and Social Structure in Genesis," *Ethos* 19, no. 4 (1991): 453–510; Susan Niditch, *A Prelude to Biblical Folklore: Underdogs and Tricksters* (Urbana, IL; Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 96.

dynamic employment of the *ketonet passim* in this text develops these motifs even further.

The rivalry between Joseph and his brothers is distinct and set apart from other sibling rivalries in Genesis, not only because of its extended development (due in part to the length of the Joseph narrative), but also because this conflict is developed between an individual (Joseph) and a group (his brothers). The biblical writers' depiction of Joseph's brothers implies that they have a collective personhood. This is particularly illustrated by the portrayal of their interactions with the *ketonet passim*. They are notably unanimous in their reaction to and treatment of Joseph's garment, signalling that they have a collective relationship with this garment. Throughout the rest of the Joseph narrative, the brothers are predominantly represented by means of the dynamics of a group, rather than as individuals, and they are frequently depicted speaking, responding, and acting as a unit;[655] even their emotions are ascribed to them as a collective.[656] The brothers' unity is occasionally broken by individual voices, yet the majority of the group's members remain unnamed, implying that their collective identity is of greater significance in the story than their individual characters.[657]

The biblical writers' apparent disinterest in each brother's character development is somewhat unsurprising, since their primary focus is on Joseph's role. Still, this does not lessen the impact of the depiction of the brothers' collective personhood within the story. The portrayal of the brothers as a group offers each of them a powerful anonymity as participants in

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[655] For example, see Genesis 37: 4, 8, 12, 17, 18, 23, 31-32.
[656] Cotter, *Genesis*, 271; Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 312, 318; Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang*, 96; Brayford, *Genesis*, 393. Pirson particularly emphasises the brothers' collective emotions, Pirson, *The Lord of the Dreams*, 37. See also, commentaries that observe unanimity of the brothers' actions at different points in the text, Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 41; Turner, *Genesis*, 162–163.
[657] Lang notes that only four of the brothers' group are actually named, possibly because they go on to play a greater role in the broader narratives in the Hebrew Bible, Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang*, 96–97. This unity is broken the depiction of Reuben and Judah's objection to Joseph's murder (Genesis 37:21-22, 26-27).

collective violence.[658] It is arguably their identity as a faceless group that enables them to more easily shift into violence, since in a group each individual is distanced from the responsibility for such actions. Portrayals of the brothers' success or subversion are also magnified by collective identity as group of men. This exaggerated form of sibling rivalry heightens Joseph's isolation and vulnerability as an individual against this group, yet, in doing so, it also intensifies Joseph's eventual triumph over them.[659] It shall be considered how the depiction of these different group dynamics impact the brothers' and Joseph's interactions with the *ketonet passim* in Genesis 37.

5.2 Gazing on the Garment

Initially, Joseph's brothers function only as 'observers' of the *ketonet passim*. They are indirectly depicted as such at two different points in the narrative: immediately following the biblical writers' assertion in Genesis 37:3 that '[Israel] made for him [Joseph] a *ketonet passim*', the brothers are said to 'see' (ראה) Israel's love, 'and his brothers saw that their father loved him [Joseph] more than all of his brothers' (v. 4). In both of these verses the biblical writers explicitly assert the brothers act of seeing. The act of seeing or gazing is rarely inconsequential in the Hebrew Bible, instead, it frequently has ramifications for the both the person that sees and the object or person that is seen, as will be argued further in this section. I argue that the brothers' gaze is bound up with Israel's actions in creating and giving the *ketonet passim* (v. 3) and Joseph's implied actions in wearing this garment.[660] The brothers' act of seeing can be seen to stimulate their hatred towards Joseph. Indeed, this depiction is consistent with the tendency among biblical scholars to associate

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[658] Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 318.
[659] The biblical writers employ similar techniques elsewhere in order to exaggerate the smaller group's eventual success, often emphasising Yahweh's ultimate power in these conflicts. For example, see Gideon's battle against the 'Midianites' in Judges 7 and Elijah's 'single-handed' triumph over the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18.
[660] Corey argues that the brothers *saw* because of the *ketonet passim*, Corey, "Dreaming of Droughts," 426. More implicitly indicated in Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:347; Fokkelman, "Genesis 37 and 38," 156.

the brothers' hatred of Joseph with the *ketonet passim*.[661] The proposal that the brothers observe Israel's actions in constructing the *ketonet passim* may better account for the extent of the brothers' hatred, given the significance of Israel's performance of construction demonstrated in the previous chapter.

The second depiction of the brothers' gaze on the *ketonet passim* is indicated in verse 18, in which Joseph approaches his brothers: 'and they saw him [Joseph] from a distance.' The biblical writers do not make it explicit that Joseph is wearing the *ketonet passim* until verse 23 in which it is specified that the *ketonet passim* was 'on him' (עליו). This reference has led many biblical scholars to propose that it was the distinct sight of Joseph's *ketonet passim* that enabled the brothers to identify him from afar; some suggest that it was the distinctive materiality of the *ketonet passim* that enabled them to recognise Joseph.[662] In both interpretations of this verse and the one mentioned above the impact of the brother's gaze is often simplified. As has been suggested, biblical scholars tend to recognise that seeing Israel's love or seeing Joseph in *ketonet passim* provokes their hatred for Joseph, yet they often do not expand on these suggestions. Given the potency of the depiction of seeing in the Hebrew Bible, which will be explored further in this section, I argue that the brothers acts of seeing deserve further recognition and explanation. They mark a significant part of the brothers' characterisation and transformation in Genesis 37, as I will go on to illustrate.

'The Excluded'

As observers of the *ketonet passim*, the brothers are characterised by that which they lack – they are the 'excluded' group. This was suggested earlier in my discussion of gift relations (above) in which I proposed that brothers are excluded parties in the gift relationship between Israel and Joseph. By considering the impact of the brothers' gaze this exclusion can be further

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[661] For examples of scholarship that imply that the brothers were observers by associating the brothers' hatred with the *ketonet passim*, see Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 37; Hartley, *Genesis*, 311; Cotter, *Genesis*, 272.
[662] Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 40; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:353–354; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 417; Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors,'" 65; Hartley, *Genesis*, 311; Turner, *Genesis*, 161.

expounded. As observers, it can be argued that the brothers have only a limited experience of the *ketonet passim*'s materiality; the nature of their relationship with the *ketonet passim* is vastly different. They 'see' it, yet the biblical writers imply that Joseph and Israel share a close, physical intimacy with the *ketonet passim*, implied by their depiction as its wearer or maker, as demonstrated in the previous chapter. Denied this tactile interaction with the *ketonet passim*, the brothers are prevented implicitly from physically touching the garment – suggesting that their limited material relationship with the *ketonet passim* also deprives them of the power, authority and manifestation of their father's identity that is manifested and intertwined in the *ketonet passim's* agency. This distance from the *ketonet passim* also highlights the absence of their father's love and favouritism – they may be Israel's sons, but they are not his *beloved* son (Genesis 37:4).[663]

The imaging of distance suggested by the brothers' gaze upon an exclusive relationship between Jacob and Joseph is reinforced by the wider depiction of distance in Genesis 37.[664] The distance between Joseph and his brothers is most explicitly expressed through the depiction of the brothers' emotions in Genesis 37, yet the distance created and marked by the *ketonet passim* is also developed in other aspects of the narrative. It has been noted that Joseph's social status is transformed at the beginning of this text by the *ketonet passim* that sets him apart (vv.2-4, 13-14). When the transformative impact of this garment is considered in direct contrast to the brothers the rift that is created between them becomes even more apparent. In verse two the biblical writers align Joseph with his brothers more closely, indicating that Joseph supports his brothers in their work: 'Joseph was shepherding the

[663] Wénin argues that Joseph's brothers are deprived of their father's love, André Wénin, "La Tunique Ensanglantée de Joseph (Gn XXXVII 31-33): Un Espoir de Réconciliation?," *Vetus Testamentum* 54, no. 3 (2004): 407–10. In contrast, Joseph's brothers are often singled out for negative reasons, implying their father's disapproval; for example, Jacob indicates his disapproval of the actions of his sons, Simeon and Levi, with regard to their response to Dinah's rape in Genesis 34:30. The biblical writers also depict Reuben sleeping with his father's concubine in Genesis 35:22.

[664] I have begun to explore the distance between Joseph and his brothers in the previous chapter; however, there it focuses on Joseph's isolation from the group, whereas, here I explore how this distancing impacts the brothers' own relationships in further depth.

flocks with his brothers'.[665] In this verse, Joseph is identified as a 'נער', a term connoting the position of assistant – a position that is presumably subordinate to his brothers. Notably, however, this position changes after he receives both the *ketonet passim* and the dreams.[666] This distinction in status is underscored by Walter Brueggemann's suggestion that Joseph was 'born to dream – not to work, not to shepherd', implying that his position is distanced from his brothers.[667] In contrast, the brothers' social status and role appear to be static: they remain as shepherds.[668] Whilst this might find partial explanation in the biblical writers' disinterest developing their characters, the depiction of the brothers' static social position nonetheless intensifies the distance between Joseph and his brothers. This distancing also continues to be illustrated further in this text; for example, in the depiction of Joseph's brothers looking at him 'from a distance' (v. 18).

A similar construction of distance is evident between Joseph's brothers and their father.[669] First, the gap between them is emphatically highlighted by their diametrically opposed emotions towards Joseph and the *ketonet passim*.[670] This rift is widened by the literary intensification of the brothers' hatred and

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[665] Hirsch, *The Pentateuch: Genesis*, 1:539; Coats, *Genesis*, 271; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:350. Note that this verse could be translated as, 'Joseph was shepherding his brothers and the flocks.' For more on this interpretation see below.

[666] Levinson stresses that Joseph's original rank was beneath that of his half-brothers by the 'slave women', Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 143. For interpretations of 'נער' as an assistant, see Speiser, *Genesis*, 289; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 36; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 217; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 406; Arnold, *Genesis*, 311. Some have even suggested that this term connotes a servant status, Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 217; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:350. Observe that some scholars suggest that the biblical writers phrasing hints that Joseph is shepherding his brothers, Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 406; Pirson, "What Is Joseph Supposed to Be?"

[667] Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 301. Others have suggested that his place was in the home near his father, Coats, *Genesis*, 271; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:350.

[668] Still, the brothers do have a significance status as eponymous ancestors of tribes.

[669] This is illustrated through the difference in relationships between Joseph and Israel and the brothers and Israel. Whilst the biblical writers develop the relationships between Joseph and Jacob and Joseph and his brothers, there is little development of the relationship between Jacob and his other sons, as suggested in Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang*, 97.

[670] Many scholars remark upon the striking difference between their emotions, Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation*, 48; Becking, "They Hated Him Even More," 42; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 412; Pirson, *The Lord of the Dreams*, 39. This is also implied in Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph*, 73; Hirsch, *The Pentateuch: Genesis*, 1:541; Fokkelman, "Genesis 37 and 38," 157.

aggression that is portrayed in this text.[671] As with Joseph, the biblical writers also indicate the distance between the brothers and their father through their geographical distance from each other. Many scholars have observed and sought to account for the somewhat surprising distance between Israel and the location of the brothers' shepherding, Joseph must go some distance to find his brothers. The length of Joseph's journey to the brothers is exaggerated further in verses 15-17, as the brothers have moved even further away than expected causing Joseph to extend his trip to find them.[672] It may be that this depiction of Joseph's elongated journey serves as a literary device to also stress the distance in the relationship between Joseph and his brothers. These examples of distancing exaggerate and emphasize the brothers' disqualification from being Israel's favoured son.

There is also a lack of dialogue between Israel and Joseph's brothers, which contrasts sharply with the dialogue between Joseph and Israel – a feature implicit of their intimacy (vv. 10, 13-14).[673] The only dialogue that occurs between Israel and Joseph's brothers concerns Joseph and the *ketonet passim*: 'We found this, please recognise whether or not it is your son's כתנת' (v.32).[674] The epithet employed here in the brothers' speech also indicates

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[671] Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 302; Becking, "They Hated Him Even More"; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:349–351; Fokkelman, "Genesis 37 and 38," 157–158; Turner, *Genesis*, 160; Cotter, *Genesis*, 271–273; Bernstein, *Stories of Joseph*, 172.

[672] For commentaries that note upon and discuss the geographical distance between Israel and the brothers, see Rad, *Genesis*, 347; Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 446; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 219; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 39; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 414. It can be noted that some of these studies simply observe this distance, whilst others take more time to unpack the implications of this depiction. For the suggestion that verses 15-17 serve as a plot retardation to build suspense in the narrative, see Coats, *Genesis*, 270; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:353, 359; Turner, *Genesis*, 161.

[673] There is an implicit suggestion that Joseph speaks to his father in verse 2, however, there is no indication as to how Israel receives his son's report.

[674] This dialogue is somewhat ambiguous in the Hebrew and many scholars have even suggested that the brothers' words are spoken through a messenger and not themselves. For the suggestion the biblical writers' use of sent indicates that the brothers were not present when the *ketonet passim* was given to their father, see Eric I. Lowenthal, *The Joseph Narrative in Genesis* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1973), 29; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 425; Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 215; Turner, *Genesis*, 162. Cf. Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 43; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:356. Note that Skinner suggests the ambiguity of the Hebrew here is an indication of the merging of two separate sources, Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 448.

their exclusion and distance from Joseph and Israel, since the biblical writers chose to employ 'your son' (בנך) rather than 'Joseph' or 'our brother'. The brothers are therefore excluded and distanced from the intimate relationship that exists between Israel and Joseph, which is prominently manifested in and by the *ketonet passim*, both materially and socially. However, the role of seeing cannot be limited to its use as a distancing device.

The Powerful Gaze

The act of seeing is powerful and proactive.[675] It is often bound with perceiving and understanding in the biblical texts and can provoke a range of dynamic reactions.[676] The power of the gaze has not gone unrecognised in biblical scholarship. Many observe that the biblical writers frequently display a concern with either looking at or being seen by the divine, as I will discuss in further depth in my final chapter. The problem of the male gaze has also been considered to a considerable extent, this gaze is often thought to be powerful in objectifying women.[677] In a number of more recent studies, the debate has shifted to consider a wider category of gazing. In these studies the power that seeing has in transforming relationships, and its potential danger, has increasingly been explored in greater depth.[678] In the light of these studies, It is important to reconsider the impact of the brothers' gaze in relation to the potency that seeing seems to have in the biblical texts.

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[675] See further discussion on the affective eye and the gaze in Nicole Tilford, "The Affective Eye: Re-Examining a Biblical Idiom," *Biblical Interpretation* 23, no. 2 (2015): 207–21.

[676] The relationship between seeing and understanding is discussed further in Silvia Schroer, *Body Symbolism in the Bible* (Collegeville, Minn: Liturgical Press, 2001); Yael Avrahami, *The Senses of Scripture: Sensory Perception in the Hebrew Bible* (New York; London: T&T Clark International, 2012), 69–74, 248–251; Tilford, "The Affective Eye."

[677] Particularly see Alice Bach's discussion on the power of gazing in her interpretation of 2 Samuel 13 in Alice Bach, *Women, Seduction, and Betrayal in Biblical Narrative* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 128–165.

[678] Don Seeman, "The Watcher at the Window: Cultural Poetics of a Biblical Motif," *Prooftexts* 24, no. 1 (2004): 1–50; Stuart Macwilliam, "Ideologies of Male Beauty and the Hebrew Bible," *Biblical Interpretation* 17, no. 3 (April 1, 2009): 265–87; Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Making Bodies: On Body Modification and Religious Materiality in the Hebrew Bible," *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 2, no. 4 (2013): 539–547; Tilford, "The Affective Eye."

A reconsideration of the power of the brothers' gaze in Genesis 37 will enable us to dismantle the common presumption that they are only passive observers of the *ketonet passim*. David Morgan stresses that despite its oft-assumed immateriality or 'aloofness' from other senses, seeing can be understood as an embodied and material practice that is intimately entangled with the other senses, particularly touch.[679] It is the means by which people engage and relate to the material world. Morgan particularly elucidates the relational quality inherent in the practice of seeing:

> Gazes or visual fields, of which there are many, engage the human body as an interface with other bodies – bodies of other people, things, and images, and through them interface with social bodies, or the group that individuals inhabit as an integral aspect of their identities.[680]

This suggests that although the brothers' gaze in Genesis 37 suggests that their experience of the *ketonet passim* is necessarily limited and restricted in comparison to Israel and Joseph, it nonetheless indicates that through seeing the brothers have familiarity and a relationship with the *ketonet passim*. They are still drawn into a tactile relationship with this garment and experience it as a material object in some way.

Morgan persuasively argues that the act of seeing is relational in the way that it gives the viewer a communal connection with other viewers; it identifies them as part of a communal body.[681] In applying this perspective to Genesis 37, the brothers' collective personhood and relationships are strengthened through their act of communally 'seeing' Joseph in the *ketonet passim*. They

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[679] David Morgan, *The Embodied Eye: Religious Visual Culture and the Social Life of Seeing* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 2012), xvii–xix, 111–136. Note that seeing is often intertwined with touching, particularly in ancient Mediterranean and West Asian cultures, as suggested in
John H. Elliott, "The Evil Eye and the Sermon on the Mount: Contours of a Pervasive Belief in Social Scientific Perspective," *Biblical Interpretation* 2, no. 1 (1994): 51–84; Avrahami, *The Senses of Scripture*, 93–102. These ideas can be observed in ancient Greek theories of extramission, in which the eye was considered to emit light which went from the eye to touch people and things in order to see see Louise J. Lawrence, *Sense and Stigma in the Gospels: Depictions of Sensory-Disabled Characters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 37–38; Tilford, "The Affective Eye," 209.
[680] Morgan, *The Embodied Eye*, xvii.
[681] Ibid., 68–70.

are drawn together by their shared experience seeing the *ketonet passim* from the same perspective and reacting to it in the same way. This would suggest that the biblical writers' use of seeing is partly efficacious in the way that it reinforces the relationship between Joseph's brothers in this text.

It is necessary to consider the impact that the brothers' familiarity with Joseph and the *ketonet passim* through gazing has on these relationships. It is not just the brothers' social role as observers that indicate their exclusion from the enmeshing of Israel, Joseph, and the *ketonet passim*; rather, it is the brothers' gaze itself and their familiarity with this garment that transforms them into the excluded party. The connection between seeing and understanding also implies that their gaze on the *ketonet passim* enabled them to more fully understand Israel's exclusive love for Joseph that is manifested in this garment.[682] This revelation is arguably enabled by means of their familiarity with the *ketonet passim's* materiality, a familiarity attained through seeing this garment either as it is constructed by Israel or worn by Joseph. Either way, they are able to recognise the exclusive relationship that that is formed between Israel and Joseph through these actions, as discussed in the previous chapter. The powerful impact of seeing the *ketonet passim* efficaciously provokes the brothers' reaction of hatred, implying the extent to which the *ketonet passim* is able to impact them through their gaze alone.

Given the negative context of the brothers' gaze, it may be that the biblical writers intend to evoke the imagery of the evil eye, implying that their gaze was dangerous and threatening to Joseph's well being. The 'evil eye' refers to a tendency widely-attested in many ancient cultures to be wary of a person's pointed gaze, due to beliefs that the gaze could be dangerous and cause damage to that which it perceives - usually to one's health or property. Whilst beliefs in the evil eye's power and form may vary, the concept itself has been attested in texts across ancient Mediterranean and West Asian cultures.[683]

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[682] Observe the implicit connection made between the brothers' seeing and their realisation in scholarly discussions, Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:347; Cotter, *Genesis*, 271.

[683] For further studies on evil eye imagery in the Hebrew Bibles, see Rivka Ulmer, *The Evil Eye in the Bible and Rabbinic Literature* (Hoboken, NJ: Ktav Publishing House, 1994), 1–7; Schroer, *Body Symbolism in the Bible*, 118–121; Nili Wazana, "A

The evil eye is thought to be caused by a person's envy or jealousy. This is consistent with the biblical writers' depiction of the brothers and their hatred (v. 4), and the portrayal of Joseph's brothers being envious (קנא) of him (v.11). Whilst some scholars have recognised the probable use of evil eye imagery in association with the depiction of Joseph's brothers, this interpretation has not been developed much beyond this.[684]

The possible connection between the brothers and the evil eye emphasises the potential danger of their gaze towards Joseph in the *ketonet passim*. Such a gaze could endanger Joseph's wellbeing and threatens the *ketonet passim* as his 'possession.' However, it is interesting that the brothers' dangerous gaze, particularly in 37:4, appears to be ineffective against Joseph. In the following verse, it can be seen that, rather than being harmed, Joseph instead dreams, '(a)nd Joseph dreamed a dream and he told it to his brothers and they hated him even more' (v. 5). Moreover, in Joseph's dreams his brothers even become subordinate to him (vv. 5-10), which leads them to ask he if he will even rule over them (v. 8). This implies that the Joseph continues to be elevated over his brothers even after they gaze at him with hatred. Still, it may be considered that the biblical writers' use of evil eye imagery is employed to hint at the danger to Joseph and the *ketonet passim* as an anticipatory nuance, which is developed later in the text.[685]

The evocation of evil eye imagery is also underscored by the association of 'seeing' and 'well being' in the text. It would appear that both the protective

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Case of the Evil Eye: Qohelet 4:4-8," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 126, no. 4 (2007): 685–702; Tilford, "The Affective Eye." For studies of evil eye imagery in ancient West Asian texts, see J. N. Ford, "'Ninety-Nine by the Evil Eye and One from Natural Causes': KTU2 1.96 in Its Near Eastern Context," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 30 (1998): 201–78. Cf. Marie-Louise Thomsen, "The Evil Eye in Mesopotamia," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 51, no. 1 (1992): 19–32.
[684] On the association between Joseph's brothers and the evil eye, see Ulmer, *The Evil Eye in the Bible and Rabbinic Literature*, 116–117; John H Elliott, *Beware the Evil Eye: The Evil Eye in the Bible and the Ancient World*, vol. 3: The Bible and Related Sources (Eugene, Or: Cascade Books: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2016), 68–72, 79–86. Also see Elliott, "The Evil Eye and the Sermon on the Mount," 68–73.
[685] It is also possible that the brothers' gaze is made ineffective by the power that is inherent in the *ketonet passim*, it could be argued that this garment has an apotropaic power that protects Joseph (see development of the *ketonet passim*'s ritual role in next section).

and damaging effects of 'seeing' are illustrated in this text. In verse four it is suggested that the brothers could not speak peaceably with Joseph, yet later in verses 13-14 Israel sends Joseph to 'see' about the well being of his brothers and the flock. The juxtaposition of the use of 'שלום,' translated as peace or well being, with 'seeing' (ראה) is ironic here: the brothers 'see' Joseph and hate him, threatening his well being, as is implied by their gaze (v. 4) and the depiction of their envy (v. 11).[686] The irony that is indicated by this contrast is heightened by the suggestion that Joseph's actions in coming to the brothers to 'see' after their well being is immediately followed by the depiction of the brothers' dangerous gaze on Joseph (v. 18) and subsequent stripping of this protective garment (v. 23).

5.3 Motive for Murder

The second occasion in which the brothers gaze upon Joseph in the *ketonet passim* (v. 18) is immediately followed by their construction of a plot to murder him (vv. 18-20). This suggests that their gaze has moved the brothers to act – it motivates them to murder. However, scholarly interpretations of the brothers' plan have largely identified Joseph's dreams as the overriding motivation for their decision to kill Joseph. This is illustrated by Laurence Turner's assumption that '(m)ore than his 'bad report', his father's favouritism or the special robe that advertises his arrival, it is his dreams that trigger their fratricidal designs.'[687] The importance of Joseph's dreams as the trigger for

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[686] For an observation of the irony of the double function of 'שלום' in Genesis 37 see Hugh C. White, *Narration and Discourse in the Book of Genesis* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 248. By contrast, Joseph is sent to 'see' after the brothers' well being - evoking the imagery of a protective or apotropaic gaze. It can even be conjectured that Israel may have sent Joseph in his *ketonet passim* to the brothers to protect them in his capacity as a ritual practitioner, which will be explored more fully in the following section.

[687] Turner, *Genesis*, 161. See other scholars that privilege the role of dreams in inciting the brothers' plotting, Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph*, 69; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 219; Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 298; Coats, *Genesis*, 272; Becking, "They Hated Him Even More," 47; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:353; Longacre, *Joseph*, 42; Arnold, *Genesis*, 320; Corey, "Dreaming of Droughts," 428. Note a wider privileging of Joseph's dreams over the writers' employment of clothing in scholarly discussions of Genesis 37, Rad, *Genesis*, 348; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 217; Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 298–305; Coats, *Genesis*, 270; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 417; Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 209–212;

his brothers' murderous motivation is supported by their mocking title for him, 'the Lord of dreams' (v. 19), and the phrase, 'We will see what will become of his dreams' (v. 20).[688] This seems to indicate that the brothers' aggression is directed at Joseph and his dreams, implying that part of the brothers' motivation and purpose is to attempt to counter, prevent and/or destroy his dreams.[689] However, despite the evident importance of dreams as a motivation, the *ketonet passim* may also play a prominent role in inciting the brothers to murderous plotting.[690]

It is important to recognise and challenge the extent to which biblical scholarship has privileged the motif of dreaming. It is likely that the privileging of the dream motif in interpretations of this text is influenced by a wider

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Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 313; Benjamin D. H. Hilbert, "Joseph's Dreams, Part One: From Abimelech to Saul," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 35, no. 3 (2011): 259–83; Heather A. McKay, "Dreams Had Recounted and Interpreted. Power Plays in the Joseph Story?," in *Interested Readers: Essays on the Hebrew Bible in Honor of David J. A. Clines*, ed. James K. Aitken, Jeremy M. S. Clines, and Christl M. Maier (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 154–157. Note that several ancient depictions of the Joseph story focus primarily on Joseph's dreams, the garment motif is omitted in Josephus, Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, trans. H. St. J. Thackeray, vol. I: Books 1–3, Loeb Classical Library 242 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1930), 2:2:11–18., Louis H. Feldman, "Josephus' Portrait of Jacob," *The Jewish Quarterly Review* 79, no. 2/3 (1988): 118.

[688] Despite being a mocking phrase, the very depiction of this title, the 'lord of dreams' or 'חלמותה הלזה' implicitly attributes power to Joseph, augmenting the irony that it is the brothers who identify him as such. Some scholars consider the divine connotations of this phrase, Jacqueline Isaac even attempts to link this epithet with other depictions of ancient West Asian deities, such as Enlil, Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence*, 55; Isaac, "Here Comes This Dreamer," 241. For further discussion and different rendering of this phrase, see Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 443; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 220; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 40; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:353; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 415, 417.

[689] For the suggestion that the brothers intend to prevent or destroy Joseph's dreams, see Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 219–220; Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 298, 304; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 41; Becking, "They Hated Him Even More," 47; Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence*, 55; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 417; Turner, *Genesis*, 161; Arnold, *Genesis*, 320.

[690] In parts of Claus Westermann's discussion he appears to go too far in the other direction and undervalues the importance of Joseph's dreams, 'verse 3 is sufficient for the brother's estrangement and shattering of peace…the dreams are a further cause but not necessarily part of the original narrative…' Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 35. Although he does later acknowledge that the brothers intend to destroy Joseph's dreams (41).

historical interest in themes of divine communication and its symbolism in biblical scholarship. Moreover, there is a tendency for scholars to privilege verbal aspects over the material and performative features in their discussion of biblical texts. This was probably influenced by the wider problem of logocentricism in biblical scholarship that was discussed earlier.[691] The focus on words is evident in the biblical writers' focus on dreams in the Joseph narrative, conveyed both through Joseph's speech and actions and his brothers' dialogue. Some source criticism approaches have resulted in fractured this story into splinters, rendering the dream motif and the *ketonet passim* as distinct features of different traditions or episodes of the story.[692] It is likely that these interpretations have led to the scholarly tendency to perceive these motifs as separate and privilege dreams as a distinct motif from Joseph's dreams. However, such privileging has inevitably led to the undervaluing of the *ketonet passim* and the brothers' gaze in this text.

The brothers' gaze on Joseph's garment in verse 18 is also arguably efficacious in affecting their response and actions. By seeing, and by inference touching, the *ketonet passim* the brothers are motivated to plot against Joseph (vv. 20-22) and act violently against him (vv. 23-24). Scholars have begun to acknowledge the significance of gazing by recognising that the sight of the *ketonet passim* was enough to fan his brothers' fury.[693] Both depictions of the brothers' actions of gazing are active and powerful, they both provoke the brothers to change their behaviour and actions, as has been suggested. However, the impact of this second gaze is emphatically illustrated by the shift in the intensity of brothers' response: they move from hatred and

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[691] For examples of discussions that particularly focus on the brothers' dialogue in identifying their motivations, see Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 417; Turner, *Genesis*, 161; Arnold, *Genesis*, 320.

[692] For commentaries that suggest that separate the motifs of clothing and dreams into different traditions, see Rad, *Genesis*, 345; Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 443; Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph*, 15; and to some extent, Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 35. It must be recognised that this interpretation is more prevalent in commentaries are led by source critical approach over a literary or anthropological approach, which is largely employed in this thesis. However, this thesis is primarily concerned with the 'final' reading of the biblical texts.

[693] Lowenthal, *The Joseph Narrative in Genesis*, 24. Also see Turner, *Genesis*, 161.

not speaking to Joseph to plotting his murder.[694] In both acts of seeing the biblical writers make a nuanced connection between the brothers' gaze and their intent to harm Joseph's well being: in relation to the first gaze the brothers are unable to speak with Joseph peaceably (v. 4), and in relation to the second gaze they plot to kill him (vv. 18-20). The suggestion that the *ketonet passim* triggers the brothers' plotting (vv.18-20) and their actions (v.23-24) is also supported by the observation that the brothers take this garment for themselves. The brothers' initial intention to kill Joseph is ultimately overturned by Reuben's intervention (vv. 21-22). However, the *ketonet passim* continues to play a prominent role in this text: it is stripped from Joseph and taken by his brothers (v.23), implying that the brothers' are still provoked into violence against the *ketonet passim*.

Scholarly interpretations privileging either Joseph's dreams or the *ketonet passim* in interpretations of the brothers' motivations are limiting since they fail to recognise the possible interplay between these motifs. It is unnecessary to divorce these motifs or privilege one over the other, since the roles of the *ketonet passim* and the dreams in motivating the brothers into action are intricately entangled, as I will continue to illustrate. The intertwining relationship between Joseph's *ketonet passim* and his dreams is suggested in a number of different studies. Aldina Da Silva notably traces the threads of these two motifs throughout the Joseph story, demonstrating that they both play similar roles in shaping Joseph's fate.[695] In a distinct though corroborating view, it is proposed that Joseph's dreams reflective of his current status as his father's favoured son whilst wearing the *ketonet passim*; as he already is in a position of power over his brothers.[696] Eric Lowenthal goes as far as to say that '[the brothers] assumed that he had fabricated the

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[694] Mignon Jacobs particularly highlights the power of the brothers' gaze in verse 18 and the shift in their gaze. He suggests that the brothers' actions in this verse are proactive, rather than reactive (note the initial response in v.4 is only identified as reactive), it is the second gaze which provokes the vivid performance depicted in verses 23-24, Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 319.

[695] Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères*.

[696] Turner, *Genesis*, 160. Also implied to some extent in Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 323.

tale [of his dreams] to fit his tunic.'[697] This interpretation implies that the removal or destruction of the Joseph's *ketonet passim* was synonymous with the negation of his dreams, thereby suggesting the intertwining of these motifs in Genesis 37. However, these interpretations skim only the surface of the connection between Joseph's *ketonet passim* and his dreams in motivating his brothers into action.

The Ketonet Passim as a Ritual Dreamcoat

Given that the *ketonet passim* is closely related to Joseph's role as a dreamer, it has been suggested that Joseph's ability to dream is directly linked to him receiving the *ketonet passim*.[698] This would indicate that the nature of the interrelationship between the *ketonet passim* and Joseph's dreams is ritual and not only literary. In this view, the *ketonet passim* could be instrumental in symbolising and constructing Joseph's new social status as a dreamer, even empowering him to dream in the first place.[699] Such an interpretation would indicate that the brothers' gaze on Joseph in his *ketonet passim* is inseparable from the biblical writers' portrayal of the brothers' words, 'Behold, here, comes the Lord of the dreams' (v.19). The stripping or 'destruction' of the *ketonet passim* (vv. 23, 31) would in many ways be tantamount to the destruction of Joseph's dreams, corroborating with the phrase, 'We will see what will become of his dreams' (v. 20). The biblical

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[697] Lowenthal, *The Joseph Narrative in Genesis*, 18.

[698] This has been argued on a number of different levels in biblical scholarship, although none more persuasively than Bernhard Lang, Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang*, 95–98. Many of these arguments are poorly supported or based on unsubstantiated interpretations of the clothing term, *ketonet passim*, G. R. H. Wright, "Joseph's Grave Under the Tree by the Omphalos at Shechem," *Vetus Testamentum* 22, no. 4 (1972): 481; MacLaurin, "Joseph and Asaph," 33–34; Bledstein, "Tamar and the 'Coat of Many Colors,'" 65–69; Thomas L. Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue: Literary, Historical, and Theological Commentary* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 353–359; Sicker, *Jacob and His Sons: The End of the Patriarchal Era*, 8. Note Aldina Da Silva's challenge to the plausibility of MacLaurin's argument in favour of its ritual use, Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères*, 87–88. Marjorie Lehman notably rejects the ritual use of the *ketonet passim*, instead suggesting that it symbolises Joseph's salvific power, as argued in Lehman, "Dressing and Undressing the High Priest," 56.

[699] Lang implies that the *ketonet passim* empowers Joseph to dream, since he proposes that it has magical properties, Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang*, 98.

writers' employ 'ראה' to see, here, which evokes the image of the brothers' gaze on the *ketonet passim* once again.

The divinatory quality of Joseph's own dreams is often a point of contention in scholarly discussions.[700] Some argue that these dreams are not divine, but rather were the construction of Joseph's egotistic nature.[701] This undermines the depiction of the *ketonet passim* as a ritual garment. Nevertheless, there is still evidence to support the view that the biblical writers considered these dreams as revelatory and divine, particularly given the biblical writers' prominent portrayal of ritual imagery in these dreams, as will be illustrated further below.[702]

The interpretation of the *ketonet passim* as a ritual device used by Joseph to dream or divine is consistent with the wider portrayal of Joseph as a ritual specialist. He is portrayed in a number of different ritual roles and contexts; for example, he receives divinatory dreams (Genesis 37:5-9), is a dream interpreter (Genesis 40-41), and a diviner (Genesis 44:5).[703] The position that Joseph is given by pharaoh in Genesis 41:37-45 is not merely administrative, but can also be identified as a ritual appointment, which may partly be indicated by his marriage to a priest's daughter (v. 45). The biblical writers frequently seem to demonstrate Joseph's ritual personhood through material performance and through his use of objects; most widely recognised is Joseph's use of a divining cup (Genesis 44:5). Joseph is depicted changing

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[700] As noted in Moberly, *Genesis 12-50*, 35.

[701] Scholars that suggest that Joseph's dreams are not divine, Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 412; Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 209; Corey, "Dreaming of Droughts," 428, 430. Further discussion on the ambiguity of the origins of Joseph's dreams, see Rad, *Genesis*, 346; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 218; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:351; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 410–412; Turner, *Genesis*, 160; Arnold, *Genesis*, 322–323.

[702] Driver, *The Book of Genesis*, 322; Rad, *Genesis*, 348; Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 293; Moberly, *Genesis 12-50*, 34; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:359; Hartley, *Genesis*, 309–310.

[703] MacLaurin, "Joseph and Asaph"; Frederick H. Cryer, *Divination in Ancient Israel and Its Near Eastern Environment: A Socio-Historical Investigation*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 142 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 265, 285, 306–307; Ann Jeffers, *Magic and Divination in Ancient Palestine and Syria*, Studies in the History and Culture of the Ancient Near East, v. 8 (Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1996), 29, 46, 160; Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang*, 95–98; Hilbert, "Joseph's Dreams, Part One," 262.

his clothes prior to meeting with Pharaoh in order to perform the role of dream interpretation (Genesis 41:14) and is given new clothing upon receiving a new ritual position in Pharaoh's court (Genesis 41:42).[704] This would indicate that the *ketonet passim's* use in connection with Joseph's dreams is most likely an intentional pairing, indicating Joseph's ritual status and performance in dreaming.

The *ketonet passim* does not only symbolise Joseph's social status as a ritual figure, but, by considering its material efficacy, it can be argued that it actually empowers Joseph to dream. We know that garments played a sacred or ritual role in ancient West Asian cultures, particularly in practices of divination and prophecy. They may well have played an oracular function in these rituals.[705] The identification of the *ketonet passim* as a ritual device is supported through its material relationship with Israel. Israel/Jacob is frequently depicted performing ritual acts, such as constructing altars or 'מצבה' (Genesis 31:45; 33:20; 35:3, 7, 14, 20) interacting with divine beings (e.g. Genesis 28:10-17; 32:22-32). Like Joseph, Israel/Jacob's role as a ritual specialist is also prominently characterised by his divinatory dream in Genesis 28:10-17. The *ketonet passim* shares in Israel's personhood and agency. In the light of this, it seems likely that the biblical writers' portrayal of the *ketonet passim* also evokes Israel's ritual agency. This interpretation corresponds with my suggestion in the previous chapter that this garment was constructed as part of a ritual performance, thereby implying that the garment manifests its own ritual potency.[706]

The identification of the *ketonet passim* as a ritually potent object is also reinforced by an intertextual allusion to Israel/Jacob's ritual performance in Genesis 27. This comparison is illustrative of the wider ritual significance that

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[704] Cf. Lisbeth S. Fried, "Why Did Joseph Shave?," *The Biblical Archaeology Review* 33, no. 4 (2007): 36–41. Others have limited interpretations of Joseph's clothing changes as an indicator of his changing social status and do not recognise the ritual significance in these texts. For example, in Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative." Susan Ackerman's discussion, in which the relationship between garments and ritual dreaming, will be examined in further depth below.
[705] I will discuss the probable oracular function of clothing used in ritual dreaming later in this section.
[706] See section 4.6

is attributed to garments in the Hebrew Bible, which shall be developed further in my case study on the *adderet*. In Genesis 27, Jacob deceives Isaac by posing as Esau in order to obtain the ritual blessing given to the firstborn son.[707] I argue that Rebekah ritually transforms Joseph into his brother to enable him to receive this blessing. First, she puts Esau's finest clothing on Jacob (v. 15). This performance of dressing could be seen to be part of the larger ritual performance of Isaac's blessing, except that Rebekah places this clothing on Joseph instead of Esau. Some scholars suggest that the biblical writers' depiction of these garments connote ceremonial or festive garments of some sort, this might imply their function as ritual garments.[708] In this text these garments play a secondary role in ritually transforming Jacob's personhood by clothing him with Esau's materiality. Still, it is through these garments that Jacob is able to manifest Esau's personhood and in many ways becomes Esau himself.[709]

The donning of Esau's clothing is intensified by Rebekah's use of the skins of kids that are put on Jacob's arms and neck to mimic Esau's hairiness (v. 16). Animal skins are often credited with ritual capacity, implying that they also played a ritual role in constructing Jacob's new personhood.[710] In this blessing Isaac is disabled by his inability to see; rather, he appears to largely rely on the materiality of touch and smell to identify Joseph (vv. 21-23, 27). Joseph's new materiality is effective in deceiving Jacob that he is Esau. This deception is, in part, enabled by the ritual potency of his clothing and its sensory

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[707] For a more in-depth discussion of the ritual elements in this text, see David E. Bokovoy, "From the Hand of Jacob: A Ritual Analysis of Genesis 27," *Studies in the Bible and Antiquity* 1 (2009): 35–50. For discussion on the ritual use of clothing in this text, see pp. 45-46. Cf. Anderson, who rejects any 'magical' elements in this ritual, see Anderson, *Brotherhood and Inheritance*, 68–73, 78–79.

[708] Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 370; Westermann, *Genesis 12-36*, 439; Bokovoy, "From the Hand of Jacob," 45.

[709] Implied in Susan Ackerman, "The Deception of Isaac, Jacob's Dream at Bethel, and Incubation on an Animal Skin," in *Priesthood and Cult in Ancient Israel*, ed. Gary A. Anderson and Saul M. Olyan, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 125 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1991), 119; Bokovoy, "From the Hand of Jacob," 45.

[710] As suggested in Ackerman, "The Deception of Isaac, Jacob's Dream at Bethel, and Incubation on an Animal Skin." For more on the ritual efficacy of animal skins, see Gilbert Brunet, "Y Eut-Il Un Manteau De Prophète? Étude sur l'addèrèt," *Rivista degli studi orientali* 43, no. 2 (1968): 150–155.

qualities. Through Isaac's ritual blessing, which is meant for Esau, Jacob can be seen to continue to ritually transform into Esau.

Susan Ackerman similarly sees the potential of sacred garments in the biblical texts. She associates Jacob's clothing, particularly the goatskins, with his dreams.[711] Ackerman argues that the untouched meal and the goat skins in Genesis 27, together with Jacob's dream in Genesis 28:11-22, were originally both parts of an incubation ritual performed to invoke divine dreams. Ackerman identifies these motifs in depictions of incubation dreams across ancient Mediterranean and West Asian texts, suggesting that goatskins were used for their perceived ritual power and were slept on in order to invoke these dreams.

Although Ackerman's discussion could be suggested to closely align Jacob's ritual use of his clothing with Joseph's use of the *ketonet passim*, her argument seems too insufficiently substantiated to be reliable for this interpretation. Ackerman's application of the incubation model to the biblical and other ancient West Asian texts seems somewhat forced and only selected elements from this model persuasively corresponds with examples in these texts. Furthermore, some of the examples she employs to support use of animal skins are derived from ambiguous features in ancient iconographic scenes and are difficult to substantiate.[712] Still, given my discussion above it can be suggested that if Jacob continued to wear Esau's ritual clothing, this clothing could enable him to gain divinatory visions or dreams. However, in its current form, it remains that the biblical writers omit any reference to Jacob's clothing in Genesis 28, making it difficult to suggest that the biblical writers saw his clothing to be efficacious in his dreaming rituals. These examples still open up ways of considering the role that clothing may play in ritual performances, which, as suggested, will be explored in greater depth in my following case study. This serves to develop the possibility that the *ketonet passim* plays an efficacious role in Joseph's ability to receive ritual dreams.

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[711] Ackerman, "The Deception of Isaac, Jacob's Dream at Bethel, and Incubation on an Animal Skin."
[712] Ibid., 98–103.

The *ketonet passim's* ritual potency does not only impact Joseph's personhood, by enabling him to receive dreams. It can be used to develop our understanding of its relationship with Joseph's brothers in Genesis 37. The *ketonet passim*'s power to provoke the brothers into action is emphasised by its depiction as a ritually efficacious device. Interpreting it in this way magnifies its challenge to the brothers' power, since it does more than connect Joseph to Israel. It empowers Joseph to dream the very dreams that threaten to elevate Joseph's status even further than has already been implied by the gift of the *ketonet passim*. Therefore, by making the association between the biblical writers' motifs of clothing and dreams one might observe an intensification of the brothers' hatred of the *ketonet passim* and all that it represents for Joseph. These interpretations also reinforce the suggestion that the *ketonet passim* is a desirable garment, since it emphasises its power and agency that Joseph's brothers could access and use if only they had this garment. This interpretation begins to demonstrate the brothers' motivation not only for murdering Joseph, but also for laying their own hands on the *ketonet passim*.

5.4 The Thieving Brothers and the Desirable Garment

The brothers' actions in Genesis 37:23 mark a significant turning point in their relationship with the *ketonet passim*. Until this juncture, they have only gazed upon Joseph's garment, yet here, the brothers finally lay their hands on it: 'They stripped [Joseph] him of the כתנת, the *ketonet passim* that was on him.' The means by which the brothers acquire the *ketonet passim* is through violence.[713] Such violence is not particularly surprising since the biblical writers already indicate their violent behaviour through anticipatory nuances in the text: the intensification of brothers' hatred towards Joseph, and the link

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[713] For scholars that explicitly identify the brothers' actions of stripping as violent or aggressive, see Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:354; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 30; John R. Huddlestun, "Divestiture, Deception, and Demotion: The Garment Motif in Genesis 37–39," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 26, no. 4 (2002): 55. For a broader depiction of the violence of stripping in the Hebrew Bible, see Erin Kathleen Vearncombe, "What Would Jesus Wear? Dress in the Synoptic Gospels" (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Toronto, 2014), 141–142.

between their gaze on Joseph with the evil eye amongst other motifs indicate their growing aggression towards him.[714] However, until this point in the text the brothers' violence and hatred seems to be ineffective against Joseph. The stripping of the *ketonet passim* is more than just a means by which Joseph is humiliated. It marks the transformation of their material relationship, and thereby Joseph's relationship, with this garment, which can be seen to indicate a notable shift in the power struggle between Joseph and his brothers.

The Emotionally Driven Brothers

In biblical scholarship, there has been a tendency to assume that the brothers' actions in stripping Joseph were driven primarily by their emotional state. Their actions have been interpreted as a 'display of anger,' or suggested to be acted out of 'rage,' or an 'inner compulsion';[715] other scholars still have pointed to their 'state of mind' in describing these actions.[716] There is an extent to which one must acknowledge the biblical writers' emphatic depiction of the brothers' emotions.[717] However, despite the prominent imagery of emotion in the climatic build up to verses 23-24, the biblical writers do not explicitly stress the brothers' emotional state in relation to their actions against Joseph. It is possible that one of the reasons that the action of stripping has particularly singled out as an emotional response is due to its omission from the depiction of the brothers' plotting (vv.18-22). The act of throwing Joseph into the pit is explicitly mentioned prior to their performance, indicating that this action was premeditated, unlike the act of stripping, which is not explicitly mentioned.[718] However, it has been demonstrated that the brothers' actions in

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[714] See more on the intensification of the brothers' anger in the sections above.

[715] As has been suggested in Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 30. Gunkel, *Genesis*, 392. And, White, *Narration and Discourse in the Book of Genesis*, 250.

[716] Afsar, "Plot Motifs in Joseph/Yūsuf Story," 180; Arnold, *Genesis*, 320. For other scholars that emphasise the emotional state of the brothers in stripping Joseph, see Rad, *Genesis*, 348–349; Hartley, *Genesis*, 311.

[717] For further discussion on this see sections above, also see Becking, "They Hated Him Even More."

[718] Gunkel, *Genesis*, 392. Robert Alter notes upon this omission, Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 213.

stripping the *ketonet passim* is anticipated to some extent in the performative cues in this text. The observation that biblical scholars often seem to miss these cues again indicates the tendency for them to privilege dialogue – the verbal, the 'intellectual' - over materiality and performance in their interpretations.

These interpretations of the brothers' 'emotional' actions are also problematic since they make an implicit assumption that emotions are somehow incompatible with strategy.[719] The language used to identify their actions, as illustrated above, implies that the brothers' actions were uncalculated and/or beyond reason. This is notably similar to the suggestion that Israel was blinded by his love; instead, here it is the brothers who are thought to be blinded by their rage. These emotionally laden interpretations can only offer a limited perspective of the brothers' actions. Anthropological studies of violence have increasingly illustrated that violence is frequently instrumental and is a 'strategically developed, consciously adopted, goal orientated social tool.'[720] Saul Olyan proposes that insights from these studies could be employed in biblical scholarship in order to reconsider depictions of violence in the Hebrew Bible, shifting away from the tendency to allow emotions to dominate such discussions.[721] This enables us to rethink the biblical writers' use of violence to strategically reshape the imbalance of power in this text; this will also be developed by turning to look at the impact that the brothers' violence has on the social and material relationships in this text.

The biblical writers emphasise their employment of clothing imagery in the brothers' performance by depicting the stripping of Joseph as the very first

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[719] Saul Olyan argues a similar point in relation to interpretations of Ezra 9-10, identifying a broader tendency to over exaggerate the role of emotions in the biblical texts, Saul M. Olyan, "Theorizing Violence in Biblical Ritual Contexts: The Case of Mourning Rites," in *Social Theory and the Study of Israelite Religion: Essays in Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Saul M. Olyan, Social of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study 71 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 176–179.

[720] See Olyan's reference to anthropological theories on violence in Ibid., 171. David Riches examination of violence has been particularly influential in developing views on its efficacy and the relationships that are impacted through violent actions. David Riches, "The Phenomenon of Violence," in *The Anthropology of Violence* (Oxford; New York: Blackwell, 1986), 1–27.

[721] Olyan, "Theorizing Violence in Biblical Ritual Contexts."

action they take against him.[722] The sequence of the brothers' actions is unusual, since it would appear that Joseph is stripped before the brothers take hold of him, 'They stripped Joseph…they took him and threw him' (v.23-24).[723] Some scholarly discussions of this verse subtly reorder this sequence; for example, Ron Pirson states that 'they seize Joseph, take off his clothes and make him disappear into the pit.'[724] However, placing this act first was most likely intentional. Marc Bernstein argues that placing clothing imagery first is significant since 'in the focalization of this act the metonymic relationship between the tunic and Joseph is highlighted.'[725] This implies that the act of stripping is placed first in order to draw the reader's attention to its importance in the text. Bernstein's point also recognises that this text goes beyond the performance of stripping. Joseph is not merely stripped, he is emphatically deprived of the *ketonet passim*: 'and they stripped Joseph of the כתנת, the *ketonet passim* that was on him.'[726] Many scholars acknowledge the uncertainty that is often cast over this phrase and explain that it could be

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[722] MacLaurin, "Joseph and Asaph," 33; Bernstein, *Stories of Joseph*, 158; Arnold, *Genesis*, 320.

[723] Hirsch indicates the unusual ordering of this sequence, Hirsch, *The Pentateuch: Genesis*, 1:548.

[724] Pirson, *The Lord of the Dreams*, 68; Isaac, "Here Comes This Dreamer," 238. For other scholars that reorder the brothers' actions, see Hartley, *Genesis*, 311. Westermann and Wenham both appear to shift between the different orderings of this verse in his discussion, Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 40–41; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:359. Eric Lowenthal offers an alternative perspective, suggesting that the biblical writers' use of the causative form of 'פשט' here imply that brothers do not strip Joseph themselves, but rather force him to strip. This interpretation attempts to smooth over the somewhat jarring ordering of this passage, clarifying how the brothers can strip Joseph without first laying hands on him. Lowenthal, *The Joseph Narrative in Genesis*, 25. See also, Hirsch's suggestion that Joseph offers no resistance, Hirsch, *The Pentateuch: Genesis*, 1:548.

[725] Bernstein, *Stories of Joseph*, 158.

[726] This is suggested in Arnold, *Genesis*, 320. Note that the biblical writers' focus on Joseph's *ketonet passim* is overlooked within ancient Jewish interpretations of this verse. Instead, they suggest that the brothers removed the rest of his clothing, 'they took off his coat of many colors, his uppergarment, his breeches, and his shirt', Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, vol. 1 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1909), 13. Note that the addition of the garment can already be seen as an emphatic addition even without the additional detail of the *ketonet passim*, for more on the linguistic ambiguity of this phrase, see Mordechai Ben-Asher, "Causative Hip'il Verbs with Double Objects in Biblical Hebrew," *Hebrew Annual Review* 2 (1978): 12–13.

interpreted as a secondary interpolation into the text.[727] However, Gordon Wenham effectively indicates the significant literary purpose that it plays in this sequence:

> The succession of verbs – stripped, took, dumped, conveys the speed and roughness of the brothers' assault…[however] the unexpected expansiveness [demonstrated in verse 23] slows down the narrative for a moment and focuses on the piece of clothing that was the mark of his father's affection and the occasion of his brothers' hatred.[728]

This implies that even at the climatic point in this narrative, the continuing significance of the *ketonet passim* and its role in the text is accentuated.[729] The biblical writers' explicit focus on the *ketonet passim*, as the garment that was taken by the brothers, implies that their actions were more than simply an emotionally charged response. Rather, this specificity implies that the brothers targeted Joseph's *ketonet passim*, either to take for themselves the desirable garment and/or to heighten the damage that it would bring to Joseph. In either case the biblical writers' emphatic portrayal of the act of stripping Joseph's *ketonet passim* suggests that the brothers' actions were strategic and indicates that there is more to be considered regarding the role of this garment.

The Stripping of Joseph's power

Disempowered

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[727] Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 447; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 34; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:348; Afsar, "Plot Motifs in Joseph/Yūsuf Story," 180.

[728] Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:354. Note that Ayaz Afsar similarly suggests that this added phrase "emphasizes the role of clothing in Joseph's life," Afsar, "Plot Motifs in Joseph/Yūsuf Story," 180.

[729] A similar narrative expansion can be observed in 2 Samuel 13:18-19. Here the *ketonet passim*, although this time it refers to Tamar's garment, is depicted at a pivotal and climatic moment in the text. In this context it similarly draws attention to the significance of this motif and its impact on how one interprets her personhood and power in the text. A brief comparison between these verses is made in Afsar, "Plot Motifs in Joseph/Yūsuf Story," 180.

The biblical writers' portrayal of stripping Joseph's *ketonet passim* as the brothers' first action does more than serve to heighten the literary tension in this climatic scene, and draw attention to the *ketonet passim*'s significance in this text. Stripping Joseph first is an important stage in disempowering Joseph in order that the brothers are able to continue to take further actions against him. This suggestion can be seen to corroborate with a number of ancient West Asian texts in which the stripping or removal of clothing marks a turning point in a character's subsequent demise. For example, as Aldina Da Silva argues, in the Myth of Anzû 'c'est seulement quand le dieu Enlil, dépouillé de son manteau…que le dieu Anzû s'empare de la < Tablette-aux-destins.>'[730] This indicates that the removal of clothing is important in enabling Anzû's success in taking the Tablet of Destiny from Enlil. Similarly in Enūma Eliš, it is only after the god Ea strips off the god Apsû's crown/tiara in his sleep that he kills him. The text indicates that this garment manifests his strength since it reads, '[Ea] stripped off his tiara, he took away his [Apsû's] aura, he himself put it on (1:62-76).'[731] These texts point to the capacity for clothing to empower and disempower those who use it.

In the light of these texts, the depiction of the stripping of Joseph's *ketonet passim* demonstrates Joseph's disempowerment and consequently the brothers' empowerment through taking the *ketonet passim*. This would indicate that this is a necessary initial stage that effectively disarms Joseph, enabling the brothers' further actions against him. The biblical writers' explicit reference to the *ketonet passim* supports this interpretation. It has been demonstrated that the *ketonet passim* manifests significant power and ritual agency as Joseph's garment and an extended part of his personhood. While Joseph wears the *ketonet passim* he manifests the presence and authority of their father. Moreover, it has been suggested that the *ketonet passim* also has apotropaic power that protects Joseph. The brothers need to address this

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[730] 'It is only when the god Enlil strips his clothing that the god Anzû grabs the Tablet of Destiny', Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères*, 77. See also Da Silva's wider discussion in 76-80.
[731] Aldina da Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères* (Saint-Laurent, Québec: Fides, 1994), 77.

manifestation of his power and protection before they can touch Joseph.[732] It is important to acknowledge that while Joseph's loss of the *ketonet passim* connotes the loss of Israel's protection and power, it also implies the loss of his divine protection and power.[733] The shift in the power struggle between Joseph and his brothers, in which the brothers can be suggested to gain power, can also be demonstrated through considering other ways in which the act of stripping the *ketonet passim* impacts Joseph and his brothers.

Joseph Effeminised and Dehumanised

The violent performance of stripping Joseph emasculates and effeminises him. Stripping is one of the methods often employed to both humiliate and undermine an enemy's strength: in ancient West Asian texts and iconographic portrayals of warfare, captives and the dead are frequently depicted being stripped or naked.[734] It has also frequently been regarded as a method used to effeminise the victim, partly because women are often depicted as passive

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[732] Much of Joseph's power can be linked with his intimacy with Israel. In the biblical writers' construction of a geographic distance between Israel and his brothers, it has been observed that this journey also serves to distance Joseph from the protection and power of his father. This would imply that Joseph loses his fathers' power and protection through both his distance and his loss of the *ketonet passim*. Many scholars imply that the brothers' actions are enabled by Joseph's distance from his father's protection, Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 219; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 39–40; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:353; Cotter, *Genesis*, 274.

[733] MacLaurin suggests that Joseph's loss of the *ketonet passim* indicates the loss of his magical power and 'supernatural aura', MacLaurin, "Joseph and Asaph," 34. For associations made between the loss of the *ketonet passim* and losing power, see Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 304; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 31; Cotter, *Genesis*, 278. Cf. Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph*, 71.

[734] For further examples, see the discussion of stripping in Daniel L. Smith-Christopher, "Ezekiel in Abu Ghraib: Rereading Ezekiel 16:37-39 in the Context of Imperial Conquest," in *Ezekiel's Hierarchical World: Wrestling with a Tiered Reality*, ed. Stephen L. Cook and Corrine L. Patton, Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series 31 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2004), 144–148; T. M. Lemos, "Physical Violence and the Boundaries of Personhood in the Hebrew Bible," *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 2, no. 4 (2013): 500–531. Also see Olyan's discussion of the stripping of Saul and Jonathan's corpses in 1 Samuel 31:8-10, Saul M. Olyan, "The Instrumental Dimensions of Ritual Violence against Corpses in Biblical Texts," in *Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible: New Perspectives*, ed. Saul M. Olyan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 126–128.

and submissive, particularly in relation to their clothing.[735] The imagery of stripping is often associated with sexual humiliation or violation, since it is evocative of exposure, indicating an undermining of one's agency. The powerful imagery of stripping therefore can be seen to depict Joseph in an ultimate position of submission.[736] This is effectively indicated in Wendy Zierler's discussion,

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[735] The motif of effeminising one's enemy is frequently portrayed in the biblical texts, see further discussion in Carole R. Fontaine, "'Be Men, O Philistines' (1 Samuel 4:9): Iconographic Representations and Reflections on Female Gender as Disability in the Ancient World," in *This Abled Body: Rethinking Disabilities in Biblical Studies*, ed. Hector Avalos, Sarah J. Melcher, and Jeremy Schipper (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 61–72; T. M. Lemos, "'They Have Become Women': Judean Diaspora and Postcolonial Theories of Gender and Migration," in *Social Theory and the Study of Israelite Religion: Essays in Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Saul M. Olyan, Social of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study 71 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 81–109.

[736] It can be observed that the biblical writers frequently portray Joseph in an effeminate or gender ambiguous way. For example, some scholars have suggested that the *ketonet passim* implied a feminine garment, which was the major source of the brothers' hatred and anger, see Jennings, *Jacob's Wound*, 179–194. Also see Gaster, *Myth, Legend and Custom in the Old Testament*, 216; Robert Alter, "Literature," in *Reading Genesis: Ten Methods*, ed. Ronald Hendel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 23. For other discussions on the liminality or effeminacy of Joseph's gendered performance in the biblical texts, see Jennings, *Jacob's Wound*, 178–198; Carden, "Genesis/Bereshit," 52–59; Drinkwater, "Joseph's Fabulous Technicolor Dreamcoat."

The depiction of Joseph as effeminised does not always appear to connote the negative connotations that it does in relation to the brothers' actions. Nevertheless, it must be acknowledged that the biblical writers use a similar method to undermine Joseph's power and masculinity in Genesis 39:6-19, with relation to his interaction with Potiphar's wife. In this text Joseph loses his clothing again on account of Potiphar's wife, who grabs Joseph's garment in an act of supplication to persuade or overpower Joseph to sleep with her. Here, Joseph's masculinity is particularly threatened because he is depicted as being submissive to a woman, whose assumes a unconventionally masculine position by being the initiator and her advances and earlier in gazing on Joseph. However, one noticeable difference between the brothers' act of stripping and Potiphar's wife is that whilst Joseph is completely passive in relation to his brothers, in Genesis 39:8-12, is that Joseph is portrayed with more agency. In this depiction he refuses Potiphar's wife verbally (vv.8-9), and although Potiphar grabs his garment, it is Joseph that is depicted as leaving his garment in her hand and fleeing from her (vv. 9-10). For further debates on the associations made between these texts, see Furman, "His Story Versus Her Story: Male Genealogy and Female Strategy in the Jacob Cycle"; Alan Aycock, "Potiphar's Wife: Prelude to a Structural Exegesis," *Man, New Series* 7, no. 3 (1992): 485; Shalom Goldman, *The Wiles of Women/the Wiles of Men: Joseph and Potiphar's Wife in Ancient Near Eastern, Jewish, and Islamic Folklore* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995); Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 32; Huddlestun, "Divestiture, Deception, and Demotion," 55; Jennings, *Jacob's Wound*, 182, 186.

The brothers' eventual assault upon [Joseph] him consequently assumes a hyper-masculine violent quality. As if to fix him permanently in a feminized, dominated position, in ways that are reserved in the Bible for women, as in the case of femininely personified Zion in Ezekiel 23.[737]

This point elucidates on the impact that stripping Joseph has on the brothers as it implies that they are hyper-masculinised through this imagery. By developing a sense of Joseph's vulnerability and effeminate identity the juxtaposed imagery of brothers' dominance over Joseph in these actions is also intensified. The brothers' masculinity is demonstrated through their power over Joseph's body and control of the *ketonet passim*. The brothers' hyper-masculinity is also implied through their collective identity – it is a group of men that is committing violence against an individual; this is similar to the depiction of violence in Ezekiel 23 alluded to above. As suggested previously, the brothers' power is be accentuated through their group dynamic, in this depiction of their act in collectively stripping Joseph of the *ketonet passim* their power is exaggerated even more.

The act of stripping is also a powerful tool in the act of 'dehumanising' a person. It is a method often employed in contexts of torture, in order to humiliate to degrade, rendering a victim less than human.[738] This suggestion is effectively demonstrated in Kate Soper's discussion of the clothed body and one's selfhood,

> To force strip the victim is to initiate the process of dehumanisation, to
> signal contempt for personal identity by playing with or mocking the

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[737] Wendy Zierler, "Joseph(ine), the Singer: The Queer Joseph and Modern Jewish Writers," *Nashim: A Journal of Jewish Women's Studies & Gender Issues* 24, no. Spring (2013): 101. For a more in-depth discussion of the emasculation and effeminisation of Ezekiel and the depiction of Jerusalem in Ezekiel 16 and 23, see Smith-Christopher, "Ezekiel in Abu Ghraib"; Lemos, "They Have Become Women," 99–102.

[738] For example, the stripping prisoners of war at Abu Ghraib, in which victims were not only forced to strip, but were also captured being treated as animals. Soper also gives an example of the use of stripping in the holocaust to dehumanise Jewish prisoners, Kate Soper, "Dress Needs: Reflections on the Clothed Body, Selfhood and Consumption," in *Body Dressing*, ed. Joanne Entwistle and Elizabeth Wilson (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 21.

aspiration to preserve it. The power of denuding the other in these contexts is also the power to depersonalise the other's clothing.[739]

This stresses that such is the significance of clothing, or the right to be clothed, that its removal is analogous to losing something of one's personhood and humanity. Given this interpretation of the implications of acts of stripping, we might be able further elucidate and emphasise our examination of the impact that the brothers' actions have on Joseph. It would develop the view that the brothers' actions in taking the *ketonet passim* from him through these actions of violence damage Joseph's personhood and infringe on his agency. These suggestions reiterate the importance that clothing has in constructing Joseph's identity, it can be seen how its removal is tantamount to destroying or transforming both his personhood and something of his humanity.

Passivity

The portrayal of Joseph's disempowerment, effeminization, and his dehumanisation through being stripped of the *ketonet passim* are all also emphasised by the absence of Joseph's physical reaction or protest towards the brothers' actions – he is completely passive.[740] As suggested previously, the biblical writers do not ascribe any emotions to him as they do to Israel and his brothers.[741] The little agency that is ascribed to Joseph through his dream telling (vv. 5-9) and his willingness to set off on a journey to meet his brothers (vv. 13-17), can be seen to be stripped from him through the brothers' actions (vv. 23-24). David Cotter explicitly links this lack of agency with his loss of the *ketonet passim*, 'Joseph is completely identified with his ornamented tunic,

[739] Ibid.

[740] Hirsch, *The Pentateuch: Genesis*, 1:548; Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation*, 49; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 41; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:354; Wénin, "La Tunique Ensanglantée de Joseph," 410; Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang*, 99. Adele Berlin also identifies that Joseph's passivity in the broader context in Genesis 37 arguing Joseph's "perceptual point of view," unlike Israel and his brothers, is never given. She stresses that "he is made to be an object in every scene," Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation*, 49–50. Further observations of Joseph's passivity in the larger Joseph story noted in Jacobs, "The Conceptual Dynamics of Good and Evil in the Joseph Story," 313.

[741] Pirson, *The Lord of the Dreams*, 37.

and when it is taken from him he becomes a speechless prop.'[742] The omission of Joseph's response (vv. 23-24) does not only construct his identity as a speechless character, as Cotter suggests, he is also rendered inanimate and unmoving through this depiction.

The portrayal of Joseph's passivity in this text is compared with the brothers' recapitulation of these events in Genesis 42:21, 'We saw the distress of his נפש when he pleaded with us, but we did not listen.'[743] The biblical writers use material performance to imply the position of power dynamics in these texts. In Genesis 42:21 Joseph is afforded some agency, since the biblical writers indicate that he responds to the brothers actions. It has been suggested that the reference to Joseph's response has its own purpose within the context of Joseph's reunion with his brothers.[744] In this text it is clear that Joseph is in a position of dominance, which is indicated even in this nuanced portrayal of Joseph's pleas. By comparison the absence of this performance in 37:23-24 can be seen to play an important purpose in underlining the biblical writers' depiction of his utter lack of agency.

Ritual Violence and Inversion

The brothers' violence against Joseph and their actions in stripping and taking the *ketonet passim* can be interpreted as a performance of ritual violence. Saul Olyan has notably elucidated on this subject and expanded the scope of its exploration in biblical scholarship. He argues that ritual violence is 'characterized by distinct features of ritual behavior, such as the manipulation,

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[742] Cotter, *Genesis*, 278.

[743] The difference in these depictions of Joseph's role has been noted in Hirsch, *The Pentateuch: Genesis*, 1:548; Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation*, 50; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 41; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:354. Note that the term 'נפש' is often interpreted as 'soul' or 'flesh,' however, I argue that these interpretations are somewhat anachronistic, therefore, I will leave this term in its Hebrew form. For a fuller discussion on the complexities of this term in the biblical texts, see Richard C. Steiner, *Disembodied Souls: The Nefesh in Israel and Kindred Spirits in the Ancient Near East, with an Appendix on the Katumuwa Inscription*, Ancient Near East Monographs 11 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2015).

[744] Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 41; David A. Bosworth, "Weeping in Recognition Scenes in Genesis and the Odyssey," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 77, no. 4 (2015): 625.

including the inversion, of other ritualized and non-ritualized practices.'[745] Olyan also develops his conception of ritual violence by recognising the role that it plays in redefining social relationships. He argues that it has 'the potential to establish new relationships between individuals or polities, just as they might terminate or perpetuate existing ties.'[746] The act of stripping the *ketonet passim* from Joseph can arguably be placed in this category of ritual violence, since it arguably inverts a number of ritualised activities as well as undermining Joseph's own ritual personhood. Olyan's discussion is a useful reference point in elucidating the presence examination of stripping since it acknowledges the transformative impact of performance in the construction of social, and to some extent material, relationships. It will be argued that the *ketonet passim* is central to how one can understand the impact of the brothers' ritualised violence in this text.

Giving vs. Stealing

Much of the scholarly discussion of the brothers' act of stripping has centred on its function to humiliate Joseph. Without wishing to detract from this important aspect of the narrative, the stripping of the *ketonet passim* may also be understood as an act that inverts aspects of gift-giving rituals through essentially stealing or taking this garment. Robert Reford suggests that the root 'טפש' holds connotations of theft; elsewhere he refers to it as a 'robbery.'[747] Indeed, this Hebrew root is frequently used in contexts that could also be suggested to imply elements of theft or capture.[748] However, the suggestion that the brothers' stripping also implies 'taking' should not be assumed to undermine the violence of these actions against Joseph, but rather enrich this portrayal. Recognising this inversion is useful, for it enables a more nuanced interpretation of the performativity and significance of the

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[745] Saul M. Olyan, "Introduction: Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible," in *Ritual Violence in the Hebrew Bible: New Perspectives*, ed. Saul M. Olyan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 3.

[746] Ibid., 4.

[747] Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph*, 143.

[748] For example, stripping of the dead in 1 Samuel 31:8 and 2 Samuel 23:10, its connection with raiding in 1 Samuel 27:8, 10; 30:1, 14, and its association with 'לקח', to take or to capture, in Ezekiel 16:39 and 23:26.

ketonet passim in redefining relationships in this text. Such details may be better considered in juxtaposition to a number of examples of gift-giving in the Hebrew Bible that include an initial depiction of the removal of garments.

There are two texts that are particularly relevant to this discussion. First, in Genesis 41:41-45 Pharaoh appoints Joseph as his second-in-command over Egypt. This is indicated by a number of transformations in Joseph's personhood. Aspects of these changes include the removal of clothing or jewellery that is then given to Joseph: 'And Pharaoh took off his ring [תטבע] from on his hand and he put it on Joseph's hand' (Genesis 41:42). The second example occurs in 1 Samuel 18: 3-4: Jonathan, the son of King Saul, is depicted removing and giving his clothing to David, who is later to become king, 'Jonathan cut a covenant with David for his love for him was as his own נפש. And Jonathan stripped himself of his 'מעיל' that was on him and he gave it to David.' Both these texts depict a voluntary removal and passing of clothing from one person to another in a ritually potent context. Like the allusion to Israel's act of giving to Joseph (Genesis 37:3), these texts highlight the contrasting portrayal of the violent and non-consensual nature of the brothers' actions in stripping and stealing Joseph's *ketonet passim*.

The biblical writers emphasise the corporeality of the performance of removing clothing in these texts by explicitly positioning these actions in direct relation to the body. In Genesis 42:41, Pharaoh removes his ring 'from on his hand' (מעל ידו); Jonathan strips himself of the clothing that was 'on him' (עליו). These actions are similar to the depiction of the *ketonet passim* being stripped from on Joseph, 'on him' (עליו) (Genesis 37:23). The physical intimacy that it is shared between giver and gift through this imagery emphasises the union that is formed through this act – akin in many ways to the close relationship constructed between Israel and the *ketonet passim* as its artisan. This intimacy is signalled in the portrayal of the gift as a part of the giver's personhood and an extension of their body and power, as argued in the previous chapter. The initial act of removal reinforces the suggestion that gift-giving implies a giving of one's own personhood, and is suggestive of the

extension of their personhood through the sharing of power with another person through a shared object.

This association between the materiality of garments, the body, and personhood might also suggest the givers' voluntary vulnerability, since they remove from themselves garments or jewellery that manifest both their personhood and power. Indeed, many biblical scholars have particularly related Jonathan's removal of clothing or regalia with the loss of his position as King Saul's successor, indicating that this act implies a self-disempowerment.[749] The ring, or signet ring, Pharaoh takes off his hand can also be identified as an object that particularly manifests his authority and presence. Although most scholars do not associate this act as a loss of his power, it still implies an extension and the entrustment of his authority and personhood to Joseph.[750] This self-exposure or vulnerability suggests a position of trust or intimacy between the giver and recipient through the act of giving.

By contrast, in Genesis 37:23, the biblical writers manipulate the language of intimacy to emphasise that the brothers' actions imply a rupturing of Joseph's personhood. Unlike the examples in which the removal of clothes is voluntary, the depiction of Joseph being separated from his *ketonet passim* indicates an undermining of his relationship with the *ketonet passim* and a breaking of relationship with the 'recipients' or 'thieves' of his clothing. The enforced exposure and vulnerability that is implied in the act of stripping Joseph suggests an undermining of trust, rather than its construction. By considering the brothers' action as an inversion of gift-giving or investiture, particularly in

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[749] Note that the removal of regalia in 1 Samuel 18 has been interpreted in other ways, for example see debates on the sexual connotations of these actions in Ora Horn Prouser, "Suited to the Throne: The Symbolic Use of Clothing in the David and Saul Narratives," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, no. 71 (1996): 27–37; Yaron Peleg, "Love at First Sight? David, Jonathan and the Biblical Politics of Gender," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 30, no. 2 (2005): 171–89; Jonathan Rowe, "Is Jonathan Really David's Wife? A Response to Yaron Peleg," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 34, no. 2 (2009): 183–93.

[750] Archaeological evidence of signet rings is often imprinted with names or images that has been suggested to indicate the names of its bearer, or its authority, see the discussion on seals in my iconographic chapter. Such an interpretation is implied in the depiction of a signet ring in Esther 8:2, 8.

the light of the discussion of gift-giving in this thesis, it is possible to highlight the impact that the performance of stripping and 'stealing' the *ketonet passim* has on the relationships between Joseph, Israel and his brothers.[751]

The depiction of stripping and taking, as an inversion of removing and giving, implies a destruction of the relationship that is constructed between Israel and Joseph in the initial giving of the *ketonet passim*. Joseph is separated from the *ketonet passim* that manifests his intimacy with his father, thereby indicating his material separation from Israel. He is also effectively stripped of his identity as Israel's beloved son an identity that was constructed through the *ketonet passim*. The biblical writers' portrayal of the brothers also indicates a violent manipulation of gift-giving rituals in order to terminate any remaining affiliation that they have with Joseph. Viewed in this way, their performance could be interpreted as the ultimate act of disowning Joseph as their brother and as part of the family.

Indeed, the depiction of the brothers stealing or taking the *ketonet passim* may also imply a transformation of their relationship with Israel. André Wénin suggests that Joseph's brothers desire their father's love and favour and argues that their actions with the *ketonet passim* represent an attempt to remove Joseph from the picture in the hope that they will be reconciled with the father.[752] Whilst this reading is somewhat imaginative in its elucidation of the brothers' purpose, it does point to the possibility that the *ketonet passim* is depicted as a desirable garment that manifests intimacy with the father as well as extending his authority. Taking this garment would implicitly suggest that the brothers could access or reconfigure this intimacy with Israel and

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[751] See section 4.3 on my development of the performance of gift-giving.

[752] This is similar to the suggestion that Joseph is sacrificed in order to resolve the disorder Joseph's presence creates as well as resolving the tensions and conflict within the family. This is argued in René Girard's outdated theory of sacrifice, René Girard, *The Girard Reader*, ed. James G. Williams (New York: Crossroad, 1996), 151–152. This interpretation is problematic since it employs the use of a very limited conception of sacrifice that seems to be uncritically imposed on examples of sacrifice, such as here in Genesis 37. For a more in-depth critique of traditional sacrificial theories in association with the biblical texts, particularly addressing the problems of ethnocentrism in these theories, see Jonathan Klawans, *Purity, Sacrifice, and the Temple: Symbolism and Supersessionism in the Study of Ancient Judaism* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 18–49.

construct a new relationship with him through their acquisition of the *ketonet passim*.[753] The brothers can be seen to usurp Joseph's position by employing the *ketonet passim* to become Israel's beloved sons, and perhaps even assume his ritual power and construct for themselves a new destiny. At the very least, it could be suggested that the depiction of stripping and taking implies a restructuring of relationships in which the brothers assert their power over that of Joseph and their father.

The violent action of stripping appears to indicate the brothers' disregard for Israel's power and their relationship with him. In addition to the impact the brothers' violence can be seen to have on Joseph, their actions undermine Jacob's masculinity and power, since he fails to protect Joseph, his beloved son, from their violence. This is most evident in the portrayal of Joseph in an effeminate position when his brothers strip him. There are frequent biblical examples in which a man's masculinity and power is compromised through his inability to protect the women under his care.[754] For example, in the wider text of Genesis the biblical writers' have already used this imagery to threaten and undermine Jacob/Israel's power: Reuben challenges Jacob's position by sleeping with his concubine (Genesis 35:22); moreover, his daughter, Dinah is raped (Genesis 34:1-7). Whilst Joseph is not Israel's daughter, the depiction of Joseph in a way that is comparable to the stripping and assault of women indicates that yet that Israel's own masculinity and power is undermined once more through the brothers' actions (Genesis 37:23-24). This depiction would imply that rather than trying to re-establish a relationship with Israel, the brothers assert their masculinity over Jacob's, destabilising his position as *pater familias*.

Inverting Joseph's Ritual Personhood and 'Disabling' the Ritual Garment

It is important not to overlook the ritual potency of the *ketonet passim* in considering the brothers' actions in stripping it from Joseph. The stripping and

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[753] The implications of taking the *ketonet passim* will be considered in further depth below.
[754] See examples of this challenge to King's David's masculinity in 1 Samuel 30, 2 Samuel 16:20-22.

stealing of the garment that Joseph uses as a tool for his divination and ritual practice can be taken to imply an undermining of his personhood as a ritual specialist. The brothers' violence against Joseph's ritual status can be developed and supported by considering the act of stripping in wider context of the brothers' actions in taking Joseph and throwing him into a pit (Genesis 37:23-24). This will allow us to reflect on the fuller picture of the ritual imagery that is employed in this short sequence. The biblical writers suggest that the pit into which Joseph is thrown is in the wilderness - well known as a motif of ritually potent and liminal space in the Hebrew Bible.[755] The pit (בור) itself can be understood as a threshold or gateway to the underworld.[756] This employment of ritually charged imagery not only supports the suggestion that the stripping of the *ketonet passim* has ritual connotations, it also can be seen to reiterate the ritual significance that the *ketonet passim* has had in protecting and empowering Joseph's ritual performances earlier in this text (Genesis 37:3-9, 18).

The biblical writers employ the imagery of loss and descent to imply a reversal or inversion of the imagery that is indicated in Joseph's dreams. The dreams (vv. 7-10) evoke the imagery of life and ascent. His second dream particularly evokes the imagery of otherworldliness, indicating he is higher than cosmological and divine forces.[757] Indeed, Israel and Joseph's brothers interpret these dreams to mean that Joseph shall rule over them (vv. 8, 10). This ascent language is then dramatically juxtaposed with Joseph's ritual humiliation and descent into the pit – into the underworld. Many scholars have acknowledged the imagery of death in these verses. Joseph's descent into the pit has also been identified as a depiction of his symbolic or literary death.[758] This might suggest that in some ways the brothers do succeed in

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[755] For more on the wilderness motif, see discussions in my case studies on the *adderet*.

[756] As suggested in Philip S. Johnston, *Shades of Sheol: Death and Afterlife in the Old Testament* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2002), 69–81.

[757] On this imagery see further discussion in McKay, "Dreams Had Recounted and Interpreted."; Corey, "Dreaming of Droughts." See similar imagery of ritual ascent and later descent imagery in Isaiah 14:12-15.

[758] Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères*, 76–78, 80–82; Isaac, "Here Comes This Dreamer," 239–244; Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang*, 99.

'killing' Joseph. Some scholars do indeed associate Joseph's loss of the *ketonet passim* with this death imagery, indicating that the loss of clothing often corresponds with death, since it has been acknowledged that it is an integral part of the sociality of living.[759] The separation of Joseph from his ritual garment that enables him to have dreams relating to life, power, and ritual ascent is therefore an essential part of the brothers' destruction and reversal of these dreams.[760]

The portrayal of Joseph's *ketonet passim* as a ritual device may also indicate that Joseph is enabled to cross into the otherworldly realms portrayed in his dreams. Ritual specialists are often depicted crossing thresholds into sacred spaces and otherworldly realms, their ritual power can be suggested to make them liminal agents that are able to cross over these otherworldly and dangerous thresholds.[761] However, in the depiction of such a ritual journey in Genesis 37:23-24 is subverted in its violent enforcement.[762] It suggests that Joseph is forced to cross into the liminal threshold having been stripped of the *ketonet passim* which manifests part of his ritual personhood and power. This implies the subjugation of Joseph's ritual personhood.

The connection between the brothers' actions of stripping and Joseph's descent into the underworld in Genesis 37:23-24 is supported by a number of ancient West Asian ritual texts in which the participant's clothing is removed in

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[759] Scholars that associate the loss of the *ketonet passim* with death, Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères*, 76–78, 80–82; Vearncombe, "What Would Jesus Wear?," 134. Note, however, that these scholars make this point based on an assumption that Joseph is naked, which is not sufficiently supported in the text. However, the forced removal of clothing still evokes similar connotations as those often associated with nudity. It is sometimes suggested that Joseph is naked, see Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, Volume 1:13; Jennings, *Jacob's Wound*, 182.

[760] As suggested in Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères*, 82–86.

[761] For more on the ritual crossing of otherworldly boundaries, see my examination of the performance *adderet* in my next case study.

[762] A comparison can be observed between this text and Numbers 20:23-29, in which the priest, Aaron, is stripped of his garments which are then put on his son before he dies. There are similar aspects of ritual in this text, his journey up the mountain, another ritually potent, liminal space and the depiction of his death in this ritual space, after he is stripped of his clothing, which may also be suggested to protect him.

order to ritually descend or to gain access to the underworld. For example, one Sumerian text portrays the goddess Inanna (later Ištar) ritually descending into the underworld in order to observe her brother-in-law's funeral rites. Inanna accesses the underworld by having her clothing removed layer by layer in order to pass through each gateway.[763] Here, the removal of clothing indicates a means of crossing boundaries and thresholds. As Inanna strips her clothing, she loses her power until she becomes like a corpse – a state of death suggested by Joseph's fate. Inanna's stripping does not indicate her degradation, but rather, as Zainab Bahrani comments, 'a symbolic preparation for entry into the underworld.'[764]

These comparisons effectively illustrate how the biblical writers employ the language and imagery of ritual violence in order to accentuate the extent of Joseph's descent and isolation, both within his family and as a ritual specialist. This functions to create a greater juxtaposition and sense of irony when Joseph later ascends to his position in the Egyptian kingdom (Genesis 41:41-45) and the brothers' submission before him (Genesis 42:6), in facing death, in which the power dynamics are reversed once again.

However, in the present context of Genesis 37 it is made clear that the brothers are portrayed as both dominant and powerful through these actions. It is not until much later in the Joseph narrative that Joseph appears to regain his power. Still, I would contend that he still maintains some power through the agency of the *ketonet passim* that continues to play a significant role in the remainder of Genesis 37. It is important to consider how the biblical

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[763] For scholars that suggest allusion between Joseph's descent and this text, see Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères*; Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 31; Vearncombe, "What Would Jesus Wear?," 13–15. For more on Innana/Ištar's descent, see Giorgio Buccellati, "The Descent of Inanna as a Ritual Journey to Kutha?," *Syro-Mesopotamian Studies* 4, no. 3 (1982): 3–7. Isaac suggests another example of a ritual descent that includes the removal of clothing, suggesting that the ritual elements in Joseph's symbolic echoes the Neo Assyro-Babylonian Akitu ritual in which the king is divested of his insignia and clothing and is ritually humiliated. The king later emerges and is reinvested, this is similar to the depiction of Joseph being lifted out of the pit and his eventual elevation in the Egyptian kingdom (Genesis 41), Isaac, "Here Comes This Dreamer," 239–241.
[764] Zainab Bahrani, "The Iconography of the Nude in Mesopotamia," *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 12, no. 2 (January 1, 1993): 16.

writers employ the *ketonet passim* as an effective means of undermining the brothers' success - even when Joseph is in many ways written out of this text.

5.5 Fashioning Fratricide

In Genesis 37:31 the brothers finally take Joseph's powerful garment for themselves. However, it can be suggested that they are unable to harness its power in its present material form. The collective group of brothers cannot wear this garment as Joseph did to become Israel's beloved sons. The *ketonet passim* continues to be depicted as Joseph's garment (vv. 31-32). Nevertheless, the brothers can be seen to take advantage of the intimate relationships that are manifested in this garment between Israel and Joseph by using it to further undermine Israel and Joseph and their relationship through their actions with the *ketonet passim*. This is achieved through their transformation of the *ketonet passim*'s materiality. Through these actions this garment becomes the tool that enables them to deceive their father.

Transforming the Ketonet Passim's Materiality

The brothers act to permanently transform the materiality of Joseph's *ketonet passim* through their use of blood: 'and they took Joseph's כתנת, slaughtered a young goat, and dipped the כתנת in the blood' (v. 31) and also by implicitly tearing it (v. 33). These actions indicate the destruction (or reconstruction) of the *ketonet passim*'s materiality, its power, and the relationships it manifests. The permanence of these actions suggests that the *ketonet passim* can no longer be used as it once was by Joseph or by anyone else – its original function as a garment is in a sense destroyed.[765] It might be assumed that the *ketonet passim* is rendered powerless through the brothers' destruction. However, the employment of the *ketonet passim* to instigate change continues in this text, this implies that it does not lose its agency as a potent object through the brothers' actions. This effectively illustrates the suggestion made earlier that the material properties of an object that are transformed

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[765] For the suggestion that the use of blood changes the materiality, namely the *ketonet passim*'s colour, see Manfred Görg, "Der Gefärbte Rock Josefs," *Biblische Notizen* 102 (2000): 12.

over time or through intentional modifications which enable an object to have agency and power in a different way.[766] Thus, whilst in one sense the brothers' actions can be understood as a destruction of the *ketonet passim* and its agency, in another sense it is being remade for a new purpose.[767] It is important to consider how and for what purpose the brothers' material modifications impact the *ketonet passim*'s agency in order to elucidate on its wider role in Genesis 37.

The Ketonet Passim: Bloodied

The brothers' staining of the *ketonet passim* with blood evidently has a practical function– it acts as a substitution for Joseph's blood in order to deceive their father. However, it is important to recognise that it is not just a substitute for blood, but that it *is* blood that is used.[768] In the Hebrew Bible, blood as a material substance has material potency in and of itself. When it is in the body, blood is a person's life force – the source of life itself, according to Pamela Barmash.[769] Barmash insightfully challenges scholarly assumptions that blood is simply a symbol for life, instead arguing that it is the materiality of blood in the biblical depictions that is significant: implying that 'blood contains human and animal life in a concrete sense…it has corporeality.'[770] This, she suggests, is one of the reasons why the biblical writers prohibit the eating of blood (Leviticus 7:26-27; 17:10-14), because it is life.[771]

Blood has liminality particularly in its depiction in the Hebrew Bible. When blood is lost or found outside the body, such as on the *ketonet passim*, it similarly manifests life force; however, in this context it is also powerful in

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[766] Refer back to section 1.4.
[767] Matthews indicates that the *ketonet passim* gains a new importance as evidence of Joseph's death, Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 31.
[768] Louis Ginzberg suggests that in ancient Jewish interpretations of this text the goat's blood was chosen because it was considered to be most like human's blood, Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, Volume 1:25.
[769] Pamela Barmash, *Homicide in the Biblical World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 96.
[770] Ibid.
[771] Ibid.

another sense, since it simultaneously manifests death.[772] Its employment in the Hebrew Bible is seemingly paradoxical, since it is both depicted as a purifier and as a powerful pollutant.[773] Given its efficacy, blood can be employed as an effective tool, yet, if not contained or dealt with appropriately it is a potentially dangerous substance. The portrayal of blood in Genesis 37 can be seen to corroborate this interpretation.

The biblical writers hint at the potency and danger of blood in Genesis 37. This is illustrated through the repeated insistence that the brothers should not just refrain from killing Joseph, but also that they should not spill his blood; Reuben stresses that they should "'not shed blood'" (v. 22) and Judah also challenges, "'What is the profit for us to kill our brother and conceal his blood?'" (v. 26).[774] The problem of the brothers' blood spilling is reinforced again later in the Joseph narrative, when Reuben speaks to the brothers before Joseph in Egypt: "'Did I not speak to you saying do not sin against the boy? But you did not listen and now behold his blood is required'" (Genesis 42:22). These verses have often been taken as indicative of the problems of covering up sin and fear of the consequence if discovered. These references also hint at the power of blood as one's life force by implying that the spilling of it has repercussions. This lays the foundation for the depiction of the brothers' use of blood in verse 31. Dipping the *ketonet passim* in blood completely transforms the *ketonet passim*'s materiality and its potency as an object.[775]

Blood is frequently employed in ritual contexts, most likely because of the inherent potency of its materiality. Genesis 37:31, read together with verses 23-24, particularly lends itself to an association with ritual and sacrificial

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[772] Wénin, "La Tunique Ensanglantée de Joseph," 409.

[773] See a full discussion of its uses as a pollutant and a purifier in Barmash, *Homicide in the Biblical World*, 94–115.

[774] The concern with spilling blood may be derived from the depiction of Cain being unable to conceal his actions, because Abel's spilled blood cried out to Yahweh from the ground (Genesis 4:10), as suggested in Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 421. This association is also implied in Rad, *Genesis*, 348; Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 213. Furthermore, see prohibitions against eating blood or spilling human blood in Genesis 9:4-6.

[775] Briefly implied in MacLaurin, "Joseph and Asaph," 33.

imagery. The biblical writers' use of goat's blood in verses 23-24 particularly evokes the imagery of sacrifice. Indeed, in the Hebrew Bible, goats are used as sacrifices, and more specifically sacrifices for sin offerings.[776] There has been a tendency for scholars to align the brothers' actions with a number of specific sacrificial rituals portrayed in other ancient Jewish texts and contemporary interpretations. For example, the book of Jubilees identifies the brothers' actions against Joseph as the foundational reason for the tradition of the Day of Atonement (Book of Jubilees 34:11-19), which also employs the use of goat's blood.[777] Here a dichotomy is constructed between the brothers' use of blood to deceive and the ritual use of blood to cleanse or make atonement.[778] Whilst it is difficult to establish any substantial connection between these two specific rituals, its association with these rituals does illuminate an interesting juxtaposition between the contradictory nature of blood in the biblical texts that is worth further consideration.

The biblical writers most likely play on the double meaning of blood, as both a purifier and a pollutant, in order to construct another instance of ritual violence. In doing so, they can be seen to nullify the *ketonet passim*'s original function and thereby, also undermine their father's role of construction and the purpose for which he made this garment. The depiction of blood as a purifier

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[776] For example in Leviticus 4:23-24, 28; 5:6; 7:23; 16. See my brief examination of Genesis 27 for more on the role of animal skins in ritual performance. Animal skins, like blood, also can be seen to manifest the essence of both life and death, implying its potency that lends itself to being used in ritual contexts.

[777] See also, Leviticus 16:3-10; 23:26-32; Numbers 29:7-11. The writer of the Book of Jubilees most likely drew their interpretation from the use of the brothers' names as eponyms of the tribes of Israel. Scholarly interpretations that make associations between the brothers' actions and the Day of Atonement, Ilona N. Rashkow, *Taboo or Not Taboo: Sexuality and Family in the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2000), 40; Mary Douglas, *Jacob's Tears: The Priestly Work of Reconciliation* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 40; Wénin, "La Tunique Ensanglantée de Joseph," 408.

[778] The biblical writers' depiction of the brothers' actions against Joseph have also been associated with the ritual of the red heifer (Numbers 19), Joseph is identified with goat that is sent into the wilderness, whereas the slaughtered goat is likened to the goat that is sacrificed to atone for Israel's sins, Calum Carmichael, "The Origin of the Scapegoat Ritual," *Vetus Testamentum* 50, no. 2 (2000): 169–174; Rashkow, *Taboo or Not Taboo*, 40; Gershon Hepner, *Legal Friction: Law, Narrative, and Identity Politics in Biblical Israel*, Studies in Biblical Literature, v. 78 (New York: Peter Lang, 2010), 533–535. Such allusions have been critically discussed in Douglas, *Jacob's Tears*, 40–60.

in the Hebrew Bible is not only associated with people. In the rituals portrayed in Exodus 29:30-31 and Leviticus 8:30-31, blood sprinkled on the priest's ritual garments in order to sanctify or purify them. However, in Genesis 37, the imagery of the *ketonet passim* being dipped in goat's blood is not easily compatible with this depiction of purification. Instead, the biblical writers' use of blood here seems to suggest that it is used to pollute rather than purify Joseph's ritual garment. The ritual use of blood is therefore inverted through the brothers' manipulation of this garment to deceive, which consequently can be identified as ritual violence against Israel and also against the *ketonet passim*'s ritual function.

By interpreting the biblical writers' use of blood as a pollutant, it is possible to further elucidate its potent new function to deceive Israel. The act of dipping this ritual garment in blood could be suggested to desecrate the *ketonet passim*'s ritual potency as a tool used in divination – a process by which divine 'truths' are revealed. There are many examples of the desecration of ritual spaces and objects in the Hebrew Bible that have been identified as acts of ritual violence that invert the original ritual function of that object. An effective although somewhat exaggerated example is Josiah's use of human bones that are burnt on altars in order to defile it (2 Kings 23:16).[779] The polluting of the *ketonet passim* could also function to prevent Israel using the *ketonet passim* to divine and discover the brothers' deception. This suggests that the *ketonet passim*'s material transformation through dipping it in blood was necessary for the success of the brothers' deception.[780]

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[779] See discussions on this example in Saul M. Olyan, "Ritual Inversion in Biblical Representations of Punitive Rites," in *Women and War: Essays in Honor of Susan Niditch*, ed. J. J. Collins (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2015), 136–139. Like blood, human bones seem to have the potential to become sacred or be used as a pollutant.

[780] This is particularly interesting in light of the Islamic portrayal of the Joseph story (12:93-96), M. A. S. Abdel Haleem, trans., *The Qur'an*, Reprint with Corrections (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010). It has been suggested in this version the author purposefully omits aspects of Israel's deception in this text. The brothers bring Joseph's garment to Israel, but Israel is not deceived by this gesture. It can be observed that this garment is not bloodied which would imply that this author considered blood to be an important factor in securing the success of the brothers' actions. Garments in Islamic version of the Joseph story appear to more evidently have a prophetic or magical function: Israel is able to discern from Joseph's garment

The Ketonet Passim: Torn

Many assume that Joseph's brothers tear the *ketonet passim*, either through the act of stripping and tearing it from Joseph, or intentionally, in order to strengthen the validity of their deception.[781] The vivid imagery that is used to capture Israel's recognition of his son's death strongly implies that the *ketonet passim* has been torn: 'Surely Joseph has been torn into pieces' (v. 33). This is particularly emphasised by the infinitive followed by the passive imperfect form of the same root, 'טרוף טורף.' This construction indicates the certainty of Israel's conviction that Joseph has been torn, a conclusion that likely arises from the materiality of the *ketonet passim* itself. This phrase heightens the irony of Jacob's misinterpretation of the garment, but also points to the potency of the modified *ketonet passim* in convincing Israel of Joseph's death. The implicit act of tearing of the *ketonet passim* also transforms its agency. This is supported by the suggestion that the tearing of clothing in other biblical contexts, such as in mourning rituals, has a transformative impact on its wearer.[782] In the context of Genesis 37 this implicit tearing seems to manifest

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the brothers' deception. Moreover, later Joseph sends Israel a garment as evidence of his identity, when Israel touches his eyes with the garment his prophetic vision is restored to him. For further discussion on the use of clothing in the Islamic version of the Joseph story, see Lori Hope Lefkovitz, "Passing as a Man: Narratives of Jewish Gender Performance," *Narrative* 10, no. 1 (2002): 94; David M. Freidenreich, "The Use of Islamic Sources in Saadiah Gaon's Tafsr of the Torah," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 93, no. 3–4 (2003): 382–383; Afsar, "Plot Motifs in Joseph/Yūsuf Story," 181–182, 185.

[781] It has been suggested in ancient Jewish and contemporary biblical scholarship that the brothers purposefully tear the *ketonet passim* in order to make it effectively evidence that Joseph was torn apart by a beast, Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, Volume 1:25; Redford, *A Study of the Biblical Story of Joseph*, 29; Lowenthal, *The Joseph Narrative in Genesis*, 29; Sicker, *Jacob and His Sons: The End of the Patriarchal Era*, 26.
Others scholars are less specific, not clearly suggesting whether the *ketonet passim* was torn in the brothers' actions of stripping or later torn in order to corroborate with their deception, Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 305; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 43; Regina M. Schwartz, "Joseph's Bones and the Resurrection of the Text: Remembering in the Bible" PMLA 103, no. 2 (1988): 116; Silva, *La symbolique des rêves et des vêtements dans l'histoire de Joseph et de ses frères*, 775; Huddlestun, "Divestiture, Deception, and Demotion," 56.

[782] As suggested in U. Dahmen, "Qārā; Qerā'îm," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green, vol. XIII - qôs - rāqîa' (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), 175–80. For more on the impact of tearing clothes see my examination of 2 Kings 2 in the following chapter.

the violence etched into the *ketonet passim*'s materiality, implying that its destruction as a garment again becomes central to its efficacious use in deception.

The identification of the *ketonet passim* as an extension of Joseph's body and personhood is particularly significant in interpreting the impact of the brothers' modifications in verse 31. It can be posited that these actions even evoke the imagery of the brothers killing Joseph through their enactment with his garment.[783] It has often been suggested that the goat that Joseph's brothers slaughter becomes a replacement or substitute for Joseph death, implying that the killing of this goat can be identified with the killing of Joseph to a certain extent.[784] Whilst the goat's blood may be used represent Joseph's blood, it is arguably the act of dipping the *ketonet passim* into this blood that makes it 'Joseph's blood', since it is the *ketonet passim* that manifests Joseph's presence. It is problematic to suggest that the *ketonet passim* becomes a 'surrogate' body for Joseph as such, since this implies that it was not previously part of Joseph himself. The *ketonet passim* is already a distributed part of Joseph's personhood. This supports the supposition that the biblical writers' depiction of the brother's bloodying this garment and tearing it, implies Joseph's death; in particular it can be seen as an act in which the brothers kill Joseph's personhood as the beloved son.

The implication of this proposal is that the *ketonet passim*, as the manifestation of Joseph's presence and an extension of his body, is transformed into Joseph's dead body.[785] To some extent this is suggested by

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[783] Implied in Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence*, 56.

[784] Wright, "Joseph's Grave," 482; Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence*, 56; Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 149; Rashkow, *Taboo or Not Taboo*, 40.

[785] James Williams identifies the *ketonet passim* in its modified form as Joseph, 'The robe dipped in a goat's blood now "is" (i.e., carries the transferred meaning of) Joseph as the expelled brother,' Williams, *The Bible, Violence and the Sacred: Liberation from the Myth of Sanctioned Violence*, 56. G. Wright similarly argues that the *ketonet passim* 'stands in' for Joseph and 'when it is rent and blood stained it is a symbol of his physical dismemberment,' Wright, "Joseph's Grave," 481–482. However, it must be recognised that these arguments are largely focused on the language of metaphor and symbolism, rather than suggesting that the *ketonet passim*'s materiality manifests Joseph's presence as is implied here.

the function of the *ketonet passim* as proof of Joseph's death.[786] The magnitude of Israel's conviction of his death has already been noted above (v.33).[787] If the *ketonet passim* is interpreted as Joseph's 'dead body' it might be suggested that the brothers' modifications through tearing and the use of blood takes on a further level of significance. The language of tearing may particularly evoke the imagery of Joseph's body being torn.[788] Francesca Stavrakopoulou's discussion on the material performance of ritual cutting, which particularly engages Paul Connerton's work, *The Spirit of Mourning*, demonstrates that such actions are powerful, since they 'blur the distinction between the inside and the outside of the body.' She continues to argue that,

> Ritual cutting brings the inside out…it is not unreasonable to propose that biblical constructions of body-cutting are suggestive of the ritual harnessing of the body's powerful but ambivalent inside/outside distinction.[789]

The language of tearing in Genesis 37 is in some ways comparable to the ritual imagery of cutting. Its combination with the imagery of blood is particularly evocative of open wounds, implying a similar blurring between the inside and the outside of the body. In the light of Stavrakopoulou's argument, I propose that even though the *ketonet passim* is not Joseph's physical body, these depictions evoke the vivid imagery of Joseph's transformed 'dead' body, which is made powerful through the use of the act of tearing and blood. Through the brothers' actions they etch a new history into the *ketonet passim*'s materiality in which Joseph has been killed.[790]

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[786] Wénin, "La Tunique Ensanglantée de Joseph," 409; Bernstein, *Stories of Joseph*, 158.

[787] The suggestion that Israel sees the bloodied *ketonet passim* as Joseph's body is indicated in Brueggemann's suggestion that Jacob "sees the body of the dreamer torn and ended by violence…" Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 305.

[788] As implied in Bernstein, *Stories of Joseph*, 248–249.

[789] Stavrakopoulou, "Making Bodies: On Body Modification and Religious Materiality in the Hebrew Bible," 537. For her fuller discussion on ritual cutting and circumcision, see pp. 535-538. See Paul Connerton's examination of the 'inside/outside' dynamics of the body in Paul Connerton, *The Spirit of Mourning: History, Memory and the Body* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 83–103, 132–133.

[790] This is clearly distinct from Joseph's physical body in the pit or taken to Egypt.

Success and Failure

Through these transformations the *ketonet passim* might be identified as a tool the brothers manipulate to their advantage.[791] Considered in the light of the discussion so far, their 'possession' of the *ketonet passim* and their appropriation of its power seems to have been successful, since they succeed in deceiving their father.[792] In addition, the brothers are able to shift their responsibility and evade any blame for Joseph's loss; instead, it is the 'evil beast' (חיה רעה) that is blamed.[793] However, rather than attributing all of the agency to the brothers by representing them as those who dominate the *ketonet passim* and concoct plans to deceive their father, it can be argued that these plans are only enabled and brought into being through the hybridity of the brothers-with-the-*ketonet-passim*. It is only once the brothers have stripped and taken this garment that they seem to be empowered to construct this plan of deception – this plan is formed through their material relationship with the *ketonet passim*. Both the agency and potent materiality of the *ketonet passim* are instrumental in the deception of their father and enabling them to evade any blame concerning Joseph's 'death'. This also implies that the *ketonet passim* empowers the brothers and gives them success in their struggle for power against Joseph. However, depending on how the purpose of the *ketonet passim*'s modification is interpreted, this apparent success may be challenged.

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[791] Matthews suggests that the *ketonet passim* becomes 'a prop they need to make their case,' Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 31. For a similar suggestion that the *ketonet passim* is the brothers' tool for deception, see Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 305; Schwartz, "Joseph's Bones," 116.

[792] Driver, *The Book of Genesis*, 325; Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 305; Westermann, *Genesis 37-50*, 43; Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 202; Hartley, *Genesis*, 312; Fentress-Williams, "Tamar in the Joseph Cycle," 20.8; Arnold, *Genesis*, 321; Alter, "Literature," 24.

[793] Note that some scholars have suggested that by bringing back something that was part of Joseph are able to legally shift their responsibility, see Rad, *Genesis*, 349; Davidson, *Genesis 12-50*, 221; Coats, *Genesis*, 270. This interpretation is derived from Exodus 22:13, in which it is suggested that if animal is torn apart and its remains are used as evidence there is no need to pay for that animal. However, it is difficult to ascertain whether or not the biblical writers of the Joseph story were aware of this instruction.

The *ketonet passim*'s materiality evades the brothers' expectations and control. Whilst it is clear that their aim is to deceive Israel into thinking that Joseph is dead, the impact that receiving the *ketonet passim* has on him may be unanticipated. Rather than restoring or elevating the brothers' position in the family, Joseph remains the focus of their father's attention. This is effectively illustrated by Israel's moving performance of ritual mourning:

> And Jacob tore his שמלה and he put sackcloth on his loins, and he mourned for his son for many days. And all of his sons and all of his daughters rose up to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted, and he said, "I shall go down to Sheol, to my son, mourning." And thus his father wept for him. (Genesis 37:34-35)

By means of this reaction, the biblical writers not only reinforce the intimate connection between Israel and Joseph, they also reaffirm that he continues to be Israel's privileged son, even if in the form Joseph's dead body.[794] The *ketonet passim* is so powerful as a marker of Joseph's eradication that it actually heightens his social presence more strongly in these verses. The brothers are unable to shift Israel's favour towards them even after reconstructing the *ketonet passim*'s materiality and employing its power.[795] The brothers continue to be depicted 'the excluded' party, they do not manage to effectively come between Israel and Joseph. The suggestion that he refused to be comforted by his sons particularly stresses their exclusion and furthermore, implies their father's rejection even of their support. Therefore, even though the brothers seem to gain power, they fail to transform themselves from being the 'excluded'; their power continues to go unrecognised or unacknowledged by their father.

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[794] Implied in Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:360.

[795] In later chapters of the Joseph narrative long after Joseph's 'death,' it is clear that the brothers are still not their father's beloved sons, implied in Goldin, "The Youngest Son," 42. Levenson even suggests that Benjamin becomes a surrogate for Joseph as his favoured son, Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 152, 162–163. A number of scholars stress that Benjamin could be excluded from the biblical writers' depiction of 'the brothers' in Genesis 37, Lowenthal, *The Joseph Narrative in Genesis*, 106; Bosworth, "Weeping in Recognition Scenes," 626. Note that Lang suggests that references to Benjamin were probably more recent additions to the story, Lang, *Hebrew Life and Literature: Selected Essays of Bernhard Lang*, 96.

If the brothers' purpose was solely to undermine Israel's power by committing ritual violence against him, then their actions might be considered to be effective to some degree. Their abuse of the *ketonet passim* by constructing a dead Joseph is effective in impacting Israel, as shall be illustrated further below. However, the depictions of the brothers' envy (v. 11) (presumably of Joseph's prominent position in the family) and the suggestion they mean to invert Joseph's dreams of dominance (v. 20), along with Judah's focus on the gain they might receive through their actions against Joseph (vv. 26-27), are all indicative that the brothers' actions imply an attempt to establish themselves over Joseph. This supports the proposal that the brothers' mean to usurp Joseph's position in the family and become Israel's beloved sons.

Many scholars have identified the biblical writers' use of irony in their depiction of Israel - particularly by his being deceived by a garment stained with goat's blood, when it is he who deceives his father with a garment and goats' skins.[796] However the biblical writers' use of irony is also evident in relation to Joseph's brothers and their use of the *ketonet passim*. The brothers seem to accumulate power and status through the *ketonet passim* only to be denied any lasting agency or influence in the family. This irony is heightened by the brothers' ultimate failure to prevent Joseph's dreams and their submission to them in the wider narrative.[797] Their continued identity as the 'excluded,' as suggested above, is also illustrated in the wider narrative through the further use of clothing imagery: Joseph gives all of his brothers a gift of clothing, but Benjamin is favoured above them, 'To all of them he gave each one changes of clothing [שמלה], but to Benjamin he gave three hundred

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[796] Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:356; Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 426; Alter, *Genesis - Translation and Commentary*, 214; Fokkelman, "Genesis 37 and 38," 167; Hartley, *Genesis*, 312; Turner, *Genesis*, 162; Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue*, 361.
[797] It could be suggested that Joseph's name is not remembered, as the brothers' names are, since their names become eponymies of the tribes of Israel. By losing the *ketonet passim* and by becoming assimilated as an Egyptian, Joseph is somehow written out of Israelite history. In contrast, it could be postulated that Joseph's legacy is continued through his sons, through two tribes rather than one. This may imply Joseph's continued prominence in larger tradition of Israel and his dominance over his brothers, Daniel E. Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible: History, Politics, and the Reinscribing of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 77, 79, 89.

pieces of silver and five changes of clothing [שמלה]' (Genesis 45:22).[798] Here, the use of clothing imagery continues to be employed to isolate the brothers. It also reiterates their failure to gain power over Joseph in the larger narrative.

Returning the Ketonet Passim to Its Artisan

The brothers' modification of Joseph's *ketonet passim* also transforms Israel's personhood. I have already emphasised that the *ketonet passim* is part of Israel's personhood and power. The brothers' actions undermine the *ketonet passim*'s intended power and function and thus, can be recognised as damaging Israel's power manifested in this garment. The biblical writers make it clear that Israel recognises (נכר) Joseph's garment, 'and he recognised it and he said, '"The כתנת of my son"' (v. 33). However, the intensity and alarmed nature of his response seems to simultaneously imply his unfamiliarity with its new materiality: '"Surely Joseph has been torn into pieces."' (v.33). The power of its transformed materiality is evident in that it is able to deceive its very creator, suggesting that the *ketonet passim* has power over Israel in a different sense. As argued, Israel's reaction to the *ketonet passim* reinforces his relationship with Joseph, yet it does not reinforce his relationship with the Joseph who is lifted out of the pit. Instead, it is the dead Joseph that has been constructed by the brothers' modification of the *ketonet passim* with whom Israel's reaction is associated. His response reiterates his intricate entanglement with Joseph's *ketonet passim*.

Joseph's death, or the destruction of the *ketonet passim* that is transformed into his dead body, also points to Israel's own social and ritual death.[799] The biblical writers' depiction of Israel's response implies that part of his personhood dies with the 'destruction' of the *ketonet passim*. Bernstein even suggests that his reaction constitutes 'a partial annihilation of the self.'[800] This is illustrated through Israel's ritual performance of mourning in which clothing

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[798] Matthews, "The Anthropology of Clothing in the Joseph Narrative," 35–36.
[799] Levenson suggests that the biblical texts imply that for Israel to be separated from Joseph is akin to Israel's death (Genesis 37:34-35; 45:25, 28). Moreover, the text suggests that Israel is revived upon learning that Joseph is alive (Genesis 45:25-28), Levenson, *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son*, 151, 163.
[800] Bernstein, *Stories of Joseph*, 186.

imagery plays a prominent role. First, Israel tears his garment, evoking the imagery of the torn *ketonet passim* and implying that Israel, too, is also torn. He then puts on sackcloth and 'goes down to Sheol' - implying another descent into the underworld by means of a ritual death.[801] The suggestion that Israel continues to mourn and refuses to be comforted has led some scholars to make assumptions that he means to continue to mourn and wear sackcloth until his dying day.[802] These points demonstrate the intensity of Israel's response to Joseph's modified garment and highlight his social and material transformation through this process. The relationship between Israel and Joseph has also shifted – Israel's new relationship with Joseph is that of a father and his dead son. This indicates a marked separation from the living Joseph. By returning to consider Israel's response it has been possible to demonstrate how the brothers' performance with the *ketonet passim* has significant repercussions for not only their own collective identities, but also on Joseph and their father's personhood.

5.6 Summary

This chapter illustrates that Joseph's brothers share a dynamic and multisensory relationship with the *ketonet passim*. This relationship transforms as their material engagement with this garment changes and as its materiality is transformed itself. As their interaction with the *ketonet passim* changes, so too are the relationships manifested in and by this garment's agency altered - particularly the connections between Israel and Joseph, as well as the brothers' relationships with them. The biblical writers' use of clothing in Genesis 37 is illustrative of the various ways in which clothing can be employed, as well as the multiple meanings each depiction and manipulation of its materiality may manifest.

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[801] For the suggestion that Israel makes a ritual descent into the underworld, see Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis*, 428. For further discussion on the social and ritual dimensions of acts of mourning see Saul M. Olyan, *Biblical Mourning: Ritual and Social Dimensions* (London; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).
[802] Rad, *Genesis*, 349; Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, 449; Wenham, *Genesis 16-50*, 2:356–357.

In exploring the brothers' interactions with the *ketonet passim*, I have illustrated how the *ketonet passim*'s agency can be considered to transform and impact their movements and behaviour in Genesis 37. This is particularly evident in the brothers' motivation to action, both in not speaking peaceably with Joseph and in moving to strip Joseph, through the impact that the *ketonet passim*'s agency has on them. The *ketonet passim* thus both enables and disables. The brothers strip the *ketonet passim* from Joseph in order to disable and disempower his personhood. Moreover, in their hands they are enabled to new possibilities, through this interaction with its agency they are even able to use the *ketonet passim*'s materiality to deceive Israel. They do this by appropriating and modifying its materiality to empower themselves. But the brothers' attempt to appropriate its power is not wholly successful. The *ketonet passim* still manifests the intimacy of the relationship between Joseph and Israel, the focus of the biblical texts and Israel's continues remains on their entanglement. However, through this bond the brothers are also able to undermine Israel's own power through their actions with the *ketonet passim*.

My exploration of the clothing imagery employed in Genesis 37 has effectively challenged the scholarly tendency to interpret the brothers' interactions with the *ketonet passim* as principally driven by their emotional state. The brothers' intertwined relationship and interactions with the *ketonet passim* cannot be limited to such interpretations. Indeed, even the brothers' emotional response to 'seeing' the *ketonet passim* (v. 4) has been demonstrated to be powerful moment that transforms the brothers' relationships with Joseph and Israel and constructs them as an excluded party. I have also shown that the biblical writers' depiction of the brothers' actions in stripping Joseph suggests that their actions were calculated and designed to most effectively disempower Joseph whilst empowering themselves.

This chapter has begun to indicate how the *ketonet passim* may be considered to pay a ritual function in this text. The *ketonet passim* can be seen to play a role as a ritually potent device used to empower Joseph's have prophetic dreams, a role which the brothers attempt to undermine through the portrayal of their actions in stripping the *ketonet passim* from Joseph and

throwing him into the pit or underworld. In the following chapters, I shall demonstrate in further depth how the biblical portrayal of clothing in different texts can be recognised as playing an important role in ritual performance. Such discussions also implicitly strengthen and support the depictions of the *ketonet passim* as a ritualistic device in its context in Genesis 37 as well as Jacob's employment of clothing in rituals in Genesis 27.

The *Adderet*:
Performing Dress

6 The Ritual Performativity of Clothing in Action

6.1 Introduction

Biblical writers frequently employ clothing imagery in the context of ritual performance.[803] I have already started to explore the ritual use of clothing in my examination of the *ketonet passim* and Israel's use of clothing and animal skins in Genesis 27. However, given the frequent use of clothing in ritual performances it is important to consider the ritual potency of dress in further depth. Over the next two chapters I will particularly focus on the ritual employment of clothing in prophetic performances. Although the performative use of clothing by prophets has not gone unnoticed in biblical scholarship, I will show that there has been a tendency to focus on the symbolic meaning and undermine the performative aspects of these depictions. However, ritual can be understood as communicative and meaningful *action* that is set apart from other actions or routine practices, implying that it is inherently performative, as I will go on to argue. Therefore, it must be considered how clothing can impact ritual performances as it is enacted and manipulated in such contexts.

The focus of my second case study will be on Elijah's (and Elisha's) *adderet*, a garment which has become iconic in the depiction of biblical prophets (1 Kings 19:13, 19; 2 Kings 2:8, 13-14).[804] The biblical writers' depiction of Elijah's *adderet* offers one of the richest portrayals of clothing in ritual

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[803] Ritual can be understood as communicative and meaningful action that is set apart from other actions or routine practices. Note that the biblical writers' use of clothing imagery in ritual performance has already been considered to some extent in my short examination of the employment of goat skins and ritual clothing in Genesis 27: 14-29 and the depiction of the *ketonet passim* in Genesis 37 (section 5.3). However, here the challenges facing interpretations of ritual actions incorporating clothing shall be explored in more depth.

[804] It will be these performances that shall provide the focal point of the discussion over this chapter and the next.

performance, since it is employed in a number of distinct actions in different ritual contexts. Therefore, this case study will enable me to most effectively explore the dynamic use of clothing in action. The present chapter will look more broadly at the *adderet*'s use in ritual contexts, whereas in my final chapter I will concentrate on exploring its ritual efficacy in one particular text.

It is worth briefly outlining some of the other examples in which clothing is employed in ritual performance, since it effectively illustrates the diversity of these actions. For example, in the depiction of the denouncement of King Saul, the prophet Samuel's garment (מעל) is grasped and torn (1 Samuel 15:27);[805] the prophet Ahijah tears a garment (שמלה) into twelve pieces in his performance of an oracle (1 Kings 11:29-30);[806] Elijah 'girds' (dresses or re-dresses) his loins (וישנם מתניו) prior to running - arguably as part of his ritual performance in this text (1 Kings 18:46);[807] Zedekiah constructs iron horns (קרני ברזל) that the biblical writers seem to imply are worn in a divinatory performance (1 Kings 22:11);[808] and Jeremiah purchases, wears, and then

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[805] For further discussion on the clothing performance in 1 Samuel 15:27, see Ronald A. Brauner, "'To Grasp the Hem' and 1 Samuel 15: 27," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 6 (1974): 135–38; David Stacey, *Prophetic Drama in the Old Testament* (London: Epworth, 1990), 76–79; Claudia Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen: Untersuchungen Zu Kleidung Und Textilien Im Alten Testament*, Beiträge Zur Wissenschaft Vom Alten Und Neuen Testament 9 (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2008), 157–160; Thomas Staubli and Musée Bible+Orient (Fribourg), *Kleider in biblischer Zeit* (Freiburg CH; Stuttgart: Bibel+Orient Museum ; Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2012), 78.

[806] For further discussion of the clothing performance in 1 Kings 11:29, see Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 79–82; Åke Viberg, "'A Mantle Torn Is A Kingdom Lost': The Tradition History of a Deuteronomistic Theme (1 Kings Xi 29-31)," in *"Lasset Uns Brücken Bauen..": Collected Communications to the XVth Congress of the International Organisation for the Study of the Old Testament, Cambridge 1995*, Beiträge Zur Erforschung Des Alten Testaments Und Des Antiken Judentums 42 (Frankfurt am Main; Belin; Bern; New York; Paris; Wien: Peter Lang, 1998), 135–40; Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 155–156.

[807] For discussions of the practice of loin-girding see Roland Boer, "The Patriarch's Nuts: Concerning the Testicular Logic of Biblical Hebrew," *Journal of Men, Masculinities and Spirituality* 5, no. 2 (2011): 41–52; Katherine Low, "Implications Surrounding Girding the Loins in Light of Gender, Body, and Power," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 36, no. 1 (2011): 3–30.

[808] The performative role of horns in 1 Kings 22:1-12; 2 Chronicles 18:1-11 is indicated in Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 87–90. The interpretation of these horns as a headdress is developed, Othmar Keel, *Wirkmächtige Siegeszeichen im Alten Testament: Ikonographische Studien zu Jos 8,18-26; Ex 17,8-13; 2 Kön 13,14-19 und 1 Kön. 22,11*, Veröffentlichungen der Ideagora für Religionsgeschichte,

hides a linen garment (אזור פשתים) as part of his performance of a prophetic message (Jeremiah 13:1-11).[809] These examples illustrate the numerous ways in which clothing is engaged in action and not just as symbols in the Hebrew Bible.

Whilst all clothing is arguably performative in some way, this chapter shall focus particularly on the intentional employment of clothing in action and movement in ritual or ritualistic contexts. As has been illustrated in a number of different ways in this thesis, scholarly interpretations have conventionally depicted clothing in static ways, rather than fully considering their dynamism and/or agency. Actions, like social relationships, are typically limited to the agency of people and not things. Therefore, even when objects are observed in motion it is perhaps our habitual (and Western) reaction to look first towards the person 'animating' that object.

In the first part of this chapter, I shall illustrate the employment of these approaches through an examination of conventional scholarly interpretations of Elijah and Elisha's clothing performances. I will focus on three particular texts that typically have been correlated: 1 Kings 19:19; 2 Kings 2:8, 14; and 2 Kings 2:12-13. Elijah's employment of the *adderet* in 1 Kings 19:13 shall be expounded on in greater depth in the following chapter. Despite the difficulties inherent in interpreting the employment of clothing in atypical ways, it will be demonstrated that by considering the materiality of clothing and their intimate entanglement with people and things, as well as the significance of these actions as being ritualistic, we can open up new ways of understanding these clothing performances. The second part of this chapter shall illustrate how this approach elucidates and enriches the interpretation of the impact of *adderet*'s agency in these performances. I will reassess each of the abovementioned clothing performances, focusing particularly on their movement and action in these texts.

Altertumswissenschaften & Theologie (Tübingen, Germany: SLM Press Jerusalem, 2013), 123–134, http://nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bsz:21-opus-66329.
[809] Mark Brummitt, "Of Broken Pots and Dirty Laundry: The Jeremiah Lehrstücke," *The Bible and Critical Theory* 2, no. 1 (2006): 3.6–3.7; Staubli and Musée Bible+Orient (Fribourg), *Kleider in biblischer Zeit*, 80.

6.2 Performing Prophetic Succession

The biblical writers' depiction of Elijah's *adderet* is characterised by its movement and action. Elijah manipulates the *adderet* in a number of distinct ways in these performances: the *adderet* is wrapped around Elijah's face (1 Kings 19:13); it is thrown (1 Kings 19:19); taken, rolled, used to strike the Jordan (2 Kings 2:8, 14); and, finally, it is taken up or lifted up (2 Kings 2:13).[810] These clothing performances are atypical – they have no exact parallel in the Hebrew Bible.[811] These manipulations of the *adderet* also disrupt our conventional expectations of the role of clothing in contemporary Western scholarship in which clothing is passively 'worn' or 'put on' its wearer. This 'unconventional' nature of Elijah's actions with the *adderet* has left scholars uncertain as to how they should be interpreted.

In 1 Kings 19:19-21, the *adderet* plays a prominent role in the depiction of Elijah's initial interaction with Elisha. The text indicates that, after finding Elisha ploughing, 'Elijah passed by him and threw his *adderet* (אדרתו) on him. And [Elisha] left the oxen, and ran after Elijah…' (v. 19-20a).[812] The rest of the

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[810] These performative movements are also noted in John Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?," in *Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East*, ed. J. Kaltner and L. Stulman (London: T. & T. Clark, 2004), 225.

[811] The biblical writers do depict the act of throwing a garment over a corpse (2 Samuel 20:12), however, the context of this action is notably distinct from its use in 1 Kings 19:19.

[812] The biblical writers' use of אליו, which would usually be interpreted 'to him,' is rendered differently by the majority of scholars in its occurrence here. Most have interpreted this preposition to indicate that Elijah threw the *adderet* 'on him' or 'over him.' For example, such interpretations can be found in James A. Montgomery, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Kings*, ed. Henry Synder Gehman, Reprint, The International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T & T Clark, 1951), 316; John Gray, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 3rd ed., Old Testament Library (London: S. C. M. Press, 1977), 413; Simon J. DeVries, *1 Kings*, Word Biblical Commentary 12 (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1985), 238; Richard D. Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville; KY: John Knox Press, 1987), 127; Russell Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," in *From Carmel to Horeb: Elijah in Crisis*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series 85 (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990), 125; Lester L Grabbe, *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages: A Socio-Historical Study of Religious Specialists in Ancient Israel* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1995), 71; Iain W. Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, Old Testament Guides (Sheffield: Sheffield

scene is arguably characterised by Elisha's transition and movement from his previous social life to his new role as he performs ritual acts and follows after Elijah: Elisha requests to kiss his parents (v. 20), he slaughters his oxen and uses the tools of his trade to boil them (v. 21), he then serves or ministers (שרת) to Elijah.

The *adderet* also features prominently in 2 Kings 2 in close conjunction with the well-known portrayal of Elijah's ritual ascent into heaven (v. 1), which to an extent marks a separation between Elijah and Elisha.[813] Leading up to this anticipated event they travel on a journey that is arguably comprised of mythic and ritual tropes that leads them to Elijah's place of departure.[814] At the point where they reach the Jordan, the biblical writers depict the use of the *adderet* in a dynamic act: 'Elijah took his *adderet* and he rolled it up and struck the waters. They were divided to the one side and to the other and the two of

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Academic Press, 1995), 148; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 455; Volkmar Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings: A Continental Commentary*, trans. Anselm Hagedorn (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 200; Tova Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," in *And God Said: "You Are Fired": The Narrative of Elijah and Elisha*, ed. Michael Caspi and John T. Greene (North Richland Hills, TX: Bibal Press, 2007), 238; Stephen A. Geller, "The Still, Small Voice: 1 Kings 19 and the Roots of Intolerance in Biblical Religion," in *Studies in Arabic and Hebrew Letters: In Honor of Raymond P. Scheindlin*, ed. Jonathan P. Decter and Rand, Michael (New Jersey; US: Gorgias Press, 2007), 49; Hermann Gunkel, *Elijah, Yahweh, and Baal*, trans. K. C. Hanson, English Translation of Elias, Jahwe und Baal (1906) (Eugene, Or: Cascade Books: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2014), 29. However, Claudia Bender challenges this interpretation proposing that that the biblical writers only imply that the *adderet* is thrown to or towards Elijah, Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 127. This interpretation can be observed in a number of other biblical studies, Paul J. Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History: Profiles of Moses, Joshua, Elijah, and Elisha*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series 224 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996), 151; Nachman Levine, "Twice as Much of Your Spirit: Pattern, Parallel and Paronomasia in the Miracles of Elijah and Elisha," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 85 (1999): 42; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233; Hillel I. Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma: The Prophet, King Ahab and the Rebirth of Monotheism in the Book of Kings* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company Inc., 2014), 104–105. Nevertheless, I would suggest that the dominant scholarly interpretation here seems to be the most fitting interpretation in its context.

[813] Elijah's departure (2 Kings 2:11) is anticipated by an authorial gloss in 2 Kings 2:1.

[814] This is indicated by the imagery of ritual descent and the crossing of liminal boundaries that shall be considered further in my own re-examination of this text later in this chapter.

them passed over the dry ground.'[815] This performance is later echoed by Elisha's actions upon returning to the other side of the Jordan: 'and [Elisha] took Elijah's *adderet* which had fallen from him and he struck the waters and said, "Where is Yahweh the God of Elijah?" and he struck the waters and they were divided to the one side and to the other and Elisha passed by' (2 Kings 2:14). Elijah's ascent into heaven is sandwiched between these parallel performances (v.11). Here, the *adderet* is featured once more in Elisha's actions following this ritual ascent, 'and [Elisha] seized his clothes [בגדיו] and he tore them into two pieces and he lifted up [רום] Elijah's *adderet* which fell from on him' (2 Kings 2:12b-13a).

Despite the diversity of actions in which the *adderet* is employed, as outlined above, its purpose and function has typically only been considered in limited ways in biblical studies. Scholars have tended to interpret the *adderet* as a garment that is largely employed to facilitate or symbolise prophetic succession.[816] These interpretations illustrate the tendency among scholars to focus primarily on the one overarching clothing performance – the passing of the *adderet* from Elijah to Elisha.[817] This can be elucidated further by considering conventional interpretations of each of Elijah's actions with the *adderet*.

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[815] See further discussion on the ambiguities of Elisha's actions in 'rolling' the *adderet* in section 6.7

[816] Note that some biblical scholars that even explicitly identity the *adderet* as a symbol of prophetic succession, such as in T. R. Hobbs, *2 Kings*, Word Biblical Commentary 13 (Waco, Tex.: Word Books, 1985), 17; Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 161; Keith Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings: The Double Agent* (Oxford University Press, 2013), 52, Oxford University Press.

[817] For examples of scholarly references to the act of 'passing' or 'transferring' the *adderet*, see Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 350; Shimon Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, trans. Dorothea Shefer-Vanson, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament.: Supplement Series 70 (Sheffield, England: Almond Press, 1989), 52; Terence Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah: The Redaction Criticism of the Prophetical Books*, The Biblical Seminar 20 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 137; Wesley J. Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series 286 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999), 35; Levine, "Twice as Much of Your Spirit," 46. More examples shall be referred to in the discussions in this chapter.

The act of throwing the *adderet* has largely been identified as an action that marks prophetic calling.[818] Similarly, it has frequently been interpreted as an act that symbolises Elisha's investiture into the prophetic life; some scholars have even indicated that this clothing performance is equivalent to an anointing scene.[819] The employment of the *adderet* to part the waters of the Jordan (2 Kings 2:8, 14) has been considered to illustrate the transference of

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[818] This is indicated in Johannes Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1962), 64; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 158. Contra, Burke O. Long, *1 Kings: With an Introduction to Historical Literature*, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature 9 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1984), 206. For more studies that interpret 1 Kings 19:19 as part of the theme of prophetic succession, including suggestions that this marks Elisha's prophetic calling, see Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 64; Aharon Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, The Littman Library of Jewish Civilization (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1978), 17; C. Coulot, "L'Investiture D'Elisée Par Elie (1R 19, 19-21)," *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* 57 (1983): 87–92; Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 135; Grabbe, *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages*, 71; Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 124; Jerome T. Walsh, *1 Kings*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, Minn: Michael Glazier; The Liturgical Press, 1996), 279; Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism*, 49; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 455; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 200; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 238; Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 127; Rachel Havrelock, *River Jordan: The Mythology of a Dividing Line* (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2011), 157–158; Victor H. Matthews, "Making Your Point: The Use of Gestures in Ancient Israel," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 42, no. 1 (2012): 26; Rachelle Gilmour, *Juxtaposition and the Elisha Cycle* (London; New York: Bloomsbury; T&T Clark, 2014), 80; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 105.

[819] As an example of an investiture ceremony it is sometimes associated with Genesis 41:42 and Esther 6:9. For interpretations of this performance as an act of investiture, see Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 316; R. P. Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas: Some Remarks on Prophetic Succession in Ancient Israel," *Vetus Testamentum* 19, no. 4 (1969): 405; Coulot, "L'Investiture D'Elisée Par Elie (1R 19, 19-21)"; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; John W. Olley, "Yhwh and His Zealous Prophet: The Presentation of Elijah in 1 and 2 Kings," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 80 (1998): 41; Matthews, "Making Your Point: The Use of Gestures in Ancient Israel," 26. It is interpreted as an anointing scene or its equivalent in Gene Rice, *Nations Under God: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Kings*, International Theological Commentary (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Edinburgh: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing; Handsel Press, 1990), 165; Grabbe, *Priests, Prophets, Diviners, Sages*, 71; Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 124; Levine, "Twice as Much of Your Spirit," 41; George W. Savran, *Encountering the Divine: Theophany in Biblical Narrative*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series 420 (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2005), 175; Havrelock, *River Jordan*, 158; Michelle L. Bellamy, "The Elijah-Elisha Cycle of Stories: A Ring Composition" (PhD, Boston University, 2013), 82. This interpretation has been discussed in Keith Bodner's overview of scholarship on these verses, Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 36.

prophetic power and authority from Elijah to Elisha.[820] Scholars have particularly focused on Elisha's ability to repeat Elijah's performance, which has broadly been understood to confirm Elisha's inheritance of Elijah's 'power' or 'spirit'.[821] The depiction of Elisha 'taking up' the *adderet* has also been considered as an action that marks this transfer - the implication being that by taking up Elijah's mantle, he becomes a prophet.

There is a tendency to read Elijah's clothing performances as markers within a wider story of prophet succession. Therefore, Elijah's actions with the *adderet* complement the broader narrative structure in which we see Elijah being replaced by Elisha as Yahweh's prophet of judgement. It is reasonable to suppose that many scholarly interpretations of Elijah's performance have been influenced by Yahweh's command that Elijah should 'anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-Meholah to be prophet instead of you [Elijah]' (1 Kings

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[820] This is implied in studies that identify the *adderet*'s use in 2 Kings 2 as symbol or instance of prophetic succession, see Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 64; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 17; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 158–159; Mordechai Cogan and Hayim Tadmor, *II Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Bible 11 (New York: Doubleday, 1988), 34; Burke O. Long, *2 Kings*, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature 10 (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1991), 27; Philip E. Satterthwaite, "The Elisha Narratives and the Coherence of 2 Kings 2-8," *Tyndale Bulletin* 49, no. 1 (1998): 5; Robert L. Cohn, *2 Kings*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry (Collegeville, Minn: Michael Glazier; The Liturgical Press, 2000), 15; Brian Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 64 (2002): 49; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 234; Joel S. Burnett, "'Going Down' to Bethel: Elijah and Elisha in the Theological Geography of the Deuteronomistic History," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 129, no. 2 (2010): 287; Havrelock, *River Jordan*, 157–158; Hadi Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll: The Wane of the Flesh and Blood Prophet in the Elisha Cycle," in *Studies on Magic and Divination in the Biblical World*, ed. Helen R. Jacobus, Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme, and Philippe Guillaume, Biblical Intersections 11 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2013), 126; Gilmour, *Juxtaposition and the Elisha Cycle*, 80.

[821] Implied in James G. Williams, "The Prophetic 'Father': A Brief Explanation of the Term 'Sons of the Prophets,'" *Journal of Biblical Literature* 85, no. 3 (1966): 345; Ernst Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige/ Übersetzt und erklärt von Ernst Würthwein*, vol. 2, Das Alte Testament Deutsch 11 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 275; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 22; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 160; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 34; Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 137; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 173; Olley, "Yhwh and His Zealous Prophet," 46; Satterthwaite, "The Elisha Narratives and the Coherence of 2 Kings 2-8," 8; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 15; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 235; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 272; Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 128; Matthews, "Making Your Point: The Use of Gestures in Ancient Israel," 26; Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 55; Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 126; Gilmour, *Juxtaposition and the Elisha Cycle*, 80; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 196–197.

19:16).[822] This does seem to imply that Elisha shall succeed Elijah; the depiction of 'anointing' (מָשַׁח) certainly evokes the imagery used in depictions of succession scenes elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible.[823] This is particularly implied by the phrase Elisha will be a prophet 'instead of you.' Still, there is no explicit scene of 'prophetic anointing' as might be anticipated, although as suggested earlier, this has not prevented scholars interpreting Elijah's performance in 1 Kings 19:19 in this way.[824]

The theme of prophetic succession has also been drawn from other references to succession imagery employed in these texts. In 1 Kings 19:20-21, the biblical writers' depiction of the dramatic shift in Elisha's role from carrying out agricultural work to becoming a follower of Elijah has been considered by some to illustrate Elisha's transformation into a prophet – a possibility emphasised by the distance constructed between Elisha and his previous social and familial roles (vv. 20-21).[825] In 2 Kings 2, there is a discussion between Elijah and Elisha, before the former is taken into heaven, in which Elisha asks for a 'double portion' of Elijah's spirit (רוּחַ, v. 9).[826] Some

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[822] For further discussion on the link between these texts, see David T. Lamb, "'A Prophet Instead of You' (1 Kings 19:16): Elijah, Elisha and Prophetic Succession," in *Prophecy and the Prophets in Ancient Israel*, ed. John Day, LHBOTS 531 (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 172–87. Some scholars indicate that following this verse there is an expectation that the text in 1 Kings 19:19-21 should include an anointing scene, Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 316; Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 36. It is also proposed that the biblical writers inserted Elijah's performance in 1 Kings 19:19-21 in this context in order to imply a link between this performance and verse 16, J. Robinson, *The First Book of Kings: Commentary*, The Cambridge Bible Commentary, New English Bible (London: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 223. However, Simon DeVries proposes that these texts originated from different traditions, DeVries, *1 Kings*, 239.

[823] e.g. Exodus 29:29; 1 Samuel 10:1; 16:12-13; 2 Samuel 5:3; 1 Kings 1; 2 Kings 11:12.

[824] See earlier references to studies that consider this performance as an alternative anointing scene. For studies that reject the suggestion that this text depicts an explicit anointing, see Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 147; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 457; Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 49; Lamb, "'A Prophet Instead of You,'" 184; Gilmour, *Juxtaposition and the Elisha Cycle*, 77.

[825] This shall be considered in more depth in my case study on this text in this chapter.

[826] It can be recognised that many scholars have frequently identified the broader text of 2 Kings 2 as a prophetic succession narrative. For example, this is indicated in Williams, "The Prophetic 'Father'"; Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, 17; Coulot, "L'Investiture D'Elisée Par Elie (1R 19, 19-21)"; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 15; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 34; Collins, *The*

commentators assume this evokes the biblical depiction of the first-born son's blessing (Deuteronomy 21:17).[827] The presumed association with this verse is typically considered to support the suggestion that Elisha shall inherit and take after Elijah, and is thought to corroborate the dominant interpretation of this text as a succession narrative. It has been proposed that the continuation of Elijah's role through Elisha is also affirmed through the words spoken by a group identified as the sons of prophets when they suggest 'the spirit [רוח] of Elijah rests on Elisha' (2 Kings 2:15). However, despite these points, like the anointing of Elisha, the theme of prophetic succession is never made explicit in these texts and I contend that biblical scholars should not limit their interpretations to this focus.[828]

The scholarly emphasis on the interpretation of these clothing performances as scenes of prophetic succession is not unproblematic. In many of these scholarly interpretations the *adderet* has been attributed with very little agency. The significance of Elijah and Elisha's clothing performances is rendered completely subservient to the larger symbolic meaning in these scenes. The tendency for scholars to reduce clothing to the symbolic has already been effectively addressed and challenged in this thesis; the difficulties with such approaches need not be repeated in detail here.[829] Still, it is worth reiterating that such interpretations tend to strip clothing of its material impact and its significance as multifunctional objects. In the context of Elijah's performances, these scholarly approaches often imply that the *adderet* is limited to its use as a symbolic prop or tool that only functions to bolster these

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Mantle of Elijah, 136–137; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 172; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 10; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 271; Havrelock, *River Jordan*, 152–160.

[827] Indicated in J. Robinson, *The Second Book of Kings: Commentary*, The Cambridge Bible Commentary, New English Bible (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 25; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 475; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 21; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 159; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 32; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 173; Jesse C. Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, College Press NIV Commentary (Joplin, Mo: College Press Pub, 2002), 290; Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 354; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 273; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 193.

[828] It has been acknowledged that there is no explicit performance of direct 'passing' between Elijah and Elisha in these texts, Olley, "Yhwh and His Zealous Prophet," 41. However, I know of few studies that seriously challenge the depiction of prophetic succession in these texts.

[829] This can be seen in chapter 1, section 1.2.

overriding themes of theological succession.[830] In contrast, it has been and shall continue to be illustrated that clothing, such as the *adderet*, plays a multifaceted and dynamic role in its relation to persons and objects.

A possible explanation for the popularity of these conventional scholarly interpretations of Elijah's clothing performances are briefly outlined here. These interpretations allow scholars to align Elijah's unconventional manipulations of the *adderet* with clothing performances that are familiar to contemporary Western scholars and are further substantiated in the biblical texts. For example, the interpretation of Elijah's use of the *adderet* as an example of investiture has been suggested to corroborate with the use of clothing in other investiture scenes depicted in the Hebrew Bible (Genesis 41:42; Esther 6:9).[831] Some scholars have even identified Elijah's actions with the *adderet* as an act of 'ordination.' This interpretation particularly evokes the imagery of ordination ceremonies held in contemporary Western churches.[832]

The presumed performance in which Elijah passes or transfers his *adderet* to Elisha has been associated with a number of other biblical texts in which clothing is 'passed' from one person to another (for example, 1 Samuel 18:4; Isaiah 22:15-24). These texts are also often considered to mark the transfer of the social role that the garment represents,[833] for example, the transfer of Aaron's 'priestly' clothing to his sons prior to his death (Numbers 20:25-28).[834]

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[830] It has explicitly been identified as a prop or tool in Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 128; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233; Matthews, "Making Your Point: The Use of Gestures in Ancient Israel," 26.

[831] For more see earlier discussions on investiture texts in section 4.2. It can be noted that the performance of *adderet* and the *ketonet passim* are both associated with investiture rituals. Similarly, both have been identified as acts of adoption, see 4.6, For the depiction Elijah's clothing performances as an adoption scene in John T. Noble, "Cultic Prophecy and Levitical Inheritance in the Elijah-Elisha Cycle," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 41, no. 1 (2016): 51.

[832] Indicated as an ordination scene in Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 316; Robinson, *The First Book of Kings*, 223. James Montgomery even loosely implies its association this with contemporary examples of ordination.

[833] Gilmour, *Juxtaposition and the Elisha Cycle*, 79.

[834] On the association of Elijah's performance and the transference of clothing in priestly succession, see Cogan, *1 Kings*, 455. Elijah's performance has been associated with the broader use of clothing to indicate changes in leadership (1 Samuel 15:27, 28:14; 1 Kings 11:29-30), Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 36–37.

However, whilst such interpretations may well be connoted in these Elijah/Elisha clothing performances, they do not sufficiently account for or explain the dramatic manipulations and movements that are employed in the biblical writers' portrayal of the *adderet*. We need to look at each of these performances in more detail; however, before doing so, it is necessary to unpack the impact that these scholarly interpretations have had on the *adderet*'s agency and efficacy in these performances.

6.3 Deconstructing the Legacy of the Prophet's Mantle

As I have indicated, the texts in which the biblical writers depict the interactions between Elijah and Elisha have come to be dominated by the broader theme of prophetic succession.[835] In the light of this, Elijah's *adderet* has also come to represent, almost iconically, the notion of prophetic succession.[836] This is indicated by the scholarly tendency to interpret the *adderet* as the 'prophet's mantle' or as a distinctive badge or uniform of the 'prophetic office.'[837] As a uniform, the *adderet* is portrayed as a garment that

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[835] It has been stressed that this depiction is particularly significant as it represents perhaps the only example of prophetic succession in the Hebrew Bible, as suggested in Cohn, *2 Kings*, 10.

[836] It can be recognised that the biblical writers depict a number of other figures wearing or using the *adderet*. For example, the *adderet* is employed to depict a valuable garment which was taken as plunder in Joshua 7:21, 24; it is also used to depict the clothing worn by the king of Nineveh in Jonah 3:6. Also note its depiction as a hairy garment in Genesis 25:25, Ahlström, " 'Addîr ; 'Addereth," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, trans. John T. Willis, vol. I - 'ābh - bādhādh (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 1974), 73. Also see J. A. Clines and John Elwolde, eds., *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew*, vol.1: Aleph (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 137; Ludwig Köhler and Walter Baumgartner, *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, trans. M. E. J. Richardson, 1st English ed., vol. 1 (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1994), 17.

[837] For examples of studies that identify the *adderet* as the 'prophet's mantle' or cloak, see Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 405; Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, 15; Coulot, "L'Investiture D'Elisée Par Elie (1R 19, 19-21)," 84; Long, *1 Kings*, 206; Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 85; Long, *2 Kings*, 25; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 147, 172; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 125; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 105. The more explicit suggestion that the *adderet* is a badge or uniform of the prophetic office is indicated in studies, such as, Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 350; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 413; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 160; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 165; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 49. For a more

unites ancient Yahwistic prophets and indirectly entangles them into a relationship with one another. Such interpretations also assume that there is a clear-cut 'prophetic role' that is consistently portrayed across the biblical 'prophets.' The tendency to generalise the *adderet* and the prophets' role in this way is illustrated in Terence Collins's discussion of Israelite prophecy, 'Prophets come and go, but prophecy remains, and the prophets of Israel must all wear the mantle of Elijah.'[838]

The depiction of Elijah as a paradigmatic prophet has also led to the appropriation and perpetuation of the concept of his clothing as the 'prophets' mantle'. Biblical scholars have sometimes implied that Elijah can be recognised as an archetypal prophet who sets the standard for other prophets who follow after him.[839] This stress on Elijah's role as a prophet has been influenced by early Christian depictions of him as a paradigmatic figure, foreshadowing and endorsing Christ.[840] Such portrayals of Elijah imply that other aspects of his identity, such as his clothing, have also been attributed paradigmatic status.

Indeed, the depiction of Elijah's *adderet* as the prophet's mantle is developed further within early Christian traditions. For example, the New Testament writers make explicit and implicit allusions to Elijah in their characterisation of John the Baptist. This includes a portrayal of John the Baptist's clothing

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in-depth discussion on the scholarly tendency to interpret Elijah's *adderet* as a prophetic uniform, see Brunet, "Y Eut-Il Un Manteau De Prophète?"

[838] Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 137.

[839] The depiction of Elijah as a paradigm or archetype prophet is suggested in Ibid., 130, 13–139. This is also implied to some extent in the tendency to make parallels between the figures Elijah and Moses, Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas"; A. Graeme Auld, *I & II Kings* (Edinburgh, Scotland; Louisville, Kentucky: The Saint Andrew Press; Westminster John Knox Press, 1986), 125–127; Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 133–134; Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 353; Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 53–54; Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 124–125; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 266–267.

[840] For example, it can be noted that the New Testament writers portrayed Elijah as a pinnacle figure alongside Moses and Jesus in the so-called transfiguration scene (Matthew 17:1-13; Mark 9:2-13; Luke 9:28-35). The suggestion that depiction of Elijah functions typologically with respect to Jesus in the New Testament is indicated in Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 178–179. It has been suggested that Elijah is also depicted as a hero and archetypical figure in early Jewish texts and Josephus, as implied in Feldman, Louis H., "Josephus' Portrait of Elijah," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament: An International Journal of Nordic Theology* 8, no. 1 (1994): 61–65.

(Matthew 3:4; Mark 1:6) which closely resembles the depiction of Elijah's clothing in 2 Kings 1:8, "He was a lord of hair [or hairy man] and wore a waist cloth [אזור] of skin on his loins." Although the *adderet* is not referred to explicitly in this depiction, many scholars have suggested that John the Baptist's clothing can also be associated with this garment.[841] It has even been implied from early Christian texts that a number of early Christian groups such as a group of Carmelites (c. second century CE) and a number of ascetic desert monks (c. third and fourth centuries CE) adopted the practice of wearing clothing which they identified with Elijah's *adderet*.[842] The adoption of such clothes was most likely an attempt to claim an identity as legitimate successors to Elijah or more broadly of biblical prophecy, which may be considered to strengthen their authority. These examples perpetuate the concept of Elijah's *adderet* as a prophetic uniform. However, they cannot be used to suggest whether or not this interpretation was circulated when the Hebrew Bible was compiled.

One of the problems of the assumption of the existence of a prophetic uniform, both historically and in the biblical texts, is that it undermines the materiality and agency of other garments employed by various different prophets in the biblical texts.[843] Although a number of prophetic figures are associated with the *adderet*, many other prophets are portrayed wearing or

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[841] On the connection of these garments to Elijah's *adderet*, see Rice, *Nations Under God*, 165; Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 85; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 246. See broader nuanced conflations between the clothing depicted in 2 Kings 1:8 and Elijah's *adderet* in Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 350; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 270; Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 41.

[842] Indicated in James Boyce, "Elijah Among the Carmelites: Adopting and Honoring the Father," in *The Prophet Elijah in Jewish and Christian Traditions: Teshuvah Institute Papers*, ed. Lawerence E. Frizzell (South Orange, NJ: The Institute of Judaeo-Christian Studies, 2011), 11–17; Alexander Ryrie, *The Desert Movement: Fresh Perspectives on the Spirituality of the Desert* (London: Canterbury Press, 2011), 11.

[843] It is possible that the conception of the prophet's garment existed even when the Hebrew Bible was collated, as it would account for the positioning of texts that depict the *adderet* together, such as 1 Kings 19:1-18 and 1 Kings 19:19-21. However, as has been suggested, this thesis focuses on the 'final form' of the biblical texts, rather than its compositional stages.

performing with various different garments.[844] For example, the prophet Samuel is portrayed employing a מעיל in 1 Samuel 15:27 and 28:14. However, some scholars, likely influenced by the conception of a prophetic uniform, conflate the depiction of Samuel's garment with Elijah's *adderet*. For example, Brian Britt suggests that 'for Samuel and Elijah, the mantle is a symbol of their prophetic office, just as priests have their own professional dress…'[845] Britt's suggestion uncritically implies that these garments were synonymous with one another in materiality, performance and significance. However, these garments are not only materially distinct, but are also performed and manipulated in distinct ways. The diversity of garments associated with different prophetic figures in the Hebrew Bible challenges the assumed existence of a prophet's mantle or uniform, and thereby, also effectively undermines the identification of the *adderet* as this uniform.[846]

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[844] It can be observed that in addition to the employment of this term in relation to Elijah and Elisha, the biblical writers also associate the *adderet* with another group of prophets depicted in Zechariah 13:4. On the suggestion that Elijah's *adderet* can be associated with the *adderet* depicted in Zechariah 13:4, see Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 350; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 160; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 165. Note that J. Thompson even suggests that Isaiah probably wore the *adderet*, even though this garment has not been explicitly attributed to him in the biblical texts, J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1980), 71. However, Brunet stresses that the *adderet* is not explicitly associated with prominent prophets, such as, Israel, Jeremiah, Hosea and so on, Brunet, "Y Eut-Il Un Manteau De Prophète?," 162.

[845] Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 43. This is emphasised by his depiction of both of these garment as a 'mantle.' Britt can be seen to briefly acknowledge that two different Hebrew words are used to depict the clothing of these prophets, however, he still choses to translate both as 'mantle' maintaining the impression that these garments were somehow synonymous with each other. Ibid., 53. For a similar conflation, see Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 350. It can be noted that elsewhere Samuel is also associated with a linen ephod (אפוד בד) in 1 Samuel 2:18. Similar conflations between Elijah's *adderet* and Moses's garment can be seen in P. J. Nel and N. F. Schmidt, "Theophany as Type-Scene in the Hebrew Bible," *Journal for Semitics* 11, no. 2 (2002): 266–267, 275.

[846] On biblical studies that challenge the existence of a distinctive dress, see Brunet, "Y Eut-Il Un Manteau De Prophète?," 161; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233. The scholarly interpretation of these texts as a paradigmatic example of 'prophetic' succession is problematic, since this also uncritically creates the illusion that there is a distinct prophetic role that may be passed down. However, this was probably not the case, the depiction of prophecy and prophets in the Hebrew Bible is notably diverse, as evidenced in the numerous debates that attempt to define Yahwistic prophecy in biblical scholarship. Its diversity has been indicated in discussion of Yahwistic prophets in Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 404, 406, 408; David J. Pleins, *The Social Visions of the Hebrew Bible: A Theological Introduction* (Louisville; KY:

The tendency for biblical scholars to depict Elijah's *adderet* as a marker of prophetic status can also be suggested to uncritically flatten its agency and undermine its significance as a performative garment employed in ritual. As indicated earlier, the biblical writers consistently depict Elijah's adderet in movement, yet its Christian and scholarly depiction as a prophetic uniform has reduced it to an inert marker of a social role, disassociated from its performative context. This is ironically illustrated in Reuven Kimelman's interpretation of Elijah in the beginning of 1 Kings 19 before his *adderet* has even been mentioned in the biblical texts, suggesting that he 'proves himself unworthy of the prophetic mantle.'[847] Here, the *adderet* has been retrojected back into the Elijah texts as a static symbol of a seemingly fixed prophetic role. However, I shall demonstrate that the biblical writers' depiction of Elijah's *adderet* in specific ritual performances is fundamental to how we can understand its efficacy as a garment.

6.4 Redirecting Power to People

In biblical scholarship there is a tendency to shift the power attributed to the *adderet* through its performance and movement to people, namely: Elijah, Elisha, and Yahweh. Such interpretations arguably limit the *adderet*'s role to being that of a passive vehicle or conduit through which Elijah's power or spirit is transferred to Elisha.[848] Indeed, many scholars submit that these clothing performances index a transfer of power, yet it is typically implied that this power transfer occurs only between Elijah and Elisha – there is little explicit indication as to the *adderet*'s role in this 'transfer.'[849] Such interpretations are

Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 111–113; David L. Petersen, *The Prophetic Literature: An Introduction* (Louisville; KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 226–234.

[847] Reuven Kimelman, "Prophecy as Arguing with God and the Ideal of Justice," *Interpretation* 68, no. 1 (2014): 26.

[848] This is implied in Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 350; Lindblom, *Prophecy in Ancient Israel*, 64; Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 52; Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?," 226.

[849] Implied in studies, such as, Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 136; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 16. It can be noted that Alan Hauser does not even mention the *adderet* in his interpretation of Elijah's performance in 1 Kings 19:19-21, Alan J. Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death - The Real Struggle in 1 Kings 17-19," in *From Carmel to Horeb: Elijah in Crisis*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament. Supplement Series 85

illustrative of the wider scholarly predisposition to privilege people's power in discussions of the agency and power of objects, as discussed earlier in this thesis.[850] The scholarly focus on people's power is well-illustrated through interpretations of the *adderet*'s employment in the division of the Jordan (2 Kings 2:4, 8), as shall now be discussed.

It is widely acknowledged that the biblical writers' depiction of the use of the *adderet* to part the Jordan (2 Kings 2:4, 8) is a supra-natural or powerful event.[851] However, as indicated above scholars do not typically attribute this power to the adderet itself - or if they do, its power is still largely associated with its user. For example, scholars including Claudia Bender and Ernst Würthwein explicitly stress that the adderet is not imbued with magical power – it is only through the users' power that the *adderet* is made effective.[852] Similar points have been made in other studies, yet they are often more nuanced than those indicated above.[853] In these studies the *adderet* is suggested to have power only as far as it reflects or symbolises Elijah's own power or agency, which is efficacious through the *adderet*. For example, it is suggested that, 'like a relic, the mantle transmits the power of the great

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(Sheffield: Almond Press, 1990), 77–79. Similarly, Wesley Bergen suggests that we should not make too much of the mantle's use in 1 Kings 19:19-21, Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism*, 50.

[850] See my discussion on the agency of objects in chapter 1, section 1.6.

[851] Implied in many biblical studies, such as in Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 354; Williams, "The Prophetic 'Father,'" 345; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 160; Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 191; Satterthwaite, "The Elisha Narratives and the Coherence of 2 Kings 2-8," 8; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 239; Joel S. Burnett, "The Question of Divine Absence in Israelite and West Semitic Religion," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (2005): 217; Burnett, "'Going Down' to Bethel," 287; Noble, "Cultic Prophecy and Levitical Inheritance," 54.

[852] Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige*, 2:275; Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 128. Note that Würthwein's argument here is also referenced and followed in Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 235. It is also likely that the resistance to depictions of the *adderet* as 'magical' corresponds with the negative depiction of magic in the Hebrew Bible and in conventional biblical studies. This resistance is arguably heightened by the theological significance that Elijah's mantle has been assumed to have as a symbol of prophetic succession. An good overview of conventional biblical scholarship on 'magic' can be seen in Ann Jeffers's introductory chapter in Jeffers, *Magic and Divination*, 1–24.

[853] For examples of interpretations that focus on Elijah's power in the action of parting the Jordan, see Williams, "The Prophetic 'Father,'" 345; Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 405; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 34; Burnett, "'Going Down' to Bethel," 287.

prophet.'[854] Also, 'the focus is on the mantle which, in Elijah's hands, has extraordinary power.'[855] Although I would argue that the *adderet* does manifest Elijah's power it must be stressed that it is also the *adderet*'s own inherent power and agency that causes the waters to part.[856] However, in the arguments I have referred to the *adderet* is relegated to being a vehicle or conduit for Elijah or Elisha's power, as was indicated earlier.

In other scholarly interpretations the power and efficacy of this supra-natural event is attributed to Yahweh, rather than to the adderet, or even Elijah or Elisha. This is implied by the frequent depiction of this event as 'miraculous', since (particularly within biblical studies) this connotes a divine act, indicating Yahweh's participation in this scene.[857] This suggestion is made more explicit in several scholarly discussions: Jesse Long (for example) suggests that in verse 14, after the depiction of Elisha calling Yahweh's name, it is Yahweh himself who responds and causes the waters to part.[858] Similarly, Marvin Sweeney focuses on Yahweh's role, proposing that it was his power in the prophets that made this performance efficacious.[859] However, it has been observed that there is no explicit indication that Yahweh acts directly in this performance, particularly in verse eight, in which he is not even mentioned.[860] The interpretations above distance the adderet and its material performance from the events that unfold, thereby indicating that the adderet's power is shifted to an external force beyond the performance itself, and implicitly reducing the adderet to a mere symbol.

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[854] Cohn, *2 Kings*, 15.

[855] Mark O'Brien, "The Portrayal of Prophets in 2 Kings 2," *Australian Biblical Review* 46 (1998): 9. For similar interpretations in which it is suggested that it is Elijah's power in the *adderet* that is efficacious, see Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 200; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 15; Havrelock, *River Jordan*, 157; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 196.

[856] As argued further in section 6.7.

[857] On the depiction of the parting of the Jordan as a miraculous act, see Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 354; Williams, "The Prophetic 'Father,'" 345; Long, *2 Kings*, 28; Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 136–137; Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 191; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 291; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 235; Burnett, "The Question of Divine Absence in Israelite and West Semitic Religion," 217; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 239; Burnett, "'Going Down' to Bethel," 287; Noble, "Cultic Prophecy and Levitical Inheritance," 54.

[858] Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 291.

[859] Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 273–274.

[860] O'Brien, "The Portrayal of Prophets in 2 Kings 2," 9.

Scholarly interpretations of the *adderet*'s power are often unclear. For example, the *adderet* has been identified as a 'talisman of power,' a 'magical prop,' and as a 'token of spiritual power.'[861] It is difficult to discern the extent to which they attribute agency to the *adderet*. Such portrayals are typically made in passing comments that do not provide sufficient explanation as to how these scholars understand these attributions of power. This tendency to obscure depictions of the *adderet*'s power in this performance well illustrate the uncertainties that biblical scholars sometimes have in discussing the agency of objects more broadly in the Hebrew Bible. Nevertheless, these interpretations at least open up ways of interpreting objects as powerful, and thus move closer to acknowledging the impact that such objects may have in ritual contexts.[862]

The *adderet* has an inherent potency illustrated by both its etymology and its materiality. The Hebrew root from which the term *adderet* is derived (אדר) can be interpreted as 'majestic' or 'glorious.'[863] This may corroborate with the suggestion that in some texts the term *adderet* indicates an expensive or beautiful garment.[864] However, it is possible that the biblical writers' employment of this clothing term was intended to imply its inherent potency or power as a garment used by the prophet.[865] It has also been suggested that the *adderet* is powerful given its materiality as a 'hairy garment.' Indeed, hair or animal skin is often portrayed as a potent material in the Hebrew Bible and

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[861] Identified as a 'talisman of power' in Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279. As a 'magical prop' in Matthews, "Making Your Point: The Use of Gestures in Ancient Israel," 26. And as a 'token of spiritual power' in DeVries, *1 Kings*, 239.

[862] The *adderet*'s power is more effectively explained in other scholarly interpretations, for example: in some discussions the *adderet* is recognised as having a potency of its own and that it is 'endowed with magical power.' In Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 239. For similar interpretations, see Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 354; Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 75. It can be observed that Robert Carroll suggests that it is by 'the agency of Elijah's mantle' that they cross the Jordan, Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 411. However, elsewhere in the same interpretation Carroll indicates that it is Elijah and not the *adderet* that is powerful, Ibid., 405.

[863] Ahlström, " 'Addîr ; 'Addereth," 73–74.

[864] As implied in C. De Wit, "Dress," ed. J. D. Douglas and F. F. Bruce, *The New Bible Dictionary* (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 1962), 326; Ahlström, " 'Addîr ; 'Addereth," 73; Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 126.

[865] Ibid., 73.

in other ancient West Asian texts; such materials are often identified as objects connoting 'life' or a person's strength.[866] Brunet's in-depth discussion of Elijah's *adderet*, which particularly focuses on the points above, illustrates that it is depicted as 'un instrument de puissance' both philologically and physically.[867]

Brunet's argument appears to recognise that the materiality of an object is central to its power and agency, a point I have stressed in this thesis. However, this argument, although interesting, is based on some unsustainable assumptions, most notably the assumption that Elijah's *adderet* is hairy. This is often implied elsewhere in biblical scholarship, yet it is based on an uncritical conflation of the depiction of Elijah as a 'lord of hair' in 1 Kings 1:8, which is often interpreted as an indication that Elijah was wearing a hairy garment, with a hairy *adderet* depicted in Zechariah 13:4.[868] Given that this material property is not explicitly attributed to the biblical writers' depiction of Elijah's *adderet*, it cannot be assumed that this material property helps to elucidate the *adderet*'s power. It is possible that the *adderet*'s specific material properties were efficacious or potent, yet this is difficult to suggest without better understanding of the sort of garment implied by this clothing term. Instead, we must look to its inherent potency as an object and its portrayed performance and movement in the texts to explore its agency in these texts.

I also remain unconvinced that the *adderet*'s etymological root can be confidently used to associate the *adderet* with glory or power. Language and its meanings frequently fluctuate depending on its context and use, making it difficult to ascertain whether the '*adderet*' in its modified state as a clothing

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[866] For Brunet's discussion on his interpretation of the *adderet* as a hairy garment and its potency, see Ibid., 149–150, 155, 158–159. On the broader discussion on the social significance of hair and its potency in the Hebrew Bible and ancient West Asian cultures, see Susan Niditch, *My Brother Esau Is a Hairy Man: Hair and Identity in Ancient Israel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[867] Brunet, "Y Eut-Il Un Manteau De Prophète?," 155.

[868] For a fuller discussion on interpretations of 2 Kings 1:8 and its assumed relationship with Elijah's *adderet*, see Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 126–127. For assumptions that Elijah's *adderet* is hairy or made with animal skins, see Robinson, *The First Book of Kings*, 223; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 413; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 165; Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 85; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 316; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 237; Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 126–127; Gunkel, *Elijah, Yahweh, and Baal*, 29.

term would necessarily have carried the same connotations as its original root.[869] Brunet's attempts to develop an understanding of the *adderet*'s depiction as an object of power cannot be sustained or used to develop the present discussion of its agency. Still, this does not imply that the *adderet*'s own materiality was not efficacious; whilst the biblical writers do not give specific details as to its material properties, its inherent potency as an object can instead be perceived by considering its portrayed use in action in the biblical texts.

Earlier it was suggested that the *adderet* has become an iconic garment in biblical studies, and in a number of these scholarly interpretations it is implied that this garment is not only iconic – it is extraordinary.[870] This is illustrated in scholarly interpretations of the *adderet* as a garment that has 'special' powers.[871] Tova Forti even restricts the *adderet*'s extraordinary power to its use in parting the Jordan (2 Kings 2), implying that it does not have this capability or potential in its employment elsewhere.[872] In biblical studies it is uncommon for clothing, or objects in general, to be attributed with power or magic in the way that biblical scholars have done with Elijah's *adderet*. Indeed, only a small number of objects in the Hebrew Bible have typically been regarded to manifest such ritually potent or extraordinary power, examples of which include Moses's staff (Exodus 4:2, 4, 17; 9:23; 10:13; 14:15-22; Numbers 20:8-11); Aaron's staff (Exodus 7:9-12; 15-20; 8:5-6; 16-17, Numbers 17:6-10); the bronze serpent (21:8-9), and the ark of the covenant (Exodus 26; 40:20-21; Deuteronomy 10; Joshua 3, 4, 6).[873] Like

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[869] On the more general fluctuation of the meanings and uses of clothing terms in ancient West Asian cultures see references in section 2.2.

[870] By 'extraordinary' here I mean that which is set apart or set above other objects as an exceptional example.

[871] The *adderet*'s extraordinary or special powers are suggested in O'Brien, "The Portrayal of Prophets in 2 Kings 2," 9; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233. This point is also loosely implied in Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 49; Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?," 227; Noble, "Cultic Prophecy and Levitical Inheritance," 56.

[872] Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 239. It can be observed that this event itself has also been identified as extraordinary, Satterthwaite, "The Elisha Narratives and the Coherence of 2 Kings 2-8," 8.

[873] Implied in George Wesley Coats, *Moses: Heroic Man, Man of God*, Journal for the Study of the Old Testament.: Supplement Series 57 (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1988), 186–191; James W. Watts, "From Ark of Covenant to Torah Scroll:

Elijah's *adderet*, these objects are often treated as exceptional items exhibiting their own power, akin to extraordinary people or deities.

It is important to avoid depicting these performances as exceptions to other uses of clothing in the Hebrew Bible. By making certain objects 'extraordinary,' as indicated above, biblical scholars can be seen to inadvertently 'other' them. Such interpretations may imply that the depiction of these objects cannot easily be reconciled with or judged according to conventional Western conceptions of clothing; therefore, they are often treated as exceptions that fall outside of these conceptions, and as such they are 'othered.'[874] This 'othering' is illustrated by the lack of in-depth analysis of the agency of these objects, as has already been mentioned in this chapter.

The tendency to attribute certain objects, such as the *adderet*, with extraordinary status has another impact on the depiction of other garments used in action in the biblical texts. It is implicitly suggested that these other garments are 'unexceptional,' implying that they do not manifest their own agency or potency in their performance in rituals or in other contexts. This study focuses on the *adderet*, of which its portrayal offers a more extensive depiction of the use of clothing in ritual performance, in order to open up ways of thinking about the ritual use of clothing in the biblical texts, rather than to limit this ritual potency to this one example. It will be argued that the *adderet* is not extraordinary for the reasons often attributed to it in biblical scholarship, but rather it shown to be powerful through specific movements in certain ritual contexts much like the portrayal of various other garments in the biblical texts. In the following chapter I shall explore an example of a clothing performance

Ritualizing Israel's Iconic Texts," in *Ritual Innovation in the Hebrew Bible and Early Judaism*, ed. Nathan MacDonald (Berlin; Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2016), 21–34. It can be noted that of these objects most of them are legitimised within the biblical texts as objects that have been divinely empowered by Yahweh or are employed by those that Yahweh has divinely appointed. This appears to legitimate their unusual agency in the biblical texts allowing more conservative biblical scholars to acknowledge this power. Whereas objects that do not fall under this category have either not been considered in-depth or their power is not explicitly acknowledged in biblical scholarship.

[874] Note that the broader events in 2 Kings 2 have been othered in Richard Nelson's commentary, 'The world of these narratives is certainly not the world of the modern reader. Water parts miraculously. Bears come out of the words at the prophet's command…' Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 157.

often overlooked or considered to be unexceptional in order to develop my analyses further.

6.5 Beyond the Static: Clothing in Action

In order to move beyond conventional scholarly interpretations of Elijah and Elisha's *adderet* it is necessary to scrutinise the finer details of these performances and each action in which the *adderet* is employed. In this thesis it has already been illustrated that the performance of clothing and changes in its materiality are efficacious in transforming material and social relationships between people and with other objects. Thus, when the *adderet* is employed in movement, engaging people, elements, places, spaces, and objects, we have to consider the intricacies of these actions in order to better understand the biblical writers' depiction of these details.

I argue that Elijah's performances in the texts discussed can be elucidated further by considering their ritualistic potency, including the actions that Elijah performs with the *adderet* itself. Still, it must be recognised that many biblical scholars have depended on older models of ritual practice, many of which are now outdated or restrictive.[875] These older models of ritual often imply that for a performance to be identified as a ritual it must fulfil a number of predetermined conditions; such models have therefore uncritically skewed which texts or performances might typically be identified as 'ritual' in the Hebrew Bible.[876] In such approaches to ritual the depiction of performances such as Elijah and Elisha's actions with the *adderet* are unlikely to be recognised as ritualistic, since they do not easily conform to a conventional pattern or model of ritual. As suggested, biblical scholars have been limited in

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[875] As implied in David P. Wright, "Ritual Theory, Ritual Texts, and the Priestly-Holiness Writings of the Pentateuch," in *Social Theory and the Study of Israelite Religion: Essays in Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Saul Olyan, Social of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study 71 (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 195–216.

[876] This has inevitably limited the discussion of ritual in the Hebrew Bible; biblical scholars have largely tended to focus on cultic activities depicted in the Priestly texts, as noted in Ibid., 196–197. However, see the development of studies of broader rituals depicted in the Hebrew Bible in Olyan, *Biblical Mourning*; Olyan, "Introduction," 2015; Nathan MacDonald, ed., *Ritual Innovation in the Hebrew Bible and Early Judaism* (Berlin; Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2016).

their depiction of the *adderet*'s power, part of the reason for this is probably due to the lack of scholarly acknowledgement of its ritual capacity in these performances. The allusion to investiture and ordination hint at the ritual importance of these texts, but such ceremonies are still dependent upon set structures of what ritual should look like. I suggest there is no need to loosely associate Elijah's actions with a particular standardised ritual; instead, we can broaden our conception of ritual itself.

It has been increasingly argued, particularly by the well-known ritual theorist Catherine Bell that rituals are intrinsically performance-based - they are rooted in material actions, persons, and objects. As such, they are inherently fluid and complex in nature. This implies that the very attempt to confine them to a set number of standardised features is problematic.[877] Bell effectively argues that we ought to look at how variable features such as space, time, objects, people, speech, and actions can be influential in constructing ritual performance, rather than starting with too many preconceptions about what a ritual 'should' look like.[878] Bell's approach suggests that a whole range of elements can be considered to be influential in impacting and shaping a ritual and its meaning and implications; it does not limit ritual to particular sacred objects or cultic personnel. In a ritual context we must consider how every action, object, place and person may be rendered efficacious. This approach also moves beyond the assumption often made that rituals are largely symbolic. Although the symbolic meanings of ritual are important, given that they might be employed to elucidate wider meaning and purpose in the biblical texts, they are still efficacious as performances and actions.[879]

Given that clothes have an inherent potency to impact other people and objects, as I have suggested, they are particularly well-disposed to being

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[877] As is set out in Catherine Bell, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[878] Ibid., 69–93. Similar arguments have been made in Lars Fogelin, "The Archaeology of Religious Ritual," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 36 (2007): 55–71; Timothy Insoll, "Introduction: Ritual and Religion in Archaeological Perspective," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology of Ritual and Religion*, ed. Timothy Insoll (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1–8; Ronald L. Grimes, *The Craft of Ritual Studies* (New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 194–197.

[879] This is suggested in Fogelin, "The Archaeology of Religious Ritual," 62–65.

employed in ritual performances. It is their very agency as objects, discussed earlier, that indicates this potency. As objects worn on the body, the intimate entanglement of clothing with people as distributed parts of personhood also identifies clothing as intrinsically potent objects. It is also the key material properties and characteristics most common to clothing, such as malleability, as I have argued in earlier discussions, that also makes them easy to employ, manipulate, and transform through different ritual actions. Other elements of a garment's materiality or material history and entanglements may also enhance their potency as objects to be used in ritual, yet as I have suggested, an understanding of ritual must not be restricted to custom-made ritual garments or sacred objects. In the following analyses, it shall be argued that the material features of clothes can be enhanced and empowered through their ritual practice and contexts. By considering Elijah's adderet from this perspective it is also possible to more readily explore its agency and power in these texts.

6.6 The *Adderet*: Thrown (1 Kings 19:19-21)

The performance presented in 1 Kings 19:19-21 is marked by action and movement, as briefly noted earlier in this discussion. The sense of movement in this performance is graphically depicted in the performance of throwing the *adderet* on Elisha: Elijah 'passes by' (עבר) Elisha and throws the *adderet* as he moves (v.19).[880] The biblical writers' depiction of Elisha running to Elijah in the following verse seems to imply that Elijah continues moving, forcing Elisha to run to catch up with him.[881] These actions also imply that Elijah manipulates the materiality of *adderet* to fall on Elisha as it floats through the air, allowing Elijah to continue to move before the *adderet* even touches Elisha. Biblical scholars have frequently commented upon the absence of spoken dialogue in this interaction.[882] Such observations are perhaps

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[880] As implied in Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 318; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279.
[881] This is suggested in Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 37.
[882] The lack of dialogue in this performance is noted in Hermann Gunkel, *The Folktale in the Old Testament*, trans. Michael D. Rutter, Historic Texts and Interpreters in BIblical Scholarship (Sheffield: Almond Press, 1987), 113; Rice,

indicative of a scholarly preference for focusing on speech over materiality or action. However, it is clear that this depiction emphasises the role of action and materiality. This portrayal immediately draws us into the material interactions of Elijah, Elisha, and the *adderet* in this performance.

A number of scholars stress the point that that Elisha 'understood' the meaning and significance of Elijah's gesture.[883] There seems to be a tacit assumption in these interpretations that Elijah's actions may have adhered to a conventional social performance that was probably known to certain ancient recipients of the biblical texts. These interpretations emphasise the symbolic or cultural meanings of these gestures – it is Elisha's ability to interpret Elijah's actions, rather than the performativity of these actions themselves that is rendered meaningful. However, Elijah's actions in passing by Elisha and throwing the *adderet* arguably sets this performance apart and renders the function of this performance or ritually efficacious.

Given that this is depicted as the first interaction between Elijah and Elisha, it might appear unusual for Elijah to 'pass by' rather than to directly approach Elisha. However, if this action is interpreted as ritualistic this could indicate that the biblical writers are using the potency of this movement to alert the reader to the ritual significance of the actions that follow. The use here of the verb עבר meaning 'to pass by' evokes the depiction of Yahweh 'passing by' Elijah in the theophany depicted in chapter 19.[884] The placement of 1 Kings 19:19-21 in conjunction with this text may imply that the biblical writers (or those compiling the biblical texts) had intentionally drawn allusions between these actions, as Yahweh passes by Elijah, so Elijah passes by Elisha. This action of 'passing by' can also be seen to be socially and ritually transformative. Such transformations are well illustrated in texts in which

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Nations Under God, 165; Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 85; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 455; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 105.
[883] Suggested in Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 316; Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige*, 2:233; DeVries, *1 Kings*, 239; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 165; Levine, "Twice as Much of Your Spirit," 43; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 455; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 105; Noble, "Cultic Prophecy and Levitical Inheritance," 51.
[884] A number of scholars have indicated this association inc. Walsh, *1 Kings*, 281; Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism*, 50; Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 176; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 105.

Yahweh is depicted 'passing by,' yet it is likely that this action is also understood to have had a transformative impact in 1 Kings 19:19.[885] After all, this verb is also employed to portray Elijah and Elisha's ritual crossing of the Jordan in 2 Kings 2:8 and 14.[886] Such allusions support the suggestion that Elijah's actions in verse 19 be interpreted in a ritual sense.

It is not only Elijah's act of 'passing by' Elisha that is suggestive of ritual connotations. The biblical writers' employment of the term שלך, throwing, is also loaded with ritual potency.[887] This has already been indicated to some degree in my discussion of the biblical writers' employment of this verb in Genesis 37**:24**, which arguably initiates Joseph's ritual descent into the underworld.[888] This verb is also employed in a number of different ritual performances, for example: the action of throwing frequently has a transformative impact on an object or space that it is thrown on, or into, such as transforming or healing water (Exodus 15:25; 2 Kings 2:21), or the ritual quality of a cooking pot (2 Kings 4:41).[889] These examples illustrate that the act of throwing does not only have a functional sense – it can also be considered as indexing a ritual action that can activate or enhance the potency of the object that employed in this movement. I contend that this is how it is being employed in 1 Kings 19:19, particularly in light of the impact of

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[885] The transformative nature of this action is also illustrated by the depiction of Yahweh 'passing by' Jerusalem in Ezekiel 16:6. This action will be considered further in the following chapter.

[886] Noted in Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 176.

[887] As suggested and illustrated in W. Thiel, "Šlk; Šālāk; Šalleket," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green, vol. XV - šākar - taršîš (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2006), 88–96.

[888] The biblical writers' use of this verb in Isaiah 14:19 also probably plays a role in constructing the broader imagery of ritual descent in Isaiah 14. This use implies an act of ritual violence against the king portrayed in this text, since it indicates that his bones have been disinterred.

[889] In 2 Kings 6:6, Elisha is depicted throwing a stick into water in order to make an axehead float. This verb is also used in the repeated performance in which the user's staff is transformed into a serpent (Exodus 4:3, 7:9-12). In these texts the act of throwing appears to initiate the staff's transformation.

this action on Elisha's performance in verses 20-21, which will be considered further in this section.[890]

The performance of throwing in Elijah's performance in 1 Kings 19:19 has sometimes been identified as an act of throwing away, or as a dismissive gesture.[891] This has sometimes been interpreted along with Elijah's enigmatic question, "'What have I done to you?'" (1 Kings 19:20) as an indication that Elijah lacks enthusiasm or denies agency in handing over his role as a prophet.[892] In an alternative interpretation, Paul Kissling proposes that Elijah's question suggests that he did not intend for Elisha to follow him, suggesting he anticipated his role to be over upon appointing Elisha as the new prophet.[893] Both of these interpretations seem to distance Elijah's involvement from the impact that throwing the *adderet* has on Elisha and is used to imply Elijah's lack of commitment in this scene. It indicates that these scholars only consider the *adderet* as a marker of status, overlooking the possibility that this object is also Elijah's garment. Such suggestions illustrate that the *adderet* has only been considered in essentialist or reductive ways.

In contrast to these scholarly interpretations, the depiction of Elijah's clothing performance can be seen to construct an intimate relationship between Elijah and Elisha.[894] Following on from what I have already argued in this thesis, as Elijah's own garment, and not just as a marker of prophetic status, I suggest the *adderet* is a distributed part of Elijah's body and personhood. As such, it is an extension and thus a manifestation of his personhood and agency. This interpretation of the *adderet* allows us to reconsider Elijah's actions of

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[890] Elisha's transformation through the action of throwing the adderet is implied in Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 175–176.

[891] Implied in DeVries, *1 Kings*, 239. This is also implied in suggestions that Elijah's actions in throwing the *adderet* was indicative of his resistance to appointing Elisha as his successor suggested in Lamb, "'A Prophet Instead of You,'" 184. On a similar point, see Walsh, *1 Kings*, 280.

[892] Implied in DeVries, *1 Kings*, 239; Lamb, "'A Prophet Instead of You,'" 184. It can be observed that the ambiguity of Elijah's question in verse 20 is emphasised in a number of biblical studies, Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 316; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 413; Long, *1 Kings*, 205; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 127; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 165.

[893] Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 177.

[894] Volkmar Fritz suggests that the *adderet* marks a new bond formed between Elijah and Elisha, Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 200.

throwing it on Elisha – it would indicate that Elijah was throwing or extending his personhood to impact Elisha. Through this ritual action, Elisha is intimately entangled with Elijah's personhood as well as the *adderet*'s own materiality and agency. Interpreted in this way, this action can hardly be considered as a dismissive or uncommitted gesture, or even one that can be reduced to a sign of prophetic calling. This may also indicate the irony of Elijah's question to Elisha, "'What have I done to you?'" (v. 20). The question indicates a call for Elisha to recognise the power of this action, since it is clear that the *adderet* does impact Elisha.[895] The ritual potency of the action of throwing emphasises these complex entanglements that are formed through Elisha's physical contact with Elijah's *adderet*.

It is important to distinguish between the suggestion that Elijah's personhood impacts Elisha through the throwing of the *adderet,* and the depiction of possession or control that has been portrayed in a number of scholarly studies. It is suggested that the throwing of the *adderet* forces or coerces Elisha to follow Elijah.[896] This is particularly well illustrated in Herman Gunkel's interpretation of this action, since he implies that this gesture may be identified as a binding spell that he associates with other magical devices which have the power to bewitch.[897] This association implicitly suggests that the *adderet* magically impacts and influences Elisha in some sense. However, if this action was a spell of sorts, this is not made apparent in the text nor is it self-evident that Elisha is 'bewitched'. It is possible that some of these interpretations may have been influenced by an older, somewhat outdated, convention in biblical scholarship in which the prophetic call was considered

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[895] It has been suggested that this question may be meant as a rhetorical question since it is clear that Elijah did do something significant to Elisha, Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233. It is possible that this question could be meant in the sense, 'But remember what I have done to you,' as is suggested in Robinson, *The First Book of Kings*, 223; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 413.
[896] Implied in Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 200; Bellamy, "The Elijah-Elisha Cycle of Stories," 81–82. This is also implied to some extent in John Gray's suggestion that the biblical writers' depiction of Elijah's clothing performance indicates an example of contractual magic in which the *adderet*, which is 'imbued with his personality and power,' secures power over Elisha, Gray, *I & II Kings*, 413.
[897] Gunkel, *Elijah, Yahweh, and Baal*, 29; Gunkel, *The Folktale in the Old Testament*, 113.

to be a supernaturally-induced compulsion.[898] Therefore, this would imply that Elisha's presumed call to prophecy in 1 Kings 19:19 was also involuntary. I argue that there are other more convincing ways to understand the impact that Elijah's *adderet* has on Elisha in this context.

Elisha's entanglement with the *adderet* is instrumental in transforming his personhood.[899] Whilst the action of throwing the *adderet* implies that Elijah's extended agency can impact Elisha, it can also be noted that the *adderet*'s own material agency transforms Elisha. Through Elijah's actions Elisha forms a relationship with the *adderet* by which his own bodily boundaries and movements are enabled and disabled in new ways through the *adderet*'s material agency. Like Latour's depiction of the man-with-the-gun, the biblical writers' depiction of Elisha-with-the-*adderet* presents new possibilities for Elisha's own performance.[900] This would imply that Elijah's agency manifested in the *adderet* activates Elisha's raw potential as a ritual practitioner and draws Elisha into ritual action through the possibilities this new materiality constructs.

Elisha's own ritual performance and can be interpreted in two ways in this text. First, his subsequent actions in this performance are often considered to indicate the transformation of his social identity or personhood. Elisha's request to return and kiss his parents (v.20) could be taken to imply an act of departure from them, or it could be a request for their blessing.[901] In either case, it indicates a performative gesture through which Elisha arguably transforms his relationship with his parents. The biblical writers' portrayal of

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[898] See Amos 3:8. It is possible that the involuntary nature of Elisha's actions or role following Elijah's performance may be implied to some extent in Josephus's interpretation of this text. Josephus indicates that Elijah's action in throwing the *adderet* on Elisha caused him to immediately prophecy, Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, trans. Ralph Marcus, vol. III: Books 7–8, Loeb Classical Library 281 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1934), 8:7:354. Noted in Feldman, Louis H., "Josephus' Portrait of Elijah," 72.

[899] Loosely implied in Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 175–176.

[900] See further discussion on this example in chapter 1, section 1.7.

[901] On the suggestion that this gesture indicates Elisha's request for his parents blessing, see Gilmour, *Juxtaposition and the Elisha Cycle*, 78. For the suggestion this indicates Elisha is leaving or abandoning his parents, see Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 149.

Elisha burning the tools of his trade and slaughtering and boiling his oxen for a feast (v.21) has typically been interpreted as an indication that Elisha is 'burning his bridges.'[902] Through these actions Elisha illustrates the irreversible destruction of his old personhood and sociality, and demonstrates his commitment to a transformed identity.[903] It is only through Elisha's initial entanglement with the *adderet* that he is open to this new possibility.

A number of biblical scholars have recognised the ritual dimensions of Elisha's actions in slaughtering and boiling his oxen for a feast[904] the biblical writers' employment of the verb זבח is evocative of ritual sacrifice as is the act of boiling בשל.[905] The meal itself has been interpreted as a fellowship or a thanksgiving offering or feast.[906] In light of the previous discussion of the *adderet*'s impact on Elisha it can be suggested that these interpretations continue to illustrate and support the proposal that the *adderet*, which manifests Elijah's personhood as a ritual practitioner, also enables Elisha's own ritual practice. This illustrates how the *adderet*'s agency impacts Elisha's own movement and practice in this text.

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[902] Suggested in Gray, *I & II Kings*, 414; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 148; Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 124; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 455; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 106.

[903] For more on the destruction of Elijah's identity and means of sustenance, see Gray, *I & II Kings*, 414; Robinson, *The First Book of Kings*, 223; Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 124; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 455; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 225; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 106. On the depiction of oxen as an indicator of Elisha's wealth and means, see Robinson, *The First Book of Kings*, 223; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 127; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 279; Levine, "Twice as Much of Your Spirit," 42; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 455; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233; Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 35.

[904] On the suggestion that these actions as a part of a religious or ritual performance, see Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 85; Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 124; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 106.

[905] Examples of use of זבח in sacrificial contexts can be found in Genesis 31:54; Exodus 18:12, Leviticus 3, 4, 7; Numbers 7. The sacrificial context of boiling is illustrated in Exodus 34:26; Leviticus 8:31; Numbers 6:19, 11:8. On the suggestion that Elisha sacrifices his oxen, see Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 225; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233. Contra. Cogan, *1 Kings*, 455.

[906] Walsh, *1 Kings*, 280; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 225; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233.

6.7 The *Adderet*: Rolled to Strike (2 Kings 2:8)

The biblical writers emphasise the *adderet*'s role through a sequence of actions: Elijah 'takes' the *adderet* and 'rolls it up' – it is only then that it is used to 'strike' the Jordan (2 Kings 2:8). However, scholarly discussions have often tended to blur or overlook these distinct actions. Many biblical scholars refer more generally to Elijah's 'use' of the *adderet* or focus only on his action in using the *adderet* to strike the waters.[907] In the light of the emphasis frequently placed on Elijah's or Yahweh's power in this performance, it is likely that these actions with the *adderet* themselves are presumed to be of lesser importance.[908] If this event was caused solely by Elijah or Yahweh's power - as has been implied - then the biblical writers' inclusion of these other actions seems somewhat superfluous. In contrast, it will be argued here that it is through the sequence of each of Elijah's actions in which the *adderet* is depicted that its agency is most fully elucidated.

Elijah's actions in 'taking' and 'rolling up' the *adderet* can be recognised as significant steps that enables the efficacy of its performance in striking the Jordan. The biblical writers' depiction of Elijah 'taking' (לקח) the *adderet* initiates this sense of movement even before it is manipulated or struck. It creates an expectation that Elijah is about to purposefully employ the *adderet* in his ritual performance and by doing so it activates the inherent potency of this garment to be employed in efficacious action. This portrayal reminds the reader of the entangled relations that are manifest between Elijah, Elisha, and the *adderet*, and reiterates the suggestion that this garment is a part of Elijah's body. Elijah's next action with the *adderet* can also be considered as a stage that activates and transforms its agency through the manipulation of its

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[907] For examples in which scholars tend to generalise Elijah's actions in their discussions, often referring to his 'use' of the *adderet*, see Williams, "The Prophetic 'Father,'" 345; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 235; Matthews, "Making Your Point: The Use of Gestures in Ancient Israel," 26; Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 52. For examples of studies that tend to reduce Elisha's performance to the action of striking the Jordan, see Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 354; Robinson, *The Second Book of Kings*, 25; Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 52; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 239.

[908] See section 6.4 in this chapter for further discussion.

materiality.[909] The biblical writers use the term גלם to depict this second action. As a hapex legomenon, this term is somewhat ambiguous; nevertheless, most scholarly interpretations seem to indicate that this action suggests that Elijah is manipulating this garment in some way.[910] However, it can be recognised that biblical scholars diverge on how they interpret this manipulation and its impact on Elijah's performance.

This action has most frequently been interpreted in association with the verb גלל meaning 'to roll up' suggesting that Elijah's rolls up the *adderet*, which implicitly alters its material properties and shape. A number of scholars have proposed the action manipulates the *adderet* to become like a staff or wand.[911] It is most likely that such depictions were influenced by the broader tendency for biblical scholars to align or associate the supra-natural event of parting the Jordan with other instances in which water is divided in the biblical texts (Exodus 14:21; Joshua 3:5-6).[912] These interpretations of the rolled up

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[909] Note that Laura Feldt recognises the transformative impact of Elijah's actions with the *adderet*, Laura Feldt, "Wild and Wondrous Men: Elijah and Elisha in the Hebrew Bible," in *Credible, Incredible: The Miraculous in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Tobias Nicklas and Janet E. Spittler, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament 321 (Tübingen, Germany: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 328, 342–343, 345–346.

[910] On the ambiguity of this verb as a hapex legomenon, see Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 32; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 20; Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?," 225–226; Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 126.

[911] Suggested in Feldt, "Wild and Wondrous Men," 328, 342–343, 345–346. This is implied to some extent in Gunkel, *The Folktale in the Old Testament*, 113. The tendency for scholars to imply that Elijah's actions rolling up the *adderet* imitated the form of a staff has been noted and challenged in Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?," 227–228.

[912] For studies that allude to other biblical texts in which waters are parted, particularly Moses's performance with his staff that splits the Reed Sea, conventionally known as the 'Red Sea', see Gray, *I & II Kings*, 475; Coulot, "L'Investiture D'Elisée Par Elie (1R 19, 19-21)," 86–87; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 19; Gunkel, *The Folktale in the Old Testament*, 113; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 173; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 13; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 290; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 235; Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 354; Burnett, "The Question of Divine Absence in Israelite and West Semitic Religion," 217–218; Burnett, "'Going Down' to Bethel," 287; Stefano Cotrozzi, *Expect the Unexpected: Aspects of Pragmatic Foregrounding in Old Testament Narratives* (New York; London: T&T Clark International, 2010), 85–86; Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 51; Feldt, "Wild and Wondrous Men," 345–346; Marvin A. Sweeney, "Prophets and Priests in the Deuteronomistic History: Elijah and Elisha," in *Israelite Prophecy and the Deuteronomistic History: Portrait Reality, and the Formation of a History*, ed. Mignon R. Jacobs and Raymond F. Person Jr., Ancient Israel and Its Literature 14 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 43–44. See Rachel Havrelock's discussion for further discussion of the similarities between these

adderet as a staff seem to allude to the depiction of the employment of Moses's staff in the parting of the Reed Sea (Exodus 14:21). However, such allusions are not unproblematic.

By making such associations these interpretations implicitly overlook the *adderet*'s unique agency and materiality. It implies that this garment is potent only insofar as it resembles Moses's extraordinary staff, indicating that it must be linked to another potent object to gain its significance and agency. Whilst the similarities between these supra-natural events are notable, the depiction of the *adderet* as a staff seems to function only to bolster allusions to Moses's performance, rather than to elucidate the impact of Elijah's actions on the *adderet*'s materiality and agency. It is almost as if the *adderet* is being drawn on the blueprint of Moses's staff denying it of its own agency. Therefore, I would suggest that these associations with Moses's actions with his staff should be made only tentatively.[913] It must be recognised that even if the *adderet* is rolled up like a stick, its agency and material form is still notably distinct from a staff and must be considered to play its own role in its performance in 2 Kings 2.

Some scholars have argued that that the interpretation of גלם as an action of 'rolling up' does not provide a satisfactory explanation of Elijah's actions.[914] Instead, such scholars have suggested that this root could be associated with the Arabic root *jalama* meaning 'to cut,' alternatively interpreted as 'to shear.'[915] John Kaltner argues that the ritual action of cutting the *adderet* makes more sense in Elijah's performance.[916] It effectively imitates the action

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performances, particularly in Exodus 14:21 and 2 Kings 2:8, 14. She also relates these examples with New Testament depictions of Jesus and John the Baptist in the Jordan. Note that Havrelock's argument concentrates on identifying these performances as a type scene for succession, Havrelock, *River Jordan*, 135–174.

[913]Stefano Cotrozzi emphasises that these crossing are still distinct and notes that different objects are employed in each performance, Cotrozzi, *Expect the Unexpected*, 85. On a similar point, see O'Brien, "The Portrayal of Prophets in 2 Kings 2," 9.

[914] Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?"; Bellamy, "The Elijah-Elisha Cycle of Stories," 80–83; Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 126–127.

[915] Interpreted as 'to cut' in Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?," 226. Followed by, Bellamy, "The Elijah-Elisha Cycle of Stories," 80–81. Interpreted as 'to shear' in Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 126.

[916] Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?," 226.

that Elijah wants to happen to the Jordan – both the *adderet* and the waters of the Jordan are divided or cut.[917] This has been considered to also corroborate with the imagery of Elisha tearing his own garment into two pieces.[918] The depiction of cutting as an act of ritual empowerment is illustrated in the Hebrew Bible, particularly the act of cutting the body, as has already been alluded to in this thesis.[919] The ritual action of cutting could be seen to enhance the efficacy of the *adderet*, yet this action simultaneously indicates that this garment's materiality is permanently transformed, perhaps even to the extent that it no longer functions in the same way as a garment.

Despite the persuasiveness of this interpretation in the context of 2 Kings 2:8, Hadi Ghantous has more recently attempted to develop this argument in a slightly different direction. Ghantous indicates that an interpretation of Elijah's action as 'shearing' would fit with both the root 'jamala' and a number of Greek interpretations of Elijah's performance.[920] This argument starts to recognise the significance of Elijah's action in transforming the material status and properties of the *adderet*. For Ghantous it is this manipulation that seems to be influential in empowering the *adderet*. Despite this seemingly insightful point, Ghantous's interpretation is dependent on the suggestion that the *adderet* was constructed from a sheepskin; it is implied that through being sheared the sheepskin *adderet* is transformed into a pliable scroll that can be rolled up.[921] Ghantous's attempt to associate the *adderet* with a scroll seems to depend on too many conjectured details. Indeed, it has already been demonstrated that the interpretation of the *adderet* as an animal skin is not supported by the biblical texts. Furthermore, Ghantous's interpretations are also guided by a predetermined agenda – to demonstrate the shift in Israelite prophecy from the figure of the prophet to written prophecy. This unhelpfully

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[917] Kaltner also suggests that the action of cutting makes sense of the omission of this action in Elisha's performance in splitting the Jordan. He argues that if the *adderet* is cut there is no need to repeat this action as it implies that *adderet* is already materially transformed, Ibid., 228.

[918] Suggested in Bellamy, "The Elijah-Elisha Cycle of Stories," 83.

[919] See section 5.5.

[920] Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 126.

[921] Ibid., 126–127. This depiction seems to corroborate the biblical writers' portrayal of the action of rolling up scrolls (implied in Isaiah 34:4).

directs the focus away from the particularities of Elijah's actions with the *adderet* and towards the importance of the overarching themes in the Hebrew Bible.

It is clear that Ghantous's interpretation moves too far towards speculation making Kaltner's argument seem even more persuasive. However, I find myself not wholly convinced by Kaltner's alternative interpretation nor his emphasis on the apparent need to diverge from the mainstream interpretation of Elijah's action of rolling up the *adderet*. It is worth acknowledging that the root גלם remains ambiguous, therefore it is important to develop possible interpretations of these actions. Still, it can be argued that the action of rolling up is not as inappropriate as Kaltner may imply. Kaltner indicates that this interpretation has been influenced by scholarly tendency to align this text with Moses's performance in crossing the Reed Sea.[922] However, this action and its manipulation can be considered on its own terms without needing to reject this translation altogether. The action of rolling up has its own potency in this performance – it enables the *adderet* to move in new ways and to take on a new form. The rolling of the *adderet* could empower it by manipulating its materiality in a form that is more conducive and efficacious for being used to strike - implying that this action has impacted the aerodynamics of this garment, and taken into account how clothing usually moves through the medium of air, as I have indicated. Even if this action not as substantiated as a ritual gesture as is the act of cutting, its very ability to transform the *adderet*'s materiality can indicate its use to enhance the power and impact of the *adderet* in this ritual performance.

In each of these interpretations of the manipulated *adderet* both the action by which this garment is transformed and the transformed garment itself are central to understanding the *adderet*'s potency in this clothing performance. It can be suggested that such manipulations actively reconstruct the *adderet* as something that is still a garment, yet is also rendered something else; in other words, it takes on a different form that is distinct from its usual shape on a body, underscoring the liminality of the *adderet*'s materiality. It is in this

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[922] Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?," 226.

transformed and liminal state that the *adderet* is then employed and empowered to impact the waters of the Jordan itself a liminal location. I propose that Elijah's employment of the *adderet* to strike the waters implies that he extends his personhood and power, which is manifested in the *adderet* its own inherent and ritually transformed agency, over the Jordan waters. Whilst it has been argued that Elijah's initial actions with the *adderet* in verse eight activates its potency as an object, the motion of striking (נכה) is dramatic itself and has its own potency as an action. Implicit in this action is the suggestion that the *adderet*'s relationship with the waters is that of a subjugator taking control over something that is typically portrayed as chaotic in the biblical texts.[923]

In biblical scholarship, discussions of the significance of Elijah's actions involving the *adderet* have often focused on its ability (or Elijah's) to trigger the supra-natural dividing of the Jordan.[924] However, although this phenomenon demonstrates the efficacy of Elijah's performance and arguably also the *adderet*'s power, this clothing performance can also be seen to enable Elijah and Elisha to access the other side of the Jordan.[925] The ritual significance of the crossing of the Jordan, and not only its division, is implied by the biblical writers' employment of the ritually loaded verb עבר 'to pass over', to depict this crossing. The theme of journeying and ritual movement is featured prominently in 2 Kings 2. The first section of this text (2 Kings 2:2-6) is characterised by a constant sense of movement in which Elijah and Elisha journey to a number of different ritually resonant locations.[926] The biblical

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[923] This is indicative of typical chaoskampf imagery depicted in many ancient West Asian and biblical texts. For further discussion on chaoskampf imagery see discussions in Bernhard Lang, *The Hebrew God: Portrait of an Ancient Deity* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2002), 57–62; Nicholas Wyatt, "Arms and the King: The Earliest Allusions to the Chaoskampf Motif and Their Implications for the Interpretation of Ugaritic and Biblical Traditions," in *'There's Such Divinity Doth Hedge a King': Selected Essays* (Hants, UK; Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2005), 151–89.

[924] Implied in Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 157; Kaltner, "What Did Elijah Do to His Mantle?," 227; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 239; Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 52.

[925] Implied in Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 411.

[926] Such as, Gigal, Bethel, and Jericho. Cf. Burnett, "'Going Down' to Bethel". Particularly 288.

writers' depiction of their movement 'going down' to Bethel evokes seems to evoke ritual descent imagery.[927] The tension of this journey is brought to a climax when it is implied that the 'prophets' come to a temporary standstill as they reach the edge of the Jordan (v.7).[928]

The biblical writers frequently portray the Jordan itself as a potent ritual, geographic, and political boundary.[929] The significance of this boundary space has been emphasised in a number of biblical studies, for example Burke Long identifies the Jordan as a 'thresholding river' only accessible by those who are 'specially set apart.'[930] Long also argues that Elijah and Elisha's crossing to beyond the Jordan marks a crossing into a sacred or numinous realm.[931] In wider biblical scholarship it has been effectively established that the space beyond the Jordan is a potent yet dangerous ritual space that is closely associated with otherworldly realms. Elijah and Elisha's separation from 'ordinary' space and time is also emphasised by the biblical writers' depiction of the sons of prophets who remain standing 'at a distance' as Elijah and Elisha reach the edge of the Jordan and cross over (v. 7).[932] This points to the exclusivity of the access that these 'prophets' had through the use of Elijah's *adderet*.[933] The ritual dimensions of the biblical writers' portrayal of location and movement in this text can be seen to indicate the significance of Elijah's ritual manipulation and performance of the *adderet*: its agency enables Elijah and Elisha to step across a ritual threshold and into an otherworldly space.

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[927] Note the suggestion that these verses indicate a 'prophetic' journey, which may begin to indicate its ritual significance, Ibid. Particularly 288. For further discussion on ritual ascent/descent imagery, see section 5.3.

[928] Bergen indicates verse seven breaks the chain of waw-consecutive verbs leading up to this verse and can be seen as a disjunction that marks the start of a new episode of the story, Bergen, *Elisha and the End of Prophetism*, 61.

[929] See Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 160; Long, *2 Kings*, 25–26, 28; Havrelock, *River Jordan*, 135–136.

[930] Long, *2 Kings*, 25–26.

[931] Ibid., 26, 28. A similar point has been suggested in Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 158. Contra. O'Brien, "The Portrayal of Prophets in 2 Kings 2," 9.

[932] Implied in Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 160; Long, *2 Kings*, 26. It has also been proposed that the text of 2 Kings 2 stands outside the chronological time and structure of the broader narrative and therefore, already has a sense of otherworldliness, Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 158.

[933] It has been suggested that Elijah and Elisha's isolation from others is emphasised through this crossing, Long, *2 Kings*, 25; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 13.

The slight distinction in the biblical writers' depiction of Elisha's repetition of the Elijah's clothing performance (v.14), in which the Jordan is divided and Elisha returns to the other side, can be briefly addressed here. The biblical writers' portrayal implies that Elisha strikes the adderet twice, rather than only once in verse eight; moreover, Elisha invokes the names of Elijah and Yahweh during this clothing performance:

> and [Elisha] took Elijah's *adderet* which had fallen from on him and he struck the waters and said, "Where is Yahweh the God of Elijah?" and he struck the waters and they were divided to the one side and to the other and Elisha passed by. (2 Kings 2:14)

A number of biblical scholars have proposed that Elisha's actions in striking the *adderet* twice indicate an attempted replication of Elijah's actions that indicates Elisha's lack of experience or familiarity with the *adderet*. Such a suggestion may implicitly denote Elisha's lack of power in comparison to Elijah.[934] However, I would propose that Elisha's clothing performance and his crossing of the Jordan do not necessarily have to replicate Elijah's actions exactly. It can be stressed that Elisha's relationship with the *adderet* is distinct from Elijah's own entanglement with this garment. These performances need not be measured against each other.

Repetition is an important feature in ritual practice that can be seen to empower the speech or actions performed in a particular ritual. This would indicate that the repetition of Elisha's actions implies another way of ritually enhancing the *adderet*'s potency in this performance. Thus, the implied double-striking of the *adderet*, as well as the combination of spoken word and action, could be interpreted as a way of enhancing the efficacy of both the *adderet*'s and the ritual.[935] Even though Elisha's performance is distinct from Elijah's the biblical writers clearly suggest that Elisha's actions evoke Elijah's own ritual performance with the *adderet*, these similarities are also important

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[934] For studies that indicate that Elisha's actions lack power or marks the failure of his first action in striking the *adderet*, see Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 163; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 15; Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 127.
[935] On the suggestion that spoken word adds emphasis in this performance, see Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 55.

to understanding Elisha's performance. The repetition of actions and the depiction of Elisha calling on Elijah's name can also be considered to add authoritative quality to Elisha's actions in using the *adderet* to strike the Jordan. This does not negate the ritual power of this performance on its own, but indicates how its efficacy is augmented through its allusion to Elijah's performance in 2 Kings 2:8.

6.8 The *Adderet*: Lifted up (2 Kings 2:13-14)

Many biblical scholars recognise that the depiction of Elisha's action in 'picking up' the *adderet*, using the Hebrew verb רום, has a transformative impact on him, implying that he assumes a new identity.[936] However, the majority of scholars still seem to focus largely on the transformation of Elisha's social status, rather than his whole personhood; as has already been indicated, Elisha is generally largely considered to 'take on' the role of a prophet.[937] Nevertheless, the discussion in this chapter so far has clearly illustrated that the *adderet* that Elisha 'takes up' manifests its own power and impacts Elisha's agency.

I argue that Elisha's action in 'taking up' the *adderet* rather than 'putting on' this garment is also indicative of Elisha's relationship with the *adderet*, like Elijah's, being characterised through action. Following on from my interpretation of the *adderet* in 1 Kings 19:19-21, it can be suggested that by picking up the *adderet* Elisha once again transforms his own movement and enables ritual performance. The impact of that this garment on Elisha's actions has already been demonstrated to some extent through my interpretation of his performance in 'taking' and 'striking' the Jordan in 2 Kings 2:14. This section shall explore how the biblical writers' depiction of Elisha's actions in 2 Kings 2:13-14 can enrich our understanding of his intimate

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[936] Implied in Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 136; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 15; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 290; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 195–196.
[937] Implied in Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 176; Satterthwaite, "The Elisha Narratives and the Coherence of 2 Kings 2-8," 5, 8; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 290; Gilmour, *Juxtaposition and the Elisha Cycle*, 87.

entanglement with the *adderet* and how this relationship can be seen to enable Elisha to move into ritual performance.

Scholars frequently understand Elisha's actions with the *adderet* in 2 Kings 2:13 in relation to his initial clothing performance in this sequence, in which he tears his own garment (בגדיו) into two pieces in verse 12.[938] The biblical depiction of this action is emphatic; scholars have particularly noted its distinction from the frequent performance of tearing clothing in the biblical texts.[939] By stressing that Elisha's garments are torn completely into two pieces the biblical writers effectively illustrate that its materiality is completely transformed, indicating that it can no longer be used as Elisha's clothing in the same sense.[940] I suggest that the tearing of Elisha's garment, which can be seen as a distributed and intimate part of his personhood, dramatically implies a tearing of his own body and personhood. This imagery echoes Elisha's destruction of the other aspects of his material personhood portrayed in 1 Kings 19:19-21. Together with Elisha's performance with the *adderet*, these actions have been considered to be efficacious in marking this turning point in Elisha's identity and status. As Cohn comments, 'this small piece of delayed exposition [in 2 Kings 2:12-13] nicely enables the writer to portray Elisha divesting himself of one identity and assuming another.'[941] The biblical writers' emphatic depiction of the action of tearing reiterates the significance that clothing has in this text and can be seen to highlight Elisha's performance with the *adderet*.

Some scholarly interpretations of Elisha's actions in tearing his garments limits perceptions of his performance with the *adderet* in verse 13. The portrayal of this action immediately proceeds from the depiction of Elijah being taken up to heaven (v. 11). Many biblical scholars have understood Elisha's

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[938] Such as in Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 91; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 176; Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 136; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 15; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 290; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 195.

[939] Long, *2 Kings*, 27; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 195.

[940] This is implied in Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 195.
Note this is somewhat similar to the brothers material transformation of Joseph's *ketonet passim* depicted in Genesis 37:31.

[941] Cohn, *2 Kings*, 15.

actions as a direct response to this dramatic event.[942] It can be noted that amongst such interpretations, some have particularly stressed that Elisha's tearing action also highlights his separation from Elijah, implying, as Robert Cohn suggests that 'the pairing of Elijah and Elisha [has] now ended.'[943] It is probable that these interpretations are influenced by the prominent depiction of Elijah being 'taken from' (לקח) Elisha that is anticipated in the repeated dialogue at the beginning of this text (2 Kings 2:2-6, 9-10). However, these interpretations implicitly undermine the *adderet*'s ability to manifest Elijah's personhood and the role that it plays in entangling Elijah and Elisha's relationships even beyond his departure (2 Kings 2:13-14). These restricted interpretations offer only a simplistic rendering of a sequence of clothing performances that can be considered to have dynamic implications in this text.

To a certain extent, the tearing of Elisha's clothing may imply his separation from Elijah. At the least, this action connotes a transformation in their relationship.[944] However, these actions cannot be considered to indicate a termination of this relationship, as is implied in Cohn's interpretation. The biblical writers reiterate that Elijah's personhood, and therefore his presence, continues to be manifested in the *adderet* through its consistent depiction as *Elijah's adderet* (אדרתאת־ אליהו) even after Elijah has been taken away and Elisha takes this garment. The continuation of Elijah's presence in the *adderet* is also indicated by the acknowledgement by the sons of prophets that Elijah's

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[942] For example, scholars have frequently interpreted this action as an emotional response of grief, Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 159; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 32; Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 90; Long, *2 Kings*, 27; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 290; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 236; Gilmour, *Juxtaposition and the Elisha Cycle*, 88; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 195. Or as a mourning ritual, Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, 17; Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige*, 2:275; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 160; Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 90; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 174; Cohn, *2 Kings*, 15; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 236; Burnett, "The Question of Divine Absence in Israelite and West Semitic Religion," 217; Havrelock, *River Jordan*, 157; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 195. Cf. other studies that interpret Elisha's actions in verse 13 in relationship with Elijah's departure, see Robinson, *The Second Book of Kings*, 26; O'Brien, "The Portrayal of Prophets in 2 Kings 2," 11.

[943] Cohn, *2 Kings*, 15. This is also implied to some extent in Long, *2 Kings*, 27; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 195.

[944] These garments presumably also played a role in Elisha's performance as Elijah's 'servant' or 'follower' (1 Kings 19:21).

spirit (רוח) is on Elisha (2 Kings 2:15). This implies that although Elijah has ascended into heaven he remains nonetheless remains materially manifest in the earthly realm by means of through his *adderet*. Therefore, the biblical writers' depiction of clothing imagery in this text indicates the complexities of the entanglements through which Elijah can be perceived as both present and absent in these verses.[945]

There is an additional ritual dimension to Elisha's actions with the *adderet* that can be considered here. The majority of biblical scholars indicate that Elisha 'picks up' or 'takes up' the *adderet*.[946] However, the verb רום is frequently interpreted as 'to lift up' or 'offer up' in other biblical texts and is particularly employed in ritual contexts.[947] For example, Moses is depicted lifting up (רום) his staff in a number of ritual contexts (Exodus 7:20, implied in 14:20), and this verb is also frequently employed in the depiction of offerings made to Yahweh (e.g. Leviticus 4:10, 19; 6:3, 8; Numbers 15:19-20). Whilst this is a legitimate interpretation in its context in 2 Kings 2:13, very few biblical scholars read Elisha's actions in this way - probably because Elisha's performance with the *adderet* has not typically been considered to have ritual significance.[948] The action of 'picking up' fits more neatly within Western expectations of the performance of clothing. Still, having illustrated the prominent use of ritual imagery depicted in this text it would be appropriate to also consider the ritual dimensions of Elisha's actions in 2 Kings 2:13 and its implication for how we might enrich an understanding of this clothing performance.

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945 Implied in Havrelock, *River Jordan*, 158.

946 For example in Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, 17; Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 17; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 130; Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings*, 31; Stacey, *Prophetic Drama*, 90; Long, *2 Kings*, 28; Satterthwaite, "The Elisha Narratives and the Coherence of 2 Kings 2-8," 5, 8; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 290; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 235; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 274.

947 This is suggested and illustrated in W. Thiel, "Rûm; Mārôm," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green, vol. XIII - qôs - rāqîa' (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), 402–12.

948 For example, Hobbs, *2 Kings*, 14. Hadi Ghantous also suggests that Elisha "exalts" the *adderet*, Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 127. However, neither expand on this interpretation.

The 'lifting up' of the *adderet* can be understood as another action activating the *adderet*'s potent agency. This performance may be considered as an extension of Elisha's ritual performance of the *adderet* to enable him to cross back over the Jordan. Still, it might also be proposed that the biblical writers' depiction of this action of lifting up effectively reaffirms the *adderet*'s potency and ability to be used in ritual performance even after Elijah has been taken away. As I have proposed earlier, Elijah and Elisha's relationship with the *adderet* is not exactly synonymous. Elisha's act of 'lifting up' the *adderet* illustrates its own transformation in Elisha's hands. By being lifted up, the *adderet* seems to gain importance; it takes on a new shape and performance on Elisha's body.

The depiction of the *adderet*'s movement in verse 13 reiterates the prominent employment of the imagery of ritual ascent and descent in the broader context of 2 Kings 2.[949] In 2 Kings 2:13-14 the biblical writers repeat the phrase 'the *adderet* of Elijah that had fallen from on him.' This depiction evokes the imagery of this garment losing its material form. The notion of falling, נפל, often connotes death or entry into the underworld – note, for example, the depiction of a king's fall from heaven into the underworld in Isaiah 14:12.[950] It may be that the falling of the *adderet* connotes Elijah's earthly 'death' and perhaps separation from the earthly realm. In some ways it might also connote an episodic death of the *adderet* in the sense it has lost its 'life' on Elijah's body. When this detail is read in relation to Elisha's action in 'lifting up', the *adderet's* movement is dramatically inverted.[951] Therefore, by interpreting Elisha's action as 'lifted up' in comparison to 'falling', it is possible to see how the biblical writers' depiction heightens the dynamics and ritual significance of the *adderet's* movements in this performance.

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[949] This language is accentuated by Elijah ritual ascent into heaven in verse 11.
[950] The association of this verb with death is suggested in H. Seebass, "Nāpal; Nēpel; Nepîlîm," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green, vol. IX - mārad - nāqâ (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 494–495.
[951] The imagery of the fallen *adderet* is emphasised by its repetition in verse 14, as suggested in Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 196.

6.9 Summary

This chapter has particularly elucidated the biblical writers' depiction of clothing in action or movement. Whilst such depictions of clothing have been explored to a certain extent in previous chapters, this chapter has particularly focused on the portrayal of actions that have largely been regarded to play only a symbolic role in these performances in biblical scholarship. As I have indicated, this has most frequently been the case in interpretations of garments in prophetic or ritual performances. I have illustrated my discussion with the example of Elijah's adderet and its use in three different ritual actions. I have argued that the portrayal of Elijah and Elisha's employment and manipulation of the materiality of the adderet illustrates its transformative power and agency. Moreover, as I have suggested, these movements empower and enable their ritual performances in these texts. As such the *adderet* can be considered as a garment that constructs part of Elijah and Elisha's identities and personhood as ritual practitioners.

I have illustrated that the movement of a garment marks a shift in a person's material experience of and enmeshment with that garment. This suggestion is particularly evocative in light of my proposal that the *adderet* becomes a distributed part of Elijah's and later Elisha's personhood – through the *adderet*'s actions it extends their bodies in distinct ways depending on each particular movement or manipulation. I have shown that the *adderet* can also impact other relationships that are indicated through this performance by viewing it in a different way, as the sons of prophets do in 2 Kings 2:15, or constructing a material relationship with it as is the case for Elisha in 1 Kings 19:19.

In this chapter it has been demonstrated that Elijah and Elisha' performances of clothing have an important ritual dimension. It has been implied that it is the very unconventional nature of Elijah and Elisha's actions with the *adderet* that arguably indicates its ritual employment in each of its contexts. Indeed, I have demonstrated that the portrayal of these actions with other objects in different biblical texts also connotes the ritual potency of these actions. Nevertheless, it must be stressed that it is not only the action that is powerful in and of itself, it

is the employment of the *adderet* and how its materiality is impacted through these actions that must also be considered to have an impact in these rituals. It has been observed that when the *adderet* is thrown, rolled, cut, or lifted its materiality is transformed and its power is activated in a new sense.

It has been argued that the *adderet* enables Elijah and Elisha's own ritual performativity. This has been illustrated in two different ways in the texts that I have examined, although it must be reiterated that each performance achieves this in distinct ways according to its different movements. First, it has been indicated that the ritual performance of the *adderet* enables Elijah and Elisha to cross ritual and physical boundaries. This was most effectively illustrated through the depiction of the taking, rolling and striking of the *adderet* to cross over the Jordan. Nevertheless, this crossing of boundaries is also implied in 1 Kings 19:19, as its movement enables Elijah and Elisha to move into a ritually charged space. Second, the *adderet*'s movement and relationship with its user can also be suggested to enable the ritual transformation of one's personhood. Elisha is first transformed by his material experience of the *adderet*, which enables him to also move into a ritual performance that deconstructs his former personhood and identity (1 Kings 19:19). Elisha is again empowered into ritual performance through picking up and lifting the *adderet* (2 Kings 2:12), which arguably empowers the *adderet* and through it Elisha in a new sense enabling him to cross back over the Jordan (2 Kings 2:14).

Although this chapter focuses on the example of Elijah's *adderet* the analysis offered here can be used more broadly to consider other ritual performances in which clothing is employed. This chapter has demonstrated that any garment has an inherent potency as an object to be used and employed in a ritual capacity, it is not completely dependent on a specific garment that is legitimated within the Yahwistic cult or depicted as sacred object by the biblical writers. Indeed, I have dismantled the suggestion that it is the *adderet*'s identity as the prophets' mantle that gives this garment significance. Instead it has been effectively emphasised that the *adderet* must not be reduced to its power to identify them with a particular social or material role. It

is the *adderet*'s particular movement and performance that most effectively illustrates its power and impact in these texts. I shall now turn to consider another example of its employment in a ritual performance in further depth, through which I shall develop some of the key points that have begun to be explored in this chapter.

7 The Wrapped *Adderet*

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will offer an in-depth analysis of the ritualistic action and performance of Elijah's *adderet* in 1 Kings 19:13, 'Elijah wrapped his face in his *adderet* and he went out and stood at the opening of the cave.' In the previous chapter I began to broaden scholarly perceptions of the ritual performance of clothing through my examination of a number of biblical texts. The present chapter shall develop on these ideas and demonstrate how a more in-depth discussion can effectively enrich interpretations of Elijah's actions in wrapping his face in the *adderet*. This fuller examination will be used to illustrate the broader impact that Elijah's clothing performance and the *adderet*'s own agency has on its context in 1 Kings 19:1-18.

Although I have already explored the depiction of Elijah's *adderet* in a number of texts, this performance of wrapping the *adderet* is worth further consideration. Despite being the same garment that is depicted in 1 Kings 19:19 and 2 Kings 2:8-14, its employment in 1 Kings 19:13 has been treated very differently in biblical scholarship. It has been noticeably overlooked, even to the point that a number of scholars do not address this depiction of the *adderet* in their discussion of 1 Kings 19:1-18.[952] Biblical scholars have typically focused on other contentious details in this text that may at first seem to overshadow the details of Elijah's clothing performance. For example: the biblical writers' unexpected depiction of Yahwistic theophany (1 Kings 19:11-12).[953] It is understandable that scholars have focused on these details given the conventional tendency in wider biblical studies to privilege the imagery that seems to have particular theological significance. However, the lack of discussion on Elijah's *adderet* in this text is somewhat surprising given that his

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[952] For example in Robinson, *The First Book of Kings*, 220–222; DeVries, *1 Kings*, 235–237; Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 60–77; Olley, "Yhwh and His Zealous Prophet," 37–41.
[953] Or the unusual portrayal of Elijah's character and his attitude towards Yahweh (1 Kings 19:4, 10, 13, 14).

other engagements with this garment in 1 Kings 19:19 and 2 Kings 2:8-14 have provoked much discussion in biblical studies. By exploring the clothing performance in 1 Kings 19:13 we can most effectively demonstrate the contrast between scholarly interpretations of different clothing imagery in the biblical texts (even of the same item of clothing) and reiterate the need to reconsider the clothing imagery that continues to be undervalued in biblical scholarship.

One of the most probable explanations for the undervaluing of this clothing performance (1 Kings 19:13) is that the *adderet* has typically only been considered to play a functional role in the actions of wrapping. This is implicit in the tendency for commentaries to only address the symbolic or social elements of the *adderet* in their interpretations of 1 Kings 19:19 and not in their discussions of its use in verse 13.[954] Richard Nelson limits the role that Elijah's *adderet* plays by proposing that: 'It is important to the plot, but not theologically loaded.'[955] Whilst Nelson seems to acknowledge that the *adderet* does have a limited social function in this performance, his assumption that this garment is not theologically or ritually loaded still significantly undermines its agency in this ritually potent text.

Some scholars even propose that the *adderet* has more significance in its 'later' passages than in verse 13.[956] For example, Iain Provan suggests that in 1 Kings 19:19 the *adderet* is 'put to considerably more use than in v. 13.'[957] This implies that the *adderet*'s use in verse 13 is interpreted in comparison

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[954] Gray, *I & II Kings*, 411–413; DeVries, *1 Kings*, 236–239; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 160, 165; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 276–279; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 453–455; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 233.

[955] Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 125. Nelson's distinction between actions that are 'religious' and 'secular' as implied here is highly problematic, since it imposes anachronistic dichotomies onto ancient texts.

[956] As suggested in Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 148; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 275; Bender, *Die Sprache Des Textilen*, 127. It is probable that the significance of Elijah's actions with his *adderet* in this text has not recognised to the same extent as other depictions because it does not seem to play a role in marking prophetic succession, a role that is often considered to mark its main purpose for its employment in other biblical texts. For scholars that only seem to link 1 Kings 19:19, 2 Kings 2:8, 14 with the 'prophetic mantle' see Rice, *Nations Under God*, 165; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 146–147; Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue*, 353. For the recognition of the *adderet's* important role in verse 13, see Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 238.

[957] Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 148.

with Elijah's other performances with the *adderet*, in which its ritual and performative function appears to be more explicit.[958] As a result, the wrapping of the *adderet* appears, at least on a superficial level, to play more of a functional and practical role in covering Elijah's face. This does not mean we can retroject the *adderet*'s efficacy from these 'later' depictions into interpretations of its performance in 1 Kings 19:13. In the previous chapter I argued that the performance of any garment in ritual performance is able to manifest its own agency and have a transformational impact through its manipulation and movement in that ritual. This implies that the simplistic rendering of Elijah's actions wrapping the *adderet* often implied in scholarly interpretations is insufficient.

This chapter shall first identify and explore the ritualistic imagery employed in 1 Kings 19:1-18, which will help to elucidate on the efficacious context in which Elijah performs with the *adderet*. I shall then address and challenge conventional interpretations of Elijah's actions, particularly focusing on the presumption that his performance with the *adderet* concerns covering his eyes. There are other ways to consider the transformative impact that the *adderet* has on Elijah's personhood and actions that will be developed in this chapter. I will then explore how Elijah's manipulation and employment of the *adderet* enables or disables his movement and speech in its ritual context in 1 Kings 19:9-14.

Scholarly discussions of 1 Kings 19 frequently emphasise an apparent shift in Elijah's personhood from the biblical writers' portrayal of him in other texts. Here, many biblical scholars have questioned Elijah's integrity and commitment to his prophetic role, whilst others have focused on the deterioration of Elijah's psychological state in this narrative.[959] The

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[958] It is harder to account for the use of Elijah's *adderet* being rolled and used to strike the Jordan (2 Kings 2:8, 14) without indicating its possible symbolic or ritual significance in this clothing performance. See previous chapter for a fuller exploration of this performance.

[959] Some scholars focus on Elijah's self-pity and unwillingness to obey Yahweh, as indicated in Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 60–77. This is also implied in interpretations that stress Elijah's ego in this chapter. Such as in Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah." Elijah's depression or emotional breakdown is implied in Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 126–127; Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of

prominence of such discussions in biblical scholarship has meant that Elijah's action in wrapping his face in the *adderet* is often interpreted in light of these discussions. This implies that the biblical scholars who do acknowledge the importance of the *adderet* typically focus on whether or not it constructs Elijah as an ideal or reluctant prophet in this text. Discerning the biblical writers' depiction of Elijah's personality will not be the primary focus of this chapter, nevertheless, the dominance of these discussions makes it necessary to engage with these interpretations in my examination of the *adderet*. Whether or not Elijah's actions denote his enthusiasm to follow Yahweh, or lack thereof, I propose that the biblical writers' depiction of the wrapping of Elijah's *adderet* is indicative of a step that enables him to communicate more effectively and intimately with Yahweh.

7.2 Setting the Ritual Scene

In 1 Kings 19:1-18 the biblical writers begin by depicting Elijah fleeing, after his life is threatened by Queen Jezebel (v. 1-3).[960] His journey takes him towards the periphery of the land, where he leaves his servant and continues into the wilderness (מדבר) (v. 3-4). In the wilderness the biblical writers portray Elijah's request for Yahweh to take his life or נפש before falling asleep (v. 4). Instead of taking his life, Yahweh's messenger appears and instructs Elijah to eat and drink (v. 5-6). This sequence (v. 5-6) is repeated a second time after which Elijah departs in strength (v. 7-8). He travels for forty days and forty nights before reaching Mount Horeb and resting in a cave (v. 8-9).

Elijah," 106; Bernard P. Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb, 1 Kings 19:1-18: A Coherent Narrative," *Revue Biblique* 98, no. 4 (1991): 534; Olley, "Yhwh and His Zealous Prophet," 38; J. Dwayne Howell and Susan H. Howell, "Journey to Mount Horeb: Cognitive Theory and 1 Kings 19:1-18," *Mental Health, Religion & Culture* 11, no. 7 (2008): 655–60. It has even been suggested was suicidal, Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 54. These interpretations are insightfully challenged in Sigve Tonstad, "The Limits of Power: Revisiting Elijah at Horeb," *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 19, no. 2 (2005): 255–256.

[960] In the Masoretic text this narrative directly follows a portrayal of a challenge between Yahweh, Baal and their prophets at Mount Carmel. After the challenge Elijah kills the prophets of Baal. It is generally assumed that it is this narrative that causes Jezebel to retaliate against Elijah.

On Mount Horeb the narrative culminates in a theophanic scene. Yahweh first questions Elijah's purpose there (vv. 9-10). After Elijah's response, Yahweh manifests his divine presence in material form after a series of dramatic phenomena (vv. 11-12).[961] Elijah's response is portrayed in a sequence of actions: he wraps his face in the *adderet*, then sets forth (יצא) and stands (עמד) at the opening of the cave (v.13). It is this performance that shall be considered in greater depth in this chapter. Elijah's actions are followed by a repetition of the question and response pattern (initially depicted in vv. 9-10, here in vv. 13-14). Finally, Yahweh gives Elijah a set of instructions, which seems to end the depiction of this theophanic scene on mount Horeb (vv. 15-18).

At first, it may appear as though Elijah's journey to Mount Horeb (vv. 1-10) has little to do with his actions with the *adderet*.[962] However, a brief consideration of the biblical writers' employment of space, beings, and objects in this scene alert us to the wider ritual dynamics of Elijah's employment of the *adderet* and his movements in 1 Kings 19:13.[963] First, it can be observed that

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[961] For further discussion on the question and response pattern see Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 145–147; Nel and Schmidt, "Theophany as Type-Scene in the Hebrew Bible," 265.

[962] Some scholars emphasise that the narrative does not indicate a clear and purposeful journey to Mount Horeb, implying that these events are not obviously linked. It is emphasised that there is no direct indication that Elijah initially intends to go to Mount Horeb. Instead, it is implied that Elijah's primary reason for leaving is to flee for his life, as argued in Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 61–63. Alternatively, other scholars suggest that Elijah's main purpose in coming to the wilderness was in order to die. This is implied from the suggestion that he leaves his servant in Beersheba (1 Kings 19:3), presumably to go on alone to die, and from Elijah's request for death, 1 Kings 19:4, as suggested in DeVries, *1 Kings*, 235; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 144. In these suggestions the depiction of Elijah's journey to mount Horeb seems like more of an afterthought. Contra. Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, 14. I propose that the biblical writers' depiction of this journey does seem to be evocative of a sort of mytho-ritual journey, which entails crossing through otherworldly spaces and interacting with otherworldly beings as will be illustrated in this chapter.

[963] It is often recognised that Elijah's journey has ritual or symbolic significance as it has been identified as a pilgrim or spiritual journey, Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel*, Rev. and enl. ed. (Louisville; KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 59; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 233; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 231; Howell and Howell, "Journey to Mount Horeb." For a broader view on ritual journeys in ancient West Asian and biblical texts see Wyatt's exploration of journeys involving the crossing of thresholds into otherworldly spaces, Nicholas Wyatt, *Space and Time in the Religious Life of the Near East*, The Biblical

Elijah moves further and further into peripheral spaces, removed and distanced, both geographically and conceptually, from the routine of everyday life.[964] In its wider ancient West Asian context, peripheral spaces, particularly the wilderness, are portrayed as liminal spaces; they mark thresholds into otherworldly realms in which divine beings and demons often dwell.[965] In 1 Kings 19 such connotations are supported by Elijah's interaction with the divine messenger (vv. 5-7).[966]

It is also important to recognise the ritual significance of the more immediate location in which Elijah manipulates the *adderet*, since our understanding of

Seminar 85 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 183–207. Cf. see for an alternative depiction of Elijah's journey, Micha Roi, "1 Kings 19: A 'Departure on a Journey' Story," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 37, no. 1 (2012): 25–44.

[964] This is suggested in Walsh, *1 Kings*, 266, 280–281; Olley, "Yhwh and His Zealous Prophet," 39. Burke Long points to the tendency for divine encounters to appear away from organized social spaces, for example in Exodus 3:1; 17:1, 17-24; 19:1, 3; 1 Kings 19:9, Long, *1 Kings*, 198. Elijah also goes to Beersheba, a place that is depicted as a location in which Abraham (Genesis 21:27-33); Isaac (Genesis 26:23-25) and Jacob (Genesis 46:1), all perform ritual activities – making a covenant, encountering Yahweh, building an altar, and offering sacrifices. Its significance as a 'religious' or ritual site is implied to some extent in Rice, *Nations Under God*, 157; Roi, "1 Kings 19," 30. Beersheba also marks a significant location, since it is often used to imply a boundary marker between Israel and that, which is beyond Israel (Judges 20:1; 1 Samuel 3:20; 2 Samuel 3:10; 17:11; 24:2, 15; 1 Kings 4:25). As noted in Gray, *I & II Kings*, 407; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 266; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 451; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 231.

[965] See S. Talmon for an extended discussion of wilderness and mountain motifs in the Hebrew Bible. This paper usefully addresses some of the ritualistic connotations of these spaces, S. Talmon, "Har and Midbār: An Antithetical Pair of Biblical Motifs," in *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East*, ed. M. Mindlin, M. J. Geller, and J. E. Wansbrough (London: School of Oriental and African Studies: Taylor & Francis, 1987), 105–25. See also, Smith and Nick Wyatt on ancient West Asian cosmic geography, including an examination of peripheral and central spaces, Mark S. Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 27–40; Wyatt, *Space and Time in the Religious Life of the Near East*, 40–41; 53–83.

[966] The depiction of a tree in verses 4-5 seems somewhat out of place considering its depiction in the wilderness, which was often also associated with death and barrenness. However, the biblical writers' employment of this imagery might be also considered to emphasise the ritual potency of Elijah's journey. Trees are potent objects that connote life and are also frequently employed in depictions of divine imagery in ancient West Asian cultures. For further discussion on tree imagery as a potent symbol of life, see Wyatt, *Space and Time in the Religious Life of the Near East*, 166–171. For examples of the frequent exhibition of tree imagery on ritual objects, see Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998).

this context particularly has a bearing on how we interpret these actions.[967] The biblical writers stress the potency of this space by identifying Mount Horeb as the mountain of God (הר האלהים) (v. 8). In biblical scholarship it is well illustrated that mountains evoke a place in which the cosmic realms were considered to intersect and converge, which further supports the ritual significance of Elijah's location.[968] The potent connotations in these locations, persons, and objects show the biblical writers' attention to nuanced details in their construction of the ritual setting, even before the depiction of Yahweh's interaction with Elijah in 1 Kings 19:9-18.

Elijah's own actions are performed in the context of a ritually loaded theophanic scene (1 Kings 19:9-18). Yahweh's portrayal in this theophany marks a notable shift away from some of the 'traditional' or more typical features of his manifestation in other theophanic scenes.[969] The biblical writers evoke a dramatic scene including a number of supra-natural phenomena with which Yahweh is commonly associated with, including wind, earthquakes and fire.[970] However, it is emphasised after each depiction of these phenomena that Yahweh is 'not in' them.[971] These negations build the suspense of the narrative, leading to the depiction of Yahweh's presence in a mysterious sound (קול דממה דקה). This material manifestation is unique to 1 Kings 19, and has consequently raised multiple questions regarding its purpose and significance.[972] Despite the importance of this unusual depiction,

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[967] The cave in which Elijah rests (v. 9) shall be di scussed in more depth later in this chapter.
[968] Talmon, "Har and Midbār," 116. Its apex is often associated with the heavenly realm, whilst a mountain's valleys and roots are associated with the netherworld, Wyatt, *Space and Time in the Religious Life of the Near East*, 147–157.
[969] See further debates on this in Gray, *I & II Kings*, 410; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 159–160, 162–163; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 146.
[970] These phenomena have traditionally been associated with the manifestation of Yahweh's presence, as suggested in DeVries, *1 Kings*, 236. See also references above.
[971] Note that this negation could be translated 'not yet' rather than 'not,' which would tone down the separation from these phenomena and Yahweh's presence, as suggested in Nel and Schmidt, "Theophany as Type-Scene in the Hebrew Bible," 275.
[972] Scholars have often pointed at the ambiguity of this Hebrew phrase, suggesting it was a 'still, small voice' or a 'voiceless whisper,' see further discussions in J. Lust, "A Gentle Breeze or a Roaring Thunderous Sound?," *Vetus Testamentum* 25, no. 1

I will develop interpretations of the significance of a lesser addressed aspect of this theophany - Yahweh's voice (v. 13b) - later in this chapter. The recognition that Elijah's actions occur in the context of this unconventional theophany is significant since it may help us to expound on the possible reasons for his choice in wrapping his face in the *adderet*.

The biblical writers frequently draw its readers' attention to the multi-sensory nature of Elijah's journey and theophanic experience in 1 Kings 19:1-18.[973] For example, this text frequently illustrates the limitations of Elijah's physical body: he sleeps (ישן) (v. 5);[974] eats (אכל), and drinks (שתה) (vv. 4, 8), and then is portrayed moving in power for forty days and nights (v. 8).[975] The biblical writers even depict Elijah speaking to his own נפש, asking it to die (v. 4). Elijah's encounter with the divine messenger powerfully evokes its tactile nature, since this messenger does not 'appear' to Elijah, instead he 'touches' (נגע) him to stir him.[976] As suggested earlier, Yahweh's own manifestation and the phenomena that precede it are also multi-sensory. To some it might seem as though the biblical writers' depiction of Yahweh's manifestation in a voice constitutes a shift away from a more materialistic portrayal of Yahweh's

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(1975): 110–15; Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 522–528. In order to not impose unsubstantiated meanings on this theophanic feature I have chosen to leave it in its Hebrew form.

[973] This imagery is somewhat undermined in Sulzbach's interpretation, since she suggests that the entire encounter with divine beings, including with Yahweh, is all part of a visionary dream, Carla Sulzbach, "When Going on a Heavenly Journey, Travel Light and Dress Appropriately," *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 19, no. 3 (2010): 186–187. However, it does not seem to be necessary to go this far. Moreover, even if Elijah's encounter was part of a dream this should not mean that we can overlook the implications of the use of material culture in this text.

[974] Also implied in 1 Kings 19:6, 9.

[975] Walsh particularly notes upon the biblical writers' employment of a fast succession actions with little description or dialogue, implying that the biblical writers emphasise the sense of action and materiality in this text, Walsh, *1 Kings*, 269. Note that the motif of forty days and forty nights (1 Kings 19:8) is often employed in ritual journeys or events, such as in Genesis 7:12, 17, Exodus 24:18; Deuteronomy 9:8. This motif connotes rich symbolism in these texts, but also may related to the forty years spent in the wilderness. For studies that have drawn associations between Elijah's journey and Moses's experience, see Kimelman, "Prophecy as Arguing with God and the Ideal of Justice," 26.

[976] As implied in Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 64. Contra. Esther J. Hamori, *"When Gods Were Men": The Embodied God in Biblical and Near Eastern Literature* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 107.

presence.[977] However, in this chapter it will be stressed that even a voice evokes a materially potent and tangible manifestation of Yahweh's presence.[978] By exploring Elijah's use of the *adderet* we can enrich these interpretations of Elijah's physical transformation and his material engagement with Yahweh in this text.

7.3 Averting or Blindfolding the Implied Gaze

In biblical scholarship there is a prevailing tendency to interpret Elijah's performance of wrapping his face (1 Kings 19:13) in association with the biblical writers' depiction of Moses being covered by Yahweh in a theophanic context in Exodus 33:22-23:

> And it will happen when my glory (כבוד) passes by, I will set you in the cleft of the rock and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by. I will take away my hand and you will see my back part, but my face will not be seen.[979]

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[977] Implied by Bernard Robinson's suggestion that this portrayal depicts Yahweh as "transcendent," Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 534.

[978] It is likely that such suggestions have particularly been influenced by the depiction of supra-natural phenomena in which Yahweh's presence is denied.

[979] For studies that draw allusions between the clothing imagery in these texts, see Gray, *I & II Kings*, 411; Long, *1 Kings*, 201–202; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 128; Jeffrey J. Niehaus, *God at Sinai: Covenant and Theophany in the Bible and Ancient Near East*, Studies on Old Testament Biblical Theology (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1995), 247; Terence E. Fretheim, *First and Second Kings*, Westminster Bible Companion (Louisville; KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), 109; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene"; Nel and Schmidt, "Theophany as Type-Scene in the Hebrew Bible," 266–267, 275–276; John E. Harvey, *Retelling the Torah: The Deuteronomistic Historian's Use of Tetrateuchal Narratives* (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 69–70; Savran, *Encountering the Divine*; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 238; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 232; Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 53. For broader allusions made between Exodus 33 and 1 Kings 19, see Robinson, *The First Book of Kings*, 218; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 410; Auld, *I & II Kings*, 125–127; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 128; Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 144–147; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 158–159; Long, *2 Kings*, 201; Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 133; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 288–289; Fretheim, *First and Second Kings*, 109–110; Jane Ackerman, *Elijah: Prophet of Carmel* (Washington: Washington Province of Descalced Carmelites, Inc.; ICS Publications, 2002), 20; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene"; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 220–221; Nel and Schmidt, "Theophany as Type-Scene in the Hebrew Bible"; Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 86–89, 204–229; Sweeney, "Prophets and Priests," 39–40; Gunkel, *Elijah, Yahweh, and Baal*, 25–27; Kimelman,

In both of these texts the imagery of covering is employed in conjunction with Yahweh's action passing by, (עבר) (1 Kings 19:11): Elijah wraps (לוט) his face, whilst Yahweh is depicted covering (שכך) Moses. The biblical writers' other depictions of Moses's encounters with Yahweh, particularly where the imagery of covering is evoked, have also frequently been paralleled with Elijah's actions with the *adderet*. These include, for example: Moses 'hiding' his face in fear before Yahweh's presence (Exodus 3:6), and, in a dramatically contrasting portrayal, Moses is depicted 'unveiling' (taking off the covering) his face before Yahweh (Exodus 34:29-35).[980] Such parallels are increasingly taken for granted and some scholars have uncritically presumed the inter-textual relationships between these texts.[981] The dominance of these approaches has meant that scholarly interpretations of Elijah's actions with the *adderet* in 1 Kings 19:13 have been impacted by the depiction of Moses's performances even though the former two of his performances do not explicitly depict any clothing imagery.

The prevalence of these parallels has led to the scholarly tendency to focus on Elijah's gaze on Yahweh. In 1 Kings 19:13 there is little explanation as to why Elijah covers his face before moving into the opening of the cave. It can be observed that possible explanations for these actions have often been imported and assumed from these associated texts. In Exodus 33:20 the biblical writers stress the danger of looking at Yahweh's face, 'and Yahweh said, "You cannot see my face for no man can see me and live."' Thus, Yahweh's actions in covering Moses (Exodus 33:22-23) could be seen to protect him from danger. Many scholars assume that Elijah's actions in wrapping his face was to cover his eyes to prevent him from seeing Yahweh,

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"Prophecy as Arguing with God and the Ideal of Justice," 25–26; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 266–267.

[980] For further discussion on the connection between 1 Kings 19:13 and Exodus 34:29-35, see Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 128; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 57; Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 53–54. A contrast is also implied in Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 238.

[981] For broader scholarly associations between Elijah and Moses as paradigmatic figures, see Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas"; Auld, *I & II Kings*, 125–127; Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 133–134; Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 353; Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 53–54; Ghantous, "From Mantle to Scroll," 124–125; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 266–267.

particularly seeing Yahweh 'face to face.'[982] It is even proposed that Elijah 'veils his eyes' implicitly limiting Elijah's act of wrapping to his eyes, rather than his face as suggested in the biblical texts (v. 13).[983] Such interpretations imply that the *adderet* functions like a blindfold in a practical and protective sense in this text.[984] This interpretation is supported to some extent by the observation that a number of other biblical texts similarly allude to the danger of 'seeing' or 'looking at' Yahweh or other divine beings.[985] However, there are inevitably limitations to these suggestions.

Other aspects of these paralleled texts have uncritically been imported into interpretations of Elijah's actions. In a number of discussions scholars have referred to Elijah's action in using the *adderet* to 'hide' his face from Yahweh.[986] It is likely that such interpretations have been influenced by the depiction of Moses hiding his face because 'he was afraid to look at Yahweh' (Exodus 3:6).[987] However, this change in language from 'wrapping' to 'hiding,' although subtle, implies a shift in the meaning of Elijah's actions. The action of 'hiding' is a loaded term that often connotes a sense of fear or reluctance in

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[982] As suggested in Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 102; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 238; Sweeney, *I & II Kings*, 232.

[983] Walsh, *1 Kings*, 276.

[984] This interpretation would also correspond with the need to protect oneself or others from the danger of the evil eye, or from the power of the gaze which can directly touch and impact the person or object that is seen. For more on the power of the gaze and the protection of clothing, see my discussion on the brothers' gaze on the *ketonet passim* in section 5.2.

[985] For example Judges 6:22, 13:20-22, for more verses and a fuller discussion of the danger gazing on the divine see Simeon Chavel, "The Face of God and the Etiquette of Eye-Contact: Visitation, Pilgrimage, and Prophetic Vision in Ancient Israelite and Early Jewish Imagination," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 19 (2012): 1–55. Chavel argues that looking at Yahweh is dangerous, however, he goes onto suggest that this danger is linked with one's etiquette when looking at Yahweh rather than a physical danger from being blinded or overwhelmed by Yahweh's material manifestation itself.

[986] Such as in Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 128; Niehaus, *God at Sinai*, 247; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 146; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 453; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 221–222; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 238; Frances Flannery, "'Go Back by the Way You Came': An Internal Textual Critique of Elijah's Violence in 1 Kings 18-19," in *Writing and Reading War: Rhetoric, Gender and Ethics in Biblical Modern Contexts*, ed. Brad E. Kelle and Frank Ritchel Ames (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008), 168.

[987] Cogan explicitly links his interpretation with the instinctive reaction to hide that is implied in Exodus 33:22-23; Judges 6:22, 13:20-22, Cogan, *1 Kings*, 453.

the Hebrew Bible. Such connotations can also be seen to impact interpretations of Elijah's personhood and his motivations in 1 Kings 19:9-14, as shall be illustrated further in this chapter. It must be stressed that the biblical writers' depiction of Elijah's action does not appear to focus on his emotional response, despite the tendency for scholars to attach emotionally loaded language in their interpretations Elijah's performance.[988] The action of wrapping itself inevitably has its own connotations that must not be glossed over or easily replaced with other depictions.[989]

Elijah's action in wrapping or covering his face has also been employed to illustrate his failure to reach the same level of intimacy that Moses is presumed to share with Yahweh. Whilst in the texts mentioned above Moses is portrayed being covered or 'covering' himself in Yahweh's presence, in Exodus 34:29-35, the biblical writers depict Moses 'unveiling' his face in Yahweh's presence, implying that he is finally able to 'see' Yahweh.[990] This portrayal is often considered to be a marker of his intimate relationship with Yahweh. When this text has been paralleled with Elijah's actions in wrapping his face, the contrast could not seem more apparent – Elijah is covered before Yahweh, whereas Moses is uncovered and presumed to be completely unhindered in Yahweh's presence. The impact of this association has meant that Elijah's clothing performance has often been considered to imply Elijah's failure – both to reach the same level of intimacy with Yahweh and to meet

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[988] Biblical scholars have often implied that Elijah's actions were partly an emotional response of fear, which has implicitly been supported by its allusion to Exodus 3:6. For example, Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 314. That this action is associated with fear is also indicated in Long, *1 Kings*, 199; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 56. Note that Hauser proposes that 1 Kings 19 focuses on Elijah's fear, Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 60.

[989] The significance of these actions shall be considered in further depth in this chapter.

[990] For more on the imagery of uncovering in Exodus 34, see Thomas B. Dozeman, "Masking Moses and Mosaic Authority in Torah," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 119, no. 1 (2000): 21–45.
See also, Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 49–52; Savran, *Encountering the Divine*; Chavel, "The Face of God and the Etiquette of Eye-Contact: Visitation, Pilgrimage, and Prophetic Vision in Ancient Israelite and Early Jewish Imagination."

Moses's assumed high standard as an exemplary figure in the biblical texts.[991] In such interpretations the *adderet*'s agency is restricted – it becomes a functional garment that only proves to act as a barrier that hinders Elijah's perception of Yahweh.

Despite the popularity of these allusions to Moses's encounters with Yahweh, it must be acknowledged that the biblical writers never make an explicit allusion to Elijah's gaze or even indicate that he covers his eyes through the act of wrapping. Furthermore, although the implied danger or fear of looking at Yahweh is illustrated in a number of texts, as suggested, this depiction is not presented consistently across the Hebrew Bible. There are a number of texts in which people appear to 'see' or 'look at' Yahweh without being harmed and sometimes even without any apparent fear of being harmed.[992] This should not mitigate the potential danger of looking at Yahweh or being in his presence, but rather suggest that not all scholars were equally concerned with this issue. In the Deuteronomistic texts, Yahweh is often portrayed through aural or textual manifestations, as seems to be the case in 1 Kings 19:9-18.[993] Although there are a number of identifiable similarities between 1 Kings 19 and Exodus 33, they are still distinct texts that have different agendas and contexts.[994] Therefore, it cannot be assumed that Elijah's actions with the *adderet* necessarily focused on the concern with 'looking at' Yahweh.

In addition to Elijah's vision there is another 'gaze' that is worth considering in this discussion: that of Yahweh's gaze on Elijah's wrapped face.[995] The

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[991] As suggested in Carroll, "The Elijah-Elisha Sagas," 401; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 128; Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 145–146; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 457–458; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 57; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 220; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 238.

[992] The diversity of portrayals of looking at Yahweh in the Hebrew Bible has been comprehensively explored in Chavel, "The Face of God and the Etiquette of Eye-Contact: Visitation, Pilgrimage, and Prophetic Vision in Ancient Israelite and Early Jewish Imagination."

[993] See examples and further discussion in Hector Avalos, "Introducing Sensory Criticism in Biblical Studies: Audiocentricity and Visiocentricity," in *This Abled Body: Rethinking Disabilities in Biblical Studies*, ed. Hector Avalos, Sarah J. Melcher, and Jeremy Schipper (Atlanta, GA: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 31–45.

[994] Argued in Harvey, *Retelling the Torah*, 71.

[995] The danger of a gaze on the person or object being observed has already been argued in the discussion of Joseph's brothers' gaze, by considering Yahweh as the

danger of Yahweh's implied gaze is creatively explored in Jeremy Schipper and Jeffery Stackert's examination of priestly blemishes and the role of the priests' clothing in cultic and divine space.[996] They propose that the tabernacle and the objects in it were intended to please Yahweh, constructing a sacred place in which his presence could be manifested. In this study it is persuasively argued that maintenance of regulations in this divine space prevented Yahweh's unfavourable gaze that might otherwise be dangerous to the priests – as is implied that anything or anyone that is unholy in Yahweh's presence is subject to potential harm and death.[997] This sense of danger is illustrated by the biblical writers' depiction of the instructions for rituals carried out in the tabernacle; for example, in the instruction that Aaron and his sons should only wear their garments in the '(h)oly place so that they will not incur guilt and die…' (Exodus 28:43).[998] Such regulations function as a protective measure to safeguard people in Yahweh's presence. This can also be suggested of the objects employed in such rituals.

Schipper and Stackert particularly emphasise the role that the garments worn by priests play in providing them with protection from Yahweh's unfavourable gaze:

> The sacred vestments allow the priest to 'blend in' with the sanctuary itself as he performs his service, making him as unobtrusive as possible as he attends to the divine sovereign and his desires. Yet the sacred vestments do not entirely conceal the priest from divine perception; this is not their purpose…Rather, they serve as a sort of

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one whose gaze significantly intensifies the potency of this gaze and the possibility of harm that it brings to Elijah.

[996] Jeremy Schipper and Jeffrey Stackert, "Blemishes, Camouflage, and Sanctuary Service: The Priestly Deity and His Attendants," *Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* 2, no. 4 (2013): 458–78.

[997] Ibid., 460–470.

[998] There are many other verses that point to the danger of failing to keep regulations in the tabernacle, such as, Exodus 30:20-21; Leviticus 10:7, 16:2; Numbers 4:20, 18:22.

camouflage, diminishing the priest's conspicuousness so that he not rouse the deity's ire.[999]

This makes it clear that in this context the garments worn by the priests were employed not to protect the priests from 'seeing' Yahweh, but to prevent Yahweh from unnecessarily 'looking at' them. It can also be suggested that these garments protect the priests by ritually transforming them – these garments set them apart and to some extent make them holy through the potency that is suggested to be manifested in these garments.[1000]

This argument introduces an insightful possibility to the present discussion of the wrapping of Elijah's face. It could imply that Elijah's actions were intended to prevent Yahweh from unnecessarily looking at him unfavourably. It might imply that Elijah uses the *adderet* to camouflage himself. However, there are some key differences between these texts that would indicate the limitations of such an interpretation. The priest's role in the tabernacle is to carry out cultic activities in Yahweh's presence, whereas the biblical writers' depiction of the scene in 1 Kings 19:13-18 seems to focus on communication between Elijah and Yahweh.[1001] Still, the suggestion that Elijah is camouflaged by the *adderet* does seem to correspond with the suggestion that Elijah 'hides' from

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[999] Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes, Camouflage, and Sanctuary Service," 473.

[1000] The power of these garments is implied in their ritual construction, depicted in Exodus 28; 39:1-31. Also in the depiction of the ritual act of putting them on, depicted in Exodus 29:1-9; Leviticus 8:1-13. For discussions on the transformative significance of these garments on the priests' power and personhood, see Nissan Rubin and Admiel Kosman, "The Clothing of the Primordial Adam as a Symbol of Apocalyptic Time in the Midrashic Sources," *The Havard Theological Review* 90, no. 2 (1997): 164; Chŏng-hun Kim, *The Significance of Clothing Imagery in the Pauline Corpus*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament 268 (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 20–23; Schipper and Stackert, "Blemishes, Camouflage, and Sanctuary Service," 470–473. Philippe Gillaume develops on the suggestion that these garments played a ritual function in priestly performances. He proposes that although many contemporary scholars are resistant to the idea that the priests' garments played a mantic role, early recipients of the biblical texts developed the idea that these garments were used in the act of divination, Philippe Guillaume, "Aaron and the Amazing Mantic Coat," in *Studies on Magic and Divination in the Biblical World*, ed. Helen R. Jacobus, Anne Katrine de Hemmer Gudme, and Philippe Guillaume, Biblical Intersections 11 (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2013), 101–17.

[1001] This corresponds with the broader role of the prophet to speak with Yahweh and communicate his words to the people.

Yahweh. The implications of these interpretations shall be further addressed in the following chapters.

The main strength of Schipper and Stackert's argument, in relation to this discussion, is that it emphasises Yahweh's perspective and that the garments worn by the priests can be suggested to impact his behaviour in relation to the priests. This suggests the power of the materiality of these garments to enable the priests to blend in, rather than become noticeable. This might indicate that Elijah's actions in wrapping his face would have impacted Yahweh's relationship with and actions towards him in this text, as shall be considered further in the last section of this chapter.

The allusions to the depictions of Moses and the priests' interaction with the divine are in many ways limited, yet they do still open up some insightful possibilities for how one might interpret Elijah's use of the *adderet* and its function in this text. Both emphasise the inherent danger of Yahweh's material manifestation in the earthly realm and the need for protection from it, which I shall argue is consistent with the portrayal of the theophany depicted in 1 Kings 19:9-14. The depiction of covering seems to play a protective role in each of these texts – in that they seem to be actively employed to prevent Moses and the priests from being harmed by being in Yahweh's presence (with exception to Exodus 34:29-35 in which Moses's veil appears to be employed to protect the people from Moses himself). Such a suggestion indicates the possibility that the portrayal of Elijah's clothing performance may have been to imply his actions in protecting himself before appearing before Yahweh's presence.[1002]

[1002] For interpretations that consider the possibility that the *adderet* plays a protective role, see Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 125; Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 175–176; Forti, "Transposition of Motifs in the Elijah and Elisha Cycles," 238.

7.4 Wrapping with the *Adderet* as Transformative Action

An alternative way of interpreting Elijah's performance, wrapping his face in his *adderet* (1 Kings 19:13), is to focus on the transformative nature of this action. Some scholarly discussions have hinted at the transformative nature of the *adderet* in 1 Kings 19:13, yet the extent to which Elijah's action and the *adderet* has been considered as transformative is usually limited; it is usually only implicit in these analyses.[1003] However, in the ritual context of 1 Kings 19, in which these actions occur, such an examination could not be more necessary – since rituals are by nature transformative. A number of recent studies have pointed to the transformative power of the performance of wrapping itself.[1004] They posit that, in the process of wrapping the identities of both the wrapper and that which is wrapped can be transformed.[1005] Thus, it will be insightful to particularly examine the various ways in which the *adderet*'s materiality is transformed through the action of being wrapped and

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[1003] The identification of the *adderet* as a protective barrier, or even as a blindfold, does suggest that a transformation has occurred. However, there are other ways of interpreting this transformative aspect of the *adderet* as will be considered in this chapter.

[1004] See debates on wrapping in Susanna Harris and Laurence Douny, eds., *Wrapping and Unwrapping Material Culture: Archaeological and Anthropological Perspectives*, Publications of the Institute of Archaeology, University College London 64 (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2014). Particularly see Susanna Harris and Laurence Douny, "Wrapping and Unwrapping, Concepts and Approaches," in *Wrapping and Unwrapping Material Culture: Archaeological and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Susanna Harris and Laurence Douny, Publications of the Institute of Archaeology, University College London 64 (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2014), 15–40; Agnès Garcia-Ventura and Mireia López-Bertran, "Unveiling Clay and Metal: The Context and Use of Mesopotamian Textile Wrappings," in *Wrapping and Unwrapping Material Culture: Archaeological and Anthropological Perspectives*, ed. Susanna Harris and Laurence Douny, Publications of the Institute of Archaeology, University College London 64 (Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press, 2014), 193–208. See also, Christina Riggs, *Unwrapping Ancient Egypt: The Shroud, the Secret and the Sacred* (London; New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2014), 122–124, 131–140.

[1005] The perceived value of an object is often influenced by its wrapping, as implied by Garcia-Ventura and López-Bertran, 'an object's value can be increased by the importance attached to its wrapping,' Garcia-Ventura and López-Bertran, "Unveiling Clay and Metal," 200.

in doing so how it transforms Elijah's agency and materiality in this performance.

By this point in 1 Kings 19 the biblical writers have already effectively emphasised the transitional nature of Elijah's personhood and materiality in this text. This is illustrated through the biblical writers' portrayal of Elijah's consumption of food in the wilderness. In 1 Kings 19:5-6, a divine being instructs Elijah to eat food and drink that he provides for him:

> Behold then a messenger touched [Elijah] and he said to him, "Rise and eat." And he looked and behold, at his head was a bread-cake on hot coals and a jug of water and he ate and drank and he turned back and lay down (vv 5b-6).[1006]

An almost identical scene is repeated in verses seven to eight, after this repetition, the biblical writers submit that Elijah then, 'went in the power of that meal for 40 days and 40 nights…' (v 8). Food and drink can easily be recognised as objects that modify the material state of our bodies. In 1 Kings 19:5-8 these actions clearly show that Elijah is filled with strength and energy implying that he is empowered by this food and drink.

The potent ritual imagery in these performances emphasises the implicit modification of Elijah's materiality.[1007] The origin of this food and drink

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[1006] Note that the biblical writers do not make it apparent that this messenger was from Yahweh until its depiction in verse seven. Cogan emphasises that the distinction in the depiction of a messenger in verses five and seven do not portray separate beings, but rather the second depiction explicitly indicates its divine identity, Cogan, *1 Kings*, 451–452. Although the term for messenger used here, 'מלאך', is used to depict both human and divine messengers, biblical scholars have largely suggested that the messenger here is divine, as implied in Robert L. Cohn, "The Literary Logic of 1 Kings 17-19," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 101, no. 3 (1982): 346; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 157. Some scholars posit that this messenger manifests Yahweh's presence, as implied in the suggestion that it was a 'hypostatic extension of [Yahweh's] own being,' DeVries, *1 Kings*, 235. Note that in Josephus it is only an unknown person who brings food to him in the wilderness, the suggestion that this was a messenger from Yahweh is omitted, Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 1934, Volume III: Books 7–8:8: 7: 349. As noted in Feldman, Louis H., "Josephus' Portrait of Elijah," 78.

[1007] Jeffery Morrow associates this depiction of Yahweh's messenger providing Elijah with food with the Seraphim that brings the coal to purify Isaiah's mouth in Isaiah 6:6-7, Jeffrey L. Morrow, "'Arise and Eat': 1 Kings 19:3-8 and Elijah's Death,

remains ambiguous, yet its appearance elucidated by the use of 'הנה' ('and behold…') implies that these objects are unusual or enigmatic.[1008] Given the biblical writers' indication that this food and drink is produced by a divine messenger (מלאך יהוה) it might be suggested that the food itself originates from a divine source.[1009] This elucidates and develops an understanding of Elijah's material transformation and how he is empowered through the divine or potent agency arguably manifested by this food and drink. This suggestion may be further supported and illustrated by the indication that Elijah is filled with supra-natural strength to continue journeying in the wilderness for another forty days and nights (v.8).[1010] Thus, through ritually potent food and drink Elijah is enabled to act and move in new ways.

In 1 Kings 19 the biblical writers portray Elijah on the precipice between life and death, this can be suggested to develop our perception of his transformative and liminal state in this text. The imagery of life and death is prominent: it is emphasised that Jezebel seeks to take Elijah's life (vv. 2, 3, 10, 14); Elijah asks his own life or נפש to die, and requests that Yahweh take his life away (v.4).[1011] This imagery of life and death is augmented by his location in spaces closely associated with death, such as the wilderness and

Resurrection And Bread from Heaven," *Journal of the Orthodox Center for the Advancement of Biblical Studies* 3, no. 1 (2010): 6. This association implicitly links 1 Kings 19 with another text in which another text in which a prophet is modified and physically transformed in the context of a theophanic scene.

[1008] Elsewhere Elijah is sustained by food brought by ravens (1 Kings 17:6), yet again, the origin of this food is left unexplained. For studies that draw parallels between the depiction of 'mysterious' food in 1 Kings 17:2-6, 13 and in 1 Kings 19:2, 6, see Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 64–65; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 269; Feldt, "Wild and Wondrous Men," 345–346.

[1009] On the suggestion that this food is from heaven or from a divine source, see DeVries, *1 Kings*, 235, 237; Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 520; Cotrozzi, *Expect the Unexpected*, 86; Morrow, "Arise and Eat." Contra. Douglas Lawrie, "Telling Of(f) Prophets: Narrative Strategy in 1 Kings 18:1-19:18," *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 23, no. 2 (1997): 173.

[1010] The suggestion that this food supernaturally or magically sustains Elijah is indicated in Cohn, "The Literary Logic of 1 Kings 17-19," 346; DeVries, *1 Kings*, 235; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 158; Feldt, "Wild and Wondrous Men," 334.

[1011] On the prominent imagery of life and death in 1 Kings 19, see Morrow, "Arise and Eat." Morrow also notes upon the juxtaposition between Jezebel's messenger of death (v. 1) and the messenger of life (vv. 5-8). For further discussion on the imagery of life and death in this chapter, see Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 63–64. Simon Devries particularly focuses on the biblical writers' use of the imagery of life, DeVries, *1 Kings*, 236.

the cave on Mount Horeb. Furthermore, the repeated depiction of Elijah lying down/sleeping (ישן/שכב) (vv. 5-6) and being instructed "to arise" or "get up" (קום, vv. 5, 7) implicitly evokes the imagery of dying and rising. This could suggest that Elijah experiences a literary death in the text, which within the text is a physical death of sorts.[1012] This depiction implies the liminality of Elijah's personhood – he never explicitly 'dies,' yet he frequently seems to be on the brink of death. The accumulation of this dramatic imagery further emphasises that Elijah's materiality is already a state of flux before Elijah even performs with the *adderet*.

This performance in verse 13 is the first literary depiction of Elijah's *adderet* and hence, it acts as the initial indication of the relationship that has been constructed between Elijah and the *adderet*. However, by introducing the *adderet* in this way the biblical writers offer very little indication as to the *adderet*'s broader material life. As such it is difficult to discern what kind of manipulation or transformation is implied through Elijah's actions and how it changes their relationship. Indeed, it is even left uncertain as to whether or not Elijah wears the *adderet* prior to the moment that he is portrayed taking it and wrapping it around his face. However, the *adderet*'s very employment by the biblical writers can be seen to transform the recipients' perception of Elijah's personhood and materiality. The use of the *adderet* in action and movement is in itself indicative of its immediate transformation even as it is introduced. It initiates a relationship between the *adderet* and Elijah that must be explored in greater depth.

The depiction of the *adderet* being wrapped onto Elijah's body implies that its materiality is reconstructed. The *adderet*'s material form and thus its agency has shifted – it is activated in movement and takes on a different life animated by the movement of Elijah's face. Through Elijah's actions, which modify its relationship with Elijah's body and its material form, the *adderet* is invested with new possibilities. This employment emphasises the dynamism of the *adderet* implying its diversity as a garment to be used in different ways. Given

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[1012] Morrow, "Arise and Eat." This is also implied to some extent in Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 65.

these suggestions, the process of wrapping can be interpreted as a performance that binds the *adderet*, both physically and materially, to Elijah's body making it a part of Elijah himself.

Elijah's own materiality is also impacted through this performance. In addition to the *adderet*'s modification and new movement animated on Elijah's face, the materiality of his own face is now arguably modified and is animated in a different sense. The inherent relationship constructed between one's personhood and their clothing furthers the suggestion that Elijah's act of wrapping has a significant impact on him, it transform his personhood. This intimate material connection between Elijah and the *adderet* that is constructed by the performance of wrapping illustrates that the *adderet* becomes a distributed part and an extension of Elijah's personhood and body.

The intimate entanglement that is evoked through the depiction of this clothing performance is developed further through the portrayal of the *adderet* with the third-person, singular suffix rendering it – 'his' or Elijah's *adderet*. This reiterates the intimate relationship that is already demonstrated through Elijah's actions. It has already been argued that the biblical writers' consistent depiction of the *adderet* with the epithet 'his' or 'Elijah's' implies the continued manifestation of his personhood in the *adderet* even after Elijah is taken into heaven (2 Kings 2:11-14). In its context in verse 13 it serves a similar purpose, it implies that this Elijah's personhood is entangled with the *adderet*'s materiality by emphasising their relationship with one another. This depiction may seem to indicate that the *adderet* is Elijah's 'possession.' However, this term is perhaps unfitting since the entanglement that is implied is one in which the distinctions between their power and agency become temporarily blurred and the impact is reciprocal. Thus, as arued, it is more probable that this suffix reaffirms the *adderet*'s status as an extension of Elijah's body rather than as just his possession.

The biblical writers' portrayal of the relationship between Elijah and the *adderet* can also be expounded by turning to consider the significance of what it is that Elijah wraps with his *adderet*. Elijah's actions in wrapping pertain to a particularly potent point in his body – his face. The particular detail of it being

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Elijah's face that is wrapped accentuates the role that the *adderet* plays in reshaping Elijah's personhood. The Hebrew term פנים, most typically considered to refer to one's face, is a multifaceted word that is used to imply a number of different meanings and connotations.[1013] Whilst this term is used to connote one's physical face, the term is also often used as a broader term to imply one's presence or personhood.[1014] This implies that the biblical writers are indirectly evoking the image of Elijah wrapping his personhood and presence with the *adderet* before meeting with Yahweh.

The biblical writers' portrayal also implies that Elijah ritually manipulates his body in order to impact his communication with Yahweh.[1015] In addition to indicating one's personhood, the term פנים is also intimately associated with one's expressions and interaction with others.[1016] The face is inherently an expressive and animated part of one's body. It is also a key site of one's senses, such as, hearing, sight and taste, allowing a person to experience and interact with the world. The wrapping of Elijah's face, which is a potent site of one's communication, can be considered to have a transformative impact on not only Elijah's personhood, but also on his communication with Yahweh. The significance of this transformation shall be developed and considered in more depth in the following sections.

7.5 'To the Mouth of the Cave'

It can be stressed that the wrapping of the *adderet* is not an isolated performance but rather, as emphasised earlier, it is part of a series of ritual movements that express Elijah's response to Yahweh. It is most likely that these actions represent a continuation of Yahweh and Elijah's dialogue (vv. 9-

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[1013] As indicated and discussed further in Simian-Yofre, "Pānîm," in *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, ed. G. Johannes Botterweck, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, trans. David E. Green, vol. XI - 'zz - pānîm (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 589–615.

[1014] This has been suggested in Choon-Leong Seow, "Face," in *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible*, ed. Karel Van der Toorn, Bob Becking, and Pieter W. van der Horst, 2nd ed. (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 1999), 322–25; Simian-Yofre, "Pānîm," 606–608.

[1015] This corresponds with the wider theme of communication in 1 Kings 19:10-18.

[1016] This is illustrated and discussed in Simian-Yofre, "Pānîm," 593–594; Matthews, "Making Your Point: The Use of Gestures in Ancient Israel," 27.

10) through non-verbal gesture. After wrapping himself, Elijah is then depicted standing and setting forth to the mouth of the cave, 'Elijah wrapped his face in his *adderet* and he went out and stood at the opening of the cave' (v.13). Whilst some biblical scholars primarily focus on the words communicated between Elijah and Yahweh in this text; the way Elijah 'speaks' with his body, through his movement and clothing, is, arguably, as communicative and as powerful as his verbal speech in this text. This will be illustrated further in the rest of the present chapter.[1017] However, there are a number of elusive details in the biblical writers' depiction of the interaction between Yahweh and Elijah that obscure scholarly interpretations of Elijah's actions in verse 13. These ambiguities and their conventional interpretations will be addressed first before turning to consider an alternative way of interpreting this performance.

Biblical scholars have interpreted the motive and reasoning behind Elijah's response in 1 Kings 19:13 in disparate ways. His actions could be implied as a response to Yahweh's instructions for Elijah to: 'Set forth and stand on the mountain before Yahweh's presence' (v.11). For some scholars, Elijah's actions are considered to demonstrate his compliance; indeed, he 'sets forth' and 'stands' which corresponds with Yahweh's instructions. This obedience is implied by the repetition of verbs used in verse 11.[1018] Elijah's action of wrapping the *adderet* is not explicitly mentioned in these instructions and therefore, they may seem as though they mark a distinct response. Nevertheless, some scholars have implied that his wrapping of the *adderet* also indicates his willingness to interact with Yahweh.[1019] Following this interpretation, the act of wrapping may be considered to correspond with and

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[1017] For scholarly discussions that largely focus on the speech in this chapter, see Brevard S. Childs, "On Reading the Elijah Narratives," *Interpretation* 34, no. 2 (1980): 128–37; Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 60–77; Jürgen Vorndran, "Elijas Dialog mit Jahwes Wort und Stimme (1 Kön 19,9b-18)," *Biblica* 77, no. 3 (1996): 417–24; Roi, "1 Kings 19." Elijah's movements are even completely overlooked in Robinson, *The First Book of Kings*.

[1018] This is often only implicit in discussions of Elijah's obedience to Yahweh. Jerome T. Walsh acknowledges this point, Walsh, *1 Kings*, 276. However, he rejects the overall idea that Elijah is wholly compliant to Yahweh's instructions, as suggested below.

[1019] This point will be considered further in the rest of this section.

support the suggestion that Elijah's other actions mark his obedience to Yahweh.[1020]

It must be recognised that other scholars, already sceptical of Elijah's self-proclaimed 'zealous' attitude towards Yahweh (vv. 10, 14), argue that Elijah's actions only mimic his obedience.[1021] These scholars postulate that the execution of Elijah's actions falls short of Yahweh's instructions. For example, it has been observed that Elijah only moves to the mouth of the cave (פתח המערה) (v.13), when he is instructed to stand on the mountain (בהר) (v.11).[1022] Still, other biblical scholars seem to be unconcerned with the apparent dissonance between these locations, presuming they essentially depict the same location.[1023] The distinction between Yahweh's instructions and Elijah's response are nuanced, yet perhaps it is because of this ambiguity that biblical scholars have used these details to support their broader interpretation of Elijah's character in this text.[1024]

[1020] For example, Brian Britt suggests that Elijah wraps his face with the *adderet*, because it is an expected response in theophany, Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 57. Whether or not this was an anticipated response in theophanic scenes, it is implied in this interpretation that Elijah's response with the *adderet* may be indicative of his obedience to social expectations implied in the biblical texts. A number of biblical scholars implicitly make similar assumptions that this was a conventional social gesture. Cf. Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 146.

[1021] Walsh, *1 Kings*, 276–277. See also, Flannery, "Go Back by the Way You Came," 171; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 101.

[1022] Noted in Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 529; Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 102; Flannery, "Go Back by the Way You Came," 170. Cf. Some suggestions that Elijah's position at the opening of the cave was an editorial addition to more closely align it with the theophanic account in Exodus 33, Rice, *Nations Under God*, 160; Montgomery, *Book of Kings*, 313. Cf. Fretheim, *First and Second Kings*, 109.109

[1023] Implied in Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, 14; Howell and Howell, "Journey to Mount Horeb," 659. Kissling also acknowledges this possibility, but simultaneously implies that this does not necessarily imply his obedience to Yahweh, 'While the opening of the cave is presumably on the mountain, and therefore in some sense "before Yahweh", since Yahweh is portrayed as being on the mountain, Elijah's response [moving to the opening of the cave] just barely qualifies as obedience', Kissling, *Reliable Characters in the Primary History*, 102.

[1024] For further discussion, see Neil Glover, "Elijah versus the Narrative of Elijah: The Contest between the Prophet and the Word," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 30, no. 4 (2006): 449–62; Tchavdar S. Hadjiev, "Elijah's Alleged Megalomania: Reading Strategies for Composite Texts, with 1 Kings 19 as an Example," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 39, no. 4 (2015): 443.

The problems in interpreting Elijah's actions in verse 13 is augmented by the ambiguities that can also be observed in the biblical writers' depiction of Yahweh's theophany in 1 Kings 19:9b-14.[1025] For example, the Hebrew text is unclear as to where Yahweh's speech beginning in verse 11, ends.[1026] Some scholars have suggested that the entire theophanic scene, from vv. 11-12, is part of Yahweh's direct speech, whereas others only identify part of this description as words spoken by Yahweh.[1027] This ambiguity has been regarded as problematic, since it makes it unclear as to when Yahweh's presence 'passes by' (v.11) or manifests in this episode. This has led to further questions as to how Elijah's performance, wrapping the *adderet* and moving to the opening of the cave, fits in conjunction with the events of Yahweh's theophanic appearance.

The biblical writers' depiction of Elijah's reaction itself offers little clarity as to what his actions are a response to, as implied by the elusive phrase, 'When

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[1025] These ambiguities are notably smoothed over or omitted in other interpretations of this encounter; such as in the Septuagint texts and in Josephus. See Philippe Hugo for an elucidation of the Septuagint (and Vulgate) versions of this text, Philippe Hugo, "Text and Literary History: The Case of 1 Kings 19 (MT and LXX)," in *Soundings in Kings: Perspectives and Methods in Contemporary Scholarship*, ed. Mark Leuchter and Klaus-Peter Adam (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 26–30. On Josephus' reconstruction of the text see Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, 1934, Volume III: Books 7–8:8: 7: 351–352.
Feldman, Louis H., "Josephus' Portrait of Elijah," 85; Olley, "Yhwh and His Zealous Prophet," 40; Hugo, "Text and Literary History," 26; Max Rogland, "Elijah and the 'Voice' at Horeb (1 Kings 19): Narrative Sequence in the Masoretic Text and Josephus," *Vetus Testamentum* 62 (2012): 88–94. On further discussions of the ambiguities in 1 Kings 19:9b-14, see Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 50; Rogland, "Elijah and the 'Voice' at Horeb"; Roi, "1 Kings 19," 28. Bernard P. Robinson's discussion focuses largely on addressing the key areas of ambiguity in 1 Kings 19, Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb."
[1026] For debates on this ambiguity, see Walsh, *1 Kings*, 274–275; Cotrozzi, *Expect the Unexpected*, 192; Hugo, "Text and Literary History," 27; Rogland, "Elijah and the 'Voice' at Horeb."
[1027] For the proposal that description of Yahweh's theophany is part of Yahweh's speech, see discussions in Walsh, *1 Kings*, 275; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 453; Hugo, "Text and Literary History," 27; Rogland, "Elijah and the 'Voice' at Horeb." Cf. Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 521; Cotrozzi, *Expect the Unexpected*, 192. Some scholars have even suggested omitting part of this description, implying that it was edited in order to construct a stronger parallel with Moses's encounters with Yahweh, Robinson, *The First Book of Kings*, 221. Walsh convincingly rejects the proposal that only part of the theophanic description is spoken by Yahweh, since, he argues, the whole description is consistent with the present construction. It would make little sense to divide this description, Walsh, *1 Kings*, 275.

he heard it he wrapped…' (v. 13a) in which the 'it' is left unqualified.[1028] Consequently, it also remains ambiguous as to when it is that Elijah moves into the opening of the cave. The majority of scholars assume that Elijah reacts to the depiction of the 'קול דממה דקה' (v. 12), implying that Elijah reacts to his acknowledgement of Yahweh's presence itself.[1029] Others suggest Elijah responds to Yahweh's initial instructions (v. 11a), or the noise of the phenomenon (vv. 11-12a), thereby indicating that Elijah is present for the entire theophanic scene.[1030] Both of these interpretations imply that Elijah moves to be closer to Yahweh's presence.

In a contrasting perspective, Jerome Walsh proposes that Elijah only acts after the theophany has already occurred (vv.11-12). This interpretation inevitably contrasts with Yahweh's direction for Elijah to stand before his presence (v.11); thus, implying Elijah's disobedience.[1031] Yet Walsh's proposal here fails to make sense of the *adderet*'s role in this text, nor does it sufficiently explain the reason behind Elijah's eventual move into the opening of the cave.[1032] The difficult task of deciphering the ordering of these actions and their correlation with one another has been a key element in scholarly

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[1028] For a fuller discussion of the ambiguity of the 'it' that is referred to here, see Rogland, "Elijah and the 'Voice' at Horeb" Particularly, 89. Also on the ambiguity of the what Elijah responds to see Walsh, *1 Kings*, 275; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 101. On the ambiguity of Elijah's response here also see Rice, *Nations Under God*, 160.

[1029] Implied in J. Kenneth Kuntz, *The People of Ancient Israel: An Introduction to Old Testament Literature, History, and Thought* (Eugene, Or: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1974), 246; Gray, *I & II Kings*, 411; DeVries, *1 Kings*, 236; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 125; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 160; Niehaus, *God at Sinai*, 27; Fretheim, *First and Second Kings*, 109; Nel and Schmidt, "Theophany as Type-Scene in the Hebrew Bible," 276; Flannery, "Go Back by the Way You Came," 170; Sulzbach, "When Going on a Heavenly Journey," 186.

[1030] Implied in Cogan, *1 Kings*, 449, 453; Rogland, "Elijah and the 'Voice' at Horeb."

[1031] Walsh suggests that Elijah refuses to stand before Yahweh, 'Elijah…does not obey Yahweh: he does not stand 'on' the mountain, nor does he stand 'before Yahweh,' as Yahweh commanded him,' Walsh, *1 Kings*, 288. For further discussion on Elijah's actions in Walsh's argument, see Ibid., 274–275. For similar arguments, see Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 146; Olley, "Yhwh and His Zealous Prophet," 40. Nelson also seems to imply that Elijah misses the theophany, though he seems to suggest that the phenomena in verses 11-12 that constitute 'theophany' here, Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 125, 128. Max Rogland proposes, however, that a depiction of a theophany without witness is 'extremely peculiar' in the Hebrew Bible, Rogland, "Elijah and the 'Voice' at Horeb," 89.

[1032] Walsh seems to imply that Elijah skews Yahweh's instructions choosing to follow them in his own way, Walsh, *1 Kings*, 288–289.

discussions of these verses for source, form and literary critical approaches to these texts.[1033] However, it must be considered whether or not all of these structural 'ambiguities' must always be identified as a problem that needs 'fixing' or 'explaining.'

One way of rethinking the structure of Elijah's encounter with Yahweh is to concede that this text does not, and perhaps was never intended to, follow a linear pattern.[1034] Such a suggestion is proposed by Jan Tarlin who argues for a shift in the way scholars tend to interpret these texts, moving away from a more conventional, 'masculinist' reading of this text as 'a linear movement to a definitive culmination.'[1035] In Tarlin's argument the ambiguities in this text, such as those discussed above, are emphasised, if not a little exaggerated, for example, she proposes that:

> In 19.11-12 Yahweh's self-manifestation is inscribed in a passage of exposition constructed around a series of participle verb forms that suspends any attempt on the part of the narrator at wholeness, completion, consistency or clarity.[1036]

Whilst not all will be convinced by Tarlin's attempt to read against the grain of more conventional renderings of this text, her argument raises an insightful suggestion – that in its present form 1 Kings 19 is a text that resists a clear-cut, designated structure.[1037] Tchavdar Hadjiev similarly acknowledges that there are 'no satisfactory literary explanations' for the ambiguities in this

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[1033] Indicated in Ernst Würthwein, "Elijah at Horeb: Reflections on I Kings 19:1-18," in *Proclamation and Presence: Old Testament Essays in Honour of Gwynne Henton Davies*, ed. John I. Durham and J. R. Porter (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1983), 152–66; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 274–275; Hugo, "Text and Literary History," 26–28.

[1034] Note that some scholars, such as Robert Cohn attempt to impose 'coherence' on the Elijah passages, yet his argument is often unconvincing, Cohn, "The Literary Logic of 1 Kings 17-19."

[1035] Jan Tarlin, "Toward a 'Female' Reading of the Elijah Cycle: Ideology and Gender in the Interpretation of 1 Kings 17-19, 21 and 2 Kings 1-2:18," in *A Feminist Companion to Samuel and Kings*, ed. Athalya Brenner, The Feminist Companion to the Bible 5 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 213.

[1036] Ibid., 217. For a more in-depth discussion of these verb forms, see Rogland, "Elijah and the 'Voice' at Horeb," 92–93.

[1037] Tarlin, "Toward a 'Female' Reading of the Elijah Cycle."

text.[1038] Hadjiev proposes that it is probable that the issues that contemporary scholars observe in this text may have been unproblematic for its ancient recipients, who accepted (or bought into) the compositional style of the text.[1039]

It is possible to suggest an alternative way of considering the ambiguities in this text by interpreting this scene as part of a ritually charged performance, as I have proposed. Time and space are both typically manipulated in ritual performance and become more fluid, making it difficult to interpret beyond the context of the performance itself.[1040] Such a reading accounts for some of the ambiguities implicit within the depiction of Elijah's encounter with Yahweh. Although such an explanation will continue to be unsatisfactory to those determined to address and solve each incongruity, it does indicate a plausible alternative than that offered by traditional scholarship as to how this text may be interpreted. The ritualistic interpretation of this text, proposed in this chapter veers away from the typical scholarly discussions of this text. However, in order to fully examine the significance of the portrayal of the *adderet* in this ritual sequence (v. 13) we must continue to consider how the *adderet* has been interpreted in these traditional discussions before returning to reconsider its ritual significance.

As briefly indicated, Elijah's wrapping of the *adderet* is frequently interpreted in association with his movement towards the mouth of the cave as a proactive step in meeting with Yahweh.[1041] In the depiction of Elijah as an

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[1038] Hadjiev, "Elijah's Alleged Megalomania," 449.

[1039] Hadjiev, "Elijah's Alleged Megalomania." Note that other scholars, such as Stephen A. Geller, reach a similar conclusion, yet undermine this composite style interpreting it as 'clumsiness' rather than purposeful, Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 50.

[1040] See Sulzbach for a similar proposal, though made of Moses's encounters on the mountain, 'Time and space collapsed and the summit became an unearthly space literarily representing heaven on earth,' Sulzbach, "When Going on a Heavenly Journey," 183. Note Wyatt's suggestion that time is often manipulated in depictions of crossing cosmological boundaries, Wyatt, *Space and Time in the Religious Life of the Near East*, 184.

[1041] Implied in Gray, *I & II Kings*, 411; John Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament* (Ontario; Canada: David C. Cook, 1983), 528; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 160; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 198; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 105.

obedient prophet, the *adderet* tends to be interpreted as a garment that protects Elijah and/or venerates Yahweh.[1042] For example, Brian Britt suggests that Elijah's response with the *adderet* is one of 'fear and respect,'[1043] Burke Long similarly describes Elijah's reaction as 'fearful and awestruck.'[1044] In these interpretations even if the *adderet* is portrayed as a garment that blocks Elijah's eyes here, it is still considered to enable Elijah to be in Yahweh's presence and to converse with him more intimately.[1045] The depiction of Elijah wrapping his face and moving to the opening of the cave also seems to anticipate a further audience with Yahweh in which their communication can continue.

Despite the persuasiveness of these interpretations, a number of scholars still attempt to imply that Elijah's action in wrapping his face in the *adderet* is indicative of his reluctance and unwillingness to meet with Yahweh.[1046] This perspective is particularly illustrated by the tendency for some biblical scholars to interpret Elijah's action of wrapping as an attempt to 'hide' from Yahweh, which has been briefly discussed earlier. In such interpretations, the implication of Elijah's actions is that he hides his face or presence from Yahweh. In more conventional interpretations the *adderet* is also considered to undermine Elijah's opportunity to 'see' Yahweh's form.[1047]

In both of these approaches to interpreting Elijah's performance with the *adderet*, it seems that the *adderet* has been appropriated by biblical scholars as a prop to bolster the presumed characterisation of Elijah either as a compliant or non-compliant prophet. Such arguments on Elijah's character seem to rely upon interpretations of a number of nuanced and ambiguous points that are accumulated to portray a seemingly solid rendering of Elijah's

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[1042] Long, *1 Kings*, 201; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 56; Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 146; Gunkel, *Elijah, Yahweh, and Baal*, 28.
[1043] Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 56.
[1044] Long, *1 Kings*, 199.
[1045] For example, Burke O. Long suggests that the *adderet* is used to 'blunt the force of [Yahweh's] numinal presence,' rather than to completely block it allowing Elijah to be in his presence, Ibid., 201.
[1046] This is indicated in Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 128; Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 146; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 288.
[1047] This is implied in comparison with the Moses texts referred to earlier, in Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 146; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 288. See previous section on Elijah's gaze.

characterisation; the fragility of each of these individual elements are rarely properly expounded upon. Hadjiev also points to 'the danger [in interpretations of the Elijah cycle] of becoming excessively subtle and ending up with interpretations quite different to what the text taken at face value seems to say.'[1048] This challenge effectively demonstrates the need to clearly acknowledge the nuances and ambiguities that are present in this text. The ability for the *adderet* to be interpreted in such divergent ways in biblical scholarship reiterates its complexity as a garment. It implies that the significance of wrapping one's face is far from apparent and can connote a number of potential meanings. Although scholarly discussions have appropriated Elijah's performance of the *adderet* to fit their arguments, their interpretations have nevertheless sparked some insightful possibilities for the different ways these actions could be understood.

Interpretations of Elijah's performance in the wrapping of the *adderet* seem to implicitly hinge upon the idea of the *adderet* as a garment that either enables or disables, or impairs, Elijah's communication and interaction with Yahweh.[1049] The proposal that the wrapping of Elijah's face disables his power to gesture or move is not completely unfounded. Indeed, if interpreted literally, it is probable that the *adderet*'s materiality restricts parts of or even the whole of Elijah's facial expressions or gestures in some way. It may imply that his sight, hearing, or sense of touch is impaired' or transformed through this gesture.[1050] As suggested, it is frequently assumed that Elijah temporarily 'disables' his ability to 'see' Yahweh.[1051] Furthermore, Brian Britt implies that Elijah's *adderet* also functions to silence him indicating in his broader argument that such an action indicates 'the suspension or withdrawal of the

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[1048] Hadjiev, "Elijah's Alleged Megalomania," 443–444.

[1049] For example, J. Kenneth Kuntz implies that the *adderet* 'disables' his relationship with Yahweh in some way, suggesting that it, 'guarantees that too close an association between God and man will not take place,' Kuntz, *The People of Ancient Israel*, 246.

[1050] It is not only sight Elijah's that has been suggested to be impaired by the *adderet*, Bernard P. Robinson indicates that the sound of Yahweh's voice is 'rendered fainter by the mantle,' Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 534.

[1051] See section 7.3

prophet and his divine message.'[1052] In this view, the imagery of the *adderet* wound around Elijah's face would presumably restrict Elijah's senses and communication.

The suggestion that the *adderet* 'disables' Elijah implicitly undermines his power in this text. The imagery of disability, or having impaired senses or gestures, is frequently associated with a lack of power or agency.[1053] In the Hebrew Bible, the biblical writers employ this imagery in order to undermine agency of cult statues, in polemical texts against the veneration of 'idols'. This example implies that the impairment of one's senses or gestures is a form of disempowerment, which can limit the body's agency.[1054] However, the wrapped body, even as a disabled body, does not necessarily suggest that Elijah is rendered powerless.

Agnès Garcia-Ventura and Mireia López-Bertran's, "Unveiling Clay and Metal: The Context and Use of Mesopotamian Textile Wrappings," can be used to rethink the nature of wrapped bodies as 'disabled,' and seemingly powerless bodies. The authors of this paper examine the possible meanings and functions of wrapped figurines discovered in foundations of temples and other ancient Mesopotamian buildings (ca. 2100-2000 BCE) from a material-cultural and archaeological perspective. They argue that the wrapping of the figurines' bodies, 'transforms them from being physically active in rituals to being

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[1052] Note that this interpretation is drawn from a wider context in which Britt proposes that there is a sustained connection between prophetic concealment and silence, 'most prophetic concealment or restraint is accomplished by a garment,' Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 57. See also, Tonstad, "The Limits of Power," 258–259.

[1053] This does not always mean a figure with a disabled body is powerless, or agentless, yet the imagery of disability is frequently stereotyped in this way. See the discussions of disability and its nuances in examples in the Hebrew Bible in Saul Olyan, *Disability in the Hebrew Bible: Interpreting Mental and Physical Disabilities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008); Rebecca Raphael, *Biblical Corpora: Representations of Disability in Hebrew Biblical Literature*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 445 (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2008).

[1054] As suggested in Saul M. Olyan, "The Ascription of Physical Disability as a Stigmatizing Strategy in Biblical Iconic Polemics," *Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 9, no. 14 (2003): 1–15. Also see briefer debates on these verses in the books referenced above.

deprived in terms of corporality and senses.'[1055] This may be likened to assumptions made of Elijah's actions with the *adderet* (1 Kings 19:13) that the *adderet* blocks or disables his senses. However, interestingly, Garcia-Ventura and López-Bertran do not consider that the figurines are rendered powerless through wrapping, as one might anticipate. Instead, they imply that the figurines' inherent power is redirected:

> The absence of corporealities [by being wrapped] does not equate with uselessness…by wrapping them and depositing them in boxes, humans reinforce one aspect of these [figurines of] kings, their protective function, and eliminate others related to their kinetic corporeality.[1056]

This suggests that these figurines are empowered in a different sense through the process of being wrapped. It needs to be recognised that Garcia-Ventura and López-Bertran's paper can only be insightful in interpreting Elijah's wrapped face in a limited way. The discussion of these figurines is not to be directly mapped onto the present examination of the *adderet*, yet it raises an interesting possibility – that what in one sense might be regarded as 'impairment' may be considered as an empowerment in another sense.[1057]

The suggestion that Elijah's actions of 'disabling' may empower him in another sense can be read in a number of different ways. In relation to some of the interpretations indicated in the discussion above, it might be suggested that Elijah's clothing performance enables him to assert his power independently from Yahweh – in other words the *adderet* could be seen to empower Elijah to 'hide' or 'avoid' Yahweh.[1058] Unlike the figurines that are wrapped by others, this possibility would imply that Elijah employs the *adderet* as an instrument of power, perhaps imitating more of a shield than a self-

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[1055] Garcia-Ventura and López-Bertran, "Unveiling Clay and Metal," 204. Also see pp. 202-205.

[1056] Ibid.

[1057] For insightful examples in which the imagery of disability is creatively reconfigured in this way, see Lawrence, *Sense and Stigma in the Gospels*.

[1058] See Frances Flannery, who asserts that 'Elijah's imprecise obedience of God's commands demonstrates his desire to assert his own authority.' Flannery, "Go Back by the Way You Came," 171.

imposed disability. This interpretation may be seen to corroborate with the depiction of the *adderet* as a protective garment that could be considered to camouflage Elijah to a certain extent. Although the possibility remains that Elijah is acting independently from Yahweh's instructions, it remains difficult to substantiate any suggestion that Elijah successfully prevents or disables his communication with Yahweh.

I argue that the idea that a wrapped body is deprived of the ability to communicate is ultimately unsustainable within the wider context of 1 Kings 19:9b-14. The depiction of Elijah, after wrapping his face is evocative of his communication and movement: setting forth, standing (v.13) and speaking (v.14). Still, it is possible that Elijah's communication with others would still be hindered or changed by his wrapped face (whatever this state entails). However, this does not seem to be the case for his encounter with Yahweh. Rather, Elijah's new form, though seemingly restrictive, can be seen to transform his body and enable him to interact with Yahweh in a distinct way, as will be discussed further in the following section.

The manipulation of the *adderet* is most likely part of a preparatory stage that enables Elijah's movement into a particularly potent ritual space. The biblical writers depict Elijah wrapping his face first in his performance (v. 13); before he moves, and before he stands before Yahweh's presence. This choice of ordering is significant since it particularly draws the readers' attention to the *adderet*'s movement and manipulation in this performance.[1059] Clothing may have been employed first because of its significant role in manifesting a transformation in one's personhood. However, I propose that Elijah's manipulation of the *adderet* is even more integral to his ritual performance than this suggestion. It can be interpreted as a preparatory step, in which Elijah ritually reconstructs his materiality and personhood – only in this new form is he empowered to move into the opening of the cave. The suggestion that this action was preparatory is implied in scholarly discussions of this text, in which the wrapping of Elijah's face is portrayed as an act that anticipates,

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[1059] For other texts in which clothing imagery features first in a sequence of events see Genesis 41:14; 41:42; 2 Kings 11:14.

or prepares for, an encounter with Yahweh's presence.[1060] Even the idea of the *adderet* as a protective garment corresponds with the indication that Elijah's actions are preparatory.[1061] Here the significance of the process of wrapping goes beyond only being communicative and is shown to be integral in enabling Elijah's ritual performance and movement in this text.

There is a tacit indication that the space 'beyond' the cave is dangerous for Elijah. This danger is evoked by the biblical writers' very depiction of Yahweh's presence on the mountain (v. 11), as previously suggested in this chapter. When Yahweh calls Elijah, 'onto the mountain,' it can be interpreted as an invitation to move into divine space, which is inherently dangerous for non-divine beings.[1062] Unlike the temple, which is a controlled space with specific requirements that are maintained to appease Yahweh as suggested earlier, the mountain on which Yahweh appears is unregulated space.[1063] Here on mountain Horeb Yahweh's power is unbounded – and Elijah's position as a human before Yahweh's presence without such regulations is arguably precarious.[1064] In 1 Kings 19:11-12 the mountain is also portrayed as a site at which supernatural phenomena occur. The potential dangers of these events are vividly captured in the biblical writers portrayal (v. 11-12).[1065] This danger is often implied by biblical commentators' use of language such as 'violent forces' to interpret these supra-natural phenomena.[1066] The inherent danger associated with the place 'beyond' the cave may indicate an explanation for the depiction of Elijah at the opening of the cave and only on

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[1060] Suggested in Nel and Schmidt, "Theophany as Type-Scene in the Hebrew Bible," 275–276; Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings*, 198.

[1061] See references for the protective function of the *adderet* earlier in this chapter.

[1062] The suggestion that Yahweh is calling Elijah into a divine space is implied in Sweeney, "Prophets and Priests," 35–41. That such spaces are dangerous for humans is indicated in Sulzbach, "When Going on a Heavenly Journey," 12.

[1063] In the temple, the priests are 'protected' by the requirements that arguably temporarily transform them enabling them to have access to these spaces. As suggested in my discussion of priest's clothing above.

[1064] See my discussion on the implied danger of being in the presence of divine beings earlier in this chapter. On the suggestion that the space beyond the cave implies divine space, see Tonstad, "The Limits of Power," 258.

[1065] As implied in Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 105.

[1066] Ibid., 101. For similar interpretations, see Lust, "A Gentle Breeze or a Roaring Thunderous Sound?," 113; DeVries, *1 Kings*, 236; Fretheim, *First and Second Kings*, 109; Gunkel, *Elijah, Yahweh, and Baal*, 27.

the periphery of this space. However, this depiction has its own significance that needs to be explored in more depth.

The opening of the cave can be identified an access point between realms; namely, between the underworld, earthly, and heavenly realms. Therefore, by positioning Elijah at the opening of the cave, the biblical writers heighten the cosmological imagery of liminality and the depiction of crossing otherworldly realms, which is already implicit in Elijah's journey and the imagery of the mountain itself (vv. 3-9). In biblical scholarship, it is sometimes implied that the opening of the cave is a place that provides some safety for Elijah from the dangers 'beyond' the cave.[1067] Nevertheless, caves have sometimes been considered to be access points into the underworld, since they lead into the core of the mountain itself.[1068] They also have strong connotations with the imagery of death, since they are frequently employed as burial sites.[1069] At the threshold of these spaces, Elijah arguably stands in a transitional space between life and death, both of these spaces are inherently dangerous to him. In the biblical texts, thresholds such as the opening of the cave, are frequently depicted as liminal spaces, often closely associated with death.[1070] This

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[1067] Implied in Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 521.

[1068] Cf. Francesca Stavrakopoulou's interpretation of the imagery of the valleys of sacred mountains, Francesca Stavrakopoulou, *Land of Our Fathers: The Roles of Ancestral Veneration in Biblical Land Claims*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 473 (London: T & T Clark, 2010), 105. The suggestion that the cave marks such a threshold is more widely attested in ancient Greek texts. See Ustinova for a more in-depth discussion of the occurrence of ritual activity in caves in ancient Greek texts, Yulia Ustinova, *Caves and the Ancient Greek Mind: Descending Underground in the Search for Ultimate Truth* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 68–84.

[1069] This is attested both in biblical texts and in archaeological evidence, for example, see the examination of burial practices which includes examples of burials discovered in caves in, Elizabeth Bloch-Smith, *Judahite Burial Practices and Beliefs about the Dead* (Sheffield, England: JSOT Press, 1992). It must be acknowledged that cave are also identified as places of provision and protection, such as in, 2 Samuel 24:3; 1 Kings 18:4.

[1070] For example, the Levite's concubine is depicted in an ambiguous state between life and death, with her hand(s) on the threshold of the doorway (Judges 19:27-28). See more discussion in Francesca Stavrakopoulou, *The Social Life of the Corpse: Within and Without the Bible*, Forthcoming. The cult statue of Dagon is discovered decapitated and defeated with his head and both his hands lying on the threshold (1 Samuel 5:4). The ominous depiction of this threshold is accentuated even further, 'Thus, the priests of Dagon and all who come into the house of Dagon do not walk on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod until this day.' (1 Samuel 5:5). This threshold is not

implies that Elijah's position standing at the merging of these ritually potent spaces and cosmological realms is not an easy space for humans to access and inhabit.[1071]

The *adderet* is arguably instrumental in empowering Elijah to move into an access point between the otherworldly realms.[1072] Carla Sulzbach implies that accessing divine spaces in the Hebrew Bible and post-biblical texts is frequently proceeded by a physical adjustment, such as a change or removal of clothing.[1073] It is only after Elijah has modified his materiality that he moves to step onto this threshold (v. 19). In the previous chapter it was effectively illustrated that the physical manipulation or movement of a garment can activate the garments' agency to empower its user in their ritual performance. The action of wrapping could in itself be considered as a ritually charged performance.[1074] As such it could be suggested to activate the *adderet*'s agency in a ritual sense, which enables Elijah's ritual movement and performance in this text. This interpretation may also evoke the *adderet*'s protective or apotropaic capacity discussed earlier in this chapter implying that Elijah's body is protected from both Yahweh's divine presence and the danger of standing on a potent liminal boundary point. Still, it must be reiterated that Elijah's action of wrapping his face in the *adderet* transforms also his own

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only associated with death, but as the threshold to a temple, it can also be considered an access point into ritual space, like the opening of the cave. Cf. Victor H. Matthews for a social/legal interpretation of threshold imagery in this text and in Judges 19, Matthews, Victor H., "Physical Space, Imagined Space, and 'Lived Space' in Ancient Israel," *Biblical Theology Bulletin: A Journal of Bible and Culture* 33, no. 1 (2003): 12–20.

[1071] George W. Savran suggests that treading on sacred ground (which I argue Elijah does at the threshold of worlds), was possible only by strict invitation from a deity, Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 182.

[1072] Contra, Sulzbach, "When Going on a Heavenly Journey," 187.

[1073] Sulzbach particularly notes the portrayal of Moses removing his veil and sandals in sacred space, Ibid., 182–188. Cf. Rubin and Kosman's discussion of clothing in the Midrashic sources, in which they indicate that clothing can function as a bridge to access different spaces. They even associate accessing worlds to the act of wrapping, 'Wrapping oneself in the garment transfers the priest into the transcendent plane and connects him to the holy.' Yet it must be noted that this seems to be depicted metaphorically, rather considering clothing as materially transformative, Rubin and Kosman, "The Clothing of the Primordial Adam," 163–164.

[1074] For example see an examination of the potency of wrapping corpses in ancient Egyptian cultures in Riggs, *Unwrapping Ancient Egypt: The Shroud, the Secret and the Sacred*, 19–27, 87, 106–108.

personhood. This implies it is his new ritually empowered materiality and personhood that enables this ritual crossing of thresholds.

7.6 Empowering Elijah's Prophetic Speech

> And behold a voice came to [Elijah] and said, "Why are you here, Elijah?" And he answered, "I have been very jealous for Yahweh, God of hosts. For the sons of Israel have abandoned your covenant, they have destroyed your altars; they killed your prophets with the sword. And I, I am the only one to remain, but they seek my נפש, to take it away" (1 Kings 19:13b-14).[1075]

For many scholars these verses which follow Elijah's clothing performance imply the resumption of Yahweh and Elijah's dialogue. The depiction of Elijah wrapped in the *adderet* is quickly forgotten – it recedes into the background, often not mentioned again in commentaries until its use in 1 Kings 19:19. However, I propose that one cannot move so readily away from the transformative, material impact of the *adderet*; particularly since I have shown that Elijah's actions with the *adderet* are indicative of a extension of their communication in 1 Kings 19:9b-10 and 13b-14. In this section I shall argue that Elijah's actions with his *adderet* and its transformed personhood impact how we might interpret both Yahweh's response to Elijah's actions (v. 13b) and Elijah's own response (v. 14). For this to be considered, it is necessary to acknowledge the importance of the materiality of their speech in this text as I will go on to discuss.

The majority of biblical scholars seem to focus on the content of Yahweh and Elijah's words rather than its material form. This has led to an assumption that this speech exactly echoes their first dialogue. The ad verbatim repetition of this question and response pattern in 9b-10 and 13b-14 is considered to be one of the many 'problematic' features that require further clarification in this

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[1075] It can be observed that this voice is not directly attributed to Yahweh, but there is little reason to challenge the assumption that it is Yahweh who is speaking. For further discussion on this ambiguity, see Provan, *1 & 2 Kings*, 149.

text.[1076] A typical explanation for this repetition is to posit that it denotes evidence for editorial redactions: the repetition was perhaps mistakenly retained or employed to indicate a resumption of the narrative after an editorial addition.[1077] In contrast, other scholars argue that this repetition is indicative of the stylistic trait of the writer of this narrative.[1078] Even if these repeated phrases marked interpolations, it must be considered what impact they have on the text in its current form.

In terms of its literary significance, the repetition of Yahweh's question and Elijah's response could be considered to function to heighten the climax of this text.[1079] Brian Britt particularly submits that the question and answer pattern neatly frames this theophanic scene, which is often identified as the climax of Elijah's journey.[1080] Other scholarly interpretations suggest that the repetition serves to add weight to Elijah's claim or underscore particular elements noted in this response. Still, there remains little consensus as to what it is that is being emphasised in this repetition.[1081] It could be proposed

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[1076] Along with the other repeated motifs in 1 Kings 19, such as, the repeated encounter with the messenger in 1 Kings 19:5-7. For further discussion on these repeated motifs, see Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 518; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 47; Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 53. George Savran suggests that examples of literal repetition, such as is found in 1 Kings 19:13, is actually quite unusual in the Hebrew Bible, Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 146.

[1077] On the suggestion that this repetition may have mistakenly been left in the text, see Gunkel, *Elijah, Yahweh, and Baal*, 28. The suggestion that this may indicate the resumption to the narrative is implied in Würthwein, "Elijah at Horeb," 161; Chavel, "The Face of God and the Etiquette of Eye-Contact: Visitation, Pilgrimage, and Prophetic Vision in Ancient Israelite and Early Jewish Imagination," 38. Noted in Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 48. This tendency in scholarship has also been noted in Cohn, "The Literary Logic of 1 Kings 17-19," 342; Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 133.

[1078] Implied in Gray, *I & II Kings*, 411; Denise Dick Herr, "Variations of a Pattern: 1 Kings 19," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 104, no. 2 (1985): 292–94.

[1079] Herr, "Variations of a Pattern"; Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 522; Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 50. The biblical writers' employment of repetition has been considered as a literary motif in the wider Elijah narratives, Cohn, "The Literary Logic of 1 Kings 17-19," 342.

[1080] Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 49. The suggestion that the theophany marks the climax of this text is indicated in Herr, "Variations of a Pattern," 292. This is also tacitly implied in other biblical commentaries on this text.

[1081] For example, scholars have focused on Elijah's isolation, Gray, *I & II Kings*, 405. Or his inner struggle, Childs, "On Reading the Elijah Narratives," 135. Alternatively, it has been proposed that this repetition emphasises Elijah's role as a 'defender of the

that Elijah adds authority to his whole response through this repetition. This would corroborate with the suggestion made earlier that repetition in a ritual context, such as this one, can function to empower one's speech or actions.[1082] It is possible that this repetition was a conventional feature in supplication rituals. However, this cannot be assumed, since there is not sufficient evidence that such a formalised ritual ever existed in ancient Syro-Palestinian culture.[1083]

Whilst some scholars propose a subtle shift in meaning or significance of Elijah's second response, this repetition is still most frequently considered to emphasise that Elijah is 'unchanged,' or even unaffected by his experience of Yahweh's theophany.[1084] Such interpretations presume that there is an implicit expectation Elijah should change his answer after being affected through his experience of Yahweh's theophany.[1085] Indeed, the repetition of Yahweh's question tacitly indicates that Yahweh expects such a change in Elijah's response.[1086] This implies that Elijah's initial response was in some way unsatisfactory.[1087] These interpretations correspond with the depiction of the wrapping of the *adderet* as an indication of Elijah's reluctance to

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covenant,' reflecting its Deuteronomistic composition, Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 135.

[1082] See section 6.8

[1083] Cf. Hugo suggests that the second dialogue is not simply repeated without purpose, it represents the repetition of an unresolved compliant that has been off set by night and Yahweh's theophany, Hugo, "Text and Literary History," 29. Simon Devries also suggests that Elijah's words are repeated because they remain true implying that they have not yet been addressed by Yahweh, DeVries, *1 Kings*, 237.

[1084] Implied in Cohn, "The Literary Logic of 1 Kings 17-19," 343; Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 125; Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 125, 134; Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 71; Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 522, 534; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 277; Olley, "Yhwh and His Zealous Prophet," 40; Cogan, *1 Kings*, 457; Long, *1 & 2 Kings*, 222; Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 146, 222; Flannery, "Go Back by the Way You Came," 170; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 102.

[1085] Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 146. The expectation that Elijah should have responded differently is implied in Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 101.

[1086] Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 71; Flannery, "Go Back by the Way You Came," 170. Cf. Walsh, *1 Kings*, 277. Many scholars recognise that the meaning of Yahweh's question may have changed in tone or force, as indicated in Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 134; Hauser, "Yahweh Versus Death," 71; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 277; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 102.

[1087] This has been implied in the suggestion that Elijah's response was self-centred, for example, Gregory suggests that, "The precise reiteration exhibits Elijah's inflexibility and egocentrism," Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 134.

communicate with Yahweh – it would seem to develop the characterisation of Elijah as a stubborn prophet. This interpretation is dependent on the presumption that there is no difference between Elijah's first and second response, however, I shall demonstrate that such an assumption is difficult to sustain in view of the material form of Elijah's (and Yahweh's) voice in this text.

Voices are inseparable from their materiality and the body or object from which they were spoken. The different aspects of a voice, such as its tone, pitch, rhythm, and so on, are all part of the material experience that it constructs and central to understanding the content and meaning of the words spoken. The materiality of the voice is insightfully illustrated and explored in Nina Sun Eidsheim's critical exploration of the performances of underwater singing enacted by soprano and performance artist Juliana Snapper.[1088] Eidsheim emphasises how these underwater performances effectively demonstrate the multisensory quality of sound as 'tactile as well as aural'.[1089] Voices are sound waves or vibrations that have a physical impact on its listener, implying that they entangle its speaker and its listeners into a relationship with one another.[1090] In underwater performances, the materiality of sound becomes more visible and thus we see that the medium through which voices are spoken also have an important part to play in impacting the listener.[1091] These points can be used to challenge us to recognise the materiality of words performed in 1 Kings 19:9-18 and its impact on how we interpret this text.

Although the content of the words spoken between Yahweh and Elijah remain the same, the form and materiality of these words have been transformed.[1092]

[1088] Nina Sun Eidsheim, "Sensing Voice: Materiality and the Lived Body in Singing and Listening," *The Senses and Society* 6, no. 2 (2011): 133–55.
[1089] Ibid., 147.
[1090] For an in-depth exploration of the materiality of voices and their inseparability from individual bodies, see Karmen MacKendrick, *The Matter of Voice: Sensual Soundings* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 1–38.
[1091] Eidsheim, "Sensing Voice," 147–148.
[1092] For further discussion of the significance of the materiality of words, see Zainab Bahrani, *The Graven Image: Representation in Babylonia and Assyria*, Archaeology, Culture and Society (Philadelphia; Bristol: University of Pennsylvania Press;

First, a shift may be observed in the materiality of Yahweh's question (v. 13b).[1093] The biblical writers portray the initial question originating from the word of Yahweh (דבר־יהוה) (v. 9b), however, in its repetition it is depicted in the form of a voice (קול) (v. 13b).[1094] This difference is nuanced and often goes unnoticed in biblical scholarship, yet it is unlikely that such a shift was incidental.[1095] Yahweh's voice is only rarely referred to in the texts of 1 and 2 Kings, whereas the Yahweh's word is employed frequently in the Elijah and Elisha texts.[1096] Thus, I propose that the depiction of Yahweh's voice marks a significant modification in Yahweh's words.

It can be argued that Yahweh's form of communication has become more direct and intimate. It is sometimes proposed that the first question is delivered through means of a messenger or a more indirect method, whereas in the second question, it is Yahweh who delivers the message.[1097] This suggestion is a valid possibility, yet it cannot be substantiated beyond speculation, since there is no reference to a messenger such as the one

University Presses Marketing, 2003); Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Materialist Reading: Materialism, Materiality, and Biblical Cults of Writing," in *Biblical Interpretation and Method: Essays in Honour of John Barton*, ed. Katharine J. Dell and Paul M. Joyce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 223–42.

[1093] It has also been noted that there is shift of the context of Yahweh's words, Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 134.

[1094] The shift from Yahweh's word to his voice has been noted in Ibid.; Collins, *The Mantle of Elijah*, 133. Also briefly noted in Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 146; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 102.

[1095] See Wiener who implies that the repetition of Yahweh's question comes from the word of the Lord, completely overlooking the shift in the biblical writers' depiction of Yahweh's voice, Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, 14.

[1096] Yahweh's voice is only indirectly referred to in 1 Kings 20:36; 2 Kings 18:12. Whereas Yahweh's word is used in 1 Kings 17:2, 8, 16; 18:1, 31 and so on. The manifestation of Yahweh's voice in 1 Kings 19:12-13 has sometimes been contrasted with the depiction of Baal in 1 Kings 18. Whilst Yahweh manifests himself to Elijah in the form of a voice, Baal is depicted as a voiceless and impotent deity in 1 Kings 18:26, 29. For further discussion, see Lawrie, "Telling Of(f) Prophets," 176–177; Nel and Schmidt, "Theophany as Type-Scene in the Hebrew Bible," 276. On the suggestion of the possibility that this depiction of Yahweh was intended as a polemic against Baal, see F. C. Fensham, "A Few Observations on the Polarisation Between Yahweh and Baal in 1 Kings 17-19," *Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 92, no. 2 (1980): 227–36; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 49; Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 88–89.

[1097] Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 522; Fretheim, *First and Second Kings*, 11. Contra. Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, 14.

depicted in verse 9b. Nevertheless, the biblical writers' depiction of a 'voice' does seem to imply that Yahweh's presence is more tangible and intimate to Elijah.[1098] The depiction of a 'voice' connotes a personal and multisensory experience, in which the words of Yahweh have taken on a particular pitch and rhythm that is completely unique to Yahweh's own materiality. This interpretation challenges the suggestion that Elijah somehow misses or avoids Yahweh's theophanic presence, as it implies that Elijah experiences Yahweh's voice in verse 13b, which is a theophanic manifestation in itself.

The intimacy of Yahweh's voice is developed to some extent by Stephen Geller and Robert Cohn who both stress that Yahweh's voice could only be heard by Elijah. In light of this interpretation, it would appear that Yahweh is drawing Elijah into an exclusive and intimate relationship.[1099] However, both of these interpretations seem to be based largely on the depiction of Yahweh's 'voice' in verse 12, suggesting that Yahweh speaks with Elijah through a 'whisper'.[1100] Given the ambiguous nature of this phrase קול דממה דקה it is difficult to reach the conclusion that this manifestation is synonymous with the depiction of 'a voice' in verse 13.[1101] It cannot be substantiated whether or not the biblical writers' depiction of Yahweh's theophany in verse 12 was even intended to portray a voice with words. The voice referred to in verse 13b lacks a definite article which also differentiates it from Yahweh's manifestation in verse 12. Therefore, I am inclined to suggest that regardless of the precise nature of Yahweh's manifestation in verse 12, this is still somewhat distinct from the portrayal of his voice in verse 13b.[1102]

[1098] The intensification of Yahweh's presence in this chapter is also implied by the portrayal of him 'passing by' (v.11) and through the mysterious voice (v. 12).

[1099] Cohn, "The Literary Logic of 1 Kings 17-19," 342; Geller, "The Still, Small Voice," 55.

[1100] Implied in Robinson, "Elijah at Horeb," 521; Rogland, "Elijah and the 'Voice' at Horeb," 94. The assumption that the depiction of Yahweh's voice or sound in verse 12 is the same as in 13 is also implied in Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 134.

[1101] Wiener posits that the voice in verse 12 is not a voice as such and therefore is wordless, Wiener, *The Prophet Elijah in the Development of Judaism: A Depth-Psychological Study*, 14.

[1102] Walsh, *1 Kings*, 276.

The change from Yahweh's word to his voice could be interpreted as a response to Elijah's actions in verse 13a, which directly precede this voice. It has already been suggested that Elijah's actions constitute a continuation of their interaction – Elijah prepares and transforms himself to move towards Yahweh's presence and communicate with him through his actions with the *adderet*. Yahweh's own transformation seems to be impacted or provoked by Elijah's transformed materiality. It could be considered that Yahweh acknowledges the ritually potent power and agency of Elijah's new materiality. The intimacy of Yahweh's response to Elijah's actions, might suggest that through transforming his communication and personhood Elijah also transforms his relationship with Yahweh.

Through the act of wrapping his face Elijah's words portrayed in verse 14 are also transformed in some way. It has already been stressed that through this action, the *adderet* is ritually empowered and Elijah's personhood and ritual movement are transformed. Therefore, it naturally follows that the power and agency of Elijah's words have changed by the indication that he himself is not the same.[1103] Furthermore, it is possible that in wrapping his face Elijah could be wrapping his mouth and therefore activate both his face and mouth in a ritual sense as they are empowered through the agency of the *adderet*. As implied before, it may seem that Elijah is impairing his communication, or voice through the act of wrapping his face and mouth, since this action would probably have muffled or inhibited his sound. Nevertheless, in this ritually potent context I argue that these actions probably function to empower and transform his voice. In this way this ritual performance may appear to distort Western expectations of the 'norm.' Even without the suggestion that Elijah covers his mouth, the very transformation of his face with the *adderet* effectively demonstrates that Elijah reframes the very platform for his words and his communication with Yahweh. Still, this suggestion could insightfully elucidate the possible material implication of Elijah's actions in the broader context of 1 Kings 19:10-18.

[1103] This proposal can be developed further by considering that Elijah wraps, and thereby transforms, his face, which is instrumental to a person's communication and expression.

It is not only the materiality of the speaker's voice that is transformed in this text – the material contexts through which these words have been spoken have also been modified. This dialogue proceeds from the dramatic phenomena depicted in verses 11-12. It can be suggested that these events would have had an impact on the environment in which Elijah speaks. The imagery of the breaking of rocks, wind, and fire is particularly evocative of a context in which it may be difficult to breathe let alone speak as it implies that the atmosphere was filled with dust and smoke. Such elements would probably have impacted the quality and range of Elijah's voice. Elijah's actions with the *adderet* arguably play a practical role in enabling him to both move and speak to Yahweh; it arguably allows Elijah to breathe or speak without being too affected by his surroundings. The implications of this imagery also suggests the sounds of his voice are transformed both through the *adderet*, if it was wrapped around his mouth (and by extension his face), and through the material medium through which he is speaking. This interpretation indicates the practical need for Elijah to transform and empower his speech and communication with Yahweh in verses 13-14.

The empowerment of prophetic word through material transformation, such as I have argued through Elijah's clothing performance in 1 Kings 19:13-14, is also portrayed in other texts in the Hebrew Bible. In Isaiah 6:6-10, the biblical writers portray the prophet Isaiah being transformed and enabled to speak to the people after a seraph touches a divine coal to his mouth. Isaiah's speech is then empowered and he is able to answer Yahweh's voice. Another instance in Ezekiel 2:8-3:4, depicts the prophet Ezekiel empowering his words (or manifesting divine word) by the consumption of a scroll which is given to him, following which he is sent to speak to the people of Israel.[1104] Whilst both of these examples are more concerned with being empowered to speak Yahweh's divine message, there is a nuanced comparison that can be observed with 1 Kings 19:13-14. Elijah manipulates his communication and undergoes a material transformation in which a potent object - the *adderet* - is ritually manipulated. This is all in order to empower his speech that he may be heard. Similarly, Isaiah and Ezekiel are portrayed empowering their speech to

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[1104] Cf. Stavrakopoulou, "Materialist Reading," 230–231.

the people by being materially transformed by divine objects/words; presumably with the desired outcome that their speech is heard.[1105]

The empowerment of Elijah's speech through his actions of wrapping, reconfiguring his personhood, and his communication with the *adderet*, is successful: Yahweh responds to him (v. 15-18). Regardless of whether or not this answer is a rebuke or an encouragement, a re-commissioning, or a dismissal, the fact that Elijah evokes Yahweh's response is an accomplishment in itself.[1106] It could be proposed that this response is incited by the empowerment of Elijah's words through being wrapped in the *adderet*. This once again implies that Elijah's transformed materiality has an impact on Yahweh's actions and words.

Another point worth briefly exploring is the possibility that the *adderet*, and Elijah's personhood as he employs the *adderet*, is also likely to have been socially, ritually, and materially transformed further through their entanglement with Yahweh's presence. In the depictions of Yahweh's physical manifestation there is even an implicit connotation that his breath is on Elijah wrapped in the *adderet*, which evokes his physical touch on Elijah.[1107] It is widely attested in the biblical texts that an encounter with Yahweh's intimate presence is ritually

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[1105] Both examples take place in a ritually charged divine space (or the threshold of divine space), indicating the transformative potential of these performances. These examples are suggestive of the significance of materiality in transforming and empowering prophets in their roles in the Hebrew Bible.

[1106] The ambiguity of Yahweh's response and if it was meant to indicate a commissioning or decommissioning is suggested in Feldt, "Wild and Wondrous Men," 335. The suggestion that Yahweh rebukes Elijah is implied in Childs, "On Reading the Elijah Narratives," 135; Gregory, "Irony and the Unmasking of Elijah," 125; Walsh, *1 Kings*, 277; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 56; Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 212; Roi, "1 Kings 19," 43. Contra. Hadjiev, "Elijah's Alleged Megalomania," 438. For the proposal that these words were meant as an encouragement, see Gunkel, *Elijah, Yahweh, and Baal*, 23, 28. For the suggestion that Elijah is re-commissioned, see Nelson, *First and Second Kings*, 127; Rice, *Nations Under God*, 161; Britt, "Prophetic Concealment in a Biblical Type Scene," 49; Bodner, *Elisha's Profile in the Book of Kings*, 29; Millgram, *The Elijah Enigma*, 103. For the interpretation of Yahweh's words as a decommissioning or dismissal, see Tonstad, "The Limits of Power," 260; Roi, "1 Kings 19," 43.

[1107] See Yahweh's transformative impact on Adam by breathing on him and giving him life in Genesis 2:7.

and physically transformative.[1108] Although it is probable that 1 Kings 19:19-21 was originally part of a separate tradition, as suggested earlier, its position following Elijah's encounter with Yahweh may impact how we interpret Elijah's ritual performance in this text. Elijah's actions passing by and throwing the *adderet* on Elisha could mark a continuation of his ritual performance on Mount Horeb, implying that he was empowered by Yahweh's presence to find and impact Elisha. Another possible interpretation is that Elisha is also transformed through Yahweh's presence that is manifested in Elijah's *adderet*.[1109] Such a suggestion does not undermine the *adderet*'s own potency and agency, rather it implies how this garment's ritual agency is augmented even further through its entanglement with Yahweh's own personhood.

7.7 Summary

The employment of the *adderet* in 1 Kings 19:13 might be interpreted as a foundation myth for the *adderet*, one which characterises how it continues to be employed in the rest of the Elijah and Elisha narratives.[1110] In the previous chapter it was acknowledged that the *adderet* is portrayed with very little indication as to its construction or material form, yet it has been established over this chapter and the last that it has the raw potential to be used as an efficacious object in different contexts. Its employment in 1 Kings 19:13 can help develop an understanding of its dynamism as a ritual object and from whence some of its potency is derived in the present form of the biblical texts.

[1108] For example, Genesis 32:22-32; Exodus 34:29-35; Isaiah 6:5-8. Transformations through encounters with a divine being is indicated in Daniel 3:25-29. There is also an implicit suggestion that Lot's wife's transformation into a pillar of salt through looking back at Yahweh's actions in Genesis 19:26. It can be observed that the tabernacle and temple is also ritually empowered through its entanglement with Yahweh's dwelling presence, indicated in Exodus 40:34-38; 1 Kings 8:11.
[1109] Savran, *Encountering the Divine*, 175–176.
[1110] This is not to suggest that the whole of the narrative of 1 Kings 19 was intended to support the foundation myth of the *adderet*. It must be acknowledged that 1 Kings 19 seems to centre around Elijah's interaction and communication with Yahweh and his experience of different cosmological realms. Still, it can be suggested that this 'foundation myth' is part of the "sub-narrative," which compliments the overarching "plotline" of 1 Kings 19 that relates the myth of the *adderet* and how it is constructed as an object with ritual potency.

Its portrayal in 1 Kings 19:13, which serves as the recipients' initial encounter with this garment, *is* in effect the foundation myth that seems to be missing in the biblical writers' portrayal of Elijah's *adderet*. Whilst it does not imply its construction in its conventional sense, its use in this ritually potent context constructs Elijah's *adderet* as a garment and 'instrument' of power. Although Elijah's *adderet* is transformed through its entanglement with Yahweh's presence, I argue that it is principally the 'birthing' of the *adderet* into action that evokes its efficacy in this and subsequent contexts, as I have demonstrated.

The *adderet* plays a role in reshaping Elijah's material personhood and enabling and empowering both his movement and speech in this ritual performance. This interpretation of the *adderet*'s manipulation as a ritual action is well grounded by the broader ritual themes in this text in which Elijah's material personhood is reconfigured. Elijah's personhood is physically and ritually impacted through the wrapping of the *adderet*. By extending our examination to consider the actions that proceed from Elijah's clothing performance in further detail I have developed a richer understanding of how the *adderet* enables him in new ways. By considering the impact that the *adderet* has on its wider context in this text I have also been able to posit that the *adderet* impacts Yahweh's responses to and entanglement with Elijah wrapped in the *adderet*. Such interpretations were only made possible by first considering Yahweh's implied gaze on Elijah and his *adderet*.

The ways in which the action of wrapping with the *adderet* empowers Elijah's movement and speech is unconventional. The *adderet*'s new form wrapped around his face would seem to disable his actions and even muffle his own voice. Nevertheless, as a ritually potent action we can better understand how it functions to empower Elijah in new ways. It must not be overlooked that in the material context and environment of this ritual the *adderet*'s own material potency also may enable and protect Elijah's new position as he moves to the mouth of the cave. The *adderet* has been argued to empower Elijah to step onto a threshold that is both physically and ritually dangerous for him. It can simultaneously be considered to empower his speech before Yahweh,

provoking Yahweh to change the materiality of his own words through his voice and answering Elijah.

Conclusions

This thesis redresses the dynamic role clothing plays in the Hebrew Bible by interrogating it through the lens of material culture studies and other anthropological studies of clothing. In each chapter, I have illustrated the need to go beyond conventional interpretations by highlighting the ways in which garments have been rendered inert, flat, and unchanging through these interpretations. One of the key problems that I have outlined in this thesis is the tendency for scholars to adopt text-centric or logo-centric approaches; this has arguably led to such flat interpretations of clothing. Whilst such approaches are understandable, given the Hebrew Bible is a collection of texts, these interpretations inevitably fail to fully recognise the implications of the material status of the objects encountered in the biblical texts. Therefore, in order to move beyond conventional studies I have adopted a multi-disciplinary approach, drawing from disciplines whose very focus is on objects and their materiality and sociality. By using these interdisciplinary insights I have demonstrated that clothing is inextricably linked to its status as a material object, even in its depiction in texts and iconography. In this thesis I have shown how a developed understanding of the materiality of clothing can diversify and enrich scholarly discussions of clothing in the Hebrew Bible.

Biblical scholarship, and contemporary Western scholarship more broadly, has frequently adopted very limited conceptions of clothing and material culture. My thesis has challenged some of the prevailing assumptions and dichotomies that underscore these conceptions. I particularly destabilise the tendency to view persons and objects as fixed entities, arguing instead that both are fluid and are in a constant state of being remade and transformed. The boundaries between person and object often become blurred to the point that the two seem to be merged, enabling us to propose that objects, such as clothes, can become extensions or distributed parts of persons. I have also used theories of entanglement and the agency of objects to indicate the impact that objects can have in peoples' lives, indicating that they are active in

constructing people. This way of talking about objects may at first feel somewhat uncomfortable in contemporary Western scholarship. Nevertheless, I argued that this reconceptualisation of objects and persons more effectively accounts for their complex entanglements in ways that the clean-cut and fixed distinctions privileged in conventional Western scholarship does not. When one focuses in on the way that the relationships between people and objects are depicted in the Hebrew Bible it quickly becomes noticeable that they are more complex and intertwined that often seems to be acknowledged in biblical scholarship.

To a certain extent, the biblical writers' depictions of clothing often appear to be flat or limited; neither of the portrayals of the *ketonet passim* or the *adderet* include a detailed description of their material properties. This lack of detail is not wholly surprising since clothing is not often the biblical writers' main concern in the text; nevertheless, this does not by any means imply that these depictions are merely incidental. The vibrant materiality of clothing can still be seen through the flat text-scope of the Hebrew Bible, since these texts are inherently embedded in the broader material culture in which they were constructed. Moreover, despite the limitation of many of the biblical writers' depictions, the Hebrew Bible remains packed with imagery of material culture. In these texts the biblical writers construct a culture in which people are intimately entangled with objects. Clothing is frequently performed and manipulated through various different actions in these texts, and often still vividly captures something of their tangibility as complex objects.

Given the biblical writers' limited depiction of many of the clothes depicted in the Hebrew Bible, and the difficulties often entailed in translating these terms, I acknowledged that employing a strict framework for examining these depictions would be unhelpful. Instead, I adopted an approach similar to that employed by Weismantel and Meskell by choosing to 'follow the material.' This approach reads against the 'natural' grain of the text which tends to privilege people. Through this focus I was able to follow the performance and life of the garments depicted in the biblical texts selected for examination.

Clothing and textiles played complex and dynamic roles in the ancient cultures in which the biblical texts arose. The complexity of clothing is effectively illustrated by the diversity of its materiality, which is clearly illustrated through textile remains that represent only a small fraction of the textiles that once existed in these cultures. The nuanced distinctions between ancient textile tools are also indicative the range of different techniques that might be employed to construct a variety of different clothes in these contexts. These material remains indicate that textiles and clothing were more than functional; they could manifest a number of different social values in these ancient cultures. In the light of the different disciplines from which I have drawn, we can see that textiles were experienced and encountered in different ways, the artisan's relationship with textiles being particularly intimate. Textiles and their construction also played an important role in a society's economy, as well as in constructing social relations between those people involved in its production. In addition, I have suggested that textile production was not only a social practice but also manifested ritual dynamics and played a role in people's religious activities.

Encountering evidence of visual culture similarly develops our perceptions of the social and material relationships that were formed with clothing in these ancient cultures. It may not offer us an accurate portrayal of ancient clothing nor indicate exactly what people thought of clothes to present the evidence, as such would be misleading. Nevertheless, iconography does effectively illustrate the variety of ways in which clothing has been employed by ancient artisans to communicate and impact the potency of these images. The distinctions in the clothing depicted on these ancient artefacts are indicative of various artistic styles and artistic perspectives on how to effectively communicate different ideologies through these depictions of clothing. Clothing is often employed to construct social and cultural difference in the relationships between figures depicted in ancient iconography. These portrayals are multifaceted and should not be overgeneralised. Like the clothing imagery that is depicted in the biblical texts, such depictions of clothing indicate that they were constructed in a cultural context in which people shared a dynamic relationship with their clothing. I have indicated

ways in which people may have shared a relationship with the clothing depicted on these iconographic artefacts. This has particularly been insightful in developing an understanding of the blurring of boundaries that existed between people and their clothes in these ancient cultures. The biblical writers' experience of visual culture would also knowingly or unknowingly impact their perceptions about the ways in which clothing could be manipulated to communicate different ideals.

My examination of these sources enriches an understanding of the impact that the materiality of clothing had in these ancient cultures. In turn this offers new ways to think about how the cultural conceptions of clothing would have also impacted the biblical writers' understanding and employment of clothing in their texts. This picture of the impact of clothing in these societies presents what was most plausible given the evidence we have; still, this evidence does not represent the complete picture. Recognising the gaps in material evidence suggests that the larger picture was much more diverse. It can be anticipated that this broader picture would develop and intensify our understanding of the complex social, economic, religious dimensions of clothing and its impact on ancient peoples that has already been partially identified through the present material and visual evidence available to us.

These sources also directly inform our perceptions of the significance of clothing imagery in the Hebrew Bible, although such interpretations must remain tentative. Examinations of the material evidence for textile production effectively illustrate that making clothing was a costly and laborious activity, which indexes the basic social and economic value of a garment. I suggested that high status garments would probably have required more time, effort, and costly resources to construct; by inference we can begin to suggest the long process that was implicit in the materiality of garments constructed for elite figures depicted in the Hebrew Bible. This analysis also enriches my interpretation of Israel's actions in making the *ketonet passim*, developing our perception of the significance of his actions and their social impact on the wider household. In short, material evidence for textiles and textile production provides us with a greater appreciation of the value of clothing in the biblical

texts and supports the claim that such imagery was unlikely to be incidental, but rather was deliberately selected and crafted by the biblical writers.

The various depictions of clothing in iconography indicates ways in which artisans employed the medium of these images to most effectively convey certain ideologies and enhance their objects' power. Even the artisan's use of detail on clothing, or the quality of textured images constructs different effects and intensifies the relationships that are depicted in these scenes. These discussions also prompt us to look at the ways in which the biblical writers used the medium of texts to draw the readers' attention to different garments that I have explored in my case studies. For example, the biblical writers often employ clothing imagery as the initial part of a narrative sequence to emphasise its significance in a performance. This has been identified and explored further in my discussion of the brothers' actions in stripping Joseph before taking him and throwing him into the pit (Genesis 37:23) and Elijah's performance in wrapping his face before setting forth and standing (1 Kings 19:13). Whilst ancient artisans and the biblical writers intensify the depiction of clothing in distinct ways, we can still see how the performance of clothing and its materiality is manipulated in ways that empower or limit its agency in the contexts depicted through image and text.

Garments are inextricably entangled with other people and objects. Although scholars are not blind to these relationships, they often stop short of fully interrogating the impact clothing has on other people. Clothing has a transformative impact on peoples' social and material lives. Each time a new garment is worn it constructs a unique relationship with the body of its wearer and their own materiality. For example, when Joseph wears the *ketonet passim* it enables and disables his movements and thereby impacts his social activity and status in the household (Genesis 37:3-10). Elisha's social and material lifestyle is also transformed through his interaction with the *adderet* (1 Kings 19:19-21). The way a garment is worn can also reshape its own potency and relationship with the wearer: Elijah's actions in wrapping the *adderet* modifies his and the *adderet*'s agency, enabling him to transform his movement and the potency of his voice in 1 Kings 19:13-14.

These entanglements with clothes in the Hebrew Bible also actively reconfigure a character's personhood. This is illustrated in the ways in which the agency, material properties, and social connotations manifested in a garment impact the movement and agency of its wearer or user. The garment itself can manifest personhood and manifest something of that character's agency in their own materiality; it becomes a distributed part of that person. The manifestation of Elijah's personhood in the *adderet* empowers him by enabling him to extend the materiality and capabilities of his body through its ritual performance. The depiction of the *adderet* as a distributed part of his personhood also enables him to continue to manifest his presence and authority through Elisha, even after Elijah himself is taken into heaven. Similarly, the *ketonet passim* clearly manifests Joseph's personhood even after he is physically absent from a scene. It is this entanglement with Joseph's personhood which allows the brothers to empower themselves by constructing his material death through their actions with the *ketonet passim*; in doing so they also impact Israel's agency, which is manifested in this garment. This depiction has enriched my interpretation of the roles that the *ketonet passim* and *adderet* play in their different contexts by intensifying the intimacy of their performance with their wearer or users, which in turn impacts how we see the influence of these clothes on other figures in these texts.

The social and material relationships constructed with a garment are not confined to those who wear or have physical contact with it. Viewers are drawn into a relationship with that garment through their implied gaze. I began to draw out the importance of the gaze through my discussions of ancient visual culture by suggesting that the viewer of an iconographic object can be impacted by its materiality, through its size and the positioning of the viewer in relation to that object. The details of clothing also probably impacted a viewer's relationship with and reaction to different figures exhibited on these objects.

In my examination of the case studies in this thesis, I developed these suggestions, particularly exploring the wider impact that these garments have on their observers. The brothers' implicit gaze on Joseph wearing the *ketonet*

passim was powerful in reconfiguring their relationships with Joseph and their father by marking them as those excluded from an intimate relationship with the *ketonet passim*. I argue that this engagement with the *ketonet passim* actively impacted their emotions and provoked them into aggressive action. Yahweh's implicit gaze on Elijah in the *adderet* impacted the relationship between deity and prophet, provoking Yahweh to respond to him in a different way. These discussions challenge the scholarly tendency to focus on the wearer's relationship with a garment and develop our understanding of the powerful and tactile relationships that are constructed through the act of viewing a garment's materiality. By considering the broader relationships between a garment and persons other than its wearer, it has been possible to expand our understanding of how clothing can transform the social interrelationships between the different people with whom it is entangled.

One way of moving beyond the conventional scholarly depiction of garments as inert objects was through emphasising that the biblical writers frequently depict clothing in action and movement. Garments are rarely depicted passively as items that are only worn; even where this is implied I have emphasised that as clothes they are inherently performative and always play active roles even when they are worn on the body. The activity of clothing and its movement is effectively demonstrated through its very construction. Both artisan and garment are transformed through the activity of 'making.' Although the movements required for this process are in one way repetitive, I have indicated how they are simultaneously unrepeatable and unique to the construction of each garment. By inference, Israel's performance in making the *ketonet passim* is a process in which his movements and the *ketonet passim*'s materiality impact and actively transform each other. Through my focus on the activity of making I was able to enrich our understanding of the potent imagery that is evoked by the biblical writers' depiction of Israel's performance. This imagery intensifies the relationship that is formed between the Israel and the *ketonet passim,* and also his relationship with Joseph in the narrative.

Despite the scholarly tendency to attempt to relate different clothing performances to more ritually substantiated clothing actions, such as in investiture or enthronement ceremonies, I have stressed that the particularity of each clothing action and movement should be given more attention. The biblical writers' depictions of clothing in various performances demonstrates its inherent potency as an object that is malleable and easily manipulated or transformed through these actions. The actions that have been considered in my case studies, wherein garments are made, stripped, dipped in blood, torn, wrapped, thrown, rolled or cut and lifted up, illustrate this diversity. Each of these actions has a transformative impact on a garment's materiality, as argued in my analyses of these clothing performances. Many of these actions empower the potency of these garments in distinct ways. This is particularly well illustrated by the actions in which garments are permanently modified, such as the performance in tearing the *ketonet passim* and dipping it in blood, and the possible interpretation of Elijah's actions in cutting the *adderet*. These actions also impact the ways in which garments can extend the personhood of their wearers or users.

This thesis has opened up new ways of considering garments as potent objects that can be employed in ritual performances. In the biblical texts, clothes are frequently employed in ritual contexts and are manipulated and performed in actions that are loaded with ritual potency elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. I have shown how these ritually activated objects can charge their users in their own ritual performance by enabling them to empower or transform their personhood and materiality, cross otherworldly thresholds, or receive divine dreams. These interpretations are also supported to some extent by the suggestion that the practice of textile production itself could manifest ritual potency. Clothes can also be employed in acts of ritual violence, which is largely made possible through their inherent and intimate interrelationships with personhood; this enables garments to be employed and manipulated to harm the people with which they are closely enmeshed. These interpretations move beyond conventional scholarly interpretations, which often only attribute ritual status to cultic garments, and instead, indicate that any item of clothing has the potential to be employed in a ritual performance.

It must be reiterated that these enriched interpretations of the clothing depicted in biblical texts hinge on the idea that clothing can manifest its own agency and therefore, can be considered to have a unique and powerful impact on the people and objects with whom it is intertwined. Such an interpretation is only made possible by having a greater appreciation of the materiality of clothes themselves. This understanding arguably takes us beyond the symbolic and allows us to move past the misconception of clothing as passive objects that are only animated and imbued with the social and religious meanings attributed to them by people. Agency is also central to understanding the impact that clothing has in performances in enabling and disabling a person's own movement and agency, and to our reconfiguration of the blurred relationships that are constructed between people and their clothes. The reason for stressing this point is to recognise that, by slightly shifting our perspectives of the ontological status of clothing, we are open to a diverse range of new possibilities for redressing clothing in the Hebrew Bible and constructing a richer understanding of the material, social and religious dimensions depicted in the biblical texts.

Contribution to Scholarship

My thesis develops and extends on the current study of clothing in the Hebrew Bible. It particularly enriches and supports the proposal that clothing imagery is complex and multi-faceted. Despite the advances in the study of clothing imagery through social, symbolic, and historical critical approaches, I have identified some of the limitations often perpetuated in these discussions. By using material cultural studies to challenge contemporary Western conceptions of clothing and its materiality, I have highlighted the advantages of going beyond the social and cultural values that garments have be considered to communicate. I have particularly stressed that the agency, materiality, and also the meanings manifested in items of clothing are particularly subject to change as they interact with other persons and things. Although this has begun to be recognised in some studies of clothing in the Hebrew Bible, my emphasis on the transformative agency of clothing builds on these discussions.

This thesis contributes to some of the broader fields of study in biblical scholarship. An increasing number of studies have begun to address different aspects of material culture in the Hebrew Bible, such food and hair.[1111] The present examination extends this interest in material culture and, like these other studies, it raises awareness of the need for more biblical scholars to recognise the importance that aspects of material culture has in shaping the people's lives in the cultures portrayed in the biblical texts. In my engagement with individual texts, I have shown that clothing imagery is rarely isolated; instead, it is frequently intimately connected with other depictions of materiality in these texts. The biblical writers' use of clothing imagery is also associated with other aspects of the material performance and movement in these texts, such as the brothers' actions in stripping Joseph of the *ketonet passim*, taking him, and throwing him into the pit (Genesis 37:23-24) and Elijah's performance of wrapping, setting forth, and standing at the opening of the cave (1 Kings 19:13) and passing by Elisha before throwing the *adderet* on him (1 Kings 19:19). The dynamism of these depictions serves to intensify the significance of clothing and its agency in their wider performances.

I have also started to develop the relationship between clothing and other aspects of material culture. For example, the transformation of Elijah's personhood is illustrated through the food that he consumes as well as through his employment of the *adderet* (1 Kings 19:5-13); Elisha's initial engagement with the *adderet* leads him to destroy the instruments of his previous social and material occupation and have a feast (1 Kings 19:20-21). These points only touch the surface of the many interrelationships that can be seen in the biblical writers' broader employment of materiality in texts that employ clothing imagery. My thesis has largely focused on clothing in order to most effectively unpack the extent of its significance in the biblical texts. However, by recognising these interlinking motifs of material imagery, it can be suggested that these clothing performances could be interrogated even

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[1111] Lisbeth S. Fried, "Why Did Joseph Shave?," The Biblical Archaeology Review 33, no. 4 (2007): 36–41; Nathan McDonald, What Did the Ancient Israelites Eat? Diet in Biblical Times (Grand Rapids, Mich.; Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2008); Susan Niditch, My Brother Esau Is a Hairy Man: Hair and Identity in Ancient Israel (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

further in biblical scholarship through an extensive examination of the broader imagery of material culture in these contexts. I argue that the broader challenges to conventional conceptions of material culture and its relationships with people in this thesis can also be employed to challenge and provoke new ways of considering other objects depicted in the Hebrew Bible.

This thesis also contributes to the development of studies of bodies by elucidating the concept of dressed bodies and also exploring how bodies can be extended through the employment of clothing. My discussion particularly focuses on the intimate relationship between the body and objects such as clothing in which the boundary between person and object becomes blurred. This corroborates with the discussion in Stavrakopoulou's paper on body modification in the Hebrew Bible, referred to earlier in this thesis, which insightfully illustrates the importance of the materiality of body modification. She uses examples of circumcision and painting the eyes to provoke her readers to consider the ways in which what a person does to the body can impact one's potency and thereby effect the way we read their agency in the biblical texts.[1112] My arguments build on these ideas by exploring how the body's movements and agency is manipulated through the employment of clothes.

Future Studies

This thesis constructs a new lens for redressing clothing motifs and imagery in the Hebrew bible. The implications of my methodology and how it impacts our interpretations, is explored through my two case studies, yet these discussions also arguably form the groundwork for rethinking our approaches to and interpretations of a range of garments depicted in the biblical texts. I purposefully selected the examples of Joseph's *ketonet passim* and Elijah's *adderet,* both of which offer more extensive portrayals of an item of clothing through their depiction in variety of different actions and their entanglement with a number of different people. These case studies enabled me to extend

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[1112] Francesca Stavrakopoulou, "Making Bodies: On Body Modification and Religious Materiality in the Hebrew Bible," Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel 2, no. 4 (2013): 532–53.

my perspective on the possible ways in which clothing could be employed and manipulated in the biblical texts, whilst most effectively deconstructing uncritical suggestions made in conventional interpretations of these garments. These examples are also particularly illustrative of the key ideas that I explored in my discussion of material culture, namely the agency, entanglement and performativity of clothes. My choice of male (non-divine) examples of clothing allowed me to remain focused on clothing imagery, rather than the loaded discussions that are often attached to the study of female clothes or clothes associated with divine beings. Nevertheless, I have raised awareness of the problem of attributing extraordinary or iconic status to certain garments, such as the *ketonet passim* and the *adderet*, in conventional biblical scholarship. Therefore, it is necessary to reiterate that other depictions of garments can also be reconfigured as powerful and influential entities through the methodology developed in this thesis - even those that have particularly been neglected in biblical scholarship.

The biblical writers' depiction of women's clothes has already begun to be critically examined in scholarship. I argue that my thesis could provoke further discussions of the materiality of these clothes and their impact on the women that wear and employ them. However, it must be acknowledged that there is an extent to which the examinations in this thesis are limited when considering such examples. Whilst my case studies offer insights as more developed depictions of clothing imagery in the Hebrew Bible, both of these examples are examples of male clothing; this is arguably reflective of the male-centricity of the biblical texts.

It is important to avoid tacitly replicating this male centricity by assuming that male examples of clothing, such as Joseph's *ketonet passim* and Elijah's *adderet*, are representative of the norm, since examples of female-associated clothing will inevitably uncover ideas that have not yet been fully explored in this thesis. Whilst I have employed gender studies in my exploration of Israel's role as an artisan and to examine the relationship between Joseph and his brother through their actions of stripping him, a more extensive employment of gender studies would serve to develop my discussions even further, would

space allow. I suggest that gender studies, which already explore the issues that surround gendered bodies and performativity in depth, would be particularly useful to employ in conjunction my discussion of the materiality of clothing in relation to women's clothing depicted in the Hebrew Bible. Indeed, the biblical writers' use of clothing imagery in Ezekiel 16 is particularly rich and would serve as a useful starting point to open up such discussions. Despite the limitations of my case studies in exploring women's clothing, the development of my approach in my first three chapters arguably offers an important foundation upon which these clothes can be explored.

The other area of clothing imagery that I did not address in depth in this thesis was that of divine and non-anthropomorphic clothing. However, my analyses of clothing can be used to challenge the assumption that these garments or clothing actions are 'only' metaphorical or symbolic and not material. Such garments still tacitly refer to the materiality of clothing and their intertwined relationships with other beings or objects depicted in these texts. Still, I acknowledge that this imagery would be more efficiently explored by employing an approach that fully develops both the metaphorical and symbolic implications of this imagery as well as the implications of the inherent materiality indicated in the employment of clothing imagery. Moreover, as suggested earlier, studies of divine clothing particularly demand robust engagement with discussions of divine materiality, which will help to develop these interpretations further.

In summary, clothing is so much more than incidental or background detail in biblical texts. Instead, in this thesis I have demonstrated that by foregrounding clothing we can see how the portrayal of clothes enriches and textures our understanding of the social, material, and religious relationships and dimensions of the contexts depicted in the Hebrew Bible. Clothing manifests its own agency that has the ability to enable and disable the movement and agency of the persons and objects with which it is engaged. As such, its employment in actions presented in these biblical texts is transformative, both in the way that its own materiality and potency is manipulated, and in the way

that it transforms the social and material relationships of the other people with whom it is entangled.

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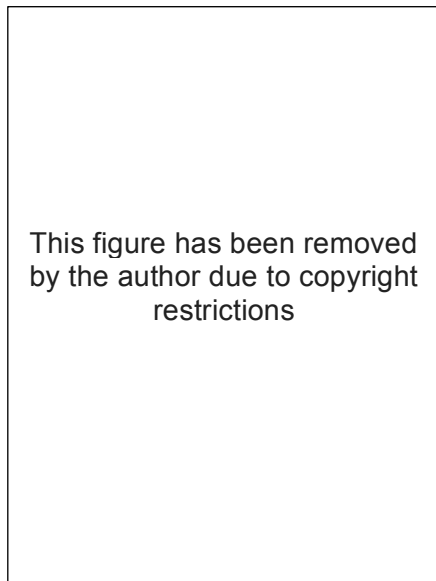
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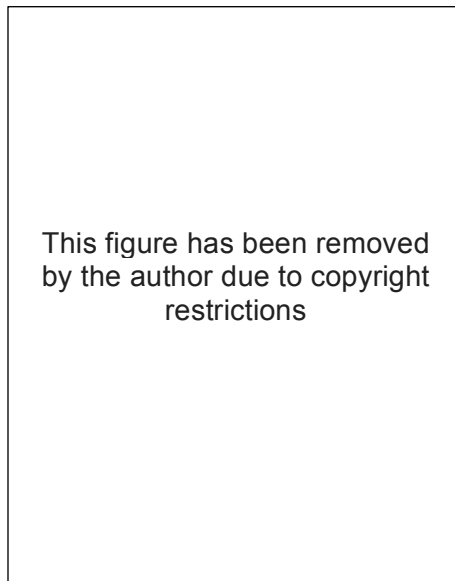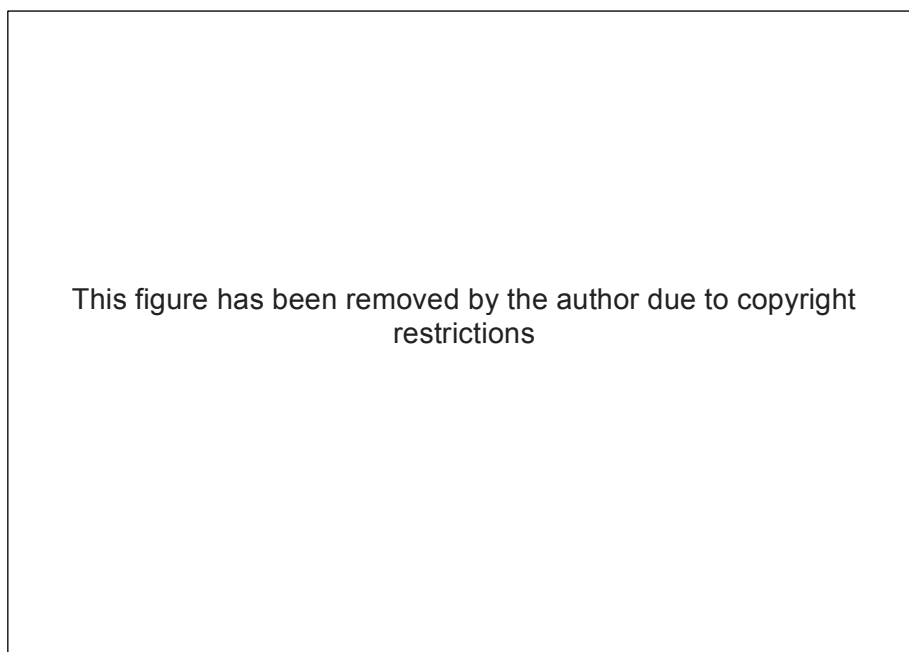
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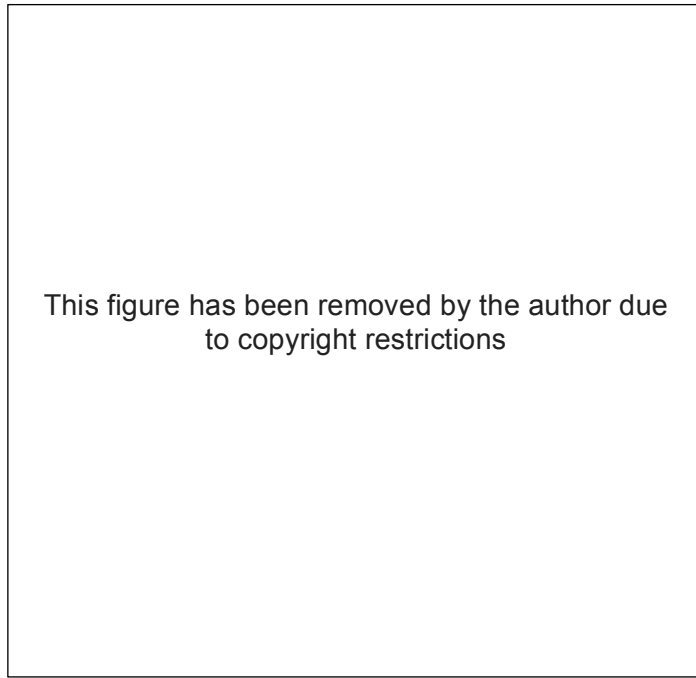This figure has been removed by the author due to copyright restrictions

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