

CAROLYN FINAMOR

THESIS ABSTRACT

When approaching the text of 2 Samuel 11, how can we move from singular meaning to reading from multiple vantage points, particularly marginal positions? An option is reading through the process of perception, both in the world of the text and the reader who approaches the text. Studying narrative techniques such as gaps, ambiguity and point of view through a discussion of alterity (otherness), can open possibilities for multiple readings. Methodologically, poststructuralist literary criticism discusses hermeneutics and literature, and specifically applies this to this biblical narrative. The passage can be read as influenced by the Deuteronomistic theology which requires the care of the Other: the widow, orphan and foreigner. The narrative critiques itself by calling power structures into question. The dominant androcentric and ethnocentric point of view is decentred, resulting in a destabilization of the text. Bathsheba is a textually marginalized figure and an inner biblical critique of the text; a narrative way of thinking about the care of the socially poor. Similarly, Uriah can be read as an example of the ideology of the powerful subverted in the text. He is also a narrative way of thinking about Deuteronomistic ideas about ethnic boundaries and insider/outsider ideology. The resulting child is a functionary prop serving the plot.