1 Samuel 31

Chiasm:

Philistines attack (v. 1)
Israel flees (v. 1)
Saul and his sons (v. 2)
  Saul under pressure (v. 3)
    Saul speaks to armor bearer (v. 4)
      Pierce me through (v. 4)
        Uncircumcised (v. 4)
          Pierce me through (v. 4)
            Armor bearer refuses (v. 4)
              Saul falls on his sword (v. 4)
                Saul and his sons (v. 6)
                  Israel flees (v. 7)
                    Philistines occupy (v. 7)


*Non compos mentis*

William Cowper (1731-1800) (pronounced Cooper)
  Poet; author of the Olney Hymns with John Newton (“Amazing Grace”)
LEGGO APPROACH TO HEBREW PROSODY
(a la J. P. Fokkelman, University of Leiden)
(illustrated by David’s Lament for Saul/Jonathan, 2 Sam. 1:19-27)

9. Whole Poem
8. Sections
7. Stanzas
6. Strophes
5. Verses (Bicolas, Tricolas, etc.)
4. Versets (i.e., Colas, Clauses)
3. Words
2. Syllables (Beats, Cadence)
1. Sounds

Elements of Hebrew Poetry

Symmetry/Parallelism

Example: “Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice”
(2 Sam. 1:20c)
“Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult”
(2 Sam. 1:20d)

(This is not strict synonymous Parallelism)

What is A: “daughters of the Philistines”
What is more (than A), i.e., B: “daughters of the uncircumcised”

What is A: “rejoice”
What is more (than A), i.e., B: “exult”

Inclusio
Bracketing/framing inception and conclusion of piece; enveloping whole.

Example: “How are the mighty fallen” (2 Sam. 1:19b)
“How are the mighty fallen” (2 Sam. 1:27a)

Chiasm
Mirror, cross-over duplication (i.e., A, A’, [X], B’, B)

A. “Jonathan” (2 Sam. 1:22c)
   B. “Saul” (2 Sam. 1:22d)
   B’. “Saul” (2 Sam. 1:23a)
   A’. “Jonathan” (2 Sam. 1:23a)

Assonance
Repetition of the same vowel sound. Must use the Hebrew Text to determine.
Alliteration
Repetition of the same consonants. Must use the Hebrew Text.

**PROSODIC ARRANGEMENT OF 2 SAMUEL 1:19-27**

Tricolon: 19 "Your beauty, O Israel,
is slain on your high places!
How have the mighty fallen!

Bicolon:
1st Colon: 20 "Tell it not in Gath, Proclaim it not in the streets of Ashkelon;
2nd Colon: Lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, Lest the daughters of the uncircumcised exult.

Bicolon:
1st Colon: 21 "O mountains of Gilboa, Let not dew or rain be on you, nor fields of offerings;
2nd Colon: For there the shield of the mighty was defiled, The shield of Saul, not anointed with oil.

Bicolon:
1st Colon: 22 "From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty
2nd Colon: The bow of Jonathan did not turn back, And the sword of Saul did not return empty.

Tricolon:
23 "Saul and Jonathan, beloved and pleasant
in their life, And in their death they were not parted;
They were swifter than eagles, They were stronger than lions.

Bicolon:
1st Colon: 24 "O daughters of Israel, weep over Saul, Who clothed you luxuriously in scarlet,
2nd Colon: Who put ornaments of gold on your apparel. 25 "How have the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!

Tricolon + Bicolon:
Jonathan is slain on your high places.
26 "I am distressed for you, my brother
Jonathan; You have been very pleasant to me.

Colon: Your love to me was more wonderful Than the love of women.
Colon: 27 "How have the mighty fallen, And the weapons of war perished!"
STRUCTURAL SUGGESTIONS

I.
A. Elegiac Lament (?19, 20-21)
   B. Eulogy (22-23)
A'. Elegiac Lament (24-27)

II.
A. (??) Zevi (Heb.) (19)
   B. Saul (21)
      C. Jonathan Saul (22)
      C'. Saul Jonathan (23)
   B'. Saul (24)
A'. Jonathan, Jonathan (25b, 26)

III.
A. Beauty, O Israel, slain on high places (19a)
   B. How are the mighty fallen (19b)
      B'. How are the mighty fallen (25a)
A'. Jonathan slain on high places (25b)

IV.
A. Slain on high places (19a)
   B. How mighty fallen (19b)
      C. Daughter of Philistines (20)
          D. Shield Saul (21d)
          E. Bow Jonathan (22b)
          D'. Sword Saul (22c)
      C'. Daughters of Israel (24a)
      B'. How mighty fallen (25a)
A'. Slain on high places (25b)