

# Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel

3

Volume 6  
2017

## Jeroboam

**Israel Finkelstein and Konrad Schmid**

Introduction: Jeroboam's Israel 259–261

**Israel Finkelstein**

A Corpus of North Israelite Texts  
in the Days of Jeroboam II? 262–289

**Ernst Axel Knauf**

Jeroboam ben Nimshi: The Biblical Evidence 290–307

**Nadav Na'aman**

Memories of Monarchical Israel in the Narratives  
of David's Wars with Israel's Neighbours 308–328

**Omer Sergi**

The United Monarchy and the Kingdom of Jeroboam II  
in the Story of Absalom and Sheba's Revolts  
(2 Samuel 15–20) 329–353

**Assaf Kleiman**

A North Israelite Royal Administrative System  
and its Impact on Late-Monarchic Judah 354–371

**Thomas Römer**

How Jeroboam II became Jeroboam I 372–382



**Mohr Siebeck**

# Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel

*Herausgegeben von* Gary N. Knoppers (Notre Dame IN), Oded Lipschits (Tel Aviv), Carol A. Newsom (Atlanta GA) und Konrad Schmid (Zürich)  
*Redaktion:* Phillip Michael Lasater (Zürich)

Die Annahme zur Veröffentlichung erfolgt schriftlich und unter dem Vorbehalt, dass das Manuskript nicht anderweitig zur Veröffentlichung angeboten wurde. Mit der Annahme zur Veröffentlichung überträgt der Autor dem Verlag das ausschließliche Verlagsrecht für die Publikation in gedruckter und elektronischer Form. Weitere Informationen dazu und zu den beim Autor verbleibenden Rechten finden Sie unter [www.mohr.de/hebai](http://www.mohr.de/hebai). Ohne Erlaubnis des Verlags ist eine Vervielfältigung oder Verbreitung der ganzen Zeitschrift oder von Teilen daraus in gedruckter oder elektronischer Form nicht gestattet. Bitte wenden Sie sich an [rights@mohr.de](mailto:rights@mohr.de).

## *Redaktionsadresse*

Professor Dr. Konrad Schmid  
Theologische Fakultät der Universität Zürich  
Kirchgasse 9  
CH-8001 Zürich  
Switzerland  
E-mail: [hebai@theol.uzh.ch](mailto:hebai@theol.uzh.ch)

## *Online-Volltext*

Im Abonnement für Institutionen und Privatpersonen ist der freie Zugang zum Online-Volltext enthalten. Institutionen mit mehr als 20.000 Nutzern bitten wir um Einholung eines Preisangebots direkt beim Verlag. Kontakt: [elke.brixner@mohr.de](mailto:elke.brixner@mohr.de). Um den Online-Zugang für Institutionen/Bibliotheken einzurichten, gehen Sie bitte zur Seite: [www.ingentaconnect.com/register/institutional](http://www.ingentaconnect.com/register/institutional). Um den Online-Zugang für Privatpersonen einzurichten, gehen Sie bitte zur Seite: [www.ingentaconnect.com/register/personal](http://www.ingentaconnect.com/register/personal)

*Verlag:* Mohr Siebeck GmbH & Co. KG, Postfach 2040, 72010 Tübingen  
Vertrieb erfolgt über den Buchhandel.

© 2017 Mohr Siebeck GmbH & Co. KG, Tübingen

Die Zeitschrift und alle in ihr enthaltenen einzelnen Beiträge und Abbildungen sind urheberrechtlich geschützt. Jede Verwertung außerhalb der engen Grenzen des Urheberrechtsgesetzes ist ohne Zustimmung des Verlags unzulässig und strafbar. Das gilt insbesondere für Vervielfältigungen, Übersetzungen, Mikroverfilmungen und die Einspeicherung und Verarbeitung in elektronischen Systemen.

*Satz:* Martin Fischer, Tübingen.

*Druck:* Gulde-Druck, Tübingen.

ISSN 2192-2276 (Gedruckte Ausgabe)

ISSN 2192-2284 (Online-Ausgabe)

Israel Finkelstein

## A Corpus of North Israelite Texts in the Days of Jeroboam II?\*

In this article, I suggest that Jeroboam II assembled Northern origin, royal and heroic oral traditions and committed them to writing. I refer to the Jacob and Exodus tales; Saul, Jeroboam I and Jehu narratives (possibly embedded in a Northern History); savior stories in Judges; and perhaps Northern conquest traditions. Jeroboam II reigned at the peak of the Northern kingdom's prosperity territorially, demographically, economically and culturally. In his time, the scribal infrastructure necessary for composing literary texts already existed in Israel. The proposed Jeroboam II corpus dealt with the issue of identity and core territory of Israel and expressed early pan-Israelite ("United Monarchy") views. It arrived in Judah after 720 B.C.E. and became the basis for biblical historiography, including the later Judahite use of "history" to promote ideology related to matters of identity and territory.

*Keywords:* Northern kingdom, North Israelite texts, Jeroboam II, Saul, Jeroboam I, Jehu, Jacob Cycle, Exodus, Savior stories in Judges, Conquest traditions in Joshua, United Monarchy

### Introduction

The question of the earliest date of composition of biblical texts and the venue of this endeavor is one of the most tantalizing in biblical scholarship, with far-reaching implications for studying the development of the Hebrew Bible. When discussing this theme, one should note two significant developments in recent scholarship. First, the understanding that comes from both biblical exegesis and archaeology is that the description of a great and prosperous United Monarchy ruling from Jerusalem is an ideological construct rather than a historical description. Second, the archaeology-led analysis of alphabetic writing in the Levant during the Iron Age shows no infrastructure of compilation of literary texts before ca. 800 B.C.E.<sup>1</sup> These insights pulled the

---

\* I am grateful to Konrad Schmid for his many helpful comments on an earlier version of this paper.

1 I. Finkelstein and B. Sass, "The West Semitic Alphabetic Inscriptions, Late Bronze II

rug out from under the foundation of past theories regarding the composition of biblical texts in Jerusalem during a Solomonic Golden Age. With no stone-and-clay great United Monarchy, the spotlight regarding early biblical writings turns to the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Archaeology and extra-biblical texts demonstrate that as long as the two Hebrew kingdoms coexisted, Israel was far more developed from every perspective – territorial extension, population, military strength, international relations, and material culture. More crucially, from the viewpoint of scribal activity, Israel provides evidence for bureaucratic writings (Samaria ostraca) and literary texts (Kuntillet 'Ajrud and Deir Alla) as early as the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., at least half a century but probably more than a century before Judah.<sup>2</sup>

Indeed, it is broadly agreed that the Enneateuch contains a significant number of Northern traditions, such as the early Jacob cycle in Genesis, Exodus narrative, savior stories in the first chapters of the book of Judges, positive house of Saul traditions in 1 Samuel, and prophetic accounts in Kings.<sup>3</sup> These materials were first incorporated into the Judahite text no earlier than the late 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., a century after Israel had been taken over by Assyria. Under these circumstances, it is evident that Israelite traditions reached the table of late monarchic Judahite authors in written form. The questions are when and where they were committed to writing, and when and how they arrived in Jerusalem.

There are several ways to answer the first question. Israelite traditions could have been committed to writing at Bethel after 720 B.C.E. in order to preserve the heritage of the demised Northern kingdom.<sup>4</sup> Theoretically, they also could have been written in Jerusalem by Northern individuals

---

to Iron IIA: Archeological Context, Distribution and Chronology," *HeBAI* 2 (2013): 149–220.

- 2 By "half a century" I refer to the possibility that an early version of the David story was composed in Jerusalem in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century (see I. Finkelstein and N. A. Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty: Hezekiah, the Remaking of Judah and the Rise of the Pan-Israelite Ideology," *JSOT* 30 [2006]: 259–285). Inscriptional evidence appears only in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century (e.g., Khirbet Uza Ostrakon 1 and, in a way, the Mezaḏ Hashavyahu ostrakon).
- 3 E.g., D. E. Fleming, *The Legacy of Israel in Judah's Bible: History, Politics, and the Rescuing of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). I acknowledge the existence of other Northern texts which were incorporated into Judahite/Judean writings, e.g., (possibly) certain psalms; see M. D. Goulder, *The Psalms of the Sons of Korah* (*JSOTSup* 20; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982); see also G. A. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms* (Society of Biblical Literature Monograph 43; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), but restrict myself here to the "historical" texts in the Enneateuch.
- 4 E. A. Knauf, "Bethel: The Israelite Impact on Judean Language and Literature," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Persian Period* (ed. O. Lipschits and M. Oeming; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 291–349.

after the fall of Israel (this option answers the second question too). Or they could have been authored in the North in the peak prosperity period of the kingdom, before the beginning of its decline. The third alternative seems the most viable for the following reasons:

- A) Israelite texts were incorporated into the Deuteronomistic literature, which evidently makes them pre-Deuteronomistic.
- B) The negative argument – lack of evidence for elaborate textual activity in the territory of the North after 720 B.C.E. and in Judah before the late 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.
- C) Such an endeavor is better placed in a time of prosperity and/or concerns about identity and cultural boundaries, that is, before the demise of the Northern kingdom.
- D) The geographical scope, concerns and ideology expressed in the Northern texts indeed point to a time before 720 B.C.E.
- E) The existence, by then, of a writing infrastructure, including the ability to compose literary texts.

In this paper, I wish to advance the theory that early Israelite oral traditions were committed to writing as a royal project in the days of Jeroboam II, in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. In what follows, I wish to detail what could have been committed to writing and why; how and when these texts arrived in Jerusalem; why they were incorporated into Judahite writings; and what impact they had on the formation of the Bible. A cautionary note is in place here: With no way to present a striking proof for what I am suggesting, I urge the reader to take this essay as an intellectual experiment, being a probability more than a certainty.

## The Territorial Aspect

Since Northern materials in the Bible have strong geographic correlations, and as territory is related to matters of ideology and identity, in order to understand these texts it is imperative first to summarize briefly my views on the territorial extent of the Northern kingdom through the different stages of its history.<sup>5</sup>

As far as I can judge, until the days of the Omrides, the Northern kingdom ruled over the highlands west of the Jordan, the Gilead (that is, the western

5 For details see I. Finkelstein, "Stages in the Territorial Expansion of the Northern Kingdom," *VT* 61 (2011): 227–242.

slopes of the Transjordanian highlands), and the area of the Jezreel Valley.<sup>6</sup> Archaeology is mute about the extent of Israelite rule in the Galilee, except for the negative evidence from Dan: The site was not inhabited in the early Iron IIA, the time of the early Israelite monarchs.<sup>7</sup> A clue to understanding the situation in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century can be found in the list of towns conquered by Sheshonq I, in which the northernmost places are located in the Jezreel Valley. The area farther to the north must have been dominated by another polity that, at this stage of research, is impossible to identify securely.

In the days of the Omride dynasty, Israel expanded on almost all fronts: in Moab down to the northern branch of the Arnon, in the northeastern Gilead to the Ramoth plateau, in the north to the area of Hazor and the mountainous Galilee and in the west to the Mediterranean coast.<sup>8</sup> In the south, the Omrides dominated the smaller, weaker Judah, as is evident from the reign of Athaliah in Jerusalem and the account of Ahaziah joining Joram as a vassal in the Battle of Ramoth-gilead. The last remaining inland independent city-states, such as Rehob in the Beth-shean Valley and Heshbon in Transjordan, were conquered at that time. Clues for the latter events come from both the archaeological and biblical records. Tel Rehov portrays Aramean features of material culture until its destruction, close to the mid-9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. The demise of Rehob may be hinted at in 2 Samuel 10, the story of David's war against Ammon and its allies.<sup>9</sup> The conquest of Heshbon seems to be referred to as an old memory in Numbers 21.<sup>10</sup>

The population of the Northern kingdom was now more diverse than in previous times. Large-scale building activities and the strong army called for conscription of a large number of individuals and hence competent con-

6 Ibid.; see also idem, *The Forgotten Kingdom: The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel* (ANE monographs / Society of Biblical Literature 5; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 74–78.

7 E. Arie, "Reconstructing the Iron Age II Strata at Tel Dan: Archaeological and Historical Implications," *Tel Aviv* 35 (2008): 6–64.

8 Discussion in I. Finkelstein, "Stages in the Territorial Expansion"; idem, *Forgotten Kingdom*, 105–109; for the coast, see N. Na'aman, "Tel Dor and Iron IIA Chronology," *BASOR* 376 (2016): 1–6.

9 I. Finkelstein, "Does Rehob of the Beth-Shean Valley Appear in the Bible?," *Bibliche Notizen* 169 (2016): 3–9; I adhere to N. Na'aman, "In Search of Reality Behind the Account of David's Wars with Israel's Neighbours," *IEJ* 52 (2002): 200–224, according to which the biblical description of David's wars should at least partially be read against 9<sup>th</sup> century realities.

10 I. Finkelstein and T. Römer, "Early North Israelite Memories' on Moab," in *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America* (ed. J. C. Gertz et al.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 711–727.

trol over the economy, indicating the existence of an effective bureaucratic apparatus. Rule over heterogeneous groups – some taken over by military force – on the borders of Moab, Damascus and Phoenicia, must have required the Omrides to address issues of identity, mainly in order to enhance the loyalty of these groups.

One way to express these concerns is in writing. Yet, there is no indication of the existence of sufficient infrastructure for compilation of complex texts in the time of the Omrides. In fact, there is hardly any evidence of writing in the heartland of Israel.<sup>11</sup> The earliest evidence of literary texts appears in Israel around 800 B.C.E. or slightly thereafter.

The second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. was a period of calamity for Israel, as it lost much of its lowland territories to Damascus and the Transjordanian *mishor* to Moab. One can argue that over half of the territory of the kingdom was lost (i. e., in the Galilee, northern valleys, Gilead, Moab and the coast). The catastrophic devastation of many towns and villages and loss of territory<sup>12</sup> must have had a strong impact on questions of identity, comparable to the later and historically better known blow inflicted on Judah by Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. There was probably a need to answer questions like “Who are we and who belongs to our nation?,” questions that must have been amplified by the sudden renewed territorial expansion in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, following the decline of Damascus as a result of Assyrian pressure.

Starting around 800 B.C.E., over a relatively short period of time Israel re-expanded into much of its former territory and beyond. I refer to the Jezreel Valley, the Gilead including the Ramoth plateau (Lidebir in Amos 6:13), areas north of the Yarmuk River (Karnaim of Amos 6:13), the Galilee and the Upper Jordan Valley (as can be deduced from the material culture of Strata VII–VI at Hazor and the biblical reference to the cult place at Dan), possibly further north into the valley of Lebanon (2 Kgs 14:25) and the coastal plain

11 Finkelstein and Sass, “West Semitic Alphabetic Inscriptions.” For a somewhat different opinion (still based on material finds), advocating indirect evidence of writing during the reign of the Omrides, see B. Sass, “Aram and Israel during the 10th–9th centuries BCE, or Iron IIA: The Alphabet,” in *In search of Aram and Israel: Politics, Culture and Identity* (ed. O. Sergi, M. Oeming, and I. de-Hulster; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 199–228. See also E. Blum, “Die altaramäischen Wandinschriften vom Tell Deir ‘Alla und ihr institutioneller Kontext,” in *Metatexte: Erzählungen von schrifttragenden Artefakten in der alttestamentlichen und mittelalterlichen Literatur* (ed. F.-E. Focken and M. R. Ott; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2016); and M. Richelle, “Elusive Scrolls: Could Any Hebrew Literature Have Been Written Prior to the Eighth Century BCE?,” *VT* 66 (2016): 556–594, who has recently envisioned even earlier writing, but the arguments in Finkelstein and Sass, “West Semitic Alphabetic Inscriptions” also apply in such cases.

12 N. Na‘aman, “Historical and Literary Notes on the Excavations of Tel Jezreel,” *Tel Aviv* 24 (1997): 122–128.

(viewed in the archaeology of Dor and Gezer). In addition, Israel once again dominated Judah. This is expressed in the chronistic reference to the battle of Beth-shemesh and the breaching of the wall of Jerusalem in the days of Joash (2 Kgs 14:13). Israel's influence reached far to the south, along the desert trade routes, as can be deduced from the finds at Kuntillet 'Ajrud,<sup>13</sup> possibly also Tell el-Khuleifeh at the head of the Gulf of Aqaba.<sup>14</sup> This was therefore a time to answer questions of identity: Who, in fact, belongs to the core population of Israel? Starting in the second half of the 9<sup>th</sup> century, questions of identity and territory surfaced in other areas of the Levant as well, as is testified by royal inscriptions in Moab and Damascus. No less important, in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. there was already an ability to address this issue in writing, as the first literary texts appeared at that time – at Deir Alla and Kuntillet 'Ajrud,<sup>15</sup> both relating to Israel.<sup>16</sup>

As I will try to demonstrate below, indications for an identity and territorial ideology “project” undertaken in the North at that time can be found in the biblical record. The evidence is not always easy to spot, because the Northern texts were reworked in Judah, and put to the service of its ideology in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century, when Israel no longer existed. In some cases, they were reworked yet again in exilic and/or post-exilic times.

It is instructive to list the most important traditions of the North in the Judahite texts. Prophetic works aside, I refer to the Jacob cycle, the Exodus tradition, the positive Saul cycle, the rise of Jeroboam I, the Jehu coup (the last two or three possibly embedded in a broader Northern History), and Israelite savior stories in Judges. To these one should perhaps add an early tradition of the conquest, now hidden behind the book of Joshua. Looking at this list, it is clear that the Northern materials can be classified into three

13 Overview in B.A. Mastin, “Who Built and Who Used the Buildings at Kuntillet 'Ajrud?,” in *On Stone and Scroll: Essays in Honour of Graham Ivor Davies* (ed. J. K. Aitkin *et al.*; BZAW 420; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2011), 69–85; for the inscriptions, e.g., A. Lemaire, “Date et origine des inscriptions hébraïques et phéniciennes de Kuntillet 'Ajrud,” *Studi Epigrafici e Linguistici* 1 (1984): 131–143; S. Ahituv, E. Eshel and Z. Meshel, “The Inscriptions,” in *Kuntillet 'Ajrud (Horvat Teman): An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border* (ed. Z. Meshel; Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2012), 95, 126–129; N. Na'aman, “The Inscriptions of Kuntillet 'Ajrud Through the Lens of Historical Research,” *UF* 43 (2012): 1–43.

14 I. Finkelstein, “The Archaeology of Tell el-Kheleifeh and the History of Ezion-geber/Elath,” *Semitica* 56 (2014): 105–136.

15 Blum, “Altaramäische Wandinschriften”; Na'aman, “Inscriptions of Kuntillet 'Ajrud.”

16 They may signal the appearance of such capability slightly, but not much earlier. Note that Proto-Canaanite lingers into the 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. in cases such as the inscriptions of Kfar Veradim, Jerusalem's Ophel and Megiddo. See B. Sass and I. Finkelstein, “The Swan-Song of Proto-Canaanite in the Ninth Century BCE in Light of an Alphabetic Inscription from Megiddo,” *Semitica et Classica* 9 (2016): 19–42.



main categories: origin or foundation myths; heroic/war tales; and royal traditions. All of them are typical of textual endeavors that deal with identity in the ancient world.<sup>17</sup>

## Origin/Foundation Myths

The Jacob narrative in Genesis seems to include two Iron Age layers: an early, oral tradition and a written one, the latter being from the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.<sup>18</sup> The former includes the story about the erection of the cairn (*galed*) in the Gilead, probably an etiological tale aimed at explaining a geographical feature which was connected to the (territorial? settlement?) border between Israelites and Arameans in Transjordan. It probably reflects realities at a time before the clash at Ramoth-gilead and hostilities between Israel and Aram, meaning before the mid-9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. It may also include a foundation tradition for the temple at Penuel. If one takes the reference in 1 Kgs 12:25 as chronistic and as preserving an old tradition, the Penuel connection also comes from the early days of the kingdom of Israel (more on this site below). In this early phase, Jacob was not yet the ancestor of all Israel, but rather a hero of a restricted area along the valley of the Jabbok River – from Succoth (Gen 33:17) via Penuel and possibly Mahanaim, to Mizpah of the Gilead. The tradition regarding the changing of Jacob's name to Israel<sup>19</sup> may reflect the transformation of the local Gilead hero into the ancestor of Israel.

The association of Jacob with Bethel may date to a later phase in the history of Israel, in the time of Jeroboam II, when Bethel served as a highly important temple of the Northern kingdom (Amos 7:13). This is hinted at by the archaeology of Beitin (location of Bethel). The site prospered mainly in the Iron I and Iron IIB, and it was still active in the Iron IIC. Evidence for

17 This does not mean that there are no other Northern materials in the Enneateuch. A good example is the memory of an ancient cult place at Shiloh (Finkelstein, *Forgotten Kingdom*, 49–50).

18 Discussion here based on I. Finkelstein and T. Römer, "Comments on the Historical Background of the Jacob Narrative," *ZAW* 126 (2014): 317–338; on the early Jacob traditions see de A. Pury, "Situer le cycle de Jacob. Quelques réflexions, vingt-cinq ans plus tard," in *Studies in the Book of Genesis. Literature, Redaction and History* (ed. A. Wénin; BETL 155; Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 213–241; E. Blum, "The Jacob Tradition," in *The Book of Genesis. Composition, Reception, and Interpretation* (ed. C. A. Evans et al.; VTS 152; Leiden: Brill, 2012), 181–211.

19 Gen 32:29, even if late in its current shape. See J. Wöhrle, *Fremdlinge im eigenen Land: Zur Entstehung und Intention der priesterlichen Passagen der Vätergeschichte* (FRLANT 246; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012).

the early Iron IIA and the Neo-Babylonian and Persian periods is lacking, and activity in the late Iron IIA was weak at best.<sup>20</sup> It seems that as part of a reorganization of the cult of the kingdom by Jeroboam II, the old Jacob tradition was “imported” to Bethel or promoted there.<sup>21</sup> Note that 1 Kgs 12:29 probably telescopes a reality from the days of Jeroboam II to the time of Jeroboam I.<sup>22</sup> Bethel and Dan were not inhabited in the early Iron IIA, the period of Jeroboam I,<sup>23</sup> and Dan was not ruled by Israel until ca. 800 B.C.E.

The promotion of Jacob at Bethel raises the question of the tradition regarding his burial place at Shechem (Gen 33:18–20). Although the present wording of vv. 18–19 is late, one can reconstruct an older tradition behind it.<sup>24</sup>

The important conclusion is that, geographically, the Iron Age Jacob tradition are related to a restricted area in the territory of Israel. That area would be the Gilead and the central highlands between Bethel and Shechem.

If so, what was the origin tradition in the northern part of the central highlands, the area of the capital Samaria? The answer may be found in the finds at Kuntilet ‘Ajrud, which are strongly connected to the Northern kingdom.<sup>25</sup> They point to the involvement there of an Israelite monarch, who was most likely Jeroboam II.<sup>26</sup> The mention in the inscriptions of YHWH of Samaria, probably to be understood as the patron or protective deity of the capital, is highly indicative. YHWH had a temple at Samaria,<sup>27</sup> which may be hinted at in Hosea 8:6 and in 1 Kgs 16:32.<sup>28</sup> The Northern origin of the Exodus tradition,<sup>29</sup> its possible connection to Kuntilet ‘Ajrud,<sup>30</sup> and the link

20 I. Finkelstein and L. Singer-Avitz, “Reevaluating Bethel,” *ZDPV* 125 (2009): 33–48.

Note that major parts of the mound were excavated in relatively large areas; therefore, the negative evidence can hardly be dismissed as arbitrary.

21 Finkelstein and Römer, “Comments on the Historical Background.”

22 A. Berlejung, “Twisting Traditions: Programmatic Absence-Theology for the Northern Kingdom in 1 Kgs 12:26–33\* (The “sin of Jeroboam”),” *JNSL* 35 (2009): 1–42.

23 For Dan, Arie, “Reconstructing the Iron Age II Strata.”

24 Finkelstein and Römer, “Comments on the Historical Background.”

25 E. g., Lemaire, “Date et origine des inscriptions hébraïques”; Mastin, “Who Built and Who Used the Buildings”; Ahituv, Eshel and Meshel, “The Inscriptions,” 95, 126–129; Na’aman, “Inscriptions of Kuntilet ‘Ajrud.”

26 Na’aman, “Inscriptions of Kuntilet ‘Ajrud”; T. Ornan, “Sketches and Final Works of Art: The Drawings and Wall Paintings of Kuntilet ‘Ajrud Revisited,” *Tel Aviv* 43 (2016): 3–26.

27 O. Keel and C. Uehlinger, *Gods, Goddesses and Images of Gods in Ancient Israel* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 228; K. Schmid, *The Old Testament: A Literary History* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012), 53.

28 M. Köckert, “YHWH in the Northern and Southern Kingdom,” in *One God – One Cult – One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives* (ed. R. G. Kratz and H. Spieckermann; BZAW 405; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 357–394.

29 E. g., Y. Hoffman, “A North Israelite Typological Myth and a Judean Historical Tradition: The Exodus in Hosea and Amos,” *VT* 39 (1989): 169–182.

30 E. g., Na’aman, “Inscriptions of Kuntilet ‘Ajrud.”

between Kuntillet 'Ajrud and Samaria raise the possibility that the Exodus tradition was associated with this temple.<sup>31</sup>

Also noteworthy is the connection between the Exodus narrative, specifically the history of Moses, and the story of Jeroboam I (more below).<sup>32</sup> Both Karel van der Toorn<sup>33</sup> and Rainer Albertz<sup>34</sup> have pointed to the possible function of the Exodus narrative in the days of Jeroboam I as a charter myth or thanksgiving story. A. D. H. Mayes linked the Exodus tradition with the time of Sheshonq I,<sup>35</sup> himself associated with Jeroboam I in both the Masoretic text and the "alternative history" in the Septuagint (on this too, more below). Taking all this into consideration, one can start speculating: Had Jeroboam I been installed over Israel by Sheshonq and then, in circumstances now irretrievable, "liberated" Israel from an Egyptian grip?<sup>36</sup> Had events related to this scenario occurred in the Jezreel-Beth-shean Valley? The Egypt connection draws attention to the valley, a traditional Egyptian hub in Canaan, possibly also in the days of Sheshonq I, as hinted by the fragment of Sheshonq stele found at Megiddo and the importance of the valley in his topographic list. The Nimshides, who originated from the valley and who seem to have promoted the royal tradition of Jeroboam I (and who

31 On YHWH as the God of Exodus, see T. Römer, *The Invention of God* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 2015), 107–112. The hint at Bethel and Dan in Exodus 32 is not a difficulty: Either it reflects the old tradition of Jeroboam II active in these places (1 Kgs 12:29; on the dating see Arie, "Reconstructing the Iron Age II Strata"; Berlejung, "Twisting Traditions") or it builds on this old source.

32 R. Smend, *YHWH War and Tribal Confederation. Reflections Upon Israel's Earliest History* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970), 120–127; M. Oblath, "Of Pharaohs and Kings – Whence the Exodus?" *JSOT* 25 (2000): 23–42; R. Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion in the Old Testament Period* (Old Testament Library; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 12; idem, "Exodus"; G. Galvin, *Egypt as a Place of Refuge* (Forschungen zum Alten Testament II/51; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 80; Schmid, *The Old Testament*, 83, and reference to previous works. This is true even if some of the literary links between Exodus and 1 Kings 11–12 come from late parts of the Exodus story.

33 K. van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria and Israel: Continuity and Change in the Forms of Religious Life* (SHCANE 7; Leiden: Brill, 1996), 287–315.

34 R. Albertz, "Exodus: Liberation History against Charter Myths," in *Religious Identity and the Invention of Tradition: Papers Read at a NOSTER Conference in Soesterberg, January 4–6, 1999* (ed. J. W. van Henten and A. W. J. Hautepe; Assen: Van Gorcum, 2001), 128–143.

35 A. D. H. Mayes, "Pharaoh Shishak's Invasion of Palestine and the Exodus from Egypt," in *Between Evidence and Ideology* (ed. B. Becking and L. L. Grabbe; Oudtestamentische studien/Old Testament studies 59; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 129–144.

36 Of course, memories of Exodus from Egypt could have been older. E. g., see D. B. Redford, "An Egyptological Perspective on the Exodus Narrative," in *Egypt, Israel, Sinai: Archaeological and Historical Relationships in the Biblical Period* (ed. A. F. Rainey; Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1987), 137–161.

are associated with the site of Kuntillet Ajrud), could have “imported” the Exodus tradition from the valley to Samaria.

It seems, then, that Israel had two narratives of origin: the Jacob cycle and the Exodus-wandering tradition.<sup>37</sup> If indeed an old Exodus narrative was promoted at Samaria and the Jezreel Valley, the foundation myths of the Northern kingdom “cover” the Gilead, its central highlands territories, and the Jezreel Valley. The sources of these traditions can be traced to early times. In the case of the Jacob narrative, it probably goes back to the formative days of the Northern kingdom, and in the case of the Exodus tradition possibly even earlier.<sup>38</sup> But each of them seems to have been “institutionalized” in the days of Jeroboam II. This monarch may have tried to centralize cult in official state shrines, the three most important related to one of the foundation myths of his kingdom. The local Gilead hero Jacob was venerated in the temples of El at Penuel and Bethel.<sup>39</sup> The link between Jacob and YHWH was probably made in the 8<sup>th</sup> century layer of the narrative. The exodus was promoted in the temple of YHWH at Samaria. Even though YHWH had been present in Israel before, possibly as a dynastic deity of the Omrides,<sup>40</sup> it was probably Jeroboam II who fostered him as the “official” deity of the kingdom.

## Heroic Tales

In a recent series of articles, I dealt with the Northern pre-Deuteronomistic tales about “saviors” in the book of Judges.<sup>41</sup> I proposed that the cores of the old tales are each of a local nature, and that they belong to the genre of

37 Van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia*, 287–315.

38 E. g., Redford, “An Egyptological Perspective”; T. Römer, *Moïse: “lui que Yahvé a connu face à face”* (Paris: Gallimard Découvertes, 2002), 54–67.

39 Bethel prospered in 8<sup>th</sup> century (above). My impression from a visit to the site of Penuel (Tell edh-Dhabab esh-Sharqi in the valley of the Jabbok) is that its main feature is an elevated rectangular podium on the summit, probably constructed in order to support a major structure. Such a monumental podium does not fit what we know about the archaeology of Northern Israel in the early Iron IIA – the time of Jeroboam I. I would therefore suggest that the Penuel tradition goes back to the early days of the Northern kingdom, but that the more elaborate construction dates to the days of Jeroboam II; needless to say, this hypothesis should be checked in future excavations at the site.

40 And by proxy, because of the dominance of Omride Israel over Judah, as the dynastic deity in Jerusalem; this is evident from the names of Joram and Ahaziah and from the Mesha account of the temple at Nebo. See Köckert, “YHWH in the Northern and Southern Kingdom”; Römer, *Invention of God*, 112–115.

41 Following W. Richter, *Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Richterbuch* (Bonner biblische Beiträge 18; Bonn: Peter Hanstein, 1966).

heroic stories, that is, they transpired with no divine intervention. These old traditions were transmitted orally until collected and committed to writing in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.<sup>42</sup> The early written version went through several expansions and redactions by (late North Israelite?), Deuteronomistic, and post-Deuteronomistic authors. Below I summarize my main observations regarding the geography and to a certain extent the historical background hidden behind the stories.

The Ehud story deals with the hill country north of Jerusalem – in biblical tribal terms (which may stem from the author of the book of saviors), Benjamin and the southern sector of the territory of Ephraim (Jericho in Judg 3:13 is a late addition). The arena east of the Jordan is designated only by the general toponym Moab. I propose that by the time the story was committed to writing, the location of the king of Moab had been forgotten, misunderstood, or intentionally blurred because of changes in the geopolitical situation on the Israel-Moab border. The original tale may have dealt with the Canaanite city-state of Heshbon, which seems to have survived until the conquest of the *mishor* by the Omrides.<sup>43</sup>

To the best of my understanding, the old heroic material behind Judges 4–5 represents two different traditions. The first is embedded in chapter 4 and deals with the area of Mount Tabor, with the city of Anaharath at its core (polemically referred to as Harosheth, possibly stemming from Hebrew חורשי רעה = conspirators). The second tradition in 5:19–22 relates to the southwestern Jezreel Valley, with no recollection of the name of the savior. The two traditions (which were linked by a later author or redactor) represent memories of the fall of the last late-Canaanite city-states and the regional takeover by highlanders either just before the rise of the Northern kingdom or in its earliest days.<sup>44</sup>

42 The reasons for this dating are explained in the specific articles cited below. On this issue I differ from both Richter, who dated the compilation of the stories to the 9<sup>th</sup> century, and from E. A. Knauf, “History in Judges,” in *Israel in Transition 2: From Late Bronze II to Iron IIA* (c. 1250–850 BCE), *the Texts* (ed. L. L. Grabbe; Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 491, 521; New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 140–149; idem, *Richter* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag, 2016), 18; and Schmid, *The Old Testament*, 79, who put this after 720 B.C.E.

43 For the Ehud story, see recently E. Gass, “Zur Ehud-Tradition in historisch-topographischer Hinsicht,” *ZDPV* 124 (2008): 38–50; L. G. Stone, “Egion’s Belly and Ehud’s Blade: A Reconsideration,” *JBL* 128 (2009): 649–663 and bibliography there. For a detailed presentation of my views on this tale, see I. Finkelstein, “Historical-Geographical Observations on the Ehud-Egion Tale in Judges,” in *Alphabets, Texts and Artefacts in the Ancient Near East, Studies Presented to Benjamin Sass* (ed. I. Finkelstein, T. Römer, and C. Robin; Paris, Van Dieren, 2016), 100–108.

44 I. Finkelstein, “Compositional Phases, Geography and Historical Setting behind Judges

The original Gideon tale dealt with the northern part of the central hill country – the inheritance of Abiezer and the area of Shechem. There is nothing in the story that relates to the Jezreel Valley. This connection was introduced as a late interpretation. In pursuit of the Midianites, Gideon reached the Jordan Valley somewhere north of Succoth, and possibly continued the chase into the Gilead.<sup>45</sup>

Against some scholars,<sup>46</sup> I see the old Jephthah story<sup>47</sup> as belonging to the old saviors tales. It has all the necessary characteristics: savior, enemy, geographical details of the confrontation, and victory. Geographically, it deals with the settlement boundary between Israelites and Ammonites in Transjordan, with the spotlight on the town of Gilead, located south of the Jabbok River.<sup>48</sup> Other geographical details (Judg 11:33) belong to a later layer. Historically, the old tale with its apiru ambiance seems to reflect a time on the eve of the rise of the Northern kingdom or in its early days, before the well-ruled kingdom of the Omrides.<sup>49</sup>

Therefore, the Northern heroic tales cover the central hill country regions of Benjamin/southern Ephraim and Manasseh,<sup>50</sup> probably without the main part of the land of Ephraim; the Jezreel Valley and the hills to its northeast; and the Gilead south of the Jabbok River. Historically, they seem to depict a time just before the rise of the Northern kingdom or in its early days.

---

4–5 and the Location of Harosheth-ha-goiim,” *SJOT* 31 (2017): 80–91, with bibliography on the history of research.

45 I. Finkelstein and O. Lipschits, “The Old Gideon Tale in Judges: Geographical and Historical Observations,” *ZAW* 129 (2017): 1–18.

46 E. g., W. Richter, “Die Überlieferungen um Jephthah: Ri 10, 17–12, 6,” *Biblica* 47 (1966): 485–556; J. A. Soggin, *Judges: A Commentary* (Old Testament Library; London: SCM Press, 1981), 207; P. Guillaume, *Waiting for Josiah* (JSOTSup 385; London: T&T Clark, 2004), 144–145; R. D. Nelson, “Ideology, Geography, and the List of Minor Judges,” *JSOT* 31 (2007): 347–364.

47 Without the many later additions, including the story of Jephthah’s daughter; on the latter see T. Römer, “Why would the Deuteronomists Tell about the Sacrifice of Jephthah’s Daughter?” *JSOT* 77 (1998): 27–38.

48 R. de Vaux, “Explorations de la Région de Salt,” *RB* 47 (1938): 398–425; M. Noth, “Gilead und Gad,” *ZDPV* 75 (1959): 14–73; I. Finkelstein, I. Koch and O. Lipschits, “The Biblical Gilead: Observations on Identifications, Geographic Divisions and Territorial History,” *UF* 43 (2012): 131–159.

49 I. Finkelstein, “The Old Jephthah Tale in Judges: Geographical and Historical Considerations,” *Biblica* 97 (2016): 1–15.

50 Part of the Abimelech story – related to the city of Shechem – may also belong to the savior tales. For details and bibliography of previous research, see I. Finkelstein, “Comments on the Abimelech Story in Judges 9,” *UF* 46 (2016): 69–84.

This brings me to the short accounts of the “minor Judges” (Judg 10:1–5, 12:8–15). They differ from the savior tales by their telegraphic nature.<sup>51</sup> In their current form, they are Deuteronomistic in language and formulae, but they seem to come from a pre-Deuteronomistic source. I see no reason for a Deuteronomistic author to invent references to the territory of the Northern kingdom. Indeed, the mention of otherwise unimportant places for a Deuteronomistic author, such as Shamir and Kamon, points to an old Northern source. Also, the reference to the thirty sons of Jair riding thirty asses and having thirty cities is close in ambiance to other fairytale-like Northern tales in Judges. In other words, the Deuteronomistic author must have elaborated on an old Northern list, which probably included the name of the hero, his hometown and possibly an additional short comment.<sup>52</sup>

The geographical extent of this hypothetical list is telling, because it closes gaps in the map representing the major saviors tales:

- Tola adds the territory of Issachar in the eastern Jezreel Valley, between the areas discussed in the Barak and Gideon tales;
- Jair introduces the Gilead north of the Jabbok;
- Elon represents the territory north of the arena discussed in Judges 5;
- And last but not least, Abdon adds the heartland of the Ephraimite hill country, missing in the heroic saviors tales.<sup>53</sup>

It is noteworthy that three of the five accounts of the Minor Judges relate to the land of the Nimshides and its vicinity in the east and west. The location of Ibzan of Bethlehem will be discussed below.

When the Minor Judges are added to the savior stories, a coherent, continuous territory is created, which includes the hill country of Benjamin, Ephraim and Manasseh; the western and eastern Jezreel Valley and the hills to its northeast; and the Gilead south and north of the Jabbok River. This is the map of Israel in its early days, after the take-over of the late Canaanite city-states in the Jezreel Valley and its vicinity and before the conquests of the Omrides. Indeed, the clashes are with Canaanites, Midianites, Moabites and Ammonites, but not with Arameans, possibly hinting that the background drawn by the material in Judges depicts a time prior to the begin-

51 See lately Nelson, “Ideology, Geography, and the List of Minor Judges”; A. Scherer, “Die ‘kleinen’ Richter und ihre Funktion,” *ZAW* 119 (2007): 190–200, with references to previous works.

52 Note that none of the judges (minor and major) carries a Yahwistic name, probably hinting at the old origin of the tales.

53 On the Minor Judges and the identification of their locations, see I. Finkelstein, “Major Saviors, Minor Judges: The Historical Background of the Northern Accounts in the Book of Judges,” *JSOT* 41 (2017): 431–449.

ning of hostilities with the Arameans, which was a product of the territorial expansions of Israel and Damascus in the early 9<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.

The author of the old list of minor Judges was probably the collector of the heroic savior tales in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. He noted that the more elaborate heroic tales that were available to him do not make a coherent map of what he considered the original territory of the Northern kingdom and the Israelites, and he therefore assembled additional material in order to “complete” the map. A specific goal could have been to show that the land of the Nimshides – the ruling dynasty in the time of composition of the heroic tales – was part of the initial territory of Israel (more below).

## Royal Traditions

Three Northern Israelite royal traditions can be identified in the Bible, dealing with Saul, Jeroboam I and Jehu, with the latter representing the rise of the Nimshides. The emphasis below is on the geographical aspects of these traditions. Other issues to deal with are the absence of an Omride royal tradition, as well as the lack of a tradition regarding Jeroboam II, in whose time according to my view the royal traditions were committed to writing.

### Saul

The first Northern royal tradition is that of King Saul. I have dealt elsewhere with the Saul material as representing an early Northern Israelite polity,<sup>54</sup> so I will be brief here and concentrate only on the components that comprise the old layer. I see the following episodes (though not every verse in each one) as belonging to the early Northern Israelite narrative that is now embedded in several later layers in First Samuel:<sup>55</sup>

54 I. Finkelstein, “The Last Labayu: King Saul and the Expansion of the First North Israelite Territorial Entity,” in *Essays on Ancient Israel in its Near Eastern Context, A Tribute to Nadav Na’aman* (ed. Y. Amit et al.; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 171–177; idem, “Saul, Benjamin and the Emergence of ‘Biblical Israel’: An Alternative View,” *ZAW* 123 (2011): 348–367; contra N. Na’aman, “Saul, Benjamin and the Emergence of ‘Biblical Israel,’” *ZAW* 121 (2009): 211–224, 335–349.

55 For pre-Deuteronomistic materials in the Saul chapters in 1 Samuel, see e.g. J. Van Seters, *In Search of History: Historiography in the Ancient World and the Origins of Biblical History* (ACLS Humanities E-Book; New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 254–258; N. Na’aman, “The Pre-Deuteronomistic Story of King Saul and its Historical Significance,” *CBQ* 54 (1992): 638–658; G. Mobley, “Glimpses of the Heroic Saul,” in *Saul in Story and Tradition* (ed. C. S. Ehrlich; FAT 47; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006),



- Saul's search for his father's mules;
- His coronation in an unnamed place by an unnamed man of God;
- The rescue of Jabesh;
- The battle of Geba and Michmash;
- Seemingly the opening of the narrative on the battle in the Valley of Elah;
- Possible additional clues in the early layer of the David story;<sup>56</sup>
- The northern version of Saul's death in the battle of Gilboa.

The territorial core of this tradition is in the highlands north of Jerusalem and the Gilead at Jabesh, with possible extension to larger areas in the highlands that were conceived as being part of the earliest Israelite entity. This territory seems to be echoed in the summary of the regions ruled by Ishbaal in 2 Sam 2:9 (possibly an originally Northern text used by a Deuteronomistic author). This source speaks about the central highlands up to the border with the Jezreel Valley (if not including parts of it), and the Gilead.<sup>57</sup>

### Jeroboam I

The second Northern royal tradition seems to be hidden behind the narrative in 1 Kings 11–12<sup>58</sup> and perhaps the Septuagint's "alternative history" regarding the "division" of the United Monarchy and the rise of the first monarch of the North.<sup>59</sup> The Masoretic text as read today is Deuteronomistic (the reference to Jeroboam in 1 Kgs 12:12 may come from the hand of a late redactor<sup>60</sup>). The nature of the alternative history – regardless of whether

80–87; W. Deitrich, *The Early Monarchy in Israel: The Tenth Century B. C. E.* (SBL Biblical Encyclopedia 3; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007).

<sup>56</sup> On my view regarding this issue, see I. Finkelstein, "The Geographical and Historical Realities behind the Earliest Layer in the David Story," *SJOT* 27 (2013): 131–150.

<sup>57</sup> More details in D. Edelman, "The 'Ashurites' of Eshbaal's State (2 Sam. 2.9)," *PEQ* 117 (1985): 85–91; N. Na'aman, "The Kingdom of Ishbaal," *BN* 54 (1990): 33–37; Finkelstein, *Forgotten Kingdom*, 52–53.

<sup>58</sup> E. g., E. Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige 1: Das erste Buch der Könige, Kapitel 1–16* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1977), 150–166.

<sup>59</sup> 1 Kings 12a–z; Z. Talshir, *The Alternative Story of the Division of the Kingdom* (Jerusalem Biblical Studies 6; Jerusalem: Simor, 1993).

<sup>60</sup> S. L. McKenzie, "The Source for Jeroboam's Role at Shechem (1 Kgs 11:43–12:3, 12, 20)," *JBL* 106 (1987): 297–300; W. I. Toews, *Monarchy and Religious Institution in Israel under Jeroboam I* (SBL Monograph 47; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 23–39; A. Rofé, "Elders or Youngsters? Critical Remarks on 1 Kings 12," in *One God – One Cult – One Nation: Archaeological and Biblical Perspectives* (ed. R. G. Kratz, and H. Spieckermann; BZAW 405; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2010), 79–89. To differ from these scholars, I would see 1 Kgs 12:2–3 as a remnant of an old Northern Israelite tradition (below).

it is based on a pre-Deuteronomistic source<sup>61</sup> or is a late *midrash* – has been debated.<sup>62</sup> The text in front of us is mainly an elaboration on the Deuteronomistic material in Kings, but several pieces of information, which do not appear in Kings, may come from an old Northern source. A Northern tradition may be cached under the story even if it was worked by a Judahite author and a still later hand.<sup>63</sup> These “concise and dramatic accounts resemble the stories of the books of Judges and of Samuel.”<sup>64</sup>

Looking through both these sources while removing evident later layers (Solomon, Rehoboam, etc.), one can conceive of a story that included details about the following:

- A hero named Jeroboam, his hometown, his father and mother in (11:26a, 28a); the reference to a prostitute mother in the alternative history 12:24b may hint that he was a leader of an Apiru band;
- His escape from a now impossible to reconstruct problem in Canaan (the House of Saul?) to Sheshonq I in Egypt and his return;
- His coronation at Shechem (information in 12:3a, part of 20; 12:1 and 12:24n<sup>b</sup>; in 12:1 of the Masoretic text a Deuteronomistic author replaced Jeroboam with Rehoboam);
- Reference to activity at Shechem and Penuel (12:25).

The Egypt connection may have stemmed from the Sheshonq I involvement in Canaan. This pharaoh could have been instrumental in the rise of Jeroboam, installing him as a vassal after his campaign in Canaan. Hence, the relationship with an empire could have initially been depicted favorably. Indeed, a close relationship with a superpower could also have been viewed positively in the days of Jeroboam II, perhaps for legitimizing connections with Assyria, e.g., in the horses business.<sup>65</sup> A negative assessment could

61 A. Schenker, “Jeroboam and the Division of the Kingdom in the Ancient Septuagint: LXX 3 Kingdoms 12.24 A-Z, MT 1 Kings 11–12; 14 and the Deuteronomistic History,” in *Israel Constructs its History: Deuteronomistic History in Recent Research* (ed. A. de Pury, T. Römer and J.-D. Macchi; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 214–257. idem, “Jeroboam’s Rise and Fall in the Hebrew and Greek Bible,” *JSJ* 39 (2008): 367–373.

62 Talshir, *Alternative Story of the Division*; M.A. Sweeney, “A Reassessment of the Masoretic and Septuagint Versions of the Jeroboam Narratives in 1 Kings/3 Kingdoms 11–14,” *JSJ* 38 (2007): 165–195.

63 Schenker, “Jeroboam and the Division” with references to previous scholars; see P. Galpaz, “The Reign of Jeroboam and the Extent of Egyptian Influence,” *BN* 60 (1991): 13–19.

64 Schenker, “Jeroboam and the Division,” 256.

65 D.O. Cantrell and I. Finkelstein, “A Kingdom for a Horse: The Megiddo Stables and Eight Century Israel,” in *Megiddo IV: The 1998–2002 Seasons* (ed. I. Finkelstein, D. Ussishkin and B. Halpern; Monograph Series of the Institute of Archaeology Tel Aviv

have emerged later. A part now missing could have dealt with the liberation from the Egyptian grip (above). Northern adoration of Jeroboam I may be hinted at by similarities between his story and that of Moses,<sup>66</sup> the hero of a Northern origin tradition that was seemingly promoted by Jeroboam II (above).<sup>67</sup> The very fact that an Israelite monarch of the 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. was called Jeroboam indicates admiration for the founder of the kingdom.<sup>68</sup> The Nimshides may have identified with Jeroboam I because, as a vassal of Sheshonq I, he made the Jezreel–Beth-shean valley, their homeland, part of Israel. Esteem for Jeroboam I among Israelites who lived in Judah after 720 B.C.E. and the giant shadow cast by Jeroboam II are probably reasons for the Deuteronomistic animosity toward Jeroboam I, as well as for the devaluation of the stature of Jeroboam II (more below).

Acknowledging that the reference to Shechem and Penuel of 1 Kgs 12:25 represents an old tradition, and that the story on the altars at Bethel and Dan is a Deuteronomistic addition, the old Northern tale of Jeroboam I concentrates on the highlands of southern Samaria and the Gilead. Jeroboam came from Zeredah in the Ephraimite highlands,<sup>69</sup> a small Apiru stronghold in the rugged, isolated area northwest of present-day Ramallah.<sup>70</sup> The focus of the story of his rise to power is apparently Shechem and the only other site mentioned is Penuel. Had Tirzah been part of the old tale (that is, if 1 Kgs 14:17 belongs to the old tradition), northern Samaria should be added to the geography of Jeroboam.

## Jehu

The third Northern Israelite royal narrative describes Jehu's rise to power and the elimination of the Ormide dynasty (the old layer in 2 Kgs 9–10:28). This tradition must have had special importance in the days of Jeroboam II, since it deals with the emergence of his own dynasty, the Nimshides, which

---

University 24; Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, 2006), 643–665.

66 Smend, *YHWH War and Tribal Confederation*, 120–127; Oblath, “Of Pharaohs and Kings”; Albertz, *A History of Israelite Religion*, 12; Schmid, *The Old Testament*, 83 and reference to previous works.

67 Even if part of the relevant Exodus material is late in date, it could have been based on an earlier source.

68 I differ here from scholars who doubt the historicity of Jeroboam I (e.g., Römer, *Invention of God*, 108).

69 Contra M. Leuchter, “Jeroboam the Ephratite,” *JBL* 125 (2006): 51–72.

70 M. Kochavi, “The Identification of Zeredah, Home of Jeroboam son of Nebat, King of Israel,” *EI* 20 (1989): 198–201 (Hebrew).

ruled Israel for a century – half of its existence. Indeed, though the exact scope of the old Northern material is debated,<sup>71</sup> what is left of it is longer and more coherent than in the two other royal traditions of the North. The story deals with Jehu's coup against Joram, the last of the Omrides. It involves Jehu's secretive coronation while stationed with the army at Ramoth-gilead; the confrontation with Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah at Jezreel; the slaughter of the two kings and Jezebel; and the elimination of the remaining Omrides.

For present purposes, it is important to note that the Nimshides' homeland was probably the eastern Jezreel–Beth-shean Valley. This is hinted at by the geographic background of the Jehu coup, the location of Abel-meholah, which is Elisha's hometown in the Jordan Valley (south of Beth-shean), and three epigraphic Iron IIA finds from Tel Rehov and Tel Amal (both near Beth-shean) mentioning the name נִמְשִׁי, “Nimshi.”<sup>72</sup> It seems that the Nimshides opposed the Omrides, who may have originated from the area of Samaria in the middle of the Israelite highlands, where they established their seat of power.<sup>73</sup> Omride fortresses were erected in strategic places on the borders of Israel with Moab, Damascus, Phoenicia and Philistia.<sup>74</sup> Exceptions are Samaria and Jezreel, both in the heartland of Israel. The former was the capital; it is possible that the latter, rather than aiming to govern the population in the valley in general terms,<sup>75</sup> was established in order to dominate the territory of the strong, competing clan or family.

The Jehu coup ended in a blood bath, hence this royal tradition was probably aimed at legitimizing the accession of the Nimshides against possible criticism and accusations,<sup>76</sup> especially in the area of Samaria, on the man-

71 See, e.g., S. L. McKenzie, *The Trouble with Kings: The Composition of the Book of Kings in the Deuteronomistic History* (SupVT 42; Leiden: Brill, 1991), 70–79; S. Otto, *Jehu, Elia und Elis: Die Erzählung von der Jehu Revolution und die Komposition der Elia-Elisa Erzählungen* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 2001), 104–111; J. M. Robker, *The Jehu Revolution: A Royal Tradition of the Northern Kingdom and its Ramifications* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 17–62 with references to previous works.

72 S. Ahituv and A. Mazar, “The Inscriptions from Tel Rehov and Their Contribution to the Study of Script and Writing during Iron Age IIA,” in “See, I will bring a scroll recounting what befell me” (Ps 40:8): *Epigraphy and Daily Life from the Bible to the Talmud Dedicated to the Memory of Professor Hanan Eshel* (ed. E. Eshel and Y. Levin; Journal of Ancient Judaism Sup 12; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Rupprecht, 2014): 43–44, 50, 64.

73 Possibly starting as a sort of a royal estate; see N. Franklin, “Samaria: from the Bedrock to the Omride Palace,” *Levant* 36 (2004): 189–202.

74 Finkelstein, *Forgotten Kingdom*, 85–109.

75 H. G. M. Williamson, “Tel Jezreel and the Dynasty of Omri,” *PEQ* 128 (1996): 41–51.

76 Robker, “Jehu Revolution,” 69–69.

ner in which they came to power.<sup>77</sup> In this regard, the Jehu royal text can be viewed as a Northern “*apologia*,” perhaps being the model for the Southern one (more below).<sup>78</sup> Except for the slaughter of their predecessors, the Nimshides, who originated from the valley rather than the highlands, may have been accused of being insufficiently Israelite, and perhaps insufficiently Yahwist as well. Other components of the Jeroboam II “corpus” seem to have aimed to answer the first of these concerns. That is probably the reason for Jeroboam II’s interest in the Northern heroic tales in the book of Judges. As shown above, when combined, the map created by the tales of the “major” judges and the short accounts of the minor judges conveyed the message that the Nimshide land was part of Israel’s core territory.

### No Omride Royal Tradition

For clan-based and geographical reasons (the ages-old confrontation between lowlanders and highlanders), the Nimshides were hostile to the Omrides. In addition, this hostility may have stemmed not only from the simple fact that one clan replaced the other, but from competition over the question of the peak period in the history of the kingdom. These must be the reasons why there was probably no Omride royal tradition among the Northern Israelite texts, which appear to have been written during the time of Jeroboam II; consequently, it is why there is no Omride royal tradition in the Bible. Memories favorable to the Omrides could have been excluded from or suppressed in the Nimshide text. Assuming that the Deuteronomistic History had been at least partially based on an old Northern Israelite history (below), this would explain why the book of Kings does not include reference to events that demonstrate the power of the Omrides, such as the battle of Qarqar and the conquest of the *mishor* of Moab. Interestingly, for the latter, there is indeed a shred of Northern memory in another venue in the Bible, the book of Numbers.<sup>79</sup> In any event, it does not seem coincidental that all three Northern royal traditions are not connected with Samaria, which was the heartland of the Omrides.

77 O. Sergi and Y. Gadot, “The Omride Palatial Architecture as Symbol in Action: Between State Formation, Obliteration and Heritage,” *JNES* 76 (2017): 103–111.

78 Regardless of their final date of composition, for geographical and historical considerations the Elijah and Elisha prophetic stories must include old material/s, which could have first been committed to writing in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, perhaps as part or support of this “*apologia*.”

79 Finkelstein and T. Römer, “Early North Israelite ‘Memories’ on Moab.”

### Was there a Jeroboam II Royal Tradition?

One may ask why there is no detailed narrative regarding Jeroboam II, who according to my theory was the monarch behind the composition of the Israelite texts. The answer may be that such an account may have existed at one time, but was later suppressed by the Deuteronomistic author, who aimed to downgrade the stature of the greatest of all Israelite kings. In fact, traces of such a tradition may be found in the references to the territorial expansion of Israel in 2 Kings (14:25a, 28), in Amos (the reference to Karnaim and Lidebir in 6:13) and in the reference to the building of Bethel and Dan in 1 Kings 11:29. Regarding the latter, note that neither site was inhabited in the early Iron IIA, the time of Jeroboam I.<sup>80</sup> Other shreds of such a royal tradition may have included the account of the construction of Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer and the reference to cities of horses and chariots and trade of horses. These accounts, which fit the realities of Jeroboam II's rule, were telescoped by a 7<sup>th</sup> century Judahite author back to the days of Solomon.<sup>81</sup> 2 Kings 14:25a is intriguing because it speaks directly about Jeroboam II's achievements. Because of the presence of a large number of Israelites in Judah (more below), the Deuteronomistic author could not entirely dismiss the memory of this great king. He referred to the conquests of Jeroboam II, but subjected them to his theological stance (2 Kgs 14:25b–17).<sup>82</sup>

### Was there a Northern "History"?

The royal traditions in the hypothesized corpus of the days of Jeroboam II – at least those of Jeroboam I and Jehu<sup>83</sup> – could have been part of what Rob-

<sup>80</sup> For Dan, Arie 2008; for Bethel, Finkelstein and Singer-Avitz 2009.

<sup>81</sup> Finkelstein and Silberman, "Temple and Dynasty," 151–177; Cantrell and Finkelstein, "A Kingdom for a Horse."

<sup>82</sup> The same may hold true for the memory of the subjugation of Judah by Joash, father of Jeroboam II (an old layer behind 2 Kings 13:8–14): otherwise, why should a Judahite author preserve this exceptionally and uniquely offending memory a century and half after the events took place?

<sup>83</sup> Inclusion of the Saul royal tradition in a Jeroboam II corpus is not evident. On one hand, the Nimshides could have identified with Saul, who was probably considered the first monarch of the North. In the days of the House of Saul, the highlanders took over the late-Canaanite city-states in the Jezreel Valley and its vicinity – the first step in making this region "Israelite." On the other hand, the Northern kingdom of Jeroboam I probably replaced the first Northern dynasty, perhaps in connection with the Sheshonq I campaign (above).

ker<sup>84</sup> called the “Israel Text,” a Northern history of Israel<sup>85</sup> from the days of Jeroboam I to the time of Jeroboam II.<sup>86 87</sup>

Royal inscriptions appeared in the Levant in the late 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>88</sup> With no evidence for historical records before this datum, a tantalizing question in the study of ancient Israel is the source of information for the lists of Judahite and Israelite monarchs, the length of their reign, and cross-references between them. An Israel Text<sup>89</sup> would resolve these difficulties.<sup>90</sup> Written approximately a century and half after the rise of the two Hebrew kingdoms, it could have recorded oral knowledge and perhaps even cite slightly earlier written materials (possibly dating a century after the rise of the North).

Most information in this hypothesized text could have been telegraphic, and even the elaborations, described above as the royal traditions, must have included no more than several sentences each. The skeleton of this hypothesized text could have given basic information about the kings of Israel (i. e., name, father, length of rule). I would suggest that, for territorial-ideology reasons, it included references to Israelite domination over kings of Judah.<sup>91</sup> The Baasha-Asa confrontation; Jehoshaphat being a vassal of Ahab and Ahazyahu a vassal of Joram; the defeat of Amaziah by Joash; etc. The

84 “Jehu Revolution,” esp. 162–169, 303–307.

85 Another proposal for a Northern chronicle is Rofé’s Ephraimite History (which he dates to the decades before the Assyrian takeover), to be found between Joshua 24 and 1 Samuel 12: A. Rofé, “Ephraimite versus Deuteronomistic History,” in *Reconsidering Israel and Judah: Recent Studies on the Deuteronomistic History* (ed. G. N. Knoppers and J. G. McConville; Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 8; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 462–474.

86 Had the longest ruling monarch of Israel ascended to the throne under another name and then taken the name Jeroboam II as part of this “project?” Though impossible to verify, this would explain the one and only instance for a twice-occurring royal name in the same Hebrew kingdom (rather than proposing that Jeroboam I never existed, e. g., Römer, *Invention of God*, 108).

87 I accept Robker’s idea only partially, first and foremost, because it is not yet free of a United Monarchy of Solomon. I would also consider the possibility that the theorized “Israel Text” was extended after 720 to include basic information on the last decades in the history of the Northern kingdom.

88 B. Sass, *The Alphabet at the Turn of the Millennium* (Journal of the Institute of archaeology of Tel-Aviv University; Occasional publications 4; Tel Aviv: Institute of Archaeology, 2005).

89 The idea, not necessarily the very text, in Robker, “Jehu Revolution,” 303–307.

90 Summary of the problem in C. Levin, *Re-Reading the Scriptures* (FAT 87; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 183–193.

91 For the idea of an old text synchronizing between the Hebrew monarchs see already A. Jepsen, *Die Quellen des Königsbuches* (Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1953), who, however, placed its compilation in Judah during the reign of Hezekiah.

basic idea behind this text could have been a claim to one kingdom ruled by an Israelite monarch – Israel and Judah under Jeroboam II, a kingdom extending “from Dan to Beer-sheba.” In fact, this could have reflected the reality following the victory of Joash over Amaziah at Beth-shemesh (the chronistic verses in 2 Kings 13), when the Southern kingdom was dominated by Israel.<sup>92</sup>

An Israelite Text would explain the source of chronistic details for the days of the early Hebrew monarchs. A good example is the campaign of Pharaoh Shishak (1 Kgs 14:25). How did a Deuteronomistic Judahite author know about this campaign? A possible answer is a reference to Egypt in general and Sheshonq I in particular in an oral Jeroboam I tradition, which was cited in the written Jeroboam II text approximately a century and a half removed from the actual event.

### A Northern “United Monarchy”

My hypothesis regarding a Northern Israelite ideology of a United Monarchy in the days of Jeroboam II warrants elaboration. I have shown that the Jacob, Saul, Jeroboam I, Jehu narratives, and the hero stories cover parts of the same territory. It includes the northern sector of the central highlands; the Gilead; the Jezreel Valley and the hills to its northeast. That which is missing is also telling: the coastal plain; the mountainous Galilee; the upper Jordan Valley; the *mishor* of Moab and an area north of the Yarmuk. Each of these regions was part of Israel in one of its two peak territorial expansions, meaning in the days of the Omrides and under Joash and Jeroboam II. It therefore seems that these Northern Israelite traditions related only to the area that was conceived as the core territory of Israel and the Israelites. Areas conquered in the two expansion periods were not considered as being genuinely Israelite.

Two additional texts of different genres represent attempts by Northern authors to “complete” the map, that is, to close the gap between what was conceived as true Israel and the reality of territorial Israel. They also portray the claim for a United Northern Monarchy, which includes the territory of Judah.

---

92 I intentionally avoid the question whether the proposed history of the Israelite monarchs can be identified with the book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel; I will deal with this issue elsewhere.



### Northern Conquest Traditions?

The territory depicted in the savior stories and Minor Judges calls attention to the conquest tales in Joshua 6–11. In its present form, the description is evidently Deuteronomistic,<sup>93</sup> probably being an allegory for a “conquest to come” and supporting the territorial ideology of Josiah after Assyria’s retreat in the late 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E.<sup>94</sup> Yet since the conqueror is considered an Ephraimite (Josh 19:50; 24:30), the question is whether an older, Northern tradition is hidden behind the late monarchic Judahite composition. A strong clue in this direction is the fact that no conquest tradition exists for the heartland of Israel as delineated by the Northern Israelite author of the savior stories and short accounts of the minor Judges. There is not a word about the central highlands between Bethel and the Jezreel Valley, the Jezreel Valley and its vicinity, or the heartland of the Israelite Gilead.<sup>95</sup>

In fact, the conquest stories in Joshua extend the borders of Israel from what I believe was conceived in the days of Jeroboam II as the core territory of Israel and the Israelites to the actual (in the north) and aspired (in the south) borders of Israel at that time:<sup>96</sup>

- The Northern story in Joshua 11 covers the mountainous Galilee, the Upper Jordan Valley, the coastal plain of Acco and the northwestern tip of the Jezreel Valley (mentioning Hazor, Merom, Shimron and Achshaph). The routing of the enemy (Josh 11:8) may represent the conquests of Jeroboam II up to the boundary of Sidon and the “valley of Mizpeh” (somewhere in the Upper Jordan Valley).

<sup>93</sup> E. g., J. Van Seters, “Joshua’s Campaign of Canaan and Near Eastern Historiography,” *Scandinavian Journal of Old Testament* 4 (1990): 1–12.

<sup>94</sup> I. Finkelstein and N. A. Silberman, *The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology’s New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of its Sacred Texts* (New York: Free Press, 2001), 72–96; on the Joshua–Josiah connection, see R. D. Nelson, “Josiah in the Book of Joshua,” *JBL* 100 (1981): 531–540.

<sup>95</sup> Incidentally, the idea that a North Israelite conquest tradition stands behind Joshua 6–11 fits the assumption that the original Exodus story included the first part of the Book of Joshua. See e.g. R. G. Kratz, *The Composition of the Narrative Books of the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 279–292; J. C. Gertz, “The Partial Compositions,” in *T&T Clark Handbook of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Literature, Religion and History of the Old Testament* (ed. J. C. Gertz et al.; London: T&T Clark, 2012), 356. Note that the Yahwistic name Joshua may be an insertion / distortion either by an 8<sup>th</sup> century Israelite author or by a later Deuteronomistic writer, and that the Northern stories could have presented more than one hero.

<sup>96</sup> See interesting observations by A. C. Tunyogi, “The Book of the Conquest,” *JBL* 84 (1965): 374–380, regarding a northern “Book of the Conquest” from the days of the Omride dynasty.

- The Jericho and Ai traditions deal with the land of Benjamin, which was disputed between Israel and Judah.<sup>97</sup>
- The Southern tale in Joshua 10 (mentioning Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish and Eglon), deals with the highlands and Shephelah territories of Judah, that is, with the densely settled part of the Southern kingdom (there is no reference to the Beer-sheba Valley). It may represent a (Northern) pan-Israelite ideology, a claim for Judah that was de facto ruled by Israel beginning in the days of Joash and Jeroboam II. The message could be that “our” hero Joshua conquered the land where “you” (Judahites) later established your kingdom.

This ideology may find also expression in the Northern tales in the book of Judges. The fifth minor judge is Ibzan of Bethlehem. Most scholars opted to identify this place with northern Bethlehem, but Bethlehem of Judah is a no less attractive as an option. Instead of being seen as a Deuteronomistic addition to the Northern text, this could have been an original reference to Judah, voicing expansionist, pan-Israelite ideas in the North.<sup>98</sup> A somewhat similar case can be found in 1 Kings 4.

### The “Solomonic” Districts

Another text that could have supported a Northern, pan-Israelite territorial ideology can be found in the list of “Solomonic” districts that probably depicts the administrative organization of Israel in the days of Jeroboam II.<sup>99</sup> The specific geography of the list covers the area from the northern Shephelah to the border with Phoenicia and the upper Galilee west of the Jordan River, and from the border with Moab (near Heshbon?) to the area north of the Yarmuk River in Transjordan. Especially noteworthy, the list includes the areas of Lidebir and Karnaim conquered by Jeroboam II (Amos 6:13) and Beth-shemesh, taken over by Joash (2 Kings 13:11), but it excludes the *mishor* of Moab, which was a territory taken by the Omrides and lost to

<sup>97</sup> Finkelstein, “Saul, Benjamin and the Emergence of ‘Biblical Israel,’”; for a different opinion, see Na’aman, “Saul, Benjamin and the Emergence of ‘Biblical Israel.’”

<sup>98</sup> This scenario seems to be supported by the fact that the Deuteronomistic author added to the heroic tales in Judges reference to Othniel, that is, to the southern part of Judah, rather than to the heartland of the Kingdom. In other words, for him the main territory of Judah had already been covered by the reference to Ibzan of Bethlehem.

<sup>99</sup> I. Finkelstein and N. A. Silberman, “Temple and Dynasty,” 161–162; for another view, that the list depicts Assyrian period realities, see N. Na’aman, “Solomon’s District List (1 Kings 4:7–19) and the Assyrian Province System in Palestine,” *UF* 33 (2001): 419–436.

Mesha. The language, including some of the terms, looks genuine, especially where the text refers to places not central in Deuteronomistic writings, but has a Deuteronomistic and even post-Deuteronomistic touch in other places, for example in 4:15, 19b. The problem is how to understand vv. 4:19b–20. Accepting the reading, “And there was one officer in the Land of Judah,”<sup>100</sup> the question would be whether this is part of the original Northern Israelite text or a Deuteronomistic addition. Both could have aimed to depict a great United Monarchy. One portrays it as ruled from Samaria, and the other depicts it as ruled from Jerusalem. I would opt for the former.

Indeed, there are other themes in the description of the golden age of Solomon, which seem to portray the situation in Israel in the first half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. These include the following: 1) the reference in 1 Kgs 9:15 to Hazor, Megiddo and Gezer, which were the main administrative centers of the North in the lowlands; 2) the repeated references to Solomon’s horses and chariots (1 Kgs 4:26–28; 9:19, 22; 10:26–29), which are most likely based on the memory of the Megiddo horse industry in the days of Jeroboam II;<sup>101</sup> and 3) the reference to the delineation of the border with Tyre; the earliest Hiram in extra-biblical texts is the one mentioned in the days of Tiglath-pileser III.

## Impact On Judah

If my reconstruction is correct, the collection and recording of Northern formative texts must have had a strong impact on Judah, its texts, and history. Here I need to return briefly to the question of Israelites in Jerusalem in particular and Judah in general after 720 B.C.E. I have recently debated this issue with my friend Nadav Na’aman,<sup>102</sup> and there is no reason to repeat the arguments in detail. Let me merely summarize my approach by saying

100 Na’aman, “Solomon’s District List,” 422–423, with discussion and reference to previous works.

101 D. O’Daniel Cantrell, *The Horsemen of Israel: Horses and Chariotry in Monarchic Israel (Ninth–Eight Centuries B. C. E.)* (History, Archaeology, and Culture of the Levant 1; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 87–113; idem, “Stable Issues,” in *Megiddo IV: The 1998–2002 Seasons* (ed. I. Finkelstein, D. Ussishkin, and B. Halpern; Monograph Series of the Institute of Archaeology Tel Aviv University 24; Tel Aviv: Emery and Claire Yass Publications in Archaeology, 2006), 630–642; Cantrell and Finkelstein, “A Kingdom for a Horse.”

102 N. Na’aman, “Dismissing the Myth of a Flood of Israelite Refugees in the Late Eighth Century BCE,” *ZAW* 126 (2014): 1–14; I. Finkelstein, “Migration of Israelites into Judah after 720 BCE: An Answer and an Update,” *ZAW* 127 (2015): 188–206, both with references to previous studies.

that, without the significant movement of Israelites to the South, I see no way to explain:

- 1) the solid archaeological evidence for a sudden settlement and demographic growth in Jerusalem in particular and Judah in general within a short period of time in the late 8<sup>th</sup> century;
- 2) the sudden appearance of items of Israelite material culture in Iron IIB–C Judah;
- 3) the incorporation of Northern traditions into Judahite texts.

I maintain that a considerable number of Israelites moved to Judah in the decades after the collapse of the North. They brought with them not only traits of material culture and oral traditions, but also a corpus of texts that dealt with issues concerning the identity and history of Israel.<sup>103</sup> Judah needed to face these Israelite texts, some of which were not complimentary to its traditions and ideological program. The new balance of population in the South made it impossible to ignore the Northern traditions. Thus, they were incorporated and contained rather than dismissed.

It is not a new theory to propose that Deuteronomism originated in the North and was brought to Judah by Israelite refugees after 720 B.C.E.<sup>104</sup> Elsewhere I have argued that early, pan-Israelite ideas developed in Judah after 720 B.C.E. against the background of the special demographic mix there following the fall of the North.<sup>105</sup> I will now take this idea a step further and suggest that the Judahite-sponsored pan-Israelite doctrine was both a reaction to and reversal of Israelite thought in the time of Jeroboam II. Moreover, it is likely that the very idea of expressing ideology through writing “history” was influenced by 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Israelite texts that reached Jerusalem after the demise of the Northern kingdom.<sup>106</sup>

Evidently, Northern traditions were incorporated into Southern texts in such a way that would serve Deuteronomistic ideas. This applies to all genres discussed here. The original Abraham tradition could have been composed as a rejoinder to the Jacob story; still later, the two separate cycles

103 On Northern texts arriving in Judah after 720 and incorporated into the Bible, see, e.g., Van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia*, 339–372; W.M. Schniedewind, *How the Bible Became a Book: The Textualization of Ancient Israel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); W. Schuette, *Israel's Exil in Juda* (OBO 279; Fribourg and Göttingen, 2016); references to additional studies in C. Edenburg and R. Müller, “A Northern Provenance for Deuteronomy? A Critical Review,” *HeBAI* 4 (2015): 148–161.

104 For a recent survey of literature, see Edenburg and Müller, “A Northern Provenance.”

105 Finkelstein and Silberman, “Temple and Dynasty.”

106 Also Robker, “Jehu Revolution,” 300.

were unified into one story of three patriarchs, with the Jacob narrative subjected to the southern Abraham. It is easy to see how the Davidic royal tradition was influenced, even shaped, by the Saul stories. That is the root of the *apologia* in the Books of Samuel.<sup>107</sup> The genre of *apologia* could have been adopted from the Jehu story. In fact, the very idea of composing a royal David narrative could have been influenced by the royal Northern texts. It is also possible to observe how Deuteronomistic writings inherited the heroic tales in Judges (and expanded them to include the southern part of Judah by adding the story of Othniel), how an administrative Northern list (1 Kings 4) was transformed into a description of the kingdom of Solomon, and how Northern conquest traditions were harnessed to Josianic territorial ideology.

The Jacob and Exodus origin traditions, as well as the heroic tales, were probably conceived as relatively benign to Judah. But the royal Saul, Jeroboam and Jehu stories were more challenging, since they were the actual historical, royal traditions of the North. This is probably the reason for the animosity of the Deuteronomist to both Saul and Jeroboam I. Jeroboam is depicted as the ultimate sinner not because of his “secession” from an ahistorical United Monarchy, nor because he erected calves at Bethel and Dan. To the contrary, he is construed as a sinner because of having been venerated in the North, coupled by the well-remembered threat posed by the dominating figure of Jeroboam II. In fact, the Deuteronomistic presentation of all Northern kings as sinners against YHWH could have stemmed from the memory of the promotion of YHWH as the God of Israel by Jeroboam II. One may also wonder whether, in the continuous references to the “sin of Jeroboam” (including the references to Dan and Bethel), the Deuteronomistic Historian did not have the more recent Jeroboam in mind.

## Conclusion

I have suggested that in the days of Jeroboam II, during the Northern kingdom’s peak prosperity period, it collected and committed to writing the most important traditions about its origin, its heroes and wars, and its royalty (the latter possibly part of a history of the Northern monarchs). The evidence does not allow addressing the issue of whether this endeavor represents one scribal project – the creation of a Northern Israelite corpus – but the overall picture presented above seems to support this possibility. This undertaking seems to have had two goals. First, it delineated the core territory of Israel

---

107 K. P. McCarter. “The Apology of David,” *JBL* 99 (1980): 489–504.

and the Israelites, as viewed by the Nimshide Dynasty, which would involve the northern part of the central highlands, the Gilead, the Jezreel Valley and the hills to its northeast. Second, it advanced a pan-Israelite ideology of a far larger “United Monarchy” of Israel and Judah ruled from Samaria. Israelites who moved to Judah after 720 B.C.E. brought the Northern corpus with them. The dramatic demographic change in the Southern kingdom did not allow later Deuteronomistic authors to dismiss the Northern traditions. Instead, they incorporated them into their writings by putting them into the service of their own ideology. This would mean that the entire Judahite “historical” corpus, as well as the Judahite historiographic mindset, are dominated, if not shaped, by the older Israelite traditions and, more specifically, by the endeavors of Jeroboam II.

Israel Finkelstein  
Tel Aviv University  
Institute of Archaeology  
Tel Aviv 6997801  
fink2@post.tau.ac.il

# Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel

*Edited by* Gary N. Knoppers (Notre Dame IN), Oded Lipschits (Tel Aviv), Carol A. Newsom (Atlanta GA), and Konrad Schmid (Zürich)  
*Redaction:* Phillip Michael Lasater (Zürich)

Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel publishes only invited articles. Submission of a paper will be held to imply that it contains original unpublished work and is not being submitted for publication elsewhere. All articles are refereed by specialists. Acceptance for publication will be given in writing. When an article is accepted for publication, the exclusive copyright is granted to Mohr Siebeck for publication in a print and an electronic version. Further information on this and the rights retained by the author can be found at [www.mohr.de/hebai](http://www.mohr.de/hebai). No one may reproduce or distribute the entire journal or parts of it in a print or an electronic version without the publisher's permission. Please contact [rights@mohr.de](mailto:rights@mohr.de).

Please do not send any unsolicited review copies. The publisher and the editors reserve the right to keep unsolicited books.

*Contact address:*

Professor Dr. Konrad Schmid  
Theologische Fakultät der Universität Zürich  
Kirchgasse 9  
CH-8001 Zürich  
Switzerland  
E-mail: [hebai@theol.uzh.ch](mailto:hebai@theol.uzh.ch)

*Full Text Online*

Free access to the full text online is included in a subscription. We ask institutions with more than 20,000 users to obtain a price quote directly from the publisher. Contact: [elke.brixner@mohr.de](mailto:elke.brixner@mohr.de). In order to set up online access for institutions/libraries, please go to: <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/register/institutional>. In order to set up online access for private persons, please go to: <http://www.ingentaconnect.com/register/personal>

*Publisher:* Mohr Siebeck GmbH & Co. KG, Postfach 2040, 72010 Tübingen  
Can be purchased at bookstores.

© 2017 Mohr Siebeck GmbH & Co. KG, Tübingen

The journal and all the individual articles and illustrations contained in it are protected by copyright. Any utilization beyond the narrow confines of copyright law without the publisher's consent is punishable by law. This applies in particular to copying, translations, microfilming and storage and processing in electronic systems.

Printed in Germany.  
Typeset by Martin Fischer, Tübingen.  
Printed by Gulde-Druck, Tübingen.

ISSN 2192-2276 (Print Edition)  
ISSN 2192-2284 (Online Edition)

# Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel

volume 6 (2017), no. 3

## Edited by

Gary N. **Knoppers** (Notre Dame IN), Oded **Lipschits** (Tel Aviv),  
Carol A. **Newsom** (Atlanta GA), and Konrad **Schmid** (Zürich)

*Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* is a peer-reviewed, quarterly journal focusing primarily on the biblical texts in their ancient historical contexts, but also on the history of Israel in its own right. Each issue has a topical focus. The primary language is English, but articles may also be published in German and French. A specific goal of the journal is to foster discussion among different academic cultures within a larger international context pertaining to the study of the Hebrew Bible and ancient Israel in the first millennium B.C.E.

*Hebrew Bible and Ancient Israel* erscheint vierteljährlich, die Beiträge werden durch einen Peer-review-Prozess evaluiert. Ihr Thema sind die Texte der hebräischen und aramäischen Bibel in ihren historischen Kontexten, aber auch die Geschichte Israels selbst. Jedes Heft wird einen thematischen Fokus haben. Die meisten Beiträge werden in Englisch verfasst sein, Artikel können aber auch auf Deutsch oder Französisch erscheinen. Ein besonderes Ziel der Zeitschrift besteht in der Vermittlung der unterschiedlichen akademischen Kulturen im globalen Kontext, die sich mit der Hebräischen Bibel und dem antiken Israel im 1. Jahrtausend v. Chr. beschäftigen.

## Associate Editors (2012–2017)

Erhard **Blum**, Tübingen; John **Day**, Oxford; Louis **Jonker**, Stellenbosch;  
John **Kessler**, Toronto; Jacqueline E. **Lapsley**, Princeton; Martti **Nissinen**,  
Helsinki; Thomas **Römer**, Paris/Lausanne; Christoph **Uehlinger**, Zürich;  
David **Vanderhooft**, Boston; Nili **Wazana**, Jerusalem



**Mohr Siebeck** [www.mohr.de](http://www.mohr.de)



2192-2276(201709)6:3;1-N