Forschungen zum Alten Testament

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The Formation of the Pentateuch

Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel, and North America

Edited by

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Convergence and Divergence in Pentateuchal Theory

The Genesis and Goals of This Volume

> Scholarly advance in the humanities often depends less on sensational new discoveries than upon the questioning and re-evaluation of what had become unquestioned assumptions.[1]

The Pentateuch lies at the heart of Western humanities. With its notions of divine revelation and social transformation through historical action, it serves as a bedrock document for Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It contributes powerfully to areas ostensibly far removed from religion, such as the rich literary, intellectual, political, and artistic history of European and later North American civilization, and has also influenced Africa, Asia, and South America. Yet despite nearly two centuries of scholarship, the human origins of this monument of civilization remain shrouded in the past. Indeed, recent developments in scholarship have broken down an earlier consensus, making it even more difficult to date its source documents and gain access to the compositional process by which the Pentateuch first took shape. The traditional conception of a unified, self-consistent foundation narrative that begins with creation and extends to the eve of the Israelites' entry into the promised land of Canaan has long been given up. Critical scholarship has isolated multiple layers of tradition, inconsistent laws, and narratives that could only have originated from separate communities within ancient Israel and were joined together at a relatively late stage by a process of splicing and editing.

The so-called New Documentary Hypothesis, often associated with the name of Julius Wellhausen, had dominated academic discourse on the Pentateuch since the end of the nineteenth century.[2] It presupposes four originally independent literary sources (the Yahwist, Elohist, Priestly, and Deuteronomic sources, identified by the sigla J, E, P, and D), each with its own set of laws and narratives, which were joined together in stages to produce the composite text of the Pentateuch. Despite challenges and modifications, the explanatory power

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[1] R.J. Coggins et al., preface to *Israel's Prophetic Tradition: Essays in Honour of Peter R. Ackroyd* (ed. R.J. Coggins et al.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), vvi.

[2] J. Wellhausen, *Prolegomena zur Geschichte Israels* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2001 [repr. from the 6th ed., 1927]); English translation, idem, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel* (trans. J.S. Black and A. Menzies; Scholars Press Reprints and Translation Series 17; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1994 [1st ed., Edinburgh: Adam & Charles Black, 1885]).

of the model long permitted it to trump rival hypotheses or to incorporate them as minor modifications of detail (such as adjustments of chronology).

Recent developments in academic biblical studies, however, jeopardize the revolutionary progress that has been accomplished over the last two centuries. Over the past forty years, the source-critical method has come under unprecedented attack. In many quarters it has been rejected entirely: many scholars claim it no longer provides a secure starting point for investigating the history of Israelite religion or the literary formation of the Pentateuch. Recent decades have witnessed not simply a proliferation of intellectual models but, in many ways much more seriously, the fragmentation of discourse altogether as scholarly communities in the three main research centers of Israel, Europe, and North America increasingly talk past one another. Even when they employ the same terminology (for example, *redactor*, *author*, *source*, *exegesis*), scholars often mean quite different things. Concepts taken for granted by one group of scholars (such as the existence of the Elohist or the Yahwist sources) are dismissed out of hand by other scholarly communities. That breakdown in a shared discourse is where this volume seeks to make a contribution, by reflecting on methodological assumptions and the theoretical models that inform the discipline.

Admittedly, the evidence for or against the Documentary Hypothesis is at best indirect because only copies of copies, in infinite regress, are preserved: the oldest complete manuscript of the Hebrew Bible, the Leningrad Codex, dates to the year 1008 CE, more than a millennium after the events depicted in the Hebrew Bible.[3] As a result, all arguments are based on internal content and literary analysis rather than independent, externally datable evidence. In addition, a series of methodological and demographic revolutions in academic biblical studies has drastically changed the playing field. Although numerous factors have played a role in bringing about these changes, the three most important are that (1) archaeologists have made numerous discoveries that challenge any direct correspondence between the textual presentation and a historical reconstruction of the religion and literature of ancient Israel; (2) the discipline of "Old Testament" studies, long dominated by Protestant scholars in Europe and North America working with implicit Christian theological paradigms, has been irrevocably transformed by the emergence of Israeli biblical scholarship and by societal changes that permitted greater numbers of Jews to gain academic positions at American universities;[4] and (3) new methodological insights

[3] The Leningrad Codex is catalogued as Firkowitch B19A in the Russian National Library. See D.N. Freedman et al. (eds.), *The Leningrad Codex: A Facsimile Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans; Leiden: Brill, 1998).

[4] In continental Europe, Jewish scholars could not hold tenured positions in biblical studies, because all such chairs were housed in faculties of Protestant or Catholic theology, which, according to the *Konfessionsvorbehalt*, restricted both faculty appointments and the awarding of doctoral degrees along confessional lines. Jews with interests in academic religious studies were forced into other fields, such as rabbinics or Assyriology, or into exclusively Jewish

have directed increased attention to forms of scribal creativity (such as textual reworking and commentary) and to stages of Judean history (such as the exile and the Second Temple period) that were previously marginalized. As a result, traditional paradigms have been rejected as untenable, and new perspectives are constantly being generated.

Yet, the lack of a shared intellectual discourse hampers what might otherwise be a moment of opportunity in the creative development of the discipline. In the three major centers of research on the Pentateuch – North America, Israel, and Europe – scholars tend to operate from such different premises, employ such divergent methods, and reach such inconsistent results that meaningful progress has become impossible. The models continue to proliferate but the communication seems only to diminish.

In Israeli scholarship, the Documentary Hypothesis in one or another of its classical forms continues to be highly esteemed. Some scholars working at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem in particular see the future of pentateuchal scholarship in the refinement rather than the abandonment of the sources J, E, P, and D for the reconstruction of the compositional history of the Pentateuch. The Priestly texts of the Pentateuch have garnered special interest, along with the Holiness Legislation. They have been examined more profoundly in the Israeli context than elsewhere in biblical studies, and the results are revolutionary. Examining this literature against the background of cultic and legal material recovered from the ancient Near East has led to a new appreciation of the Priestly source's historical integrity, antiquity, creativity, and cultural significance. A thorough reassessment of the stages of composition of the Priestly literature has yielded an entirely new approach to the formation of this corpus and the interrelationship of its constituent parts.

The European discussion has moved in such a different direction that it has become all but unintelligible in the Israeli academic context. Scholars on the European continent predominantly view the Pentateuch as composed from thematic blocks (primeval history, ancestral history, Moses-exodus story) rather than documentary sources. Indeed, the two sources that under the older model provided the most reliable window into the earliest period of Israelite religion – the Yahwist and the Elohist – are now treated with extreme skepticism by most European scholars, who dispute their antiquity if not their very existence. European scholars focus instead on differentiating between Priestly and non-Priestly text complexes. Finally, a number of European scholars contend that there was no connection between Genesis and Exodus in any pre-Priestly texts and shift the date of much of the Pentateuch to the Persian period (539–331 BCE).

In North America, as in Israel, scholarship still largely supports the Docu-

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institutions such as the Jewish Theological Seminary at Breslau (1854–1939) or the Lehrhaus in Frankfurt founded by Franz Rosenzweig in 1920 and reopened by Martin Buber in 1933. Such issues continue to affect the discipline.

mentary Hypothesis and places a large number of text complexes in the preexilic period. Because of the very different structure of graduate education, North American scholars tend to draw more intensively on ancient Near Eastern and Second Temple literature (like the Dead Sea Scrolls) in attempting to construct their models. They often contend that the current proliferation of European hypotheses is theory driven and self-generated without adequate consideration of comparative literary evidence.

In effect, three independent scholarly discourses have emerged. Each centers on the Pentateuch, each operates with its own set of working assumptions, and each is confident of its own claims. This volume seeks to further the international discussion about the Pentateuch in the hope that the academic cultures in Israel, Europe, and North America can move toward a set of shared assumptions and a common discourse.

Like the Pentateuch itself, this volume has a long and multilayered compositional history. The point of departure was an international research group entitled Convergence and Divergence in Pentateuchal Theory: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Israel, North America, and Europe, which was convened at the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies (IIAS) in Jerusalem from September 2012 through June 2013. For the first time in the history of the discipline, an internationally representative, long-term research group was convened at an Institute for Advanced Studies in the attempt to overcome the fragmentation in the field of academic biblical studies. The IIAS is remarkable for its commitment to interdisciplinary research and its focus on creating research teams composed of international scholars.

The research group was established to investigate the scholarly debate regarding the formation of the Pentateuch and to trace the genealogy of the three diverging academic cultures involved. By bringing together an international team composed of the leading advocates of the competing positions, and by creating a structured series of intellectual encounters, the research group attempted to break free of the intellectual impasse, foster meaningful communication, and permit new knowledge to develop. The idea and initiative for the research group came from Bernard M. Levinson, who in close collaboration with Konrad Schmid (Zurich) and Baruch J. Schwartz (Jerusalem) prepared the formal research proposal. The research group consisted of eight members: Jan Christian Gertz, Shimon Gesundheit, Sara Japhet, Levinson, Schmid, Schwartz, Dalit Rom-Shiloni, and Benjamin D. Sommer. In addition, Joel S. Baden and Jeffrey Stackert contributed as short-term guests for approximately one month each. Ariel Kopilovitz served as research assistant.

The first, extensive stage of the group's intellectual work, which took place from September to December 2012, was directed toward the investigation of the emergence of the distinct academic cultures in pentateuchal research. In this phase, each member of the group selected a publication of his or her own that was deemed characteristic of his or her work; each of these was assigned in turn

for reading and critique. These presentations contextualized the selections by providing the scholar's own view of his or her basic methodological standpoint and assumptions.

In a second phase, the group devoted a significant amount of time to the discussion of specific biblical texts, such as the Joseph story in the book of Genesis or the plague cycle in the book of Exodus. These portions of the Pentateuch provide many peculiarities and difficulties for readers, and there are different ways to evaluate these texts in terms of their historical genesis. Some of the group members defended a source-critical approach; others, while not denying that the Pentateuch is composed of sources, placed more emphasis on redactional expansions of preexisting texts. Each member of the group benefited from the rare opportunity to study these texts intensively in the company of colleagues in the field.

In the third phase, the group discussed basic differences regarding historical-exegetical methods and also turned more closely to legal texts of the Pentateuch and their early reception. Seminars were given by members of the group who had published on the dating of pentateuchal texts, on the relationship between the legal collections of the Pentateuch, and on the evidence provided by Ezra–Nehemiah for understanding the formation of the Pentateuch.

Further academic guests lecturing to the group included Ed Greenstein (Bar-Ilan University), Steven E. Fassberg (Hebrew University), Itamar Kislev (University of Haifa), Armin Lange (University of Vienna), Naphtali Meshel (Princeton University; now Hebrew University), Frank Polak (Tel Aviv University), Alexander Rofé (Hebrew University), and Emanuel Tov (Hebrew University). Invited colleagues and doctoral students from the Hebrew University helped strengthen the group's ties to the local academic community in the field of Hebrew Bible.

As a preliminary capstone to its work, the group organized an international conference (bearing the same title as the research group), which took place at the IIAS on May 12–13, 2013. In addition to the members of the group, the list of chairs and speakers included an additional nineteen scholars from Israel and abroad. A second and much larger international conference, with fifty scholars on the program, entitled The Pentateuch within Biblical Literature: Formation and Interaction, took place at the IIAS on May 25–29, 2014. Grant applications by Dalit Rom-Shiloni and by Jan Christian Gertz were essential in funding these conferences, which could not have taken place without the generous support provided by both Israeli and German foundations committed to furthering international research: the IIAS, the Israel Science Foundation, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. Seeking to bring its goals to the attention of colleagues more broadly, the group also organized panels at the World Congress of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem (July 30–Aug. 1, 2013) and the Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in Baltimore (Nov. 17–20, 2013).

This volume has been organized into ten parts, each representing a theme that the editors thought important in order to move the discipline forward. Each part has been provided with its own introduction that seeks to highlight the larger intellectual goals and rationales of the papers included. Each of the fifty-six essays, contributed by forty-nine international colleagues, has gone through a process of peer review. In the selection and organization of the ten parts, the authors have sought to reframe conventional approaches to the question of the formation of the Pentateuch, bringing to bear historical linguistics, material culture, geography, and the literature of the Second Temple period:

1. Empirical Perspectives on the Composition of the Pentateuch
2. Can the Pentateuch Be Read in Its Present Form? Narrative Continuity in the Pentateuch in Comparative Perspective
3. The Role of Historical Linguistics in the Dating of Biblical Texts
4. The Significance of Second Temple Literature and the Dead Sea Scrolls for the Formation of the Pentateuch
5. Evidence for Redactional Activity in the Pentateuch
6. The Integration of Preexisting Literary Material in the Pentateuch and the Impact upon Its Final Shape
7. Historical Geography of the Pentateuch and Archaeological Perspectives
8. Do the Pentateuchal Sources Extend into the Former Prophets?
9. Rethinking the Relationship between the Law and the Prophets
10. Reading for Unity, Reading for Multiplicity: Theological Implications of the Study of the Pentateuch's Composition

Extensive effort has been placed on bringing to bear the relationship of the prophetic corpus to the Pentateuch, with special attention to matters of inner-biblical exegesis and textual allusion as potentially providing new evidence for standard assumptions about textual dating and literary development. The question of the relation between synchronic and diachronic methodology has also been explored. The volume aims, in these ways, less to provide a set of final answers than to open a dialogue that includes proponents of multiple positions, creating a shared conversation and inviting further participation and response.[5]

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[5] The editors wish to acknowledge the international grant support that made the original research year, the two conferences, and this volume possible. Gratitude goes first and foremost to the Israel Institute for Advanced Studies (Jerusalem) for its extraordinary support and remarkable staff. The encouragement of its director, Michal Linial, who fondly called us the *Tanakhistim*, meant a great deal. Major support was also provided by the European Institutes for Advanced Studies Fellowship Program and by the European Commission under the Marie Curie Scheme. Crucial support for funding the two conferences organized by the research group and for the publication of this volume was provided by the Israel Science Foundation, the Fritz Thyssen Foundation (Cologne), and the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (Bonn). Important support has been provided by the University of Zurich, Heidelberg University, the University of Tel Aviv, and the University of Minnesota. Without the dedicated, professional academic editing services provided by Sarah Shectman and the remarkable production skills of Samuel Arnet (Zurich), the volume would not have seen the light of day.

Only the reader can decide whether the research group has achieved its goals. After having devoted himself to the study of the Pentateuch for many years, Julius Wellhausen finally became weary of the field. In 1889, while teaching at Marburg, he received a *Ruf* (call) to be appointed to the chair in Old Testament at Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, one of Europe's oldest universities. Declining that offer in a letter to the minister of culture of Baden-Württemberg, Wellhausen wrote:

> Mich interessieren die Themata der Vorlesungen nicht, mich langeweilt der Pentateuch und die kritische Analyse und das Altersverhältnis der Quellen.
> [I am not interested in the topics of the lectures. I am bored with the Pentateuch, critical analysis, and the relationship between the sources.][6]

With contributions that focus closely on the biblical text while asking new questions from a full range of methodological perspectives, we hope to help the reader avoid Wellhausen's *ennui*.

Jan Christian Gertz
Bernard M. Levinson
Dalit Rom-Shiloni
Konrad Schmid

[6] J. Wellhausen, *Briefe* (ed. R. Smend et al.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 247 (letter of January 12, 1890).

Part One

Empirical Perspectives on the Composition of the Pentateuch

Introduction

Jan Christian Gertz

The reconstruction of the formation of the Pentateuch is still an equation with several unknowns. Perhaps it will always remain an unsolved riddle. In terms of external evidence, the texts and traditions combined to form the given Pentateuch are lost – most likely forever. Nearly unknown are the social and historical circumstances of the formation of the Pentateuch and its parts. And finally, we know hardly anything about the biblical writers who fashioned the narratives and laws of the Pentateuch by combining separate but complementary written traditions. What we think we know about the formation of the Pentateuch is based on internal critical analysis of the Pentateuch. The evidence for or against the Supplementary Hypothesis, the Documentary Hypothesis, and the Fragmentary Hypothesis or the various combinations thereof is, at best, indirect.

In the history of research, phenomena such as anachronisms, inconsistencies, contradictions, and thematic and stylistic variations within the books of the Pentateuch were rightly considered incompatible with the traditional view of uniform date or homogeneous authorship. They were more convincingly explained by the supposition of textual growth. It is a plausible hypothesis that the Pentateuch was formed by the combination of separate written traditions, and it is possible for modern scholarship to retrace these processes to some extent. However, beyond this general agreement on the historical growth of biblical literature, there is little consensus in scholarship on the formation of the Pentateuch. Unfortunately, estimations such as "this text is incoherent" or "this thematic or stylistic variation is in no way comparable with the suggestion of a single author" are highly subjective. An argument that some may consider self-evident may be regarded by others as weak. The evaluation of textual evidence is especially controversial concerning the ability to reconstruct the preliminary stages of the text and its literary growth precisely. Further contentious issues are the proof of textual influence and the determination of textual dependence. No less debated, of course, is the general idea of the literary history of ancient Israel, to which the respective hypotheses on the formation of the Pentateuch belong.

Reconstructing the formation of the Pentateuch is a historical issue – even if one disregards the historical question and thinks only in terms of literary analysis. As a result, it is necessary to ask for historical analogies and for the

correlation of historical phenomena:[1] are there analogies for the assumption that the Pentateuch as a whole can be divided into four sources? In the light of historically demonstrable literary processes, is it plausible to assume that the received Pentateuch is the work of a single compiler who combined nearly completely preserved sources and abstained from reworking and reformulating them? Is there an empirical basis for scholarly confidence in reconstructing the growth of the text in every detail? Is there empirical evidence for a series of unlimited smaller adaptations?

Concrete analogies would enable those doing source criticism or history of redaction to base their work on something more than subjective self-evidence. Naturally, the search for analogies is not new. Three decades ago, Jeffrey Tigay prepared the introduction to his inspiring edited volume, *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism*, at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Jerusalem. It is therefore fitting that the present volume similarly emerges out of a research year and two associated conferences convened at the same institute. In his engaging introduction, Tigay mentioned analogies adduced on the basis of Chronicles, the Qumran Scrolls, the Septuagint, ancient Near Eastern literature, and the nature of the cultural milieu in which biblical literature was produced.[2] Every single "empirical model" shows that ancient writers created their literary works out of distinct and overlapping written sources or by supplementing one source with another.

Concrete analogies could function as models of literary development, providing the critic with firsthand experience with compilers' or redactors' techniques. But where can we find appropriate analogies demonstrating more than the general conditions of literary production in the ancient Near East? Given the relative paucity of evidence from the Bible itself or the time of the formation of the early stages of the Pentateuch, the Qumran scrolls and certain postbiblical texts like the book of Jubilees become attractive as models of literary development. Yet, one cannot rule out the possibility that some of the techniques reflected in the postbiblical material are different from those used earlier by the biblical authors. The analogies are thus not perfect. They are not a "primary source" for the techniques of Israelite writers in the earlier periods. Nevertheless, analogies can show what is possible or realistic by presenting what happened elsewhere. In so doing, they can aid in evaluating the historical realism of an existing theory of the formation of the Pentateuch. Like every historical analogy, they are a proof of plausibility. They serve to indicate which compositional technique might

[1] See E. Troeltsch, "Über historische und dogmatische Methode in der Theologie," in idem, *Zur religiösen Lage, Religionsphilosophie und Ethik*, vol. 2 of *Gesammelte Schriften* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1913), 729–753.

[2] J.H. Tigay, introduction to *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism* (ed. J.H. Tigay; Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1985), 1–20.

plausibly have been used by the biblical writers by demonstrating what was done in culturally and historically similar contexts.

Tigay's question has received new attention in recent research, as can be seen in the present volume. Besides the part entitled "Empirical Perspectives on the Composition of the Pentateuch," Reinhard G. Kratz and Molly M. Zahn address the question in the part "Second Temple Literature and Its Importance for the Formation of the Pentateuch." Moreover, Jean Louis Ska and Cynthia Edenburg explicitly deal with the topic in the part "Evidence for Redactional Activity in the Pentateuch."

Inscriptional Evidence for the Writing of the Earliest Texts of the Bible

Intellectual Infrastructure in Tenth- and Ninth-Century Israel, Judah, and the Southern Levant

Christopher A. Rollston

Introduction

The dating of biblical materials has long been, and shall always be, the subject of much discussion and dispute.[1] As part of some of the discussions and disputes regarding the origins of the earliest biblical materials, some very fine scholars have argued that the capacity for writing texts of substance and sophistication was simply not present in Israel or Judah prior to the eighth century BCE. For this reason, these scholars contend that the origins of the earliest biblical materials cannot antedate the eighth century BCE. For example, Thomas L. Thompson has written that "we cannot seek an origin of literature in Palestine prior to the eighth, or perhaps even better the seventh century."[2] Similarly, regarding the Southern Kingdom of Judah, Israel Finkelstein states that he

[1] I am grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities (Washington, DC), the Albright Institute of Archaeological Research (Jerusalem), and the American Center of Oriental Research (Amman) for grants, fellowships, and libraries that permitted me to conduct the research in this article. In addition, I am indebted to the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, the Amman Citadel Museum, the Israel Antiquities Authority, the Israel Museum (Jerusalem), the Rockefeller Museum (Jerusalem), the Directorate General of Antiquities of Lebanon, the National Museum of Beirut, the Harvard Semitic Museum, the British Museum, and the University of Pennsylvania for permission to collate inscriptions in their collections. As always, I am grateful to Bruce Zuckerman and Marilyn Lundberg of West Semitic Research for photographic and digital expertise and good counsel. I am also grateful to George Washington University for providing research funds for assistance with the completion of this article, to my research assistant Nathaniel E. Greene for his assistance with digital matters, and to Adam Bean for reading a penultimate version of this manuscript and making useful suggestions. Finally, I wish to thank my dear friend Bernard M. Levinson for facilitating my invitation to be part of the Jerusalem Symposium on the Pentateuch in May 2013, a presentation that formed the basis for this article.

[2] T.L. Thompson, *Early History of the Israelite People from the Written and Archaeological Sources* (SHCANE 4; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 391.

has "argued time and again [that] archaeology shows that meaningful scribal activity appeared in Jerusalem only with the rise of Judah to full statehood in the late eighth century B.C.E." For this reason, Finkelstein concludes that the "composition of literary works" in Judah could not antedate the eighth century BCE.[3] Regarding the Northern Kingdom of Israel, he has stated that "one can expect large-scale building activities such as the ones carried out at Samaria, Jezreel, and the other Omride sites and a prosperous economy to be accompanied by an advanced bureaucratic apparatus, including writing," but he then goes on to state that "evidence of writing in the entire region in the early ninth century is sparse. In fact, not a single early ninth-century B.C.E. inscription has thus far been found in the heartland of Israel – at Samaria, Jezreel, Megiddo, Yokneam, and Taanach." He states further that "daily administration related to the recording of agricultural output is evident in Israel only in the first half of the eighth century B.C.E., first and foremost in the Samaria ostraca." He is, of course, aware that someone might contend that "most scribal activity was carried out on papyrus and parchment" (and thus perished during the course of time), but he argues that there is also an absence of monumental inscriptions in Northwest Semitic until "the second half of the ninth century, for example, the Mesha and Tel Dan inscriptions." He then concludes that "literacy and scribal activity during the time of the Omrides was weak at most."[4] Regarding the Hebrew Bible, therefore, Finkelstein states that "assembling all available data for scribal activity in Israel and Judah reveals no evidence of writing before approximately 800 B.C.E. In fact, it shows that meaningful writing in Israel began in the first half of the eighth century, while in Judah it commenced only in the late eighth and more so in the seventh century B.C.E." Then he asserts that "past ideas regarding the date of compilation of biblical texts were based on the testimony of the Bible and hence fell prey to circular reasoning. Recent archaeological and biblical research has made it clear that no biblical text could have been written before circa 800 B.C.E. in Israel and about a century later in Judah." Along those same lines, he contends that "this means that the earliest northern texts, such as the core of the Jacob cycle in Genesis, were probably put in writing in the first half of the eighth century, during the period of prosperity in Judah, especially under the long reign of Jeroboam II. This indicates, in turn, that ninth-century B.C.E. and earlier memories could have been preserved and transmitted only in oral form."[5]

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[3] I. Finkelstein, "Digging for the Truth: Archaeology and the Bible," in *The Quest for the Historical Israel* (ed. B.B. Schmidt; ABS 17; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 9–20, here 12.

[4] I. Finkelstein, *The Forgotten Kingdom: The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel* (SBL Ancient Near Eastern Monographs 5; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2013), 113–115.

[5] Finkelstein, *Forgotten Kingdom* (see n. 4), 162–163. For similar statements in earlier publications, see also idem, "Digging for the Truth" (see n. 3), 14, 17. It is worth noting

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