



# Victorian ethnographic perceptions of Palestine and the historiography of ancient Israel: a preliminary exploration

**Q1 Emanuel Pfoh**



CONICET & National University of La Plata




## ABSTRACT

Victorian travellers, explorers and scholars in the Levant produced a series of ethnographic observations of Palestine's indigenous population essentially through biblical lenses. These perceptions sought ultimately to retrieve the biblical past in the context of the imperial present. At the same time, modern historiography about ancient Israel developed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. While the full-blown allochroism and Orientalism of the early modern Western visitors to Palestine have in recent decades been surpassed by more critical insights in the scholarly assessment of the region, some traits from that Victorian ethnographic and Bible-centred gaze still linger in contemporary historical constructions of ancient Palestine through the concept of 'ancient Israel', notably in the conceptualisation and periodisation of such a history.

## KEYWORDS

Victorian ethnography;  
 allochroism; Orientalism;  
 Palestine; ancient Israel

## Introduction

It could be argued that the 'history of ancient Israel', as a historiographical genre in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, contributed in a very distinctive way to the general discourse of Orientalism, as defined and deconstructed by Edward Said in his homonymous book (1978). To further understand this, we must consider first how Western powers, along with travellers, explorers and scholars, rediscovered (or better, reinvented) the Near/Middle East through properly modern (i.e., rational, scientific, historicist) perspectives,<sup>1</sup> starting with the Danish Arabia Expedition of 1761–67, conceived by Johann David Michaelis (1717–1791), and of which Carsten Niebuhr (1733–1815) was the only survivor (cf. Hansen 1964); and then with Constantin de Volney's (1757–1820) travels in Egypt and Syria in 1783–85 (Volney 1787). But essentially and more significantly, it was with Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion of Egypt and Syria-Palestine during 1798–1801 that the Orient, the scenario of the biblical stories, was properly opened to Western research and exploration in a concrete manner (Ben-Arieh 1979, Shepherd 1987, Larsen 1994, Reid 2002, pp. 21–136). These events mark, precisely, the beginning of a Western appropriation of the Near East region, not merely in the imperial sense of political and economic influence and intervention, but fundamentally in a symbolic and ideological sense: a claim over the landscape that saw Western origins was explicitly made, initiating two centuries of active European and American presence in the region.<sup>2</sup> As Hegel (1770–1831) noted in his *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Geschichte* (1822–30),<sup>3</sup>  an history began in eastern lands and the West was the true meaning and destination of the unfolding of world history. It was thus logical that, in an era of discovery and exploration, but also of progress and empire, such as the Victorian age,<sup>3</sup> the cradle of European history and traditions was reclaimed, in monuments and meaning, as properly Western.

**Q2 CONTACT** Emanuel Pfoh  [emanuelpfoh@gmail.com](mailto:emanuelpfoh@gmail.com)



© 2022 Council for British Research in the Levant

In relation to Palestine, many and different Western explorers and travellers visited the land in the wake of the Napoleonic campaigns. Among them, the first incursion by Edward Robinson (1794–1863) and Eli Smith (1801–1857) in 1838 stands out as a clear pioneering intention of surveying the biblical geography of the land (Robinson and Smith 1841). However, from an institutional perspective, and with the exception of the Jerusalem Literary Society founded in that city by the British consul James Finn (1806–1872) in 1849 (Finn 1878), this task was formally initiated in 1865 with the establishment of the British Palestine Exploration Fund in London and later on with the work of its American and German counterparts: the American Palestine Exploration Society, founded in 1870, and the Deutscher Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas, founded in 1877 (see Moscrop 2000, Goren 2003, Cobbing 2005, Davies 2006, Hübner 2006). In Jerusalem, the founding of institutions like the École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem (1890), the American Schools of Oriental Research (1900), the Deutsches Evangelisches Institut für Altertumswissenschaft des Heiligen Landes (1900) and the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (1919),<sup>4</sup> furthered the research impulse cementing Western dominance over the retrieval of the ancient past of the region (Moorey 1991, pp. 25–53). In particular, Gustaf Dalman (1855–1941), the first director of the Deutsches Evangelisches Institut, produced a magisterial seven-volume study of local traditions and practices that would become a landmark due to the wealth of ethnographic data from pre-World War I Palestine collected in it (Dalman 1928–42).

From these institutional frameworks, then, a series of textual descriptions, paintings, photographs, maps and topographic researches, ethnographic illustrations and archaeological excavations would formulate different yet simultaneous ways of symbolically and materially appropriating the Near East, and in particular Palestine, as an imaginative geography through the concept of *Holy Land* (cf. Liverani 1994, Whitelam 2008, Aiken 2010, Goren *et al.* 2017). And, also, within this context of hegemonic British, German, French and American scholarly traditions, the historiography about ‘ancient Israel’,<sup>5</sup> which unfolded during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the context of European imperial and colonial expansion, appears as particularly relevant for these developments since it would hide or obliterate indigenous historical processes as meaningful in themselves, while favouring instead biblically-oriented interpretations of the past of the region.

Travel and exploration were in the Victorian era the main means to bring to life a biblical past whose historicity was accepted as indisputably provable. It is in this sense that the ethnographic observations, illustrations and vignettes evoked by travellers and explorers in their writings—even if far from the cultural sensitivity that would characterise anthropology in the twentieth century—along with biblical studies and their rather narrow focus on the biblical antecedents of the region, created a very particular image of the past and the present of Palestine; a rather contradictory image indeed, since appropriation and rejection of local landscapes and peoples and the historical processes which transpired in them coincided in tension within the same geographical framework.

### Allochronic ethnography, allochronic Palestine

The allochronic perspective in the study of non-European societies, and especially in ‘primitive’ and traditional societies, has been present since the rise of modern scientific anthropology, including of course Victorian elaborations (see Stocking 1987, Kuper 2005, pp. 1–36). According to Johannes Fabian’s influential study on the epistemology of anthropological discourse, *Time and the Other* (1983), allochronism produces a ‘denial of coevalness’, namely the refusal to conceive of the ‘anthropological native’ as inhabiting the same temporal and historical framework as the ‘anthropological observer’ (cf. Fabian 1983, pp. 25–35).<sup>6</sup> In effect, through this allochronic perspective, the first generation of modern anthropologists, performing what we would now call ‘armchair anthropology’ within an imperial framework, viewed the indigenous peoples of distant locations in the world as irrevocably removed from Western temporality, as basically inhabiting a different track of time: they did not share Western culture and values, and they also did not share the Western path in time.

This conception of other peoples' temporality matched the imperial impulse to colonise them or civilise them, in both cases driven by the same mission but also supported by an evolutionary conception of world history: superior peoples rule over inferior ones. In either way, knowledge and power marched hand in hand and the material appropriation of land and resources was at times preceded and at times followed by a symbolic appropriation of territory and everything in it (cf. Stafford 1999, Driver 2001, Hevia 2012). Naturally, Palestine did not escape from this procedure of Western expansion into the Near East throughout the long nineteenth century. Within this context of imperial expansion and knowledge-building, pilgrimage, travelling and tourism flourished (cf. Ben-Arieh 1979, Searight and Wagstaff 2001, Whitelam 2008).

As has been noted, 'The Holy Land was not only a physical *location*, it was also converted into a *landscape* by its many visitors' (Coleman 2002, p. 377; original emphases). To walk into this sacred landscape was for many of its visitors to go back to biblical times. In effect, during the nineteenth century, Palestine was perceived by different Western observers, pilgrims and scholars through this particularly allochronic and Orientalist lens, whereby travel in space was equated with a travel back in time, or better to an arrested, ancient time (cf. McGrane 1989, pp. 103–105). This Palestine was imagined as part of the 'immovable Orient' and the 'unvarying East' (to allude to the titles of studies of the period: Hardy 1912, Baldensperger 1913), a vision already forwarded by thinkers like Montesquieu, Hegel and Marx, among others, who considered Oriental societies as stagnant and basically ahistorical, especially in contrast to Western social and political developments (cf., e.g., Turner 1978, Curtis 2009, pp. 57–102, 217–257). From this perspective, what was seen and experienced by modern travellers and scholars in any part of the Orient had been so for millennia of unchanging social conditions and behavioural attitudes. Hence, to observe the peasants (*filāḥīn*) and the nomads (*badawīn*) was to look directly into the past, notably the *biblical* past: they were living fossils from a time long gone but could nonetheless be scientifically retrieved by ethnographic observation and biblical and archaeological investigation (Kirchhoff 2005, pp. 256–312, 2010).<sup>7</sup> This perspective was in general shared by both religious pilgrims to the land and more scholarly-oriented travellers, seeking to discover biblical continuities—even if both groups can be analytically distinguished in their approach to and conceptualisation of the landscape, their epistemology seems to be ultimately shared. In both cases, the discovery of a biblical present in Palestine was central to reclaiming this heritage as properly and rightfully Western. As McGeough (2015, p. 73) indicated in connection to Western artistic representations of the East:

Ethnography also provided painters evidence for ancient Near Eastern life, just as it did for scholars of the time. The belief in the timelessness of the East meant that nineteenth-century experiences could be translated into scenes of the past, and the lack of difference in the regions of the Orient meant that any location could provide evidence for biblical practices.<sup>8</sup>

This understanding was illustrated by the rise of a proto-ethnographic genre authored by travellers in the Near East and later by writers with a more scientific aim, namely the 'manners and customs' (alternatively 'customs and manners') series of volumes, inaugurated by works like *An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians written in Egypt during the Years 1833–1835* (1836) by Edward W. Lane, and *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Egyptians* (1837–41) by J. Gardner Wilkinson. Regarding Palestine, it is worth mentioning the most relevant examples of this anthropological and historical perception of the land, its social and cultural textures and its peoples, always in relation to biblical times: William M. Thomson's *The Land and the Book, or Biblical Illustrations Drawn from the Manners and Customs, the Scenes and Scenery of the Holy Land* (1859), Ermete Pierotti's *La Palestine actuelle dans ses rapports avec la Palestine ancienne: Produits – mœurs – coutumes – légendes – traditions* (1865), Henry J. Van-Lennep's *Bible Lands: Their Modern Customs and Manners Illustrative of Scripture* (1875), James Neil's *Palestine Explored, with a View to Its Present Natural Features, and to the Prevailing Manners, Customs, Rites, and Colloquial Expressions of Its People, which throw Light on the Figurative Language of the Bible* (1882), Henry B. Tristram's *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands* (1894), Samuel Schor's *Palestine and the Bible: Illustrating the Manners and Customs of*

the *People in the Bible Lands* (1900), C.T. Wilson's *Peasant Life in the Holy Land* (1906), Elihu Grant's *The Peasantry of Palestine: The Life, Manners and Customs of the Village* (1907), E.J. Hardy's *The Unvarying East: Modern Scenes and Ancient Scriptures* (1912), and Philip J. Baldensperger's *The Immovable East: Studies of the People and Customs of Palestine* (1913).

These titles, out of many others from the period, have all in common the notion, as already pointed out, that current—namely, at the time of their writing—behaviours observed in Palestine and the Near/Middle East in general were representative of biblical customs and key to truly understanding Scripture, bridging the two-millennium gap between God's revelation and modern believers (cf. Makdisi 1997, Varisco 2013). Thus, Cunningham and McGeough (2018, p. 183) have concluded:

Bible lands literature depended on a cosmological framing of the nineteenth-century Near East as a place out of time, and frequently depended on extensive theological arguments to make the territory of the Holy Land transform Ottoman Muslims into vestiges of ancient Jewish lifeways for the purposes of biblical exegesis.

For certain, we cannot consider the descriptions of these travellers, researchers and Christian missionaries as properly 'ethnographic' in a scientific manner since the natives had no voice or 'point of view' in them—we might call them 'spontaneous ethnographies' (Harbsmeier 1997)<sup>9</sup>—and, as Pratt (2008, p. 60) notes, a 'textual apartheid that separates landscape from people, accounts of inhabitants from accounts of their habitats' was produced as part of these allochronic perceptions. Nonetheless, these accounts do provide us with primary sources of representations of the Other in Ottoman Palestine through the lens of the modern, Western, travelling, Bible-believer or researcher. As such, an early pretention to 'ethnographic authority' (Clifford 1983) over indigenous peoples and human landscapes marked the way Palestinian past and present society, ancient and late Ottoman, was represented and understood to be. We may also find clues in them to figure out the way modern biblical scholarship has represented the history of the land through the concept of 'ancient Israel' (see next section).

The interpretive trend of the 'Bible customs' genre did not die out when Western powers and influence expanded after World War I. On the contrary, as late as the early 1950s, a volume titled *Manners and Customs of Bible Lands*, authored by Fred H. Wight, was published, with later reprints (Wight 1953/1983). And in the field of biblical studies, we even find as recently as 1988 a book named *Manners & Customs in the Bible: An Illustrated Guide to Daily Life in Bible Times* (Matthews 1988), with a fourth edition in 2015 retitled *The Cultural World of the Bible: An Illustrated Guide to Customs and Manners* (Matthews 2015), which contains some hints pointing at the Orientalist perception of a stagnant landscape, for instance:

To complete this cautionary survey of aids to the reconstruction of life in the biblical period, it is important to point to modern anthropological research. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, *tribal peoples continued to live in the Near East in much the same way that their ancestors had thousands of years ago*. (Matthews 2015, pp. 5–6; my emphasis)

This assertion would to a certain extent be correct since, from an ethnoarchaeological perspective, modern practices observed by ethnographers may indeed provide clues about ancient social practices, techniques, beliefs, etc. (cf., e.g., David and Kramer 2001). Yet the last sentence cannot avoid being interpreted within the same stream of Victorian 'manners and customs' Orientalist genre, even a hundred years later.<sup>10</sup>

Attending now to the perceptions common to the aforementioned Victorian writers, we find then a clear illustration of this allochronic picture of the present natives of Palestine in the words of, for instance, Claude R. Conder (1848–1910) in his *Tent Work in Palestine* (1879), who would write, concerning a description of the features of the peasants of the land:

The above sketch is intended rather to draw attention to a people well worthy of study than to form an exhaustive account of their manners and customs. In language, in dress, in religion, and in customs, they represent in the nineteenth century a living picture of that peasantry amongst whom Christ went about doing good; and,

indeed, the resemblance is equally striking when they are compared with the earlier inhabitants of the land, from the days of Samuel downwards; and the parallel is so remarkable that it seems justifiable to dub the Fell-ahin by the simple title of 'modern Canaanites' (Conder 1879, pp. 268–269).

In the same fashion, although noting the early effects of Western penetration in the region, the Reverend Tristram (1822–1906), in his *Eastern Customs in Bible Lands*, mentioned above, observed:

The unchanging East. The Biblical student must often be thankful that so it is. Otherwise much which has explained or illustrated many an obscure allusion in the volume of sacred writ would have been long since lost and utterly forgotten. But that East, though still unchanged, is beginning to change. The restless West is invading it; and many an old landmark is crumbling away. Customs and fashions, stereotyped in the daily life of centuries, are becoming modified through Western influences; and now, when the shriek of the iron horse is heard, not only among the ruined churches of Asia Minor, but at the very gates of Jerusalem itself, we are warned that the monotony of Western civilisation is overspreading the lands of the past as well as those of the future. (1894, p. 3).

In contrast to these predominant perceptions during this period, a later and critically conscious opinion of the Finnish ethnographer Hilma Granqvist (1890–1972) stands out as a marvellous exception. In the first volume of her *Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village* from 1931, regarding this sort of ahistorical parallelism, she assesses what she calls the 'biblical danger', namely:

[...] the temptation to identify without criticism customs and habits and views of life of the present day with those of the Bible, especially of the Old Testament. Only too often one has been tempted to build a bridge from the past to the present by combining modern parallels with the Bible verses. No one can get away from the fact that much is in agreement—the land and nature determine that. But in any case one must remember the whole time that it is Muhammadan Arabs, not Jews, whose traditions are being studied, and that there is a period of 2000 years and more between them – a gap which cannot be explained away merely by citing »the immovable East«. (Granqvist 1931, p. 9).

However, and in spite of critical observations like this, the general Orientalist perception of the anthropology of the land was not essentially changed during the first decades of the twentieth century but was actually maintained in many historical studies of twentieth-century biblical scholarship on Israel in ancient times (see the next section).

This unchanged, and simultaneously modern and biblical, scenario was understood during most of the nineteenth century as in need of transformation by proper civilisation and progress, in other words by Western intervention in the land. In this way, Western political and economic actors were first seen as agents of civilisation, as later Zionist colonisation was understood as a proper path towards the concrete modernisation of local society and landscape (cf. Avitsur 1975, Baer 1975, Shamir 1975, Ben-Arieh 1979, pp. 189–233, Schölch 1982), a diagnosis justly relativised in more recent times (e.g., Doumani 1992, p. 1995, Doumani and Rabinowitz 2011). It appears clearly, in the scholarly perception of the Victorian and post-Victorian periods, an awareness of the abovementioned process of Western intervention in Palestine and the need to ethnographically save ancient ways of life in the land from their inevitable disappearance before the expansion of progress. Thus, for instance, the renowned Palestinian scholar Tawfiq Canaan (1882–1964), already tackling the issue of Palestinian indigeneity from a scientific perspective,<sup>11</sup> would write in 1927:

The primitive features of Palestine are disappearing so quickly that before long most of them will be forgotten. Thus it has become the duty of every student of Palestine and the Near East, of Archaeology and of the Bible, to lose no time in collecting as fully and accurately as possible all available material concerning the folklore, customs and superstitions current in the Holy Land. Such material is, as we have begun to learn, of the greatest importance for the study of ancient oriental civilization and for the study of primitive religion. (Canaan 1927, p. v).<sup>12</sup>

Other witnesses to this process perceived the situation with much less ethnographic sensitivity. In *The Question of Palestine* (1979), Said documented Western visions from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century regarding the native inhabitants of Palestine. Apart from ethnocentric and openly racist views, it is interesting to notice how most of the time Western travellers, scholars

and imperial agents considered these natives 'mainly as traces on the landscape' (Pratt 2008, p. 58), as evolutionarily inferior dwellers of a territorial portrait of biblical relevance that was being justly reclaimed by Western civilisation. Thus, for instance, Horatio H. Kitchener (1850–1916), in the *Survey of Western Palestine*, is quoted by Said, saying:

We hope to rescue from the hands of that ruthless destroyer, the uneducated Arab, one of the most interesting ruins in Palestine, hallowed by footprints of our Lord. I allude to the synagogue of Capernaum, which is rapidly disappearing owing to the stones being burnt for lime. (Said 1979, p. 80).<sup>13</sup>

This view survived into the Mandatory period (1920–1948). For instance, the archaeologist R.A.S. Macalister (1870–1950), in a section on 'Cultural History' in his *A Century of Excavation in Palestine* (1925), would deem the modern inhabitants of the land unworthy of any praise even since ancient times:

It is no exaggeration to say that throughout these long centuries the native inhabitants of Palestine do not appear to have made a single contribution of any kind whatsoever to material civilisation. It was perhaps the most unprogressive country on the face of the earth. Its entire culture was derivative. Babylon, Egypt, Crete, Rome, each in its turn, lends it a helping hand; never is it stimulated to make an effort for itself. As we walk through a dirty, ill-smelling modern village, with its flat-topped huts of rough tone and mud, we may fancy ourselves, without any illegitimate straining of the imagination, in one of the 'cities' of the rascally 'kings' of the Tell el-Amarna period, or in a village of the time of Solomon, or of Ezra, or of the Gospels. Doubtless there have been changes, especially in these latter years. In villages near the larger towns, the wealthier sheikhs are indulging in incongruous luxuries, such as watches and even gramophones. But the essential background, with its ineradicable squalor, remains as it ever was. (Macalister 1925, pp. 210–211; my emphases).

A century after these words, a major figure in American Syro-Palestinian/biblical archaeology of the twentieth century would recall in his memoirs, regarding the indigenous people of the land where he was excavating:

We were so preoccupied with the logistics of the dig in 1969–71 that we did not fully realize that we had a unique (and last) opportunity to do some ethnography. We had the advantage of being long-term residents, familiar and accepted, with access even to the usually hidden lives of women and children. We did interview some people, and we took many photos, but we did not record as fully as we should have the everyday lives of the Arab villagers *who lived almost exactly as the biblical Israelites had in the Iron Age* (Dever 2020, p. 96; my emphasis).

These references to most ancient times reproduce the Orientalist notion of a stagnant and never-changing East. Also, this perception of the land and its peoples in early twentieth century was not only imperial in its racist overtones but essentially colonial, since it implicitly gave strength to the idea of receiving more progressive forces (European, Zionist) to modernise the region.<sup>14</sup> In sum, as L. van Oord concluded:

The rediscovery of the Holy Land and the anthropological conception of historicized difference in the nineteenth century fostered the idea that Palestine was a primitive society, which could be claimed, mapped and modernized by the Western world. With the start of Zionist colonization in Palestine, this role was more and more sub-contracted to Jewish immigrants, who were seen to redeem the land through settlement and agricultural labor. [...] a combination of the imperial white man's burden and a Protestant interpretation of biblical prophecy formed the intellectual justification of this process. (van Oord 2008, p. 225).

In this way, this imperialist vision of the natives of the land set aside—most probably unconsciously—the chance of analysing the relationship between the Arab indigenous peoples of Palestine and the ancient ruins and monuments of the land. Of course, we now know that since these ruins and monuments belong to a time before the Prophet Muhammad, a time considered one of ignorance and sin (*jāhiliyya*), the Muslim believer of the period would probably not have to care about them (Liverani 2005, p. 225, cf. Eldem 2011). Nevertheless, the ethnocentric interpretation of Kitchener and other observers has in some ways survived in modern biblical scholarship when the history of ancient Israel is shaped according to what we in the West find meaningful in Palestine's past; in other words, according to its relevance for Western self-perceptions in religion or in cultural

identity. A reflexive and properly anthropological view on the history of the lands comprising the Levant, including the past of historical Israel in Palestine and the literary history of the Israelis (in plural; see Lemche 1998, pp. 86–132, Davies 2007) that we find narrated in the Hebrew Bible, would seek instead to discover a cultural otherness proper to societies which do not necessarily share our values, concerns and worldviews, even though we may perceive them as our cultural ancestors.

### Imagining Palestine through ‘ancient Israel’

In 1996, Keith W. Whitelam published a book that would fuel the debate in the field of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament studies between so-called maximalist and minimalist biblical scholars, but that would also stir controversy outside of that particular discipline to affect in general some aspects of Israel/Palestine studies, especially the political perception of an ancient past.<sup>15</sup> In effect, *The Invention of Ancient Israel*, inspired by Said’s *Orientalism* and taking a critical and essentially postcolonial perspective, in a very innovative way, addressed for the first time a set of issues that, until then, had been broadly ignored or neglected by biblical scholars and archaeologists alike—and to some extent, still are. Of particular relevance here, one of Whitelam’s main points was that.

The periodization of the history of the region [Palestine] has been dominated [...] by Judaeo-Christian theological concerns since the study of Israelite history has remained, and remains, the preserve of faculties of Theology, seminaries, and departments of Religion. (Whitelam 1996, p. 62).<sup>16</sup>

It is clear that, since the early nineteenth century, the alluded-to scientific rediscovery of Palestine and the Near East, along with archaeological and topographical surveys and the expansion of cartographic knowledge in the region, were spearheaded by—apart from geopolitical and imperial considerations—a profound Euro-American interest in the historicity of biblical traditions (cf. Holloway 2013). But Whitelam went a step beyond this acknowledgement and exposed the often-hidden politics of Near Eastern and, in particular, biblical studies as profoundly Orientalist in their intellectual matrix. Thus, the dominant paradigm in the search for historical referents in the biblical narrative accepted most biblical stories (particularly the books of Samuel, Kings, Ezra and Nehemiah) as ultimately portraying an ancient historical reality to a greater degree, basing this approach on the correlations that (even today) can be made between biblical and ancient Near Eastern epigraphic and archaeological data. This approach, in its search for ‘ancient Israel’—namely, the ancient Israelites who, by a combination of archaeology, epigraphy and biblical texts, were understood by biblical and archaeological scholarship to form the backbone of Palestinian history<sup>17</sup>—while neglecting what Whitelam calls Palestinian history (namely, non-biblically driven, contemporary versions of such a past), was more concerned with confirming, ‘correcting’ and supplementing the narrative data found in the Hebrew Bible than with decoding its cultural setup, or understanding it in its own terms and proposing, together with this configuration, a critical version of the past of that portion of the southern Levant through its cultural (textual) manifestations (cf. Thompson 1999).

If we can synthesise and compress the last two centuries of Euro-American scholarly treatments of the Bible, Palestine and its peoples, clear perspectives may be delineated. First of all, German biblical criticism, inaugurated by Wilhelm M. L. de Wette (1780–1849) and probably best expressed by Julius Wellhausen (1844–1918) and continued by Albrecht Alt (1883–1956) and Martin Noth (1902–1968), was the exponent of the Enlightenment’s scrutiny of the biblical text, showing the historical (human) complexities of the production of Scripture. Secondly, and since the mid-nineteenth century, Anglo-American biblical archaeology appeared, seeking to throw light on the historicity of biblical accounts through the excavations of mounds and monuments (cf. Thompson 1992, pp. 1–26, Holloway 2013, Lemche 2022, Ch. 2). In Britain, Archibald H. Sayce (1845–1933) was probably one of the most committed defenders of the historical reality of the biblical text within its ancient Near Eastern context (see, e.g., Sayce 1865, 1894), while in the United States William Foxwell Albright (1891–1971) and his school dominated the field of historical and archaeological studies of the Bible. In fact, Albright was

considered by many, for the greater part of the twentieth century, the dean of biblical archaeology (Long 1997, Sherrard 2011). Until the 1970s, German biblical criticism and Anglo-American biblical archaeology, although from different perspectives and competing in epistemologies and methodologies, saw biblical narrative as containing, to a greater or lesser degree, a kernel of historical truth out of which the history of ancient Israel could be written. This historical kernel could be reached by detecting and peeling off literary strata in the Bible and through the systematic digging of Palestinian soil. In the mid 1970s, two publications attacked from different angles the historicity of the Patriarchal narratives, i.e., the notion of the existence of a historical Abraham as founder of an Israelite people in the early second millennium BCE (Thompson 1974, Van Seters 1975), starting a deconstructive interpretation of the biblical history of Israel that would continue until the present. Then, during the 1980s, a then-clear starting point for sound Israelite history was established with the United Monarchy of kings David and Solomon (cf., e.g., Soggin 1984), but during the 1990s this historical milestone was again challenged and deconstructed, and in that decade the whole historicity of the stories found in the biblical text was finally perceived by some scholars with utmost scepticism (cf. Lemche 2022, Ch. 2).

While it is not my intention to enter into the debates and minutiae of these developments within the field of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament historical scholarship, a brief historical and thematic account of them was needed in order to understand how this relates to Victorian images of a present biblical Palestine and how alternative understandings of the past of the region were made possible by recent criticism (e.g., Thompson 1992, 1999, Hjelm 2016, Hjelm 2019). Could we then say that the Orientalist perceptions of Victorian ethnographic understandings of the human landscape of Palestine still survive, albeit not as strongly as a century ago, in contemporary biblical scholarship? To what extent is this reflected in biblical scholarship of the second half of the twentieth century and the early twenty-first?

That historiography reflects the dominant ideas of the context of its production is a truism well-known since Benedetto Croce's dictum that 'all true history is contemporary history' (Croce 1920, p. 4). In Hebrew Bible/Old Testament studies, it has also already been noted how German nation-building and American independence shaped respectively German and American historiography on 'ancient Israel' in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Sasson 1981, Whitelam 1996, pp. 11–36, 122–175), and the replacement of British intervention in the Middle East by American influence after World War II was also reflected in modern historical biblical scholarship (Whitelam 2002b, pp. 283–296). So, we may identify different layers of contextual influence in modern biblical historiography, attending to geopolitical, national, politico-ideological and theological influences—to name the main ones—being expressed in the ways the past of the region is formatted and constructed by historians and other scholars. In particular, if we can identify a Victorian (i.e., imperial, Eurocentric) gaze in biblical scholarship in post-Victorian times, without doubt Albright's works are representative of a particularly Western and Christian view on the ancient history of Palestine, especially his understanding of the meaning of history. In 1957, Albright published a revised second edition of his *From the Stone Age to Christianity*, originally from 1940, which is more a philosophy of history than a historical treaty itself. In it, for instance, and referring to the Israelite military conquest of the land of Canaan as narrated in the biblical book of Joshua, one can read:

From the impartial standpoint of a philosopher of history, it often seems necessary that a people of markedly inferior type should vanish before a people of superior potentialities, since there is a point beyond which racial mixture cannot go without disaster. [...] Thus the Canaanites, with their orgiastic nature worship, their cult of fertility in the form of serpent symbols and sensuous nudity, and their gross mythology, were replaced by Israel, with its pastoral simplicity and purity of life, its lofty monotheism, and its severe code of ethics. (Albright 1957, pp. 280–281).

Although there is, as we now know (e.g., Na'aman 1994), no archaeological evidence that this military event ever occurred in history, it is hard to ignore the overtly imperialist and racist conception of cultures and peoples in these words, very much in agreement with Victorian Eurocentric and

imperial depictions of the peripheral Other. The violent replacement of an inferior indigenous civilisation (Canaanites) by a superior invading civilisation (Israelites) in the history of Palestine mirrors Western expansion over culturally 'inferior' societies, deemed to be civilised, colonised and controlled by 'superior' foreign powers. It is astonishing indeed to have this perception published barely one decade after the Nazi war atrocities, which by the time would have been well known. Yet, to be fair, Albright should be perceived rather as projecting a religious teleological vision of Judeo-Christian progress in history—notwithstanding the implicitly racist and imperialist tone of his words—and, as Long (1997, p. 135) indicated, 'Albright believed that the cultural and religious ideas of West Asian peoples demonstrably evolved from primitive beginnings to the highest (and never-to-be-surpassed) truths of Christianity' (cf. further Long 1997, pp. 133–136). Whitelam (1996, pp. 79–90) goes further and reads these quoted words, alongside those of other contemporary European biblical scholars and Israeli archaeologists, against the context of Zionist colonisation in Palestine during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, and the Palestine-Israel conflict in the following decades.

Albright's quotation is perhaps the most extreme example taken from biblical scholarship during the middle of the twentieth century. However, while extreme, these words were essentially neither disputed nor condemned in the field until Whitelam's criticism in 1996. This passive acceptance might point at how self-centred were Euro-American biblical studies in the last decades of the last century, in spite of being open to critical theoretical approaches from the social sciences and the humanities in the 1970s and 1980s, including gender theory, literary and Marxist criticism, etc. (e.g., Trible 1978, Clines 1998, further Carter and Meyers 1996).

Yet, historiographically, perhaps the most explicit survival of Victorian biblical evocations may not be centred on landscapes and peoples as a century ago but rather on historical time frames. Indeed, if we browse the historiographical production of the last sixty years on the ancient past of Palestine/Israel, *biblical history*, *biblical period* and *biblical world* are concepts and terminology usually present and understood as referring to the actual history and social situations belonging, obviously, to the 'biblical times' of Palestine, namely the period between ca. 1200 BCE and 135 CE.<sup>18</sup> In Albright's days the starting point of these biblical times was the traditions of the Patriarchs, whose historical period was accepted to be between 2000 and 1800 BCE (something long refuted by critical scholarship; Thompson 1974, pp. 172–186). This view is, however, still openly accepted by American conservative-evangelical scholarship, which considers Israelite history as narrated in the Bible as the main content for writing histories of ancient Palestine and still begins such histories with the Patriarchal narratives, producing what is in essence a paraphrase of the biblical text with more theological meaning than historical rigour (e.g., Provan et al. 2003/2015, Arnold and Hess 2014).<sup>19</sup>

In spite of this, it should be noted that there is in fact no real or coherent archaeological or epigraphic reason to speak historically of a clearly defined 'biblical period' in the history of the region, coinciding with the Iron Age (ca. 1200–600 BCE) and expanding into later periods (Persian, Hellenistic, Roman). Indeed, the term is utterly misleading since it actually refers to a literary (biblical) scheme placed within an archaeological and historical set of data—usually covering the dates mentioned above—originating in an epistemological matrix proper of nineteenth-century biblical archaeology. And since there is no concrete, undisputable proof that the biblical texts were created in the Iron Age but most probably much later, and since such an anachronic placement would plainly be wrong in terms of historical methodology, it should therefore be logical to conclude that it is pointless to speak critically of a 'biblical history' or a 'biblical period' in the sense of proper historical time-spans—just as there is no real Homeric period in the history of ancient Greece. These concepts are meaningful but only as *literary realms*, quite apart from what historians could envision to be concrete historical contexts. 'Biblical history' is, therefore, not the history found when reading biblical texts; 'biblical history' should be primarily related to the biblical narrative appearing in the Persian through Hellenistic to the Roman periods, where the biblical texts have their most probable time of creation and composition (Davies 1992, 2007, Thompson 1999, Lemche 2022, ch. 3). Hence, and in relation to this, the idea of a 'biblical world', anchored in a 'biblical period', results for the

historian in a conceptual restriction to a particular and limited amount of data dictated by the framework of the biblical text, and just like the Western writers and travellers from the nineteenth and early twentieth century who—for different reasons—missed the indigenous peoples of Palestine in their search for traces of a biblical past,<sup>20</sup> the ‘biblical world’ of modern biblical scholarship represents rather a distortive framework for an ancient reality, as it centres its historical scope on the biblical text itself, missing out a whole set of interpretative possibilities still to be further researched.

### Some final comments and prospects

While important progress has been made, especially since the 1970s, in overcoming the original Bible-bound orientation of archaeological and historical research in Palestine/Israel, there exists a general epistemological matrix that still dominates the field of historical biblical studies, in particular Hebrew Bible/Old Testament studies and biblical archaeology, especially in the United States, which finds its usual funding in religious institutions and crafts its research programmes mainly in theological faculties and seminaries (Pfoh 2020). Thus, a certain ideological connection between the biblical past and the religious present is always latent, and this certainly creates an epistemological obstacle for ‘exoticising the past’ in an anthropological sense: the human past of the region is still perceived in direct relation to the biblical narrative while obliterating alternative histories, not only by religious and political actors and institutions, but to some degree by secular scholars doing research in the region, who at some point must interact with these religious and political actors and institutions—not less for funding research.<sup>21</sup> In such a way, the allochronic perspective discussed in the previous pages, of Victorian travellers in the Holy Land and created out of biblical images and religious memories of Judaism and especially Christianity, still lingers in the epistemological spectrum behind many Euro-American historical constructions of ancient Palestine.

In a spatial sense, the land allocated within the coordinates of this territory is simultaneously—although with diverging margins—Palestine but also the Jewish Eretz Israel and the Christian Holy Land. This simultaneity of condensed imagined geographies occupying the same territory necessarily points to the variety of collective meanings attached to and injected into the spatial axis.<sup>22</sup> A similar approach is pertinent to understanding how the temporality alluded to above is constructed into the spatial plane of ‘Palestine/Israel’. We may understand how Christianity elaborated the sacred geography of the Holy Land and its development through time by means of Christian eschatology, ending up in the Protestant millenarianism (British and American) that triggered travels and explorations in Palestine during the nineteenth century (Bar-Yosef 2005, Sand 2012, pp. 119–175) and, further, had a share of influence in American foreign policy in the Middle East in the twentieth century (Anderson 2005). This messianic periodisation is equally found in national-religious Judaism during the twentieth century (Feige 2009, pp. 46–66), and before this was also found in early Zionist political aspirations and programmes, aiming at a secular redemption of world Jewry (and the land of Israel) by means of nationalism and politics (Raz-Krakovitzkin 2002, 2013, Sand 2012, pp. 177–253).

In the field of biblical studies, the temporal scheme within the Hebrew Bible narrative, along with the ethnic scenarios represented in it, was transposed into historical and archaeological periodisations of the territory already since early archaeological fieldwork in Palestine, and even as late as the 1950s in Israeli archaeology: it was not uncommon then to speak of a ‘Canaanite period’ before an ‘Israelite period’, for respectively naming the Bronze and Iron Ages as a succession of ethnic populations (Abu el-Haj 2001, pp. 105–111). This served first as a logical guide to rationalise the materiality of past cultures and societies on archaeological horizons seen through the biblical prism, but at the same time it was taken as patent proof of biblical historicity and nationalist claims. However, the progressive deconstruction of ‘biblical history’ (namely, the deconstruction of this modern Western historiographical tradition of imagining the past and the landscape of the region for millennia in antiquity), since the 1970s to the present, brought about insights pointing at a different way of constructing historically the past periods of the southern Levant. Indeed,

there is in fact an alternative history of Iron Age Palestine, one broader in its temporal scope, encompassing the last six or five millennia; an alternative history that should be pursued outside of the 'biblical period' framework and that should find the whole region and its peoples as meaningful in itself, beyond the usual focus on biblical aspects, although naturally without excluding them: these must too be explained and understood in their historical and cultural contexts.<sup>23</sup>

This orientation, however, has still to become a dominant paradigm for the ancient history of the southern Levant, a newer paradigm overcoming the inherited conceptual predominance of biblical historicity when doing history in biblical scholarship (be it the German historical-critical textual orientation or the Anglo-American and, also now, Israeli empirical-archaeological practice). This orientation, finally, calls for an interdisciplinary approach of archaeology, biblical scholarship, anthropology, history and geography, in order to better grasp and conceive of the integral historical past of the region and its many social and cultural processes, identities and practices over the millennia, of which the Hebrew Bible and other biblical and para-biblical traditions are only partial ancient reflections.

## Notes

1. On the problematic terminology of the 'Near/Middle East', the 'Orient', and related concepts, cf. Bonnie and Amanat 2012, and especially Yilmaz 2012.
2. Or as Laurens (2019 [1997], p. 232) put it, 'l'expédition d'Égypte n'est plus le début du mouvement de civilisation de l'Égypte mais la première 'agression culturelle' d'une série inlassablement répétée jusqu'à aujourd'hui'. For the geopolitics of Palestine within the European imperial expansion into the so-called Middle East, see the informed synthesis in Heacock 2001, and also Kamel 2015, pp. 1–25.
3. In general, on the Victorian age and its different aspects and features, see for instance Hewitt 2012.
4. It should be noted that all these institutions made extensive use of photographs and visual depictions of the land and its population, instantly linking them to biblical imagery and, in this way, contributing to the reproduction of a present biblical landscape. On this issue, see e.g., Baram 2007; and most recently the essays in Sanchez Summerer and Zananiri 2021.
5. 'Ancient Israel', with quotation marks, following Davies (1992), in order to identify a historiographical construct merging archaeological and epigraphic discoveries in Palestine within the framework of the biblical narrative, and different from a 'historical Israel' (to which direct archaeological and epigraphic data can be referred to) and a 'biblical Israel' (the complex literary figure about which we can read in the biblical narrative).
6. As Fabian stated: 'Anthropology emerged and established itself as an allochronic discourse; it is a science of other men in another Time. It is a discourse whose referent has been removed from the present of the speaking/writing subject' (Fabian 1983, p. 143, see also McGrane 1989, pp. 93–100, Pratt 2008, pp. 56–66).
7. Already in the early nineteenth century, Milman (1829, p. 9) had characterised Abraham as a pastoralist sheik or emir, with clear reminiscences of contemporary Bedouin people. In fact, this understanding was common throughout the nineteenth century (as illustrated, for instance, in the works by J. Wellhausen and W. Robertson Smith) and up at least to the 1970s, and it has even been recently proposed again (see Bailey 2018). On the construction of Palestinian Bedouin peoples as pure remnants of ancient times by British imperial explorers, see Assi 2018.
8. See further on visual representations of Palestine, Burritt 2020.
9. As Clifford (1997, p. 197) indicates: 'Before the separation of genres associated with the emergence of modern fieldwork, travel and travel writing covered a broad spectrum. In eighteenth-century Europe, a *récit de voyage* or 'travel book' might include exploration, adventure, natural science, espionage, commercial prospecting, evangelism, cosmology, philosophy, and ethnography. By the 1920s however, the research practices and written reports of anthropologists had been much more clearly set apart'. Further on British travellers to Palestine, see now Polley 2020.
10. For another recent 'customs and manners' study related to the Bible, which would fit very well into a properly Victorian anthology of the theme, cf. Vos 1999.
11. The wider issue of the construction of Palestinian indigeneity, in relation to the presence of Victorian Christian travellers and, later on, Zionist colonists but also through nationalist lenses and in relation to the archaeology and ethnography of the land, escapes the limitations of the present discussion.
12. On Tawfiq Canaan, see Tamari 2004, Mershen and Hübner 2006. Further on this ethnographic understanding, Kirchhoff 2005, pp. 308–312.
13. The Survey of Western Palestine (1871–78) was carried out by the Palestine Exploration Fund and supported by the British War Office (see Moscrop 2000, pp. 95–128, and Kirchhoff 2005, pp. 149–158).

14. See further Pappe 2004, pp. 49–56, Krämer 2008, pp. 107–127, Kamel 2015, pp. 70–84. On the impact of modernisation on the lives of peasants and Bedouins during the twentieth century, see Seligman 2013.
15. Whitelam 1996. Cf. some of the reviews/reactions to the book, who mostly branded it as 'ideology' (namely, a distorted and politically oriented view) while dodging the main (and important) historiographical issues raised by it: Levine and Malamet 1996, Provan 1997, Dever 1999, pp. 96–100. Cf. Whitelam's response to some of these reactions in Whitelam 2002a. In broad terms, 'biblical minimalism' refers to scholars who are sceptic of the plain historicity of the stories in the biblical text and its usefulness for reconstructing the history of ancient Palestine, while 'biblical maximalists' contend the contrary; see further in Davies 2005, Hjelm 2019, Lemche 2022.
16. Cf. also Pfoh 2020.
17. See the seminal criticism to this approach in the writings of the 'biblical minimalists': Davies 1992, Lemche 1998, Thompson 1999. See also now Lemche 2022.
18. While it is impossible to name here every article and volume published, it is illustrative to browse some of the leading journals in Old Testament studies between 1960 and 2020: from the conservative *Journal of Biblical Literature*, *Vetus Testamentum*, *Biblica* and *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* to the more progressive *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* and *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament*.
19. North-American religious (conservative-evangelical) interest in biblical historicity, as well as Holy Land landscapes and scenarios, was naturally an important source of funding and a driving force for the exploration of the past of the region from the nineteenth century onwards; see further Obenzinger 1999, Long 2002. Current conservative biblical scholarship in the United States still revolves around the historicity of the Bible as a key epistemological departure for writing history (Lemche 2022).
20. See the volumes referred to in the previous section; cf. Kirchhoff 2010.
21. A (now dated) history of archaeological research in Palestine is conveniently presented in Moorey 1991. Another history of biblical archaeology is offered by Davis 2004, which ought to be contrasted with more critical perspectives in, for instance, Abu el-Haj 2001, Greenberg and Keinan 2007, al-Houdalieh 2010. Important insights on the relation between Jewish religious nationalism and the ancient past in the West Bank are made in Feige 2009, pp. 91–111, while a critical presentation of the entanglement of archaeological research and politics in the Old City of Jerusalem is thoroughly studied in Kletter 2020.
22. The intellectual construction of the Holy Land as a religious landscape in the West deserves further analysis but, once again, this escapes the boundaries and scope of this paper. See provisionally Whitelam 2008, 2011, Aiken 2010, Sand 2012.
23. The most recent and promising historical perspectives are found in Hjelm 2019, and in Stordalen and LaBianca 2021. See also the prospects in Pfoh 2017. Recent German histories of ancient Israel (Knauf and Guillaume 2016, Frevel 2018, Knauf and Niemann 2021), while probably the most sound and the best of the genre, and incorporating a wider scope of historical issues and problems, still operate to a certain degree within the framework of a historiographical 'ancient Israel', as discussed above, and are still mainly concerned with providing historical backgrounds for biblical exegesis. This should be not surprising since, institutionally and for the last two hundred years, the histories of ancient Israel have been produced almost exclusively in faculties of theology in Europe or in theological seminaries in the United States. On the contrary, a recent attempt to write the history of Palestine during the last 4,000 years, like Masalha 2018, while important in its critical impulse as it aims at overcoming Bible-oriented versions of the past of the region, is more concerned with historiographical designs and issues for such a history, and many times offers a rather partisan (if not flawed) version of a past that should, instead, be constructed in a more integral and comprehensive manner.

## Disclosure statement

**Q4** No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Q5 References

- Abu el-Haj, N., 2001. *Facts on the ground: archaeological practice and territorial self-fashioning in Israeli society*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Aiken, E.J., 2010. *Scriptural geography: portraying the Holy Land* (Tauris Historical Geography Series 3). London: I.B. Tauris.
- Albright, W.F., 1957. *From the Stone Age to Christianity: monotheism and the historical process*. Second edition with a new introduction. Garden City NY: Doubleday.
- al-Houdalieh, S.H., 2010. Archaeological heritage and related institutions in the Palestinian national territories 16 years after signing the Oslo accords. *Present Pasts*, 2 (1), 31–53.
- Anderson, I.H., 2005. *Biblical interpretation and Middle East policy: the promised land, America, and Israel, 1917–2002*. Gainesville FL: University Press of Florida.

- Arnold, B.T., and Hess, R.S., 2014. *Ancient Israel's history: an introduction to issues and sources*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Assi, S., 2018. The Invention of the 'Bedouin Race' in Ottoman Palestine. *International Journal of Middle East studies*, 50 (2), 213–232. doi:10.1017/S002074381800003X
- Avitsur, S., 1975. The influence of western technology on the economy of Palestine during the nineteenth century. In: M. Ma'oz, ed. *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period*. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 485–494.
- Baer, G., 1975. The impact of economic change on traditional society in nineteenth century Palestine. In: M. Ma'oz, ed. *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman Period*. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 495–498.
- Bailey, C., 2018. *Bedouin culture in the Bible*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Baldensperger, P.J., 1913. *The immovable east: studies of the people and customs of Palestine*. London: Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons.
- Baram, U., 2007. Images of the Holy Land: the David Roberts paintings as artifacts of 1830s Palestine. *Historical archaeology*, 41 (1), 106–117. doi:10.1007/BF03376997
- Bar-Yosef, E., 2005. *The Holy Land in English culture, 1799–1917: Palestine and the question of Orientalism*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Ben-Arieh, Y., 1979. *The rediscovery of the Holy Land in the nineteenth century*. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press.
- Bonnie, M.E., Amanat, A., and M.E. 2012. *Is there a Middle East? The evolution of a geopolitical concept*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Burritt, A., 2020. *Visualising Britain's Holy Land in the nineteenth century*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.
- Canaan, T., 1927. *Mohammedan saints and sanctuaries in Palestine*. London: Luzac & Co.
- Carter, C.E., and Meyers, C.L., 1996. *Community, identity, and ideology: social science approaches to the Hebrew Bible*, SBTS 6. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns.
- Clifford, J., 1983. On ethnographic authority. *Representations*, 2, 118–146. doi:10.2307/2928386
- Clifford, J., 1997. Spatial practices: fieldwork, travel, and the disciplining of anthropology. In: A. Gupta, and J. Ferguson, eds. *Anthropological locations: boundaries and grounds of a field science*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 185–222.
- Clines, D.J.A., 1998. *On the Way to the postmodern. Old Testament essays, 1967–1998*, Vols. I–III, JSOTSup. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 292–294.
- Cobbing, F.J., 2005. The American Palestine exploration society and the survey of Eastern Palestine. *Palestine exploration quarterly*, 137 (1), 9–21. doi:10.1179/174313005x37925
- Coleman, S., 2002. From the sublime to the meticulous: art, anthropology and Victorian pilgrimage to Palestine. *History and anthropology*, 13 (4), 275–290. doi:10.1080/0275720022000046751
- Conder, C.R., 1879. *Tent work in Palestine. A record of discovery and adventure*, Vol. 2. London: Richard Bentley & Son.
- Croce, B., 1920. *Teoria e storia della storiografia*. 2nd ed. Laterza & Figli: Bari.
- Cunningham, J.J., and McGeough, K.M., 2018. The perils of ethnographic analogy. *Parallel logics in ethnoarchaeology and Victorian Bible customs books*. *Archaeological dialogues*, 25, 161–189. doi:10.1017/S1380203818000181
- Curtis, M., 2009. *Orientalism and Islam: European thinkers on oriental despotism in the Middle East and India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Q6** Dalman, G., 1928–42. *Arbeit und Sitte in Palästina*, Vol 7. Gütersloh: C. Bertelsmann.
- David, N., and Kramer, C., 2001. *Ethnoarchaeology in action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Davies, G., 2006. The contribution of the Palestine exploration fund to research on the Holy Land. In: U. Hübner, ed. *Palaestina exploranda. Studien zur Erforschung Palästinas im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert anlässlich des 125jährigen Bestehens des Deutsche Vereins zur Erforschung Palästinas*, ADPV 34. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 53–64.
- Davies, P.R., 1992. In search of 'ancient Israel': a study in biblical origins, JSOTSup 148. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Davies, P.R., 2005. What Is 'Minimalism' and Why Do So Many People Dislike It? In: M. Müller, and T.L. Thompson, eds. *Historie og konstruktion. Festschrift til Niels Peter Lemche i anledning af 60 års fødselsdagen den 6. September 2005*, FBE 14. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanums Forlag, 76–86.
- Davies, P.R., 2007. *The origins of biblical Israel*, LHBOTS 485. London: T & T Clark.
- Davis, T.W., 2004. *Shifting sands: The rise and fall of biblical archaeology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dever, W.G., 1999. Histories and unhistories of ancient Israel. *Bulletin of the American schools of oriental research*, 316, 89–105. doi:10.2307/1357501
- Dever, W.G., 2020. *My nine lives: sixty years in Israeli and biblical archaeology*. Atlanta: SBL Press.
- Doumani, B., 1992. Rediscovering Ottoman Palestine: writing Palestinians into history. *Journal of Palestine studies*, 21 (2), 5–28. doi:10.2307/2537216
- Doumani, B., 1995. *Recovering Palestine: merchants and peasants in Jabal Nablus, 1700–1900*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Q7** Driver, F., 2001. *Geography militant: cultures of exploration and empire*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Eldem, E., 2011. From blissful indifference to anguished concern: Ottoman perceptions of antiquities, 1799–1869. In: Z. Bahrani, Z. Çelik, and E. Eldem, eds. *Scramble for the past: a story of archaeology in the Ottoman empire, 1753–1914*. Istanbul: SALT, 281–329.
- Fabian, J., 1983. *Time and the other: how anthropology makes its object*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Feige, M., 2009. *Settling in the hearts: Jewish fundamentalism in the occupied territories*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press.
- Finn, J., 1878. *Stirring times; or records from Jerusalem consular chronicles of 1853 to 1856 (edited and compiled by his widow)*, Vol. 2. London: C. Kegan Paul & Co.
- Frevel, C., 2018. *Geschichte Israels*, KST, 2nd ed.. Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.
- 655 Furani, K., and Rabinowitz, D., 2011. The ethnographic arriving of Palestine. *Annual review of anthropology*, 40, 475–491. doi:10.1146/annurev-anthro-081309-145910
- Goren, H., 2003. »Zieht und erforscht das Land«. *Die deutsche Palästinaforschung im 19. Jahrhundert*. Göttingen: Wallstein.
- Goren, H., Faehndrich, J., and Schelhaas, B., 2017. *Mapping the Holy Land: the foundation of a scientific cartography of Palestine*, Tauris Historical Geography 11. London: I. B. Tauris.
- 660 Granqvist, H., 1931. *Marriage conditions in a Palestinian village*, Societas Scientiarum Fennica. Helsingfors: Akademische Buchhandlung/Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Grant, E., 1907. *The peasantry of Palestine: The life, manners and customs of the village*. Boston: The Pilgrim Press.
- Greenberg, R., and Keinan, A., 2007. *The present past of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: Israeli archaeology in the west bank and east Jerusalem since 1967, research papers N° 1*. Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University.
- Hansen, T., [1962] 1964. *Arabia felix. The danish expedition of 1761–1767*. London: Collins.
- 665 Harbsmeier, M., 1997. Spontaneous ethnographies: towards a social history of travellers' tales. *Studies in travel writing*, 1 (1), 216–238. doi:10.1080/13645145.1997.9634868
- Hardy, E.J., 1912. *The unvarying east: modern scenes and ancient scriptures*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons/London: T. Fisher Unwin.
- Heacock, R., 2001. Palestine dans les relations internationales 1798–1914. In: D. Trimbur, and R. Aaronsohn, eds. *De Bonaparte à Balfour: La France, l'Europe occidentale et la Palestine, 1799–1917*, Mélanges du Centre de Recherche Française de Jérusalem 3. Paris: CNRS, 31–43.
- 670 Hegel, G.W.F., [1822–30] 1970. *Werke* 12. Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp Verlag.
- Q8 Hevia, J., 2012. *The imperial security state: British colonial knowledge and empire-building in Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hewitt, M., 2012. *The victorian world*. London: Routledge.
- 675 Hjelm, I., 2016. Lost and found? A non-Jewish Israel from the merneptah stele to the byzantine period. In: I. Hjelm, and T.L. Thompson, eds. *History, archaeology and the Bible forty years after 'Historicity': changing perspectives* 6, CIS. London: Routledge, 112–129.
- Hjelm, I., 2019. History of Palestine versus history of Israel? The minimalist-maximalist debate. In: I. Hjelm, I. Pappe, H. Taha, and T.L. Thompson, eds. *A new critical approach to the history of Palestine: Palestine history and heritage project 1*, CIS. London: Routledge, 60–79.
- 680 Hjelm, I., et al., 2019. *A New critical approach to the history of Palestine: Palestine history and heritage project 1*, CIS. London: Routledge.
- Holloway, S.W., 2013. Expansion of the historical context of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. In: M. Sæbø, ed. *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The history of its interpretation. volume III: from modernism to post-modernism (The nineteenth and twentieth centuries). part 1: the nineteenth century – a century of modernism and historicism*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 90–118.
- 685 Hübner, U., 2006. Der Deutsche Verein zur Erforschung Palästinas: seine Vorgeschichte, Gründung und Entwicklung bis in die Weimarer Zeit. In: U. Hübner, ed. *Palaestina exploranda. Studien zur Erforschung Palästinas im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert anlässlich des 125jährigen Bestehens des Deutsche Vereins zur Erforschung Palästinas*, ADPV 34. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 3–52.
- Kamel, L., 2015. *Imperial perceptions of Palestine: British influence and power in Late Ottoman times*. London: I.B. Tauris.
- Kirchhoff, M., 2005. *Text zu Land. Palästina im wissenschaftlichen Diskurs 1865–1920*, Schriften des Simon-Dubnow-Instituts Bd. 5. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- 690 Kirchhoff, M., 2010. 'Unveränderlicher Orient' und 'Zukunft Palästinas': Aspekte der Palästina-Ethnographie im 19. und frühen 20. Jahrhundert. In: B. Haider-Wilson, and D. Trimbur, eds. *Europa und Palästina 1799–1948: Religion – Politik – Gesellschaft*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 105–127.
- Kletter, R., 2020. *Archaeology, heritage and ethics in the western wall plaza, Jerusalem: darkness at the end of the tunnel*, CIS. London: Routledge.
- 695 Knauf, E.A., and Guillaume, P., 2016. *A history of biblical Israel: The fate of the tribes and kingdoms from merenptah to Bar kochba*, WANEM. Sheffield: Equinox.
- Knauf, E.A., and Niemann, H.M., 2021. *Geschichte Israels und Judas im Altertum*, De Gruyter Studium. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Krämer, G., 2008. *A history of Palestine: from the Ottoman conquest to the founding of the state of Israel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kuper, A., 2005. *The reinvention of primitive society: transformations of a myth*. London: Routledge.
- 700 Lane, E.W., 1836. *An account of the manners and customs of the modern Egyptians written in Egypt during the years 1833–1835*. London: Ward, Lock and Co.

- Larsen, M.T., 1994. The appropriation of the near eastern past: contrasts and contradictions. In: B. Scarcia Amoretti, ed. *The east and the meaning of history: international Conference, Università di Roma 'La Sapienza', 23–27 November, 1992*, Studi Orientali 13. Roma: Bardi, 29–51.
- Laurens, H., 2019. L'expédition d'Égypte en question [1997]. In: H. Laurens, ed., *Orientales*. Paris: CNRS Éditions, 223–233.
- Lemche, N.P., 1998. *The Israelites in history and tradition*. LAI. Louisville KY: Westminster John Knox Press.
- Lemche, N.P., 2022. *Back to reason: minimalism in biblical studies*. DANES. Sheffield: Equinox.
- Levine, B., and Malamat, A., 1996. Review of: Keith W. Whitelam, *The invention of ancient Israel, The silencing of Palestinian history*. *Israel exploration journal*, 46 (3-4), 284–288.
- Liverani, M., 1994. «Voyage en Orient»: the origins of archaeological surveying in the near east. In: B. Scarcia Amoretti, ed. *The east and the meaning of history: international conference, Università di Roma 'La Sapienza', 23–27 November, 1992*, Studi Orientali 13. Roma: Bardi, 1–16.
- Liverani, M., 2005. Imperialism. In: S. Pollock, and R. Bernbeck, eds. *Archaeologies of the Middle East: critical perspectives*. Oxford: Blackwell, 223–243.
- Long, B.O., 1997. *Planting and reaping albright: politics, ideology, and interpreting the Bible*. University Park PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press.
- Long, B.O., 2002. *Imagining the Holy Land: maps, models, and fantasy travels*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Macalister, R.A.S., 1925. *A century of excavation in Palestine*. London: The Religious Tract Society.
- Makdisi, U., 1997. Reclaiming the land of the Bible: missionaries, secularism, and evangelical modernity. *The American historical review*, 102 (3), 680–713. doi:10.2307/2171506
- Masalha, N., 2018. *Palestine: A four thousand year history*. London: Zed Books.
- Matthews, V.H., 1988. *Manners & customs in the Bible: An illustrated guide to daily life in Bible times*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Matthews, V.H., 2015. *The cultural world of the Bible: An illustrated guide to customs and manners*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- McGeough, K.M., 2015. *The ancient near east in the nineteenth century: appreciations and appropriations. III: fantasy and alternative histories*, HBM 69. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press.
- McGrane, B., 1989. *Beyond anthropology: society and the other*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Mershen, B., and Hübner, U., 2006. Tawfiq canaan and his contribution to the ethnography of Palestine. In: U. Hübner, ed. *Palästina exploranda. Studien zur Erforschung Palästinas im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert anlässlich des 125jährigen Bestehens des Deutsche Vereins zur Erforschung Palästinas*, ADPV 34. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 250–264.
- Milman, H.H., 1829. *A history of the Jews*, Vol.3. 2nd ed., London: John Murray.
- Moorey, P.R.S., 1991. *A century of biblical archaeology*. Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press.
- Moscrop, J.J., 2000. *Measuring Jerusalem: the Palestine exploration fund and British interest in the Holy Land*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.
- Na'aman, N., 1994. The conquest of canaan in the book of Joshua and in history. In: I. Finkelstein, and N. Na'aman, eds. *From nomadism to monarchy: archaeological and historical aspects of early Israel*. Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 218–281.
- Neil, J., 1882. *Palestine explored, with a view to its present natural features, and to the prevailing manners, customs, rites, and colloquial expressions of its people, which throw light on the figurative language of the Bible*. New York: A. D. F. Randolph & Co.
- Obenzinger, H., 1999. *American Palestine: Melville, Twain, and the Holy Land mania*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Pappe, I., 2004. *A history of modern Palestine: one land, two peoples*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pfoh, E., 2017. A plea for an historical anthropology of ancient Palestine. In: J.G. Crossley, and J. West, eds. *History, politics and the Bible from the Iron Age to the media age. essays in honour of Keith W. Whitelam*, LHBOTS 651. London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 41–54.
- Pfoh, E., 2020. The need for a comprehensive sociology of knowledge of biblical and archaeological studies of the southern Levant. In: Ł. Niesiołowski-Spanò, and E. Pfoh, eds. *Biblical narratives, archaeology and historicity: essays in honour of Thomas L. Thompson*, LHBOTS 680. London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 35–46.
- Pierotti, E., 1865. *La Palestine actuelle dans ses rapports avec la Palestine ancienne: Produits – mœurs – coutumes – légendes – traditions*, 2nd ed., Paris: J. Rothschild.
- Polley, G., 2020. *'Palestine is thus brought home to England': the representation of Palestine in British travel literature, 1840–1914*. PhD dissertation. University of Exeter.
- Pratt, M.L., 2008. *Imperial eyes: travel writing and transculturation*. 2nd ed., London: Routledge.
- Provan, I.W., 1997. The end of (Israel's) history? K.W. Whitelam's *The Invention of Ancient Israel*. A review article. *Journal of semitic studies*, 42 (2), 283–300. doi:10.1093/jss/42.2.283
- Provan, I.W., Long, V.P., and Longman III, T., 2003. *Biblical history of Israel*, 2nd ed., Louisville KY: Westminster John Knox Press. 2015.
- Raz-Krakotzkin, 2002. A national-colonial theology: religion, Orientalism and the construction of the secular in Zionist discourse. In: M. Zuckermann, ed. *Ethnizität, Moderne und Enttraditionalisierung*, Tel Aviver Jahrbuch für deutsche Geschichte XXX. Tel Aviv: Wallstein, 312–326.

Raz-Krakotzkin, A., 2013. Exile, history, and the nationalization of Jewish memory: some reflections on the Zionist notion of history and return. *Journal of Levantine Studies*, 3 (2), 37–70.

Reid, D.M., 2002. *Whose pharaohs? Archaeology, museums, and Egyptian national identity from Napoleon to World War I*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Robinson, E., and Smith, E., 1841. *Biblical researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai and Arabia Petraea. A journal of travels in the year 1838*. In: E. Robinson, and E. Smith, eds.. *Undertaken in reference to biblical geography*, Vol. 2. Boston: Crocker & Brewster.

Said, E.W., 1978. *Orientalism*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Said, E.W., 1979. *The question of Palestine*. New York: Times Books.

Sanchez Summerer, K., and Zananiri, S. 2021. *Imaging and imagining Palestine: photography, modernity and the biblical lens, 1918–1948*. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

Sand, S., 2012. *The invention of the land of Israel: from Holy Land to homeland*. London: Verso Books.

Sasson, J.M., 1981. On choosing models for recreating israelite pre-monarchic history. *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, 6, 3–24. doi:10.1177/030908928100602101

Sayce, A.H., 1865. *Fresh light from the ancient monuments: A sketch of the most striking confirmations of the Bible, from recent discoveries in Egypt, Palestine, Assyria, Babylonia, Asia Minor*. Piccadilly: The Religious Tract Society.

Sayce, A.H., 1894. *The 'higher criticism' and the verdict of the monuments*. 4th ed. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

Schölch, A., 1982. European penetration and the economic development of Palestine, 1856–82. In: R. Owen, ed. *Studies in the economic and social history of Palestine in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*. London: Macmillan, 10–87.

Schor, S., 1900. *Palestine and the Bible: illustrating the manners and customs of the people in the Bible lands*. 9th edn. Liverpool: Thompson & Co.

Searight, S., and Wagstaff, M., 2001. *Travellers in the Levant: voyagers and visionaries*, Astene Publications 2. Durham: Astene.

Seligman, N.G., 2013. The environmental legacy of the fellahien and the bedouin in Palestine. In: D.E. Orenstein, A. Tal, and C. Miller, eds. *Between ruin and restoration: an environmental history of Israel*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 29–52.

Shamir, S., 1975. The impact of western ideas on traditional society in Ottoman Palestine. In: M. Ma'oz, ed. *Studies on Palestine during the Ottoman period*. Jerusalem: The Magnes Press, 507–514.

Shepherd, N., 1987. *The zealous intruders. from napoleon to the Dawn of zionism – the explorers, archaeologists, artists, tourists, pilgrims, and visionaries who opened Palestine to the west*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.

Sherrard, B., 2011. *American biblical archaeologists and zionism: The politics of historical ethnography*. PhD dissertation. Florida State University.

Soggin, J.A., 1984. *A history of Israel: from the beginnings to the Bar Kochba revolt, AD 135*. London: SCM Press.

Stafford, R.A., 1999. Scientific exploration and empire. In: A. Porter, ed. *The Oxford history of the British empire. Volume III: The nineteenth century*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 294–319.

Stocking, G.W. Jr, 1987. *Victorian anthropology*. New York: The Free Press.

Stordalen, T., and LaBianca, Ø. 2021. *Levantine entanglements: cultural productions, long-term changes and globalizations in the eastern Mediterranean*. Sheffield: Equinox.

Tamari, S., 2004. Lepers, lunatics and saints: the nativist ethnography of Tawfiq Canaan and his Jerusalem circle. *Jerusalem quarterly*, 20, 24–43.

Thompson, T.L., 1974. *The historicity of the patriarchal narratives: The quest for the historical Abraham*, BZAW 134. Berlin: W. de Gruyter.

Thompson, T.L., 1992. *Early history of the Israelite people from the written and archaeological sources*, SHANE 4. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

Thompson, T.L., 1999. *The Bible in history: how writers create a past*. London: Johnathan Cape.

Thomson, W.M., 1859. *The land and the book, or biblical illustrations drawn from the manners and customs, the scenes and scenery of the Holy Land*, Vol. 2. New York: Harper and Brothers.

Trible, P., 1978. *God and the rhetoric of sexuality*, OBT 2. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

Tristram, H.B., 1894. *Eastern customs in Bible lands*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Turner, B.S., 1978. *Marx and the End of Orientalism*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

van Oord, L., 2008. The making of primitive Palestine: intellectual origins of the Palestine-Israel conflict. *History and anthropology*, 19 (3), 209–228. doi:10.1080/02757200802449923

Van Seters, J., 1975. *Abraham in history and tradition*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Van-Lennep, H.J., 1875. *Bible lands: their modern customs and manners illustrative of scripture*. New York: Harper & Brothers.

Varisco, D.M., 2013. Orientalism and bibliolatry: framing the Holy Land in nineteenth-century protestant Bible customs texts. In: I. Netton, ed. *Orientalism revisited: art, land and voyage*, Culture and Civilization in the Middle East 35. London: Routledge, 187–204.

Volney, C.-F., 1787. *Voyages en Syrie et en Égypte, pendant les années 1783, 1784 et 1785, avec deux cartes géographiques. Seconde édition revue et corrigée, 2 vols.* Paris: Volland et Desenne.

- Vos, H.F., 1999. *Nelson's new illustrated Bible manners & customs: how the people of the Bible really lived*. Nashville TN: Thomas Nelson.
- Whitelam, K.W., 1996. *The invention of ancient Israel: the silencing of Palestinian history*. London: Routledge.
- Whitelam, K.W., 2002a. Representing minimalism: the rhetoric and reality of revisionism. In: A.G. Hunter, and P.R. Davies, eds. *Sense and sensitivity: essays on Reading the Bible in memory of Robert Carroll*, JSOTSup 348. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 194–223.
- Whitelam, K.W., 2002b. The poetics of the history of Israel: shaping Palestinian history. In: D.M. Gunn, and P.M. McNutt, eds. *'Imagining' biblical worlds: studies in spatial, social and historical constructs in honor of James W. Flanagan*, JSOTSup 359. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 277–296.
- Whitelam, K.W., 2008. The land and the book: biblical studies and imaginative geographies of Palestine. *Postscripts*, 4 (1), 71–84.
- Whitelam, K.W., 2011. Nation making: mapping Palestine in the nineteenth century. In: K.W. Whitelam, ed. *Holy Land as homeland? models for constructing the historic landscapes of Jesus*, SWBA-SS 7. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 81–96.
- Wight, F.H., 1953. *Manners and customs of Bible lands*. Chicago: Moody Press. reprint 1983.
- Wilkinson, J.G., 1837–41. *Manners and customs of the ancient Egyptians, including their private life, government, laws, arts, manufactures, religion, and early history; derived from a comparison of the paintings, sculptures, and monuments still existing, with the accounts of ancient authors*, 6 vol. London: John Murray.
- Wilson, C.T., 1906. *Peasant life in the Holy Land*. New York: E. P. Dutton.
- Yilmaz, H., 2012. The eastern question and the ottoman empire: The genesis of the near and Middle East in the nineteenth century. In: M.E. Bonine, A. Amanat, and M.E. Gasper, eds. *Is there a Middle East? The evolution of a geopolitical concept*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 11–35.