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Strengthening Biblical Historicity vis-à-vis Minimalism, 1992–2008 and Beyond. Part 2.3: Some Commonalities in Approaches to Writing Ancient Israel's History

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This series of articles covers scholarly works in English which can, at least potentially, be associated with a generally positive view of biblical historicity regarding periods preceding the Israelites' return from exile. Part 2 covers works that treat the methodological issues at the center of the maximalist–minimalist debate. Parts 2.1 and 2.2 selectively survey the works of 24 non-minimalist scholars during two decades. In the absence of consensus, this article analyzes the works in Parts 2.1 and 2.2, tracing elements of approach that are held in common, at least among pluralities of non-minimalists (possible majorities are not noted). The first commonality of approach is that history is provisional, not final. The second is that history should become fully multidisciplinary. The third commonality is that historians should receive all historical evidence on an equal footing before examination and cross-examination. The fourth and last is that historians should become increasingly sensitive to cultural aspects and coding in ancient Near Eastern materials. Parts 3–5 will cover select works on evidences.

KEYWORDS   biblical historicity, historical methodology, historical reliability of the Bible, history of Israel, non-minimalists

What does a man get for all the toil and anxious striving with which he labors under the sun?—Ecclesiastes 2:22

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28   This article and the two longer articles that preceded it attempt to answer
29 the question: *What is the profit* to be gained from over two decades of intense
30 scholarly effort focused on method since 1992?[1]

31   Specifically, the present article gathers points from Parts 2.1 and 2.2 that
32 have the support of pluralities of scholars and presents them in organized
33 fashion, with a few brief comments. The intent is to make possible an ana-
34 lytical grasp of much of these two previous, long articles in this series. The
35 hope is that it might facilitate reflection and aid in formulating methodol-
36 ogy to help achieve optimal writing of the history of ancient Israel and her
37 neighbors.

38   The two immediately preceding articles in this series, Mykytiuk *Strength-*
39 *ening Part 2.1* and *Strengthening Part 2.2*, comprise a selective survey of the
40 approaches of 24 scholars since 1992. In the absence of a consensus among
41 historians of ancient Israel and her neighbors, this article seeks commonali-
42 ties among 24 approaches. Although this article was not part of the original
43 plan envisioned in Part 1 of this series, it falls into exactly the right place in
44 the orderly sequence.

45   Criteria used to select the 24 scholars are that they are (1) non-
46 minimalists for whom (2) there is a live possibility that much of the Hebrew
47 Bible may contain valid historical data and (3) they have written significantly
48 in a relevant area.

49   Immediately below, "Where treated in this series" is intended to be a
50 help, because the discussion following simply lists these scholars by their
51 last names. *It is much easier to find the points referred to via the endnotes or*
52 *by using the "Where treated" column than by using the bibliography*.

53   The 24 select scholars, whom one may whimsically call "the four and
54 twenty elders,"[2] are as follows.

55   Views of several other scholars are also included where there is com-
56 monality or if a salient point seems to deserve mention.

57   Inevitably, some important views held by worthy scholars, including
58 the select 24, are not included. Rather, this article tracks some *elements of*
59 *approach that are held in common*. The common elements are usually found
60 in the parameters within which the approaches operate. The shared aspect
61 promotes credibility and conciseness.

62   The main question is: What potential lessons in methodology are avail-
63 able for harvest, potential development, and use?

64   Regarding standards:[7]

65 1. History is provisional, not final. It must be rigorous, yet it has a place for
66   imagination.

67 • "All reconstructions are provisional" states Grabbe,[8] encapsulating simi-
68   lar views from Hayes and Miller, Brettler, Becking, Frendo, et al.[9] Moore
69   stresses that writing history with the awareness that it is provisional does

Scholar	Where treated in this series
Richard E. Averbeck	Part 2.2, 130–132
James Barr	Part 2.1, 120–121
Hans M. Barstad	Part 2.1, 123–125
Craig G. Bartholomew	Part 2.2, 120–121
Bob Becking	Part 2.1, 121–122
David M. Carr[3]	Part 2.3, Appendix
Anthony J. Frendo	Part 2.2, 142–143 n. 2[4]
Lester L. Grabbe	Part 2.1, 118–120
Baruch Halpern	Part 2.2, 116–117
John H. Hayes	Part 2.1, 116
Ronald S. Hendel	Part 2.1, 125–126
James K. Hoffmeier	Part 2.2, 139–141
Kenneth A. Kitchen	Part 2.2, 122–123
Jens Bruun Kofoed	Part 2.2, 123–130
V. Philips Long	Part 2.2, 137–139
Amihai Mazar	Part 2.1, 122–123, and Part 2.2, 143–144 n. 2[5]
J. Maxwell Miller	Part 2.1, 116
Robert D. Miller II	Part 2.2, 117–118
Megan Bishop Moore	Part 2.1, 116–118
Nadav Na'aman	Part 2.2 n. 2[6]
Iain W. Provan	Part 2.2, 132–137
Mark S. Smith	Part 2.1, 126–128
Andrew G. Vaughn	Part 2.2, 115–116
H. G. M. Williamson	Part 2.2, 118–119

70   not imply any reduction of scholarly rigor.[10] The "story" must be historically
71   grounded (Becking; Klein),[11] yet the art of history has a place for imag-
72   ination (Becking; Vaughn).[12] Historical reconstruction is partly subjective
73   (Becking; Frendo),[13] so the goal of dialogue is "intersubjective knowledge
74   of the past," as Becking phrases it.[14]

75   "Provisional" includes letting unknowns be unknowns, without com-
76   mitting the reductive error, since absence of evidence is not evidence of
77   absence. In the lacunae created by unknowns, there is room for imaginative
78   analogies and perhaps partly grounded scenarios. For example, presumably
79   in the gap between event and biblical text, A. Mazar and H. G. M. Williamson
80   posited that temple and palace archives provided source material for the writ-
81   ing of the history of Israel (Mazar suggested the late monarchic period and
82   Williamson the time of the United Monarchy).[15] Since both the existence
83   of such libraries and/or archives and their use in writing some of Israel's
84   history of Israel are plausible hypotheses, one cannot reasonably disallow
85   such hypotheses on the grounds that extrabiblical evidence is lacking.

86   Regarding evidence and archaeology:[16]

87   1. History should become fully multidisciplinary.

88   Favoring new multidisciplinary breadth in writing history:

89   • Scholars should attempt a far more comprehensive, demanding, multidisci-
90   plinary way of studying ancient Israel's history than previously attempted,
91   as urged by Hess, Kitchen, and Moore (earlier, Thompson *Early History*
92   had included climate as a factor).[17]

93   **Comment:** An integrated team approach by many coauthors is far more
94   common in the sciences than in the humanities, where the sole-author pub-
95   lication reigns supreme. The closest we humanists usually come is the edited
96   volume of collected, sole-author essays. Can such an academic subculture
97   come to accommodate a truly integrated, team approach?
98   Conceivably, a more difficult pitfall in multidisciplinary work is the va-
99   riety of assumptions, methods, and kinds of data involved. Integrated stud-
100   ies should show awareness of real and potential interdisciplinary clashes,
101   whether obvious or subtle, and whether these are harmful or might be used
102   to gain certain advantages.

103   • A multidisciplinary approach that includes archaeology, epigraphy, sociol-
104   ogy, anthropology, etc. implies that the Bible has a referential dimension.
105   This dimension is essential to any biblical claim to historical truth. Part of
106   the contribution of Bartholomew, as well as Kofoed, Andrew P. Norman,
107   and Hoffmeier, is *explicit* treatment of the referential dimension, whereas
108   many others assume it implicitly.[18]
109   • That the referential dimension necessarily involves present-day theological
110   issues in interpretation is an understanding (possibly a conviction) held
111   by Vaughn, Bartholomew, Meir Sternberg, Becking, et al.[19] As Vaughn
112   expressed it, to "jettison history and archaeology" runs "the risk of reducing
113   God to a psychological or rhetorical concept."[20]
114   • The referential dimension of the Bible, in turn, opens the question of
115   whether meaning is intrinsic in events or in historians' emplotment. Ko-
116   foed and Norman insist, contra Hayden White, that meaning is intrinsic in
117   events.[21] Long implies the referential dimension, a constraining factor, by
118   stating that "the task of the historian is to recognize the past's contours
119   and meaningfully connected features and to represent them in a verbal
120   medium. ... the historian's creativity is constrained by the actualities of the
121   subject...."[22] R. D. Miller found that White and others "draw attention to a
122   real past that *constrains* our reconstructions" and that "the aim of research
123   is to gain knowledge that 'constrains,'" while he seeks to avoid, along with

124   "Rankean empiricism," "naïve Biblicism," etc., "a postmodernist scepticism
125   about the approachability to any external reality."[23]

126   1. Historians should examine and cross-examine *all* historical evidence on
127   an equal footing.

128   • Regarding examination and cross-examination, it is methodologically valid
129   to treat biblical data according to the jurisprudence analogy or forensic
130   model (R. D. Miller, Long, Grabbe, Becking).[24] Equal footing includes
131   such things as both *la longue durée and* relatively brief catalysts that seem
132   to have precipitated change (see below), as well as both archaeological
133   *and* biblical data. Note also the relevance of Na'aman's and Finkelstein's
134   disagreement on the question of whether archaeology should be the "high
135   court" in biblical historical research,[25] If all evidence is received on an
136   equal footing, and evidence is evaluated on a case-to-case basis, *is* there
137   one area of study that should be *the* high court?

138   Favoring inclusion of *la longue durée*, yet in a balanced way that in-
139   cludes catalysts:

140   • *La longue durée*, according to Grabbe, must not be ignored.[26] Williamson
141   found that archaeology is best suited for revealing information about *la
142   longue durée* but that archaeology sometimes does not indicate catalysts
143   (a set of circumstances, a group, or a specific individual) that precipitate
144   change.[27] Kofoed also sought balance between *la longue durée* and cata-
145   lysts; R. D. Miller noted rejection of the loss of importance of the individual
146   in history via Braudel's three-tier model, even from quarters usually asso-
147   ciated with collectivism; and Provan, Long, and Longman protested similar   **Q1**
148   minimalist misuse of that model.[28]

149   Favoring the limitation to use historical evidence to answer historical
150   questions rather than allow present-day theological issues affect outcomes:

151   • Historical questions are to be settled on historical grounds, using histor-
152   ical methods, without attempting to employ current theological doctrines
153   to which the researcher subscribes or a scholar's religious convictions to
154   make a historical argument (Grabbe; Kitchen).[29] Moore sought objectivity
155   as a regulative ideal, eschewing both faith-based epistemology and episte-
156   mology based on scepticism.[30] Likewise, for Barr and Barstad, the absence
157   of extrabiblical information to confirm a biblical assertion or reference is
158   not an adequate reason to doubt it, any more than that one should doubt
159   the countless *non*-biblical documents that lack support in other ancient
160   documents.[31] R. D. Miller II warned against rejecting the narrative history
161   of the Hebrew Bible as a potential starting-point.[32] For each episode or

162 event, all data are to be judged on a case-by-case basis, with no default po-
163 sition favoring or rejecting Scripture (Grabbe; Mazar; Smith; Williamson[33]).

164 **Comment:** With no default position, thus no a priori acceptance, rejec-
165 tion, favoring, or suspicion of biblical texts, those who follow this approach
166 espouse methodological avoidance of both maximalism and minimalism.
167 (This point involves the simple recognition that not all non-minimalists are
168 maximalists.)

169 It might be seen as a potential difficulty that ancient theology is an
170 integral part of the historical evidence that must be analyzed. The following
171 observation serves as an example: "The 'theology' of the composition was
172 simply treated as an essential part of their true 'history' (in the sense of
173 historically accurate 'history writing')" (Averbeck).[34]

174 It would seem helpful, if perhaps not a complete solution, to distinguish
175 between ancient and modern theology. Ancient theology comes as part and
176 parcel of the culture of ancient sources and must be respected as such
177 (see point 4 below on ancient Near Eastern culture). Ancient theological
178 views affected the behavior of people in many areas of life, not least by
179 divinely sanctioned imperatives and prohibitions. If, for example, a deity
180 was understood to have authorized the rule of a particular monarch, then
181 that monarch was normally in a much stronger position than otherwise.
182 Present-day theology, on the other hand, can affect the present-day scholar's
183 view of the text and might interfere with objectivity in approach.

184 Favoring, in addition to consideration of archaeological evidence, con-
185 sideration of biblical evidence—but only that which is historical in nature,
186 and plainly so, not that which is based on current theology:

187 1. One must be very careful about placing *methodological* limits on what
188   may be admitted as evidence to be considered. Instead of excluding bib-
189   lical data (e.g., Banks *Writing the History*), biblical materials should be
190   included for consideration (Athas[35] and all 24 authors listed above who
191   are treated in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* and *Strengthening Part
192   2.2*), though one holds that a case must still make a case for *using* these
193   data (Grabbe).[36] A biblical text must neither be accepted nor rejected be-
194   cause it is part of a religious and theological collection (Grabbe; Barr[37]),
195   nor because it has a literary aspect (Barr; Kofoed; Millard[38]).

196 **Comment:** In effect, current theological doctrines (e.g., John Goldingay
197 "acknowledges the theological imperative toward a maximalist position"[39])
198 may be permitted to hold open for consideration some historical options
199 that might otherwise have been excluded a priori by views that may be too
200 narrow. Nevertheless, such held-open options are to be explored using his-
201 torical methods and evidences, which are essentially separate from modern
202 theological and religious beliefs (Grabbe; Kitchen[40]).

203   Favoring, specifically, considering biblical data on an equal footing with
204 other historical evidence:

205 1. Historical data in the Bible are to be received on an equal footing with
206   other historical evidence before being similarly subjected to examination
207   and cross-examination. Halpern argued effectively, for example, that data
208   in the book of Kings fit well with contemporaneous extrabiblical data and
209   should be used to write the history of the period;[41] Barr, Barstad, Provan,
210   Long, and Frendo each made a case that the Bible's ideological aspect,
211   literary forms, and/or religious bias do not lessen its historical value and
212   that it is not to be treated with greater scepticism than any other source of
213   data.[42] Therefore, it should not be subjected to a methodology that requires
214   it to validate itself according to an external standard, such as archaeological
215   conclusions, before it even receives a hearing (Provan,[43] representing a
216   view generally held by maximalists and some "neither–nors"). One may
217   say that the Bible is not to be treated as guilty until proven innocent.

218 1. Historians should become increasingly sensitive to cultural aspects and
219   coding in ancient Near Eastern materials.

220 • Hoffmeier and Ziony Zevit[44] (and indeed, Mircea Eliade[45]) have a clear
221   philosophical preference for a phenomenological approach. The salient
222   message of Hoffmeier's six main points describing it[46] seems to be that
223   its great virtue is to allow maximum freedom for cultural difference in
224   the context of history, without interference from methodology or from the
225   world view of the modern researcher.

226   Favoring oral and ritual tradition as transmitters of historical data:

227 • Kofoed leaned on Blenkinsopp regarding modern analogies.[47] In working
228   with ancient Hebrew culture, Kofoed pointed out, historians should take
229   into account oral, ritual, and artifactual transmission of the "central thrust"
230   of cultural memory.[48]

231   Favoring simultaneous oral and textual traditions:

232 • Kofoed also understood the Hebrew Bible to be partly based on oral   **Q2**
233   and textual traditions that potentially continued side by side for long time
234   periods. He relied on "a commonplace in contemporary Old Testament
235   research" to support "a prolonged oral transmission . . . in pre-exilic Is-
236   rael."[49] Going farther in that direction, Carr, whose work is treated in the   **Q3**
237   Appendix, offers empirical evidence for text-supported memory as an im-   **Q4**
238   portant factor in Israelite scribal practice, along with the apparent results:

239 diminished modern ability to trace the history of textual transmission and
240 to date texts linguistically.

241 Favoring the inclusion of historical origins of biblical texts in literary
242 treatments:

243 • Long and Kofoed argued against purely literary treatments of historical
244 texts, finding that purely literary views ignore crucial questions about the
245 original understanding of oral and/or written traditions and, as a result,
246 misread them. "[T]o argue that the historical information present in …
247 a literary innovation must be considered a *literary invention* is a non
248 sequitur."[50]

249 History vis-à-vis cultural memory: replacement or coexistence?

250 • Barstad foresaw the collapse of modernism in scholarship, including the
251 *Annales'* "total history" and minimalism, to be followed by "a drastically
252 less scientific form of history in the realm of culture."[51] Other scholars who
253 work in the area of cultural memory, however, do not forecast a cata-
254 clysmic shift but imply coexistence, with perhaps more treatments of the
255 biblical text as cultural memory. Hendel saw cultural memory as a branch
256 of history, namely, "reception theory applied to history," capable of reach-
257 ing historical conclusions about traditions.[52] M. S. Smith finds that "biblical
258 presentations of the past shape the past to conform to [then] present con-
259 cerns."[53] This understanding, which seems to approach the biblical text as
260 cultural memory in then-present application, evidently agrees with Hen-
261 del and also with Barstad's view that the biblical prophets' focus was on
262 preaching, not so much on what actually happened.[54]

263 Favoring the use of ancient historiographic conventions to understand
264 history:

265 • In accord with Bartholomew's favorable remarks on attempting to discern
266 ancient conventions in historiographic patterns in early writings of other
267 ancient Near Eastern cultures,[55] a short essay by Averbeck illustrated the
268 use of Sumerian formal conventions to narrate the building of a temple. He
269 observed, "The ancients … did not see this as 'fiction.'"[56] Barstad made a
270 similar observation about culturally determined, stereotypical literary pat-
271 terns. Still, he feels that they can keep us from recovering "what really
272 happened."[57] Valuable primary-source resources on ancient Near Eastern
273 cultures include Sparks's *Ancient Texts*.

274   CONCLUSION

275 Each of the above four commonalities of approach among some non-
276 minimalists is a call for change. Because history is provisional, not final,
277 it has a built-in restlessness that ever seeks more data, better understanding,
278 and better, more complete, syntheses. The means by which these are gen-
279 erated may include new discoveries, refusing to harmonize sharp disagree-
280 ments and tensions, and gathering data more broadly, perhaps in meticulous
281 detail, as exemplified in Carr (*Formation*). To be satisfied with traditional
282 views, regardless of intellectual, academic, religious, or theological persua-
283 sion, is to diminish historical research and to move in the direction of the
284 death of history.

285   Because history should become fully multidisciplinary, scholars of the
286 humanities should both expand their research horizons to realize the need
287 for other disciplines in the effort and, as may be needed, should learn to
288 work as contributing members of research teams.

289   Because historians should receive all historical evidence on an equal
290 footing before examination and cross-examination, maximalist scholars
291 should expect that even after biblical evidence is no longer subjected to
292 verification before being heard, in the analyses of "neither–nor" scholars (nei-
293 ther maximalist nor minimalist), it will often experience "rough-and-tumble"
294 cross-examination along with other kinds of evidence, to which they may
295 wish to respond.[58]

296   Because historians should become increasingly sensitive to cultural as-
297 pects and coding in ancient Near Eastern materials, expertise in cultural
298 anthropology and cross-cultural studies should be prized and increasingly
299 applied to the interpretation of artifacts, and ancient Near Eastern texts,
300 whether epigraphic or biblical.

301   ADDENDA TO PART 2.2

302 In Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (121–122), the following should be added
303 in chronological order to the list of "Edited Volumes of Essays That Are
304 Maximalist to Largely 'Positive' toward the Bible":

305 Daniel I. Block, ed., Israel: Ancient Kingdom or Late Invention? (2008); Bill
306 T. Arnold and Richard S. Hess, eds., Ancient Israel's History: An Introduction
307 to Issues and Sources (2014).

308 Accordingly, the following bibliographic entries are to be inserted on pp.
309 148 and 149, respectively, of Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2*:

310 Arnold, Bill T., and Richard S. Hess, Eds. *Ancient Israel's History: An Intro-
311 duction to Issues and Sources*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2014.

312 Block, Daniel I. *Israel: Ancient Kingdom or Late Invention?* Nashville, TN:
313 B&H Academic, 2008.

314   ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

315   I dedicate this essay to John Gregory Turner, MTS, independent scholar,
316   Chicago, Illinois, with well-founded respect for his scholarship and deep
317   appreciation for his friendship. I also gratefully acknowledge Purdue Uni-
318   versity's Dean of Libraries, James L. Mullins, granting me six months' sabbat-
319   ical leave during 2009 to conduct research for the bibliographic essay that
320   this series of articles comprises. I appreciate having had the opportunity to
321   present an earlier, short version of this material in San Diego at the 2014
322   Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature in the Hebrew Bible,
323   History, and Archaeology section co-chaired by Jeremy Smoak and Matthew
324   Suriano on November 23, 2014. Finally, and with sincere gratitude, I wish
325   to thank the *JRTI* scholars who reviewed this article. As the author, I alone
326   bear the responsibility for all of its flaws and shortcomings.

327   NOTES

328   1. The year 1992 was chosen, because during that year, two books brought major changes to
329   biblical studies and to the study of ancient Israel's history: Thompson's *Early History* and Davies's *In*
330   *Search*.
331   2. Rev 4:4, 10; 5:8; 11:16; and 19:4.
332   3. Here I take the liberty of listing an important non-minimalist not covered in Parts 2.2 and 2.3:
333   David M. Carr. Appended to this article is a summary of Carr's approach in his book, *The Formation of the*
334   *Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction* (2011). Carr is substituted for Israel Finkelstein, because the limited
335   coverage of only two of Finkelstein's minor publications in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (143–144 n.
336   2) does not add to the list of commonalities, whereas coverage of Carr's book does.
337   4. Treatment in an endnote merely signifies that the select works treated were published after
Q6 338   2008, hence covered in the "beyond" of the article title (except for A. Mazar).
339   5. Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (143–144 n. 2), paragraph in parentheses.
340   6. Treatment in an endnote merely signifies that the works treated, published after 2008, were
Q7 341   covered in the "beyond" of the article title (except for A. Mazar).
342   7. See Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (109–110).
343   8. Grabbe (*Ancient Israel* 26), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (119).
344   9. Hayes and Miller (82); Brettler (16); Becking (68), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1*
345   (109, 121, respectively). Frendo (99–100), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (142 n. 2).
346   10. Moore (*Philosophy* 183), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (118).
347   11. Becking (68–69) and Ralph W. Klein's review of *1–2 Kings* by Gina Hens-Piazza (2), both
348   quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening 2.1* (121–122, 132 n. 29, respectively).
349   12. Becking (68), described in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (121); Vaughn (414), quoted in
350   Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (115–116).
351   13. Becking (68), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (121), appropriating Newman
352   (175–208 passim), Frendo (100), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2*.
353   14. Becking (68), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (121).
354   15. These two hypotheses relate to the gap between event and writing/editing favoring interme-
355   diate sources of historical data mentioned in Mykytiuk *Strengthening 2.1* (110–111). Mazar reasonably
356   asserted that at least a kernel of important ancient evidence may exist in a given biblical text, despite a
357   lengthy chronological gap between the time to which the text purports to refer and the time of writing
358   and/or editing. "Late monarchic authors and redactors used early materials, such as temple and palace
359   libraries and archives" (A. Mazar *Spade and the Text* 144, quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening 2.1* 123).
360   Williamson made a case for archival sources during the united monarchy and for that period as the most
361   appropriate time for the growth of a strictly political history of Israel. Israel's national consciousness

362 looked back from the standpoint of the monarchy (Williamson 148–149, described in Mykytiuk *Strength-*
363 *ening 2.2* 119). On the likelihood that such archives or libraries existed in the Hebrew kingdoms and
364 on their possible role in relation to the Hebrew Bible, cf., du Toit; Löwisch, review of du Toit *Textual*
365 *Memory*.
366   16. See Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (110, 112–115).
367   17. Hess (14–15), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (106–107). Kitchen (*Hebrew Bible*
368 150) and Moore (*Writing* 35); Moore (*Beyond* 5–6, 7) are both quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part*
369 *2.1* (130 n. 12). Thompson (*Early History* 215–221).
370   18. Bartholomew (404), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (120); Kofoed (200), quoting
371 Hirsch (70), in turn quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (129). Norman (119–135), described and
372 quoted in Kofoed (13–15); Hoffmeier (22, point 3), described or quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part*
373 *2.2* (124, 139, respectively).
374   19. Killebrew and Vaughn (10); Vaughn (412–416), described in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2*
375 (115); Bartholomew (404), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (120); Sternberg (320), described
376 in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (120–121). By apparently espousing Collingwood's view of realism,
377 Becking implies a similar point of view in his *Inscribed Seals* (67), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part*
378 *2.1* (121).
379   20. Vaughn (413, 414), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (115).
380   21. Kofoed (13–15) and Norman (130–131), both described in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2*
381 (124). White (20).
382   22. Long (*Narrative and History* 84), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (137).
383   23. R. D. Miller (157, 160), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (117, 118, respectively).
384   24. R. D. Miller (158), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (118); Long (*Israel's Past*   **Q8**
385 581–582), cited by Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (118); Grabbe (*Are Historians* 193); Becking clearly
386 implied cross-examination in discussions among scholars in his *Inscribed Seals* (68), quoted in Mykytiuk
387 *Strengthening Part 2.2* (121–122).
388   25. Briefly discussed in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (143–144 n. 2).
389   26. Grabbe (*Ancient Israel* 35), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (119, point 3).
390   27. Williamson (144, 146–148), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (118–119).
391   28. Kofoed (4, 25–27), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (123–124); R. D. Miller (154),
392 mentions "British Marxists such as E. P. Thompson . . . rejecting . . . the submergence of the individual in
393 its [*Annales'*] structuralism" (referring to E. P. Thompson *Making* 9); Provan, Long, and Longman (77–
394 79).
395   29. Grabbe (*Ancient Israel* 36), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (119, point 6); Kitchen
396 (*On the Reliability* 3) is quoted in Bartholomew (404), which in turn is quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening*
397 *Part 2.2* (120).
398   30. Moore (*Philosophy* 160–161), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (117).
399   31. Barr (79), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (120–121); similar but only implicit
400 regarding extrabiblical verification is Barstad (*Bibliophobia*, in its version as chapter 3 of *History and the*
401 *Hebrew Bible*, 39, 45), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (124–125).
402   32. R. D. Miller (159–160), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (118).
403   33. Grabbe (*Are Historians* 35; *The Exile* 97; *Ancient Israel* 36), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening*
404 *Part 2.1* (118, 118–119, 119; the second point 4 plus point 6, respectively). A. Mazar (*The Spade and*
405 *the Text*, a chapter in Williamson *Understanding*, 144) and M. S. Smith (*Memoirs of God* 13), both
406 quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (123, 127, respectively). Williamson (145), quoted in Mykytiuk
407 *Strengthening Part 2.2* (118), finds that the evidence will not support any "blanket" view, whether
408 dismissal or acceptance "at face value" but still accepts that the Bible has "an historical bedrock."
409   34. Averbeck (109).
410   35. Athas (14), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (106).
411   36. Grabbe (*Are Historians* 35), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (118, point 3).
412   37. Grabbe (*The Exile* 97) and Barr (82), both of which are quoted or described in Mykytiuk
413 *Strengthening Part 2.1* (118–119, point 3, and 120, respectively).
414   38. Barr (83–84), described in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (120). Kofoed (29) and Millard
415 (37–64), described in Kofoed (29, 29 n. 82), both of which are quoted in or cited by Mykytiuk *Strength-*
416 *ening Part 2.2* (125, 146 n. 24, respectively).
417   39. Goldingay (405), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (120).

418   40. Grabbe (*Ancient Israel* 36), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (119, point 6). Kitchen
419   (*On the Reliability* 3), quoted in Bartholomew (405), in turn quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2*
420   (120).
421   41. Halpern (546–565), described in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (117).
422   42. Barr (82, 83–84) and Barstad (*History and the Hebrew Bible*, in its version as chapter 1
423   in *History and the Hebrew Bible*, 20, 21, 23), both of which are quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening*
424   *Part 2.1* (120, 124, respectively). Provan (*Ideologies* 588, 605), Long (*Biblical History* 75, 76, 81), and
425   Frendo (102), all three quoted or described in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (132, 137, 142 n. 2,
426   respectively).
Q9 427   43. Provan (*Ideologies* 601–602; *In the Stable* 301) and *Biblical History* (54, 55, 56, 73, 74) are all
428   three quoted or described in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (132, 134, 135, respectively).
429   44. Zevit (23 n. 19, 24–27).
430   45. For example, "Our sole aim has been a summary phenomenological analysis of these periodic
431   purification rites..." (Eliade *Myth* 73); see also his *Phenomenology*.
432   46. Hoffmeier (32–33), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (141).
433   47. Blenkinsopp (77–78), quoted in Kofoed (78), which in turn is quoted without any direct
434   quotation from Blenkinsopp in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (127).
435   48. Kofoed (77, 88), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (126, 128, respectively).
436   49. See note 46.
437   50. Kofoed (29), emphasis his, quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (125).
438   51. Barstad (*History and the Hebrew Bible*, in its version as chapter 1 in his *History and the Hebrew*
439   *Bible*, 12), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (124).
440   52. Hendel (58), quoting Assmann (8–9), in turn quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1*
441   (126).
442   53. M. S. Smith (*Early History of God* xxviii), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (127).
443   54. Barstad *Issues in the Narrative Truth Debate*, in its version as chapter 2 in his *History and the*
444   *Hebrew Bible*, 37), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (124).
445   55. Barstad (*History and the Hebrew Bible*, in its version as chapter 1 in his *History and the Hebrew*
446   *Bible*, 20), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (124).
447   56. Averbeck (109), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (131).
448   57. Barstad (*History and the Hebrew Bible*, in its version as chapter 1 in his *History and the Hebrew*
449   *Bible*, 20), quoted in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.1* (124).
450   58. For example Grabbe (*Are Historians*), to which Long responded in his *How Reliable*, both
451   treated in Mykytiuk *Strengthening Part 2.2* (137–138).
452   59. Portions of this summary rely on Erisman's review of Carr (*Formation* 1–2). All errors and
453   shortcomings, however, are the present author's responsibility.
454   60. For example, as George Foote Moore pointed out, P passages are clearly discernable in the Pen-
455   tateuch, as are texts from the Gospel of John in the *Diatessaron* (Carr *Formation* 109). "Nevertheless,...
456   a return to the clarity and simplicity of the documentary hypothesis is no longer possible," because
457   the portion of it "relating to the identification of cross-Pentateuchal 'J' and 'E' sources (even aside from
458   questions of dating them) has proven multiply flawed" (110).
459   61. Rollston (44).
460   62. Cf., Rollston (19–46, 91–126).
461   63. Rather than attempting to gather knowledge from many peoples, the kingdom's scribal pro-
462   duction would have focused on its own heritage; cf., du Toit (138–155, especially 154–155) regarding the
463   model of relatively small, truly *national* libraries at Sippar and Ebla, rather than the model of "universal"
464   libraries of Ashurbanipal and at Alexandria.

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668   APPENDIX

669   The Approach of David M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible:*
670   *A New Reconstruction*. 2011.

Q21

671   Amid the disparate variety of current approaches to study of the Hebrew
672   Bible, Carr analyzed and built on an inescapable pair of elements that con-
673   tributed to its formation.[59] He set these forth as a modest, stabilizing factor
674   in which scholars can ground their studies. These elements are oral tradi-
675   tion accompanying textual transmission by "scribes/priests/scholars" (Carr
676   *Formation* 6; cf., Kofoed 59–60, 83, 88). More specifically, he described the
677   "writing-supported process of memorization" (5). "As I argued in a prior
678   book, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature*,
679   the texts of the Hebrew Bible, like those of many better-documented cultures
680   surrounding it [viz., Egyptian, Greek, and Mesopotamian], were formed in
681   an oral-written context where the masters of literary tradition used texts to
682   memorize certain traditions seen as particularly ancient, holy, and divinely
683   inspired" (Carr *Formation* 4). The documented ancient Near Eastern phe-
684   nomenon of memory supported by written texts effectively puts an end to
685   the 20th-century notion that oral transmission was chronologically succeeded
686   by written transmission.
687   The process was oriented toward oral presentation of the written Torah
688   "and adaptation of it for a community or sub-community" (5). Carr sought to
689   ascertain "how, when, and why scribes in ancient Israel innovated in their
690   written performance of the sacred tradition for their communities, and when
691   and why they moved toward more strict conservation"—two impulses that
692   were often at odds with each other (6–7).
693   Although it is impossible for a short summary on methodology to do
694   justice to the numerous thoroughgoing, reflective portions of *Formation*,
695   one can at least describe its three parts and give some indications of its
696   importance and implications for biblical historicity. Part 1 of Mykytiuk doc-
697   uments "the fact that ancient scribes significantly revised the texts that they
698   transmitted and the reality that this process of revision—often by way of

memory—often was too fluid to reconstruct in detail" (7). In support of
this proposition, a major strength of Carr's work is its empirical grounding
of scribal practices. He presents many textual examples, whether finely ana-
lyzed or simply mentioned. These include differing versions of the Gilgamesh
epic, the rewritten Bible of second-Temple times, and the ancient versions.
He finds graphic variants (e.g., haplography), aural variants, and, most sig-
nificantly, memory variants (e.g., use of synonymous words or phrases or
similar biblical texts). He avoids the term *oral*, because memory variants are
supported by relatively stable texts, whereas orality is much more fluid and
cannot be traced in detail. Internal biblical revisions involve such processes
as combining texts, expanding them, preserving only parts of them, and
harmonizing them. Thus, vocabulary and style of writing are rendered unre-
liable indicators of particular sources, and updates in terminology similarly
make certain language indications unclear. The results are that (1) linguistic
dating is rendered much less reliable and (2) sources, though traceable in
some instances, are not as thoroughly traceable as scholars have assumed.
It remains true that in cases where a fixed set of distinctive traits appear
together in a particular portion of text, they can clearly indicate a particular
source (109).[60] The overall result, however, is that our present-day ability
to reconstruct transmission history is much more limited than previously
thought.

Part 2 of Carr's book gives a period-by-period, general description of
scribal activity and the writing of books of the Hebrew Bible and, as relevant,
apocryphal or deuterocanonical books. Reverse chronological order works
advantageously, beginning with much documented data to provide a firm
start, whereas less plentiful data from earlier periods require a more tenta-
tive approach and greater qualification of results. The Hasmonean period
involved "emergent standardization of the Hebrew Bible, both in scope and
(textual) form" (153). Treating the books of Esther and Daniel as products of
the Hellenistic era, Carr found the use of an earlier form of Hebrew to be an
archaizing technique. He assigned the origin of books treating the restoration
from exile, such as Haggai, Zechariah, Ezra, and Nehemiah, along with Isaiah
chapters 56 through 59, to the Persian era. In these books, the good image
of Persian rule stands in sharpest contrast with that of previous empires.
This exceptional presentation makes it seem likely that it was perpetuated
by scribes who favored Persian rule. Also, not attributing a more extensive
list to this period is contrary to recent, minimalistic trends.

Observing that the Hebrew Bible is a "Bible for exiles" (226), Carr
included among books of exilic-period origin the books of Lamentations
and Ezekiel, as well as Deutero-Isaiah, prophetic oracles against Babylon,
and priestly versus non-priestly versions of the Hexateuch. Such versions
were harmonized in later periods. Works from the neo-Assyrian period in-
clude contemporaneous prophetic oracles and other writings that reflect
Assyrian literary genres and motifs. For example, after discussing affinities

743 between Joshua–2 Kings and Assyrian writings, Carr observed, "This back-
744 ground would suggest that the first edition(s) of the broader history of kings
745 in Samuel–Kings probably originated in the late pre-exilic period of Judah's
746 history..." (312).

747   Considering Carr's increasingly cautious approach to earlier and earlier
748 periods, it seems remarkable that part 3 of *Formation* dares to venture into
749 a tentative treatment of the early monarchic period. He considered it rea-
750 sonable for there to have been a tenth- to ninth-century formation of the
751 Israelite kingdom. It would have standardized the Phoenician script (lead-
752 ing to its distinctively Hebrew development "first attested only in the ninth
753 century"[61]), instituted scribal education,[62] and produced a body of national
754 literature for the purposes of preserving and inculcating Israelite history and
755 culture.[63] To the early monarchic period, Carr cautiously assigned the com-
756 position of certain royal psalms, proverbs (with indications that some are
757 attributable to Solomon; 410), the Song of Songs (434), the Covenant Code,
758 and the primeval history minus the P version. Thus Carr's view of the early
759 monarchy partly coincides with Williamson's proposal that it was a prime
760 period for production of texts that enshrine the national heritage.