

The Ancient History of Palestine between European Archaeology and the Bible: A Critical Study

Fahad M. Al-Otaibi

Associate Professor of Ancient History
King Saud University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

(Received 5/5/1432H.; accepted for publication 21/6/1432H.)

Keywords: Ancient History, Ancient Palestine, European Archaeology, Biblical Archaeology, the Bible, the Material culture, the pottery, post-colonialism.

Abstract. Ancient History is one of the most important period which in many time has strong connections with the present. Such connections could be political, economic, or religious. However, the ancient history of Palestine is the only history in which these connections are very clear. This is because European Archaeology played an important role in studying this history and modeling it in a certain way. The problem with this modeling is that it has many mistakes in its basis. In this paper, we shall speak about the beginning of European Archaeology and highlighting its main philosophies. Then, we will treat its first contact with Palestine which the European imperial discourse calls it "the Discovery of Palestine". After that, we will highlight the main shortcomings in its treatments of the ancient History of Palestine. The conclusion will be drawn after that.

'The Identification and restoration of "golden ages" and the selection of "chosen peoples" implicitly discredit the history of people who *are* not chosen' [emphasized in origin] (Silberman, 1991: 84).

Introduction

Archaeology (ἀρχαιολογία) is a Greek word which means 'the study of everything ancient'. It is derived from the two Greek words *archaios* "ancient" and *logos* "knowledge". Sometimes when the ancient Greeks used the term 'ἀρχαιολογία', they meant 'the telling of old stories', *i.e.* ancient history. Hence, the Jewish scholar Josephus called his book *Antiquitates Iudaicae*, Jewish Archaeology¹, to mean ancient history of the Jews (Al-Otaibi, 2005:27).

The usage of the word archaeology continued until the Renaissance. In the Renaissance, scholars tended to use the 'Latin Antiquities' to denote large

works on ancient civilization which is mainly based on written sources. In the seventeenth century, however, the word archaeology was revived by the well-known archaeologist Jacques Spon (Charles-Picard, 1972:9).

With the commencement of the 19th century, the discovered ancient materials were included in the subject of archaeology (Fritz, 1994:11). In the Middle East, however, archaeology started with Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798. Since then, archaeology has interwoven with politics. This interweaving is nowhere clearer than in the case of Palestine where archaeology has been used by the zealot Christians and then the Zionists to claim the land (Palestine).

If we agree that archaeology is the 'study of man's past cultural behaviour within specific historical and ecological frameworks in which it occurred' (Hester, 1976:4), it follows that the term 'biblical archaeology' denotes a branch of archaeology that takes from the study of the lives and cultures of what is so-called 'Biblical lands' *i.e.* the ancient Near East (Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia, Palestine, Arabia) its subject matters. The time span of this branch of knowledge extends from prehistoric times until the Islamic period. 'The integration of Palestine', writes Fritz

¹ This work is known as *The Jewish Antiquity*. It consists of 20 volumes and outlines the history of the Jews from creation to the revolt in 66 C.E. This book, which gives a fuller account than the *Bellum Iudaicum*, is based on the Bible, other Jewish writings, and the works of previous historians.

(1994:11), 'with the Bible had been the goal which the term 'biblical archaeology' and 'Biblical antiquities' implied.' However, it should be mentioned from the outset that the term 'biblical archaeology' is prejudiced in itself because it hinders the study of the past in its own right that what objective study should be. Hence, the term 'Biblical archaeology' is problematic as it will be seen further below.

At any rate, it may be said that biblical archaeology started with the visit of the biblical scholar, Edward Robinson (1794- 1863) to Palestine when he opened the way for the study of the area.

In this paper, we shall look at the ancient history of Palestine as approached by biblical archaeology. This of course includes studying the early European expeditions to Palestine, or as the imperial western traditions tend to call it "the discovery of Palestine". Having said that, it is manifestly impossible to list here every single European expedition that was sent there. Rather, we shall limit ourselves to the main ones before looking critically in the second chapter at the approach of biblical archaeology to ancient history of Palestine. The main shortcomings with this approach will be singled out benefiting from the new development in social sciences that has taken place since 1960s.

Chapter One

1-The Beginning of Scientific Archaeology

It is interesting to note that the modern discipline of archaeology came into existence as a result of an increased interest to recover Bible history. The word archaeology was first used in English in 1607 to denote the knowledge of ancient Israel from the literary sources, not least the Bible (Price, 1997:25). Hence, archaeology was linked to the Bible from the outset. When archaeologists became interested in other areas than the ancient Near East, a new term was coined "Biblical Archaeology" to refer to the branch of archaeology that focused on the Bible. Biblical archaeology developed as a Christian, or rather a Protestant academic discipline.

However, scientific archaeology, one may say, started with the commencement of the eighteenth century. It was at that time that some scholars started to investigate some ancient monuments systemically with the aim of getting some additional information to supplement the historical evidence of written records. These attempts at scientific archaeology took place at the same time that experimental method was utilized in the exact science. Names of pioneers of this movement included: Nicolas de Fabri, Sir de

Peiresc (1580-1637), and the doctor from Lyon, Jacques Spon (1647-1685) who, as it has already be mentioned, revived the word 'archaeology'.

Some great works were written at that time. Among them were *L'Antiquité Expliquée et Représentée en Figures* by the Benedictine Montfaucon published in 1719 and *Recueil d'Antiquités Egyptiennes, Etrusques, Grecques, Romaines et Gauloises* by The Comte de Caylus (1692-1765). In England, there was an archaeological school at that time under the patronage of James Stuart, Nicholas Revett,² and Robert Wood.³ If we look at Italy, however, we find that the first excavations at Herculaneum and Pompeii took place in 1719 and 1784. The aim of these excavations was the enrichment of the private collections of the nobles who directed them. It was not until the middle of the century that the public at large took interest in archaeology. One reason for this in addition to the economic one may have been the rise of liberal and revolutionary philosophy which helped to increase enthusiasm for the ancient world (Charles-Picard, 1972: 14-15).

The western interest in eastern archaeology increased with the western occupation of some parts of the East. Napoleon's Egyptian expedition marked the commencement of Egyptology. The latter came to light as the result of Jean-François Champollion's success to decipher the hieroglyphs on 14 September 1822. This led to an increased interest in archaeology. Accordingly, interest in the ancient Near East "lands of the Bible" spread across Europe. European governments: the German states (later Germany)⁴, France Great Britain, and even Russia, were eager to support any expeditions into the ancient Near East. As a result, Egypt, Mesopotamia, and Palestine received various archaeological expeditions.

With time, the science of archaeology established itself at universities. Such achievement was aided by the tendency of many countries to build their national museums since the nineteenth century. Among these famous museums was the British Museum, to give only an example.

2-The Quest for Biblical Palestine

At the base of the 17th century western interest in Palestine lay some medieval accounts by pilgrims which were influenced by the Bible (see Simon, 1980: 107-126).⁵ One of these accounts is that by the

² The author of *Antiquities of Athens*.

³ Robert Wood investigated Palmyra and Baalbek.

⁴ Germany was unified on 18 January 1871.

⁵ For information about similar accounts in the Roman Empire, see Hunt, 1982: 198 .

Swiss Dominican, Felix Schmid who visited the Holy Land in 1480 and 1483. About a century later (in 1575), the German physician, Leonhard Rauchwolff conducted a visit to Palestine and wrote about its natural history, not least botany. The Fleming, Johann Zuallart, who visited Palestine in 1586, wrote in its architecture and archaeology. As a result, many new works came to light during this time. A clear example is Pietro della Valle's account which was written in 1650 and included abundant and novel archaeological data. Another work followed in 1679 and written by the French Jesuit, Michael Nau. In 1703, the English Protestant chaplain, Henry Maundrell brought out his account of his visit to Palestine where new archaeological materials were introduced.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, there was a steady western interest in Palestine. This interest may have been due to some reasons. One of these causes is the western belief that their modern culture is a combination of Semitic and Hellenic roots. 'Sometime or other, every undergraduate who takes a history course is told that modern European society (and its derivative in the Americas and Australia) is the joint product of Semitic and Hellenic roots', writes Akenson (1998:3). Since Palestine and the ancient Near East was the cradle of Semitic civilization, there was an increased interest in studying this area. Other reasons that contributed toward this European interest included the importance of the trade routes in the area, Napoleon's essays to capture Egypt, and the expansion of Russia toward the East. 'National, territorial ambitions', writes Silberman (1991:78), 'were effectively served by cultivating religious attachments; which resulted in an increased flow of western European traders, explorers and military men in Palestine.' Hence, in 1738, Bishop Pococke conducted his journey to Palestine where he drew plans, drawings, and copied many inscriptions. However, it was not until the publication of the Dutchman, Adrian Reland's *Palestina ex monumentis veteribus* ('Palestine Illustrated by Ancient Monuments') in 1709 that a new approach to ancient Palestine, one may argue, started. In this work, all the previously known information about Palestine was collected from both ancient and modern sources (Moorey, 1991: 15). This book had not received scholarly attention before its application by Edward Robinson (see below).

In the first decade of the nineteenth century (1805-1807), the German, Ulrich Jasper Seetzen visited Transjordan and explored it to be the first scholar to do so; he continued travelling in the East until he was killed in Yemen in 1811. Among the results of his exploration was the discovery of

Caesarea Philippi. The Swiss, Johann Ludwig Burckhardt travelled from northern Syria to Nubia from 1809 till 1817 when he died in Cairo. Burckhardt uncovered Petra, the famous Nabataean metropolis, and recorded Arabic place names correctly. To do this, he called himself *Sheikh Ibrahim* (الشيخ إبراهيم) and claimed to be a Muslim when he visited Mecca and Medina (Fritz, 1994: 35).

In 1838, the American theologian and professor of Biblical literature, Edward Robinson, who is often regarded as the founding father of biblical archaeology, and his student Eli Smith visited Palestine (see Bewer, 1939: 355-360). Robinson conducted the first systematic explorations of Palestine with the aim of recovering the historical reality behind the biblical record, thereby making Scripture more accessible (see Davis, 1987: 12).

In reaching Palestine, Robinson had with him some books which were of great value, foremost among which was Reland's *Palestina ex monumentis veteribus* (see above) and von Raumer's *Palästina* (published in 1835). The result of this first excavation in Palestine was the publication of his book *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mt. Sinai, and Arabia Petraea* in two volumes in 1841 (see Robinson, 1841). Between 1851 and 1852, Robinson conducted his second visit to Palestine which was followed by the publication of the third volume of his *Biblical Researches in Palestine* which took place in 1856 (Fritz, 1994: 35). It goes without saying that as a biblical scholar, Robinson was interested in the Bible before his visit to Palestine. He learned Hebrew for a couple of years under Moses Stuart at the Theological Seminary of Andover, Massachusetts (Pearlman, 1980: 22).

In 1831, he started the publication of the *Biblical Repository*, which took four years to be edited. Six years later (1837), he became the chair of biblical literature in Union theological seminary in New York City. Robinson edited the first volume of his *Bibliotheca Sacra* in 1843 into which was merged the *Biblical Repository* (see Smith and Hitchcock, 1863: passim).

The fact that Robinson was trained in Semitic languages and Smith, who had become missionary in the East, mastered Arabic enabled them to try for the first time to identify some "biblical places" during their journey from Egypt to Beirut. They also explained the linguistic transformation by which, according to their belief, ancient Hebrew place names were transformed into Arabic (Silberman, 1991: 78). Talking about the principals which governed their work, Robinson wrote:

The first [principal] was, to avoid as far as possible all contact with the convents and the authority of the monks; to examine everywhere for ourselves with the Scripture in our hands; and to apply for information solely to the native Arab population. The second was, to leave as much as possible the beaten track, and direct our journeys and researches to those portions of the country which had been least visited (cited in Moorey, 1991: 16).

The Palestine Exploration Fund was found in Britain in 1865 under the patronage of the Church of England. Some factors were behind its establishment. First, the success of the early western scholars to tie their findings in Palestine with the Bible created public interests which resulted in not only gaining emotional but also financial support (see the letter of Layard's friend in 1846 mentioned below). Second, the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* and its assault on the Bible resulted in great demand for the reaffirmation of the Bible authority and examination of the origins of Christianity. Third, the Crimean War (1853-1856) which broke out mainly for political reasons⁶ brought the competition over the religious custody of Holy Places in Palestine into the fore (Moorey, 1991: 18). Accordingly, the goal of the Palestine Exploration Fund was 'the complete systematic and scientific exploration of the Holy Land, and thus above all to aid in elucidating the Scriptures' (Hilprecht, 2002: 591).

The first step taken by this organization was the sending of the young British ordnance, Charles Warren to excavate at Jerusalem in 1867. In spite of the fact that Warren committed some mistakes such as dating a site belongs to Herod the Great to the reign of Solomon, he laid the corner stone to all the following work on the topography and history of Jerusalem. Around 1867, the French consulate in Palestine received a young Frenchman of 21 who was to make a great contribution to the study of ancient Palestine. This lad was no more than the famous scholar Clermont-Ganneau (1846-1923). In 1870, Clermont-Ganneau managed to obtain the Mesha Stone (known also as Moabite Stone) from the Arabs and took it to the Louvre. Also, he made great contributions in term of excavations and recording inscriptions. In the same year, the American Palestine Exploration Society was established. From the beginning, there was cooperation between this new society and the British. Hence, it was decided that the American Palestine Exploration Society should survey Transjordan since the British surveyed western Palestine. However, the two campaigns sent

by this organization were a complete failure.

In 1884, G. Schumacher made a good cartographic and archaeological survey of Hauran and northern Transjordan benefiting from being a member of the temple society (Templegesellschaft), and knowing the country from childhood. He also surveyed the Jolan where a map of the area was published in 1886 (see Hilprecht, 2002: 595). However, it should be mentioned that until now all the expeditions referred to above had no means to date their findings. In 1890, Flinders Petrie (1853-1942), an Englishman who had worked in Egypt, started to excavate Tell el-Hesi in Palestine. Petrie's contribution was the use of the pottery in dating his systematic discoveries. In this case, he used his knowledge of Egyptian dynastic chronological comparing his pottery with that found in datable Egyptian burials. He also used some terminology to denote his pottery such as 'Amorite' (Early and Middle Bronze Age) and 'Phoenician' (Late Bronze Age) (Moorey, 1991: 29). At that time, the German scholars were waiting for the chance to excavate Palestine. Hence, the Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft was established in 1898. The first expedition sent by this organization was in 1901 when the German biblical scholar, Ernst Sellin excavated the mound of Taanach. Between 1903 and 1905, Schumacher was appointed a head of a German team which was sent to dig the site of Tell el-Mutesellim (it is said to be ancient Megiddo) with the direct financial aid and patronage of the Kaiser. Among this team's members was Benzinger who by that time had published *Hebräische Archäologie* (published in 1894) (Moorey, 1991: 34). Sellin and Carl Watzinger led a joint German-Austrian mission to excavate Tell es-Sultan (Jericho) which started work in 1907; in 1913 the report on this excavation came to light (Albright, 1949).

The Palestine Exploration Fund carried on excavating Palestine without interruption. Among the results was the publication of the excavation at Jericho (1913) and Samaria (1924) (Albright, 1949). In spite of the fact that the broke out of the First World War led to the giving up of new plans, it is equally correct that the Middle East was opened up to Western scholars to unprecedented time.⁷ Western scholars tend to call the era since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War the "Golden Age of Biblical Archaeology." The British and France Mandatory Governments that replaced the Ottoman authority in Syro-Palestine and Iraq, local departments of antiquates were created. Hence, in 1920, the

⁶See, among others, Fletcher and Ishchenko, 2004: *passim*.

⁷ The Ottoman Empire restricted the Western excavation in the East, especially in Palestine.

British Mandatory Government in Palestine founded a Department of Antiquates and chose the archaeologist, John Garstang of Liverpool University to be its director; the later was appointed a director of the recently founded British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (1919) (see Moorey, 1991: 48-49, Pearlman, 1980: 143). The department kept excavating Palestine continuously in the period between 1921 and 1936. This time almost coincided with the presence of the well-known American archaeologist, W. F. Albright in Palestine (1920-1935) when he participated in the excavation of the land. Albright accomplished a great reputation as a biblical archaeologist, and according to him there were three factors that put him on his life path: a book on archaeology he purchased in Chile as a young boy, a collection of archaeology books he purchased in Iowa, and his decision to apply to Johns Hopkins University (Feinman, 2004).

Hence, most of the American and Israeli biblical archaeologists were his students. Albright (1891-1971) obtained his degree in Classic from Upper Iowa University in 1912 while he was studying Akkadian and Hebrew privately. In 1917, he finished his Ph.D. on *The Assyrian Deluge Epic* at Johns Hopkins University under the supervision of Haupt. Two years later, he went to the American School in Jerusalem and was to be its director from 1920 to 1929 and again from 1933 to 1936. He became Vice-President and a trustee of the American School of Oriental Research for more than thirty years. There is no doubt that his edition of the Bulletin (*B.A.S.O.R.*) from 1931 until 1968 played a significant role in increasing his erudition as well as giving him the opportunity to define biblical archaeology for his generation (Moorey, 1991: 68).

When reached Palestine, Albright was already the director of the American School of Oriental Research. In 1922-1923, he dug up the site of Tell el-Ful (north of Jerusalem) and identified it with the birth place of king Saul *i.e.* Gibeah (Pearlman, 1980: 150). His choice of this site to conduct his first excavation came as a result of Dalman's advice.⁸ The importance of this site for biblical archaeology was to come later when the pottery discovered there and assigned to the early Iron Age was taken as an indication of Israeli settlement. At any rate, the identification of this site as Gibeah by Albright is debatable (see Moorey, 1991: 69). From 1926 until 1932, Albright excavated Tell Beit Mirsim and published as a result his *The Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible*. In 1934, he directed the excavations at Bethel which saw clearly the influence of the Bible upon him. No town has been

mentioned in the Bible more than Bethel save Jerusalem. At Bethel, Albright was joined by scholars among them was Wright.

Wright (1909-1974) did his thesis at Johns Hopkins University between 1934 and 1937; its title was *The Pottery of Palestine from the Earliest Times to the End of the Early Bronze Age*. Like Albright, he managed to combine both training in biblical scholarship and experience in archaeology, not least in ceramic typology under the authority of Albright. As far as archaeology was concerned, Wright was convinced that archaeology's 'role was to expose the historical basis of the Judaeo-Christian faith, to demonstrate how revelation had come through history' (Moorey, 1991: 77-78).

Between the wars, the British took the lead in excavating Palestine through the British School of Archaeology and the Palestine Exploration Fund. In the period between 1931 and 1935, there was a joint British-American-Hebrew university expedition to Samaria headed by J. W. Crowfoot. The excavation at Tell al-Duweir which took place between 1932 and 1938 was under the direction of J. L. Starkey. The later was a great archaeologist who, as his predecessors, was keen to find anything Jewish. The Americans continued their interest in Palestine archaeology. Accordingly, the University of Pennsylvania Museum organized an expedition to excavate the citadel of Beth-Shan headed by C. S. Fisher. The latter abandoned the work with the University of Pennsylvania and joined the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago with the aim of directing the digging at Megiddo. He succeeded in this; however, the deterioration in his health caused him to leave to be succeeded by P. L. O. Guy and Gordon Loud.

In 1926, the American School of Oriental Research (founding 1900) organized some excavations the first of which was sent to Tell en-Nasbe, north of Jerusalem. The reason for electing this site for excavation was the attempt to confirm its *baseless* identification with the biblical Mizpah.

Kathleen Kenyon published her book: *Digging Up Jericho*, in 1957, which provides a kind of interim report on her archaeological work on the Tell of Jericho in the years 1952-1958. In 1974, her book on Jerusalem entitled *Digging Up Jerusalem* appeared. This book which is a kind of companion to *Digging Up Jericho* concentrates on her excavations in Jerusalem between 1961 and 1967.

In 1947, two volumes edited by C. C. McCown which documented the excavation came to light. The same year they witnessed the excavation of Tell Beit Mirsim, south-east of Hebron under the leadership of

⁸ Dalman was director of the Protestant Institute in Palestine.

W. F. Albright and M. G. Kyle. Between 1926 and 1932, the site which the western scholars regarded it to be the biblical Debir or Kiriath-sepher was partly excavated. In addition, the excavation of Beth-shemesh by Elihu Grant which took place in the period between 1928 and 1933 ought not to be forgotten.

In 1933, a new name appeared in the academic sphere of Palestine archaeology. In that year, the teaching rabbi and the biblical archaeologist, Nelson Glueck started a continuous archaeological survey of Transjordan which ended in 1943. In his survey of this vast area, Glueck relied on pottery for identifying sites and then dating them. Such method of identification may have been accepted at that time. Silberman writes:

Indeed, from the beginning of the twentieth century until well after World War II, the main emphasis of Near Eastern archaeology was to identify discrete historical strata by means of stratigraphic and ceramic analysis. The history of the region was seen as a sequence of violent, historically recorded (or archaeologically inferred) racial or ethnic conquests, based on the equation of new pottery styles and destruction level with the arrival of foreign ethnic groups (1991: 81).

Such kind of cultural archaeology first saw the light in the age of European colonialism. Indigenous ancient Near Eastern remain was seen no more than the record of successive phase of conquests of historical 'energetic' ethnic groups. This understanding of ancient Near Eastern cultures would justify the Western colonization of the area. Nowadays, however, it has become clear that there is no one to one correlation between pottery and identity.⁹

At any rate, in 1944, the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society undertook the excavation of Khirbet Kerak which was till then carried its Canaanite name Beth-yearh 'City of the Moon'. Two years later (1946) the French Roland de Vaux excavated Tell el-Farah which is located north-east of Nablus.

Chapter Two

Biblical Archaeology Approach to Ancient Palestine: Critical Assessment

From the beginning, it should not escape our attention that the term 'Biblical Archaeology' is problematic in itself. This term reflects clearly that what is so-called 'Biblical Archaeology' was not conducted for a mere study of the past, but it was rather carried out within the context of the *Bible*, which is regarded as inspired of God and inerrant.

The Bible was behind all archaeological activities in the East. This fact was realised from the commencement of Biblical Archaeology. In his famous inaugural lecture for the German Oriental Society entitled, 'Babel und Bible', F. Delitzsch says:

What is the reason for these efforts in remote, inhospitable, and dangerous lands? What is the reason for this expensive rooting through rubble many thousands of years old, all the way down to the water table, where no gold and no silver is to be found? What is the reason for the competition among nations to secure excavation rights to these deserted mounds, and the more the better? Moreover, what is the source of the ever-increasing, self-sacrificing interest, on both sides of the Atlantic, allotted to the excavations in Babylonia and Assyria?

To these questions there is one answer, even if not the whole answer which points to what for the most part is the motive and the goal, namely, the Bible (Delitzsch, 1906: 1).

'In the Holy Land the archaeologists carried out their excavations with the Bible in one hand' writes Fritz (1994: 221). Similarly, Elliott writes:

Archaeological interpretation by biblical scholars at this time was principally a Protestant enterprise. The major archaeological research interest for many Anglo-American Bible scholars was its direct reflection on the biblical narrative. Inscriptions, illuminating political events and biblical personalities, concentrated the attention of these early scholars. Many were devout and reared on a literal reading of Scripture. They believed it was not the excavation and the discovery of archaeological material by archaeologists that was essential, but whether the interpretation of the data confirmed the biblical text. Conservative Bible scholars and theologians presumed that the main task of biblical archaeology was to provide valuable testimony to disprove critics of the biblical narrative. These defenders of the faith cared little for archaeological techniques or considered perspectives concerning culture, anthropology, sociology, comparative religion, architectural forms, environment arid a host of other specializations about the interpretation of excavated material. Conservative scholars thought biblical proofs could be diligently located by the spade. Their pious interpretations produced apologetic conclusions. These scholars were not genuinely interested in the principles of scientific investigation, for they were blinded by their prejudices and clearly motivated by theological questions. Far too many biblical scholars created an archaeology of faith that authenticated the word of the Lord and demonstrated that "liberal"

⁹ See al-Otaibi, (2009), 'Nelson Glueck and Nabataean Ethnicity: an Appraisal', *Aram* (21), pp. 353-371 .

interpretations of the Bible were specious and heretical (Elliott, 1998: 9).

Let us start with A.H. Sayce, the Anglican clergyman who is regarded as the most committed advocate of the historicity of the Bible and the most articulate opponent of 'Higher Criticism.'

Who knows *what* is in store for us, during the next few years, if only sufficient funds can be provided for carrying on the costly work of excavation? Histories of the patriarchs, records of Melchizedek and his dynasty, old hymns and religious legends, may be among the archaeological treasures that are about to be exhibited to the wondering eyes of the present generation. A few years ago such a possibility could not have been dreamed of by the wildest imagination; now it is not only a possibility, but even a probability (Sayce, 1892: 546).

Wright, one of established biblical archaeologists, writes in his book *Biblical Archaeology*:

Biblical archaeology is a special 'armchair' variety of general archaeology. The biblical archaeologist may or may not be an archaeologist himself, but he studies the discoveries of the excavations in order to glean from them every fact that throws a direct, indirect or even diffused light upon the Bible. [...] Yet his chief concern is not with methods or pots or weapons in themselves alone. His central and absorbing interest is the understanding and exposition of the Scriptures. [...] The intensive study of the Bible by the biblical archaeologist is thus the fruit of the vital concern for history which the Bible has instilled in us. We cannot, therefore, assume that the knowledge of Biblical history is unessential to the faith. Biblical theology and Biblical archaeology must go hand in hand, if we are to comprehend the Bible's meaning (1957: 17).

Similar to Wright's subjective approach is that of Nelson Glueck who insisted that archaeology unconditionally proves the historicity of the Bible. 'It may be stated categorically', writes Glueck (1959: 31), 'that no archaeological discovery *has ever* controverted a Biblical reference' [italics mine]. Glueck also asserted repeatedly that there is 'almost incredible accurate historical memory of the Bible, and particularly so when it is fortified by archaeological fact (Glueck, 1959: 68).

This led the Dutch archaeologist Franken to justly say, 'One has only to read Glueck's 'Exploration in Transjordan' to find how from ca. 2000 BC his whole interpretation of the history of the country is based on biblical data (cited in Moorey, 1991: 103). Hence, Moorey states:

Even in his most circumspect publication Glueck, more than any other field archaeologist of his stature,

epitomized the pejorative view of the biblical archaeologist as the explorer with a Bible in his hand whenever he went declaring it to be the most reliable guide to ancient Palestine' (1991: 103).¹⁰

To give an example of how Glueck relied heavily on the Bible in his work, one may cite his excavation in western Palestine. In I king (9:26), it is written:

וְאִי עָשָׂה הַמֶּלֶךְ שְׁלֹמֹה בְּצִיּוֹן-גִּבֹר
אֲשֶׁר אֶת-אֵלוֹת עַל שֵׁפֶת יַם--סוּף בְּאֶרֶץ אֲדוֹם.

And king Solomon built a navy in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the lip of the Red Sea on the Edomite land.

Hence, relying on the above quotation, Glueck excavated the site of Ezion-geber, near Eilat, and claimed that he found an industrial city which dated back to Solomon's period (see Pearlman, 1980: 153).

On the same path walked also Albright, who concluded his detailed book *The Archaeology of Palestine* by saying:

Against these and other modern forms of ancient magic, archaeology wages an unceasing war, and few things are more irritating to the sober archaeologist than to see religious faith confounded with magic by exponents of cheap materialism. To one who believes in the historical mission of Palestine, its archaeology poses a value which raises it far above the level of artefacts with which it must constantly deal, into a region where history and archaeology share a common faith in the eternal realities of existence (Albright, 1949: 256).

One clear indication of such unrestricted reliance on the Bible is the fact that from the commencement of archaeological research in the East, especially in Palestine until the Second World War only places which had had been thought to play role in the history of early Israel were excavated. Megiddo, Jericho, and Beth-Shean can be given as examples of these sites. Another instance is the fact that the American expedition sent by Harvard university in 1908 came only to excavate Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. This may be understandable if it is taken into account the fact that the majority of excavators were 'ordained Protestant clergymen or biblical specialists teaching in theological seminars or in departments of religion in colleges and universities' (Moorey, 1991: 99). However, it should be noted that sometimes there is a contradiction between the Bible and archaeology, one may mention the capture of Jericho. The Bible

¹⁰ See Ra'ad, B (2010), *Hidden Histories: Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean*, London, Pluto Press, p.15.

states that it was Joshua who captured the city as we read in Joshua (24:11):

ותעובר את-הירדן ותבאו אל-יריחו
 וילחמו בכם בעלי- יריחו האמרי
 והפריזי והכנעני והחתי והגרגשי
 החיו והיבوسی ואתן אותם בידכם.

And you crossed over the Jordan and came to Jericho. And the masters of Jericho fought against you, the Amorite and the Perizzite, and the Caananite, and the Hittite, and the Girgashite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite; and I gave them into your hand.

None the less, archaeological data has shown that the city fall down on the 14th century B.C. *i.e.* a century before the time Joshua and there was no occupation of the site during the Late Bronze Age (see Wight, 1959: 101).

Such biased approach which relied on the Bible, resulted into two connected facts. First, archaeological evidence that contradicted the Bible or did not support it at least were completely ignored. Maier writes:

As long as the interpreter, however, trusts God and his Word, he will agree with revelation also at those points where it stands in tension with or contradiction to other sciences and life experiences. Revelatory truth possesses a higher worth for him than any "truth" outside of revelation. Examples of this are found in Luther and Bengel, who would have rather [done] violence to secular history" than give up the preeminence of Scripture (Maier, 1994: 214-215).

One may mention Nelson Glueck here as a case in point. He says:

It would matter scientifically not a particle to us as archaeologists if we were to discover materials which would tend, so to speak, to disprove statements in the Bible. It would not concern me at all; it would not detract for me from the glory and the wonder and the beauty and inspiration of the Bible, because I know that the Bible is primarily not a book of history, nor primarily a book of geography, but the Bible is primarily a record in which God-inspired men put down their perceptions, their understanding, their revelation of the words and ways of God. Belief in God requires no proof (Glueck, 1954: 364).

Here, Glueck insisted that materials which contradict the Bible would be ignored. This of course is not a scientific method of reconstructing the ancient history of Palestine, but a selective way which is intended to manipulate this history.

'In other words', writes Bright (1956: 29) 'archaeological evidence is not allowed play as an effective control on the biblical tradition, but is used rather as an apologetic tool to bolster up its historical accuracy.' Another example here is Albright's excavation at Mari. Albright emphasised the similarity between the tablets found there and the biblical narrative while at the same time ignored the differences (see Moorey, 1991: 153).

The second resulted fact from such unrestricted reliance on the Bible is that sites not least, these which dated back to the early Islamic period were also neglected because they fall outside the context of Biblical archaeology. It would not be further from the truth to say that these places were not seen as appropriate subjects for European archaeological enquiry. Hence, Silberman frankly states that:

In contrast to the detailed archaeological study of the biblical periods at the country's major sites, practically no attention was paid to the later remains at those sites. And regarding the remains of medieval and early modern towns and villages located away from the sites of earlier biblical cities, virtually nothing was known (1991: 82).

Sometimes there were deliberate attempts to connect archaeological excavations in Palestine with the Bible. One reason behind this was the aim of gaining emotional and financial western public support. One of Layard's friends wrote to him in 1846:

The interest about your stones is very grate, I hear-and if you can as I before said attach a biblical importance to your discoveries you will come to the complete dodge over this world of fools and dreamers; you can get some religious fellow to inspire you with the necessary cant, for which I won't think a bit the worse of you (cited in Saggs, 1969: 11).

Another shortcoming with the nineteenth-century Biblical archaeologists' approach to ancient Palestine history was their preconceived idea that there was a big civilized gap between 'the degraded modern level of civilization in the area' and, according to them, the 'impressive ancient, or rather biblical remains.' Such gulf was understood as 'nothing less than a literal fulfillment of biblical prophecy' (Silberman, 1991: 76). In the Bible, the prophets and the apostles prophesized that the Holy Land would be laid to waste as a result of its people disobedience.¹¹ Isaiah (6: 11) says:

See also Ezekiel, 7: 24. ¹¹

וְאָמַר עַד־מַתַּי אֲדָנָי׃
 וַיֹּאמֶר עַד אֲשֶׁר אֶם־שָׂאוּ
 עָרִים מֵאִין יוֹשֵׁב וּבְתֵימָם
 מֵאִין אֲדָם וְהָאֲדָמָה
 תִּשְׁאַרָה שְׂמָמָה

Then I said, how long, O Lord? And He said, until cities lie desolate without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land is laid waste, a desolation.

Jeremiah (4: 26) says: " I saw, and the fruitful land became desert because god fierce anger".

Hence, biblical archaeologist saw such state of affairs as a divine plan in spite of the fact that it can be explained in terms of secular history. It goes without saying that those scholars had preconceived negative ideologies about the people of the area which went back to the Greek and Roman period (Al-Otaibi, 2005: 33).¹² "The "Saracens" of the region were often seen as " the wolves of Arabia"- natural enemies of civilization, unwilling and congenitally incapable of adopting a settled life", writes Silberman (1991: 81). Accordingly, the western scholars regarded the restoration of the land to its 'magnificent' ancient condition as their duty. Helping in this direction was the expectation of the closeness of the Second Advent of Jesus. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the West (England, France, America) witnessed a fervent millennial expectation (see Brown, 1952: 445). And the first step towards the coming of the Divine Kingdom was the restoration of the desolated land and the returning of the Jews. Hence, 'conquest and "modernization" of the Holy Land came to be seen as Europe and America's manifest spiritual destiny' (Silberman, 1991: 77). Another means for the land restoration was European archaeological and historical works. Therefore, the appearance of European -style schools, shops, and hospitals coincided with that of ancient biblical cities and villages. This Led to the creation of a new geographical entity "Land of the Bible." Determining the boundaries of this entity was crucial for the extent of Mandatory Palestine. It goes without saying, therefore, that for those scholars the holy land's essence was by far more appealing than its present reality. Later, the British Mandatory Government approved the adoption of biblical place names by biblical archaeologists. Modern biblical archaeology and geography", writes Silberman , " thus affectively assisted political developments in the

land of the Bible by providing a concrete means of reshaping its history, and specific territorial foci on which to exercise national claims" (1991: 79). Therefore, biblical archaeologist remade Palestine's geography and history in the image of their own biblical understanding which made these scholars instruments "in the ideological validation of a political and economic transformation hardly less far-reaching than that so successfully accomplished in the colonial Bethlehems, Nazareths, Hebrons, New Canaans and New Jerusalems of America" (Silberman, 1991: 79).

Another defect with biblical archaeology approach to ancient Palestine is the mechanism of defining sites as biblical or Israelite sites. First, because there are so many difficulties in defining the term "Israelites" in general, and in identifying some Iron I sites as early Israelites ones in particular. Such identification supposes that there was a clearly defined Israeli ethnicity at that time; this was not the case. The population of early sites did not refer to themselves as Israelite (*emic* definition of ethnicity). It took long time for Israeli ethnicity to be formed and it was not before the establishment of the Monarchy such complex process were completed (Finkelstein, 1988: 28). Hence, it is inappropriate to use the term "Israelites" in the archeological identification of Early Iron I settlements. The second problem in labeling sites as biblical or Israelite sites has resulted from the fact that the majority of biblical scholars have not attempted to give a clear definition of the concept of "ethnicity"; what is an Israeli ethnicity?

Yet, the third problem is that biblical archaeologists when identifying some sites as Israelite relied on material culture, not least pottery (see Aharoni, 1957a: 194). They looked at collared rim jars and four-room houses which appeared in Palestine at the beginning of Iron Age as exclusively Israelite since their appearance coincided with that of the Israelites. Doing so was a methodological error. Because, a part from the fact that the date of pottery by early biblical archeologists such as Albright was contradicted by archaeology (see Miller, 1985: 22), the assumption lying behind such an approach was that there is a fixed one-to-one relationship between these aspects of material culture and Israelite identity. Where as there is nothing about the physical characters of both collared rim jars and four-room houses that specifically connected them with the Israelite (see Miller and Hayes, 1986: 85). Therefore, these types could be belonged to the Jebusites or the Moabites, or to any other human group who once lived there.

In addition, such association between these types

¹²About the ancient root of Orientalism, see Al-Otaibi, 2006. Al-Otaibi, 2005 and

and the Israelites by biblical archaeologists means that in the opinion of those scholars Israelite cultures and identities are monolithic and homogenous across diverse social and historical contexts. Talking about biblical archaeology, Whitelam writes: 'The debate in archaeology has not concerned the identity of the inhabitants; this was taken for granted as self-evident until recently', (1996: 188). The same difficulty is also faced when treating Jewish identity in the Greco-Roman time. Tessa Rajak writes, 'To determine in advance what is Jewish and what is not (or even 'probably' not) is to operate with a pre-conception of Jewish identity when our task is, precisely to seek to define that identity'.

However, over the last three decades a great deal of research has been done on ethnicity (ethnic identity). It has been revealed, therefore, that there is no one-to-one correlation between ethnicity and culture (Al-Otaibi, 2005: 35). In addition to the fact that it is only certain cultural aspects are utilized when constructing ethnic identities from within, a subjective element should be allowed for when treating peoples' ethnicities. Hence, it is unlikely that a discrete uniform pattern of certain kinds of material culture (here pottery) can represent a particular ethnic group (in this case early Israelites). If such development in our understanding of ethnic identity is taken into consideration, the naïve straightforward assumption that certain type of pottery = Israelite symbol = Israelite site is no longer valid.¹³

This may relate to the actual nature of the pottery itself as an ethnic symbol. The stories of archaeologists who try to use the pottery to establish the ethnic status of certain sites but failed to do so are not few. However, taking the limitation of space in this article into consideration, two examples will be mentioned. First is the story of Colono-Indian Ware. In brief, the ware was dated to the period of colonization and was similar to the Native American ware that prevailed in the eastern part of United States of America. However, the difficulty, which biblical scholars such as Glueck might not have taken in to account when identifying biblical sites according to the pottery, is that *this pottery was found also in sites that Native Americans never dwelt in*. In addition, this ware is always found in the area of the African-American slaves (see Orser, 1996: 118). The other instance is the case of pottery in Zambia. In Zambia, what is known as the Luangwa tradition reflects very little variation and extended over a wide area, but in

actual fact, it is made by different peoples (Hodder, 1978: 14).

The use of the pottery in establishing the ethnic status of these sites, one may say, rests on two related erroneous assumptions. First, there was a fixed relationship between the style of this pottery and Israeli identity. Second, that Israeli identity was homogenous and bounded regardless of the different time, place, or socio-economic factors which evidently affect ethnicity (see Jones, 1997: 220-221). These suppositions need to be questioned. Oddly enough those biblical scholars, who accept his identification of these sites, overlooked the possibility that this pottery may have been made to be sold as a source of income. Therefore, it cannot be assumed that those who used it were Israeli, nor can we identify sites containing it as Israelite.¹⁴ Such conclusion has been emphasised by Posnansky (1973: 159). Studying the relation between peoples and potteries in Ghana he concludes:

The ancient trade in pottery was a complex matter, and the simplistic belief that different wares represent different groups of people can rarely be substantiated. A single Mo potter of the present day makes several distinct types of ware which are used by a variety of different linguistic groups, while a consumer, even before the advent of modern transport, would buy, or obtain by barter, specific types of vessel from relatively long distances [my italics].

Therefore, it could be argued that the 'Israeli' pottery was economically distributed rather than ethnically.

Additionally, scholars have found that in many cases pottery differences between peoples related mainly to the differences in ceramic resources available to them rather than ethnic alliances (Arnold, 1978: 58). Consequently, if members of an ethnic group occupy different ecological niches, they tend to produce dissimilar ceramics, whereas if different ethnic communities lived in the same niche, they produce similar, if not identical, ware. For this reason, we see similarities in ware made in the Pokom Mixco community and in the Cakchiquel communities of San Raimundo and La Cienega in spite of their linguistic and cultural differences. *Per contra*, the Pokom communities that share cultural

¹³ One of the best books that have been written about the subject is Jones' *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*, London, Routledge.

¹⁴ There are many other difficulties pertaining the use of material culture, not least pottery in identifying past peoples. First, is that some peoples try to left out most of the artefacts when they abandon the site. Hence, the remaining, if there is any, does not reflect the actual culture. Second, is that in some cases there are no systematic excavations, but rather selected parts of sites which hinder any actual picture of the studied society.

and linguistic traits produce dissimilar ceramic (see Arnold, 1978: 58-59).

A part from pottery, most of western biblical scholars mentioned above operated within the context of orientalism discussed by Said in his seminal work *Orientalism* published in 1978 which highly coloured their approach to ancient history. For example, the division between we (the civilized) and them (the backward) is evident in Albright's work. Our choice of Albright is based upon three reasons. First is that his philosophy of ancient history guided and still guiding many western historians, biblical scholars, and archaeologists. Hence, when he died in 1972, Wiseman writes: 'With the death of Professor Albright on 19 September 1971 Biblical and Oriental studies have lost a scholar of pioneering zeal and a teacher of international influence' (Wiseman, 1972: 346). Second is that he is regarded as a just scholar the thing which shall be commented upon below. The third reason is that the state of Israel appreciated his academic works and his effort to help many Jews to escape from the Nazi persecution.

In Albright's interpretation of archaeology, there is a sharp distinction between the Israelite (he regarded the Israelite culture as the taproot for western culture) and the Canaanite culture. Many examples can be cited from his widely-read book: *The Archaeology of Palestine*. For example, he writes:

Since Israelite culture was in many respects a *tabula rasa* when the Israelites invaded Palestine, we might expect them to have been influenced strongly by the culture of their Canaanite predecessors. Yet excavations show a most abrupt break between the culture of the Canaanite Late Bronze Age and that of the Israelite early Iron Age in the hill-country of Palestine (Albright, 1957: 284-285).

In another place, he says:

When the Israelites address foreigners they use language suitable to their horizon and capable of producing a friendly reaction. There is nothing 'modern' about this principle, which must have been commonplace in the ancient Orient-though no other known people of antiquity can approach the objectivity of the Israelites in such matters, to judge from their literature (Albright, 1957: 288-289).

What this quotation shows is that there were two groups of people: the rational (the Israelites) and the irrational (the others) in the ancient Near East.

It may be said that the claimed objectivity of Albright as a biblical scholar was unfounded. Albright, judging from his works, as many other biblical archaeologists, not only was operating within

the context of Orientalism but also was involved in the colonial enterprise in Palestine, or say in politics. In his article 'Why the Near East needs the Jews', he showed that he was a supporter of Zionism which according to him has the political right in Palestine. The Jews, according to him, has the right to the land since they have historical as well as emotional ties with it. In addition, his philosophy of history was based on the belief of an evolutionary development of organisms according to which the superior people must replace the inferior. He says:

Real spiritual progress can only be achieved through catastrophe and suffering, reaching new levels after the profound catharsis which accompanies major upheavals. Every such period of mental and physical agony, while the old is being swept away and the new is still unborn, yields different social patterns and deeper spiritual insights (Albright, 1957: 402).

Hence, for Albright, 'it is natural for Israel to "replace" the inferior indigenous population of Palestine' (Whitelam, 1996: 86). Such replacement, as far as he was concerned, could have come about by slaughtering just as the ancient Jews under the leadership of Joshua exterminated the native people of the land *i.e.* the Canaanites. His justification of the extinction of native people can be seen clearly in the following quotation which deserves to be produced verbally:

It is questionable whether a strictly detached observer would consider it as bad as the starvation of helpless Germany after the armistice in 1918 or the bombing of Rotterdam in 1940. In those days warfare was total, just as it is again becoming after the lapse of three millennia. And we Americans have perhaps less right than most modern nations, in spite of our genuine humanitarianism, to sit in judgment on the Israelites of the thirteen century B.C., since we have, intentionally or otherwise, exterminated scores of thousands of Indians in every corner of our great nation and have crowded the rest into great concentration camps. The fact that this was probably inevitable does not make it more edifying to the Americans of today. It is significant that after the first phase of the Israelite Conquest we hear no more about 'devoting' the population of Canaanite towns, but only of driving them out or putting them to tribute (Judges 1: *passim*). 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. When such a process takes place- as at present in Australia - there is generally little that can be done by the humanitarian- though every deed of brutality and

injustice is infallibly visited upon the aggressor. It was fortunate for the future of monotheism that the Israelites of the Conquest were a wild folk, endowed with primitive energy and ruthless will to exist, since the resulting decimation of the Canaanites prevented the complete fusion of the two kindred folk which would almost inevitably have depressed Yahwistic standards to a point where recovery was impossible. 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 sever code of ethics. In a not altogether dissimilar way, a millennium later, the African Canaanites, as they still called themselves, or the Carthaginians, as we call them, with the gross Phoenicians mythology which we know from Ugarit and Philo Byblius, with human sacrifices and the cult of sex, were crushed by the immensely superior Romans, whose stern code of morals and singularly elevated paganism remind us in many ways of early Israel (Albright, 1957: 280-281).

As already noted, Albright's justification of the extinction of native people is remarkable for two reasons. The first one is its undisguised racism. Racism is defined as: (1) the belief that each race or ethnic group possesses specific characteristics, abilities, or qualities that distinguish it as inferior or superior to another such group, (2) discrimination against or antagonism towards other races or ethnic groups based on such a belief. The second reason is that this racism has never been referred to or touched upon by biblical scholars,¹⁵ who have tried to conceal it.

Finally in the 1970s, a growing impact from social sciences over biblical archaeology took its shape as a result of the information explosion that was taking place at that time. Such an impact can be seen in the following developments. First, excavations, even on main biblical sites, became more carefully planned and sometimes problems not related to the Bible were considered. Second, these excavations were conducted with larger teams of expertise from different academic subjects such as humanities and natural sciences. Third, as a result, a border spectrum of evidence, which was previously neglected, was looked for. Four, in contrast with old view where excavated areas were seen as self-sufficient units, these areas came to be regarded as part of landscape, which has their own complex history (see Moorey, 1991: 115). Hence, with growing professionalism in

archaeology goals of new generation of field archaeologists were more often now unrelated to Biblical Studies. In addition, some of these scholars started to put biblical archaeology into close scrutiny. To give an example, the Dutch scholar Franken challenged the whole trend of biblical archaeology that was understood by Albright and his school. 'An important reason that we still know so little', says Franken 'is that Palestinian archaeology has built an enormous structure of archaeological "evidence" around the historicity of the Old Testament' (see Franken, 1976: 8). Franken was convinced that the data which had been collected by biblical archaeologists was either misinterpreted or misused.

Such new trend in perceiving the connection between the Bible and archaeology led some older biblical archaeologists to change their opinion regarding such connection. One of these scholars is Père de Vaux who in his essay 'On Right and Wrong Uses of Archaeology' writes:

Archaeology does not confirm the text, which is what it is, it can only confirm the interpretation which we give it. If the results of archaeology seem to be opposed to the conclusions of text criticism, the reason may perhaps be that not enough archaeological facts are known or that they have not been firmly established; the reason may also be that the text has been wrongly interpreted (quoted in Moorey, 1991: 137).

Similarly, Wright who was one of the most advocates of 'archaeology proves the Bible', was influenced by the new academic trend. In 'What Archaeology Can and Cannot do', an article which came to light in 1971, he writes, 'conversely archaeology dealing with the wreckage of antiquity, proves nothing in itself. It must be analyzed in a variety of ways, and then with all other data available, its meaning in the overall picture of a cultural continuum is expressed by interpretation' (Wright, 1971: 70). This tune was different from Wright's previous tune.

All these developments led to the emergence of what is known as The Copenhagen School (the minimalists= the deconstructionists), which started to criticize the connection between archaeology and the Bible. Hence, in 1974, T.L. Thompson, an American trained in Germany, published his work *The Historicity of the Patriarchal Narratives: the Quest for Historical Abraham*, which was a devastating work demonstrating the circularity of much of Albright's synthesis in biblical scholarship. Some other deconstructionists such as Whitelam and Davies to mention but two examples, have the believe that a suppression of a contemporary Palestinian

¹⁵ See for example, Running, L. G. & Freedman, D. N. (1975) William Foxwell Albright: A Twentieth Century Genius, New York, Morgan Press.

social identity and the support of an Israeli Jewish identity are implicated from the start in the ways that the study of the history of a region gets associated with the study of the Biblical text. This is because, they go on,

The construction of an ancient Israel and an ancient settlement of the land by means of an uncritical, paraphrastic history fuses academic historicism with religious ethnic memory. Separating these two forms of remembering (in both an ancient history and all the more recent histories of Zionism) has resulted in heated disputes, often with little holds barred. If anything, this current ideological battle illustrates well that a synchronic method with careful attention to contextual variation often uncovers enduring social tension within and among religious traditions, tension that remain unresolved (Zwelling, 2000: 140).

Momigliano writes, 'At the same time we have been cured of early delusions that the reliability of historical traditions can be easily demonstrated by the spade of archaeologists' (1982: 224). Such an impact led to the emergence of what is known as the 'new' archaeology. It was the influence of ideas taken from social science and the philosophy of science that brought about the final demise of biblical archaeology. Hence, biblical archaeology is seen as a prejudiced and unscientific subject.

Conclusion

Biblical archaeology, as has been seen, is a branch of archaeology which takes from the study of the lives and cultures of what is so-called 'Biblical lands' i.e. the ancient Near East (Egypt, Assyria and Babylonia, Palestine, Arabia) its subject matters. The term 'biblical archaeology' is prejudiced in itself because it hinders the study of the past in its own right that what objective study should be. Instead the term 'biblical archaeology' connects the Bible with the archaeological activities in the ancient Near East.

As we have seen, biblical archaeology started with Edward Robinson's to Palestine when he opened the way for the study of the area. In 1838, the American theologian and professor of Biblical literature together with his student Eli Smith went to Palestine. Robinson conducted the first systematic explorations of Palestine. His goal was to recover the historical reality behind the biblical record, thereby making Scripture more accessible. This first excavation in Palestine resulted in the publication of Robinson's book *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mt. Sinai, and Arabia Petraea* in two volumes in 1841 (see Robinson, 1841). Between 1851 and 1852,

Robinson conducted his second visit to Palestine after which he published the third volume of his *Biblical Researches in Palestine* in 1856. As has been seen as a biblical scholar, Robinson was interested in the Bible before his first visit to Palestine. He learned Hebrew for a couple of years under Moses Stuart at the Theological Seminary of Andover, Massachusetts.

In the same year (1865), The Palestine Exploration Fund was found in Britain under the patronage of the Church of England. There were some factors behind its foundation as the first chapter has shown us. First, the success of the early western scholars to tie their findings in Palestine with the Bible created public interests which resulted in gaining both emotional and financial support (see the letter of Layard's friend in 1846 mentioned above). Second, the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* and its assault on the Bible led to great demand for the reaffirmation of the Bible authority and examination of the origins of Christianity. Third, the Crimean War (1853-1856) which broke out mainly for political reasons brought the competition over the religious custody of Holy Places in Palestine into the fore (Moorey, 1991: 18). Accordingly, the goal of the Palestine Exploration Fund, as we have learned, was 'the complete systematic and scientific exploration of the Holy Land, and thus above all to aid in elucidating the Scriptures' (Hilprecht, 2002: 591).

The Palestine Exploration Fund started its activities by sending Charles Warren to excavate Jerusalem in 1867 where he laid the corner stone to all the following work on the topography and history of Jerusalem. The French also conducted their archaeological activities there. Around 1867, the French consulate in Palestine received Clermont-Ganneau (1846-1923) who made a great contribution to the study of ancient Palestine. In 1870, Clermont-Ganneau managed to obtain the Mesha Stone (known also as Moabite Stone) from the Arabs and took it to the Louvre. Also, he made great contributions in term of excavations and recording inscriptions. In the same year, the American Palestine Exploration Society was established. From the beginning, there was cooperation between this new society and the British. Hence, it was decided that the American Palestine Exploration Society should survey Transjordan since the British surveyed western Palestine. However, the two campaigns sent by this organization were a complete failure (see above).

The Palestine Exploration Fund carried on excavating Palestine without interruption. Among the results, as we have seen, was the publication of the excavation at Jericho (1913) and Samaria (1924).

The broke out of the First World War led to the opening up of the Middle East to Western scholars to unprecedented time. Therefore, scholars tend to call the era since the collapse of the Ottoman Empire after the First World War the "Golden Age of Biblical Archaeology." The British and France Mandatory Governments replaced the Ottoman authority in Syro-Palestine and Iraq and local departments of antiquates were created. In 1920, the British Mandatory Government in Palestine founded a Department of Antiquates and chose the archaeologist, John Garstang of Liverpool University to be its director; the later was chosen to be a director of the recently founded British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (1919). The department kept excavating Palestine continuously in the period between 1921 and 1936. W. F. Albright participated in the excavation of Palestine at this time.

In 1922-1923, Albright dug up the site of Tell el-Ful (north of Jerusalem) and identified it with the birth place of king Saul *i.e.* Gibeah. His choice of this site to conduct his first excavation was due to Dalman's advice.

Like Albright, Wright (1909-1974), managed to combine both training in biblical scholarship and experience in archaeology, not least in ceramic typology under the authority of Albright. As far as archaeology was concerned, Wright was convinced that archaeology's 'role was to expose the historical basis of the Judaeo-Christian faith, to demonstrate how revelation had come through history' (Moorey, 1991: 77-78).

Between the wars, as has been seen, the British took the lead in excavating Palestine through the British School of Archaeology and the Palestine Exploration Fund. The Americans continued their interest in Palestine archaeology. The University of Pennsylvania Museum organized an expedition to excavate the citadel of Beth-Shan headed by C. S. Fisher. In 1926, the American School of Oriental Research (founding 1900) conducting some excavations the first of which was sent to Tell en-Nasbe, north of Jerusalem. Between 1926 and 1932, the site which the western scholars regarded it to be the biblical Debir or Kiriath-sepher was parley excavated. In addition, the excavation of Beth-shemesh by Elihu Grant which took place in the period between 1928 and 1933 ought not to be forgotten.

In 1933, as we have seen in the first chapter, Nelson Glueck started a continuous archaeological survey of Transjordan which ended in 1943. In his survey of this vast area, Glueck relied on pottery for identifying sites and then dating them. Such method

of identification may have been accepted at that time. Nowadays, however, it has become clear that the reliance on pottery in establishing identity is no longer justified. There is no one to one correlation between pottery and identity.

In 1944, the Jewish Palestine Exploration Society, as we have seen, undertook the excavation of Khirbet Kerak which was till then carried its Canaanite name Beth-yearh 'City of the Moon'.

These enormous archaeological activities resulted in collecting much archaeological data. However, such collecting of these data and their interpretation have not been without their problems. The present paper only touches upon some of these many defects with biblical archaeology. First of all, as we have argued above, 'Biblical Archaeology' should be defined as an archaeology of the ancient Near East, not least Palestine dominated, defined, and presented by the concerns of the biblical texts. This has been done, the hidden agenda behind biblical archaeology becomes clear. Biblical archaeology is used to seek the verification of the Bible as well the justification of the occupation of Palestine. As we have seen, this can be done either by projecting the political situation of the modern time when biblical archaeologists were working in Palestine into the distant past or the glorifying the Hebraic past.

Secondly, the continued belief in the Bible as the primary source for ancient Israel is no longer justified. Instead, priority should be given to what is called 'New Archaeology' or rather 'Social Archaeology'. If this has been done, many biblical text-based reconstructions will be called into question. Indeed, there is a lack of written sources for the reconstruction of the history of early Israel. However, instead of giving the Bible the priority in filling such gap of information, we should ask ourselves about the reasons behind this state of affairs. Whatever reasons there might be, there is no doubt that the non-existence of a political unity by the name of Israel at the tenth century B.C. is the chief one.

As has been argued in the second chapter, biblical archaeologists' approach to ancient Palestine suffers so many defects. One of these shortcomings is the mechanism by which sites are defined as biblical or Israelite ones. In addition to the fact that there are many difficulties in defining the term "Israelites", much more problems arise when trying to identify some Iron I sites as early Israelites ones. This because such identification supposes that there was a clearly defined Israeli ethnicity at that time which was not the case (see above). Hence, it is inappropriate to use the term "Israelites" in the archaeological

identification of Early Iron I settlements. The second problem in labelling sites as biblical or Israelite sites has resulted from the fact that the majority of biblical scholars have not attempted to give a clear definition of the concept of "ethnicity"; what is an Israeli ethnicity?

The third problem is that biblical archaeologists when identifying some sites as Israelite relied on material culture, not least pottery. They looked at collared rim jars and four-room houses which appeared in Palestine at the beginning of Iron Age as exclusively Israelite since their appearance coincided with that of the Israelites. The assumption lying behind such an approach was that there is a fixed one-to-one relationship between these aspects of material culture (collared rim jars and four-room houses) and Israelite identity. However, examining these materials show that there is nothing about their physical characters that specifically connected them with the Israelite, as we have seen above. Therefore, these types could be belonged to the Jebusites or the Moabites, or to any other human group who once lived their.

In addition, as the above chapters have shown, the claimed objectivity of some biblical scholars can not be justified any longer. The writer believes that there is no non-political value free biblical archaeology. Biblical archaeology since its inception was connected with nationalism which started in the West at the end of the eighteenth century. It becomes clear now that some prominent biblical archaeologists such as William Foxwell Albright, had little regard if any for local concerns. This may be seen in the fact that many valuable artifacts were taken to the west and that native populations were used as cheap labour. Not only this but sometimes these native workers would be beaten as happened in some excavations (see Shanks, 2000: 52).

As has been seen, biblical archaeologists modelled Palestine's geography and history in the image of their own biblical understanding. Therefore, these scholars were instruments in the ideological validation of a political and economic transformation hardly less far-reaching than that so successfully accomplished in the colonial Bethlehems, Nazareths, Hebrons, New Canaans and New Jerusalems of America.

Bibliography

- Aharoni, Y.** 'Problems of the Israelite Conquest in Light of Archaeological Discoveries'. *Antiquity and Survival*, 2, (1957a), 131-150.
- Aharoni, Y.** 'Problems of the Israelite Conquest in the Light of Archaeology'. *Antiquity and Survival*, 2, (1957b), 131-150.
- Aharoni, Y.** *The Land of the Bible: A Historical Geography*, London: Burns and Oates (1967).
- Akenson, D.** (1998) *Surpassing Wonder: The Invention of the Bible and the Talmuds*, London, Harcourt Brace & Company, (1998).
- Albertz, R.** 'Religionsgeschichte Israels statt Theologie des Alten Testaments! pladoyer fur eine Forschungsgeschichtliche Umorientierung'. *Jahrbuch fur biblische Theologie*, 10, (1994), 3-24.
- Albright, W. F.** *The Archaeology of Palestine*, London: Pelican Book, (1949).
- Albright, W. F.** *From the Stone Age to the Christianity*, New York: Doubleday (1957).
- Al-Otaibi, Fahad.** "Becoming Roman Staying Nabataean: Acculturation and Identity in the Roman Near East", Supplement of the *Journal of Semitic Studies* (2011, forthcoming).
- Al-Otaibi, Fahad** From Nabataea to Roman Arabia: Acquisition or Conquest?, BAR. (2011).
- Al-Otaibi, Fahad.** "Nelson Glueck and Nabataean Ethnicity: An Appraisal", *Aram* (21), (2009), 353-371 .
- Al-Otaibi, Fahad.** "Towards a Contrapuntal Reading of History: Orientalism and the Ancient Near East", *J. King Saud University*, Vol. 19, *Arts* (2), (2006), 55-66.
- Al-Otaibi, Fahad** *Rome and Nabataea: Post-Colonialism and the Writing of History*, P.hD. thesis, Manchester University, (2005).
- Amiran, R.** (1970) *Ancient Pottery of the Holy Land*, New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press (1970).
- Armstrong, J.** *Nations before Nationalism*, University of North Carolina Press. (1982).
- Arnold, D.** "Ceramic variability, environment and culture history among the Pokom in the vally of Guatemala". IN Hodder, I. (Ed.) *The Spatial Organisation of Culture*. London: Duckworth. (1978), 39-59.
- Artzy, M.** 'Incense, Camels and Collared Rim Jars: Desrt Trade Routes and Maritime Outlets in the Second Millennium'. *Oxford Journal of Archaeology*, 13, (1994), 121-147.
- Barton, J.** "Historical-critical approaches ."IN Barton, J. (Ed.) *Biblical Interpretation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (1998).
- Ben-Arieh, Y.** *The Rediscovery of the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century*. Jerusalem: Magnes Press (1975).
- Ben-Arieh, Y.** (1972) 'The Geographical Exploration of the Holy Land'. *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, 104, 81-92.
- Berlin, I.** *Against the Current: Essays in the History of Ideas*. New York: Viking Press (1980).
- Bewer, J. A.** 'Edward Robinson as a Biblical Scholar'. *Journal of Biblical Literature*, 58, No. (4), (1939), 355-363.
- Bowler, P. J.** *The Invention of Progress: The Victorians and the Past*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell (1989).
- Bright, J.** *Early Israel in Recent History Writing*. London: SCM Press Ltd. (1956).
- Brown, I.** 'Watchers for the Second Coming'. *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, 39, (1952), 441-458.
- Charles-Picard, G.** "What is Archaeology?" IN Charles-Picard, G. (Ed.), *Larousse Encyclopedia of Archaeology*. New York, G.P. Putnam's Sons. (1972).
- Coote, R.B. and Ord, D.R.** *The Bible's First History. From Eden to the Court of David with the Yahwist*. Philadelphia; Fortress (1989).
- Daniel, G. E.** *The Origins and Growth of Archaeology*. New York:

- (1967).
- Davis, T.W.** *A History of Biblical Archaeology*, Ph.D., The University of Arizona (1987).
- Delitzsch, F.** *Babel und Bible*, (tr. Leipzig, J. & Hinrichs, C.), Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co. (1902).
- Delitzsch, F.** *Babel and Bible: Three Lectures on the Significance of Assyriological Research for Religion*. Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Co. (1906).
- Dever, W. G.** "Syro-Palestine and Biblical Archaeology". IN Knight, D. A. & Tucker, G. M. (Eds.) *Hebrew Bible and its Modern Interpreters*. Philadelphia, Chico Fortress/Cholars. (1985), pp. 31-74.
- Elliott, M.** *Archaeology, Bible and Interpretation:1900-1930* . Ph.D., the University of Arizona (1998).
- Etheredge, Laura** (Historic Palestine, Israel, and the Emerging Palestinian Autonomous Areas Middle East: Region in Transition, The Rosen Publishing Group (2011).
- Feinman, P. D.** *William Foxwell Albright and the Origins of Biblical Archaeology – By Peter Douglas Feinman*. London: Andrews University Press (2004).
- Finkelstein, I.** *The Archaeology of the Israelite Settlement* . Jerusalem (1988).
- Finkelstein, I.** 'The Archaeology of the United Monarchy: An Alternative View'. *Levant*, 28, (1996), 177-87.
- Fletcher, I. & Ishchenko, N.** *Crimean War: A Clash Of Empires*. London: Spellmount Ltd., (2004).
- Franken, H. J.** 'The Problem of Identification in Biblical Archaeology'. *Palestine Exploration Quarterly*, 108, (1976), 3-11.
- Frick, F. S.** *The Formation of the State in Ancient Israel: A Survey of Models and Theories*. Almond Press, (1985)..
- Fritz, V.** *An Introduction to Biblical Archaeology*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press (1994).
- Glueck, N.** 'The Bible in the Light of Modern Archaeological Discoveries'. *Journal of Educational Sociology*, 27, No. (8), (1954), 360-368.
- Glueck, N.** *Rivers in the Desert*. New York Farrar, Straus and Cudahy, (1959).
- Gnuse, Robert.** "The Emergence of Monotheism in Ancient Israel: A Survey of Recent Scholarship." *Religion*, 29 No. (4), (1999), 315-336.
- Hallote, Rachel S.** *Bible, Map and Spade: The American Palestine Exploration Society, Frederick Jones Bliss and the Forgotten Story of Early American Biblical Archaeology*, The Amazon, (2006).
- Harris, W. V.** *Rome's Imperial Economy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (2011).
- Hester .J. J.** *Introduction to Archaeology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, (1976).
- Hilprecht, H. V.** *Explorations in Bible Lands During the 19th Century*. New Jersey: Gorgias Press, (2002).
- Hodder, I.** "Simple correlations between material culture and society: a review". IN Hodder, I. (Ed.) *The Spatial Organisation of Culture*. London: Duckworth. (1978).
- Holman Bible Editorial Staff. *Holman Concise Bible Dictionary*. B&H Publishing Group (2011).
- Hopkins, J. W.** 'Nineteenth-century Maps of Palestine; Dual Purpose Historical Evidence'. *imago Mundi*, 22, (1968), 30-36.
- Hunt, E. D.** *Holy Land Pilgrimage in the Later Roman Empire AD 312-460*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, (1982).
- Hyslop, Stephen G. and Robin Currie.** *The Letter and the Scroll: What Archaeology Tells Us About the Bible*, The Amazon, (2009).
- Jacobs, Joseph.** *Studies in Biblical Archaeology*, The Amazon, (2010).
- Jameson, J.H.** Interpretation of Archaeology for the Public. In: Pearsall DM (ed) *Encyclopaedia of Archaeology*. London: Elsevier Inc.(2008).
- Jayne, Arthur Garland.** *The Bible*, London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent (1911).
- Jones, S.** *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*. London, Routledge (1997).
- Kenyon, K.** *Digging Up Jericho*, New York: Frederick A. Praeger Publisher (1957).
- Kenyon, K.** *Digging Up Jerusalem*. London: Ernest Benn Ltd. (1974).
- Lemche, N. P.** 'Is it Still Possible to Write a History of Israel'. *SJOT*, 8, (1994), 165-190.
- Levy, Thomas Evan.** *Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism*, The Amazon (2010).
- Maier, G.** *Biblical Hermeneutics*. Wheaton Ill: Crossway Books (1994).
- Miller, J. M. & Hayes, J. H.** *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*. London, SCM Press (1986).
- Miller, J. M.** "Israelite History". IN Knight, D. A. & Tucker, G. M. (Eds.) *Hebrew Bible and its Modern Interpreters*. Philadelphia: Chico Fortress/Cholars, (1985).
- Momigliano, A.** 'Biblical Studies and Classical Studies: Simple Reflections about Historical Methods'. *Biblical Archaeologist*, 45 (1982).
- Moorey, R. A.** *Century of Biblical Archaeology*. Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press (1991).
- Orser, C. E.** *A Historical Archaeology of the Modern World*. London: Plenum Press (1996).
- Palmer, Douglas et al.** *Fortune and Glory: Tales of History's Greatest Archaeological Adventurers* , D&C. (2008).
- Pearlman, M.** *Digging up the Bible*. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc. (1980).
- Posnansky, M.** 'Aspects of early west African trade'. *World Archaeology*, 5, (1973), 149-162.
- Price, R.** *The Stones Cry Out: What Archaeology Reveals About the Truth of the Bible*. New York: Harvest House. (1997).
- Ra'ad, B.** *Hidden Histories: Palestine and the Eastern Mediterranean*. London: Pluto Press (2010).
- Robinson, E.** *Biblical Researches in Palestine, Mount Sinai, and Arabia Petraea*. Boston: Crocker and Brewster. (1841).
- Saggs, H. W.** *Assyriology and the Study of the Old Testament*. London: University of Wales Press (1969).
- Sayce, A.** 'The Latest Discovery in Palestine'. *SST*, 34, (1892), 543-549.
- Shanks, H.** 'Against the Tide: An interview with Maverick Scholar Cyrus Gordon'. *Biblical Archaeology Review*, 26, (2000), 52.
- Silberman, N. A.** 'Desolation and Restoration: The Impact of a Biblical Concept on Near Eastern Archaeology'. *Biblical Archaeologist*, 54, No. (2), (1991), 76-87.
- Simon, R.** 'The Struggle for the Christian Holy Places in Eretz-Israel in the Ottoman Period, 1516-1853 [Hebrew]'. *Cathedra*, 17, (1980), 107-126.
- Smith, H. B. & Hitchcock, R. D.** *The Life, Writings, and Character of Edward Robinson*. New York (1863).
- Sutton, Susan Buck and Anna Stroulia (eds)**, *Archaeology in Situ: Sites, Archaeology and Communities in Greece*. Lexington Books (2010).
- Whitelam, K. W.** "The Social World of the Bible". IN Interpretation, B. (Ed.) *Biblical Interpretation*. Cambridge:

- Cambridge University Press (1998).
- Whitelam, K. W.** *The Invention of Ancient Israel*. London: Routledge (1996).
- Whitelam, K. W.** 'Recreating the History of Israel'. *JSOT*, 35, (1986), 45-70.
- Williams, M. H.** "θεοσεβης γαρ ην- the Jewish tendencies of Poppaea Sabina'. *JTS*, (1988), 97-111.
- Wiseman, D. J.** 'Obituary: William Foxwell Albright'. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 35, No. (2), (1972), 346-348.
- Wright, G. E.** 'What Archaeology Can and Cannot do'. *Biblical Archaeologist*, 34, No. (3), (1971), 69-76.
- Wright, G. E.** *Biblical Archaeology*. London: Blackwell (1957).
- Zwelling, J.** 'The Fictions of Biblical History'. *History and Theory*, 39, (2000), 117-141.

تاريخ فلسطين القديم بين علم الآثار الأوروبي والتوراة: دراسة نقدية

فهد مطلق العتيبي

أستاذ التاريخ القديم المشارك بجامعة الملك سعود

(قدم للنشر في ٥ / ٥ / ١٤٣٢ هـ، وقبل للنشر في ٢١ / ٦ / ١٤٣٢ هـ)

الكلمات المفتاحية: التاريخ القديم، فلسطين القديمة، الآثار الأوروبية، الآثار التوراتية، التوراة، الثقافة المادية، الفخار، نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار.

ملخص البحث. يعتبر التاريخ القديم من أهم الحقب التاريخية والتي تتقاطع أحياناً كثيرة مع الحاضر. وهذا التقاطع قد يكون سياسياً أو اقتصادياً أو دينياً. ولا يوجد تاريخ يكون فيه هذا التقاطع واضحاً كتاريخ فلسطين القديم. حيث كان لعلم الآثار الغربي (التوراتي) دور كبير في تناول هذا التاريخ وتشكيله تشكيلاً خاصاً. وتكمن خطورة هذا التشكيل في وجود العديد من أوجه الخلل في الأساس الذي بني عليه. ومن أوجه هذا الخلل اتخاذ التوراة نطاقاً لدراسة هذا التاريخ. في هذا البحث سنتناول نشأة علم الآثار التوراتي. معرجين على أهم التوجهات لهذا العلم. ثم سنتقل للحديث عن بداية عمله في فلسطين، وهو ما يسميه الخطاب الغربي الاستعماري European Imperial Discourse: "اكتشاف فلسطين" (The Discovery of Ancient) Palestine. ثم سنتقل بعد ذلك لمعالجة تشكيل هذا العلم لتاريخ فلسطين القديم محددتين أهم نقاط الضعف في هذا التشكيل. ثم سنقوم بوضع خاتمة هذا البحث.