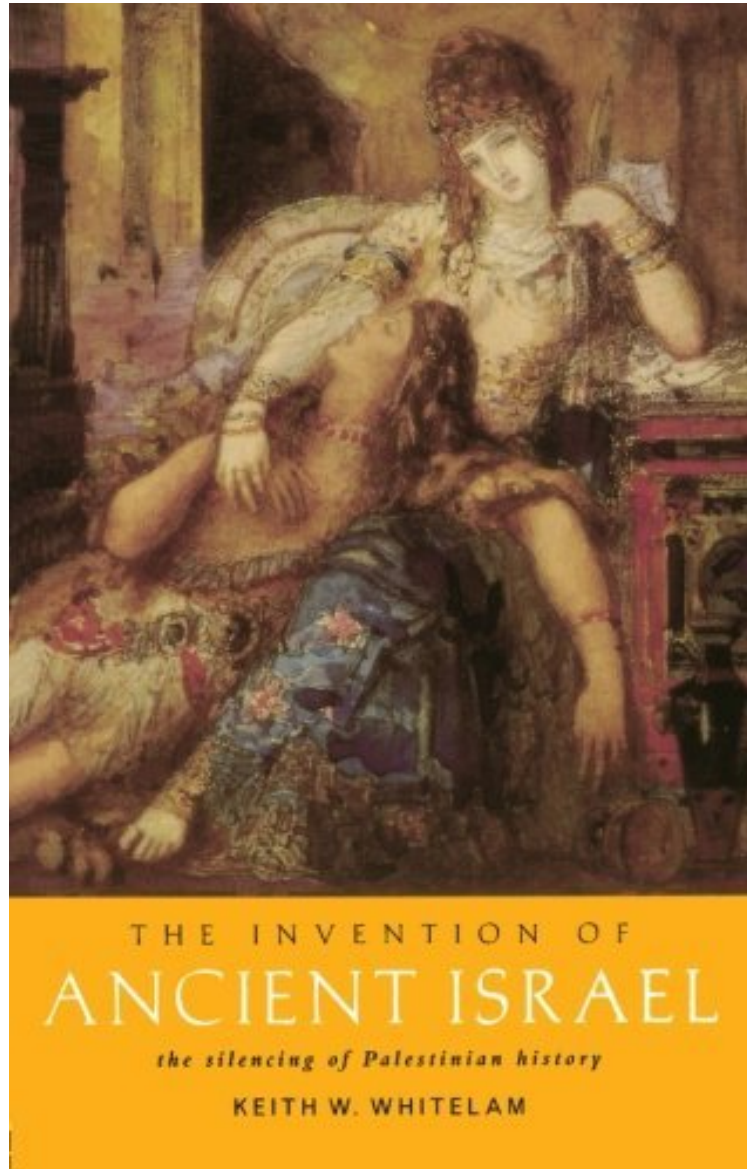


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The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History

Keith W. Whitelam

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Keith W. Whitelam : The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History:

5 of 7 people found the following review helpful. If you like historiography...By A. New Yorker I recommend "The

Invention of Ancient Israel" to anyone interested in how history is researched and written. It's more about historiography--the study of historical writing--than about history per se, although it includes much of the latter as a necessary consequence. To everyone interested in this book--pro or con--I also highly recommend Prof. Hayden White's work. Here are a few more quotes from Prof. White relevant to Prof. Whitelam's themes: From the article *The Burden of History*, in the journal *History and Theory*, Vol 5. No. 2: "We choose our past in the same way we choose our future. The historical past therefore, is, like our various personal pasts, at best a myth, justifying our gamble on a specific future, and at worst a lie, a retrospective rationalization of what we have become through our choices." "Historical systems differ from biological systems by their capacity to act as if they could choose their own ancestors." "The historical past is plastic in a way that the genetic past is not. Men range over it and select from it models of comportment for structuring their movement into the future. They choose a set of ideal ancestors that they treat as genetic progenitors." "In choosing our past, we choose a present; and vice versa. We use the one to justify the other. By constructing our present, we assert our freedom; by seeking retroactive justification for it in our past, we silently strip ourselves of the freedom that has allowed us to become what we are." (--summarizing Sartre's view of history.) From *The Fiction of Narrative* (collected essays, 2010): "The practical past is made up of all those memories, illusions, bits of vagrant information, attitudes and values which the individual or the group summons up as best they can to justify, dignify, excuse, alibi, or make a case for actions to be taken in the prosecution of a life project." 0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. repetition of same idea By qua This book could be cut down at least in half. I gave it three stars because the information presented is important --- and probably new to most readers. tthose who follow "biblical" archeology will have already suspected that the "finds" are at odds with the stories 0 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Important work. By Severo Important work. Finally some truth in the subject of Canaanite history and the rational analysis of the history of the region without having it just be a story canvassed by The Cult of Yahweh. Why has it taken so long to shed rational light on Levantine history outside the fairy tales of Yahwehists (Christians, Muslims,...)? Bravo! Hopefully one day the true true history of the region will be known and its rich polytheistic traditions gain the attention they rightly deserve, and should have been given all along.

The Invention of Ancient Israel shows how the history of ancient Palestine has been obscured by the search for Israel. Keith W. Whitelam argues that ancient Israel has been invented by scholars in the image of a European nation state. He explores the theological and political assumptions which have shaped research into ancient Israel by Biblical scholars, and contributed to the vast network of scholarship which Said identified as 'Orientalist discourse'. Keith W. Whitelam's groundbreaking study argues that Biblical scholars, through their traditional view of this region, have contributed to dispossession of both a Palestinian land and a Palestinian past. This is important reading for historians, biblical specialists, social anthropologists and all those who are interested in the history of ancient Israel and Palestine.

"The *Invention of Ancient Israel* is a remarkable work of scholarship, certainly audacious enough, despite its painstaking manner, to undermine many unthinking presuppositions about ancient biblical history . . . the book possesses that keen independence of spirit and vision that is so rare and so invigorating when one encounters it." - Edward Said, "The Times Literary Supplement" "This is a brave, fascinating and important book." ---Sunday Times ... "fascinating ... This is a timely, pioneering study ... author is to be congratulated for producing an extremely provocative and, for the most part, faithful mirror in which the discipline of biblical studies may behold its unflattering reflection." - "Journal of Biblical Literature" About the Author Keith W. Whitelam is Professor of Religious Studies and Head of Department at the University of Stirling. He is the co-author of *The Emergence of Early Israel in Historical Perspective* (1987), and has produced a series of articles on ancient Israelite and Palestinian history.