



The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History

Keith W. Whitelam

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The Invention of Ancient Israel shows how the true history of ancient Palestine has been obscured by the search for Israel. Keith W. Whitelam shows how ancient Israel has been invented by scholars in the image of a European nation state, influenced by the realisation of the state of Israel in 1948. 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'.

This study concentrates on two crucial periods from the end of the late Bronze Age to the Iron Age, a so-called period of the emergence of ancient Israel and the rise of an Israelite state under David. It explores the prospects for developing the study of Palestinian history as a subject in its own right, divorced from the history of the Bible, and argues that Biblical scholars, through their traditional view of this area, have contributed to dispossession both of a Palestinian land and a Palestinian past.

This controversial book is important reading for historians, Biblical specialists, social anthropologists and all those who are interested in the history of ancient Israel and Palestine.



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