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Wheels of Fortune: The Alphabet

It may be a surprise to realize that the letters I am using now, in fact the letters people use and teach their children to use, or the ones they guess on the TV show “Wheel of Fortune,” originated in the East Mediterranean region more than 3500 years ago at a time when the people living there were Cana’anites.

Yet, as I explain in Chapter 1, while Cana’an is idealized as a land of great bounty, the Cana’anites themselves (generalized as the Other) are demonized as a people—a prerequisite for justifying why they (and others) could be slaughtered and dispossessed of their lands. Given such rapacious attitudes toward them, it is no wonder that they are not given the full credit for a great invention such as the alphabet. A reader might say: “But I am told the alphabet was introduced to ancient Greece by the Phoenicians.” This is true if one accepts the usual terminology, or euphemism. “Phoenician,” however, whether a term assigned by the Greeks or a local identification that became widespread, applies to coastal Cana’anites who were culturally indistinguishable from people living inland.¹ The coast is the home of Cadmus (or Kadmos), who is said to have traveled from Šūr/Tyre to found the city state of Thebes and introduce the alphabet to Greece, and whose name is really *qdm* if we take out the Greek ending *-us*. It is the same larger region where people lived in city states between Egypt and Mesopotamia and the region from which the Carthaginians also emerged to found Carthage (now in Tunis) and other settlements across the whole Mediterranean.

There are other distracting ascriptions, biases, and credit-taking which relate to the alphabet’s beginnings and the cultural environment that resulted in its transmission across the Mediterranean. To dispel them is to understand the role of writing in a historical context as well as to go beyond its current limitations in order to discover its promises.

PRIMAL ORIGINS

By virtue of its medial position, Cana’anite culture was a crucial creative force in the development of the phonetic alphabet. Being

a non-empire and an outward-looking, migratory society helped it to take this step of logical abstraction and communicative economy based on the neighboring accomplishments of cuneiform and hieroglyphic. The earlier writing systems of Mesopotamia and Egypt were indeed the first, the basis of the advance to follow. Those two systems contained hundreds of signs based on pictorial representation in the case of hieroglyphic and a syllabic principle in the case of cuneiform—somewhat cumbersome and limited in use to specialized scribes. The novel idea was to find a sort of sound shorthand, just the right number of signs to represent the spoken language efficiently.

We don’t know where exactly in Cana’an the alphabet first originated—though Jubayl in Lebanon (ancient *Jubla*; Greek *Byblos*) or a location in southern Palestine is most likely. Southern Palestine, near the borders of Egypt, seems the more probable geography, in view of the discovery of a proto-alphabet at Serabit el Khadim, a turquoise mine in Sinai dating to the Middle Bronze period. For its inception, the alphabet benefited from this intermediary point of interaction by adapting the idea of pictographs. (Its somewhat later implementation at Ugarit shows how the same alphabet was adapted to cuneiform technology at a location closer to Mesopotamia.) It began to take form, using pictures of common objects and their initial sounds for 28 letters sufficient to represent the language in writing. The signs were derived from essential shapes and aspects fundamental to the development of civilization, natural forces, and parts of the human body.

If one looks at the original signs of the alphabet, the current forms of letters used in European and other scripts are already evident and conform to what they now signify in most cases, especially in capital letters. The first letter reproduced the head of a bull, an animal associated with godly power. What better place to start than with the connection to the holy and one’s chief god? Thus “aleph,” which comes from *alif* (meaning a tamed animal) denoted the process of domestication that is essential for cultivation of land and plants and the gathering of livestock, thus settlement and civilization. This first sign stood for the three long vowels *ā-ū-ē*. The capital letter A in Greek and Latin scripts is an evolution from that first shape, rotated first sideways then upside down. The next basic letter, B, comes from *beit*, which meant “house” in Cana’anite (and still means “house” in Arabic), and so took the shape of a basic place of habitation, which stood more or less like a square first, then

acquired stylization with time, dictated by the medium and direction of writing. The sign for L has not really changed much, except in direction of writing, and is very similar to the current *lam* in Arabic. The letter K (from *kf*, palm) was derived from a shape that has four fingers, later stylized into a three-fingered palm, and further simplified and rotated so as to produce the close “k” of today. The letter M started by using marks that typified sea waves (related to *ym*, meaning sea), while R originally had the shape of a human head in profile (from *rās*, head), evidenced by the fact that Greek *rho* is shaped like a P.



Figure 5.1 Evolution of the alphabet signs
ABKLMORT

NON-RECOGNIZING BIASES

No doubt the alphabet is one of the greatest intellectual inventions in history, which is why it is subject to many claims. Without it, there would be none of the systematic recording that has accumulated over the past three millennia. In fact, without a simple alphabet there would probably be no such thing as organized history and no extensive libraries of expanding knowledge—also none of the dependent advances as we know them today. It was, as Marshal McLuhan said, a “most radical technology,” whose later “extensions” enabled the “West” to harness “aggregate uniform power,” the processing of data, classification, literacy, and systematic science.

Yet McLuhan wants to identify the alphabet as “Graeco-Roman.”² This hyphenated conclusion is based partly on the assumption that Greek script has the distinction of including “vowels,” making Greek and then Latin rather than “Phoenician” the first “true” alphabet.³ Of course, the original alphabet had the basic long vowels (*ā-ū-ē*), and the short vowels were understood (or can, now, be indicated by diacritical marks in Arabic). The Greeks adapted the Cana’anite system to enable them to write *their* language. Since not all the available consonants were needed for their sounds they turned some of them into vowels, as in the sign for *’ayn*, an eye (see Figure 5.1), which became the omicron (other adjustments occurred, such as *h* ultimately representing the *E* while the sign for the guttural *ḥ* was used for *H*). As we have already seen, “Phoenician” as a euphemism itself displays a complex of biases: it is another name for Cana’anite (as *rasna* became Etruscans), a designation also useful to biblicists who want to demean them; whether as a localized name or an appellation used for coastal Cana’anites by the Greeks, it is equivalent to the Roman *Poenicus* (Carthaginians), hence the insulting sense of the word “punic” in English dictionaries (see Chapter 1, note 21). The Romans vilified the Carthaginians, as they did the Etruscans; and the Bible degrades the Cana’anites as pagans destined to become slaves or be exterminated; later in the New Testament “Phoenicia” appears as a more limited geographic area in northern Palestine and southern Lebanon.

So, use of the term “Phoenician” only serves to cloud the issue, preventing the recognition that would give full credit to the Cana’anites. It is an elision that avoids contradicting the preferential model of Western civilization and the select elements of its Judeo-Christian-Greek-Roman construct, which (as I detailed in Chapter 1) contains, in each and all the elements combined,

entrenched biases against other civilizations and people, including the Babylonians, Canaanites, Egyptians, and Philistines. In much scholarship, in traversable tropes, ancient civilizations placed outside the sanctioned model are appropriated for their advances but nevertheless also labeled as decadent, money-oriented, imperialistic, or pagan. Biblical William Foxwell Albright, while unable to neglect Canaanite contributions, nevertheless maintains that the decimation of these pagans (much like that of the native "Indians" in North America) was inevitable and "fortunate," since it replaced "gross mythology" with "lofty monotheism." Then, inconsistently (or consistently with such supremacist thinking), Albright admires the "superior Romans" and their "singularly elevated paganism."⁴

Another allied prejudice relates to the direction of writing (right to left or left to right), as if this represented something other than a difference in habit or convenience. Latin was borrowed from the Etruscan script, which was borrowed (like the Greek) from the Canaanite invention. The Romans had taken over use of the Etruscan alphabet, which was made into Latin by merely changing the direction of writing. So, to lend Latin more distinction, the notion was devised of deeming left-to-right to be more advanced, while viewing Etruscan as "retrograde" because of its right-to-left orientation.⁵ In reality, in its beginnings about 4000 years ago, the alphabet showed no right/left preferences, but was written in all directions. Epigraphists puzzled over ancient Greek inscriptions until they deciphered that, like proto-Canaanite, they were written boustrophedon. This not only suggests an earlier date for Greek borrowing from Canaanite (around 1500 BCE), rather than from the later period when the Canaanite script took a more fixed right-left direction, but also the ridiculousness of the notion that left-right is somehow a more refined stage. The eventual shift in Greek to the left-right direction was not unprecedented. At Ugarit in northern Syria, around 1400 BCE, scribes adapted figuration by using a reed stylus, the cuneiform printing technology, for the 30 signs representing the same alphabet sounds. Contrary to other "Semitic" scripts, Ugaritic was imprinted from left to right on the tablets, probably to avoid smudging the clay.

Martin Bernal writes that "language is the *sanctum sanctorum* of the Aryan Model."⁶ On the subject of the alphabet, some scholarship wants to make the distinction between a consonantal alphabet and a "true" alphabet as a way of "privileging the distinctive role of Greek consciousness."⁷ Other attempts have been made to wield the alphabet's evolution and characteristics to fit into the

appropriative complex and amalgam called "Western civilization." Often, the biases implicit or explicit in one of the constituents of this construction aim to privilege and sanctify Greek or Roman or Judeo-Christian traditions.

OTHER CLAIMS

Grammatology (the linguistic study of script), like biblical scholarship, is therefore often characterized by approaches designed to take advantage and to interpret by agenda. While the agenda is diminishment of the real inventors in the case of "Graeco-Roman" credit-giving, it is appropriation by subscribers to biblical credit-taking. It is not uncommon to see in scholarship various claims that backdate Hebrew as a language or a script in order to place it in a position of ascendancy, not dissimilar to what Bernal describes. One extreme example is a book by Leonard Shlain who, in order to invent a theory about how Yahweh gave the alphabet to his chosen males first in the world, has to dismiss the "Phoenicians" as ethnically and culturally incapable of devising such a great system and to bypass Ugarit as if it never existed.⁸

Even in encyclopedia accounts (where more accuracy might be expected), occasional hedging, invention, and euphemism seem intended to establish particular claims or to create uncertainties. The *Britannica* article on "Writing" and *Collier's Encyclopedia* entry on "Alphabet" backdate an early "Hebrew" alphabet to the "period of Saul and David" in the eleventh century BCE. Thus they sideline the overwhelming doubts about David's historicity, neglect to mention that the "Israelites" were "preliterate," or that Hebrew cannot be that old, or that the "Gezer calendar," which both articles cite as proof, is "Phoenician" (that is, Canaanite) with some of its letter characteristics being close to Moabite.⁹ The older edition of *Encyclopaedia Judaica* (1971) clarifies that the "Hebrews" adopted the Canaanite alphabet and "followed the current Phoenician script until the ninth century," then adopted a variety of Aramaic. Even if one doubts the equation of "Hebrew" with "Israelite" and with the much later religion Judaism, this hypothetical explanation of the descent of Hebrew as a script at least avoids moving branches and burying other branches in the alphabet tree.

The tree in Daniels and Bright's *The World's Writing Systems* is generally accepted: from proto-Canaanite, the 28-letter linear script developed around 2000 BCE and wedge-shaped Ugaritic around 1500 BCE. From linear Canaanite developed Old Arabian scripts and

“Phoenician” around 1200 BCE. The reduced “Phoenician” 22-letter alphabet dominated northern and western regions of Greater Syria until about 850 BCE, with various “script varieties” deriving from it, such as Aramaic. From Aramaic (an international language from about 700 BCE) developed later “Semitic” scripts, including square Hebrew. Arabic more likely developed from a pre-1300 BCE South Semitic group, since it retained a 28-letter alphabet.¹⁰ In a side development that has become major, all Western alphabets later evolved from the Cana’anite. “About 1700 BCE, someone in Canaan ... created the alphabet. This brilliant achievement would revolutionize the development of writing and literacy throughout the Western world.”¹¹ Despite any doubts about language classification related to this region, perhaps we should try at least to let *this* tree stand.

SOUND

Languages are best related through sound rather than script. It is fallacious to note only similarities in script form, or to rely on such similarities to create connections, especially when looking at ancient languages. The connection to Arabic of the original Cana’anite, Southern Arabic and Ugaritic is more demonstrable if sounds are examined rather than merely the shapes of letters, which are different from each other. What the signs represent and their number are the more important considerations. Yet, it is a very common bias in scholarship to think of the later, more abridged 22 signs as the original alphabet, to use the term “Phoenician,” and to transcribe “Phoenician” and other ancient languages using the much later 22-letter square Hebrew (which is really unacknowledged square Aramaic).¹²

The original Cana’anite had 28 signs and sounds. Similarly, Ugaritic had basically 28 sounds, although it used cuneiform technology to etch 30 signs on clay tablets and wanted to distinguish the three alephs, *ā-ū-ē*. Arabic today has 28 sounds. Thus, the sound systems of Arabic, proto-Cana’anite, South Arabian, and Ugaritic are basically identical.

What distorts the evidence of this fact is that Arabic letters evolved differently and eventually the writing used the cursive joining of letters to form words. While the sign for *lam* *ل* did not change much, the other sounds are the same though the script is distant. In Arabic, joining letters (a later development) resulted in certain evolutions intended to achieve economy and ease of writing.

Economy is further achieved by using the same sign for two or three sounds (as in *ع ح Ğ ħ* and *ر ز*), somewhat adapting their shapes when they are placed in initial, medial or terminal positions, and making sound distinctions by using dots and diacritical marks. That the order of the present Arabic alphabet is somewhat different from, say, Ugaritic was simply the result of later scholarly ordering, so that sounds represented by similar signs are placed next to each other. This is proof of evolution in Arabic, a positive development that (in contrast to fossilized languages) evidences constant use and inventiveness.

WRITING WRITING

“The certitude that everything has been written negates us or turns us into phantoms.” The disorder made order by infinite alphabetic arrangements Borges imagines in his mixed trope “The Library of Babel” is yet to come—though one hopes not. In an ontological void, the space of language is defined by the library, “a monotonous line of language left to its own devices,” where a book—because it cannot be all books and is no longer where speech adopts a form—will be shelved among other “endless murmuring.”¹³

Our contemporary predicament, however, is that all conditions of language apply at once: literature and interpretation are self-perpetuating, but there are also single books that many consider the last word, about which commentary multiplies. Assuming the finality of any writing only leads to an endless reshaping of it (often perversely) in ever-changing psyches and times. When that happens, minds monomaniacally fixate on a point spinning on itself. But why can’t writing and its materiality be employed, instead, to call into question all claims of totality and to challenge systems, making the very limitations of writing as hitherto employed an advantage by allowing “the unveiling of the silences, conflicts, and power realities in all religious and cultural traditions”?¹⁴ This materiality itself, in probing criticism and insightful analysis of material cultures, in its exposure of hierarchies and repressions, can avoid the weight of a writing tradition, or its futile fate.

So, paradoxically, it is in writing that we must generate models of how to transmit knowledge, how to avoid a fate of writing. Just as in the historic abuse of writing there are traces of its gaps, so in the origin of our writing systems we might find the prospect of its future.

Recognition here is paramount because it is an irony of ironies that the originators of the alphabet so central to the globalization

of knowledge should be subjected to the tropes of civilizational hate and cultural appropriation. There are lessons in this language history that should annul any Babel bias. The alphabet seems to have developed in a climate of cultural openness and exchange where all participants were willing to offer and to accept debt. Otherwise, it might not have evolved to become the varied alphabets of East and West. This accommodative nature at its source could be a model for cultural globalization and for how people might live together, though the history of the alphabet's inventors highlights the dangers in such openness if not everyone participates in it and acknowledges the participation of others.

Writing in the materiality of signs need not be a *terminus ad quem*. Beyond its practical applications, it has been, like the art in caves, a means to express the silences of the self, the loneliness of existence, the charm against death that comes every moment and at the end. Poet or scribe, alone or in concert, Ilimilku notched in clay this episode of the Ba'al cycle in the city of Ugarit about 3400 years ago. As he withholds the rains, Ba'al recalls 'Anat from her ritualistic autumnal violence so she can relay a plea to ʾĪl (El) to build a palace that will acknowledge his victory over Mōt (Death) and Yam (Sea). He calls her from *her* warring, albeit on behalf of the people and of him:

<p><i>qryy.bars / mlhmt</i> <i>st.b'prt.ddym</i> <i>sk.slm.lkbd.ars</i></p>	<p>“Bury war in the earth; set strife in the dust; pour a libation into the midst of the earth, honey from a jar into the midst of the steppe.</p>
<p><i>ar bdd.lkbd.sdm</i></p>	<p>Grasp your spear (and) your mace: let your feet hasten towards me, let your legs hurry to me!</p>
<p><i>hsk.'sk.'bsk</i> <i>'my.p'nk.tlsmn</i> <i>'my / twth.isdk.</i> <i>dm.rgm / it.ly.w.argmk</i></p>	<p>For I have a word that I would say to you, a message that I would repeat to you: a word of tree and whisper of stone, the sighing of the heavens to the earth, of the deep to the stars, I understand the thunder which the heavens do not know, a word unknown to men and which the multitudes of the earth do not understand.”¹⁵</p>
<p><i>hwt.w.atnyk.</i> <i>rgm / 's.w.lhst.abn</i> <i>tant.smm.'m.ars</i> <i>thmt.'mn.kbkbm</i> <i>abn.brq.dl.td'.smm</i></p>	
<p><i>rgm ltd'.nsm</i> <i>wltbn / hmlt.ars</i></p>	

Ilimilku and his consorts labored in the profession of recording the drama and movement of forces. Though their world was also troubled with struggle and weariness, they reflected on its delicate balance and retained its wonder.

It is no longer possible to retrieve this fusion of oral and written, primal and civilized sensibilities. Nothing, though, should prevent learning of this past and unearthing its wisdom, or including it in our consciousness and priorities—much as we revise theories and epistemologies. By contrast, a life devoted to appropriation, accumulation of wealth, and abuse of others through willed ignorance or stereotyping unleashes ever more predatory and calculating acts. Even charity is then deceptive. Cultural connectivity is not realized merely through mechanical, economic, electronic globality. And exclusivist ideologies will only continue to transfer identities into claims for innovations, gods, or lands. “A life without joy—what advantage does it have over death?” asks an Ugaritic school text.¹⁶ Absence of recognition is another form of death, the death of culture as a wholesome sustaining force. Instead, it is possible to realize that we hold much in common if we see history together rather than use it for our special purposes. An inclusive model that globalizes recognitions, that breaks old molds, and that unshackles knowledge, is more compelling now than before. It might reconcile us to what has been unjustly devalued—but has been part of us from the beginning.

CHAPTER 5

1. See remarks in Chapter 1 (and notes 18 and 21) and Chapter 6 (and note 10 there) for more on the terms “Phoenician” and “Canaanite.”
2. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), 87.
3. The adjective “true” is used by Steven Roger Fischer, *A History of Language* (London: Reaktion, 1999), 97, 108.
4. Quoted in Keith Whitelam’s *The Invention of Ancient Israel: The Silencing of Palestinian History* (London: Routledge, 1996), 83–4.
5. Graeme Barker and Tom Rasmussen, *The Etruscans* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 96–7.
6. Martin Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization. Vol. 1: The Fabrication of Ancient Greece, 1785–1985* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1987), 413.
7. Peter T. Daniels and William Bright, *The World’s Writing Systems* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 88.
8. Leonard Shlain, *The Goddess Versus the Alphabet: The Conflict Between Word and Image* (New York: Viking, 1998), 68–71.
9. Robert K. Logan, *The Fifth Language: Learning a Living in the Computer Age* (Toronto: Stoddard, 1995), 144; Marc Zvi Brettler’s *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 143; Thomas L. Thompson’s *The Messiah Myth: The Near Eastern Roots of Jesus and David* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2006); H. W. F. Saggs, *Civilization Before Greece and Rome* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 83. The “Gezer” calendar is so transparently unlike square Hebrew, and so close to Moabite and “Phoenician” signs of that period, it is incredible how anyone can claim it as Hebrew.
10. Saggs, *Civilization Before Greece and Rome*, 83–4.
11. Michael D. Coogan, ed., *The Oxford History of the Biblical World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 58.
12. See the discussion of Aramaic and Hebrew in Chapters 1, 7, and 10.
13. Jorge Luis Borges, “The Library of Babel,” in *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings* (New York: New Directions, 1964); Michel Foucault, *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1977), 29–31, 51, 60, 66–7.
14. David Tracy, “Writing,” in Mark C. Taylor, ed., *Critical Terms for Religious Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 392.
15. The translation is taken from N. Wyatt, *Religious Texts from Ugarit: The Words of Ilimilku and His Colleagues* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 78, and the transcription from J. C. L. Gibson, ed., *Canaanite Myths and Legends*, second edition (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1978), 49. I suggest that the third-to-last line could be rendered, “I show thunderbolts that the sky cannot contain.”
16. Manfred Dietrich, “Aspects of the Babylonian Impact on Ugaritic Literature and Religion,” in N. Wyatt, et al., *Ugarit, Religion and Culture* (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1996), 42.

CHAPTER 6

1. Sharon Herbert has given this lecture about her research on second-century BCE seals in various places. See <http://www.archaeological.org/webinfo.php?page=10224&clid=145>, among other sites. For a marvelous recording of the extent of Canaanite / “Phoenician” civilization across the Mediterranean, see Sabatino Moscati, ed., *The Phoenicians* (New York: Rizzoli, 1999), originally published as *iFenici* (Milan: Bompiani, 1988).

2. Trude and Moshe Dothan, *People of the Sea: The Search for the Philistines* (New York: Scribner, 1992); Seymour Gitin, Trude Dothan, and Joseph Naveh, “A Royal Dedicatory Inscription from Ekron,” *Israel Exploration Fund Journal* 47 (1997), 1–15. Jonathan N. Tubb’s *Canaanites* (London: British Museum Press, 1998) and the work of Israeli archaeologist Israel Finkelstein, among others, suggest the theory about “Israelites” being “Canaanites.” Among mid-twentieth-century Israeli intelligentsia, there developed a now largely defunct “Canaanite” movement.
3. Eric M. Meyers, “Israel and Its Neighbors Then and Now: Revisionist History and the Quest for History in the Middle East Today”; available at: <http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/emeyers.shtml>
4. This misunderstanding does not need documentation as it is so common in the West and of course in Zionist scholarship. A work like Barbara Tuchman’s classic Zionist interpretation of British history in relation to Palestine, *Bible and Sword: England and Palestine from the Bronze Age to Balfour* (New York: Ballantine, 1984 [1956]), is replete with this typical confusion between present Jews and ancient people: the Hebrews and “the modern survivors of the Old Testament” have been gathered from “exile” in the “restoration of Israel” with the partial (she insists it is partial) help of British biblically affected thinking along the same lines.
5. For an Israeli example see my discussion of author Abraham B. Yeshoshua’s confused use of “Israelite,” “Jew,” and “Israeli” in “Editing in a Time of Dispossession,” *Profession 2009* (Modern Language Association), 150–1. I suggest that even critics of the Zionist system don’t make the distinction: for example, both Nur Masalha, in a good chapter about the un-historicity of the Bible in *The Bible and Zionism* (London: Zed Books, 2007), and Nadia Abu El-Haj in her competent analysis of the role of archaeology in Israeli society in *Facts on the Ground: Archaeological Practice and Territorial Self-Fashioning in Israeli Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001), fail to notice that “Jewish” and “Israelite” are altogether two different things. In his keen criticism of traditional biblical history, Masalha goes so far as to praise theorists like Israel Finkelstein for the appropriative notion that “Israelites” emerged peacefully from “Canaanites.” Shlomo Sand, who demolishes Zionist mythology about a “Jewish people” and their “exile” and “return” (see below), does not seem to make the distinction clear between Judaism and the biblical tradition about “Israelites.”
6. For more, see the discussion of DNA and other studies in Chapter 11. On issues related to population, see the works I mention in Chapter 1, and specifically Thomas L. Thompson in his *The Mythic Past* and an article “Biblical Archaeology and the Politics of Nation Building,” *Bible and Interpretation* (August 21, 2009) (available at <http://www.bibleinterp.com/opeds>), an expanded version of which appears in *Holy Land Studies* 9.2 (2009). On David, see Thompson’s *The Messiah Myth: The Near Eastern Roots of Jesus and David* (London: Jonathan Cape, 2006) and its references to other studies about the un-historicity of a King David, and also Marc Zvi Brettler, *The Creation of History in Ancient Israel* (London: Routledge, 1995), 143. On the myth of Exodus, see Chapter 7 (note 11).