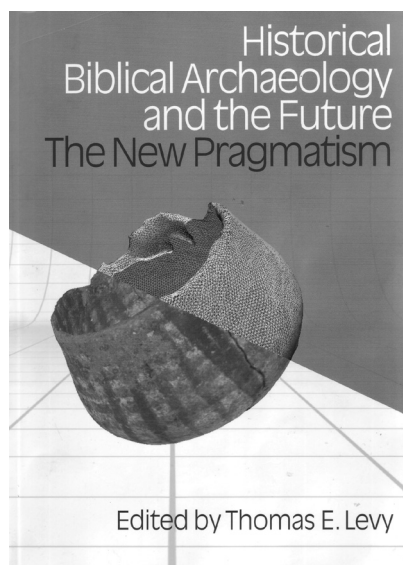


Book Review



Historical Biblical Archaeology and the Future: The New Pragmatism,
edited by Thomas E Levy, 2010, London and Oakville: Equinox, pp xvi & 375, ISBN 978-1845532581, USD 40.

Christopher J. Davey

Professor Thomas E. Levy, Norma Kershaw Chair in the Archaeology of Ancient Israel and Neighbouring Lands, University of California, San Diego, has already contributed a couple of valuable books including *The archaeology of society in the Holy Land* (Continuum, 1998) and *The Bible and Radiocarbon Dating* (Equinox, 2005). This volume of papers continues the theme of the latter arguing that the application of scientific recording and analyses seen in historical archaeology elsewhere in the world has the potential to make Biblical Archaeology relevant again. Biblical scholars such as Thomas L Thompson have claimed that archaeology can tell us nothing and many German scholars have simply ignored it altogether.

The occasion for the book was the establishment of the Norma Kershaw Endowed Chair in the Archaeology of Ancient Israel and Neighbouring Lands at the University of California, San Diego, Judaic Studies Program. Interestingly, the holder of the chair must have experience in the archaeology of ancient Israel and one of its neighbours.

Science to the rescue

Levy sets the scene in the first chapter entitled 'The New Pragmatism: Integrating Anthropological, Digital, and Historical Biblical Archaeologies'. He briefly traces the demise of Biblical Archaeology and discusses geographical terminology deciding 'the Levant' is preferable to 'Syro-Palestine' because it is culturally and politically neutral. He discusses the idea of 'pragmatism' which is

derived from some recent American philosophers and which 'views the truth of a proposition or idea in its observable consequences' (9). The approach emphasises compromise and incremental solutions over grand visions and 'authoritarianism/dogma/ideology/fundamentalism'. Levy takes up Dever's call for Biblical Archaeology to be more inclusive and less loaded with ideology. This is the intention of the book. Levy says that to make historical Biblical Archaeology work:-

we need to find ways collectively to harness the scholarly communities interested in historical Biblical Archaeology (archaeology, biblical studies, scientific analytical fields, telecommunications and information technology); funding resources; the possibility of re-establishing historical Biblical Archaeology as an important intellectual resource for societies especially interested in Abrahamic tradition; and the tradition of archaeology as a consumer, user, and innovator interested in testing new theories and methods for research (9).

Interestingly Levy is critical of ASOR for leaving public Biblical Archaeology to the Biblical Archaeology Society. If his archaeological horizon began before Albright he may be less concerned, however he is taking a positive step to propose a solution by means of the application of rigorous methodologies to produce the 'most parsimonious explanation' of the data.

Archaeology may be seen here to be returning to its roots. Robert Wood, John Gardner Wilkinson, Johannes Ludwig Burckhardt, Edward Robinson, William Matthew Flinders Petrie and many others went out to measure and accurately record what they found using the best available equipment. Problems arose when their work became embroiled in the higher criticism debate where it was called upon to contribute evidence beyond its capacity to do so. This book however is based on American archaeological experience and makes little reference to anything prior to Albright.

In modern terms Levy is advocating the adoption of processual archaeology. While archaeologists elsewhere in the Near East adopted this methodology long ago, Israeli archaeology still seems to be dominated by a culture history structure. The current projects employing up-to-date scientific analysis and technology listed by Levy include:-

- Brown University, Computer Vision Research: Promoting Paradigm Shifts in Archaeology, \$2.6m,
- University of Bergen, Global Movements in the Levant Project, \$2.4 m,
- Euro project, Reconstructing Ancient (Biblical) Israel: The Exact and Life Sciences Perspective, \$5m, and
- a number of Californian based imaging and digital data projects.

Levy devotes the remainder of his paper to the development and application of digital recording of excavations and artefacts, and radiocarbon dating, beginning with a description of excavation practice applied by him at Khirbet

en-Nahas, Jordan. He is right that digital recording using GPS systems and GIS software is the future of excavation recording. The sizes of field computers and the equipment costs are significant issues now for archaeologists.

The radiocarbon dating discussion focuses on the progress of calibration and advocates the use of IntCal04 calibration curve for the southern Levant. Again the application of radiocarbon to Khirbet en-Nahas is described. Previous archaeological excavation has led to the conclusion that the area of ancient Edom was not settled before the seventh century BC, but Khirbet en-Nahas is revealing a fairly continuous occupation from the Late Bronze Age into the Iron Age. The absolute dates obtained from radiocarbon analyses reduce the opportunities for uncertainty.

There is a certain mystery in this book with respect to the identity of Biblical Archaeology. While its history and demise is explained in terms of the Biblical Archaeology understood by such people as G. Ernest Wright, in fact what is meant here seems to be Israeli archaeology of the Iron Age. Levy believes that Biblical Archaeology, one assumes Israeli archaeology, should become 'more inclusive and less laden with ideology' (9). While he personally has some ties with non-Israelis, the fact is, this book barely mentions non-Israeli activity. Miroslav Barta's chapter entitled 'Biblical Archaeology' and Egyptology: Old and Middle Kingdom Perspective' is an exception. A discussion about the ideology to be discarded by Israeli archaeology can not be found in the book.

Ethnicity and Israel

Two papers by Prof Shlomo Bunimovitz, Tel Aviv University, and Avraham Faust, Bar-Ilan University, deal with the identification of ancient Israel in the archaeological record. They express the view that it was the archaeological surveys undertaken in the Occupied Territories after the Six-day War that brought about the change in Israeli Biblical Archaeology. Supposedly this work 'liberated' archaeology from the biblical agenda. The claim is surprising as Finkelstein's publication of his surveys and excavation in the Occupied Territories, *The Archaeology of the Period of Settlement and Judges* (1988), was entirely biblically defined as the title would suggest.

Finkelstein's Israelite attributes were claimed to be the four-roomed house and the collared-rim storage jar, however as Faust acknowledges (59) the Jordanian archaeologist, Moawiyah Ibrahim, had shown a decade prior to Finkelstein's work that these features had a distribution well beyond the Occupied Territories. The only trait now accepted to be Israelite is the absence of pig bones, and even that seems to be fairly tenuous given that the contrasting data is derived mainly from one area, which is assigned to the Philistines.

A paper by Assaf Yasur-Landau, University of Haifa, discusses the four-roomed house and the archaeology of households in a paper entitled 'Under the Shadow of the Four-Roomed House'. He also deals with the contrasting

Philistine domestic archaeology and then asks why have archaeologist not identified a typical Canaanite house; there is certainly no lack of data. The answer seems to be that the data from second millennium domestic dwellings is not precise enough to be meaningful.

Faust acknowledges that the term 'Israelite' has been abandoned by many archaeologists because they have not been able to identify the archaeological attributes of the various Canaanite ethnicities. He is sanguine about a solution to the problem because of the extremely large database available, but he makes no comment about its quality; it is in fact unlikely that archaeological records are precise enough to reliably learn about family structure, wealth, economic structure, gender and so on.

A paper entitled 'Biblical Archaeology as Social Action' by David Ilan, Director of the Nelson Glueck School of Biblical Archaeology, Jerusalem, describes two community archaeology projects. One involves students from the city of Modi'in and a nearby site of Givat Sher, which is said to have been occupied from the time of the Maccabees. The aim is to develop community 'political sophistication' by instilling the realisation of the long period of occupation of the land on which they now live.

The second project is at Tel Dan where it is hoped that Israeli Palestinians will learn to co-exist with Israeli Jews. We are told that this dig 'addresses directly the source of the conflict in the Middle East between Israel and the Arabs' (78). How Tel Dan, which had only a comparatively short-term Israelite presence, does this is not explained. An archaeological investigation of the remains of nearby Palestinian villages on Highway 99, the road to Tel Dan, such as *al-Khisas* and *al-Manshiyya*, ethnically cleansed in May 1948, may offer a more promising starting point for such an understanding.

The promoters are right to believe that 'archaeology can give a more nuanced, long-term perspective of their place in the land and history' (78), however, until Israel itself comes to grips with the issues raised by Shlomo Sand, *The Invention of the Jewish People* (trans. Yael Lotan; London & New York: Verso, 2009) and the archaeological indeterminacy of Israelite ethnicity, it is unlikely that they have very much to impart to the indigenous people of Palestine. Ilan hopes that archaeology may contribute positively to group solidarity and counter the negative forms of group solidarity that draw on chauvinism, racism and nationalism (79). There is a strong hint throughout this paper that it is young Israelis and Israeli-Palestinians who need to re-orientate their perspective; the fact is they did not create the current political situation.

The future of Biblical Archaeology

In a paper entitled 'The Archaeology of the Levant in North America' Aaron Burke, Assistant Professor of Archaeology of Ancient Israel and the Levant, University of California, Los Angeles, surveys the current American involvement in Levantine archaeology by listing the relevant academic

teaching positions and field work; the list is much shorter than one might have expected. He believes that while most dissertations allude to 'Israel' or 'Canaan', it is only a consideration of the northern Levant that will enable broader historical questions to be addressed (83). He also advocates the use of 'Levantine' rather than 'Syro-Palestinian' to describe the discipline once called 'Biblical Archaeology', which in this case may not mean Israeli archaeology.

Burke's comment that it is only recently 'for the first time' that the largest excavations may be in the north of the Levant, rather than the south, displays a complete lack of knowledge of the history of the archaeology of Lebanon, Syria and southern Turkey (91). His concern that Levantine Archaeology may not be as attractive as Biblical Archaeology also reveals a failure to appreciate its richness. There are numerous Americans involved in archaeology in Syria, but none are mentioned here. It seems that the contributors to this book are generally unaware of the massive amount of archaeology being conducted elsewhere in the Levant and instead see it as a vacant field which they can usurp with a name change.

Applied Pragmatism

There are six papers offered to illustrate the idea of pragmatism. Czech Egyptologist Miroslav Bárta discusses the Egyptian Old and Middle Kingdom in a paper entitled 'Biblical Archaeology' and Egyptology'. He focuses on Egyptian Old Kingdom trade and other relations with the Levant. The Middle Kingdom discussion focuses on the story of Sinuhe and the influx of people from the Levant into Egypt. Bárta briefly mentions the excavations at Tell el-Dab'a and Tell el-Borg. These excavations used rigorous scientific methods, have direct relationships with the Levant and have biblical ramifications. They represent archaeological pragmatism superior to anything offered in this book and the omission of any serious consideration of them is strange.

A detailed analysis of two intramural burials from Late Bronze Age Ashkelon is presented by Aaron Brody in a paper entitled 'New Perspectives on Levantine Mortuary Ritual'. Brody, who is Robert and Kathryn Riddell Associate Professor of Bible and Archaeology and Director of the Badè Museum, Pacific School of Religion, Berkeley, carefully uses stratigraphic data and Ugaritic texts to propose burial rituals, which he contrasts with the ritual proposed by Professor Manfred Bietak for Middle Bronze tombs at Tell el-Dab'a.

Ann Killebrew is Associate Professor of Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies and History, Jewish Studies and Anthropology, Pennsylvania State University. Her paper 'The Philistines and their Material Culture in Context' summarises our present knowledge of the Philistines and questions the traditional theories about their origins. She canvasses the range of approaches that may be explored. This is a helpful assessment of current thinking.

Eveline van der Steen's paper, 'Judha, Masos and Hayil' describes the recent history and traditions of the Ibn Rashid emirate and suggests that it offers some models to understand the formation of the Israelite kingdom. Dr van der Steen is at the University of Liverpool. The contribution is useful and refreshing. Post-processual archaeology is based on this type of research. The phenomenon of Khirbet Qieyafa, is not considered and there is no discussion of any possibility of nomadic tribal involvement in copper mining and smelting technology, although she does address trade issues. A second study in the paper considers the formation and transformation of oral tradition in tribal society and the biblical stories of King David.

The application section concludes with a paper 'The Four Pillars of the Iron Age Low Chronology' by Daniel Frese and Thomas Levy. This is also a handy summary of the issues. A footnote acknowledges that Finkelstein 'may have softened his position' (187) on the date of the Iron I-II transition. In fact at the 2010 Society of Biblical Literature meeting in Atlanta Finkelstein adopted 950 BC, rather than 920 BC, as beginning of Iron Age II, thus halving the difference between high and low chronologies. The issue has now largely dissipated. The paper also makes practical comments about the recent history of radiocarbon dating in relation to the Iron Age in Israel.

The problem with texts

An adoption of processual methodology will inevitably create a tension with textual material. In this book however it seems to be implied that texts should be part of the scientific analysis, but it is not actually stated that texts are artefacts and should be subjected to similar processes of investigation and interpretation.

The section about texts begins with a paper entitled 'Towards an Anthropological Methodology for Incorporating Texts and Archaeology' by Tara Carter and Thomas Levy. This paper uses Icelandic Sagas to explore the relationship between history, anthropology and archaeology. By focussing on the status of women in the Icelandic Sagas the paper aims to demonstrate that a 'meaningful glimpse of ancient societies' can be obtained and that the maximalist-minimalist debate by contrast has reached a dead end. This is certainly correct. The authors general assumption that the Hebrew Bible is a post-exilic text however is contestable as demonstrated by the following paper.

William M. Schniedewind, Kershaw Chair of Ancient Eastern Mediterranean Studies, Professor of Biblical Studies & Northwest Semitic Languages, University of California, Los Angeles, discusses the issue of the Solomonic gates in a paper entitled 'Excavating the Text of 1 Kings 9'. He sets the scene in the first sentence by calling many 'historical reconstructions' and 'dismissals of historicity' 'naïve' (241); the reviewer would feel more comfortable with the term 'superficial'. After commenting on the rhetorical position of Finkelstein on the subject, Schniedewind demonstrates that 1 Kings 9 was originally a text cataloguing Solomon's

building activity and that a subsequent writer inserted additional comment about Solomon's unsatisfactory dealings with foreigners concerning gold, horses and wives. There is, he says, 'no *a priori* reason to dismiss a 10th century date' for the original text (248). He also draws attention to the absence of any serious comment in the archaeological literature about the last three cities mentioned in the list of building activity, Lower Beth-Horon, Baalath and Tamar, implying that dogmatic theories about the United Monarchy are premature.

In a paper 'Culture, Memory, and History' Ronald Hendel, Norma and Sam Dabby Professor of Hebrew Bible and Jewish Studies in the Department of Near Eastern Studies of the University of California, Berkeley, explores the role of the biblical scholar in relation to history, with the warning that this is work in progress. He begins by referring to Spinoza's distinction between the truth and meaning of ancient writings and after discussion maintains that the historical-critical method is far from dead. He may be right, but whether it has any relevance outside academia is questionable. The paper concludes with a favourable reference to Halpern's suggestion that history in ancient Israel begins with the all-Israel ceremony at Shechem (Joshua 24).

Baruch Halpern, Chaiken Family Chair in Jewish Studies; Professor of Ancient History, Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies, and Religious Studies, Pennsylvania State University, provides a moderately detailed description of the history of the Levant in the mid-10th to mid-8th centuries BC in a paper entitled 'Archaeology, the Bible and History'. He concludes that 'concerning public events, Kings [ie the Book of] is reasonably robust' (271). Papers like this are satisfying to read as we see a scholar opining on all available evidence to reach an understanding of the inter-play between power and politics of the 9th century BC Levant.

Jodi Magness, holds a senior endowed chair in the Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill: the Kenan Distinguished Professor for Teaching Excellence in Early Judaism. Her paper, 'Integrating Archaeology and Texts', discusses the toilet found by De Vaux in the Qumran complex and the texts dealing with defecation. By comparison with the Romans, Jews seem to be coy about the process. Interestingly, Magness does not reference the paper by F. Joe E. Zias, James D. Tabor, Stephanie Harter-Lailheugue, Toilets at Qumran, the Essenes, and the Scrolls: New Anthropological Data and Old Theories, *Revue de Qumran*, 22.4 2006, 631-640, that discusses the defecation area outside the settlement. The Zais *et al* paper is a rigorous application of scientific archaeology that precisely illustrates the approach advocated by Levy.

Back to Biblical Archaeology

The last and shortest section of the book entitled, In Perspective, has six contributions. Dr Aren Maeir, Bar-Ilan University and excavator of Tell es-Safi, writes under the

sub-title 'How I Lost my Fear of Biblical Archaeology and Started Enjoying It'. This is not a very good paper. He belittles the 'Bibel und Babel' controversy as 'simplistic' and portrays the Palestine Exploration Fund as a Bible 'proving' organisation because of the reference in its aims to 'biblical illustration'. His failure to understand the debates of the past leads him to repeat the mistakes. Maeir argues that Biblical Archaeology should embrace all periods from prehistory until Byzantine, all regions from Persia to Rome and that it should be a field excavation activity seen as distinct from the past because it is now a 'scientific endeavour' (301). It may be true that Israeli archaeology is now becoming scientific, but the fact is, that most other forms always were. The Palestine Exploration Fund, for example, used the best scientific equipment available at the time. It was this fact that prevented it from working jointly with the amateurish 'Bible proving' American Palestine Exploration Society in the 1870's survey of Palestine. Maeir has his eye on public perception where Biblical Archaeology still has some attraction. That may be the case, but as an academic discipline Maeir's Biblical Archaeology has very little going for it and finds itself at odds with the last paper in this section by William Dever.

Richard Elliott Friedman, Ann and Jay Davis Professor of Jewish Studies at the University of Georgia, in a paper entitled 'A Bible Scholar in the City of David' also advocates the retention of the title 'Biblical Archaeology'. The paper imparts a few personal anecdotes about his experience as a conservative biblical scholar observing Israeli archaeological excavations over the last thirty years. He mentions Aharoni's Arad temple excavation without acknowledging that Aharoni's *a priori* assumptions led him to dig so carelessly that we now have little idea about the date or significance of this important structure. This is the reason why biblical archaeologists should not apply their discipline in the field, they come with restrictive agendas and they are unable to give all the material they find due attention.

The paper by David Goodblatt, Professor of History and Endowed Chair in Judaic Studies, University of California, San Diego, 'Books and Stones and Ancient Jewish History' will elicit groans from archaeologists because he argues that without texts such as Josephus, we would be unaware that there was a Jewish temple in Jerusalem, implying that results from archaeology can be very limited. Jodi Magness, in a second paper 'The Archaeology of Palestine in the Post-Biblical Period' takes issue with those who would try to interpret Qumran independently of the scrolls. The role of textual material is better discussed in the context of post-processualism, which is not the context of this collection of papers.

Magness' main issue, however, is the lack of archaeology available in American institutions that is 'post-biblical' meaning post 586 BC. She laments the American practice of incorporating archaeology into related departments and not into Institutes or Departments of Archaeology.

Alexander Joffe, Research Scholar at the Institute for Jewish & Community Research, continues Magness' bleak assessment. He is only concerned with Israeli archaeology of the Iron Age. The reason why it has lost its popularity according to Joffe is its 'clash of parochialisms, egos, and unrealistic expectations' (343). This is no doubt correct, but it is only part of the story. Israeli archaeology is an integral part of the State, and while Australians may be blissfully unaware, much of the world's population is disenchanted with the actions of modern Israel. Biblical Archaeology is seriously implicated in this situation. Some public statements by the publisher of this journal prior to 1970 are a case in point. Joffe's assessment of the status of archaeology as viewed by different Middle Eastern political and religious groups is interesting and rather depressing.

The last word is left to William Dever, 'Does 'Biblical Archaeology' have a future?'. Dever seems to think so, but he offers a few words of warning. He points out that Biblical Archaeology is primarily promoted by Christians, not Jews and he makes a number of serious criticisms of Iron Age archaeology in Israel. The declining American funding for archaeology is a concern for him, as it is for the preceding authors, and he commends the commitment of the Adventist and Southern Baptist communities who continue to fund serious archaeological excavations.

Summing up

The excitement with which I began reading this book had dissipated by the end with feelings of disappointment as it became clear that the core issues involve Israeli archaeology. There was a feeling of claustrophobia; so many problems have long been dealt with elsewhere. Excavating permits in other Middle Eastern countries from the 1920's, for example, required the nomination of an epigraphist, together with a surveyor and conservationist to be part of archaeological teams. Texts are an integral part of the archaeological process outside Israel.

When Israel jettisoned the Mandate archaeological jurisdiction in 1948 it set out on a path that has led to the current situation where minimalist biblical scholars can deride its results without fear of a reliable evidence based rejoinder. Dever refers to the problem of personality cult in Israeli archaeology, but without it there would be no groupies and no public interest or media support. Slick presentation is all that is left.

Elsewhere archaeologists are facing the challenges of post-processualism. As Faust notes Israeli archaeology is still dominated by culture history methodologies; some papers in this book advocate a processual approach, a method developed elsewhere forty years ago.

Israeli archaeology certainly needs a make-over, but a name change will not achieve very much, or answer the problems listed by Dever. The attempt by some authors in this book to re-badge Biblical (Israeli) Archaeology as part of Levantine Archaeology is problematic. Levantine Archaeology is alive and well, it continued in Syria and

Jordan throughout the 20th century only stopping for the World Wars. Most archaeologists in this field will not appreciate the baggage of Israeli biblical archaeology being brought to their doorstep. The hysteria associated with the Tell Mardikh tablets in the late 1970's was the last such encounter. Nor will they appreciate involvement with the politics, factionalism, variable competence and narrow focus of Israeli Iron Age archaeology.

The advanced state of archaeology elsewhere in the Levant is not appreciated by any of the contributors to this book and some, like Dever, actually admit to ignorance about the matter. Levy's excavation in Jordan is repeatedly alluded to while the many other American excavations barely rate a mention. The journal of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem (now the Council for British Research in the Levant) began in 1969 and is called 'Levant'. At the 2010 ICAANE conference the second most numerous national group were from Italy, and most of their archaeological work was based in the Levant.

The use of the term 'Biblical Archaeology' in this book confuses the issues discussed. For most Christians, Biblical Archaeology includes the New Testament period and extends across the Mediterranean to Rome. For American academics, Biblical Archaeology is associated with the writings of people like G. Ernest Wright and Paul Lapp; its methodological shortcomings have been thoroughly examined and dealt with. The resurrection of the term here as an alias for Israeli Iron Age archaeology, makes the subject of Israeli archaeology far more difficult to address. Its presence in the book's title may sell a few more volumes, but it will also hasten disillusionment with the issue. Dever expresses the view that 'Biblical Archaeology' is not now a discipline, but a dialogue between archaeology and biblical studies. He is certainly correct.

The titles and positions of the contributors to the book are not mentioned in it; they have been added to this review after a web search. The number of contributors holding chairs endowed by American Jewish interests is noteworthy. How this may play out is unclear, the scholars themselves are all of unquestionable academic integrity, however I detect an ignorance of the issues at the heart of the conflict in many Jewish and Zionist environments outside the Middle East. In such circumstances even-handedness is hard to achieve, as Ilan's paper demonstrates.

Of concern is the fact that some of the book's contributors have opposed the appointment of non-Zionist and/or Palestinian scholars to US academic posts and have been associated with lobby groups, such as Campus Watch, set up to carry out this purpose. The signs are not good, but Levy at least does advocate the need for the archaeology of Israel to become part of the region and the book can be seen in the context of trying to prepare Israeli archaeology for this exposure. The Jordanians allowed Thomas Levy and some Israelis to excavate in the Wadi Faynan, but as Dever observes, the Israelis are not likely to follow suit (352). In Dever's view, archaeology in Jordan is not

politicised, however the continuation of this situation can not be taken for granted.

There are much greater forces at work shaping archaeology in Israel and the role it is allowed to fulfil. Until it breaks out of the politically profiled mould it will not be very welcome elsewhere. It needs to acknowledge its own shortcomings such as the illegal excavations and on-going looting in the Occupied Territories, especially in Jerusalem, the bulldozing of non-Israelite archaeological strata and its contribution to Israeli myths that have led to and justified the dispossession of the Palestinians. It may also contemplate inviting Palestinian archaeologists to participate in the archaeological excavation of sites with strata deposited during the last two millennia.

Dever notes that German, French and British archaeological institutes in Jerusalem are virtually 'defunct'; in fact their focus is now elsewhere. Dever does not speculate on the reason for this change. There are no doubt a number of reasons, but the fact is that many archaeologists once associated with these Institutes were profoundly uncomfortable with Israeli government policy toward the Palestinians and found work elsewhere more enjoyable. While many countries from time to time have awkwardnesses to be worked around, the state of affairs in Israel has been ongoing for over sixty years. Many scholars now boycott Israeli academics. While Zionists are inclined to trivialise this action, they do so from a position of ignorance and disrespect for those who are making a serious statement about something that deeply troubles them.

Levy argues that Israeli archaeology should reject ideology, but he does not indicate what ideologies he has in mind and if they may include the dogma that underpins the modern state of Israel. What ever the case, until Israeli archaeologists adopt a pragmatic approach of justice for Israel's original inhabitants, genuine inclusiveness will be elusive. Ilan Pappé's book *The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine* (London and New York: Oneworld, 2006) sets out the Israeli evidence for the events of 1948 and it explains how the landscape changed at that time; it has to be the starting point for any meaningful dialogue between Israeli and non-Israeli archaeologists.

The canvas of archaeology in the Mediterranean and the Middle East is broad and irrespective of its title as Near Eastern, Levantine, Biblical or whatever, it does seem to advance with a reasonable level of inclusiveness. Jordan, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon and Cyprus are all open to competent scholars. Turkey is less so and Iraq since the arrival of the American coalition has been closed. Where Israel is concerned the issues are complicated by its politics. While hostilities with the indigenous population continue and borders remain in dispute it will be difficult for Israel's archaeologists to gain unqualified acceptance. If Israeli archaeologists were able to address some of the problems raised by Dever and deal with the issue of ideology, mentioned but not explored in this book, the situation would be much more open. Indeed archaeology may then actually contribute to peace and security in the region.