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How Jeroboam II became Jeroboam I

The Deuteronomistic redactors of the book of Kings are almost silent about the reign of Jeroboam II. This can be explained by the fact that they transferred the foundation of the sanctuaries of Dan and Bethel to the time of Jeroboam I. The exodus tradition and the Jacob narrative in the Northern kingdom were made "official" under Jeroboam II.

Keywords: Jeroboam, Northern tradition, Jacob, Exodus, 1 Kings 12, 2 Kings 14, Hosea 12

Jeroboam II in a Deuteronomistic perspective

Whether or not one adheres to the theory about the existence of a "Deuteronomistic History," there is no doubt that the story of the Israelite and Judahite monarchies is written from a Judahite or Southern perspective, promoting the ideology based on cult centralization (with Jerusalem as the "chosen place") and monolatry (Yhwh is the only god to be worshipped). Consequently, the Judahite redactors of the books of Kings understood the Northern Kingdom as "deviant" from the very beginning.

The Deuteronomistic description of the reign of Jeroboam II is astonishingly short, despite the fact that he ruled for about forty years:

2 Kings 14:23–29: In the fifteenth year of King Amaziah son of Joash of Judah, King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel began to reign in Samaria; he reigned forty-one years. He did what was evil in the sight of Yhwh; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he caused Israel to sin. *He restored the border of Israel from Lebo-hamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of Yhwh, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet, who was from Gath-hepher. For Yhwh saw that the distress of Israel was very bitter; there was no one left, bond or free, and no one to help Israel. But Yhwh had not said that he would blot out the name of Israel from under heaven, so he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Joash*. Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and all that he did, and his might, how he fought, and how he recovered for Israel Damas-

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cus and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah[1], are they not written in the Book of the Annals of the Kings of Israel? Jeroboam slept with his ancestors, the kings of Israel; his son Zechariah succeeded him.[2]

Here in these seven verses, one or several scribe summarize forty-one years on the throne – the longest reign of a monarch in the Northern kingdom. Jeroboam's reign is presented tersely and does not give much information about the king's political and military achievements.

The note begins with the statement that Jeroboam did what is evil in in the eyes of YHWH and went in the footsteps of Jeroboam his namesake. But the nature of this "evil" is not explained. If we follow the biblical account, he did continue the sins of the "first Jeroboam," which were the cultic activities at Dan and Bethel (see below). On the other hand, one may observe a certain embarrassment, especially in verses 26–27, which are often considered to be the work of a later (post-dtr) redactor.[3] In this passage, the long reign of Jeroboam is justified with the idea that he was a tool of Yhwh, by whom he saved Israel from its enemies. Verse 27 apparently contradicts prophetic announcements that Yhwh would destroy the North. It could also be a critical allusion to prophecies of Amos, who announced the end of Jeroboam and his house,[4] although the verse does not contain straightforward quotations from the book of Amos. The expression *mḥh šm*, which is used in v. 27, occurs elsewhere in the HB only in Deut 9:14 and 29:19. The latter passage appears in a context of curses,[5] so that 2 Kgs 14:17 can also allude to these texts, claiming that these curses did not (yet) come true during the time of Jeroboam.

Astonishingly, Jeroboam II is credited with a territorial restoration that reminds the borders of the "United Monarchy" under David and Salomon (for Lebo-hamath, cf. 1 Kgs 8:65). Does this mean that Jeroboam is here

1 This idea is strange. It was often argued that this note refers to Iaudi / Sam'al (Zinjirli), as e. g. in E. Würthwein, *Die Bücher der Könige. 1.Kön 17–2.Kön. 25* (ATD 11,2; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 375. But the Akkadian references to Iaudi denote the kingdom of Judah. Therefore, one may speculate whether we originally had here "Israel," a term that was later changed into Judah by a Judean glossator. Cf. M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB; New York: Doubleday, 1988), 162.

2 The translation is taken from NRSV, with some modifications. As we will explain below, the phrases in italics are probably later additions to the original text.

3 Würthwein, *Könige*, 375–376.

4 F. Crüsemann, "Kritik an Amos im deuteronomistischen Geschichtswerk. Erwägungen zu 2. Könige 14,27," in *Probleme biblischer Theologie. Gerhard von Rad zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. H. W. Wolff; München: Kaiser, 1971), 57–63; S. Hasegawa, "Relations between Amos 6:13–14 and 2 Kgs 14:25–28," *AJBI* 33 (2007): 92–102.

5 Deut 29:20: "All the curses written in this book will descend on them, and Yhwh will blot out their names from under heaven."

presented as "achieving the glories of David and Solomon?"[6] However, the idea that Lebo-hamath is the Northern boundary of Israel appears mostly in late texts from the Persian period, such as Num 13:21; 34:8; Josh 13:5; Ezek 47:20, 48:1; 1Chr 13:5; and 2 Chr 7:8. For this reason, Fritz and others have considered v. 25 to be also a later addition,[7] since it anticipates the note in v. 28, which seems to be an older tradition according to which Jeroboam achieved an extension of the Israelite borders in the North, controlling Aramean territories. According to Israel Finkelstein, this information cannot be taken as historical. It seems clear, however, that Israel did gain territories in the north.[8] Amos 6:13 presupposes that Karnaim had become Israelite in the first half of the eighth century, and domination of Israel over the Upper Jordan valley is shown by 2 Kgs 15:29, which describes the campaign of Tiglath-Pileser in this region (732 BCE). Archaeology has shown that in the first half of the eighth century BCE, Israel took over Dan and retook Hazor from Aram,[9] so that, under Jeroboam II, Israel reached its maximal territorial extension.

Summing up thus far, the Deuteronomistic editors of 2 Kgs 14:23–24.28–29 (vv. 25, 26–27 are later additions) are surprisingly short-spoken about Jeroboam II. They only mention his deed and strength and refer to the annals of the kings of Israel. This extremely short comment about the Israelite king with the longest rule might be explained by the fact that the Deuteronomists transferred events that happened under Jeroboam II to Jeroboam I.

If Jeroboam II was the king who stabilized and extended the kingdom of Israel, we may suspect that he or his counselors also undertook actions on the ideological or cultic level. Indeed, it is quite plausible to accredit Jeroboam II with the attempt to "officialize" the exodus and Jacob traditions. The Northern origin of the Jacob story is evident,[10] and it is very plausible for the exodus tradition.[11] As for the latter, the Deuteronomists attributed

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6 Cogan and Tadmor, *II Kings,* 162. As suggested to me by I. Finkelstein, it may well be that the "reality" of the United Kingdom reflects the geopolitical situation under Jeroboam II that was later transferred into the time of David and Solomon.

7 V. Fritz, *1 & 2 Kings: a Continental Commentary* (Continental Commentaries; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 324.

8 I. Finkelstein, "Stages in the Territorial Expansion of the Northern Kingdom," *VT* 61 (2011): 227–242.

9 Finkelstein, "Stages," 241.

10 For more details, see below, as well as I. Finkelstein and T. Römer, "Comments on the Historical Background of the Jacob Narrative in Genesis," *ZAW* 126 (2014): 317–338. There is no need to emphasize the Northern connection of the Jacob narrative. It is shown by the places and sanctuaries Jacob is linked-to: Bethel, Gilead, Penuel, Mahanaim and Shechem, as well as his connection to Aram.

11 For other Northern traditions, see the article of I. Finkelstein in this volume.

the worship of Yhwh as the god who brought Israel out of Egypt to Jeroboam I, the "founder" of the Northern kingdom. It is difficult to imagine why they would have invented a Northern location for the exodus tradition, if it were not the case.

The Northern origin of the exodus tradition

According to 1 Kings 12, Jeroboam I built sanctuaries in Bethel and Dan, where he places bull statues:

So the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold. He said to the people, "You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt." He set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan (v. 28–29).

The plural form is intriguing and also appears in the story of the golden calf in Exod 32:4, which presupposes 1 Kgs 12:28 and transfers Israel's "original sin" into the wilderness. Even if the text speaks of two sanctuaries, it is clear that the bulls or calves do not represent different deities, but refer to Yhwh, the national god. One could imagine that the plural alludes to Yhwh in his different manifestations: the Yhwh from Bethel and the Yhwh from Dan.[12] The author of the story would therefore criticize a "poly-Yahwism" in the North.[13] But this would only make sense in 1 Kings 12, not in Exodus 32, which speaks of only one bovine statue. Therefore, the best solution is to understand the plural as polemical, a scribal transformation of an original cultic exclamation in the singular. Comparing 1 Kgs 12:28 with the opening of the Decalogue shows that the exclamations are very similar.

Exod 20:2	1 Kgs 12:28
I am Yhwh your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt	Here are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt

It would have been easy for a redactor to modify the verbal form of the root *ʿ-l-h* in 1 Kgs 12:28 from a singular to a plural.[14] This Judean redactor of 1 Kings 12 apparently wanted to convince his audience that the Northern cult at Bethel and Dan (and elsewhere) was not only "idolatrous," but also

12 Cf. the ostraca from Kuntillet Ajrud, which attest to the Yhwh from Samaria and the Yhwh from Teman.

13 H. Donner, "'Hier sind deine Götter, Israel!'," in *Aufsätze zum Alten Testament aus vier Jahrzehnten* (BZAW 224; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 67–75, 71–75.

14 Interestingly, the singular form is still preserved in the recapitulation of the golden calf episode in Neh 9:18.

"polytheistic." This modification probably occurred before 1 Kings 12 had been taken over by the author of Exodus 32.

The sanctuary at Dan

The mention of Dan in 1 Kings 12 is astonishing. According to Eran Arie, Israel Finkelstein and others, Dan only became part of Israel in the 8th century.[15] Following their reconstruction, Dan was destroyed at the end of the late Iron I. Apparently unoccupied during most of Iron IIA, it was rebuilt by Hazael and later conquered by Israel for the first time around 800 B.C.E. or somewhat later. In this case, 1 Kings 12 in its present form cannot be placed under Jeroboam I. It is a polemical fiction that transfers an event from the time of Jeroboam II to the early days of the Northern kingdom. As Angelika Berlejung puts it, 1 Kings 12 does not contain "reliable historical information about the time of Jeroboam I, but reflects historical facts … of the time of Jeroboam II."[16] For these reasons, the story of 1 Kings 12 should be considered as a transfer of events that happened during the time of Jeroboam II into the beginnings of the Northern kingdom. The establishment of Dan and Bethel as "boarder sanctuaries" would indeed fit well into the time of Jeroboam II.

With regard to Bethel, one can recall the confrontation between Amos and Amaziah in Amos 7:10–17. The priest Amaziah chases Amos – who announces Jeroboam's death in battle and Israel's exile – from Bethel, by qualifying the place as "the king's sanctuary, and the temple of the kingdom" (מִקְדַּשׁ־מֶלֶךְ הוּא וּבֵית מַמְלָכָה, v. 13). This sounds as though Bethel had recently gained a new and important status. The rise of Bethel as a state sanctuary can be discerned through archaeological investigations. Israel Finkelstein and Lily Singer-Avitz have argued that, in the first millennium B.C.E., Bethel only had a substantial settlement from the 8th until the early 7th centuries and declined during the Babylonian and Persian periods.[17] This means that

15 E. Arie, "Reconsidering the Iron Age II Strata at Tel Dan: Archaeological and Historical Implications," *Tel Aviv* 35 (2008): 6–64; Finkelstein, "Stages," 230.

16 A. Berlejung, "Twisting Traditions: Programmatic Absence-Theology for the Northern Kingdom in 1 Kgs 12:26–33* (the 'Sin of Jeroboam')," *JNSL* 35 (2009): 1–42, 24. For a similar argument made more on literary considerations, see C. Levin, "Amos und Jerobeam I.," *VT* 45 (1995): 307–317 = idem, *Fortschreibungen. Gesammelte Studien zum Alten Testament* (BZAW 316; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2003), 256–264; and J. Pakkala, "Jeroboam Without Bulls," *ZAW* 120 (2008): 501–525.

17 I. Finkelstein and L. Singer-Avitz, "Reevaluating Bethel," *ZDPV* 125 (2009): 33–48. Note however that 2 Kings 17 presupposes some cultic activities in Bethel.

when 1 Kings 12 mentions Bethel as a Northern religious center in the early days of the kingdom, the statement is chronologically problematic, as is the mention of Dan. The importance of Bethel fits neither the 10th century B.C.E. nor the Babylonian and Persian periods. "1 Kgs 12 re-projects the flourishing Bethel of Jeroboam II to the times of Jeroboam I."[18]

The Northern exodus tradition according Hosea 12

The time of Jeroboam II is probably also reflected in the text of Hosea 12. This chapter may echo, if not the voice of the prophet himself, then the situation in the North during the second half of the 8th century. But as we will see, much later dates have been suggested. The author of this text seems aware of many episodes from the Jacob narrative and puts Jacob's acts in opposition to Yhwh's deed.

Whereas Jacob is connected to a deity that is called "Elohim" or "El,"[19] Yhwh presents himself as the god from the land of Egypt (12:10), a statement reminiscent of 1 Kings 12 and the opening of the Decalogue. Yhwh himself is described as a deity related to Egypt.

In Hos 12:13–14, Jacob's flight to Aram and his "slavery" because of a woman are contrasted with Yhwh's prophet or prophets who lead Israel out of Egypt and who guard it. It is usually assumed that the prophet mentioned in v. 14 is Moses,[20] but interestingly he is not named.[21] Why is that so? The fact that the prophet remains anonymous is probably related to the prophetic group behind Hosea 12, a group that seeks legitimacy by claiming that there was already a prophetic mediation at the time of the exodus. The idea is apparently to present the prophets as the mediators of Yhwh's will, which of course would also legitimize the prophetic author of this text.

One may tentatively suppose that the Northern exodus tradition that was "officially established" under Jeroboam II did not yet contain the figure of Moses. Perhaps Moses became the hero of the exodus narrative only when this tradition was adopted by the South after 722 B.C.E., where the exodus

18 Berlejung, "Twisting Traditions," 23.

19 מַלְאָךְ in 12:5 is probably a gloss that transformed the original "El" into a "messenger"; most commentaries agree on this.

20 See for instance E. Blum, "Hosea 12 und die Pentateuchüberlieferungen," in *Die Erzväter in der biblischen Tradition. Festschrift für Matthias Köckert* (ed. A. C. Hagedorn and H. Pfeiffer; BZAW 400; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), 291–321.

21 Some scholars, however, think that the double mention of the prophet in this verse refers not to one but to two different prophets, see M. Odell, "Who Were the Prophets in Hosea?," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 18 (1996): 78–95.

narrative was finally written and combined with the Moses tradition.[22] Indeed, a possible Judahite origin for Moses is indicated by the notice in 2 Kgs 18:3. This verse mentions a bronze serpent in the Jerusalemite temple, made by Moses and destroyed by King Hezekiah. The passage is certainly not a late invention, since it contradicts the Deuteronomistic picture of Moses,[23] who is presented as an iconoclast (Exodus 32). The story in Numb 21:4–9, which explains the origin of a bronze serpent with healing functions, was written down much later by authors who wanted to explain that this statue was associated with Moses in the first Temple.[24]

Jeroboam II and the establishment of the Jacob tradition as the story of Israel's ancestor

Let us return briefly to Hosea 12 and its summary of the Jacob tradition. As is often observed,[25] this presentation contains clear allusions to major episodes from the Jacob cycle in the book of Genesis: his birth and struggle with his brother, and allusion to his name (Gen 25:24–26; cf. Hos 12:4); his combat with God (El) or his angel, and the etymology of the name "Israel" (32:23–32; cf. Hos 12:5); the encounter at Bethel (28:10–22*; cf. Hos 12:5); the theme of enrichment (30:25–42*; cf. Hos 12:9); Jacob's flight from Aram (31:1–22*; cf. Hos 12:13); an allusion to Galaad as "heap of stones" (Gen 31:46–47; cf. Hos 12:12); and the motif of servitude because of a woman (29:15–30*; cf. Hos 12:13). These parallels indicate a relationship between Hosea 12 and the Jacob narrative in Genesis.

It is difficult to imagine that the Jacob narrative in Genesis would have been constructed based on Hosea 12. This text in Hosea presupposes the audience's knowledge of a Jacob story, and the numerous literary parallels

22 For more details see T. Römer, "Auszug aus Ägypten oder Pilgerreise in die Wüste? Überlegungen zur Konstruktion der Exodustradition(en)," *forthcoming*.

23 R. Albertz, *Religionsgeschichte Israels in alttestamentlicher Zeit* (Grundrisse zum Alten Testament 8; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992), 1:281.

24 K. Koenen, "Eherne Schlange und Goldenes Kalb. Ein Vergleich der Überlieferungen," *ZAW* 111 (1999): 353–372, 359–363. See also J.C. Gertz, "Hezekiah, Moses, and the Nehustan. A Case Study for the Correlation between the History of Religion in the Monarchic Period and the History of the Formation of the Hebrew Bible," in *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel and North America* (ed. J.C. Gertz *et al.*; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 745–760, who argues however that Moses and the serpent were "imported" from the North.

25 See for instance Blum, "Hosea 12"; M. Schott "Die Jakobspassagen in Hos 12," *ZTK* 112 (2015): 1–26, who claims however that these parallels in Hos 12 are later additions taken from the canonical Jacob narrative.

may indicate that this story was at least partially close to the narrative structure we know from the book of Genesis. Of course one could also argue that Hosea 12 is a very late text, as J. Wöhrle has, following others, has recently done.[26] Wöhrle's argument is that Hos 12:5 (בֵּית־אֵל יִמְצָאֶנּוּ וְשָׁם יְדַבֵּר עִמָּנוּ[27]) presupposes the Priestly layer of the Jacob story,[28] because the root *d-b-r* does not appear in Genesis 32, but only in Gen 35:14–15 (P) (וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב אֶת־שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר דִּבֶּר אִתּוֹ שָׁם אֱלֹהִים בֵּית־אֵל). However, this kind of comparison poses a methodological problem: Is a very common term like the root *d-b-r* enough to claim that Hosea 12 presupposes P? It should also be noted that, contrary to Genesis 35, in Hosea 12 the root is not used to explain the name of the sanctuary. So one could also argue that P knew Hosea 12. But such a parallel is not obviously sufficient for claiming literary dependence.

Interestingly, there is also a negative allusion to the figure of Jacob in the book of Jeremiah. In Jeremiah 9, which most scholars consider to belong to the oldest collection of Jeremiah's oracles, Israel is accused of falsehood and betrayal. Verse 3 contains the following statement: כִּי כָל־אָח עָקוֹב יַעְקֹב וְכָל־רֵעַ רָכִיל יַהֲלֹךְ ("Indeed, every brother supplants, and every neighbor goes around like a slanderer.") The name Jacob is not mentioned, but for someone hearing the text in Hebrew, it seems plausible that the author of this verse wanted to allude to Jacob, especially since within the Hebrew Bible the root *ʿ-q-b* (Qal) only occurs in Gen 27:36; Hos 12:4; and Jer 9:3. This evocation of Jacob is also negative. Since Jeremiah is related to the territory of Benjamin, it is possible that the prophet or later tradents were aware of Hosea's critique of Jacob and the Jacob tradition itself. One may therefore ask whether there was prophetic resistance against the attempt of Jeroboams II to transform the figure of Jacob into the ancestor of Israel. This attempt is probably reflected in Gen 32:23–32. The narrative of Jacob's encounter and struggle with a divine being has often triggered theological and spiritual commentaries. Yet the main aim of the narrative is to explain quite simply how "Jacob" became "Israel" or how the ancestor of the sons of Jacob became the ancestor of Israel.

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26 J. Wöhrle, "Jacob, Moses, Levi. Pentateuchal Figures in the Book of the Twelve," in *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel and North America* (ed. J.C. Gertz *et al.*; FAT 111; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 997–1014, 1003–1004. See also the earlier work of H. Pfeiffer, *Das Heiligtum von Bethel im Spiegel des Hoseabuches* (FRLANT 183; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 78–82; R. Vielhauer, *Das Werden des Buches Hosea. Eine redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung* (BZAW 349; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2007), 179–182.

27 Along with many commentators, perhaps one should read עמו according to Greek manuscripts.

28 For the same argument, see already Pfeiffer, *Das Heiligtum*, 78.

The narrative has the following structure:

V. 23–24: Night. Jabbok
  25–26: Jacob's fight with a "man"
    27: Jacobs refuses to let the "man" go and asks for blessing
      28–29: change of name: Jacob–> Israel
    30: The "man" refuses to tell his name and blesses Jacob
  31: Jacob identifies the man as "God" (Penie-el, 'elohîm)
V. 32: Sunrise (morning). Penuel
V. 33: Meal taboo

This structure shows that the story combines two major themes: the question of the name and the theme of Jacob's / Israel's blessing. While in Genesis 27 Jacob steals the blessing from his brother, in Genesis 32 he receives it directly from God. The story ends similarly to the story of the dream in Bethel (Gen 28:10–22), with the note that Jacob gives a name to the place where the event happened. In both cases this is a toponym constructed with the divine name El.[29] The original story, which probably contained vv. 23, 25b, 26a and 27–32a,[30] told how Jacob needed to change his name in order to become the ancestor of Israel. It is therefore possible that Gen 32:23–32* was composed under Jeroboam II in order to transform Jacob into the ancestor of Israel.[31]

The official edition of the Jacob narrative would probably likely also have contained the story about Jacob's foundation founding of the sanctuary of Bethel in Gen 28:10–22 (the original text can be found roughly in verses 11–13aα and 16–19[32]). This story was perhaps written down in the time of

29 Interestingly, Genesis 28 and Genesis 32 share the same chronological frame: from night to sunrise.

30 We cannot enter here into an extensive discussion about the diachrony of Gen 32:23–32. It is obvious that vv. 23 and 24 are somewhat in contradiction, so that it is possible that the original story contained only v. 23. A later redactor found it unfitting that Jacob was attacked by a man when he was with his wife and children, and added therefore vv. 24 and 25a in order to explain that Jacob sent them before him and remained alone. The story is somewhat confusing about the subjects of the action and often only uses "he." Contrary to what now seems to be the case, it is possible that v. 26a recounted that Jacob struck the man at his hip. This would be more logical in regard of the explanation in v. 29. In this case, v. 26b and 32b would be an addition from a redactor who wanted to change the scenario. But for our topic, this is not a central issue. In any case, the later *midrashic* addition in v. 33 presupposes the understanding that Jacob was hit.

31 The story focuses indeed on this new name, and the aetiology of Penuel is not as important as Jacob's new name. It is possible that the aetiology was added because of a memory of an old link between the *beney Ya'aqob* and Penuel.

32 See for instance E. Blum, *Die Komposition der Vätergeschichte* (WMANT 57; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1984), 9–34; and somewhat differently, idem, „Noch einmal: Jakobs Traum in Bethel – Genesis 28,10–22," in *Rethinking the Foundations. Historiography in the Ancient World and in the Bible. Essays in Honour of John Van Seters* (ed. S. L. McKenzie and T. Römer; BZAW 294; Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000), 33–54.

Jeroboam II in order to make Jacob the founder of an El-sanctuary, which the king had transformed into a royal sanctuary, and to make place for the worship of Yhwh there.[33]

Although the separation between Jacob and Laban in Genesis 29–31* contains older material,[34] according to our hypothesis it was also revised under Jeroboam II. Most scholars would agree that the few mentions of Haran in this story (27:43; 28:10 and 29:4) are later revisions from a time when Harran became an important center in the neo-Assyrian period or even later.[35] The original, Iron Age story would then deal with an Aram on the border of Israel. This theory is strengthened by the observation that Hosea 12 mentions Aram but not Haran. In the 8th century B.C.E., when Israel was in conflict with Aram and under Jeroboam II who managed to annex some Aramean territories, the conflict story between the Aramaean Laban and the Israelite Jacob makes good sense. And even the conflict between Jacob (Israel) and Esau (Edom) and their reconciliation can be understood in the context of the time of Jeroboam. The graffiti from Kuntillet Ajrud, which date to the first half of the 8th century B.C.E.,[36] provide evidence that at this site Yhwh was addressed as the "Yhwh of Samaria" and the "Yhwh of Teman" (with and without article). On the one hand, this reminds us of the "Yhwh of Dan" and the "Yhwh of Bethel" in 1 Kings 12. On the other hand, it indicates that a relationship between Jacob and Esau / Edom (Teman, which is often located in the territory of Edom) could also make sense in the context of the 8th century B.C.E. In this way, the 8th century Jacob story would be an acknowledgement of a common veneration of Yhwh at Samaria and in the South.

This overview provides good evidence for the existence of a complete pre-Priestly Jacob narrative composed by high officials of Jeroboam II.

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33 I will deal elsewhere with the question of whether Gen 28:10–22 still recognizes El's presence in Bethel.

34 The earliest Jacob traditions were local to the Israelite territory in the Gilead, possibly to the early core area of the territory named Gilead – namely, in the Jabbok and south of it. For the Israelite territories in the Gilead, see I. Finkelstein, I. Koch and O. Lipschits, "The Biblical Gilead: Observations on Identifications, Geographic Divisions, and Territorial History," *UF* 43 (2012): 131–159.

35 R. G. Kratz, *Die Komposition der erzählenden Bücher des Alten Testaments. Grundwissen der Bibelkritik* (UTB 2157; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000), 270.

36 I. Finkelstein and E. Piasetzky, "The Date of Kuntillet 'Ajrud: The 14C Perspective," *TA* 35 (2008): 135–185.

Summary and perspectives

The Deuteronomistic redactors of the book of Kings are almost silent about the reign of Jeroboam II. This can be explained by the fact that they transferred the foundation of the sanctuaries of Dan and Bethel to the time of Jeroboam I.

There are several indications for the existence of an exodus tradition and a Jacob narrative in the Northern kingdom, which were made "official" under Jeroboam II. The form of the original exodus narrative is more difficult to reconstruct. The Jacob story was elaborated under Jeroboam II, in order to create an eponymous ancestor for Israel, transforming a clan ancestor into a state ancestor.

Of course, the Hebrew Bible contains many more Northern traditions, especially in the book of Judges, which certainly has a Northern origin, and in the traditions about the rise of Saul. Interestingly, the book of Numbers as early as chapter 21 contains conquest traditions, which are related to Transjordan and the North. Some of them seem to reflect conquests by the Omrides, but the stories could well have been written down under Jeroboam II, in order to legitimate his ideas of territorial expansion.[37] Even though the Judean perspective in which the Hebrew Bible was finally compiled tried to evict or transform Northern tradition, and despite the Deuteronomistic attempt to downplay the reign of Jeroboam II, these tradition resisted, enabling us to know more about the "censored kingdom of the North."

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37 I. Finkelstein and T. Römer, "Early North Israelite 'Memories' of Moab," in *The Formation of the Pentateuch: Bridging the Academic Cultures of Europe, Israel and North America* (ed. J.C. Gertz *et al.*; FAT 111; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2016), 711–728, 718–719.