

Stories of Origins in the Bible and Ancient Mediterranean Literature

In this book, Guy Darshan explores stories of origins that lie at the heart of Pentateuchal sources in the context of literature created in neighboring societies of the ancient Mediterranean world. A comparative study, his volume analyzes the parallels between biblical origin stories – the narrative traditions arranged in genealogical sequence that recount the beginnings of humanity and origins of peoples – in tandem with ancient Greek genealogical writings from the seventh to fifth centuries BCE onwards. He also considers Phoenician and Anatolian sources from the first millennium, several of which have only been published in recent years. This is the first scholarly study to trace the origins of this genre of narrative and the circumstances that led to appearances in the Hebrew Bible and ancient Mediterranean literature. It sheds new light on our knowledge of the history of literature, as well as the interconnections and interrelations between civilizations of the pre-Hellenistic eastern Mediterranean and Near East.

Guy Darshan is the chair of the Department of Biblical Studies at Tel Aviv University. He earned his academic degrees in Hebrew Bible and Classical Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He served as Fellow in Judaica at Harvard University and at the University of Pennsylvania, and he has received several prestigious academic grants and awards, including the 2014 David Noel Freedman Award. His research is devoted to the formation of the biblical literature and its text in the context of early eastern Mediterranean writings.

Stories of Origins in the Bible and Ancient Mediterranean Literature

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Preface

This book examines the history of the genre of origin stories that lie at the foundation of some of the pentateuchal sources and form the basis of the book of Genesis in general. In this book, I have used the term “origin stories” to indicate a literary work based upon a genealogical foundation and plot sequence stretching from the beginning of humanity (or the first humans) to the stories of the group’s patriarchs and its geographical settlement, focusing primarily on questions of group identity and origin. This type of writing is quite well known in later literature – for example, European or Arabic literature – to the extent that it would seem that this literary genre has existed in all cultures from time immemorial. However, in the words of the Israeli poet Nathan Alterman, “Even an old sight has its moment of birth” (“Moon”). Indeed, signs of the existence of this type of literature cannot be found among the multitude of discoveries from the ancient Near East before the second quarter of the first millennium BCE, and its full expression appears only in the eastern Mediterranean literature from this period onward. This book, therefore, endeavors to examine the formation of this genre based on its expression in biblical literature and a series of sources from Greek genealogical and mythographic literature from the Archaic period and the beginning of the Classical Period, as well as traditions from the Phoenician and Luwian cultures of the first millennium BCE.

This book originated in the doctoral dissertation that I wrote at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem under the supervision of Professor Alexander Rofé from the Bible Department and Professor Deborah Levine Gera from the Department of Classical Studies. Both guided me throughout all the stages of my academic studies, from undergraduate

courses onwards. I am grateful to them for their complete confidence in me throughout all the stages of writing the dissertation, their constructive comments, and their meticulous attention to detail. From the time that I completed the dissertation until the preparation of the Hebrew version of this book, I was privileged to receive many astute suggestions and comments on the book's contents. I will mention with gratitude only a few of the scholars whose comments helped me to reexamine, change, correct, and improve the book's contents and present them anew in this current format: Professors Yair Zakovitch, Michael Segal, and Baruch J. Schwartz from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; the late Professor Zipora Talshir from the Ben Gurion University of the Negev; Professor Irad Malkin from Tel Aviv University; Professor John Van Seters from the University of North Carolina; Professor Ronald S. Hendel from the University of California, Berkeley; Professors Carolina López-Ruiz, Jeffrey Stackert, and Simeon Chavel from the University of Chicago, where I did post-doctoral research in 2012–2013; and Professors Shaye J. D. Cohen and Peter Machinist from Harvard University, where I served as a Harry Starr Fellow at the Center for Jewish Studies in 2015. During the preparation of the Hebrew edition of the book, I received excellent advice from Professor Shmuel Ahituv, Dr. Ronela Merdler, and Geula Cohen.

The book continued to develop and undergo changes in its new, English version. I made several corrections, a few additions, and updated references to recent scholarship. I naturally could not discuss extensively all the developments in scholarship in the last few years but will certainly attempt to do so in the coming years. I am very grateful to Dr. Hannah Davidson who translated the Hebrew book to English with great dedication during the challenging period of the global pandemic, and to my student, Anat Alcalay, who assisted me in all aspects of preparing this book in its current form and offered sage advice. I would also like to thank my students, Jonathan Schabbi, Tzlil Miron, and Matan Oren, who prepared the bibliography and indexes in the Hebrew version, Eti Korol who prepared the indexes in the English version, and Dalit Weinblatt-Naim for preparing the maps. I am grateful to the staff of the Cambridge University Press for their work in producing the book and especially to Beatrice Rehl for her assistance and steadfast support in this project from its earliest stages, as well as to the anonymous readers who read the manuscript on behalf of the publishers and made very constructive comments. It is my duty and pleasure to thank the research foundations that supported the production and publication

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Above all, I would like to thank those from whom I learn every day, both at home and in my academic home. This book would not have been written were it not for my discussions with my wife Noga, in our family Beit Midrash, in fulfillment of the words of Reish Lakish, “two disciples who form an assembly [...] as it is said, ‘and his intention toward me was love (ודגלו עלי אהבה)’” (b. Šabb. 63a) and the joy showered upon us by our daughters. I also owe a great debt to my colleagues and students in the Department of Biblical Studies at Tel Aviv University. I feel fortunate to be writing these final words on the balcony of the Museum of the Jewish People at the university, whose windows open to the Mediterranean Sea, in the hope that this book will provide some contribution to an understanding of the ancient cultures that flourished on its shores.

Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------|---|
| ABC | Grayson, A. K. 1975, <i>Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles</i> (TCS 5), Locust Valley, NY |
| ABD | Freedman, D. N. (ed.). 1992, <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> , I–VI, New York |
| ACEBT | <i>Amsterdamse Cahiers voor Exegese en bijbelse Theologie</i> |
| AfO | <i>Archiv für Orientforschung</i> |
| AHAW | Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften |
| AJA | <i>American Journal of Archaeology</i> |
| AJP | <i>American Journal of Philology</i> |
| AnBib | Analecta Biblica |
| AnSt | <i>Anatolian Studies</i> |
| AOAT | Alter Orient und Altes Testament |
| AoF | Altorientalische Forschungen |
| ASSR | Archives de sciences sociales des religions |
| ATANT | Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments |
| ATDan | Acta Theologica Danica |
| Athenaeum | Athenaeum: Studi Periodici di Letteratura e Storia dell'Antichità |
| AuOr | <i>Aula Orientalis</i> |
| AuOrSup | <i>Aula Orientalis – Supplementa</i> |
| BA | <i>Biblical Archaeologist</i> |
| BAR | <i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i> |
| BASOR | <i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i> |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| BETL | Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium |
| <i>BibInt</i> | <i>Biblical Interpretation</i> |
| BICS | Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies |
| BICSSup | Supplements to the Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies |
| <i>BIES</i> | <i>Bulletin of the Israel Exploration Society</i> (= <i>Yediot</i>) |
| <i>BJRL</i> | <i>Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester</i> |
| BN | <i>Biblische Notizen</i> |
| BWANT | Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten (und Neuen) Testament |
| BZ | <i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i> |
| BZAW | Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft |
| CAT | Commentaire de l’Ancien Testament |
| CBET | Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology |
| CBQ | <i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i> |
| CBQMS | Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series |
| Chambry | Chambry, É. (ed.). 1985, <i>Ésope, Fables</i> (Les belles lettres), Paris |
| CHD | Güterbock, H. G., H. A. Hoffner, and T. P. J. van den Hout (eds.). 1980–, <i>The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> , Chicago, IL |
| ChS | Corpus der hurritischen Sprachdenkmäler |
| CJ | <i>Classical Journal</i> |
| ClAnt | <i>Classical Antiquity</i> |
| ClQ | <i>Classical Quarterly</i> |
| ConBOT | Coniectanea Biblica: Old Testament Series |
| COS | Hallo, W. W. (ed.). 2012, Context of Scripture Online, Brill Online (http://brillonline.com) |
| CP | <i>Classical Philology</i> |
| CR | <i>Classical Review</i> |
| CTA | Herdner, A. (ed.). 1963, <i>Corpus des tablettes en cunéiformes alphabétiques découvertes à Ras Shamra-Ugarit de 1929 à 1939</i> (Mission de Ras Shamra 10), Paris |
| CTH | Laroche, L. 1966, <i>Catalogue des textes hit- tites</i> , Paris (repr. 1971); (S. Košak – G. G. W. |

List of Abbreviations

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| | Müller – S. Görke – Ch. Steitler, hethiter.net/ : Catalog (2021-12-13) |
| DDD | van der Toorn, K., B. Becking, and P. W. van der Horst (eds.). 1999 ² , <i>Dictionary of Deities and</i> <i>Demons in the Bible</i> , Leiden (1st ed. 1995) |
| DJD | Discoveries in the Judaean Desert |
| DK | Diels, H. and W. Kranz. 1951 ⁶ , <i>Die Fragmente der</i> <i>Vorsokratiker</i> , Berlin |
| EIDOS | EIDOS: Studies in Classical Kinds |
| EM | Sukenik, E. L. et al. 1950–1988 (eds.). <i>Encyclopaedia Biblica: Thesaurus Rerum Biblicarum</i> (<i>Encyclopedia Miqra'it</i>), I–IX, Jerusalem (Hebrew) |
| EPRO | Etudes préliminaires aux religions orientales dans l'empire romain |
| <i>ErIsr</i> | <i>Eretz-Israel</i> |
| <i>ErJb</i> | <i>Eranos-Jahrbuch</i> |
| ETCSL | Black, J. A. et al. (eds.). 1998 – The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature, Oxford (https:// etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/) |
| F/FF | fragment/fragments |
| FAT | Forschungen zum Alten Testament |
| FGrH | Jacoby, F. 1954–1964, <i>Die Fragmente der</i> <i>griechischen Historiker</i> , Leiden |
| Finglass | David, M. and P. J. Finglass. 2014, <i>Stesichorus:</i> <i>The Poems</i> , Cambridge |
| Fortenbaugh et al. | Fortenbaugh, W. W. et al. (eds.). 1993, <i>Theophrastus of Eresus: Sources for his Life,</i> <i>Writings, Thought, and Influence</i> , I/1–2 (<i>Philosophia Antiqua</i> 54, 1–2), Leiden |
| FOTL | Forms of the Old Testament Literature |
| FRLANT | Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments |
| HAT | Handbuch zum Alten Testament |
| HBM | Hebrew Bible Monographs |
| HdO | Handbuch der Orientalistik |
| Helm | Helm, R. 1956, <i>Eusebius Werke</i> , VII: <i>Die Chronik</i> <i>des Hieronymus/Hieronymi Chronicon</i> , Berlin |
| Hercher | Hercher, R. 1866, <i>Claudii Aeliani de natura anima-</i> <i>lium libri xvii, varia historia, epistolae, fragmenta</i> , II, Leipzig (repr. 1971) |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| <i>Hermes</i> | <i>Hermes: Zeitschrift für klassische philologie</i> |
| Hilgard | Hilgard, A. 1901, <i>Scholia in Dionysii Thracis artem Grammaticam</i> (Grammatici Graeci I/3), Leipzig (repr. Hildesheim 1965) |
| HS | <i>Hebrew Studies</i> |
| HSCP | <i>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</i> |
| HSM | Harvard Semitic Monographs |
| HTR | <i>Harvard Theological Review</i> |
| HUCA | <i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i> |
| IboT | İstanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinde bulunan Boğazköy Tabletleri(nden Secme Metinler), İstanbul 1944, 1947, 1954, 1988, Ankara |
| ICC | International Critical Commentary |
| IEG | West, M.L. 1989–1992 ² , <i>Iambi et Elegi Graeci ante Alexandrum Cantati</i> , Oxford |
| <i>IstMitt</i> | <i>Istanbul Mitteilungen</i> |
| JAAR | <i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i> |
| JANER | <i>Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Religions</i> |
| JAOS | <i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i> |
| JBL | <i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i> |
| JCS | <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> |
| JEA | <i>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</i> |
| JHS | <i>Journal of Hellenic Studies</i> |
| JNES | <i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i> |
| JNSL | <i>Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages</i> |
| JPS | Jewish Publication Society |
| JSJSup | Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods |
| JSOT | <i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i> |
| JSOTSup | Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series |
| JSS | <i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i> |
| JTS | <i>Journal of Theological Studies</i> |
| KAI | Donner, H. and W. Röllig. 2002 ⁵ , <i>Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften</i> , I–II, Wiesbaden |
| Kannicht | Kannicht, R. (ed.). 2004, <i>Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> , V: <i>Euripides</i> , Göttingen |
| KAR | Ebeling, E. 1919–1923, <i>Keilschrifttexte aus Assur religiösen Inhalts</i> , I–II (WVDOG 28, 34), Leipzig |

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| <i>Kaskal</i> | <i>Kaskal: rivista di storia, ambiente e culture del Vicino Oriente Antico</i> |
| <i>KBo</i> | <i>Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköy</i> , Leipzig 1916–1923, Berlin 1954– |
| <i>Kernos</i> | <i>Kernos: revue internationale et pluridisciplinaire de religion grecque antique</i> = <i>Diethnes kai Diepistemonike Epitheorese tes archaias Hellenikes threskeias</i> |
| <i>KTU</i> ³ | Dietrich, M., O. Loretz, and J. Sanmartín (eds.). 2013 ³ , <i>The Cuneiform Alphabetic Texts from Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani, and Other Places</i> (AOAT 360/1), Münster |
| <i>KUB</i> | 1921–, <i>Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi</i> , Berlin |
| <i>LCL</i> | Loeb Classical Library |
| <i>LHBOTS</i> | The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies |
| <i>Maehler</i> | Maehler, H. 2003 ⁸ , <i>Bacchylides: Carmina cum Fragmentis</i> , München-Leipzig |
| <i>MDOG</i> | Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft |
| <i>MH</i> | <i>Museum Helveticum</i> |
| <i>Mnemosyne</i> | <i>Mnemosyne: A Journal of Classical Studies</i> |
| <i>MVAG</i> | Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatisch-ägyptischen Gesellschaft |
| <i>M-W</i> | Merkelbach, R. and M. L. West (eds.). 1990 ³ , <i>Fragmenta Selecta</i> , in F. Solmsen (ed.), <i>Hesiodi, Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum</i> , Oxford (1st ed. 1967) |
| <i>NABU</i> | <i>Nouvelles assyriologiques breves et utilitaires</i> |
| <i>NICOT</i> | New International Commentary on the Old Testament |
| <i>NovTSup</i> | Supplements to Novum Testamentum |
| <i>Numen</i> | <i>Numen: International Review for the History of Religions</i> |
| <i>OBO</i> | <i>Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis</i> |
| <i>OLA</i> | <i>Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta</i> |
| <i>OTE</i> | <i>Old Testament Essays</i> |
| <i>OTL</i> | <i>Old Testament Library</i> |
| <i>OTS</i> | <i>Old Testament Studies</i> |
| <i>PCG</i> | Kassel, R. and C. Austin. 2001, <i>Poetae Comici Graeci</i> , I, Berlin |

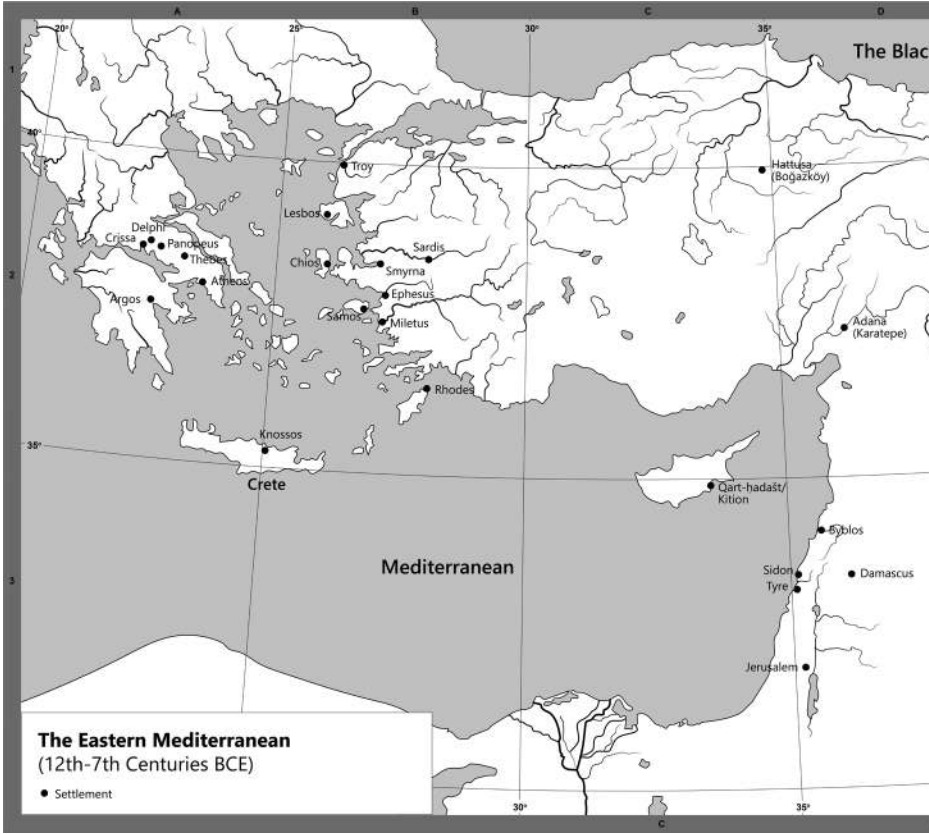
| | |
|----------|--|
| PEG | Bernabé, A. 1987, <i>Poetarum epicorum Graecorum testimonia et fragmenta</i> , pt. 1, Leipzig |
| PEQ | <i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i> |
| Phil | <i>Philologus</i> |
| Phoenix | <i>Phoenix: The Journal of the Ontario Classical Association</i> |
| PMG | Page, D. L. 1962, <i>Poetae Melici Graeci</i> , Oxford |
| PMGF | Davies, M. 1991, <i>Poetarum Melicorum Graecorum Fragmenta</i> , Oxford |
| RA | <i>Revue d'assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i> |
| RAC | Kluser, T. et al. (eds.). 1950–, <i>Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum</i> , Stuttgart |
| Radt | Radt, S. 1977, <i>Tragicorum Graecorum fragmenta</i> , IV, Göttingen |
| Ramus | <i>Ramus: Critical Studies in Greek and Roman Literature</i> |
| RB | <i>Revue biblique</i> |
| RBS | Resources for Biblical Study |
| RE | Herzog, J. J. (ed.). 1896–1913, <i>Realencyklopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche</i> , Leipzig |
| RÉG | <i>Revue des études grecques</i> |
| RhM | <i>Rheinische Museum für Philologie</i> |
| RHR | <i>Revue de l'histoire des religions</i> |
| RIA | Ebeling, E. et al. (eds.). 1928–, <i>Reallexikon der Assyriologie</i> , Berlin |
| Ruelle | Ruelle, C. É. (ed.). 1889, <i>Damascii successoris dubitationes et solutiones</i> , I–II, Paris (repr. 1964) |
| Sandbach | Sandbach, F. H. 1972, <i>Menandri reliquiae selectae</i> , Oxford |
| SBLMS | Society of Biblical Literature Monograph Series |
| SBLSymS | Society of Biblical Literature Symposium Series |
| SBT | Studies in Biblical Theology |
| SCI | <i>Scripta Classica Israelica</i> |
| ScrHier | Scripta Hierosolymitana |
| SHANE | Studies in the History of the Ancient Near East |
| Shnaton | <i>Shnaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies</i> (Hebrew) |
| SJLA | Studies in Judaism in Late Antiquity |
| SJOT | <i>Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament</i> |
| SSEA | Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities |

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| ST | <i>Studia Theologica</i> |
| StBoT | Studien zu den Bogazköy-Texten |
| TAPA | <i>Transactions of the American Philological Association</i> |
| TCS | Texts from Cuneiform Sources |
| TDOT | Botterweck, G. J. and H. Ringgren (eds.). 1974–, <i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i> , J. T. Willis et al. (trans.), I–XVI, Grand Rapids, MI |
| TZ | <i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i> |
| UBL | Ugaritisch-biblische Literatur |
| UF | <i>Ugarit-Forschungen</i> |
| VT | <i>Vetus Testamentum</i> |
| VTSup | Supplements to Vetus Testamentum |
| WAW | Writings from the Ancient World |
| WBC | Word Biblical Commentary |
| WMANT | Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament |
| WUNT | Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament |
| ZAW | <i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i> |
| ZPE | <i>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</i> |

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MAP 1 The Eastern Mediterranean (12th–7th Centuries BCE)