

Idan Dershowitz

The Dismembered Bible

Cutting and Pasting Scripture in Antiquity

[Die zergliederte Bibel. Ausschneiden und Einfügen von heiligen Schriften in der Antike.]

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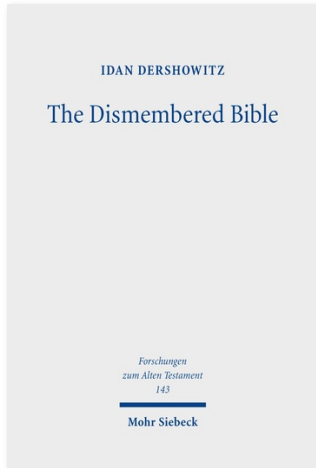
It is often presumed that biblical redaction was invariably done using conventional scribal methods, meaning that when editors sought to modify or compile existing texts, they would do so in the process of rewriting them upon new scrolls. There is, however, substantial evidence pointing to an alternative scenario: Various sections of the Hebrew Bible appear to have been created through a process of *material redaction*. In some cases, ancient editors simply appended new sheets to existing scrolls. Other times, they literally cut and pasted their sources, carving out patches of text from multiple manuscripts and then gluing them together like a collage. Idan Dershowitz shows how this surprising technique left behind telltale traces in the biblical text – especially when the editors made mistakes – allowing us to reconstruct their *modus operandi*. Material evidence from the ancient Near East and elsewhere further supports his hypothesis.

»This is an extremely stimulating study that will have a lasting impact on the scholarly discourse. [...] *The Dismembered Bible* is an outstanding example of what biblical studies can learn from neighboring disciplines and hopefully marks only the beginning of a more intense dialogue between exegesis and research on material aspects of textual production.«

Translation of Anja Klein in *Theologische Revue*, 117. Jahrgang, September 2021, <https://doi.org/10.17879/thrv-2021-3568>

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