THE HA-BI-RU--KIN OR FOE OF ISRAEL?
THIRD ARTICLE

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II. *Ha-BI-ru*--HEBREW RELATIONS

A fascination with the possibilities of illuminating Hebrew origins has characterized studies of the *ha-BI-ru*. As observed at the outset, popular theory has it that the Hebrews were one offshoot of the *ha-BI-ru*. This theory may start with the supposition that the *ha-BI-ru* were a social class or an ethnic group. Although some form of either approach can be developed without the assumption that the terms *ha-BI-ru* and *'Ibri* can be equated phonetically or at least semantically they are greatly strengthened if such equation can be established. It is necessary in this connection to survey the usage of *'Ibrim* in the Old Testament and to face the question of the phonetic relation of *ha-BI-ru* and *'Ibri*.

A. The Usage of *'Ibrim* in the Old Testament.

Support for the view that the term *ha-BI-ru* denotes a larger whole from which the biblical Hebrews originated has been claimed in the usage of the term *'Ibrim* in the Old Testament. There is no doubt that the gentilic *'Ibri* is ordinarily used in the Old Testament as an ethnicon for Abraham and his descendants of the Isaac-Jacob line.[178] In a

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[178] The word is found almost exclusively in a few clusters which suggests that particular circumstances account for its employment. One such group appears in the narrative of the Egyptian sojourn and bondage; a second in the record of Israelite-Philistine relationships during the days of Samuel and Saul; and a third in a series of texts dealing with the manumission of Hebrew servants. There are besides only the isolated appearances in Genesis 14:13 and Jonah 1:9. The great majority of these are instances of non-Israelites speaking to or about Israelites, or of Israelites speaking to foreigners, or of declarations of God destined for foreigners. Where it is

few passages, however, some have judged that *'Ibrim* is used
in a non-Israelite or even appellative sense and that in such
texts an original, wider (i. e., *ha-BI-ru*) connotation emerges.
These passages must be examined.

1. *The 'Ebed 'Ibri Legislation.*

In the legislation of Exod. 21:2 and Deut. 15:12 and in
the references to these laws in Jer. 34:9, 14 the term '*Ibri* has
been thought to denote not the ethnic character of the servant
but a particular variety of servanthood. J. Lewy develops
this theory on the basis of his interpretation of the term
ha-Bl-ru in the Nuzu contracts as an appellative meaning
"foreign-servant", and his judgment that the parallels between
the status of the *ha-BI-ru* servants and the *'ebed 'Ibri* of
Exod. 21:2 (and the associated passages) are so close and
numerous as to indicate identical institutions and identity
of meaning for *ha-BI-ru* and *'Ibri*.[179]

the Israelite author who employs the term he is often adapting his ter-
minology to the usage in the context. In several passages a contrast is
drawn between Israelites and other ethnic groups.

It has been suggested that '*Ibri* uniformly possesses a peculiar connota-
tion. For example, DeVaux (*RB* 55, 1948, pp. 344 ff.) maintains that it
has a derogatory nuance and finds the common element in the fact that
the *'Ibrim* are strangers in the milieu, while Kraeling (*AJSL* 58, 1941
pp. 237 ff.) suggests that *'Ibri* is an alternate for "Israelite" in situations
where the designee is not a free citizen in a free community or on free soil.
The latter formulation seems to be successful in unravelling a strand
common to all the *'Ibri* contexts but it remains uncertain whether such a
nuance necessarily attached to the employment of the word. Cf. Green-
berg, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

[179] *HUCA* XIV, 1939, pp. 587 ff.; XV, 1940, pp. 47 ff. Cf. his note in
Bottero, op. cit., pp. 163-4, where he translates *ha-BI-ru* as "resident
alien". Lewy supports his thesis with the considerations that the *ha-BI-ru*
are present in the Mitannian orbit in the period during which the *'Ibrim*
became a nation and that the whole area in question had been unified
under the Hyksos with the result that the same technical terms and
analogous institutions are found throughout. He holds that this social-
legal appellative usage of Ibri represents the earliest stage (noting its
appearance in the first paragraph of Israel's Book of the Covenant) but
that later the term was used in an ethnic sense for the descendants of the
"Hebrews *par excellence*". Cf. *supra WTJ* XIX, pp. 183, 184.

But is the situation on the Nuzu side clearly as Lewy has reconstructed it? There are texts[180] in which the person(s) concerned is not designated as an *ha-BI-ru* and yet the essential clauses of the contract are those characteristic of the contracts where the persons are labeled as *ha-BI-ru*. It is, therefore, difficult to insist that we are dealing with a specifically *ha-BI-ru* type of servanthood.[181] While, therefore, *ha-BI-ru* are found in the great majority of these contracts, they are not necessarily involved in all of them,[182] and one may not assume then the existence in the Nuzu area of a specifically *ha-BI-ru* brand of slavery.

Moreover, even if Lewy's view of the Nuzu evidence were to be adopted, the biblical evidence would contradict the translation of '*Ibri* as "foreign-servant" in the *'ebed 'Ibri* legislation. For the biblical law is patently not dealing with foreign servants but with those who were their masters' brethren. The Deut. 15:12 expansion of the original statement reads, "If thy brother[183] a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee"; while Jeremiah, further expanding it urges "that every man should let go free his man-servant and every man his maid-servant, that is a Hebrew or Hebrewess ; that none should make bondmen of them, namely, of a Jew, his brother" (34:9, cf. vs. 14). While one may then recognize the instructive parallels in the conditions of servanthood at Nuzu and in the biblical legislation, it is impossible to hold that '*Ibri* is in this legislation a technical term for a

[180] *JEN* VI, 610, 611, 613 (cf. *JEN* V, 456:9-23); *JEN* V, 446, 449, 457 and 462.

[181] An alternate interpretation has been advocated in the present study. See supra *WTJ* XIX, pp. 179, 180, 183, 184.

[182] Especially relevant is the figure of Attilammu the Assyrian in the servant contract *JEN* VI, 613:2. Even when this text in abbreviated form is included in the *Sammelurkunde JEN* V, 456 between two contracts in which the persons are specifically designated as *ha-BI-ru* (i. e., in a situation where there would be a tendency to uniformity), Attilammu is not described as an *ha-BI-ru*. It is further to be observed in connection with the use of *as-su-ra-a-a-u* for Attilammu in *JEN* VI, 613 that when *ha-BI-ru* from Ashur are so described it is as *sa-^{mat} as-su-ur*.

183 Note the clear distinction drawn in verse 3 between "the foreigner" and "thy brother" in the law of the seventh year release with respect to debt.

specific type of servanthood[184] and least of all for the
idea of "foreign-servant". Its usage is rather ethnic, as
always.

2. The *'Ibrim* in I Samuel 13 and 14.

It has been affirmed that the *'Ibrim* here (*cf.* 13:3, 7, 19;
14:11, 21) are quite clearly non-Israelites.[185] The proper
interpretation of these verses is, indeed, difficult; nevertheless,
to distinguish between the *'Ibrim* and the Israelites would
be at odds with the decisive evidence in this context of their
identity. Thus, in 13:3, 4, הָעִבְרִים and כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל are obvious
equivalents (cf. יִשְׁמְעוּ הָעִבְרִים: וְכָל־יִשְׂרָאֵל שָׁמְעוּ).[186] More-
over, it is apparently in reference to the hiding of those de-
scribed in 13:6 as the "men of Israel" that the Philistines say,
"Behold, the *'Ibrim* are coming out of the holes where they had
hid themselves" (14:11b). Again, the equivalence of הָעִבְרִים
with the inhabitants כָּל־יִשְׂרָאֵל and with בְּכֹל אֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל
in 13:19, 20 is evident.
     To find, then, in the *'Ibrim* of 13:7 a group ethnically
distinct from the "men of Israel" in 13:6 would involve for
the term *'Ibrim* a change from its contextual significance too
abrupt to be plausible. Verses 6 and 7 are concerned with
two groups of Israelites. Verse 6 refers to those excused by
Saul from military service (cf. vs. 2).[187] These hide in the
hills and caves west of Jordan. Verse 7 refers to certain of
the selected troops who were with Saul at Gilgal near the
Jordan. These, deserting, cross over the river to the land of
Gad and Gilead east of Jordan.[188]

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[184] The *'ebed* in the phrase *'ebed 'Ibri* (Exod. 21:2) would then be tau-
tological, and Alt feels obliged to exscind it from the text.
   [185] *Cf. e. g*., A. Guillaume, *PEQ*, 1946, p. 68.
   [186] The LXX rendering of the end of verse 3, ἠθετήκασιν οἱ δοῦλοι
(as though the Hebrew were פשעו העברים) seems to be a conjectural emenda-
tion occasioned by the fact that הָעִבְרִים comes somewhat unexpectedly
on the lips of Saul.
   [187] 13:4b does not describe a regathering of those sent home but simply
indicates the new location of Saul and his chosen army at Gilgal.
   [188] There were originally 3000 chosen by Saul (13:2), but after the
approach of the Philistines in force and Samuel's delay there were only
600 left (13:11, 15; 14:2).

In 14:21 it is not necessary to follow the English versions in regarding the ʿ*Ibrim* as men who had been serving in the Philistine army. Even if such a translation were adopted, it would still be gratuitous to identify these ʿ*Ibrim* as non-Israelites for they might be Israelite turn-coats.

But verse 21 may be translated : "Now the Hebrews were towards the Philistines as formerly when[189] they went up with them in the camp round about;[190] both they were with the Israelites who were with Saul and Jonathan and...". The antecedent of עִמָּם, "with them", appears to be "Saul and all the people (or army)" of verse 20. Another possibility is to regard "the Philistines" as the antecedent of "them" but to translate the preposition "against".[191] In either case this passage would contain no mention of ʿ*Ibrim* as having served in Philistine forces. Verses 21 and 22 rather distinguish as two elements swelling the unexpectedly triumphant remnants of Saul's army those who had deserted after being selected by Saul to encamp against the Philistines (vs. 21) and those who, after being dismissed by Saul,[192] were frightened into hiding by the alarming course of the conflict (vs. 22).

This distinction in 14:21, 22 is the same as that found in 13:6, 7a. Indeed, the terminology in the two passages is deliberately made to correspond. ʿ*Ibrim* is used in both 13:7a and 14:21 for the deserters; and "men of Israel" in 13:6 and 14:22 for the people who hid in the hill-country of Ephraim. The ʿ*Ibrim* of 14:21 will then be the deserting soldiers of Saul who had crossed over[193] the Jordan but now resume their former position in the Israelite ranks against the Philistines.

[189] Cf. Brown, Driver and Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1952) under אֲשֶׁר 4b (a).

[190] Is this an allusion to the circumstance that the original three Israelite positions at Bethel, Michmash, and Gibeah surrounded the Philistine garrison at Geba? If the Massoretic text and accentuation (סָבִיב) stand, the next clause will be a pseudo-verbal construction (as translated above). The LXX and Syraic would read סָבְבוּ גַּם, "they also turned", which would provide a parallel to וַיַּדְבְּקוּ גַם (vs. 22).

[191] Cf. Brown, Driver and Briggs, *op. cit.*, under עִם lc.

[192] For a similar military development see Judg. 7:3-7, 23, 24.

[193] The use of עָבְרוּ. in 13:7a suggests the possibility of וְהָעֹבְרִים, "those who passed over", as the original in 14:21 (cf. the participle, הַמִּתְחַבְּאִים,

3. *Abraham the ʻIbri (Gen. 14:13).*

Is ʻ*Ibri* in this its earliest biblical appearance used eth-
nically? This question may be dealt with in connection with
an inquiry into the origin of the term ʻ*Ibri*. Broad contextual
considerations indicate that in his use of ʻ*Ibri* in Gen. 14:13,
the author had in mind ʻ*Eber* of the line of Shem (cf. Gen.
10:21, 24, 25; 11:14-i 7).[194] The direct descent of Abraham
from ʻ*Eber* had already been traced in the genealogy of
Gen. 11:10-26. Moreover, the departure from the stereotyped
presentation of the genealogical data in Gen. 10 to describe
Shem as "the father of all the children of ʻ*Eber*" (vs. 21)[195]
is most readily accounted for as an anticipation of the author's
imminent concentration (cf. Gen. 11:27 ff.) upon the Semitic
Eberites par excellence, i. e., the "Hebrews" whom Yahweh
chose to be the channel of revelation and redemption. In
Gen. 14:13 then, ʻ*Ibri* is a patronymic, applied in this isolated
way to Abraham perhaps to contrast him with the many other
ethnic elements which play a role in this context.

On the other hand, many regard this usage of ʻ*Ibri* as
appellative and then find their interpretations of the term
ha-BI-ru reflected in it.[196] The appellative view is ancient,
for the LXX renders הָעִבְרִי as ὁ περάτης;[197] Aquila, as
περαΐτης; Jerome, as *transeuphratensis*; and the prevailing
view of the rabbis a generation after Aquila was that הָעִבְרִי

in the corresponding member of 14:21). Such a change in the Massoretic
pointing would support a corresponding change to וְעֹבְרִים in 13:7a. If
the Massoretic וְעֹבְרִים. is original, the author perhaps employed this
designation of the Israelites to produce a word play with עָבְרוּ.

[194] עִבְרִי (ʻ*ibri*) is the gentilic formation of עֵבֶר (ʻ*eber*).

[195] Cf. also the additional remark in Gen. 10:25.

[196] For example, W. F. Albright, *JAOS* 48, 1928, pp. 183 ff., once found
in both the idea of "mercenary"; and DeVaux, *op. cit*., pp. 337 ff., that of
"stranger". Kraeling, op. cit., held that ʻ*Ibri* is used to underscore Abra-
ham's role as a sojourner who pays tribute to Melchizedek.

[197] Parzen, *AJSL* 49, pp. 254 ff., is mistaken in his opinion that the
LXX actually found העבר in the Hebrew text. Noth, "Erwagungen zur
Hebraerfrage", in *Festschrift Otto Procksch* (Leipzig, 1934), pp. 99 ff., is
probably correct in stating that the LXX translator simply regarded it as
desirable at this first appearance of ʻ*Ibri* to indicate what was, in his
opinion, its significance.

designated Abraham as "from the other side of the river".[198] All of these derived *'Ibri* from the substantive meaning "the other side" rather than from the verb *'br*.[199] In line with this view of the etymology is the emphasis in Joshua 24:2, 3 on Abraham's origin "beyond the River". But these facts are far from possessing the weight of the more immediate contextual considerations cited above. Here too then *'Ibri* is not appellative but ethnic.

4. *Conclusion.*

It has appeared from this study that, the term *'Ibrim* in the Old Testament has uniformly an ethnic meaning and denotes descendants of Eber in the line of Abraham-Isaac-Jacob exclusively. Deriving from the eponymous ancestor *'Eber* the term is probably early;[200] in particular, its application to Abraham need not be proleptic. To judge from its characteristic association with foreigners in the biblical contexts and the general avoidance of it by the Israelites, it possibly originated outside the line of Abraham. Originally it may have been of wider application than is the usage in the Old Testament, denoting other descendants of Eber than the Abrahamites. This is perhaps suggested by the use of *'Eber* in Gen. 10:21 and Num. 24:24.[201] In that

[199] Greenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 5, n. 24, directs attention to the evidence for this in *B^eresit Rabba* 42, 8. A minority opinion of the rabbis was that Abraham was called the *'Ibri* because he was a descendant of *'Eber*.

[199] This appears to be so even in the LXX, although later Patristic writings in treating the LXX rendering derived it from a verbal base. (cf. Greenberg, ibid.).

[200] Kraeling, *op. cit*., offers the strange hypothesis that "Hebrews" is a secondarily personalized form of a geographical name, i. e., "Overites" from עֵבֶר הַנָּהָר adopted by the Israelites as late as the early monarchy in an attempt to orientate themselves to the world in which they had just become prominent. The usage would thus be that of the first millennium even when applied to the Patriarchs. H. H. Rowley counters: (a) in the early monarchy, consciousness of being from over the Euphrates is not apparent among the Hebrews; (b) the term disappeared almost completely from the Old Testament with the establishment of the monarchy; (c) The Israelites would hardly adopt as a symbol of self-esteem a term "generally employed in a pejorative sense". *PEQ*, 1942, pp. 41-53; *From Joseph to Joshua*, 1952, pp. 54-5; cf. further O'Callaghan's criticism in *Aram Naharaim* p. 216, n. 4.

[201] The validity of conclusions based on the tradition of descent from

case the appearance of such gentilic but non-Abrahamic
'*Ibrim* in some non-biblical text of the patriarchal age need
not come altogether unexpectedly.

      Do the *ha-BI-ru* qualify? According to the conclusions
already reached in this study concerning the probable ge-
ographical and ethnic origins of the *ha-BI-ru* they do not
qualify as Semitic let alone Eberite kin of the Hebrews.[202]
On the other hand, a final judgment on this larger issue is

Eber is challenged by DeVaux's contention (*op. cit.*) that there are diver-
gent views within the Old Testament. He grants that the composer(s)
of the biblical genealogies derives '*Ibri* from the ancestor '*Eber*, but finds
in the reference to Jacob as a "wandering Aramean" (Deut. 26:5) a
conflicting tradition of Aramaic origin (cf. Gen. 10:22-24). DeVaux
believes the latter to be further supported by the description of Laban,
grandson of Abraham's brother Nahor, as an "Aramean" (Gen. 31:20).
According to the record, however, the term "Aramean" could have been
applied to both Jacob and Laban in virtue of their long residence in
Paddan-aram and so construed would say nothing about their lineage.
DeVaux also insists, but unnecessarily, on identifying the Aram of Gen.
10:22 and the Aram of Gen. 22:21, which would then bring the two passages
into hopeless confusion. Finally, DeVaux appeals to the prophetic denun-
ciation of Jerusalem in Ezek. 16:3, "your origin and your nativity are of
the land of the Canaanite; the Amorite was your father and the Hittite
your mother". Actually, as is apparent from the context (cf. especially
vss. 45 ff.), Ezekiel is using a scathing figure to say that from the first
Israel was just as much disqualified spiritually from enjoying a covenantal
relationship with Yahweh as were her despised heathen neighbors--the
point being that Israel's election must be attributed solely to the principle
of divine grace. But even if Ezekiel were speaking of literal racial inter-
mixture, the reference would be not to Abraham's family origins but to the
subsequent mingling of the racial strain of his descendants with those of
the inhabitants of Canaan. DeVaux's view is that the Hebrews and *ha-
BI-ru* were of common Aramaean descent. Starting with the notion that
the ha-BI-ru were desert nomads, DeVaux seeks to relate the *ha-BI-ru*
to the Aramaeans by a partial identification of them with proto-Aramaean
nomadic Ahlamu.

  [202] Greenberg, op. cit, pp. 93 ff., provides an example of how the biblical
usage of '*Ibrim* can be regarded as consistently ethnic, and *ha-BI-ru* be
deemed an appellative for a social class, and yet the terms be equated
and the Hebrews derived from the *ha-BI-ru*. He suggests that Abraham
was an *ha-BI-ru*, but this epithet as applied to Abraham's descendants
became an ethnicon. Later biblical genealogists, unaware of this, invented
the ancestor '*Eber*, man of many descendants, in order to explain at one
stroke the known kinship of the Hebrews to other Semitic tribes and the
origin of their name!

bound to be seriously affected by one's opinion on the phonetic question of whether the term *ha-BI-ru* can be equated with the term *'Ibri* (and so be derived from *'Eber*).[203]

B. *Phonetic Relation of Ha-BI-ru to 'Ibri.*

1. *Consonants*. The common cuneiform spelling of the name is *ha-BI-ru* the final *u* being, according to the usual assumption, the nominative case ending, which yields as the grammatical relations require to other case or gentilic endings.[204] In this cuneiform rendering the identity of the first two radicals is ambiguous. The initial consonant is ambiguous because Accadian *ḥ* may represent other letters than Hebrew ח;[205] among them, Hebrew ע.[206] The second is ambiguous because

[203] In addition to the supposed phonetic equivalence of *ha-BI-ru* and *'Ibri*, support has been sought for the derivation of the Hebrews from the *ha-BI-ru* by appeal to certain parallels in the careers of the two. But the similarities are for the most part superficial or based on misinterpretations of the data on one side or the other. For a recent popular example see H. Orlinsky, *Ancient Israel*, 1954; cf. DeVaux *RB* 55, 1948, pp. 342 ff.; H. H. Rowley *From Joseph to Joshua*, 1952, p. 53, n. 1. Items like the following have been or might be mentioned: (a) In each case there is a westward movement about the Fertile Crescent. (But this cannot be demonstrated for the *ha-BI-ru* and, in the case of the Hebrews, it applies not to the group as such but only to Abraham.) (b) The chronological span of the use of the terms *ha-BI-ru* and *'Ibri* is roughly the same. (c) Both groups move in the Hurrian cultural orbit and exhibit the influence of this fact. (d) The military activity of Abraham the Hebrew in Genesis 14 and the attack of Simeon and Levi on Shechem are comparable to *ha-BI-ru* razzias. (But this involves a superficial estimate of both biblical instances.) (e) The *ha-BI-ru* mercenary activity is paralleled by the Hebrews in the Philistine army. (But this is a misinterpretation of the biblical data.) (f) Both groups are in Egypt forced into the corvee. (g) The *ha-BI-ru* are frequently strangers in the milieu and such are the Hebrew patriarchs in Canaan. (h) Both groups deprive Egypt of its holdings in Canaan by military operations during the Amarna Age.

[204] Cf. supra, *WTJ* XIX, pp. 9-11.

[205] Indeed, as A. Ungnad observes, "Bisweilen wird ḥ fur 3 gebraucht" (*Grammatik des Akkadischen*, 1949, p. 9).

[206] In the Canaanite glosses in the Tell el Amarna tablets are found, for example: *hu-ul-lu* (EA 296:38) = עֹל (cf. XXX) ; and *hi-na-ia* (*EA* 144:17) = עֵינַי (cf. XXXX). Cf. E. A. Speiser, *Ethnic Movements in the Near East in the Second Millennium B.C.*, 1933, p. 39.

BI represents among other values that of *pi* as well as that of *bi* in all periods of the cuneiform literature.

Further evidence is available, however, for in some cases other signs of the cuneiform syllabary are used to write this name and, moreover, the name has appeared in other systems of writing, syllabic and alphabetic. From Ras Shamra[207] comes the form *'prm* written in the alphabetic cuneiform common in texts from that site, in which the 'Ayin is distinct from other gutturals and the b is distinct from *p*. This form is, therefore, unambiguous. But the question has been raised whether this form, in particular the second consonant, is original or secondary. If the phonetic equivalence of *'prm* and *'Ibrim* were to be maintained, the primacy of the *p* would still he favored by the fact that Ugaritic often preserves a more primitive Semitic form than does the Hebrew.[208] On the other hand there is evidence of an original *b* becoming *p* in Ugaritic.[209]

In Egyptian hieroglyphics appears the form *'pr.w* which is also without ambiguity. But here again the question arises as to whether the *p* is primary or secondary. It can be shown that Egyptian *p* may represent foreign, including Semitic, *b*, especially when the *b* is immediately preceded or followed by *l*

[207] Virolleaud, *Syria* 21, 1940, p. 132, pl. 8 and p. 134, pl. 10.

[208] So Kraeling, *AJSL* 58, 1941, pp. 237 ff. Cf. W. F. Albright, *BASOR* 77, 1940, pp. 32-3; DeVaux, *RB* 55, 1948, p. 342, n. 3. In an effort to show that it is "quite possible that the isolated Ugaritic as well as the Egyptian *'pr* are secondary forms due to Hurrian influence" J. Lewy observes that "the population of Ugarit included Hurrian elements and that the Hurrians, wherever they appear, are responsible for a confusion in the rendering of Semitic ב and פ because their scribes did not distinguish between voiced and voiceless stops" (*HUCA* 15, 1940, p. 48, n. 7). C. H. Gordon, however, informs me that the Ugaritic scribes who wrote the tablets bearing *'prm* carefully distinguish *p* and *b*. J. W. Jack (*PEQ*, 1940, p. 101) attributes the Ugaritic spelling to Egyptian influence at Ugarit. 309 There are, e. g., the variants *lbs/lps* and *nbk/npk*. Cf. Greenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 90, n. 24. For evidence of confusion in Ugaritic between *b* and *p*, and that in the very name *ha-BI-ru*, attention has been called to the Ugaritic text 124:14, 15 (Gordon, *Ugaritic Manual*, 1955). Cf. Virolleaud, *Syria* XV, 1934, p. 317 n., and *La Legende de Keret*, 1936, p. 74; and H. H. Rowley, *From Joseph to Joshua*, 1950, p. 50. Actually, the text has nothing to do with the *ha-BI-ru* or with the Hebrews (as suggested by Virolleaud).

or *r*.[210] Such, however, is not the rule[211], and, as Kraeling observes,[212] in the case of the '*pr.w*, a people present in Egypt itself, it is difficult to assume an error of hearing on the part of the scribe.

The spelling *ha-BIR-a-a* is found twice in Babylonian documents of the 12th and 11th centuries B.C.[213] Commenting on this form, B. Landsberger observes that "*b* nicht *p* als mittlerer Radikal steht durch die Schreibung *ha-bir-a-a* (IV R 34 Nr. 2, 5) fest".[214] In signs, however, of the variety consonant-vowel-consonant there is not only vocalic variability but flexibility of both consonants within the limits of their type.[215]

[210] For the evidence see B. Gunn apud Speiser, *op. cit*., p. 38, n. Cf. J. A. Wilson, *AJSL* 49, 4, pp. 275 ff. W. F. Albright (*JAOS* 48, 1928, pp. 183 ff.) argues that the equation of Egyptian *'pr* with *'eber* is difficult since Egyptian of the New Empire regularly transcribes Semitic *b* by Egyptian *b*. As for Egyptian *hrp* for Can. *harb* (Heb. *hereb*), he says that it only shows there was the same tendency for a final vowelless sonant stop following a consonant to become voiceless that there is in the modern Arabic dialect of Egypt; but the *b* in *'eber* is medial and cannot have been pronounced as a voiceless *p*. It should be noticed, however, that in some instances of the use of Egyptian *p* for foreign *b*, the *b* is medial: thus, *isbr* varies with *ispr* ("whip") and *Kpn* (O. K. *Kbn*) = Can. *Gbl* ("Byblos"). 211 Gunn *op. cit*., p. 38, n.: "There are many cases (36 counted) in which a foreign *b* with *r* or *l* either before or after it is represented by b and not by p in the Egyptian writings". Wilson *op. cit*., pp. 275 ff. affirms that the most straightforward equation is *'pr* = עפר.

[212] *Op. cit*., pp. 237 ff.

[213] Rawlinson, *Cuneiform Inscriptions of Western Asia,* IV, 34:2, 5; and Hilprecht, *Old Babylonian Inscriptions*, I, 2, pl. 66, no. 149, 22.

[214] ZA, N. F. 1, 1923, p. 214, n. 1.

[215] See the remarks of C. H. Gordon, *Orientalia* 19, 1950, pp. 91 ff. There is specific evidence that *BIR* was used (though not commonly) for pir in the neo-Assyrian period and possibly (the evidence is doubtful) in the middle-Assyrian period. Cf. Von Soden, *Das Akkadische Syllabar*, 1948, p. 73, no. 237. Bottero, *op. cit*., p. 132 urges against reading *pir* here the absence of specific Babylonian evidence for this value to date, plus the availability of the sign *UD (pir)*. However, he acknowledges (p. 156) that this form is not decisive for a root *'br*. It may be additionally noted that J. Lewy in defense of reading the second radical as b appeals to the occurrence of the god "*ᵈHa-bi-ru* in an Assyrian text (*Keilschrifttexte aus Assur verschiedenen Inhalts*, no. 42), i. e., in a text in which *ha-bi-ru* can hardly stand for **ha-pi-ru*" (*HUCA* 15, 1940, p. 48, n. 7). Bottero (*op. cit*., p. 135) agrees on the grounds that in the neo-Assyrian era one normally

By way of conclusion, there can be no doubt that the Ugaritic and Egyptian forms of the name definitely require that the consonant represented in the cuneiform syllable *ḫa* be read as *'Ayin*.[216] They also strongly support an original *p*. While there is a possibility that *'br* is primary, it is highly probable that *'pr* is the original form. In fact, unless it can be shown that *ha-BI-ru* is to be equated with the biblical *'Ibri* there is no unquestionable evidence for *'br* as even a secondary form.[217]

2. Vowels. That the first vowel is A-type and the second is I-type is obvious from the cuneiform, *ha-BI-ru*;[211] but it is more difficult to determine the length of these vowels. This question requires examination before one attempts to draw conclusions concerning the possibilities of phonetic equation with *'Ibri*.

used *PI* to signify *pi*. For evidence that *BI* = *pi* in all periods see Von Soden, *ibid*., p. 53 no. 140. Also J. W. Jack states, "In the Hittite documents, for instance, *habiru* clearly has *bi*" (*PEQ*, 1940, p. 102). E. Laroche (in Bottero, *op. cit*., p. 71, n. 2) argues, "D'apres le systeme en usage a Boghazkoy, *ha-bi-ri* note une pronunciation habiri (sonore intervocalique non geminee) ". But *ha-ab-bi-ri* appears twice. Moreover, P. Sturtevant maintains that in cuneiform Hittite "the Akkadian distinction between ... *p* and *b* did not exist", adding, "To all intents, therefore, Hittite has dispensed with the means of writing *b*" (*Comparative Grammar of the Hittite Language*, 1933, p. 66). Similarly, J. Friedrich, Hethitisches Elementarbuch I, 1940,.p. 6(21). Accordingly, even the form *ha-ab-bi-ri* (*KBo* V, 9, IV, 12) is quite ambiguous, as it would also be in Akkadian cuneiform where AB stands in all periods for both ap and ab. Greenberg (*op. cit*., p. 90, n. 20) suggests the possibility that a Hittite scribe utilized a native convention, doubling the labial to indicate a sound heard by him asp. Also ambiguous is the sign BAD (*bi* or *pi*) used in the Alishar text. 2,6 Cf. Bottero, *op. cit*., p. 154.

[217] Speiser (op. cit., p. 40), writing at a time when he did not have the benefit of the Ugaritic evidence, begged the question of the phonetic equation with *'Ibri* in concluding, "The second consonant is ambiguous both in cuneiform and in Egyptian, but not so in Hebrew: since the latter has b, the labial must be read as voiced in cuneiform, while the voiceless correspondent in the Egyptian form of the name is to be ascribed to local developments".

[218] As far as it goes the Egyptian data is compatible. Gunn (*op. cit*., p. 38, n.) concludes from a survey of the evidence that "we seem to have the alternatives *'apar, 'apir, 'apur*, with a possible indication in" the Beth-shan stele of Seti I "in favor of *'apir*".

a. The A-Vowel: According to Gustavs,[219] the form h̠a-*AB-BI-ri*[220] shows that the a is short. He explains the doubling of the middle radical on the ground that consonants in Akkadian are often doubled after an accented short vowel .[221] This possibility, however, rests on the doubtful opinion that the following I-vowel is short, for otherwise the penult would receive the accent.[222] Another possible explanation of the doubling of the middle radical, although the phenomenon is rare and late, is that it indicates that the preceding vowel is long.[223]

Other unusual forms have appeared which suggest that the A-vowel is long. One is *ha-a-BI-ri-ia-as*.[224] Another is *ha-a-BI-i-ri-a[n?]* (cf. *ha-a-BI-i-ri-ia-an*).[225] Finally, from Alalah comes the form *ha-a'-BI-ru*.[226]

b. The I-Vowel: Inasmuch as short unaccented vowels between single consonants often drop out[227] and the name

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[219] *ZAW*, N. F. 3, 1926, pp. 28 f.

[220] *KBo* V, 9, IV, 12. Cf. also *ha-AB-BI-ri-ia-an* (KUB XXXV, 43, III, 31).

[221] Cf. Ungnad, *op. cit.*, p. 18 (6p); W. Von Soden, Grundriss der Akkadischen Grammatik, 1952, p. 21 (20g).

[222] Cf. Von Soden, *op. cit.*, p. 37 (38 f).

[223] Cf. Ungnad, *op. cit.*, p. 7 (3d).

[224] HT 6, 18. This text is a variant of KUB IX, 34, IV. Greenberg (*op. cit.*, p. 90, n. 20) comments, "Were this writing not unique and not in a word foreign to the Hittites it might have deserved consideration as indicative of a participial form".

[225] KUB XXXI, 14 (XXXIV, 62), 10; and KUB XXXV, 49, I, 6 ff. (cf. IV, 15).

[226] *AT* 58:29. E. A. Speiser (*JAOS* 74, 1954, p. 24) observes that the main purpose of this unique form may be to indicate a form like *Habiru*. He suggests that even if the sign be given its value ah4 instead of *a'* the *h̠* might be a graphic device signifying a long vowel or stressed syllable. Cf. Greenberg (*op. cit.*, p. 20): "Assuming that the scribe was West Semitic he may have noted that his alephs became long vowels in Akkadian: hence, by a sort of back analogy he may have converted what he took to be a long vowel into an aleph". Wiseman (in Bottero, *op. cit.*, p. 37) "The word is unusually written *ha-'a-bi-ru*. This may be either a case of *HAR=AB$_4$* or, as I am inclined to think, a case of the scribe erasing by the three small horizontal strokes of the stylus".

[227] Cf. Ungnad, *op. cit.*, pp. 12, 13 (5c). The possibility that the *i* is short but accented is obviated by the fact that were it short, the antepenult with its long *a* (as maintained above) would receive the accent.

ha-BI-ru is never found without the *i*, it would seem that
this *i* is long.[228]

Further support for this is found in the spelling *ha-BI-i-ra*[229]
used for the Nuzu personal name (assuming this name may be
identified with our *ha-BI-ru*). There are also the forms noted
above: *ha-a-BI-i-ri-a[n?]* and *ha-a-BI-i-ri-ia-an*.

c. Conclusion: The vocalization is largely a question of
how much weight to attach to the exceptional spellings.
Quite possibly they require two long vowels, producing the
(apparently non-Semitic) form, *'apir*. Perhaps only one vowel
is long. It would be precarious, however, to assume that
every indication of a long vowel is misleading and to adopt
the form *'apir* --or still less likely--*'abir*.

3. The Hebrew Equivalent. The difference in middle radicals
between *ha-BI-ru* (read as *ha-pi-ru*) and *'Ibri* would not be
an insuperable obstacle for the phonetic equation of the two.
There are a few examples of a shift in Hebrew from *p* to *b*.[230]
Nevertheless, this shift is not the rule[231] and the difference in
labials must be regarded as a serious difficulty in the case for
equation.

If we allow the consonantal equation and examine the
vowels it will be found that the difficulties increase and the
equation can be regarded as at best a bare possibility. The
following are the possible vowel combinations of *ha-BI-ru*
(reading *bi* for the moment and listing the more probable
combinations first) along with their normal Hebrew gentilic
equivalents: *'abir*, עוֹבִירִי; *'abir*, עֲבִירִי; *'abir*, עוֹבְרִי; *'abir*,
עֲבְרִי; and *'abr*, עֲבְרִי.

Attempts have been made, however, to derive *'Ibri* from
one or other of these vowel combinations. The most plausible
efforts are those which assume two short vowels, *'abir* .[232]

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[228] So C. H. Gordon (*Orientalia* 21, 1952, p. 382, n. 2) : "That the *i* is
long follows from the fact that it is not dropt to become **hapru*".

[229] *JEN* 228:29.

[230] *dpr-dbr*, "drive"; *parzillu*, 511 ; *dispu*, דבשׁ. Cf. W. F. Albright,
BASOR 77, 1940, p. 33; H. H. Rowley, *PEQ*, 1940, p. 92; DeVaux, RB
55, p. 342.

[231] Cf., e. g., אַפָר, סֵפָר, כֹּפָר, עֹפֶר, עַפָר.

[232] J. Lewy (*op. cit*.), assuming the form *Habiru*, suggests that it "is

Speiser suggests that "the form *qitl* may go back to an older qatil" with the restriction that such forms derive from stative, not transitive, verbs.[233] In line with this, attention has been called to the derivation of late Canaanite *milk*, "king", from older *malik*, "prince".[234] "Whatever validity there may be in the theory of a *qatil* to *qitl* shift,[235] it must be remembered that such is not the dominant tendency. Moreover, the degree of plausibility in applying such a principle in the present case is greatly diminished by the following considerations: a) The combination of two short vowels (*'abir*) is one of the less likely possibilities; b) The supposed shift from *'abir* to *'ibr* did not occur according to our evidence in extra-biblical documents either earlier than, or contemporary with, the appearances of *'Ibri* in the Bible. It is necessary to assume that the shift took place first and only with the Hebrew authors. And if we may not assume that the Hebrew form is based on a previous shift to '*ibr* elsewhere, then proof is required within the Hebrew language itself, and not merely, for example, from inner-Canaanite developments, of a shift from *qatil* to *qitl*.[236]

to עֵבֶר and עִבְרִי as the Akkadian proper name Zakiru(m) [for references see, e. g., A. T. Clay, *Personal Names from Cuneiform Inscriptions of the Cassite Period* (New Haven, 1912) p.- 145] is to זֶכֶר and זִכְרִי (Ex. 6:21, etc.) ". There is, however, no evidence that the Hebrew form זֶכֶר represents the Akkadian Zakiru.

[233] *Op. cit.*, p. 40, n. 96. Cf. T. J. Meek, *Hebrew Origins*, 1936, p. 7. Similarly Bauer-Leander (*Grammatik*, 459), on the basis of a possible relation of adjectival *qatil* and abstract *qitl*: e. g.., *sapil-sipl*, "base-baseness".

[234] So, e. g., Albright, *Archaeology of Palestine and the Bible* (New York, 1935), p. 206, and Bohl, *Kanaander and Hebraer* 1911, p. 85. In an earlier article (*JBL* 43, 1924, pp. 389 ff.), Albright stated that Hebrew *'Eber* for *'Ibr* stands by epenthesis for **'Apir*, adding that the philological process is familiar in all the Semitic languages; e. g., Arab. *bi'sa* from *ba'isa*. Cf. the alternation of *ma-si-ri* and *mi-is-ri* in syllabic texts from Ugarit.

[235] DeVaux (*op. cit.*) goes to the extreme of describing the passing of '*apir* into *'ipr* as "normal".

[236] The *qatil* type of noun does appear at times in Hebrew like a segholate; cf. Gesenius, *Hebrew Grammar*, 1910, 93 hh, ii. Most of these are of the getel-type which is usually the A-type but is sometimes the I-type (e. g., דֶּמַע, יֶתֶר, קֶצָב); but גֵּזֶל (Eccles. 5:7; Ezek. 18:18) is also found and that is clearly I-type. This phenomenon is, however, confined to the construct

Conclusion: The complete phonetic equation of *ha-BI-ru* and '*Ibri* is at most a bare possibility. If a difference in morphology were to be allowed while identity of denotation was assumed the difference in the vowels could be explained[237] and only the labial problem would remain as a phonetic obstacle for the theory of common derivation. Even that assumption, however, is implausible in dealing as we are not with appellatives but proper names. The phonetic situation, therefore, is such as would weaken an otherwise strong case for tracing Hebrew origins to the *ha-BI-ru*, not such as to strengthen a theory already feeble.

C. Amarna Age Encounter.

In spite of the negative conclusions reached thus far the investigation of *ha-BI-ru*--Hebrew relationships is not much ado about nothing. For history apparently did witness an *ha-BI-ru*--Hebrew encounter.

How is the *ha-BI-ru* activity in Palestine as reflected in the Amarna letters to be integrated with the Israelite conquest of their promised land as described in the books of Joshua and Judges? That is the question.

1. *Conquest*. The Amarna activity of the *ha-BI-ru* has been identified by some with the Hebrew Conquest, more specifically, with its first phase led by Joshua. But quite apart from all the aforementioned obstacles to any identification of the two groups, the Conquest under Joshua differed from the Amarna military operations of the *ha-BI-ru* even in broadest outline and fundamental character.

(a) The Hebrew conquerors were a people which had long been in Egypt and were newly arrived in Canaan. The Ugaritic and Alalah evidence reveals that the *ha-BI-ru* were

state. This restriction would not, of course, be significant so far as the gentilic form עִבְרִי is concerned. It becomes significant though when account is taken of the derivation of עִבְרִי from the patronymic עֵבֶר which is found in the absolute state.

[237] Albright compares a development of gentilic '*Ibri* from an appellative *ha-BI-ru* to *Lewi*, "Levite", probably derived from **lawiyu*, "person pledged for a debt or vow"; *Qeni*, "kenite", from *qain*, "smith"; or *hopshi*, "free-man", from *hupshu*.

in Syria for a long while before the Hebrew Conquest (on any view of its date). Moreover, since in Syria the *ha-BI-ru* had long enjoyed permanent settlements of their own in well-regulated, peace-time integration with the local population and authorities, while the Amarna letters show the *ha-BI-ru* in Palestine to be on the move, quartered here and there, without absolute loyalty to any one party, it seems clear that the Amarna *ha-BI-ru* were in Canaan as professional militarists to exploit the anarchy there for their northern lords.

(b) Also in conflict with this picture of the *ha-BI-ru* operating in relatively small, detached companies and fighting as mercenaries with no apparent national aspirations of their own as *ha-BI-ru* is the biblical picture of the Hebrew Conquest as an invasion by a united multitude, advancing in their own name in a concerted effort to achieve a common national goal. (c) The natives of Canaan were to the Israelites an enemy to be exterminated; the acceptance of them as allies would directly contravene Israel's purposes.[238] But the *ha-BI-ru* had no special antipathy for the Canaanites as such. Quite the contrary, the Canaanites were their employers, and for the most part the *ha-BI-ru* are found abetting the attempts of those Canaanites who strove to gain independence from Egyptian domination. Complaints are frequently heard from the loyalists that Canaanite rebels are going over to the cause of the *SA-GAZ*.

(d) The goal of Israel in Canaan with respect to the land was to gain possession, and agreeably their general policy in dealing with cities was to exterminate the population and seize the spoil but to refrain from destroying the cities by fire. The *ha-BI-ru*, however, after conquering and plundering, frequently set the city on fire,[239] apparently having no designs to acquire territory or to build an empire.

The difference between the two movements can also be traced in matters of detail.

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[238] Cf. Josh. 11:19. Nothing underscores this more than the anomalous character of the Gibeonite alliance. It should not be overlooked, however, that after the days of Joshua's leadership the original determination gave way frequently to a fraternizing attitude (e. g., Judg. 3:5-6).

[239] So repeatedly in *EA* 185.

(a) Names: None of the names of the Israelite leaders is found in the Amarna letters.[240] Moreover, where the names of the rulers of specific Canaanite cities can be checked (as at Jerusalem, Lachish, Gezer, and Hazor) there is in every case disagreement between the Bible and the Amarna texts.

(b) Numbers: In the pleas of the loyalists for military assistance it appears that Egyptian support in the form of fifty or so men will be adequate to turn the tide of battle. It seems unlikely then that these Canaanite kings were confronted with an assault on the scale of Joshua's army.[241]

(c) Places: The *ha-BI-ru* operated successfully in Phoenicia and Syria, but neither the Conquest under Joshua nor later tribal efforts penetrated that far.[242]

(d) Military Technology: The Israelites made no use of chariotry,[243] whereas chariots were a standard division of the *ha-BI-ru* corps at Alalah and in Palestine.[244]

2. *Pre-Conquest*. An alternative must be found then to identifying the biblical Conquest under Joshua with the Amarna disclosures. The procedure of the majority of scholars is to place Joshua after the Amarna events. Thus Meek,

[240] Proposals to equate Joshua with Yashuia and Benjamin with Benenima (or Ben-elima) are phonetically impossible. Furthermore the Amarna men were pro-Egyptian.

[241] Cf. Exod. 12:37; 38:26; Num. 1:46; 2:32; 26:51. At the same time it should not be overlooked that even fifty professional soldiers might provide adequate leadership to defend a walled garrison. Moreover, there are larger requests like that of Rib-Addi (*EA* 71:23-24) for fifty pair of horses and 200 infantry as a merely defensive measure.

[242] The way in which this argument is developed by Rowley (*op. cit.*, pp. 42 ff.) is an illuminating exhibition of rewriting history to one's taste. He argues that the exploits of Joshua were mainly if not entirely confined to the central districts while the *ha-BI-ru* trouble was in the south and north and only at Shechem in the center. It will be recognized that this is the precise opposite of the *prima facie* biblical account, according to which Joshua's campaigns were notably in the south (Josh. 10) and in the north (Josh. 11:1-14). Rowley rejects Joshua 10 in favor of the supposedly conflicting account in Judges 1; and Joshua 11, in favor of the supposed variant in Judges 4. According to the record itself, Judges 1 records events after the death of Joshua and the events of Judges 4 fall well over a century after those of Joshua 11.

[243] *Cf.*, *e. g.*, Josh. 11:9.

[244] *Cf. EA* 87:21; 197:2-11.

though he believes the Amarna *ha-BI-ru* and Joshua's campaign belong to one movement, specifies that "the Amarna account marks the beginning of the movement, while the Old Testament account has to do largely with its final accomplishment".[245] An odd quirk of Meek's view is that the Exodus from Egypt under Moses follows Joshua by more than a century.

Albright, though he posits an earlier, pre-Amarna exodus from Egypt and entry into Canaan on the part of the Joseph tribes and finds their presence in central Palestine before the major Hebrew arrival reflected in the *ha-BI-ru* of the Amarna letters, dates the (second) exodus (*i. e*., Moses leading out the Leah tribes) and the campaigning of Joshua in the 13th century, long after the Amarna correspondence.[246]

To cite one further variety of this approach, there is Rowley's intricate reconstruction. He also espouses a theory of a two-fold entry into the land, according to which certain Hebrew groups, notably Judah, press northward from Kadesh c. 1400 B.C. (these Rowley would identify with the *ha-BI-ru* of the Amarna letters) while kindred tribes, including Asher, Zebulon, and Dan, exert pressure in the north (these, Rowley conjectures, are the *SA-GAZ* of the Amarna letters). But the exodus from Egypt under Moses and the entry of Joshua into central Palestine he dates late in the 13th century B. C.[247]

It will be observed that all these efforts to locate Joshua after the Amarna episode involve drastic recasting of the biblical data--the rejection not merely of points of detail but of the biblical history in its basic structure. It requires some ingenuity, indeed, to produce one of these elaborate creations by weaving together a host of miscellaneous data sublimated from their original contexts, but the result is fiction not history. Under the mask of a claim of controlling the biblical sources by means of archaeological and extra-biblical sources an almost totally undisciplined biblical exegesis has been introduced. But why the penchant for the hasty rejection of the Old Testament source in favor of

[245] *Op. cit*.
[246] BASOR 58, 1935, pp. 10 ff.
[247] See Rowley, *op. cit*., esp. pp. 140 ff. for a survey of the various views.

interpretations of archaeological evidence which are them-
selves so uncertain and disputed at countless points?

      3. *Post-Conquest*. There is another alternative for the
integration of the Amarna and the biblical histories. It is
the reverse of those just surveyed in that it locates the Con-
quest under Joshua before rather than after the Amarna
letters, at least before those of Abdi-Hepa.[248] This is in

[248] The historian is at this juncture always embroiled in the complex
question of the date of the Exodus. Aware of the difficulties of the early
date (i. e., locating Joshua in or before the Armarna Age) and not aware of
the proper solution of them all, the writer nevertheless finds insuperable
the difficulties of a later date. Relevant as the problem is, limitations of
space allow only brief comment on a few salient points: a) The case
presented by H. H. Rowley (in *From Joseph to Joshua*) against a Hebrew
entry into Egypt in the Hyksos period has not been answered. If valid,
that majority of scholars which is certainly correct in dating the patriarchal
period early in the second millennium B.C. rather than (with Rowley)
in the middle of it must date the beginning of the sojourn before the Hyksos
period, not (with Rowley) after it. And that, in turn, virtually necessitates
the early date of the Exodus. b) Advocates of a 19th dynasty Exodus
constantly appeal to the archaeological evidences of royal building opera-
tions at the sites of Pithom and Raamses. G. E. Wright, for a recent
example, states, "We now know that if there is any historical value at all
to the store-city tradition in Exodus (and there is no reason to doubt its
reliability), *then Israelites must have been in Egypt at least during the early
part of the reign of Rameses II*" (*Biblical Archaeology* (Philadelphia and
London, 1957), p. 60. Italics his.) That is a curiously misleading state-
ment. Is it not rather the case that, if one has no reason to doubt the
reliability of the record in Exodus 1:11 that Pharaoh forced the Israelites
to build Pithom and Raamses as store-cities, he cannot possibly identify
that pharaoh with Ramses II? For it is inconceivable that anyone should
have described the magnificent operations of Ramses II at these sites,
transforming one of them into the capital of Egypt, in the "store-cities"
terms of Exodus 1:11. The Hebrew building and the Hebrew Exodus
must then precede Ramses II. c) Albright has dated the destruction of
Canaanite Bethel, Lachish, and Debir, all by conflagration, in the 13th
century B.C., and would identify this destruction with Joshua's campaigns
as evidence of a late Exodus. Such a deduction does not do justice to the
biblical facts that Canaanite reoccupation frequently followed Joshua's
conquest of Canaanite cities and that destruction by fire was exceptional
in Joshua's campaigns. (Apparently only Jericho and Ai among the
southern cities were burned and only Hazor was burned in the Galilean
campaign. Josh. 11 .13.) The evidence of these Palestinian excavations,
therefore, actually requires a date for Joshua considerably earlier than the

precise agreement with the chronological data in Judges 11:26 and I Kings 6:1 and assumes a fairly brief period for Joshua's campaigns which also agrees with the biblical record.[249]

Even more compatible with this view than with the identification of Joshua's campaigns and the Amarna activity are certain facts which have long constituted a popular argument in favor of the latter view.[251] Giving it a somewhat different turn than the advocates of identification, the argument is as follows: Precisely those cities which appear in the Amarna letters as under Canaanite control, whether pro-Egyptian or rebel (and, therefore, likely allied to the *SA-GAZ*), are those which were not permanently dispossessed either by Joshua[251] or the early tribal efforts after the death of Joshua.[252]

13th century fall of these cities. *A propos* of Josh. 11:13, Yadin's recent report of the second season of excavations at Hazor is of interest (*cf. Biblical Archaeologist,* XX, 1957, pp. 34 ff.). In addition to the latest Canaanite city which was destroyed in the 13th century (perhaps then, according to an early Exodus, in the days of Deborah, cf. Judges 4 and 5), remains were found of a 14th century city "approximately in the el-Amarna period" (p. 44) and of an earlier city of the Middle Bronze Age which "was effectively destroyed by fire, most probably by one of the Egyptian pharaohs of the New Kingdom, Amenophis II or more probably Thutmose III" (p. 44). The supposition that a pharaoh of the New Kingdom captured Hazor is questionable; for in spite of their many campaigns into Canaan their ignorance of the techniques of siege warfare made the capture of a fortified city a rarity. But according to the early date of the Exodus, Joshua was a contemporary of Amenophis II and as for Hazor, "that did Joshua burn".

[249] Josh. 14:7 and 10 indicate that the initial phase was completed within five years of the entry into Canaan.

[250] Cf., e. g., Olmstead, *History of Palestine and Syria* (New York, 1931), pp. 196-197; Meek, *op. cit*., p. 20.

[251] Joshua 10 and 11.

[252] The situation at Shechem is problematic. Nothing is said about an Israelite conquest of central Palestine, but if the transaction of Joshua 24 implies Israelite control of Shechem, they subsequently lost their foothold, for Labaya ruled Shechem some thirty years after the Israelite entry (cf. EA 289:22 ff.). Similarly, if Albright (*BASOR* 87, 1942, p. 38) is correct that Debir became the seat of a local chieftain after the Amarna period, not only Joshua's raid but even Othniel's capture of that city (Josh. 15:15-17; cf. Judg. 1:11 ff.) failed to be permanently effective. Again, though Joshua's raid had depopulated Lachish and Gezer, these cities fell again into Canaanite hands according to *EA* 287:14-15, whether these lines mean that these cities had been assisting Pharaoh's enemies or

Albright has concluded that in southern Palestine of the Amarna period the main city-states were Gezer, Lachish, Jerusalem, and Hebron-Keilah.[253] In the period of Joshua there are in this area five additional city-states: Jarmuth, Makkedah, Libnah, Debir, and Eglon, with still others like Jericho, Bethel and Gibeon nearby. Albright then theorizes that from c. 1375-1250 there had been a gradual reduction in the power of the city-states combined with an increase in their number, which he attributes to a settled Egyptian policy of *divide et impera*. This decrease in the power of the Canaanite city-states is then judged to have aided Israel in her Conquest. Indeed, this is seized upon as compelling evidence that the Hebrew Conquest was late.

It will be recognized that this reconstruction of the 14th century situation in southern Palestine is based in part on silences in the Amarna letters. Such a procedure is precarious, however, for the silences might readily be accounted for by the fact that the authors of the Amarna letters simply had no occasion to mention the towns in question. To the extent, however, that there may actually have been fewer city-states in the Amarna period than in Joshua's day, a more plausible explanation would be that between Joshua and the Amarna situation the Israelites had been encroaching on the territory of the old Canaanite city-states, reducing their number by conquest.

Furthermore, the spontaneous confederation of Canaanite kings described in Joshua 10 is difficult to explain if it be supposed that Joshua's campaigns were contemporary with or subsequent to the *ha-BI-ru* activity of the Amarna letters. For these letters graphically exhibit the mutual distrust and growing antagonism among the Canaanite kings during this period. Is it not apparent that neither in the midst of, nor soon after, such intrigues and civil strife could a king of Jerusalem so easily consolidate the surrounding city-states for

were to provide for Pharaoh's archers. Such developments indicate that Israel's permanent acquisition of territory in Canaan was a gradual process only initiated by Joshua's campaigns.

[253] Besides these, Jarmuth was a minor independency and an Egyptian garrison and official were stationed at Eglon. *BASOR* 87, 1942, pp. 37-38. *Cf.* Wright, *op. cit.*, pp. 75, 76.

a joint military venture against a common foe? Abdi-Hepa's
futile efforts during the struggle with the *ha-Bi-ru* is a witness
that a king of Jerusalem would find such a task impossible.
Again a more plausible reconstruction is that the collapse of
the five-city alliance against Joshua terminated the southern
confederation and prepared for the Canaanite disunity ev-
idenced in the Amarna letters.

If Joshua is to be placed before the Amarna period, the
problem still remains of synchronizing the later Israelite tribal
efforts to take actual possession of their allotted inheritances
(i. e., the Book of judges) with the Amarna *ha-BI-ru* move-
ments. The arguments already presented against the pos-
sibility of identifying the *ha-BI-ru* with the Israelites of
Joshua's day for the most part hold against any such iden-
tification at this point as well. However, in view of the known
tendency of the authors of the Amarna letters to stigmatize
the cause of all enemies (or at least all accused of disloyalty
to Egypt) with the *SA-GAZ* label, we ought not to be too
dogmatic in denying the possibility that some Hebrew
activity might be hidden in the Amarna letters under that
label.

More significant is the fact that on the chronology followed
here the first oppression of Israel in Canaan[254] falls in the late
second and in the third decade of the 14th century B.C. This
corresponds with part of the era of the *ha-BI-ru* in Canaan.[255]
Israel's first oppressor was "Cushan-rishathaim king of Aram
Naharaim".[256] The area designated by "Aram Naharaim"
would include within its southwestern limits the region about
Alalah (and probably still farther south) which was a strong
ha-BI-ru center in the 14th century B. C.[257] Though styled

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[254] Judg. 3:9-10.

[255] part of this era corresponds to the career of Labaya which can be
dated in the second and third decades of the 14th century on either
Albright's or Knudtzon's reading of the date on the hieratic docket on
Labaya's letter, *EA* 254.

[256] Judg. 3:8. It is possible that the additional רִשְׁעָתַיִם, "double wicked-
ness", was appended by Cushan's victims, perhaps as a pun on אֲרַם נַהֲרַיִם.
Cf. Burney, *The Book of Judges*, 1920, pp. 65-66.

[257] Cf. O'Callaghan, *Aram Naharaim,* esp. pp. 131-145; cf. p. 122.

melek, Cushan-rishathaim need not have been more than one strong chieftain among several in Aram Naharaim.[251]

Moreover, the name Cushan is attested in this area both as the name of a geographical district and as a personal name. That there was a district in northern Syria in the 13th and 12th centuries B.C. called Qusana-ruma, is known from the list of Ramses III.[259] Still more pertinent is the 15th century tablet from Alalah[260] which contains the personal name *ku-sa-an*.[261] This tablet is a fragment of a census list of unspecified purpose, on which 43 personal names remain along with the phrase found on the left edge, "owner of a chariot". The list then might well be one of the numerous military lists and probably includes the names of several *maryannu*.

Within the framework of synchronization proposed here for Hebrew and *ha-BI-ru* careers, it is difficult to dissociate the oppression of Israel by Cushan-rishathaim from the *ha-BI-ru* menace of the Amarna letters. The facts rather suggest that elements of the *ha-BI-ru* corps from Syria active in southern Canaan as the terror of the loyalist Canaanite city kings began in time to raid the settlements of the more recently arrived Israelites. The Israelites were becoming, like the Egyptians, too dominating a power in Palestine to suit the interests which the *ha-BI-ru* were engaged to further. It appears then that it was from plundering *ha-BI-ru* mercenaries that Othniel delivered oppressed Israel.[262]

If so, the *ha-BI-ru*, certainly not the kin of Israel, were actually Israel's foe--the first oppressors of Israel in Canaan. And then, far from offering a Canaanite version of the Hebrew

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[258] Such is the usage elsewhere in judges. Thus Jabin of Hazor is called "king of Canaan" (Judg. 4:2; cf. 4:23, 24), though he was but one of several Canaanite kings (*cf.* Judg. 5:19). So also, O'Callaghan, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

[259] Cf. W. Edgerton, J. Wilson, *Historical Records of Ramesses III*, pl. 101, p. 110.

[260] Wiseman, AT 154.

[261] *Ibid.*, p. 140. 36 names end in *-an* (*ibid.*, p. 10).

[262] Since Othniel is associated with the south, this first oppression probably centered there.

march of conquest, the Amarna letters dealing with the *ha-BI-ru* are a Canaanite portrait of the first scourge employed by Yahweh to chastise the Israelites for their failure to prosecute the mandate of conquest.

It is not difficult to surmise what verdict the biblical historians would have given if they had left to us their interpretation of the data of the *ha-BI-ru* oppression of the theocratic people in the early 14th century and the almost total disappearance of the *ha-BI-ru* as a social-political entity by about the close of that century. Surely they would have judged that the brief Amarna Age encounter with Israel was for the *ha-BI-ru* a crucial hour of more than ordinary political decision. It was an encounter that sealed their destined fall.

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