

UDC 930.85

**From Joseph to Moses: the key time of interaction
between the cultures of Egypt and Israel**

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Abstract

The article studies the chronicle part of the biblical narrative about the Jewish settlement in Egypt and their Exodus from it. The question of the historicity of the Jewish settlement in Egypt, which lasted for several centuries, remains debatable in modern science. The solution of this problem (like in many other areas of history which the biblical narrative casts light on) often depends on the methodological preferences of a researcher because there are almost no objective and clearly interpretable archaeological data on the events of that epoch. The article also deals with the most important historical upheaval of those centuries for Egypt – the Hyksos invasion – as an event that is likely to be connected with the biblical events. The Hyksos invasion is regarded as a turning point in the history of Ancient Egypt. The period of the rule of the Hyksos (like the Jewish settlement in Egypt that took place in the same epoch) is considered to be one of the most mysterious parts of the history of Ancient Egypt because no Hyksos written texts, inscriptions, bas-reliefs, tombs, frescoes or sculptures have ever been found. The article also tries to throw light on the ethnic identity of the Hyksos.

For citation

Misetskii E.V. (2018) Ot Iosifa do Moiseya: klyuchevoe vremya vzaimodeistviya kul'tur Egipta i Izrailya [From Joseph to Moses: the key time of interaction between the cultures of Egypt and Israel]. *"Belye pyatna" rossiiskoi i mirovoi istorii* ["White Spots" of the Russian and World History], 8 (4-5), pp. 32-47.

Keywords

Egypt, Tanakh, ancient Egyptian civilization, ancient Hebrew civilization, Israel, Exodus, chronology of the Bible, archaeological data, the Jews.

Introduction

The text of the Tanakh contains fairly accurate chronological coordinates and quantitative indicators related to the stay of Jews in Egypt. We will highlight the main, key moments of chronicle character in the biblical text:

1) When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt, he said: ...Go down there and buy some for us, so that we may live and not die. Then ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt. (Gen. 42:1-5).

2) Now the famine was still severe in the land. So when they had eaten all the grain they had brought from Egypt, their father said to them: Go back and buy us a little more food. (Gen. 43: 1-2).

3) Then Joseph said to his brothers: ... Now hurry back to my father and say to him: This is what your son Joseph says: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me; don't delay. You shall live in the region of Goshen and be near me — you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all you have. I will provide for you there, because five years of famine are still to come. Otherwise you and your household and all who belong to you will become destitute. (Gen. 45: 4, 9–11).

4) God said: "I am God, the God of your father," he said. "Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you into a great nation there.; I will go down to Egypt with you, and I will surely bring you back again. ...So Jacob and all his offspring went to Egypt, taking with them their livestock and the possessions they had acquired in Canaan. ... All those who went to Egypt with Jacob—those who were his direct descendants, not counting his sons' wives—numbered sixty-six persons. (Gen. 46: 3–27).

5) Pharaoh said to Joseph: Your father and your brothers have come to you; and the land of Egypt is before you; settle your father and your brothers in the best part of the land. Let them live in Goshen. And if you know of any among them with special ability, put them in charge of my own livestock. ...So Joseph settled his father and his brothers in Egypt and gave them property in the best part of the land, the district of Rameses, as Pharaoh directed. (Gen. 47:5-6, 11).

6) Now Joseph and all his brothers and all that generation died; but the Israelites were exceedingly

fruitful ... Then a new king, to whom Joseph meant nothing, came to power in Egypt. "Look," he said to his people: "the Israelites have become far too numerous for us. Come, we must deal shrewdly with them or they will become even more numerous and, if war breaks out, will join our enemies, fight against us and leave the country." So they put slave masters over them to oppress them with forced labor. And they built Pithom and Rameses as store cities for Pharaoh. But the more they were oppressed, the more they multiplied and spread; so the Egyptians came to dread the Israelites. And worked them ruthlessly. They made their lives bitter with harsh labor in brick and mortar and with all kinds of work in the fields; in all their harsh labor the Egyptians worked them ruthlessly. (Ex. 1: 6–14).

7) The Lord said: I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. ... But Moses said to God: Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt? And God said: I will be with you. (Ex. 3: 7-12)

8) During the night Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said: Up! Leave my people... Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me. The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country; they said: "For otherwise," they said: "we will all die!"... The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Sukkoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. Many other people went up with them, and also large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds. ... Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt was 430 years. (Ex. 12:31-40).

"An Inexplicable Five Hundred-year-old Failure in Hebrew Historical Memories»

If we delete fable details of Joseph and Moses fate and take into account motivation given by the biblical narrator, the settlement of the Jews in Egypt and their exodus looks so. It immediately attracts attention an unusually long break in the story between death of Joseph (Gen. 50) and enslavement of the Jewish nation (Ex.1), especially in contrast to the detailed descriptions of the vicissitudes of Joseph and Moses lives. As the researchers point out, probably, such a lacuna in a story of an extensive narrator of the biblical text is not accidental. So, A. Nemirovskii points to "an inexplicable five hundred-year-old failure in Hebrew historical memories" [Nemirovskii, 1996] – up to the beginning of the events of the Book of Exodus. I. Lipovskii notes that in the Book of Exodus "several centuries of Jewish staying in Egypt were disregarded with almost complete silence" [Lipovskii, 2010, 8].

The question of the historicity of several centuries stay of the Jews in Egypt remains acutely debatable in modern science. As in many other areas of history, on which biblical narration sheds light, this answer is often in full dependence on the methodological penchants and preferences of the researcher, as objective and unambiguously interpreted archaeological data about the events of that era is actually not saved.

However, current situation does not eliminate the need for a scrupulous, thoughtful and reasonable historical study of available facts (in that source condition in which they have reached us) in order to reconstruct the events of the distant past as much as possible. Since the history of interaction between Egyptian and Hebrew civilizations is directly related to the formation of world spirituality, both within the "Religions of the Book" – Judaism, Christianity, Islam – and beyond their influence.

According to the apt remark of I. Lipovskii: "The story of the ancient Jews stay in Egypt is the most mysterious and darkest part of the Old Testament", despite the fact that "the Egyptian period lasted longer than the time spent by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in Canaan", and that "the theme of slavery in Egypt is so important that runs a red thread through all the biblical books". Moreover, it is told immeasurably more about the 40-year stay of the Jews in the desert than about Egyptian period [Lipovskii, 2010, 64].

Let us briefly dwell on the main actants and circumstances of historical action, as they are presented in modern biblical studies.

Ethnic identity of the Israeli ethnic group

The first, and important, is the question of the main actant of the biblical narration – the Jewish Nation. Despite the statement in the Tanakh about the unity of the Jewish Nation from ancient times, the question of ethnic identity of the Israeli ethnos of the Patriarchal and the Egyptian period, as well as later times, remains controversial in historical science.

Thus, N. Merpert developed views of the famous historian-biblical A. Mazar, notices: "Ethnic identification of specific population groups and questions of their participation in formation of the Israeli ethnic group require extreme caution, especially when using archaeological sources" [Merpert, 2000, 227]. According to archaeological data, inhabitants of the early iron age settlements, having close material culture, "could belong to different ethnic groups. When they came closer ... the same generalizing designation was used to all these groups, covering both residents of large settlements and small communities of farmers and shepherds" [ibid, 228]. A. Nemirovskii emphasizes that *Hapiru*, in particular, identified as pre-Israeli peoples, were "multiethnic in their nature" [Nemirovskii, 1996, 12].

At the same time, I. Tantlevskii, and after him I. Lipovskii, identify the Patriarchs as the Amorites-Sutians.

The question of correlation of the ethnonyms of the *Habiru* with *Ivri/Ibri* (יְבֻרִי) (self-name, traditionally identified as "the Jew") also remains controversial. One of the first to make this comparison was biblical scholar K. Kenyon. She noticed correspondence of general situation of the Hyksos invasion (including the Habiru tribes) with the era of nations movement in Patriarchal times [Kenyon, 1979]. A. Nemirovskii connects self-identification *ibri* with transition (*eber* (עֶבֶר) - "get across") [Nemirovskii, 1996]. J. Weinberg says: "Some ancient Egyptian texts mention [H]apiru, who are involved in the construction of the new capital of Ramses II <...> the identification of the mentioned [H]apiru with ibrim is not indisputable" [Weinberg, 2002, www]. G. E. Wright interprets *Habiru/Apiru* as "nomadic tribes" [Wright, 2003, www]. Following him, I. Lipovskii defines *Habiru* as "an alien nomad", "homeless and wandering involuntarily" [Lipovskii, 2010, 98], that is, rather social, rather than ethnic term; while "the ancient Jews represented only a very small part of numerous tribes of Habiru" [ibid, 102].

In his monograph I. Lipovskii substantiates the conclusion that the ancient Jews "originally represented not one but two nations, or rather, tribal groups – Northern and Southern" [ibid, 7], later known as *the Israelis* (Northern tribes) and *the Jews* (Southern tribes), which after a short Association into a single Kingdom formed separate States. However, according to the scientist, it is necessary to remember also that "both the Israelis, and the Jews represented not so much direct descendants of ancient Jews, but an ethnic alloy of all indigenous peoples of Palestine, who has been living in this country since prehistoric times" [ibid, 10].

Undoubtedly, Jewish ethnogenesis is in close connection with the Patriarchal tradition. A. Nemirovskii proves the historicity of the migration of the ancient Jews ancestors to Palestine from southern Mesopotamia in form of a movement of a large tribal Union (or unions), which was at the historical stage of "chieftainship". Those very tribal chiefs were that Patriarchs, which A. Nemirovskii identifies as historical figures [Nemirovskii, 1996, 14]. I. Lipovskii proposes to consider the Patriarchs rather as the personification of the tribes, a kind of meta-ethnonyms: "Lot leaving Abraham, then Ishmael leaving Isaac, and finally Esau leaving Jacob is not just "departure of relatives", but a division of related tribes, which gradually become independent nations" [Lipovskii, 2010, 43]. I. Tantlevskii gives an example of texts from Mari, which tell about Amorite-Sutian tribe of *Bini-Yamin* ("Sons of the South"), which name is synonymous with the name of the youngest son of Jacob – Benjamin [Tantlevskii, 2005, 22].

Migration and settling down of the tribes in Palestine has led to a variety of contacts with surrounding nations. This interaction, though primarily confrontational, nevertheless "played a significant role in consolidation of the Israelis, and <...> in the process of their cultural development at the pre-state level" [Merpert, 2000, 228].

The question of the stay of the Jews in Egypt remains among the most controversial in historical science. There are two radical answers to this question: point of view, according to which events of the last chapters of Genesis and Exodus are historically true (then the task of the historian becomes dating of events); as well as point of view, according to which the great migration of of Jacob-Israel nation to Egypt and the Exodus both are mythological events, which has no correlative scale of historical basis.

J. Van Seters and T. Thompson (as well as their followers A. Alt, M. Noth, G. Miller, N. Na'aman et al.) "deny the historicism of the Patriarchal tradition in general and see it as a late historical and fantastic compilation" [ibid, 181], marked by the realities of the first, not the second millennium BC. It is natural that migration of nations is represented in this hypercritical (A. Nemirovskii) version as a mythological phenomenon, while the ethnogenesis of the Jews is explained either by migration of the population to Palestine from its outskirts, or by separation of tribes from their kindred Canaanites.

However, a significant part of historians, archaeologists, biblical scholars dealing with ancient Eastern archaeology (G.E. Wright, J. Weinberg, I. Lipovskii), come to the conclusion about the historicity of the events described in the Tanakh, and consider the biblical text data, such as requiring historical verification, with "preliminary trust" (A. Nemirovskii).

It is proved that the Syro-Palestinians lived in Egypt long before the Hyksos invasion: thus, the oldest Semitic inscriptions in alphabetical writing are carved on the rocks in the desert to the West of the Nile (Wadi al-Kohl), near the ancient road that ran between Thebes and Abydos. They are pre-dated 1900-1800 BC. One of the papyri of the Middle Kingdom mentions a certain Baby, "the chief of Asians" – the military leader, who commanded a contingent of mercenaries from Canaan [Wright, 2003, www].

Historically accurate realities relating to the topic of the Jews in Egypt are considered geographical and topographic data, for example, "the country of Goshen", which modern Egyptologists localize in the northeastern Delta. As G.E. Wright pointed out, this region is now known as Wadi Tumilat, with most of its population being nomads up to the nineteenth century [ibid.]. Also the cities of Pitom and Ramses are identified in the area of modern Ismail, built by Pharaoh Ramses II (1290-1224 BC), in the construction of which, according to tradition (Ex. 1:11 and adj.), the Israelis took part [Weinberg, 2002, www].

Egyptian flavor in the history of Joseph is very bright, which indicates a good knowledge of Egyptian customs, life and traditions [Wright, 2003, www]. Attention to dreams and their interpretations, as well as exact names of public positions, etc. is reflected in the Book of Genesis among distinctive features of the Egyptian culture. Having linguistically clear Egyptian origin, there are such authentic Egyptian names as: Potiphar / Potipher (meaning in ancient Egyptian language "Devoted to Ra"), Asenath (meaning in ancient Egyptian "Devoted to Anat"), Zaphenath-Paneah; (meaning in ancient Egyptian language "God spoke and [a newborn] will live", perhaps "head of the house of life") [Weinberg, 2002, www].

An interesting argument in favor of the historicity of the Egyptian captivity leads I. Shifman. He notes that falsification of the Exodus and the personality of Moses is possible, but their purpose is unclear; on the contrary, to give necessary authority to the cult of Yahweh, it was necessary to appeal to historical traditions that are well-known to all people. "Why should they think out a story of slavery and escape? It was possible to make up something higher and heroic..." [Shifman, 1987, 124].

The Complexity of Chronological Identification of the Biblical Events

The question of determining the chronological coordinates of the considered events becomes of high importance. Let's highlight the main options for its resolution in the biblical historiography of recent decades.

In the middle of the XX century the point of view, according to which Jacob's resettlement in Egypt belongs to the end of the middle bronze age, began to dominate. Thus, W. Albright was not doubting in the reality of the Patriarchal history events and presumably dated the migration of Jacob with his tribe to Egypt as XVIII – XVII centuries BC, relating it with the Hyksos invasion, and with the old Babylonian era on the Mesopotamian line [Albright, 1961, 83]. J. Bright, W. Speiser, K. Kenyon adhered to the same version in their works. Брайт, У. Спейзер, К. They usually used archaeological data as a proof of the historicity of biblical events. We should remind, that opponents of this hypothesis (as of dating events too early) cite as an argument the centuries-old "failure" in the old Testament narration between the books of Genesis and Exodus (in particular, this consideration is provided by A. Nemirovskii).

Another concept is related to the names of S. Gordon, O. Eissfeldt, I. Diakonoff, G. Fohrer and refers the resettlement of Israelis from Mesopotamia to the late bronze age (or the middle Babylonian period). Proponents of this concept of dating recognized the historicity of the main plot of the biblical story only (the resettlement of nations) and rejected the accuracy of the details; while "archaeological

data is almost not involved" [Merpert, 2000, 180].

The question of precision of the legend of the Exodus is no less complicated. As Merpert noted, during these centuries, "the boundaries of specific cultural phenomena changed rapidly, cities passed from hand to hand, they were destroyed and restored <...> and equally ambiguous are the experiments for establishing correspondences between archaeological and written – primarily biblical – evidences" [ibid, 218]. Some geographical and topographical data of the ancient Jews route of wandering in the desert – Kadesh-Barnea, Edom and others, corresponding to the ancient caravan road in the Sinai desert, are considered reliable in historical science [Weinberg, 2002, www].

The difficulty occurs while defining terms of Israel stay in Egypt. Так, Й. J. Weinberg writes: "Such a long stay of the large in number ethnos in the North-Eastern Delta could not pass without a trace, but archaeological and epigraphic materials from this region contain no direct data confirming the reliability of the tradition in the Tanakh" [ibid].

A large number of the Israeli tribes, leaving Egypt at the same time, as it is described in the Bible ("about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children" – Ex.12:37), according to historians (J. Weinberg, Yu. Klimenkovskij, A. Dollinger) is not confirmed by existing sources. However, I. Lipovskii, finds this number relatively accurate, but specifies the timing of the Exodus of the tribes, as well as presence of other ethnic groups representatives among them. Ancient Egyptian texts of the late XIII century BC reported on the arrivals and departures from Egypt of individuals, groups of people, even a whole tribe, as well as a thorough check of arriving and departing on the northeastern border. Part of the scientists (G.E. Wright, A. Malamat, Z. Herzog) believe that it is rightful to assume that there was no simultaneous resettlement of the ancient Jews in Egypt, no long and constant their stay in Goshen and no their one-time departure from there, but multiple, repeated, especially during drought and famine, visits of individual Hebrew clans and tribes to Egypt and multiple, repeated exoduses from it, probably in the XIV-XII centuries BC [Weinberg, 2002, www], that merged in people's memory over the centuries into one nation and one Exodus.

G. E. G.E. Wright comments on the known inconsistencies of the biblical chronology of the Exodus using archaeological data. According to the latest ones, the Exodus should be dated XIII century. At the same time, the Third Book of Kings states that Solomon began to build the temple 480 years after the Exodus, in the fourth year of his reign, which, according to recent studies, fell on 959 BC (1Ki 6:1); in this case, the time of the Exodus according to the biblical data becomes 1439. There is an assumption that the number 480 is obtained by multiplying twelve traditional generations between the Exodus and the times of Solomon for forty years of their duration. If you take a more realistic value equal to, on

average, twenty-five years for one generation, then the Exodus falls on the third quarter of the XIII century BC, which corresponds to archaeological evidence [Wright, 2003, www].

The complexity of chronological identification of the biblical events of studied period is related to the fact that at the time of the Patriarchs, the Exodus and even during the period of judges, the Jews yet had no official historiography. "If historical legends contained any indication of significant time intervals, they were most likely expressed in the number of generations that separated one event from another and not in the number of years" [ibid.]. Having studied a lot of historical sources, data of paleoethnography and linguistics, conclusions of Hellenistic and Jewish chronologists, however, modern scholars come to the conclusion that "general historical quality of the Patriarchal tradition should <...> be considered proven" [Nemirovskii, 1996, 16].

I. Lipovskii, considers that common history of the two tribes of the Jewish nation was written only in the era of the United Kingdom by the Levites and the Aaronids. He brings the following hypothesis of the Jews stay in Egypt, in particular, explaining the persistent silence of biblical authors about the four hundred years of the Egyptian period. In his opinion, fate of the two tribal groups differed: Northern tribes ("Israel-Joseph group") left Palestine and went to the Nile Delta at the end of XVIII century BC – this story is reflected in the legend of Joseph. The historian adds that most probably, it happened during the drought in Canaan, when Isaac (representative of the Southern tribal Union) was forbidden to go to Egypt (Gen. 26:1-3.): this ban may be considered an indirect confirmation that another part of tribes went to Egypt same time [Lipovskii, 2010, 48]. The historian relates the arrival of Joseph's family to the period of the Middle Kingdom (1938 – 1630 BC). The Southern group of tribes ("Jacob") "appeared in the Nile Delta much later, only in the second half of the XVII century BC" [ibid, 49].

The two tribal groups not only came to Egypt at different times, they also left it at different times: Joseph's family – no later than middle of the XV century BC, and the Southern tribes – only in the early XII century BC [ibid, 65]. G. E. Wright has an opinion that "the Exodus occurred in the first half of the XIII century BC" [Wright, 2003, www]. According to Lipovskii, the biblical story reflects only the history of the Southern tribes; Northern tribes "were an integral part of the conquerors of Egypt, the so-called Hyksos" [Lipovskii, 2010, 65]. The historian finds a clever proof of his hypothesis: thus, the name of Jacob Israel is connected with the fact that Joseph's father united two ancestor tribes: Northern and Southern. The episode of the struggle with the angel is clearly connected with the "God-fighter" Israel, and not with Jacob, who was "a meek man living in tents", according to the biblical description, (Gen. 25:27). It was the task of bringing together two very different stories of the Amorite tribal groups

in Egypt that made Bible authors keep silent about this period: different conditions and chronology of the Jews stay in the Nile Delta "made it impossible to combine oral traditions of both groups into a single version <...> Therefore compilers of the Book of Exodus considered it best way to pass over in silence the huge Egyptian time period" [ibid, 65].

The version of "two Exoduses", as well as the above-mentioned version of "partial" Exoduses of individual tribal groups, is quite common in historiography (see ex.: [Herr, 1999]). According to archaeological data Yu. Klimenkovskij also points out the evidence, that "there were two Israeli invasions, one in the 13th century, and another two centuries later, but later tradition has combined them into one" [Klimenkovskij, www]. At the same time, I. Tantlevskii considers it possible to date the events of the Book of Exodus as historical to the XIII century, confirming his argumentation by changes in the population of Canaan at this time (the appearance of shepherds and farmers) and the destruction of a number of Canaan cities.

The Invasion of the Hyksos as a Turning Point in the History of Ancient Egypt

Let us turn to the most serious historical shock of those centuries, which affected Egypt - the invasion of the Hyksos – in its possible connection with biblical events.

Without any doubt, the invasion of Hyksos tribal unions of the middle bronze age (early XVII BC [Merpert, 2000, 177]) was a turning point in the history of Ancient Egypt.

The name "Hyksos" (*=hq3w-s3sw*, "the kings of the shepherds") was first used by Manetho an Egyptian priest and historian of III century BC. He used it in his description of the conquest of Egypt by foreigners who came from the East, in the non-preserved "Aegyptiaca" that was quoted in the book of Flavius Josephus "Antiquities of the Jews". Breasted and Turaev note that the "Hyksos" is most likely the Greek pronunciation of the Egyptian title "ruler of countries" [Breasted, Turaev, 2003, 213], I. Lipovskii and I. Tantlevskii more reasonably assume that the word "Hyksos" is a phonetic variant of the Egyptian "hekahasut" – "rulers of foreign lands" [Lipovskii, 2010, 71], "rulers of foreign/desert highlands" [Tantlevskii, 2005, 62].

Historians note that the period of the Hyksos reign is the darkest and most mysterious part of ancient Egyptian history (like the period of the Egyptian stay of the Jews, which falls on this era, which is also not covered in the Bible). Even today, in particular, there are not found any Hyksos written texts, inscriptions and bas-reliefs, tombs, frescoes or sculptures. Everything that could somehow remind of the power of the Hyksos was destroyed in the country by order of the New Kingdom pharaohs.

The remained monuments of that time were left only by the enemies of the Hyksos - pharaohs of

the XVII dynasty of Thebes.

However, here, same as in the issue of ethnic identification of Hebrew tribes, researchers hold different points of view.

Thus, N. Merpert describes "the many-sided Hyksos array" as having Asian roots, "where, of course, along with the others, (the Hurrians, Habiru, etc.) Semitic elements were also represented" [Merpert, 2000, 177]. J. Breasted and B. Turaev indicate that the Hyksos were "hordes, perhaps Semitic", and the Hyksos Empire was most likely Semitic [Breasted, Turaev, 2003, 210, 216].

There are different variations among the attempts of the Hyksos ethnic identification: Arabs and Phoenicians, Hittites, Hurrians, Indo-European tribes (since it is the Hyksos, as it is believed, acquainted the Egyptians with horses, war chariots, taught them more modern methods of melting metals). However Manetho, Plutarch, Apion, and, on the other hand, Flavius Josephus, identified the Jews with the Hyksos or their allies. As I. Lipovskii points out, "archaeological excavations of the last decades have put an end to any doubts: the so-called Hyksos were actually semi-nomadic Western Semites and came not from Asia in General, but specifically from Palestine" [Lipovskii, 2010, 71-72]. As a proof, the historian cites the data of linguistic analysis of names from Egyptian sources, as well as the fact that neither the Hittites nor the Hurrians in the XVIII – XVII centuries BC could not appear in the Nile Delta, as they were settled away from these places. I. Tantlevskii also speaks about Hyksos invasion as of "West Semitic tribal pastoral groups, primarily of Amorite-Sutian origin" [Tantlevskii, 2005, 62].

I. Lipovskii cites an important social aspect of the meaning of the word "Hyksos": the Egyptians called so "only pharaohs and rulers of Western Semitic origin", while common people, immigrants from Syria and Palestine, were called "aamu", correlated with the ethnonym "Amorites" and the name of Southern Syria and Phoenicia – Amurru [Lipovskii, 2010, 72].

Egypt became a shelter for nomadic Semitic tribes in the First Intermediate Period of Egypt; and in the text of the Bible you can find evidences that Semitic tribes "descended" into the Nile Delta, like Abraham. Already at this time, Egyptian officials collected a considerable bribe from those Amorite tribes who sought their salvation from periodic droughts in Canaan, used them as employees and blacksmiths (in particular, as shows us the famous fresco from the tomb of Khnumhotep II, dated XIX century BC and reflecting the resettlement of the Semitic family in Egypt).

The most reliable and complete source by which we can judge the nature of the Hyksos rule, is not the work of Manetho (not only lost, but also clearly historically inaccurate; in particular, he points out that the Hyksos ruled in Egypt 511 years, while the data of modern historiography called a little more than 100 years), but the Papyrus royal de Turin – the ancient Egyptian papyrus, compiled in the XIII

century BC during the reign of Ramses II. Moreover, the sources are seals and scarabs found in Egypt and Palestine. Despite the fragmentary nature of the extant sources, they have brought names of at least six Hyksos pharaohs of the XV dynasty to the present day (Sheshi, Yaqub-Har, Khyan, Apepi I, Apepi II, Khamudi) and two more, which Egyptologists refer either to the same or to the next, XVI, dynasty (Anathar and Jakebmu). I. Lipovskii, noticed that the names Khamudi, Yaqub-Har, Jakebmu "even in the Egyptian forms look course western Semitic" [ibid., 84]. The list of Hyksos rulers names is given by Manetho (Salitis, Bnon, Apachnan, Apophis (Apopi), Iannas (Khyan), Kertos (Khamudi), Yaqub-Har, Semken, Anather) [cited by Klimenkovskij, www], Semitic names are also distinguishable. Comparing name of the Hyksos

Pharaoh Yaqub-Har (Yakubher, Yak-Baal) with the old Testament narration, Breasted and Turaev have made a bold assumption: "There is nothing impossible in the fact that any chief of Jacob tribe has reached the supreme power in this troubled time" [Breasted, Turaev, 2003, 216].

The upgrowing decentralization of power during the XII and XIII dynasties led to the massive settlement of the Nile Delta by the Hyksos / Aamu, and in the Eastern part of the Delta they built a fortified city of Avaris. Subsequently, the Hyksos tribes became an important political force, and any candidate for the place of Pharaoh had to enlist their support. Apparently, already the XIV dynasty, that declared itself in the North of the Nile Delta, was Hyksossian. And the XV dynasty (1630-1523 BC) was already "pure Amorite" [Lipovskii, 2010, 81].

It should be noted that, as far as the preserved data allow us consider, the Hyksos came to power not as foreign invaders, but as Egyptians of foreign origin: they used traditional language, symbols, rituals of Egypt and represented its interests (and not their countries, as later conquerors - Assyrians or Babylonians). I. Lipovskii notes that the word itself, transmitted in Greek as "Hyksos", was assigned to them by the Theban pharaohs from Upper Egypt (Manetho relied on that written monuments in his characterization of the Hyksos) [ibid, 82]. At the same time in Lower Egypt, where the power of the aliens from Asia extended, most likely, the Pharaoh tradition did not seem roughly interrupted.

I. Lipovskii suggests that the Northern Israeli tribes ("house of Joseph") were an integral part of the Hyksos, and their tribal elite was part of the inner circle of the Hyksos pharaohs. The Hyksos adopted the Egyptian religion and culture, having lost their status of nomads [Klimenkovskij], learned the Egyptian language and writing [Tantlevskii, 2005, 63]. A possible parallel to this process is found in the Bible: the foreigner Joseph not only lived according to Egyptian traditions, but also took a wife "the daughter of Potiphera, priest of Heliopolis" (Gen. 41:45), and also was buried in Egypt and on Egyptian practice: "And after they embalmed him, he was placed in a coffin in Egypt." (Gen. 50:26).

The Southern tribes ("house of Jacob") moved later because of the prolonged droughts and famine in Canaan. It was around the XVII century BC with the help and under patronage of "house of Joseph", but they led modest pastoral life, preserving their customs and culture.

Almost the entire Second Intermediate Period of Egypt, "military domination was on the side of the Hyksos North" [Lipovskii, 2010, 83]. The policy of the Hyksos, both internal and external, was peaceful, as far as we can conclude from the Theban sources; in the surrounding lands of Syria, Libya, Canaan there were found no traces of Hyksos conquests.

Conclusion

In the end, after unsuccessful campaigns of the Theban pharaohs Seqenenre Tao and Kamos against Northern Pharaoh Apopi, Pharaoh Ahmose sieged the Northern capital of Avaris, going against the Hyksos Pharaoh Khamudi. According to Manetho, Ahmose "at last <...> was convinced of the impossibility of taking the fortress by force and concluded a Treaty with them, according to which they all had to leave Egypt..." [cited by: Lipovskii, 2010, 93]. This Manetho's message echoes the biblical story of the Exodus from Egypt when "...[Pharaoh] called Moses and Aaron at night and said: Up! Leave my people, you and the Israelites! Go, and go <...> Take your flocks and herds, as you have said, and go. And also bless me. The Egyptians urged the people to hurry and leave the country <...> The Lord had made the Egyptians favorably disposed toward the people: and they gave them what they asked for; so they plundered the Egyptians. The Israelites journeyed from Rameses to Sukkoth. There were about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. Many other people went up with them, and also large droves of livestock, both flocks and herds" (Ex. 12:31-38) 31-38). Manetho's data is also confirmed by excavations at the site of Avaris (modern Tell-el-Dab'a), where the material culture is typical for Western Semites from Canaan, abruptly ends and is replaced by the Egyptian one [Lipovskii, 2010, 94]. Of course, the Exodus of the whole nation could not be simultaneous, and in this regard there are fair thoughts of I. Lipovskii that Semitic nobility was the first to leave Egypt and only later there were shepherds who settled in the Nile Delta ("Now the Israelites settled in Egypt in the region of Goshen. They acquired property there (I. Lipovskii gives the following translation: "And they settled in it" [Lipovskii, 2010, 94]), and were fruitful and increased greatly in number." – Gen. 47:27).

In favor of the opinion that the stay of the Jews in Egypt coincided with the time of the Hyksos reign, there are also some fortifications and a memorial stele arised in memory of the 400th anniversary of founding of the city by the Hyksos ruler, found on the site of the current town of San El Hagar in the

Nile Delta, which is believed to be on the site of Avaris (later Raamses, and then Tsoan). According to G.E. Wright, "the tradition according to which Hebron was built "seven years before Tsoan" (Num.13:23), shows that the Jews lived in Egypt during it's foundation, that means during the reign of the Hyksos" [Wright, 2003, www].

Moreover, it is likely that the story of the purchase of all Egyptian land for Pharaoh (Gen. 47:13 and further) reflects a social revolution in the reign of the Hyksos. During their reign land was owned by noblemen, and government officials [ibid].

Now it is necessary to focus on the main historical hypotheses related to the leader and inspirer of the Exodus, a key figure not only of Jewish history, but also of world monotheism – Moses. His figure and his teachings have direct relevance to the cultural interaction between Egypt and Israel, because the repulsion from the Egyptian sample, but also borrowing some features [Misetskii, 2012], thus was born the main idea of the Jewish culture, Gospel and the Testament brought by Moses to the Jewish people and the world.

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От Иосифа до Моисея: ключевое время взаимодействия культур Египта и Израиля

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Аннотация

Данная статья представляет собой исследование хронологических координат и количественных указателей, связанных с пребыванием евреев в Египте. Предполагается, что пребывание евреев в Египте совпало по времени с гиксосским воцарением.

Для цитирования в научных исследованиях

Мисецкий Е.В. От Иосифа до Моисея: ключевое время взаимодействия культур Египта и Израиля // «Белые пятна» российской и мировой истории. 2018. Том 8. № 4-5. С. 32-47.

Ключевые слова

Египет, Танах, египетская цивилизация, древнееврейская цивилизация, Израиль, Исход, библейская хронология, археологические данные, евреи.

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