

## Commentary — From the Margins *Evidence of Redaction*

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These are the names of the sons of Israel who came to Egypt with Jacob, each with his household ... there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph. And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens. *They built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses.*(Ex 1:1, 8–11 emphasis added)  
And the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children. (Ex 12:37)

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### 1.

There is absolutely no archeological evidence for any Israelite peoples being in Egypt when the New Kingdom city of Rameses was built: Israel did not build Rameses, a city with a relatively short lifespan during and a little before the times of Samuel, Saul, and David ... construction of Rameses didn't begin until Israel had been gone from Egypt for two or more centuries, said without caveat.

All leading Egyptologists agree that no exodus of Semitic peoples from Egypt occurred during the New Kingdom; however, these Egyptologists, to their chagrin, provide the missing "lock" that can be unlocked [opened] by understanding that Imperial Hebrew scribes redacted [rewrote and condensed] the narratives of Moses after the lost book of the Covenant was found in the dilapidated temple during the reign of Josiah. And evidence of the redaction of Scripture is irrefutable in the two cited passages beginning this Commentary: Exodus 1:11; 12:37.

There is archeological evidence of Semitic peoples being in Avaris from the 18<sup>th</sup>-Century BCE through mid 15<sup>th</sup>-Century BCE, when the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Dynasties of Egypt's Middle Kingdom abruptly collapsed ... these Semitic peoples were lumped under the linguistic identifier, "Hyksos," or foreign rulers. As slaves, they were identified as "Asiatics."

The appearance of Hyksos peoples in Egypt's Delta region began long before Egypt's Second Dark Period when the Hyksos 15<sup>th</sup> Dynasty ruled the Lower Kingdom. Archeologically, it appears that the Hyksos stepped in to fill a power-vacuum created by the collapse of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Dynasties; it appears from unearthed evidence that the Hyksos didn't mount a swift military campaign against a well organized native Egyptian army, but that the Hyksos went from dwelling in the Delta to ruling the Lower Kingdom without a good explanation of how or why.

As a high school sophomore during the school year of 1960–61, I took World History as a Social Studies requirement. I had a good understanding of history, and in the spring of the year when regional academic competitions took place, I was one of two students selected to represent Taft High [Lincoln County, Oregon] in World History, the comprehensive test covering more than the History of Western Civilizations ... what had been taught to me about Egyptian history had Hyksos being *Shepherd Kings* that suddenly appeared in Egypt and quickly defeated the Egyptians because of their superior weapons technology (the laminated recurve bow and the chariot), the source texts for the Hyksos being *Shepherd Kings* being Manetho's *Aegyptiaca* (History of Egypt), appearing in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-Century BCE, and cited by Josephus in *Against Apion*.

The year previous I had taken World Geography from an instructor who didn't like the fact that I was a twelve-year-old high school freshman. He made his displeasure known in ways he could, only reluctantly giving me an "A" in every grading period—and I didn't have much use for him.

But after the World History test was given a year later, while I was doing homework alone in the school bus that would return us to Taft [now part of Lincoln City], my freshman World Geography instructor opened the bus door. He was obviously looking for me. He asked, "How do you think you did?"

"I think I did okay."

"I would say so. You scored 25 points higher than any of the district faculty." And he turned and left. But from this particular evening on, his attitude toward me changed: he no longer resented my age.

What I was taught about the Hyksos being Shepherd Kings relied upon a mistranslation of <*heqa khaseshet*>, "foreign rulers." This mistranslation of "foreign rulers" as "Shepherd Kings" was widely accepted among historians who didn't do their own research. After all the mistranslation dates to antiquity, dates to the Ptolemaic reign of Greek kings over Egypt.

I thought about taking history as a college major: I took math instead. But history was and has been interesting enough for me to keep abreast of major archeological developments, especially when I was a graduate student in University of Alaska Fairbanks' Creative Writing program, where John Morgan, then department chair, told me that I was too large of a character to create fictional characters. History will judge the accuracy of what Morgan said.

Texts have texture: they have about them a "feel" that can be felt by readers who have gained reading experience, this "feel" often not expressible in words but being as "real" as the inscribed words themselves. And one thing every writer realizes is that a sane person doesn't orally interrupt the person's discourse with a cartoonish, *Says me*, expression. Popeye the Sailor Man interrupts himself for comic effect, but God doesn't; the Lord doesn't. ... Such interruptions hinder communication, and turn the texture of Scripture abrasive: a person will not sit down to read Scripture as they would other books the size of the Bible. People will not read the Bible from cover-to-cover over the course of a few days. Instead, they will read *here a little, there a little*, the reading strategy by which the people of Israel were taken, snared, and broken (Isa 28:13). And indeed, greater Christendom has been strangled and broken by the Adversary.

Hemingway showed others that a writer doesn't need as many "identifiers" of who said what as were traditionally used by authors in the modern novelistic period. Authors need to trust readers to put the right words in the mouth of the right speaker, the text becoming self-correcting. Authors only need to supply fragments of discourse for the discourse to be fully heard in the minds of auditors.

When an auditor listens to the speech of a person, the auditor doesn't need the speaker to identify him or herself. The auditor knows by simply being present when words are spoken who said what, and in what language the utterance was made. "Presence" supplies the context for the utterance.

But it is easier for an auditor to trust a writer than for the writer to trust the auditor. Too often the writer wants to eliminate all ambiguity and will use far more words than necessary to convey the intended discourse. And this is especially true for the production of scientific or historical texts ... whereas ambiguity is the friend of the fiction writer (ambiguity requires the auditor to resolve what isn't clear and thereby take ownership of the text), ambiguity is the enemy of the traditional theologian who wants the words he or she reads to have one meaning only, and the words that he or she writes to have one meaning only. This traditional theologian wants what he or she cannot have, even going back to ancient Egypt where at the beginning of inscription, unspoken words were added to texts as a preventative hedge against ambiguity. These words are known as "linguistic determinatives": they were used to give to written texts the context of "presence" denied to the text through inscription.

It shouldn't take a Christian born of spirit and thereby having the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16) long to "hear" the words of the Lord in the writings of ancient scribes. However, what's heard are stuttered words, inscribed by writers who didn't trust auditors to assign the words of the Lord to the Lord—that is correct—the stuttering coming from the many appearances of, *Thus says YHWH*, inserted whenever and wherever an ancient scribe would have encountered a linguistic determinative in the narrative being copied.

Again, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century writers didn't trust their auditors to place these writers' carefully crafted speeches into the mouths of the appropriate characters—and that is what "speech" was in far too many novels from the period, not the speech of real people but speeches written by the authors, thereby revealing that over the course of centuries the craft of writing hadn't developed beyond the speeches that the Second Sophist author of the canonical text, Acts, had placed in the mouths of his characters, speeches that "sound" the same for every character ... Acts is a historical novel, not a reliable account of Paul's ministry as a close reading of Paul's epistles will reveal.

Because 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century authors used identifying tags such as, *He said; She said; the Lord said*, when these identifying tags were not necessary, the prose of these authors "sounds" wooden, stiff, fossilized ... the identifiers, *He said; She said*, separate the auditor from the inscribed character and hinder actually "hearing" in the auditor's mind the words of the speaker. And it is probably for this reason as much as any other that the use of a linguistic determinative to identify speakers (especially deity) fell out of favor and ceased being used early into the first millennium BCE.

Language use changes over time: the modern English use of an <apostrophe "s"> as the possessive form of a word comes from the archaic construction of the genitive case:

*John, his coat is hanging on the peg.* This construction is still heard among older residents of Appalachia in their saying, *John, he went to town—why you asking about John? He done nothing wrong.*

Indeed, he hasn't ... as long as men owned everything, construction of the genitive from the possessive male pronoun had no detractors. But this construction doesn't work when Mary owns a coat: *Mary, his coat is gone*; hence, we get in modernity the construction, *Mary's coat is missing*.

The "naturalness" of a linguistic construction is informed by culture—and when a culture changes, linguistic constructions change, with English teachers in Kentucky trying to erase from the spoken language the use of an identifying noun [name] as a stand-alone sentence element followed by a pronoun beginning the clause disclosing what the person did or didn't do ... when teaching Comp at Paducah Community College (2000–2002), Paducah, Kentucky, I didn't often encounter this archaic construction in papers received (mostly thanks to Microsoft's grammar check), but I regularly heard this construction used in the speech of students coming from rural areas, the construction not hindering communication but "marking" the person as undereducated.

The country humorist Minnie Pearl didn't need to leave price tags on her hats, but she did for they became "markers" that identified her as an unsophisticated person, thereby allowing her to use self-deprecating humor that was less demeaning than funny. America laughed along with her, not at her.

Thus, when writing was new and not trusted by either the writers themselves or by their auditors—this dates back four thousand and more years ago—always unpronounced linguistic determiners were included as visually-read-only parts of the text that functioned as, *He said; She said* identifying tags function in modern English. These linguistic determinatives were, again, included in the inscribe text not to be read aloud but to establish parity between written texts and audibly heard utterances.

Linguistic determinatives were intend to embed "presence" into the context in which an inscribed text is or was read: determinatives were used to negate any advantage orality had over inscription.

But as Minnie Pearl's price tag on her hat was a signifier of unsophistication that probably will not be translatable to generations a century removed, the linguistic determinative used by Moses from deity was not translatable by Imperial Hebrew scribes in the days of King Josiah and on into the Deportation. Therefore, from the evidence received in the form of canonical Scripture, certain conclusions can be drawn: Moses did not write the Book of Exodus as received by endtime disciples ... Moses couldn't have written Exodus as received from translation of the Masoretic Text. For Israel did not build the city of Raamses nor journey from Rameses on the night of the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the first month. Archeology clearly shows that no Semitic peoples, no Hyksos, no Asiatics were present in any discernable numbers in Egypt's New Kingdom.

Also, Scripture clearly shows that Israel was not in Egypt when the city of Rameses was built: "In the four hundred and eightieth year after the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, he began to build the house of the LORD" (1 King 6:1).

King David's reign over Israel has agreed upon dating. Solomon's reign begins on a recognized date, and 480 years before Solomon's fourth year will place Israel's Exodus

in Egypt's Middle Kingdom, not in the New Kingdom, and will place Israel's Exodus in approximately year 1450 BCE, two centuries before construction of Rameses began.

Moses would not have, could not have written that Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth on the night after Israel ate the Passover in their houses and didn't leave their houses until dawn on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of the first month. And again, there is no disagreement about this among tenured Egyptologists that contend Israel's Exodus from Egypt is a myth ... why is it a myth? Because there was no Israel in Egypt at 1250 BCE. Of course there was no Israel in Egypt in 1250 BCE, when the city of Rameses was built. The Exodus had occurred two or more centuries earlier.

Who was the king [Pharaoh] who didn't know Joseph? "Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph" (Ex 1:8).

Because tenured Egyptologists insist that Exodus 1:11 and 12:37 are to be read as if literally true, the Asiatic peoples in Egypt during the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Dynasties of the Middle Kingdom cannot, for these tenured Egyptologists, be Hebrews; be Israelites; yet they acknowledge that the Hyksos peoples probably didn't suddenly invade Egypt as the historian Egyptian Manetho would have them doing; that the Hyksos peoples began filtering into the Delta region in the 18<sup>th</sup>-Century BCE as a mixed Asiatic peoples with a dominant Semitic component, but that these Hyksos peoples didn't usurp power until the collapse of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Dynasties three and four centuries later.

Who were the Hyksos of Egypt's Middle Kingdom? Egyptologists don't fully agree other than to say that they were of mixed ancestry that came mostly from the Levant.

From Scripture we know that Ishmael was an archer (Gen 21:20) and that Ishmael lived in the wilderness of Paran. Esau was a man of the fields; was Edom, and from Caleb being the son of Jephunneh (Num 13:6), we know that descendants of Esau lived among Israel in Egypt. Abraham's son (by Keturah) Midian lived just north of the Egyptian border region. The descendants of Moab, the son of Abraham's nephew Lot, lived interspersed with the descendants of Midian. So it can be reasonable stated that the Semitic peoples that had migrated south to constitute a majority of the Hyksos peoples were of Abraham, with these peoples centered in and near the city of Avaris in the Delta region of Egypt.

Again, from the Hyksos use of a composite, recurve bow that apparently was previously unknown in Egypt, and from Caleb being the son of Jephunneh, and from the movement of peoples out of the Levant during the drought about which Pharaoh was warned, it is reasonable to assume that some of the Hyksos were sons of Esau, skilled archers and cousins of Israelites; that some of the Hyksos were Ishmaelites; that some were Midianites; that some were Moabites; that some were Israelites. And if some were Israelites, then the story of Moses which parallels another ancient account of a baby saved from a river can be true.

The infallibility of Scripture is a fiction told to spiritual infants to cause them to mentally sleep while supporting priests that promise more than can be humanly delivered; that cause spiritual infants to not question the validity of the received text, which will withstand close readings that disclose two or more redactions, one of which transformed the linguistic determinative <YHWH> into a singular naming noun that retained its always unpronounced status.

Why would an Imperial Hebrew scribe place Israel in Egypt during the days of the city of Rameses? Ignorance? As in the case of the two Hagar accounts (Gen chap 16 & chap 21) that cannot both be true? Or as a “sign” that communicates information not to be shared with those outside of Israel?

Regardless of why Imperial Hebrew scribes placed Israel’s Exodus in the New Kingdom, in doing so these scribes gave to endtime disciples the theological lock that can only be unlocked with a double-sided key: understanding that Scripture has been rethought, rewritten, redacted under the magnifying lens of strict monotheism, thereby preventing Christ Jesus from being the unique son of the God of Abraham.

Scripture wasn’t assembled by spiritually living sons of God, but by carnal men of both the Great Assembly and of the early Christian Church, with these carnal men having good intentions but lacking in spiritual understanding. Their eyes could not see what was on the page [scroll], and their ears could not hear the voice of Christ Jesus in the words of Moses. Therefore, the words of Moses were “tampered-with” to such a degree that the tampering could not be hidden, but was foregrounded in, “And the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, besides women and children” (Ex 12:37) ... Pharaoh’s attempt to curb the expansion of Israel’s population wasn’t particularly successful although archeological evidence suggests there may have been a 25–30% reduction of Israelite males about when Moses would have been born (ca 1530 BCE).

In “the people of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth” is sufficient evidence to support an Imperial Hebrew redaction of Scripture; for the people of Israel would have journeyed from Avaris to wherever they spent their first night on the trail out of Egypt. But Avaris as an Egyptian city no longer existed when the lost Book of the Covenant was found in the dilapidated temple. It would, however, have been known by Hebrew scribes that Rameses was built on the ruins of Avaris; thus, to retain ancient Israel’s relevance to Hebrews in the Deportation, the name of a city that represented the location of Avaris but a city then known to Jews in the Deportation could have been logically substituted by scribes not realizing that their work would be closely scrutinized over the next two and a half millennia; that their 6<sup>th</sup>-Century BCE substitution of Rameses for Avaris would lead to widespread skepticism and academic unbelief of the Exodus narrative.

The “Sea of Reeds” might well be the Red Sea: if this were to be proved true from archeological finds, this would not further the case for a redaction of Scripture ... what will support the case is removing the Tetragrammaton *YHWH* when used as a naming noun from the middle of utterances. See if Scripture doesn’t suddenly become more “readable.” It will; for the Lord doesn’t need to remind auditors every few words that He was speaking: His speech can be “heard” in what He says. It was scribes in Babylon who didn’t trust auditors to know who spoke the words of the Lord.

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