Hyksos, Hurrians, and the Original Idea of Indo-European

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The Characteristics of Models for Language Change

1. **Identification of group as foreign (exogenous)** with "homeland" outside of area in question
2. **Linguistic relationship** between group and antecedent exogenous group
   - Vocabulary
   - Toponyms
   - Personal names
   - Divine names
3. One or more aspects of **shared material culture**
   - Burial types
   - Ceramics
   - House types
   - Weapons
4. Processes for spread (Chp. 6 in Renfrew 1987)
   - Demographic and Subsistence models:
     • Colonization
     • Gradual diffusion of subsistence practices (e.g., farming)
     • Wave of advance model (e.g., gradual population growth)
     • Constrained Pop. Displacement: a refugee model (plague, famine, etc.)
     • Sedentary/Mobile Boundary Shift (e.g., nomadic pastoralism v. agriculture)
     • Donor/Recipient Population Systems (e.g., peaceful diffusion of technology/techniques)
   - Elite Dominance model:
     • Military aristocracy (e.g., conquest model)
   - System Collapse

Ethnic Movements Commonly Noted in Near Eastern History

1. Early Transcaucasian group (3000–2300 BC)
2. Gudeans (ca. 2000 BC)
3. Amorites (ca. 2000–1500 BC)
4. Hyksos (ca. 1650–1550 BC)—actually Amorites!
5. Hittites (ca. 1650–1200 BC)—Indo-European elements
6. Hurrians (ca. 1600–1350 BC)—Indo-Iranian (Aryan)
7. Sea Peoples (ca. 1400–1200 BC)
8. Israelites (ca. 1250 BC)
9. Arameans (ca. 1000 BC)
10. Phoenicians (ca. 1000 BC onwards)
11. Scythians
12. Sassanids (6th–7th cent. AD)
13. Arabs (7th cent. AD)
Manetho’s Account of the *Hyksos*?
(*Josephus Contra Apion, Bk I.14*)

• Invaders from east (e.g., Asiatics) into Delta who deposed native Egyptian rule “without a battle” and then “burned” cities

• Kings of Dynasty XV identified by Greek term *Hyksos*, translated “shepherd kings”
  – Salatis, 13 years
  – Beon, 44 years
  – Apachnas, 36 years and 7 months
  – Apophis, 61
  – Jonias, 50 years and 1 month
  – Assis, 41 years and 2 months

• Ruled at *Avaris* in Egypt

• Expelled from Egypt by Ahmose, ca. 1530 BC, they sought refuge in southern Levant (e.g., Israel)

Reasoning about the *Hyksos*?

• Hyksos kings ruled in Egyptian Delta during Dynasty XV (ca. 1650–1530 BC) and can be considered of West Asian (i.e., Asiatic) origin.

• Names of kings suggested their identification as Amorite (West Semitic)

• However their conquest and chronological relationship to the introduction of the chariot suggested a Hurrian (Indo-European) element.

• With such ethnic elements they must have maintained close contact with groups in their “homeland” and brought with them…
  – Massive earthen fortification types known in Levant (in Egypt: el-Yehudiyeh, Heliopolis, ed-Dab’a) which were associated with…
  – Horses and the chariot which were identified with the Hurrians (…during the Late Bronze Age when it also became common in Egypt)
  – Ceramics and other aspects of material culture from Western Asia

• Answers lie at their capital, Avaris!

• Late Middle Bronze Age [MB IIC] material culture, which was contemporary with Hyksos rule in Egypt, could therefore be identified as *Hyksos*, which included…
Late Rampart Phase (ca. 1700–1500 B.C.)

MB II (IIB-C) Fortifications of the Southern Levant

Settlement Statistics
- Size: 2.25 ha
- Est. Pop.: 560
- Male Pop.: 112

MB Rampart Statistics
- Height: 6 m
- Volume: 90,000 m³
- Length: 600 m
- Width: 50 m
- Labor (person-months): 1,000

Timnah (Tel Batash), Israel

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DEPARTMENT OF NEAR EASTERN LANGUAGES AND CIVILIZATIONS
Ashkelon, Israel (ca. 1800 BC)

Who the “Hyksos” really were!

• Revised historical-literary understanding of $Hk3 h3swt$…“foreign rulers” (beginning MK)
  • Occurs in Middle Kingdom Tale of Sinuhe
  • Beni Hasan tomb depictions

• Hyksos < Amorites
• Evidence from excavations in eastern Egyptian Delta
  – Tell el-Yehudiyyeh
  – Tell el-Mashkhuta
  – Tell ed-Dab’a (> Avaris)
Excavations at Avaris

- Massive city (2 km²) built atop Middle Kingdom settlement
- Cosmopolitan eastern Mediterranean city like those of the Levant
- Indisputable evidence for an Amorite population from Levant exhibited in…
  - Burial customs
  - Ceramics
  - Metallurgy, weapons, etc.
  - Dietary habits
  - Cultic remains
- Evidence for influence of Egyptian styles/customs upon Amorite population

“Hyksos” (Amorite) Burial Customs

- “Warrior” burials
- Infant jar burials
- Equid burials
- Cist burials
• Levantine ceramics increase from 20% of assemblage (MB IIA) to 40% by (MB IIC), include basic wares and distinctive wares:
  – Levantine Painted Ware
  – Tell el-Yehudiye Ware
• Levantine metal weapons in burials
• Amorite cultic rituals attested (temple, etc.)
• Hyksos scarabs at Avaris and in S. Levant
Hurrians at Avaris among Hyksos?

- Material culture:
  - At Avaris all MC is Egyptian or Amorite
  - No MC left to assign to Hurrians
  - Same throughout s. Levant

- No onomastica to indicate Hurrians

- Emergence of Hurrians is later
  - Hyksos demise, ca. 1530
  - Hurrians first attested, ca. 1500

The Origin of an Idea

“The Aryan invasion of the Land of the Seven Rivers, the Punjab and its neighbours, constantly assumes the form of an onslaught upon the walled cities of the aborigines. For these cities the term used in the *Rigveda* is *pur*, meaning a ‘rampart,’ ‘fort’ or ‘stronghold’. One is called ‘broad’ and ‘wide’. Sometimes strongholds are referred to metaphorically as ‘of metal’. Autumnal forts are also named: this may refer to forts in that season being occupied against Aryan attack or against inundations caused by overflowing rivers. Forts ‘with a hundred walls’ are mentioned. The citadel may have been made of stone; alternatively, the use of mud-bricks is perhaps alluded to by the epithet *ama* (‘raw,’ ‘unbaked’)... The recent excavations of Harappa may be thought to have changed the picture. Here we have a highly evolved civilization of essentially non-Aryan type, now known to have dominated the river-system of north-western India at a time not distant from the likely period of the earlier Aryan invasions of that region. What destroyed this firmly settled civilization? Climatic, economic, political deterioration may have weakened it, but its ultimate extinction is more likely to have been completed by deliberate and large-scale destruction.”

*Ancient India* 3 (1947): 78–82.
Who were the Hurrians?

- Third millennium settlement of Urkeš (Tell Mozan) identified with Hurrians
  - Mythical seat of Kumarbi, Hurrian grain god
- Evidence of PNs in Anatolia, early 2nd millennium BC
- Hurrians identified primarily with kingdom of Mitanni in early 15th cent. BC
  - Waššukani, capital of Mitanni, not identified
  - “Mitanni” material culture uncertain
  - Evidence from Alalakh (N. Levant) and Nuzi (N. Mesopotamia)
- Recognize a unique Hurrian language with Indo-Aryan characteristics (ergative—marks subject for active and passive tense of verb)
  - Ugarit
  - Hattuša, among Hittite ritual texts and chariot/horse texts
  - Emar in NW. Mesopotamia
  - Amarna letters in Egypt (from Mitanni king)
- Significant presence of Hurrians seen in northern Levant during mid-second millennium (esp. Alalakh)
- Particular vocabulary related to chariots and chariot class (maryannu) seen in Hittite, Ugaritic, and Egyptian
- Unique deities (e.g., Kumarbi and Teshub, storm god)
- Social and kinship customs (at Nuzi)

Mittani (ca. 1500 BC)
Hurrians = Nuzi Ware?

Anatolia in the Late 3rd Millennium

- 3 Indo-European populations:
  - Luwians (west) < *luwili*
  - Palaians (north) < *palaumnili*
  - Nesites (east) < *n[e/a/i]šili* attested at Nesa (Kanesh)...becomes official language of Hittites

- Locations based on toponyms, PNs, and DNs
- Origins uncertain...but many theories, ca. 2200 BC...
  - Invasion of *Kurgan* immigrants from Russian steppe established as *Hattian* rulers (E. Akurgal)
  - Indo-European elite emerge as rulers over larger native Hattian population
Hittite connections with Indo-Europeans

- Language: adopt Nesite as official language of Hittite court (Middle and Late Bronze Age > *Hittite* is, thereby, IE

- Religion: Hurrian gods permeate pantheon

- Preservation of Hurrian terminology (e.g., *Kikkuli* texts)
Early Transcaucasian Culture

Begins ca. 3000 in Anatolia, ca. 2700 in Levant

Red-Black Burnished Ware (or KKW)
- sinuous sided bowls
- andirons
- pots with lids
- 7–8 forms attested in assemblage

Khirbet Kerak (N. Israel)