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Ronald A. Geobey, "Joseph the Infiltrator, Jacob the Conqueror? Reexamining the Hyksos-Hebrew Correlation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 136, no. 1 (2017), 23-37.

*Summary:*

Dr. Ronald Geobey attempted to analyze the argument made that the Israelite Exodus is synonymous with the Hyksos expulsion and its influence on the Hebrew Exodus story. His introduction stated the issues surrounding the lack of the Hyksos in the Exodus narrative and gives a summary of the aforementioned theory. Geobey described Josephus' use of Manetho's account, relating the "captive shepherds" (Hyksos) with the Hebrew people. Geobey argued that "Hyksos" is better translated "foreign ruler" and was used to distinguish foreign people. He argued for possible misunderstandings in Josephus' reading of Manetho's writings. Dr. Geobey also challenged the view that Joseph was a Hyksos scout (27), highlighting details in the biblical narrative, archeology, and historic evidence. In referencing the evidence of a Hyksos King bearing the name of Jacob, he argues that such a powerful figure would have been framed as such in the Bible had they been aware of such prestige. He concluded that the biblical exodus was not self-identifying with the Hyksos, but it may have been influenced by a collective memory.

*Critical Review:*

Geobey did an excellent job fulfilling the dual task of educating the reader and responding with his own insights. One could approach his research without studying the Hyksos issue and come away from the article with a basic understanding of the issues and arguments that

gave credence to the theory. However, while Dr. Geobey did a good job articulating his argument, some of his points seemed to introduce a few inconsistencies.

He took to task the idea that Joseph was a Hyksos scout. Geobey suggested that because Asiatic people frequently achieved positions of authority, it is unlikely that, after a thousand years, the Hebrew people would have remembered the story of such a specific figure. Why would they not remember such an important person? Later in the article, he used the fact that Israel does not remember Jacob as a king as a point against the Hyksos-Hebrew correlation in Scripture. Which is it?

Concerning Joseph, he wrote that the biblical narrative is concerned with “distinction-even cultural polarity.” He even falsely noted that Joseph could not understand Hebrew in Genesis 42:23. He implies that Joseph had to be ethnically distinct because of the themes of the Joseph narrative, while the Hyksos correlation would make Joseph “ethnically identical.” (28) This seemed to be a contradiction to an earlier point. When opening the discussion with Josephus’ interpretation of the term “Hyksos,” he made the point that the term was used to maintain “cultural disconnection.” This language reflects what he used to describe the themes of the Joseph narrative.

He wrote, referring to the tale of the Hyksos domination in Egypt, “Why would the people who became Israel not shout this tale (of domination over their arch-nemesis) from the rooftops for generations to come?” If the Exodus is, as Geobey refers to it in his conclusion, a “myth,” the Israelites contrived the story to provide them with a *theocentric* origin. The key details in the Pentateuch do not matter in this context because the theory of the Hyksos being the Israelites leaves too many subjective truths to make the text reliable.

In looking at the history of the Hyksos as a source of textual validation, one finds too many contradictions of purpose. In identifying the Israelites with the Hyksos, the integrity of the correlating facts was compromised. Joseph is a key figure in biblical history, far too important to dream away as a mythological memory. While these correlations are certainly interesting, in the search for the historicity of the Exodus, those serious about biblical inspiration are better off looking elsewhere.

**Key Points to Observe:**

1. NO title page is needed for Book Review or Journal Article Review
2. If you insert a quote, put the page number in parenthesis i.e. (27). Journal Articles and Book reviews do not need footnotes unless your are referencing something not in the Book or Journal Article.
3. Note the biographic entry at the top of page one is in Turabian format.
4. First half of the page one is a summary of the Journal Article. Book Reviews should have a summary of the key chapters and will require more than ½ of page one.
5. Typically, six hundred words is a suitable length for a Journal Article Review, but CHECK your course syllabus for specific length required by the instructor. Typically, a Book Review would be 1,200 to 1,500 words, but CHECK your course syllabus for the faculty member's requirements.
6. **You must interact with the content with critical analysis.**
7. The Headings "Summary" and "Critical Review" can be either in Italics, Bold, or Underlined. (Select only one style)
8. DOUBLE SPACE your review except the Bibliography and your name and class info at the top of page 1.
9. Margins are all 1 inch.
10. Page numbers: Bottom of page 1, Top of remaining pages.