

The Reign of Jeroboam and the Extent of Egyptian Influence

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Jeroboam rebelled against King Solomon, escaped to Egypt and spent sixteen years in the Egyptian court, until Solomon's death (1Kgs 11:40). After becoming king of the Northern Kingdom, Jeroboam did not imitate the Judean Kingdom's administrative model with which he was familiar. Instead, he created new patterns of government. From what source did Jeroboam derive the inspiration to reorganize the Northern Kingdom?

According to most scholars, Jeroboam's rebellion and his escape to Egypt took place in the twenty-fourth year of Solomon's rule, that is 945 B.C.E., or during the first year of the reign of Shoshenq I as Pharaoh of Egypt (945-924 B.C.E.)¹.

With regard to Jeroboam's rebellion and his period of residence in Egypt, another version is offered in the Septuagint². In that version, when Jeroboam requests to return to his native land, Shoshenq prevents him from doing so and gives him a wife: Ano, the sister of Tahpenes. The offspring of that marriage was Avia³. This addition in the Septuagint's version has created a controversy as to the version's reliability as an historical source.

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- 1 A. MALAMAT, *Israel in Biblical Times* (Jerusalem 1983), pp. 191-192, nn. 49-51 (in Hebrew); W.F. ALBRIGHT, *Further Light on Synchronisms between Egypt and Asia in the period 935-685 B.C.E.*, *BASOR* 141 (1956) 16ff., and *New Light on Early Recensions of the Hebrew Bible*, *BASOR* 140 (1955) 4-8; B. HALPERN, *Sectionalism and the Schism*, *JBL* 93 (1974) 519-523; K.A. KIT-CHEN, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt (1100-650 B.C.)*, 2nd ed. (Warminster, UK 1986), p. 294, n. 286.
 - 2 J.W. WEVERS, *Exegetical Principles Underlying the Septuagint Text of 1 Kings II 12-XXI 43*, *Oudtestamentische Studien* 8 (1950) 300-322; J. DEBUS, *Die Sünde Jeroboams* (Göttingen 1967), pp. 55ff.
 3. It is difficult to identify the names mentioned in this passage. One Greek letter has several parallels in Egyptian. The name Ano appears as Anna in the Latin version and can be found in the corpus of Egyptian names; see H. RANKE, *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen* (Glückstadt 1935) pp. 62ff. The Egyptian sources do not refer to any queen or princess with the name Tahpenes. The attempts by MONTET and ALBRIGHT to interpret Tahpenes as a

The present study supports the view expressed by such scholars as SKINNER and OLMSTEAD⁴, who are of the opinion that the version offered by the Septuagint should not be ignored and should instead be considered as a reliable historical source. The Septuagint's author utilized a Northern Kingdom tradition concerning Jeroboam's residence in Egypt. Before being incorporated in the Septuagint, the tradition was altered by a Judean editor, who took care to present Jeroboam's character in a negative light, as can be seen in the Septuagint and in the original Biblical version. Despite the numerous editorial efforts to tarnish Jeroboam's name, his charismatic character still manages to shine forth. Basing himself on SMEND, COATS maintains that Jeroboam was considered by the tribes of the North as another Moses and that parallels can be made in the Bible between the two⁵.

The verses in the Septuagint describing Jeroboam's residence in Egypt and his marriage to the Pharaoh's sister have been understood as being a paraphrase of the story of Hadad the Edomite (1Kgs 19-20)⁶. In the description of Hadad's experiences in Egypt, one finds conceptual motifs and linguistic phrasing that are parallel to those in the various episodes of Moses' life⁷.

first name have been rejected as unlikely. It is currently accepted by scholars that GERDSELOFF's explanation appears correct, namely, that Tahpenes is the Hebrew transliteration of an Egyptian title: *t3 hp(t)n - 3st*. See B. GERDSELOFF, *Edom d'après les sources égyptiennes*, *Revue de l'histoire juive en Egypte* 1 (1947) 89ff.; ALBRIGHT, *New Light on Early Reconstructions*, p. 32, nn. 22-26; J.R. BARTLETT, *An Adversary against Solomon: Hadad the Edomite*, *ZAW* 88 (1976) 211-212; M. GÖRG, *Namen und Titel in 1Kön 11,19f*, *BN* 36 (1987) 22-26; S. AHITUV, *Tahpenes*, *Encyclopaedia Biblica* 8, pp. 518-520 (in Hebrew).

- 4 See DEBUS, pp. 55ff.; B. ODED, *Jeroboam*, in *Encyclopaedia Judaica* 9, p. 1372; H. TADMOR, *Jeroboam, the son of Nabat*, *Encyclopaedia Biblica* 3, pp. 771-772 (in Hebrew); J. SKINNER, *The Century Bible. I and II Kings*. (1904) pp. 443-446; A.T. OLMSTEAD, *Source Study and the Biblical Text*, *AJSL* 30 (1913) 1-47.
- 5 G.W. COATS, *Moses: Heroic Man of God*, *JSOT* 57 (1988) 23, 86; R. SMEND, *Yahweh-War and Tribal Confederation: Reflections upon Israel's Earliest History*, trans. M.G. ROGERS (Nashville 1970), pp. 120-127. Thus, SMEND compares 1Kgs 11:29 with Exod 2:15, 1Kgs 12:2 with Exod 4:15, and 1Kgs 11:29 with Exod 3:13.
- 6 A.R. SCHULMAN, *The Curious Case of Hadad the Edomite*, *Egyptological Studies in Honor of R.A. PARKER*, ed. L.H. LESKO (Hannover and London 1986), pp. 122-135; BARTLETT, pp. 217-218; J. GRAY, *I and II Kings*, 2nd ed. (1970), p. 311; D.W. GOODING, *The Septuagint's Rival Version of Jeroboam's Rise to Power*, *VT* 17 (1967) 187.
- 7 The Hadad account includes a reference to Midian: see 1Kgs 11:18. Whereas Moses escaped to Midian because of the threat of retribution at the hands of Pharaoh and returned only after the Pharaoh's death (Exod 3:1), Hadad

Therefore, it can be assumed that there are parallels between the accounts given of Hadad and Jeroboam, as reflected in the Septuagint and in the Masoretic text, which vividly recalls the description given of Moses' character. We are of the opinion that the story of Hadad was originally written about Jeroboam and this fact explains the textual and chronological difficulties in the Hadad account⁸. In order to play down Jeroboam's respected position in the Egyptian court, the Judean editor transfers the description of Jeroboam's residence in Egypt to a secondary figure, namely, Hadad the Edomite. This Biblical process of transferring the role of protagonist from primary to secondary characters has already been noted by ZAKOWITCH⁹. According to the Septuagint, Jeroboam returns to the Holy Land together with his wife Ano and his son Avia. The Judean editor tried to obscure Jeroboam's previous connection with Egypt and therefore, instead of mentioning Ano by name, merely referred to her as "Jeroboam's wife" (1Kgs 14:2,5,6).

Shoshenq's policies reflected careful, long-range planning, and it is therefore quite likely that Jeroboam's marriage to the Egyptian queen's sister had the character of a diplomatic act¹⁰. Jeroboam's prolonged residence in the Egyptian court and his ties to the Egyptian royal family had an impact on his political outlook and, at a subsequent stage, on his rule of the Northern Kingdom.

escaped in fear of David and returned only after David's death. Like Moses, who was raised in the Egyptian court ("she [Pharaoh's daughter] nursed him", Exod 2:19), Hadad was a ward of the Davidic court ("she raised him", 1Kgs 11:20). See also D. DAUBE, *The Exodus Pattern in the Bible* (Oxford 1963), pp. 34-36.

- 8 Z. TALSHIR, *The Image of the LXX-Edition of the Book of Kings*, Tarbiz 59 (1989/90)/290-298 (in Hebrew); SCHULMAN, pp. 126-133; A. LEMAIRE, *Hadad l'Edomite ou Hadad l'Araméen?* BN 43 (1988) 14-18; BARTLETT, pp. 206-210; C.F. BURNEY, *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Book of Kings* (1903), pp. 157-163.
- 9 Y. ZAKOWITCH is of the opinion that the account of Peretz' and Zerah's births (Gen 38) is actually a transfer of the traditional account originally given for the births of Jacob and Esau (Gen 25). In order to "rescue" Jacob's dignity, the traditional account regarding the birth of the twins and their prenatal struggle was transferred to Peretz and Zerah, who are secondary Biblical characters. In general, a Biblical account can be transferred to another character because of the positive or negative character of the account. See *The Synonymous Word and Synonymous Name in Name-Midrashim*, Shnaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies 2 (1977) 104-105.
- 10 For a survey on diplomatic marriages in the Near East, see, for example, MALAMAT, p. 207ff and bibliog.; A.R. SCHULMAN, *Diplomatic Marriage in the Egyptian New Kingdom*, JNES 38 (1979) 177-191. Shoshenq's policy of diplo-

One notes an interesting parallel between the careers of both Shoshenq and Jeroboam. Like Shoshenq, who was a member of the Egyptian military elite, namely, the Mashwash tribe¹¹, Jeroboam is referred to as an individual "of considerable military prowess"¹². Furthermore, neither person was affiliated with his country's ruling dynasty.

During the reign of Psusennes II (959-945 B.C.E.)¹³, Shoshenq was appointed to an administrative post. His prestigious office was of great assistance to Shoshenq when he crowned himself Pharaoh, following the death of the country's legal ruler. Similarly, Jeroboam was a well known figure among the northern tribes and was appointed by King Solomon to serve as "the House of Joseph's official tax collector". The support provided by the tribe of Ephraim was the key factor behind Jeroboam's ascent to the throne following Solomon's death.

Shoshenq united the Egyptian kingdom, using peaceful methods, and sought to effectively deal with - and accept - the reality of the separatist movement in his country. He had, in fact, inherited a state that was divided into two separate units: the north, ruled by the members of the twenty-first dynasty, and the south, under the control of the high priests, who were based in Thebes. With the help of his sons, Shoshenq was able to consolidate his rule over the entire country. He supervised the activities of the principal administrative units through the individuals whom he appointed to senior positions in the governing apparatus of each unit¹⁴. The fact that he

matic marriages can also be seen in the marital ties between his family and long-established aristocratic families; the primary purpose of the marriages with members of the aristocracy was to give legitimacy to his regime, in light of his foreign origins (he was of Libyan descent).

11 On the Mashwash tribe, see W. HÖLSCHER, *Lybier und Ägypten* (Glückstadt 1937), G.A. WAINWRIGHT, *The Meshwesh*, JEA 48 (1968) 89-99; Y. YOYOTTE, *Les Principautés du Delta au temps de l'anarchie libyenne*, in *Melanges Maspero*, 1:4 (1961) 121-181; A.M. BLACKMAN, *Stela of Shoshenk, Great Chief of the Meshwesh*, JEA 22 (1941) 92-93; KITCHEN, pp. 285ff.

12 The semi-official title, "of considerable military prowess" ("*gibbor hayil*"), is also applied to Kish, father of King Saul; Jephthah; Gideon; and Boaz (1Kgs 11:26; 2Kgs 5:1; Ruth 2:1; 1Chr 12:29,28:1). See also J.v.d. PLOEG, *Le Sens gibbor hail* (*Vivre et Penser*), RB 50 (1941) 120-125; SCHÄFER-LICHTENBERGER, *Stadt und Eidgenossenschaft im Alten Testament* (1983), p. 319. According to the Septuagint version, Jeroboam had "three hundred chariots". The probable sense of the Hebrew phrase "*gibbor hayil*" seems to be "of considerable military prowess".

13 KITCHEN, pp. 283-286.

14 *Ibid.*, pp. 287-290.

appointed close relatives to serve as governors of the key districts reflects the general direction of his administrative outlook. Instead of forcing unity upon an obviously divided Egyptian kingdom, he took care to cultivate the ancient regional centers in the spirit of Egyptian tradition. In the Delta region, he allowed the local rulers, members of his own tribe, the Mashwash, to maintain their control¹⁵.

In a parallel manner, Jeroboam followed a strikingly similar course. The long and impressive list of cities and centers that he established or rebuilt clearly indicates that he made a major effort to come to terms with his kingdom's tribal substructures. Jeroboam carried out construction work in Shechem (Nablus), Penuel, Bethel and Dan, which were all centers with a long-standing tribal tradition and which were also of major significance in the history of the Israelite nation. Only Tirza is not mentioned as a landmark in the nation's historical development. Apparently, the selection of this city was based on both strategic reasons and the basic orientation of his policies: the consolidation of the entire kingdom with the assistance of the various tribes¹⁶. Like Shosheng, Jeroboam avoided open conflict with his country's traditional ethnic substructures.

Shosheng's first administrative center was in Bubastis, however, he soon transferred the center to Tanis, which he turned into his kingdom's capital. In contrast, Jeroboam frequently changed his administrative centers, with Tirza serving as capital only towards the end of his reign¹⁷. Although this con-

15 Shosheng allowed the Mashwash leaders to continue to rule their fiefdoms. These leaders retained their status of independent princes, although they did recognize his authority as ruler of the entire country. Their only obligation was to provide a quota of warriors for the Egyptian army. The independence of the Delta princedoms was in effect until the beginning of the twenty-sixth dynasty; see YOYOTTE.

16 On the problems involved in locating the ancient religious centers, see N. NA'AMAN, Bethel and Beth-Aven: An Investigation into the Location of the Early Israelite Cult Places, *Zion*, Jubilee volume (1985/86), 21ff. (in Hebrew). On Tirza, see E. STERN and S. AHITUV, *Encyclopaedia Biblica* 8, pp. 937-941. Jeroboam founded the city of Tirza, which had no ties to the ancient past, and deliberately ignored Shilo, which had once been the center for the worship of the Holy Ark, because he wished to erase the memory of Shilo's tradition. See D.G. SCHLEY, *Shilo: A Biblical city in Tradition and History*, JSOT Supplement 63, Sheffield (1989); I. FINKELSTEIN, *Shilo Yields Some But Not All of Its Secrets*, *BAR* 12 (1986) 22-41; M. COHEN, *The Role of the Shilonite Priesthood in the United Monarchy of Ancient Israel*, *HUCA* 36 (1965) 59-89.

17 For an extensive discussion of this point, see H. REVIV, *Jeroboam I and His Supporters*, *Shnaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 10 (1986/89) 177-178.

tinual moving around of the capital city was useful in gaining him many supporters, the policy ultimately weakened his kingdom. Shoshenq firmly based himself on ancient Egyptian traditions, which he regarded as an effective tool for welding the Egyptian nation together. He therefore adopted the traditional titles of Egyptian rulers, restored the Temple of Amun in the southern Heracleopolis, increased the splendor of the central temple in Tanis, and agreed to the resumption of tax collection on behalf of the Temple of Arsaphes and to the renewal of the embalming table for the Ceremony of the Sacred Apis Bull in Memphis¹⁸.

Numerous studies have been written on the Egyptian origins of the Golden Calf constructed by the Israelites in their trek through the desert. Jeroboam's renewal of the Golden Calf ritual should not, however, be taken as an imitation of the Egyptian ritual, but rather as a means of reviving ancient Israelite traditions¹⁹. Perhaps Jeroboam's decision to renew the Golden Calf ritual can be linked to the fact that his residence in Egypt coincided with the efforts to restore the embalming table for the Ceremony of the Sacred Apis Bull²⁰. Jeroboam set up Golden Calves throughout his kingdom, in the

18 KITCHEN, pp. 290-291; A.H. GARDINER, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (Oxford 1961), p. 330; P. TRESSON, *L'inscription de Checanq Ier, au Musée du Caire: Un frappant exemple d'impôt progressif en matière religieuse*, *Mélanges Maspero*, 1 (1934) 826ff. On the basis of the stela in the Cairo Museum, A.R. GREEN attempts to prove that Jeroboam had an impact on Egyptian taxation policy; see his *Israelite Influence at Shishak's Court*, *BASOR* 233 (1979) 59-62. A contrary view is provided by D.B. REDFORD; see J.W. WEVERS and D.B. REDFORD, *Studies in Relations between Palestine and Egypt during the First Millennium B.C. Vol. 1: Taxation System of Solomon: Studies on the Ancient Palestinian World* (Toronto 1972), pp. 141-156.

19 H. BEINART, *Golden Calf*, *Encyclopaedia Biblica* 6, pp. 74-76 (in Hebrew); S. TALMON, *The 'Desert Motif' in the Bible and in Qumran Literature*, in *Biblical Motifs, Origins and Transformations*, ed. A. ALTMANN (Cambridge, Mass. 1966), pp. 31-36; M. GRINTZ, *The First Reform in Israel*, *Zion* 41 (1976) 109-126 (in Hebrew); R.H. PFEIFFER, *Images of Yahweh*, *JBL* 45 (1962) 217-218; E. DANELIUS, *The Sins of Jeroboam Ben-Nabat*, *JQR* 58 (1967-1968) 95-114 and 204-223. For an exhaustive survey on the origins of the Golden Calf and on the scholarship regarding this issue, see J. HAHN, *Das Goldene Kalb* (Frankfurt/Main and Bern 1981) and V. HUROWITZ, *The Golden Calf and the Tabernacle*, *Snaton: An Annual for Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 7-8 (1983-84) 55ff.

20 Shoshenq's brother-in-law restored the embalming table for the Ceremony of the Sacred Apis Bull in Memphis. Jeroboam, who was in the Egyptian court at the time, was no doubt aware of the fact, particularly in view of the importance of the ceremony in ancient Egypt. See H. BRUGSCH, *Ein wichtiges Denkmal aus den Zeiten König Sesong I*, *ZÄS* 16 (1878) 37-43;

north and in the south, as part of his policy of decentralization. Newly created priests served in the ceremony: "He appointed priests from among the people, making sure that these new priests were not members of the Levitic tribe" (1Kgs 12:32). Since Jeroboam dismissed the Levitic High Priests who were loyal to the House of David, offices in the priesthood became available to those who were in the king's inner circle²¹. Shoshenq adopted a similar policy in Memphis, when he appointed his brother-in-law to serve as high priest to the god Ptah. In Thebes, Shoshenq appointed his son Iuput to serve as High Priest of Amun. Gradually, many of Shoshenq's relatives and close friends took over the most important positions in the priesthood²².

His prolonged residence in the Egyptian court and his marriage to the queen's sister provided Jeroboam with an opportunity for observing the Egyptian kingdom's patterns of organization and administration. Shoshenq was a restorer, not a reformer. He saw to the renewal of the ancient Egyptian tradition while at the same time coming to terms with the tendency towards decentralization in Egypt. Jeroboam adopted a similar course: instead of imitating the House of David's administrative model which promoted centralization and national unity, Jeroboam tried to emulate both the Egyptian model and the character of the Egyptian ruler, Shoshenq*.

E. OTTO, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stierkulte in Ägypten* (1983), pp. 6-8, 32-33; J. VERCOUTTER, *Apis, LÄ I* (1975) 338-350.

- 21 The term "among the people" (lit.: "from the edges of the nation") appears in another context in Judges 18:2. On an explanation of the term, see A. MALAMAT, pp. 151-152, esp. 9-10; M. GRINTZ, p. 126; B. MAZAR, *Encyclopaedia Biblica* 4, pp. 482-484. For an extensive discussion of this point, see B. HALPERN, *Levitic participation in the Reform of the Cult of Jeroboam I*, JBL 95 (1976) 36-38; and H. REVIV, pp. 173ff.
- 22 Shoshenq appointed the members of his inner circle to serve as priests in religious centers that were also important politically; see H. KEES, *Das Priestertum im ägyptischen Staat* (1953), pp. 200-206; and H. GAUTHIER, *Le Livre des rois d'Égypte* 3 (1914-1915) pp. 321-322.

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