

THE HA-BI-RU--KIN OR FOE OF ISRAEL? SECOND ARTICLE

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C. An Ethno-Professional Interpretation.

It has appeared that the currently dominant identifications of the *ha-BI-ru* as a social class of one sort or another are inadequate. They fail to discover a common denominator for all the *ha-BI-ru* (and the *ha-BI-ru* alone) that will satisfy all the known documents. The investigation must turn to other possibilities. Was ethnic unity the peculiar stamp of the *ha-BI-ru*? Was their hallmark the practice of a particular profession?

1. *Ethnic Unity*. Examination of the morphological data led to the conclusion that the variety of forms found for the word *ha-BI-ru* is most readily explained in terms of variations of the proper name for an ethnic group.¹¹³

Other features point in this same direction:

There are indications of family relationships among the *ha-BI-ru*¹¹⁴ and of self-contained communities or tribal organization in the *ha-BI-ru* pattern of life.¹¹⁵

The word *ha-BI-ru* is used in contrast to particular ethnic terms and, therefore, as at least the equivalent of an ethnic term itself. Repeatedly in Hittite rituals and treaties the *ha-BI-ru* are paired with the Lulahhu (the people of Lullu). In one ritual¹¹⁶ this pair appears in a list of social classes,

¹¹³ See *supra*, WTJ XIX, pp. 9-11.

¹¹⁴ See *ibid.* p. 21, n. 98 and cf. JEN V, 452, 453, 456, 465; SMN 2145 for mention of *ha-BI-ru* women with their children or alone.

¹¹⁵ E. g., at Ugarit, Alalah and among the Hittites. DeVaux (RB 63, 1956, pp. 264-265) aptly compares the *ha-BI-ru* among whom Idri-mi found political asylum to the tribe in Retenu in which Sinuhe passed his years of exile.

¹¹⁶ No. 91 in Bottero, *op. cit.*

suggesting that "the Lulahhu and the *ha-BI-ru*" had become a cliché among the Hittites for the social category of foreigners.¹¹⁷ Such usage, however, would be only local and secondary in the case of the *ha-BI-ru* as it obviously must be in the case of the Lulahhu. As a matter of fact, once it has been established that the *ha-BI-ru* cannot successfully be identified as a social class, all evidence that they were regarded in particular areas as one specific group of foreigners,¹¹⁸ becomes so much support for the interpretation of them as a specific ethnic entity.

Certain Egyptian texts also mention *ha-BI-ru* in lists containing ethnic elements. In the Memphis stele Amenophis II lists 3,600 *'pr* (i. e., *ha-BI-ru*) among those he took captive on his second Asiatic campaign. They are preceded by 127¹¹⁹ princes of *Rtnu* (Syria-Palestine) and 179 brothers of princes. They are followed by 15,200 *.S3s.w* (Bedouin of the desert region adjoining Egypt to the east), 36,300 *Hr.w* (Hurrians, used in the sense of the settled population of Syria-Palestine) and 15,070 *Ngs* (people of Nuhassi). The intermediate position of the *ha-BI-ru* in sequence and numerically between the aristocracy and the ethnic terms would make it precarious to determine from this text alone whether the *ha-BI-ru* were a social class or ethnic group. Similar ambiguity is present in the testamentary enactment left by Ramses III in which he cites the properties accumulated by the temples of Thebes, Heliopolis, and Memphis through his benefactions. In the Heliopolitan section the serfs of the temple are listed as follows: "warriors, sons of (foreign) princes, *maryannu*, *'pr.w*, and the settlers who are in this place: 2,093 persons".¹²⁰ What is clear is that the *ha-BI-ru* were in the eyes of the Egyptians an easily identifiable group distinct from the Bedouin and the general population of Syria-Palestine--a fact incompatible

¹¹⁷ Perhaps more specifically, foreign servants. They are located in this list on the border of the upper and lower strata of society. In the somewhat similar list, *KUB XXXV*, 45, 11, 2 ff., they are closely associated with the slaves.

¹¹⁸ See *supra*, *WTJ XIX*, pp. 18 ff.

¹¹⁹ Or 217 or 144.

¹²⁰ Papyrus Harris I, 31, 8. Wilson (*Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, (Princeton, 1950), p. 261, n. 7) regards all these serfs as foreign. Posener (in Bottero, *op. cit.*, p. 170) considers the "settlers" Egyptians.

with the theory that the *ha-BI-ru* were an indistinct social class.¹²¹ Of course in Egypt they were slaves¹²² but this like their foreign status among the Hittites was a local and temporary condition. It is clear, too, that their presence in Egypt is as prisoners of war belonging to a military corps from Syria- Palestine,¹²³ which was somehow distinct from other such troops both general (e. g., the *Hr.w*) and elite (e. g., *maryannu*). One plausible explanation of their distinctiveness would be that it was ethnic.¹²⁴

From the Mesopotamian area too come examples of *ha-BI-ru* used as the equivalent of an ethnic term. In the Mari texts, for example, the *ha-BI-ru* are distinguished from such ethnic groups as the Beni-laminu, Beni-Simal, and "the men of Talhaya".¹²⁵ So again in the Palestinian area the

¹²¹ G. Posener, *ibid.*, p. 175, observes that in the case of the term '*pr.w*', "Les determinatifs les designent simplement comme des strangers; it ne s'ajoute aucun signe qui caracterise une classe sociale, un genre de vie ou une occupation, comme on en trouve, d'une fagon reguliere ou sporadique, apres des appellatifs d'emprunt comme *mri*, *mrjn*, *mskb*, *n'rn*, *kt (n)*, etc." According to Albright, the foreign warrior determinative is used on the smaller Beisan stele of Seti I.

¹²² Cf. also the stele of Ramses IV in the Wadi Hammamat recording the personnel of an expedition sent to procure blocks of stone (Cuyat and Montet, *Inscriptions hieroglyphiques du Ouadi Hammamat*, no. 12). The high priest of Amon heads the list followed by nine civil and military officers (Nos. 2-10), 412 subordinate officers (Nos. 11-16, 18, 21, 22), 5,000 men of the army (No. 17), 800 '*pr.w*' (No. 19), 2,000 slaves (No. 20), 130 quarrymen and stone-cutters (No. 25) and ten skilled artificers and artists (Nos. 23, 24, 26, 27). Similarly, two hieratic papyri from Memphis dated to the reign of Ramses II depict '*pr.w*' drawing stone. (Papyrus Leiden I, 348, *recto* 6:6; 349, *recto* 15).

¹²³ The Beisan stele attests the presence of some *ha-BI-ru* in that area near 1300 B. C. and the Papyrus Harris 500 account of the taking of Joppa locates *ha-BI-ru* there in the 15th century (though the manuscript itself is 13th century).

¹²⁴ If the 12th century proper name, *p3-'pr* (see no. 191 in Bottero, *op. cit.*) has anything to do with the *ha-BI-ru*, it might be an indication of their ethnic distinctiveness since names of the type article plus substantive are often ethnic (e. g., *p3-hr*); they are, however, also professional (e. g., *p3-hm-ntr*, "the priest").

¹²⁵ See *supra*, WTJ XIX, p. 14, n. 66. Cf. A 109. Contrary to Bottero (*op. cit.*, p. 188) *ha-BI-ru* is not shown to be an appellative by the Mari texts and others which designate certain towns or countries as the place of proximate origin or residence of the *ha-BI-ru*. The *ha-BI-ru* of these

ha-BI-ru, according to the Amarna and other evidence, were a well-defined group which could be contrasted with ethnic elements like the Sutu, native Palestinian troops, and "men of the land of Kashu".¹²⁶

Another feature which comes as no surprise on the assumption that the *ha-BI-ru* were an ethnic group is the mention of the "gods of the *ha-BI-ru*" in the Hittite treaties.¹²⁷ It would not be as common for inter-ethnic professional groups to have guild deities¹²⁸ and it is unlikely that a general social class had its own gods.¹²⁹ Relevant here is the god ^d*ha-BI-ru* found in an Assyrian *Gotteradressbuch*¹³⁰ and in Hittite ritual.¹³¹ Possibly the similarity of ^d*ha-BI-ru* and ^{LU}*ha-BI-ru* is accidental¹³² but otherwise there could be evidence here of the tribal character of the *ha-BI-ru* in the appearance of their eponymous tribal god.¹³³

texts may also be understood as a distinct ethnic element not indigenous to, or only temporarily located in, these places.

¹²⁶ Cf. e. g., EA 195:24 ff. ; 246:5 ff. ; 318:10 ff.

¹²⁷ Gustavs (ZAW, N. F. 3, 1926, pp. 25 ff.) disposed of the opinion of Jirku (*Orientalistische Literaturzeitung*, 1921, pp. 246 ff.; 1922, p. 38; and *Der Alte Orient*, 1924, pp. 18 ff.) that the proper translation is "the gods *Ha-BI-ru*". Jirku was compelled to regard as a scribal error: *ilani*^{MES} *sa*^{LU} SA-GAZ (*Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazkoi* (hereafter *KBo*) I, 2, Rs. 27; cf. I, 3, IV, 5). Nor could he explain the genitive found in all cases but one (excluding, of course, the use of the ideogram). The one exception is a Hittite nominative: (*KBo* V, 3, I, 56) which Gustavs treated adjectivally. (Cf. Goetze in Bottero, *op. cit.*, p. 81). Might this reflect the fact that what appeared like a nominative elsewhere, i. e., *ha-BI-ru*, was a shortened gentilic? Gustavs also proved groundless Jirku's view that the *ilani* was a plural of majesty.

¹²⁸ In India certain professions have patron gods.

¹²⁹ Greenberg (*op. cit.*, p. 87, n. 9) argues that the summary type formula used to designate the gods of the *ha-BI-ru* points to an agglomeration of gods from diverse sources, not to a single pantheon of an ethnically unified group. That this is gratuitous is apparent from the use of the same summary formula for the gods of the ethnically unified Lulahhu.

¹³⁰ KAV 42, II, 9. It is part of a corpus known as the "Description of the city of Ashur" and dates from the 7th century B. C.

¹³¹ Collection of tablets found at Boghazkoi (hereafter *Bo*) 5239:7 and 6868:2.

¹³² W. von Soden (in Bottero, *op. cit.*, p. 135) says of the Neo-Assyrian *dha-BI-ru* that it represents the Akkadian *ha'iru*, *hawiru*, "spouse".

¹³³ So Jirku, *op. cit.* Of uncertain relation to ^d*ha-BI-ru* and ^{LU}*ha-BI-ru* are the personal names *ha-BI-ra-am* (of Old Akkadian texts), *ha-BI-re/ri*

There are also instances of peace treaty and covenant oaths governing the relation of *ha-BI-ru* groups to kings.¹³⁴ These are compatible with an ethnic but not with a social class interpretation.

The ethnic view is not without problems. Often urged against it is the onomastic evidence, for *ha-BI-ru* names range inside and outside the Semitic sphere.¹³⁵ Caution, however, is required in drawing ethnic conclusions from onomastic data. A migratory group will adopt names current in their new land, for imitation of the higher social strata is a common human foible.¹³⁶ According to an ethnic interpretation of the *ha-BI-ru* they will everywhere have assimilated their names to the indigenous population except, as far as the evidence goes, at Nuzu where they are apparently recently arrived from a Semitic area and even there the process of assimilation to Hurrian names may be seen to have begun.

and *ha-[BI]-ir-di-il-la* (from Nippur), *ha-BI-ra*, *ha-BI-i-ra*, and *ha-BI-ir-til-la* (from Nuzu), and the Egyptian personal names containing the element 'pr. Gustavs (ZAW, N. F. 17, 1940, pp. 158, 159) judged *ha-BI-ir-til-la* to be "H. is lord" and thus further evidence of ^d*ha-BI-ru*. If that were correct, the fact that *-tilla* is a common element in Hurrian names would suggest Hurrian associations for ^d*ha-BI-ru* (cf. supra, WTJ XIX, p. 4, n. 17). Moreover, most of the Nuzians who bear the names *ha-BI-ra* and *ha-BI-ir-til-la* appear to have Hurrian relatives. And along with ^d*ha-BI-ru* in the Assyrian Gotteradressbuch are mentioned the Hurrian deities *Seris* and *Hurris* (cf. Albright, BASOR 81, 1941, p. 20. n. 20). Problematic, however, for Gustavs' interpretation are the facts that in every other case the word compounded with *-tilla* is verbal or adjectival and *tilla* is itself a Hurrian deity or surrogate for one.

¹³⁴ Cf. supra, WTJ XIX, p. 17 and n. 84; and P. A. Pohl, *Orientalia* 25, 1956, p. 429. See below for further treatment of these texts as evidence of the *ha-BI-ru* professional character.

¹³⁵ "The analyzable Old Babylonian names are Akkadian; those from Alalab are, with few exceptions, non-Semitic; one of the two from Anatolia is non-Semitic; from Babylon and Ashshur of the Middle period -Kassite. At Nuzi H. names, mostly Akkadian, differ in a marked degree from those of the local (in this case, Hurrian) population . . .". So Greenberg summarizes. *op. cit.*, p. 87.

¹³⁶ While granting that this is a "proven tendency", Greenberg, *ibid.*, n. 9, says that the edge of the above argument has "been dulled by frequent use". It may be the beginning of scholarship to realize that an accumulation of authorities does not validate a view but it is a bit novel to judge that popularity invalidates one.

The wide dispersal of the *ha-BI-ru* throughout the Fertile Crescent and adjacent areas which has earned for them in modern studies the epithet "ubiquitous" has also been thought a difficulty for the theory of ethnic unity. But it is reasonable to envisage this ubiquity of the *ha-BI-ru* as the sequel of an ethnic wave that dashed across the Fertile Crescent before even the earliest extant mention of *ha-BI-ru* in Babylonia.¹³⁷ If so the question arises whether their ultimate origins lay in the desert enclosed by the Crescent or in the tracts beyond.

In opposing the ethnic view Greenberg appeals to what he believes to be evidence in the Amarna letters of accretions to the *ha-BI-ru* ranks. Thus, Abdi-Ashirta is called the GAZ-man;¹³⁸ "the townsmen of Lachish, after committing an offense against the king, are said to `have become H.'"¹³⁹; and we read of Amanhatbi that he "fled to the SA-GAZ men".¹⁴⁰ If Canaanites could so readily become *ha-BI-ru* (or SA-GAZ) how can *ha-BI-ru* denote an ethnic status? The texts in question, however, mean no more than that certain leaders and villagers of Canaan in rebelling against Pharaoh and his loyalists identified themselves with the efforts of the *ha-BI-ru* in Canaan. By making common cause with the SA-GAZ these Canaanites did not actually become SA-GAZ but became, in respect to their relationship to the Pharaoh (the recipient of these letters), "like GAZ men" (i. e., rebels).¹⁴¹

The major considerations bearing on the possibility of *ha-BI-ru* ethnic unity have now been surveyed. The hypothesis which accounts with the least difficulty for all the facts

¹³⁷ DeVaux, *ibid.*, p. 265, compares the similarly widespread Sutu and Arameans. Cf. also the Terahites who left elements of the family in Ur and Haran as they migrated to Canaan (Gen. 11:27 ff.). The notion of a general westward movement of the *ha-BI-ru* from Babylonia about the Fertile Crescent is too much dependent on the accident of archival discovery. Even according to present evidence the *ha-BI-ru* are found from Sumer to Alalah and Alishar by the 19th and 18th centuries.

¹³⁸ EA 91:5.

¹³⁹ So Greenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 75. The text, EA 288:44, reads: *ardutu*^{MES} *ip-su a-na*^{LU.MES} [*h*]*a-[B]I-[r]i*.

¹⁴⁰ EA 185:63.

¹⁴¹ In following Abdi Ashirta the people of Ammiya are said to have become "like GAZ men": *i-ba-as-su ki-ma*^{LU.MES} GAZ (EA 74:28, 29; cf. 67:16, 17).

is that the *ha-BI-ru*--at least the characteristic core of them--did represent one ethnic stock.

2. *Professional Fraternity*. Ethnic unity need not have been the only or even the dominant element in the Gestalt called *ha-BI-ru*. Frequently in the extant record of their exploits it is their professional role which occupies the foreground and that role is military. In fact, they are almost everywhere and always engaged as professional warriors. They man the garrisons at Ur, Larsa, Babylon, Susa, and in Anatolia; conduct razzias along the Euphrates and throughout Canaan; and endure the fate of captives of war in Egypt. Especially illuminating are the new pages in *ha-BI-ru* history from Alalah and Boghazkoi.

At Alalah the term *ha-BI-ru* (or SA-GAZ) denotes the members of a particular military corps. The available details concerning the constituency of this *ha-BI-ru* corps contradict all identifications of the *ha-BI-ru* as a social class such as the *hupsu*. The Hurrianized society of Alalah was divided into distinct social classes. The *maryannu* occupied the top rung, followed by a free class of tradesmen, the *ehelena*. Next came the rural dwellers called *sabe name*, subdivided into the *hupsu* and *haniahu*. There were also, as always, the poor (*muskenu*) and the slaves.¹⁴² Now the significant thing is that the membership of the *ha-BI-ru* corps cut across these classes.¹⁴³ It comprised *ehelena*,¹⁴⁴ *muskenu*,¹⁴⁵ slave,¹⁴⁶ and even the *maryannu*.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² See Wiseman, *AT*, pp. 10 ff.; Speiser, *JAOS* 74, 1954, pp. 18 ff.; Mendelsohn, *BASOR* 139, 1955, pp. 9 ff. Wiseman equates only the *hupsu* with the *sabe name*, associating the *haniahu* with the *ehelena*.

¹⁴³ Cf. *supra*, *WTJ* XIX, p. 16 and n. 78. Eissfeldt recognized this (*Forschungen and Fortschritte* 28:3, March 1954, pp. 80 ff.), but Greenberg blurs the situation when he comments that the SA-GAZ "are grouped with a military class composed of *ehele* and *hanyahe*" (*op. cit.*, p. 65).

¹⁴⁴ *AT* 182:27; cf. 180:27.

¹⁴⁵ *AT* 180:31; 182:29.

¹⁴⁶ *AT* 182:14.

¹⁴⁷ According to the probable implications of the charioteers in the *ha-BI-ru* corps (*AT* 180:24; 182:19; 183:6; 226:1) and the most probable interpretation of the list of family chiefs (*AT* 198, esp. line 42; cf. *supra*, *WTJ* XIX, p. 16., n. 80). Since the *maryannu* status was obtainable by marriage and royal grant as well as by inheritance and since this class had

Alongside the *ha-BI-ru* as a second military body at Alalah is the *sanannu* corps.¹⁴⁸ The two groups have much in common. The *sanannu* corps too is composed of members of the various social categories. Both groups consist in part of charioteers. The members of both come from towns around Alalah and farther afield.¹⁴⁹ Both are coordinated with towns in civil administration. Thus in a cattle census the totals are given in terms of the sheep, rams, and asses belonging to Alalah, Mukish,¹⁵⁰ the SA-GAZ, and the *sanannu*.¹⁵¹

What the distinction was between the *ha-BI-ru* and the *sanannu* corps is uncertain. Perhaps it lay in the area of military specialization.¹⁵² Another possibility, however, in line with the apparent ethnic unity of the *ha-BI-ru* would be that the distinction was (at least on the *ha-BI-ru* side) ethnic, as in the case of David's Pelethites and Cherethites.

Once again in the two new documents¹⁵³ from the Old Hittite royal archives at Hattusha¹⁵⁴ the SA-GAZ stand forth as a distinct corps on a level with other regular branches of the Hittite military. In one document¹⁵⁵ the SA-GAZ troops

no rigid ethnic barrier (*cf.* R. T. O'Callaghan, *Aram Naharaim*, Rome, 1948, p. 66) there is no difficulty in the presence of *ha-BI-ru* regarded as substantially an ethnic unity among the *maryannu*.

¹⁴⁸ See AT 183, 226, and 350.

¹⁴⁹ See AT 145 and 341.

¹⁵⁰ Wiseman suggests that *Mu-ki (-is) -he* be read for *Mu-ki-he*. 252 AT 350; *cf.* 352. The *sanannu* total is elsewhere (AT 341) itemized in terms of sixteen towns around Alalah.

¹⁵² Albright (*apud* Wiseman, *op. cit.*, p. 11, n. 4), relating the *sanannu* of Alalah to the *tnn* of the Ugaritic texts, compares Akkadian *sananu* and suggests *tnn*, "strive", as the common stem; he translates *sanannu* as "archers". Gordon (*Ugaritic Manual*, Rome, 1955, no. 2049) renders the Ugaritic *tnn*, "a kind of soldier"; and the plural, "members of a certain guild".

¹⁵³ At the time of this writing these documents have not yet been published and I am greatly indebted to Prof. H. Otten for his kindness in making available to me his article *Zwei althethitische Belege zu den Hapiru* (SA-GAZ) shortly to appear in *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie*, in which he presents the texts in transliteration and translation along with an excellent discussion. *Cf.* P. A. Pohl's reference to these texts in *Orientalia* 25, 1956, p. 428.

¹⁵⁴ The modern Boghazkoi.

¹⁵⁵ 141/d=KUB XXXVI, 106.

are seen joining the troops of Hatti in a pledge of allegiance to the city of Hattusha. Their commitment assumes the form of a self-maledictory oath, the characteristic covenant form found in the ritual of oath taking for Hittite soldiers.¹⁵⁶ In the other document,¹⁵⁷ it is the rights of the SA-GAZ troops which are guaranteed, and that by means of a solemn oath taken by the sovereign. This disclosure of the official status of that *ha-BI-ru* within the political establishments at Boghazkoi and Alalah¹⁵⁸ suggests that much of the *ha-BI-ru* activity which has appeared to be independent marauding was directed from the capital of one of the ambitious empires of the day.

3. *Proposed Solution.* Two elements are integral to the entity called *ha-BI-ru*: ethnic unity and military fraternity. In the extant records the military connotation is often dominant.¹⁵⁹

Comparable to this dual character of the *ha-BI-ru* is that of the *maryannu*. Professionally, they were the experts in chariotry; ethnically, the characteristic core and majority of them belonged to the Indo-Aryan stock which constituted the ruling and patrician class in the unusual symbiosis of Mitannian society. The *maryannu* and *ha-BI-ru* categories are not completely parallel since, as noted, the *ha-BI-ru* corps cut across the social classes and included *maryannu*. Nevertheless, the *maryannu* do offer a social phenomenon in the immediate historical context of the *ha-BI-ru* analogous to that presented here as an interpretation of the *ha-BI-ru*, particularly with respect to the essential point of the correlativity of ethnic and professional character in one group.¹⁶⁰ And if the *ha-BI-ru*

¹⁵⁶ Cf. *KBo* VI, 34 and its duplicate *KUB* VII, 59.

¹⁵⁷ 298/n+756/f.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. also their employment by governments in the early Babylonian administrative texts and in some of the Mari and Amarna letters.

¹⁵⁹ Locally the name develops an even more specialized military significance in the ^{LU}*ha-BI-ri* officer at Alalah (*AT* 164); cf. the SA-GAZ officer at Ugarit (*RS* 15109).

¹⁶⁰ If it be the case that the *ha-BI-ru* were not ethnically one but that there were additions from various ethnic groups to the original ethnic stock of the military organization, that too would find its parallel in the *maryannu* who, though they were predominantly Indo-Aryan, were not exclusively so (cf. above n. 147).

and *maryannu* were kindred phenomena, the *ha-BI-ru* will have been, within the Mitannian orbit at least, a kind of guild.¹⁶¹

This interpretation has the advantage of being based on that which is pervasive rather than elusive in the texts. At the same time it is able to account for the various types of polarity in the *ha-BI-ru* career. Readily understood for example are both their settled and free-booting phases. The latter isolated from the former has led to the theory that the *ha-BI-ru* were a second millennium B. C. counterpart to the condottieri of the late Middle Ages.¹⁶² This theory properly recognizes the family structure and fighting profession of the *ha-BI-ru* but is one-sided in not doing justice to the phase of their history which finds them a long since settled and respected element in a mature cultural complex. Both phases find room, however, within the historical vicissitudes of an ethnic but far-flung group, in the shaping of whose life the controlling factor was a committal to the military profession. The pursuit of happiness for them might become the pursuit of trouble and a hectic chase it led the *ha-BI-ru* at times. But militarists who identify themselves permanently with a particular political cause can there achieve honor and influence. Indeed, the warriors and the priests generally constituted the two highest social groups. Such an exchange of loyalty and recognition marks the status of the *ha-BI-ru* in the Old Hittite empire and especially in the Alalah-Ugarit sector of the Mitannian hegemony.

The Nuzu documents have appeared to present a puzzling exception to the military pattern of *ha-BI-ru* life. If so, was it that though militarists they found no call for their professional services at Nuzu and were obliged to seek more peaceful means of support? The difficulty of making such a transition might well have compelled them to give up a measure of their freedom for a measure of security, as was involved in accepting the terms of their servant contracts. Or was it (as is also possible on an ethno-professional approach) that some individuals belonging to the *ha-BI-ru* ethnic whole did not

¹⁶¹ For the importance of the guild system in the Ras Shamra texts see J. Gray, *The Hibbert Journal*, January, 1955, pp. 115 ff.

¹⁶² So, e. g., Albright, *JAOS* 48, 1928, pp. 183-185.

participate in the military guild? Obviously in this category are the *ha-BI-ru* women who appear alone or as widows (apparently) with children.¹⁶³

As a matter of fact, however, traces of the military motif can be detected even in the Nuzu episode.¹⁶⁴ Mitanni had only recently secured the Nuzu area and would want to maintain its military strength there. It was a *halsu* district, an area of farms and hamlets defended by towers and fortified houses. Such areas were occupied in part by military veterans settled as feudal tenants and were, in effect, frontier cantonments.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, Tehiptilla, from whose archives the majority of the *ha-BI-ru* contracts come was the first *halsuhlu* official appointed over the Nuzu district and it would not be unusual if business conducted in the name of his house were actually official state business.¹⁶⁶ In addition, there are Nuzu ration lists which deal with certain *ha-BI-ru* collectively, citing provisions assigned for them and (significantly for the possibility of a military role) for their horses. The form of these lists recalls the Old Babylonian administrative texts dealing with *ha-BI-ru* mercenaries.

A unifying strand is suggested, therefore, for all the *ha-BI-ru* documents in an ethno-professional interpretation. But within that identifying unity there is considerable diversity as to local and secondary conditions. In order to describe more adequately the place of the *ha-BI-ru* in the history of their age it is necessary to ask not simply what? but when? and where? Especially important is the question of the association of the *ha-BI-ru* with the Hurrians.

¹⁶³ See n. 114 above. Cf. the SA-GAZ women singers mentioned in a Hittite text (no. 138 in Greenberg, *op. cit.*).

¹⁶⁴ Not, however, by regarding the *ha-BI-ru* there as prisoners of war (so Chiera). Such a supposition is contradicted by the voluntary terms of the contracts (cf. ramaniu and *pisu u lisansu*) and by a text like *JEN V*, 455, which indicates that the *ha-BI-ru* Mar-Ishtar had come north from Akkad apart from any military venture.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. J. Lewy, HUCA XXVII, 1956, pp. 56, 57.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. J. Lewy, *op. cit.* XIV, 1939, p. 601, n. 75. Possibly the *halsuhlu* official at Nuzu had a military as well as judicial function. There are indications that the *halsuhlu* was at times at least a garrison commander. (cf. J. Finkelstein, *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* (hereafter *JCS*) 7, 1953, p. 116, n. 30).

4. *Political Affiliation.* *Ha-BI-ru* and Hurrian careers in the Near East are roughly coterminous geographically and chronologically. The Mitannian kingdom extended at times from east of the Tigris to Anatolia and *ha-BI-ru* are found from one end of it to the other. Beyond these borders, both *ha-BI-ru* and Hurrian individuals and influence penetrated among the Hittites and into Palestine and Egypt as well as into Babylonia. Chronologically, the *ha-BI-ru* are discovered in the Fertile Crescent from the Ur III period, and probably somewhat earlier, to almost the end of the second millennium B. C., although evidence of the *ha-BI-ru* in strength vanishes by the close of the 14th century. The date of the Hurrian arrival is a moot point but they too are clearly on the scene well before the Ur III period.¹⁶⁷ The rise of the Hittite Suppiluliuma in the second quarter of the 14th century marked the end of Mitannian strength in the west and the rise of the Assyrian Shalmaneser I a century later in the east terminated Hurrian political significance.

In short, there is a general contemporaneity of *ha-BI-ru* and Hurrian careers, with the political importance of each declining sharply by about the close of the 14th century. Bottero mentions the disappearance of the *ha-BI-ru* from history at the end of the second millennium as a difficult problem¹⁶⁸ but a far more significant problem is why the evidence of *ha-BI-ru* community organization and military enterprise disappears about the end of the 14th century.¹⁶⁹ And it is difficult to divorce the answer to that question from the simultaneous collapse of the Mitannian empire.

The clue provided by *ha-BI-ru*--Hurrian contemporaneity is confirmed by the evidences of their cultural-political congeniality.¹⁷⁰ By way of contrast, the welcome afforded the

¹⁶⁷ There were two Hurrian kings at Urkish in the Upper Khabur area as early as the third millennium. (See J. Finkelstein *JCS* 9, 1955, p. 6; cf. O'Callaghan, *op. cit.*, p. 47).

¹⁶⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 198.

¹⁶⁹ The mention of *ha-BI-ru* in Egyptian slave gangs after this date is obviously not a real exception.

¹⁷⁰ Speiser in *Ethnic Movements in the Near East in the Second Millennium B. C.*, 1933, pp. 34 ff., regarded the *ha-BI-ru* as culturally dependent on the Hurrians and identified the Hurrians and one branch of the *ha-BI-ru*

ha-BI-ru outside Mitanni was something short of enthusiastic. One of the clichés among the threatenings of prophets of woe was that the *ha-BI-ru* were coming¹⁷¹ and historians in describing anarchic conditions of the past often observed that the *ha-BI-ru* had roamed the highways uncontrolled.¹⁷² In the 18th century *ha-BI-ru* raiders were a plague to Amorite authorities in Mesopotamia and in the Amarna Age *ha-BI-ru* incursions were a menace to loyalist native chiefs in Palestine. Their reputation is epitomized in the SA-GAZ epithet which seems to have been applied to them as intruders into the Mesopotamian area and is probably to be understood in the sense of "thugs". Of course, the *ha-BI-ru* were at times employed by various governments as mercenaries, but even among the Hittites where they had their own settlements and enjoyed legal guarantees of their rights as a division of the military, they were still regarded as foreigners.

Within the Mitannian hegemony, however, the exchange of loyalty and respectful recognition which marks the relation of the *ha-BI-ru* to the government seems to have traditional roots. Especially in the Syrian area the *ha-BI-ru* are a thoroughly integrated element in the civil-social complex. There they are found in permanent settlements and contribute to the community leadership--civil, cultic, and military. It is, moreover, the Hurrianized pattern of society that forms the native habitat for the *ha-BI-ru* as a societal species; for in it the *ha-BI-ru* find organizational analogues to themselves. The evidence for the various elements in this picture has already been given¹⁷³ and may now be supplemented by observations concerning the Amarna and Nuzu situations.

as the main components of the Hyksos. The assumption that *ha-BI-ru* were involved in the Hyksos movement is plausible in view of their military profession, their known presence in Syria before the Hyksos period, and their role in Syria-Palestine and slave status in Egypt after the Hyksos era.

¹⁷¹ So in the omen literature if the *ha-BI-ru* may be seen in the SA-GAZ of these texts.

¹⁷² So again if SA-GAZ refers to *ha-BI-ru* in the Old Babylonian literary texts (cf. in Bottero, *op. cit.*, nos. 6-8).

¹⁷³ See above the comparison of *ha-BI-ru* and *maryannu* and cf. *WTJ* XIX, pp. 12, 15, 16, 21.

Mitannian leaders with their designs of encroaching on Egyptian holdings could only have regarded with satisfaction the activities of the *ha-BI-ru* in Palestine as reflected in the Amarna letters. In view of the contemporary *ha-BI-ru*--Hurrian associations in adjoining Syria, this harmony of *ha-BI-ru* program and Mitannian policy will hardly have been due to coincidence.¹⁷⁴ Then the collapse of Mitanni before the expanding New Hittite power confronted the *ha-BI-ru* with crisis and decision. And the noteworthy fact to emerge is that the *ha-BI-ru* as an organized entity did not survive the fall of Mitanni. That suggests that whatever ambiguity may attach to the political allegiance of the *ha-BI-ru* during this crisis,¹⁷⁵ their fundamental affiliation had been in the Mitannian sphere where they had enjoyed their most satisfactory social adjustment.

Meanwhile at Nuzu on the eastern extremity of Mitannian dominion *ha-BI-ru* are found in a relationship to the Hurrians rather different from that at Ugarit and Alalah. This difference is perhaps to be explained by the recentness both of Mitanni's annexation of the Nuzu district and of the arrival of the *ha-BI-ru* there from a non-Hurrian area, in contrast to the long association of the *ha-BI-ru* with the Hurrians in Syria. In any case, even the condition of servitude which the *ha-BI-ru* were obliged to accept at Nuzu, though less attractive an arrangement than the one enjoyed by their colleagues in Syria, may in its own way serve equally well to underscore the unusually cordial association which prevailed between the often ominous *ha-BI-ru* and the kingdom of Mitanni. For the *ha-BI-ru* status of the Nuzu contracts has been convincingly equated by J. Lewy with that of the

¹⁷⁴ Cf. EA 90:19-25.

¹⁷⁵ In the period of Mitannian disintegration the *ha-BI-ru* cooperated with the Hittites in their Palestinian interests. So, for example, they assisted Aziru against the loyalists when he was being used as a tool by the Hittite Suppiluliuma (cf. *Boghazkoi-Studien* VIII, 4). Similarly, during the Old Hittite period *ha-BI-ru* mercenaries are found in the army of a Hittite king at a time when he was contending against the Hurrians (cf. nos. 72 and 72' in Bottero, *op. cit.*). A lack of coordination among the various contingents of the *ha-BI-ru* military fraternity would lead to such political complications.

'*ebed 'Ibri* in the biblical legislation.¹⁷⁶ To the extent that this is so it is evidence (not as Lewy concluded that the *ha-BI-ru* at Nuzu were regarded as foreign servants but) that the Hurrians treated the *ha-BI-ru* there like needy brothers. Such is the plain meaning of the biblical '*ebed 'Ibri* laws.¹⁷⁷

Here then is a promising area for future investigation as the volume of *ha-BI-ru* texts continues to grow. Available evidence, however, would seem to warrant the conclusion that within the period of our documents the primary base of operations for the *ha-BI-ru*, their center of family-tribal settlement and societal integration, and their strongest political attachments were in the Hurrian sphere. The implications of this for earlier associations of the *ha-BI-ru* and Hurrians or Indo-Aryans before they appear on the stage of near eastern history are uncertain. In our present state of knowledge it appears more likely that the *ha-BI-ru* were part of the massive migration from the north that brought the Hurrians into the Fertile Crescent in the third millennium B. C. than that they were a native element there.

(to be concluded)

¹⁷⁶ The following parallels are adduced by Lewy: a) there was a fixed terminus understood for the period of service (cf. Exod. 21:2 and *JEN V*, 455:1-7 and 8-16); b) there was the option of choosing to become a permanent slave (cf. Exod. 21:5-6; but see, too, Lev. 25:39-41; and *JEN V*, 452, 453, etc.); c) the servant who left might not take with him a wife given him by his master (cf. Exod. 21:4; but see, too, Lev. 25:41; and *JEN V*, 437; cf. *JEN VI*, 611). Levy's position that there was a law which automatically fixed the term of service in such contracts unless the contract itself stipulated the master's lifetime, is criticized by Greenberg (op. cit., p. 67, n. 28) on the ground that no contracts mention such a feature. It seems, however, that the date formulae of *JEN V*, 455 are best accounted for on an assumption like Lewy's.

¹⁷⁷ This matter will be more fully examined later in this article. Even if the Nuzu and biblical phenomena are not identified it must be recognized that the *ha-BI-ru* at Nuzu were treated far more favorably than ordinary slaves. They do not sell their persons to their patrons. They may terminate their service by furnishing a substitute. The relationship of servant to master is at times expressed in terms reminiscent of adoption contracts.

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