

## Canaan. Phoenicia. Sidon

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[The present paper offers a revaluation of the ethnonyms “Phoenician”, “Canaanite” and “Sidonian” in the light of the available evidence. Among other proposals, it is suggested that the Greeks adopted the designation “Phoenician” from Egyptian Fenkhu.]

The name “Phoenicians” by which this ethnos was known in ancient times and is still known in modern times was not a self-denomination. It was given them by the Greeks. The Phoenicians preferred to call themselves “Canaanites” and their country “Canaan”. Augustinus writes (PL XXXIV-XXXV, col. 2096) that the Carthaginians’ descendants in North Africa also called themselves “Canaanites”. In an inscription of Cirta (modern El-Hofra), a man, possibly a Carthaginian (or a Phoenician in general) is designated as a “man of Canaan” (KAI 116,3). Canaan as the name of Phoenicia is etched on the coin of the city of Byblos.<sup>1</sup> This is by no means an accident. The Phoenicians were part of the Canaanite ethnos that occupied a vast area in the eastern Mediterranean in the third-second millennia B. C.

In historical science there are several interpretations of the term “Canaan”. It is often associated with the notion of purple or red colour; Canaan is then understood as the Purple Land; and the Canaanites, inclusive Phoenicians, as “Red People” (red-skinned or red-haired). In this case, the term is congruous with the Greek name also derived from the notion of red.<sup>2</sup> The basis for this explanation of the name may be found in the manufacture on the Syro-Palestinian seashore of purple so highly valued in antiquity. Really, the Hurrian word “kinakhnu” is used in Mesopotamian sources to denote red colour, but as S. Moscati points out, it is linguistically easier to explain the transition from the name “Canaan” to the adjective kinakhnu - “red” than the opposite.<sup>3</sup> Therefore it may be assumed that the Mesopotamian or Hurrian use of this word as an attribute is secondary, as is its occasional usage as a professional rather than ethnic term. It should be kept in mind that for all the importance of purple and purple fabrics, timber was the prime export from the littoral and the nearby mountains. Timber was the coveted target of all campaigns and commercial expeditions to these quarters. Taking into consideration that “Canaan” was a self-denomination of people and, consequently, of the country, this explanation sounds incredible and

1. C. F. Hill, *A Catalogue of the Greek Coins in the British Museum. Phoenicia*, London 1910, p. 52.

2. W. Helck, *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.*, Wiesbaden 1962, p. 280; H. J. Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre*, Jerusalem 1973, p. 7; S. Moscati, *Chi furono i fenici*, Torino 1994, pp. 16-17.

3. S. Moscati, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

unlikely: it looks like a violent assumption that people could call themselves after a manufactured product. A different explanation is necessary.

The Semitic peoples of the Syro-Palestinian region had a widespread custom to call an ethnic group after their real or more often than not their mythical ancestor. The Amorites believed their forefather was Amurru, who was evidently regarded in Ugarit as the first-born son of Balu the Athlete and the Virgin Anath.<sup>4</sup> One of the Amorite communities later to become Ugaritic was Ditanu whose ancestor was considered to be the first king of the same name.<sup>5</sup> The Sution's distant forefather was Seth, Adam's son, born of Adam and Eve after Abel's death and Cain's flight (Gen. IV, 25-26; V, 3). The Israelites, as is known, viewed themselves as Israel's (or Jacob's) descendants. For that reason, it seems to be more natural to trace the denomination "Canaan", both of ethnos and land, to their ancestor's name. True enough, we find such a forefather in both the Bible and in Phoenician literature. In the biblical Table of Nations, one of Ham's sons is Canaan (Kinaan) who fathered a number of ethnics, the Sidonians among them (Gen. X, 6; 15). Philon of Byblos (I, 39) speaks about Chna (Χνα) who afterwards received the name of Phoinikos. Philon is known to have given Phoenician deities and heroes as far as possible Greek names so that Phoinikos to his mind was the Greek name of Chna. The Greeks considered Phoinikos (Φοινιξ) to be the Phoenician's ancestor - eponym. The name Chna itself is a variant of the name that is reproduced as Canaan in cuneiform literature.<sup>6</sup> A young historian Nemirovsky of Moscow has shown in his unpublished thesis that all the names of the Canaanites' forefathers in the extant sources derive from a name that the Bible reproduces as Cain. That is why it can be inferred that the Canaanites themselves derived their name from Chna-Cain. It is not at all surprising that the Bible treats Cain as a murderer and a prime scoundrel on earth. According to the biblical legend, Cain was a tiller and Abel was a shepherd (Gen. IV, 2). This is undoubtedly a projection into a mythological sphere of an age-old enmity between agriculturists and cattle-breeders.

Chapter IV of Genesis deals with the history of Cain and his offspring. After the murder of his brother he fled to the land of Nod, east (or opposite) of Eden, where he married and had a son Enoch (Hanoch). There Cain built a city, the first city on earth (no cities whatsoever are mentioned previously in the Bible), "and called the name of the city Enoch" after his son. Thus Cain appears to be not only the first farmer but also the first city-dweller. Nomadic and semi-nomadic cattle-breeders of the Near East treated the city and its agricultural area with profound hostility that was mainly focused on the image of Cain. Canaan is known to have been a land of cities prior to the Hebrew conquest.<sup>7</sup> In Phoenician mythology, the first city Byblos was founded by the sovereign god El (Phil. Bibl. in Euseb. Prep. Euang. I, 10, 19). The list of Cain's descendants yields practically no information, being just an enumeration of proper names, and only Cain's fifth descendant Lamech seems more of a concrete and real person. We know of his two wives whom he addresses with a song, one of the most ancient specimens of Hebrew poetry. But an even more significant fact is that Lamech's sons are associated with specific trades: "Jabal was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock", Jubal "was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe", and Tubal-Cain was "the forger of all implements of bronze and iron" (Gen. IV, 16-24). These are typical "cultured heroes" who can be found in all mythologies of the world, including Phoenician mythology. No wonder such personages crept into the biblical legends too.

One thing, however, seems dubious. The whole story of Cain's life in the land of Nod and of his progeny seems somewhat artificially "nested" into the account of the antediluvian times. Indeed, at the end of chapter IV the narration comes back to Adam and gives the name of his newborn son Seth and

4. I. Sch. Schiffmann, *Kultura drevnego Ugarita*, Moscow 1987, p. 89.

5. H. Cazelles, "Mtpt à Ugarit", in *Memorial Mitchell J. Dahood*, Roma 1984, p. 89.

6. B. A. Turayev, *Ostatki finiltyskoy literatury*, S. Peterburg 1903, pp. 71-72.

7. A. Malamet, "Ursprünge und Frühgeschichte," in: *Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes. Bd. 1*, München 1981, pp. 13-15.

further very logically goes on describing Seth's scions up to Noah and his sons. Chapter V deals with the genealogy of Adam from his creation in the likeness of God, omitting altogether the episode with Cain and Abel and not even mentioning their names. In this chapter we again meet some names of Cain's offspring among those of Seth's. Hanoch (Enoch) who is called Cain's son in Gen. IV, 17, in Gen. IV, 18 turns out to be Jared's son. Whereas the former Hanoch is only mentioned (plus the mention of the city called after him by his father), the latter appears to be the embodiment of righteousness because he "walked with God" (Gen. V, 22). It is known that in Hebrew literature this person's name is given to a book devoted to piety and righteousness.<sup>8</sup> In Chapter V, Lamech appears to be Hanoch's grandson and Noah's father, whereas in Chapter IV he is the fourth descendant of Hanoch and father of Tubal-Cain and his brothers. It is most likely that those were rather popular figures, well-known in the Palestinian and maybe even in the whole Syro-Palestinian region who could "wander" from the mythology of one ethnos of the area into that of another, Lamech is featured as the author of the popular song of blood feud.<sup>9</sup> In Chapter 1 of the First Book of Chronicles the human forefathers from Adam to Noah's sons are mentioned again but this time neither Cain nor Abel nor Cain's scions can be found in the list, a direct genealogy is established from Adam to Seth and then to his descendants. The Pentateuch's sources are known to be various and diverse, and the most important among them were doubtless folklore stories. The period when the Pentateuch took its final shape is debatable but most probably it was the latter third of the seventh century B. C., the reign of King Josiah,<sup>10</sup> i. e. the period before the exile. Although monotheism was already taking root in Judaeen society at that time, it was not yet rigidly separated from the rest of the population.

The books of Chronicles were compiled most likely in the middle or latter half of the fifth century B. C., evidently by Nehemiah,<sup>11</sup> when the Judaeen Yahwist community became sharply opposed not only to the pagans but also to the Samaritans whose religious beliefs were very similar, and even to those tribesmen who remained in Palestine after the fall of the kingdom.<sup>12</sup> The society began its new evolution almost "from scratch", but at the same time it strove to establish an immediate link with its pre-exile history. For that reason the author of the Books of Chronicles actively and amply drew upon the pre-exile material, still fresh in the memories of those who returned from exile and especially on the clans' genealogies resolutely cutting off extraneous material. Even when enumerating Noah's offspring, he sharply curtailed the genealogies of Japheth and Ham.<sup>13</sup> To the Hebrews of the post-exile period, the history of Abel and Cain did not seem to be part of their own history but rather as something alien, not worthy of remembrance at all. All this leads us to the conclusion that the account of Cain and his scions was not authored by Hebrew writers but was borrowed by the Hebrew population of Palestine from its neighbours or the subjected Canaanites. Its integration into the Hebrew mythological-historical tradition was for a long time uncompleted. It was only the unquestionable prestige and authority of the Pentateuch that already contained the narration, that guaranteed its presence in the Bible.

If Cain can be considered the Canaanites' forefather, then we have a considerably transformed remnant of Canaanite mythology. Canaanite origin of this passage is also plainly seen from the fact that Cain is called Eve's first son (Gen. IV, 1), i. e., he is the eldest, the first-born son of Eve, he is older than Abel. It is common knowledge that great importance was attached to one's birthright in the Near East.

8. I. Sch. Schiffmann, *Ucheniye*, Moskow 1993, p. 272.

9. Idem, *Vetchiy Zavet i ego mir* Moskow 1987, p. 107.

10. Ibid., pp. 89-95.

11. Ibid., p. 158.

12. H. Tadmor, *Die Zeit des Ersten Tempels, die babylonische Gefangenschaft und die Restauration*, in: *Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes. Bd. I.* München 1981, pp. 218-220.

13. J.P. Weinberg, "Das Wesen und die funktionelle Bestimmung der Listen in I Chr. 1-9", *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 93, 12 1981, pp. 91-113.

Suffice it to recall the biblical story of Jacob who bought his birthright from his brother Esau and obtained by perfidy his father's blessing, thus becoming twice the first-born though he was not first by birth (Gen. XXV, 31-34; XXVII, 1-36).

One more point in Cain's story is noteworthy. From God's wrath, he fled to the land of Nod, east of Eden or opposite it. The story of Cain's flight may be compared with the Phoenician myth about the flight of the god Demarous who suffered a defeat in the battle against the Sea (Phil. Bibl. in Euseb. Prep. Euang. I, 28). In Ugarit with the sea god Yammu was somehow connected the god Yavu (possibly he was one of Yammu's hypostases). The same god Yevo by name was revered in Phoenician Berith where he was also connected with the sea deity, but at the same time there is some link between Yavu-Yevo and the biblical Yahweh.<sup>14</sup> If this is really true, then Cain may be a hypostasis of Demarous, a deity still very mysterious in many respects. Philon did not specify where Demarous fled; the land of Nod in which Cain found his refuge is localized by the biblical author somewhere in the region of Eden. Eden was the garden of Paradise, the abode of God and the first people before their fall. In Sumerian mythology Paradise and the first people's birthplace is Dilmun, identified with Bahrain.<sup>15</sup> Strabo (XVI, 3, 4) related a legend according to which the Phoenicians' original home were the islands in the Persian Gulf, e. i. Bahrain. Could the notion about the land of Nod be a variant of the Sumerian myth of Dilmun and the Hebrew myth of Eden as the abode of gods and the original homeland of people, of their own ethnos in particular?

Apparently, the story of Cain and his scions should be viewed as a mythical prehistory of Canaan. The fact that the Hebrews borrowed these myths is by no means surprising, for there are other passages in the Bible adopted from Phoenician literature.<sup>16</sup> The more ancient literature of Canaan could no doubt have influenced Hebrew literature.

The confines of Canaan are well defined in the Bible (Num. XXXIV, 2-12). Not all the places indicated there can be accurately localized today but on the whole the territory of Canaan included a sizable part of the Syro-Palestinian littoral, a southwestern section of inland Syria, the whole of Palestine (inclusive Trans-Jordan) and part of Sinai. Of this area, the Phoenicians occupied a narrow strip of the littoral between the mountains of the Lebanon (plus a number of mountains) and the Mediterranean Sea north of Mount Carmel. It is not easy to specify the northern border of Phoenicia but it may be tentatively localized in the area of modern Tell-Sucas.<sup>17</sup> This is the place where the Greeks localized the Phoenicians.

The problem of the origin of the denomination "Phoenicians" is as complicated and disputable as that of the name "Canaanites". This word is also often derived from the root \*φον meaning generally "red".<sup>18</sup> And correspondingly all sorts of explanations of this designation have been suggested. Putting aside for the time being a detailed analysis of all these explanations, we shall only point out how ungrounded and unconvincing they seem to us. The name can hardly mean "bloody", "red-skinned" or "red-haired".<sup>19</sup> Many other peoples could have been bloody or blood-stained if the Greeks had had armed conflicts with them. Apropos no such conflicts with the Phoenicians have been recorded for earlier times. Normally people call aliens in accordance with their salient features that unmistakably distinguish them from each

14. I. Sch. Schiffmann, *Kultura drevnego Ugarita*, p. 91; E. Lipinski, *Dieux et déesses de l'univers phénicien et punique*, Leuven 1995, p. 122.

15. I. M. Diakonoff, "Predistoriya drevnevostochnykh civilizatsiy", in: *Istoria Drevnego Vostoka*, I, 1 1983, p. 92; V. K. Afanasieva, "Ideologia i kultura protopismennogo perioda", *ibid.*, p. 145; B. Alster, "Dilmun, Bahrain, and the Alleged Paradise", in: *Sumerian Myth and Literature, Dilmun*, Berlin, pp. 39-65.

16. G. Garbini, "La letteratura dei fenici", in: *Atti del II congresso internazionale di studi fenici e puniche*, Roma 1991, p. 490.

17. *Les Phéniciens*, Paris 1997, p. 20.

18. L. Godart, "I Fenici nei testi in lineare B: lo stato della questione", in: *Atti del II congresso internazionale di studi fenici e puniche*, Roma 1991, p. 495.

19. *Ibid.*, p. 497; C. Baurain - C. Bonnet, *Les Phéniciens*, Paris 1992, pp. 14-16.

other. But we deem it unlikely that people of the eastern Mediterranean are anthropologically so much unlike the people in the south of the Balkan peninsula. As for the connection of this name with purple, it may be added to what has already been said about the dubious link between "red colour" and the designation "Canaan" that in the Greek language purple dye and purple fabric are more often than not called πορφύρα whereas red colour is called ερυθρός. Rather far - fetched is the opinion that "Phoenicia" and "Phoenicians" were originally used to denote a certain region in Greece and its inhabitants and after the invasion by "Sea Peoples" in which these inhabitants also took part, the names were transferred to their neighbours.<sup>20</sup> It is almost beyond doubt that the residents of the Aegean basin were part and parcel of the "Sea Peoples" coalition.<sup>21</sup> Also indisputable is the fact (Paraskevaidou has proven it successfully<sup>22</sup>) that in Greece and in general in the Aegean basin there are some toponyms similar to "Phoenicia" that have nothing to do whatever with historical Phoenicia. But on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean (to be more exact, of Palestine) it was the Philistines and Tjekers who settled down, not the so-called "Phoenicians" from Greece (most probably from Crete). All this makes us search for a different explanation.

A long time ago it was suggested to connect the Greek Φοινικιοί with the Egyptian Fenkhu.<sup>23</sup> However this word also arouses heated disputes, and yet in all likelihood the word had initially meant "wood cutters" (or perhaps shipbuilders but also connected with woods and trees) but afterwards it became an ethnonym.<sup>24</sup> As is only too natural, this word was used to call people who seemed to the Egyptians the main suppliers of timber to their woodless country. These were mainly Phoenicians and especially the residents of Byblos. Therefore, it is not at all surprising that the word Fenkhu was used to call the inhabitants of this very region. From time out of mind, the Egyptians often named strangers after their trades, irrespective of the true names of this or that ethnos.<sup>25</sup> Since the word Fenkhu was not a self-denomination, but a name given by another people, such transference of the meaning of the word is not in the least objectionable. In the story of Sinuhe, there is a reference to the land of Fenkhu and of its ruler Menus.<sup>26</sup> This work dates back to the period of the Middle Empire, to the Twelfth Dynasty and it is believed to give a fairly true picture of what was life like in the Asiatic periphery of the Egyptian kingdom.<sup>27</sup> During one of his campaigns to Asia, Tutmosis III traveled along the coastline via Fenkhu to Irqata in Northern Phoenicia (ANET, p. 241). All these considerations enable us to maintain that "the land of woodcutters" was situated in the area of Byblos.

The Aegeans (Minoans and Mycenaean alike) since olden times have been tightly bound with Egypt.<sup>28</sup> The Mycenaean were also connected with Byblos, as is plainly attested by the name of this Phoenician city in Greek: the Phoenician Gubla could become the Greek Byblos only as the result of

20. H. A. Paraskevaidou, "The name of Phoenicians: some considerations", in: *Atti del II congresso internazionale di studi fenici e puniche*, Roma 1991, p. 527.

21. Cf. T. Dothan, "Tel Mikne-Ekron. The Aegean Affinities of the Sea Peoples (Philistines) settlement in Canaan", in: *Recent Excavations in Israel. A view to the West*, Jerusalem 1995, pp. 41-42; S. Gittin (ed.), *Tel-Mikne - Ekron*, Jerusalem 1998, 3, 2 1.

22. H. A. Paraskevaidou, *op. cit.*, p. 523.

23. D. J. Wiseman (ed.), *Peoples of Old Testament Times*, Oxford 1973, p. 263; C. Baurain - C. Bonnet, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

24. W. W. Helck, *op. cit.*, pp. 277-278; *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, IV, Wiesbaden 1982, p. 1039; A. Nibbi, "The Canaan in Egypt", in: *Atti del II congresso internazionale di studi fenici e puniche*, Roma 1991, p. 169.

25. W. Helck, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

26. *Poeziya i proza Drevnego Vostoka*, Moscow 1973, p. 47.

27. Ju. Ja. Perepelkin, "Drevniy Egipet", in: *Istoriya Drevnego Vostoka*, I, 2, Moscow 1988, p. 224.

28. There are lot of papers and articles on the links of the Aegean Sea with Egypt. Just on example only: J. Pendlebury, *Archeologiya Krita*, Moscow 1950, pp. 24-24 and further; A. Bartonek, *Zlatoobilnyye Mikeny*, Moscow 1991, p. 175.

phonetic changes in the Greek language from Mycenaean to post-Mycenaean times.<sup>29</sup> Linguistic data can be corroborated by archaeological ones that also bear witness to the ties of Mycenaean Greeks with Byblos.<sup>30</sup> Small wonder that the Greeks of the second millennium B. C. could have borrowed the Egyptian name for the region of Byblos. Indeed, in the tablets written in the linear script B and found in Crete there are the words “po-ni-ki-jo” and “po-ni-ke-ja”. This word could have several meanings but it never had anything to do with purple since in Mycenaean texts purple is called “pu-pu-ro”, or with red colour for that matter because the Mycenaean Greek for red colour is “e-ru-te-ra”. Besides, in two cases this word most likely denoted the ethnic characteristic of a woman, obviously of the owner or a textile-worker of a textile workshop, and this word is identical to a later ethnicon Φοινικηῶ.<sup>31</sup> Thus it may be concluded that as early as the Mycenaean times, the Greeks used the term “Phoenicia” and its derivatives to name both the country and its people. And since the term had no bearing either on purple or red colour, its adoption from Egyptian terminology seems most probable. In the wake of the Egyptians, the Greeks of the second millennium B. C., referred it to the Syro-Phoenician seashore.

In Homer’s poems, the Phoenicians are known to be called Sidonians and this tradition persisted on in antique literature for a long time, but “Phoenicians” were also mentioned there. In the “Iliad” (XXIII, 743-744) we find a description of a silver bowl wrought by Sidonians and brought to Lemnos by Phoenicians. Even more often Phoenicians were mentioned in the “Odyssey”. In the “Iliad”, the Phoenicians are treated in a neutral enough tone, whereas the Sidonians are all but admired for their high craftsmanship and skills. In the “Odyssey”, though, the Phoenicians are characterized in a plainly negative vein.<sup>32</sup> Telling a fictitious tale of his hardships the hero mentions a crafty Phoenician who induced him by a ruse to board his ship allegedly to sail for Phoenicia, but in fact it is in order to sell him into servitude (Od. XIV, 283-297). Somewhat earlier (XIII, 272), a Phoenician vessel is mentioned. The faithful Eumeos in his sad account of how he had become a slave when he was a child, charged the Phoenicians with his woes (XV, 414-484). At the same time Sidonians are also mentioned in the “Odyssey”. Noteworthy is the story of Menelaos about his meetings on the way from Troy, with Cypriots, Phoenicians, Egyptians, Ethiopians, Sidonians and the inhabitants of Libya (IV, 83-85). As in the story of the silver bowl in the “Iliad”, here Phoenicians and Sidonians are mentioned side by side, “in one breath”, so that it becomes clear that for the author (and his listeners) they are two different peoples. And the author is favourably disposed towards the Sidonians throughout his story. In the same tale of his wanderings Menelaos is very proud of a bowl given to him by the Sidonian’s king, the noble Phedymos. It may even be held that in the poems skillful craftsmen (the Sidonians) are opposed to insidious traders and seafarers (the Phoenicians).<sup>33</sup> It is of little significance in this case whether these characteristics were the Mycenaean epoch’s inheritance or whether they emerged in Homer’s time only. What matters is that these two words denote two different ethnics with different ethnic characteristics.

It has been stated previously that the Phoenicians were mentioned already in the Script B tablets. Therefore, their mention in Homer’s epos is not surprising. The case is more complicated with the Sidonians. The common opinion is that this denomination reflected the leading position of Sidon among other Phoenician towns, but the question arises - to what period can this superiority be referred? No extant data can bear out Sidon’s special importance in the second millennium B. C. From a letter of the Tyrian

29. I. M. Diakonoff - N.B. Yankovskaya - V.G. Ardzinba, “Perednyaya Aziya”, in: *Istoriya Drevnego Vostoka*, II,1. Moscow 1988, p. 226.

30. H. L. Lorimer, *Homer and the Monuments*, London 1950, p. 52; H. Mueller-Kape, *Handbuch der Vorgeschichte. Bronzezeit*, Muenchen 1980, p. 754.

31. L. Godart, *op. cit.*, pp. 495-497.

32. J. Latacz, “Die Phönizier bei Homer”, in: *Die Phönizier im Zeitalter Homers*, Mainz 1990, pp. 14-16.

33. *Ibid.*, pp. 11-21.

king Abimilki to the Pharaoh Akhenaton (EA 149) in the fourteenth century B. C. it may be learned that the Tyrians had waged a bloody war against the Sidonians, and that the Sidonian king Zimrida had captured mainland Ushu, thereby severely jeopardizing Tyre: Tyre was deprived of both fresh water supplies and an access to the woods of the Lebanon.<sup>34</sup> Sometimes it is believed that this was the time of Sidon's rise.<sup>35</sup> But from the Tyrian king's letters, it follows that eventually the attack of Sidon was repelled. Even if from its alliance with Amurru, Sidon managed to derive certain benefits, they were not great enough to justify the name of the whole people, including the overwhelming majority outside the Sidonian kingdom, given after one city. Also, the rise of Sidon can hardly be dated from the twelfth-eleventh centuries B. C.<sup>36</sup> True there is a tradition to date the foundation of Tyre by the Sidonians back to the beginning of the twelfth century B. C. (Iust. XVIII, 3, 5; Ios. Ant. Iud. VIII, 3, 1), but this event is usually associated with the destruction of Sidon by the Ascalonites and with the Sidonians' flight from the destroyed city. All these circumstances can scarcely be interpreted as the vindication of Sidon's predominance over the whole of Phoenicia. The only period when Sidon was really the leading city of Phoenicia was the epoch of the Achaemenides,<sup>37</sup> but it fails to explain the mention of the Sidonians by Homer.

Returning to the Bible, in the "Table of Nations", Canaan (Kenaan) is mentioned already as Ham's son (Gen. X, 6), and his first-born son is named Sidon (Gen. X, 15) and then follows a list of Canaan's other children: Heth, Jebusit, Amorit, Girgashit, Hivit, Arkit, Sinnit, Arvadit, Zemarit, Hamathit. All these names are given in the form of the so - called singularis collectivum designating whole ethnic or political units.<sup>38</sup> Into the number of the Hamites, the biblical author includes the people whom he regarded as hostile. In other biblical texts, these people are again described as the ones whom God designed to be exiled by the Israelites (Deut. VII, 1; Jos. III, 10; XXIV, 11; Ne IX, 8). But it should be pointed out that out of eleven peoples, Canaan himself and his ten children, only six are mentioned in these texts (the seventh people - the Peruzzite - was added). Sidonians, Sinnites, Arkites, Arvadites, Zemarites are no doubt generically called "Canaanites". As for the remaining peoples, some are well known (Amorites, for example), while others are still very enigmatic (Peruzzites). We know practically nothing of the Girgashites as an ethnos, but the popularity of the proper name, connected with this ethnonym in the west-Semitic world from Ugarit to Carthage, speaks volumes about firm and sound memories of this people's existence.<sup>39</sup> We know that an alien ethnonym could become a proper name. For instance, we know of such names in Carthage as Mizri (Egypt) or Shardanat (a Sardinian girl).<sup>40</sup> It can hardly be wise to suppose that all the enumerated ethnics were indeed kindred. The author of "Table of Nations" was no specialist, either in ethnology or in linguistics. Here we have to deal with a block of the pre-Israelite population of the Promised Land within the confines of Canaan in the second millennium B. C., as has been established in Numbers XXXIV, 2-12.

On the other hand, some texts in the Bible allow us to consider the Sidonians not only as residents of the city of Sidon. For instance, some deities of Sidon are mentioned (Jud. X, 6; I Reg. XI, 33). They are listed in the ranks of the deities of Aram, Moab, Ammonites, Philistines, i. e. with the gods of whole ethnics, and the Sidonians are another time enumerated together with these same people irrespective of their gods (Jud. X, 11-12; I Reg. XI, 1). Isaiah (XXIII, 2; 4) speaks in his prophecy of Tyre about

34. H. J. Katzenstein, *The History of Tyre*, Jerusalem 1973, p. 63.

35. I. M. Diakonoff - N. B. Yankovskaya - V. G. Ardzinba, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

36. B. Mazar, *The early biblical Period*, Jerusalem 1986, p. 58.

37. D. Harden, *The Phoenicians*, Harmondsworth 1980, pp. 50-51.

38. M. Sznycer, "A propos de l'inscription punique de Carthage CIS I, 4484", *Semitica*, 46 (1996), p. 21.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 19-23.

40. Ju. B. Tsirkin, *Karfagen i ego kultura*, Moscow 1987, p. 132.

merchants of Sidon and about Sidon as the stronghold of the sea. The Book of Judges (XVIII, 27-29) relates the story of Laish, a city that was captured and burned by the Hebrews of Dan's tribe, who later rebuilt the city and called the city Dan after their father. One of the reasons why it was so easy to seize this city is, as the Bible states, that it was far from Sidon. There is no evidence that the city of Sidon was so inimical to the Israelites at that time, so that most likely the word "Sidon" is here used to mean the country peopled by the Sidonians. Certainly, the Bible mentions Sidon many a time as an important city, but of greater consequence is a more general interpretation of this toponym.

Coming back to the "Table of Nations" we find among Canaan's sons, besides Sidon, the inhabitants of Irqata, Siyannu, Arvad, Sumur and Hamath. Irqata, Arvad and Sumur were situated in Northern Phoenicia and were mentioned many times during the second millennium B. C. Siyannu was situated more to the north and belonged to Ugarit for a long period of time and was later disjoined from it by the Hittite king Mursilis II in the latter part of the fourteenth century B. C.<sup>41</sup> Hamath lay in the middle Orontes valley and was a significant centre of commerce and politics; this kingdom played an important role at the beginning of the first millennium B. C.<sup>42</sup> Byblos and Tyre are repeatedly mentioned in the Bible. The Hebrew kings David and Solomon maintained with Tyre not just inter-allied, but even friendly relations. Later, these relations worsened and during the reign of the Israelite king Ahab who was married to the Tyrian princess Jesebel, everything of Tyre seemed extremely inimical and hostile both to the opposition circles and common people of the kingdom. A similar animosity can be felt in the prophecies of some prophets, as for instance, Isaiah and Ezekiel. But in any case, Tyre meant much to the Hebrews. Is it not strange that this city is not included in the "Table of Nations"?

The First Book of Kings (XVI, 31) calls Ahab's father-in-law Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians. Menander of Ephesus drawing upon the Phoenician sources included this Ethbaal into the catalogue of Tyrian kings (Ios. Contra App. I, 18). The vicegerent of the Tyrian king Hiram II at Cyprian Carthage called himself a slave of the Sidonians' king (KAI 31). Some time before that, Solomon had begged the Tyrian king Hiram I to allow his slaves, together with the slaves of the Jerusalem king, to cut down some cedar trees for a temple because there were no wood cutters like the Sidonians (I Reg. V, 6). For many years in his relations with the outer world, the Tyrian king acted as the king of Sidon<sup>43</sup> and the Tyrian king's subjects (Hiram's slaves) were called Sidonians.

Some unity between Tyre and Sidon has long since been suspected. In the Ugaritic poem about Karatu (KTU 1.14. IV. 34-39), Athiratu of Tyre, goddess of the Sidonians, is described. The poem was written down in the fourteenth century B. C., but compiled much earlier,<sup>44</sup> most probably in the second half of the third millennium B. C.<sup>45</sup> Even at that remote time Sidon and Tyre were considered jointly by the inhabitants of Ugarit (or rather by their forefathers), for the two cities had one sanctuary of the goddess who patronized them both.

All this leads to the conclusion that "Sidon" rather often means not a concrete city or state (a city-state) but the whole of Southern Phoenicia, including Tyre and its kingdom.<sup>46</sup> The residents in this region of Phoenicia are called Sidonians. Justinus (XVIII, 3, 2-5) describing the foundation of Sidon stresses that the city owes its name to the profusion of fish and researchers of today agree that it is quite possible to

41. W. Helck, *op. cit.*, p. 519.

42. H. Klengel, *Geschichte und Kultur Altsyriens*, Leipzig 1979, pp. 179, 181.

43. H. L. Katzenstein, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-132; D. Harden, *op. cit.*, p. 49; G. Kestemont, "Tyre et les Assyriens", *Studia Phoenicia*, Leuven 1983, p. 57.

44. H. L. Katzenstein, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

45. I. Sch. Schiffmann, *Ugaritskiy epos*, Moscow 1993, p. 12.

46. Cf. G. Bunnens, *L'expansion phénicienne en Méditerranée*, Bruxelles-Rome 1979, pp. 296-299.



interpret the term "Sidon" in this way.<sup>47</sup> But it seems more feasible to associate the name "Sidon" with the god Sid.<sup>48</sup> Malalas (Chron III, 69) retold a legend, somewhat corrupted, from the Phoenician sources<sup>49</sup> according to which Sid was Egypt's son who founded Sidon in Abraham's times. In this context it is a country rather than a city.

If we understand Sidon as Southern Phoenicia and Sidonians as its residents, it becomes easier to explain the difference between the Sidonians and the Phoenicians which (as we have mentioned earlier) is testified by Homer's poems. In the Greek texts of the second millennium B. C., as has been shown, the Phoenicians are undeniably mentioned, whereas no mentions of the Sidonians have yet been found. But the Greeks of that epoch were no doubt familiar not only with Byblos, but also with Sidon and Tyre, as linguistic data particularly shows.<sup>50</sup> Then the Greeks must have made distinctions between the inhabitants of Northern Phoenicia which they called Phoenicia, and Southern Phoenicia called Sidon. Sometimes it is maintained that originally the Greeks called Phoenicians all peoples of the Syro-Palestinian region (the Levant) without much distinction and it was much later (in the work of Hekataios at the earliest) that this name came to be used to mean only Phoenicians as such.<sup>51</sup> As we see it, it was just the other way round; since the Mycenaean times the Greeks named Phoenicians exclusively the people of Northern Phoenicia (approximately the region of Byblos) and only as a result of their more substantial acquaintance with them, after having built their own settlements on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean, the Greeks became aware of the ethnic unity of the whole of Phoenicia and spread the name over the whole country, reserving the term "Sidonians" for poetry. Now and then, though, historians also used this term to mean Phoenicians in general.

To sum up, it may be assumed that the Phoenicians regarded themselves as Canaanites. The Egyptians called some of them Fenkhu, whence the Greeks adopted the denomination "Phoenicians" and much later even coined their own eponym Phoinix. Originally the Greeks applied this name only to the northern part of Phoenicia. Its southern part, we believe, was called Sidon, the way it was called by the Greeks and the Phoenicians' Asiatic neighbours.

[Translated from the Russian by L. Chistonogova]

47. E. g. I. Sch. Schiffmann, "Finikiyskaya istoricheskaya tradiciya v grecheskoy i rimskoy istoriografii", in: *Drevniy Vostok i mirivaya kultura*, Moscow 1981, p. 104.

48. *Ibid.*

49. S. Ribichini, "Una tradizione sul fenico Sid", *RSF* 10,2 (1982), p. 174.

50. I. Sch. Schiffmann, *Vozniknoveniye Karfagenskoy derzavy*, Moscow-Leningrad 1963, pp. 13-14.

51. F. Mazza, "Civiltà fenicia e fonti classiche", in: *I Fenici: ieri, oggi, domani*, Roma 1995, p. 79.