

Moses and the Exodus: what evidence?

Abstract. To be or not to be is a crucial question regarding Moses as well as the Exodus because, according to the Bible, the character related to that famous event forms the basis of the Passover which meant the Promised Land for Jews and later the Paradise for Christians. However, according to most Egyptologists, there is absolutely no evidence of Moses and the Exodus in Egyptian documents, which leads them to conclude that the whole biblical story is a myth written for gullible people. Ironically, if one considers that “truth” must be based on two pillars: an accurate chronology anchored on absolute dates (Herodotus’ principle) and reliable documents coming from critical editions (Thucydides’ principle), that implies an amazing conclusion: those who believe Egyptologists are actually the real gullible ones. According to Egyptian accounts the last king of the XVth dynasty, named Apopi, “very pretty” in Hebrew that is Moses’ birth name (Ex 2:2), reigned 40 years in Egypt from 1613 to 1573 BCE, then 40 years later he met Segenenre Taa the last pharaoh of the XVIIth dynasty and gave him an unspecified disturbing message. The eldest son of Segenenre Taa, Ahmose Sapaïr, who was crown prince died in a dramatic and unexplained way shortly before his father. Segenenre Taa died in May 1533 BCE, after 11 years of reign, in dramatic and unclear circumstances. The state of his mummy proves, however, that his body received severe injuries, in agreement with Psalms 136:15, and remained abandoned for several days before being mummified. Prince Kamose, Segenenre Taa’s brother, assured interim of authority for 3 years and threatened attack the former pharaoh Apopi, new prince of Retenu (Palestine) who took the name Moses, according to Manetho (280 BCE), an Egyptian priest and historian. In the stele of the Tempest, Kamose also blames Apopi for all the disasters that come to fall upon Egypt, which caused many deaths.

Before answering the question “what evidence of Moses’ existence”, it is necessary to define what is evidence. For example “did Jesus exist?” because most testimonies come from the New Testament, a religious book. Some atheists refuse to take into account the Bible because that book states clearly the existence of God as well as miracles. However, in my opinion, searching the truth must be the fundamental purpose of any honest historian. “What is truth” Pilate said to Jesus (Jn 18:38). For honest and scientific historians, “truth” is based on two main pillars: 1) an accurate chronology anchored on absolute dates (Herodotus’ principle) and 2) reliable documents coming from critical editions (Thucydides’ principle). If we apply these two principles, Jesus existed because he died on Friday 3 April 33 CE around 3 hours before a moon eclipse (Ac 2:20) and the Jews who put him to death have never denied even his claim to be the Messiah (BT Sanhedrin 43a).

The existence of Moses, and consequently the Exodus, began to be challenged when Egyptologists began publishing articles, mainly from 1980¹, to prove that the text of the Old Testament should be considered without historical value. It is to be noted that the more these academics are close to political power (which is today in France proudly atheist) the more their attacks (in French) against the Bible are virulent and ideological:

➤ *It is absurd on the one hand, taking the biblical text for a historical document, on the other hand reversing the importance of protagonists: Israel is mentioned only once on a stele of Merneptah while the word Egypt is used 680 times in the Bible (...) The references to Egypt in the Bible are mainly used to feed the internal history of the Hebrews, giving a vague backdrop for some episodes, and are unrelated with current history teaching². Christiane Desroches Noblecourt (1913-2011), was an Egyptologist, Emeritus Chief Curator of Egyptian Antiquities (Louvre) and former professor of archaeology at the Ecole du Louvre.*

¹ J.K. HOFFMEIER – Israel in Egypt. The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition
New York 1996 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 3-5.

² C. DESROCHES NOBLECOURT - Symboles de l'Égypte
Paris 2004 Éd. Desclée de Brouwer pp. 125-126.

- *As the history of unclean ones is devoid of any historical basis it is difficult to agree with Manetho and Josephus that the forcibly expelling from Avaris by Pharaoh and his congeners is the same event as the liberation of the Hebrews taken out by Moses with God's help ... The gross invention of Egyptian scribes, worthy of the trashcan, can not remain in the folder of historians of Bible times (...) The apologetical travesty imagined by Josephus is not better than the libelous travesty of the Egyptian priest³. Jean Yoyotte (1927-2009) was an Egyptologist, Chairholder of Egyptology at the Collège de France and director of studies at the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes.*
- *In general, no serious archaeologist believes today that the events described in the Book of Joshua have any accurate historical basis. Archaeological surveys in the early 1990s, in particular, showed that the Israelite culture emerged in the central hills of the country, in continuity with the Canaanite culture of the previous period⁴. Pierre de Miroschedji, archaeologist, director of research at CNRS.*
- *The departure from Egypt, known as the Exodus, is an essential vicissitude of this story [Exodus 13:14] (...) We almost forget one fundamental fact: nothing in the present state of Egyptian literature, more or less contemporary with these events, confirms this story, or even alluded, only fleetingly, to one of the episodes where some characters are mentioned. Nothing⁵ Alain Zivie, Egyptologist, Director of Research at Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique.*
- *Most historians take the biblical text of the conquest of Canaan for a pious legend, a reinterpretation of ideological and theological origins of Israel (...) These cities are, according to the Bible, heavily fortified. But archaeological excavations reveal otherwise. So today, excavations of Canaanite cities and reading of tablets from Tell el-Amarna showed that the victories of Joshua took place only on paper. To conclude: "There has been no mass exodus from Egypt. Canaan was not conquered by violence⁶." Richard Lebeau, Egyptologist, historian of religions in the ancient Near East.*
- *Modern archaeology has shown that the concept of archives kept in Jerusalem with writings of the tenth century, is an absurdity based on a biblical witness and not on factual evidence. Bible stories would rank therefore among national mythologies, and would have no more historical foundation than the Homeric saga of Ulysses, or that of Aeneas, founder of Rome, sung by Virgil⁷. Israel Finkelstein, Israeli archaeologist, Director of the Institute of Archaeology of Tel Aviv University, author of the famous book The Bible Unearthed.*
- *How should ultimately consider the source that is the biblical text to serve as a gateway for talking about people of the Bible? (...) There are so many layers of myths, they should not be taken for historical narratives. The Exodus, episode presented in college history books as a real historic event, provides a good illustration. According to the Bible (...) this is the long journey of the Hebrews from Egypt and Canaan which is called the Exodus. However, it is highly unlikely that such an event ever took place. The first reason to doubt results from the considerable chronological gap between the time of writing from books that mention it and the supposed date of the event, clearly located in a mythical past. The second reason is the absence of any explicit data in the biblical text to place Exodus in time and to follow it in space, so the name of the Pharaoh is not given. The third reason is the silence of the Egyptian sources. A final argument is the absence of any reference to the Exodus in the oldest strata of the Bible⁸.*

³ J. YOYOTTE – En Égypte, le faux mystère des dynasties hyksos
in: *Le monde de la Bible* n°146 (novembre 2002) pp. 44-45.

⁴ P. DE MIROSCHEDJI – Les archéologues réécrivent la Bible
in: *La Recherche* n°391 (novembre 2005) p. 32.

⁵ A. ZIVIE – Les Hébreux en Égypte: réalités et fantasmes
in: *Historia* n°698 (février 2005) p. 59.

⁶ R. LEBEAU – La Terre promise était acquise
in: *Historia* n°698 (février 2005) pp. 64, 65.

R. LEBEAU – L'Exode une fiction théologique
in: *Histoire Antique* n°41 (février 2009) p. 79.

⁷ I. FINKELSTEIN – Le grand roi? Rien qu'un potentat local
in: *Historia* n°698 (février 2005) p. 73.

I. FINKELSTEIN, N.A. SILBERMAN - La Bible dévoilée
Paris 2002 Éd. Bayard pp. 51-53.

⁸ C. ROBIN – Les peuples de la Bible quelle(s) lecture(s) ?
in: *Les Cahiers de Science&Vie* n°89 (octobre 2005) pp. 6-8.

Christian Robin, Director of the Laboratory of ancient Semitic Studies (Collège de France Paris IV Sorbonne), member of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres.

- *The biblical writers and editors had some genuine sources, but they did not hesitate to manipulate them. They did this not only with exaggerations and embellishments, but also with additions and even outright inventions, in order to make the stories serve their own ideological agenda. In this regard, they were like most ancient historians. Nevertheless, they still need not be regarded as charlatans, even though their view of history was naive. They, too, thought that they were telling the operative truth — that is, they were simply writing well-intentioned propaganda. This may be called “historicized myth,” and that is how much of modern, liberal, critical scholarship regards the Hebrew Bible. Nevertheless, even propaganda and myth, like caricature, must necessarily contain some objective truths, lest they be completely unbelievable and thus ineffective (...) Rather than attempt to defend the factual historicity of the Exodus traditions, I suggest that we must understand the Exodus story precisely as a myth, specifically as a “metaphor for liberation”. William G. Dever, American archaeologist (University of Arizona), specialist and defender (sic) of the history of biblical Israel⁹.*
- *Stories and history (...) It would be absurd requesting the rigor that would use a modern historian (...), although we can not specify the contours in the mythical garment that has been given, in accordance with the mentality of the time and the environment (...) For the date of the Exodus, we can not rely on chronological indications of 1 K 6:1 and Jg 11:26, which are secondary and derived from artificial computations (...) Certainly neither the apostles nor other evangelical preachers and storytellers have tried to make « history » in the technical sense of the word, their purpose was less profane and more theological. Jerusalem Bible (Paris 1986 Ed. Cerf pp. 27, 1410), which is the official Bible of the Catholic world.*

An objective reader should note that most reasons put forward by these prestigious scholars are ideological, not based on any verifiable factual data: *absurd, no serious archaeologist believes that the events described in the book of Joshua; worthy of the trashcan, fundamental fact: nothing, pious legend, there was no mass exodus from Egypt; nonsense based on a biblical witness; very type of myth, history does not support the amazing and miraculous story of Exodus, etc.* Some of these scholars, in order to prove their claims, quote the work of the archaeologist Finkelstein explaining¹⁰: *The main problem was that the scholars who accepted the biblical accounts as reliable mistakenly believed that the patriarchal age must be seen, one way or the other, as the earliest phase in a sequential history of Israel. Some Telltale Anachronisms: The critical textual scholars who had identified distinct sources underlying the text of Genesis insisted that the patriarchal narratives were put into writing at a relatively late date, at the time of the monarchy (tenth-eighth centuries BCE) or even later, in exilic and post-exilic days (sixth-fifth centuries BCE). The German biblical scholar Julius Wellhausen argued that the stories of the patriarchs in both the J and E documents reflected the concerns of the later Israelite monarchy, which were projected onto the lives of legendary fathers in a largely mythical past. The biblical stories should thus be regarded as a national mythology with no more historical basis than the Homeric saga of Odysseus's travels or Virgil's saga of Aeneas's founding of Rome. In more recent decades, the American biblical scholars John Van Seters and Thomas Thompson further challenged the supposed archaeological evidence for the historical patriarchs in the second millennium BCE. They argued that even if the later texts contained some early traditions, the selection and arrangement of stories expressed a clear message by the biblical editors at the time of compilation, rather than preserving a reliable historical account. But when did that compilation take place? The biblical text reveals some clear clues that can narrow down the time of its final composition. Take the repeated mention of camels, for instance. The stories of the patriarchs are packed with camels, usually herds of camels; but as in the story of Joseph's sale by his brothers into slavery (Gn 37:25), camels are also described as beasts of burden used in caravan trade. We now know through*

⁹ W.G. DEVER – Who Were the Early Israelites and Where Did They Come From?

Grand Rapids 2003 Ed. Eerdmans Publishing pp. 226,233.

¹⁰ I. FINKELSTEIN, N.A. SILBERMAN -The Bible Unearthed: Archaeology's New Vision of Ancient Israel and the Origin of Sacred Texts New York 2001 Ed. The Free Press pp. 36-38.

archaeological research that camels were not domesticated as beasts of burden earlier than the late second millennium and were not widely used in that capacity in the ancient Near East until well after 1000 BCE. And an even more telling detail —the camel caravan carrying "gum, balm, and myrrh," in the Joseph story— reveals an obvious familiarity with the main products of the lucrative Arabian trade that flourished under the supervision of the Assyrian empire in the eighth-seventh centuries BCE. Then there is the issue of the Philistines. We hear of them in connection with Isaac's encounter with "Abimelech, king of the Philistines," at the city of Gerar (Gn 26:1). The Philistines, a group of migrants from the Aegean or eastern Mediterranean, had not established their settlements along the coastal plain of Canaan until sometime after 1200 BCE. Their cities prospered in the eleventh and tenth centuries and continued to dominate the area well into the Assyrian period. The mention of Gerar as a Philistine city in the narratives of Isaac and the mention of the city (without the Philistine attribution) in the stories of Abraham (Gn 20:1) suggest that it had a special importance or at least was widely known at the time of the composition of the patriarchal narratives. Gerar is today identified with Tel Haror northwest of Beersheba, and excavations there have shown that in the Iron Age I —the early phase of Philistine history— it was no more than a small, quite insignificant village. But by the late eighth and seventh century BCE, it had become a strong, heavily fortified Assyrian administrative stronghold in the south, an obvious landmark. Were these incongruous details merely late insertions into early traditions or were they indications that both the details and the narrative were late? Many scholars —particularly those who supported the idea of the "historical" patriarchs —considered them to be incidental details. But as Thomas Thompson put it as early as the 1970s, the specific references in the text to cities, neighbouring peoples, and familiar places are precisely those aspects that distinguish the patriarchal stories from completely mythical folk-tales. They are crucially important for identifying the date and message of the text. In other words, the "anachronisms" are far more important for dating and understanding the meaning and historical context of the stories of the patriarchs than the search for ancient Bedouin or mathematical calculations of the patriarchs' ages and genealogies. So the combination of camels, Arabian goods, Philistines, and Gerar—as well as other places and nations mentioned in the patriarchal stories in Genesis —are highly significant. All the clues point to a time of composition many centuries after the time in which the Bible reports the lives of the patriarchs took place. These and other anachronisms suggest an intensive period of writing the patriarchal narratives in the eighth and seventh centuries BCE. According to Finkelstein, Moses had little or nothing to do with the writing of the book of the Pentateuch.

Critics of Finkelstein against the Pentateuch are all based on an absence of evidence that would be evidence of the absence and his statement that, according to the documentary hypothesis, there would never have been any biblical writing in the time of Moses is simply false. The Amarna letters (on clay tablets in cuneiform), which are mostly diplomatic correspondence between the Egyptian administration and its representatives in Canaan and Amurru (dated 14th century BCE) have shown that the scribes of Canaan knew writing because these letters are written primarily in Akkadian (in fact Babylonian Standard), the regional language of diplomacy for this period, with marginal notes in Ancient Canaanite, their mother tongue. For archaeologists, Moses could not have written the Pentateuch because the paleo-Hebrew only appeared after circa 1050 BCE¹¹, at Byblos, and scribal schools in Palestine only began to exist circa 800 BCE¹². According to Finkelstein¹³: *Modern archaeology has shown that the concept of archives kept in Jerusalem with writings of the tenth century, is an absurdity based on a biblical witness and not on factual evidence. Bible stories*

¹¹ J.F. HEALEY – Consolidation de l'alphabet et extension vers l'Ouest

in: La naissance des écritures du cunéiforme à l'alphabet (Seuil, 1994), pp. 281-284.

¹² D.W. JAMIESON-DRAKE – Scribes and Schools in Monarchic Judah: A Socio-Archaeological Approach
Sheffield 1991, Ed. Sheffield University Press pp. 11-47.

¹³ I. FINKELSTEIN – Le grand roi? Rien qu'un potentat local

in: *Historia* n°698 (février 2005) p. 73.

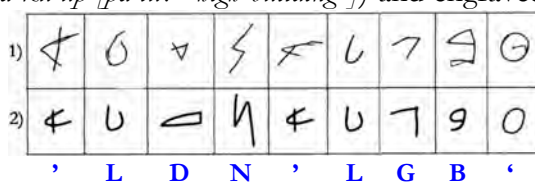
I. FINKELSTEIN, N.A. SILBERMAN - La Bible dévoilée
Paris 2002 Éd. Bayard pp. 51-53.

would rank therefore among national mythologies, and would have no more historical foundation than Homeric saga of Ulysses, or that of Aeneas, founder of Rome, sung by Virgil. These statements and these dates are historically grotesque since these authors are well aware that the Semites who came from Egypt and lived in Palestine knew the old writing called proto-Canaanite¹⁴, the ancestor of Old Hebrew. For example, several inscriptions in proto-Canaanite have been discovered in Egypt (Serabit el-Khadim in Sinai and Wadi el-Hôl¹⁵ north of Thebes) and in Palestine (Lachish, Gezer and Shechem). These inscriptions are difficult to date, between 1850 and 1500 BCE for Serabit el-Khadim and 1600-1500 for those in Palestine.

The spelling of the name of Canaanite cities in execration texts¹⁶ (dated c. 1950 BCE)¹⁷, founded on shards and figurines, is variable¹⁸ but their meaning is clearly Hebrew:

| City | | Hebrew | meaning | City | | Hebrew | meaning |
|----------------------|------------|------------|----------------------|----------------------|--------------|-------------|------------------------|
| <i>I-s-q-3-i</i> | Asqalu[na] | Ashkalon | <i>Migration?</i> | <i>I-p-w-m</i> | Apûm | Hobah | <i>Hiding place</i> |
| <i>M-‘-k-t-r-y</i> | M’aktoley | Migdol | <i>Tower</i> | <i>D-w-3-w-y</i> | Djûrûy | Tyre | <i>Rock</i> |
| <i>S-k-m-i-m</i> | Sekemim | Shechem | <i>Shoulder</i> | <i>M-k-ti</i> | Meketa | Megiddo | <i>Place of troops</i> |
| <i>I-p-q-w-m</i> | Apeqûm | Aphek | <i>Strength</i> | <i>3w-w-3-3-m-m</i> | [U]rûshalmum | Jerusalem | <i>City completed</i> |
| <i>M-‘-š-i-3</i> | Ma’shal | Mishal | <i>Prayer</i> | <i>I-b-w-3-m</i> | Abûlum | Abel | <i>Meadow</i> |
| <i>i-3-h-b-w-m</i> | aRehobûm | Rehob | <i>Open place</i> | <i>‘-3-q-t-m</i> | ‘Arqatum | Arqat | <i>Earth</i> |
| <i>H-d-w-i-3-i</i> | Hadjûre | Hazor | <i>Castle</i> | <i>Q-3-q-3-m</i> | Qarqarum | Qarqar | <i>Soft ground?</i> |
| <i>B-q-‘-t-m</i> | Beq’atum | Beqa | <i>Valley</i> | <i>‘-q-3-i</i> | Aqere[n] | Ekron | <i>Eradication</i> |
| <i>-s-[ti]-3-t-m</i> | As[t]artum | ‘Ashtaroth | <i>Ishtar(s)</i> | <i>b-w-t-š-m-š-w</i> | Bûtshemeshû | Bet-Shemesh | <i>House of Sun</i> |
| <i>Q-n-i</i> | Qena | Kanah | <i>Place of reed</i> | <i>‘-3-m-w</i> | Aram-û | Arameans | <i>High region</i> |

The oldest epigraph in paleo-Hebrew is dated 1550-1480¹⁹. One has to notice (below) that this latter example comes from a professional scribe who inscribed his name in cuneiform: *Ali-dîn-ili of Kup[patu?]* (*a-lî-di-in-î-lî ša ku-up-[pa-tu? “high building”]*) and engraved it in paleo-Hebrew on the edge of the tablet as: ‘LDN’L GB’ (*Aldinel of Gaba “hill?”*). This paleo-Hebrew script is close to that yet much later (c. 950 BCE) found at Tel Zayit²⁰.



From its discovery (in 2005) the Tel Zayit Abecedary served as evidence supporting the notion of widespread literacy in ancient Israel during the 10th century²¹ for two reasons: 1) the increasing number of paleo-Hebrew inscriptions discovered in the period dated 1100-1000 BCE (at least 6) and 2) the regularity of writing of these inscriptions that is possible only if there were schools of scribes²². Some schools of scribes had likely been organized by King David because it is from his reign that appear king's secretaries²³. David himself was able to write a letter to Joab, his chief of the army (2Sa 11:14-15). Writing was

¹⁴ A. LEMAIRE – Les «Hyksos» et les débuts de l'écriture alphabétique au Proche-Orient in: Des signes pictographiques à l'alphabet (Karthala, 2000) pp.103-133.

¹⁵ J. COLEMAN DARNELL, F.W. DOBBS-ALLSOPP, M.J. LUNDBERG, P. KYLE MCCARTER, B. ZUCKERMAN – Two Early Alphabetic Inscriptions from the Wadi el-Hôl in: *The Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 59 (2005), pp. 73-110.

¹⁶ R. DUSSEAUD – Nouveaux textes égyptiens d'exécration contre les peuples syriens in: *Syria* 21:2 (Persee, 1940) pp. 170-182.

¹⁷ They are transcribed with early Old Babylonian features, especially the mimation as the final *m* that appears on all singular, feminine plural nouns and on the dative pronouns, was lost quite early in the Old Babylonian period, probably after the collapse of Ur.

¹⁸ The Egyptian letter "3" was frequently used, at that time, for rendering the Canaanite letters "l" or "r" (J. BRIEND, M.-J. SEUX – Textes du Proche-Orient ancien et histoire d'Israël. Paris 1977 Éd. Cerf pp. 30-36).

¹⁹ S. DALLEY – Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection in: *Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology* Vol. 9 (CDL Press, 2009) pp. 1-16, 112, plates LIII, CLIV.

²⁰ L. COLONNA D'ISTRIA – Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection in: *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* N°3 (2012) pp. 61-63.

²¹ C.A. ROLLSTON – The Phoenician Script of the Tel Zayit Abecedary and Putative Evidence for Israelite Literacy in: *Literate Culture and Tenth-Century Canaan: The Tel Zayit Abecedary in Context* (Eisenbrauns, 2008), pp. 61-96.

²² D.M. CARR – The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction 2011 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 360-385.

²³ As Shavsha (1Ch 18:16), Sherayah (2Sa 8:17), Shisha (1Ki 4:3), Sheva (2Sa 20:25), Elihoreph and Ahijah (1Ki 4:3).

so widespread at his time that King Solomon warns: *As regards anything besides these, my son, take a warning: To the making of many books there is no end, and much devotion [to them] is wearisome to the flesh* (Ec 12:12). The findings about schools of scribes during the 10th century are interesting (but recent) as they show the stupidity of Finkelstein's claims, however these paleographers continue teaching that the documents in paleo-Hebrew prior to 1100 BCE did not exist and that the references to this writing at the time of Moses (Dt 31:24, Jos 1:8; 10:13) are not credible. However, as explained the Bible d'Alexandrie in its note on Judges 5:14²⁴ which mentions some enumerator scribes, without such professional these major censuses (as those quoted in Numbers 1:1-19, 20:2-63) would have been impossible to perform. There were not only professional scribes who could write because even a young man (anonymous) at the time of Gideon (1299-1259) was able to write 77 names (Jg 8:14).

Denigration of biblical texts by archaeologists is based primarily on the following fallacy: "*the current lack of archaeological evidence is evidence of the lack of historical evidence*". It is important to understand why this reasoning (mainly from 1970)²⁵ is false because it is the "cornerstone" of archaeologists whereas for historians today it is the testimony of early historians. First, one must know that the complete disappearance of past things, including some impressive buildings of stone, is the rule and not the exception, even the main capital of the first empire of Akkad (Aggad) has still not been found. Major periods of history, like the one that followed the attack of the Peoples of the Sea and lasted 400 years (1150-750) are called "Dark Ages" because they are completely empty of written documents. The kings of the Elamite empire, for example, "disappear" completely out of the history for more than three centuries (1100-770) and although the Etruscan civilization is newer and has prospered from 750 to 300 BCE we do not have any literature. Indeed, there is currently no document datable from the period of the Judges (1500-1000) but it should be noted, by way of comparison, that the famous Kassite dynasty, which also lasted five centuries (1650-1150), left no text and yet it was far more powerful than the Jewish jurisdiction. How can one explain that a known writing could disappear for several centuries without leaving any archaeological trace. For example, the Elamite cuneiform was used from 22nd to 4th centuries BCE²⁶ but its disappearance during the period 1100-770 BCE was caused by a massive arrival of Indo-Aryan tribes which upset the Elamite empire leading to a relocation of its capital at Susa²⁷ (instead of Anshan). It is obvious that the Elamite writing did not disappear but as chancelleries ceased to produce documents in large quantities, due to disturbances in the empire, the number of documents of this period that have survived today has decreased drastically to reach virtually zero (the proportion of contemporaneous documents that are found is probably less than one in a thousand)²⁸. For the same reasons when the Babylonian empire was destroyed by the Hittites (in 1499 BCE) it was replaced by a small provincial Kassite kingdom without Chancery, and therefore without written documents (we know Kassite kings only through later Babylonian scribes). The appearance of a writing is in fact closely linked to the activities of a Chancery. A second factor has played a significant role (poorly known): the perishable nature (or not) of support.

Two well-known writings, Egyptian hieroglyph and Babylonian cuneiform, allow one to understand the role of chancelleries and support of scriptures. The Babylonian

²⁴ P. HARLÉ, T. ROQUEPLO – Bible d'Alexandrie LXX 7. Les Juges
Paris 1999 Éd. Cerf pp. 121-122.

²⁵ P. COURBIN – Qu'est-ce que l'archéologie?
Paris 1982 Éd. Payot pp. 121-220.

²⁶ F. GRILLOT-SUSINI – L'Élamite. Éléments de grammaire
Paris 2008 Éd. Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner p. 9.

²⁷ F. JOANNÈS – Dictionnaire de la civilisation mésopotamienne
Paris 2001 Éd. Robert Laffont pp. 272-276.

²⁸ Thus most ancient writers are not known anymore, except sometimes their names, because their works were now lost. Josephus, for example, cites many former authors who then fell into anonymity.

cuneiform writing is particularly well suited to clay tablets which have the property of not being perishable. However, although the first Sumerian dynasty of Kish I (beginning c. 2800 BCE) preceded the Akkadian dynasty of Uruk I (beginning c. 2500 BCE) the first cuneiform inscription « *Me-bara[ge]-si, king [of Ki]sb*²⁹ » appears only from the 22nd king of Kish I, called Me-barage-si (2500-2485) who was a contemporary of the first king of Uruk I called Mes-ki'aggašer (2496-2490). Some tablets dated stratigraphically prior -2500 are only accounting documents (i.e. inventories or lists of offerings). According to Berossus³⁰, a Babylonian priest (c. 280 BCE): *At the beginning of the reign of Alorus [supposed to be the first Mesopotamian king] Oannes [Adapa] emerged from the Persian Gulf and taught the skills needed to write and calculate and for all kinds of knowledge: how to build cities, to found temples and make laws, and the epic Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta reads: Because the messenger's mouth was too "heavy" and he could not repeat (the message), the lord of Kullab [En-merkar] modeled clay and made to stand as a word on a shelf. Before that day, it was not possible to fit the words into the clay. But then when the sun came up that day, it was done: the lord of Kullab words did stand on a shelf—it was done!* In fact, these two quotes are complementary since En-merkar (2490-2483), who is presented as the 1st writer just prior to the 5th king of Uruk I, Gilgamesh (2461-2401), was actually the 2nd king of Uruk I. Cuneiform writing appears therefore at the same time as the first Akkadian chancellery. The Sumerian chancellery had to exist, otherwise we would not know the first royal list with the names and durations of reign of the 21 kings before En-Mebaragesi, but this chancery had not to establish diplomatic ties with other cities. The Egyptian hieroglyphic writing is particularly well suited to papyrus which have the property of being perishable except in Egypt (and around the Dead Sea) because of very low humidity. The first hieroglyphs appear on some label indicating the name of the 1st Dynasty pharaohs and some words in hieratic appear on ostraca of the 3rd Dynasty. Then at the end of the 5th Dynasty, appear the first texts in hieratic (Djedkarâ Isesi) and hieroglyphic (pyramid of Unas). As livestock censuses began in the early dynasties (beginning c. 2800 BCE), Egyptian chancelleries had to be operational from that time.

The emergence of foreign writing in Near Eastern kingdoms is more complicated to date for at least 3 reasons: 1) their chancelleries were much smaller than those of Egyptian and Babylonian empires (even the chancelleries of the Elamite Empire adopted the Babylonian cuneiform, from Sargon of Akkad, to record their language. It was not anymore the native language of Canaanite scribes³¹), 2) the language used by these chancelleries was the standard Babylonian written on tablets from the reign of Hammurabi (1697-1654) and 3) the support of writing used by most countries for their own language, like Aramaic (Syrian states) or Old Canaanite (Phoenician states), was papyrus and parchment which do not keep long in these regions. The Assyrian Empire is a good example of this complexity. From Tiglat-pileser I (1115-1076) who made vassal several Phoenician states, Assyrian chancelleries adopted Aramaic as a second diplomatic language beside Babylonian. Clay tablets were used for writing cuneiform (mainly Babylonian and Assyrian languages) and scrolls for Aramaic (language of the rest of the empire). These scribes³² were called in Akkadian *ṭupšarru*, from the Sumerian word DUB-SAR "tablet-write," and *sep̄ru*, translating the Sumerian KUŠ-SAR "skin-write".

²⁹ E. SOLLBERGER, J.-R. KUPPER – *Inscriptions royales sumériennes et akkadiennes* Paris 1971 Éd. Cerf pp. 39-40, 130-131.

R.J. TOURNAY, A. SHAFER – *L'épopée de Gilgamesh* Paris 1994 Éd. Cerf pp. 7-10.

³⁰ D. CHARPIN – *Lire et écrire à Babylone* Paris 2008 Éd. PUF pp. 17-41.

³¹ A. LEMAIRE – *La diffusion de l'alphabet dans le bassin méditerranéen* in: *Langues et écritures de la Méditerranée* (Éd. Khartala, 2006) pp. 200-201.

³² F. JOANNÈS – *Dictionnaire de la civilisation mésopotamienne* Paris 2001 Éd. Robert Laffont pp. 763-766.

The Assyrian scribes are rarely represented³³ (first time around 800 BCE)³⁴, but always by two: one with a tablet and stylus and the other with a parchment and quill (see opposite figure). Despite the indirect evidence of the existence of Assyrian archives on parchment none of these documents has yet been found. Achaemenid archives have the same problem. According to Diodorus, Ctesias, who lived in the time of Artaxerxes II, was said to have drawn his information from past events, and laws, which were recorded by Persians on royal parchments (Historical Library II:32) that confirms the Bible (Est 6:1-2, 10:2). Indeed, it seems that from the year 27 of Darius, after his trip to Egypt, the Achaemenid administration has adopted the use of Egyptian papyrus for writing their documents (to the detriment of tablets) because after the writing of a digest of the Egyptian legal system (Book of Ordinances) in the year 19 of Darius, then (year 27) an *addendum* was written in Aramaic on papyrus and in documentary writing (on tablets?). Thus, the archives (non-perishable) from major temples cease at the end of the reign of Darius and it's the same with most of the private archives of Babylon's region³⁵. In fact, if the archives of the great temples fall drastically from 495 BCE it is perhaps due to a centralization ordered by the palaces of Susa and Persepolis. However, the palace of Persepolis was burned and destroyed by Alexander the Great and the excavations at Susa have delivered so far no archive of the Achaemenid period³⁶. Both phenomena, local government reorganization and increasing of Aramaic influence on Babylonian population were likely overlapping. So although the Assyrian and Achaemenid Empire had possessed annals on parchment in Aramaic, there remains nothing. Archaeologists concluded (obviously) that these records on parchment never existed.



According to archaeology the oldest traces of Phoenician script appear on the sarcophagus of Ahiiram in Byblos (dated 1000 BCE). But the story of Wenamun³⁷, dated year 5 of Smendes (1090-1064), contradicts this assertion. Wenamun explains that he was sent to Palestine and after leaving Tyre he met Zakarbaal the prince of Byblos. In this city, he negotiated with Werketer, the boat captain, *who read out a journal roll of his forefathers* in his presence in order to prove the antiquity and legitimacy of his trade with Egypt (Story of Wenamun II:9-11). The Egyptian story proves two points: 1) a mere boat captain could read Phoenician in 1085 BCE (and also translate it into Egyptian) and 2) this writing probably dated back at least to 1150 BCE (time of the Captain's forefathers).

Letters from El-Amarna Egyptian chancery cover a short period from Amenhotep III (1383-1345) to Ay (1327-1323) but they show that Egypt, still a great power, used Babylonian (cuneiform writing) as diplomatic language. This language mixing a lexicon Canaanite with a Babylonian syntax was used for international trade with all the Near Eastern kingdoms. Scribes in Canaan spoke Old Canaanite, close to Old Hebrew³⁸, but

³³ Egyptian scribes are usually represented in a seated position, equipped with sharpened rush pens, palettes and small water jars (ink).

³⁴ J. B. PRITCHARD - The Ancient Near East in Pictures
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press p. 74.

³⁵ F. JOANNÈS - La Mésopotamie au 1^{er} millénaire avant J.C.
2000 Paris Ed. Armand Colin pp. 16,17,144.

³⁶ Among the 23,595 Babylonian texts listed in the form of tablets (J. EVERLING - Répartition chronologique et géographique des sources babyloniennes in: *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires*, 2000, pp. 42-45), only 84 are dated during the reign of Xerxes, or 0.4% of the total, in addition, these records come from 18 different sites (S. GRAZIANI - I testi Mesopotamici datati al regno di Serse 485-465 a. c. in: *Annali 46 sup.* 47 (Rome 1986) Ed. Herder pp. X-XIII).

³⁷ W.K. SIMPSON - The Report of Wenamun

in: The Literature of Ancient Egypt (2005) Ed. The American University in Cairo Press pp. 116-124.

³⁸ E. LIPINSKI - Semitic Languages Outline of a Comparative Grammar
in: *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 80. Leuven 2001 Ed. Peeters pp. 59-60.

although it was their mother tongue³⁹, no tablet written in paleo-Hebrew has been found. This apparent paradox is explained by the fact that writing is associated with a type of medium: cursive scripts (hieratic and paleo-Hebrew) to papyrus and cuneiform writings (Babylonian and Hurrian) to clay tablets. Egyptian letters were written in two copies: an original in hieratic on papyrus, sent to one of the three Egyptian commissioners living in Canaan, with its copy in cuneiform for the Chancery of vassal kings⁴⁰. The Egyptian copy (for the commissioner) served as a reference to the translator in case of ambiguity in the reading of the Babylonian tablet. As originals (sent into Canaan) were written on papyrus, they disappeared, while copies on clay tablets have survived the centuries.

The Amarna letters are misleading because they give the illusion that diplomatic couriers were common among great powers whereas we would have had almost nothing over the period 1500-1200 without this exceptional discovery. For example, Egypt, in addition to its diplomatic relations had also many important business relationships, including with the Mycenaean empire and the famous city of Troy, as confirmed by the list of the Aegean monument Amenhotep III (1383-1345) at Kom el-Hetan⁴¹, however no trade contract has yet been found. The trade between Egypt and Aegean islands was controlled by Phoenician sailors (Odyssey XIV:228-295). These commercial contracts had to exist, at least in the major port cities of Phoenicia as Ugarit, Byblos, Beirut, Sidon and Tyre, but have generally not been archived except by a few landowners and for a short time. If one denies the existence of these contracts one arrives at a huge paradox: the Phoenicians, main traders at the time, would have been able to write all languages, except their own! This is not serious. The city of Ugarit, the only one in which we have found the Chancery, provides the answer because some of these letters⁴² refer to *wax tablets*. Greek merchants in connection with Phoenician sailors (Odyssey IV:617; VIII:158-164, XV:415-471) should use this type of medium for writing because clay tablets are not convenient for carrying on boats and poorly adapted to cursive scripts such as Greek and Phoenician. The only character whose precise practice of writing (Mycenaean) in the works of Homer is Proteus, the first king of Tiryns (Iliad VI:169), who used a "folded tablet": *He [Proteus] gave baneful signs to her, drawing on a folded tablet many mortal characters, he invited her to show it [the letter] to her stepfather, for his ruin*. This amazing remark (long considered fanciful) is in agreement with recent archaeological discoveries⁴³: the "folded tablet" would have been a diptych made of wood covered with wax and "many characters" would be syllabograms of Linear B (Mycenaean). As the clay tablets discovered in Crete are not real pieces of archiving but are rather accounting documents, the originals would instead have been recorded on suitable media such as palm leaves, according to Pliny (Natural History XIII:21), or more likely on diptychs in wood covered with wax⁴⁴, as shown by the Uluburun⁴⁵ wreck dated around 1320 BCE. If Herodotus (The Histories II:44) was able to consult the archives of Tyre and if the Phoenician priests were able to indicate the date (c. 2750 BCE) of the founding of

³⁹ A.F. RAINEY – Canaanite in the Amarna Tablets Vol. 2

Leiden 1996 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 2-3, 15, 31-32.

⁴⁰ W.L. MORAN - Les lettres d'El Amarna

in: *LIPO* n°13 Paris 1987 Éd. Cerf pp. 19-21.

S. WACHSMANN – *Keftiu, the "Isles in the Midst of the Sea" and Alashia*

in: *Aegeans in the Theban Tombs* (Peeters, 1987) pp. 93-101.

⁴¹ J. STRANGE – Caphtor-Keftiu: a new investigation

in: *Acta Theologica Danica* 14, Leiden 1980, Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 21-27.

⁴² S. LACKENBACHER – Textes akkadiens d'Ugarit

in: *Littératures Anciennes du Proche-Orient* 20 (Cerf, 2002), pp. 22 n.11, 202.

⁴³ W. WAAL – They wrote on wood. The case for a hieroglyphic scribal tradition on wooden writing boards in Hittite Anatolia

in: *Anatolian Studies* 61 (2011) pp. 21-34.

⁴⁴ J. DRIESSEN – Homère et les tablettes en linéaire B. Mise au point

in: *L'Antiquité classique* 61 (Bruxelles 1992), pp. 5-37.

⁴⁵ C. PULAK – The Uluburun Shipwreck and Late Bronze Age Trade

in: *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millenium B.C.* Metropolitan Museum, 2008.

the oldest temple in their city, confirmed by Archaeology, it implies that the Tyrians had known writing for a long time. Pseudo-hieroglyphic script (also called Proto-Byblian) is known from 10 inscriptions found in Byblos as well as Canaanite scarabs of the Second Intermediate Period⁴⁶. These inscriptions (still undeciphered), with many signs resembling letters of the later Phoenician alphabet⁴⁷, are engraved on bronze plates and spatulas, and carved in stone. They are dated by some scholars between 2300 to 1750 BCE⁴⁸.

Mycenaean writing⁴⁹ (Linear B), the ancestor of modern Greek disappears around 1190 BCE with the destruction of the "third palaces" and reappears around 750 BCE, in a new form (Archaic Greek), with the emergence of Greek cities. The fluidity of cursive writing on clay tablets by Mycenaean scribes during the period 1450-1190 BCE involves a widespread use of ink on parchment. In addition, some seals have retained the imprint of ligatures on folded parchments⁵⁰, which were the usual medium at this time in Greece⁵¹. Mycenaean sailors therefore used wax tablets and parchments to write their contracts, but there remains absolutely nothing. Similarly, Phoenician sailors had to have used the same media for the same reasons. Even if Ugaritic is ranked among North Semitic languages while Phoenician and Old Canaanite languages are classified as West Semitic they have many things in common⁵² including the use of an alphabetic script. No Phoenician contracts have been found, but several clay tablets in Ugaritic cuneiform (c. 1350 BCE) were written with an alphabetic writing instead of a syllabary (general case). This confirms that alphabet signs, not syllabaries, was reserved for Semitic writings (Ugaritic and Phoenician), but as this medium was perishable these contracts all disappeared very soon.

Concerning Hebrew script used by the Israelites the situation is more complicated than the previous cases because from their arrival in Canaan (c. 1500 BCE) until the establishment of their first king (c. 1100 BCE) there was no Jewish Chancery and therefore no official documents. However, the priests had to teach the Israelites concerning the Law of Moses (Lv 10:8-11), which meant reading and writing even if this teaching activity was not observed (2Ch 17:9). Some priests have been called *Sopherim* because they were "literate" or "counters of letters" which shows the importance of writing for Israelites (modern words such as *decipher* and *zero* come from Arabic *sifr* or Hebrew *sepher*). The Hyksos who arrived in Palestine around 1500 BCE already spoke Old Canaanite as evidenced by their Semitic names and knew proto-Canaanite writing (which has been used in mines of Serabit el-Khadim). Coming from Egypt they probably continued to use papyrus as writing material rather than parchment, more expensive and therefore rarely used. The situation was reversed in Greece, according to Herodotus (The Histories V:58), because of the scarcity of papyrus in Ionia. We note also that Moses asks to be "wiped out/rubbed over" (Ex 32:32-33) not to be "scratched out", because to erase ink from a papyrus it was enough to moisten it while a parchment had to be scratched out. Papyrus was (prior to the 6th century BCE) the preferred medium for biblical scrolls as it could be (rarely) eaten (Ezk 3:1-3) or sent to the bottom of a river by tying it with a stone (Jr 51:63-64), that would not have been necessary with a parchment flowing pic.

⁴⁶ D. BEN-TOR - Pseudo Hieroglyphs on Canaanite Scarabs

in: *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* Vol 1:1 (Israel Museum, 2009) pp. 1-7.

⁴⁷ In addition, the name of all kings of Byblos (= Gebal "mountain") transcribed into hieroglyphs are of West Semitic origin.

⁴⁸ J. GOODY - The Interface Between the Written and the Oral
Cambridge 1993 Ed. Cambridge University Press (1987), pp. 44-49.

⁴⁹ R. TREUIL, P. DARCQUE, J.-C. POURSAT, G. TOUCHAIS - Les Civilisations égéennes du Néolithique et de l'Âge du Bronze
Paris 2008 Éd. Presses universitaires de France pp. 32, 138, 352-353, 454-457, 500-505.

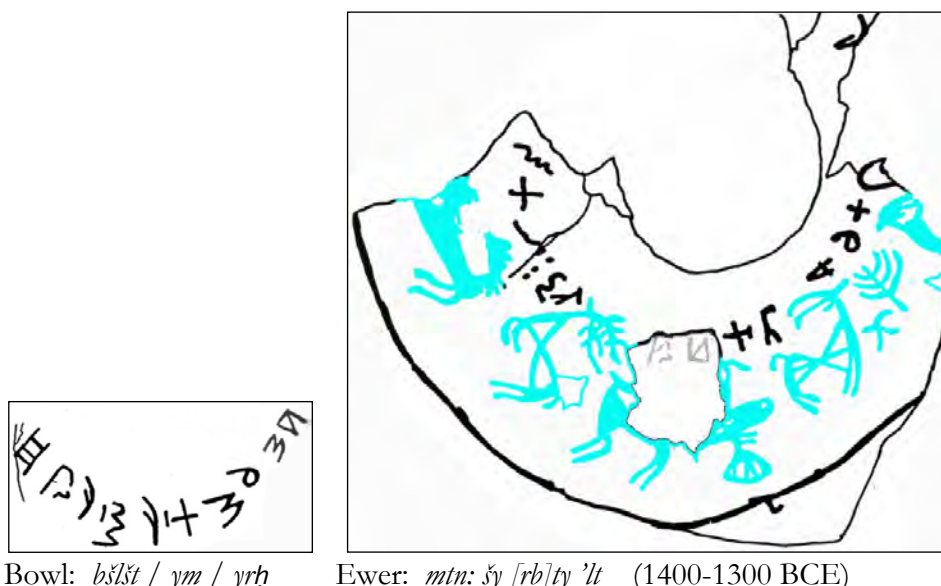
⁵⁰ Y. DUHOUX, A. MORPURGO DAVIES - A Companion to Linear B. Mycenaean Greek Texts and their World Vol. 2
Louvain-la-Neuve 2001, Ed. Peeters pp. 124-125.

⁵¹ M.A. DESBOEUF - Papyrus et parchemin dans l'antiquité gréco-romaine
Grenoble 2006-2007 Master2 Histoire et histoire de l'art (Université Grenoble II) pp. 52-54.

⁵² E. LIPINSKI - Semitic Languages Outline of a Comparative Grammar
in: *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 80. Leuven 2001 Ed. Peeters pp. 51-60.

Despite unfavorable conditions, absence of Chancery and use of a perishable medium, it is possible to find traces of the script used by the Israelites through a few ostraca written with ink. However there is a major difficulty, these ostraca are not datable neither by carbon-14, due to an absence of carbon, nor by epigraphy, due to a lack of documents, but by stratigraphy that only gives an imprecise interval of dates (for example ostrakon of Izbet Sartah in paleo-Hebrew is dated between 1200 BCE and 1000 BCE).

The inscriptions in paleo-Hebrew could actually have appeared as soon 1450 BCE. Indeed, epigraphists consider that paleo-Hebrew having evolved from proto-Canaanite it had truly been standardized only around 1000 BCE and prior to that date it was proto-Canaanite. This conception of an evolution of writing is flawed for the following reason: the standardization of inscriptions arises from the existence of scribal schools⁵³ (who were professionals dependent on a administration) because the slovenly inscriptions from individuals are not standardized and the letters are drawn by their acronym (A *aleph* "beef" (Ps 144:14) becomes head of an ox, R *resh* "head" (Dt 11:12) becomes a human head, etc.). Thus the paleo-Hebrew would be just a standardized proto-Canaanite. This conclusion is confirmed by the inscriptions discovered at Lachish. On a bowl we read the following sentence: *bslšt / ym / yrh* "in the 3rd day of the month [of ?]" and a ewer of the same time, we read: *mtn: šy [rb]ty 'lt* "Mattan: offering [to?] my sover[eign] Elat". The word El being above what looks like a candlestick with 7 branches (Ex 25:31-32?).



Bowl: *bslšt / ym / yrh* Ewer: *mtn: šy [rb]ty 'lt* (1400-1300 BCE)

The writing appearing on the bowl (except the R that could be proto-Canaanite), on the ewer and those in paleo-Hebrew dated 1550-1480⁵⁴ are identical. The epigraphic ranking of these inscriptions as proto-Canaanite is artificial and Puech himself recognizes that ceramics and archaeology recommend rather a date in the 14th century⁵⁵. This dating 1400-1300 BCE is rejected by epigraphists since it would imply an early coexistence of paleo-Hebrew with proto-Canaanite, although this is the most logical explanation. The writer of these inscriptions must have been a Palestinian professional and not an individual, because the writing on the bowl refers to a schedule, which requires an administrative contract, and that on the ewer was for a temple. In both cases, the writing by a professional

⁵³ C.A. ROLLSTON –Scribal Education in Ancient Israel: The Old Hebrew Epigraphic Evidence in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 344 (2006) pp. 47-74.

⁵⁴ S. DALLEY – Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection in: *Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology* Vol. 9 (CDL Press, 2009) pp. 1-16, 112, plates LIII, CLIV.

⁵⁵ E. PUECH –Origine de l'alphabet in: *Revue Biblique* 93:2, 1986, pp. 177-178.

had to be standardized and was thus paleo-Hebrew. The language used in Lachish (that name could mean "obstinate") was Old Canaanite, close to Old Hebrew. This important Canaanite city was fortified because it was on the road giving access to Egypt. Although Joshua destroyed it (Jos 10:32) during his conquest of Palestine (in 1493 BCE), Lachish had again become Canaanite near 1400 BCE since a Canaanite temple was built at that time⁵⁶, replaced by a second temple in 1325 BCE and then by a temple III. The Amarna letters show that during the period 1370-1350 this city, headed by Canaanite mayors was partly Jewish [Paapu an Egyptian commissioner wrote to pharaoh in order to warn him against the disloyalty of Šipti Ba'la and Zimredda, mayors of Lachish (EA 333), 'Abdi-Aštarti, the mayor of Qiltu warned Pharaoh that Lachish was hostile to him (EA 335), 'Abdi-Heba, the mayor of Jerusalem, informed Pharaoh that the city of Lachish helped Apiru (Hebrews) and that some servants who joined them had hit Zimredda its mayor (EA 287, 288)]. The Temple III was destroyed by Philistines around 1200 BCE (Jg 10:7-8), then the city, completely destroyed by fire around 1150 BCE⁵⁷, again by Philistines (Jg 13:1), was abandoned for a long period. It was rebuilt by Rehoboam (2 Ch 11:5-12) in 975 BCE. During the period 1500-1200 the inhabitants of Lachish had Hebrew sounding names like: Yaphia "radiant" (Jos 10:3); Yabni-Ilu "God created" (EA 328); Šipti Ba'la "judgment of Baal", Zimredda "melody (?) of Hadda" (EA 333). This is as true as the inhabitants of Jerusalem: Adoni-Šédeq "Lord of justice" (Jos 10:3), 'Abdi-Heba "servant of Heba" (EA 287). The inhabitants of Lachish, Jewish (Hebrew) or Canaanite, used the same language (Old Canaanite), but for official documents Akkadian remained the norm⁵⁸.

Without precise dating (to +/- 1 year) and without historical text, most inscriptions discovered by archaeologists generally provide little information. The Beth-Shemesh ostrakon⁵⁹ (opposite figure), for example, comes from the Stratum IV (dated 1400-1200 by pottery)⁶⁰, contains this inscription: *Jars of wine 7 (bt yn) to Azaab 1 (l'z'h .), Abaz 1 (h'z .), Shimeon 4 (Sm'n), Hanun 1 (Hnn .)*. Puech dates it 1300-1200 relying on epigraphic criteria and ranks it as proto-Canaanite. However this conclusion is questionable because of the very small number of ancient inscriptions, thus epigraphic criteria are uncertain, which creates variables dating (up to 4 centuries!) among epigraphists. Moreover, according to the Bible (Jos 21:16; 1Sa 6:15; 1Ki 4:9), this city remained in Israelite territory since the conquest of Joshua (c. 1490 BCE) until it was taken by the Philistines (c. 740 BCE) during the reign of Ahaz⁶¹ (2Ch 28:16-18), which would rank the inscription as paleo-Hebrew rather than proto-Canaanite. As the name Shimeon is typically Hebrew (Gn 29:33) the Canaanite origin of the inscription seems unlikely. If ostraca in paleo-Hebrew are few, those quoting biblical passages are necessarily rarer because there is always a gap of several centuries between the moment a book is written and its dissemination to the public. Homer's books⁶², for example, were written around 850-800 BCE according to Herodotus (The Histories II:53) and the Chronicle of Paros marble, but the earliest fragments of papyrus (found in Egypt) of Homer's works are



⁵⁶ R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan
Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 80, 192.

⁵⁷ D. USSISHKIN - Key to the Israelite Conquest of Canaan?
in: *Biblical Archaeology Review* 13:1 (1987) pp. 35-39.

⁵⁸ W. HOROWITZ, T. OSHIMA, S. SANDERS - Cuneiform in Canaan. Cuneiform Sources from the Land of Israel in Ancient Times
Jerusalem 2006 Ed. Israel Exploration Society. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem pp. 4-19.

⁵⁹ E. PUECH - Origine de l'alphabet
in: *Revue Biblique* 93:2 (1986) pp. 172-177.

⁶⁰ A. MAZAR - Archeology of the Land of the Bible
New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday p. 242.

⁶¹ This town recaptured by Tiglath-Phileser III in 732 BCE will be finally destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar in 587 BCE.

⁶² V. BÉRARD, P. DEMONT, M.P. NOËL - L'Odyssée
1996 Librairie Générale Française, Le Livre de Poche p. 12.

dated more than 500 years later (285-250 BCE) and the oldest complete manuscript is the Laurentianus dated around 1000 CE.



1 אל תעשק : ועבד א'ל' : א' יב'זיה
 2 שפט (?) ובכ אלמ'נ' (?) שלט
 3 בנר . ובעלל . קצמ (?) יחד :
 4 א'ד'מ ושרמ יסד מלכ :
 5 חרמ <ששם> עבדמ : מדרת .

The excavations at Tell Qeiyafa (the camp enclosure of 1Samuel 17:20?) have identified the city Shaaraim⁶³ which was inhabited until the reign of David (1Ch 4:31; 1Sa 17:52). The end of this city has been dated 1010 +/- 40 BCE by Carbon 14 through olive pits found in the site. Not only does this town date back from the time of David but these excavations have also unearthed a Hebrew inscription (opposite figure), which reads:

- [... your neighbour?]
 1) do not exploit and serve G[od]. Despised by
 2) the judge, and the widow cried, he had power
 3) over the foreign resident and the child he suppressed together.
 4) Men and leaders have made a king.
 5) Devoting <sixty> servants among the generations.

As noted Puech⁶⁴, this text describes a situation identical to that of the biblical text when the elders of Israel asked Samuel to enthrone a king (Saul) in order to replace his sons who became corrupt judges (1Sa 8:1-5). The first (readable) line implicitly refers to a well known passage of the Law of Moses: *do not exploit your neighbour* (Lv 19:13).

With the establishment of kingship in Israel the number of documents in paleo-Hebrew increases as well as texts referring to the Bible. However, documents relating to the early Judean kings (David and Solomon) are few because their reigns took place during a period of decline of the two great empires of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Among the 113 kings in the Levant listed during the period 1000-600 BCE, including those of the Bible, only 16 are mentioned in inscriptions⁶⁵. Despite the extent of their empire we know only very little action of most Egyptian and Babylonian kings during this period (except the name and the duration of their reign). According to the biblical text, the only outstanding action with the Israelites involved the Egyptian kingdom. Absence of archaeological remains of the famous temple of Solomon is explained by the fact that this temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in the fall of Jerusalem. In addition, when King Herod the Great restored the second temple, built on the remains of the previous one, he began by its foundations that had eliminated last Solomonic vestiges⁶⁶ because, according to Josephus, Herod carried out a complete reconstruction of the temple (Jewish Antiquities XV:354, 380, 421). Consequently, when archaeologists invoke the absence of evidence to “prove” that only Christian fundamentalists still believe that Moses is the author of the Pentateuch, that sort of argument is disingenuous, because as we have seen, a professional scribe in Mesopotamia around 1500 BCE called *Aldinēl* “No judgment of God” was able to inscribe his name in cuneiform: *Ali-dîn-ili* as well as in Paleo-Hebrew: 'LDN'L. Consequently, contrary to what most Egyptologists claim, the writing of a narrative in paleo-Hebrew around 1500 BCE (Pentateuch) is quite logical.

⁶³ Y. GARFINKEL, S. GANOR - Khirbet Qeiyafa: Sha'araim
 in: *The Journal of Hebrew Scriptures* 8 (2008) article 22.

Y. LEVIN - The Identification of Qeiyafa: A New Suggestion
 in: *BASOR* N°367 (August 2012) pp. 73-86.

⁶⁴ E. PUECH - L'Ostracon de Khirbet Qeiyafa et les débuts de la royauté en Israël
 in: *Revue Biblique* 117 (2010) pp. 162-184.

⁶⁵ A. MILLARD - King Solomon in his Ancient Context
 in: *The Age of Solomon* (Brill 1997) Ed by L.K. Handy p. 46.

⁶⁶ E.-M. LAPEROUSAZ - Les temples de Jérusalem
 Paris 2007 Éd. Non Lieu pp. 51-74, 104-120.

According to Egyptian accounts the last king of the XVth dynasty, named Apopi, “very pretty” in Hebrew like Moses’ birth name (Ex 2:2), reigned 40 years in Egypt (1613-1573), then 40 years later he met Seqenenre Taa the last pharaoh of the XVIIth dynasty. The eldest son of Seqenenre Taa, Ahmose Sapaïr, who was crown prince died in a dramatic and unexplained way shortly before his father. Seqenenre Taa died in May 1533 BCE, after 11 years of reign, in dramatic and unclear circumstances. The state of his mummy proves, however, that his body received severe injuries and remained abandoned for several days before being mummified (Ps 136:15). Prince Kamose, Seqenenre Taa's brother, assured interim of authority for 3 years (1533-1530) and threatened to attack the former pharaoh Apopi, new prince of Retenu (Palestine). In the Stele of the Tempest he also blames Apopi for all the disasters that come to fall upon Egypt which caused many deaths. The 3 Hyksos dynasties (XIV, XV, XVI) ruled Egypt approximately from 1750 to 1530 BCE and then disappear abruptly after the death of Pharaoh Seqenenre Taa. One can notice that Egyptian documents unanimously describe the departure of the Hyksos from Egypt to Palestine in a disaster. Modern Egyptologists pictured a ‘war of the Hyksos’, however no document speaks of war but only that Avaris, Hyksos’ capital, was looted and vandalized after their departure. Moreover all accounts of former historians picture the Hyksos as the ancestors of the Hebrews, led into Palestine under the leadership of Moses. The only way to date the so-called “Hyksos' war” is to gather all historical and archaeological documents about the Hyksos for establishing a chronology of the “Hyksos' war”, identifying who was Apopi, determining where the Hyksos came from and where they went, dating the Hyksos war according to the Egyptian chronology through synchronisms dated by astronomy and dating the Exodus according to the Israelite chronology checked by absolute dates.

Modern Egyptologists suppose that: *The Hyksos dynasty (XV) reigned a hundred years in Egypt, succumbing only after a struggle that was very difficult for Egyptian nationalist Pharaohs, of whom at least one of them was killed (Seqenenre Taa). Kamose began the liberation war, but it is Ahmose who definitively eradicated the Hyksos domination by taking Avaris and Sharuben*⁶⁷. Claude Vandersleyen, despite offering a fictionalized version of the ‘liberation war of the Hyksos’, notes that: *The New Kingdom began in a strange silence of the sources. What happened there after the 3rd year of Kamose? (...) It is curious that the most important event in the history of Egypt during an entire millennium, the annihilation of the population of the Hyksos, was ignored in the inscriptions of King Ahmose dealing with something quite different: a storm that destroyed the cemetery of Thebes, his concern about the perpetuation of his grandmother, Queen Teti-Sheri, some gifts offered to the temple of Amun at Karnak, the wise government of his mother, Queen Abhotep, etc., but not the main conquest of his reign*⁶⁸. He also argues that there is no archaeological evidence of the Exodus under Ramses II and, therefore, that the biblical Exodus under this Pharaoh would be a pious story, written after the fact, embellished for posterity, which is the frequent conclusion of specialists⁶⁹! Concerning the chronology he acknowledges that: *All these calculations lead us well before Ramses II, and specifically in the 16th century. No doubt the reliability of these chronologies is unproven, but they are spaced apart —whereas they exist— because they contradict the low dating of the Exodus that is not based on any document (...) and should we push back the Exodus to the 16th century? (...) It was noted that all proposed solutions to the problems of the Exodus are speculative and ignore infrequent figures preserved in the Bible and Manetho. But the date given by Manetho — that the Exodus took place under Ahmose — is the*

⁶⁷ J. YOYOTTE – Dictionnaire des pharaons
Paris 1998 Éd. Noésis p. 85.

⁶⁸ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L’Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France p. 190, 193, 213, 232-237.

⁶⁹ E. BLOCH-SMITH - Israelite Ethnicity in Iron I: Archaeology preserves what is remembered and what is forgotten in Israel's history
in: *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122/3 (2003) pp. 401-425
R. HENDEL - The Exodus in Biblical Memory
in: *Journal of Biblical Literature* 120/4 (2001) pp. 601-622.

only one truly accurate (...) In short, whatever the objections of exegetes today, we must not reject a priori to study the problem of Exodus in connection with the expulsion of the Hyksos. The Egyptologist J. Assmann⁷⁰, also believing in the 'liberation war of the Hyksos', notes however that: *All the extra-Biblical versions agree that the aliens, or impure ones, are driven out of Egypt. In the Bible, the Hebrews are retained in Egypt against their will and they are allowed to emigrate only after divine interventions in the form of the plagues. But even in this version the account of the emigration contains elements of expulsion. Of course, it would be most instructive to confront these different versions with what could constitute historical evidence, but there is almost no such evidence. The only historical evidence which is both archaeologically provable and semantically comparable with the content of these different versions of the expulsion/emigration story is the sojourn of the Hyksos in Egypt. If we apply the same question asked previously about the Amarna experience to the Hyksos tradition and if we remain on the lookout for what might have become of the memories that must have been shared by the expelled tribes about their stay in, and domination of Egypt, we find ourselves again referred to the Exodus tradition. I completely agree with Flavius Josephus and Donald B. Redford, who has held in various publications that the Hyksos' sojourn in, and withdrawal from, Egypt was all that happened in terms of historical fact.*

The name and order of some pharaohs based on archaeological finding remain controversial but the following chronological framework is now accepted⁷¹:

| Strata | Period | Egyptian Dynasty | Vizier | Asiatic Dynasty | Capital |
|--------|-------------|-------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|-------------|
| MB IIA | 1975-1778 | 12 th (Lisht/ [Memphis]) | Yes | | |
| MB IIB | 1778-1750? | 13 th (Lisht/ [Memphis]) | Yes | | |
| MB IIB | 1750?-1680? | | Yes | 14 th (Hyksos) | Tanis |
| MB IIC | 1680?-1613 | (Thebes) | - | 15 th (Great Hyksos) | Avaris |
| MB IIC | 1613-1573 | | - | Apopi | " |
| | 1573-1544 | 17 th (Thebes) | - | 16 th (Theban kings) | Edfu? |
| | 1544-1533 | Seqenenre Taa | - | | " |
| LB AI | 1533-1530 | Kamose | - | Apopi (= > Moses) Hyksos' War | |
| | 1530 - | 18 th (Thebes) | | Moses (Exodus) | (Sinai) |
| | -1505 | Ahmosé | Yes | | (1533-1493) |
| | 1505-1472 | Thutmose I | Yes | Joshua in Palestine | Jerusalem |

According to dating Middle Bronze Age strata⁷² (+/- 30 years), the first part of the 13th Dynasty could be dated 1750-1650 BCE (MB IIB), the 15th Dynasty in 1650-1550 BCE (MB IIC) and the beginning of the 18th Dynasty in 1550 BCE (LB AI). The material culture of the Canaanite settlers in the eastern Delta displays a distinct similarity to the material culture found at Middle Bronze Age sites in Palestine⁷³ and studies of scarabs of the Middle Bronze period from both region argue for the southern Levant as the place of origin of the Second Intermediate Period foreign rulers in Egypt⁷⁴. The site of Tell el-Dab'a, identified with ancient Avaris, was recently identified with the New Kingdom port of *Prw Nfr*, when two possible harbours were found⁷⁵. If the first Hyksos (14th dynasty) began to reign around 1750 BCE, they had already arrived in Egypt for over a century and, according to Egyptian records, most of them came from Palestine (called Retenu in Egyptian).

⁷⁰ J. ASSMANN – The Memory of Egypt in Western Monotheism Cambridge 1997 Ed. Harvard University Press pp. 40-41.

⁷¹ D. FRANKE – The 13th to 17th Dynasties: chronological framework in: *Egyptian Stelae in the British Museum from the 13th to 17th Dynasties* Vol I:1 (The British Museum, 2013) pp. 7-13.

⁷² M. BIETAK – Egypt and Canaan During the Middle Bronze Age in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 281 (1991) pp. 27-72.

⁷³ D. BEN-TOR – Scarabs, Chronology, and Interconnections: Egypt and Palestine in the Second Intermediate Period in: *Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis* 27 (2007) pp. 1-3.

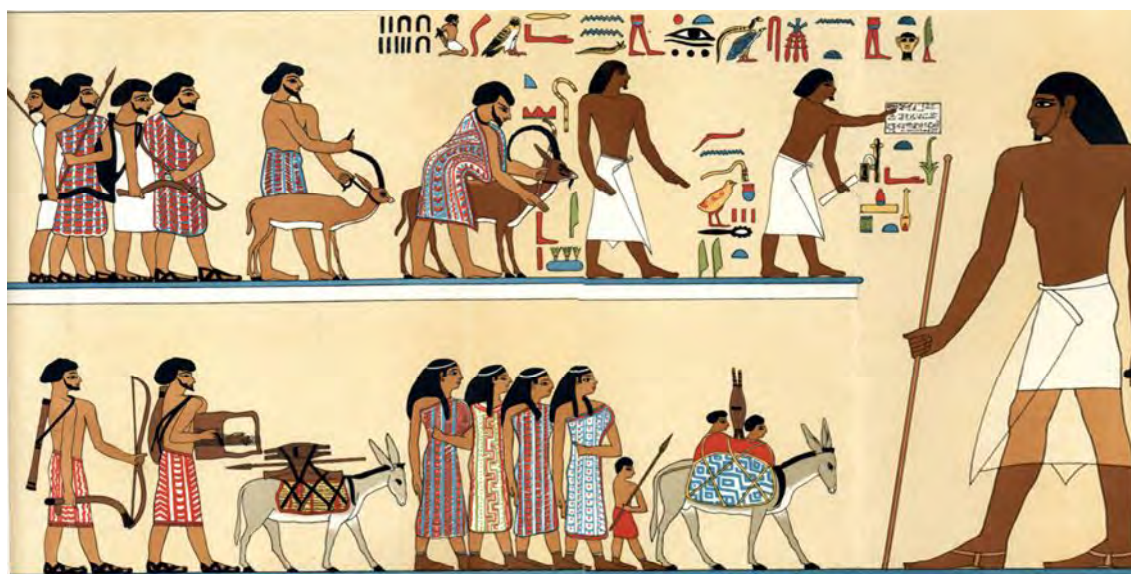
⁷⁴ D. BEN-TOR – Can Scarabs Argue for the Origin of the Hyksos in: *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* 1:1 (2009) pp. 1-7.

⁷⁵ B. BADER – Traces of Foreign Settlers in the Archaeological Record of Tell el-Dab'a in: *Intercultural Contacts in the Ancient Mediterranean (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 202, 2011)* pp. 137-158.

THE HYKSOS ACCORDING TO HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL DOCUMENTS

The Hyksos (*hq3w h3swt*, “rulers of foreign lands”) must be understood as a foreign dynasty that rules Egypt c. 1640-1530 BCE⁷⁶. Their power was rooted in a population of Near Eastern origin. Where they came from, how they came to power and how they manage to assert themselves in Egypt are still matters of ongoing debate⁷⁷. Flavius Josephus used the designation “Hyksos” incorrectly as a kind of ethnic term for people of foreign origin who seized power in Egypt for a certain period. In this sense, for sake of convenience, it is also used in this article. One should never forget, however, that, strictly spoken, the term “Hyksos” (*ḥqꜣw ḥꜣswt* *heqa’ ha’s*) was only used by Egyptians to indicate a “ruler of foreign lands” resident in Egypt but native from Retenu (Syro-Palestine). The title *heqa’ aa* “Great ruler” was also used to designate some Pharaohs (as Seqenenre Taa).

An illustration often cited as a classic example of Egyptian-Asiatic contact in the early Middle Kingdom is the painting in Tomb No. 3 at Beni Hasan⁷⁸. The Tomb belongs to the nomarch Khnumhotep III, who is also an “Overseer of the Eastern Hill Countries”. Besides illustrating the presentation of various types of “cattle” to the nomarch, the painting depicts the arrival of a group of 37 Asiatics (*3mm*) who are being led by an Egyptian with the title “Overseer of hunters”. The Asiatics are bearded, and wear the traditional dress of Semites as depicted in Egyptian artwork; they carry weapons typical of Middle Bronze Age Canaan, including what appear to be composite bows and a “duckbilled” axe. One of the inscriptions that accompanies the painting describes the arrival of the “Asiatics”, led by Absha (*Ibš3*), a “ruler of a foreign land (*hq3 h3st*)”, who are bringing black eye-paint to the nomarch Khnumhotep, here designated as the “Administrator of the Eastern Desert” in the 6th year of Senwosret II's reign (1863-1855). Absha, Hyksos' name, is Semite and means maybe "Father of prince" (Abshar)⁷⁹.



These Asiatics (*3mm*) coming from Shutu⁸⁰ (Sudu[m] then Moab) to bring galena (*msdmṯ*) into Egypt were Canaanites. Galena, the material for the black eye-paint, was likely

⁷⁶ M. BIETAK – From Where Came the Hyksos and Where did they go?
in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) pp. 139-181.

⁷⁷ R.M. ENGBERG – The Hyksos Reconsidered
in: *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* 18 (The University of Chicago Press, 1939) pp. 1-50.

⁷⁸ S.L. COHEN - Canaanites, Chronologies, and Connections
Indiana 2002, Ed. Eisenbrauns pp. 33-50.

⁷⁹ The sound r is often rendered by an Egyptian 3 at this time, but the reading Abshay "Father of gift" (2Sa 10:10) is also possible.

⁸⁰ J. KAMRIN – The procession of “Asiatics” at Beni Hasan
in: *Cultures in Contact: From Mesopotamia to the Mediterranean in the Second Millennium B.C.* (Metropolitan Museum of Art 2013) pp. 156-169.

produced in this region because the third daughter of Job (c. 1650 BCE), who dwelled near Punon (Faynan) in Edom, was called "Horn of the black-(eye)-paint" (Job 42:14). In the inscription of Weni (c. 2200 BCE) the term *ʿ3mw* is used only in relation to the nomads of the Sinai Desert but it is extended to all the populations in Syria-Canaan as a sign of disdain⁸¹. Similarly, the Asiatics (*ʿ3mw*) in the *Instruction to King Merikare* (c. 2050 BCE) are depicted as wild and unruly⁸². In fact, some of the earliest evidence relating to Egyptian contact with the southern Levant during the Middle Bronze Age comes from the very beginning of the Middle Kingdom during the reign of Mentuhotep II⁸³ (2045-1994).

The extent of contact with Canaan, and Egyptian views of Asiatics, do not appear to change in any significant way during the reign of Amenemhet I (1975-1946). Although the evidence is slight, "The Prophecy of Neferty", a text associated with Amenemhet I makes mention of Asiatics: *He (Neferty) was concerned for what would happen in the land. He thinks about the condition of the east. Asiatics (ʿ3mw) travel with their swords, terrorizing those who are harvesting, seizing the oxen from the plow (...) All happiness has gone away, the land is cast down in trouble because of those feeders, Asiatics (Styw) who are throughout the land. Enemies have arisen in the east, Asiatics (ʿ3mw) have come down to Egypt. A fortress is deprived of another beside it, the guards do not pay attention of it (...) Asiatics (ʿ3mw) will fall to his sword, Libyans will fall to this flame, rebels to his wrath, traitors to his might, as the serpent on his brow subdues the rebels to him. One will build the "Wall of the Ruler", life prosperity and health, to prevent Asiatics (ʿ3mw) from going down into Egypt*⁸⁴.

The Egyptian words Aamu (*ʿ3mw*) and Retenu (*Rtnw*) are usually translated as "Asiatics" and "Syria-Palestine", they fit well to the biblical terms "people of Canaan" and "Canaan". As the Execration Texts⁸⁵ transcribe the names Ascalon and Jerusalem by *ʿIsq3nw* (Ašqalun) and *3w33mw* ([U]rusalimum), the Egyptian letter 3 being used for sound r/l (up to 1800 BCE), the word *ʿ3mw*, could be read Aramu "those of Aram". The region of Aram is very ancient, it appears as A-ra-me^{ki} in inscriptions of Naram-Sin (2163-2126), but its location seems to have changed over time, from the area of Akkad to Syria⁸⁶. "Aramean ancestor" is rendered "Syrian" in the Septuagint (Dt 26:5). The Egyptian word Setiu (*Styw*) is also translated as "Asiatics", but refers more specifically to Suteans [of Moab]. When Idrimi (1500-1470) fled to the south of Syria, he met the Sutu [Suteans], and then lived 7 years with the Habiru [Hebrews] in the country of *Ki-in-a-nim*^{ki} [Canaan]⁸⁷. This term Canaan, which is Semitic, does not appear in Egyptian texts, moreover, because of migration, it has designated different areas: Lebanon at the time of Ebla⁸⁸, circa 2300 BCE, Upper Mesopotamia at the time of Mari, c. 1800 BCE (*Ki-na-ab-nu*)⁸⁹, Syria-Palestine at the time of Idrimi (c. 1500 BCE), Philistia at the time of Merenptah (c. 1200 BCE).

⁸¹ A.F. RAINEY – Sinuhe's World

in: "I will Speak the Riddles of Ancient Times » (2006, Eisenbrauns), pp. 277-299.

⁸² But there is a gap between official inscriptions from Pharaoh (always warlike) and private inscriptions from officials (peaceful).

⁸³ A fragmentary stele found in a secondary context in an 18th dynasty palace at El-Deir represents one of Mentuhotep's monument that might describe an historical occurrence rather than simply presenting a standardized and traditional bellicose attitude toward Asiatics and other foreigners. The stele recounts a military expedition and mentions (line x + 8): the hinterland, the Qedem lands and possibly an additional statement about easterners. As Qedem is the same Semitic term meaning "the East" used by Sinuhe to describe the region in which he spent most of his exile after he reached Byblos, this may indicate that part of this particular campaign or military conflict occurred somewhere in the Levant (probably Lebanon).

⁸⁴ J.K. HOFFMEIER – Israel in Egypt. The Evidence for the Authenticity of the Exodus Tradition
New York 1996 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 58-59.

⁸⁵ R. DUSSAUD – Nouveaux textes égyptiens d'exécration contre les peuples syriens
in: *Syria* 21:2 (1940) pp. 170-182

⁸⁶ E. LIPINSKI – The Aramaeans. Their Ancient History, Culture, Religion
in: *Analecta* 100, Peeters 2000, pp. 25-40.

⁸⁷ P. GARELLI, J.M. DURAND, H. GONNET, C. BRENIQUET - Le Proche-Orient Asiatique
Paris 1997 Ed. P.U.F. pp. 139-140.

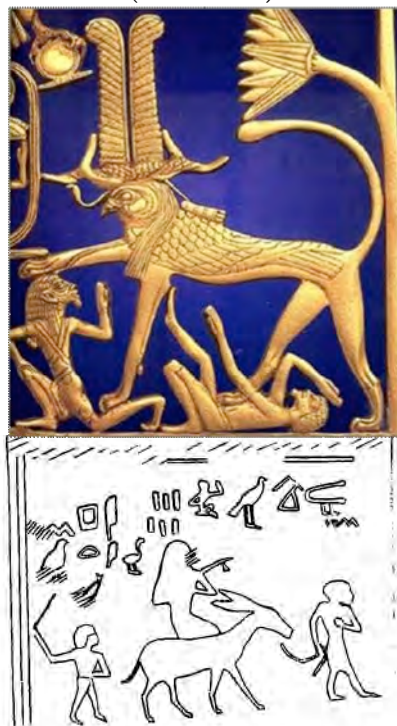
⁸⁸ *kù nig-ba* ^dBE(lum) *Ga-na-na-im* "gift (for) the lord of Canaan"; *é* ^dGa-na-na-im "temple of divine Canaan" see J.N. TUBB – Peoples of the Past. Canaanites. London 1998 Ed. British Museum p. 15 and A. ARCHI – The Head of Kura-The Head of 'Adabal in: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 64:2 (2005) pp. 81-100.

⁸⁹ G. DOSSIN – Une mention des Cananéens dans une lettre de Mari
in: *Syria* n°50 1973, pp. 277-282.

Egypt's Asiatic policy appears to have changed during the reign of Amenemhet I's successor. 'The Tale of Sinuhe', a fictional account composed during the reign of Senwosret I (1946-1901), indicates an increased interest in the southern Levant and its inhabitants. The Egypto-Canaanite relationship portrayed in the story continues to be one of détente and reasonably cordial relations. Several elements in the story relate peaceful encounters between Egyptians and Canaanites. When Sinuhe leaves Egypt and travels out into the desert, he is saved by a group of Bedouins, the chief of whom is described as "a man who had been in Egypt". Furthermore, the Bedouin chief is said to "recognize" Sinuhe; thus, not only had the chief been in Egypt, but he may also have been in the capital, where Sinuhe, as a courtier, would have resided prior to his flight. This incident may indicate that, despite the bellicose rhetoric about smiting and crushing sand-dwellers and the like, there were comparatively peaceful relations between the Egyptians and their Asiatic neighbours. One reads: *I gave a road to my feet northward and attained the Wall of the Prince, which was made to repel the Asiatics (Styw) and to crush the Sandfarers (...) I set forth to Byblos; I pushed on to Qedem. I spent half a year there; then Amu-son-of-Ensi, prince of Upper Retenu, took me and said to me: Thou farest well with me, for thou hearest the tongue of Egypt. This he said, for that he had become aware of my qualities, he had heard of my wisdom; Egyptian folk, who were there with him, had testified concerning me (...) I spent many years, and my children grew up as mighty men, each one controlling his tribe (...) for this prince of Retenu (ḥq3 pn n Rtnw) caused me to pass many years as commander of his host (...) His Majesty sent to me with gifts of the Royal bounty, and gladdened the heart of this his servant, as it had been the ruler of any foreign country (ḥq3 n ḥ3st) Thou hast traversed the foreign lands and art gone forth from Qedem to Retenu (...) The Asiatics ('3mw) shall not convert thee (...) Let now Thy Majesty cause to be brought Ma[?]ki from Qedem (...) Then His Majesty said to the Royal Consort: "Behold Sinuhe, who is come as an Asiatic ('3m), an offspring of Asiatics(Styw)-folk".*

Considerable details indicating increased Egyptian activity and interest in Canaan can be found in a fragmentary inscription dating to Amenemhet II (1901-1863). From his Annals one reads⁹⁰: *Number of prisoners brought from these foreign lands: 1554 Asiatics ('3m); as slave tribute from Levantine rulers: 1002 Asiatics ('3m)*. If Egyptian inscriptions mention traditionally 9 hereditary enemies, their representations are limited to Asiatics in the north and Nubians (Cushites) in the south. A gold pectoral from the tomb of Khnumhotep II (opposite figure), for example, describes an elite Hyksos man with thick hair, small beard and two bands crossed over the chest. Khnumhotep II was a nomarch during the reigns of Amenemhet II (1901-1863), Senwosret II (1863-1855) and Senwosret III (1855-1836).

The impression of peaceful relations gains support from the several graffiti that describe the visit of "the brother of the prince of Retenu, Khebbed" at the Egyptian mines. A relief scene, dating to Amenemhet III (1836-1791), depicts the arrival of this individual. Khebbed comes to the Sinai mines at Serabit el-Khadim riding on a donkey which is led by one man⁹¹, and driven from behind by another. The skin of the men is painted



⁹⁰ K.A. KITCHEN - On the Reliability of the Old Testament
Cambridge 2003 Ed. W.B. Eerdmans p. 636.

⁹¹ P. TALLET - Sésostris III et la fin de la XIIe dynastie
Paris 2005 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 160-162.

yellow (following the Egyptian convention for Asiatics). They wear short kilts, and, significantly, they are armed, thus reinforcing the impression that the Egyptians have not coerced the Asiatics into participating in the campaigns. Other Sinai inscriptions list Asiatics among the participants of the expedition. For example, an inscription dating to Senwosret III (1855-1836), lists “the Asiatic Rua, possessor of honour”, last in a series of officials carved on the apron of a statue assumed to be of the king. Inscriptions, from Amenemhet III (1836-1791) and from Amenemhat IV (1791-1782), mention the participation of 10 and 20 Asiatics (*ʿ3m.w*) from Retenu, respectively.

Although the decrease in both the quality and the quantity of monuments, public buildings, and other forms in Egypt reveals a downward trend, Egypt's power and prestige abroad do not seem to have weakened until well into the 13th dynasty. Although no monuments or inscriptions exist which speak specifically of Egyptian-Canaanite relations, a relief at Byblos shows the local prince doing homage to Neferhotep I (1700-1685?), one of the more powerful and longer-lived kings of the 13th dynasty. Beginning with the Late 12th dynasty⁹², the rulers of Byblos styled themselves *ḥ3ty-‘ n kḫny*, ‘Governor of Byblos’. The title *ḥ3ty-‘ n GN* is Egyptian and was used to designate the governors of Egyptian domains, mainly of larger cities and nomes within Egypt during the Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate Period, but also of the large forts in Nubia. Foreign chieftains, on the other hand, were designated *wr* ‘great’ and *ḥq3* ‘ruler’. The fact that the rulers of Byblos used a specific title suggests therefore that they regarded Byblos as an Egyptian domain and saw themselves as its governors on behalf of the Egyptian king. This situation is substantiated by two sources of a different nature, a relief found at Byblos and a cylinder-seal of unknown provenance. The relief depicts the ‘Governor of Byblos Yantinu (*in-t-n*) who was begotten by Governor Yakin (*y3-k-n*)’ seated upon a throne in front of which is inscribed a cartouche with the prenomen and nomen of Neferhotep I. The cylinder-seal is inscribed for a certain Yakin-ilu in cuneiform on one side and the prenomen of king Sewesekhtawy on the other side. The fact to record the name of the Egyptian king within those specific context strongly suggests that they regarded themselves officially as subordinates of the Egyptian king. It is notable that it was the Egyptian king (13th dynasty) rather than the Canaanite kings (14th dynasty) who were recognized as the superiors at Byblos. However, Yantinu, whose name is evidently hypocoristic, is identical to a certain Yantin-‘Ammu recorded as ‘king of Byblos’ (*lugal gu-ub-lā^{ki}*) in an administrative document found at Mari. Cartouches were used by at least two of the governors, one of whom also used the royal epithet *mry DN*, ‘beloved of DN’, and another governor adopted the epithet *ḥq3-ḥq3w*, ‘Rulers of rulers’. The use of cartouches reveals in no uncertain manner that while the men in question officially designated themselves as governors, they clearly regarded themselves as the actual rulers of Byblos. This may well explain why Yantin-‘Ammu was described as King of Byblos at Mari.

A prince of the land Iry⁹³, which was most probably situated near Sidon (where the seal was found), had the throne name of king Amenemhet III translated into West Semitic *Ddq3-R* ‘“justice of Râ (Ṣaduqa-Râ)”’, bore the epithet “beloved of Baal (the name of the god is written with the logogram of Seth), lord of Iry (*nb i-3-y*)”. On a stele at Serabit el-Khadim on Sinai, contingents of Near Easterners are listed among the personnel of mining expeditions that took place during the late 12th Dynasty. An Asiatic dignitary called “brother of the ruler of Retenu” participated at least four times. The “ruler of Retenu”



⁹² K.S.B. RYHOLT – The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period c. 1800-1500 B.C. Copenhagen 1997, Ed. Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications Vol. 20 pp. 86-89,123.

⁹³ M. BIETAK – From Where Came the Hyksos and Where did they go? in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) pp. 147, 157.

most probably had his seat at Avaris or Tanis⁹⁴, and that it may have been from there that the expeditions were organised. In a tomb of Tell el Dab'a (Avaris), attached to a palatial mansion, has been found a scarab (opposite figure) of the late 12th Dynasty whose inscription names a "[ruler of R]etenu: S-b-'k-w-rw?".



Some scarabs and seals dating to the 13th Dynasty have been excavated from MB IIA tombs and occupation levels at many Canaanite sites, such as Acco, Tell el-'Ajjul, Ashkelon, Jericho, and Megiddo, which may indicate a high level of Egyptian-Canaanite contact and interaction. Evidence also points to increasing numbers of Asiatics within Egypt, large numbers of whom seem to have been in domestic service (people well open to exploitation, in fact akin to slavery). In Brooklyn papyrus 35.1446⁹⁵, almost 2/3 of one household's staff (95 names) have Asiatic names, while other documents contain titles such as "officer in charge of Asiatic troops" and "scribe of the Asiatics". This document, dated from year 10 of Amenemhet III (1836-1791) to year 2 of Sobekhotep III (c. -1700), is a record of the Bureau of labour⁹⁶. It shows that at this time there were many Asiatics who were working for Egyptian masters. The document further indicates that these Asiatic names were systematically changed into Egyptian names, which is consistent with the Egyptian custom of that time, as stated in the biblical text in the case of Joseph (Gn 41:45). Most of these names are clearly West Semitic as Aquba, Menahem, Asher, Shiphra (Ex 1:15), Hiabi-ilu, Sakar and [Ab]i-Baal, Baal-tuya⁹⁷. Several names also contain the form Aper(u) *pr(u)* which could be the cause of the designation of an ethnic group later known as Apiru⁹⁸ in the el-Amarna letters.

From the 12th dynasty these Asiatics (*Aamu*), who accounted for between 1/6 (at Abydos) and 1/3 (at Kahun) of the population of Egypt⁹⁹, would be considered Egyptians "of Asiatic origin" (Hyksos). They are conventionally represented as Egyptians (only their Asiatic origin is mentioned in the texts). Many of these Asiatics entered the country as prisoners of war, others were born in Egypt from Asiatic parent. They were employed in households, on agricultural estates and in the service of temples. Their presence is evident in lists of household members and working crews on papyri, especially the ones of Kahun. A study of texts on funerary stele and other material of the time, shows that among 2600 people who appear on these objects, 800 were either themselves *Aamu* (*3m.w*) or had *Aam* (*3m*) relatives, or stood in some kind of —often job-related— connection with them. On a stele from Abydos, belonging to Amenyseneb, overseer of the monthly priesthood of a temple at Abydos, among 17 men and women whose figures are preserved, 3 are designated as *Aamu*: the brewer Iri, a female miller Senebit, and a man called Sobekiry. About 12% of workers portrayed in the tomb of Pahery, governor of El-Kab (c. -1480), were Asiatic (through representation of their heads).

To sum up, the arrival of Asiatics in Egypt, from the 12th dynasty, was the result of continuing immigration from Syria-Palestine, which is consistent with the biblical account (Gn 41:41-45,50-1; 46:5-7,27). We therefore should not talk of an 'invasion'. It is in such a context that has been described the Hyksos dynasties appeared.

⁹⁴ Tanis in Egypt (Ps 78:12) and Hebron in Canaan (Gn 23:2) have been founded and named by Abraham (Nb 13:22).

⁹⁵ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 553-554.

⁹⁶ B. MENU – Le papyrus du Brooklyn Museum n° 35.1446 et l'immigration syro-palestinienne sous le Moyen Empire
in: *Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne* 5 (2012) pp. 19-30.

⁹⁷ G. POSENER – Les asiatiques en Égypte sous les XIIIe et XIIIe dynasties
in: *Syria* 34:1-2 (1957) pp. 145-163.

⁹⁸ The tribe of Ephraim, as the largest group, represented all the Israelites (2Ch 25:7, Jr 7:15). It is therefore possible that the Egyptian term Apiru, "those of Aper" in Egyptian, has been used to designate the Ephraimites. The text of Genesis 41:50-52 connects the name Ephraim (duel form) to *biphrab* "made fruitful" and not to *epher* ('*aphar* means "dust"). The term *prw* ('Apiru) is rendered by *pru* in Ugaritic, *Ha-pi-rum* or *Ha-pi-ri* in some Akkadian proper names (HOCH pp. 61-63).

⁹⁹ D. ARNOLD – Image and Identity: Egypt's Eastern Neighbours, East Delta People and the Hyksos
in: *The Second Intermediate Period (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 192, 2010)* pp. 183-221.

Amidst the 35 texts¹⁰⁰ from stela dated to the period 1950-1700 BCE and over 75 instances of individuals of Asiatic ancestry, only 5 names may be of Semitic origin¹⁰¹, the rest being simply '3m "Asiatic" or derived from the Egyptian. For example, a text (dated c. 1830 BCE) reads: *His Majesty's proceeding in travelling northwards to overthrow the Mntw-St.t; [Bedouins of Negeb] his Majesty's arrival at the district of Skmm [Shechem]¹⁰², its name; his Majesty's making a good start in proceeding to the Residence, may it live, be prosperous and healthy. Then Shechem fell with the miserable Rtnw [Palestine], I acting as the army's rearguard. Then the soldiers of the army engaged to fight with the '3m.w [Asiatics]. Then I hit the '3m and I caused that his weapons be taken by 2 soldiers of the army, without desisting from fighting, my face was courageous and I did not turn my back on the '3m. As Senwosret [III] lives (for me), I have spoken in truth.* On a stela (dated c. -1750) an Egyptian worker from Byblos is called: *Hall-keeper of (goods) from Byblos (Kpni): Sebekherhab.* Pictorially, individuals labelled '3m are illustrated as Egyptians seated, kneeling or standing. Unfortunately, publications of most of the stelae are in grey-scale, restricting any comments on skin colour. Where coloured photographs are presented, no colour is preserved for the Asiatic men. A few Asiatics bear offerings, including ox legs, lotus stems, fowl as well as baskets or vessels. Three appear engaged in daily activities such as pouring beer, grinding grain and sowing seed. The stelae offer a significant insight into the Asiatics' acceptance of Egyptian traditions. The majority of identified Asiatic descendants are represented with Egyptian names, titles and dress, taking part in Egyptian daily activities and rituals. Two stelae owners are conclusively of Asiatic descent, leading to the proposition that such individuals also assumed Egyptian religious obligations by placing their stelae at Abydos. Furthermore, they appear familiar with Egyptian deities as apparent by the utilisation of offering formulae expressing their devotion to Osiris, Anubis, Geb and Hapy.

The 35 texts present substantial evidence on the status of Asiatics within Egyptian society. They illustrate: 1) A slight increase in the number of Asiatics during the 13th Dynasty and early Second Intermediate Period, perhaps resulting in 'hybrid' artistic fusions reaching Abydos; 2) The presence of Asiatics, both male and female, working and living among Egyptians of mid to high social rank; 3) The acceptance of Asiatics in the social, administrative and military spheres; 4) Asiatics partaking in Egyptian religious duties and daily activities; 5) The artistic representations of Asiatics as Egyptians; 6) A lack of bellicose representations of Asiatics after Senwosret III's reign and 7) The elite's control of trade with the north, particularly the Northern Levant, during the 13th Dynasty.

Abydos was certainly accessible to Asiatics, a few of whom placed their own stelae at the site following popular Egyptian traditions. They were employed within the Egyptian administration, holding titles involved with private households as well as the local administration and workforce. Some may also have resided in Egypt for over three generations, adopting particular aspects of the Egyptian culture and intermingling with the local population without abandoning their own ancestry. The Egyptians accepted the foreign lineage of their neighbours and did not represent them in a derogatory way. Despite records of conflict over the borders, the situation within Egypt marks mutual work and family relations. Descendants of Asiatics were recognised for their contributions and were most probably encountered on a daily basis, in typical situations and, at the very least, by middle to high ranking individuals within Egypt as far south as Abydos. Therefore, the stela convey considerable data on the rising status and recognition of the Asiatic population, noting that, in the time preceding the rise of the Hyksos, Abydos was more than familiar with Asiatic descendants—it was also visited by them.

¹⁰⁰ A.-L. MOURAD – Asiatics and Abydos from the Twelfth Dynasty to the Early Second Intermediate Period in: *The Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology* Vol. 24 (2013) pp. 31-58.

¹⁰¹ Ama ('Imi) "Mama"; Aba ('Ibi) "Papa"; Dudi (?) ('Dwḏj) "my beloved one"; Gbgb (?) ; 'i (?) and maybe a sixth name: Aper ('ḫr).

¹⁰² Shechem is written Skmm (instead of Skm) as in Execration Texts (dated c. 1950 BCE).

The Second Intermediate Period [S.I.P.] encompasses the 13th to the 17th Dynasties but this arrangement is primarily a product of the Manetho tradition. Nowhere does Manetho's reputation suffer more than in his coverage of the S.I.P., that amorphous historical stretch bridging the gap between the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 18th Dynasty. Not only does his dynastic chronology stray wildly out of bounds for this period, but the three surviving versions of his history — in Josephus, Africanus and Eusebius — radically disagree with each other as to which kings and which political groups ruled which dynasties and how long each of the dynasties lasted (Josephus' version could be the more reliable). Manetho originally had a group of 32 Hyksos kings in Xoïs and 6 Hyksos kings who established their capital in the city of Avaris. They reigned 103 years according to Eusebius' version. And 37 Theban kings, perhaps identically, following the arrangement in the Turin Canon of Kings, which had 32 Hyksos kings preceding the 6 six Great Hyksos kings who reigned 108 years and 37 or 38 Theban kings following afterwards¹⁰³.

Despite numerous errors and their incomplete state, the existence of such lists shows that these royal dynasties were considered Egyptian. The ranking of dynasties is in chronological order, each dynasty being linked to a capital. Archaeological remains¹⁰⁴ have confirmed Manetho's report, except for Xoïs (its name *ḥ3smw* is close to the word "foreigners" in Egyptian). The first capital of the Hyksos was Tanis. This is deduced from the presence of sphinxes and royal statues dated the Middle Kingdom (12th and 13th dynasties) found in the sanctuary of Amon, the latest relic of this period being the statue of Sobekhotep IV¹⁰⁵ (1686-1677). This is consistent with the biblical account which located the settlement of the Hebrews in the land of Goshen, also referred to as the "Field of Tanis" (Gn 45:10; 47:11; Ps 78:12, 43), called "Field or marshland of Tanis (*D'(n)w*)" in Egyptian¹⁰⁶. The city of Tanis would have been founded by Amenemhat I¹⁰⁷. According to the Bible, after arriving in Canaan at 75 years old (in 1963 BCE), Abraham would have changed the name of Kiriath-arba "city of four" into Hebron "joining" (Gn 23:1) and then, 7 years later, would found the Egyptian city of Tanis (Nb 13:22). Despite the fact that data regarding Tanis are few it is possible to reconstruct its past precisely enough.

In order to better control southern Canaan and northern Egypt under tension at that time¹⁰⁸, Amenemhat I moved his capital (Thebes) to Itjtawy during his 20th year of reign and appointed his son (Senusret I) as co-regent, he also claims to have built Bubastis, Khatana (Qantir) and Tanis. According to the Bible, Tanis (San el-Hagar), former capital of the Hyksos, was founded in 1957 BCE, 7 years after Hebron. This town had to have been founded by Abram (in cooperation with Amenemhat I) because the name Tanis, *Šo'an* in Hebrew (*Sa-a-nu* in Assyrian), means "moving tents" (Is 33:20), whereas in Egyptian *Da'an* (Djaân) means nothing. Qantir is believed to mark what was probably the ancient site of Ramses II's great capital, Pi-Ramses or Per-Ramses. The ancient site of Avaris is about 2 km south of Qantir. Later on, Avaris was absorbed by Pi-Ramses. 'Tanis' history is very poorly known. In the *Report of Wenamon* (dated 1085 BCE) Tanis is written *Da'an*, however in *The Pleasures of Fishing and Fowling* (dated c. 1400 BCE) we read (line 14)¹⁰⁹: *Sehet-Da'an*

¹⁰³ G. GREENBERG – Manetho. A Study in Egyptian Chronology
Pennsylvania 2004 Marco Polo Monographs pp. 103-144.

¹⁰⁴ M. DESSOUDREIX – Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne
Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 169-177.

¹⁰⁵ J. LECLANT – Tanis. L'or des pharaons
Paris 1987. Éd. Ministère des affaires étrangères pp. 183-187.

¹⁰⁶ D. VALBELLE – Tanis
in: Dictionnaire de l'Antiquité sous la direction de Jean Leclant 2005 Éd. PUF p. 2123.

¹⁰⁷ N. GRIMAL – Histoire de l'Égypte ancienne
Paris 1988 Éd. Fayard p. 212.

¹⁰⁸ This tension came from Chedorlaomer, a powerful Elamite king (see Dating the Chedorlaomer's death).

¹⁰⁹ R.A. CAMINOS – Literary Fragments in the Hieratic Script
Oxford 1956 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 19-20.

"Field of Tanis", the same expression as in Psalm 78, which appears in the sequence *[Sh̥t]-D'w* (*Fields of Tanis*), *Hwt-w'rt* (*Avaris*), *Rhty* (?). It is precisely the same sequence: *Sh̥t-D'(n)*, *Hwt-w'rt*, *Rhty* that we find in the geographical procession in Ramses II's temple. The 400 Year Stela, found at Tanis, is a large slab of stone erected (c. 1280 BCE) by Ramses II to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the establishment of the reign of the god "Seth, Great of Power, the Ombite (the Baal or "Lord" of the Hyksos)". A paleographical study of the name *D'(n)*¹¹⁰ shows that this toponym must go back to the end of the Old Kingdom¹¹¹. The city of Tanis must have been founded at the beginning of the 12th dynasty because the statues of almost all the sovereigns of this dynasty, including Amenemhat I, remained there in that city. However, apart from the doorways erected in Bubastis, Khatana and Wadi Natrûn, Amenemhat did not leave any other buildings in the Delta¹¹². From an inscription unearthed in Khatana, alongside a statue depicting Amenemhat sitting, it is clear that the king was responsible for erecting a building here to which the door gave entrance. In addition one of the officials who lived under the reign of Amenemhat made a stela in which the 3rd line reads: *year 20[? under] the majesty of..* that enables us to date the building in 1957 BCE. Seeing that the doorway is still in its original place and that during the reign of Amenemhat I and Senusret III who were concerned with the doorway, the district was flourishing. Given that the doorway is still lying near its original place, we can suppose it was the same for Tanis where there was also a statue depicting Amenemhat I sitting. The few buildings built by Amenemhat I in the Delta were built to win the sympathy of the people in this region because of the prophecy of Neferty¹¹³. The famous prophecy of Neferty could be related to the 400-year prophecy given to Abraham: *Then He [God] said to Abram: Know for certain that your offspring will be foreigners in a land not theirs and that the people there will enslave them and afflict them for 400 years. But I will judge the nation they will serve, and after that they will go out with many goods* (Gn 15:13-14).

The comparison of archaeological data with the Turin Canon list shows that the Hyksos dynasties (14th, 15th and 16th) should be in parallel¹¹⁴:

| Period | Length (Turin King-list) | Egyptian Dynasty | | Asiatic Dynasty | |
|-------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------|--------------|
| | | | | (Capital) | King |
| 1975-1778 | 213 years | 12 th (Lisht/ [Memphis]) | Vizier | | |
| 1778-1750? | [?] | 13 th (Lisht/ [Memphis]) | Vizier | | |
| 1750?-1680? | | | Vizier | 14 th (Tanis) | Hyksos |
| 1680?-1572? | 108 years | | - | 15 th (Avaris) | Great Hyksos |
| 1572?-1530 | [?] | 17 th (Thebes) | - | 16 th (Edfu?) | Thebans |
| 1530-1295 | | 18 th (Thebes) | Vizier | | |

Chronological reconstruction of the Second Intermediate Period is very uncertain, including the succession of kings¹¹⁵, it is based on the following elements:

¹¹⁰ The absence in writing would suggest a nasalized letter (ã for an), like Sheshãq instead of Sheshanq.

¹¹¹ J. YOYOTTE – Conférence de M. Jean Yoyotte
in: *Annuaire École Pratique des Hautes Études* Tome 91 (1982-1983), p. 220.

¹¹² L. HABACHI – Khatâ'na-Qantir importance
in: *Annales du service des antiquités de l'Égypte* Tome LII (1954), pp. 443-458.

¹¹³ G. POSENER – Littérature et politique dans l'Égypte de la XIII^e dynastie
Paris 1956 Éd. Librairie ancienne Honoré Champion pp. 38-40.

¹¹⁴ T. SCHNEIDER – Ausländer in Ägypten während des Mittleren Reiches und der Hyksoszeit
in: *Ägypten und Altes Testament* 42, Wiesbaden 1998 Ed. Harrassowitz Verlag pp. 123-145.

P. VERNUS, J. YOYOTTE – Dictionnaire des pharaons
Paris 1998 Éd. Noësis pp. 63, 185-186.

¹¹⁵ K.S.B. RYHOLT – The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period
Copenhagen 1997 Ed. The Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies pp. 184-201.

J. VON BECKERATH – Chronologie des Pharaonischen Ägypten
Mainz 1997 ed. Verlag Philipp von Zabern pp. 126-137.

T. SCHNEIDER – Ausländer in Ägypten während des Mittleren Reiches und der Hyksoszeit
in: *Ägypten und Altes Testament* 42, Wiesbaden 1998 Ed. Harrassowitz Verlag pp. 33-54,70.

- The end of the 12th Dynasty (1975-1778) corresponds to the beginning of the 13th Dynasty (1778-1750?).
- The beginning of the 18th Dynasty (1530-1295) corresponds to the end of the 17th Dynasty (1572?-1530).
- The 15th dynasty of the Great Hyksos (1680?-1572?) lasted about 108 years (Turin King-list). According to Herodotus, the Egyptians did not want to remember this period perceived by them as harmful and which had lasted 106 years (The Histories II:128).
- According to the "Stela of year 400", found at Tanis, the 15th dynasty (Great Hyksos) would begin around 1680 BCE, 400 years prior Ramses II (1283-1216).
- The three Hyksos dynasties succeeded one another over time without overlapping, according to the Turin Canon: 14th (1750?-1680?), 15th (1680?-1572?), 16th (1572?-1530).

The Stela of year 400, made under Ramses II, apparently refers to the Sethian dynasty of the Hyksos, 400 years earlier. The interpretation of this stela is controversial because it represents the vizier Sety (grandfather of Sety I, father of Ramses II), commemorating the event¹¹⁶. The Stela seems to have been made by Ramses to support an honourable affiliation with an ancient dynasty, because the cult of Seth, likened to the Baal of the Hyksos, was not widespread among the Egyptians. In addition, the system of eras was unused. It is possible that Ramses had imitated the previous era under the auspices of Horemheb, a predecessor, because a trial in the year 18 of Ramses II is dated in the year 59 of Horemheb¹¹⁷. Ramses seems to have connected his reign to his predecessor whose name Sethos I referred to the god Seth. The era of Ramses II would be a continuation of a prestigious past, which would place the establishment of the cult of Seth/Baal around 1680 BCE, if one counts from Ramses II's reign. In fact, Seth is completely absent from the titular of Ramses II and its worship appears¹¹⁸ only after the Battle of Kadesh and from the construction of the temple of Abu Simbel started in year 5 of his reign (in 1279 BCE).

The chronological data on the Hyksos period are few, but they overlap quite well. The Egyptian priest Manetho, who wrote around 280 BCE, indicates that the Hyksos ruled Egypt from Pharaoh Toutimaïos (Doudimes?) and they were expelled by the Pharaoh Ahmose (1530-1505). Eusebius (Preparatio Evangelica IX:27:3-5) quotes Artapan's book entitled: The Jews (written around 200 BCE), explaining that the region above Memphis was divided into various kingdoms under Pharaoh [Sobekhotep IV] Chenephres (1685-1676). The information is accurate, because the royal activities during the 13th dynasty are attested until the end Sobekhotep IV's reign, the most prestigious king of this dynasty¹¹⁹, further to the north of Thebes rather than Thebes itself (the capital of Egypt remains Lisht until the end of the dynasty). From this pharaoh, titles acquired a military bearing; they pertain to security and replace the character of administrative function of titles from the late Middle Kingdom. Similarly, the evolution of sculpture — relief and full relief — can follow an obvious loss of interest in quality. All these changes could be explained by the presence of Asiatic dynasties, especially the Hyksos dynasty.

There is no consensus about the reconstruction of the 13th Dynasty. The only document available to restore it is the Turin King-list, despite its very incomplete state and numerous errors¹²⁰ (durations of missing reigns are supposed to be on average of 5 years =

¹¹⁶ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 252-253.

¹¹⁷ Mes's inscription (*Untersuchungen zur Geschichte und Altertumskunde Ägyptens* 4 p. 3) describes a complaint declared during the year 18 of Ramses II, which is finally recorded and dated in the year 59 of Horemheb. The only plausible explanation for this anomaly is to assume that the reign of Horemheb was extended posthumously, year 28 being followed by years 1-2 of Ramses I, which became years 29-30 of Horemheb, then by years 1-11 of Sety I (years 31-41 of Horemheb) and finally by years 1-18 of Ramses II (years 42-59 of Horemheb).

¹¹⁸ C. DESROCHES NOBLECOURT – Ramsès II La véritable histoire
Paris 1996 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 185-189, 370-372.

¹¹⁹ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 123, 140, 159-160.

¹²⁰ The last vizier was Iymeru, from Sobekhotep III to Sobekhotep IV, and the next vizier was Yuy, from Ahmose to Thutmose I.

118/24). Regarding the 17th Dynasty the agreement is slightly better¹²¹, but the duration of reigns is far from certain (there is no more vizier between Se-hetepibre and Ahmose)¹²²:

| | 12 th Dynasty | | Length | Reign |
|----|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| 7 | Amenemhat IV | Maakherure | 9 years 4 months | 1791-1782 |
| 8 | Neferusebek | Sebekkare | 3 years 11 months | 1782- 1778 |
| | 13 th Dynasty | | | |
| 1 | Wegaf | Khutawyre | 1 | 2 years 3 months |
| 2 | Amenemhat V son of Senebef | Sekhemkare | 2 | 4? years |
| 3 | (Ameny)-Qemau | Amenemhat | | [5 years] |
| 4 | Sehetepibre I | | | [5 years] |
| 5 | Iufni | - | 3 | 1? month |
| 6 | (Ameny-Antef)-Amenemhat VI | Seankhibre | | [5 years] |
| 7 | Nebnun | Semenkare | 4 | 1? month |
| 8 | Hornedjheritef | Se-hetepibre <i>son of Asiatics</i> | | [5 years] |
| 9 | Sewadjkare | (14 th Dynasty) | | [5 years] |
| 10 | Nedjemibre | | 5 | 7 months |
| 11 | Sobekhotep I | Khaankhre | 6 | 3+ years |
| 12 | Renseneb | - | 7 | 4 months |
| 13 | Hor I | Awibre | | [5 years] |
| 14 | (Kaï)-Amenemhat VII | Sedjefakare | 8 | 7 years |
| 15 | (Amenemhat)-Sobekhotep II | Sekhemre-Khutawy | 9 | 6+ years |
| 16 | Khendjer | Weserkare | 10 | 4+ years |
| 17 | Semenkhkare | | | [5 years] |
| 18 | Antef IV | Sehetepkare | | [5 years] |
| 19 | Seth | [-]ibre | 11 | 3+ years |
| 20 | Sobekhotep III | Sekhemre-Sewadjtawy | 12 | 4 years 2 months |
| 21 | Neferhotep I | Khasekhemre | 13 | 11 years 4? months |
| 22 | Sahathor | - | 14 | 1+ month |
| 23 | Sobekhotep IV | Khaneferre (15 th Dynasty) | 15 | 8+ years |
| 24 | Sobekhotep V | Merhetepre | 16 | 4 years 8 months |
| 25 | Sobekhotep VI | Khahetepre | 17 | 2 years 2 months |
| 26 | Ibia | Wahibre | 20 | 10 years 8 months |
| 27 | Aï | Merneferre | 18 | 23? years 8 months |
| 28 | Ani | Merhetepre | 19 | 2 years 4? months |
| 29 | Sewadjtu | Seankhenre | 21 | 3 years 2+ months |
| 30 | Neferhotep II Ined | Mersekhemre | 22 | 3 years 1 month |
| 31 | Hori | Sewadjkare | 23 | 5 years |
| 32 | Sobekhotep VII | Merkaure | 24 | 2 years |
| 33 | | total: | | 118 years |
| | | (Apopi) | | (1613-1573) |
| 50 | ?? | (16 th Dynasty) | | [3 years] |
| | 17 th Dynasty | | | |
| 1 | Rahotep | Sekhemra-wahkhau | | [3 years?] |
| 2 | Sobekemsaf I | Sekhemra-Shedtawy | | [2 years?] |
| 3 | Sobekemsaf II | Sekhemra-wadjkhau | | [10 years?] |
| 4 | Antef VI | Sekhemra-wepmaat | | [2 years?] |
| 5 | Antef VII | Nubkheperre | | [10 years?] |
| 6 | Antef VIII | Sekhemra-Heruhhermaat | | - |
| 7 | Ahmose (Iahmes) | Senakhtenre | | [1 year?] |
| 8 | Taa | Sequenre | | 11 years |
| 9 | Kamose | Wadjkheperre | | 2 years 11 months |
| | 18 th Dynasty | | | |
| 1 | Ahmose | Nebpehtyre | | 25 years 4 months |
| 2 | Amenhotep I | Djeserkare | | 20 years 7 months |

¹²¹ D. POLZ – New Archaeological Data from Dra' Abu el-Naga and their Historical Implications in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) pp. 343-352.

¹²² K.S.B. RYHOLT - The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period Copenhagen 1997 Ed. The Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies pp. 203-204.

There is no consensus to precisely restore the chronology of the 15th Dynasty, with the exception of Apopi, its last Hyksos king, who is well attested and reigned about 4[1] years¹²³ according to the Turin king-list. The Khyan sealings found at Edfu, in the same context together with those of Sobekhotep IV (1686-1677), attest a (non-violent !) contact between the Hyksos (15th Dynasty) and Upper Egypt¹²⁴ (13th Dynasty) at that time.

| Manetho | No. | 14 th Dynasty | (Turin King-list) | Capital | Length | Reign |
|--------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|--------------------|---------|-------------|-----------|
| ? | 1 | [?] | | | | 1750? - |
| | 6 | Nehesy | Aasehre | Tanis | 0 year [-] | |
| ? | 24 | [?] | | | [1 year] | -1680 |
| 15th Dynasty | | | | | | |
| Salitis | 1 | | | Avaris | [12 years] | 1680 - |
| Bnon | 2 | [Šamqenu?] | | | [12 years] | |
| | 3 | [‘Aper-‘Anati?] | | | [12 years] | |
| | 4 | [Sakir-Har?] | | | [12 years] | |
| Arpachan | 5 | [Khyan?] | [Suserunere] | Avaris | 20? years | 1632-1613 |
| Apophis | 6 | [Apopi] | [Aauserre] | Avaris | 4[1 years?] | 1613-1573 |
| | - | Khamudi | hotepibre | | [1? year] | - |
| 16th Dynasty | | | | | | |
| ? | 2 | Djehuty | Sekhemresegmentawy | Edfu | 3 years | 1571-1568 |
| ? | 5 | Mentuhotepi | Sankhenre | Edfu | 1 year [-] | 1567-1566 |
| ? | 15 | [?] | | | [1 year] | -1530 |

Many kings not listed in the Turin King-list are difficult to classify among the five dynasties of the Second Intermediate Period (XIII to XVII), including those who are considered misclassified. King Aasehre Nehesy, for example, belonging to the 14th dynasty, is attested by several documents unearthed at Tanis, Tell el-Moqdam, Bubastis, Tell el-Daba (Avaris) and Tell el-Hebua (Tjaru) and King Mentuhopeti Seankhere, belonging to the 16th dynasty, is attested by two big sphinxes, unearthed at Edfu, and a fragmentary stele found at Karnak on which it is written: *[king] beloved by his army, his authority is strong; decisions which one lives (...) to submit all foreign countries (...) I am a king before Thebes, this my city, mistress of the whole country, the victorious city (...) more than any other city*¹²⁵. The sentence “submit all foreign countries” seems to refer to the Asiatics residing in Egypt.

Very surprisingly, Hyksos pharaohs of the 15th dynasty were considered Egyptian since a manuscript¹²⁶, dated to the Third Intermediate Period, lists two of them in the following order: Shareq (3,6), Apopi (3,5), then Ahmose (3,4) and Amenhotep I (3,2). The role and the titulary of these pharaohs are very particular. Aldred¹²⁷, says in effect: *The feudal rulers, who had shared power with Pharaoh at the beginning of the 12th dynasty, had been replaced towards the end of it, by the mayors of various localities, whose main charge was collect taxes. At the Hyksos Period, these mayors were working under the direction of the great chancellors of Lower Egypt. Common use had strengthened this traditional system, and that is why it was adopted by Ahmose who made it supervised by a vizier (t3ty) of Lower Egypt and a vizier of Upper Egypt, each with their headquarters in the proper capital. In Nubia and in*



¹²³ T. SCHNEIDER -Ausländer in Ägypten während des Mittleren Reiches und der Hyksoszeit in: *Ägypten und Altes Testament* 42, Wiesbaden 1998 Ed. Harrassowitz Verlag pp. 57-75.

¹²⁴ N. MOELLER, G. MAROUARD -Discussion of late Middle Kingdom and early Second Intermediate Period History and Chronology in: *Ägypten und Levante* XXI (Wien 2011) pp. 108-111.

¹²⁵ C. VANDERSLEYEN -L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2 Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France, pp. 168-188.

¹²⁶ C. BARBOTIN -Ahmose et le début de la XVIII^e dynastie Paris 2008 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 58,59.

¹²⁷ C. ALDRED -Akhenaton Paris 1997 Éd. Seuil pp. 132-133.

*Kush, the administration born during the Second Intermediate Period was headed by a prince of Kush independent, who ruled with the help of officials apparently of Egyptian origin. This administration was headed by a bureaucratic government headed by a military leader who continued to be called "ruler (ḥq3)" before becoming "Ruler of Kush" and be appointed by the pharaoh as his viceroy (...) In fact the office of Pharaoh saw its nature turn with the rivalry that had developed between the Hyksos kings and princes of Thebes. Thus during the 17th Dynasty, there was, besides the pharaoh, a Ruler of Kush (ḥq3 n Ks)¹²⁸ in the south, a vassal king regarded as a viceroy of Egypt, and a Hyksos king in the north (Delta), considered a co-regent because of his royal titulary which appears sometimes on some scarabs or monuments. However, this criterion is not absolute because some powerful nomarchs at Abydos¹²⁹ also adopted this kind of titulary: first name (enthronement name) then family name (birth name) preceded by the words "son of Râ", both names being written in cartouches. The Hyksos kings were not vassal kings but co-regents because their names on scarabs or monuments are never preceded by the official title: *nsw bity* "king of Upper and Lower Egypt" (except Apopi) and they have no document dated with years of reign (except Apopi, year 33).*

The Hyksos kings, such as Egyptian governors, were appointed directly by the Pharaoh. After the restoration of the unity of Egypt by Mentuhotep II at the 11th Dynasty, first kings of the 12th dynasty reorganized a provincial administration similar to the one of the Old Kingdom. Despite the decentralization of the provincial administration, the Residence still occupied a prominent place in the appointment and training of nomarchs who often spend a part of their career in the Residence before being appointed in the provinces¹³⁰. During the Old Kingdom, a time when Abraham is supposed to have lived, kings of Egypt were regularly referred to as 'Residence (*ḥnm*)' and sometimes by the word pharaoh (*per-âa*) meaning "Great domain"¹³¹ (*pr-ʿ3*), because Egyptian government was confused with the place where the king resided. For example, when Sinuhe, an Egyptian official, arrived in Palestine, a ruler of Upper Retenu (*ḥq3 pw n Rtnw hrt*) who welcomes him asked: *Has something happened to the Residence?* (The Tale of Sinuhe §§ 54-58). The Hyksos kings acted as a representative of the pharaoh. The Egyptian title "representative (*idmw*)" is misleading because it might serve to designate any high representative, including the Pharaoh himself, such as the viceroy of Kush¹³², which put him almost on a par with the pharaoh. Horemheb, for example, first ruled Egypt with the title of *idmw* "representative [of Pharaoh]" received from his predecessor (Tutankhamun), during the first 14 years of his reign¹³³, before taking the conventional title 'King (*nsw bity*)'. The enthronement of Joseph in the Bible is a good example of this procedure: *And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a gold chain about his neck; And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Abrek [pay attention?]; and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnathpaaneah ["The god said: He will live"]; and he gave him to wife Asenath [ns-n.t "she belongs to Neith"] the daughter of Potipherah [p3-di-p3-r- "the one has given Ra"] priest of On (imnw Heliopolis).*

¹²⁸ S. KUBISCH – Biographies of the Thirteenth to Seventeenth Dynasties

in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) p. 323.

¹²⁹ For example these three nomarchs: Wepwawtemsaf, Pentjeny and Senââib.

¹³⁰ É. MARTINET – Le Nomarque sous l'Ancien Régime

Paris 2011 Éd. Presses de l'université Paris-Sorbonne pp. 233-235.

¹³¹ A. ROCCATI – La littérature historique sous l'ancien empire égyptien

in: LAPO 11 Paris 1982 Éd. Cerf pp. 134-135, 191-195, 309.

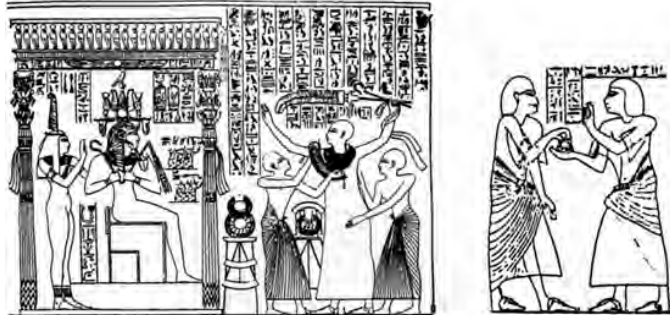
¹³² The Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 2, Part 1

Cambridge 1973 Ed. Cambridge University Press pp. 348-349.

¹³³ W.J. MURNANE – Ancient Egyptian Coregencies

in: *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* Vol. 16 (1979) p. 189.

And Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt (...) So Joseph went and told Pharaoh, 'My father and brothers have arrived from Canaan with their flocks and all they have come from the land of Canaan. Here they are, in the region of Goshen.' He had taken five of his brothers, and he now presented them to Pharaoh (...) Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: They may stay in the region of Goshen, and if you know of any capable men among them, you must appoint them chiefs of livestock over what is mine. Jacob and his sons went to Egypt where Joseph was (Gn 41:41-45; 47:1-6). There is no trace of Joseph in Egyptian documents¹³⁴, but the investiture ceremony is consistent with Egyptian customs that describe the enthronement of a vizier, second person of State (opposite figure), robed in fine linen, receiving his gold collar and signet-seal of office¹³⁵.



The biblical account is consistent with linguistics, geography (the capital of Egypt was located in the north until early in the 17th dynasty) and timescale, since the date of Joseph's co-regency (1758-1744) is at the time of Pharaoh Amenemhat VI (1760?-1755?). It is known that Amenemhat V (1776?-1770?), a predecessor, ruled the north of Egypt, because a stela to his name has been found in the Nile Delta (in Athribis) and a successor, Hetepibre Hornedjheritef (1755-1750?), has his name preceded by his affiliation *sa aamu* "son of Asiatics (plural)". Also known is the pyramid of King Ameny *Aamu*. A baton of command bearing the name Hotepibre was found at Ebla (Syria). On the site of Tell el-Dab'a (Avaris), Bietak has uncovered¹³⁶ a vast palace whose existence was brief, a few years at most, and it had not even been completed. This building dates from the beginning of the 13th Dynasty. Various details — including the discovery of a cylinder seal "Ruler of Retenu" in a style typically Syrian, lack of foundation deposits, remains of offerings of animals in a circular pit — are foreign to Egyptian habits and make one think of Asia and a Canaanite influence. This palace could be the 'summer residence' of the king of Egypt *son of aamu*, Hetepibre, whose statue was found 100 meters away¹³⁷. The pharaohs of the 13th dynasty ruled Lower Egypt so until Pharaoh Sobekhotep IV (1686-1677), but the eastern part of the Delta was under Asiatic influence. If the Pharaohs of the 13th Dynasty had brief reigns, their viziers exerted their function over periods apparently longer. However, only few viziers of the early 13th dynasty, until Sobekhotep IV, are known¹³⁸.

The very short duration of reign of the kings belonging to the 14th and 16th dynasties involves more a position of super nomarch than king. Only kings of the 15th Dynasty have comparable power to the kings of Egypt. The name of Egyptian nomes of Lower Egypt¹³⁹ confirm the existence of regions where Asiatics (Canaanites, Syrians, Israelites, etc.) were inhabiting. For example, the nome No. 8, capital Pithom (Tell el-Maskhutah) is called "Oriental harpoon" (*hnmw i3btj*), the nome No. 13, capital Heliopolis (El-Matariyah), is called "Orient Prince of Levant" (*hq3 'ndm*) and the nome No. 14, capital Tjaru (Tell Hebua), is called "Orient" (*i3b.t*). Avaris (Tell el-Dab'a), Bubastis (Tell Basta) and Tanis (San el-Hagar) were in the northern part of the nome No. 13.

¹³⁴ However, Hebrew names were often replaced by Egyptian names.

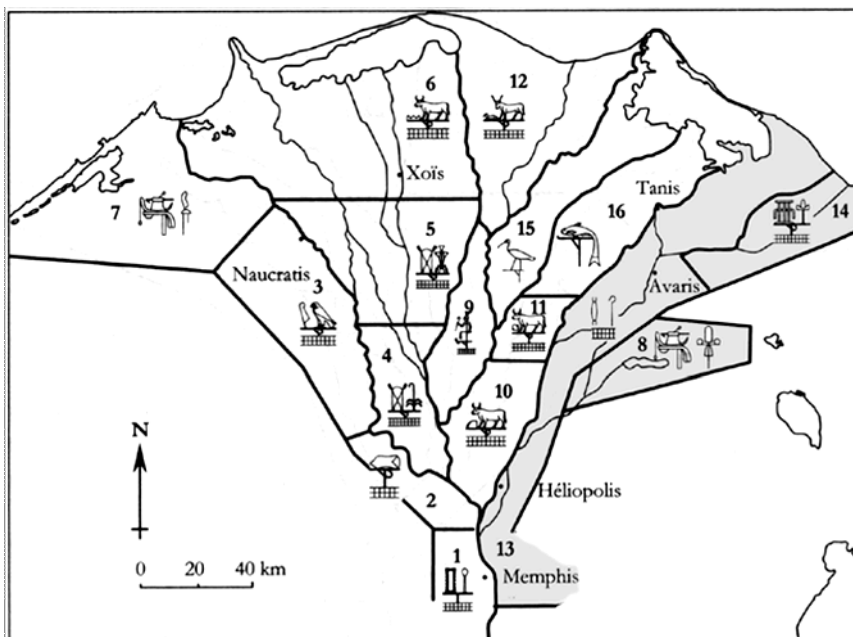
¹³⁵ K.A. KITCHEN – On the Reliability of the Old Testament Cambridge 2003 Ed. Eerdmans Publishing Company p. 640.

¹³⁶ Most of sealing impressions found in Avaris bear the name of King Khyan and one possible Apopi (I. FORSTNER-MÜLLER, M. BIETAK, M. LEHMANN, C. REALI -Report on the Excavations at Tell El-Daba'a 2011).

¹³⁷ C. VANDERSLEYEN – L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France p. 129.

¹³⁸ S. QUIRKE – Middle Kingdom Studies New Malden 1991 Ed. SIA Publishing pp. 123-139.

¹³⁹ M. DESSOUDÉIX – Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 755-775.



The remains of Hyksos kings in Egypt are few for at least 2 reasons: these foreign kings, having had only a limited power in Egypt (mainly in the Delta), would hardly have constructed monuments, in addition, the departure of the Hyksos into Palestine having affected the following pharaohs very badly all their works were either destroyed or severely mutilated as shows this statue (opposite figure) of a Hyksos dignitary, dated in the beginning of the 14th dynasty, identified thanks to his hair and the cross on his shoulder¹⁴⁰. The Museum of Antiquities in Cairo also has a Middle Kingdom funerary mask¹⁴¹ of the Hyksos period from which identifying indicia are gone, however the outstanding representation of a beard on a sarcophagus is a typically Semitic practice.



According to Manfred Bietak¹⁴², Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos (250 ha), was composed of at least 30,000 inhabitants, most of them being Asiatics. It appears that they collaborated harmoniously with the Egyptians. Archaeological excavations have also revealed their link with the south of Palestine¹⁴³. Thus, the weapons found in the tombs of Tell el Dab'a (site of Avaris) have a Syro-Palestinian origin for 80% of them. Similarly, 74% of the pottery had been imported from Southern Palestine. The Hyksos did not mummify their dead, unlike the Egyptians, thus indicating a different conception of the afterlife. The information given by Josephus has proved so reliable, again, the biblical details regarding the manufacture of bricks made of clay and straw, the frames of acacia, are indeed typical of Egypt, but unknown in Palestine. There was found at Avaris the effigy of Imeni (looks like Amen "faithful"), a Hyksos officer (recognizable by



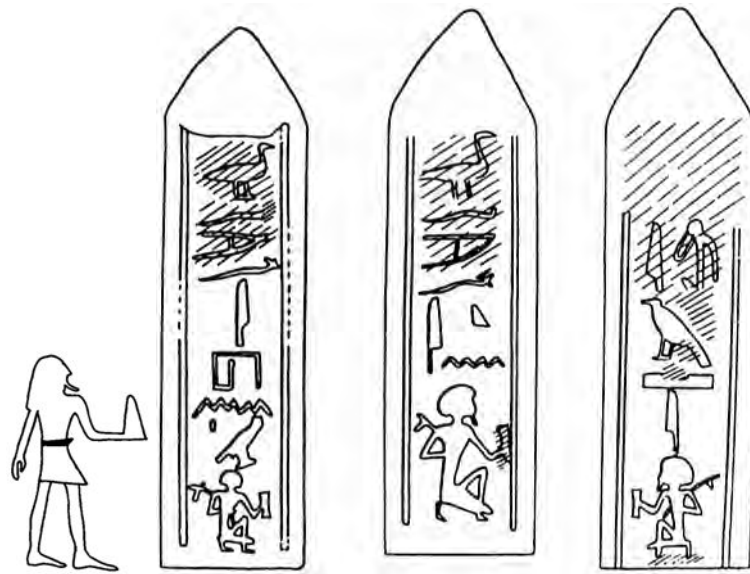
¹⁴⁰ BASOR 281 (1991) pp. 34,49,50.

¹⁴¹ Referenced TR 7.9.33.1.

¹⁴² M. BIETAK – From Where Came the Hyksos and Where did they go? in: The Second Intermediate Period (*Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 192, 2010) pp. 148-149.

¹⁴³ C. BOOTH - The Hyksos Period in Egypt Buckinghamshire 2005 Ed. Shire Publications pp. 1-53.

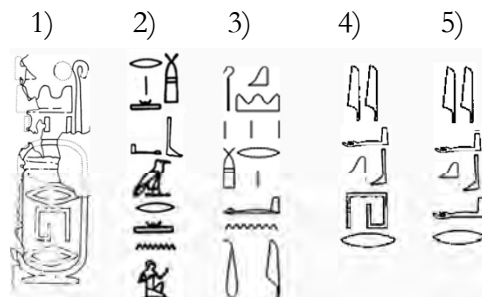
his beard), who seems proud to be Asiatic. On a small obelisk from Serabit el-Khadim we can see representations of Western Asiatic soldiers holding duckbill axes.



Geographical and chronological data¹⁴⁴ provided by biblical and Egyptian accounts (a people from Syria-Palestine arrived in Egypt around 1750 BCE and left about 1530 BCE) so well overlap. The archaeological reports of Bietak show that Semites of Syria-Palestine reached Avaris from the 13th dynasty, then disappeared at the beginning of the 18th dynasty. Historical evidence of the Hyksos, despite some uncertainties and inconsistencies are therefore quite consistent¹⁴⁵.

What was the language of the Hyksos and what was their religion? Analysis of their names¹⁴⁶ allows one to answer these two questions. The native language of the Hyksos would have been Old Canaanite and they (for the most part) would have worshipped Baal and not Seth, its Egyptian counterpart, because no theophoric name refers to Seth. For example, several name include the term baal such as Baal-Tuya or [Ab]i-baal. This is particularly evident among the names of the Hyksos rulers¹⁴⁷:

- 1) Hyksos Sakar-El / Sokar-her (*s-k-r-b-r*)
- 2) Aper-Baal (*pr-b-ʿ3-r*)
- 3) Hyksos Aper-Anati (*pr-ʿn-ti*)
- 4) Yaqub-El / Yaqub-her (*y-ʿq-b-b-r*)
- 5) Yaqub-Baal (*y-ʿq-b-ʿr*)



¹⁴⁴ W.G. DEVER/ J.M. WEINSTEIN - The Chronology of Syria-Palestine in the Second Millenium B.C.E.
in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 288 (1992) pp. 1-21; 27-38.

D. HENIGE - Comparative Chronology and the Ancient Near East
in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 261 (1986) pp. 57-65.

¹⁴⁵ J. YOYOTTE - Dictionnaire de la civilisation égyptienne
Paris 1998 Éd. Hazan pp. 108,109.

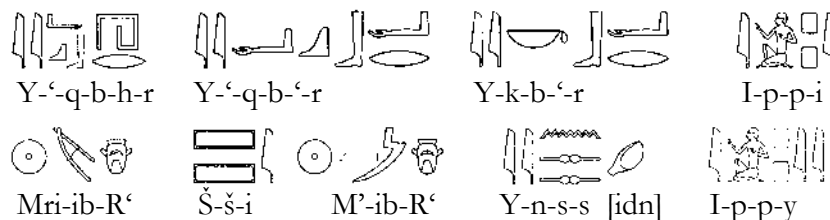
J. ASSMANN - Moïse l'Égyptien
Paris 2001 Éd. Flammarion pp. 76-78.

D. REDFORD - The Hyksos Invasion in History and Tradition
in: *Orientalia* 39 (1970) pp. 1-51.

¹⁴⁶ W.C. HAYES - A Papyrus of the Late Middle Kingdom in the Brooklyn Museum
Brooklyn 1955 Éd. The Brooklyn Museum pp. 87-99.

¹⁴⁷ M. DESSOUDÉIX - Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne
Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 221-223.

Some Hyksos names transcribed into hieroglyphs are of Semitic origin (especially those beginning with y)¹⁴⁸, but others are Egyptian. It is often difficult to separate them because the phonetic transcription of these names is often approximate and fluctuating:



- a. Yaqub-Baal (*y-‘q-b-‘r*) is clearly of Canaanite origin because it has no meaning in Egyptian, but it means: "Supplanter [is the] Master" in Old Hebrew¹⁴⁹. It should be noted that Ya‘qub-El (*Ia-ah-qu-ub-el*) appears repeatedly in Lower Mesopotamia at the time of King Manana¹⁵⁰, a contemporary of Sumu-El (1799-1771), a king of Larsa¹⁵¹.
- b. Yaqub-El / Yaqub-her (*y-‘q-b-h-r* but *y-‘q-b-i-r* in Thutmose III's list) is of Canaanite origin but its meaning is less clear: "Supplanter [is] God" in Old Hebrew or "Jacob [is] glad" in Egyptian. The first meaning seems more likely, because Baal was considered interchangeable with El. Similarly, vocalization Sakar-El "Wage [of] God" in Old Hebrew is more appropriate than Sokar-her "Sokar [is] glad" in Egyptian. The Sakar name appears in Is-sakar "There is a wage [of God]", a son of Jacob (Gn 30:18).
- c. Aper-Baal (*‘pr-b-ḥ*) is the name of the Lord Chancellor on the jamb of a chapel door found at Tell Hebua¹⁵² (dated to the Second Intermediate Period), its meaning could be "Adornment [of] Baal" in Egyptian or "Calf [of] Baal" in Hebrew (Gn 25:4). Similarly, Aper-Anati (*‘pr-‘n-ti*) could mean "Adornment [of] Anat" or "Calf [of] Anat".
- d. Khyan (*ḥ-y-ḥ-n*) means nothing in Egyptian but "brotherly (*akhyan*)" in Old Hebrew, with an aphaeresis of the initial vowel (1Ch 7:19).
- e. Apopi (*i-ḫ-p-p-i*). The fact that the name is usually written with the syllabic group *i-ḫ* would rather suggest that it was foreign in origin, just as all the other known names of kings and their treasurers of this Dynasty¹⁵³. It means nothing in Egyptian, but "splendid (*yepepia*)" in Hebrew (Jr 46:20), close to the name Joppa "beautiful" (Jos 19:46) or to Ip-Shemu-Abi (*‘i-p-š-mm-‘i-b-iḥ*), a king of Byblos (1790-1765) whose Semitic name means: "beautiful is the name of my father"¹⁵⁴. The name Apopi also appears in the Jerusalem Talmud (Nedarim 42c; 11:1)¹⁵⁵ which states that a vow made on behalf of Apopi (איפופי) of Israel is valid. Some Jewish amulets¹⁵⁶ written in Greek are dedicated to IAO YPEPI "Iao Apopi" or to IAO CABAO MOUCE "Iao Sabaoth Moses".
- f. Meribre Sheshi (Mri-ib-R‘ Š-š-i) is clearly Egyptian and means "Beloved [by the] heart [of] Ra; Refined gold?".

¹⁴⁸ J.E. HOCH – Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period Princeton 1994 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 50-58.

¹⁴⁹ According to the biblical text Jacob (1878-1731) lived in Egypt (Gn 47:28), his son calling God "the powerful one of Jacob" (Gn 49:24), he also spent 20 years (1801-1781) near Haran in Mesopotamia (Gn 30:25; 31:41).

¹⁵⁰ R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 186,192.

¹⁵¹ S.D. SIMMONS – Early Old Babylonian Texts in: *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 14 (1960) pp. 27,87,122.

¹⁵² M. ABD EL-MAKSoud – Tell Hebua (1981-1991) Paris 1998 Éd. Recherche sur les Civilisations pp. 271-272.

¹⁵³ K.S.B. RYHOLT - The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period Copenhagen 1997 Ed. The Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies p. 129.

¹⁵⁴ P. MONTET – Le drame d'Avaris. Essai sur la pénétration des Sémites en Egypte Paris 1940, Éd. Librairie orientale Paul Geuthner, pp. 37-39.

¹⁵⁵ J. BONSIRVEN – Textes rabbiniques des deux premiers siècles chrétiens Rome 1955 Éd. Pontificio Istituto Biblico p. 1376.

¹⁵⁶ E.R. GOODENOUGH – Jewish Symbols in the Greco-Roman Period New York 1953 Ed. Pantheon Books vol. 2 p. 220, vol. 3 n°1027, n°1135.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE 12TH DYNASTY

The Sothic rising, dated IV Peret 16 in year 7 of Senwosret III, can be dated around 1850 BCE by astronomy because at that time the Sothic rising took place July 11 in Thebes (longitude 32°39' E, latitude 25°42' N) and 15/16 July in Memphis (longitude 31°15' E, latitude 29°52' N), which fixes the heliacal rising of Sirius either in 1849 BCE +/- 4 years in Thebes or 1865 BCE +/- 4 in Memphis¹⁵⁷. The *arcus visionis* should be 8.3° instead of 8.5° because around 1850 BCE the angle between the Sun and Sirius at its rising was a little higher than today.

| <i>arcus visionis</i> 8.3° | Sothic rising (IV Peret 16) | year 7 of Senwosret III | year 1 of Senwosret III |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Memphis (29°52') | 15 July | 1865-1862 | 1872-1869 |
| Thebes (25°42') | 11 July | 1849-1846 | 1855-1852 |
| Elephantine (24°) | 9 July | 1841-1838 | 1848-1845 |

It is possible to refine this dating using numerous lunar dates¹⁵⁸ that span the 19 years of the reign of Senwosret III, followed by the 45 years of Amenemhat III and which fit according to the lunar cycle of 25 years (dates highlighted hereafter)¹⁵⁹. They are offset by 1 day compared with those of Parker who translated the word "until" in an inclusive meaning and not exclusive¹⁶⁰. The few irregularities prove that they are observed cycles and not calculated cycles¹⁶¹. The 19-year reign of Senwosret III precede the 45 years of Amenemhat III, his successor, without official co-regency¹⁶².

The lunar dates enable one to choose between Thebes and Memphis. The lunar cycle of 25 years starting at I Akhet 1 and the full moon¹⁶³ on November 30, 1857 BCE, the Sothic rising of Year 7 dated in 1848 BCE is the only one located in a calculated area for Sothic rising (1849-1846). The one dated 25 years earlier (1865-1862) does not fit in the previous cycle (starting December 6, 1882 BCE), unless accepting 1 day of error on all lunar dates (lunar cycle of 25 years starting at I Akhet 2* in november 1871).

The Sothic rising of year 7 of Senwosret III coincided with a 1st lunar crescent (dated July 11, 1848 BCE), which may have been a remarkable event, worthy of notice (the IV Peret 1 coinciding with the full moon of June 26, 1848 BCE). The Sothic rising of Senwosret III was thus observed at Thebes. Astronomy fixing the year 7 of Senwosret III in 1848 BCE it is possible to date the 12th dynasty through the duration of the reigns (known for this period, reigns starting at year 0) were represented in the following table:

| Colour legend | Meaning |
|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Date of first lunar day in the (civil) calendar. |
| * | Date of first lunar day shifted by 1 day compared to the theoretical cycle. |
| | Calculated area of the heliacal rising of Sirius. |
| | Day dated IV Peret 1 year 7 of Senwosret III. |
| | Reign of Senwosret III |
| | Reign of Amenemhat III |

¹⁵⁷ <http://www.imcce.fr/fr/grandpublic/phenomenes/sothis/index.php>

¹⁵⁸ R.A. PARKER - The Calendars of Ancient Egypt
in: *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* N°26 (1950) Ed. University of Chicago pp. 63-67.

¹⁵⁹ U. LUFT – Die chronologische Fixierung des ägyptischen Mittleren Reiches
Wien 1992 Ed. Akademie der Wissenschaften pp. 150,151.

R. KRAUSS - Arguments in Favor of a Low Chronology for the Middle and New Kingdom
in: *The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern* (M. Bietak 2003) pp. 175-197

¹⁶⁰ L.E. ROSE – The Astronomical Evidence for Dating the End of the Middle Kingdom
in: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 53 (1994) pp. 247,248.

¹⁶¹ Lunar date I Akhet 19, year 31 of Amenemhat III, is wrong because it would involve a 31-day month, this date should be corrected in I Akhet 20.

¹⁶² C. OBSOMER - Sésostriis Ier. Étude chronologique et historique du règne
Bruxelles 1995 Éd. Connaissance ancienne de l'Égypte p. 149.

¹⁶³ http://www.imcce.fr/fr/grandpublic/phenomenes/phases_lune/index.php

| | | | | AKHET | | | | PERET | | | | SHEMU | | | | 5 |
|---------------|------|------|----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| | (2) | (1) | | I | II | III | IV | I | II | III | IV | I | II | III | IV | |
| | 1882 | 1857 | | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | |
| | 1881 | 1856 | | 1 | 1 | 30 | 29 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 |
| | 1880 | 1855 | 0 | 2 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 |
| Senwosret III | 1879 | 1854 | 1 | 3 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| | 1878 | 1853 | 2 | 4 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 23 |
| | 1877 | 1852 | 3 | 5 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 |
| | 1876 | 1851 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| | 1875 | 1850 | 5 | 7 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 |
| | 1874 | 1849 | 6 | 8 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| | 1873 | 1848 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 29 | 29 | 28 |
| | 1872 | 1847 | 8 | 10 | 23 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 |
| | 1871 | 1846 | 9 | 11 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 7 |
| | 1870 | 1845 | 10 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 30 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 26 |
| | 1869 | 1844 | 11 | 13 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 |
| | 1868 | 1843 | 12 | 14 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| | 1867 | 1842 | 13 | 15 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 |
| | 1866 | 1841 | 14 | 16 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 13 |
| | 1865 | 1840 | 15 | 17 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| | 1864 | 1839 | 16 | 18 | 26 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 21 |
| | 1863 | 1838 | 17 | 19 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 11 |
| | 1862 | 1837 | 18 | 20 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 30 |
| | 1861 | 1836 | 19 | 21 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 19 |
| Amenemhat III | 1860 | 1835 | 1 | 22 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| | 1859 | 1834 | 2 | 23 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 29 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 |
| | 1858 | 1833 | 3 | 24 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 17 |
| | 1857 | 1832 | 4 | 25 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 |
| | | 1831 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 29 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 |
| | | 1830 | 6 | 2 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 |
| | | 1829 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| | | 1828 | 8 | 4 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 23 |
| | | 1827 | 9 | 5 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 |
| | | 1826 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| | | 1825 | 11 | 7 | 25 | 25 | *25 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 |
| | | 1824 | 12 | 8 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| | | 1823 | 13 | 9 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 29 | 29 | 28 |
| | | 1822 | 14 | 10 | 23 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 |
| | | 1821 | 15 | 11 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 7 |
| | | 1820 | 16 | 12 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 30 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 26 |
| | | 1819 | 17 | 13 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 |
| | | 1818 | 18 | 14 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 |
| | | 1817 | 19 | 15 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 |
| | | 1816 | 20 | 16 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 13 |
| | | 1815 | 21 | 17 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| | | 1814 | 22 | 18 | 26 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 21 |
| | | 1813 | 23 | 19 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 11 |
| | | 1812 | 24 | 20 | *6 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | *3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 30 |
| | | 1811 | 25 | 21 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 19 |
| | | 1810 | 26 | 22 | 13 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 8 |
| | | 1809 | 27 | 23 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 29 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 |
| | | 1808 | 28 | 24 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 19 | 19 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 17 | 17 |
| | | 1807 | 29 | 25 | 11 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 9 | 9 | 8 | 8 | *8 | 7 | 6 | 6 |
| | | 1806 | 30 | 1 | 1 | 30 | 29 | 29 | 28 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 |
| | | 1805 | 31 | 2 | 19 | *20 | *19 | *19 | 18 | *18 | 17 | *17 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 |
| | | 1804 | 32 | 3 | 9 | *9 | 8 | 7 | 7 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 |
| | | 1803 | 33 | 4 | 28 | 27 | 27 | 26 | 26 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 23 |
| | | 1802 | 34 | 5 | 17 | 17 | 16 | 16 | 15 | 15 | 14 | 14 | 13 | 13 | 12 | 12 |
| | | 1801 | 35 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| | | 1800 | 36 | 7 | 25 | 25 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 23 | 22 | 22 | 21 | 21 | 20 |

CHRONOLOGY OF THE 13TH AND 17TH DYNASTIES

The reign of Senwosret III (1855-1836) enables an anchoring of the chronology of the 12th dynasty obtained from the following documents¹⁶⁴:

| Pharaoh | Turin King List | Highest date | Manetho | Length of reign | Reign |
|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------|---------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 12 th Dynasty | | | | | 1975-1778 |
| Amenemhat I | [-]9 | 30 | 16 | 29 years | 1975-1946 |
| Senwosret I | 45 | 45 | 46 | 45 years | 1946-1901 |
| Amenemhat II | 3[-] | 35 | 38 | 38 years | 1901-1863 |
| Senwosret II | 1[-] | 8 | 48 | 8 years | 1863-1855 |
| Senwosret III | 19 ? | 19 | 8 | 19 years | 1855-1836 |
| Amenemhat III | 4[-] | 46 | 8 | 45 years | 1836-1791 |
| Amenemhat IV | 9 years 4 m. 27 d. | 9 | 8 | 9 years 4 m. 27 d. | 1791-1782 |
| Neferusebek | 3 years 10 m. 24 d. | 3 | 4 | 3 years 10 m. 24 d. | 1782- 1778 |
| Total: | 213 years 1 m. 16 d. | | 176 | 197 years | |
| 13 th Dynasty | | | | | 1778 - |
| 14 th Dynasty | | | | | |
| 15 th Dynasty | | | | | |
| 16 th Dynasty | | | | | |
| 17 th Dynasty | | | | | -1530 |
| 18 th Dynasty | | | 260 | | 1530-1295 |

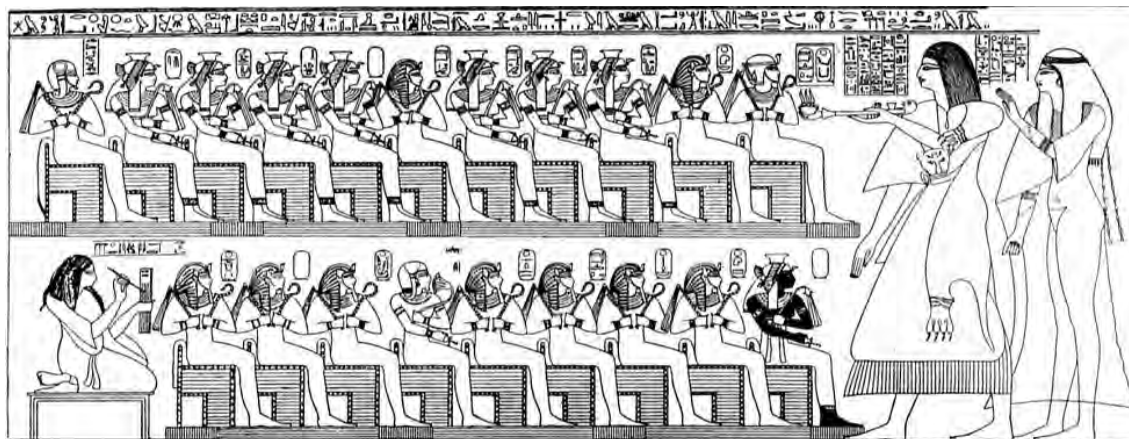
The 13th Dynasty presents many problems¹⁶⁵, not just from the point of view of genealogical reconstruction, but also even from that of the royal succession. The key source is the Turin Canon — a Ramesside compilation of royal names, successions and reign lengths — although analysis is hampered by the badly damaged state of the surviving papyrus copy. Although our knowledge can be augmented by contemporary monuments, there remain many gaps and uncertainties in the various reconstructions that have been put forward, with no real consensus on some of the more opaque parts of the dynasty. A feature of the number of the kings of the 13th Dynasty is their length and formulation, a good example being 'Ameny-Inyotef-Amen-emhat'. It is now becoming recognized that such 'names' actually contain the name of the king himself, together with that of his father and, in cases such as this, his grandfather as well. We should thus read here: 'Amenemhat (VI), (son of) Inyotef, ([grand]son of) Ameny (= Amenemhat V)'; this kind of arrangement is known as a "filiative nomen", and is thus of very considerable help in reconstructing the notoriously opaque genealogy of the dynasty. On the other hand, a further suggestion that any king without such a form of nomen should be judged to be without royal ancestry and thus a 'usurper' is certainly stretching the subject too far. Using the criteria of their nomina, the first two kings of the dynasty, Sobekhotep I and Sonbef ('Amenemhat-Sobekhotep' and 'Amenemhat-Sonbef' respectively), are probably to be recognized as the sons of Amenemhat IV, penultimate ruler of the 12th Dynasty. In support of the suggestion that Amenemhat IV was of non-royal birth, there is the fact that the previously untitled mother of the Overseer of the Fields Ankhu A suddenly became a King's Sister late in the 12th Dynasty, suggesting that her royal brother had not previously been a King's Son. The 13th Dynasty seems to have had around 61 kings.

Some lists of Pharaohs appear in a few tombs but their ranking is sometimes surprising. For example, on the scene called "Lords of the West" from Inherkau's tomb (TT359) we see on the top row from the right then on the bottom row from the right:

¹⁶⁴ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Egypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 43-122.

¹⁶⁵ A. DODSON, D. HYLTON – The Complete Royal Families of Ancient Egypt
London 2010 Ed. Thames & Hudson Ltd, pp. 100-129.

1) King Amenhotep I, 2) King Ahmose I, 6) King Siamun A, 11) Crown Prince Ahmose Sapaïr
 1) Ahmes-Nefertiry, 2) King Ramses I, 3) King Mentuhotep II, 4) King Amenhotep II, 5) King Taa
 Sequenre, 6) Crown prince Ra(?)mose, 7) King Ramses IV, 8) King unknown, 9) King Thutmose I.



It is assumed that the 17th dynasty is a continuation of the 13th dynasty. Its reconstruction is easier. However the order of its 9 kings remains controversial¹⁶⁶. As there were 50 kings in the 13th Dynasty and 9 kings in the 17th, the average duration of each reign is approximately 4 years = $(1778 - 1530)/(50 + 9)$. As we know the duration of the last two reigns (3 years for Kamose and 11 years Sequenre Taa), the 17th dynasty had to have started in 1572 (= $1530 + 3 + 11 + 7 \times 4$). The average of 4 years may be adjusted based on the number of dated documents and highest dates¹⁶⁷:

| | 17 th Dynasty | | highest date | [Adjusted duration] | Reign |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Rahotep | Sekhemra-wahkhau | | [3 years] | 1572-1568 |
| 2 | Sobekemsaf I | Sekhemra-Shedtawy | | [2 years] | 1568-1566 |
| 3 | Sobekemsaf II | Sekhemra-wadjkhau | 7 | [10 years] | 1566-1556 |
| 4 | Antef VI | Sekhemra-wepmaat | | [2 years] | 1556-1554 |
| 5 | Antef VII | Nubkheperre | 3 | [9 years] | 1554-1545 |
| 6 | Antef VIII | Sekhemra-Heruhmaat | 0 | - | 1545-1545 |
| 7 | Ahmose (Iahmes) | Senakhtenre | | [1 year] | 1545-1544 |
| 8 | Taa | Sequenre | 11 | 11 years | 1544-1533 |
| 9 | Kamose | Wadjkheperre | 3 | 2 years 11 months | 1533- 1530 |
| | 18 th Dynasty | | | | |
| 1 | Ahmose | Nebpehtyre | | 25 years 4 months | 1530-1505 |

The chronology of the 13th dynasty (1778-1472) is much more uncertain, because the position of the first 35 kings is approximate and the last 15 kings are not identifiable in the present state of documentation. The choice made here is that of Aidan Dodson who rearranged the Turin King List based on genealogical links between kings. Unknown durations have been replaced by an average value of 4 years, except for kings No. 7 to 10 because Nebnuni and Iufeni having left no relics¹⁶⁸ we can assume that their reigns were short. The reign of Sihornedjherkef Hotepibre having several prestigious relics, we can assume that he easily exceeded the average of 4 years. In addition, there are two synchronisms with Byblos Rulers (Yakin-el and Yantin-Ammu) and a King of Mari (Zimri-Lim) that allows verifying the reliability of the chronological anchorage.

¹⁶⁶ D. POLZ – New Archaeological Data from Dra' Abu el-Naga and their Historical Implications in: *The Second Intermediate Period (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 192, 2010)* pp. 343-352.

¹⁶⁷ K.S.B. RYHOLT – The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period c. 1800-1500 B.C. Copenhagen 1997, Ed. Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications Vol. 20 pp. 203-204.

¹⁶⁸ S. QUIRKE – Ways to Measure Thirteen Dynasty Royal Power from Inscribed Objects in: *The Second Intermediate Period (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 192, 2010)* pp. 55-68.

SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO AN ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY
THROUGH SYNCHRONISMS DATED BY ASTRONOMY

| n° | 13 th Dynasty | | Vizier | Length | Reign |
|----|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Sobkhotep I | Sekhemrekhutawy | ‘Ankhu | 3+ years | 1778-1775 |
| 2 | Sonbef | Sekhemkare | Khemenes | 4+ years | 1775-1771 |
| 3 | - | Nerikare | ? | 6 years | 1771-1765 |
| 4 | Amenemhet V | Sekhemkare | ? | 4? years | 1765-1761 |
| 5 | Qemaw | - | ? | [4 years] | 1761-1757 |
| 6 | Amenemhet VI | Sankhibre | ? | [4 years] | 1757-1753 |
| 7 | Nebnuni | Semenkare | ? | [- year] | 1753-1753 |
| 8 | Iufeni | - | ? | [- year] | 1753-1753 |
| 9 | Sihornedjherkef | Hotepibre | 14 th Dynasty | [12 years] | 1753-1741 |
| 10 | - | Sewadjkare | ? | [2 years] | 1741-1739 |
| 11 | - | Nedjemibre | ? | 7 months | 1739-1739 |
| 12 | Sobkhotep II | Khaankhre | ? | 6+ years | 1739-1733 |
| 13 | Reniseneb | - | ? | 4 months | 1733-1733 |
| 14 | Hor I | Awibre | ? | [4 years] | 1733-1729 |
| 15 | Amenemhet VII | Sedjefakare | ? | 7 years | 1729-1722 |
| 16 | Wegaf | Khutawyre | ? | 2 years 3 months | 1722-1720 |
| 17 | Khendjer | Woserkare | ? | 4+ years | 1720-1716 |
| 18 | Imyremeshaw | Semenkhkare | ? | [4 years] | 1716-1712 |
| 19 | Antef V | Sehotepkare | ? | [4 years] | 1712-1708 |
| 20 | Seth | Meribre | ? | 3+ years | 1708-1705 |
| 21 | Sobkhotep III | Sekhemresewadjtawy | Iymeru | 4 years 2 months | 1705-1701 |
| 22 | Neferhotep I | Khasekhemre | Iymeru | 11 years 4? months | 1701-1690 |
| 23 | Sihathor | Menwadjre | Iymeru | 1+ month | 1690-1690 |
| 24 | Sobkhotep IV | Khaneferre | Iymeru | 8+ years | 1690-1682 |
| 25 | Sobkhotep V | Merhotepre | 15 th Dynasty | [4 years] | 1682-1678 |
| 26 | Sobkhotep VI | Khahotepre | | 4 years 8 months | 1678-1673 |
| 27 | Ibiaw | Wahibre | | 10 years 8 months | 1676-1665 |
| 28 | Aya | Merneferre | | 13? years 8 months | 1665-1652 |
| 29 | Ini I | Merhotepre | | 2 years 4? months | 1652-1650 |
| 30 | Sewadjtu | Sankhenre | | 3 years 2+ months | 1650-1647 |
| 31 | Ined | Mersekhemre | | 3 years 1 month | 1647-1644 |
| 32 | Hori | Sewadjkare | | 5 years | 1644-1639 |
| 33 | Sobkhotep VII | Merkawre | | 2 years | 1639-1637 |
| 34 | Ini II | - | | [4 years] | 1637-1633 |
| 35 | Neferhotep II | - | | [4 years] | 1633-1629 |
| 36 | - | - | | [4 years] | 1629-1625 |
| 37 | - | - | | [4 years] | 1625-1621 |
| 38 | - | - | | [4 years] | 1621-1617 |
| 39 | - | - | | [4 years] | 1617-1613 |
| 40 | - | - | | [4 years] | 1613-1609 |
| 41 | - | Mer[...]re | | [4 years] | 1609-1605 |
| 42 | - | Merkheperre | | [4 years] | 1605-1601 |
| 43 | - | Merkare | | [4 years] | 1601-1597 |
| 44 | - | - | | [4 years] | 1597-1593 |
| 45 | Mentuhotep V | Sewedjare | | [4 years] | 1593-1589 |
| 46 | Ibi | [...]maatre | | [4 years] | 1589-1585 |
| 47 | Hor(..?) | [...]webenre | | [4 years] | 1585-1581 |
| 48 | - | Se[...]kare | | [4 years] | 1581-1577 |
| 49 | Sankhptahi | Scheqenre | | [4 years] | 1577-1573 |
| 50 | Senebmiu | - | | [4 years] | 1573-1569 |

It is difficult to assess the accuracy about those periods of reigns (for the first 35 kings), but a value around +/- 10 years would seem reasonable. There are several synchronisms between the Egyptian kings and the Byblos Rulers¹⁶⁹ for which the duration is based only on assumptions. Assuming an exact contemporaneity, the death of Abi-Shemu had to have occurred around 1790 BCE (death of Amenemhat III). The living

¹⁶⁹ P. GERSTENBLITH – The Levant at the Beginning of the Middle Bronze Age
Winona Lake 1983 Ed. Eisenbrauns pp. 101-107.

conditions of Byblos Rulers at the time of these Egyptian kings being quite similar one can assume a period of about 25 years of reign (= 197/8). The historical sequence¹⁷⁰ is: 1) Abi-Shemu I (Tomb I), 2) Ip-Shemu-Abi (Tomb II), 3) Yakin-el (Tomb III), a contemporary of Sihornedjherkef Hotepibre, and 4) Ilimi-Yapi (Tomb IV). Yatin-Ammu's father was Yakin. One can also assume that Neferhotep I was a contemporary of Yantin-Ammu since there was found at Byblos a relief showing Pharaoh Neferhotep I¹⁷¹ opposite Prince Yantin-(‘Ammu) of Byblos. In addition, in a letter dated the 9th year of Zimri-Lîm (1680-1667), king of Mari, the name Yantin-Ammu appears as the donor of a gold cup. The following chronological reconstruction shows that the agreement is good for +/- 10 years.

| Tomb | King of Byblos | Reign | | King of Egypt | Reign | # | King of Mari | Reign |
|------|----------------|-----------------|------|----------------|-----------|------|--------------|-----------------|
| I | Abi-Shemu | 1815-1790 | [25] | Amenemhat III | 1836-1791 | 45 | ? | |
| II | Ip-Shemu-Abi | 1790 - -1765 | [25] | Amenemhat IV | 1791-1782 | 9 | ? | |
| | | | | Neferusebek | 1782-1778 | 4 | ? | |
| III | Yakin-el | 1765-1740 | [25] | [Hotepibre | 1753-1741 | [12] | ? | |
| IV | Ilimi-yapi ? | 1740-1720 | [20] | | | | ? | |
| | Yakin? | 1720 - -1695 | [25] | Seth | 1708-1705 | | Yahdun-Lîm | 1716 - -1699 |
| | | | | Sobekhotep III | 1705-1701 | 4 | | |
| | Yantin-Ammu | 1695 - | [25] | Neferhotep I | 1701-1690 | 12 | Sûmû-Yamam | 1699-1697 |
| | | | | Sobekhotep IV | 1690-1690 | 9 | Samsî-Addu | 1697-1687 |
| | | | | Sobekhotep V | 1690-1682 | 5 | Yasmah-Addu | 1687-1680 |
| | | | | Sobekhotep VI | 1682-1678 | 2 | Zimri-Lîm | 1680 - |
| | ? | -1670 | | Iaib | 1678-1673 | 11 | | -1667 |

CHRONOLOGY OF THE 14TH, 15TH AND 16TH DYNASTIES

Conspicuously few monuments of the 14th Dynasty are known today. The entire dynasty is represented by no more than about ten royal monuments and, except for two, all bear the name of Nehsy (either as king or king's son) who had a reign of less than one year according to the Turin King-list. This circumstance is difficult to reconcile with the fact that the 14th Dynasty was situated in the most fertile lands in Egypt and had intensive trade with both Canaan, Thirteenth Dynasty Egypt, and Nubia. Apart from scarabs and a few seal-impressions, the 14th Dynasty is attested outside the Turin King-list only by monuments of its second king, Nehsy, from the eastern Delta, none of which were found in precisely datable contexts. For its 51 or more rulers, the King-list preserves a total of 12 years, 2 months, and 23 days of rule in 18 entries, with no reign longer than three years¹⁷² (the five first rulers are lost). Thus the total duration of the 14th dynasty would be about 34 years (= 51x12/18). Several reigns have durations of only a few months which shows an abnormal process. The first Asiatic king had to have appeared at the time of Hotepibre¹⁷³ under the prenomen "the Asiatics, son of Hornedjherkef", Hornedjherkef (1753-1741) being a king of the 13th Dynasty. The last king of the 14th Dynasty had to have coincided with the first king of the 15th Dynasty (the Great Hyksos)? According to the Jewish historian Artapan (around 200 BCE) quoted by Eusebius (Preparatio Evangelica IX:27:3-5) the region above Memphis was divided into various kingdoms under Pharaoh [Sobekhotep IV] Chenephres (1690-1682). The information is accurate, because the royal activities during the 13th dynasty are attested until the end Sobekhotep IV's reign, the most prestigious king of this dynasty, further to the north of Thebes rather than Thebes itself.

¹⁷⁰ L. NIGRO – The Eighteenth Century BC Princes of Byblos and Ebla and the Chronology of the Middle Bronze Age in: *Baal Hors-Série VI* (Beirut 2009) pp. 159-175.

¹⁷¹ Two Scarabs of Neferhotep I were also found at Tell el-Ajjul.

¹⁷² J.P. ALLEN – The Second Intermediate Period in the Turin King-List in: *The Second Intermediate Period (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 192, 2010)* pp. 1-6.

¹⁷³ K.S.B. RYHOLT – Hotepibre, a Supposed Asiatic King in Egypt with Relations to Ebla in: *Bulletin of the American schools of Oriental Research* No. 311 (1998) pp. 1-6.

We can reconstruct the reign of the first five kings of the 14th dynasty using the number of seals and assuming a constant uttering each year (this method of counting is however uncertain, mainly for Sheshi)¹⁷⁴. We obtain an average of c. 1 seal per month:

| King of Egypt (14 th Dynasty) | Seals | duration | average | error |
|------------------------------------------|-------|-------------|----------|--------------|
| Yakbim Sekhaenre | 123 | 5-16 years | 10 years | +/- 5 years |
| Ya'ammu Nubwoserre | 26 | 1-4 years | 2 years | +/- 2 years |
| Qoreh Khawoserre | 30 | 1-4 years | 3 years] | +/- 2 years |
| 'Ammu Ahotepre | 62 | 2-8 years | 5 years | +/- 3 years |
| Sheshi Maaibre | 396 | 13-53 years | 33 years | +/- 20 years |
| Total | 637 | 22-85 | 53 years | |

| 13 th Dynasty | | | | Length | Reign |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------|
| No. | [Si]horned]herkef Hotepibre | 14 th Dynasty | | | (1753-1741) |
| 1 | | [Yakbim] | [Sekhaenre] | [10 years] | 1750-1740 |
| 2 | | [Ya'ammu] | [Nubwoserre] | [2 years] | 1740-1738 |
| 3 | | [Qoreh] | [Khawoserre] | [3 years] | 1738-1735 |
| 4 | | ['Ammu] | [Ahotepre] | [5 years] | 1735-1730 |
| 5 | | [Sheshi] | [Maaibre] | [33 years] | 1730-1697 |
| 6 | | [Nehsy] | [Asehre] | [6 m.] 3 d. | 1697-1697 |
| 7 | | [-] | Khakherewre | [6 m.] 3 d. | 1697-1696 |
| 8 | | [-] | Nebefawre | 1 year 6 m. 15 d. | 1696-1694 |
| 9 | | [-] | Sehebre | [3 years] 1 d. | 1694-1691 |
| 10 | | [-] | Merdjefare | [3 years] | 1691-1688 |
| 11 | | [-] | Sewadjkare | 1 year | 1688-1687 |
| 12 | | [-] | Nebdjefare | 1 year | 1687-1686 |
| 13 | | [-] | Webenre | [6 m.] | 1686-1686 |
| 14 | | [-] | [.....] | [1 year] | 1686-1685 |
| 15 | | [-] | [...]djefare | 4 m. | 1685-1685 |
| 16 | | [-] | [...]webenre | 3 m. | 1685-1685 |
| 17 | | [-] | Awibre | 1 m.? 18 d. | 1685-1685 |
| 18 | | [-] | Heribre | 1 m.? 29 d. | 1685-1685 |
| 19 | | [-] | Nebesenre | 5 m. 20 d. | 1685-1684 |
| 20 | | [-] | [.....] | 21-24 d. | 1684-1684 |
| 21 | | [-] | Sekhperenre | 2 m. 1-5 d. | 1684-1684 |
| 22 | | [-] | Djedkherewre | 2 m. 5 d. | 1684-1684 |
| 23 | | [-] | Sankhibre | 19 d. | 1684-1684 |
| 24 | | [-] | Nefertumre | 18 d. | 1684-1684 |
| 25 | | [-] | Sekhem[...]re | [2 m.] | 1684-1684 |
| | | | | | 1684-1680 |
| 45 | | [-] | [-] | [2 m.] | 1680-1680 |
| | Sobkhotep IV Khaneferre | 15 th Dynasty | | | (1690-1682) |

The 15th dynasty is better documented because its total duration is 10[8] years, according to the Turin King List or 106 years, according to Herodotus (The Histories II:128). The beginning of the dynasty is likely Sobekhotep IV (1690-1682). The Stela of the year 400, made under Ramses II, apparently refers to the Sethian dynasty of the Great Hyksos, 400 years earlier. The Stele seems to have been made by Ramses to support an honourable affiliation with an ancient dynasty, because the cult of Seth, likened to the Baal of the Hyksos, was not widespread among the Egyptians. He seems to have connected his

¹⁷⁴ Obviously there is a considerable margin of error involved in such statistical calculations. This may be illustrated through King Ibiaw and his successor Aya (13th Dynasty), both of whose exact reign-lengths are preserved in the Turin King-list. Ibiaw ruled 11 years and is attested by 13 seals (average of c. 1 seal per year), while Aya ruled 24 (or 14) years and is attested by 63 seals (average of c. 2 ½ seals per year). Calculating the reign of Ibiaw by the average for Aya would suggest a reign of 5 years for Ibiaw (vs. an actual length of 11 years), and *vice versa* a reign of 52 ½ years for Aya (vs. an actual length of 24/14 years). However, since this approach seems at present to be the only means by which a rough idea of the individual reign-lengths of the first five 14th Dynasty kings can be achieved, it has nevertheless been pursued. Neferhotep I (11 years), Sobkhotep IV (min. 9 years), Ibiaw (11 years), Aya (24/14 years), Khyan (20/10 years), Apopi (40 years), and Nebiryrau (27 years): c. 288 seals and a total reign-length of more than 130 years.

reign to his predecessor whose name Sethos I referred to the god Seth. The era of Ramses II would have been a continuation of a prestigious past, which would place the establishment of the cult of Seth/Baal around 1680 BCE, if one counts from Ramses II's reign. In fact, Seth is completely absent from the titular of Ramses II and its worship appears only after the Battle of Kadesh and from the construction of the temple of Abu Simbel started in year 5 of his reign (in 1279 BCE).

| 13 th Dynasty | | | Length | Reign |
|--------------------------|-----|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Sobkhotep IV Khaneferre | No. | 15 th Dynasty | | |
| | 1 | | [12 years] | 1680 - |
| | 2 | [Šamqenu?] | [12 years] | |
| | 3 | [‘Aper-‘Anati?] | [12 years] | |
| | 4 | [Sakir-Har?] | [12 years] | |
| | 5 | [Khyan?] | 20? years | 1632-1613 |
| | 6 | Apopi | 4[1 years?] | 1613-1572 |
| | - | Khamudi | [1? year] | 1572-1572 |
| 17 th Dynasty | No. | 16 th Dynasty | | |
| | 1 | ? | [1 year] | 1572-1571 |
| | 2 | Djehuty | Sekhemresematawy | 3 years 1571-1568 |
| | 3 | Neferhotep III | Sekhemresankhtawy | 1 year 1568-1567 |
| | 4 | Mentuhotepi | Sankhenre | 1 year 1567-1566 |
| | 5 | Nebiriau I | Sewadjenre | 16? years 1566-1550 |
| | 6 | Nebiriau II | - | [3m.] 1550-1550 |
| | 7 | - | Semenre | [1 year] 1550-1549 |
| | 8 | Bebiankh | Sewoserenre | 12 years 1549-1537 |
| | 9 | - | Sekhemreshedwaset | [3m.] 1537-1537 |
| | 10 | Dedumose I | Djedhotepre | [3 years] 1537-1534 |
| | 11 | Dedumose II | Djedneferre | [1 year] 1534-1533 |
| | 12 | Mentuemsaf | Djedankhere | [1 year] 1533-1532 |
| | 13 | Mentuhotep VI | Meryankhere | [1 year] 1532-1531 |
| | 14 | Senwosret IV | Snefruibre | [1 year] 1531-1530 |
| 18 th Dynasty | | | | |

The chronology of the 16th dynasty (1572-1530) is conjectural¹⁷⁵ because some kings of this dynasty could have belonged to the end of the 13th dynasty¹⁷⁶. The capital of the 16th Dynasty had to be Edfu (or El-Kab?) while that of the 13th dynasty was Thebes¹⁷⁷. The only dated synchronisms with the Hyksos dynasties are those from the Israelite chronology:

| 13 th Dynasty | | Israelite ruler | Reference | Length | Reign |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|--------|------------------|
| 1778 - | | | | | |
| | 14 th Dynasty | | | (80) | |
| (1753-1741) | Asiatics | Joseph co-regent | Gn 41:40-45 | 14 | 1758-1744 |
| | | Cattle princes | Gn 47:6 | 66 | 1744 - |
| | | Death of Joseph | Gn 47:28 | | -1678 |
| (1690-1682) | 15 th Dynasty | | | (105) | |
| | | Foolish princes of Tanis | Is 19:11-13 | 65 | 1678 - |
| | | Princes of her tribes | | | -1613 |
| (1613-1573) | Apopi | Moses Pharaoh | Ex 11:3 | 40 | 1613-1573 |
| 17 th Dynasty | 16 th Dynasty | | | | |
| | | Moses alien resident in Midian | Ac 7:21-42 | 40 | 1573 - |
| (1533-1530) | Apopi (2) | then come back into Egypt | | | -1533 |
| 18 th Dynasty | | | | | |
| 1530 - | | Exodus | Ex 16:35 | 40 | 1533-1493 |

¹⁷⁵ A. DODSON, D. HYLTON – The Complete Royal Families of Ancient Egypt London 2010 Ed. Thames & Hudson Ltd, pp. 16-117.

¹⁷⁶ M. DESSOUDEIX – Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 169-177, 226-235.

¹⁷⁷ and regnal years on steles (like Sobekhotep VIII) are typical of Egyptian dynasties but they are absent among Hyksos dynasties.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE 18TH, 19TH, 20TH AND 21ST DYNASTIES

If the dates obtained by ¹⁴C (calibrated by dendrochronology) are imprecise they nevertheless set values to +/- 15 years (2010) over the period 1500-1000¹⁷⁸. Dates obtained both by ¹⁴C and astronomy (dates in bold) have been highlighted (for reigns according to astronomical dating see *Basic astronomy for historians to get a chronology*):

| | | Reign according to ¹⁴ C | Length of reign | Reign according to astronomical dating | gap |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| | 17 th Dynasty | | | | |
| 8 | Taa Seqenenre | - | 11 years | /1544-04/1533 | |
| 9 | Kamose | - | 2 years 11 months | 05/1533-04/1530 | |
| | 18 th Dynasty | | | | |
| 1 | Ahmose | 1557-1532 | 25 years 4 months | 04/ 1530 -07/1505 | +27 |
| 2 | Amenhotep I | 1532-1511 | 20 years 7 months | 08/ 1505 -02/1484 | +27 |
| 3 | Thutmose I | 1511-1499 | 12 years 9 months | 02/1484-11/1472 | +27 |
| 4 | Thutmose II | 1499-1486 | 3 years | 08/1472-07/1469 | +27 |
| | [-Hatshepsut] | 1480- | [21 years 9 months] | [08/1472-04/1450] | +8 |
| 5 | Thutmose III /[Amenhotep II] | 1486-1434 | 53 years 11 months [2 years 4 months] | 08/ 1472 -03/1418 [11/ 1420 -03/1418] | +14 |
| 6 | Amenhotep II | 1434-1407 | 25 years 10 months | 04/1418-02/1392 | +16 |
| 7 | Thutmose IV | 1407-1397 | 9 years 8 months | 02/1392-10/1383 | +15 |
| 8 | Amenhotep III /[Amenhotep IV] | 1397-1359 1359-1345 | 37 years 10 months [11 years 5 months] | 10/1383-07/ 1345 [03/1356-07/1345] | +14 |
| | Akhenaton | | 5 years 2 months | 08/1345-10/ 1340 | |
| 9 | Semenkhkare | 1345-1342 | 1 year 4 months | 10/1340-02/ 1338 | +5 |
| 10 | -Ankhkheperure | | 2 years 1 months | 02/1338-03/1336 | |
| 11 | Tutankhamon | 1342-1333 | 9 years 8 months | 03/1336-10/ 1327 | +6 |
| 12 | Ay | 1333-1330 | 4 years 1 month | 10/1327-11/1323 | +6 |
| 13 | Horemheb I [former regent] Horemheb II [pharaoh] | 1330-1302 | 14 years 13 years 2 months | 11/1323-11/1309 12/1309-01/1295 | +7 |
| | 19 th Dynasty | | | | |
| 1 | Ramses I | 1302-1302 | 1 year 4 months | 01/1295-05/1294 | +7 |
| 2 | Seti I | 1302-1285 | 11 years | 06/ 1294 -06/1283 | +8 |
| 3 | Ramses II | 1285-1219 | 67 years 2 months | 06/1283 -07/1216 | +2 |
| 4 | Merenptah | 1219-1206 | 9 years 3 months | 08/1216-10/1207 | +3 |
| 5 | Seti II | 1206- | 5 years | 11/1207-10/1202 | -1 |
| 6 | [Amenmes] | 1209- | [4 years] | [04/1206-03/1202] | +3 |
| 7 | Siptah | 1200-1194 | 6 years | 11/1202 -10/1196 | -2 |
| | Siptah-Tausert / [Setnakht] | 1194-1192 | 1 year 6 months | 11/1196-04/1194 | -2 |
| | 20 th Dynasty | | | | |
| 1 | Sethnakht | 1192-1189 | 3 years 5 months | 11/1196-03/1192 | -4 |
| 2 | Ramses III | 1189-1158 | 31 years 1 months | 04/1192 -04/1161 | -3 |
| 3 | Ramses IV | 1158-1152 | 6 years 8 months | 05/1161 -12/1155 | -3 |
| 4 | Ramses V | 1152-1148 | 3 years 2 months | 01/1154-02/1151 | -2 |
| 5 | Ramses VI | 1148-1140 | 7 years | 03/1151-02/1144 | -3 |
| 6 | Ramses VII | 1140-1133 | 7 years 1 month | 03/1144-03/1137 | -4 |
| 7 | Ramses VIII | 1133-1130 | 3 months ? | 04/1137-06/1137 | -4 |
| 8 | Ramses IX | 1130-1112 | 18 years 4 months | 07/1137-10/1119 | -7 |
| 9 | Ramses X | 1112-1103 | 2 years 5 months | 11/1119-03/1116 | -7 |
| 10 | Ramses XI | 1103-1073 | 26 years 1 month ? | 04/1116-04/1090 | -13 |
| | 21 th Dynasty | | | | |
| 1 | Smendes | 1073-1046 | 26 years | 1090-1064 | -17 |
| 2 | Amenemnesut | 1046-1042 | 4 years | [1064-1060] | -18 |
| 3 | Psusennes I | 1042-997 | 46 years | 1064 -1018 | -24 |
| 4 | Amenemope | 997-989 | 9 years | 1018-1009 | -21 |

¹⁷⁸ C.B. RAMSEY, M.W. DEE, J.M. ROWLAND, T.F. G. HIGHAM, S.A. HARRIS, F. BROCK, A. QUILLES, E.M. WILD, E.S. MARCUS, A.J. SHORTLAND - Radiocarbon - Based Chronology for Dynastic Egypt in: *Science* Vol 328 (10 june 2010) pp. 1554-1557.
<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/data/328/5985/1554/DC1/1>

DATING THE EXODUS ACCORDING TO THE ISRAELITE CHRONOLOGY

Every people of the past used their own calendar to count years, months and days. Israelites were not an exception, and they were concerned about accurately placing events on the time scale, as can be proved by long genealogical lists and frequent recordings of how many years kings or judges ruled. Jews even considered that their book, the Bible, was laying down history and there was no need to write any other specific book. The only exception was the *Seder Olam* written around 160 C.E. This book mainly was an attempt to reconstruct biblical chronology, and it tried to solve a problem occurring each time one works on chronology: When did one particular period of time begin and when did it end? A scientific chronology must fill two basic standards: it must be consistent with itself and also with all key historical date (i.e. dates based on accurately dated astronomical phenomena). Such standards exclude the inconsistent Septuagint based chronology on the period 1000-500 BCE¹⁷⁹ and the *Seder Olam* chronology which dates reigns of Persian kings with a shift of 170 years (Cyrus would have begun ruling in 369 BCE and would have died in 367 BCE)¹⁸⁰. Current calculations of historical data are based on Thiele's biblical chronology which is about 45 years off near 900 BCE¹⁸¹.

As attested by Qumran texts, the Bible Masoretic text was very well preserved. This text is the one used to establish the scientific biblical chronology. Though it does not mention any astronomical phenomenon, it does mention reigns of several Egyptian, Babylonian and Persian rulers, as well as famous battles or the fall of well-known cities. This allows indirect comparisons with key dates. Moreover, the biblical text often contains a two-fold chronology: one by adding years of rules, and the other one by linking "anchor periods". These periods appear as spans (often hundreds of years) telling how much time elapsed between two major events. For example, Israelites were to be oppressed during 400 years (Gn 15:13). According to the biblical text, this period began with the persecution of Abraham's son Isaac (Gn 21:8-9) and ended with the escape from Egypt and the end of slavery (Ga 4:29).

Several important questions must be settled before any chronological calculation may be done: How long is a year, a month or a day? When does the year, the month or the day begin? Is the number of years inclusive or exclusive? For example, "the second year" of a rule may count for one year (if the second year is beginning) or for two years (if the second year is ending). At the very beginning of the Bible, time is already counted: *Let luminaries come to be in the expanse of the heavens to make a division between the day and the night; and they must serve as signs and for seasons and for days and years* (Gn 1:14). Since the sun and the moon are mentioned, the year should be solar (365.24 days) and the months should be lunar (29.53 days). Only the beginning of the day is indicated: it began when the previous one ended (Gn 1:5). The beginning of the year is not stated, but it should be synchronized with agricultural activity, which ended after harvests, before the cold winter (Gn 8:22). Old Mesopotamian calendars all started at the autumn equinox; the first month, the one of the renewal, was called Tishri, which means "beginning". The biblical text says that from Exodus onward (approximately 1500 BCE) years no longer had to begin in Tishri but in Nisan (Ex 12:2), at the spring equinox. Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities* I:81) confirms that the Jews used to count from Nisan for religious or solemn (royal) activities, but continued counting from Tishri for commercial activities.

¹⁷⁹ J. HUGHES – Secrets of the Times. Myth and History in Biblical Chronology in: *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series* 66 (1990) pp. 57, 267-272.

F. NOLEN JONES – The Chronology of the Old Testament Texas 2005 Ed. Master Books pp. 170-173, 326.

¹⁸⁰ H. GOLDWURM, N. SCHERMAN - Daniel: la Bible commentée Paris 2001 Éd. du Sceptre p. 334.

¹⁸¹ M.C. TETLEY – The Reconstructed Chronology of the Divided Kingdom Winona 2005 Ed. Eisenbrauns pp. 178-186.

The first way to evaluate the accuracy of chronological data from the Bible is to compare the consistency of results between the chronologies of the kings of Judah and Israel. The biblical chronology according to the Masoretic text is as follows (King Hoshea died at the fall of Samaria in 720 BCE, King Josias died at the battle of Haran in 609 BCE):

| Event | Period | # | | | | Reference |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------|-----------------|
| Abraham in Ur | 2038- 1963 | 75 | From birth to departure into Canaan | | | Gn 12:4-5 |
| Israelites as foreigners | 1963-1533 | 430 | From Canaan stay to Egypt deliverance | | | Ex 12:40-41 |
| Exodus in Sinai | 1533-1493 | 40 | From Egypt deliverance to entering Canaan | | | Ex 16:35 |
| Israelites in Canaan | 1493- 1013 | 480 | From entering Canaan to year 4 of Solomon | | | 1Ki 6:1 |
| King of Judah | Reign | | King of Israel | Reign | | |
| Solomon | 1017 - 977 | 40 | | | | 1Ki 11:42 |
| Rehoboam | 977-960 | 17 | Jeroboam I | 10/977 - -05/955 | 22 | 1Ki 14:20,21 |
| Abiyam | 960-957 | 3 | | | | |
| Asa | 957 - -916 | 41 | Nadab | 06/955-05/954 | 2 | 1Ki 15:10,25 |
| | | | Baasha | 06/954-04/931 | 24 | 1Ki 15:28,33 |
| | | | Elah | 05/931-04/930 | 2 | 1Ki 16:8 |
| | | | Zimri | 05/930 | 7 d. | 1Ki 16:10-16 |
| | | | Omri/ | 06/930-05/919/ | 12 | 1Ki 16:21-23 |
| | | | [Tibni] | [06/930-01/925] | 6 | |
| Jehoshaphat | 916 - -891 | 25 | Ahab | 06/919-01/898 | 22 | 1Ki 16:29 |
| | | | Ahaziah | 02/898-01/897 | 2 | 1Ki 22:51 |
| Jehosaphat/Jehoram | [893-891] | [2] | Jehoram son Ahab | 02/897-09/886 | 12 | 2Ki 3:1 |
| Jehoram | 893 - -885 | 8 | [Ahaziah]/ Joram | [07/887-09/886] | 1 | 2Ki 9:29 |
| | | | Ahaziah | 10/886-09/885 | 1 | 2Ki 9:24,27 |
| [Athaliah] Jehoyada | 885-879 | 6 | Jehu | 10/885-03/856 | 28 | 2Ki 10:36 |
| Joash | 879 - -839 | 40 | Jehoahaz | 04/856-09/839 | 17 | 2Ki 10:35; 13:1 |
| | | | Jehoahaz/ Jehoash | [01/841-09/839] | 2 | 2Ki 13:10 |
| Amasiah | 839 - -810 | 29 | Jehoash | 09/839-01/823 | 16 | 2Ki 13:10 |
| | | | Jeroboam II | 01/823-05/782 | 41 | 2Ki 14:23 |
| Uzziah [Azariah] | 810 - [796 - -758 | 52 | [Zechariah] | 06/782-02/771 | [11] | 2Ki 14:29 |
| | | | Zechariah | 03/771-08/771 | 6 m. | 2Ki 15:8 |
| | | | Shallum | 09/771 | 1 m. | 2Ki 15:13 |
| | | | Menahem | 10/771-03/760 | 10 | 2Ki 15:17 |
| | | | Peqayah | 04/760-03/758 | 2 | 2Ki 15:23 |
| Jotham | 758-742 | 16 | Peqah | 04/758-05/738 | 20 | 2Ki 15:27 |
| Ahaz | 742-726 | 16 | [Hoshea] | 06/738-01/729 | 9 | 2Ki 15:27-30 |
| Hezekiah | 726-697 | 29 | Hoshea | 02/729-09/ 720 | 9 | 2Ki 17:1,3 |
| Manasseh | 697-642 | 55 | | | | 2Ki 21:1 |
| Amon | 642-640 | 2 | | | | 2Ki 21:19 |
| Josias | 640-609 | 31 | | | | 2Ki 22:1 |
| Jehoachaz | -609 | 3 m. | | | | 2Ch 36:2 |
| Jehoiaqim | 609-598 | 11 | | | | 2Ch 36:5 |
| Jehoiachin | -598 | 3 m. | | | | 2Ch 36:9 |
| Zedekiah | 598-587 | 11 | | | | 2Ch 36:11 |
| Jehoiachin (exile) | 587-561 | 26 | | | | 2Ki 25:27-28 |

The second way to evaluate the accuracy of chronological data from the Bible is to cross-check results. The Septuagint (LXX) was completed circa 160 BCE, the Masoretic Text (MT) c. 90 CE, the work of Flavius Josephus¹⁸² (FJ) c. 95 CE, that of Theophilus of Antioch¹⁸³ (TA) c. 180 CE and the Jewish chronology of the Seder Olam¹⁸⁴ (SO) is fixed c. 200 CE. Errors (highlighted with *) and corrections (highlighted):

¹⁸² E. NODET - Le Pentateuque de Josèphe
Paris 1996 Éd. Cerf pp. 72-83.

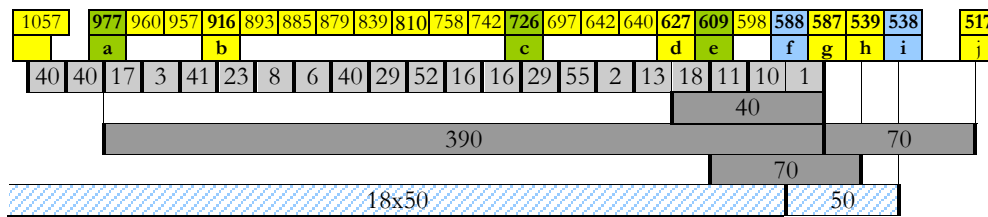
¹⁸³ THEOPHILE D'ANTIOCHE – Trois livres à Autolycus
in: *Sources chrétiennes* 20 (1948 Cerf) pp. 49-53, 154-159.

¹⁸⁴ H.W. GUGGENHEIMER – Seder Olam. The Rabbinic View of Biblical Chronology
Lanham 2005 Ed. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers Inc.

| Text of: | TM | LXX | FJ | TA | SO | period | reference |
|----------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Abraham (<i>Ur=>Harran</i>) | 75 | 75 | 75 | 75 | 75 | 2038-1963 | Gn 12:4-5 |
| <i>journey Canaan-Egypt</i> | 430 | 430 | 430 | 430 | 430 | 1963- 1533 | Ex 12:40-41 |
| Moses (<i>Exodus</i>) | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 1533-1493 | Ex 16:35 |
| Joshua | 110 - 80 | 110 - 80 | 110 - 80 | 27 | 28 | 1493 -1463 | Jos 14:10;24:29 |
| Without judge | [11] | [11] | 18 | - | 0 | 1463-1452 | Jos 24:31 |
| Total de 40 +/-1 = | 41 | 41 | 48 | 27 | 28 | <i>1493-1452</i> | Nb 32:13 |
| Cushan-rishataim | 8 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 1452-1444 | Jg 3:8 |
| Othniel | 40 | 40/50* | 40 | 40 | 40 | 1444-1404 | Jg 3:11 |
| Eglon | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 1404-1386 | Jg 3:14 |
| Ehud | 80 | 80 | [80] | 8* | 80 | 1386-1306 | Jg 3:30 |
| Madian | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 1306-1299 | Jg 6:1 |
| Gideon | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 1299-1259 | Jg 8:28 |
| Abimelek | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1259-1256 | Jg 9:22 |
| Tola | 23 | 23 | [23] | 23 | 23 | 1256-1233 | Jg 10:2 |
| Jair | 22 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 22 | 1233-1211 | Jg 10:3 |
| Anarchia | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 18 | 1211- 1193 | Jg 10:8 |
| Total of 300 = | 300 | 300 | # | # | # | <i>1493-1193</i> | Jg 11:26,30 |
| Jephte | 6 | 6/60* | 6 | 6 | 6 | 1193-1187 | Jg 12:7 |
| Ibzan | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 7 | 1187-1180 | Jg 12:9 |
| Elon | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 1180-1170 | Jg 12:11 |
| Abdon | 8 | [8] | [8] | 8 | 8 | 1170-1162 | Jg 12:14 |
| [Eli] Philistines | 40 | 20/40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 1162-1122 | 1Sa 4:18 |
| Samson | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 20 | 1122-1102 | Jg 16:31 |
| Samuel's sons | [5] | [5] | 12* | 12* | 10 | 1102-1097 | 1Sa 8:1-3 |
| Saul | [40] | [40] | 20/40 | 20 | 3* | 1097-1057 | Acts 13:21 |
| David | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 1057-1017 | 1Ki 2:11 |
| Solomon (year 4) | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 1017- 1013 | 1Ki 6:1 |
| Total of 480 = | 480 | 440 | 474* | # | # | <i>1493-1013</i> | 1Ki 6:1 |
| Salomon | 40 | 40 | 80 | 40 | 40 | 1017 - 977 | 1Ki 11:42 |
| Rehoboam | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 17 | 977 -960 | 1Ki 14:21 |
| Abiyam | 3 | 6 | 3 | 7* | 3 | 960-957 | 1Ki 15:2 |
| Asa | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 41 | 957-916 | 1Ki 15:10 |
| Jehosaphat | 25 - 2 | 25 - 2 | 25 - 2 | 25 - 2 | 25 - 2 | 916-893 | 1Ki 22:42 |
| Jehoram | 8 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 8 | 893-885 | 2Ki 8:17 |
| [Athaliah] | 7 - 1 | 7 - 1 | 7 - 1 | 6 | 7+1 | 885-879 | 2Ki 11:4 |
| Joash | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 879-839 | 2Ki 12:1-2 |
| Amasiah | 29 | 29 | 29 | 39* | 22* | 839-810 | 2Ki 14:2 |
| Uzziah (Azariah) | 52 | 52 | 52 | 52 | 52 | 810-758 | 2Ki 15:2 |
| Jotham | 16 | 16 | 16 | 16 | 16 | 758-742 | 2Ki 15:33 |
| Ahaz | 16 | 16 | 16 | 17* | 16 | 742-726 | 2Ki 16:2 |
| Hezekiah | 29 | 29 | 29 | 29 | 29 | 726-697 | 2Ki 18:2 |
| Manasseh | 55 | 55 | 55 | 55 | 55 | 697-642 | 2Ki 21:1 |
| Amon | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 642-640 | 2Ki 21:19 |
| Josias | 31 | 31 | 31 | 31 | 31 | 640-609 | 2Ki 22:1 |
| Jehoiaqim | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 609 -598 | 2Ki 23:36 |
| Zedekiah | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 11 | 598- 587 | 2Ki 24:18 |
| Total of 390 = | 390 | 190 | 390 | 405* | 385 | <i>977-587</i> | Ezk 4:5-6 |
| <i>Babylonian empire</i> | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 70 | 609- 539 | Jr 25:11-12 |

The biblical chronology according to the Masoretic text over the period 2038-539 BCE is therefore accurate, as a result the chronology reconstituted in this paper will use Masoretic data. By convenience, the total period 2000-1 BCE has been divided into four periods: the patriarchal period 2000-1500 BCE, the period of the judges 1500-1000 BCE, the period of the kings 1000-500 BCE and finally the period of the second temple 500-1 BCE. Each period arises in the following way (example of the patriarchal period):

THE PERIOD OF KINGS (1097-517 BCE)



- End of Solomon's 40-year reign (1Ki 11:42). The splitting of his kingdom in two parts (Israel and Judah) marks the start of a 390-year period that ends with the destruction of Jerusalem (see §c). His successors would be Rehoboam: 17 years of reign (1Ki 14:21), Abijam: 3 years of reign (1Ki 15:1-2) and Asa: 41 years of reign (1Ki 15:9-10).
- Jehoshaphat ruled for 25 years (1Ki 22:41-42), but we must remove the 2-year co-regency with his son Jehoram who became king in Jehoshaphat's 23rd year of reign, and not after the 25th year. This can be checked: Jehoram, king of Judah, who ruled for 8 years, became king in the 5th year of Jehoram, king of Israel (2Ki 8:16-17), whose rule had begun in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat (2Ki 3:1); 18 + 5 do amount to 23. After the death of Jehoram, king of Judah, Athaliah ruled for 6 years (2Ki 11:3), then Jehoash for 40 years (2Ki 12:1), Jehoahaz for 17 years (2Ki 13:1), Amasiah for 29 years (2Ki 14:2), Uzziah for 52 years (2Ch 26:3), Jotham for 16 years (2Ki 15:32-33), Ahaz for 16 years (2Ki 16:2), Hezekiah for 29 years (2Ki 18:1-2), Manasseh for 55 years (2Ki 21:1), Amon for 2 years (2Ki 21:19), and Josiah for 31 (= 13 + 18) years (2Ki 22:1).
- The fall of Samaria began in year 4 of Hezekiah (2Ki 18:9-10) and ended in his year 6 corresponding to year 2 of Sargon II (in 720 BCE).
- In Josiah's 13th year (Jr 25:3,11), Jeremiah began proclaiming the destruction of Jerusalem. This 40 years period, foretold in Ezekiel (Ezk 4:6), ended with the disappearance of the kingdom of Israel, that had been born 390 years before.
- Start of Babylonian's 70-year rule over all the nations. This rule started at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign (Jr 27:1-7), after the battle of Haran during which king Josiah was killed (2Ki 23:29), 4 years before the battle of Carkemish (Jr 46:2), and it terminated with the destruction of Babylon. After Josiah's death, Jehoahaz ruled 3 months (2Ki 23:31). Jehoiakim, put on the throne by pharaoh Necho, reigned for 11 years (2Ki 23:34,36), and afterwards Zedekiah, enthroned by Nebuchadnezzar reigned for 11 years (2Ki 24:17-18) until the destruction of the temple.
- In Zedekiah's 10th year (Jr 32:1), because the people deliberately broke a Jubilee (Jr 34:8-11), the temple was destroyed and they were deported to Babylon. The liberation that should have occurred at this Jubilee was postponed to the next one (Jr 34:13-22).
- Destruction of the temple on the 10th day of the 5th month of Nebuchadnezzar's 18th year according to Babylonian computation (Jr 52:12-13, 29).
- Destruction of Babylon in 539 BCE after 70 years of slavery (Jr 25:11-12).
- 1st year of Cyrus, the liberation from Babylon occurred.
- End of the 70-year desolation period and of the exile (from Babylonia, but also from Assyria and Egypt); beginning of a new 50-year Jubilee cycle¹⁸⁵.

The year of Nebuchadnezzar's rule during which the temple was destroyed and the 70-year¹⁸⁶ period began is controversial. To set the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's rule, it seems that the writer of Jeremiah's book, who lived under Egyptian and then Babylonian

¹⁸⁵ J.-F. LEFEBVRE - Le jubilé biblique

Göttingen 2003 Éd. Universitaires Fribourg pp. 369-370.

¹⁸⁶ *When the seventy years granted to Babylon are over* (Jr 29:10, Jerusalem Bible, London 1974).

authority, used both a computation including the accession year (Egyptian system) and a computation not including the accession year (Babylonian system). This could explain several 1-year gaps. However, those dates can be fixed through a chronological reconstitution combining information given by other biblical writers and indications from Babylonian tablets (the start of the exile can be set between the 7th and the 23rd year of Nebuchadnezzar). Therefore, although Jeremiah's disconcerting dating sets the destruction of the temple in Zedekiah's 11th year, i.e. either in Nebuchadnezzar's 19th year (Egyptian computation) or in his 18th year, according to Babylonian computation (Jr 52:12,29), it is of no consequence since this 18th year of Nebuchadnezzar is linked to Zedekiah's 10th year (Jr 32:1). The 70-year period is abundantly described, and it first relates to Babylonian rule over all nations. According to the text of Jeremiah 25:1, 9-12, 17-26, Judea would be devastated, and all contemporary nations would serve the king of Babylon for 70 years: *The word that occurred to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah in the 4th year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, that is, the 1st year of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon (...). And all this land must become a devastated place, an object of astonishment, and these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon 70 years. And it must occur that when 70 years have been fulfilled I shall call to account against the king of Babylon and against that nation, (...) even against the land of the Chaldeans, and I will make it desolate wastes to time indefinite.* Then the Chaldeans' country would become desolated. It may be noted that this prediction was issued in the 1st year of Nebuchadnezzar. Babylonian rule had already begun, but the devastation of Judah was still to come. The period of slavery was to begin before the period of desolation. The 70-year period of slavery applied to all the nations including Egypt, and not only to Judah. This period started after the victory of Babylonian forces over the armies of Assyria and Egypt at Haran, and then extended from 609 to 539 BCE.

A Babylonian chronicle (BM 21901) dates the final part of the battle of Haran to the 17th year of Nabopolassar, in the month of Duzu¹⁸⁷ (July) 609 BCE. During that year Assyrian king Ashur-uballit II was killed (as well as Josiah); as Jehoahaz reigned 3 months, Jehoiakim's rule must have begun around Tishri (October) 609 BCE. Since the fall of Babylon happened in Tishri 539 BCE, Babylon dominated over the world for exactly 70 years. It can be noted that after king Josiah's death, pharaoh Necho II, who was a satrap of Nebuchadnezzar (Against Apion I:133-137), brought the Judean kingdom under subjection and changed the name of its king to Jehoiakim (2Ch 36:3-4). The 70 years period is delimited by two events apparently providential: the death of king Josiah (1Ki 13:2; 2Ch 35:20-24) and the accession of king Cyrus (Is 43:1, 45:1). Subjection to Egypt lasted for 8 years and was succeeded by subjection to Nebuchadnezzar after the battle of Carkemish. Babylonian domination began in 609 and was exerted on Judah first through Egypt and then directly, from king Jehoiakim's 8th year, 3 years before the end of his rule (2Ki 24:1). The biblical text makes a difference between Babylon's legal rule [starting in 609 BCE] and effective Babylonian rule [starting in 601 BCE].

| Babylonian king | Reign | King | Reign | Length | Reference | Comment |
|-----------------|-------|--------------------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------------------|
| Nebuchadnezzar* | 611 - | Josiah | 640-609 | 31 years | 2Ch 34:1 | *Coregent |
| | -605 | Jehoahaz | -609 | 3 months | 2Ch 36:2 | |
| Nebuchadnezzar | 605 - | Jehoiakim | 609-598 | 11 years | 2Ch 36:5 | |
| | | Jehoiachin | -598 | 3 months | 2Ch 36:9 | |
| | | Zedekiah | 598-587 | 11 years | 2Ch 36:11 | |
| | | [Gedaliah] ^o | -587 | 2 months ? | 2Ki 25:25 | ^o governor |
| | -562 | Jehoiachin ^{oo} | (587-561) | 26 years ? | 2Ki 25:27 | ^{oo} in exile |

¹⁸⁷ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press p. 305.

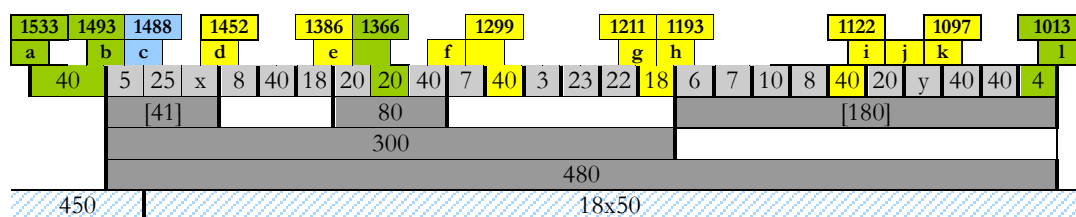
According to Daniel 9:1,2,17-24: *In the 1st year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus of the seed of the Medes (...) I myself, Daniel, discerned by the books the number of the years concerning which the word of Jehonah had occurred to Jeremiah the prophet, for fulfilling the devastations of Jerusalem, [namely,] 70 years (...) And now listen, O our God, to the prayer of your servant and to his entreaties, and cause your face to shine upon your sanctuary that is desolated (...) Do open your eyes and see our desolated conditions and the city that has been called by your name.* Let us say first that Darius the Mede is called Ugbaru in a Babylonian tablet¹⁸⁸; he ruled over Babylon and appointed governors (Dn 6:1) during the 5 last months of his reign and died at the end of his 1st year of reign, on the 11 Arahsammu (November 538 BCE). So, one year after the destruction of Babylon, Daniel explains that the 70 years would also be the length of the desolation (which was to end in 517 BCE, since the temple was destroyed in 587 BCE). The words "desolated and devastated land" are controversial, for they can mean either a "land deserted and without inhabitants" (literal meaning) or a "land without worshippers" (religious meaning). The biblical text favours the second meaning. Indeed, the start (as well as the end) of the literal exile cannot be dated accurately, since it expands between Nebuchadnezzar's 7th and 23rd year (Jr 52:28-30) and the exile was still going on at Esther's time (Est 2:6) around 470 BCE. However, the length of the religious exile (the period when there were "no worshippers") is easier to settle, since it runs from the destruction of the temple to the "liberation of the captives" on the 50th year of the Jubilee (religious meaning).

The words "causing desolation (Dn 9:27)" was understood by the Jews as the disappearance of the sacrifices in the temple (and consequently of the worshippers) and not as the disappearance of the inhabitants. When we read: *by reason of my house that is waste, while you are on the run, each one in behalf of his own house* (Hg 1:1,9), text written in Darius' 2nd year, that is on 520 BCE, we may understand also that the temple was waste of worshippers, not of people. This religious meaning is used in Ezekiel 29:10-12: *I will make the land of Egypt devastated and dry, a desolate wasteland, from Migdol to Syene to the boundary of Ethiopia. Neither man nor livestock will pass through it on foot, and it will not be inhabited for 40 years. I will make the land of Egypt the most desolate of lands, and its cities will be the most desolate of cities for 40 years; and I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among the lands.* This could not be understood in a literal way: a deporting of all Egyptian people in a foreign land would have left some traces, but the religious meaning "without worshippers (Ezk 30:7,13)" is more appropriate, since Jeremiah states that the sign (the 40-year period was beginning) would be pharaoh Hophra's death (Jr 44:29,30; Ezk 30:20-22), exactly as Zedekiah's death marked the end of worship in the temple. Pharaoh Hophra (whom Egyptian viewed as a living god) was replaced in 570 BCE by Amasis, a mere general (and former putschist), who ruled from 569 to 526 BCE. Pharaoh Hophra died a few years after the beginning of Amasis' reign, probably in 566 BCE, his death being reported as occurring soon after Amasis' 3rd year [567 BCE]¹⁸⁹. Egypt then had no visible god (Pharaoh) between 566 and 526 BCE. Herodotus wrote: *It is said however that Amasis, even when he was in a private station, was a lover of drinking and of jesting, and not at all seriously disposed (...) when finally he became king he did as follows: —as many of the gods as had absolved him and pronounced him not to be a thief, to their temples he paid no regard, nor gave anything for the further adornment of them, nor even visited them to offer sacrifice, considering them to be worth nothing and to possess lying Oracles* (The Histories II:174). From a religious point of view, Egypt had been devastated, or without its god Pharaoh (a spiritual desolation), during the 40 years of the ungodly dominion of Amasis (566-526). Similarly, the land of Israel had been devastated for 70 years (587-517) when its holy priesthood was no longer able to perform worship in the Temple (it was a spiritual desolation).

¹⁸⁸ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press p. 306.

¹⁸⁹ G. DARESSY - Stèle de l'an III d'Amasis
in: Recueil de travaux relatifs à la philologie et à l'archéologie Paris 1900 pp. 1-9.

THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES (1493-1097 BCE)



- Exodus from Egypt and start of 40-year wandering in the wilderness of Sinai before entering Canaan (Ex 16:35).
- Israel comes out of the Sinai and enters Canaan; beginning of a 300-year period which would end with Jephthah's vow (Jg 11:26,30). Caleb enters Canaan when he is 80 years old and the country is pacified when he is 85 years old (Jos 14:7,10).
- Joshua, the same age as Caleb, died 110 years of age (Jos 13:1; 24:29; 2Sa 19:32). The following period [x] is unknown, but it may be calculated. Indeed, the generation which entered Canaan with Joshua was to take possession of the country (Jg 2:6-10), now as the preceding generation had lasted 40 years (Nb 32:13), that makes it possible to suppose that: $[40] = 5 + [25] + x$ ($25 = 110 - 85$). In fact calculation gives $x = 11$ year, because $300 = 5 + 25 + x + 8 + 40 + 18 + 20 + 20 + 40 + 7 + 40 + 3 + 23 + 22 + 18$. Joshua gives Israelites the pacificated Canaan country (Jos 11:23); start of the Jubilee cycle to cancel the debts and free the captives every 50 years (Lv 25:8-11). The cycle starts when Canaan is given to the Israelites, that is 5 years after they entered the Promised Land (Dt 6:10,11; Jos 14:7,10).
- Cushan-rishataim, a king from Mitanni (Šauštatar I) oppressed Israel for 8 years, then Othniel judges for 40 years, then Eglon, a Moabite king, oppressed Israel for 18 years, then Ehud judges the country (Jg 3:8-15).
- Ehud starts a period of peace for 80 years (Jg 3:30) in the South (Judea), which ends by 40 years of full peace (Jg 5:31) preceded by 20 years of oppression in the North (Samaria) by Jabin (Jg 4:3), a Canaanite king of Hazor. Ehud then Shamgar¹⁹⁰ judge for the 20 first years of full peace and Barak the last 40 years (Jg 3:26-31, 4:22-24).
- The country of Midian oppressed Israel for 7 years, then Gideon judges for 40 years, then Abimelech is king for 3 years, then Tola judges for 23 years and finally, Jair judges for 22 years (Jg 6:1, 8:28, 9:22, 10:1-3).
- Jair judges Israel for 22 years, but after his death no judge succeeds him and the land is given over to oppression by Philistines, Ammonites, Egyptians, etc. This period of trouble begins on 1211 and gets Israel in great distress for 18 years (Jg 10:3-13).
- Jephthah as a judge over Israel for 6 years, Ibzan for 7 years, Elon for 10 years, Abdon for 8 years. Then follows a 40-year period of oppression by the Philistines (Jg 12:7-13:1). The period of 176 years from Jephthah to Solomon may be calculated by two ways, first: $176 = 480 - 300 - 4$, or $176 = 6 + 7 + 10 + 8 + 40 + 20 + 5 + 40 + 40$.
- Samson, who acts as a judge for 20 years, puts an end to oppression by the Philistines (Jg 13:5; 16:31). The ark of the covenant is captured by the Philistines, then given back to the Israelites 7 months later. It is moved to Kiriath-jearim where it will stay for 20 years¹⁹¹ (1Sa 6:1; 7:2).
- Undetermined period (x) between the temporary end of idols use and Samuel defeating

¹⁹⁰ The southern part of Israel was ruled in peace during 80 years (Jg 3:30), from 1386 to 1306 BCE. Shamgar judged less than 1 year according to Josephus (Jewish Antiquities V:197). The name Shamgar (Ši-ma-qa-ri) appears in several Nuzi texts (ca 14th century BCE).

¹⁹¹ This 20-year period should correspond to the judicature of Samson which was characterized by peace (1Sa 7:13-15). During the reign of Saul, the ark is located in Nob (1Sa 21:1, 22:19), a town near Qiriath-jearim north of Jerusalem (1Sa 14:16-18). After 40 years of Saul's reign (1097-1057), David decided a few years after the beginning of his reign, to bring it back from Qiriath-jearim to Jerusalem (1 Ch 13:5).

the Philistines. This period takes place before Saul's reign (1Sa 7:4,13; 9:15-16).

- k) Saul rules for 40 years¹⁹² (Ac 13:21), then David for 40 years (2Sa 5:4).
 l) Solomon rules for 40 years. A 480-year period that begins at the Exodus from Egypt terminates in his 4th year of reign (1Ki 6:1; 11:42).

Three time spans in this period are controversial: the 5 years after the departure from Egypt, the 480 years and the undetermined period (x). The 5-year period can be calculated from the age of Caleb. According to the book of Joshua, Caleb was 85 when the Israelites received the land of Canaan as their inheritance. This was what God had promised to Moses 45 years before. The account specifies that Caleb was 40 when he explored the country from Kadesh-Barnea (Jos 14:1,7,10). This exploration is dated to the 1st month of the 2nd year after the departure from Egypt (Nb 9:1, 13:25). Counting these years however proves difficult, because Caleb was born in Egypt and was counting his years according to the old calendar which began in Tishri, e.g. September/October. Then, after having come out of Egypt, years were counted from Nisan (Ex 12:2, 23:15), e.g. March/April, and no longer from Tishri. There was therefore a 6-month discrepancy with the former system.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|----|----|--|--|--|--|--|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|--|--|----|----|
| 39 | 40 | 41 | | | | | | 79 | 80 | 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | | | | | |
| 1 | 2 | | | | | | | 40 | 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 | | | 49 | 50 |

The 50-year Jubilee system did not begin in the first year after entering Canaan, but only in Caleb's 85th year, because Israelites were given the land only after the pacification period (Jos 1:15). It would have been impossible to cultivate the land and then to observe Jubilee prescriptions during the conquest war. The conquest was quick, and Israelites (circa 1490 BCE) only burnt three cities: Jericho, Ai and Hazor (Jos 6:1,24, 8:19, 11:11-13). Confirming exactly the biblical account, archaeology dates¹⁹³ the destruction of these three cities to the 15th century B.C.E. The first year of the 50-year Jubilee period started in Nisan but was only celebrated on 10th Tishri of the same year (Lv 25:9-10).

The 480 years are controversial: *And it came about in the 480th year after the sons of Israel came out from the land of Egypt, in the 4th year, in the month of Ziv, that is, the 2nd month, after Solomon became king over Israel* (1Ki 6:1). We might conclude that the period began after Israel left the country of Goshen, in Egypt. But this would contradict other biblical data. Indeed, if we calculate the time starting before (and not after) the 40 years in the wilderness of Sinai, we find: 40 + 300 + 6 + 7 + 10 + 8 + 40 + 20 + 40 + 40 + 4 = 515 + x. If 515 + x = 480, x = -35! Actually, the wilderness of Sinai belonged to Egypt since it was located in front of the torrent valley of Egypt which marked its border (2Ki 24:7). Israelites therefore definitely left Egypt when they crossed this torrent valley (after having spent 40 years in the wilderness)¹⁹⁴. Thus: 475 + x = 480, with x = 5 years. The translators of the Septuagint, who knew about this 480-year period beginning at the Exodus from Egypt and ending after (not before) the 40 years in the wilderness amended the figure to 440 years (= 480 - 40)¹⁹⁵. According to the Jerusalem Talmud (Megilla 72cd), the time of the conquest of Canaan would have been 7 years, and the sanctuary at Shiloh 369 years, which gives: 480 = 7 + 369 + 20 + 40 + 40 + 4 (in fact: 480 = 5 + 366 + 20 + 5 + 40 + 40 + 4)¹⁹⁶.

¹⁹² The length of the reign, which had to appear in 1Samuel 13:1, can be deduced from the biography of Ishbosheth, a son of Saul, who was born at the beginning of his father's reign (1Ch 8:33), because he was 40 years at Saul's death (2Sa 2:10). Josephus hesitated between 20 and 40 years (Jewish Antiquities VI:378, X:143), also in the sum of the reigns (Jewish Antiquities VIII:61, XX:230).

¹⁹³ B.G. WOOD - Let the Evidence Speak

in: *Biblical Archaeology Review* March/ April 2007 pp. 26,78.

¹⁹⁴ The Israelites who died in the wilderness (Nb 26:65) had desired to die in Egypt repeatedly (Ex 14:11; 16:3). This paradoxical wish has been fulfilled.

¹⁹⁵ From the output of Egypt (-1533) marking the beginning of Exodus to Solomon's 4th year (in -1013) there are 520 years (= 480 + 40).

¹⁹⁶ The duration of the conquest of Canaan is 5 years and the duration of the sanctuary at Shiloh is 366 years (= 1488 - 1122), because it is installed just after the conquest of Canaan (Jos 18:1), in -1488, disappeared at the death of the high priest Eli (1Sa 4:1-7:1) in -1122.

Occurrence of different spans between two seemingly identical events can be found also about the ark when it was moved from Kiriath-jearim. The ark was brought to this city where it stayed for 20 years. We also read that David decided to bring the ark back from Kiriath-jearim to Jerusalem (1Ch 13:5) after Saul's 40-year reign. Where are those 40 years to be found? It may be that meanwhile the ark was moved to Baale-judah, a city near Kiriath-jearim (2Sa 6:2), or to Gibeah (1Sa 7:1) according to the Vulgate. The words "in the Hill (Jos 24:33)" are strange indeed, because *ba-guibeah* generally is translated "in Gibeah (1Sa 22:6)". The city of Gibeah was geographically near Kiriath-jearim. Moreover, Saul requested the ark to be brought to him when he was in Gibeah (1Sa 14:16-18).

According to the biblical chronology, the anonymous pharaoh who confronted Moses died in 1533 BCE. The departure from Egypt, which began in Ramses city, is dated to 15/I (Nb 33:3). As the arrival in the Wilderness of Sin is dated 15/II (Ex 16:1) and the final confrontation took place near Pihahiroth (Ex 14:9), midway between Rameses and the Wilderness of Sin, pharaoh's death would have occurred on 1/II, which is dated on 9/10th May 1533 BCE. A later biblical text (Ezk 32:2,7,8, Ps 136:15) mentions pharaoh's tragic death and links it with a solar eclipse: *Son of man, lift up a dirge concerning Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and you must say to him: As a maned young lion of nations you have been silenced. And you have been like the marine monster in the seas (...) And when you get extinguished I will cover [the] heavens (...) All the luminaries of light in the heavens —I shall darken them on your account, and I will put darkness upon your land.* This text alludes to the Pharaoh of the Exodus, because the expression "marine monster" always appoints this leader: *For Egypt's help is completely useless. So I have called this one: Rahab, who sits still (...) Was it not you who broke Rahab to pieces, who pierced the sea monster? Are you not the one who dried up the sea, the waters of the vast deep? The one who made the depths of the sea a roadway for the repurchased ones to cross?* (Is 30:7; 51:9-10). The expression "All the luminaries of light in the heavens [sun and moon]" has a symbolic meaning but could be understood by Jews only if it had also a literal meaning. Since pharaoh was considered a god (the son of the sun-god Ra) by Egyptians, the eclipse (and also the moonless night) would have impressed the people. The only total solar eclipse in this part of the world and at this time¹⁹⁷ occurred on 9th May 1533 BCE¹⁹⁸. A total sun eclipse in a given area is very rare. Between -1500 and -100, for example, there were only 11 total eclipses on the territory of Israel during this period, that is to say on average every 120 years¹⁹⁹. The date of 1/II thus agrees perfectly with the eclipse date. The spring equinox fell on 3rd April 1533 BCE²⁰⁰; the following first crescent of the moon²⁰¹ is dated to 10/11th April, and the first crescent of the following month is dated to 9/10th May. Egyptian chronology, which is based on Sothic rises, also dates to May 1533 BCE the violent death of pharaoh Seqenenre after confronting Apopi, the Hyksos king who went off to Palestine. The other pivotal date comes from the book of Acts where heavenly phenomena are mentioned in connection with Jesus' death: *The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood* (Ac 2:20). Usually, the moon does look blood-red during a lunar eclipse (the more natural explanation for the above passage²⁰²). The only lunar eclipse which was visible from Jerusalem on a Friday between 30 and 33 CE was the one dated Friday 3rd April 33 CE.

Consequently, the biblical chronology is anchored on two significant events: Jesus' death on 3 April 33 CE and the death of the Pharaoh who opposed Moses (beginning of the Exodus), on 9 May 1533 BCE.

¹⁹⁷ <http://sunclear.gsfc.nasa.gov/eclipse/SEcat/SE-1599--1500.html>

¹⁹⁸ This eclipse of magnitude 1.08 (covering a strip of land 250 km wide) could be seen in Northern Egypt (at the level of Heracleopolis city) around 4.40 p.m. and lasted more than 6 minutes.

¹⁹⁹ F.R. STEPHENSON – Astronomical Verification and Dating of Old Testament in: *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 107 (1975) pp. 107-117.

²⁰⁰ <http://www.imcce.fr/page.php?nav=fr/ephemerides/astronomie/saisons/index.php>

²⁰¹ <http://portail.imcce.fr/fr/ephemerides/astronomie/Promenade/pages4/441.html>

²⁰² J.P. PARISOT, F. SUAGHER - *Calendriers et chronologie* Paris 1996 Éd. Masson pp. 165, 166.

THE PATRIARCAL PERIOD (2038-1493 BCE)

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-----|------|------|------|------|
| 2038 | | 1963 | 1938 | 1933 | 1878 | 1788 | 1748 | 1678 | | 1573 | 1533 | 1493 | 1488 |
| a | | b | c | d | e | f | g | h | | i | j | k | l |
| | | | 5 | | | | 400 | | | | | | |
| | 75 | 25 | | 150 | | 40 | | 215 | | 40 | 5 | | |
| | 100 | | | 60 | 90 | | 110 | | 105 | 40 | | | |
| | | | | | | | 430 | | | | | | |
| | 100 | | | | | | | 450 | | | | | |

- a) Birth of Abraham (in 2038 BCE).
- b) Abraham enters Canaan when he is 75 years old (Gn 12:4-5); 430-year alien residence begins (Ex 12:40-41).
- c) Birth of Isaac (in 1938 BCE), ancestor of the people of Israel, when Abraham is 100 years old (Gn 21:5); 450-year period begins (Ac 13:17-20).
- d) Isaac is weaned at 5 years old²⁰³; 400 years of affliction²⁰⁴ begin (Gn 15:13). This period starts when Isaac is persecuted by Agar's son²⁰⁵ (Gn 21:8-9) and ends with the Exodus from Egypt and the end of slavery²⁰⁶ (Ga 4:25-29).
- e) Birth of Jacob (in 1878 BCE) when Isaac is 60 years old (Gn 25:26).
- f) Birth of Joseph in Jacob's 91st year since he is 130 years old (Gn 41:46-47, 53-54; 45:11; 47:9) when Joseph is 39 (= 30 years + 7 years of plenty + 2 years of famine).
- g) Israelites (Jacob and his family, 75 individuals) come to Egypt in Joseph's 40th year (Gn 45:11; 46:5-7); beginning of a 215-year dwelling.
- h) Joseph died in 1678 BCE, when he is 110 years old. Israelite chiefs appointed by Joseph and later on by pharaohs as kings (Great Hyksos) administrate the land of Goshen for 105 years (Gn 47:6; Ex 5:14).
- i) Moses is banished for 40 years (1573-1533) in Madian before coming back to Egypt²⁰⁷ (Hb 11:24; Ac 7:21-23, 29-36).
- j) Exodus from Egypt and beginning of 40-year (1533-1493) wandering in the wilderness of Sinai before entering Canaan (Ex 16:35). Moses stands as the last "great personality in Egypt", because he was considered as "pharaoh's son" for 40 years (Ex 2:15; 11:3; Dt 34:7), that is from 1613 to 1573 BCE.
- k) Israel comes out of Sinai and enters Canaan (in 1493 BCE); beginning of a 5-year pacification period (Jos 14:7,10) ending in 1488 BCE and fixes the beginning of Jubilees (every 50 years). Moses dies at 120 years old (Dt 34:1-7).
- l) Joshua completes pacification of Canaan (in 1488 BCE).

The 430-year period is controversial. We read: *the dwelling of the sons of Israel, who had dwelt in Egypt, was 430 years* (Ex 12:40). Does that mean that Israel dwelt in Egypt for 430 years? This would contradict other biblical data. Jewish translators of the Septuagint were aware of this ambiguity and thus chose to add an interpolation in order to prevent any misunderstanding: *The dwelling of the sons of Israel which they dwelt in the land of Egypt [and in the land of Canaan] was 430 years long*. This interpolation, that is also found in the Samaritan Pentateuch, is in keeping with the context which says that the 430-year period covers the total span of the painful dwelling of the sons of Israel outside the Mosaic covenant (Ga 3:17). This period does include two parts: the first one starts in Canaan with the Abrahamic covenant rapidly followed by harassment of Isaac by Esau (Gn 21:9), and ends when Jacob left for Egypt. The second one begins with the slavery in Egypt and terminates with the

²⁰³ According to 2Maccabees 7:27, breastfeeding usually lasted at least 3 years (see 2Ch 31:16).

²⁰⁴ The 400-year period begins with the oppression of Isaac and not from his birth.

²⁰⁵ The meaning of the Hebrew verb is "mocking" and not "play". The Talmud (Sotah 6:6) even mentions of abuse.

²⁰⁶ According to Maimonides (Epistle to Yemen III) and Rashi, the 400 years run from birth of Isaac to the departure from Egypt.

²⁰⁷ It is possible that Moses knowing the prophecy of Neferty stated under Amenemhat I (1975-1946), similar to the 400 years' prophecy of Genesis 15:13, wanted to achieve it in 1575 BCE (= 1975 - 400), 40 years too early.

Exodus. The above verse should then be read as follows: *the dwelling of the sons of Israel, who had dwelt in Egypt [for 215 years], was 430 years long*. Joshua's genealogy indirectly confirms this 215-year period (1Ch 7:23-28). Joshua was 40 years old when Israel fled Egypt (Jos 14:7) in -1533. Then he would have been born about -1573. Assessing 20 years elapse between each generation, we get the following dates of birth:

| | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---|-----------|---------------|---|-----------|----------|----|-----------|
| Jacob | 1 | Father in | | | Father in | | | Father in |
| Joseph | 2 | -1760 | Resheph-Telah | 6 | -1680 | Elishama | 10 | -1600 |
| Ephraim | 3 | -1740 | Tahan | 7 | -1660 | Nun | 11 | -1580 |
| Beriah | 4 | -1720 | Ladan | 8 | -1640 | Joshua | 12 | -1560 |
| Rephah | 5 | -1700 | Ammihud | 9 | -1620 | (Exodus) | 13 | -1540 |

As Joseph was 17 years old when he came to Egypt (Gn 37:2), the period of time from his marriage in 1758 (Gn 41:45-46) to the Exodus in 1533 amounts to 225 years (= 1758 – 1533), which are fully consistent with the 215 years that have just been calculated. This chronological point was known in antiquity, since Josephus refers to it in his works (Jewish Antiquities II:318). Demetrius (c. 220 BCE), already knew that the period in Canaan lasted 215 years (Preparatio evangelica IX:21:16). The biblical chronology therefore sets rather precisely the date of the Exodus from Egypt in 1533.

| Israelite ruler | period | # | 3 rd Dynasty | reign | | synchronism |
|-----------------|-------------|---|----------------------------------------------|-----------|--|-----------------------------------------------|
| | | | Djoser - Netjerikhet | 2597-2578 | | |
| | | | Sekhemkhet | 2578-2572 | | |
| | | | Nebka[ra]/ Sanakht | 2572-2553 | | |
| | | | Khaba | 2553-2547 | | |
| | | | Huni | 2547-2523 | | |
| | | | 4th Dynasty | | | |
| | | | Snefru | 2523-2479 | | astronomy |
| (Reu) | (2509-2170) | | Kheops | 2479-2456 | | astronomy |
| | | | Djedefre | 2456-2448 | | |
| | | | Khephren | 2448-2419 | | astronomy |
| | | | Baka | 2419-2419 | | |
| | | | Mykerinos | 2419-2391 | | astronomy |
| | | | Shepseskaf | 2391-2387 | | |
| | | | Thamphthis | 2387-2385 | | |
| | | | 5th Dynasty | | | |
| | | | Userkaf | 2385-2378 | | astronomy |
| (Serug) | (2377-2047) | | Sahure | 2378-2364 | | astronomy |
| | | | Neferirkare (Kakaï) | 2364-2354 | | |
| | | | Shepseskare | 2354-2347 | | |
| | | | Neferefre | 2347-2346 | | |
| | | | Niuserre (Ini) | 2346-2332 | | |
| | | | Menkauhor | 2332-2324 | | |
| | | | Djedkare (Isesi) | 2324-2286 | | |
| | | | Unas | 2286-2256 | | |
| | | | 6th Dynasty | | | |
| (Nahor I) | (2247-2039) | | Teti | 2256-2238 | | |
| | | | Userkare | 2238-2238 | | |
| | | | Pepi I | 2238-2195 | | Sargon of Akkad |
| | | | Merenre I | 2195-2181 | | |
| (Terah) | (2168-1963) | | Pepi II | 2181-2127 | | |
| | | | Merenre II | 2127-2126 | | |
| | | | Nitocris | 2126 | | |
| | | | 7th-8th Dynasty | 2226-2118 | | |
| | | | 11th Dynasty | | | 9th-10th Dynasty |
| | | | Mentuhotep I | 2118 - | | |
| | | | Antef I | -2102 | | |

SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO AN ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY
THROUGH SYNCHRONISMS DATED BY ASTRONOMY

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----|--------------------------------|-----------------|--|--------------------------------|
| | | | Antef II | 2102-2053 | | |
| | | | Antef III | 2053-2045 | | |
| Abraham | 2038 - | 175 | Mentuhotep II | 2045-1994 | | |
| | | | Mentuhotep III | 1994-1982 | | |
| | | | Mentuhotep IV | 1982-1975 | | |
| | | | 12th Dynasty | | | |
| | | | Amenemhat I | 1975-1946 | | <i>Founding of Tanis</i> |
| | 1963-1957 | | Senwosret I | 1946-1901 | | <i>Execration texts</i> |
| | - 1863 | | Amenemhat II | 1901-1863 | | |
| Jacob | 1878 - | 147 | Senwosret II | 1863-1855 | | |
| | | | Senwosret III | 1855-1836 | | <i>astronomy</i> |
| | | | Amenemhat III | 1836-1791 | | |
| | | | Amenemhat IV | 1791-1782 | | |
| | | | Neferusebek | 1782-1778 | | |
| | -1731 | | 13th Dynasty | | | |
| Joseph | 1788 - | 110 | Sobkhotep I | 1778-1775 | | |
| | | | Sonbef | 1775-1771 | | |
| | | | [-] Nerikare | 1771-1765 | | |
| | | | Amenemhet V | 1765-1761 | | |
| | | | Qemaw | 1761-1757 | | |
| (vizier) | 1758 - | | Amenemhet VI | 1757-1753 | | Hyksos |
| | | | Nebnuni | 1753-1753 | | |
| | | | Iufeni | 1753-1753 | | |
| | -1744 | | Sihornedjherkef Hotepibre | 1753-1741 | | 14th Dynasty |
| | | | [-] Sewadjkare | 1741-1739 | | [Yakbim] |
| | | | [-] Nedjemibre | 1739-1739 | | [Ya'ammu] |
| | | | Sobkhotep II | 1739-1733 | | [Qoreh] |
| | | | Reniseneb | 1733-1733 | | [‘Ammu] |
| | | | Hor I | 1733-1729 | | |
| | | | Amenemhet VII | 1729-1722 | | [Sheshi] |
| | | | Wegaf | 1722-1720 | | |
| | | | Khendjer | 1720-1716 | | |
| | | | Imyremeshaw | 1716-1712 | | |
| | | | Antef V | 1712-1708 | | |
| | | | Seth | 1708-1705 | | |
| | | | Sobkhotep III | 1705-1701 | | |
| | | | Neferhotep I | 1701-1690 | | [Nehesy] |
| | | | Sihathor | 1690-1690 | | ? |
| | | | Sobkhotep IV Knaneferre | 1690-1682 | | <i>Great Hyksos</i> |
| | -1678 | | Sobkhotep V | 1682-1678 | | 15th Dynasty |
| Chiefs of cattle | 1678 - | 65 | Sobkhotep VI | 1678-1673 | | <i>Stele of year 400</i> |
| | | | Ibiaw | 1676-1665 | | [Šamqenu?] |
| | | | Aya | 1665-1652 | | |
| | | | Ini I | 1652-1650 | | [‘Aper-Anati?] |
| | | | Sewadjtu | 1650-1647 | | |
| | | | Ined | 1647-1644 | | |
| | | | Hori | 1644-1639 | | [Sakir-Har?] |
| | | | Sobkhotep VII | 1639-1637 | | |
| | | | Ini II | 1637-1633 | | |
| | | | Neferhotep II | 1633-1629 | | Khyan? |
| | -1613 | | ? | -1613 | | |
| Moses (pharaoh) | 1613 - -1573 | 40 | ? | 1613 - -1573 | | Apopi Auserre |
| | | | | | | Khamudi? |
| | | | 17th Dynasty | | | 16th Dynasty |
| (in Madian) | 1573 - | 40 | Rahotep | 1573-1569 | | Djehuti |
| | | | Sobekemsaf I | 1569-1567 | | Mentuhotepi |
| | | | Sobekemsaf II | 1567-1557 | | Nebiriau I |
| | | | Antef VI | 1557-1555 | | |
| | | | Antef VII | 1555-1545 | | Bebiankh |

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------|------|--------------------------|-------------|--|--------------------------------|
| | | | Antef VIII | 1545-1545 | | |
| | | | Senakhtenre | 1545-1544 | | |
| | -1533 | | Sequenre Taa | 1544-1533 | | Dedumose |
| (Exodus) | 1533 | - 40 | Kamose | 1533-1530 | | Hyksos' War |
| | | | 18 th Dynasty | | | |
| | -1493 | | Ahmose | 1530-1505 | | |
| Joshua | 1493 | - 30 | Amenhotep I | 1505-1484 | | Shasu Land |
| | | | Thutmose I | 1484-1472 | | |
| | -1463 | | Thutmose II | 1472-1469 | | |
| Without Judge | 1463-1452 | 11 | [Hatshepsut] | [1469-1450] | | |
| Cushan-Rishataim | 1452-1444 | 8 | Thutmose III | 1469-1418 | | Šausatar I (Mitanni) |
| Othniel | 1444-1404 | 40 | Amenhotep II | 1420-1392 | | Tribe of Asher |
| Eglon | 1404-1386 | 18 | Thutmose IV | 1392-1383 | | |
| Ehud / (Shamgar) | 1386-1366 | 20 | Amenhotep III | 1383-1345 | | |
| Jabin/ Sisera | 1366-1346 | 20 | Akhenaton | 1356 - | | War of Apirus |
| Barak | 1346 | - 40 | | -1340 | | |
| | | | Semenkhkare | 1340-1338 | | |
| | | | -Ankhkheperure | 1338-1336 | | |
| | | | Tutankhamon | 1336-1327 | | |
| | -1306 | | Ay | 1327-1323 | | |
| Madian | 1306-1299 | 7 | Horemheb | 1323-1295 | | |
| | | | 19 th Dynasty | | | |
| Gideon | 1299 | - 40 | Ramses I | 1295-1294 | | |
| | | | Sety I | 1294-1283 | | |
| | -1259 | | Ramses II | 1283 - | | |
| Abimelek | 1259-1256 | 3 | | (-1279) | | 1 st Israelite king |
| Tola | 1256-1233 | 23 | | | | |
| Jair | 1233-1211 | 22 | | -1216 | | |
| Anarchy | 1211 | - 18 | Merenptah | 1216-1207 | | Stele of Israel |
| | | | Sety II | 1207-1202 | | Sea Peoples |
| | | | [Amenmes] | [1206-1202] | | come in Philistia |
| | | | Siptah | 1202-1196 | | |
| | | | -Tausert | 1196-1194 | | |
| | -1193 | | 20 th Dynasty | | | |
| Jephthah | 1193-1187 | 6 | Sethnakht | 1196-1192 | | |
| Ibzan | 1187-1180 | 7 | Ramses III | 1192 - | | |
| Elon | 1180-1170 | 10 | | | | |
| Abdon | 1170-1162 | 8 | | -1161 | | Shasu >> Aamu |
| [Eli] Philistines | 1162 | - 40 | Ramses IV | 1161-1155 | | |
| | | | Ramses V | 1154-1151 | | |
| | | | Ramses VI | 1151-1144 | | |
| | | | Ramses VII | 1144-1137 | | |
| | | | Ramses VIII | 1137-1137 | | |
| | -1122 | | Ramses IX | 1137-1119 | | |
| Samson | 1122-1102 | 20 | Ramses X | 1119-1116 | | |
| Samuel's sons | 1102-1097 | 5 | Ramses XI | 1116-1090 | | |
| Saul | 1097 | - 40 | [Herihor] | [1098-1085] | | 1 st king of Israel |
| | | | 21 st Dynasty | | | |
| | | | Smendes | 1090-1064 | | |
| | -1057 | | Amenemnesut | [1064-1060] | | |
| David | 1057-1017 | 40 | Psusennes I | 1064-1018 | | |
| Solomon | 1017 | - 40 | Amenemope | 1018-1009 | | |
| | | | Osorkon the Elder | 1009-1003 | | |
| | (-993) | | Siamon | 1003 - 984 | | Gezer attacked |
| | | | Psusennes II/III | 994-980 | | |
| | -977 | | 22 nd Dynasty | | | |
| Rehoboam | 977-960 | 17 | Shoshenq I | 980-959 | | Campaign in Palestine |
| Abiyam | 960-957 | 3 | Osorkon I | 959 - | | |
| Asa | 957 | - 41 | | -924 | | |

SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO AN ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY
THROUGH SYNCHRONISMS DATED BY ASTRONOMY

| | | | | | | | |
|---------------------|---------------|-----|--------------------------------|---------------|--|--|--------------------------------|
| | | | Shoshenq II | 924-922 | | | |
| | | | Shoshenq IIb | -922 | | | |
| | -916 | | Takelot I | 922 - -909 | | | |
| Jehoshaphat | 916 - -891 | 25 | Osorkon II | 909 - | | | |
| Jehosaphat/Jehoram | [893-891] | [2] | | | | | |
| Jehoram | 893-885 | 8 | | | | | |
| [Athaliah] Jehoyada | 885-879 | 6 | | | | | |
| Joash | 879 - -839 | 40 | | -865 | | | |
| | | | Takelot II | 865-840 | | | <i>astronomy</i> |
| Amasiah | 839-810 | 29 | Shoshenq III | 840 - -800 | | | 23rd Dynasty |
| Uzziah | 810 - | 52 | | | | | |
| [Azariah] | [796 - | | Shoshenq IV | 800-788 | | | |
| | -758 | | Pamiiu | 788-782 | | | 24th Dynasty |
| Jotham | 758-742 | 16 | Shoshenq V | 782 - -745 | | | |
| Ahaz | 742-726 | 16 | Osorkon IV (Sô) | 745 - | | | <i>Alliance with Sô</i> |
| Hezekiah | 726 - | 29 | | -712 | | | 25th Dynasty |
| | -697 | | Chabataka | 712 - -689 | | | |
| Manasseh | 697 - | 55 | Taharqa | 689-663 | | | |
| | -642 | | 26th Dynasty | | | | |
| Amon | 642-640 | 2 | Psammetichus I | 663 - | | | |
| Josias | 640 - | 31 | | -609 | | | |
| | -609 | | Necho II | 609 - | | | <i>Death of Josias</i> |
| Jehoiachim | 609-598 | 11 | | -594 | | | |
| Zedekiah | 598-587 | 11 | Psammetichus I | 594-588 | | | |
| Jehoiachin (exile) | 587 - | 26 | Apries | 588-570 | | | |
| | -561 | | Apries/ Amasis | 569-567 | | | |
| | | | Amasis | 569-526 | | | |
| Zerubbabel | 538-525 | | Psammetichus III | 526-525 | | | <i>Governor</i> |
| | | | 27th Dynasty | | | | |
| | | | Cambyses II | 526-522 | | | |
| Esther | 489-425 | | Darius I | 522-486 | | | |
| Nehemiah | 455-443 | 483 | Xerxes I | 496-475 | | | <i>Queen</i> |
| | | | Artaxerxes I | 475-434 | | | <i>Governor</i> |
| | | | Darius B | 434-425 | | | |
| | | | Artaxerxes I | 425-424 | | | |
| | | | Xerxes II | 424 | | | |
| Ezra | | | Darius II | 424-405 | | | <i>Elephantine</i> |
| | | | 28th Dynasty | | | | |
| | | | Amyrtaeus | 404-398 | | | |
| | | | 29th Dynasty | | | | |
| | | | Nepherites I | 398-393 | | | |
| | | | Psammuthes | 393 | | | |
| | | | Hakor | 393-380 | | | |
| | | | Nepherites II | 380 | | | |
| | | | 30th Dynasty | | | | |
| | | | Nectanebo I | 380-362 | | | |
| | | | Teos | 362-360 | | | |
| | | | Nectanebo II | 360-343 | | | |
| | | | 31st Dynasty | | | | |
| | | | Artaxerxes III | 343-338 | | | |
| | | | Artaxerxes IV | 338-336 | | | |
| | | | Khababash | 338-335 | | | |
| | | | Darius III | 336-332 | | | |
| Jesus | 29-33 | | | | | | <i>Messiah</i> |

CHRONOLOGY OF THE 'HYKSOS' WAR

The only major incident during the period before the "Hyksos' war" is recorded in a decree of Antef VII²⁰⁸ (1555-1545), a predecessor of Seqenenre, the *in absentia* impeachment of Teti, viceroy of Kush, who had fomented a rebellion²⁰⁹: *Year 3, III Peret 25, under the Majesty, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nebkheperre son of Ra, Antef [VII] (...) that one ignores now his name in the temple (...) rebel and enemy of God, his writings have to be destroyed (...) any king or powerful governor who will be merciful to him will not be able to receive the white crown [Upper Egypt] anymore, he will not bear the Red Crown [Lower Egypt], he will not sit on the throne of Horus [Egypt] of living beings, the two Mistresses will not be favourable to him.* These remarks illustrate the political situation at the time: kings of the 17th Dynasty had authority over Egypt but they had delegated a part of Upper Egypt to vassal Kings of Kush and a part of Lower Egypt to Kings of foreign Lands, the Theban kings of the 16th dynasty, such as Mentuhotepi (1567-1566) who wrote: *one in whose governance people (can) live, one who functions as king [...] of victorious Thebes! I am a king native of Thebes, this city of mine, mistress of the entire land, city of triumph*²¹⁰. Relationships between Egyptian and Hyksos kings were peaceful, as evidenced by the fact that stones of Senakhtenra's monument in Thebes come from Tura, near Memphis, which proves that the Egyptian kingdoms (16th and 17th Dynasties) maintained trade and peaceful relations, reversing a so-called rivalry²¹¹.

| | | 13 th Dynasty (Lisht/Memphis) | | 15 th Dynasty (Avaris) | |
|----------------------|-----------|------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| ? | | ? | 1632 - | [Khyan?] | 1632-1613 |
| ? | | ? | | Apopi | 1613-1572 |
| ? | | ? | -1571 | Khamudi? | 1572-1571 |
| King of Kush (Kerma) | | 17 th Dynasty (Thebes) | | 16 th Dynasty (Edfu) | |
| ? | | Rahotep | 1572-1568 | Djehuty | 1571-1568 |
| ? | | Sobekemsaf I | 1568-1566 | Neferhotep III | 1568-1567 |
| ? | | Sobekemsaf II | 1566-1556 | Mentuhotepi | 1567-1566 |
| ? | | Antef VI | 1556-1554 | Nebiriau I | 1566 - |
| Teti | 1555 - | Antef VII | 1555 - | | -1550 |
| | | | | Nebiriau II | 1550-1550 |
| | | | | -(Semenre) | 1550-1549 |
| | | | -1545 | Bebiankh | 1549 - |
| | | Antef VIII | 1545-1545 | | |
| | | Senakhtenre | 1545-1544 | | |
| | | Seqenenre | 1544 - | | -1537 |
| | | | | -(Sekhemreshedwaset) | 1537-1537 |
| | | | | Dedumose I | 1537-1534 |
| | | (Hyksos' war) | -1533 | Dedumose II | 1534-1533 |
| | | Kamose | 1533 - | Mentuemsaf | 1533-1532 |
| | | | | Mentuhotep VI | 1532-1531 |
| | -1531 | | -1530 | Senwosret IV | 1531-1530 |
| | | 18 th Dynasty (Thebes) | | | |
| Djehuti | 1531-15?? | Ahmose | 1530-1505 | | |

Egyptian stories written before and after Apopi are contradictory²¹² since before this king no tension can be reported, but the Hyksos suddenly become a calamity for

²⁰⁸ C. LALOUETTE – Thèbes ou la naissance d'un empire
Paris 1986 Éd. Fayard pp. 108-110.

²⁰⁹ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 187-188.

²¹⁰ D.B. REDFORD – Textual Sources for the Hyksos Period
in: The Hyksos: New Historical and Archaeological Perspectives. Philadelphia 1997 pp. 5,12.

²¹¹ S. BISTON-MOULIN – Le roi Sénakht-en-Ré Ahmès de la XVII^e dynastie
in: Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne 5 (2012) pp. 61-71.

²¹² P.A. CLAYTON - Chronique des Pharaons
Paris 2000 Éd. Castelman pp. 90-97.

Egyptians after their departure from Egypt. The earlier Egyptian documents show that, contrary to the descriptions of later Egyptian sources, the Hyksos were builders, even encouraging the spread of Egyptian literature and intellectual life of Egypt²¹³. Furthermore, paradoxically, no Pharaoh had this “war against the Hyksos” engraved on the rock, as was the case for the Battle of Kadesh, which was nevertheless crucial in Egyptian history.

| HYKSOS | Reign | HANA | Reign | KASSITE | Reign | BABYLON | Reign |
|--------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 14 th Dynasty | 1750 - -1680 | Yahdun-Lim (<i>kings of Mari</i>) | 1716-1700 1700-1680 | | | Sîn-muballiṭ Hammurabi | 1717-1697 1697 - |
| 15 th Dynasty | 1680 - | Zimri-Lim Yāpaḥ-Šumu-Abu | 1680-1667 1667-1654 | | | | -1654 |
| | | Iši-Šumu-Abu Yadiḥ-Abu I | 1654-1641 1641-1627 | Gandaš | 1661 - -1635 | Samsu-iluna | 1654-1645 1945-1927 |
| Khyan | -1613 | [Mutī-Huršana?] | 1627-1613 | Agum I | 1635-1613 | | 1627-1616 |
| Apopi | 1613 - -1573 | Kaštiliaš Šunuḥru-Ammu | 1613-1591 1591-1575 | Kaštiliaš I Ušši | 1613-1591 1591-1583 | Abi-ešuḥ Ammiditana | 1616-1588 1588 - |
| 16 th Dynasty | 1572 - -1533 | Ammi-madar Yadiḥ-Abu II | 1575 - -1559 1559-1543 | Abirattaš Kaštiliaš II (?) Urzigurumaš (?) | 1583-1567 1567-1551 1551-1535 | | -1551 -1530 |
| Exodus | 1533 - -1493 | Zimri-Lim II Kasap-ilī Kuvari | 1543-1527 1527-1511 1511-1495 | Harbašihu (?) Tiptakzi | 1535 - -1519 1519-1503 | Samsuditana | 1530 - -1499 |
| Canaan | 1493 - | Ya'usa / Hanaya Qiš-Addu Iddin-Kakka | 1495-1480 1480 - -1455 1455-1435 | Agum II Burna-Buriaš I Kaštiliaš III Ulam-Buriaš | 1503-1487 1487-1471 1471-1455 1455-1439 | | |

| HATTI | Reign | UGARIT | Reign | MITANNI | Reign | ASSYRIA | Reign |
|--------------|-----------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Ḫarpatiwa | 1730-1710 | Ugarānu | 1725-1710 | | | Ērišu II | 1722-1712 |
| Inar | 1710 - -1690 | Amqunu Rap'anu | 1710-1695 1695-1680 | | | Šamši-Adad I Išme-Dagan I | 1712-1680 1680-1670 |
| Waršama | 1690-1670 | Līm-il-Malik | 1680-1665 | | | Aššur-dugul | 1670-1664 |
| Pithana | 1670-1650 | Ammu-harrāši | 1665-1650 | | | Bēlu-bāni | 1664-1654 |
| Anitta | 1650-1630 | Ammu-šamar | 1650-1635 | | | Libbaya | 1654-1638 |
| Zūzu | 1630 - -1610 | Ammištamru I Niqmepa I | 1635-1620 1620-1605 | | | Šarma-Adad I Puzur-Sîn | 1638-1626 1626-1615 |
| Ḫuzziya I ? | 1605-1585 | Mabu'u/'il | 1605-1590 | | | Bazaya | 1615-1588 |
| Tudḫaliya ? | 1585 - -1565 | Ibirānu I | 1590-1575 | | | Lullaya | 1588-1582 |
| PU-Šarruma? | 1565 - -1550 | Ya'dur-Addu/ Eḫli-Tešub Niqmepa II | 1575 - -1560 1560-1545 | | | Šû-Ninûa Šarma-Adad II Ērišu III Šamši-Adad II | 1582-1568 1568-1565 1565-1553 1553-1547 |
| Labarna | 1550-1530 | Ibirānu II | 1545-1530 | | | Išme-Dagan II | 1547-1531 |
| Ḫattušili I | 1530-1510 | Ammurapi I | 1530-1515 | | | Šamši-Adad III | 1531-1516 |
| Muršili I | 1510-1500 | Niqmepa III | 1515-1500 | | | Aššur-nêrârî I | 1516 - -1491 |
| Ḫantili I | 1500-1495 | Ibirānu III | 1500 - | Kirta | 1500 - | | |
| Zidanta I | 1495 | | | | | Puzur-Aššur III | 1491 - |
| Ammuna | 1495-1485 | | -1485 | | -1485 | | |
| Ḫuzziya II | 1485 | Niqmepa IV | 1485 - | Šutarna I | 1485 - -1480 | | |
| Telipinu | 1485-1480 | | | Barattarna I | 1480 - | | |
| Alluwamna | 1480-1475 | | | | | | |
| Ḫantili II | 1475-1470 | | | | | | |
| Taḫurwaili I | 1470 | | -1470 | | | | |
| Zidanza (II) | 1470-1465 | Ibirānu IV | 1470 - | | | | -1467 |
| Ḫuzziya II | 1465-1460 | | | | | Enlil-nāšir I | 1467-1455 |
| Muwatalli I | 1460-1455 | | -1450 | | -1455 | Nûr-ili | 1455-1443 |
| Tudḫaliya I | 1455-1435 | Niqmaddu I | 1450-1430 | Šauštatar I | 1455-1435 | Aššur-rabi I | 1443-1433 |

²¹³ N. GRIMAL - Histoire de l'Égypte ancienne
Paris 1988 Éd. Fayard p. 246
J. VERCOUTIER - Les Hyksos
in: Encyclopédia Universalis (1994) pp. 820-821.

The reconstruction of this time period shows that it all happened during the reign of Kamose. Two paradoxes appear: 1) Kamose who is nevertheless the key element in the “Egypt liberation” is not placed at the beginning of the 18th dynasty, and in his lengthy biography the soldier Ahmose son of Abana detailing his service, from Seqenenre until Thutmose I, ignored Kamose, the major hero of the war; 2) Some Egyptologists describe, by conjecture, a violent war with the Hyksos, but the remains of Avaris show no trace of conflagration and destruction, but rather a gradual abandonment of the city²¹⁴. The mystery is over. What really happened and why have Egyptians always refused to identify the culprit of their disaster, as Herodotus noted (The Histories II:128)?

The first document about the “war of the Hyksos” is an account between pharaoh Apopi and pharaoh Seqenenre giving the reasons for the conflict (parts in square brackets have been reconstituted according to the context)²¹⁵:

It was the land of Egypt was in trouble because there was no lord, life-integrity-health, as king of the (entire) region. It was then, king Seqenenre, life-integrity-health, was ruler of the Southern City (Thebes) and was the misfortune of Asiatics in the city for the prince Apopi, life-integrity-health, was installed in Avaris. He had put the entire country in his service, the North (Delta) also providing (him) all kinds of good products from the Northern Land. Now king Apopi, life-integrity-health, made Sutekh (Baal) his lord, he did not serve any god of the whole country except Sutekh. He built (him) a temple in perfect work for eternity next to the palace King Apopi, life-integrity-health, he appeared [...] days to present [his offering] to Sutekh daily while dignitaries [...] wore linen cloths used in accordance with the temple of Re-Harakhti in front of it. Now therefore king Apopi, life-integrity-health, would send a letter of challenge (to) king Seqenenre, [life-integrity-health,] Prince of the Southern City. After many days had elapsed after this, king [Apopi, life-integrity-health] did call [...] write [...] and dignitaries [said: « O] sovereign, life-integrity-health, our Lord [grant that Seqenenre chasing after] some hippos out the lake [that lie to the east of the City, considering] that they don't leave [coming to us the sleep neither day nor] night [their din fills the ears of our city ...] So the Prince of the Southern City [...] is with him (Seqenenre) as a protector, he bows to no god [in entire country] except Amun-Ra-king-of-gods. After many days had elapsed after this, the king Apopi, life-integrity-health, sent to the Prince of the Southern City the letter of challenge than he had called his scribes scholars. The messenger of king Apopi, life-integrity-health, came to the Prince of the Southern City. So he was taken in the presence of the Prince of the Southern City and one (the Prince) said to the messenger of King Apopi, life-integrity-health: « Why have you sent to the Southern City? Why hast thou done this trip? ». Then the messenger told him (to Seqenenre): « It is king Apopi, life-integrity-health, that sends me to you to tell you: “do make chasing out of the lake hippos that are to the east of the city considering they do not let me get to sleep either by day or night, their uproar fills the ears of the city” ». So the Prince of the Southern City burst into tears, in great despair, for he was (not) in a state of knowing how to respond to the messenger of King Apopi, life-integrity-health. So the Prince of the Southern City said: « Is it that thy lord, life-integrity, health, hear the noise [of hippos] in the east of the Southern City over there (in Avaris, 900 km north)? ». So [the messenger precised?] the terms (of the challenge) on which he (Apopi) had written. [The prince of the Southern City made sure] that were taken care of [the messenger of king Apopi, life-integrity-health, through all kinds] of good things, meats, cakes [... Then the Prince of the Southern City] said: [« So I will do that. Go back where you came,] and all that thou shalt say to him (to Apopi), I will. So will you tell him ». [... Then messenger of king] Apopi, life-integrity-health, was transported on a journey to the place, where his lord, life-integrity-health. Then the Prince of the Southern City convoked his great dignitaries, and all the soldiers and generals before him, and repeated all the terms of challenge on which king Apopi, life-integrity-health, wrote to him. And then they all remained silent, in great distress, without knowing answer for good or evil. Then King Apopi, life-integrity-health, wrote to [...] (End of document lost).

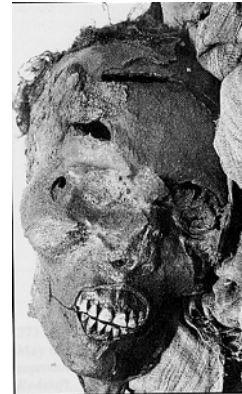
²¹⁴ M. BIETAK – Avaris

in: Dossiers d'Archéologie n°213 mai 1996 pp. 16-23.

²¹⁵ C. BARBOTIN – Ahmôsis et le début de la XVIII^e dynastie
Paris 2008 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 231-235.

As one can see, there are many anomalies, to say nothing of strangeness: 1) How is it that Seqenenre, the penultimate king of the 17th dynasty, discusses with Apopi, the last king of the 15th dynasty, while we should have a Theban king from the end of the 16th dynasty? Why is a pharaoh shocked that another Pharaoh worships only one god²¹⁶? What do the letters of challenge from pharaoh Apopi contain so serious that they could make pharaoh Seqenenre burst into tears, in great despair?

The Challenge "the hippos from the Southern City [Thebes] make noise" (which is absurd, Avaris is approximately 900 kilometres from Thebes) was actually a harbinger of death against Pharaoh because, according to Egyptian mythology, Menes, the 1st king of Egypt was killed by a hippopotamus. In addition, each year, pharaoh put to death a hippopotamus an incarnation of Seth, in a ritual manner, to commemorate the triumphant struggle of Horus against Seth. So this sinister omen could explain the reaction of Seqenenre Taa who bursts into tears, in despair, and why his great dignitaries all remain silent. No Egyptian source has described the sequence of events, but the state of the mummy of Seqenenre, especially his head indicating serious injury (opposite picture), is eloquent, this pharaoh died (aged 30 to 40 years) in a very violent manner and it took quite a long time before his mummification²¹⁷. Although this event was exceptional the Egyptians are absolutely silent about this death, but it is not the case of Egyptologists who explain that Seqenenre was probably slaughtered by at least 2 Hyksos soldiers. This explanation is ridiculous because this would mean the Egyptians left to decompose the corpse of their pharaoh before its mummifying, what would have been blasphemy. Moreover, as the ribs and vertebrae are fractured and dislocated, Seqenenre had to be attacked by two Terminators!



Not only is the brutal death of Seqenenre inexplicable, but his eldest son, the Crown Prince, also died shortly before in dramatic circumstances: *Seqenenre had an heir, Prince Iahmes. He died at six years old and his father followed closely (...) Very quickly his cult was formed [and would last until the beginning of the 21st dynasty] and he was the first of the "big family" Royal from the late 17th and early 18th Dynasty to have been the object of worship, before Amenhotep I and Iahmes Nefertari (...) inscriptions of the statue reveal that this prince was the eldest son of Seqenenre Djebuty-Aa (...) The statue is exceptional in many respects. This is a large statue of 1.035 m tall, which is remarkable at a time when there were almost no statues! It shows family grief, the prince evidently died prematurely as it is regretted by his mother and two sisters, and his father the king. It is unique in the history of Pharaonic Egypt that a king declares his paternity and speaks directly to his son, using a second person²¹⁸. The reasons for this cult that lasted nearly half a millennium remain mysterious. The examination of the mummy of Iahmes Sapaïr indicates that this prince measured 1.17 m²¹⁹ which evaluates as 6/7 years the age of his son. Despite his young age, Ahmose*



²¹⁶ O. GOLDWASSER – King Apophis and the Emergence of Monotheism
in: Timelines Studies in Honour of Manfred Bietak Vol. I (2006) pp. 129-133, 331-354.

²¹⁷ A.-P. LECA – Les momies
Paris 1976 Éd. Librairie Hachette pp. 147-148.

²¹⁸ C. VANDERSLEYEN - Iahmès Sapaïr
Paris 2006 Éd. Safran pp.14-20,27.

²¹⁹ The enthronement name: Sapaïr (*s3 p3 ir*) "son of the one who acted", was attached shortly after the death of Seqenenre. Furthermore, the mummy of the prince measuring 1.17 m and his statue with a size of 1.035 m, it had to be done about 1 year before his death.

Sapaïr was circumcised²²⁰ to indicate that he was pure in gods' eyes which was exceptional, because circumcision was usually performed at puberty²²¹.

On the stela of year 3 of Kamose²²² appears the first detailed report of the "taking of Avaris", an inaccurate term because there is no fighting, the city being only looted. This inscription looks more like a report written shortly after the events rather than a declaration of victory, traditionally laudatory. Important point of this inscription: Kamose's retaliation was not caused by an attack of the Hyksos since his counsellors remind him²²³: *we are at peace with our Egypt*. The entry is highlighted in the following points²²⁴:

^{A1/225}Year 3 of the Horus appearing on his throne, the Two Ladies of renewing the memorials, the golden hawk which pacifies the Two Lands, King of Upper and Lower Egypt (nsw-bity) Wadjkeheperre [son of Ra Ka]mose, endowed with life, beloved of Amun-Re lord of the thrones of the Two Lands like Ra, forever nights and days. ^{A2/}The victorious king (nsw) in the nome of Thebes, Kamose endowed with life for eternity of nights, is a king (nsw) efficient: it is Ra himself [who made him] King (nsw), who sent him victory in truth! His Majesty said in his palace in the board of his dignitaries ^{A3/}who were following him: « How do I should recognize, my victory, with a prince (wr) in Avaris and another in Kush, I who have been enthroned in company with an Asiatic ('3m) and a Nubian (nhsy)? Each has his part in this Egypt. The country has been shared with me, and ^{A4/}there is no one who goes beyond (his share) up to Memphis, the canal of Egypt: see then he holds Hermopolis! One can't stop without being squeezed by easements (taxes) of Asiatics. I'll confront him, I'll disembowel him, I desire to get hold (whole) of Egypt and destroy ^{A5/}the Asiatics! ». The dignitaries of is council said: « As far as Cusae is the allegiance of Asiatics. Flaps on their chatter, for we are at peace with our Egypt! Elephantine is impregnable, ^{A6/}and the center (of the country) belongs to us as far as Cusae. Plowing for us the best in their fields, our cattle graze in the marshes (Delta), the grain is shipped (for fattening) our pigs, our cattle are not stolen, no crocodile ^{A7/}[...] because of this, he (the Hyksos king) holds Asiatic country and we hold Egypt. If coming (the one that would work against) and we would act against him ». They affected the heart of His Majesty « with regard to your will ^{A8/}[...] right, I should not acknowledge the one that shares the country with me, those Asiatics who [...] ^{A9/}I sail northward to complete the annihilation of Asiatics and success will result. If [...] his eyes] in tears, the whole country [...] ^{A10/}the ruler (hq3) in the nome of Thebes, Kamose who protects Egypt. So I sailed northward through my courage to chase the Asiatics, and by order of Amon who attests to the will, my valiant army ^{A11/}before me like the heat of a flame. The Medjay's troupe which is east of our watch will flush out the Asiatics and destroy their settlements, east and west providing them the grease ^{A12/}while the army eats food, anywhere. I sent the victorious troop of Medjaj's, I was so busy with [...] to the encirclement of the [rebel] ^{A13/}Teti, son of Pepi, within Nefrusy [near Hermopolis]. I will not allow him to escape when I should expel the Asiatics who oppose Egypt in order for him to do Nefrousi a nest of Asiatics! It's on my ship, the heart happy, I spent the night ^{A14/}. At dawn, I found myself on board, similar to the status of a hawk, and after lunch, I devastated, having demolished its walls, killing its people and bringing down his wife (of the rebel Teti) ^{A15/}to shore, my army like the state of lions, in charge of his booty, crumbling of slaves, cattle, fat and honey, busy with the division of his property, his heart swelling (of joy). District Nefrusy ^{A16/}is in a state of surrender, we will not totally lock up the (?), Per-shaq goes away when I approach him, his carriages have fled inside. Patrols of the army [...], ^{A17/}those who remember in the valley, their goods, it [...]

²²⁰ G. ELLIOT SMITH – Catalogue Général Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire: The Royal Mummies. Vol. 59 Le Caire 1912 Éd. Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale pp. 1-6, 25.

²²¹ This child would be born around 1540 BCE, which was an exceptional coincidence for the Egyptians because every 243 years the heliacal risings of Sirius and Venus coincided. This exceptional event marked a new era called the Great year by Greek authors (and described as the rebirth of the Phoenix), and it occurred exactly on 12 July 1543 BCE at Thebes and during a full moon (G.W. VAN OOSTERHOUT – Sirius, Venus and the Egyptian Calendar in: *Discussions in Egyptology* 27, 1993, pp. 83-96). The Horus name of Seqenenre was "the one (Sirius) appeared in Thebes". The Crown Prince Ahmose (Iahmes) Sapaïr therefore symbolized the emergence of a new era for the Egyptians (in fact, the 18th Dynasty will begin with Ahmose, the younger brother of Ahmose Sapaïr).

²²² L. HABACHI – The Second Stela of Kamose and his Struggle against the Hyksos Ruler and his Capital Glückstadt 1972 Ed. Verlag J.J. Augustin pp.31-67.

²²³ C. LALOUETTE – Thèbes ou la naissance d'un Empire Paris 1986 Éd. Arthème Fayard pp. 117, 591 note 51.

²²⁴ M. DESSOUDÉIX – Lettres égyptiennes. La naissance du Nouvel Empire de Kamosis à Thoutmosis II Paris 2010 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 12-60.

²²⁵ A1 means "line 1 of the first stela of year 3 of Kamose" and B1 means "line 1 of the second stela of year 3 of Kamose".

[-----]

^{B1/}terrible news in your city: you are turned back on the side of your army! You are insolent when you make me a worthy (sr), while you're a ruler (hq3), until I'll ask ^{B2/}for you this illegitimate good because of which you fall! Look at the disaster behind you! My army close behind you, women of Avaris will not give birth anymore because it is no longer (a man) who opens their heart ^{B3/}in their belly when the clamour of my army is heard. I am moored in front of the citadel, and the brave (of my army) said: « My heart is swollen (of joy), I'll show ^{B4/}Apopi time of the weakness, he the prince (sr) of Retenu to weak arms, who devises in his heart heroic acts without occurring in his favour ». I came to Inyt-^{B5/}of-the-upstream (in Avaris), I crossed the river toward them (my soldiers) to the harangue: « Steer me to ensure the fleet that (each ship) is disposed one behind the other, I want to put them bow to stern, with the ^{B6}best of my brave going to fly over the river, how would do a hawk, my ship gold-headed ahead. (It) is like their falcon-headed. ^{B7}I want to place this warship in the limits of the desert, the fleet behind him as it (?) ravaging the land ^{B8}of Avaris. I watched its women (of Avaris) at the top of his castle watching from their windows to port. There is no (man) who opens their bellies when ^{B9}they see me, while watching through its loopholes in their walls, like little mice to the bottom of their holes, saying: « How he goes fast ». ^{B10}Here I am to triumph, what is left (of the country) is in my hand, my action is effective! By victorious Amon, I do not spare you, I will not let you cross a field ^{B11}without finding myself in front of you! So your heart fails, moron Asiantic! Look, I drink wine of your vineyard, ^{B12}the one that press for me the Asiatics I capture, I ransacked your place of residence, I cut your trees after having put your wives in (my) slipway ^{B13}and I took possession of carriages. I have not left a board from the 300 ships (made) of fresh pine which were full of gold, lapis lazuli, silver, turquoise, ^{B14}bronze axes without number, excluding oil moringa, incense, honey, wood-ituren, wood-sesenedjem, wood-sepen, all precious woods ^{B15}and all beautiful imports from Retenu. I have taken everything, I have nothing left, Avaris is doomed to penury, the Asiatic perished. ^{B16}So your heart fails, moron Asiatic who said: « I am the Lord (nb), unrivalled as far as Hermopolis, as far as Pi-Hathor on the (?) and as far as Avaris ^{B17}between the two rivers ». I left it in the destruction, without inhabitants, having sacked their cities. I burned that their settlements which were reduced to mounds redden (by fire), ^{B18}for the eternity of nights, because the damage they had done inside Egypt. Those who allowed themselves to listen the call of Asiatics, they have abandoned Egypt, their mistress. ^{B19}I captured his messenger (of Apopi) east of the oasis (in Bahariyah) as he went back south to Kush with a written message. I found there the written retranscription of the words from the ruler (hq3) of Avaris: ^{B20}« Aauserre, the son of Ra, Apopi, send greetings to (my) son, Ruler (hq3) of Kush. Why did you set up as ruler (hq3) without letting me know? ^{B21}Did you see what Egypt has done against me? The ruler (hq3) therein, Kamose endowed with life, driving me out of my land as I have not attacked, in a manner identical to what he had done ^{B22}against you. He wants to tear the two countries to destroy my country and yours, after having ransacked. Come, come down the Nile, did not hesitate. ^{B23}Look, he's here with me, there is someone who opposes you in (this part of) Egypt. Look, I do not let him free rein until you came here. So we will share ^{B24}those cities of (this part of) Egypt and Khenthennefer will rejoice! ». Wadjkeheperre (Kamose) endowed with life that drives away evil. ^{B25}I placed the deserts and uphill of the country under my authority, and rivers as well, one can not find a way to assault me. I can not be careless about my army (because one) had not yet prevailed ^{B26}on the northern (Apopi). That's when I went to the north that he was afraid of me, before we fought, before I've never met him. When he saw my flame, he wrote to Kush (a letter) ^{B27}requesting his protection. I intercepted him (the messenger) in the desert, so I do not permit that he arrive. So I made him take in order to send him back. It (the letter) was left ^{B28}toward Atfih. My triumph has penetrated his heart, his members were dashed when his messenger told him what I had done against the District of Cynopolis which was part ^{B29}of his possessions. I sent my powerful troop which goes by land to devastate the oasis of Bahariyah. ^{B30}while I was at Saka to prevent a rebel behind me. So it is a brave heart and a happy heart that I sailed southward, destroying any rebel who was on the road. What a perfect trip toward the south it was for the ruler (hq3), ^{B31}life, integrity, health, with his army in front of him (Kamose)! There was no loss, no one inquired for his friend, no one cried. This is at time of the season ^{B32}Akhet that I arrived with hastily on the floor of the City (Thebes). Each face was bright, the country was in opulence, the port was in jubilation, the Theban nome was celebrating. Women and men were constantly coming ^{B33}to see me. Every

woman pressed again and again, his fellow in his arms. No face was in tears. The incense was (placed) to the brave inside the Nekhen chapel where one says: ^{B34} « Get what's good! » as when it gives strength to the son of Amon, life, integrity, health, sustainable King (nsw) 'Wadjkheperra', son of Ra 'Kamose the victorious one', given life, ^{B35} that defeated the South and who drove out the North, who seized the country by force, given life, stability and power, his joy being with his ka, like Ra for ever and ever. ^{B36} His Majesty has ordered the Director, Governor, Superior of the secrets of the royal domain, higher in-Chief of the entire domain, Chancellor of the king of Lower Egypt (bity), instructor of the two lands in front, Governor, Directors of Friends, ^{B37} Director of sealed things, Wesernesha: Make sure you write all that My Majesty made thanks to the strength of a stele. Its place will be located in Karnak in ^{B38} the Theban nome forever and ever. And he (Wesernesha) said to his Majesty: It is in relation to the favor of the royal presence I do any mission. The director of the seal Nesbi.

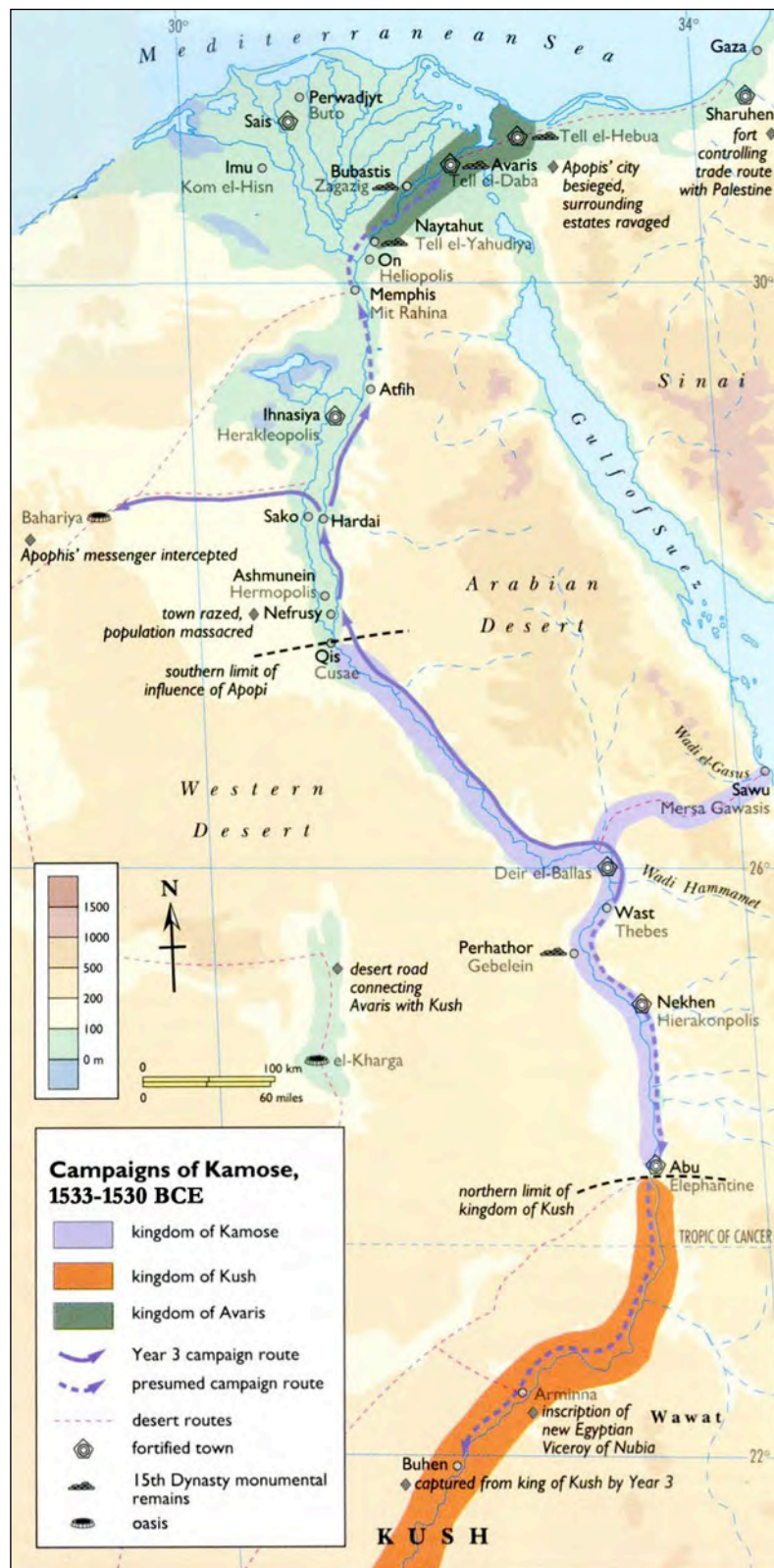
As one can see, there are several anomalies²²⁶: 1) At the beginning of the inscription "year 3 (*renpet 3*)" is the number of years and not regnal years "year 3 (*bat-sep 3*)"; 2) Pharaoh's name should have appeared at the beginning (as in Pharaoh Apopi's letter in line B20) instead of the god Horus, who merely represents the pharaoh; 3) according to the chronological description of Kamose's military campaign, Apopi had, at the beginning of hostilities, a full title of pharaoh (line B20) with a power superior to the viceroy of Kush since he called the latter "my son"²²⁷ (kings of same power wrote to each other using the expression "my brother") while Kamose is referred to as "worthy" by Apopi (line B1). During the drafting of the stele by Wesernesha, who was Chancellor of the king of Lower Egypt, Kamose was only the king of Upper Egypt (lines B34-38) and ruler of Thebes. Kamose's titulary evolved rapidly: Worthy, Ruler of Thebes, King of Lower Egypt and finally King of Upper and Lower Egypt. Apopi's titulary, on the contrary, decreased rapidly: King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Ruler of Avaris and finally Prince of Retenu.

The stele provides essential information to rebuild the military campaigns of Kamose in chronological order: 1) Kamose complained for being squeezed by easements (taxes) of Asiatics. 2) He desired to get hold (whole) of Egypt and destroy the Asiatics despite his dignitaries telling him: *we are at peace with our Egypt*. 3) He sailed northward to chase the Asiatics. 4) He intended to flush out the Asiatics and destroy their settlements by mean of Medjaïs troop which is east. 5) He sent the troop of Medjays to encircle the rebel Teti, son of Pepi, within Nefrusy [near Hermopolis], which was a nest of Asiatics who opposed Egypt. 6) He devastated Nefrusy, demolished its walls, killed its people, taking booty and crashing slaves. District Nefrusi surrounded. 7) He moored in front of the citadel (Avaris) and intended to show a time of weakness to Apopi, the prince of Retenu. 8) He ravaged the land of Avaris, ransacked it, took everything and left nothing (no inhabitants), made it doom to penury. He burned the settlements of the Asiatics because of the damage they had done in Egypt. He left not a single board from the 300 ships of Avaris port and took all beautiful imports from Retenu. 9) Some Egyptians listened to the call of Asiatics and have abandoned Egypt, their mistress. 10) He captured the messenger, east of the oasis (in Bahariyah), going back south to send a message to the king of Kush to whom Apopi was requesting help. 11) He went to the north again which made Apopi afraid. Apopi's supporters had fled before he fought when his messenger told him what Kamose had done against the District of Cynopolis which was part of his possessions. Thus, Kamose never met Apopi. 12) He sent his troop to devastate the oasis of Bahariyah, while he was at Saka to prevent a rebellion behind him. 13) He sailed southward, destroying any rebel who was on the road. 14) He arrived in Thebes at the time of Akhet season to

²²⁶ C. BARBOTIN – Âhmosis et le début de la XVIII^e dynastie
Paris 2008 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 169-179, 261-263.

²²⁷ C. LALOUETTE – Thèbes ou la naissance d'un Empire
Paris 1986 Éd. Arthème Fayard pp. 121, 591 note 63.

celebrate his seizing the country by force (performed by his defeating the South and his driving out the North). It is worth noting that the only warlike activity of Kamose, clearly described, had took place in the south²²⁸.



²²⁸ D. O'CONNOR - The Hyksos Period in Egypt
in: The Hyksos: New Historical and Archaeological Perspectives. Philadelphia 1997 pp. 45-63

This account is full of mysteries. Why did Apopi, who was a powerful pharaoh (there were, for example, 300 ships in the port city of Avaris, more than Byblos the biggest port of that time!), disappear in a ditch without fighting? Why did Kamose not mention what was the serious damage Apopi had done in Egypt? The only rational explanation of this confused story is the detailed capture of the rebel Teti, the son of Pepi. We can assume the following scenario: after a serious dispute with Seqenenre (or an unknown reason), Apopi a Hyksos king would have gone to Palestine accompanied by his supporters including some Egyptians. In retaliation Kamose plundered the rich city of Avaris, which had been abandoned. Taking advantage of the situation, the viceroy of Kush, Teti son of Minhotep, who had already fomented a rebellion in the days of Antef VII²²⁹, urged the Asiatics who remained in the area of Nefrusy (the headquarters of the 16th dynasty were at Edfu) to support him in his revolt against Egypt (Pepi is the diminutive of Minhotep)²³⁰. Kamose crushed the revolt and captured Teti. The northern land of Kush, called Wawat (part of the kingdom of Kerma, which had been independent), was annexed to Egypt. The viceroy of Kush was replaced by Djehuty who was appointed as “king [of Egypt]’s son”.

The Papyrus Rhind²³¹ briefly describes the fall of Avaris and the events that followed. This papyrus is a copy of a vast mathematical treatise written under Pharaoh Amenemhat III which is dated: IV Akhet, year 33 of King Apopi²³² (below):



Very surprisingly, a scribe has added inside a blank the following note²³³ (which has nothing to do with mathematics)²³⁴:

^{1/}Year 11, II Shemu (1); we entered Heliopolis

^{2/}I Akhet 23; the mighty dignitary

^{3/}of the South attacked Tjaru

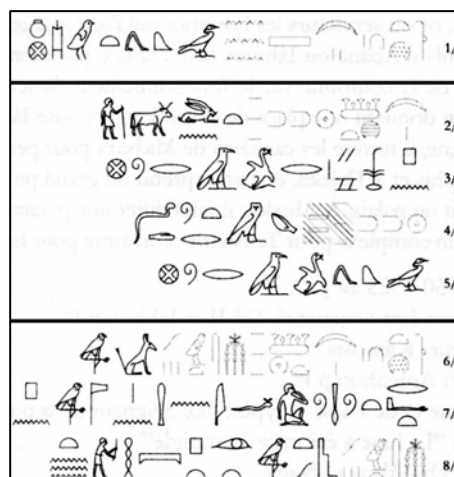
^{4/}[day] 25, we heard that

^{5/}we had entered Tjaru

^{6/}Year 11, I Akhet 3-birth of Seth [3rd epagomenal day]

^{7/}his voice is given by the majesty of this god (he thundered)

^{8/}Birth of Isis [4th epagomenal day], the sky has made rain



Once again, anomalies are numerous: 1) the fall of Avaris is not mentioned (!); 2) Pharaoh's name is not quoted, only the Prince of the South (?); 3) prior to Kamose, regnal years were reckoned from I Akhet 1, so it should have been Year 12 (not 11), I Akhet 3-. Forgetting the name of the Pharaoh seems inexplicable, since Pharaoh's name is specified in the year 33. As this anonymous pharaoh clearly belongs to the end of the Hyksos era, speculation about his identification were many: year 11 of Khamudy, Yeneses or Ahmose.

²²⁹ C. LALOUETTE – Thèbes ou la naissance d'un empire
Paris 1986 Éd. Fayard pp. 108-110.

²³⁰ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 187-188, 221-226.

²³¹ M. DESSOUDREIX – Lettres égyptiennes. La naissance du Nouvel Empire de Kamosis à Thoutmosis II
Paris 2010 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 62-64.

²³² J. VON BECKERATH – Untersuchungen zur politischen Geschichte der Zweiten Zwischenzeit in Ägypten
Glückstadt 1964 Ed. Verlag J.J. Augustin pp.270-279.

²³³ C. LALOUETTE – Thèbes ou la naissance de l'empire
Paris 1986 Éd. Arthème Fayard p.125.

C. BARBOTIN – Ahmose et le début de la XVIII^e dynastie
Paris 2008 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 180-182, fac-similé du *papyrus Rhind* p. 144.

²³⁴ The scribe has probably wanted to keep track of these memorable events, not hesitating to include them in a mathematical treatise of great value.

In fact, the solution is easy: the pharaoh and his crown prince having died within a short time interval, there was nobody on the throne of Egypt during the evacuation of Avaris at this time. The scribe therefore wrote a posthumous year 11 [of Seqenenre]. The powerful dignitary of the South who attacked Tjaru (Tell Hebua)²³⁵, a city in Hyksos territory, to regain control, is clearly Kamose²³⁶ (“mighty” is written with the hieroglyph *k3* “victorious bull”, as in the name of Kamose *k3-ms* “fathered by victorious bull”). The note of the scribe is preceded by a supply contract where the account²³⁷ appears: ^{1/}[...] *living for ever. List of the food in Hebebt* ^{2/}[...] *his brother, the steward Kamose [...]* ^{3/}. The note of the scribe can be understood as follows: probably shortly before the II Shemu year 11 of Seqenenre, the pharaoh and his son, Crown Prince Ahmose Sapaïr, must have died shortly before the evacuation of Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos, which had to be a major trauma for the Egyptians; 1 month later the army of Kamose entered Heliopolis, then 3 months later attacked Tjaru which fell in 2 days; 8 days later there was an impressive tempest from the birth of Seth (3rd epagomenal day), being seen as an evil day.

The career of Kamose is very strange: 1) he bore three names of Horus (unique case for the 17th Dynasty)²³⁸, 2) he is never mentioned as king of Upper and Lower Egypt in the documents not written by him; 3) his coffin (opposite figure) was not gilded and was not equipped with the Royal ureus; 4) Kamose does not appear on a fresco depicting the royal family of Seqenenre Taa²³⁹ 5) his military campaigns are quite similar to those of Ahmose.

The genealogical reconstitution of Ahmose's family²⁴⁰ imposes chronological synchronisms. Thus Seqenenre had one (younger) brother, Kamose²⁴¹; seven daughters (most named Ahmose); two sons, Ahmose (Sapaïr) and Ahmose I (junior). The age of Ahmose at his father's death (around 1 year) and the duration of Kamose's reign (approximately 3 years) are deduced from the mummy of Ahmose indicating a death between 25 and 30 years old²⁴². Subtracting out this value the length of his reign, 25 years and 4 months, and the one of Kamose, 3 years minimum, the calculation gives around 1 year (= 30 - [25 years + 4 months + 3 years]). During these 3 years, Ahmose was crown prince (replacing Ahmose Sapaïr) as the last son of Seqenenre and Kamose, as the brother of Seqenenre, was the guardian of this crown prince. This imbroglio explains the following anomalies:



- On two rock-inscriptions at Arminna and Toshka in Nubia, the prenomen and nomen of Kings Kamose and Ahmose, as well as the names of two princes, are inscribed together. In both inscriptions, the names of Ahmose follow directly below those of Kamose and each king is given the epithet *di 'nh* “given life”, which was normally used of ruling kings. This indicates that both Kamose and Ahmose were ruling when these

²³⁵ M. ABD EL-MAKSOUUD – Tell Heboua. L'apport de l'épigraphie in: *Revue d'Égyptologie* 56 (2006) pp. 1-43.

²³⁶ “mighty” is written with the hieroglyph *k3* “victorious bull”, as in the name of Kamose “fathered by victorious bull (*k3-ms*)”.

²³⁷ T.E. PEET – The Rhind Mathematical Papyrus

London 1923 Ed. The University Press of Liverpool Limited pp. 128-129.

²³⁸ N. GRIMAL - Histoire de l'Égypte ancienne

Paris 1988 Éd. Fayard p. 254.

²³⁹ A. DODSON, D. HYLTON – The Complete Royal Families of Ancient Egypt

London 2010 Ed. Thames & Hudson Ltd, pp. 122-126.

²⁴⁰ M. DESSOUDÉIX – Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne

Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 245-255.

²⁴¹ K.S.B. RYHOLT – The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period c. 1800-1500 B.C.

Copenhagen 1997, Ed. Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications Vol. 20 p. 309.

²⁴² I. SHAW, P. NICHOLSON – The Dictionary of Ancient Egypt

London 1995 Ed. The British Museum Press p. 18.

inscriptions were cut and consequently that they were coregents²⁴³.

- An axe belonging to Ahmose represents him adult in the process of defeating the Hyksos (opposite figure), although it is Kamose who expelled them, according to the stela of year 3. At the time of the expulsion Ahmose was 1 year old, he could not have driven fighting teams!
- In his biography the soldier Ahmes son of Abana describes his career under the King of Upper and Lower Egypt (*nsw-bity*), Seqenenre. He then describes his acts of bravery at the time of the Master of the Two Lands (*nb t3ny*) Ahmose, with the looting of Avaris, the siege and then the ransacking of Sharuhēn²⁴⁴ in year 3, the only date of his account, as in Kamose's stela, and finally the crushing of a Nubian revolt. He states that he had the privilege of accompanying his (anonymous) Sovereign (*ity*) when he was travelling in his war chariot. As Ahmose was 4 years old when he began reigning, the (anonymous) Sovereign had to be Kamose.
- Although liberator of Egypt, having opposed the Hyksos and having defeated the Nubians, Kamose is not the 1st king of the 18th dynasty but Ahmose is.
- In the Buhen stela of Ahmes, Kamose is called "mighty ruler", not "king of Upper and Lower Egypt", and in the Buhen stela of Iy (Nubia) dated regnal year 3, III Shemu 10 (the enthronement name of Senwosret I (*Kheper-ka-re*) took place of Kamose's name²⁴⁵).
- The epithet "the Ruler (*p3 hq3*)" is sometimes included in the second cartouche in place of the name Kamose. A practice which was still attested under his successor Ahmose.
- In Emheb's stela, at Edfu, describing the confrontation at Avaris, year 3 is anonymous and there is a curious dualism between "god" and "prince" concerning the king's title.
- In the stela of Kamose, at Buhen, despite its incomplete state, the title of King of Upper and Lower Egypt is this time attributed to Kamose as in the stela of year 3.
- The sarcophagus of Kamose contains many wealthy objects with Ahmose's name.
- In a royal chronology, appearing in a private document of the Third Intermediate Period, King Apopi is the immediate predecessor of King Ahmose.
- From Ahmose, regnal years no longer start at I Akhet 1 but from the date of accession.



We can assume the following scenario: after a serious quarrel with Seqenenre (for an unknown reason), Apopi decided to leave for Retenu and evacuate the city of Avaris. Shortly afterwards, both the crown prince and pharaoh die suddenly. Kamose, Seqenenre's brother, was ordered to hand back the country and the young Ahmose was appointed as the new crown prince to replace his older brother. Kamose thus acted as representative of the young Ahmose. In the past, until the 5th dynasty, pharaohs were enthroned only with a Horus name. In time, the complete titlature had five names, but only two were actually used, the enthronement name and the birth name. The birth name aside, which did not change (except for some additional laudatory), other names could be changed to indicate a new political or religious program. For Kamose his 1st Horus name was "He who appears on his throne", the 2nd "He who subdues the two Lands" and the 3rd "He who nourishes the two Lands". These 3 names match his 3 years of reign²⁴⁶. Historical reconstruction:

²⁴³ K.S.B. RYHOLT – The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period c. 1800-1500 B.C. Copenhagen 1997, Ed. Carsten Niebuhr Institute Publications Vol. 20 pp. 273-274.

²⁴⁴ L. HABACHI – The Second Stela of Kamose and his Struggle against the Hyksos Ruler and his Capital Glückstadt 1972 Ed. Verlag J.J. Augustin pp.31-67.

²⁴⁵ D.B. REDFORD – Textual Sources for the Hyksos Period in: The Hyksos: New Historical and Archaeological Perspectives. Philadelphia (1997) pp. 5, 12.

²⁴⁶ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2 Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France p. 195.

SCIENTIFIC APPROACH TO AN ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY
THROUGH SYNCHRONISMS DATED BY ASTRONOMY

| year | | | | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | |
|------|----|------|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1534 | 1 | X | V | 10 | | | | [A] Taa Seqenenre King of Upper Egypt [B] Ahmose Sapaïr Crown Prince [C] Teti son of Pepi Vice-roy of Kush [D] Apopi Aauserre Hyksos King (Lower Egypt) |
| | 2 | XI | VI | | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | VII | | | | | |
| | 4 | I | VIII | | | | | |
| | 5 | II | IX | | | | | |
| | 6 | III | X | | | | | |
| | 7 | IV | XI | | | | | |
| | 8 | V | XII | | | | | |
| | 9 | VI | I | 11 | | | | |
| | 10 | VII | II | | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | III | | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | IV | | | | | |
| 1533 | 1 | X | V | *** | | | | Avaris, capital of Hyksos, is evacuated then sacked |
| | 2 | XI | VI | | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | VII | | | | | |
| | 4 | I | VIII | | | | | |
| | 5 | II | IX | *** | (1) | | ??? | [B] Kamose Prince of the South (Thebes) Tjaru is sacked [D] Apopi Ruler of Retenu (Palestine) |
| | 6 | III | X | | | | | |
| | 7 | IV | XI | | | | | |
| | 8 | V | XII | | | | | |
| | 9 | VI | I | | | | | [A] Ahmose Crown Prince [B] Kamose Horus (1) of Egypt |
| | 10 | VII | II | | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | III | | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | IV | | | | | |
| 1532 | 1 | X | V | | | | | |
| | 2 | XI | VI | | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | VII | | | | | |
| | 4 | I | VIII | | | | | |
| | 5 | II | IX | | (2) | | | Hebrews near Sharuben (Numbers 1:1, 14:34-45) |
| | 6 | III | X | | | | | |
| | 7 | IV | XI | | | | | |
| | 8 | V | XII | | | | | |
| | 9 | VI | I | (3) | | | | [B] Kamosis Horus (2) of Egypt |
| | 10 | VII | II | | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | III | | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | IV | | | | | |
| 1531 | 1 | X | V | | | | | Nefrusy is sacked Wawat is annexed Buben stele of Iy dated year 3 of Sennosret I, III Shemu 10 Sharuben is sacked |
| | 2 | XI | VI | | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | VII | | | | | |
| | 4 | I | VIII | | | | | |
| | 5 | II | IX | 3 | | | | [B] Kamose Horus (3) of Egypt [C] Djehuti Vice-roy of Kush |
| | 6 | III | X | | | | | |
| | 7 | IV | XI | | | | | |
| | 8 | V | XII | | | | | |
| | 9 | VI | I | | | | | |
| | 10 | VII | II | | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | III | | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | IV | | | | | |
| 1530 | 1 | X | V | | | | | |
| | 2 | XI | VI | | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | VII | | | | | |
| | 4 | I | VIII | | | | | |
| | 5 | II | IX | 1 | - | | | [A] Ahmose King of Upper and Lower Egypt [B] Ahhotep coregent |
| | 6 | III | X | | | | | |
| | 7 | IV | XI | | | | | |
| | 8 | V | XII | | | | | |
| | 9 | VI | I | | | | | |
| | 10 | VII | II | | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | III | | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | IV | | | | | |
| 1530 | 1 | X | V | | | | | |
| | 2 | XI | VI | | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | VII | | | | | |
| | 4 | I | VIII | | | | | |
| | 5 | II | IX | | | | | |

Julian calendar: Spring equinox = April 3 (in 1533 BCE)

Egyptian calendar: (month *I*, day 1) = September 10 (in 1533 BCE)

Babylonian calendar: (month I, day 1) = April 11 (in 1533 BCE)

This two-headed system of command, King and co-regent, obviously led to a dual assignment in royal actions. Inscriptions, however, officially recognize only the king title. For example, Hatshepstat, although co-regent, dated her documents on behalf of Thutmose III (or Thutmose I for 'his' *sed* festival). Royal inscriptions are always complimentary to kings and their victories (obviously complete and grandiose), thus the so-called victory over the Hyksos should have been commented by Ahmose, but it was not.

The chronological reconstruction of the so-called war of the Hyksos shows that in fact it was carried out in two phases: first a police operation to loot and ransack the big city of Avaris (capital of the Hyksos) and the town of Sharuhén, then a war dated in year 3 of Kamose in order to annex the Nubian kingdom of Kerma, a former ally of the Hyksos. The majority of stelae describing a war are dated year 3 [of Kamose] and were erected at Edfu, capital of the 16th Dynasty²⁴⁷, which indirectly confirm the place of the war (south of Egypt). These stela inscriptions, such as the Emhab stela²⁴⁸, are among the most problematic and controversial ancient Egyptian texts. However, most textual difficulties have arisen when translators approached the inscription out of context, forcing new meanings on words and expressions to make the Egyptian text only an account of quarry dispute or drumming contest²⁴⁹ (Egyptologists are fond of fanciful interpretations). In fact, Emhab narrated his battle against a mysterious figure called *tmrhtn(t)* which led to victory over 7,000 enemies, apparently after a struggle between two important characters (lines 6-8). During the campaign against Kerma and Avaris, Emhab followed his lord (*nb*), in all places and at all times (lines 4 and 13), and even took the lead when his lord —most likely Kamose, because in his inscription Emhab says (line 11): *He is a god (ntr), while I am a ruler (hq3)*— came back to Lower Egypt (lines 15-16). In addition to his military bravery, Emhab provided economic support for Upper Egypt during the war (lines 10-11), sending tax agents to collect supplies and revenue (line 5). In the course of this short inscription, Emhab sketched a biography of an ideal regional administrator during a time of war. It is noteworthy that this inscription includes an anomaly in the reckoning of regnal years: *renpet 3* "year 3" (line 8), indicating the number of years, instead of the usual regnal years *hat-sep 3*.

A number of biographical inscriptions show that the military conflict between the Egyptians at the end of the 17th Dynasty only concerned the kingdom of Kush²⁵⁰:

- *I am a strong servant of the ruler [hq3] of Kush. I wash my feet in the waters of Kush while following the ruler Ndh.*
- *I am a strong commander of Buben. Never did any commander do what I did. I built the temple of Horus, Lord of Buben, to the delight of the ruler [hq3] of Kush.*
- *I am a powerful warrior entering Edfu. I took <my> wife, children and household away from the south of Kush in 13 days.*
- *I am a powerful warrior of the strong ruler [hq3] [Ka]mose, given life. I brought 46 head of people while following the ruler, given life.*
- *I am one who follow his lord [nb] on his journeys, one who do not fail in (any) statement he makes (...) I will fight against him (i.e. an enemy mentioned before) in endurance (...) I reached Mjw (in Nubia) without counting every land while I followed him day and night, and I reached Avaris.*

The loyalty of the provincial officials was an important basis for the re-conquest of Egypt, enabling Kamose and Ahmose to unite these local powers into a single force.

²⁴⁷ C. BARBOTIN – Âhmôsis et le début de la XVIII^e dynastie
Paris 2008 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 169-202.

²⁴⁸ J. BAINES – The Stela of Emhab: Innovation, Tradition, Hierarchy
in: *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 72, (1986), pp. 41-53.

²⁴⁹ D. KLOTZ – Emhab versus the *tmrhtn*: Monomachy and the Expulsion of the Hyksos
in: *Studien zur Ägyptischen Kultur* 39 (2010) pp. 211-241.

²⁵⁰ S. KUBISCH – Biographies of the Thirteenth to Seventeenth Dynasties
in: *The Second Intermediate Period (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 192, 2010)* pp. 323-325.

The only record that describes the so-called war of the Hyksos in the field, and not according to official propaganda, comes from an officer of El-kab, Ahmose son of Abana, whose autobiography is in his tomb²⁵¹:

^{1/}The chief of the rowers, Ahmose son of Abana, ^{2/}says: « I want to speak to you, all people. I want you to be aware of the distinctions that are due to me: I was rewarded with gold seven times ^{3/}facing the entire country and the servants alike. I have been endowed with so many fields, my name is strong for what I did, safe in this ^{4/}country ever ». He says: « It is in the city of Nekheb (El-kab) I grew up, when my father was a soldier of *late King of Upper and Lower Egypt Sequenre*. Baba, son of ^{5/}Ro-inet was his name. Then I was a soldier in his place in the boat “the Wild Bull”, at the time of *late Lord of Two Lands Nebpehtyre (Ahmose)*. ^{6/}I was (yet) a young man, I had not yet married, I slept in a hammock. Then I founded a home. So, I was taken aboard ^{7/}the ship “the Septentrion” since my excellence, I walked in the wake of the Sovereign (ity), life, integrity, health, when he was travelling in his ^{8/}chariot. They laid siege to the city of Avaris and I behaved valiantly, in the field, before His Majesty. So I was then assigned to ^{9/}the (ship) “Emergence in Memphis” and they fought on the water, the channel Padjedkou of Avaris. So I made the catch. ^{10/}I brought 1 hand, something that was repeated to the royal herald: I was given the gold of valour. Then the fighting resumed in this place and I made the catch. ^{11/}I brought 1 hand and I was given the gold of valour again. Then they fought in the part of Egypt which is south of this city. ^{12/}I brought a prisoner alive after plunging into the water. Look, he was returned as taken from the side of the ^{13/}city and it is by stating that I crossed the water. This having been reported to the royal herald, my reward was the gold again. ^{14/}Then they began to plunder Avaris and I brought back the spoils: 1 man and 3 women, a total of 4 (individuals). His Majesty's attributed to me as slaves. ^{15/}Then they besieged Sharuben in year 3 and His Majesty sacked it. So I brought back the spoils: 2 women and 1 hand, ^{16/}and I was given the gold of bravery. Look, I was awarded my taken as slaves! And then, His Majesty slew the Sinai Bedouins. ^{17/}It went up the Nile as far Khenthennefer (south of the second cataract) to destroy the Nubian archers. Her Majesty is doing a great slaughter among them. ^{18/}So I brought back as booty 2 men, 2 ears and 3 hands. I was rewarded with gold once again and, look, I was given two maids. ^{19/}His Majesty sailed north, his heart swelling with joy by the bravery and victory, because it had seized the South and North. ^{20/}So is the rebel Aata came to the South, his destiny was to be destroyed. The gods of the South seized him and he was discovered by His Majesty in Tentaâmu. His Majesty took ^{21/}him prisoner each of his people being an easy prey. So I brought 2 captured warriors on the ship the rebel Aata ^{22/}and he gave me 5 persons and 5 shared arourai field in my city. He was doing the same for all the crew. Then came this vile enemy, ^{23/}his name was Tetian (Teti-the-beautiful) who had gathered around him his rebels. His Majesty killed him, his associates (of Tetian) were as if they had not existed. ^{24/}Then they gave me 3 persons and 5 arourai field in my city. So I carried *late King of Upper and Lower Egypt Djeserkare (Amenohotep I)* as he sailed southward towards Kush to expand ^{25/}the borders of Egypt. His Majesty overthrew this vile Nubian nomad midst of his army which was taken tied, those who had fled ^{26/}were laying as if they had not existed while I was at the head of our army. I fought in truth and His Majesty saw my bravery. I brought back 2 hands which were presented to ^{27/}His Majesty and his people were sought and his cattle. Then I brought a prisoner who was brought alive to His Majesty. I guided his Majesty for 2 days to Egypt ^{28/}(passing) through the eastern wells. Then I was rewarded with gold and I brought back as booty by 2 maids over what I had presented to ^{29/}His Majesty (before). Then I was promoted to the rank of “Ruler's Warrior”. Then I carried *late King of Upper and Lower Egypt Aakheperkare (Thutmose I)* while sailing south towards Khenthennefer ^{30/}to destroy the rebellion through the mountainous regions and to repel an invasion from the desert regions.

The events are recorded in a chronological order²⁵². Early in his career, Ahmes states that at Ahmose's time he accompanied the Sovereign in his chariot (line 8). The hieroglyphic sign of the chariot can even inform us about its shape (see below). The

²⁵¹ C. BARBOTIN – Âhmôsis et le début de la XVIII^e dynastie
Paris 2008 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 197-202.

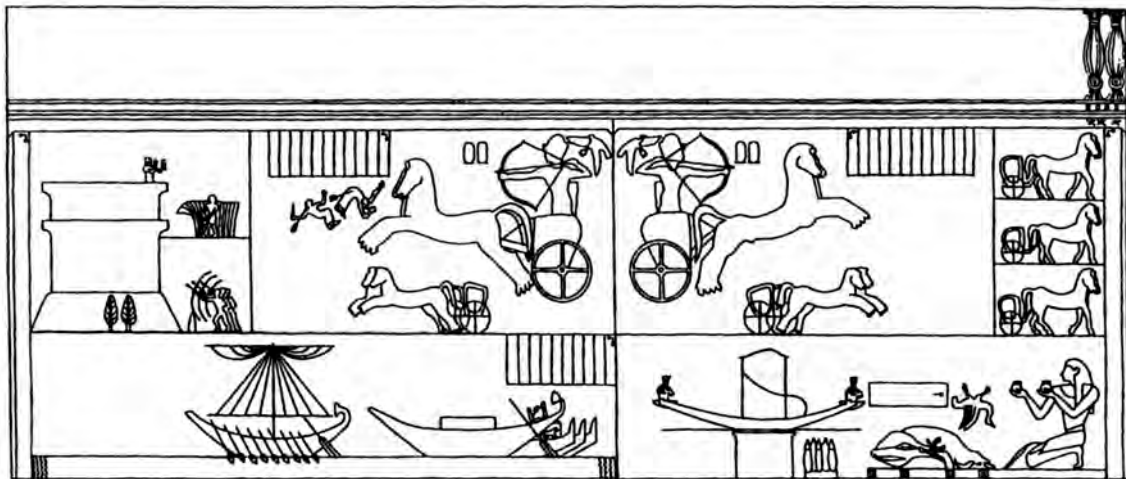
²⁵² C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 213-216.

Sovereign (*ih*) is not named, but as he got into in his chariot the king was bound to be an adult. As Ahmose was 1 year old at that time, it might be Kamose. In addition, the facts related are identical to those described in the stele of year 3. Ahmes laid siege to the city of Avaris and behaved valiantly (in fact, he took only 1 man in the Padjedku channel of Avaris) and plundered Avaris (no fight is mentioned). He besieged Sharuhen in year 3 and His Majesty sacked it. Sharuhen is besieged in year 3 (same date in Kamose's Stele), not for 3 years, for at least three reasons: 1) as Kamose crushed the powerful viceroy of Kush in a single military campaign, Sharuhen, which was a small city, could not hold out long against Kamose's army, 2) no army at that time could sustain a siege of more than 1 year (the mighty Thutmose III besieged the city of Megiddo for 7 months); 3) such a memorable siege would have been recounted, but only a sack of the city is mentioned. The only battles and slaughters that are detailed all took place in southern Egypt and involved only Nubian rebels. Given the low numbers of prisoners and the small number of deaths, these Egyptian troops would be better described as squads of police rather than regiments of war.



The soldier Ahmose son of Abana did not mention Kamose in his autobiography like the soldier Ahmose son of Pennekhbet who described his service²⁵³ under successive Kings (*nsu*): *Ahmose* then *Amenhotep I*, *Thutmose I*, *Thutmose II*, *Ruler (hq3)* and finally under *Thutmose III*. Queen Hatshepsut is not mentioned by name but by Ruler (coregent's title).

The chariot used as an offensive weapon appears for the 1st time under the reign of Kamose. This is confirmed by the relief of the “fall of Avaris” reconstituted (below) thanks to the many fragments found at Abydos in the temple next to the pyramid of Ahmose²⁵⁴. Although no direct text accompanying this scene has been found, many internal details, however, allow its identification as the presence of ships, the names of Apopi and Avaris as well as representation of the weapons used.



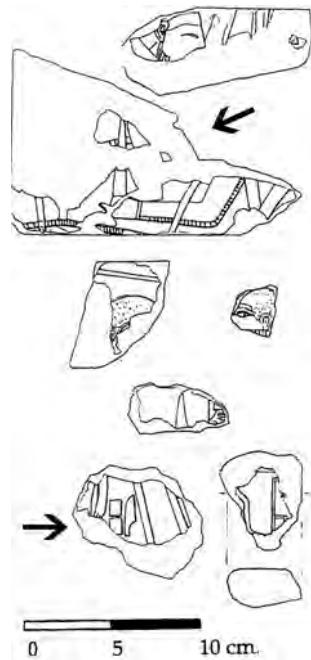
The use of horses by the Egyptians proves that there had been no war with the Hyksos because as they came from Palestine they knew horse domestication, already performed in Syria and Mari since 1700 BCE, and had brought this animal to Egypt²⁵⁵. If there had been a war with the Egyptians, the Hyksos would have used their own horses and would have prevailed.

²⁵³ M. DESSOUDÉIX – Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne
Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 113-132.

²⁵⁴ S.P. HARVEY - The Cults of King Ahmose at Abydos
Michigan 1998 Ed. UMI Dissertation Services pp. 316-353, 529-550.

²⁵⁵ J.R. KUPPER -Les nomades en Mésopotamie au temps des rois de Mari
Paris 1957, Ed. Librairie Droz pp. 35-37.

Apopi's name (written *i-p-p*) appears, for example, on a fragment (lower arrow in the drawing) and an Asiatic recognizable by his fringed garment and his dagger sword (top arrow). On the relief of Ahmose, several Asiatic warriors (in later representations they have two bands crossed over the chest with a collar, which identifies them as Hyksos) are represented falling, pierced by arrows. A small fragment of a relief immersed, discovered in the same context, named Avaris, the capital of the Hyksos (with the same spelling as in the Stele of Kamose). The arrows used by archers are Nubian, we know they were used by Nubian archers loyal to Kamose, the Madjaïs, during the siege of Avaris. The ships represented on the relief are warships such as the "vulture" (the Nile was used to transport troops). The description of a grain crop in a context of war is very surprising and might suggest that a famine caused by strategy was associated with this war. The relief of Ahmose therefore is in full agreement with the indications given by the Stele of Kamose, but is an absolutely new type of representation in Egyptian art.



Later representations of this "battle" are most prolific in detail, like the one shown on two panels of a chariot of Thutmose IV²⁵⁶ (below).



Careful examination of protagonists reveals that only Nubians are portrayed with arms (the archers who oppose the Pharaoh), which is not the case of Asiatics identifiable by their beards. In addition, some Asiatics (indicated by an arrow) wear two bands crossed over their chest with a collar, which is a characteristic of Hyksos soldiers (the depiction contains an anachronism since the chariot of Pharaoh has eight spokes while those of his opponents have four, as at the time of Ahmose). Egyptians undertook several aggressive campaigns against Nubia (land of Kush) and conducted only a few raids of intimidation in northern Sinai, Syria and Mitanni²⁵⁷, but nothing specific, except threats, against Retenu where the ancient Hyksos²⁵⁸ fled.

²⁵⁶ J. B. PRITCHARD - The Ancient Near East in Pictures

Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 103-104

²⁵⁷ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Egypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2

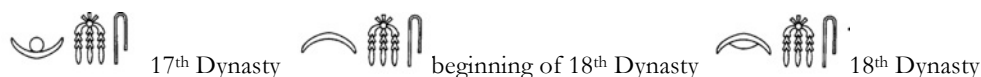
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 225-257.

²⁵⁸ G.N. KNOPPERS, A. HIRSCH - Egypt, Israel, and the Ancient Mediterranean World
Leiden 2004 Ed. Brill pp. 121-141.

If Ahmose doesn't detail the war against the Hyksos he insists, on the other hand, on two issues: "he is now the king of Lower Egypt (stele at Karnak) and the events that preceded his reign were terrible (Tempest Stele)". The stele of Ahmose at Karnak reads²⁵⁹:

The King of Upper and Lower Egypt, lord of the Two Lands, Nebpehtyre, the son of Re, his beloved, Ahmose, living forever, the son of Amun-Re, his beloved (...) whose valiance is terrific, he who subdues the rebel, gives life and establishes Maat, the king of Lower Egypt for the kings in all countries, the sovereign, life-integrity-health, who tamed the Two Banks (Egypt), great in the terror he inspires, whose coronation commands the Nubian archers kneeling (...) he ruled over what surrounds sun's course, the white crown and the red crown set upon his head, the shares of Horus and Seth are under his authority, he whose pictures appeared in glory from his childhood (...) This is a king of the North that Ra made sovereign, Amun made great. May they grant the banks and the countries all at once (...) This is a King of Lower Egypt unique, a disciple of the star Sirius, the favourite of Sebat. The prestige of Thoth is by his side: may he deign to grant him know the rituals! (Thus) he will lead the scribes according to exact rules. It is a large holder of magic, who provides love of him more than any king of Lower Egypt (...) Follow this King of Lower Egypt in his campaigns, spread his empire by other people (...) honour him as for Ra, adore him as for the moon, he the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Nebpehtyre, living forever, who tames any foreign land (...) Glorify the Lady, the Queen of the banks of Hau-nebu [eastern Delta], whose reputation is high over any foreign land, who fulfils the will of the multitude, the wife of the king [Seqenenre], the sister of the Sovereign [Kamose], life-integrity-health, the daughter of the king [Senakhtenre], the august mother of the king [Ahmose], who knows the business, who unites Egypt; she gathered its worthies whom she assured cohesion and took back its fugitives, she merged its dissidents and has pacified Upper Egypt, she has pushed its rebels, wife of King, Ahhotep, living.

Ahmose's statement confirms two important points: first, the war against the Hyksos (there is no mention) occurred before his reign. He focuses particularly on his new role as King of Lower Egypt, then, how his mother, Queen Ahhotep²⁶⁰, managed to bring home some Egyptian dissidents (who followed Apopi) and pushing (not crushing) some rebels (Hyksos). Family ties of Queen Ahhotep clarify two other points: 1) Kamose was the brother of Seqenenre since Ahhotep was the daughter of Seqenenre, the granddaughter of Senakhtenre and the sister of Kamose; 2) Kamose was co-regent, not king since the titles are different: king [Senakhtenre] king [Seqenenre], Sovereign [Kamose], and king [Ahmose]. In fact, the main events commented by Ahmose in his inscriptions concern his family²⁶¹ (Ahmose was Seqenenre's son and Senakhtenre's grandson)²⁶². Thus we know, for example, that his mother Ahhotep assured his regency from year 1 to 20; toward year 18, Satkamose his first wife died; he then married Ahmes Nefertari; his mother died around year 20 at the time of Amenhotep I's birth. This event marked a new era²⁶³, as the hieroglyphic sign of the moon consisting of a crescent with two points upward will definitely change (unique in Egyptian history) and would turn downward from year 20 of Ahmose. Evolution over time of Ahmose's name (or Iahmes) "begotten of Moon":



The beginning of the reign of Ahmose was relatively peaceful since no incidents were reported. A graffito in hieratic dated year 2, found in the tomb of Sobeknakht at El-

²⁵⁹ C. BARBOTIN – Âhmôsis et le début de la XVIII^e dynastie
Paris 2008 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 210-214.

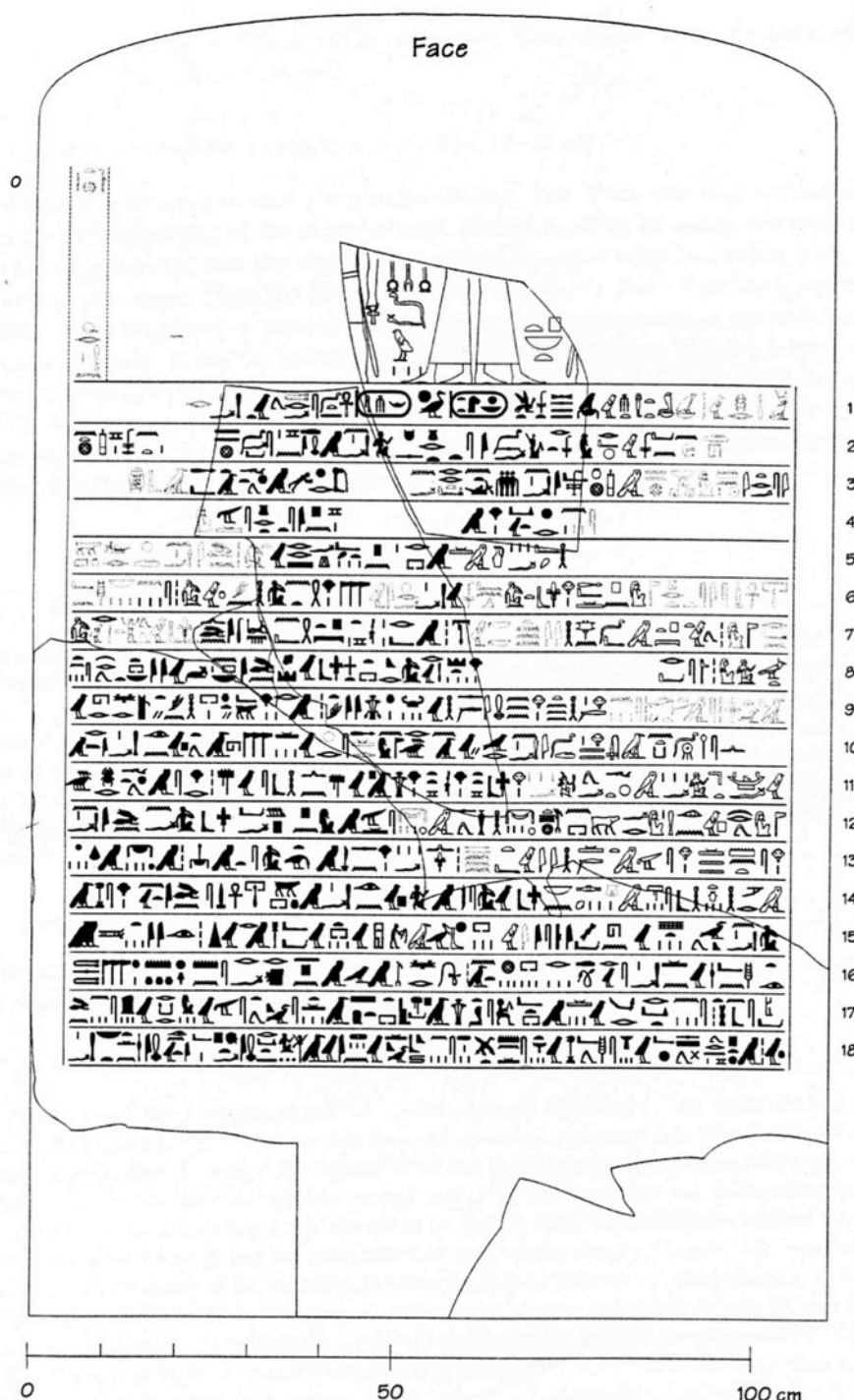
²⁶⁰ C. VANDERSLEYEN – Les guerres d'Amosis
Bruxelles 1971 Éd. Fondation égyptologique reine Élisabeth pp. 135-228.

²⁶¹ T. STASSER – La famille d'Amosis
in: *Chronique d'Égypte* LXXXVII (2002) Fasc. 153-154 pp. 23-46.

²⁶² S. BISTON-MOULIN – Le roi Sênakht-en-Rê Ahmès de la XVII^e dynastie
in: *Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne* 5 (2012) pp. 61-71.

²⁶³ The accession of Ahmose is dated around IV Peret 1 which coincided in his year 19 (in 1512 BCE) with a full moon (April 3).

ka, provides insignificant information. Another graffito²⁶⁴ carved on a block of a chapel at Karnak simply says this: *In year 5, II Akhet 12, level of the great inundation. The chancellor of the king of Lower Egypt and general in chief Ah[mose] came.* The most surprising information that Ahmose gave about the Hyksos period, which preceded his reign, comes from the “stele of the storm” or “Tempest Stele” dated year 1 (line 0). A high resolution readout made it possible to restore almost all of this stele²⁶⁵:



²⁶⁴ L. COTELLE-MICHEL – Présentation préliminaire des blocs de la chapelle de Sésostris I^{er}
in: *Cahiers de Karnak* 11 (2003) p. 348.

²⁶⁵ M. WIENER, J.P. ALLEN Separate Lives: The Ahmose Tempest Stela and the Thera Eruption
in: *Near Eastern Studies* 57 (1998) 1 pp. 1-28.

[Regnal Year 1 ... during the Incarnation of the Horus "Great of Developments." Two] Ladies "Perfect of Birth," Gold Falcon "Who knots together the Two Lands," *King of Upper and Lower Egypt Nebpehtyre*. Son of Re *Ahmose*, alive forever—at the coming of His Incarnation [to ...], the Sun himself having designated him king; for though His Incarnation had settled in the harbour-town of "Provisioner of the Two Lands" [...] of the south of Dendera, *A[mun]-Re*, lord of thrones of the Two Lands] was in Thebes. Then His Incarnation sailed upstream to [give him a] pure [...]. Now, after this offer[ing ceremony ... th]em, and they were put on the [... in/of] this [nome], while the processional image [...], his body united with this temple, his limbs in joy. [Then His Incarnation sailed downstream to the Palace, lph. But] this great [god] was desiring [that] His Incarnation [return to him, while] the gods were asking for [all] their cult-services.

[Then] the gods [made] the sky come in a storm of r[ain, with dark]ness in the western region and the sky beclouded without [stop, loud]er than [the sound of] the subjects, strong[er than ..., howling(?)] on the hills more than the sound of the cavern in Elephantine. Then every house and every habitation they reached [perished and those in them died, their corpses] floating on the water like skiffs of papyrus, (even) in the doorway and the private apartments (of the palace), for a period of up to [...] days, while no torch could give light over the Two Lands. Then His Incarnation said: « How much greater is this than the impressive manifestation of the great god, than the plans of the gods! » What His Incarnation did was to go down to his launch, with his council behind him and [his] army on the east and west (kinks) providing cover, there being no covering on them after the occurrence of the god's impressive manifestation. What His Incarnation did was to arrive at the interior of Thebes, and gold encountered the gold of this processional image, so that he received what he had desired. Then His Incarnation was stabilizing the Two Lands and guiding the flooded areas. He did not stop, feeding them with silver, with gold, with copper, with oils and clothing, with every need that could be desired.

What His Incarnation did was to rest in the Palace, lph. Then one was reminding His Incarnation of the entering of the sacred estates, the dismantling of tombs, the hacking up of mortuary enclosures, and the toppling of pyramids — how what had never been done (before) had been done. Then His Incarnation commanded to make firm the temples that had fallen to ruin in this entire land: to make functional the monuments of the gods, to erect their enclosure walls, to put the sacred things in the special room. to hide the secret places, to cause the processional images that were fallen to the ground to enter their shrines, to set up the braziers, to erect the altars and fix their offering-loaves, to double the income of office-holders — to put the land like its original situation. Then it was done like everything that His Incarnation commanded to do.

This inscription confirms three points: 1) the disaster linked to Hyksos occurred before the reign of Ahmose and it affected all Egypt; 2) the unprecedented violence of climatic elements explains the consternation of Sequenre and his council when they met Apopi; 3) the origin of this conflict is linked to the Hyksos deity (Apopi's single god), because of the amazing sentence: « How much greater is this than the impressive manifestation of the great god, than the plans of the gods! ». Regarding this last point Queen Hatshepsut²⁶⁶ is even more explicit: *Listen to him, you, namely all patricians and common folk in its multitude! I did these things by the design of my heart and the forgotten one shall not sleep for me! While I restored what have been devastated, I levied the foremost draft since Asiatics were in the region of Avaris of Lower Egypt. Resident aliens among them were disregarding the assigned tasks. They ruled without Re' who would not be blind when the god (Amun) assigned the steering rope to my Majesty. When I was established over the thrones of Re', I became known through a period of years as a born conqueror. And when I came as Horus, my uraeus threw fire against my opponents. I have banished the abomination of the gods, the earth removed their footprints! This is (governance of) the father of fathers, the Sun, who (now) comes at his dates. Damage will not happen (again), for Amun has decreed that my decree remain like the mountains.*

²⁶⁶ H. GOEDICKE – The Speos Artemidos Inscription of Hatshepsut and Related Discussions
Oakville 2004 Ed. Halgo, Inc. pp. 76-91, 102-104.

J.P. ALLEN – The Speos Artemidos Inscription of Hatshepsut
in: *Bulletin of the Egyptological Seminar* 16 (2002) pp. 1-17.

Ahmose's reign had been peaceful. Ahhotep's regency was even a brilliant restoration of Egyptian authority. It was during this recovery period, which lasted 20 years, that king's counsellors were the most active. In respect of the court etiquette, advising the pharaoh was usually given in the form of a timeless (and archaizing) wisdom with the guarantee of an illustrious predecessor²⁶⁷ having sometimes experienced a similar situation. This is the case of The Teaching for King Merikare²⁶⁸. Although this teaching is assigned to Merikare, this text should rather be dated to the beginning of the 18th Dynasty for the following reasons²⁶⁹: this teaching is completely unknown before and is never mentioned by any previous document; the conflict with Asiatics which is described as catastrophical, is identical to the one mentioned in Tempest Stele under Ahmose; Antef II, in the last year of his reign (year 50), said he seized the thinite nome wholly. He speaks as if Thebes took possession of it for the first time. Moreover, nothing in the inscriptions of nomarchs at this time let one think about a state of war or of any disorders²⁷⁰. The Teaching seems to have been written around year 20 of Ahmose, which coincides with the end Ahhotep's regency. Indeed, the note: *Quarry stones from Tura and do not construct your tomb through recycled materials* is consistent with the fact that King Ahmose started to build his pyramid (actually a cenotaph at Abydos) from year 22. The remark: *For these 20 years, recruits have been at ease, following their heart, and the military goes forth in strength. Those who are recruited enlist voluntarily like young men trained [and strengthened]. It is (our) ancestry which fights on our behalf*, contradicts interpretations assuming a King Ahmose who would lead a war against the Hyksos.

The beginning of the Instruction made by the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Khet]y, for his son, Merikare [...] But whose many partisans are now a multitude and respect him for his possessions and for his cleverness, one who has gained (men's) confidence and has ingratiated himself in the sight of his dependents, and who persists as a troublemaker and a spreader of talk, get rid of him, and slay his children, obliterate his name, and destroy his supporters, banish (all) memory of him and of the partisans who respect him a seditious man is liable to incite the citizens And create two groups of malcontents among the youth. If, therefore, you find that there is such a one among the citizens, [A ...] whose actions challenge you, denounce him before the officials and get rid of him, for he is indeed a rebel (...) Be proficient in speech, so that you may be strong, for the strength of a king is his tongue. Words are mightier than any struggle, And no one can outsmart him who is skilled of heart, [But you will sit secure] upon the throne. The wise man is a bulwark (even) for officials, And those who are aware of his knowledge dare not assail him. No evil happens in his presence (...) Show due respect to the nobles, support your people, fortify your borders and your buffer zones, for it is expedient to work for the future (...) Punish by means of flogging and imprisonment, for thus will this land be kept in good order, except for the rebel who has contrived his plots. But God is aware of the rebel, and God will smite his evil with blood (...) The ba will return to the place which it knows, and it will not wander from its familiar ways; all magic rituals will be unable to oppose it (...) Marshall your troops so that the Residence may respect you; increase your supporters in the military. Behold, your cities are filled with new generations; For these 20 years, recruits have been at ease, following their heart, and the military goes forth in strength. Those who are recruited enlist voluntarily like young men trained [and strengthened]. It is (our) ancestry which fights on our behalf, and I was raised up from it on my succession. Elevate your officials, promote your fighters; bestow wealth upon the young men of your followers, provide them with possessions, confer fields upon them, and endow them with cattle. Make no distinction between a well-born man and a commoner, but take a man into your service because of his deeds.

²⁶⁷ W.K. SIMPSON – The Literature of Ancient Egypt
Cairo 2005 Ed. Yale University Press pp. 125-243.

²⁶⁸ P. VERNUS – Sagesse de l'Égypte pharaonique
Paris 2010 Éd. Thesaurus Actes Sud pp. 179-213.

²⁶⁹ A.M. GNIRS – Das Motiv des Bürgerkriegs in Merikare und Neferti. Zur Literatur der 18. Dynastie
in: jn.t dr.w Festschrift für Friedrich Junge (Göttingen 2006) pp. 207-265.

²⁷⁰ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 6-11.

Let every occupation be carried on [...] for the Lord of might. Keep guard over your border, and strengthen your forts, for troops are profitable to their lord. Erect [many] monuments for God (...) But enemies will not be calm within Egypt, for troops will fight troops, as (our) ancestors foretold, and Egypt will fight/ in the necropolis, destroying the tombs with havoc time and again. I did the same, and the same will happen (again), as is done by him who likewise transgresses against God. Do not be too stern with the southern territory, for you know what the Residence advises about it. It has happened (in the past), just as such things may happen (again). There was no attack on their part, even as they maintained, but yet I advanced upon Thinis right to its southern border at Taver (...) Granite comes to you without interruption, so do not destroy the monuments of another. Quarry stones from Tura and do not construct your tomb through salvaged materials (...) I brought peace to the entire west as far as the area of the lake; (Now) it serves (me) of its own accord and produces meru-wood, one may now see the juniper wood which they give us. The east abounds with foreigners, and their taxes [pour in]. The Middle Island has returned (to us) and every man within it. The temples say: "O Great One, (all) men revere you." Behold, the land which they had destroyed has been established as nomes, and all the great cities [have been rebuilt]. What had been governed by one man is now under the control of ten; officials are appointed, taxes are levied, and every responsibility is clearly understood. When free men are granted a plot of land, they serve you like a single company; such ensures that no one among them will be discontent. The Nile flood will cause you no worry by failing to come, and the revenues of the Delta are in your hand behold, the mooring post which I have made in the east is secure, from Hebenu to the Way of Horus, well settled with towns and full of people, the choicest of the entire land, to drive back / any attacks against them. May I see a brave man who will emulate this, one who will for his own sake add even more to what I have done. I would be worried by an heir who is ineffective. But as concerns the foreigners, let this be said: The vile Asiatic is miserable because of the place wherein he is, shortage of water, lack of many trees, and the paths thereof difficult because of the mountains. He has never settled in one place, but plagued by want, he wanders the deserts on foot. He has been fighting ever since the time of Horus. He neither conquers nor can he be conquered. He does not announce the day of fighting, but is like a thief whom society has expelled. However, as I live / and shall be what I am, these foreigners were like a sealed fortress which I had surrounded and besieged. I caused the Delta to strike them, I captured their people and seized their cattle to the point that the Asiatics detested Egypt. Do not distress your heart on his account, for the Asiatic is only a crocodile on its riverbank which attacks on a lonely road but does not invade the area of a crowded town. Unite Medenit to its [nome], take possession of its adjacent territory as far as Kem-Wer, for behold, it is a lifeline against the foreigners. Its walls are a defence, its soldiers are numerous, and the serfs within it adept at carrying weapons, as are the free citizens within it. As for the region of Djedsut, it totals 10,000 men, Both serfs and free citizens exempt from taxation. Officials have been in it ever since it was the Residence; well established are its borders, and mighty are its garrisons. Many northerners irrigate it as far as the borders of the Delta, taxed with grain after the fashion of free citizens. For him who achieves (all) this, it will be means of surpassing me. Behold, it is the gateway to the Delta, and they have formed a protection as far as / Neni-nesut. Well-populated cities mean satisfaction, but beware of being surrounded by the supporters of a foe. Vigilance prolongs one's years. Equip your border against the lands to the south, for they are aliens who take up the panoply of war. Construct buildings in the Delta, for a man's name will not be demeaned by what he has accomplished, and a securely founded town will not be destroyed; so build mansions for your image. An enemy loves anguish, and his actions are despicable. (...) But as for him who revolts against you, this is (like) a destruction of heaven, (like) destroying a hundred years of monuments. If an enemy is prudent, he will not destroy them, In hope that his action may be affirmed by another who comes after him; But there is no one who does not have an / enemy. The (ruler) of the two banks is intelligent. The king, the lord of courtiers, will not act foolishly. He was wise even at his coming forth from the womb, and God has made him preeminent over the land above countless others (...) Behold, a dreadful incident occurred in my time: The nome of Thinis was laid desolate. Indeed, it did not happen through anything I had done, and I learned of it only after it had

been committed. Behold my abomination! What I did is all too plain! Verily, destruction is detestable. It is pointless for a man to repair what he has destroyed or to rebuild what he has torn down. Beware of such! Affliction will be requited in kind, and every deed committed has its consequence. One generation of mortals follows another, but God, the all-knowing, has concealed himself. There is none who can resist the might of the Lord of the Land (...) He has slain the rebellious among them, as if a man would smite his son for the sake of his brother. And God knows every name. Make no detraction from my discourse, for it establishes all the precepts of kingship. Instruct yourself, so that you may rise up as a man, and then you will equal me, and none will indict you (...) Implant love for yourself in the entire land, for a good disposition means being remembered, even after years are past and gone. May you be called "Destroyer of the Time of Evil" By those who are among the descendants of the house of Khety, And may they pray, 'Let him return this (very) day!'" Behold, I have told you the best of my thoughts; may you conduct yourself in accordance with what is laid out before you. Both the Teaching for King Merikare and the Tempest Stele agree. The description of events, according to the Tempest Stele, has several amazing items: 1) a storm of extraordinary intensity affected the whole of Egypt, 2) the country was left in total darkness (during 9 days, according to the inscription of naos 2248²⁷¹), 4) the storm decimated the people including the Palace, and 5) dead bodies floated down the Nile like skiffs of papyrus; 6) the temples were particularly affected; 7) the disaster was caused by a god greater than the will of the gods. Most Egyptologists believe that this description is overstated or even fanciful, but it fully agrees with another known as the Admonitions of Ipuwer. There are also several historical parallels between the Admonitions of Ipuwer and The Teaching for King Merikare, since the two texts:

- Describe a disaster that affected the whole of Egypt and then lavish advice to Pharaoh in place to restore the country.
- Refer to the famous prophecy of Neferty (Admonitions 1:10-11; The Teaching for King Merikare 68-74), published under Amenemhat I (1975-1946). According to this famous prophecy, Asiatics who had just entered Egypt would cause her misfortune and would be expelled after a long time.
- Mention the revolt of the District of Thinis (8th Nome of Upper Egypt) resulting in a severe takeover (Admonitions 3:10; The Teaching for King Merikare 68-74).

The papyrus Leiden 344 containing the Admonitions of Ipuwer was published by Alan Gardiner²⁷², an eminent Egyptologist and deemed historian, still making authority, who dated the papyrus itself not earlier than the 19th Dynasty, although there were sufficiently strong indications that the scribe used a manuscript of which the history of transmission may go back to the beginning of the 18th Dynasty. According to Enmarch²⁷³: *The paleography of both recto and verso is broadly Ramesid (...) which can be dated to the late 19th dynasty, from Merneptah to Siptah [c. 1200 BCE] (...) However, the manuscript contains several older sign forms that hark back to the Second Intermediate Period and early New Kingdom [c. 1550 BCE].* According to Gardiner, this text describes dramatic events rather than being a prophecy:

- The beginning of the Admonitions reads: *The prediction of the ancestors, having reached (1:10-11), which is understandable as the fulfilment of a past prophecy, like the one of Neferty (published around -1950), rather than a prophecy to come.*
- Many reported details, like: *Those who were with the god's boat are yoked [...], and no one has travelled north to [Byb]los today. What may we do about pines for our mummies, [with] whose products prie[sts] are buried, (and) with the oil whereof the great are embalmed? From as far as Crete(?) they do*

²⁷¹ H. GOEDICKE - The Chronology of the Thera/ Santorin Explosion in: *Ägypten und Levante* III Wien 1992 p. 61.

²⁷² A.H. GARDINER - The Admonitions of an Egyptian Sage Leipzig 1909 Ed. J.C. Hinrich'sche Buchhandlung pp. 2-18,110-112.

²⁷³ R. ENMARCH - The Dialogue of Ipuwer and the Lord of All Oxford 2005 Ed. Griffith Institute p. 10.

not come! Destroyed is gold, finished is the stor[ing up of the s]eed(?) of every work; uncovered is <...> of the King's Estate (l.p.h.). How great is the coming of oasis-dwellers bearing their festal offerings: mats, [sleeping mats(?)] of fresh palm, [jar]s(?) of birds and plucked(?) reeds(?)! O, yet Elephantine, Thinis, the Upper Egyptian [nome]s(?), have not paid tax because of [st]rife (3:6-11), would have no interest in a prophecy and rather correspond to an observation.

- On many occasions (10:6-11:12), the author of the text invites the Pharaoh to respond by destroying enemies and remembering the happy past. These injunctions are only meaningful if the described disaster had just happened.

Notwithstanding the foregoing common sense, this text is currently filed in the prophecies²⁷⁴. About the dating, the Egyptologist and philologist Sethe considered that the best candidate for these events was the end of the Hyksos period, marked by serious disturbances including, when the Asiatics ('3mm) were in the Delta. Van Seters²⁷⁵, thanks to the internal data of the document (social, cultural and political), because the dating by philology is imprecise, scribes being conservative valued the archaistic style, was able to date these catastrophic events to the end of the Hyksos era²⁷⁶. For example, section 14:11-14 gives an important clue to the date at which the Admonitions was written. One reads: *Every man fights for his sister and he protects his own person. Is it the Nubians (nhsw)? Then we shall make our own protection. Fighting police will hold off the bowmen (pdtw). Is it the Libyans (tmhw)? Then we shall act again. The Madjays (md3yw) fortunately are with Egypt.* In this passage Egypt is in conflict with its southern neighbours, the *nhsw*. Here, however, they are viewed as quite distinct from another Nubian people, the *md3yw*, who are on the side of Egypt and who are closely associated by parallelism with the 'fighting police'. Posener has shown that this distinction between *nhsw* and *md3yw* is unknown in the Old Kingdom. In the biography of Weni from the end of the Old Kingdom the term *nhsw* applies to all the Nubians, both from *w3w3t*, the river valley area, as well as from *md3*, the steppe country. In the course of the 12th Dynasty, however, the term *nhsw* came to designate only the settled river people, while Bedouin from the southern steppe were called *md3yw*. It is in this period also that the *md3yw* were regimented as professional soldiers and desert police. The importance of this distinction becomes apparent at the end of the Hyksos period when the soldiers of liberation under Kamose include numerous *md3yw* who remained loyal even though Nubia was hostile to Egyptian rule and under an independent *nhsw* prince. The passage quoted above, therefore, reflects a situation following the Middle Kingdom and not too different from that presented to us in the Kamose inscriptions. The history of the development of this *md3yw* mercenary force is also substantiated from archaeology by the so-called 'pan graves' in Egypt from the Middle Kingdom period and later. These graves are in character native to Nubia and have, for good reasons, been associated with the *md3yw*. Another term used in the *Admonitions*, though not strictly ethnic, is *pdtw*, which has the general meaning of 'foreign bowmen'. It is frequently associated with Asiatics in Middle Kingdom literature, and this may account for the development of the term *sttyw* in the sense of 'archer' as well as Asiatic. The term *pdtw* is used in The Instructions for Merikare in a description of the '3mm, and in The Story of Sinuhe in close association with *sttyw*. In the *Hymn of Sesostri III*, however, the *pdtw* seem to include 'bowmen' of both Nubia and Asia. While most of the references in the *Admonitions* deal with the *pdtw* from the north, in the passage of 14:13 quoted above they also refer to hostile Nubians. The period when the *pdtw* were

²⁷⁴ A. FERMAT, M. LAPIDUS – Les prophéties de l'Égypte ancienne Paris 1999 Éd. La Maison de Vie pp. 5-55, 85-195.

²⁷⁵ J. VAN SETERS – A Date for the 'Admonitions' in the Second Intermediate Period in: *The Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 50 (1964) Ed. The Egypt Exploration Society pp. 13-23.

²⁷⁶ J. VAN SETERS – The Hyksos a New Investigation New Haven London 1966 Ed. Yale University Press.

threatening both the northern and southern frontiers was the Second Intermediate Period. However, the previous conclusions are disputed by Enmarch²⁷⁷. While recognizing some relevance to the lexical and topographic arguments for setting a date, he prefers to adopt a hypercritical attitude, inherited from the biblical higher criticism, and leave the dating in a range going from Senwosret III to the end of the Second Intermediate Period. He compares the Admonitions of Ipuwer to the “poems” of the Old Testament that contain a background of historical truth but not allowing to determine the time accurately. However, Enmarch’s review is biased because it is based on prejudices, for example:

- The story of the Admonitions is likened to a poem by Enmarch (without real historical value) due to the expression: *yet the river (Nile) is blood*, which would be hyperbolic. This is arbitrary, if the words were poetic why they mention: *no one has travelled north to Byblos today (...) Elephantine, Thinis, the Upper Egyptian nomes, have not paid tax because of strife (...) the land of kingship by a few people who are ignorant of counsels. For look, it has come to rebellion against the strong uraeus of Re’ which pacifies the Two Lands. Look, the secret of the land, whose limits are not known, is bared; (and so) the Residence has fallen down in an hour (...) the secrets of the Dual Kings have been bared. Look, the Residence is fearful because of want; (but) my Lord will stir up strife unopposed! Look, the land has knotted together in gangs (3:6-10; 7:3-7)*, for example, is poetry? One can notice that the region in rebellion (from Elephantine to Thinis) is similar to the area which revolted under Teti the viceroy of Kush and was crushed by Kamose. In addition, the inability to navigate to Byblos is difficult to explain while it derives logically from the sacking of the great harbour of Avaris (with 300 ships) by Kamose.
- He contradicts himself: *Some scholars have also emphasized the essentially ahistorical, timeless, nature of Middle Egyptian lament literature. This is particularly noticeable in Ipuwer, where concrete historical or historicizing references are lacking (...) For example, the fact that a lake of wood products from Byblos, as lamented in Ipuwer 3.6-8, is historically attested in Upper Egypt in the Second Intermediate Period (...) the assertion that the Medjay are well disposed to Egypt (14.14), and the possible presentation of Asiatics as a more serious threat to Egypt than Nubians or Libyans, would be consistent with a late Middle kingdom—Second Intermediate Period dating (...) The viewpoint of the poem is apparently centred in Memphis/Itjtany: rebellion is described in Upper Egypt (3.10-11), and the Delta is overrun (4.5-6). This makes it unlikely that the poem is a Hyksos composition, under whom Asiatic encroachment on the Delta might not be expected to be lamented. If these description have any historical significance (sic!), and are not merely schematic ‘inverted world’ laments, it might indicate that the text was written before the Thirteenth Dynasty [or after the Seventeenth Dynasty] attached to Upper Egypt, which happened at near or near its end (...) The basic meaning of wsr is ‘dry, parched’; from the context Faulkner plausibly suggested that here it could mean ‘be barren’ (...) Women’s barrenness is also an image used of Hyksos distress by Kamose.* Consequently, contrary to what Enmarch claims at the beginning of his commentary, it is particularly noticeable that there are several concrete historical, or historicizing references, in the Admonitions of Ipuwer, which allow a dating towards the end of the Second Intermediate Period or more precisely just after the reign of Kamose.
- Although he knows about the reconciliations between the Admonitions and the Exodus, he just mentions them while pointing to the religion of their authors (Jewish, Christian and Islamic)²⁷⁸. This explicit reference to religion is exceptional (and abnormal) in a scholarly article and appears to have been made to discredit implicitly their work (as one can guess, today, to categorize someone as a religious fundamentalist is an efficient way to cast doubt about his mental health).

²⁷⁷ R. ENMARCH – A World Upturned. Commentary on and Analysis of *The Dialogue of Ipuwer and the Lord of All* Oxford 2009 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 1-24, 73-74.

²⁷⁸ R. ENMARCH – The reception of a Middle Egyptian poem: *The Dialogue of Ipuwer and the Lord of All in the Ramesside period and beyond* in: *Ramesside Studies in Honour of K.A. Kitchen* (Rutherford Press Bolton, 2011), pp. 169-175.

- According to Enmarch, the Admonitions speak only of the arrival of Asiatics in Egypt, not their departure. This objection is misleading for the following reasons: the text of the Admonitions is very incomplete at the end, where the departure of Asiatics may have been mentioned. As he knows, the Egyptians rewrite history by presenting them as invaders, because before they left no text mentions any exaction from them. It is not the departure of Asiatics that shocked Egyptians, but all the disasters (the "10 plagues" according to the biblical text), which preceded it.
- The king of Egypt is not named in the Admonitions, which would be a proof of its inauthenticity. This criticism is not serious, because many anonymous documents can be identified by their internal elements. In fact, pharaoh's name is: Neb-er-djer "Lord of All" (Admonitions 15:13), as Enmarch himself recognized²⁷⁹. It seems that no pharaoh bore this name, but it must be remembered that Ipuwer, although he had been a high dignitary, would never have dared to dictate to Pharaoh his conduct. To avoid crimes of "lese majesty", Egyptian accounts were usually presented timeless to an idealized Pharaoh. Ahmose is a good candidate for the following reasons: his coronation name: Neb-pehty-ra "Lord of the power of Re," is close to "Lord of All"; because of his young age Ahmose's reign was carried out mainly under the regency of his mother (until year 20); that could explain advice given to the future king who came to the end of regency.

As one can see, some arguments are more motivated by prejudice than by facts and logic. The association of the war of the Hyksos with the biblical Exodus is a hot and sensitive topic. However, a connection is needed between the Admonitions of Ipuwer, the Tempest Stele of Ahmose and the biblical Exodus, since these three documents describe the same disaster on all Egypt. It is amazing that most Egyptologists consider logical that Apopi (1613-1573), the last great Hyksos king of the 15th dynasty, vanishes suddenly during the period covered by the 16th Dynasty, then reappears 40 years later to discuss with King Seqenenre (1544-1533) and to provide him defying letters. In my opinion, the only rational explanation of that incredible resurgence of Apopi 40 years later is the one offered by the Bible: it was a miracle.

IS THE TEMPEST STELE A TESTIMONY OF THE 'TEN PLAGUES' ?

Most Egyptologists refuse to associate the events described in the Tempest Stela with those marking the beginning of Exodus for the following reasons:

- This disaster would be a "metaphorical storm"²⁸⁰, the purpose of which may be esoteric (for unknown reasons). However, if the purpose of the metaphor was to glorify the restorative action of Pharaoh, it is because the disaster was real.
- This catastrophe would describe the consequences of Santorini's eruption (other volcanic eruptions have been considered²⁸¹). However, a detailed analysis negates this "natural" explanation, at least on two points: 1) the description does not match the impact of a volcanic eruption²⁸² and 2) the timing between -1645 and -1627 estimated by dendrochronology²⁸³, is incompatible with the reign of Ahmose: *One therefore is easily led to*

²⁷⁹ R. ENMARCH – A World Upturned. Commentary on and Analysis of *The Dialogue of Ipuwer and the Lord of All*. Oxford 2009 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 30-31.

²⁸⁰ E. JAMBON – Entre crues et tempêtes. Les Égyptiens face aux caprices de la nature in: *Dossiers d'Archéologie* Hors série n°16 (mars 2009) 1 pp. 23-24.

²⁸¹ M.H. WIENER – Chronology Going Forward (with a Query about 1525/4 B.C.) in: *Timelines Studies in Honour of Manfred Bietak* Vol. III (2006) pp. 317-325.

²⁸² M. WIENER, J.P. ALLEN - Separate Lives: The Ahmose Tempest Stela and the Thera Eruption in: *Near Eastern Studies* 57 (1998) 1 pp. 1-28.

²⁸³ S.W. MANNING - A Test of Time

Oxford 1999 Ed. Oxbow Books pp. 335,336.

M. BIETAK - Science Versus Archaeology C.U. HAMMER - Thera Eruption Date 1645 BC confirmed by New Ice Core Data? in: *The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean*. Wien 2003 pp. 23-31, 87-94.

conclude, on the basis of the chronology of Crete, a date around 1550-1530 BCE (...) the dating by C14 and dendrochronology clearly invite one to hold a date one century later. They (dates) first appeared to converge towards the period 1650-1643, especially because the presence of volcanic ash in Greenland may arise from Thera, trapped in ice sheets, suggesting an identical date. But the latest and most relevant dating now tilt the balance towards the years 1625-1600, and despite the remaining uncertainties, many believe it is time to draw the consequences of this situation²⁸⁴.

The catastrophe described in the Tempest Stele parallels the dramatic episode of the 'Ten plagues' of Egypt on two points: 1) same chronology and 2) same events.

| Tempest Stele | The "Ten plagues" |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>[Then] the gods [made] the sky come in a storm of rain, with dark]ness in the western region and the sky beclouded without [stop, loud]er than [the sound of] the subjects, strong[er than ..., howling(?)] on the hills more than the sound of the cavern in Elephantine. Then every house and every habitation they reached [perished and those in them died, their corpses] floating on the water like skiffs of papyrus, (even) in the doorway and the private apartments (of the palace), for a period of up to [...] days, while no torch could give light over the Two Lands.</i> | <i>Jehovah gave thunders and hail, and fire would run down to the earth, and Jehovah kept making it rain down hail upon the land of Egypt. Thus there came hail, and fire quivering in among the hail (Ex 9:23-24). Moses stretched his hand out toward the heavens, and a gloomy darkness began to occur in all the land of Egypt for 3 days. They did not see one another, and none of them got up from his own place 3 days; but for all the sons of Israel there proved to be light in their dwellings (Ex 10:22-23).</i> |
| <i>Then His Incarnation said: How much greater is this than the impressive manifestation of the great god, than the plans of the gods!</i> | <i>Hence the magic-practicing priests said to Pharaoh: It is the finger of God! (Ex 8:19).</i> |
| <i>Then every house and every habitation they reached [perished and those in them died, their corpses] floating on the water like skiffs of papyrus, (even) in the doorway and the private apartments (of the palace)</i> | <i>And the Egyptians began to urge the people in order to send them away quickly out of the land, "because," they said: we are all as good as dead! (Ex 12:33).</i> |
| <i>Then His Incarnation commanded to make firm the temples that had fallen to ruin in this entire land: to make functional the monuments of the gods (...) to cause the processional images that were fallen to the ground to enter their shrines.</i> | <i>I must pass through the land of Egypt on this night and strike every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from man to beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I shall execute judgments (god statues thrown down, according to 1 Samuel 5:3) (Ex 12:12).</i> |

Without the biblical explanation the 'tempest of Ahmose' remains an enigma. The Admonitions of Ipuwer describe the same situation:

| Admonitions of Ipuwer | The "Ten plagues" |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| [Nile] River is blood | |
| <i>Admonitions 2:6,10: pestilence is throughout the land, blood is everywhere (...) O, yet the [Nile] river is blood and one drinks from it; one pushes people aside, thirsting for water.</i> | <i>Exodus 7:20-21: all the water that was in the [Nile] River was turned into blood. And the fish that were in the [Nile] River died, and the [Nile] River began to stink; and the Egyptians were unable to drink water from the [Nile] River.</i> |
| Hail and fire | |
| <i>Admonitions 2:10-11; 7:1: O, yet porches, pillars and partition walls(?) are burnt, (but) the</i> | <i>Exodus 9:23-24: Jehovah gave thunders and hail, and fire would run down to the earth, and Jehovah</i> |

²⁸⁴ R. TREUIL, P. DARQUE, J.-C. POURSAT, G. TOUCHAIS -Les Civilisations égéennes du Néolithique et de l'Âge du Bronze Paris 2008 Éd. Presses universitaires de France p. 296.

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>facade(?) of the King's Estate (l.p.h.) is enduring and firm (...) For look, the fire is become higher.</i> | <i>kept making it rain down hail upon the land of Egypt. Thus there came hail, and fire quivering in among the hail.</i> |
| Magic is ineffective | |
| <i>Admonitions 6:6-7: O, yet the sacred forehall, its writings have been removed; the place of secrets and the sanctuary(?) have been stripped bare. O, yet magic is stripped bare; omens(?) and predictions(?) are made dangerous because of their being recalled by people.</i> | <i>Exodus 8:18-19: the magic-practicing priests tried to do the same by their secret arts, in order to bring forth gnats, but they were unable (...) the magic-practicing priests said to Pharaoh: It is the finger of God!</i> |
| Vegetation perished | |
| <i>Admonitions 4:14; 6:2-4: O, yet [t]rees are swept away, plantations laid bare (...) O, yet one eats(?) plants and one drinks down water. No meal or bird-plants can be found; seed is taken from the pig's mouth. There is no bright face because of *bowing down(?) before hunger. O, yet barley has perished everywhere (...) everyone says. 'There is nothing!' — the storehouse is razed.</i> | <i>Exodus 9:25; 10:15: The hail struck everything that was in the field, from man to beast, and all sorts of vegetation of the field; and it shattered all sorts of trees of the field (...) [the locusts] went on eating up all the vegetation of the land and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left; and there was left nothing green on the trees or on the vegetation of the field in all the land of Egypt.</i> |
| Cattle perished | |
| <i>Admonitions 5:6: O, yet all herds, their hearts weep; cattle mourn because of the state of the land.</i> | <i>Exodus 9:3: Jehovah's hand is coming upon your livestock that is in the field. On the horses, the asses, the camels, the herd and the flock there will be a very heavy pestilence.</i> |
| Disaster on the whole country | |
| <i>Admonitions 5:6; 6:4; 9:6; 10:4: Officials are hungry and homeless (...) everyone says: There is nothing! The storehouse is razed (...) Look, the strong of the land, they have not reported the state of the subjects, having come to ruin (...) The entire King's Estate is without its revenues.</i> | <i>Exodus 12:30,33: There began arising a great outcry among the Egyptians, because there was not a house where there was not one dead (...) and the Egyptians began to urge the people in order to send them away quickly out of the land, because, they said, we are all as good as dead.</i> |
| Darkness | |
| <i>Admonitions 9:11,14; 10:1: Wretches [...] them(?); day does not dawn on it. Destroyed (...) be]hind a wall(?) in an office, and rooms containing falcons and rams(?) [... till] dawn. It is the commoner who will be vigilant; day dawns on him.</i> | <i>Exodus 10:22-23: A gloomy darkness began to occur in all the land of Egypt for 3 days. They did not see one another, and none of them got up from his own place 3 days; but for all the sons of Israel there proved to be light in their dwellings.</i> |
| Death of the firstborn | |
| <i>Admonitions 2:6-7; 3:13-14; 5:6-7: there is no *lack(?) of death; the (mummy)-binding speaks without approaching it. O, yet the many dead are buried in the river; the flood is a grave, while the tomb has become a flood (...) What may we do about it, since it has come to perishing? O, yet laughter has perished [and is no] longer done. It is mourning which is throughout the land mixed with lamentation (...) O, yet the children of officials are thrown against walls; children of prayer are placed on high ground. Khnum mourns because of his weariness. O, yet terror slays.</i> | <i>Exodus 12:29-30: who was in the prison And it came about that at midnight Jehovah struck every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive hole, and every firstborn of beast. Then Pharaoh got up at night, he and all his servants and all [other] Egyptians; and there began arising a great outcry among the Egyptians, because there was not a house where there was not one dead.</i> |

| Pharaoh is fallen down | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Admonitions 7:4: <i>the Residence has fallen down in an hour.</i> | Psalms 136:15: <i>And who shook off Pharaoh and his military force into the Red Sea.</i> |
| Egyptians stripped | |
| Admonitions 2:4-5; 3:1-3: <i>O, yet the poor have become the owners of riches; he who could not make for himself sandals is the owner of wealth (...) the outside bow-people have come to Egypt. O, yet [‘3mw Asiatics] reach [Egypt] and there are no people anywhere. O, yet gold, lapis lazuli, silver, turquoise, garnet, amethyst, diorite(?), our [fine stones(?),] have been hung on the neck(s) of maidservants; riches are throughout the land, (but) ladies of the house say: ‘Would that we had something we might eat!’</i> | Exodus 11:2; 12:35-36: <i>Speak, now, in the ears of the people, that they should ask every man of his companion and every woman of her companion articles of silver and articles of gold (...) the sons of Israel did according to the word of Moses in that they went asking from the Egyptians articles of silver and articles of gold and mantles. And Jehovah gave the people favour in the eyes of the Egyptians, so that these granted them what was asked [in order to get some food?]; and they stripped the Egyptians.</i> |

The beginning of the Astarte papyrus (dated 1415 BCE), which is very lacunary, relates a amazing struggle called ‘The gods against the sea’²⁸⁵, it reads: *Year 5, III Peret 19, may be live King of Upper and Lower Egypt [Amenhotep II ...] he has done for the Ennead in order to combat the sea [... I want to celebrate] your exploits, exalting [your power] telling what you did whereas I was just a child [...] the rebels were made [... two mountains] to trample your enemies [...] as they trampled reeds [...] his head while his [two horns ...]²⁸⁶ his enemies and opponents. Regard to [...] and the earth calmed down [...] So every man embraced [his neighbour ...] after [seven] days and the sky [...] the tribute of the sea [...] the sea as sovereign [...] the sky. Come near them to [the moment ... Asiatics] Astarte [...] the daughter of Ptah [... come] fight with him [...] he calmed down. He will not seek a quarrel. Seth sat down [...] and the sea gave up [...] with the sky [...].* That story is not clear, but it seems linked to the fall of Avaris.

The dramatic events related to the departure of the Hebrews to Palestine left a trace in Egyptian documents. A disaster of such a magnitude has logically marked the national memory. The translation of the Jewish Bible into Greek, the Septuagint (280 BCE), welcomed by Ptolemy II Philadelphus, however provoked a hostile reaction of the Egyptian priests, as the story of the Exodus, now available to Greek speaking Egyptians, gave a poor image of the ancient Egyptian priesthood. Manetho, a Hellenized Egyptian priest, at the request of Ptolemy II Philadelphus, wrote in Greek from Egyptian sources a history of Egypt under the title *Aegyptiaca*. In this story, the story of the Hyksos reappears but overhauled since this time they are described as being cruel princes, burning and slaughtering, oppressing Egypt and finally expelled because of their leprosy. It is in such a controversial context that the ancient history of the Hyksos resurfaced, which explains the distorted view that several Egyptian inscriptions give of this period (erected in the area around Avaris, another notable coincidence).

The first inscription was found in El-Arish²⁸⁷, and as noted by Griffith²⁸⁸, this long text refers to the ancient sanctuary of Pi-Soped (which was the capital of the 20th nome during the Ptolemaic period) and described in mythological terms the successive reigns of the gods Ra, Tefnut, Geb and Chou (description influenced by Greek conception of the four elements, Fire being associated with Ra, Tefnut with Water, Geb with the Earth and

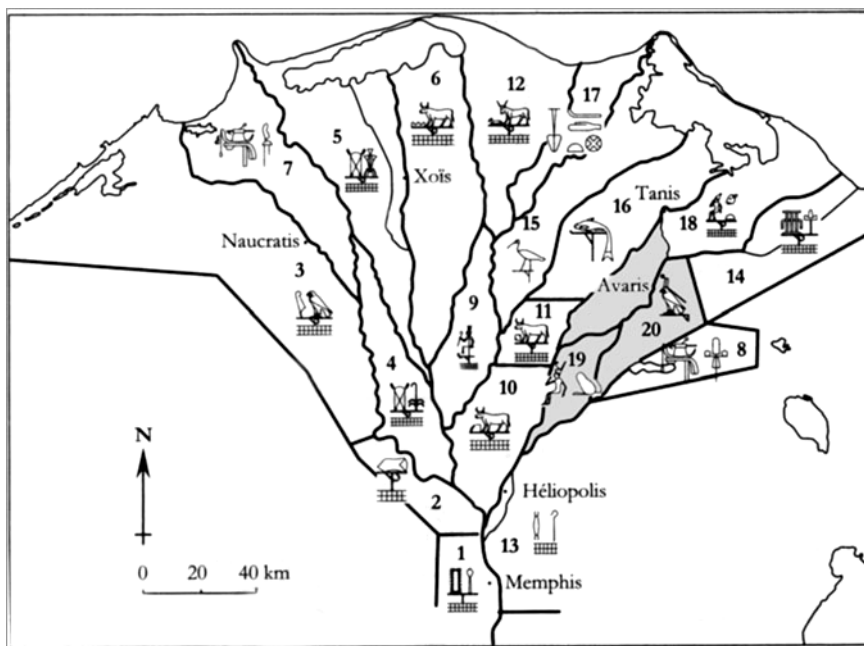
²⁸⁵ P. COLLOMBERT, L. COULON - Les dieux contre la mer in: *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 100 (2000) p.207.

²⁸⁶ The head with two horns is the symbol of Baal.

²⁸⁷ The naos 2248 of Ismailia's Museum.

²⁸⁸ F.L. GRIFFITH -The Antiquities of Tell el Yahûdiyeh and Miscellaneous Work in Lower Egypt during the Years 1887-1888 London 1890 Ed. Egypt Exploration Fund pp. 70-74.

Chou with the Air). Despite this theological aspect²⁸⁹, Goyon²⁹⁰, the author of a complete translation of this text, has rightly noted: *The story of the attack is based on the memories of invasions from the east and, in particular, the Hyksos invasion.* The inhabitants of pi-Soped (*pr-Spdw*) were aware of being the bulwark of Egypt, or the other major city of the 20th nome was Gesem²⁹¹ (*gsm* is vocalized *gosem* in Coptic and *gošen* in Hebrew) which appears in the "Land of Gesem" of the Septuagint. The word *gasmon*, from which *gesem* is derived has the meaning "storm" in Egyptian²⁹² (the word *gsm* has the same meaning in Ugaritic and Hebrew). The terms "land of Goshen", "land of Rameses" and "Field of Tanis" mean essentially the same region (Gn 45:10; 47:11, Ps 78:12,43), or the land of the "Storm" belonging to the "Son of the Sun (Pharaoh)" in the "marshlands of Tanis"²⁹³.



According to the Pithom stele²⁹⁴, found in the same region (Tell Maskhuta) and dated the year 22 of Ptolemy II Philadelphus [in 263 BCE], one reads²⁹⁵: *The king went to the province of Syria. When he reached Palestine, he found all the gods of Egypt and brought them back to Egypt (...) Egypt is in his fist and all foreign countries are under his soles (...) she [her Majesty] realized a large wall in the middle of the eastern desert, of a wonderful length, impassable to repel enemies — misfortune from the gods — when they entered Egypt.*

Due to their location, one can understand that the Egyptian priests in this region had maintained a bad memory of the Hyksos, the ancestors of the Jews from the time of Ptolemy II Philadelphus. Although the inscription of the *naos* in Pi-Soped [the Yat-Nebes of decans²⁹⁶, the present Saft al-Henna) is very damaged, however one can read:

²⁸⁹ Empedocles of Agrigento (495-435?) stated, for example: *At one point, the One formed from the Multiple, at another time, it was divided and from the One left the Multiple - Fire, Water and Earth and the powerful height of the Air.*

²⁹⁰ G. GOYON - Travaux de Chou et les tribulations de Geb d'après le naos 2248 d'Ismailia in: *Kémi* tome 6 (1936) pp. 1-42.

²⁹¹ M. DESSOUDÉIX - Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 761,769-771.

²⁹² J.E. HOCH - Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period Princeton 1994 Ed. Princeton University Press p.354.

²⁹³ D. VALBELLE - Tanis

in: Dictionnaire de l'Antiquité sous la direction de Jean Leclant 2005 Éd. PUF p. 2123.

²⁹⁴ E. NAVILLE - The Store-City of Pithom and the Route of Exodus London 1903 Ed. Egypt Exploration Fund pp. 1-40.

²⁹⁵ C. THIERS - Ptolémée Philadelphie et les prêtres d'Atoum de Tjékou. Nouvelle édition de la « stèle de Pithom » in: *Orientalia monspeliensia* 17 (2007) pp. 39-40, 45-49, 52-55.

²⁹⁶ A.S. VON BOMHARD - The Egyptian Calendar in: *Egyptology in the Dawn of the Twenty-first Century* Vol. 2 (2003) p. 142.

[But then] the majesty of Chu was the perfect king of heaven, earth, hell, water, wind, primordial waters, mountains and sea, [making] all laws on the throne of his father Ra-Harakhte became just of voice. But then the majesty of Chu was in his home [...] in Memphis. His Majesty spoke to the great Ennead of the gods which was to follow him: Let's walk to [...] in the east, to my residence of Yat-Nebe (...) Thus the majesty of Chu rose Yat-Nebe solid like the sky and all her castles as akhit. He came [...] as King of the Gods in Yat-Nebe. He completed the throne of Harakhte. But then children of Apopis, the rebels who are in the "dry place" and in the desert, they came by paths of Yat-Nebe, swooping down on Egypt in the dusk [...] of Egypt. They conquered but to destroy. They ransacked every place on the water, on land, they became [abandoned]? [...] by all the inhabitants because of this. These rebels, so they came from the East Mountains on all Yat-Nebe paths. Behold the majesty of Chu placed the gods following Ra and gods following [Chu] on all hillocks are in the territory of Yat-Nebe. It was hillocks of the time of Ra, the time when the Majesty of Ra was in Yat-Nebe [...] This is the great walls of Egypt repelling rebels when Apopis proceeds to attack (?) Egypt. The gods of these hillocks are the bulwark of this earth, they are the four pillars of heaven, the guard (?) [...] of eternal horizon, the throne of Chu in Yat-Nebe. Those who reside in the hillocks of Yat-Nebe, they are batters of the earth [...] store. They are Souls of the East to [...] of Ra Harakhte. They are the supporters of Ra in heaven and in the other world [...] of sky. They are the masters of the eastern mountain, defending Ra against Apopis, knowing all [...] in the territory of Yat-Nebe, with the gods who live in Yat-Desui in Yat-Nebe it is the lake [...] east to Yat-Nebe, who left his Majesty of Ra, to fight against Apopis' fellow [...] in Yat-Nebe, east of Yat-Nebe, it is the lake [...] in Yat-Nebe (...) with Chu? taking for him the whole earth. No one was resisting his presence. No other god was in the mouth of his troops [...] furious face with imperious look. He had his flag with the assistance of the wicked ones. Evil fell on this earth. There was a great revolution in the residence. Rebels carried disorder to the residents of the house of Chu. Here that Geb saw his mother who loved him very much. His heart (Geb's) was negligent after her. Earth [...] for his in great affliction. The Majesty of Chu flew to heaven with her companions. Tefnut remained in the place of her coronation in Memphis. She went to the royal house of Chu to noon. The great Ennead of gods stood on the world (?) of eternity that is the path of her father Harakhte. So the majesty of [...] Here he finds him in this place called Pi-Kharoti [p-h3-3-r-t-ÿ] and here he took him by force. It was a great revolution in the residence. It was Chu rising to heaven. There was no way out of the palace for a period of 9 days, and during these 9 days of revolution it was a storm as neither men nor gods saw the face of their neighbour. The Majesty of Geb appeared crowned on the throne of his father Chu, and all the inhabitants of the residence kissed the ground before him. After 75 days Geb went into the Delta and Chu flew to heaven, above the ground, in front of his eldest son through the mountains [of the East]. He did not go to On [Heliopolis] with as companions of thieves of scepter, called the "hidden ones", who lived on what the gods abominate (...) When the Majesty of Ra-Harakhte fighting with the enemies in this water of Yat-Desui — rebels showed no courage against His Majesty — His Majesty made contact with Yat-Desui, he took the form of a crocodile (...) As His Majesty was at home in Ity-Tawi in the land of benu plants. His Majesty had sent an expedition to bring her foreigners and Asiatics ('3mm) from their lands. Then the Majesty of Geb says to the great Ennead of the gods who were behind her: What did my father Chu from the beginning of his reign on the throne of his father Atum? The Ennead said to the Majesty of Geb. Since your father Chu was on the throne of his father Atum, he defeated all the rebels of his father Atum by killing children of Apopis and he made all the enemies of his father Ra see reason and after the air has got cooler, the lands were dried, the gods and humans were formed the following of Atum lord of southern On [Heliopolis], he irrigated cities, founding nomes, and pitched the walls of Egypt, building temples in the land of the South and North.

Several clues make it possible to locate the time of the disaster during the reigns of Kamose or Seqenenre. Indeed, Ity-Tawi²⁹⁷ was the residence of Pharaohs of the 12th dynasty (the capital of the 18th dynasty was in Thebes) and building activity at Karnak [the On or southern Heliopolis], described at the end, only picked up again from Ahmose²⁹⁸,

²⁹⁷ Capital near Lisht (necropolis of the first two kings of the 12th Dynasty).

²⁹⁸ L. GABOLDE – Thèbes

in: Dictionnaire de l'Antiquité sous la direction de Jean Leclant (2005 Éd. PUF), p. 2168.

the first Pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty. The Pharaoh of the story is designated by the term "Majesty of Ra (or Chu)" and his opponent is portrayed as the dragon Apopis. Coincidence: the name Seqenenre means "He who Ra made brave" and the name of the king Apopi (written *i-p-p*) is close to that of the evil god Apopis (written '*p-p*') associated with Seth. Although the story is mythological, the protagonists stand well: on one side the pharaoh and the gods of Egypt, on the other rebels from the mountains of the East assimilated to foreigners and to Asiatics, portrayed as enemies, villains, companions or children of Apopis and thieves of sceptre that the gods abominate. The outline of the conflict overlaps with that of the biblical text:

| Egyptian account (naos 2248) | Biblical account |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Residence in Memphis | |
| <i>The majesty of Chu was in his home [...] in Memphis.</i> | <i>Pharaoh had to stay near Ramses (Ex 12:31-37) which was Fostat, near Memphis, according to Flavius Josephus (Jewish Antiquities II:315).</i> |
| Beginning of disaster | |
| <i>Swooping down on Egypt in the dusk [...] Earth [...] for his in great affliction [...] There was a great revolution in the residence.</i> | <i>Death of firstborn began at midnight and there was a great outcry among the Egyptians (Ex 12:29-30).</i> |
| Death of firstborn | |
| <i>Chu flew to heaven, above the ground, in front of his eldest son (who therefore died prior his father).</i> | <i>The firstborn of Pharaoh died prior his father (Ex 11:5).</i> |
| Death of Pharaoh | |
| <i>The Majesty of Ra-Harakhte fighting with the enemies in this water of Yat-Desui [...] Here he finds him in this place called Pi-Haroti (𓂏𓂛𓂏𓂛𓂏𓂛) and here he took him by force.</i> | <i>Death of Pharaoh at Pi-Hahiro²⁹⁹ (Ex 14:9) shook off in the Red Sea (Ps 136:15) when he was fighting with the Israelites (Ex 14:23).</i> |
| Great darkness | |
| <i>During these 9 days of revolution it was a storm as neither men nor gods saw the face of their neighbour.</i> | <i>A gloomy darkness began to occur in all the land of Egypt for 3 days. They did not see one another, and none of them got up from his own place 3 days (Ex 10:21-23).</i> |
| Pharaoh is a crocodile | |
| <i>His Majesty made contact with Yat-Desui, he took the form of a crocodile.</i> | <i>Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great sea monster lying stretched out in the midst of his Nile canals (...) I will put hooks in your jaws (Ezk 29:3-4).</i> |

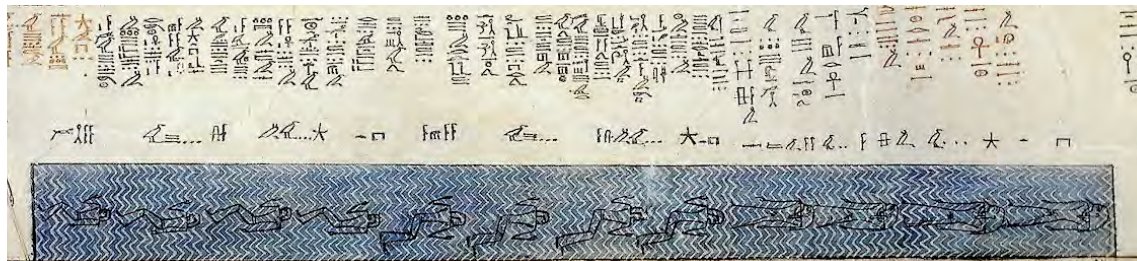
Most Egyptologists claim that these Egyptian testimonies are only some vague allegories of past disasters but, if it was the case, what was the goal of such allegories? Furthermore, Manetho (c. 280 BCE) who was an Egyptian historian and priest, and not a poet, would have invented his story about some ancient Jewish lepers who were able to fight with Pharaoh's armies, but for what purpose? In addition if his narrative had not a true basis it would be strange, because in the past Pharaoh had always been viewed as an invincible god. At last, why would Hecataeus of Abdera (315-305 BCE) who was a Greek historian and sceptic philosopher have believed such an unbelievable story? Why had King Ptolemy alluded (in 196 BCE) to this disaster of the past if it was just a myth: *he [King Ptolemy] overcame the rebels who were within it, and slaughtered them in accordance with what Thoth and Horus son of Isis did to those who had rebelled against them in those places in the Beginning; (as for) the rebels who had gathered armies and led them to disturb the nomes, harming the temples and abandoning the*

²⁹⁹ Pi-Hahiroth is transcribed [pi]-Heiroth "mouth of Heiroth" in the Septuagint (Nb 33:7-8).

way of the King and his father, the gods let him overcome them at Memphis during the festival of the Reception of the Rulership which he did from his father (Rosetta Stone lines 26-28). In my opinion, the core of the Egyptian testimonies about the Hyksos' war are broadly true, but were embellished or arranged because of nationalism (as we can understand a complete discomfiture is impossible for nationalists!), which is a usual behaviour as had already explained the famous historian Thucydides.

Some 30 ancient Egyptian texts with Exodus "parallels" or Exodus-like content have been identified by 56 Egyptologists, archaeologists, and Semiticists from 1844 to now in professional literature and additional texts have now been identified (in 2013) for a total of more than 90 Egyptian texts containing Exodus parallels. Based on the work presented at the UCSD Exodus conference³⁰⁰, Jan Assmann has ventured beyond his pioneering concept of cultural "mnemohistories" to comment that consensus views of the Exodus are "now highly contested" because there has been "Perhaps too much unanimity as to the non-historicity of the Exodus"; the "old certainties" of Exodus as pure myth are "gone".

The enigmatic scene³⁰¹ below appears in the royal Amduat underworld book, dated around 1500 BCE³⁰², as it is visualized (10th Hour) in Amenhotep II's tomb (KV 35). In the first stage there are 12 soldiers (in 3 groups of 4), in the second stage we can see Horus (the god of Egypt) in the middle, between the gods of Upper and Lower Egypt, which are themselves between two walls of vertical water and finally, in the third stage the 12 soldiers are all drowned and are represented inside the missing "path of water" of the second stage.



³⁰⁰ B.C. SPARKS – Egyptian Texts relating to the Exodus: Discussions of Exodus Parallels in the Egyptology Literature in: Israel's Exodus in Transdisciplinary Perspective (Springer, 2013), pp. 259-281.

³⁰¹ Z. HAWASS – Les trésors de la vallée des rois
Pais 2006, Ed. Place des victoires, pp. 103-114, 120-135, 166-167.

³⁰² The earliest citation of the Amduat appears in the tomb of Tuthmosis I (KV 20).

The Egyptian texts that accompany these images are not very explicit. For example, the walls of Water in a split Sea, the water bandage is called "Lake of Fire", also appears in the scene of Hour 5 (below) in the Amduat book (Thutmose III tomb KV 34) and the Hieroglyphic text caption between walls states that water had once been present and would return in deadly fashion in the same waterway or body of water 5 hours later. The second image is the Amduat-parallel scene in the Book of Gates, Hour 4, with Hour Goddesses standing upright on top of the walls of divided waters, showing that the Walls of Water in the corresponding Amduat Hour 5 scene are vertical and not an overhead image or a map of pools or lakes. The Coiled serpent represents Apophis, an enemy entity, which is clouding the view, not a picture of blessed dead. Anyway, the only naval battle in which the Egyptian army was involved took place at Avaris in the reign of Kamose (1533-1530).



The Book of Gates, which is an Ancient Egyptian funerary text dating from the New Kingdom³⁰³, narrates the passage of a newly deceased soul into the next world³⁰⁴. The scene of Hour 9 (below) in Ramses VI's tomb (KV 9) shows that among the 12 dead ones in the basin of drowned (bottom) only 9 souls were resurrected (top of the picture)!



³⁰³ The earliest citation of the Book of Gates appears in the tomb of Horemheb (1323-1295).

³⁰⁴ Which corresponds to the journey of the sun through the underworld during the 12 hours of the night. The soul is required to pass through a series of 'gates' at different stages in the journey. Each gate is associated with a different goddess, and requires that the deceased recognise the particular character of that deity. The text implies that some people will pass through unharmed, but that others will suffer torment in a lake of fire.

WHO WAS APOPI?

Apopi was a genuine pharaoh, since he exceptionally got a full titulary. Indeed, no Hyksos king, except he, received Horus' name and Pharaoh's title (in official documents).

| Name of: | Horus | | Egyptian meaning |
|----------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 | <i>shṭp t3wy</i> | <i>Sebeteptawy</i> | He-satisfies-the-Two-Lands |
| | Enthronement | | |
| 1 | <i>nb ḥꜥs r'</i> | <i>Nebhepesbre</i> | Lord-of-the-strength-of-Sun |
| 2 | <i>'3 qn r'</i> | <i>Aaqenre</i> | Great-and-brave-is-Sun |
| 3 | <i>'3 wsr r'</i> | <i>Aauserre</i> | Large-is-the-power-of-Sun |
| | Birth | | |
| 1 | <i>ippi</i> | <i>Apopi</i> | - |

The first enthrone name of Apopi (*Nebhepesbre*) appears on a dagger found in the tomb of an Asiatic named Abdu³⁰⁵ "Servant of Him (in Hebrew)", with the following inscription on the handle³⁰⁶: *The good god, lord of the Two Lands, [Nebhepesbre], son of Sun, [Apopi], given life. His lord's retainer, Naḥam [in Delta]*³⁰⁷. This dignitary was a Hyksos because he has two crossed bands (in dotted) and a necklace on his chest, in addition, he holds a scimitar in his left hand (a weapon typically Asiatic) and he bore a Hebrew name: Naham³⁰⁸.



The terms 'king's son', 'son of Sun' and 'god's wife', do not refer to biological relationships but to official titles of royalty. The title 'god's wife' was understood as 'king's wife'. In the same way 'son of Sun' was understood as "by divine right" and 'king's son' as 'royal son' or "belonging to the royal family". The official title 'King of Upper and Lower

³⁰⁵ P. LACAU – Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du musée du Caire n° 28087-28126 Le Caire Ed. Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale pp.86,86.

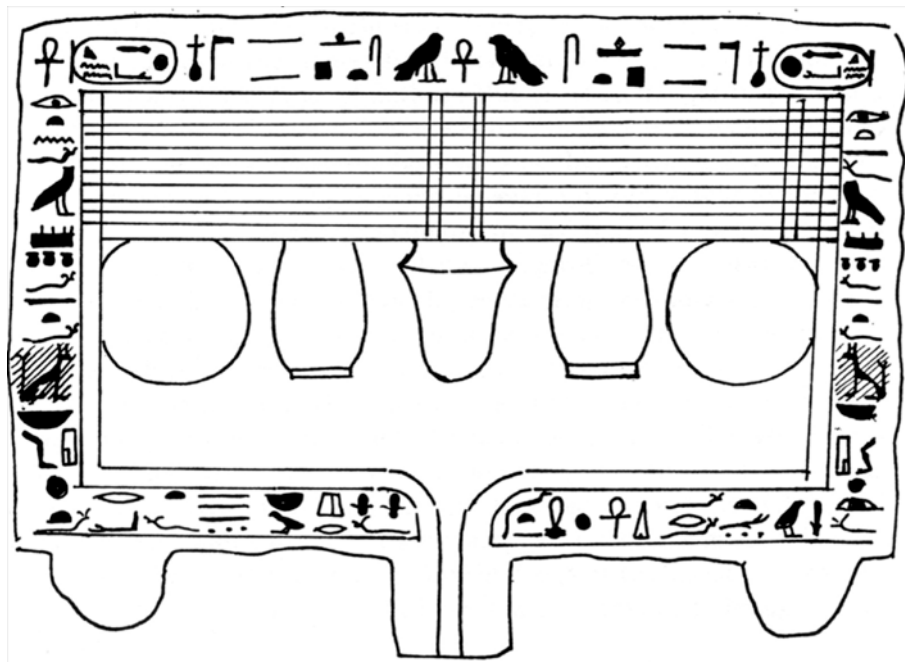
³⁰⁶ G. DARESSY – Un poignard du temps des rois pasteurs in: Annales du service des antiquités de l'Égypte tome VII (1906) pp. 115-120.

³⁰⁷ The clump of papyrus at the end of the name is an ideogram for the "Land of the North (Delta)".

³⁰⁸ 1Ch 4:18,19. The text also specifies that a named Mered had married Bityah a Pharaoh's daughter.

Egypt' written *n(y)-sw(t)-bity* means "He who belongs to the reed and the Bee" in which the reed (*swt*) symbolizes Upper Egypt and the bee (*bity*) Lower Egypt³⁰⁹.

The second enthronement name of Apopi (*Aaqenrē*) appears on an offering table found in Tanis³¹⁰. One can note that the representations of Seth, the god worshiped by Pharaoh Apopi have been systematically hammered:



Horus: pacifier-of-the-Two-Lands, the Perfect God, [Aqenrē], may he live! (This is) what he made as his monument for his father Seth, lord of Avaris, affixing his flag-staves, that lie might make 'given-life' like Re forever. Horus: pacifier-of-the-Two-Lands, the Perfect God, [Aqenrē], may he live. (This is) what he made as his monument for his father, Seth lord of Avaris, when he placed all lands under his feet.

The phraseology is typically Egyptian, Seth being presented as the father of King Apopi. Another inscription on a building in Avaris says³¹¹: *Horus: pacifier-[of-the-Two-Lands ...], Son of Re, [Apopi], given life. [He made it as his monument for his father Seth, making] for him many flag-staves and a fixture (?) of bronze for this god.* The titular of Apopi is somewhat unusual, because the god Seth is placed in an honorary ante-position at the beginning of the sentence (not the word), which is exceptional, as one can see below (on a granite vessel):


~~Seth~~, The Perfect God, [Aqenrē], Son of Re, [Apopi], given life, beloved of [-]

Apopi is the only Hyksos to have been designated by the title King of Upper and Lower Egypt (*nsw bity*), probably from a young age because several seals (at least 7) bear the title "royal son (*s3 nsw*)", which suggests that he was designated to the throne³¹².

The Perfect (sic) King of Upper and Lower Egypt, [Apopi], given life



³⁰⁹ J. VERCOUTER – L’Égypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 1

Paris 1992 Éd. Presses universitaires de France p. 206.

³¹⁰ L. HABACHI – The Second Stela of Kamose and his Struggle against the Hyksos Ruler and his Capital Glückstadt 1972 Ed. Verlag J.J. Augustin pp.56-65.

³¹¹ D.B. REDFORD – The Hyksos: New Historical and Archaeological Perspectives

Philadelphia 1997 Ed. The University Museum E.D. Oren p. 7 N° 33,35.

³¹² K.S.B. RYHOLT – The Political Situation in Egypt during the Second Intermediate Period Copenhagen 1997 Ed. The Carsten Niebuhr Institute of Near Eastern Studies pp. 45-48, 54-57, 129, 258.

The third enthronement name of Apopi (*Aauserre*), the most frequent, appears:

1) without cartouche: 

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Aauserre, Son of Re, Apopi, given life, Lord of the Two Lands

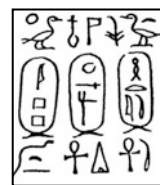
2) without cartouche in the scribal text³¹³ (Medinet el-Fayum), but with cartouche in the dedication: *Palette made by the king, the scribe of Re, whom Thoth himself taught, who expectore ~~the~~ ~~Ombian Seth and its followers~~ to/of all things; multitalented on the day when he reads faithfully all the difficult (passages) of the writings as (smoothly as [?]) flows the Nile [...] with a great [..., unique(?) ...], stout-hearted on the day of battle, with a greater reputation than any (other) king, protector of strange lands who have never (even) had a glimpse of him; living image of Re upon earth, solving(?) [...] people. King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Aauserre, Son of Re, Apopi, given life every day like Re forever. I was [...] to(?) his teaching, he is a judge(?) of the needy(?) commons — there is no false statement in that — there is indeed not his like in any land! [...] Son of Re, of his body, whom he loves, Apopi, given life. // Palette given by the king to the scribe Atju. Several phrases of this text are strange, such as: *he reads faithfully all the difficult (passages) of the writings (...)* his teaching, he is a judge of the needy commons — there is no false statement in that — there is indeed not his like in any land!*

On a alabaster vessel from Spain (Almuñecar), in a rectangle: *The Perfect God, Aauserre, Son of Re, Apopi; Royal sister T(?)awa, may she live, and around the rim: King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Aauserre, Son of Re, Apopi; Royal sister T(?)awa; may she live. The Perfect God, Lord of the Two Lands, whose might has reached the limits of the foreign lands — there is not a country exempt from serving him!*

3) with cartouche: in the date of Rhind Papyrus: *Regnal year 33, III Akhet [day 1 under the majesty of] the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Aauserre, given life.*



Apopi's name was widespread since it was found, for example, in the tomb of Amenhotep I, on an alabaster vase dedicated in his name and on behalf of Herit (*h-r-i-t?*), a king's daughter³¹⁴. This dedication (opposite figure) also proves that Apopi, pharaoh of Lower Egypt, was on good terms with the Pharaoh of Upper Egypt: *Sister of the King of Upper Egypt, Herit, may she live, the Perfect God, Aauserre, Son of Re, Apopi, given life.* A high official re-dedicated a sphinx³¹⁵ representing Sesostri III: *Apopi beloved by Wadjet, Lady of Imet; the treasurer Ikhuir [=Ahuel?].*



The most incomprehensible among all these inscriptions on Apopi is the systematic hammering of god Seth (in Avaris). The Egyptians indeed hammered only the Seth of Apopi after his departure, but not the ancient god Seth. This fact is unique in their history because there were two Seth at Avaris, worshiped and cursed at the same time³¹⁶! The most plausible explanation is to assume there was a violent conflict, just before the war of the Hyksos, between the "Master (*Seth/Baal*)" of Apopi and the other Egyptian gods.

Numerous Greek and Latin authors spoke of Jews in Egypt³¹⁷. Among those whose works have been preserved there is:

³¹³ H. GOEDICKE – The Scribal Palette of Athu (Berlin Inv. Nr. 7798)

in: *Chronique d'Égypte* LXIII (1988) Fasc. 125 pp. 42-56.

W. HELCK – Historisch-Bibliographische Texte der 2. Zwischenzeit und Neue Texte der 18. Dynastie Wiesbaden 1975 Ed. Otto Harrassowitz pp.54-58.

³¹⁴ W.C. HAYES – The Scepter of Egypt Part II

Massachusetts 1959 Ed. Harvard University Press.

³¹⁵ D. ARNOLD – Image and Identity: Egypt's Eastern Neighbours, East Delta People and the Hyksos

in: *The Second Intermediate Period (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 192, 2010)* p. 208, plates 33-34.

³¹⁶ H. SOUROUZIAN – Seth fils de Nout et Seth d'Avaris dans la statuaire royale ramesside

in: *Timelines Studies in Honour of Manfred Bietak Vol. I (2006)* pp. 331-354.

³¹⁷ M. STERN – Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism

Jerusalem 1976 Ed. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities pp. 26-34.

- **Hecataeus of Abdera** (315-305 BCE), a Greek historian and sceptic philosopher: *When in ancient times a pestilence arose in Egypt, the common people ascribed their troubles to the workings of a divine agency; for indeed with many strangers of all sorts dwelling in their midst and practising different rites of religion and sacrifice, their own traditional observances in honour of the gods had fallen into disuse. Hence the natives of the land surmised that unless they removed the foreigners, their troubles would never be resolved. At once, therefore, the aliens were driven from the country, and the most outstanding and active among them banded together and, as some say, were cast ashore in Greece and certain other regions; their leaders were notable men, chief among them being Danaus and Cadmus. But the greater number were driven into what is now called Judaea, which is not far distant from Egypt and was at that time utterly uninhabited. The colony was headed by a man called Moses, outstanding both for his wisdom and for his courage. On taking possession of the land he founded, besides other cities, one that is now the most renowned of all, called Jerusalem. In addition he established the temple that they hold in chief veneration, instituted their forms of worship and ritual, drew up their laws and ordered their political institutions. He also divided them into twelve tribes, since this is regarded as the most perfect number and corresponds to the number of months that make up a year. But he had no images whatsoever of the gods made for them, being of the opinion that God is not in human form; rather the Heaven that surrounds the earth is alone divine, and rules the universe. The sacrifices that he established differ from those of other nations, as does their way of living, for as a result of their own expulsion from Egypt he introduced an unsocial and intolerant mode of life. He picked out the men of most refinement and with the greatest ability to head the entire nation, and appointed them priests; and he ordained that they should occupy themselves with the temple and the honours and sacrifices offered to their God. These same men he appointed to be judges in all major disputes, and entrusted to them the guardianship of the laws and customs. For this reason the Jews never have a king, and authority over the people is regularly vested in whichever priest is regarded as superior to his colleagues in wisdom and virtue. They call this man the high priest, and believe that he acts as a messenger to them of God's commandments. It is he, we are told, who in their assemblies and other gatherings announces what is ordained, and the Jews are so docile in such matters that straightway they fall to the ground and do reverence to the high priest when he expounds the commandments to them. And at the end of their laws there is even appended the statement: "These are the words that Moses heard from God and declares unto the Jews." Their lawgiver was careful also to make provision for warfare, and required the young men to cultivate manliness, steadfastness, and, generally, the endurance of every hardship. He led out military expeditions against the neighbouring tribes, and after annexing much land apportioned it out, assigning equal allotments to private citizens and greater ones to the priests, in order that they, by virtue of receiving more ample revenues, might be undistracted and apply themselves continually to the worship of God. The common citizens were forbidden to sell their individual plots, lest there be some who for their own advantage should buy them up, and by oppressing the poorer classes bring on a scarcity of manpower. He required those who dwelt in the land to rear their children, and since offspring could be cared for at little cost, the Jews were from the start a populous nation. As to marriage and the burial of the dead, he saw to it that their customs should differ widely from those of other men. But later, when they became subject to foreign rule, as a result of their mingling with men of other nations (both under Persian rule and under that of the Macedonians who overthrew the Persians), many of their traditional practices were disturbed.*
- **Manetho** (c. 280 BCE), an Egyptian historian and priest: *There was a king of ours whose name was Tutimaheus. Under him it came to pass, I know not how, that God was averse to us, and there came, after a surprising manner, men of ignoble birth out of the eastern parts, and had boldness enough to make an expedition into our country, and with ease subdued it by force, yet without our hazarding a battle with them. So when they had gotten those that governed us under their power, they afterwards burnt down our cities, and demolished the temples of the gods, and used all the inhabitants after a most barbarous manner; nay, some they slew, and led their children and their wives into slavery. At length they made one of themselves king, whose name was Salatis; he also lived at Memphis, and*

made both the upper and lower regions pay tribute, and left garrisons in places that were the most proper for them. He chiefly aimed to secure the eastern parts, as fore-seeing that the Assyrians, who had then the greatest power, would be desirous of that kingdom, and invade them; and as he found in the Saïte Nomos, [Sethroite,] a city very proper for this purpose, and which lay upon the Bubastic channel, but with regard to a certain theological notion was called Avaris, this he rebuilt, and made very strong by the walls he built about it, and by a most numerous garrison of 240,000 armed men whom he put into it to keep it. Thither Salatis came in summer time, partly to gather his corn, and pay his soldiers their wages, and partly to exercise his armed men, and thereby to terrify foreigners. When this man had reigned 19 years, after him reigned another, whose name was Bnon, for 44 years; after him reigned another, called Apachnas, 36 years and 7 months; after him Apophis reigned 61 years, and then Jannas 50 years and 1 month; after all these reigned Assis 49 years and 2 months. And these 6 were the first rulers among them, who were all along making war with the Egyptians, and were very desirous gradually to destroy them to the very roots. This whole nation was styled Hyksos, that is, Shepherd-kings: for the first syllable Hyk, according to the sacred dialect, denotes a king, as is sos a shepherd; but this according to the ordinary dialect; and of these is compounded Hyksos: but some say that these people were Arabians. These people, whom we have before named kings, and called shepherds also, and their descendants, kept possession of Egypt 511 years. That the kings of Thebais and the other parts of Egypt made an insurrection against the shepherds, and that there a terrible and long war was made between them. That under a king, whose name was Mispbragmuthosis, the shepherds were subdued by him, and were indeed driven out of other parts of Egypt, but were shut up in a place that contained 10,000 acres; this place was named Avaris. That the shepherds built a wall round all this place, which was a large and a strong wall, and this in order to keep all their possessions and their prey within a place of strength, but that Thummosis the son of Mispbragmuthosis made an attempt to take them by force and by siege, with 480,000 men to lie rotund about them, but that, upon his despair of taking the place by that siege, they came to a composition with them, that they should leave Egypt, and go, without any harm to be done to them, whithersoever they would; and that, after this composition was made, they went away with their whole families and effects, not fewer in number than 240,000, and took their journey from Egypt, through the wilderness, for Syria; but that as they were in fear of the Assyrians, who had then the dominion over Asia, they built a city in that country which is now called Judea, and that large enough to contain this great number of men, and called it Jerusalem. That this nation, thus called Shepherds, were also called Captives, in their sacred books. When this people or shepherds were gone out of Egypt to Jerusalem, Tethtmosis the king of Egypt [Ahmose], who drove them out, reigned afterward 25 years and 4 months, and then died [...] how this namesake of his told him that he might see the gods, if he would clear the whole country of the lepers and of the other impure people; that the king was pleased with this injunction, and got together all that had any defect in their bodies out of Egypt; and that their number was 80,000; whom he sent to those quarries which are on the east side of the Nile, that they might work in them, and might be separated from the rest of the Egyptians. There were some of the learned priests that were polluted with the leprosy; but that still this Amenophis, the wise man and the prophet, was afraid that the gods would be angry at him and at the king, if there should appear to have been violence offered them; who also added this further, [out of his sagacity about futurities,] that certain people would come to the assistance of these polluted wretches, and would conquer Egypt, and keep it in their possession thirteen years; that, however, he durst not tell the king of these things, but that he left a writing behind him about all those matters, and then slew himself, which made the king disconsolate. After those that were sent to work in the quarries had continued in that miserable state for a long while, the king was desired that he would set apart the city Avaris, which was then left desolate of the shepherds, for their habitation and protection; which desire he granted them. Now this city, according to the ancient theology, was Typho's city. But when these men were gotten into it, and found the place fit for a revolt, they appointed themselves a ruler out of the priests of Heliopolis, whose name was Osarsiph, and they took their oaths that they would be obedient to him in all things. He then, in the first place, made this law for them, That they should neither worship the Egyptian gods, nor should abstain from

any one of those sacred animals which they have in the highest esteem, but kill and destroy them all; that they should join themselves to nobody but to those that were of this confederacy. When he had made such laws as these, and many more such as were mainly opposite to the customs of the Egyptians, he gave order that they should use the multitude of the hands they had in building walls about their City, and make themselves ready for a war with king Amenophis, while he did himself take into his friendship the other priests, and those that were polluted with them, and sent ambassadors to those shepherds who had been driven out of the land by Tethmosis [Ahmose] to the city called Jerusalem; whereby he informed them of his own affairs, and of the state of those others that had been treated after such an ignominious manner, and desired that they would come with one consent to his assistance in this war against Egypt. He also promised that he would, in the first place, bring them back to their ancient city and country Avaris, and provide a plentiful maintenance for their multitude; that he would protect them and fight for them as occasion should require, and would easily reduce the country under their dominion. These shepherds were all very glad of this message, and came away with alacrity all together, being in number 200,000 men; and in a little time they came to Avaris. And now Amenophis the king of Egypt, upon his being informed of their invasion, was in great confusion, as calling to mind what Amenophis, the son of Papis, had foretold him; and, in the first place, he assembled the multitude of the Egyptians, and took counsel with their leaders, and sent for their sacred animals to him, especially for those that were principally worshipped in their temples, and gave a particular charge to the priests distinctly, that they should hide the images of their gods with the utmost care he also sent his son Sethos, who was also named Ramesses, from his father Rhampses, being but 5 years old, to a friend of his. He then passed on with the rest of the Egyptians, being 300,000 of the most warlike of them, against the enemy, who met them. Yet did he not join battle with them; but thinking that would be to fight against the gods, he returned back and came to Memphis, where he took Apis and the other sacred animals which he had sent for to him, and presently marched into Ethiopia, together with his whole army and multitude of Egyptians; for the king of Ethiopia was under an obligation to him, on which account he received him, and took care of all the multitude that was with him, while the country supplied all that was necessary for the food of the men. He also allotted cities and villages for this exile, that was to be from its beginning during those fatally determined 13 years. Moreover, he pitched a camp for his Ethiopian army, as a guard to king Amenophis, upon the borders of Egypt. And this was the state of things in Ethiopia. But for the people of Jerusalem, when they came down together with the polluted Egyptians, they treated the men in such a barbarous manner, that those who saw how they subdued the aforementioned country, and the horrid wickedness they were guilty of, thought it a most dreadful thing; for they did not only set the cities and villages on fire but were not satisfied till they had been guilty of sacrilege, and destroyed the images of the gods, and used them in roasting those sacred animals that used to be worshipped, and forced the priests and prophets to be the executioners and murderers of those animals, and then ejected them naked out of the country. It was also reported that the priest, who ordained their polity and their laws, was by birth of Heliopolis, and his name Osarsiph [Auserre-Apophi], from Osiris, who was the god of Heliopolis; but that when he was gone over to these people, his name was changed, and he was called Moses. After this, Amenophis returned back from Ethiopia with a great army, as did his son Ahampses with another army also, and that both of them joined battle with the shepherds and the polluted people, and beat them, and slew a great many of them, and pursued them to the bounds of Syria (Against Apion I:75-91, 237-266).

- **Marble of Paros**³¹⁸ (written in 264 BCE): *From when Cadmus the son of Agenor came to Thebes [... and] built the Cadmeia, 1255 years (1519 BCE). From when [the first fifty-oared] ship [prepared by Danaus] sailed from Egypt to Greece (...) 1247 years (1511 BCE).*
- **Greek inscription** (dated 234 BCE): *The inhabitants of these [Balearic] islands were the Canaanites fleeing from the face of Joshua the son of Nun (Paschal Chronicle dated 630)*³¹⁹.

³¹⁸ F. JACOBY - Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker
Leiden 1962 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 993,994.

³¹⁹ A.J. FREND - Two Long-Lost Phoenician Inscriptions and the Emergence of Ancient Israel
in: *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 134,1 (2002) pp. 37-43.

- **Demetrius the Chronograph** (c. 220 BCE), a Jewish chronicler: *Since Adam [in 5307 BCE] until the birth of Abraham 3334 years (1973 BCE), until the entry of Jacob into Egypt 3624 years (1683 BCE), until the Exodus of Moses 3839 years (1468 BCE)* (Stomata I:21, 141; Preparatio evangelica IX:21:1-19).
- **Artapanus** of Alexandria (c. 200 BCE), a Hellenistic Jewish historian: *Moses was the master of Orpheus. As an adult, he transmitted to people much useful knowledge (...) he confided the sacred letters to the priests, and there were also cats, dogs, ibis (...) This is why Moses was loved by crowds, and the priests, who considered him worthy of divine honours, called him Hermes, since he interpreted the sacred letters* (Preparatio evangelica IX:27).
- **Eupolemus**³²⁰ (c. 160 BCE), a Hellenistic Jewish historian: *Moses was the first to acquire wisdom and transmit writing to the Jews, the Phoenicians received it, then from the Phoenicians to the Greeks. Moses was the first to write laws for the Jews* (Preparatio evangelica IX:26).
- **Diodorus of Sicily** (c. 50 BCE), a Greek historian: *Cadmus, who was a citizen of Egyptian Thebes, begat several children, of whom one was Semelê (...) And since he had become conversant with the teachings of the Egyptians about the gods, he transferred the birth of the ancient Osiris to more recent times, and, out of regard for the descendants of Cadmus, instituted a new initiation (...) In general, they say, the Greeks appropriate to themselves the most renowned of both Egyptian heroes and gods, and so also the colonies sent out by them (...) Now the Egyptians say that also after these events a great number of colonies were spread from Egypt over all the inhabited world. To Babylon, for instance, colonists were led by Belus [Baal], who was held to be the son of Poseidon and Libya; and after establishing himself on the Euphrates (...) They say also that those who set forth with Danaus, likewise from Egypt, settled what is practically the oldest city in Greece, Argos, and that the nation of the Colchi in Pontus and that of the Jews, which lies between Arabia and Syria, were founded as colonies by certain emigrants from their country (...) among the Jews Moses referred his laws to the god who is invoked as Iao (Historical Library I:23, 28, 94). Many generations later men supposed that Cadmus, the son of Agenor, had been the first to bring the letters from Phoenicia to Greece; and after the time of Cadmus onwards the Greeks were believed to have kept making new discoveries in the science of writing, since a sort of general ignorance of the facts possessed the Greeks (...) About this time Danaüs together with his daughters fled from Egypt (...) And a little after this time Cadmus, the son of Agenor, having been dispatched by the king to seek out Europe, put ashore at Rhodes (...) Now Cadmus honoured likewise the Lindian Athena with votive offerings, one of which was a striking bronze cauldron worked after the ancient manner, and this carried an inscription in Phoenician letters, which, men say, were first brought from Phoenicia to Greece (...) To the Muses, we are further told, it was given by their father Zeus to discover the letters and to combine words in the way which is designated poetry. And in reply to those who say that the Syrians are the discoverers of the letters, the Phoenicians having learned them from the Syrians and then passed them on to the Greeks, and that these Phoenicians are those who sailed to Europe together with Cadmus and this is the reason why the Greeks call the letters "Phoenician," men tell us, on the other hand, that the Phoenicians were not the first to make this discovery, but that they did no more than to change the forms of the letters, whereupon the majority of mankind made use of the way of writing them as the Phoenicians devised it, and so the letters received the designation we have mentioned above (Historical Library V:57-58,74) The ancestors of the Jews had been driven out of all Egypt as men who were impious and detested by the gods. For by way of purging the country all persons who had white or leprous marks on their bodies had been assembled and driven across the border, as being under a curse; the refugees had occupied the territory round about Jerusalem, and having organized the nation of the Jews had made their hatred of mankind into a tradition, and on this account had introduced utterly outlandish laws: not to break bread with any other race, nor to show them any good will at all (...) Antiochus, called Epiphanes, on defeating the Jews had entered the innermost sanctuary of the god's temple, where it was lawful for the priest alone to enter. Finding there a marble statue of a heavily bearded man seated on an ass, with a*

³²⁰ B.Z. WACHOLDER - Eupolemus. A Study of Judeo-Greek Literature
Cincinnati 1974 Ed. Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion pp. 71-96.

book in his hands, he supposed it to be an image of Moses, the founder of Jerusalem and organizer of the nation, the man, moreover, who had ordained for the Jews their misanthropic and lawless customs (Historical Library XXXIV:1). Now that we are about to record the war against the Jews, we consider it appropriate to give first a summary account of the establishment of the nation, from its origins, and of the practices observed among them. When in ancient times a pestilence arose in Egypt, the common people ascribed their troubles to the workings of a divine agency; for indeed with many strangers of all sorts dwelling in their midst and practising different rites of religion and sacrifice, their own traditional observances in honour of the gods had fallen into disuse. Hence the natives of the land surmised that unless they removed the foreigners, their troubles would never be resolved. At once, therefore, the aliens were driven from the country, and the most outstanding and active among them banded together and, as some say, were cast ashore in Greece and certain other regions; their leaders were notable men, chief among them being Danaüs and Cadmus. But the greater number were driven into what is now called Judaea, which is not far distant from Egypt and was at that time utterly uninhabited. The colony was headed by a man called Moses, outstanding both for his wisdom and for his courage. On taking possession of the land he founded, besides other cities, one that is now the most renowned of all, called Jerusalem. In addition he established the temple that they hold in chief veneration, instituted their forms of worship and ritual, drew up their laws and ordered their political institutions. He also divided them into twelve tribes, since this is regarded as the most perfect number and corresponds to the number of months that make up a year. But he had no images whatsoever of the gods made for them, being of the opinion that God is not in human form; rather the Heaven that surrounds the earth is alone divine, and rules the universe. The sacrifices that he established differ from those of other nations, as does their way of living, for as a result of their own expulsion from Egypt he introduced an unsocial and intolerant mode of life. He picked out the men of most refinement and with the greatest ability to head the entire nation, and appointed them priests; and he ordained that they should occupy themselves with the temple and the honours and sacrifices offered to their god. These same men he appointed to be judges in all major disputes, and entrusted to them the guardianship of the laws and customs. For this reason the Jews never have a king, and authority over the people is regularly vested in whichever priest is regarded as superior to his colleagues in wisdom and virtue. They call this man the high priest, and believe that he acts as a messenger to them of God's commandments. It is he, we are told, who in their assemblies and other gatherings announces what is ordained, and the Jews are so docile in such matters that straightway they fall to the ground and do reverence to the high priest when he expounds the commandments to them. And at the end of their laws there is even appended the statement: These are the words that Moses heard from God and declares unto the Jews. Their lawgiver was careful also to make provision for warfare, and required the young men to cultivate manliness, steadfastness, and, generally, the endurance of every hardship. He led out military expeditions against the neighbouring tribes, and after annexing much land apportioned it out, assigning equal allotments to private citizens and greater ones to the priests, in order that they, by virtue of receiving more ample revenues, might be undistracted and apply themselves continually to the worship of God (Historical Library XL:3).

- **Strabo** (c. 20 CE), a Greek geographer, philosopher and historian: An Egyptian priest named Moses, who possessed a portion of the country called the Lower [Egypt], being dissatisfied with the established institutions there, left it and came to Judea with a large body of people who worshipped the Divinity. He declared and taught that the Egyptians and Africans entertained erroneous sentiments, in representing the Divinity under the likeness of wild beasts and cattle of the field; that the Greeks also were in error in making images of their gods after the human form. For God [said he] may be this one thing which encompasses us all, land and sea, which we call heaven, or the universe, or the nature of things. Who then of any understanding would venture to form an image of this Deity, resembling anything with which we are conversant? on the contrary, we ought not to carve any images, but to set apart some sacred ground and a shrine worthy of the Deity, and to worship Him without any similitude. He taught that those who made fortunate dreams were to be permitted to sleep in the temple, where they

might dream both for themselves and others; that those who practised temperance and justice, and none else, might expect good, or some gift or sign from the God, from time to time. By such doctrine Moses persuaded a large body of right-minded persons to accompany him to the place where Jerusalem now stands. He easily obtained possession of it, as the spot was not such as to excite jealousy, nor for which there could be any fierce contention; for it is rocky, and, although well supplied with water, it is surrounded by a barren and waterless territory. The space within [the city] is 60 stadia [in circumference], with rock underneath the surface. Instead of arms, he taught that their defence was in their sacred things and the Divinity, for whom he was desirous of finding a settled place, promising to the people to deliver such a kind of worship and religion as should not burthen those who adopted it with great expense, nor molest them with [so-called] divine possessions, nor other absurd practices. Moses thus obtained their good opinion, and established no ordinary kind of government. All the nations around willingly united themselves to him, allured by his discourses and promises (Geography XVI:2:35-36).

- **Pliny the Elder** (c. 70 CE), a Roman naturalist: *I have always been of opinion, that letters were of Assyrian origin, but other writers, Gellius, for instance, suppose that they were invented in Egypt by Mercury: others, again, will have it that they were discovered by the Syrians; and that Cadmus brought from Phoenicia 16 letters into Greece. To these, Palamedes, it is said, at the time of the Trojan war, added these 4: H Y Φ X. Simonides, the lyric poet, afterwards added a like number Ψ Ξ Ω Θ; the sounds denoted by all of which are now received into our alphabet (Natural History VII:57).*
- **Josephus** (c. 95 CE), a Romano-Jewish historian and hagiographer of priestly and royal ancestry: *Manetho at all probable, wherein he relates the change of his name, and says that "he was formerly called Osarsiph;" and this a name no way agreeable to the other, while his true name was Moses, and signifies a person who is preserved out of the water, for the Egyptians call water Mou. I think, therefore, I have made it sufficiently evident that Manetho, while he followed his ancient records, did not much mistake the truth of the history; but that when he had recourse to fabulous stories, without any certain author, he either forged them himself, without any probability, or else gave credit to some men who spake so out of their ill-will to us. (Against Apion I: 285-287,290).*
- **Tacitus** (c. 100 CE), a senator and a historian of the Roman Empire: *The Egyptians, in their animal-pictures, were the first people to represent thought by symbols: these, the earliest documents of human history, are visible to-day, impressed upon stone. They describe themselves also as the inventors of the alphabet: from Egypt, they consider, the Phoenicians, who were predominant at sea, imported the knowledge into Greece, and gained the credit of discovering what they had borrowed. For the tradition runs that it was Cadmus, arriving with a Phoenician fleet, who taught the art to the still uncivilized Greek peoples. Others relate that Cecrops of Athens (or Linus of Thebes) and, in the Trojan era, Palamedes of Argos, invented sixteen letters, the rest being added later by different authors, particularly Simonides. In Italy the Etruscans learned the lesson from the Corinthian Demaratus, the Aborigines from Evander the Arcadian; and in form the Latin characters are identical with those of the earliest Greeks. But, in our case too, the original number was small, and additions were made subsequently: a precedent for Claudius, who appended three more letters, which had their vogue during his reign, then fell into desuetude, but still meet the eye on the official bronzes fixed in the forums and temples (Annals XI:14). Some say that the Jews were fugitives from the island of Crete, who settled on the nearest coast of Africa about the time when Saturn was driven from his throne by the power of Jupiter. Evidence of this is sought in the name (...) Others assert that in the reign of Isis the overflowing population of Egypt, led by Hierosolymus and Judas, discharged itself into the neighbouring countries. Many, again, say that they were a race of Ethiopian origin, who in the time of king Cepheus were driven by fear and hatred of their neighbours to seek a new dwelling-place. Others describe them as an Assyrian horde who, not having sufficient territory, took possession of part of Egypt, and founded cities of their own in what is called the Hebrew country, lying on the borders of Syria. Others, again, assign a very distinguished origin to the Jews, alleging that they were the Solymi, a nation celebrated in the poems of Homer, who called the city which they founded Hierosolyma after their own name. Most writers, however, agree in stating that once a disease, which horribly disfigured the body, broke out over Egypt; that king*

Bocchoris, seeking a remedy, consulted the oracle of Hammon, and was bidden to cleanse his realm, and to convey into some foreign land this race detested by the gods. The people, who had been collected after diligent search, finding themselves left in a desert, sat for the most part in a stupor of grief, till one of the exiles, Moses by name, warned them not to look for any relief from God or man, forsaken as they were of both, but to trust to themselves, taking for their heaven-sent leader that man who should first help them to be quit of their present misery. They agreed, and in utter ignorance began to advance at random. Nothing, however, distressed them so much as the scarcity of water, and they had sunk ready to perish in all directions over the plain, when a herd of donkeys was seen to retire from their pasture to a rock shaded by trees. Moses followed them, and, guided by the appearance of a grassy spot, discovered an abundant spring of water. This furnished relief. After a continuous journey for six days, on the seventh they possessed themselves of a country, from which they expelled the inhabitants, and in which they founded a city and a temple. Moses, wishing to secure for the future his authority over the nation, gave them a novel form of worship, opposed to all that is practised by other men. Things sacred with us, with them have no sanctity, while they allow what with us is forbidden. In their holy place they have consecrated an image of the animal by whose guidance they found deliverance from their long and thirsty wanderings. They slay the ram, seemingly in derision of Hammon, and they sacrifice the ox, because the Egyptians worship it as Apis. They abstain from swine's flesh, in consideration of what they suffered when they were infected by the leprosy to which this animal is liable. By their frequent fasts they still bear witness to the long hunger of former days, and the Jewish bread, made without leaven, is retained as a memorial of their hurried seizure of corn. We are told that the rest of the seventh day was adopted, because this day brought with it a termination of their toils; after a while the charm of indolence beguiled them into giving up the seventh year also to inaction. But others say that it is an observance in honour of Saturn, either from the primitive elements of their faith having been transmitted from the Idæi, who are said to have shared the flight of that God, and to have founded the race, or from the circumstance that of the seven stars which rule the destinies of men Saturn moves in the highest orbit and with the mightiest power, and that many of the heavenly bodies complete their revolutions and courses in multiples of seven. This worship, however introduced, is upheld by its antiquity; all their other customs, which are at once perverse and disgusting, owe their strength to their very badness. The most degraded out of other races, scorning their national beliefs, brought to them their contributions and presents. This augmented the wealth of the Jews, as also did the fact, that among themselves they are inflexibly honest and ever ready to show compassion, though they regard the rest of mankind with all the hatred of enemies. They sit apart at meals, they sleep apart, and though, as a nation, they are singularly prone to lust, they abstain from intercourse with foreign women; among themselves nothing is unlawful. Circumcision was adopted by them as a mark of difference from other men. Those who come over to their religion adopt the practice, and have this lesson first instilled into them, to despise all gods, to disown their country, and set at nought parents, children, and brethren. Still they provide for the increase of their numbers. It is a crime among them to kill any newly-born infant. They hold that the souls of all who perish in battle or by the hands of the executioner are immortal. Hence a passion for propagating their race and a contempt for death. They are wont to bury rather than to burn their dead, following in this the Egyptian custom; they bestow the same care on the dead, and they hold the same belief about the lower world. Quite different is their faith about things divine. The Egyptians worship many animals and images of monstrous form; the Jews have purely mental conceptions of Deity, as one in essence. They call those profane who make representations of God in human shape out of perishable materials. They believe that Being to be supreme and eternal, neither capable of representation, nor of decay. They therefore do not allow any images to stand in their cities, much less in their temples. This flattery is not paid to their kings, nor this honour to our Emperors. From the fact, however, that their priests used to chant to the music of flutes and cymbals, and to wear garlands of ivy, and that a golden vine was found in the temple, some have thought that they worshipped father Liber, the conqueror of the East, though their institutions do not by any means harmonize with the theory; for Liber established a festive and cheerful worship, while the Jewish religion is tasteless and mean (History V:2-5).

- **Tatian** (160-170 CE) an Assyrian early Christian writer and theologian: *But now it seems proper for me to demonstrate that our philosophy is older than the systems of the Greeks. Moses and Homer shall be our limits, each of them being of great antiquity; the one being the oldest of poets and historians, and the other the founder of all barbarian wisdom. Let us, then, institute a comparison between them; and we shall find that our doctrines are older, not only than those of the Greeks, but than the invention of letters (...) the Egyptians also there are accurate chronicles. Ptolemy, not the king, but a priest of Mendes, is the interpreter of their affairs. This writer, narrating the acts of the kings, says that the departure of the Jews from Egypt to the places whither they went occurred in the time of king Amosis, under the leadership of Moses. He thus speaks: Amosis lived in the time of king Inachus. After him, Apion the grammarian, a man most highly esteemed, in the 4th book of his Aegyptiaca (there are five books of his), besides many other things, says that Amosis destroyed Avaris in the time of the Argive Inachus, as the Mendesian Ptolemy wrote in his annals. But the time from Inachus to the taking of Troy occupies 20 generations (...) every intelligent person will most carefully observe that, according to the tradition of the Greeks, they possessed no historical composition; for Cadmus, who taught them letters, came into Boeotia many generations later. But after Inachus, under Phoroneus, a check was with difficulty given to their savage and nomadic life, and they entered upon a new order of things. Wherefore, if Moses is shown to be contemporary with Inachus, he is 400 years older than the Trojan war [1184 BCE] (To the Greeks XXXI, XXXVIII, XXXIX).*
- **Eusebius** (c. 300 CE), a Roman historian, exegete and Christian polemicist: *Orpheus, son of Oeagrus, first brought over with him the mysteries of the Egyptians, and imparted them to the Greeks; just, in fact, as Cadmus brought to them the Phoenician mysteries together with the knowledge of letters: for the Greeks up to that time did not yet know the use of the alphabet (...) From Misor was born Taautus, who invented the first written alphabet; the Egyptians called him Thouth, the Alexandrians Thoth, and the Greeks Hermes (...) Tardily and painfully they learned the nature of letters. Those at least who assign the greatest antiquity to their use of them boast of having learned it from the Phoenicians and Cadmus. Nevertheless no one could show any record that is preserved even from that time either in temples or on public monuments: seeing that there has been great doubt and inquiry, whether even those who so many years later went on the expedition to Troy, made use of writing; and the true opinion is rather that they were ignorant of the use now made of written letters (The Preparation of the Gospel I:6:4, I:10:14, X:7:5-8). In the year 508 of Abraham [born in 2016 BCE]: Egypt left (1508 BCE) under Moses leading (...) in the year 543 (1473 CE): Danaus calls Argos after being expelled from Egypt (...) In the year 563 of Abraham (1453 BCE) Cadmus, who left Egyptian Thebes for Syria, reigns in Tyre and Sidon (Chronicle of Eusebius/Jerome)*
- **Moses of Khoren** (370-486 CE), a prominent Armenian historian quoted by the historian Procopius of Caesarea (500-562 CE) in one of his Book (History of the Wars IV:10:21-22), wrote that a Phoenician inscription appearing on two columns built (c. 700 BCE ?) in the city of Tigisis in Numidia, bore the following sentence: *we are they who fled from the face of Joshua, the robber, the son of Nun.*

As one can see, the classical authors have preserved the memory of the Egyptian version of a Moses, priest of the god Seth, hated by gods and expelled at the head of a band of cursed lepers. The influence of Egyptian propaganda and prejudices from Greek and Roman authors are obvious. The confusion of Seth under its animal form is originally an absurd legend: the Jews would have worshiped a donkey in their Temple! Thus, according to Plutarch, Jewish customs were derived from the god Typhon (Seth) represented by a red donkey (De Iside et Osiride §§ 30-31). To eradicate such prejudices, Josephus explained: *Apion ought to have had a regard to these facts, unless he had himself had either a donkey's heart or a dog's impudence; of such a dog I mean as they worship; for he had no other external reason for the lies he tells of us. As for us Jews, we ascribe no honour or power to donkeys, as do the Egyptians to crocodiles and asps, when they esteem such as are seized upon by the former, or bitten by the latter, to be happy persons, and persons worthy of God. Donkeys are the same with us which they are with*

other wise men, viz. creatures that bear the burdens that we lay upon them; but if they come to our thrashing-floors and eat our corn, or do not perform what we impose upon them, we beat them with a great many stripes, because it is their business to minister to us in our husbandry affairs. But this Apion of ours was either perfectly unskillful in the composition of such fallacious discourses, or however, when he begun [somewhat better], he was not able to persevere in what he had undertaken, since he hath no manner of success in those reproaches he casts upon us (Against Apion II:79-81).

For the Egyptians, Seth generally personified the god of foreign lands, which has led some to believe that Egyptian Christians worshiped a god with the head of a donkey³²¹, as seen on this graffito³²² (opposite figure) of the 2nd century of our era (the crux ansata is Egyptian). The Greek text ALEXAMENOC CEBETE ΘΕΟΝ means "Alexamenos venerates his god". However, as a representative of Seth, the donkey was an ambivalent symbolism³²³. Tertullian (155-222) laughed at such rumours since he wrote the following remark : *But recently in this city, what is really a new representation of our god has been made public, since a certain criminal, hired to trick the wild beasts, exhibited a picture with an inscription to the following effect: 'The Christian God, the Offspring of a Donkey.'* He had donkeys' ears, one foot hoofed, was dressed in the toga and carried a book. We laughed both at the name and the figure (The Apology XVI:12).



The story of Manetho is heavily influenced by Egyptian propaganda, but its chronological indications, without religious implications, are usually quite accurate. For example, he wrote: *When this people or shepherds were gone out of Egypt to Jerusalem, Tethmosis the king of Egypt, who drove them out, reigned afterward 25 years and 4 months.* Tethmosis (also written Thummosis) the first king of the 18th Dynasty, was Ahmose and his father was Seqenenre Taa. This indisputable chronological benchmark provides the following equivalences: *Tethmosis/Thummosis/ Ahmose; Mispbragmuthosis/ Seqenenre Taa; Amenophis/ Kamose; Apophis/ Apopi; Osarsiph/Osarsepho/ Aauserre-Apopi; Salitis/ Joseph?; Seth/Typhon/ The Lord of the land.* According to these equivalences, Manetho's account is:

There was a king of ours whose name was Tutimaues. Under him it came to pass (...) they made one of themselves king, whose name was Joseph?; he also lived at Memphis (...) he found in the Sethroite nome, a city very proper for this purpose, and which lay upon the Bubastic channel, but with regard to a certain theologic notion was called Avaris (...) it was the Lord of the land's city (I:75-78, 238). Joseph reigned 19 years, Bnon reigned 44 years, Arpachan reigned 36 years and 7 months, Apopi reigned 61 years, Jannas reigned 51 years and 1 month, Assis reigned 49 years and 2 months (I:79-81). That under a king, whose name was Seqenenre, the Hyksos were subdued by him, and were indeed driven out of other parts of Egypt, but were shut up in a place that contained 10,000 acres; this place was named Avaris (I:86). Ahmose the son of Seqenenre made an attempt to take them by force and by siege, with 480,000 men to lie rotund about them, but that, upon his despair of taking the place by that siege, they came to a composition with them, that they should leave Egypt, and go, without any harm to be done to them, whithersoever they would; and that, after this composition was made, they went away with their whole families and effects, not fewer in number than 240,000, and took their journey from Egypt, through the wilderness, for Syria³²⁴; but that as they were in fear of the Assyrians, who had then the dominion over Asia (!), they built a city in that country which is now called Judea, and that large enough to contain this

³²¹ J.M. ROBINSON – The Nag Hammadi Library
Leiden 1988 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 208-219.

³²² R. LANCIANI -The Palace of the Caesars
in: *Ancient Rome in the Light of Recent Discoveries* (Boston 1898).

³²³ R.-J. THIBAUD –Dictionnaire de mythologie et de symbolique égyptienne
Paris 1996, Éd. Dervy pp. 22-23, 320-321.

³²⁴ This precision: *for Syria; but that as they were in fear of the Assyrians, who had then the dominion over Asia*, is commented as mistake. However, the mighty city of Babylon was sacked by the Hittites in 1499 BCE enabling Kassites kings to dominate the region of Assyria for several centuries. According to the Masoretic chronology, the Israelites entered Canaan in 1493 BCE, 6 years later.

great number of men, and called it Jerusalem (I:88-90). They [Hyksos] appointed themselves a ruler out of the priests of Heliopolis, whose name was Aauserre-Apopi, and they took their oaths that they would be obedient to him in all things. He then, in the first place, made this law for them, That they should neither worship the Egyptian gods, nor should abstain from any one of those sacred animals which they have in the highest esteem (...) When he had made such laws as these, and many more such as were mainly opposite to the customs of the Egyptians, he gave order that they should use the multitude of the hands they had in building walls about their City, and make themselves ready for a war with king Kamose, while he did himself take into his friendship the other priests, and those that were polluted with them, and sent ambassadors to those shepherds who had been driven out of the land by Ahmose to the city called Jerusalem (...) (Kamose) marched into Ethiopia, together with his whole army and multitude of Egyptians; for the king of Ethiopia was under an obligation to him, on which account he received him, and took care of all the multitude that was with him, while the country supplied all that was necessary for the food of the men. He also allotted cities and villages for this exile, that was to be from its beginning during those fatally determined [1]3 years. Moreover, he pitched a camp for his Ethiopian army, as a guard to king Kamose, upon the borders of Egypt (...) But for the people of Jerusalem, when they came down together with the polluted Egyptians, they treated the men in such a barbarous manner, that those who saw how they subdued the aforementioned country, and the horrid wickedness they were guilty of, thought it a most dreadful thing; for they did not only set the cities and villages on fire but were not satisfied till they had been guilty of sacrilege, and destroyed the images of the gods, and used them in roasting those sacred animals that used to be worshipped, and forced the priests and prophets to be the executioners and murderers of those animals, and then ejected them naked out of the country (I:238-241, 265-266). The priest, who ordained their polity and their laws, was by birth of Heliopolis, and his name Aauserre-Apopi, from Osiris, who was the god of Heliopolis; but that when he was gone over to these people, his name was changed, and he was called Moses. After this, Kamose returned back from Ethiopia with a great army, as did his son Ahampses with another army also, and that both of them joined battle with the Hyksos and the polluted people, and beat them, and slew a great many of them, and pursued them to the bounds of Syria (I:250, 265). When this people or Hyksos were gone out of Egypt to Jerusalem, Ahmose the king of Egypt, who drove them out, reigned afterward 25 years and 4 months (I:94, 231; II:16).

Manetho's story is therefore very similar to that appearing on the stele of Kamose. It is interesting to notice that Josephus disagreed with Manetho on a linguistic point concerning the name of Moses: *wherein he [Manetho] relates the change of his name, and says that "he was formerly called Osarsiph;" and this a name no way agreeable to the other, while his true name was Moses, and signifies a person who is preserved out of the water, for the Egyptians call water Mou (Against Apion I:286). Thermuthis imposed this name Mouses upon him, from what had happened when he was put into the river; for the Egyptians call water by the name of Mou, and such as are saved out of it, by the name of Uses: so by putting these two words together, they imposed this name upon him (Antiquities of the Jews II:238).* Josephus was partly right, because the first part of Mouses' name meant "water (*mon*)" in Egyptian, as confirmed by Philo of Alexandria (De Vita Mosis I:17), however the second part does not mean "saved out of it" but merely "son (*s3*)" in Egyptian, like in the frequent expression "son of Ra (*s3 rʿ*)". Ramses (*rʿ ms*) means "spawned by Sun god (Ra)", Ahmose (*Iʿh ms*) "spawned by Moon god (Iah)", Musa (*mw s3*) "son of Water (god Nile)", because the names linked to the pharaoh are governed by honorific anteposition. For example, the expression "like Ra" is written *rʿ-mi* "Ra like", the word "king" pronounced *n(y)-sut* is written *sut-n(y)*.

A lot has been written about the explanation of the name of Moses. According to the biblical text it means "pulling out of [the water]", assuming an unusual Hebrew form *mashuy* "being pulled out." This name is used in conjunction with the people who would "be pulled out of [the water]" by the man who would become Mosheh "pulling [his people out of the water]" in Isaiah 63:11,12". The first vowel of the name Moses is "o" in the

Hebrew text and "ou" in the Greek text (Mouses), but never "a" or "e", which prevents a reconciliation with the Egyptian word *mes*, meaning "spawned by", found in the name Ra-mes-es. The biblical text has preserved the Egyptian vocalization of this word in the name Ra-mes-es (Gn 47:11), which is different from the Hebrew name Mosheh. If the name of Moses came from the Egyptian *mes*, the biblical text would have preserved this form, or would be likely Hebraicized in *mes*³²⁵. Anyway, neither Flavius nor Manetho knew Osarseph. According to Manetho's account, Osarseph's name came from Osiris, the god of Heliopolis ("city of the sun", thus the god of Heliopolis was Ra). According to Chaeremon, director of the Museum of Alexandria (c. 40 CE), the name of Joseph in Egypt was Peteseeph (not Salitis) and the name of Moses was Tisithen (Against Apion I:290).

Obviously former names of the protagonists were no longer understood by most historians³²⁶ quoted by Josephus. The chronological sequence of events recounted by Manetho solves a puzzle: Apopi, the last king of the 15th dynasty reappeared 40 years later, just before the expulsion of the Hyksos.

| King of Kush | | King of Egypt | King of foreign Lands (Hyksos) |
|--------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | 13 th Dynasty | |
| | 1780 - | | 14 th Dynasty |
| | 1740 - | Tutimaecus (?) | Salitis (Joseph ?) |
| | | | Bnon (?) |
| | | | 15 th Dynasty (Avaris) |
| | 1640 - | | Arpachan (?) |
| | -1570 | | Apophis (Apopi) |
| | | 17 th Dynasty | 16 th Dynasty |
| | 1570 - | | Jannas (Jannes ?) |
| | | | Assis (?) |
| | 1544-1533 | Misphragmuthosis (Seqenenre) | Osarsiph (Aauserre-Apopi) |
| [Ethiopia] | 1533-1530 | Amenophis (Kamose) | Osarsipho (Aauserre-Apopi) |
| | | 18 th Dynasty | |
| [?] | 1530-1505 | Tethmosis/Thummosis (Ahmose) | Osarsipho => Moses |

This chronological scheme involves identifying the expulsion of the Hyksos with the biblical Exodus, since Osarseph was Moses. This identification, which was that of ancient historians, would explain satisfactorily the catastrophic calamities experienced by the Egyptians, but seems to contradict the biblical account which says: *Consequently the Egyptians made the sons of Israel slave under tyranny. And they kept making their life bitter with hard slavery at clay mortar and bricks and with every form of slavery in the field, yes, every form of slavery of theirs in which they used them as slaves under tyranny* (Ex 1:13-14). This erroneous view is derived from a mistranslation of the word *ebed* "servant, domestic, worker": *So the Egyptians gave them no mercy in the demands they made, making their lives miserable with hard labour: with digging clay, making bricks, doing various kinds of field —work— all sorts of labour that they imposed on them without mercy* (New Jerusalem Bible). In the Egyptian language, as in Old Hebrew, the word 'slave' did not exist, because every Egyptian was a servant of the Pharaoh (consequently the word "free man" does not exist either), its meaning depends of the context. *Ebed-melech*, for example, means "king's servant" that is "king's minister", but sometimes also "king's flunkey". If the Hebrews were abused slaves, they would not have wanted to return to Egypt after their departure, which was the case (Ex 16:3). It would be more appropriate to speak of exploited, sometimes, overexploited workers (working poor).

³²⁵ The exchange between s and š is very frequent (but not understood). For example, the Egyptian name Amen-mes is rendered by Aman-maša in Akkadian (letter EA 113), and the famous Ra-messu (Ramses) is rendered by Ria-mašeša (Hattusili treaty with Ramses).

³²⁶ J.G. GAGER – Moses in Greco-Roman Paganism
New York 1972 Ed. Abingdon Press 113-133.

APOPI ALIAS MOSES

The Greek word 'Hyksos' means 'ruler of foreign lands (*hq3 h3swt*)' in Egyptian. Thus, Joseph was the first Hyksos: *And Pharaoh added to Joseph: See, I do place you over all the land of Egypt. With that Pharaoh removed his signet ring from his own hand and put it upon Joseph's hand and clothed him with garments of fine linen and placed a necklace of gold about his neck. Moreover, he had him ride in the second chariot of honour that he had, so that they should call out ahead of him, "Avrekhl!" thus putting him over all the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh further said to Joseph: I am Pharaoh, but without your authorization no man may lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt. After that Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphenathpaneah and gave him Asenath the daughter of Potiphra the priest of On [Heliopolis] as a wife. And Joseph began to go out over the land of Egypt. And Joseph was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh the king of Egypt. Then Joseph went out from before Pharaoh and toured about in all the land of Egypt. And during the 7 years of plenty the land went on producing by the handfuls. And he kept collecting all the foodstuffs of the 7 years that came upon the land of Egypt and he would put the foodstuffs in the cities (...) Accordingly Joseph came and reported to Pharaoh and said: My father and my brothers and their flocks and their herds and all they have come from the land of Canaan, and here they are in the land of Goshen. And from the whole number of his brothers he took 5 men, that he might present them to Pharaoh. Then Pharaoh said to his brothers: What is Your occupation? So they said to Pharaoh: Your servants are herders of sheep, both we and our forefathers. After that they said to Pharaoh: We have come to reside as aliens in the land, because there is no pasturage for the flock that your servants have, for the famine is severe in the land of Canaan. And now let your servants dwell, please, in the land of Goshen. At that Pharaoh said to Joseph: Your father and your brothers have come here to you. The land of Egypt is at your disposal. Have your father and your brothers dwell in the very best of the land. Let them dwell in the land of Goshen, and if you know that there are among them able men, you must appoint them cattle chiefs over what is mine (Gn 41:41-48; 47:1-6).*

The investiture ceremony of Joseph is quite consistent with Egyptian customs that describe the enthronement of a vizier, second person of State. According to the biblical account, Joseph officiated as vizier over a period of 14 years (1758-1744). Is there a trace of Joseph in Egyptian documents? Pharaoh Sehetepibre is a good candidate. The Turin King List mentions two kings with the same name: Sehetepibre I (1765-1760?) and Sehetepibre II Hornedjheritef (1755-1750?) four lines later. There is obviously an oddity³²⁷, because Sehetepibre had a name preceded by a strange affiliation *sa aamu* "son of Asiatics", whereas he was an Egyptian king of the 13th Dynasty, not a Hyksos ruler, in addition, his birth name means "He who satisfies the heart of Ra", which is typically Egyptian. Furthermore, on the site of Tell el-Dab'a (Avaris), a vast palace whose existence was brief, a few years at most, was not even completed. This building dates from the beginning of the 13th Dynasty. Various details—including the discovery of a cylinder seal "Ruler of Retenu" in a style typically Syrian, a lack of foundation deposits, remains of animals' offerings in a circular pit—are foreign to Egyptian habits and make one think of Asia and a Canaanite influence. This palace could have been the 'summer residence' of the king of Egypt Hetepibre 'son of Asiatics', whose statue was found 100 meters away. These peculiarities may be explained as follows: Sehetepibre was an actual Egyptian king of the 13th Dynasty who had delegated his authority to an Asiatic vizier (Joseph). Having the proxy of Pharaoh, this vizier would act on behalf of Pharaoh by preceding Pharaoh's name with the words "son of Asiatics". The Egyptian word *Aamu* (*ʿ3mw*), translated as "Asiatics", could refer to *Aramu* "those of Aram". Joseph was an Aramean, rendered "Syrian" in the Septuagint (Dt 26:5). The Egyptian word *Sutu* (*Swtnw*) is also translated as "Asiatics", but refers more specifically to

³²⁷ C. VANDERSLEYEN – L'Égypte et la vallée du Nil
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 128-129.

Suteans of Moab, "Sons of Seth" according to Numbers 24:17. For example, Abisa[r], the Hyksos ruler pictured at Beni Hassan (near Nefrusy), came from Moab (Su[t]u). Moabite rulers are called "sheiks" in the Bible (Gn 36:29-40).

Joseph dwelt in the land of Goshen, also referred to as the 'Field of Tanis' (Gn 45:10; 47:11; Ps 78:12, 43) called 'Field of Tanis (*D'w*)' in Egyptian. The choice of Tanis, founded under Amenemhat I³²⁸ (1975-1946), was not due to chance. According to the Bible, after arriving in Canaan at 75 years old (in 1963 BCE), Abraham changed the name of Kiriath-arba "city of four" into Hebron "joining" (Gn 23:1) and then, 7 years later, founded the city of Tanis "moving tents" (Nb 13:22). At the time of Joseph, this city had probably a few hundred Asiatic inhabitants.

The order: *you must appoint able men cattle chiefs over what is mine*, entailed in fact significant responsibilities. The title "cattle chiefs (*sarê migneḥ*)" may also be understood as "rulers of purchase property" (Gn 23:18). Livestock being the main wealth of Egypt, the pharaohs established, from the very beginning, regular censuses of their livestock. When the 7 years of famine ended, Joseph had to relinquish his post of vizier, however the administration (able men) he put in place continued to operate until his death (in 1678 BCE). During this period (1744-1678), Hebrew administration leaders (14th Dynasty) worked as viziers of the North (Delta). These Hebrew leaders are qualified as foolish, because of their reliance on the Egyptian government, since this collaboration with the authorities led them to support Egyptian taskmasters against Hebrew officers (Exodus 5:14). One reads: *The princes of Tanis are indeed foolish. As regards the wise ones of Pharaoh's counsellors, [their] counsel is something unreasonable. How will You men say to Pharaoh: I am the son of wise ones, the son of kings of ancient time? Where, then, are they — the wise men of yours — that they may now tell you and that they may know what Jehovah of armies has counselled concerning Egypt? The princes of Tanis have acted foolishly, the princes of Memphis have been deceived, the cornerstone [the chiefs, LXX] of its tribes have caused Egypt to wander about.* (Is 19:11-13). The passage, written at the time of Osorkon IV, could concern this Pharaoh, but the order: *How will You men say to Pharaoh*, points out only Israelites, in addition, the word "tribes" usually refers to the tribes of Israel (Ex 28:21, Nb 4:18), which has puzzled some translators, because the Egyptian system did not know this kind of division into tribes, contrary to Israelites.

After the death of Joseph, as Hebrew people greatly increased (Ex 1:7), the viziers of the North received new responsibilities and became in fact co-regents (beginning of the 15th Dynasty). It can be seen there is no more vizier after Sobekhotep IV (1686-1677), a king of the 13th Dynasty, until Ahmose³²⁹ (1530-1505), first king of the 18th Dynasty. Thus, Moses was born during the 15th dynasty: *She conceived and gave birth to a son. When she saw how good-looking he was, she kept him concealed for 3 months (...) Now Pharaoh's daughter went down to bathe in the Nile river, while her maids walked along the riverside. Among the reeds she noticed the basket, and she sent her maid to fetch it. She opened it and saw the child: the baby was crying. Feeling sorry for it, she said: This is one of the little Hebrews. The child's sister then said to Pharaoh's daughter: Shall I go and find you a nurse among the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you? Yes, said Pharaoh's daughter, and the girl went and called the child's own mother. Pharaoh's daughter said to her: Take this child away and nurse it for me. I shall pay you myself for doing so. So the woman took the child away and nursed it. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter who treated him like a son; she named him Moses because, she said: I drew him out of the water* (Ex 2:2-10). As Pharaoh's daughter was not able to speak Hebrew, the name Moses must be Egyptian. One can notice that in Hebrew this name probably means "pulled out (*mosheb*)" (the word "water" is missing),

³²⁸ N. GRIMAL - Histoire de l'Égypte ancienne

Paris 1988 Éd. Fayard p. 212.

³²⁹ M. DESSOUDÉIX – Chronique de l'Égypte ancienne
Paris 2008 Éd. Actes Sud pp. 728-732.

whereas in Egyptian it means "Water's son (*mu-sa*)". Moses did not receive this Egyptian name from his parents, but from Pharaoh's daughter after his "baptism" in the Nile. As it was received after the age of 3 months (the text of Exodus 2:10 even suggests after his weaning), it was therefore a nickname and not a birth name (just as Israel is the nickname for Jacob, his birth name). The name of Hebrew children was given by parents based on a noteworthy event at birth. As Moses was beautiful at his birth, which is emphasized by biblical texts (Ex 2:2) as by Josephus (Jewish Antiquities II:231), "divinely beautiful" according to Acts 7:20, he had to be called "very beautiful". In Hebrew "beautiful" is rendered as Ioppa (Jos 19:46) and "splendid" as *iepepiah* (Jr 46:20).

Moses was adopted as the king's son through Pharaoh's daughter (Ex 2:10). Adoption in the royal family conferred its holder the honorific title of "king's son." If the daughter of Pharaoh had the more prestigious position of "Wife of the god", she was able to confer dynastic position to his son who could be considered not just as king, as were already the kings of the 15th Dynasty, but as a real co-regent. Some Egyptian accounts show that women of royal origin could play an important role in the choice of future pharaohs. According to Flavius Josephus: *Thermuthis therefore perceiving him to be so remarkable a child, adopted him for her son, having no child of her own. And when one time had carried Moses to her father, she showed him to him, and said she thought to make him her successor, if it should please God she should have no legitimate child of her own; and to him: I have brought up a child who is of a divine form, and of a generous mind; and as I have received him from the bounty of the river, in, I thought proper to adopt him my son, and the heir of thy kingdom. And she had said this, she put the infant into her father's hands: so he took him, and hugged him to his breast; and on his daughter's account, in a pleasant way, put his diadem upon his head; but Moses threw it down to the ground, and, in a puerile mood, he wreathed it round, and trod upon his feet, which seemed to bring along with evil presage concerning the kingdom of Egypt. But when the sacred scribe saw this, (he was the person who foretold that his nativity would the dominion of that kingdom low,) he made a violent attempt to kill him; and crying out in a frightful manner, he said: This, O king! this child is he of whom God foretold, that if we kill him we shall be in no danger; he himself affords an attestation to the prediction of the same thing, by his trampling upon thy government, and treading upon thy diadem. Take him, therefore, out of the way, and deliver the Egyptians from the fear they are in about him; and deprive the Hebrews of the hope they have of being encouraged by him. But Thermuthis prevented him, and snatched the child away. And the king was not hasty to slay him, God himself, whose providence protected Moses, inclining the king to spare him. He was, therefore, educated with great care* (Jewish Antiquities II:232-233). The text of Josephus on the royal status of Moses is often considered a legend by archaeologists although these details were known from 280 BCE thanks to Manetho. Strabo, a Greek geographer and historian, wrote for example around 20 CE: *An Egyptian priest named Moses, who possessed [managed] a portion of the country called the Lower [Egypt]³³⁰, being dissatisfied with the established institutions there, left it and came to Judea with a large body of people who worshipped the Divinity* (Geography XVI:2:35).

The biblical text speaks little of the royal position of Moses during the first 40 years of his life, but one can guess implicitly in the following texts: *The man Moses too was very great in the land of Egypt, in the eyes of Pharaoh's servants and in the eyes of the people* (Ex 11:3); *the daughter of Pharaoh picked him up and brought him up as her own son. Consequently Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. In fact, he was powerful in his words and deeds* (Ac 7:21-22); *By faith Moses, when grown up, denied to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, choosing to be ill-treated with the people of God rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin, because he esteemed the reproach of the Christ as riches greater than the treasures of Egypt* (Heb 11:24-26). Renunciation of Moses of the treasures of Egypt makes sense only if he really had them thanks to his royal status. Something can be denied only if it has been owned. However, his leading position has been

³³⁰ Μωσῆς γάρ τις τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἱερέων ἔχων τι μέρος τῆς (κάτω) καλουμένης χώρας.

challenged by some Hebrews: *he (Moses) went out on the following day and here there were two Hebrew men struggling with each other. So he said to the one in the wrong: Why should you strike your companion? At this he said: Who appointed you as a prince and judge over us? Are you intending to kill me just as you killed the Egyptian?* (Ex 2:13-14). As Moses could inflict the death penalty on the Hebrews, that implies his royal authority.

Moses was co-regent for 40 years, from 1613 to 1573 BCE, for exactly the same duration as Apopi, then: *Now when the time of his 40th year was being fulfilled, it came into his heart to make an inspection of his brothers, the sons of Israel* (Ac 7:23). *Now it came about in those days, as Moses was becoming strong, that he went out to his brothers that he might look at the burdens they were bearing; and he caught sight of a certain Egyptian striking a certain Hebrew of his brothers. So he turned this way and that and saw there was nobody in sight. Then he struck the Egyptian down and hid him in the sand (...) Moses now got afraid and said: Surely the thing has become known! Subsequently Pharaoh got to hear of this thing, and he attempted to kill Moses; but Moses ran away from Pharaoh that he might dwell in the land of Madian; and he took a seat by a well* (Ex 2:11, 15). About this new period of 40 years (1573-1533), since Moses lived 120 years (Dt 34:7) and spent 40 years in the wilderness (Dt 8:2), very little is known. One can assume that Moses was well known at that time under his birth name Apopi (or under his last enthronement name Aauserre). Thus, to avoid being recognized he had to hide his identity and probably used his 'baptismal' name Musa unknown outside Egypt, Hebraized into Muša (for example, the name Amen-mes is rendered Aman-maša in the Akkadian El-Amarna letter n° 113). We note that after King Apopi, the last great Hyksos, the following Hyksos dynasty changed its capital, Edfu, north of Thebes (centre of the war of liberation against the Hyksos)³³¹, instead of Avaris and that all kings of this 16th dynasty bore only Egyptian names. *During this long period the king of Egypt died. The Israelites, groaning in their servitude, cried out for help and from the depths of their servitude their cry came up to God* (Ex 2:23).

The last 40 years of Moses (1533-1493) are the best known: *you and the elders of Israel are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him: Jehovah, the God of the Hebrews, has encountered us. So now please allow us to make a 3-days' journey into the desert and sacrifice to Jehovah our God. I am well aware that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless he is compelled by a mighty hand; he will not let you go until I have stretched out my arm and struck Egypt with all the wonders I intend to work there. I shall ensure that the Egyptians are so much impressed with this people that when you go, you will not go empty-handed. Every woman will ask her neighbour and the woman staying in her house for silver and golden jewellery, and clothing. In these you will dress your own sons and daughters, despoiling the Egyptians of them (...) So Moses took his wife and his son and, putting them on a donkey, started back for Egypt (...) [God said:] You will then say to Pharaoh: (Ex 3:16-22; 4:20-22).* The fact that Moses could easily go and talk to Pharaoh proved that he was an important figure. However, the context is complicated because Moses had to discuss with Egyptian officials (17th dynasty) and with Jewish officers (16th dynasty) totally subservient to Pharaoh: *So those who drove the people to work and their officers [16th Dynasty] went out and said to the people: Here is what Pharaoh has said: I am giving You no more straw. You yourselves go, get straw for yourselves wherever You may find it, because there is to be no reducing of Your services one bit. Consequently the people scattered about over all the land of Egypt to gather stubble for straw. And those who drove them to work kept urging them, saying: Finish Your works, each one his work, day for day, just as when straw was available. Later on the officers of the sons of Israel [16th Dynasty], whom Pharaoh's taskmasters [17th Dynasty] had set over them, were beaten, these saying: Why is it You did not finish Your prescribed task in making bricks as formerly, both yesterday and today? Consequently the officers of the sons of Israel [16th Dynasty] went in and began to cry out to Pharaoh, saying: Why do you deal this way with your servants? There is no straw given to your*

³³¹ E.D. OREN - The Hyksos Enigma — Introductory Overview
in: The Hyksos: New Historical and Archaeological Perspectives (Philadelphia 1997) p. 12

servants and yet they are saying to us: 'Make bricks!' and here your servants are beaten, whereas your own people are at fault. But he said: You are relaxing, You are relaxing! That is why You are saying: We want to go, we want to sacrifice to Jehovah. And now go, serve! Though no straw will be given to You, yet You are to give the fixed amount of bricks. Then the officers of the sons of Israel [16th Dynasty] saw themselves in an evil plight at the saying: You must not deduct from Your bricks one bit of anyone's daily rate. After that they encountered Moses [former king of the 15th Dynasty] and Aaron, who were standing there to meet them as they came out from Pharaoh. At once they said to them: May Jehovah look upon You and judge, since You have made us smell offensive before Pharaoh [17th Dynasty] and before his servants so as to put a sword in their hand to kill us (Ex 5:10-21).

Some Jewish officers of the 16th Dynasty refused to cooperate with Moses and even opposed him: *Now in the way that Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so these also go on resisting the truth, men completely corrupted in mind, disapproved as regards the faith* (2Tm 3:8). The precision: « disapproved as regards the faith » proves that they were Jewish rulers³³², not Egyptian priests. According to the Jewish literature of the 1st century, Jannes and his brother Jambres opposed Moses under the influence of Belial (Damascus Document 5:18-19). According to Manetho, Jannas ruled as king after Apopi, which is unlikely because his Egyptian name, Jeneses deputy (*y-n-s-s idn*), appears (opposite figure) in an inscription at Avaris³³³ not as king of Lower Egypt but only as Khyan's son, the Hyksos king (15th Dynasty) just before Apopi.



The episode of the 10 plagues of Egypt is famous. A painstaking reconstruction³³⁴ shows that it lasted about 40 days, from month XII day 1 to month I day 14 (1533 BCE), the most lethal wounds (9th and 10th) being focused on the last 3 days, with total darkness, storm and death of all the firstborn:

| N° | Date | Julian | Plague | Exodus | Adominitions | Tempest stela |
|----|--------|----------|-------------------------------|----------|---------------------|---------------|
| 1 | 7/XII | March 18 | Water to blood | 7:14-25 | 2:6,10 | yes? |
| 2 | 15/XII | March 26 | Frogs | 8:1-7 | | |
| 3 | 18/XII | March 29 | Lice | 8:16-19 | | |
| 4 | 20/XII | March 31 | Flies | 8:24-29 | | |
| 5 | 23/XII | April 3 | Murrain | 9:6 | | |
| 6 | 25/XII | April 5 | Boils | 9:8-12 | | |
| 7 | 27/XII | April 7 | Hail and Fire | 9:22-26 | 2:10-11 | yes |
| | 28/XII | April 8 | Barley and flax smitten | 9:31 | 6:2-4 | |
| 8 | 2/I | April 12 | Locust | 10:13-15 | | |
| 9 | 5/I | April 13 | Darkness for 3 days | 10:21-23 | 9:11; 10:1 | yes |
| | 10/I | April 20 | Passover, lamb selected | 12:28 | | |
| 10 | 14/I | April 24 | Passover, death of firstborns | 12:29-36 | 2:6-7; 5:6-7 | yes |
| | 30/I | May 10 | Death of Pharaoh | 14:7-28 | Total solar eclipse | |

According to the biblical text: *And at midnight Jehovah struck down all the first-born in Egypt from the first-born of Pharaoh, heir to his throne, to the first-born of the prisoner in the dungeon, and the first-born of all the livestock. Pharaoh and all his officials and all the Egyptians got up in the night, and there was great wailing in Egypt, for there was not a house without its dead. It was still dark when Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said: Up, leave my subjects, you and the Israelites! Go and worship Jehovah as you have asked* (Ex 12:29-31). The remark: *from the first-born of Pharaoh, heir to his throne*, shows that this anonymous Pharaoh had a son (the eldest) who was Crown prince. The final sequence of events is precisely dated.

³³² According to Pliny the Elder (c. 77 CE): *There is another sect, also, of adepts in the magic art, who derive their origin from Moses, Jannes, and Lotapea, Jews by birth, but many thousand years posterior to Zoroaster* (The Natural History XXX:2).

³³³ M. BIETAK - Avaris the Capital of the Hyksos
London 1996 Ed. British Museum Press pp. 64-67.

³³⁴ F. NOLEN JONES - The Chronology of the Old Testament
Texas 2005 Ed. Master Books p. 70.

The Exodus began on 15/I (1533 BCE) from Rameses a storage city (unidentified), which was the ancient Egyptian Babylon (Fustat, near Old Cairo) according to Josephus (Jewish Antiquities II:315). Israelites followed the path of the desert (from Memphis to the mines of Serabit el-Khadim) and not the Philistines' way³³⁵, called "path of Horus" by the Egyptians, along the Mediterranean coast to a camp at Soukhot, then Etham before finally returning to Pihahiroth³³⁶ (Ex 13:17-14:2). This town was to be located north of the Red Sea as described by Josephus (Jewish Antiquities II:324-326) and could be the present jebel 'Ataqa (the site actually looks like a dead end). The pharaoh died during the crossing of the Red Sea³³⁷ (Ps 136:15), and the Israelites reached Elim (now called Gharandel wadi) on the 15th of the following month (Exodus 16:1). The route between Memphis and Elim is round 600 kilometres. The distance can be covered in approximately 24 days (the armies of the past moved at an average speed to 25 km per day. Even the Roman armies, highly organized, did not exceed this speed)³³⁸, which corresponds to 30 days indicated in the text (taking into account the duration of each stay)³³⁹. Crossing the current between the promontory called Ras 'Ataqa to the oasis Ayun Musa, on the opposite bank is about 10 km which requires a period of at least 2 hours to get from the bottom of one bank to another. The maximum depth is 15 meters in the middle of the path, which is consistent with the biblical description: *The Israelites went on dry ground right through the sea, with walls of water to right and left of them* (Ex 14:22). To avoid miraculous explanation some biblical scholars propose a simple swamps crossing, but in this case the path would be either impractical for a large crowd or without danger for the Egyptian armies.

The departure from Egypt is dated 15 Nisan (Nb 33:3). Since the arrival in the desert of Sin is dated the 15th of the following month (Ex 16:1) and the final showdown is near Pihahiroth (Ex 14:9) a place halfway between the city called Rameses and the desert of Sin, the date marking the death of the Pharaoh can be fixed Nisan 30/1 Iyyar, on 9/10 May 1533 BCE. Flavius Josephus gives some chronological details on this important event: *a thick darkness, without the least light, spread itself over the Egyptians, whereby their sight being obstructed, and their breathing hindered by the thickness of the air, they died miserably, and under a terror lest they should be swallowed up by the dark cloud. Besides this, when the darkness, after 3 days and as many nights, was dissipated, (...) But when God had signified, that with one plague he would compel the Egyptians to let Hebrews go, he commanded Moses to tell the people that they should have a sacrifice ready, and they should prepare themselves on the 10th day of the month Xanthicus, against the 14th, (which month is called by the Egyptians Pharmouthi, Nisan by the Hebrews; but the Macedonians call it Xanthicus,) and that he should carry the Hebrews with all they had (...) the whole Egyptian army was within it, the sea flowed to its own place, and came down with a torrent raised by storms of wind, and encompassed the Egyptians. Showers of rain also came down from the sky, and dreadful thunders and lightning, with flashes of fire. Thunderbolts also were darted upon them. Nor was there any thing which used to be sent by God upon men, as indications of his wrath, which did not happen at this time, for a dark and dismal night oppressed them. And thus did all these men perish, so that there was not one man left to be a messenger of this calamity to the rest of the Egyptians* (Jewish Antiquities II:308-311,343-344). The equivalence: 1st Pharmouthi (IV Peret 1) = 1st Nisan, is possible only around 1530 BCE. The 'dark and dismal night' that occurred on April 14 was a total solar eclipse.

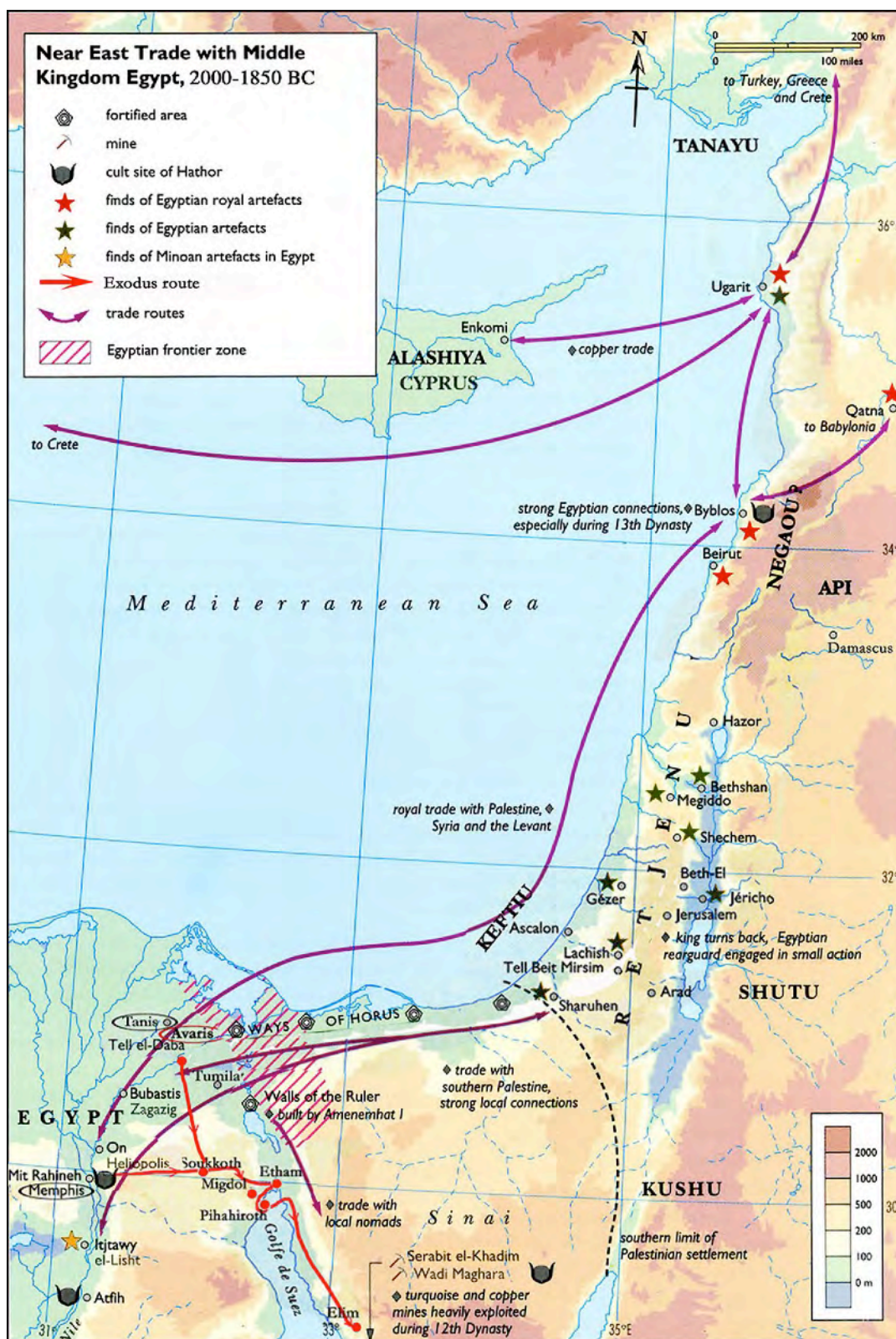
³³⁵ It seems that if the Israelites had taken the path of Horus in the open, they could easily return to Egypt in seeing the army of Pharaoh pursuing them.

³³⁶ Pihahiroth name could come from old Canaanite *pi hiritu* "mouth of the channel."

³³⁷ It is in fact the old Sea of Reeds north of the Red Sea because the Greek text (Ac 7:36, Heb 11:29) always translates the Hebrew words *yam-suph* "Sea of Reeds" by *erythra thalassa* "Red Sea".

³³⁸ E. LUTTWAK – La grande stratégie de l'Empire romain Paris 2009 Éd. Economica pp. 137.

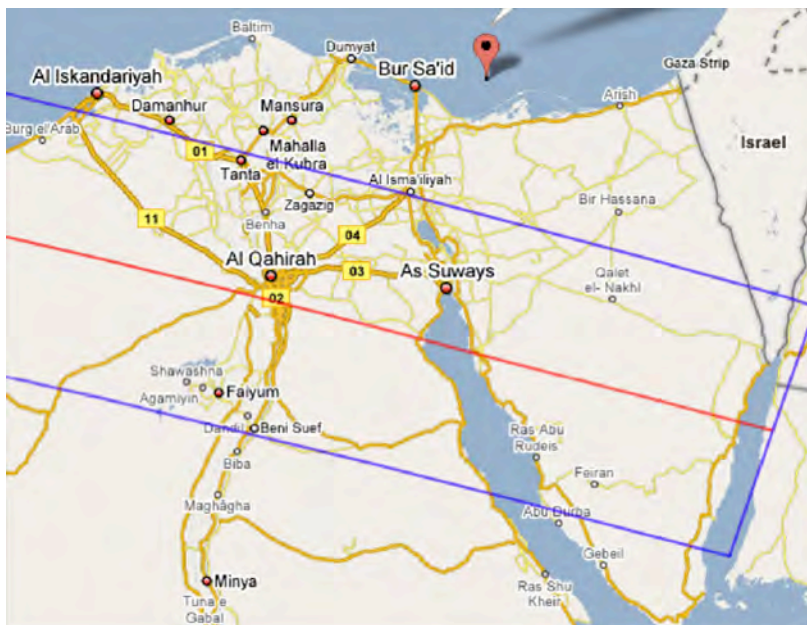
³³⁹ Departure from Ramses (near Memphis) on Nisan 15, arrival at Succoth on 21, departure on 23, arrival at Etham on 27, departure on 29, arrival at Pihahiroth on 30, departure on 1 next month, arrival at Mara on 8 and departure on 13, arrived at Elim on 15.



The total solar eclipse on 15/II was merged with the violent storm that occurred at the same time: *The waters have seen you, O God, the waters have seen you; they began to be in severe pains. Also, the watery deeps began to be agitated. The clouds have thunderously poured down water; A sound the cloudy skies have given forth. Also, your own arrows proceeded to go here and there. The sound of your thunder was like chariot wheels; Lightnings have lighted up the productive land; The earth became*

agitated and began to rock. Through the sea your way was, and your path was through many waters; And your very footprints have not come to be known. You have led your people just like a flock, by the hand of Moses and Aaron (Ps 77:17-20). The text of Ezekiel mentions the tragic end of a pharaoh and associates it with a cloudy sky and a solar eclipse: *Son of man, lift up a dirge concerning Pharaoh the king of Egypt, and you must say to him: As a maned young lion of nations you have been silenced. And you have been like the marine monster in the seas [crocodile], and you kept gushing in your rivers and kept muddying the waters with your feet and fouling their rivers (...) And when you get extinguished I will cover [the] heavens and darken their stars. As for [the] sun, with clouds I shall cover it, and [the] moon itself will not let its light shine. All the luminaries of light in the heavens — I shall darken them on your account, and I will put darkness upon your land (Ezk 32:2, 7-8).* This text targets the Pharaoh of the Exodus, the only one known for ending tragically (Ps 136:15), because the terms "crocodile dragon/ marine monster" always refer to this ruler (Is 51:9-10) as an avatar of the sliding snake, Leviathan (Is 27:1, Ezk 29:2-5, Ps 74:13-14) and not Apries, the Pharaoh of that time who is named (Jr 44:30). This process of assimilation between two rulers from different eras is found again with the king of Tyre who was assimilated to the original serpent in Eden (Ezk 28:12-14). The expression: *All the luminaries of light in the heavens — I shall darken them on your account, and I will put darkness upon your land* has a symbolic meaning, but could be understood only if it had also a literal meaning. The Pharaoh was considered a living god by the Egyptians, the son of Ra the sun god, thus the solar eclipse as the moonless night had to mark them.

According to astronomy, the only total solar eclipse in this region during this period 1600-1500³⁴⁰ was the one dated May 10, 1533 BCE³⁴¹, magnitude 1.08, it covered a strip of 250 km and was visible in the North of Egypt over several cities like Heliopolis (dedicated to sun worship), Memphis and Heracleopolis, at 4:40 p.m. and lasted more than 6 minutes (the place called Pihahiroth "mouth of the canal" should be near As Suways).



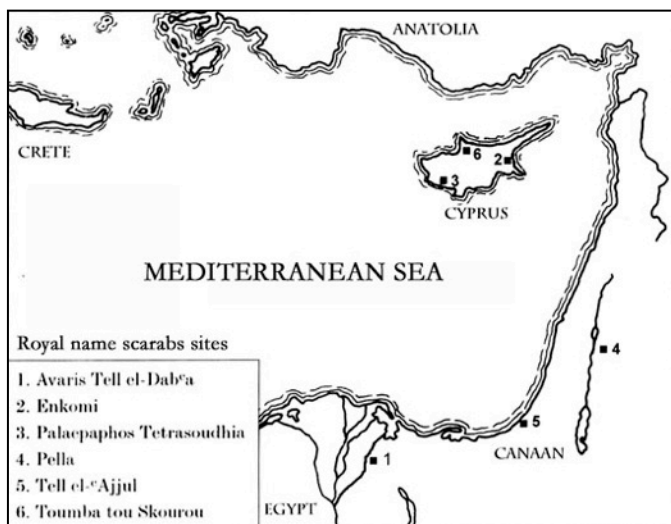
Chronological information from the biblical text (the death of Pharaoh dated May 10, 1533 BCE), from Josephus (14 Nisan = 14 Pharmouthi around 1530 BCE), from the Rhind papyrus (Avaris evacuated during I Shemu 1533 BCE) and from astronomy (total solar eclipse on May 10, 1533 BCE) coincide remarkably well:

³⁴⁰ <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEcat5/SE-1599--1500.html>

³⁴¹ <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEsearch/SEsearchmap.php?Ecl=-15320510>

| Israelite calendar | Julian (1533 BCE) | Egyptian calendar | Event |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 23 Adar (23/XII) | 3 April (<i>spring equinox</i>) | III Peret 26 (26 <i>Phamenoth</i>) | |
| 1 Nisan (1/I) | 11 April | IV Peret 4 (4 <i>Pharmouthi</i>) | |
| 14 Nisan (14/I) | 24 April (<i>full moon</i>) | IV Peret 17 (17 <i>Pharmouthi</i>) | Death of Ahmose Sapaïr |
| 15 Nisan (15/I) | 25 April | IV Peret 18 (18 <i>Pharmouthi</i>) | Avaris evacuated, then sacked |
| 30 Nisan (30/I) | 10 May (<i>total solar eclipse</i>) | I Shemu 3 (3 <i>Pakboms</i>) | Death of Seqenenre Taa |
| 29 Iyyar (29/II) | 7 June | II Shemu 1 (1 <i>Payni</i>) | [Kamose] arrived in Heliopolis |
| | 2 October | I Akhet 23 (23 <i>Thot</i>) | Tjaru sacked by Kamose |

Events following the exodus from Egypt are few. According to the biblical text, due to a lack of faith, entry into Canaan, which should have started from year 2 (Nb 1:1) was delayed 40 years (Nb 14:29-34). Some Israelites tried entering the land of Canaan despite the divine refusal, but they were defeated by the Amalekites in the south of Palestine (Nb 14:34-45), probably in the Hyksos area near Sharuhén (Tell el-‘Ajjul).



There is no consensus whatever as to the function(s) of scarab seals, however it seems reasonable to assume that the demonstrable cultural intimacy between southern Levantine city-states such as Pella or Sharuhén and the Hyksos Kingdom grew on the back of a flourishing economic relationship³⁴².

| Year | | | | [A] | [B] | [C] | |
|-------|----|------|-------------|-----|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| -1534 | 8 | V | <i>XII</i> | 11 | | 79 | [A] Pharaoh [Sequenre] [B] Crown Prince [Ahmose Sapaïr] [C] Moses was 80 years old when he came into Egypt. He was a former pharaoh 40 years earlier. |
| | 9 | VI | <i>I</i> | | | 80 | |
| | 10 | VII | <i>II</i> | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | <i>III</i> | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | <i>IV</i> | | | | |
| -1533 | 1 | X | <i>V</i> | | *** | 0 | Beginning of the 10 plagues |
| | 2 | XI | <i>VI</i> | | | 1 | |
| | 3 | XII | <i>VII</i> | | | | |
| | 4 | I | <i>VIII</i> | | | | |
| | 5 | II | <i>IX</i> | | | | |
| | 6 | III | <i>X</i> | | | | |
| | 7 | IV | <i>XI</i> | | | | |
| | 8 | V | <i>XII</i> | | | | |
| | 9 | VI | <i>I</i> | | (2) | [C] Year 1 of the Exodus (departure to Palestine) | |
| | 10 | VII | <i>II</i> | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | <i>III</i> | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | <i>IV</i> | | | | |
| -1532 | 1 | X | <i>V</i> | | | | (2) |
| | 2 | XI | <i>VI</i> | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | <i>VII</i> | | | | |
| | 4 | I | <i>VIII</i> | | | | |
| | 5 | II | <i>IX</i> | | | | |
| | 6 | III | <i>X</i> | | *** | Israelites defeated by the Amalekites in the south of Palestine. Exodus for 40 years in Sinai (Egypt) | |
| | 7 | IV | <i>XI</i> | | | | |
| | 8 | V | <i>XII</i> | | | | |
| | 9 | VI | <i>I</i> | | | | (3) |
| | 10 | VII | <i>II</i> | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | <i>III</i> | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | <i>IV</i> | | | | |

³⁴² S.J. BOURKE, K.O. ERIKSSON – Pella in Jordan, Royal Name Scarabs and the Hyksos Empire in: *Timelines Studies in Honour of Manfred Bietak Vol. II* (2006) pp. 339-348.

WHAT WAS THE LANGUAGE SPOKEN BY THE HYKSOS?

The name of two Hyksos kings: Yaqub-Baal (*y-‘q-b-‘r*) or Yaqub-El (*y-‘q-b-i-r* in Thutmose III's list), are clearly Old Canaanite (or Old Hebrew), however this ancient language is poorly known because of the very few number of documents. In addition, some words believed to be recent, because of their apparent absence in ancient documents (several examples arisen)³⁴³, existed in fact for many centuries, but had “hibernated³⁴⁴”. Old Canaanite could be very old as Unas' pyramid already contains, toward 2300 BCE, some sentences in this language written phonetically with hieroglyphs³⁴⁵. The fact that Egyptians borrowed Canaanite words proves that there were many Canaanite inhabitants in Egypt from the remotest antiquity. For example, the words *migdol* “tower” (Ex 14:2) and *’ašpah* “quiver” (Job 29:23), vocalized *magdalu* and *ašipati* in old Canaanite (letters EA 234, 266), were borrowed as *miktal* and *’aspet* by the Egyptians around 1800 BCE³⁴⁶.

It is noteworthy that the word *manna* “what? (Ex 16:15)” is different from Hebrew *mâ-hu* “what it [is]” thus some scholars have explained this discrepancy by a popular etymology based on the Syriac or late Aramaic. This erudite explanation is inaccurate because the word *manna* means “who” in both languages, not “what”. The form of the interrogative pronouns in ancient Semitic languages³⁴⁷, is:

| Language attested | from | until | “who” | “what” | “tower” | “quiver” |
|----------------------------|-------|-------|----------|---------|-------------|-----------|
| Old Egyptian | -2500 | -1500 | m | m | m(i)-k-ti-l | ’i-s-p-t |
| Old Akkadian | -2500 | -2000 | man | min | | |
| Assyro-Babylonian | -1900 | -600 | mannu(m) | minu(m) | magdala | išpatu(m) |
| Amorite | -2500 | -1500 | manna | ma | | |
| Ugaritic | -1500 | -1100 | my | mh, mn | mgdl | utpt |
| Old Canaanite (Old Hebrew) | -1800 | -1100 | miya | manna | magdalu | ašipati |
| Phoenician | -1000 | 300 | my | m | | |
| Hebrew | -1000 | 500 | mî[y] | mâ[n] | migdol | ’ašpah |
| Aramaic | -900 | 200 | man | mâ | | |
| Syriac | 0 | 200 | man | mâ | | |

The word *manna* existed in Old Canaanite and meant “what”, it is written *ma-an-na* (vocalization preserved by the Septuagint and the New Testament) in a letter dated around 1350 BCE found in El-Amarna (EA 286). Old Canaanite is a kind of Old Hebrew tinged with Akkadian³⁴⁸ (Old Canaanite lexicon with a Babylonian grammar), which was used by scribes (Semites) in their correspondence with Canaan (Old Canaanite gave way to Hebrew after 1100 BCE). The word *ḥanikayw* “his men of elite” in Genesis 14:14 is another example proving the great antiquity of Old Hebrew. This hapax, the exact meaning of which was not yet known long ago, was discovered in some Egyptian execration texts dated 1900-1800 BCE to qualify “men of elite” who belonged to Canaanite rulers. This rare word³⁴⁹ appears then for the last time, in a text found at Taanach dated around 1450 BCE.

³⁴³ A.R. MILLARD - The Tell Fekheriyeh Inscriptions

in: *Biblical Archaeology Today* 1990. Jerusalem 1993, Ed. Israel Exploration Society p. 523

A.R. MILLARD - A Lexical Illusion

in: *Journal of Semitic Studies* 31 (1986) pp. 1-3.

³⁴⁴ For example, the rare and “recent” word *ketem* “gold” (Job 28:16,19), already existed in Akkadian (*ketîmu*) from the Sumerian KU-DIM which meant “goldsmith” (prior 2000 BCE).

³⁴⁵ R.C. STEINER – Early Northwest Semitic Serpent Spells in the Pyramid Texts

in: *Harvard Semitic Studies* 61. Indiana 2011, pp. 77-84.

³⁴⁶ J. SEGUIN – Le Migdol du Proche-Orient à l’Égypte

Paris 2007 Éd. Presses de l’Université Paris-Sorbonne pp. 28-30,149.

³⁴⁷ E. LIPINSKI - Semitic Languages Outline of a Comparative Grammar

in: *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 80. Leuven 2001 Ed. Peeters pp. 336,337,560,575.

³⁴⁸ S. IZRE’EL - Canaanite-Akkadian

Munich 2005 Ed. Licom Europa pp. 1-4.

³⁴⁹ R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d’Israël des origines à l’installation en Canaan

Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 208-209.

In the 18th Dynasty, the Egyptians established administrative headquarters in three provinces of Syria-Palestine and built garrisons throughout the region. Furthermore a large numbers of Semitic speakers were living in Egypt as slaves or as labourers; some were sent there for diplomatic reasons. Another form of contact was commercial, and Syrian merchants, private and state envoys, brought in goods and slaves to sell in Egyptian market-places. Through their intensified use of the overland trade routes, the Egyptians no doubt interacted with peoples living in the region from the Sinai Peninsula to the Arabah. The execration texts of the Middle Kingdom record quite a number of Canaanite personal and place names, but examples of ordinary vocabulary are not numerous until the New Kingdom³⁵⁰ (c. 1530 BCE). Usually a people borrows certain words from immigrants according to the number of these immigrants in the country³⁵¹. Given that the Egyptians were several millions around 1500 BCE and they had borrowed several dozens of Canaanite words, it means that the Hyksos had have been numerous, likely at least 1,000,000 (in addition Seqenenre Taa was not able to expel them), in order to produce such an influence on Egyptian language. This figure is in agreement with that from the Bible, which gives a number of 600,000 men before the Exodus (Ex 12:37).

Old Canaanite (or Old Hebrew) as Semitic language could be written thanks to cuneiform or hieroglyphs, but equivalence of sounds being imperfect in the first case and cursive writing being difficult in the second case (even in hieratic), a new writing more adapted was born at Serabit el-Khadim during the 15th Dynasty³⁵². Several inscriptions in proto-Canaanite have been discovered in Egypt (Serabit el-Khadim in Sinai and Wadi el-Hôl³⁵³ north of Thebes) and in Palestine (Lachish, Gezer and Shechem). These inscriptions are difficult to date, between 1850 and 1500 BCE for Serabit el-Khadim and 1600-1500 for those in Palestine but the oldest epigraphs in paleo-Hebrew are dated around 1500 BCE³⁵⁴.



The inscription contains an Egyptian hieroglyphic text: « Beloved by Hathor of [the mistress of] turquoise (*mry hthr [nbt] msk3t*) », and two proto-Canaanite texts: « Beloved by the Mistress (*m'bb'l[t]*) » and « to the Mistress (*lb'lt*) ». The inscriptions from Palestine seem to have only proper names: Kaleb? (Lachish); Turanza? (Gezer).

³⁵⁰ J.E. HOCH – Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period Princeton 1994, Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 3-5.

³⁵¹ That's why the American language borrowed more Spanish words, coming from the Mexicans, than Swedish or Norwegian words.

³⁵² A. LEMAIRE – Les «Hyksos» et les débuts de l'écriture alphabétique au Proche-Orient

in: Des signes pictographiques à l'alphabet (Karthala, 2000), pp.103-133.

³⁵³ J. COLEMAN DARNELL, F.W. DOBBS-ALLSOPP, M.J. LUNDBERG, P. KYLE MCCARTER, B. ZUCKERMAN – Two Early Alphabetic Inscriptions from the Wadi el-Hôl in: *The Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 59 (2005), pp. 73-110.

³⁵⁴ S. DALLEY – Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection

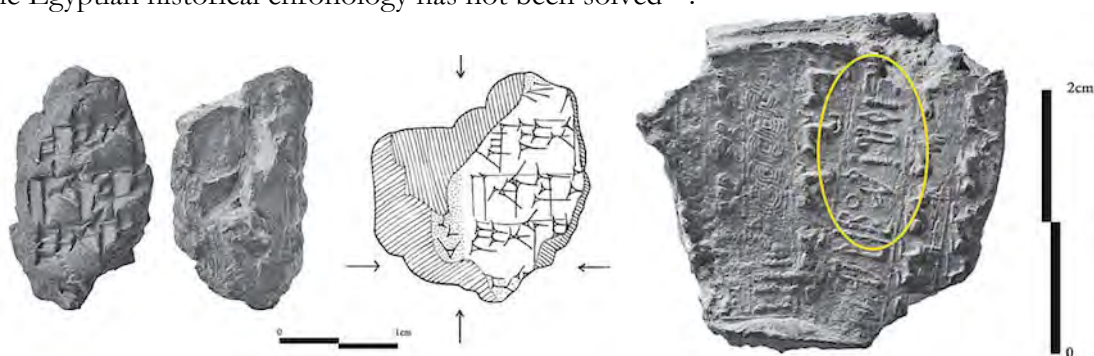
in: *Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology* Vol. 9 (CDL Press, 2009) pp. 1-4.

L. COLONNA D'ISTRIA – Babylonian Tablets from the First Sealand Dynasty in the Schøyen Collection in: *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* N°3 (2012) pp. 61-63.

Many Egyptologists dispute the fact that the Hyksos have used the Proto-Sinaitic because these inscriptions are rare and remain undeciphered for most of them. A main reason for this anomaly: despite their notable differences, Ancient Semitic languages had remained close³⁵⁵ (likely until the end of the 2nd millennium BCE) and could be broadly understood by different speakers as different as Babylonians and Syrians (similarly Jews and Arabs today) consequently, as Akkadian was the *lingua franca* at that time there was no great need to use a local language because from the end of the 3rd millennium the language of international trade and diplomacy was Akkadian throughout the Orient, with the exception of the kingdom of Byblos which used Egyptian. Thus the great Syrian city of Ebla (c. 2300 BCE) had used Akkadian with the Sumerian kingdoms, as well as the city of Mari, similarly the Assyrian merchants of Ashur with the Hittite kingdom of Kanish (c. 1900 BCE).

The Hyksos Absa[r] “Father of prince” who came from Edom³⁵⁶ and who met Senwosret II (in 1858 BCE) in order to trade an amount of black eye-paint, had to have talked in Egyptian, but when Sinuhe, an Egyptian prince, admonished Amusinenshi, a local chieftain somewhere in Syria (Upper Retenu) with whom he resided while in exile, to write to Senwosret I (1946-1901), he had to have talked in Akkadian. Although the Canaanites spoke Old Canaanite language (obviously), those of the south, in Palestine (Lower Retenu), had to do their business in the Egyptian language, those of the north, in Syria (Lower Retenu), had to do their business in Akkadian. Consequently, writing in Old Canaanite was used very sporadically, sometimes between traders of the same language but from different regions, such as the Hyksos officers with the group of workers from southern Palestine who were coming to work in the mines of Serabit el-Khadim.

The excavations at Avaris of the palace of Khyan³⁵⁷, the last Hyksos king who reigned just before Apopi, have confirmed two points: 1) these kings had connections with Palestine (Retenu) because a seal unearthed underneath the palace bears the inscription in Egyptian hieroglyphics (framed area below): *Ruler of Retenu-land: Mi?[-] (hq3 Rtnm: Mi?[-])*, 2) and inside the palace have been found 8 seals in Khyan's name as well as a clay tablet (from Palestine) written in late Old Babylonian (cuneiform dated around 1550 BCE). However, radiocarbon dating at the Tell el-Daba site in the Nile Delta (Avaris) has created an enigma for many years. Despite great efforts, the difference of about 120 years between the chronology based on 14C dates and the one based on archaeological evidence linked to the Egyptian historical chronology has not been solved³⁵⁸.



³⁵⁵ J.A. HACKETT, N. PAT-EL – On Canaanite and Historical Linguistics : A rejoinder to Anson Rainey in: *Maarav* 17 :2 (2010), pp. 173-188.

E. VON DASSOW – Peripheral Akkadian Dialects, or Akkadography of Local Languages? in: *Babel und Bibel* 4 Volume I (Eisenbrauns, 2010), pp. 895-924.

³⁵⁶ Edom was still called Shutu[m] by the Egyptians at that time, the famous Sudum area (Sodom).

³⁵⁷ M. BIETAK - Le Hyksos Khayan, son palais et une lettre en cuneiforme in: *Compte Rendu de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* II (2010), pp. 973-990.

M. BIETAK – Où est le palais des Hyksôs ? À propos les fouilles à Tell el-Dab'a et ' Ezbet Helmi in: *Compte Rendu de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* II (2007), pp. 749-780.

³⁵⁸ W. KUTSCHERA & AL – Chronology of Tell el-Daba: 14C Dating, Archaeology, and Egyptology in: *Radiocarbon* 54:3-4 (2012), pp 407-422.

WHAT WAS THE MAIN GOD OF THE HYKSOS?

Proper names are also a valuable source of information about the religion of people who bear them, because they contain the names of deities who were really worshiped. This shows that the Hyksos only worshiped Canaanite gods, Baal being the main one. The term *baal* is not a proper name, but a Semitic word meaning “Master, Lord, Patron, Owner, Head [of family]”. Baal was called in fact³⁵⁹: Ada in Ebla, Addu in Mari, Hd in Ugarit, etc³⁶⁰. This god of Canaan had in practice a local cult, as shown by the expressions: Baal [or Horus] of Zaphon “Lord of the North”, Baal of Peor “Lord of Peor” (Ex 14:2, Nb 25:5), etc. Balaam invoked the god of the Israelites on “high places of Baal” (Nb 22:41-23:12) and David refers to Jehovah as “Lord of Breakings” (2Sa 5:20). Only the worship of Baal was sentenced but the use of this term to refer to God as Master remained legitimate. Some Israelites had theophoric names in Baal such as Bealyah “Lord Yah”, Baalyada “Master knows”, Baalhanan “Lord has favoured” (1Ch 12:5, 14:7, 27:28), etc. However, after the fall of the kingdom of Samaria (720 BCE), using the term *baal* “Lord” for God was banned: *You will call me my Husband, and you will no longer call me my Baal* (Ho 2:16-18) to avoid idolatry (Jg 2:13). Copyists even changed the names of Baal in Israelite names, replacing *baal* by *boshet* “shame”, as Jerubbaal into Jerubbeshet and Ishbaal into Ishboshet (1Sa 12:11, 2Sa 2:8, 11:21). The term *adon* “Lord, Master” remained lawful (Dt 10:17).

Egyptian religion was syncretic, thus it equated systematically Canaanite gods with Egyptian gods who resembled them. Representations of Seth and Baal are quite similar. Several seals from Avaris³⁶¹ show Baal, a Syrian god of lightning, with a sceptre and wearing a horned helmet with a braid. The two horns appear on the helmet of the “Baal of lightning” unearthed in Ugarit and dated around -1500 (Baal is presented as the victor of the sea god Yam). Seth “Master of the Storm” was the Egyptian version of the Baal of Canaan, so there was a technical equivalence between two terms³⁶² but Hyksos people worshiped Baal³⁶³, not Seth its Egyptian counterpart, because no Hyksos name refers to Seth. It is noteworthy that a Hyksos king was called Yaqub-Baal (*y-‘q-b-‘r*).



Seth (Egypt)



Baal (Ugarit)



Baal/Seth (Avaris)

³⁵⁹ E. LIPINSKI - Baal

in: Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible Éd. Brepols 1987 p. 172.

³⁶⁰ Similarly, the Mesopotamian god 𒀭ISKUR could be read either Adad or Addu, Tešub, etc., according to the country.

³⁶¹ D. COLLON - New Seal Impressions from Tell El-Dab'a

in: Timelines Studies in Honour of Manfred Bietak Vol. II (2006) pp. 97-101.

³⁶² N. ALLON - Seth is Baal — Evidence from the Egyptian Script

in: *Ägypten und Levante* XVII Wien 1997 pp. 15-22.

³⁶³ Moses' mother was Jochebed (Ex 6:20) whom name means "Jo[va] is glory".

Ramses II employed the two terms interchangeably as shown in his poem³⁶⁴ written after the Battle of Kadesh: *And the vile conquered Prince of Hatti sent a message to honour the name of my majesty, the equal of Ra, in these terms: You're Sutekh, Baal himself. The fear that you inspire is a flame in the country of Hatti.* In the treaty between Ramses II and Hattusil III one reads: *Seth, whose strength is great (...) see, Hattusil great prince of the Hittites, is party to a treaty to restore relations had established Ra, that Sutekh established for the land of Egypt and the land of Hatti (...) the lord of the sky god Ra, the god Reof the city of Arinna, Sutekh lord of heaven, Sutekh of the Hittites, Sutekh of the city of Arinna.* The treaty was sealed for "Seth, ruler of heaven." The character used to Seth was vocalized Baal (*b-ʿr*) in some Egyptian inscriptions³⁶⁵:



Ramses III had four divisions of 5000 men including one named Seth and six chariotries, one of which called Baâlherkhopshef "Baal is on my sword"³⁶⁶, which confirms the similar role of these deities. So when Seqenenre Taa criticized Apopi for exclusively worshipping Seth, he actually aimed at Baal³⁶⁷.

Despite the great influence of Seth in the political and religious life of the Ramessides, one knows very few figurations in full relief within official sculpture. The oldest representations³⁶⁸ are those of a dog shape, sometimes with an ass's head (opposite figure)³⁶⁹. The general appearance is that of a dog, but two elements are also characteristic of the donkey: the two elongated ears and the tuft of hair at the end of a long tail (elements of the animal frequently represented).

As storm god, Seth had a destructive aspect, for example one reads in the Book of the Dead³⁷⁰: *I'm Seth, disturbance agent and a hurricane in the horizon of heaven, as Nebedj [Demon of darkness].* In time that ambivalent aspect protector/destroyer would increase. Several medical papyri from the beginning of the 18th dynasty suggest invoking the god Seth who stopped the Mediterranean Sea before Avaris to treat certain diseases: *Conjuration of Canaanite disease: who is knowing as Ra? (...) So as Seth conjured sea, Seth conjure thee well, O Canaan disease (...) all evil in you will be expelled (...) like the sea by listening to the voice of Seth (...) Other conjuration. Seth's rage is directed against the disease 'akhu! Seth's fury is directed against you! The rage of the storm, when it is hungry for water from the sky, is directed against you! Then he will end the violence, having [put] his arms on you. Then shalt thou let endure what the sea has endured through his hand.* The "destructive rage of



³⁶⁴ P. GRANDET – Les pharaons du Nouvel Empire : une pensée stratégique
Paris 2008 Éd. du Rocher pp. 322,343,344.

³⁶⁵ R. GIVEON – Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 51,118.

J.E. HOCH – Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and Third Intermediate Period
Princeton 1994 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 93-95.

³⁶⁶ P. GRANDET – Ramsès III histoire d'un règne
Paris 2009 Éd. Pygmalion pp. 166, 170.

³⁶⁷ Z. MAYANI – Les Hyksos et le monde de la Bible
Paris 1956 Éd. Payot pp. 122-128.

³⁶⁸ H. TE VELDE – Seth, God of Confusion
1967 Leiden Ed. Brill pp. 7-12.

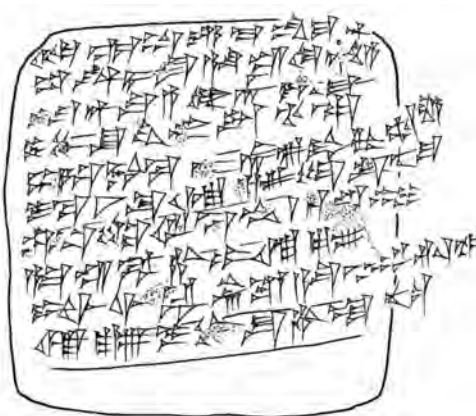
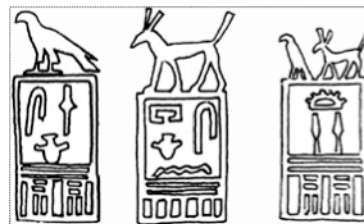
³⁶⁹ S. DONADONI – Per la morfologia dio Seth
in: *Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts Abteilung Kairo* 57, 1981 pp. 115,122.

³⁷⁰ P. BARGUET – Le livre des morts des anciens Égyptiens XXXIX
Paris 1967 Éd. du Cerf pp. 7,82.

the sea (as storm?)" was explained by "the rage of Seth³⁷¹". The downside of Seth appears more clearly in an Egyptian papyrus dated to 1200 BCE: *It's like Seth, the furious, the reptile, the snake whose bad venom, in its mouth, is flame (...) as what it had committed against Osiris when he (Seth) made it immersed in the waters of misfortune.*

Seth was an ancient Egyptian god since the first pharaohs³⁷² (from Khasekhemwy the last king of the 2nd dynasty) put it (with Horus) above their *serekh*. This god was worshiped throughout Egypt's history, at least until the time of Seti and Sethnakht who had it inside their birth names. So when Seqenenre Taa criticized Apopi for worshipping only Seth (actually Baal), he reproached him an uncompromising monotheism³⁷³ and not a heresy. According to information from the Egyptian priest Manetho, as reported by Josephus, the Hyksos resided at Avaris, a city devoted to Typhon/Seth (Against Apion I:237-238). Typhoon is the Greek name of Seth, according to Diodorus (Historical Library I:21,88). The Egyptian term *netjer* (*ntr*) "god" does not refer to "God", as in the Bible, but only the "divine quality" characteristic of all Egyptian gods. This word was used as a title and did not designate a specific god, because no temple was dedicated to Netjer "God".

Although the Hyksos had particular religious beliefs, most worshiped Baal, and spoke a different language (Old Canaanite), they were wholly considered as Egyptians. The recording of Hyksos dynasties in Egyptian annals proves it (whereas the name of several Egyptian kings, considered later as illegitimate, were hammered). No incidents or animosity toward Egyptian authorities are reported before the so-called Hyksos' war. To sum up, the Hyksos were viewed as Egyptians who were worshipping Canaanite gods whose the main one was Baal³⁷⁴ "the Lord". It is noteworthy that Apopi is the founder of monotheism since he worshipped solely his "Lord (*baal*)". Although syncretism was widely spread in the past, Egyptians, Canaanites and the Hyksos who had arrived in Canaan after their leaving Egypt (and their stay in Sinai), did not express in exactly the same way when they were speaking of God as shown in a letter exhumed in Taanach³⁷⁵ and dated around 1450 BCE.



³⁷¹ P. COLLOMBERT, L. COULON - Les dieux contre la mer
in: *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 100 (2000) p.207.

³⁷² J. VERCOUTER - L'Egypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 1
Paris 1992 Éd. Presses universitaires de France pp. 205-233.

³⁷³ O. GOLDWASSER - King Apophis and the Emergence of Monotheism
in: *Timelines Studies in Honour of Manfred Bietak* Vol. I (2006) pp. 129-133, 331-354.

³⁷⁴ The presence of multiple Baal-named deities with geographic last names is not evidence of polytheism, see S.L. ALLEN - The Splintered Divine: A Study of Ištar, Baal, and Yahweh Divine Names and Divine Multiplicity in the Ancient Near East (PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 5-16-2011), pp. 400-410.

³⁷⁵ W. HOROWITZ, T. OSHIMA, S. SANDERS - Cuneiform in Canaan. Cuneiform Sources from the Land of Israel in Ancient Times
Jerusalem 2006 Ed. Israel Exploration Society. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem pp. 132-134, 218

Recto (left) 6 first lines (Taanach 2 letter):

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| 1) <i>a-na</i> ^m <i>Tal-wa-šur</i> [q]i-bi | To Talwashur say |
| 2) <i>um-ma</i> ^m <i>Aḥ-ia-mi</i> ba'alu ilānu | Message of Ahiami: May the Lord God |
| 3) <i>ZI-ka</i> li-iš-šur aḥu at-ta | guard your life. You are a brother |
| 4) <i>ù na-ra-mu</i> i-na aš-ri šu-wa-at | and a beloved friend in that place. |
| 5) <i>ù i-na</i> ŠA-bi-ka i-nu-ma | Now, it is in your mind that |
| 6) <i>ar-ba-ku</i> i-na É ra-qí | I have entered into an “empty house” |
| 13) <i>ša-ni-tam</i> pí-qí-id a-na URU.DIDLI.ḤA-ka | Furthermore, command your cities |
| 14) <i>ù lu-ú ti-pu-šu</i> ip-ša-šu/-nu | that they should do their work |
| 15) UGU SAG.DU-ia ma-am-ma-an | On my head is everything |
| 16) <i>ša it-tab-su</i> a-na URU.KI.DIDLI.ḤA | which took place in regard to the cities. |

Verso (right) 4 last lines:

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| 21) <i>ša-ni-tam</i> li-ru-ba-am ^m <i>Ilu-ra-pi-i</i> | Furthermore, let Elrapî enter |
| 22) <i>a-na</i> URU Ra-ḥa-bi <i>ù lu-ù</i> | into Rehob and I will certainly |
| 23) <i>i-wa-ši-ra</i> awilu-ia a-na mah-ri-ka | send my man to you |
| 24) <i>ù lu-ù i-pu-šu</i> ḥa-at-nu-tam | and I will certainly arrange a marriage. |

Talwashur was the local Cananite ruler of Taanach at that time in association with Ahiami (lines 13-16). Taanach (modern Tell Ta'annek) is 8 km South-East of Megiddo. According to the Old Testament, under the command of Joshua, the Israelites defeated the king of Taanach around 1490 BCE (Jos 12:7,21) but the Manassites failed to drive out the Canaanites from this and other cities. Eventually these Canaanites were put to forced labour (Jg 1:27-28). Given that Taanach is mentioned in the account of the Battle of Megiddo by Pharaoh Thutmose III, dated Year 23 (1450 BCE), as a southern bypass to Megiddo and as a place where Egyptian troops were mustered, the Egyptian governor of Gaza who had come from Egypt, called Amanhatpa in Taanach letters, had to have been the crown prince Amenhotep (Thutmose III's son).

Taanach letters show two important points: 1) these letters between Canaanite and Egyptian rulers are all written in Babylonian cuneiform but never in Egyptian hieroglyphs, nor in Proto-Canaanite; 2) god's concept was different for Egyptians, Canaanites and former Hyksos. For example, Guli-Adad, a Canaanite mayor, sent a letter: *To Talwashur say: Thus says Guli-Adad: Live well! May the gods (ilāni) attend to your welfare, the welfare of your house, and your sons* (Taanach 1, lines 1-5), but Amenhotep wrote: *To Talwashur say: Thus says Amanhaptu: May Ba'al guard your wife. Send me yours brothers together with the chariots and send me the horse, your tribute and an audience gift, and all the prisoners who are now with you* (Taanach 5, lines 1-12) and Ahiami wrote: *To Talwashur say: Message of Ahiami: May the Lord God (ba'alu ilānu) guard your life. You are a brother and a beloved friend in that place* (T2, lines 1-4). The phrase: *May Ba'al guard your wife* is odd coming from an Egyptian ruler but Amenhotep II (1418-1392) was the first to venerate the Canaanite deities such as: Astarte, Baal and Reshef³⁷⁶.

Ahiemi and Elrapî had to have been former Hyksos because these two names are typically Israelite³⁷⁷ and they do not appear in the letters of Amarna, but above all the expression “the Lord God”, which is plural with a verb in the singular, is absolutely unique at that time³⁷⁸, furthermore it was the usual Jewish substitute for God's name (*'adonay 'elohim*), the exact counterpart of the expression in Old Canaanite. Another reason for assimilating the former Hyksos to the Israelites is the context in Palestine around -1500.

³⁷⁶ S. PASQUALI – Amenhotep II et les divinités du ProcheOrient en Egypte in: *Egypte Afrique & Orient* 65 (2012), pp. 11-24.

³⁷⁷ The name Elrapî means “God is a healer” (Nb 13:9). The meaning of Hammubabi “the ancestor is healer (Hammupabi)” is controversial. The meaning of “Ahiam” (2Sa 23:33) is not clear (in addition the name could also be read as Ahia or Ahiaw).

³⁷⁸ M.S. SMITH – God in Translation: Deities in Cross-Cultural Discourse in the Biblical World Michigan 2010, Ed Eerdmans Publishing Co, pp. 55-57.

According to the Bible, the Pharaoh who opposed Moses knew God's name and was able to pronounce it: *After this, Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him: This is what YHWH, God of Israel, says "Let my people go, so that they can hold a feast in my honour in the desert". Who is YHWH, Pharaoh replied, for me to obey what he says and let Israel go? I know nothing of YHWH, and I will not let Israel go* (Ex 5:1-2). According to the Bible of Abbot Crampon (official Bible of Catholicism in 1904), Pharaoh would have said: *Who is Jehovah (...)* I know nothing of Jehovah, however, according to the revision of 1923, he would have rather said: *Who is Yahweh (...)* I know nothing of Yahweh. According to Jerusalem Bible (1955)³⁷⁹ he would have finally said Yahve! There is something lost in translation, but the Pharaoh did not have to consult some skilled Hebraists to know how to pronounce YHWH (fortunately for him) because he spoke only Egyptian like the Pharaoh Amenhotep III who had engraved the Tetragram in a shield³⁸⁰ on a pylon of a temple. The inscription (right), which contains the Tetragram, is easy to decipher³⁸¹. Indeed, just take an elementary grammar of Egyptian³⁸² to transcribe this sentence into hieroglyphs by: *t3 š3-sw-w y-h-w3-w*, which is vocalized in the conventional system (3 = a, w = û, ȳ = i) as: *ta shasû-w yehûa-w* (the final w is a plural) and which can be translated as: *land (ta) of the Bedouin-s (shasû-w) of Yehoua-those (yehûa-w)*, because û is pronounced ou. The conventional system of vocalization is well known to all Egyptian makers of engraved pendants in hieroglyphics, generally with the name of the owner. Then simply ask one of these small manufacturers how he reads the inscription of the shield, usually the issue immediately following the reading is: *but who is this Yehoua?* This demonstrates the lack of difficulty to read this Tetragram in hieroglyphics. However Egyptologists argue that this reading is speculative because we do not know the vowels of Egyptian words. This observation is quite accurate but does not include proper names because foreign proper names make no sense in Egyptian, they should be written in phonetic through an alphabet provided for this purpose. For example, Queen Hittite Puduhepa (1297-1215) was cited on numerous documents in different scripts³⁸³:

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------|
| | | |
| pu- du- hi/he- pa | pu- du- i- pa | (Syllabic cuneiforms) |
| | | |
| pu- du- he/hi- pa | | (Hittite hieroglyphs) |
| | | |
| p- w- d- w- h-ȳ- p3 | | (Egyptian hieroglyphs) w3-w3.t |
| p- û- d- û- h-î pâ | | (= Puduhipa) Wâ-wâ.t land (Lower Nubia) |

³⁷⁹ Official Bible of Catholicism since 1955.

³⁸⁰ J. LECLANT - Les fouilles de Soleb
in: *Annuaire du Collège de France 1980-1981* pp. 474-475.

³⁸¹ J. LECLANT - Le "Tétragramme" à l'époque d'Aménophis III
in: *Near Eastern Studies*. Wiesbaden (1991 Ed. Otto Harrassowitz) pp.215-219.

M.C. ASTOUR - Yahweh in Egyptian Topographic Lists
Bamberg 1979 in: *Festschrift Elmar Edel* pp.17-32.

³⁸² Even Wikipedia gives accurate information in that matter (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egyptian_language).

³⁸³ G. GERTOUX - The Name of God Y.eH.oW.aH Which is Pronounced as it is Written I_Eh_oU_Ah
New York 2002 Ed. University Press of America pp. 251-264.

Even if one ignores these ancient writings, careful observation of all these inscriptions enables one to verify that the name of the queen in Egyptian hieroglyphs is written with an alphabet using the vowels: w = û, j̄ = î and 3 = â. So according to these equivalences, which confirm to the conventional reading, the Egyptian Tetragram Y-h-w3 should be read Yehua (Yehoua). If this Tetragram was pronounced Yahweh, Egyptians would have spelled it phonetically Y-3-h-w-h (Yâhûeh) and not Y-h-w3 (Yehûâ)³⁸⁴.

Not only is the conventional pronunciation “Yehua” replaced by Yahweh to be in agreement with the Hebrew scholars who are themselves dependent on theologians, but this name corresponding to the Hebrew God is likened to a place name where would have lived a small group of Bedouin (Shasu). This is ludicrous for at least two reasons: first, the name Yehûâ is in a group of four names whose three others are well-known Semitic gods, secondly, Shasu’s name refers to both the country and the people of Palestine. For example, a list of toponyms enumerates: Pella-foreign land (*p-h-r h3st*), *Shasu-foreign land* (*š3-sw-w h3st*), Qatna (*qd-d-j-n-3*), Gezer (*q-3-d-3-r*). Egyptian texts and their topographical lists confirm the existence of a vast area inhabited by the Shasu³⁸⁵ or Israelites³⁸⁶.

In the temple of Amun (at Soleb) a column, to the north of an Eastern portal (thus pointing towards Canaan), contains a short list of four names³⁸⁷ (opposite figure). This abnormally short list is composed of at least three unknown names out of four (from left to right):



The translation of that list according to the conventional reading is as follows, if the names are those of gods (1) or of place names³⁸⁸ (2):

| Transcription | Translation (1) | Translation (2) |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| t3 š3-sw-w s3 m-'ti-i | Land of Shasu <i>after Maat</i> | Land of Shasu: <i>Samata</i> |
| t3 š3-sw-w y-h-w3 w | Land of Shasu <i>those of Yehua</i> | Land of Shasu: <i>Yahwe</i> |
| t3 š3-sw t-w-r-j̄ b-l | Land of Shasu <i>showing respect to Bel</i> | Land of Shasu: <i>Turbil/r</i> |
| b3-i-ti b '[n-t] | Bait [<i>house of</i>] A[nat] | Beth <i>A[nat]</i> |

The translation (2), which supposes place names, is illogical³⁸⁹ for two reasons: Anat (Hebrew and Phoenician עֲנַת, ‘Anāt; Ugaritic ‘nt) was a major northwest Semitic goddess, not a place name, and the three other “place names”: *Samata*, *Yahwe* and *Turbil/r* are absolutely unknown in the El-Amarna letters. There are two explanations: either Egyptian scribes or Egyptologists erred (in my opinion it is ***). In contrast, Maat (meaning “truth/harmony” in Egyptian) was a major goddess of Byblos, Yehowah was the Israelite God, Bel was the Babylonian Baal (meaning “Lord” in Canaan) and Anat was a major Syrian god. So, the Egyptians distinguished among different kinds of Canaanite nomads by the chief god they worshiped. In Ramses II’s lists, the *Shasu* “Bedouin” in Canaan are distinguished from one another. For example, at the Battle of Kadesh, a text reads (pap. Anastasi): *Came two Shasu from the tribes of Shasu (...) He takes what is left and joined the (ranks of) wretched. He mingles with the tribes of Shasu land and disguises himself as those Asiatics (aamu) (I, 23,7-8). We ended allowing to tribes of Shasu from Seir (Edom) to pass the fortress (VI, 54-56).*

³⁸⁴ For example *Yahmai* (1Ch 7:2) is written: Y-3-h3-3-m3-3 (*Ya-ha-ma*). *Sweneh* (Ezk 30:6) or *Suene* (LXX) is written s-w-nw.

³⁸⁵ A. NEGEV, S. GIBSON – Dictionnaire archéologique de la Bible Paris 2006 Ed. The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. pp. 30-31, 242-245, 282-285.

³⁸⁶ A. RAINEY – Shasu or Habiru : Who Were the Early Israelites ? in: *Biblical Archaeological Society* n°34 (2008) pp. 51-55.

³⁸⁷ M. SCHIFF GIORGINI – Soleb V Le temple bas-reliefs et inscriptions 1998 Ed. Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale pl. 221.

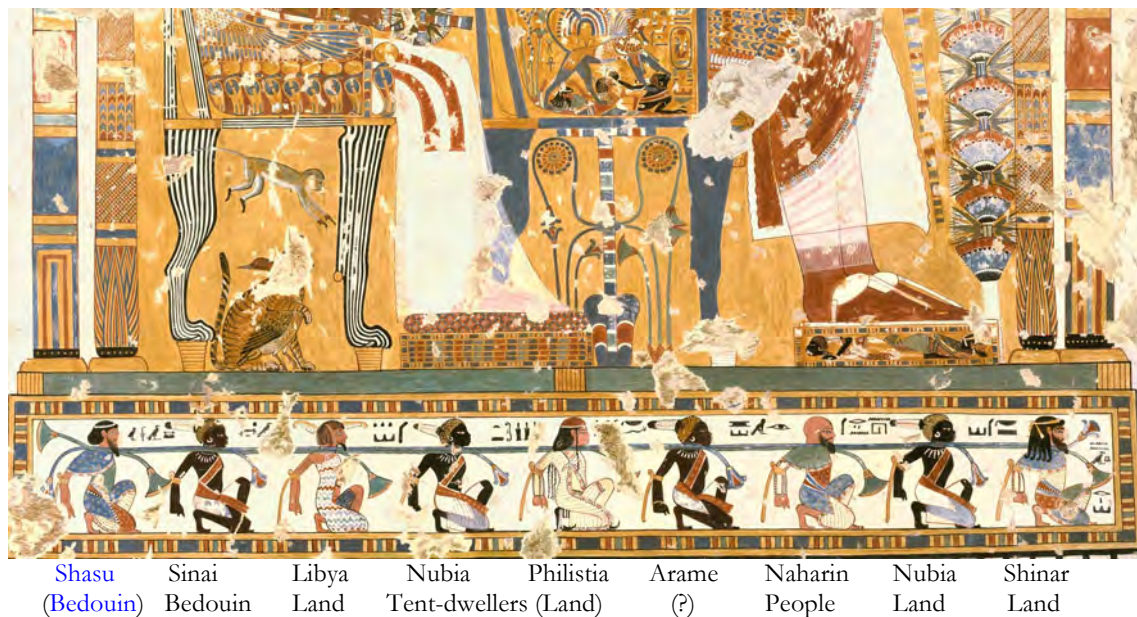
³⁸⁸ ALLEN, SPENCER L., “The Splintered Divine: A Study of Ištar, Baal, and Yahweh Divine Names and Divine Multiplicity in the Ancient Near East” (2011). Publicly accessible Penn Dissertations (Paper 309), pp. 350-354.

³⁸⁹ C. ALING, C. BILLINGTON -The Name Yahweh in Egyptian Hieroglyphic Text in Autumn 2009 issue of *Artifax*.

It is noteworthy that from Ahmose (c. -1530) there is a complete disappearance (into nowhere!) of any reference to the Hyksos and Syro-Palestine “Retenu” became suddenly the “land of Kharru³⁹⁰ (Hurrians/Syrians)” for Egyptians. Shortly after, from Thutmose I (c. -1490) and up to Ramses III (c. -1160), appear (from nowhere!) in Palestine an important new Asiatic people, called Shasu³⁹¹, who are extensively described in the Egyptian iconographic documents³⁹². “Shasu land” in the Egyptian inscriptions was not a small area of unknown nomads because in the following list of six place names on a chariot of Thutmose IV (1392-1383), “Shasu land” was considered potentially as a powerful enemy by the Egyptians like Naharin land (Western Mesopotamia) or Shinar:

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| | | | | | |
| 1) <i>N-h-r-j-n</i> Naharin land | 2) <i>S3-n-g-r</i> Shinar's | 3) <i>T-w-n-p</i> Tunip country | 4) <i>Š3-sw</i> Shasu land | 5) <i>Q-d-š</i> Kadesh land | 6) <i>Ti-h3-j3-s3</i> Takhsi country. |

In the tomb of Anen (TT120), brother-in-law of the king Amenhotep III (1383-1345), “Shasu” is pictured as one of the nine traditional enemies of Egypt (from right to left: 1) *S-n-g-3-r* Shinar land; 2) *Kš* Kush land (Nubia); 3) *N-h-r-j-n* Naharin people; 4) *r-m* Arame; 5) *K-f-[ti-w]* Keftiu (Philistia); 6) *ʿwnti-Sty* Tent-dwellers of Nubia; 7) *Tḥnw* Tehenu land (Libya); 8) *[Mn]tyw nw Stt* Bedouin of Sinai; 9) *Š3-sw* Shasu (Bedouin of Retenu):



According to the Bible, Moses commanded the Israelites, after they arrived in Palestine to have the edges of their clothing frayed and to wear tassels at the four corners of these garments (Nb 15:38-40; Dt 22:12). This coincidence in clothing reinforces the

³⁹⁰ J.-C. GOYON – De l'Afrique à l'Orient
Paris 2005 Ed. E.J. ellipses pp. 57-61.

³⁹¹ Shasu refer to Bedouin (“wandering” in Egyptian), called Habiru (“emigrants” in Akkadian) by Canaanites. This identification is confirmed by the Egyptian priest Manetho himself. He explains the word as Hyksos from *hyk-sos* “King Shepherd”, which is relatively accurate, because the Egyptian word *heq* means “ruler/chief” and the word *sos* actually means “shepherd”. Sahidic translation (late Egyptian) of Genesis 47:6: *if you know any able men among them, then make them rulers over my cattle*, used for example the word *sos* to describe these “rulers of cattle”. The Hyksos word actually comes from the Egyptian *heqaw ha'sw.t* “Rulers of foreign lands”, but Manetho connected it to the Shasu appeared later and thus translated it as “Rulers of shepherds” *heqaw sosw* (in Egyptian *š3s* means “travelling”). Studies on Shasu tend to rehabilitate this so-called popular etymology (M.G. HASEL - *Domination and Resistance. Egyptian Military Activity in the Southern Levant*, Leiden 1998, Ed. Brill, pp. 217-239). In fact, the Egyptians understood the word *shasu* as a common noun designating semi-sedentary shepherds staying mainly in the south of Palestine. They used the phrase “Lands of Shasu”, which shows that they originally included this phrase as a geographical designation. The fact that they wrote the word sometimes *shas* (*š3s*) “wandering” instead of the usual *shasu* (*š3sw*) also shows that they originally included the word as a synonym for “transhumant”.

³⁹² R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 248-250.

identification of Shasu (former Hyksos) with the Israelites³⁹³, however most archaeologists and Egyptologists refuse to identify them with the Israelites for the following reasons:

- Objection n°1: according to the Bible, the Exodus had been a complete disaster for Egypt (Ex 12:33) whereas the 18th dynasty marked the end of the obscure Second Intermediate Period as well as the beginning of a new powerful empire.
- ✓ The Egyptian records, themselves, give the answer to the objection. For example, the *Admonitions of Ipuwer* clearly explain that the Egyptians had to give their gold and jewellery to the Israelites in exchange of their food in order to survive and the stela of Kamose relates that the kingdom of Kush (Kerma) with its numerous mines of gold was annexed, which allowed Egypt to recover its wealth, furthermore Kamose put an end to the other vassal kingdom of Egypt (16th dynasty).
- Objection n°2: according to the Bible, millions of Israelites spent 40 years in the desert of Sinai, first which is strictly impossible, secondly there is absolutely no archaeological trace of human activity in that part of Egypt at that time (c. -1500).
- ✓ The Bible says that the Israelites were miraculously fed with manna (Ex 16:3-4), moreover, millions of Bedouins of the past have never left any archaeological trace. For example the well known Amorite tribes which destroyed the mighty Ur III Empire and which produced later many powerful Aramean kingdoms in Syria around -1100 gave no archaeological evidence of their existence before -1100. If one refuses the narrative of the Bible regarding the Exodus, how can one explain the sudden vanishing of the powerful Hyksos kingdom (in Egypt) as well as the sudden emergence at the same time of numerous Shasu in Palestine?
- Objection n°3: If the conquest of Canaan began around -1490 with the destruction of three big cities: Jericho (Jos 6:1,24), which was burned with fire like Ai (Jos 8:18-19) and Hazor "the head of all these kingdoms" (Jos 11:11-13), there is a big anomaly because the city of Ai did not exist at that time "according to archaeology".
- ✓ This objection, unanimously accepted by archaeologists, is however triply illogical: 1) If one chooses the date of -1200 instead of -1550 for the conquest of Canaan because the city of Ai did not exist in the 16th century BCE then, for the same reason, one should choose on the contrary the date of -1550, instead of -1200, because the city of Jericho did not exist in the 13th century BCE; 2) The city of Ai was rebuilt around -1200 and not completely destroyed as stated in the Bible; 3) If one considers the biblical text as trusted to describe the conquest of Canaan, one must also accept its date which is fixed around -1500, three centuries before.

In fact, according to current archaeology, the cities of Jericho, Ai and Hazor already existed at the time of Abraham³⁹⁴ (c. -2000). The excavations at Tell es-Sultan (identified with Jericho) showed that the fortifications of this big city were destroyed violently around -1550 according to the dating from ceramics. The city was abandoned afterward and was poorly reoccupied during the 14th century BCE before disappearing completely until the 9th century BCE when some insignificant remains appear again. The excavations near Bet-Aven at Khirbet et-Tell (identified with Ai) showed that the city was destroyed in the Bronze Age III (c. -2000) and remained abandoned until the early Iron I. Around that date (c. -1200), a small town was rebuilt which was partially destroyed again at an indefinite

³⁹³ W.G. DEVER - Aux origines d'Israël. Quand la Bible dit vrai
Paris 2003 Éd. Bayard p. 167

A. F. RAINEY - Israel in Merneptah's Inscription and Reliefs
in: *Israel Exploration Journal* 51 (2001) pp. 57-75
D.B. REDFORD - The Hyksos Invasion in History and Tradition
in: *Orientalia* 39 (1970) pp. 1-51.

³⁹⁴ A. NEGEV, S. GIBSON - Dictionnaire archéologique de la Bible
Paris 2006 Ed. The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. pp. 30-31, 242-245, 282-285.

time. The excavations at Tell el-Waqas (identified with Hazor) showed that the fortifications of this big city (it was connected to a wall with casemates, the oldest discovered in Palestine) were destroyed by a violent fire in the Middle Bronze IIC (end of level XVI dated c. -1550). A new city-state was built³⁹⁵ in the Late Bronze I (15th century BCE) which was destroyed by fire at the end of level XIV (dated c. -1300). The city was destroyed again by a foreign invasion (presumably the Sea Peoples) at the end of level XIII dated approximately around -1200. The city was finally destroyed by Tiglath-Pileser III (level VA dated -732). The archaeological dating of all those destructions made consensus³⁹⁶. Based on these archaeological findings, most biblical scholars conclude that the conquest of Canaan had to have taken place around -1200 and the details from the biblical text are unreliable or even erroneous³⁹⁷.

Considering all the archaeological findings for the 3 cities (Jericho, Ai, Hazor), their destruction around -1550 is the most logical date. Moreover some archaeologists³⁹⁸ find the identification with Khirbet et-Tell (Ai) unacceptable on the basis of the city's size (Jos 7:3) and the fact that there is no broad valley to the North of Khirbet et-Tell (Jos 8:11). The city was probably abandoned around -2000 and rebuilt nearby the ruins of the ancient site (common phenomenon in Palestine) and was called Ai "ruins". This "new city" was finally destroyed around -1550. It is noteworthy that Jebel et-Tawil site, 3 km to the South West of et-Tell, unearthed a city dated Middle Bronze Age II³⁹⁹ (2100-1550). Anyway, further archaeological work about Ai is clearly necessary before the problem can be solved without dispute. The archaeological excavations of the cities of Jericho and Hazor gave results much more reliable and therefore less controversial. As recalled Finkelstein, before identifying the factor of a destruction, one must first determine accurately the date of this destruction, but archaeologists rarely agree between themselves. For example, Finkelstein himself regularly shows that the earlier dating of his predecessors were wrong⁴⁰⁰:

| DE VAUX | | CHAMBON | | HERZOG, SINGER-AVITZ | | FINKELSTEIN | |
|---------------|-----------|---------|-----------|----------------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| Level | Date | Period | Date | Period | Date | Period | Date |
| 4 Late Bronze | 1200-1100 | VIIa | 1150-1050 | Early Iron IIA | 950-900 | Early Iron IIA | 930-870 |
| 3 Iron I | 1100-1000 | VIIb | 1050-950 | Late Iron IIA | 900-830 | Late Iron IIA | 870-830 |

As can be seen in the table above, each archaeologist has his own way of naming and dating stratigraphic layers. Thus, the oldest layers are thus rejuvenated about 200 years. This raises two questions: When will this process of rejuvenation cease and the latest results are they necessarily the most reliable? Contrary to what Finkelstein say learnedly, the archaeological datings from ceramics for ancient periods (prior to 700 BCE) are still very inaccurate. Even the few archaeological dates considered as pivotal dates are disputed, for example one can read: *There are many reasons to question the idea that the destruction of Hazor V in 732 BC provides a firm "anchor" in the present chronological debates. The dating of the end of Stratum V to the Assyrian conquest is merely an assertion which has become a given, used to reconstruct the dates of preceding and following layers but never properly argued out in its own right —or, for that matter, critically analysed. It has also given rise to numerous anomalies in the dating of Hazor's Iron IIA-IIB strata, concerning independently dated imports (from Cyprus, Phoenicia and Mesopotamia), which have previously*

³⁹⁵ K. JOSEPHSON HESSE – Contacts and Trade at Late Bronze Age Hazor Umea 2008, Print & Media (Doctoral Dissertation in Archaeology) pp. 221-227.

³⁹⁶ A. MAZAR - Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10000-586 BCE New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 196, 242, 301, 372-373.

³⁹⁷ R. DE VAUX – Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 560-582, 602-605.

³⁹⁸ J. SIMONS in: *American Journal of Archaeology* 51:3 (July-September 1947) p. 311.

³⁹⁹ J.J. BIMSON, D. LIVINGSTON – Redating the Exodus in: *Biblical Archaeological Review* 13:5 (September-October 1987) pp. 40-53, 66-68.

⁴⁰⁰ I. FINKELSTEIN - La royaume biblique oublié Paris 2013 Éd. Odile Jacob pp. 44-45, 64-68, 113, 122-123, 233-243.

been treated on an unsatisfactory ad hoc basis. While the Tel Aviv school has now begun to address the problem of Iron IIA chronology originally raised by Kenyon et al. from their excavations at Samaria, similar uncertainties in dating extend well into the succeeding Iron IIB and IIC periods. Advocates of the Tel Aviv version of a 'Low Chronology' are working within an unnecessary straitjacket, by adhering to Yadin's dating of Hazor VII-V. This has led them, while lowering Iron IIA largely into the ninth century, to conclude that this important phase should be shortened from 200 to 125 years. If we abandon the "anchor" of 732 BC for the end of Hazor V, and lower Hazor VII into the mid-eighth century, then Iron IIA might be allowed a slightly longer duration. The related problem, of "stratigraphic congestion" between strata X-V is also relieved, and a major obstacle is removed to lowering Iron IIA from the 10th to the 9th century BC⁴⁰¹. Archaeological dating is therefore largely conjectural. The C14 dating is much more accurate (+/- 25 years) if one can be sure that debris are actually measured at the time of destruction, which is not often the case for two reasons: the materials of buildings of the past were often reused and dating of wood indicates only when the tree was felled and not when burned (often 50 years later).

DATING THE FALL OF JERICHO AND HAZOR (IN 1493 BCE)

The destruction of Jericho is well documented in the biblical narrative, as it is the first Canaanite city conquered by Joshua after entering the land: *The Israelites pitched their camp at Gilgal and kept the Passover there on the 14th day of the month, at evening, in the plain of Jericho. On the very next day after the Passover, they ate what the land produced, unleavened bread and roasted ears of corn. The manna stopped the day after they had eaten the produce of the land. The Israelites from that year onwards [1493 BCE] ate the produce of Canaan and had no more manna (...) The people raised the war cry, the trumpets sounded. When the people heard the sound of the trumpet, they raised a mighty war cry and the wall collapsed then and there. At once the people stormed the city, each man going straight forward; and they captured the city. They burned the city and everything inside it, except the silver, the gold and the things of bronze and iron; these they put into the treasury of Yahweh's house* (Jos 5:11-6:24). According to the biblical text, Jericho, also called "City of Palms", was reoccupied for 18 years (1404-1386) by Eglon (Jg 3:12-14), a king of Moab. This city had become a small village, mentioned in the time of David (2Sa 10:5), was rebuilt at the time of Ahab (1Ki 16:33-34) who reigned (919-898) 500 years after the conquest of Joshua.

The city of Jericho, located in front of Mount Nebo, land of Moab (Dt 32:49), was identified with Tell es-Sultan. Several points of the biblical narrative have been confirmed by archaeology⁴⁰²: 1) The city was strongly fortified and 2) was on a hillock (the people went up into the city). 3) The conquest happened in the early spring, just after harvest, since grain storage jars were full (Joshua 2:6, 3:15, 4:9, and 5:10 show that early spring was the time of Joshua's siege). 4) Because the storage jars were full, there could not have been a long siege before the city fell. 5) There were dwellings built up right against the outer (mudbrick) city wall, such as was the case for Rahab's dwelling. 6) The city wall collapsed to the base of the tell (Jos 6:20). 7) As established by Kenyon, it was after the walls fell that the city was burned with an intense conflagration. 8) Following the destruction by fire, the main part of the city remained uninhabited for a number of decades. 9) During the time when the city was basically uninhabited, there was found nevertheless an isolated palace-like structure that Garstang called the "Middle Building," dated to the 14th century BCE. The resident here was well-to-do, as evidenced by a large quantity of imported Cypriot pottery. 10) The Middle Building was only inhabited for a short time. It's description and

⁴⁰¹ P. JAMES – The Alleged "Anchor Point" of 732 BC for the Destruction of Hazor V in: *Antiquo Oriente* Vol 6 (2008), pp. 137-175.

⁴⁰² B.G. WOOD – Did the Israelites Conquer Jericho? A New Look at the Archaeological Evidence in: *Biblical Archaeology Review* 16:2 (March/April 1990), pp. 44-58.

chronology fit the story of Eglon, king of Moab, who set up operations in the abandoned city of Jericho some decades after the death of Joshua, as recorded in Judges 3:12-30.

The main disagreement comes from dating: according to John Garstang, the destruction of Jericho took place around -1400, but according to Kathleen Kenyon, the city was destroyed around -1550 and was then abandoned. Dating the destruction of Jericho is tricky because the remains of the city are very small and it has been rebuilt at least 7 times. Fortunately the only layer where there was a destruction by fire is dated around -1550. The discovery of scarab seals in the name of Thutmose III, Hatshepsut and Amenhotep III, proves that this city was still inhabited long after this date⁴⁰³. In addition, pottery, type "bi-chrome Cypriot", appearing only during the Hyksos period⁴⁰⁴ (1600-1450), have also been unearthed in this city.



The Carbon-14 dating⁴⁰⁵ gives two dates: -1563 +/- 38, from a sample of 6 grains or -1597 +/- 91, from 2 samples⁴⁰⁶ of charcoal. These results demonstrate two important points: 1) the accuracy of the Carbon-14 dating is highly dependent on the calibration curve (complex and evolving), 2) dates obtained from charcoal samples are higher than 34 years because the dating from charcoal is that when the wood was cut down and not when it burned (several decades later). Dating from the sample of 6 grains is better because it gives the date of harvest that preceded the fire (a while before).

Two elements, unexplainable by archaeology, advocate for the biblical narrative: 1) who were the perpetrators of the destruction? 2) Why were many jars found at the site still full of grain (opposite figure)? According to the Bible, the siege was short (7 days), thus grain reserves will not be initiated. Kenyon believed that the city had been destroyed by the Egyptians at the time of the expulsion of the Hyksos⁴⁰⁷ but this contradicts the account of Ahmose, son of Abana, who clearly states not having gone beyond Sharuhen (near Gaza), further, the Egyptians have never been in the area of Jericho. Mazar wrote⁴⁰⁸: *These subdivisions reflects the major historical developments related to the Egyptian history: LB IA is*



⁴⁰³ J. GARSTANG – The Story of Jericho: Further Light on the Biblical Narrative in: *American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature* 58 (1941), pp. 126, 368-372.

⁴⁰⁴ A. MAZAR – Archaeology of the Land of the Bible New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 216-218, 257-261.

⁴⁰⁵ H. BRUINS, J. VAN DER PLICHT -Tell-es-Sultan (Jericho): Radiocarbon results of short-lived cereal and multiyear charcoal samples from the end of the Middle Bronze Age in: *Radiocarbon* 37:2 (1995) pp. 213-220.

⁴⁰⁶ Excavations at Jericho, 1998. Preliminary Report on the Second Season of Excavations and Surveys at Tell es-Sultan, Palestine in: *Quaderni di Gerico* 2 (2000) pp. 206-207, 330, 332.

⁴⁰⁷ K.M. KENYON – Palestine in the Middle Bronze Age in: *Cambridge Ancient History* Vol. 2 Part 1 (1973), pp. 92-93.

⁴⁰⁸ A. MAZAR - Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10000-586 BCE New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 238-241.

parallel to the period of the Eighteenth Dynasty, between the expulsion of the Hyksos and the conquest of Canaan by Tuthmosis III (...) Indeed, it appears that southern Palestine suffered from a wave of devastation in the sixteenth century B.C.E.; such devastation was probably brought about by the Egyptians in their struggle against the Hyksos, who retreated to this area after their expulsion from Egypt. The only plausible explanation is to identify the Hyksos with the Israelites who, according to the biblical text, burned three cities: Jericho, Ai, and Hazor during their conquest of Canaan (Jos 6:1,24; 8:19; 11:11-13). Again to explain this destruction, one must imagine wars (not documented) between the small kingdoms of Canaan. This explanation, however, is illogical, because which kingdom could defeat Hazor, one of the most powerful cities of the time (the Egyptians and Babylonians were absent from this region)? In addition, the walls of this Canaanite city are identical to those excavated at Tell el-Yahudiyeh and at Heliopolis (in the east of the Delta in Egypt), typical of the Hyksos fortifications⁴⁰⁹ of this period. All these datings are consistent and confirm indirectly the biblical text.

The archaeological dating of the destruction of Jericho, according to the Carbon 14 (calibrated) is around -1550. However, these ¹⁴C measures overestimate dates about 50 years, during this period, compared with those from Egyptian chronology⁴¹⁰. This difference implies a date, calibrated and corrected, around -1500, in good agreement with the dating 1493 BCE, according to the Masoretic chronology. Moreover, according to the biblical text, several regions conquered by the Israelites, after their entry into Canaan, varied in space and also in time⁴¹¹. Given the complexity at that time of boundaries in Canaan, of their quick changes, of the presence of many ethnic groups (Philistines, Amalekites, Moabites, Ammonites, Arameans or Syrians, Sidonians or Phoenicians, Israelites/ Shasu, etc.) who also varied in time and space, it is impossible for archaeology to write the history of this region, solely chronology can enlighten such complex events. The complete destruction of the walled city of Jericho around -1500 involves attributing it to the Hyksos and therefore to the Israelites, in the same way the destruction of the powerful city of Hazor at the same time which was "the head of all these kingdoms" (Jos 11:11-13).

Prior to -1800, Hazor and Laish are the only 2 cities of Canaan mentioned in the archives of Mari which attach great importance to Hazor. Geti, king of Hazor, is listed in the Execration Texts (dated c. -1950) and Ibni-Addu, king of Hazor, whose name is written in Old Babylonian (opposite figure)⁴¹², appears in letters to the kings of Mari⁴¹³ (dated c. 1700 BCE). The city of Hazor has a long history and "Jabin" was a dynastic name⁴¹⁴, in addition, Hazor was destroyed several times including twice by fire at the end of layer XVI around -1550 +/- 60 and at the end of layer XIII about -1200 +/- 25. An important question is to know "who" destroyed this mighty city of Hazor and "when". The biblical solution: Israelites around -1500, is now denied⁴¹⁵ because most archaeologists and Egyptologists have abandoned the



⁴⁰⁹ A. MAZAR – Archeology of the Land of the Bible
New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 194-202.

⁴¹⁰ H. HAAS, ET AL – Radiocarbon Chronology and the Historical Calendar in Egypt
in: Chronologies in the Near East (Ed. O. Aurenche et al, 1987), pp. 585-606.

⁴¹¹ Y. AHARONI – The Land of the Bible
Philadelphia 1979, Ed. The Westminster Press pp. 202-214.

⁴¹² The tablet is damaged, the first line is as follows: *a-na ib-ni[Addu]* "To Ibni[Addu]".

⁴¹³ J. BRIEND – Israël et les nations
in: *Supplément au Cahiers Évangile* 69 (Cerf, 1989) pp. 14-16.

⁴¹⁴ K. VAN BEKKUM – From Conquest to Coexistence
Leiden 2011, Ed. Brill, pp. 166 n. 162,355.

⁴¹⁵ C. MEYERS – Exodus
Cambridge 2005 Ed. Cambridge University Press p. 5.

archaeological investigation of Moses and the Exodus, regarding it as "a fruitless pursuit". In addition, the consensus among biblical scholars today is that there was never any Exodus of the proportions described in the Bible, and that the story is best seen as theology. Certain biblical scholars (in the past) supposed that the destruction of Hazor by fire, around -1200, was caused by the Israelites. This hypothesis is absolutely ludicrous for the following reasons: 1) the error in the biblical chronology would be about 300 years (no comment)! 2) If the Israelites were those who destroyed Hazor by fire around -1200 they would have left Egypt around -1250 just after the death of Pharaoh in the Red Sea (Ps 136:15). It is easy to verify that no Pharaoh of this era experienced any trouble in Egypt and died in a violent manner. Thus, both Ramses II (1283-1216) and Merneptah (1216-1207) lived peacefully. 3) There was a violent crisis dated around 1200 BCE caused by the Sea Peoples⁴¹⁶ which hit all the eastern Mediterranean and caused the ruin of the great empires of the Bronze Age, of which the Trojan War is the most famous episode.



Numerous cities were destroyed: Thebes, Lefkandi, Tiryns, Mycenae and Pylos in mainland Greece and Chania in Crete were ransacked and sometimes completely destroyed. Most of these cities and their palaces were burned. In Anatolia, among the most important sites, archaeological levels similarly destroyed are found and which date from the same period. Hattusa, the Hittite capital, was sacked and burned just like the major cities of Cyprus. On the north coast of Syria, the flourishing city of Ugarit was destroyed and never inhabited thereafter. Mesopotamia was preserved as the wave of devastation did not extend

⁴¹⁶ R. MORKOT – Historical Atlas of Ancient Greece
London 1996 Ed. Penguin Books pp. 30-31.

to the east, and it was the Egyptians who alone could stop it. The temple of Ramses III at Medinet Habu contains an account of this victory over the Sea Peoples. The identification of these peoples and their reasons for migration are poorly understood⁴¹⁷, however, these events are precisely dated year 8 of Ramses III in 1185 BCE. This war led by the Sea Peoples had to be spread over less than one year because, according to the inscription of Ramses III, all countries (Hatti, the coast of Cilicia, Carchemish, Cyprus, etc.) were "destroyed all at once" and, according to the text of Homer, the sacking of the city of Priam [Troy], after 10 years of fighting, was followed "in less than 1 month" by the cruise of Achaeans to Egypt and the sacking of its wonderful fields (Odyssey XIV:240-280). This destruction coincides with the fall of the Hittite Empire dated year 2 of Meli-Shipak⁴¹⁸ in 1185 BCE. The great Alexandrian scholar Eratosthenes (276-193) dated the famous Trojan War to 1184 BCE and Manetho⁴¹⁹, while confirming the 7-year reign of Queen Tausert (1202-1194) stated: *Thouôris, (...) at the time when Troy was taken, reigned 7 years*⁴²⁰. Some important Canaanite cities: Megiddo (Stratum VIIB), Beth-Shean (Stratum VII), Gezer (Stratum XV), Lachish (Stratum VII), Ashdod (Stratum XIV) were totally destroyed, the largest and most influential of which was Hazor. This wave of destructions corresponded with the termination of the Egyptian presence in Canaan⁴²¹.

It is noteworthy that the destruction of Hazor around 1500 BCE, the most powerful Canaanite city of that time, may have been caused only by the Hyksos⁴²². Most archaeologists reject such a conclusion (one can guess why) and prefer to either ignore it (most common) or to link it to the campaign of Thutmose III in Palestine. The latter hypothesis is ludicrous because of the following reasons:

- Thutmose III came to Palestine only from his 23rd year of reign (c. -1450), which occurred around 50 years after the destruction of Hazor.
- Thutmose III did not destroy Hazor but rather looted the city⁴²³, he is far more likely to have subjugated Hazor than actually to have destroyed it. In support of this conclusion is the parallel that exists with several other cities that were destroyed or subjugated by Thutmose III and Amenhotep II. Relevant among these cities are Aleppo, Kadesh, and Tunip. Kadesh, which is considered to have been the most powerful city in Syria and was already mentioned as being the focal point of rebellious opposition to Egypt at the outset of the reign of Thutmose III, is the closest of these cities in proximity to Hazor. Not to be deterred, Egypt's greatest imperialistic pharaoh eventually attacked Kadesh and "destroyed" the city. However, Pritchard notes this about the invasion of Kadesh: *The word 'destroy,' used with reference to this town, is not to be taken literally; Thutmose may have done no more than destroy its food supplies.* Redford concurs, as he writes: *The mountains were crossed and Kadesh attacked directly. Although the terse entry in the daybook reads 'destroying it,' it is clear that the city itself did not fall, and suffered only the laying waste of its orchards and crops.*

In conclusion, the destruction of the powerful city of Hazor (in -1550 +/- 60 according to C14 dating) must be assigned to the Israelites, called Hyksos (*hq3w h3snt*) and

⁴¹⁷ S. PECZYNSKI – The Sea People and their Migration

New Jersey 2009, Ed. Rutgers University (PhD in History), pp. 62-105.

⁴¹⁸ The last texts from Emar are dated [-]/VI₂/2 and 6/VII/[2] of Meli-Shipak, in October 1185 BCE (Y. COHEN, I. SINGER – A Late Synchronism between Ugarit and Emar in: Essays on Ancient Israel in Its Near Eastern Context, Ed. Eisenbrauns 2006, Indiana p. 134).

⁴¹⁹ W.G. WADDELL – Manetho (1956 Harvard University Press) pp. 101-119.

⁴²⁰ Tausert actually reigned, from 1195 to 1194, at the beginning of the war, 10 years before the destruction of Troy. According to Thucydides, the Trojan War was the result of an expedition of disparate tribes of pirates (see Odyssey III:71-74), living on islands around Achaia, who were united by King Agamemnon of Mycenae. This expedition against the Trojans was the culmination of 10 years of battle (The Peloponnesian War I:8-12). For example, a battle in Egypt is mentioned in the year 5 of Rameses III.

⁴²¹ A. MAZAR – Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10000-586 BCE
New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 287.

⁴²² H. BRUINS, J. VAN DER PLICHT – Tell-es-Sultan (Jericho): Radiocarbon results of short-lived cereal and multiyear charcoal samples from the end of the Middle Bronze Age in: *Radiocarbon* 37:2 (1995) p. 217.

⁴²³ D. PETROVICH – The Dating Of Hazor's Destruction In Joshua 11 By Way Of Biblical, Archaeological, And Epigraphical Evidence in: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 51:3 (Sept 2008) pp. 489-512.

Asiatics (*'3mm*) by the Egyptians⁴²⁴. More and more scholars agree now that the “Egyptian hypothesis” of the so-called “War of the Hyksos” is in fact a myth⁴²⁵. In Palestine, the transition from the Middle Bronze II to the Late Bronze Age (c. 1550-1450 BCE) was marked by a severe settlement crisis. All urban centres were destroyed, some were abandoned and resettled only much later, and others suffered serious regression.

The traditional explanations for the destruction and abandonment of the Middle Bronze II urban system is that it was mainly the result of the Egyptian campaigns during the early decades of the 18th Dynasty. The conquest of Palestine was regarded as the continuation of the war with the Hyksos directed against their Canaanites allies, and this conquest culminated in the establishment of the Egyptian Empire in Asia under Thutmose III. Many new excavations and the extensive surveys of the hill country have demonstrated the true nature of the MB/LB transition, but the traditional explanation for the transition was uncritically sustained, and the Egyptian military campaigns of the early 18th Dynasty were regarded as the major (or even exclusive) cause for the utter destruction of hundreds of settlements throughout Palestine in the 16th-early 15th century BCE. Several scholars have criticized this simplistic and one-sided interpretation: Redford (1979) and Hoffmeier (1991) demonstrated that there is no textual support for the assumption of widespread devastation of cities and villages over Palestine by the Egyptians. In the 16th century BCE there is a gap in documentation but we find that the number of people of Semitic origin in the population of Palestine increased significantly. The conquest of Sharuhen (south of Palestine), the only one mentioned by the Egyptians, does not prove that they conquered the rest of Palestine. Furthermore, Thutmose III's campaign into Canaan was conducted against a coalition of Syro-Canaanite kingdoms headed by the king of Kadesh and supported by Mitanni and her allies; this coalition threatened to drive Egypt back beyond the Sinai peninsula. The anarchic conditions caused by the destruction of cities by northern groups and the struggle for survival of the local rulers has nothing to do with the Hyksos who would have led the consolidation of a coalition (under the hegemony of Kadesh) and the efforts of the northern groups to unite their forces to defeat Egypt and drive her out of the land of Canaan. Mitanni gained supremacy in northern Syria and apparently operated in the Canaanite areas through the centre of Kadesh, a kingdom whose ruler was the strongest in the area. With the support of Mitanni, the king of Kadesh was able to organize a vast coalition whose members were mainly rulers of northern origin. A prominent member was the king of Megiddo, whose city served as headquarters for the coalition. This alliance succeeded in pushing Egypt back into southern Canaan and threatened to drive the Egyptians all the way back to their homeland. This expansion occurred during the reign of the Egyptian queen Hatshepsut and forms the background for Thutmose's first Asiatic campaign (c. 1450 BCE).

Dever (1990) said: *All archaeological evidence points to a long, homogenous, peaceful period of development and expansion throughout the Middle Bronze Age in Palestine (phases IIA-C) of nearly 500 years, with the zenith at the very end; and that: a major cultural-historical change had taken place by the end of the 15th century BCE, when Palestine (...) was completely subdued, pacified.* Indeed, according to archaeology, over the period 1450-950 BCE, there was neither war nor conquest in Palestine by the Egyptians before Shoshenq I, exactly as the Bible relates. Although most Egyptologists are allergic to assimilating the Hyksos in Egypt with the Hebrews, then with the Asiatics (*Aamu*) of Shasu land (Palestine), this conclusion is the only one that is consistent with all historical documents.

⁴²⁴ T.M. KENNEDY –The Israelite Conquest: History or Myth? An Archaeological Evaluation of the Israelite Conquest During the Periods of Joshua and the Judges in: Master of Arts report (University of South Africa, 2011) pp. 106-142.

⁴²⁵ N. NA'AMAN –The Hurrians and the End of the Middle Bronze Age in Palestine in: Canaan in the 2nd Millennium B.C.E. (Eisenbrauns, 2005), pp. 1-20.

WHEN THE HYKSOS LEFT EGYPT THE SHASU ARRIVED IN PALESTINE

Little is known about the end of Hyksos rule in Egypt, particularly at Avaris. In his tomb at Elkab, Ahmose son of Ibana mentions only that "one captured Avaris". Flavius Josephus, who may have had some direct access to Egyptian traditions, wrote that forcing a surrender of Avaris by blockading did not work, and that the Egyptians gave up in despair. They would have concluded a treaty by which all the "shepherds" were to leave Egypt, taking their possessions and households on a desert trip to Syria. Following Josephus, historians have not only concluded that the Hyksos were driven out and moved to Palestine, but also that that they had come from there. Egyptologists have seldom appreciated the impact that the Hyksos rule must have made on Egypt. They have largely taken over the ancient Egyptian doctrine that it had been an unpleasant interlude and produced no more than a Theban counter-reaction that brought on the New Kingdom. However, it is only realistic to assume that the presence of a considerable number of Western Asiatic people in north-eastern Egypt (c. 1820-1530) helped to shape the succeeding New Kingdom culture. Could this population have disappeared, and could it be that 300 years of cultural interaction in the Delta were brought to a halt the moment that Avaris was taken and the Hyksos kingdom destroyed? This scenario is highly unlikely.

According to archaeological sources, Avaris was abandoned, and archaeological evidence has shown no signs of destruction besides the looting of tombs. This would be entirely in keeping with Josephus story. In several areas, however, settler activity continued into the 18th Dynasty. However, according to M. Bietak⁴²⁶: *Summing up, we have no evidence that the Western Asiatic population who carried the Hyksos rule in Egypt was expelled to the Levant, except for the Manethonian/Josephus tradition. While one cannot rule out that elite groups moved to southern Canaan at the end of the Hyksos Period, especially to Sharubn, there is mounting evidence to suggest that a large part of this population stayed in Egypt and served their new overlords in various capacities. These people contributed in many ways to New Kingdom culture and society and seem to have built a lasting local tradition in the eastern Delta, kept alive by the cultic installations of Canaanite gods, particularly Seth of Avaris, down to Ramesside times.* However, the conclusion of Bietak: *there is mounting evidence to suggest that a large part of this population stayed in Egypt and served their new overlords in various capacities,* is wrong because of the following reasons:

- Historical reasons. We have a lot of evidence that the Western Asiatic population who carried the Hyksos rule in Egypt was expelled to the Levant, according to: 1) *Hecataeus of Abdera*, a Greek historian and sceptic philosopher (c. -300), 2) *Manetho*, an Egyptian priest (c. -280), 3) *Demetrius the Chronograph*, a Jewish historian (c. -220), 4) *Artapanus*, a Hellenistic Jewish historian (c. 200), 5) *Eupolemus*, a Hellenistic Jewish historian (c. -160), 6) *Lysimachus of Alexandria*, an Egyptian grammarian (c. -100), 7) *Diodorus of Sicily*, a Greek historian (c. -50), 8) *Strabo*, a Greek geographer, philosopher and historian (c. 20 CE), 9) *Chaeremon of Alexandria*, a Stoic philosopher, historian, and grammarian. He was superintendent of the portion of the Alexandrian library that was kept in the Temple of Serapis, and as custodian and expounder of the sacred books he belonged to the higher ranks of the Egyptian priesthood (c. 50). 10) *Tacitus*, a senator and a historian of the Roman Empire (c. 100), 11) *Tatian* an Assyrian early Christian writer (c. 160-170), 12) *Eusebius*, a Roman historian, exegete and Christian polemicist (c. 300), 13) *Moses of Khoren*, a prominent Armenian historian (370-486). According to Manetho: *He (Salitis) rebuilt (Avaris), and made very strong by the walls he built about it, and by a most numerous garrison of 240,000 armed men whom he put into it to keep it. Thither Salatis came in summer time, partly to*

⁴²⁶ M. BIETAK – From Where Came the Hyksos and Where did they go?
in: *The Second Intermediate Period (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 192, 2010)* pp. 164-171.

gather his corn, and pay his soldiers their wages, and partly to exercise his armed men, and thereby to terrify foreigners (...) [Ahmose] the son of [Sequenre] made an attempt to take them by force and by siege, with 480,000 men to lie rotund about them, but that, upon his despair of taking the place by that siege, they came to a composition with them, that they should leave Egypt, and go, without any harm to be done to them, whithersoever they would; and that, after this composition was made, they went away with their whole families and effects, not fewer in number than 240,000 [soldiers], and took their journey from Egypt, through the wilderness, for Syria; but that as they were in fear of the Assyrians, who had then the dominion over Asia, they built a city in that country which is now called Judea, and that large enough to contain this great number of men, and called it Jerusalem (Against Apion I:78, 88-90). According to the biblical account: Jehovah spoke to Moses, in the desert of Sinai, in the Tent of Meeting, on the 1st day of the 2nd month, in the 2nd year after the exodus from Egypt, and said: Take a census of the whole community of Israelites by clans and families, taking a count of the names of all the males, head by head. All the Israelites of 20 years and over, fit to bear arms, were counted by families Altogether, the total came to 603,550 (Nb 1:1-2, 45-46). It is noteworthy that the figures from Manetho's narrative are similar with those from the Bible.

- Logical reasons. The port of Avaris contained 300 ships, which involves this city containing tens of thousands of people, has been completely removed. If this crowd of Asiatics remained in Egypt (after the sack) they would have constituted a serious threat of revolt for Kamose. Moreover, how does one explain that Kamose succeeded relatively easily in crushing the Asiatics who were associated with the revolt of Teti, the mighty Viceroy of Kush, and he had not been able to face the Asiatics in Avaris.
- Archaeological reasons. There is a complete disappearance of any reference to the Hyksos from Ahmose and Palestine "Lower Retenu (Syria)" became suddenly the "land of Harru"⁴²⁷ (Hurrians)" for Egyptians. Shortly after, from Thutmose I and up to Ramses III, there appears in Palestine an important new Asiatic people, called Shasu, who are extensively described in the Egyptian iconographic documents⁴²⁸. One must note that "Harru" meant a geographical area and not ethnicity because among 23 names found in Taanach Letters (c. -1450), 14 are Semitic, 5 are Aryan and only 4 are Hurrian⁴²⁹.

Shasu refer to Bedouins, called Habiru ("emigrants" in Akkadian) by Canaanites⁴³⁰. This identification is confirmed by Manetho who explains the word Hyksos coming from *hyk-sos* "King Shepherd", which is relatively accurate, because the Egyptian word *heq* means "ruler/chief" and the word *šos* actually means "shepherd". Sahidic translation (late Egyptian) of Genesis 47:6: *if you know any able men among them, then make them rulers over my cattle*, used for example the word *šos* to describe these "rulers of cattle". The Hyksos word actually comes from the Egyptian *heqaw ha'sw.t* "Rulers of foreign lands", but Manetho connected it to the Shasu appearing later and thus translated it as "Rulers of shepherds" *heqaw šosw* (in Egyptian *šs* means "travelling"). Studies on Shasu⁴³¹ rehabilitate this so-called popular etymology because the Egyptians understood the word *shasu* as a common noun designating semi-sedentary shepherds staying mainly in the south of Palestine. They used the phrase "Land of Shasu", which shows that they originally included this phrase as a geographical designation. The fact that they wrote the word *shas* (*šš*) "wandering" instead of the usual *shasu* (*ššw*) also shows that they originally included the word as a synonym.

⁴²⁷ J.-C. GOYON – De l'Afrique à l'Orient
Paris 2005 Ed. E.J. ellipses pp. 57-61.

⁴²⁸ R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 248-250.

⁴²⁹ R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan
Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 86-96.

⁴³⁰ D. CHARPIN – Hammurabi de Babylone
Paris, 2003, Éd. Presses Universitaires de France p. 238.

⁴³¹ M.G. HASEL - Domination and Resistance. Egyptian Military Activity in the Southern Levant
Leiden 1998 Ed. Brill pp. 217-239.

Distribution of Biconical 3 and 4 Tell el-Yahudiya jugs.

Distribution of the late Palestinian type of the Tell el-Yahudiya ware.

ALLGEMEINE PROVENIENZ

MONT ALS 19 STUCK (20-29)

MONT ALS 9 STUCK (10-19)

⁴³⁶ R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 9-10.

Shasu permanently resided. The Egyptian records of Thutmose II mention neither Israel nor the Israelites for two reasons: 1) according to the biblical narrative the Egyptians never attacked Israel before the military campaign of Pharaoh Shoshenq I in 972 BCE and 2) Palestine (called Upper Retenu by Egyptians and Canaan by Israelites) was systematically called “land of Israel” (1Sa 13:19) instead of “land of Canaan” only from King Saul's time (c. 1100 BCE), before that date the name “Israel” meant “sons of Israel”, not “land of Israel”. Under the Thutmose III's reign (1472-1418), information about Asiatics (*Aamu*) in Canaan and Hyksos appear in the stela (below) relating his 1st campaign into Retenu (Syro-Palestine), dated in the year 23 of his reign (c. -1450):



3) *All lands and all foreign countries, subdued, are under his sandals, one went to him head down, and bowing in front of his lightning. Foreign rulers [Hyksos] over the entire Earth recognize: He [Thutmose III] is our master. It is he who has made them come back to him by the fear he inspires.*

4) *There is no country that he has trampled to expand the borders of Egypt by victories, thanks to his power. Neither millions nor hundreds of thousands of men put off his courage. It is a brave king who, in the melee, made great slaughters among Asiatic coalitions.*

5) *He is the one that makes rulers of Retenu's land, in their entirety, to be required to provide their tribute and be subject to the annual tax like the people who depend on his palace.*

6) *He is more effective alone than an army of many thousands of men. He is a so valiant fighter that no one can match in the entire country, neither in his army, nor among foreign rulers [Hyksos], nor South, nor North. This is a king who deserves his power exalted as much as his valour. Egypt has increased since his inception: it fears no other country,*

7) *it has not to worry about the South, nor to worry about the North (...)*

8) *The lands of Min and Kush were its subjects, offering it their production of gold, in abundance, ivory and ebony, without limit. There was no king who has done what he has done among all the kings that have existed so far.*

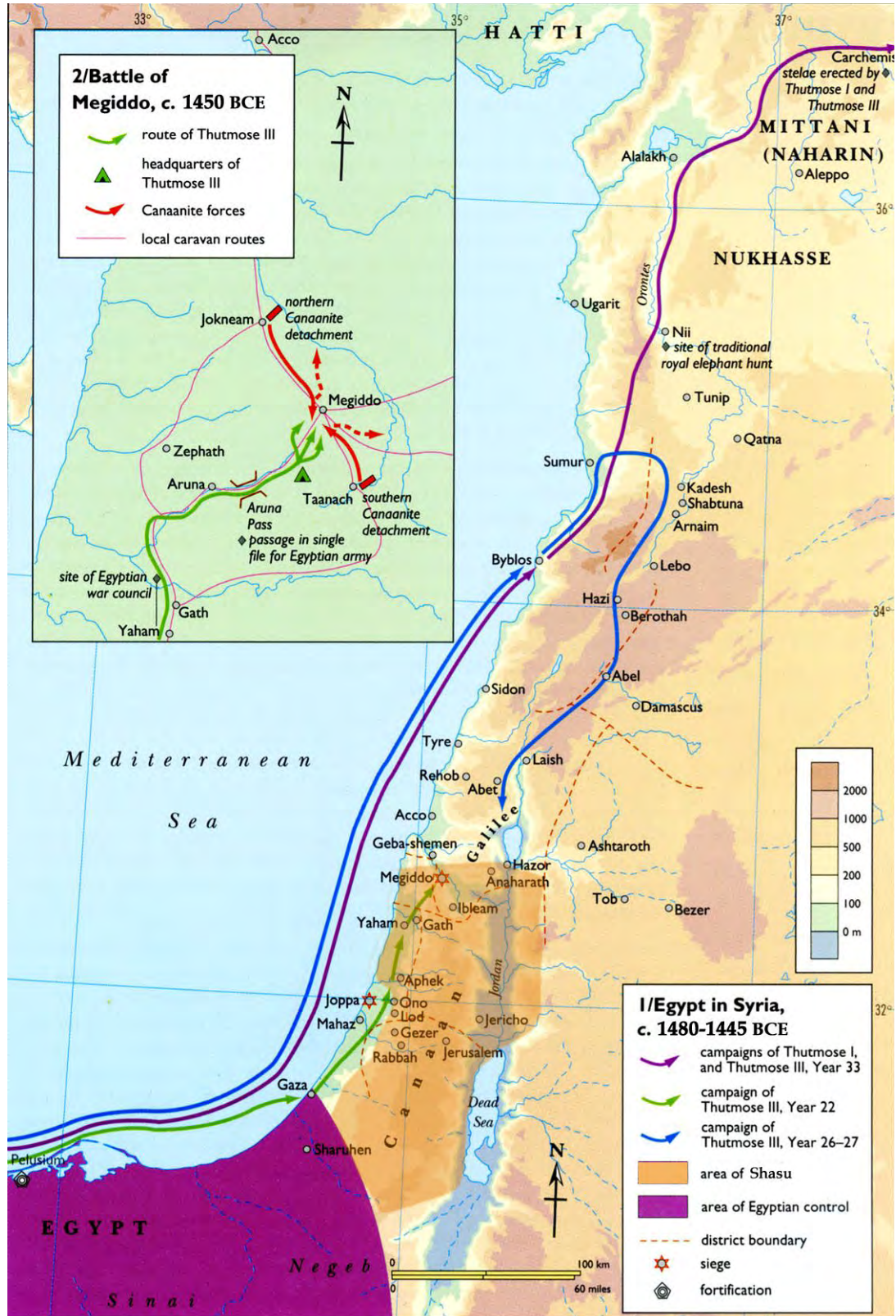
The boastful tales of this pharaoh⁴³⁷, coalesce in the same feud: rulers of foreign lands (Hyksos), rulers of Retenu's land and Asiatics (*aamu*) coalitions (northern part of Megiddo)⁴³⁸. In the topographical lists of Thutmose III about this campaign no place is cited in southern Palestine⁴³⁹, usually associated with Shasu, with the exception of the Negeb. The Egyptians therefore met few Shasu only around Megiddo and Taanach. According to the Old Testament, under the command of Joshua, the Israelites defeated the kings of Megiddo and Taanach around 1490 BCE (Jos 12:7,21) but the Manassites failed to drive out the Canaanites from these cities. Eventually these Canaanites were put to forced labour (Jg 1:27-28). Taanach and Megiddo are mentioned as Canaanite cities by Thutmose

⁴³⁷ A.S. VON BOMHARD - Le calendrier Égyptien. Une œuvre d'éternité
London 1999 Ed. Periplus pp. 42-43.

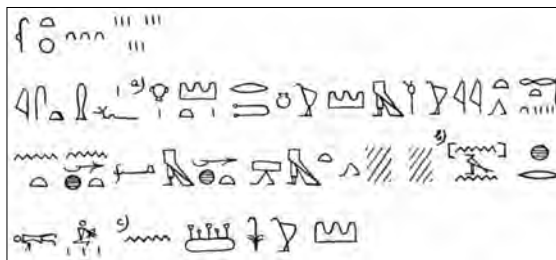
⁴³⁸ P. GRANDET - Les pharaons du Nouvel Empire : une pensée stratégique
Paris 2008 Éd. du Rocher pp. 89,295-303.

⁴³⁹ B. MANLEY - Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypte
London 1996 Ed. Penguin Books pp. 70-73.

III (c. 1450 BCE), given that Talwashur the Canaanite mayor of Tanaach had had an assistant, Ahiami, who was an Israelite (and probably it was the same for Megiddo) Thutmose III was able to meet some Shasu at the north of Palestine. It should be noted that he carefully avoided the land of Shasu (Palestine) in all his campaigns towards Syria. The city of Aphek (Jos 19:30) was not conquered and remained Canaanite (Jg 1:31).



Thutmose III also claims in his annals (text opposite), that during his 14th campaign (dated -1434) he stayed in Retenu after defeating the Shasu land: *Year 39: His Majesty was in Retenu land during his 14th successful campaign after he had (to do) the vanquished Shasu land.* This occurred long after the conquest of the Syrian port cities which enabled him to take the sea route to approach his northern enemies⁴⁴⁰. Its main purpose was to appease a rebellion, and at the same time, open roads to the Egyptian army. This campaign against the land of Shasu was of a secondary character but numerous Canaanite cities seized by the Israelites, such as Hazor or Beth-Shean, passed under Egyptian control⁴⁴¹ (Jg 1:28-33; 3:1-5).



"Naharine" (Mesopotamia) became a political entity called "Mitanni" from its first king known as Kirta (1500-1485). Thus, from Thutmose III, Egyptian topographical lists⁴⁴² include both Naharine (*n-h-r-j-n*) and Mitanni (*m-t-n*). It is noteworthy that the period 1480-1450 corresponds to a period of expansion westwards of Mitanni (as far as Syria), mainly due to the policy of conquest of two powerful kings⁴⁴³: Barattarna I (1480-1455) and Šauštatar I (1455-1435). The Egyptians were concerned about that aggressive expansion, thus during his 1st campaign, in year 22 (dated 1450 BCE), Thutmose III states that he fought 330 rebel princes who were under the orders of the king of Kadesh and were thus indirectly in the wake of the "prince of Naharina". Šauštatar I the king of Mitanni (also called Hanigalbat) corresponds well to the biblical king of Aram-Naharaim called Cushan-rishathaim in Judges 3:8-10. However, the word Aram-Naharaim refers to a geographical area (land), not ethnic or linguistic, because kings of Mitanni were of Indo-Aryan origin and spoke Hurrian. The word *paddan* means "area" in Aramaic thus the name *Paddan-Aram* (Gn 47:8) could be translated as "area of Arameans"⁴⁴⁴.

The area covered by the Mitanni during the 1500-1400 period was traveled by Aramaean tribes who came from Lower Mesopotamia⁴⁴⁵. The term *Ahlamû* "Arameans" was used to designate nomadic enemies of Assyria⁴⁴⁶. Around 1350 BCE, the term *Ahlamû* (EA 200) was used to designate some rebels in the Nippur area⁴⁴⁷ under Burna-Buriash II (1360-1333). The Amarna letters use it under the form *Naharima* (EA 288), a syllabic transcription of (Aram)-*Naharaim*, to designate a region also known by them as Mitanni (*Meten*). If at the time of David (c. 1050 BCE) the "kings of Aram" could be called "kings of Syria" (Damascus kingdom) four centuries earlier the area named Aram-Naharaim covered mainly Upper Mesopotamia. For example: *At this Jehovah's anger blazed against Israel, so that he sold them into the hand of Cushan-rishathaim the king of Aram-Naharaim and the sons of Israel continued to serve Cushan-rishathaim 8 years. And the sons of Israel began to call to Jehovah for*

⁴⁴⁰ T. SÄVE-SÖDERBERGH - The Navy of the Eighteenth Egyptian Dynasty
Uppsala 1946 Ed. Uppsala Universitets Arsskrift p. 39.

⁴⁴¹ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 242-243.

⁴⁴² J. SIMONS - Handbook for the Study of Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia
Leiden 1937 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 207-210.

⁴⁴³ J. FREU, R. LEBRUN - Histoire du Mitanni
Paris 2003 Éd. L'Harmattan pp. 40-51.

⁴⁴⁴ E. LIPINSKI - Paddân-Aram
in: Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible (Brépols, 1987) p. 949.

⁴⁴⁵ F. JOANNÈS - Dictionnaire de la civilisation mésopotamienne
Paris 2001 Éd. Robert Laffont pp. 63-68.

⁴⁴⁶ D.D. LUCKENBILL - Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia I
Chicago 1926 Ed. University of Chicago Press §§ 73, 116, 166, 209.

⁴⁴⁷ R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan
Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp.194-198.

A.T. CLAY - Documents from the Temple Archives of Nippur dated in the reigns of Cassite rulers
in: Babylonian Expedition (1906) Vol XIV p. 16; Vol XV pp. 44, 168.

aid. Then Jehovah raised a saviour up for the sons of Israel that he might save them, Othniel the son of Kenaz the younger brother of Caleb. The spirit of Jehovah now came upon him, and he became the judge of Israel. When he went out to battle, then Jehovah gave Cushan-rishathaim the king of Aram into his hand so that his hand overpowered [not slaughtered] Cushan-rishathaim (Jg 3:8-10). Cushan-rishathaim, the king of Aram-Naharaim (Mitanni), ruled the land of Israel from 1452 to 1444 BCE. The name Cushan-rishataim was amended by derision because it means "Kushan of double wickedness" in Hebrew⁴⁴⁸ (Jr 50:21), the transcription Khousarsatos (*Kušaršata?*) in the Septuagint is closer to the name of Mitannian king Šauštatar I (1455-1435).

The Egyptian documents from Thutmose III's period and biblical texts both provide convergent information: a powerful king of the kingdom called Naharine (or Mitanni) led an aggressive expansionist policy towards the west around 1450 BCE. Moreover, the region called Palestine (Upper Retenu) had little or no contact with their neighbours at that time (Syria is called Lower Retenu).

Archaeologists claim that Shasu were only a small tribe of nomads poorly localized, but according to the Egyptian documents of that time, they were at least several tens of thousands and their country in Palestine was considered as one of the nine enemy countries of Egypt. For example, Amenhotep II's stele (c. -1410) gives some ethnic information through a list of prisoners: *Great ones of Retenu land 127; Brothers of the Great ones 179; Apiru 3600; living Shasu 15200; Haru land (north Canaan) 36300; living Nubasse land (Syria) 15070, their families 30652; total amount 89600 (sic)*⁴⁴⁹.



The high number of Shasu captured (some of whom would serve later in the Egyptian army), half of Haru (Canaanites), shows that Shasu constituted a population of first magnitude at that time. It was not a small group of families who emigrated to Palestine, but, as argued by the biblical text, a large group of people. If the Egyptian text distinguishes Shasu and Apiru this does not prove that there was no link between these two groups, because the terms Shasu and Apiru were not proper names but common names. In the Amarna letters, the settlers conquering Palestine are 'Apiru "refugees"⁴⁵⁰ or Hapiru "migrants"⁴⁵¹, with the meaning "rebels"⁴⁵². The word Habiru means "migrants" in Semitic languages⁴⁵³ hence its later meaning "wanderers". The list of Amenhotep II can be understood: Factious (Apiru) 3600, Bedouins (Shasu) 15200. If for Egyptians the Shasu, including those of Palestine, were perceived as wanderers, all wanderers (or factious) were not Bedouins (Shasu). The biblical text itself states that the cities that had been conquered by the Israelites remained very variegated: *Manasseh did not dispossess Beth-Shean and its dependencies, nor Taanach and its dependencies, nor the inhabitants of Dor and its dependencies, nor the inhabitants of Ibleam and its dependencies, nor the inhabitants of Megiddo*

⁴⁴⁸ M. GUICHARD – Kushân-rishéatayim

in: Dictionnaire encyclopédique de la Bible (Brepols, 1987) p. 724.

⁴⁴⁹ The number of living Nuhasseh is likely to be 3570 (as for Apiru) instead of 15070.

⁴⁵⁰ W.L. MORAN - Les lettres d'El Amarna in: *LIPO* n°13 Paris 1987 Éd. Cerf pp. 604-605.

⁴⁵¹ M. GUICHARD - Les émigrés politiques au Proche-Orient ancien in: *Dossiers d'Archéologie* n°300 février 2005 pp. 40-49.

⁴⁵² N. NA'AMAN - Habiru and Hebrew: The transfer of a social Term to the Literary Sphere in: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 45 (1986) pp. 271-288.

⁴⁵³ J.M. DURAND - Documents épistolaires du palais de Mari in: *LIPO* n°18 Paris 2000 Éd. Cerf p. 205.

R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda pp. 106-112, 202-208.

and its dependencies; in those parts the Canaanites held their ground (...) The Amorites held their ground at Har-Heres and Shaalbim (Jg 1:27-35). According to figures from Amenhotep II' list, the Shasu (shepherds of Palestine) were four times more numerous than the Apiru (factious or outlaws). Once again the Egyptians met few Shasu as well as Syrians only in the northern part of Palestine, however the Israelites at that place were mixed with Canaanites.



The aim of Amenhotep II's campaigns was to secure the major trade route called "Via Maris" linking Egypt to Aleppo in Syria⁴⁵⁴. He therefore established some garrisons of soldiers in Canaan to perform police operations. Amenhotep II (1420-1392) established a number of garrison towns in Canaan such as: Gaza, Joppa, Beth-Shean, Ulaza, Sumur and Ikathi (near Damascus?), Gaza being the most permanent one for defending the coastal road to Egypt. Note that no garrison is located in Palestine (Upper Retenu) the land of Shasu because Gaza and Joppa belong to Philistine territory, Beth-Shean (south of Hazor) is north of Palestine (Lower Retenu), Kumidu belonged to Phoenician territory and Sumur belongs to western Syria (Djahy). Egyptian records are in harmony with its biblical counterpart which says that the land of Canaan had no disturbance for 40 years when Othniel (1444-1404) was ruling as Judge (Jg 3:11). According to the biblical narrative, the area inhabited by Israelites was not homogeneous (below).

The obvious proof that Egypt never controlled Upper Retenu (Palestine), the dwelling area of the Israelites, after the conquest of Canaan (in 1493 BCE) is the complete disappearance of the cities in this region (hatched area), such as: Aijalon, Tirzah, Tappuah, Shiloh, Gilgal, Bethel, Gibeon, Succoth, Hebron, Debir, Beer-sheba, Arad, etc., in the campaigns from Thutmose I (in 1483 BCE) up to Shoshenq I (in 972 BCE). How can one explain such a disappearance if Egypt controlled Palestine as most (if not all) archaeologists and Egyptologists believe? That bias, which completely overshadows the biblical testimony, is unfortunately widely spread among current historians and modify interpretation of the Egyptian events.



⁴⁵⁴ Y. AHARONI – Some Geographical Remarks concerning the Campaigns of Amenhotep II in: *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 19:3 (1960), pp. 177-183.

A band of hieroglyphs carved above the heads of the prisoners depicted on slab no. 21687 (opposite figure) that reads: *one, who is falling on his feet* [...] *'Asqelūn (i-s-q-rw-n)* *[Kīna'anū (k-j-n-'3-n-nw)]* *'Ašair (i-'3'3-i-r)*. As this spelling of the city of Ashkelon is specific to the reign of Amenhotep II⁴⁵⁵ it can be inferred that such recording describes the coastal regions which were subjected during the campaign of Year 9 against Aphek (ANET 246). Consequently, the mysterious place called 'Ashair⁴⁵⁶ after Canaan and around Aphek must be 'Asher (Jg 1:31, 5:17). In addition, one reads: *So the Asherites continued to dwell among the Canaanites inhabiting the land, because they did not drive them out* (Jg 1:32).



Despite the fact that the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites is dated around 1500 BCE, which is confirmed by archaeology⁴⁵⁷ through the destruction of several big cities in Palestine during the Late Bronze Age IA (1550-1470), archaeologists refuse to make a link with the biblical account as Pierre Grandet explains⁴⁵⁸: *Archaeology seems to reveal a wave of destruction and abandonment of most urban centres in Canaan during the transition from the final phase of the Middle Bronze Age to the Late Bronze, is to count off, between the beginning of the New Kingdom and the end of the XVIIIth Dynasty (1550-1292). Unfortunately, in the absence of written documentation, the reasons for such a phenomenon, its exact nature, its geographical expansion and to its specific date, remain a matter of debate. Some archaeologists date the destruction of the period immediately following the expulsion of the Hyksos, but the silence of texts and the relative indifference of Egypt towards Asia at this time is not in favour of this theory.* However, the presence of Hapiru ("Hebrews", the word is written SA.GAZ and means "wanderer") in Canaan is mentioned⁴⁵⁹ by King Idrimi during his stay⁴⁶⁰ with them (1487-1480?). Egyptians performed several campaigns in Syria-Palestine, soon after 1500 BCE, in fact simple police operations against Canaanite cities of the region (mainly in the Mitanni and not in Lower Retenu, the Hebrews area) to remind them their state of vassalage. If the Egyptian frescoes, in the 15th century BCE, portrayed the Syrians under the features of a vassal people⁴⁶¹, they simply disparage the "vile" Shasu without explaining their exact status in the region. The Amarna letters show that during the 14th century there were many disturbances in Palestine. This confused situation would explain why Egyptian raids in Palestine are not mentioned in the biblical text, while many cities became Canaanite (or Amorite) again after the death of Joshua (Jg 1:10-36). The area occupied by the Israelites in Palestine hardly concerned the Mediterranean coast, as the south was occupied by the Philistines and the north by the Phoenicians. The Pharaohs led some campaigns in Asia, they mainly concerned Mitanni or the north of Canaan, but never the south of Palestine. In addition, when they entered the area of Israel (north of Palestine), it was only in periods when this area was under foreign domination.

The only period during which Palestine is well documented comes from the letters preserved by the Egyptian chancellery in El-Amarna. Although this period is very short (1360-1330) it illuminates the relationships between the various rulers in Canaan.

⁴⁵⁵ A. MAZAR - Archaeology of the Land of the Bible, 10000-586 BCE
New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday pp. 224-242.

⁴⁵⁶ Some scholars transcribe this name "Yasrail" but Semitic names beginning with i-3- in Egyptian are always vocalized 'A- not Ya-.

⁴⁵⁷ P. VAN DER VEEN, C. THEIS, M. GÖRG - Israel in Canaan (Long) Before Pharaoh Merenptah? A Fresh Look at Berlin Statue Pedestal Relief 21687 in: *Journal of Ancient Egyptian Interconnections* Vol. 2:4 (2010), pp. 15-25.

⁴⁵⁸ P. GRANDET - Les pharaons du Nouvel Empire : une pensée stratégique
Paris 2008 Éd. du Rocher pp. 112-114.

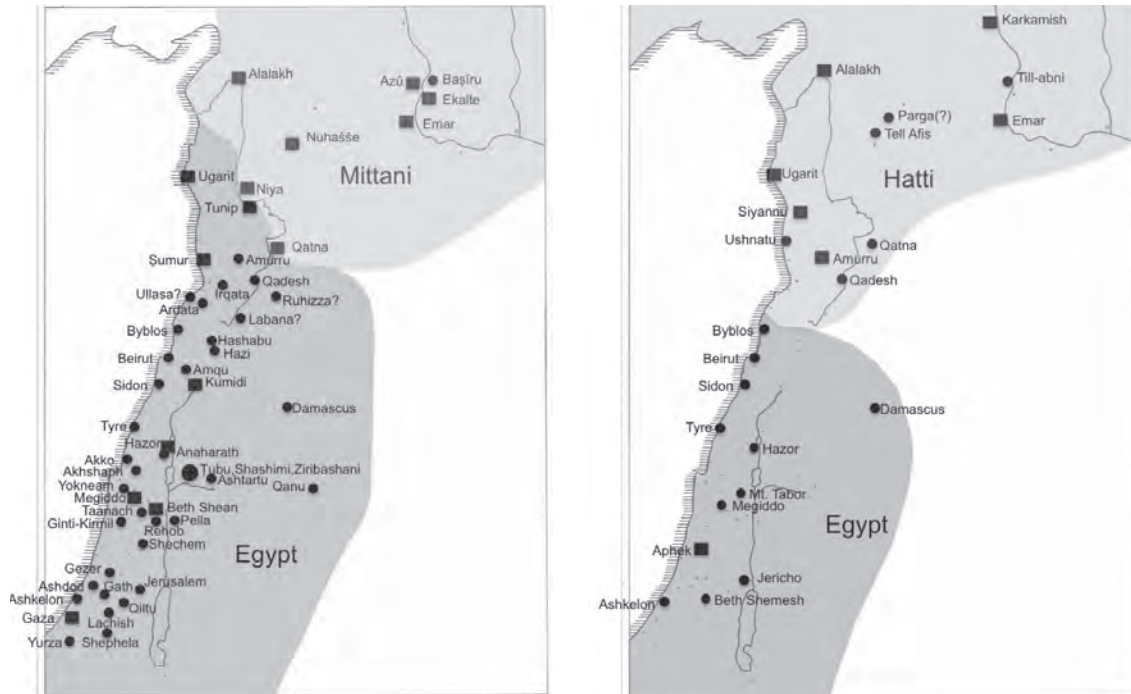
⁴⁵⁹ E.L. GREENSTEIN, D. MARCUS - The Akkadian Inscription of Idrimi
in: *Journal of the Association of Near-Eastern Studies* 8 (1976) pp. 59-96.

⁴⁶⁰ The fatal incident that forced Idrimi to leave Aleppo is the attack of his city (in 1500 BCE) by Mursili I (1510-1500), a king of Hatti.

⁴⁶¹ J. B. PRITCHARD - The Ancient Near East in Pictures
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 15-17.

WHY THE SHASU (ISRAELITES) ARE NEVER MENTIONED IN AMARNA LETTERS?

Given that Amarna letters never speak of Shasu (Israelites), but only sometimes of Apiru (faction), most scholars have concluded that all Canaanite rulers in Palestine had been controlled by Egypt. The only major change had been the annexation of Syria by the Hittite empire (in 1348 BCE), which was previously controlled by the Mitannian kingdom.



This interpretation, widely accepted⁴⁶², which represents Egypt as controlling the whole of Canaan (above images) is however contrary to the contents of the letters coming from the Egyptian chancellery. The data provided by the Amarna state correspondence thus clearly imply a narrow link between the military and economic sphere with direct military interventions taking place only when the economic priorities of the Egyptian administrative system became affected or endangered⁴⁶³. Contrary to the Hittite empire the goal of Egyptian military interventions in Canaan was not to conquer new territories, or to control them, but to secure economic relationships among its client rulers in Canaan. The diplomatic correspondence shows that alliances between Egypt and its allies (Amorite and Mitannian kingdoms, Phoenician and Philistine state-cities, Canaanite mayors in the western coast of Palestine), were primarily economic in nature, not political. Egyptian Military manpower corresponds to garrisons of a few hundred policemen⁴⁶⁴ rather than battalions of thousand of soldiers. In addition, Egyptian correspondence is biased because there are no documents coming from the Hittite chancellery (rival empire), no Shasu documents (nation in peace with no relationship with Egypt) and no letters from Egyptian commissioners (written on papyrus which disappeared).

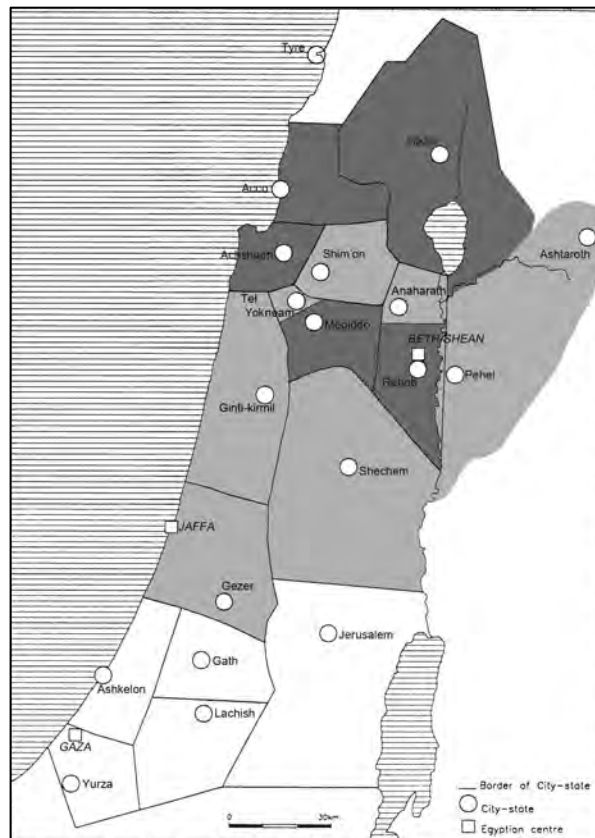
Letters of Amarna mainly show the panic reaction in Canaan generated by the annexation of Syria. The king of Mitanni pleaded with the king of Egypt for a military intervention in order to recover part of his kingdom conquered by the Hittites, without success. The king of Amurru tried to prove his loyalty to Egypt but at the same time, for

⁴⁶² W.H. VAN SOLDT – The Extent of Literacy in Syria and Palestine during the Second Millenium B.C.E. in: *Time and History in the Ancient Near East* (Eisenbrauns, 2013), pp. 19-28.

⁴⁶³ J. MYNÁŘOVÁ – Egypt among the Great Powers and its relations to the neighbouring vassal kingdoms in the Southern Levant in: *Policies of Exchange: Political Systems and Modes of Interaction in the Aegean and the Near East in the 2nd Millennium BC* (OREA 2), pp. 155–163.

⁴⁶⁴ 200 infantrymen (EA 71); 400 men (EA 76); 300 men (EA 93); 200 archers (EA 95); 80 soldiers (EA 152); 50 men (EA 238).

pragmatic reasons of real politic, began to negotiate new alliances with the king of Hatti. Because of the chaotic and uncertain situation, several Amorite mayors as well as some former Mitannian mayors established new alliances with the King of Hatti and were consequently called Apiru “factions” by Canaanite mayors who had remained loyal to Egypt. Finally, some Canaanite mayors like those of Shechem and Hazor took advantage of the chaos in Palestine to extort other Canaanite cities by making raids to get booty and consequently were also called Apiru “factions”. This led Israel Finkelstein⁴⁶⁵ to reinterpret (drawing below) the data provided by the letters of Amarna and propose, instead of an Egyptian control of Palestine, a struggle between two Canaanite blocks: a Shechem coalition in the south (light gray) and an anti-Shechem coalition in the north (dark gray).



Finkelstein's interpretation shows two crucial points: 1) Egypt did not have control of Palestine and 2) despite the short period 1360-1330 BCE being of the best documented about Canaan, Palestine and Egypt (almost 400 letters), several parts remain controversial⁴⁶⁶ because of the following:

- Most protagonists are rarely mentioned by name but almost exclusively by their title (king, mayor) or function (ruler, commissioner).
- The boundaries of some small countries (Amurru, Palestine) have been very volatile.
- Transcription of Egyptian names into Akkadian⁴⁶⁷ is often quite confusing⁴⁶⁸.

⁴⁶⁵ I. FINKELSTEIN – The Forgotten Kingdom. The Archaeology and History of Northern Israel Atlanta 2013, Ed. Society of Biblical Literature, pp. 13-19.

⁴⁶⁶ D. KAHN – One Step Forward, Two Steps Backward: The Relations between Amenhotep III and Tushratta, King of Mitanni in: Egypt, Canaan and Israel: History, Imperialism, Ideology and Literature (Brill, 2011) pp. 136-152.

⁴⁶⁷ A. DODSON – Were Nefertiti & Tutankhamen Coregents? in: KMT a Modern Journal of Ancient Egypt n° 20:3 (2009) p. 48.

⁴⁶⁸ For example (Egyptian / Akkadian): Thutmose III (*Menkheperre* / *Manakheperre*); Amenhotep III (*Nebmaatre* / *Ni[b]muariya*); Akhenaten (*Neferkheperure* / *Napkhuriya*); Tutankhamun (*Nebkheperure* / *Nibkhuriya*); Semenkhkare (*Ankhkheperure* / *[Nip] Khuriya*). The land of Mitanni (Hittite) is called *Meteni* (Egyptian), *Hanigalbat* (Assyrian), *Aram-Naharaim* (Hebrew), *Naharina* "[between the] rivers [Tigris and Euphrates]" (Babylonian), *Neberine* (Egyptian), *Mesopotamia* "between rivers" (Greek). The people of Mitanni are called *Hurri*.

- It is difficult to distinguish ethnic vs common names, but a link exists between them⁴⁶⁹. In Egyptian⁴⁷⁰: 'Aperu "crew members/workmen", Šasu "Bedouins", 'A[r]amu "Asiatics"; in Babylonian: 'Apiru "factions"⁴⁷¹, Ḫapiru SA.GAZ "nomads", Ḫabiru "migrants", Ahlamaiu "Arameans"; in Hebrew: 'Ibrim "Hebrews/those of Eber", 'eber means migrant! These terms often refer to people in the same place at the same time.
- Canaanite mayors all accuse each other of treachery to the pharaoh (who are the liars?).
- There were several simultaneous wars: 1) Hatti against Mitanni (ally of Egypt) then against Amurru (former ally of Egypt); 2) Apiru mercenaries (EA 195) around Amurru's area in the North and around Shechem's area in the South against Canaanite kings.

Canaan appears at this time as a sort of protectorate under the power of pharaohs. Each king, wren, or town mayor, had to swear allegiance to the pharaoh and take into account the requirements of the latter who secured his power in the land by sending his representatives on the spot accompanied by a police escort of a few hundred archers. These letters reveal a generally peaceful international environment with the exception of two areas of conflict, one in the region around the land of Amurru and another in the area around the town of Shechem.

Nearly one-quarter of the letters are from Rib-Hadda, the mayor of Byblos. The politics of Rib-Hadda's Byblos were dominated by the emergence of a major power in Amurru with 'Abdi-Aširta and the aggression of Šuppiliuma I, King of Hatti. With Sumur captured and Byblos virtually besieged, Amenhotep IV was obliged to summon the ruler of Amurru, Aziru, to court, where he was detained for several months. Subsequently, however, Aziru stepped up the pressure on Byblos and switched his allegiance to the King of Hatti. The politics of Palestine, on the other hand, were dominated by local power-games in which Egypt intervened as little as possible. However, the raiding of Lab'ayu and his sons near Megiddo was one local irritation which grew into a threat to trade. Avoiding direct intervention, Amenhotep IV demanded that a group of Palestinian city-states put aside their own differences and co-operate in order to eliminate Lab'ayu (and protect the trade routes with the minimum of direct intervention). Key areas of conflict⁴⁷²:

The term 'Apiru ("factions") is used with a slightly different meaning to the north and south. For example, Biryawaza, the mayor of Kumidu (in the north), wrote to the Egyptian king: *I am indeed, together with my troops and chariots, together with my brothers [soldiers from Kumidu], my 'Apiru [Canaanite mercenaries from Amurru] and my Suteans [Syrian mercenaries from Mitanni], at the disposition of the archers [Egyptian soldiers], wheresoever the king [of Egypt], my lord, shall order (me to go)* (EA 195). These mercenaries were involved in police operations and not in a war because of the numbers involved⁴⁷³. Thus Rib-Hadda, the mayor of Byblos wrote: *What is 'Abdi-Aširta [king of Amurru], servant and dog, that he takes the land of the king himself? What is his auxiliary forces that it is strong? Through the 'Apiru his auxiliary force is strong! So send me 50 pairs of horses and 200 infantry that I may resist him in Šigata until the coming forth of the archers* (EA 71). The 'Apiru of 'Abdi-Aširta (King of Amurru) were factions from Amurru and the 'Apiru of Lab'ayu, the mayor of Shechem, were factions from the area around Shechem: *Message of Biridiya [Mayor of Megiddo] (...) The two sons of Lab'ayu have indeed gave the money to the 'Apiru and to the Suteans in order to wage war against me* (EA 246).

⁴⁶⁹ W.L. MORAN - Les lettres d'El Amarna

in: *LIPO* n°13 Paris 1987 Éd. Cerf pp. 569, 604-605.

⁴⁷⁰ R.O. FAULKNER - A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian
Oxford 2002, Ed. Griffith Institute pp. 38, 42, 261.

⁴⁷¹ In Middle Assyrian *apāru/epēru* means "put crown on the head", see: A Concise Dictionary of Akkadian (Harrassowitz Verlag, 2000) pp. 19,99. In Amarna letters Apiru are compared to: a runaway dog (EA 67); mercenaries (EA 71); a rebel (EA 288); robbers (EA 318).

In Akkadian *Ḫapirū/Ḫabbātu* =SA.GAZ means "nomads/looters", see Manuel d'épigraphie akkadienne (Geuthner, 1999) p. 87.

⁴⁷² B. MANLEY - Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypt
London 1996 Ed. Penguin Books pp. 80-81.

⁴⁷³ For example: *Zitana [a Hittite General] has come and there are 90,000 infantrymen that have come with him* (EA 170).

The term Ḥapiru/‘Apiru was also used to designate the inhabitants of Palestine⁴⁷⁴, a country that was at peace! For example, ‘Abdi-Heba, the mayor of Jerusalem, wrote: *What have I done to the king, my lord? They denounce me: (I am slandered) before the king, my lord: ‘Abdi-Heba has rebelled against the king, his lord. Seeing that, as far as I am concerned, neither my father nor my mother put me in this place, but the strong arm of the king brought me into my father's house, why should I of all people commit a crime against the king, my lord? As truly as the king, my lord, lives, I say to the commissioner of the king, my lord: Why do you love the ‘Apiru but hate the mayors? Accordingly, I am slandered before the king, my lord. Because I say: Lost are the lands of the king, my lord, accordingly I am slandered before the king, my lord. May the king, my lord, know that (though) the king, my lord, stationed a garrison (here) [Now], O king, my lord, [there is n]o garrison, [and so] may the king provide for his land. May the king provide for his land! All the lands of the king, my lord, have deserted. Ili-Milku [mayor of Gezer] has caused the loss of all the land of the king, and so may the king, my lord, provide for his land. For my part, I say: I would go in to the king, my lord, and visit the king, my lord, but the war against me is severe, and so I am not able to go in to the king, my lord. And may it seem good in the sight of the king, [and] may he send a garrison so I may go in and visit the king, my lord. In truth, the king, my lord, lives: whenever the commissioners have come out, I would say (to them): Lost are the lands of the king, but they did not listen to me. Lost are all the mayors; there is not a mayor remaining to the king, my lord. May the king turn his attention to the archers so that archers of the king, my lord, come forth. The king has no lands. (That) ‘Apiru [Ili-Milku] has plundered all the lands of the king. If there are archers this year, the lands of the king, my lord, will remain. But if there are no archers, lost are the lands of the king, my lord (EA 286). Consider] the entire affair. [Milkilu and Tagi brou]ght [troop]s into [Keilah] against me. [Consider] the deed that they did [to your servant] (...) May the king know (that) all the lands are [at] peace (with one another), but I am at war. May the king provide for his land. Consider the lands of Gezer, Ashkelon, and Lachish. They have given them food, oil, and any other requirement. So may the king provide for archers and send the archers against men that commit crimes against the king, my lord. If this year there are archers, then the lands and the mayors will belong to the king, my lord. But if there are no archers, then the king will have neither lands nor mayors. Consider Jerusalem! This neither my father nor my mother gave to me. The strong hand: (arm) [of the king] gave it to me. Consider the deed! This is the deed of Milkilu [ruler of Gezer] and the deed of the sons of Lab‘ayu [rulers of Shechem], who have given the land of the king (to) the ‘Apiru. Consider, O king, my lord! I am in the right! With regard to the Kašites (Kushites?), may the king make inquiry of the commissioners. Though the house is well fortified, they attempted a very serious crime. They took their tools, and I had to seek shelter by a support for the roof. A[nd so i]f he is going to send [troop]s into [Jerusalem], let them come with [a garrison for] (regular) service. May the king provide for them; [all] of the land might be in dire straits on their account. May the king inquire about the[m. Let there be] much food, much oil, much clothing, until Pauru, the commissioner of the king, comes up to Jerusalem. Gone is Addaya together with the garrison of soldiers [that] the king provided. May the king know (that) Addaya said to me: Behold, he has dismissed me. Do not abandon it, [and] send this [year] a garrison, and send right here the commissioner of the king. I sent [as gift]s to the king, my lord, [x] prisoners, 5000 [... and ...]8 porters for the caravans of the k[ing, my lord], but they have been taken in the countryside of Aijalon. May the king, my lord, know (that) I am unable to send a caravan to the king, my lord. For your information! As the king has placed his name in Jerusalem forever, he cannot abandon it —the land of Jerusalem. Say to the scribe of the king, my lord: Message of ‘Abdi-Heba, your servant. I fall at (your) feet. I am your servant. Present eloquent words to the king, my lord: I am a soldier of the king. I am always yours. And please make the Kašites responsible for the evil deed. I was almost killed by the Kašites in my own house. May the king [make an inquiry] in their regard. [May the kin]g, my lord, [provide] for them (EA 287). It is, therefore, impious what they have done to me. Behold, I am not a mayor; I am a soldier of the king, my lord. Behold, I am a friend of the king and a tribute-bearer of the king. It was neither my father nor my mother, but the strong arm of the king that*

⁴⁷⁴ In addition, several cities bear the same name like Rehob (Jos 19:28-30), Aphek (Jos 12:18; 13:4; 19:30; 1Ki 20:26), etc.

placed me in the house of [my] father (...) May the king give thought to his land; the land of the king is lost. All of it has attacked me, I am at war as far as the land of Šeru (Seir) and as far as Ginti-kirmil (Gath of Carmel). All the mayors are at peace, but I am at war. I am treated like an 'Apiru, and I do not visit the king, my lord, since I am at war. I am situated like a ship in the midst of the sea. The strong hand (arm) of the king took the land of Naḥrima (Mitanni) and the land of Kasi (Kush), but now the 'Apiru have taken the very cities of the king. Not a single mayor remains to the king, my lord; all are lost. Behold, Turbaḥu was slain in the city gate of Silu. The king did nothing. Behold, servants who were joined to the 'Apiru smote Zimredda of Lachish, and Yaptih-Hadda was slain in the city gate of Silu. The king did nothing. Why has he not called them to account? May the king provide for his land and may he see to it that archers [come ou]t to his land. If there are no archers this year, all the lands of the king, my lord, are lost. They have not reported to the king that the lands of the king, my lord, are lost and all the mayors lost. If there are no archers this year, may the king send a commissioner to fetch me, me along with my brothers, and then we will die near the king, our lord (EA 288). Milkilu does not break away from the sons of Lab'ayu and from the sons of Arsava, as they desire the land of the king for themselves. As for a mayor who does such a deed, why does the king not call him to account? Such was the deed that Milkilu and Tagi did: they took Rubutu. And now as for Jerusalem, if this land belongs to the king, why is it (not) of concern to the king like Gaṣa (Haṣattu)? Gath of Carmel (Ginti-kirmil) belongs to Tagi, and men of Gath (Gimti) are the garrison in Beth-Shean (Bitsani). Are we to act like Lab'ayu when he was giving the land of Shechem (Sakmu) to the Ḥapiru? Milkilu has written to Tagi and the sons [of Lab'ayu]: Be the both of you a protection. Grant all their demands to the men of Keilah, and let us isolate Jerusalem. Addaya has taken the garrison that you sent in the charge of Haya, the son of Miyare; he has stationed it in his own house in Gaṣa and has sent 20 men to Egypt. May the king, my lord, know (that) no garrison of the king is with me. Accordingly, as truly as the king lives, his irpi-official, Pu'uru, has left me and is in Gaṣa. (May the king call this to mind when he arrives) and so may the king send 50 men as a garrison to protect the land. The entire land of the king has deser[ted] (EA 289). Here is the deed against the land that Milkilu and Šuardatu did: against the land of the king, my lord, they hired troops from Gezer, troops from Gath, and troops from Keilah. They seized Rubutu. The land of the king deserted to the Ḥapiru. And now, besides this, a town belonging to Jerusalem, Bit-⁴⁷⁵NIN.URTA⁴⁷⁵ by name, a city of the king, has gone over to the side of the men of Keilah. May the king give heed to 'Abdi-Heba, your servant, and send archers to restore the land of the king to the king. If there are no archers, the land of the king will desert to the Ḥapiru. This deed against the land was at the order of Milki[lu and a]t the order of Šuardatu, [together w]ith Gath (EA 290).

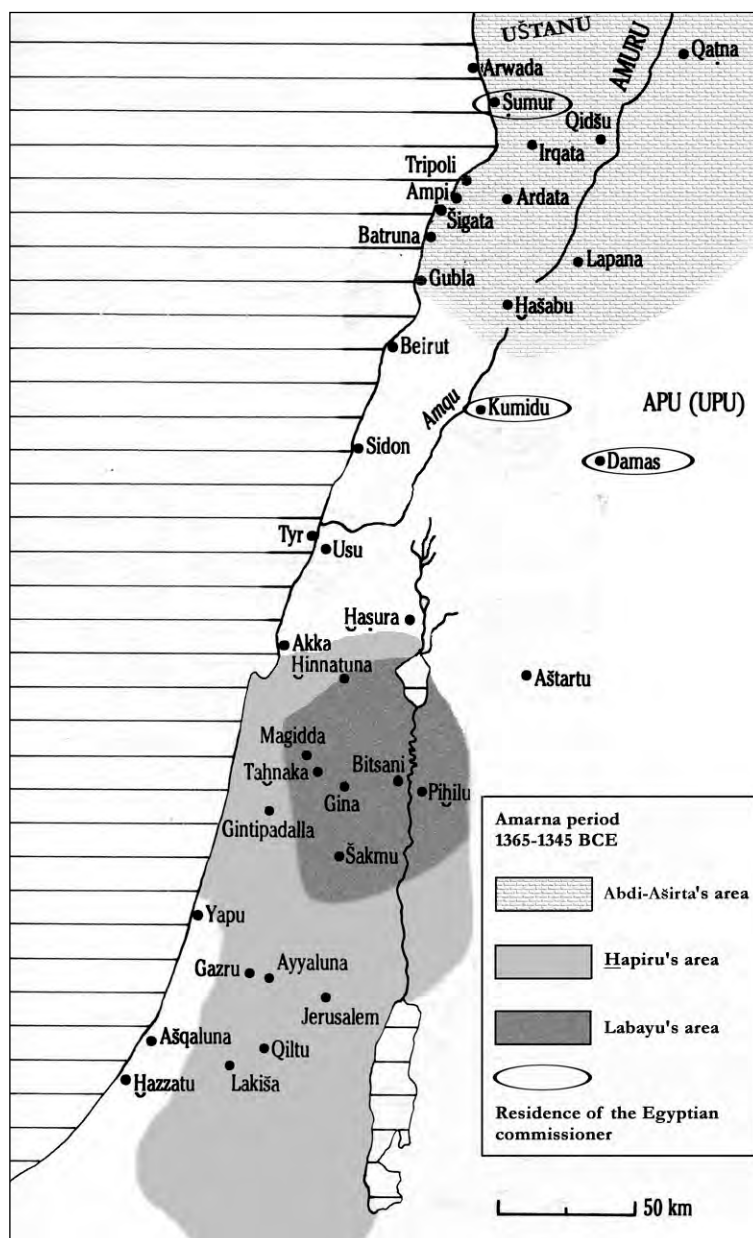
Letters of 'Abdi-Heba, the mayor of Jerusalem, describe a situation similar to that of Rib-Hadda, the mayor of Byblos, however, the areas involved are very different as well the leaders of the insurrection. Thus, northern Canaan was annexed by 'Abdi-Aširta (its former mayors had to pay him tribute), the king of Amurru, thanks to his 'Apiru, most were Amorite factious, and northern Palestine was bullied by Lab'ayu (then his sons afterwards), the mayor of Shechem, thanks to his 'Apiru, most were Canaanite factious, however the south of Palestine was a country in Ḥapiru's hands (Hebrews). Moreover, the war in northern Canaan is quite dramatic because many Canaanite mayors were killed whereas the war in the north of Palestine looks more like an insurgency accompanied by racketeering. Rib-Hadda, the king of Byblos, wrote: *Why have you been negligent, not speaking to the king, your lord, so that you may come out together with archers and fall upon the land of Amurru? If they hear of archers coming out, they will abandon their cities and desert. Do not you yourself know that the land of Amurru follows the stronger party? Look, they are not now being friendly to 'Abdi-Aširta. What will he do to them? [And so] they are longing day and night for the coming out of the archers, and (they say), "Let us join them!" All the mayors long for this to be done to 'Abdi-Aširta, since he sent a message to the men of Ammiya, "Kill your lord and join the 'Apiru. Accordingly, the mayors say, "He will do the same thing*

⁴⁷⁵ The name means "House of Ninurta [Assyrian god of war]", maybe a translation of Kiriath-Baal "City of Baal" (Jos 15:9,60).

to us, and all the lands will be joined to the 'Apiru (EA 73). The war, however, of the 'Apiru against me is severe. (Our) sons and daughters and the furnishings of the houses are gone, since they have been sold [in] the land of Yarimuta for our provisions to keep us alive. For the lack of a cultivator, my field is like a woman without a husband. I have written repeatedly to the palace because of the illness afflicting me, [but there is no one] who has looked at the words that [keep arr]iving. [May the king] give heed [to] the words of [his] servant. [...] The 'Apiru killed Ad[una, the king] of Arkite, but there was no one who said anything to 'Abdi-Aširta, and so they go on taking (territory for themselves). Miya, the ruler of Arašni, seized Ardata, and just now the men of Ammiya have killed their lord. I am afraid. May the king be informed that the king of Hatti has seized all the countries that were vassals of the king of Mittani. Behold, [he] is king of Nabrima [and] the land of the Great Kings, [and] 'Abdi-Aširta, [the servant] and dog, is tak[ing the land of the king] (EA 75). May the king, my lord, know that the war of 'Abdi-Aširta against me is severe. He wants to take [for himself] the two cities that have remained to me. Moreover, what is 'Abdi-Aširta, the dog, that he strives to take all the cities of the king, the Sun, for himself? Is he the king of Mittani, or the king of Kaššu (Babylonia), that he strives to take the land of the king for himself? He has just gathered together all the 'Apiru against Sigata [and] Ampī, and he himself has taken these two cities. I said: There is no place where men can enter against him. He has seized (...) [so] send me [a garris]on of 400 men a[nd x pairs of horses (...)] out to inspect [the coun]try, and yet now that the land of the king and Sumur, your garrison-city, have been joined to the 'Apiru, you have done nothing. Send a large force of archers that it may drive out the king's enemies and all lands be joined to the king (EA 76). Be informed that since Amanappa reached me, all the 'Apiru have at the urging of 'Abdi-Aširta turned against me. May my lord heed the words of his servant. Send me a garrison to guard the city of the king until the archers come out. If there are no archers, then all lands will be joined to the 'Apiru. Listen! Since Bit-Arha was seized [at] the urging of 'Abdi-Aširta, they have as a result been striving to take over Byblos and Batruna, and thus all lands would be joined to the 'Apiru. There are two towns that remain to me, and they want to take them from the king. May my lord send a garrison to his two towns until the archers come out, and may something be given to me for their food. I have nothing at all. Like a bird in a trap (cage), so am I in Byblos. Moreover, if [the kin]g is unable to save me from his enemies, [then al]l lands will be joined to 'Abdi-Aširta. [What is h]e, the dog, that [he ta]kes the lands of the king for himself? (EA 79). Repeatedly to you: The war is against Ardat, against Irqat, and against [..., an]d Ammiy[a and Sigat]a, loyal cities of the king, [but the king], my lord, [has done nothing]. Moreover, what is [he, 'Abdi-Aširta, the servant (and) dog, that he has acted as he pleased in the lands of my lord, [and yet] the king, my lord, has done nothing for [his] servant? Moreover, I sent my messenger (each time) that he took my cities and moved up against me. Now he has taken Batruna, and he has moved up against me. Behold the city! He has ... the entrance of the gate of Byblos. How long has he not moved from the gate, and so we are unable to go out into the countryside. Moreover, look, he strives to seize Byblos! And [... and] may the king, my lord, give heed t[o the words of] his servant, and [may] he hasten [with] all speed chariots and [troops] that they may gu[ard the city of the king], my lord, and [... until] the arrival of the king, [my] lord. For my part, I will not neglect the word of [my] lord. But i[f the k]ing, my lord, does [not give heed] to the words of [his] ser[vant], then Byblos will be joined to him, and all the lands of the king, as far as Egypt, will be joined to the 'Apiru. Moreover, should my lord not have word brought to his servant by tablet, with all speed, then ... the city to him and I will request a town from him to stay in, and so I will stay alive (EA 88). There was war against the[m, but] a garrison [of the king] was with them. There were provisions from the king at their disposal. [Though the war against me] is severe. I have no [provisions from the king or gar]ri[son of the king]. Wh[at shall I] do? As for the mayors, they are the ones who strike our city. They are like dogs, and there is no one who wants to serve them. What am I, who live among 'Apiru, to do? If now there are no provisions from the king for me, my peasantry is going to fight (against me). All lands are at war against me. If the desire of the king is to guard his city and his servant, send a garrison to guard the city. I will guard it while I am alive. When I die, who is going to guard it? (EA 130).

The 'Apiru in service to 'Abdi-Aširta, who was King of Amurru, are different from those associated with Lab'ayu, Mayor of Shechem. Amurru was an unreliable kingdom vassal of Egypt and its king led a secession war through Amorite factions on a large scale (north of Canaan). Shechem was an unreliable town vassal of Egypt and its mayor led a small insurgency around the town through some raids by Canaanite mercenaries. Two areas were little affected by these conflicts: the kingdom of Hazor in central Canaan and southern Palestine inhabited by people called Hapiru "Hebrews". The equivalence Hapiru = Hebrews is complicated by the mix of people in Palestine and the fact that many cities conquered by Joshua became in time Canaanite again (partially or fully). For example: *And the sons of Israel dwelt in among the Canaanites, the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. And they proceeded to take their daughters as wives for themselves, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they took up serving their gods (Jg 3:5-6). As for the Jebusites who were dwelling in Jerusalem*⁴⁷⁶, *the sons of Judah were not able to drive them away; and the Jebusites continue dwelling with the sons of Judah in Jerusalem down to this day (Jos 15:63). And they did not drive away the Canaanites who were dwelling in Gezer, and the Canaanites continue dwelling in among Ephraim down to this day and came to be subject to slavish forced labor (Jos 16:10). And Manasseh did not take possession of Beth-Shean and its dependent towns and Taanach and its dependent towns and the inhabitants of Dor and its dependent towns and the inhabitants of Ibleam and its dependent towns and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its dependent towns, but the Canaanites persisted in dwelling in this land. And it came about that Israel grew strong and proceeded to set the Canaanites to forced labor, and they did not drive them out completely. Neither did Ephraim drive out the Canaanites who were dwelling in Gezer, but the Canaanites continued to dwell in among them in Gezer. Zebulun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kitron and the inhabitants of Nahalol, but the Canaanites continued to dwell in among them and came to be subject to forced labor. Asher did not drive out the inhabitants of Akko and the inhabitants of Sidon and Ahlab and Achzib and Helbah and Aphik and Rehob. And the Asherites continued to dwell in among the Canaanites inhabiting the land, because they did not drive them out. Naphtali did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and the inhabitants of Beth-anath, but they continued to dwell in among the Canaanites inhabiting the land; and the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath became theirs for forced labor. And the Amorites kept pressing the sons of Dan into the mountainous region, for they did not allow them to come down into the low plain. So the Amorites persisted in dwelling in Mount Heres and in Aijalon and Shalbim. But the hand of the house of Joseph got to be so heavy that they were forced into task work. And the territory of the Amorites was from the ascent of Akkrabbim, from Sela upward (Jg 1:27-36). Several Hebrew cities became Canaanite again a little while later: In time Abimelech the son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem to the brothers of his mother and began speaking to them and to all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying: Speak, please, in the hearing of all the landowners of Shechem: Which is better for you, for seventy men, all the sons of Jerubbaal, to rule over you or for one man to rule over you? And you must remember that your bone and your flesh I am. So the brothers of his mother began speaking all these words about him in the hearing of all the landowners of Shechem so that their heart inclined toward Abimelech, for they said: He is our own brother. Then they gave him seventy pieces of silver from the house of Baal-berith, and with them Abimelech proceeded to hire idle and insolent men, that they might accompany him. After that he went to the house of his father at Ophrah and killed his brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal, seventy men, upon one stone, but Jotham the youngest son of Jerubbaal was left over, because he had hid. Subsequently all the landowners of Shechem and all the house of Millo gathered together and went and made Abimelech reign as king [ruler], close by the big tree, the pillar that was in Shechem (Jg 9:1-6). Considering all this information it is possible to reconstruct several zones of influence in Palestine during the period 1365-1345:*

⁴⁷⁶ The execration texts (c. 1950 BCE) report the name [U]rusalimum "City of Salem" in accordance with the biblical text (Gn14:18; Heb 7:1) placing the name at the time of Abraham. The name Yebus (Jg 19:10) which means "trample" is not attested but Mari texts (c. 1800 BCE) experiencing Amorite anthroponym Yabusi'um. A Amorite clan "those of Yabusi" would therefore have been settled in Jerusalem (E. LIPINSKI *Itineraria Phoenicia* in: *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 127 (2004) Peeters p. 502).

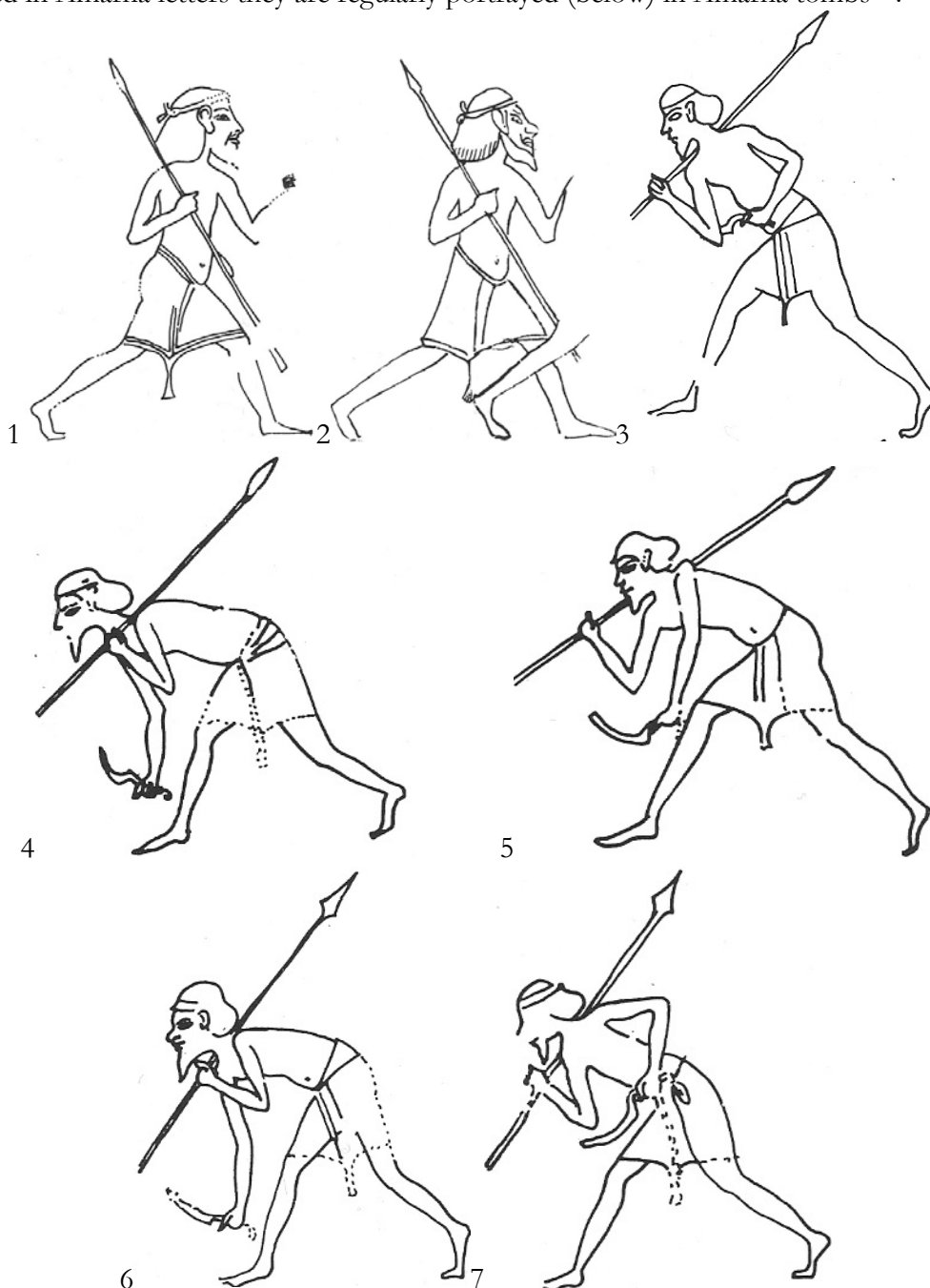


The area inhabited by the Ḫapiru “Nomads” in Palestine was substantially the same as the land of Shasu “Bedouins” described by Egyptian letters. This area of Palestine escaped the rulership of Egypt, since the Commissioner of Sumur was responsible only for the land of Amurru⁴⁷⁷ (from Byblos to the south of Ugarit and inward up to Orontes). The Commissioner of Kumidu administered Apu country (around Damascus), a territory from Kadesh, in southern Syria, to Hazor in the north of Palestine, and from the Damascus area to the northern Transjordan. Finally, the Commissioner of Gaza controlled Canaan, except the land of Shasu (Palestine), and a part of the Phoenician coast, probably up to Beirut⁴⁷⁸. Another proof that Egypt did not control Palestine is the complete disappearance of many Israelite cities of the region, such as: Tirzah, Tappuah, Shiloh, Gilgal, Bethel, Gibeon, Succoth, Hebron, Debir, Beer-sheba, Arad, etc. The Shasu (Israelites) are never mentioned

⁴⁷⁷ The Amurru is mentioned in the Mari letters (to -1700) as southern neighbor of Qatna's kingdom. It was perhaps a federation of several cities, the most important seems to have been Hazor. The Damascus region (Apu country) may have belonged to this group. After 1340 BCE, the Amurru (which the capital is not known) becomes a vassal kingdom of Hatti.

⁴⁷⁸ W.L. MORAN - Les lettres d'El Amarna in: *LIPO* n°13 Paris 1987 Éd. Cerf pp. 34-35.

in Amarna letters, because they were oppressed by the king of Hazor (1366-1346) at that time, according to the Bible (Jg 4:1-24). The city of Hazor was probably a vassal of the kingdom of Mitanni, which was itself an ally of Egypt. However if the Shasu are not quoted in Amarna letters they are regularly portrayed (below) in Amarna tombs⁴⁷⁹:



Shasu regularly appear with beards, hairstyles and clothes which are substantially identical to those worn by the Hyksos (Bedouins from Edom) represented on a wall at Beni-Hassan. This hairstyle (above), like the one of Syrians or Shasu from Edom, with a headband encircling the head was a characteristic attribute. Egyptian art represented variations in Shasu hairstyles (headband), it was so not for the representatives of other nations. Some features are identical to the biblical descriptions. In addition to their

⁴⁷⁹ R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens
Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 31-34, pl. II & III.

characteristic hair, a detail deserves special note: these Shasu soldiers are clothed in fringes decorated with tassels. According to the biblical text, Moses commanded the Israelites, after they arrived in Palestine to have the frayed edges parts of their clothing and tassels at the four corners of these garments (Nb 15:38-40; Dt 22:12). This coincidence confirms the identification of Shasu with the Israelites of the Bible⁴⁸⁰.

According to the reports from some Canaanite mayors, the Apiru were becoming a threat to Egypt: *The 'Apiru have taken the entire country (...) if the king, my lord, does [not give heed] to the words of his servant, while Gubla [Byblos] will be joined to him, and all the lands of the king, as far as Egypt, will be joined to the 'Apiru* (EA 83, 88). It seems however that the messages of this vassal king in the north of Canaan showed more posturing than real war, as he also wrote: *what am I, I who live among 'Apiru, to do? (...) All lands are at war against me* (EA 130). What complicates an accurate identification is the multiplicity of ethnic groups in the same place: *the son of Israel dwelt among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Yebusites* (Jg 3:5). The city of Jerusalem remained in the hands of Yebusites (Jos 15:63). It is noteworthy that Mari texts (c. -1800) contain Amorite anthroponym Yabusi'um. The name Yebus (Jg 19:10) means "He will trample" in Hebrew. An Amorite clan "those of Yabusi" must therefore have been settled in Jerusalem⁴⁸¹. Campaigns of Pharaohs have always avoided the area of the Shasu which extended into the western plains of Jericho and corresponded to the area indicated by the text of Joshua 4:13. The area of Apiru was smaller than the entire Retenu, however Egyptian domination in Northern Palestine was episodic and may be more theoretical than real⁴⁸².

The events described in the Amarna letters are consistent with those of the biblical text: Palestine is occupied by the Hebrews (Hapiru/ Shasu), the south is at peace with its neighbours and is slightly administered (not ruled, by the judge Ehud) and the north of the country is oppressed (and racketed)⁴⁸³ by the powerful king of Hazor via his commander-in-chief: Sisera. Despite the crucial role of the Hapiru in Palestine⁴⁸⁴, the Amarna letters never mention their ruler, which could be explained by the fact that Barak was only a judge or a counsellor. Amazingly, that case raises a huge problem because although the king of Hazor was the most powerful king of Canaan (he was the only Canaanite ruler to bear the title of king) he appeared not to intervene in conflicts, in addition, he disappeared for no apparent reason at the time of the 'Apiru's war and was replaced by a mayor (Abdi-Tirši), not by a king! Some scholars to explain the surprising absence of the powerful king of Hazor during this period assume he was in the orbit and protection of the king of Mitanni⁴⁸⁵. However this assumption is contradicted by the situation drawn up by Addu-nirari, the last king of Nuḥašše (Syria), whose kingdom was annexed by Šuppiluliuma I: *To the Sun, the king, my lord, the king of Egypt [Amenhotep III]: Message of Addu-nirari, your servant. I fall at the feet of my lord. Note (that) when Manahpiya [Thutmose III], the king of Egypt, your ancestor, made Takku, my ancestor, a king in Nuḥašše [c. -1450], he put oil on his head and spoke as follows: Whom the king of Egypt has made a king (...) And now, (...) And the king of Hatti (wrote to me about*

⁴⁸⁰ W.G. DEVER - Aux origines d'Israël. Quand la Bible dit vrai
Paris 2003 Éd. Bayard p. 167.

A. F. RAINEY - Israel in Merneptah's Inscription and Reliefs
in: *Israel Exploration Journal* 51 (2001) pp. 57-75

D.B. REDFORD - The Hyksos Invasion in History and Tradition
in: *Orientalia* 39 (1970) pp. 1-51.

⁴⁸¹ E. LIPINSKI *Itineraria Phoenicia*
in: *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta* 127 (2004) Peeters p. 502.

⁴⁸² J.C. GOYON - De l'Afrique à l'Orient (1800-330 avant notre ère)
Paris 2005 Éd. Ellipses pp. 73-75, 101-105.

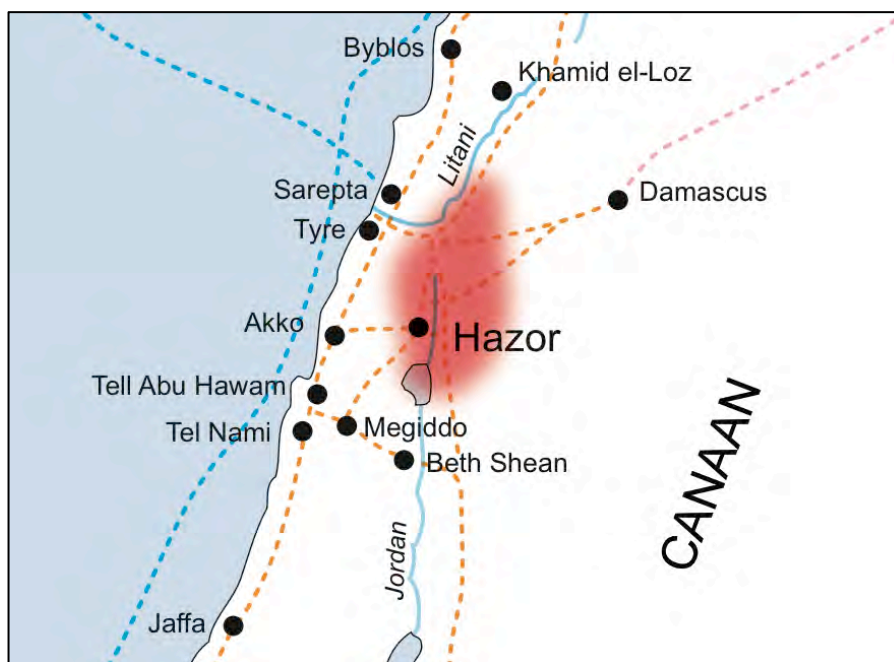
⁴⁸³ Some Israelite clans, like that one of Heber, had negotiated peace agreements with Jabin the king of Hazor (Jg 4:11,17).

⁴⁸⁴ Y. AHARONI - The Land of the Bible
Philadelphia 1979, Ed. The Westminster Press pp. 220-225.

⁴⁸⁵ A. ZARZECKI-PELEG, R. BONFIL - Hazor - A Syrian City-State in Mitanni's Orbit?
in: *Ugarit-Forschungen* 43 (2011) pp. 537-567.

an alliance). My lord, (I rejected the offer of) tablets of treaty obligations, and (I am still a servant of) the king of Egypt, (my lord). And now, (may) our lord (come forth to us), and into his power (...) And may our lord come forth (this) year. Do not be negligent. You will see that they are loyal to service of the king, my lord. And if my lord is not willing to come forth himself, may my lord send one of his commissioners together with his troops and chariots (EA 51). This letter shows that Nuḥašše was still a vassal kingdom of Egypt before its annexation by Šuppiluliuma I (c. -1345), despite it paid tribute to Mitanni (EA 75) an ally of Egypt from Artatama I's time (c. -1390). Given that Hazor appears in Thutmose III's list of conquered towns it was nominally under Egyptian control from this period (c. -1450). It is again included in a topographical list of Amenhotep II at Karnak. Furthermore, Hermitage Papyrus 1116A, dated year 18 of Amenhotep II's reign (c. -1400), records the transportation of grain and beer rations to an Egyptian garrison at Hazor and mentions envoys, termed as *mariyannu* ("knights") from various cities (among them Hazor) in Djahu (Lebanon). Hazor next appears in the topographical list of Seti I (1299-1283). Despite their scarcity, these documents show that Hazor was under Egyptian control during the Amarna period. Archaeological excavations of Hazor⁴⁸⁶ have provided clarification on the role and power of this city during the Amarna period, for example:

- The city of Hazor was the largest city in Canaan during Late Bronze, its size was around 80-100 hectares (below highlighted area) which is almost three times as large as Ugarit, a small but powerful kingdom. Thus its size was impressive enough to generate some amount of threat to its surroundings.



- Hazor was one of few Late Bronze cities in Canaan that was fortified. The lack of fortifications in these other cities is suggested to be an Egyptian strategy to weaken their power. Thus, Egypt might have left the fortifications of Hazor remaining as a means to defend itself against surrounding city-states in general, and a possible northern threat, (the Mitannians and later the Hittites) which would have threatened Egypt, in particular.
- The prevailing Syrian-influenced architectural elements and objects found in the city reveal not only a maintained commercial infrastructure and close contacts to the north, but also that Hazor associated with the northern cultural sphere, although, as in Middle Bronze, on the periphery.

⁴⁸⁶ K. JOSEPHSON HESSE – Hazor – Contacts and trade at Late Bronze Age Hazor
Umeå University 2008, Doctoral thesis, Department of historical, philosophical and religious studies, pp. 9-10,51-57,192-200.

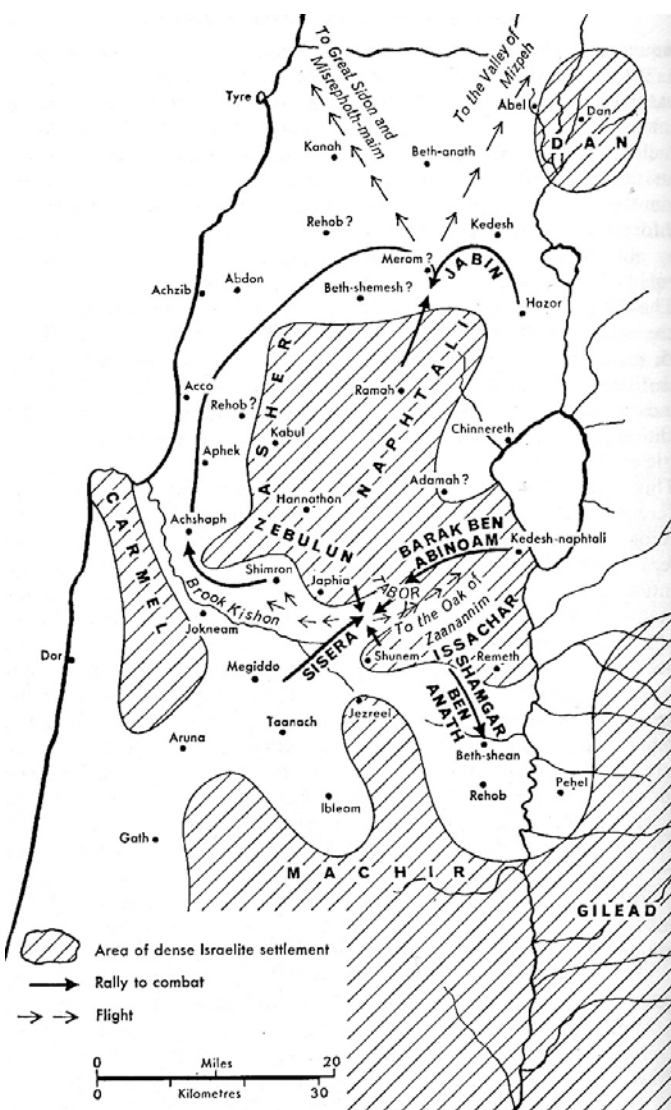
In this context Egypt most likely took advantage of Hazor's strategic position for her political purposes. The northernmost vassals, bordering the Mitannian and later Hittite empire, were Amurru, Kadesh and Damascus, and to the south of them, the northern border of Hazor's kingdom was located, whose territory seems to have reached the southern part of the Beq'a Valley. Amurru and Damascus acted as military buffers to Pharaoh's enemies in the north. However the allegiance to Pharaoh of these remote states, which were highly interested in extending their own territories, was not reliable. There was always the possibility of transferring their loyalty to the other side, which also happened with Kadesh, Amurru and also Damascus⁴⁸⁷. The disloyal behaviour of 'Abdi-Ashirta, the lord of Amurru, led to him being caught by the Egyptians and put to death. Later, his son Aziru continued these territorial ambitions and eventually joined the Hittites. He was followed by Niqmaddu II of Ugarit, who also changed sides, while Qatna was destroyed by the Hittites. During such circumstances it was, of course, an advantage to have a large and loyal vassal kingdom to trust, or a partner, which could keep an eye on the growing city-states bordering Egypt's northern enemies, called 'Apiru ("factions"). In this connection, the city of Hazor was perfect for Egypt to use as an informant and mediator towards this potential northern threat. Evidence of the city's loyalty to Pharaoh in the Amarna period is shown in its "membership" or "partnership" in a Pharaoh-loyal group, opposed to a growing coalition against Egypt led by Lab'ayu ("a faction"), the mayor of Shechem.

Hazor appears only in 4 Amarna letters, but none of these letters reveal the name of the king. It is noteworthy that the king of Alašiya (Cyprus), a member of the Great Powers club, never uses his name as well (EA 33-40) but merely introduces himself as "the king of Alašiya" in his letters to Pharaoh. The ruler of Hazor similarly titles himself "the king of Hašura", which is the only Amarna letter addressed to a Pharaoh where a vassal ruler refers to himself as a king: *Message of the king of Hazor. I fall at the feet of my lord. Look, I have the cities of the king, my lord, under guard until my lord reaches [me]. And when I heard these words of yours and of the coming forth of the Sun to me, I rejoiced accordingly. I pondered (the news), and my jubilation came forth. There was peace, and the gods themselves looked (favorably) on me. And I have indeed prepared everything until the arrival of the king, [my] lord. Look, whenever [Han]i, your messenger, arrives, the heart rejoices exceedingly. [In] my [heart] my joy [is great]. When... (EA 227).* The content of this letter is quite surprising. The tone of letter EA 227, sent to Pharaoh, is relaxed and radiates self-confidence compared to other vassal letters, which are filled with various expressions of self-abasement. This letter hints to a more equal relation between Pharaoh and the Hazor ruler. In addition, EA 227 mentions a *mar šipri* "messenger", Pharaoh's personal envoy, who visited Hazor. This *mar šipri* should be compared to an ambassador or a political envoy, conveying personal messages or requests or collecting tributes or gifts. Hazor's large territory and ambitions to extend this are indicated in EA 227 when the king of Hazor mentions his cities in plural and in EA 364 when Ayyab, the ruler of Ashtaroth, writes to the Pharaoh that the ruler of Hazor has taken 3 cities from him. Consequently, the situation of the king of Hazor is quite unreal: despite all the land of Canaan being disturbed by many factions who put the country upside down, he feels relaxed and joyful regarding the peace of the cities in his land. Even stranger, the king of Hazor is accused to have passed to enemies of Egypt ('Apiru) by Abi-Milku, the mayor of Tyre: *I write to the king, my lord, because every day the king of Sidon has captured a palace attendant of mine. May the king give attention to his servant, and may he charge his commissioner to give Usu to his servant for water, for fetching wood, for straw, for clay. Since he has acted hostilely, has he not violated the oath? There is not another palace attendant. The one who raids the land of the king is the king of Sidon. The king of Hazor has abandoned his house and has aligned himself with the 'Apiru. May the king be concerned about the*

⁴⁸⁷ Damascus (in Uru) which was a vassal of Egypt (EA 53) became a vassal of Hatti (EA 197).

palace attendants. These are treacherous fellows. He has taken over the land of the king for the 'Apiru. May the king ask his commissioner, who a familiar with Canaan (EA 148). The change in circumstances between the two letters regarding the king of Hazor is incomprehensible especially since when the king of Hazor disappears he is replaced by a ruler, not a king, who complains about all that was done against his city: *Message of 'Abdi-Tirzi, the ruler of Hazor, your servant. I fall at the feet of the king, my lord, 7 times and 7 times (at the feet of the king, my lord). As I am the loyal servant of the king, my lord, I am indeed guarding Hazor together with its villages for the king, my lord. May the king, my lord, recall whatever has been done against Hazor, your city, and against your servant* (EA 228). Academics don't try to explain such unlikelihood, in contrast to the Bible which offers a logical explanation in the Book of Judges.

The Bible reads: *But after Ehud died [in 1366 BCE], the Israelites again did what was bad in Jehovah's eyes. So Jehovah sold them into the hand of Jabin the king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The chief of his army was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth of the nations. The Israelites cried out to Jehovah, because Jabin had 900 war chariots with iron scythes, and he harshly oppressed the Israelites for 20 years [1366-1346]. Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. She used to sit under Deborah's palm tree between Ramah and Bethel in the mountainous region of Ephraim; the Israelites would go up to her for judgment. She sent for Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali and said to him: Has not Jehovah the God of Israel given the command? Go and march to Mount Tabor, and take 10,000 men of Naphtali and Zebulun with you. I will bring to you Sisera, the chief of Jabin's army, along with his war chariots and his troops to the stream of Kishon, and I will give him into your hand (...). They reported to Sisera that Ba'arak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor. At once Sisera assembled all his war chariots —900 chariots with iron scythes— and all the troops that were with him from Harosheth of the nations to go to the stream of Kishon. Deborah now said to Barak: Rise up, for this is the day that Jehovah will give Sisera into your hand. Is Jehovah not going out before you? And Barak descended from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men following him. Then Jehovah threw Sisera and all his war chariots and all the army into confusion before the sword of Barak. Finally Sisera got down from his chariot and fled on foot. Barak chased after the war chariots and the army as far as Harosheth of the nations. So Sisera's whole army fell by the sword; not even one remained (Jg 4:1-16).* Consequently, it is essential to determine precisely the role and chronology of the king of Hazor (called Jabin II in the Bible).



DATING THE AMARNA PERIOD (1360-1330)

Assyrian, Babylonian and Egyptian chronologies, calibrated by astronomy, are used to fix the chronologies of Hatti, Ugarit, Mitanni and Amurru⁴⁸⁸. Israelite chronology is drawn from the Bible (Amarna period is highlighted in light green):

| EGYPT | reign | ASSYRIA | reign | BABYLON | reign |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| Amenhotep III | 1383-1345 | Eriša-Adad I | 1385-1358 | Kadašman-Enlil I | 1375-1360 |
| Akhenaten | 1356-1340 | Aššur-uḫalliṭ I | 1358 - | Burna-Buriaš II | 1360 - |
| Semenkhkare | 1340-1338 | | | | |
| -Ankhkheperure | 1338-1336 | | | | |
| Tutankhamon | 1336 - -1327 | | | | -1333 |
| Aḫ | 1327-1323 | | -1323 | Kurigalzu II | 1333 - |
| Horemheb | 1323-1295 | Enlil-nêrârî | 1323-1313 | | -1308 |

| UGARIT | reign | MITANNI | reign | CARKEMISH | reign |
|---------------|-----------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------|--------|
| Niqmepa V | 1380-1360 | Šutarna II | 1373-1355 | (vassal of Hatti) | |
| Ammištamru II | 1360 - -1347 | Artašumara | 1355-1353 | ? | |
| | | Tušratta | 1353 - | ? | |
| Niqmaddu III | 1347 - | | -1339 | ? | |
| | | Artatama II | 1339 - | ? | |
| | | Šutarna III | -1325 | ? | |
| | -1315 | Šattiwaza | 1325 - | Šarri-Kušuh | 1325 - |
| Arḫalbu | 1315-1310 | | -1300 | (Piyaššili) | -1310 |

| HATTI | reign | AMURRU | reign | PALESTINE | reign |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|------------------------|------------------|
| Tuthaliya III | 1370-1353 | Abdi-Aširta | 1370 - | Ehud/ Shamgar | 1386-1366 |
| Šuppiluliuma I | 1353 - -1322 | | -1347 | Jabin II/Sisera | 1366-1346 |
| | | Aziru | 1347 - | Barak | 1346 - |
| Muršili II | 1322 - -1295 | | -1314 | | -1306 |
| | | DU-Tešub | 1314-1312 | | |
| | | Duppi-Tešub | 1312-1280? | Madian | 1306-1299 |
| Muwatalli II | 1295-1275 | Bentešina | 1280?-1275 | Gideon (Jerubbaal) | 1299 - |
| Urhi-Teshub | 1275-1268 | Šapili | 1275-1264 | | |
| Ḫattušili III | 1268-1241 | Bentešina | 1264-1230 | | -1259 |

Several precisely dated events and based on astronomy allow one to fix an absolute chronology for the short Amarna period (1360-1330):

- Muršili II's reign can be dated precisely⁴⁸⁹ because at the beginning of his 10th year there was "a solar omen"⁴⁹⁰ (total eclipse on the Hittite capital Ḫattuša). During this period 1330-1310 BCE there was only one total solar eclipse on Hittite territory, that of 24 June 1312 BCE⁴⁹¹. In his annals, the king mentions the death of his father and his older brother during his accession, all these events were held in a single campaign in 1322 BCE⁴⁹², between April and November. Šuppiluliuma died in 1322 BCE and his son Arnuwanda II died during the 6th and final year of the war. Proceedings of Šuppiluliuma mention a period of 20 years between the Hurrian war of 6 years and the Syrian war of 1 year (KUB 19:9 I). The preparation of the Syrian war covered a period of 3 or 4 years after the 1st unsuccessful attack against Tušratta at the beginning of his reign (KBo I:1.)

⁴⁸⁸ S. IZRE'EL – Singer, A Concise History of Amurru

in: Amurru Akkadian: A Linguistic Study vol. II (Ed. Scholars Press, 1991) pp. 172-179.

⁴⁸⁹ E. WENTE, C. VAN SICKLEN - Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes

in: *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* 39 (Chicago, 1976) p. 249.

⁴⁹⁰ I. SINGER – Hittite Prayers

Atlanta 2002 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 75,77.


P.J. HUBER -The Solar Omen of Mursili II

in: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 121 (2001) pp. 640-644.

⁴⁹¹ <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEcat5/SE-1399--1300.html> <http://eclipse.gsfc.nasa.gov/SEsearch/SEsearchmap.php?Ecl=-13110624>

⁴⁹² T. BRYCE – The Kingdom of the Hittites

Oxford 2005 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 154-220.

- Proceedings of Šuppiluliuma (28 III:11-15) tells us that after Akhenaten's death the craven widow of Semenkhkare (*[Nip]Hururiya*) asked for a son to Hittite king to become a Pharaoh in Egypt. The chronological reconstruction of this period is as follows: the total solar eclipse of 14 May 1338 BCE on the city of Akhenaten, cited in allusion on the Amon's priest graffito dated III Akhet 10, Year 3 of Ankhkheperure⁴⁹³ (1st August 1337 BCE), explains the strange behavior of the queen to get a king on the throne of Egypt and also the change to sun worship from the time (Amon replacing Aton).
- Akhet-Aton (*3ht-'itn*) means "where the sun-disk rises" represented by the hieroglyph  exactly imitating the sun appearing in the notch of the mountain in Amarna. The temple in the city was inaugurated on IV Peret 13 in year 5 of Akhenaten and commemorated in Year 6 on the same date⁴⁹⁴. The fact that the temple is oriented exactly in line with the Royal Wadi⁴⁹⁵ suggests that Akhenaten chose to inaugurate the city, the precise day when the sun rose in the notch of the mountain, illuminating the temple like a laser beam. The simulation of sunrise observed at that location⁴⁹⁶ (14th century BCE) indicates that it appeared at 4:38 UT in the notch of the mountain (the apparent diameter of which is 0.9 °, that of the sun is 0.5°) only two days in the year: 3/4 March and 5/6 November, as the apparent path of the sun drift of about 0.4° per day at the horizon (0° altitude) goes back and forth between the two extreme positions reached at solstices on 1st January and 5 July (spring equinox fell on 2 April⁴⁹⁷ at that time⁴⁹⁸). This implies that the equation: IV Peret 13 = 3 March⁴⁹⁹ [day of solar illumination in the temple] was satisfied only for 4 years, from 1341 to 1338 BCE. As the commemoration of IV Peret 13 stopped at the 6th year of Akhenaten (no 7th year), we can assume that it was the last year of his reign without co-regency (17th year from his co-regency). The accession of Akhenaten being located on I or II Peret, his 5th year began around January 1341 BCE and his 6th year to January 1340 BCE⁵⁰⁰. His father Amenhotep III died on April 1345 BCE during the year 38 of his reign. Letter EA 106 was written 5 years after the beginning of the war (1352 BCE) and EA 116 after Akhenaten sat on the throne.
- Tušratta wrote 7 letters⁵⁰¹ to Amenhotep III (EA 17-26) then 3 letters to Amenhotep IV (EA 27-29). He relates in his first letter (EA 17) his accession to the throne after the murder of his brother Artasuwara, then the following year an attack of the Hittite king [Šuppiluliuma] that he managed to repel. EA 23 letter (BM 29793) is dated IV Peret 1 Year 36 and 27 EA letter is dated I Peret [5] Year [1]2 of Amenhotep IV. Correspondence with Amenhotep III was intense because the EA 20 letter stated that the following letter would be sent 6 months later, involving a total period of 4 or 5 years between the first and last letter. Correspondence with Amenhotep IV was more relaxed since the last letter written to Amenhotep IV (EA 29) states "my messengers for 4 years", involving a period of at least 4 years between the first and the last letter.
- Šuppiluliuma I congratulated Semenkhkare (*Hureya*) when he acceded to Egypt's throne (EA 41), then mentions the murder of Tušratta in a letter to Semenkhkare (EA 43).

⁴⁹³ W.J. MURNANE – Texts from the Amarna Period

Atlanta 1995 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 207-208.

⁴⁹⁴ W.J. MURNANE - The "First Occasion of the Discovery" of Akhet-Aton

in: *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 14 (1987) pp. 239-246.

⁴⁹⁵ D.P. SILVERMAN, J.W. WEGNER, J.H. WEGNER – Akhenaten and Tutankhamun Revolution and Restoration Philadelphia 2006 Ed. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology pp. 43-55.

⁴⁹⁶ R.A. WELLS - The Amarna M,X,K Boundary Stelae Date: A Modern Calendar Equivalent

in: *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 14 (1987) pp. 313-333.

⁴⁹⁷ <http://www.imcce.fr/fr/grandpublic/temps/saisons.php>

⁴⁹⁸ This coincidence of 3 March happening today on 18 February [azimuth 102.7 ° at the horizon 0°], the apparent path of the sun moving towards the summer solstice (on 5 July). The Egyptian calendar was being exactly 365 days it drifted from one day every 4 years compared to the true solar year of 365.24 days [or a drift of about 0.1° per year].

⁴⁹⁹ The other possibility IV Peret 13 = 5 November has no solution in the 14th century BCE.

⁵⁰⁰ The posthumous stele of year 8 has been completed in the last year of the 4-year cycle, in 1338 BCE.

⁵⁰¹ W.L. MORAN - Les lettres d'El Amarna

in: *LIPO* n°13 Paris 1987 Éd. Cerf pp. 48, 110-190.

Šuppiluliuma and his son Arnuwanda II died in -1322 (of bubonic plague). The 1st year of the Hurrian war of 6 years goes back in -1327, the year of Tutankhamun's death. The Syrian war of 1 year against Amurru is dated -1348 and Šuppiluliuma's attack against Tušratta in -1352. Tušratta likely had begun to reign 1 year before the attack and died during the brief reign of Semenkhkare⁵⁰² (c. -1338). Akhenaten's death in -1340 and EA 9 letter that Burna-Burias II sent to Tutankhamun, shortly after his accession, has coincided with the beginning of his reign in -1336. Synchronisms are highlighted:

| <i>Astronomical dating</i> | EGYPT | | MITANNI | | HATTI |
|----------------------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| | Amenhotep III | | Šutarna II | | Tuthaliya III |
| | 1357 | 27 | | | |
| | 1356 | 28 | Amenhotep IV | Artašumara | |
| | 1355 | 29 | 2 | | |
| | 1354 | 30 | 3 | Tušratta | |
| | 1353 | 31 | [1] | | Šuppiluliuma I |
| <i>first letters</i> | 1352 | 32 (EA 254) | [2] | | 1st attack |
| | 1351 | 33 | EA 17, EA 18 | 1 | 2 |
| | 1350 | 34 | EA 19, EA 20 | 2 | 3 |
| | 1349 | 35 | EA 21, EA 22 | 3 | 4 |
| | 1348 | 36 (EA 75) | EA 23, EA 24 | 4 | '1 year War' |
| | 1347 | 37 (EA 106) | EA 25 | 5 | 6/1 |
| | 1346 | 38 | EA 26 | | 2 |
| | 1345 | Akhenaten | EA 27 | 1 | 3 |
| | 1344 | 2 | [13] | 2 | 4 |
| | 1343 | 3 | EA 28 | 3 | 5 |
| | 1342 | 4 | [15] | 4 | 6 |
| <i>3 March</i> | 1341 | 5 | [16] | EA 29 | 7 |
| <i>3 March</i> | 1340 | 6 | | | 8 |
| | 1339 | [-] | Semenkhkare | [15] | 9 (EA 41) |
| <i>14 May</i> | 1338 | *8* | 2 | (EA 43) | 10 |
| | 1337 | | Ankhkheperure | | 11 |
| <i>last letters</i> | 1336 | | Tutankhamun | (EA 9) | 24 |
| | 1335 | | 2 | | 25 |
| | 1334 | | 3 | | 26 |
| | 1333 | | 4 | (Burna-Buriaš II) | 27 |
| | 1332 | | 5 | | 15 |
| | 1331 | | 6 | | 16 |
| | 1330 | | 7 | | 17 |
| | 1329 | | 8 | | 18 |
| | 1328 | | 9 | | 19 |
| | 1327 | | 10 | | 20 |
| | 1326 | | Aḫ | | '6 years War' |
| | 1325 | | 2 | | 2 |
| | 1324 | | 3 | | 3 |
| | 1323 | | 4 | | 4 |
| | 1322 | | Horemheb | | 5 |
| | 1321 | | 2 | | Arnuwanda II |
| | 1320 | | 3 | | Muršili II |
| | 1319 | | 4 | | 2 |
| | 1318 | | 5 | | 3 |
| | 1317 | | 6 | | 4 |
| | 1316 | | 7 | | 5 |
| | 1315 | | 8 | | 6 |
| | 1314 | | 9 | | 7 |
| | 1313 | | 10 | | 8 |
| <i>24 June</i> | 1312 | | 11 | | 9 |
| | | | | | 10 |

⁵⁰² J. FREU, M. MAZOYER – Les débuts du nouvel empire hittite. Les Hittites et leur histoire
Paris 2007 Éd. L'Harmattan p. 271.

DATING THE 'APIRU'S WAR (1347 BCE)

The letter EA 75 allows dating of the 'Apiru's war, it reads⁵⁰³: *[May] the king, my lord, know that Byblos, the maidservant of the king from ancient times, is safe and sound. The war, however, of the 'Apiru against me is severe (...) The 'Apiru killed Ad[una, the king] of Arkite, but there was no one who said anything to 'Abdi-Aširta, and so they go on taking (territory for themselves) (...) May the king be informed that the king Hatti has seized all the countries that were vassal of the king of Mittani. Behold, [he] is king of Naḥrima [and] the land of the Great Kings, [and] 'Abdi-Aširta, [the servant] and dog, is tak[ing] the land of the king]. Send archers. This war in Canaan, which occurred just before Amenhotep III's death (EA 116), dated -1345, matches the war dated -1347⁵⁰⁴ led in Syria by Šuppiluliuma I. According to the mayor of Byblos: *May the king, my lord, know that the war [again]st us is very severe. As to its being told to you, "Sumur belongs to the king," may the king know that there was an attack on our garrison, and the sons of 'Abdi-Aširta seized it. And so there has been no one to carry word to the king. But give thought to the fact that I am your loyal servant, and whatever I hear I write to [my] lord. Moreover, give thought to Sumur. It is like a bird in a trap (cage): [The war] is very severe, and the messengers that [came] from the palace were unable to get [in]to Sumur. It was by night that I got them in. And here is how Yapah-Hadda [mayor of Beirut] is not just in my regard: when my man arrived, he bound him. May what is due to me [be gi]ven; it is very much. Now as the king is going to send the royal commissioners, may the king tell them to decide between us. If the king gives (the property) to his servant, well and good! Or, on the other hand, let the king take everything for himself. Moreover, all my towns have been joined to the 'Apiru, and all of them [are extremely hostile] to me, for [Yapah-Hadda keeps devising] evil upon evil against me. They have nothing, having paid ransom money, some twice, some three times. May the king heed the words of his loyal servant and give provisions to his servant and his maidservant, Byblos. Moreover, it would please me were I with you and so at peace. Look, Aziru and Yapah-Hadda have made an agreement against me, and I am unable [to d]o anything. Their actions [are hostile] to me. Accordingly, my situation is extremely grave. Moreover, note that we have been loyal servants of the king from ancient times. Moreover, note that I am your loyal servant, but I have nothing but distress. Note this matter. Note that I am the dirt at your feet, O king! Note: did not your father come out and visit (his) lands and his mayors? And now the gods and the Sun and the Lady of Byblos have granted that you be seated on the throne of your father's house (to rule) your land. Who are they, the sons of 'Abdi-Aširta, that they have taken the lands of the king for themselves? The king of Mittani? The king of Kaššu (Babylonia)? The king of Hatti? May the king send archers (and) Yanhamu along with [the prefec]ts from the land of Yarimuta. The commissioner from Kumidu (EA 116).**

Paralleling synchronisms implies dating the war of 'Apiru just after the "1 year war" in Syria led by Šuppiluliuma I (c. -1347), 4 years after his first attack (in -1352) against Mukiš, Nuḥašše and Niya, vassal kingdoms of Mitanni⁵⁰⁵. The aggression of Šuppiluliuma I in Syria caused a chain reaction which destabilized all the region, from the north with the big kingdoms of Mitanni (ally of Egypt) and Amurru (unreliable vassal of Egypt), to the south with the numerous small kingdoms of Canaan (vassals of Egypt) and Palestine (independent area). The period of destabilization was intense but short (1447-1445).

(One must know that comparing historical data to archaeological finds has shown that territory was not constitutive of political power during the Bronze Age and that the spatial configuration of ancient Near Eastern polities was more related to a sovereign state rather than a territorial state with boundaries, which is a modern notion⁵⁰⁶).

⁵⁰³ W.L. MORAN –The Amarna Letters

London 2002 Ed. The Johns Hopkins University Press pp. 145-146.

⁵⁰⁴ T.R. BRYCE – Some observations on the Chronology of Šuppiluliuma's Reign in: *Anatolian Studies* XXXIX (1989) pp. 19-30.

⁵⁰⁵ Against Itur-Addu, king Mukiš, Adu-nirari king of Nuḥašše and Agi-Tešub king of Niya (RS 17.340).

⁵⁰⁶ J. CASANA –Alalakh and the Archaeological Landscape of Mukish: The Political Geography and Population of a LBA Kingdom in: *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* No. 353 (2009), p. 31.

| year | | | [A] | [B] | [C] | [D] | [E] | [F] | [G] | |
|--------------|----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| -1347 | 1 | X | 36 | | | 5 | | 19 | | [A] Amenhotep III King of Egypt |
| | 2 | XI | | | | | | | | Letter EA 23 (year 36 of Amenhotep III) |
| | 3 | XII | *** | 10 | | *** | | | | |
| | 4 | I | | | | | 13 | 20 | *** | [F, G] Jabin II King of Hazor. Letter EA 75 (war in Syria led by King of Hatti, war of 'Apiru being in progress) |
| | 5 | II | | | 11 | 6 | | | | |
| | 6 | III | | | | | | 0 | | [B] Amenhotep IV King of Egypt |
| | 7 | IV | | | | | | | | [C] Aššur-uballit I King of Assyria |
| | 8 | V | | | | | | | | [D] Šuppiluliuma I King of Hatti |
| | 9 | VI | | | | | | | | [E] Tušratta King of Mitanni |
| | 10 | VII | 37 | | | | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | | | | | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | | | | | | | | [F] Baraq Judge of Israel |
| -1346 | 1 | X | | | | | | | | [G] Abdi-Tirši Mayor of Hazor |
| | 2 | XI | | | | | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | | 11 | | | | | | |
| | 4 | I | | | | | 14 | 1 | | |
| | 5 | II | | | 12 | 7 | | | | |
| | 6 | III | | | | | | | | |
| | 7 | IV | | | | | | | | |
| | 8 | V | | | | | | | | |
| | 9 | VI | | | | | | | | |
| | 10 | VII | 38 | | | | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | | | | | | | | |
| | 12 | IX | | | | | | | | |
| -1345 | 1 | X | | | | | | | | |
| | 2 | XI | | | | | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | | 12 | | | | | | |
| | 4 | I | | | | | 15 | 2 | | |
| | 5 | II | | | 13 | 8 | | | | |
| | 6 | III | | | | | | | | |
| | 7 | IV | | | | | | | | |
| | 8 | V | 1 | | | | | | | [A] Akhenaten, [B] Amenhotep IV King of Egypt |
| | 9 | VI | *** | | | | *** | | | Letter EA 26 Amenhotep III is dead |
| | 10 | VII | | | | | | | | |
| | 11 | VIII | *** | | | | *** | | | Letter EA 27 dated December year [1]2 of Amenhotep IV |
| | 12 | IX | *** | | | | | | | Reception of foreign tributes dated February year 12 |
| -1344 | 1 | X | | | | | | | | |
| | 2 | XI | | | | | | | | |
| | 3 | XII | 2 | [13] | | | | | | |
| | 4 | I | | | | | 16 | 3 | | |
| | 5 | II | | | 14 | 9 | | | | |
| | 6 | III | | | | | | | | |

The first purpose of wars was to annex a country for further payments of tribute. Rulers who refused to comply were ransomed in order to get a booty and sometimes killed. The great kingdoms of that time received tributes paid by their vassals (once a year) and gave them in exchange a police protection. Two letters from Burna-Buriaš II to Tutankhamun (*Nibḥureriya*) show that the protection of the king of Egypt was defective in Canaan and consequently Canaanite mayors sought to change to ally with other kings: *Now, my merchants who were on their way with Aḥu-rabu, were detained in Canaan for business matters. After Aḥu-rabu went on to my brother, in Hinnaṭuna of Canaan [Jos 19:14], Šum-Adda, the son of Balumme, and Šutatna, the son of Šaratum of Akka, having sent their men, killed my merchants and took away their money. I send [...] to you posthaste. Inquire [from him so] he can inform you. Canaan is your country, and [its] kings [are your servants]. In your country I have been despoiled. Bring [them] to account and make compensation for the money that they took away. Put to death the men who put my servants [to] death, and so avenge their blood. And if you do not put these men to death, they are going to kill again, be it a caravan of mine or your own messengers, and so messengers between us will thereby be cut off. And if they try to deny this to you, Šum-Adda, having blocked the passage of one man of mine, retained him in his company, and another man, having been forced into service by Šutatna of Akka, is still serving him. These men should be brought to you so you can investigate, inquire [whether they are] dead, and thus become informed (EA 8). In the time of Kurigalzu [1391-1375], my ancestor, all the Canaanites, wrote here to him, saying: Come to the border of the country so we can revolt and be allied with you. My ancestor sent*

them this (reply), saying: Forget about being allied with me. If you become enemies of the king of Egypt, and are allied with anyone else, will I not then come and plunder you? How can there be an alliance with me? For the sake of your ancestor my ancestor did not listen to them. Now, as for my Assyrian vassals, I was not the one who sent them to you. Why on their own authority have they come to your country? If you love me, they will conduct no business whatsoever. Send them off to me empty-handed (EA 9).

Historical context explains the strategic role of Syria which was a hub in international trade at that time. Since Amenhotep II (1420-1392) the Egyptians were going to control the great trade route to Mesopotamia through alliances with the Mitanni⁵⁰⁷. Dynastic marriages between Thutmose IV (1392-1383) and Artatama I (1390-1373) would seal definitely the alliance between Egypt and Mitanni (EA 29:16). Thus the entire Mediterranean coast (from Philistia to Phoenicia) was controlled by Egyptians, as far as Byblos and the north west of Syria (kingdom of Carchemish) was under the control of the Hittites. This balance would be broken after the attack north of Hatti by Kaska (EA 31:26-27). Tudhaliya III (1370-1353) embarked on the monumental task of winning back his kingdom from the enemy forces which had occupied his land which laid the foundations in the campaigns of reconquest⁵⁰⁸. When Tudhaliya III died his son Šuppiluliuma continued this reconquest eastward annexing the Syrian part of Mitanni⁵⁰⁹: Nuḥasse (EA 51) and Qatna (EA 55). Tušratta managed to stop the attacks (EA 17:30-35) and Ammištamru II (1360-1347), the king of Ugarit, wrote to Amenhotep III (1383-1345) because he feared being annexed by Šuppiluliuma I (EA 45). This first attack, the "Syrian War of 1 Year" in 1352 BCE, was the starting point of the voluminous correspondence found in El-Amarna.

The correspondence of the southern vassals has certain clear sequences and correlations. One point of reference is the figure of Lab'ayu, mayor of Shechem (EA 252-254), who clearly belongs to the earliest level of this correspondence⁵¹⁰. As the hieratic docket on EA 254 is dated year 3[2 Amenhotep III], this letter written in 1352/1351 matches exactly at the time of the war in Syria: *I [Lab'ayu] have obeyed the orders that the king wrote to me. Who am I that the king should lose his land on account of me? The fact is that I am a loyal servant of the king! I am not a rebel and I am not delinquent in duty. I have not held back my payments of tribute; I have not held back anything requested by my commissioner. He denounces me unjustly, but the king, my lord, does not examine my (alleged) act of rebellion. Moreover, my act of rebellion is this: when I entered Gezer, I kept on saying: Everything of mine the king takes, but where is what belongs to Milkilu? I know the actions of Milkilu against me! Moreover, the king wrote for my son. I did not know that my son was consorting with the 'Apiru. I herewith hand him over to Addaya [the commissioner]. Moreover, how, if the king wrote for my wife, how could I hold her back? How, if the king wrote to me: Put a bronze dagger into your heart and die, how could I not execute the order of the king?* (EA 254). Obviously Lab'ayu profited from the intervention by Šuppiluliuma to loot some Canaanite cities in his area and encourage them to secede. This local insurgency should be considered minor because at that time the Egyptians divided their partners in order of importance⁵¹¹, 1st row (temple of Soleb): Ugarit, Kadesh, Cyprus, Hatti and Naharina (Mitanni); ranked second: Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Carchemish and Assyria. So, the mayors of Canaan, vassals of Egypt, came in 3rd which explains the non-intervention of Egyptians. However the consequences of the Syrian War of 1 year in 1348/1347 were much more serious. 'Abdi-Aširta, the king

⁵⁰⁷ J. FREU – Histoire du Mitanni

Paris 2003 Éd. L'Harmattan pp. 72-90.

⁵⁰⁸ T. BRYCE – The Kingdom of the Hittites

Oxford 2005 Éd. Oxford University Press pp. 144-153.

⁵⁰⁹ J. FREU – Histoire politique du royaume d'Ugarit

Paris 2006 Éd. L'Harmattan pp. 36-49.

⁵¹⁰ W.L. MORAN – The Amarna Letters

London 1992 nEd. The Johns Hopkins University Press pp. XXXIV-XXXIX.

⁵¹¹ J. ELAYI – Histoire de la Phénicie

Paris 2013 Éd. Perrin pp. 76-92.

of Amurru, who did not receive any support from Amenhotep III, preferred to cooperate with Šuppiluliuma and paid him by ransoming the Canaanite kings of his area. As did Lab'ayu earlier, the war of Šuppiluliuma encouraged him to loot some Canaanite cities in his area and encourage them to secede. In a very pragmatic way, Amenhotep III refused to engage in an uncertain and costly war against the Hittite empire and merely managed some police operations against 'Abdi-Aširta and Lab'ayu and finally had them executed (c. -1346). Despite this Egyptian retaliation, Aziru, the son of 'Abdi-Aširta, continued the policy of his father who was forced to pact with the Hittites. When Akhenaten succeeded Amenhotep III, he was mainly concerned with his new capital Akhetaten, which may explain why the police operations in Syria ceased.

In sum the term 'Apiru refers only to factious like some Amorites in the north and Canaanites in the south but never to the Hebrews in Palestine, an area which seems to have played no role in all the conflicts. However, the term Ḫapiru is also used to designate the inhabitants of Palestine (Hebrews/ Canaanites), a country that was at peace, by 'Abdi-Ḫeba, the mayor of Jerusalem, who explained that he lived among them. In fact the area not mentioned in the Amarna letters corresponds to the Israelites settlement (Jos 12:1-24):

| Land or kingdom | Capital or city | Ruler (king or mayor) | <i>Major change</i> | Title |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------|
| | | 1355 BCE | 1345 BCE | 1335 BCE |
| Hatti | Hattuša | Šuppiluliuma I | | King |
| Mitanni | Waššukkani | Tušratta | | King |
| Ugarit area | Ugarit | Ammištamru II | Niqmaddu III | King |
| | Uštanu | Sisera (Sisarawa) | <i>Integrated with Siyannu</i> | King? |
| <i>Siyannu (Lebanon)</i> | Siyannu | 'Abdi-Ḫebat | Abdi-Anati | King |
| Nuḫašše (Syria) | ? | Addu-nirari King | <i>Annexed by the Hittites</i> | |
| Amurru (<i>Lebanon</i>) | <i>near Kadesh ?</i> | 'Abdi-Aširta | <i>Aziru (Hittite vassal)</i> | King |
| Upu (Syria) | Damascus | ? | | King |
| Canaan (<i>Syria</i>) | Qatna | Akizzi | <i>Destroyed by the Hittites</i> | Mayor |
| | Kadesh (Qidšu) | Aitukama | | Mayor |
| | Arkite (Irgata) | Aduna | ? | Mayor |
| | Lapana (<i>near Hamath</i>) | Tiwati | | Mayor |
| | Byblos (Gubla) | Rib-Hadda | Ili-Rapiḫ | Mayor |
| | Beirut (Biruta) | Yapaḫ-Hadda | Ammunira | Mayor |
| | Kumidu (<i>Kamid el-Loṣ</i>) | Biryawaza | | Mayor |
| | Sidon (Šiduna) | Zimredda | | Mayor |
| (<i>Phoenicia</i>) | Tyre (Šurru) | Abi-Milku | | Mayor |
| Hazor area | Hazor (Hašura) | [Jabin II] King | Abdi-Tirši (<i>no longer king</i>) | Mayor |
| | Akko (Akka) | Satatna | | Mayor |
| | Ashtaroth (Aštartu) | Ayyab | Biridašwa | Mayor |
| | Hannaton (Ḫinnatuna) | | [?] | Mayor? |
| Palestine (<i>Israel</i>) | Megiddo (Magidda) | Biridiya | | Mayor |
| | Pella (Piḫilu) | Mut-Baḫli | | Mayor |
| | Shechem (Sakmu) | Lab'ayu | Lab'ayu's sons | Mayor |
| | Gezer (Gazru) | Adda-danu/ Milkilu | Yapaḫu | Mayor |
| | Jerusalem (Urusalim) | 'Abdi-Ḫeba | | Mayor |
| | Keilah (Qiltu) | Šuwardata | 'Abdi-Aštarti | Mayor |
| | Lachish (Lakiša) | Šipti-Ba'la/ Zimredda | Yabni-ilu | Mayor |
| Philistia | Ashkelon (Ašqaluna) | Yidya | | Ruler |
| | Gaza (Ḫazzatu) | Yaḫturu | | Mayor? |
| Egypt | Thebes/El-Amarna | Amenhotep III | Akhenaten | King |

| SIYANNU | USNATU | reign | HAZOR | | PALESTINE | reign |
|------------|--------|-----------|------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|
| Abdi-Ḫebat | Sisera | 1370-1345 | [Jabin II] | 1370-1345 | Jabin II/Sisera | 1366-1346 |
| Abdi-Anati | | 1345-1325 | Abdi-Tirši | 1345-1325 | Barak | 1346-1306 |

The marauding Habiru of Late Bronze Canaan, generally designating seditious/factional at this time, have often been described in both social and linguistic terms as the precursors to the earliest Hebrews, but the pastoral-nomadic Shasu, another social group from the east, provides a more fitting background for Israel's origins⁵¹². Egyptians knew well the area of Syria-Palestine which they called Retenu until Thutmose III (1469-1418), then from Amenhotep II⁵¹³ (1420-1392): Upper Retenu (Palestine) and Lower Retenu⁵¹⁴ (Syria). From Thutmose II (1472-1469) appears the new term "Land of Shasu (Israel and Judah)" instead of "Upper Retenu" which would be later exclusively used in the numerous topographical lists written under Amenhotep III⁵¹⁵ (1383-1345). A list of toponyms enumerates: Pella-foreign land (*p-h-r ḥ3st*), Shasu-foreign land (*š3-sw-w ḥ3st*), Qatna (*qd-d-j-n-3*), Gezer (*q-3-d-3-r*), however, Shasu's name refers to both the country and the people of Palestine. For example a list of four toponyms reads: Land of Shasu after Maat (*t3 š3-sw-w s3 m-'ti-i*); Land of Shasu those of Yehua (*t3 š3-sw-w y-h-w3 w*); Land of Shasu showing respect to Bel (*t3 š3-sw t-w-r-j b-h*); Bait house of Anat (*b-3-i-ti b '[n-t]*). It is noteworthy that in his treaty⁵¹⁶ with Duppi-Tešub (1312-1280), King of Amurru, are mentioned "the Hapiri gods" by Muršili II (1322-1295), King of Hatti.

If Palestine played no role in the events at that time, the kingdom of Hazor was a notable exception. The venerable kingdom of Canaan was stuck between Mitanni to the northeast, Amurru to the northwest and Palestine to the south. The king of Hazor's death coincided with the appointment of Barak (in -1346), an Israelite judge from Kedesh (Tell Qades) who fought Jabin II who was killed at that time (Jg 4:1-24). Although Jabin is presented as king of Canaan, in practice, Sisera was controlling the north of Palestine (Israel). It is noteworthy that the south of Palestine (Judah) was at peace, consequently, this part of Canaan was a "no man's land" for Egyptians' chancery. The title "king of Canaan" was honorary⁵¹⁷, it was already used at the time of the conquest of Joshua as is specified about Jabin I (1510-1490?): *Jabin king of Hazor heard about this (...) Joshua then turned back and captured Hazor, putting its king to the sword. Hazor in olden days was the capital of all these kingdoms* (Jos 11:1,10). Jabin II's death early in the conflict explains his absence among Amarna letters (except letter EA 227). This king was able to control the north of Palestine not because of a numerical superiority but thanks to the "900 war chariots of iron" (Jg 4:3; 5:8) belonging to Sisera, his general of army: *They [the Israelites] chose new gods; then the cities of the rulers [mayors] fought; a shield could not be seen, nor lance, among 40,000 in Israel* (Jg 5:8 LXX). Thus, after the disappearance of Sisera, as well as his army, the kingdom of Hazor no longer played a major role in Canaan. In addition, Barak's choice to attack the powerful kingdom of Hazor and its commander-in-chief (Sisera) at the very moment when the Hittite empire triggered its attack against the Syrian kingdoms proved to be providential. Indeed, the military disorganization throughout the whole region of Canaan (under Egyptian control) allowed the Hebrews to prevail easily over their mighty oppressors. At that time a garrison of 400 men and pairs of horses was enough to control a whole territory (EA 76). Furthermore, there were only 3000 Egyptian soldiers in Canaan (EA 11), spread over 3 towns (Sumur, Kumidu, Gaza), to control the whole land and in case of war a garrison of 30-50 chariots was quite sufficient to protect a big city (EA 107, 127, 366).

⁵¹² A. RAINEY – Shasu or Habiru : Who Were the Early Israelites ? in: *Biblical Archaeological Society* n°34 (2008) pp. 51-55.

⁵¹³ J. SIMONS – Handbook for the Study of Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia Leiden 1937 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 123-124, 130, 210.

⁵¹⁴ Upper Retenu (*r-l-nw h-r-f*); Lower Retenu (*r-l-nw h-r-f*).

⁵¹⁵ R. GIVEON - Les bédouins Shosou des documents égyptiens Leiden 1971 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 9-10, 17-33.

⁵¹⁶ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 203-206.

⁵¹⁷ Using a former title "king" in a honorific way is a current Eastern practice.

If the letters from Canaanite mayors are silent on the situation in Palestine (Israel in the north, Judah in the south) the Egyptian texts and their topographical lists confirm the existence of a vast area inhabited by the Shasu called Shasu-land (Israel & Judah). The cities conquered by Joshua appearing in the Amarna letters are those which remained occupied by the Canaanites, but the cities which became entirely Israelites like: Hebron (el-Khalil), Mamre (Ramat el-Khalil), Arad (Tell Arad), Aroer (Khirbet Arair), Beer-sheba (Tell Sheba), Dan (Tell el-Qadi), Debir (Khirbet er-Rabud), Adullam (Khirbet esh-Sheikh Madhkur), Libnah (Tell Burna), Shiloh (Khirbet Seilum), Tirzah (Tell el-Farah), Eshtemoa (es-Semu'a), Jattir (Khirbet el-Attir), Juttah (Yatta), etc., are never mentioned in Amarna letters despite their existence being confirmed by archaeology⁵¹⁸. Who could have been the inhabitants of those cities⁵¹⁹ (below), wearing tassels at the 4 corners of their garments (Shasu depicted in Amarna tombs), who were not under Egyptian control, apart from the Israelites? It is funny that for once an absence of historical evidence in Egyptian documents (supreme evidence for archaeologists) is contradicted by archaeological evidence.



⁵¹⁸ A. NEGEV, S. GIBSON – Dictionnaire archéologique de la Bible
Paris 2006 Ed. The Jerusalem Publishing House Ltd. pp. 30-31, 242-245, 282-285.

⁵¹⁹ H.G. MAY – Oxford Bible Atlas
New York 1984, Ed. Oxford University Press, pp. 60-63.

In the Bible, the role of Sisera as prince of the army of Jabin II is paramount (Ps 83:9) as he is the only one to be cited (1Sa 12:9). The Hebrew word *sar* “prince/leader” is used instead of *rosh* “head/chief” (1Sa 15:17). This character must have been important because he was mentioned in a treaty of alliance (RS 19.68) between two kings of the region⁵²⁰: *As from today, Niqmaddu, king of Ugarit, and Aziru, king of the Amurru, did between them (an agreement) by oath (...) If bunches of Hapiru make raids in my country Aziru will fight against my enemy with chariots and soldiers. If there are troubles in my country Aziru will come to my rescue <with> his chariots and his troops. On the other hand, Sisaruwa (si-sa-ru-wa) is a subject of the king and the city of Uštanu is his residence*⁵²¹. *If Sisaruwa behaves as an enemy to the king, Aziru will fight against Sisaruwa with his chariots and his troops.* The Sisera (Sisara in the LXX) of this treaty between two important kings is the same as the one from the Bible for the following reasons:

- Both have the same name (*Si-sa-ru-wa* in Babylonian, meaning unclear⁵²²), which is extremely rare and unique in the whole Bible and also in the whole onomastic corpus⁵²³.
- Both have exactly the same title: Prince and army general.
- Both died in the same year: 1347 BCE. After Sisera's death his principality (Uštanu)⁵²⁴ was annexed to Siyannu⁵²⁵.
- Both lived in the same place. Haroshet-ha-Goiim was the residence of Sisera (Jg 4:13), if this locality remains unknown up till now, this name means “Wooded place (1Sa 23:15) of nations”; “Wooded place in Lebanon (Ezk 31:3)”; “Forest of Lebanon (1Ki 7:2)”. The city of Uštanu was the residence of Sisera and was indeed situated south of Siyannu in Lebanon between Ugarit and Amurru.

According to the Bible, Sisera died just before the end of the rulership of Jabin II over Israel, whereas this treaty must be concluded to this date, and therefore early in the reigns of Niqmaddu III (1347-1315) and Aziru (1347-1314), likely between the “1 year War” of Šuppiluliuma I in 1348 BCE and the “War of Apiru” in 1347 BCE. The treaty shows that Aziru, king of Amurru, was now an ally of the king of Ugarit, a vassal kingdom of the Hittites, this was not the case before⁵²⁶ when he was an ally of Egypt. However, despite the fact that Sisera was a subject of the king of Ugarit he was considered as a potential enemy by the two Hittite vassal kings. Canaanite mayors could hire a garrison of Syrian mercenaries in their service⁵²⁷ (of a hundred men) either to protect their city or to make war to another mayor but the use of troops and chariots was reserved for the (Egyptian or Hittite) army exclusively. It is noteworthy that the set of “900 chariots” (Jg 4:13) was a huge quantity because the whole Egyptian army in Canaan was made up of 3000 soldiers at that time (EA 11) and if an Egyptian garrison constituted on average 100 infantrymen, 100 soldiers (archers) and 30 chariots (EA 127), with its charioteers, that means that the army of Sisera was comparable to the Egyptian army in Canaan, but not to the Hittite army of commander-in-chief Zitana constituted of 90,000 infantrymen (EA 170). Maintaining such a large army, especially the pay of soldiers, required possessing huge resources⁵²⁸, but given that Ušnatu was just a city-state, not a kingdom with many cities, the

⁵²⁰ S. LACKENBACHER – Textes akkadiens d'Ugarit
in: LIPO n° 20 (2002) Éd. Cerf pp. 64-65, 180-181.

⁵²¹ According to the context “residence” means “principality”.

⁵²² Sīsrā (Ezra 2:53) means perhaps “a field of battle” in Syriac (*sīrsarthā*) or “fading flower of wind” (Is 28:4) in Hebrew (*šīšā rūah*).

⁵²³ R. DE VAUX – Histoire ancienne d'Israël. La période des juges
Paris 1987 Éd. Gabalda pp. 102-103.

⁵²⁴ G. BECKMAN – Hittite Diplomatic Texts
Atlanta 1999 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 175-176.

⁵²⁵ F. MALBRANT-LABAT – Siyannu, Uštanu et Ugarit
in: De la Tablilla a la Inteligencia Artificial (Instituto de Estudios Islamicos y del Oriente Proximo, 2003) pp. 67-75.

⁵²⁶ J.-M. MICHAUD – La Bible et l'héritage d'Ougarit
Sherbrooke 2005 Éd. C.G.C. pp. 79-84.

⁵²⁷ At that time a soldier was worth about 50 shekels of silver (EA 114), or around one pound of silver.

⁵²⁸ For example, the king of Ugarit [Ammištamru III] had preferred paying 50 gold minas (3000 shekels or 34 kg) to Tuthaliya IV (1241-1209), the king of Hatti, in order to be exempted of sending his army against Assyria (RS 17.59).

only way to acquire a large amount of money was either to do looting of wealthy cities or act as mercenaries for sake of kings. Looting is excluded for two reasons: 1) Sisera is never mentioned in Syria and 2) if he had intervened in this region the powerful Hittite king would quickly neutralized him. The second option “act as mercenaries for sake of kings” is restricted because that couldn't be either the king of Amurru, a vassal of Hittite king through the king of Ugarit and or the king of Egypt who did not need such a partner, in addition, he is never mention in the Egyptian correspondence. The only possible candidates in Canaan who were able to afford and hire this powerful army general are either the king of Hatti or the king of Hazor, the only king mentioned in Canaan at that time (in addition archaeology shows that he was wealthy).

We know that at the time of Artatama I (1390-1373) the Mitannian power had increased tax burden on its vassals⁵²⁹ in Syria, then Tuthaliya III (1370-1353), the king of Hatti, made incursions in Syria for the purpose of plundering⁵³⁰. Sometimes, Hittite kings have hired armies for their incursions in Syria⁵³¹, for example Šuppiluliuma I (1353-1322) wrote in a letter (RS 17.340): *The Great King, sent princes and great ones with soldiers and chariots in Ugarit and they raided the enemy troops of Ugarit. Šumi[tti] an Amorrite general wrote to the king of Ugarit the following letter: Say to the king [Šuppiluliuma I], my lord: Šumi[tti] thus (says) your servant (...) It's been 5 months since I am installed in Amurru country and that I monitor day and night. I monitor them this way: I monitor their roads and their access roads. Half of my chariots are located at the edge of the [Mediterranean] Sea and the other half on the edge of the Lebanon Mountains (...) That the king gives orders to the troops and chariots which have to come in (...) it is feared that the king of Egypt arrives quickly and (in that case) we could not get the upper hand. It is feared that the king of Egypt comes out (of his country), but if he did not come out and that was the troop of his archers [garrisons in Canaan] which was coming out, I would able to have the upper hand. Let the king therefore assigned troops and chariots, we can battle and get the upper hand.* In these circumstances, we can understand why Sisera, a powerful Amorite ruler, chose to rent his army to the king of Hazor, a vassal kingdom of Egypt (the main power in the area), rather than to Ugarit, a vassal kingdom of Hatti. The king of Hazor probably had wanted to increase his resources by partnering with Sisera in order to loot Palestine, a defenceless country.

All the previous coincidences confirm the biblical story in a striking way:

- He who succeeded King of Hazor, Abdi-Tirši (1345-1325), had no longer the title of king because he had lost his power and his complaints of what had been done against his city are understandable.
- The principality headed by Sisera (Ušnatu) was attached to the kingdom of Siyannu, which was led by Abdi-Anati (1345-1325), after he died (in 1347 BCE).
- The land controlled by the king of Hazor (Israel) was “given” to the Hapiru (Hebrews) after the king of Hazor lost his army. According to the text of Judges 4:24-25, Jabin II initially at peace with the Hebrews was defeated gradually.

Note that Catholic exegetes prefer to situate the episode of Jabin and Sisera around 1150 BCE because they place the Exodus during the reign of Ramses II⁵³². This absurd hypothesis proves that without a reliable and accurate chronology it is impossible to establish a reliable and accurate history. The examination of Egyptian documents over the period 1300-1200 shows that the country of Israel already existed before Ramses II.

⁵²⁹ J. FREU – Histoire du Mitanni

Paris 2003 Éd. L'Harmattan pp. 83-84.

⁵³⁰ T. BRYCE – The Kingdom of the Hittites

Oxford 2005 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 145-153.

⁵³¹ S. LACKENBACHER – Textes akkadiens d'Ugarit

in: *Littératures Anciennes du Proche-Orient* 20 (Cerf, 2002), pp. 33-36, 64-74.

⁵³² R. DE VAUX – Histoire ancienne d'Israël

Paris 1987 Éd. J. Gabalda, pp. 100-105.

DATING THE BETH-SHEAN VICTORY OF SETI I (1294 BCE)

In the years following the Amarna period⁵³³, the expansionist policies of Hatti and Assyria had led to the virtual eclipse of Mitanian independence. Of greater concern to Egypt, however, was the situation of Kadesh, the great trading centre of the Orontes Valley whose chiefs felt increasing pressure to ally with Hatti. In spite of peace treaties between the two nations, Hittite and Egyptian armies had clashed near Kadesh at some point during or after the reign of Tutankhamun (1336-1327). A new dynasty, the 19th, had a military background, and felt it was time to reassert the role of the king as war-leader. Initially Seti I (1294-1283) took the field against the Shasu, briefly returned Amurru (in 1294 BCE) to Egyptian control, and then engaged a Hittite army near Kadesh. However, Seti's successes (portrayed with emphasis on the wall of Karnak) were only preliminary skirmishes in which the two armies appraised the gathering storm: it was his son, Ramses II (1283-1216), who was destined to meet the armies of Muwatalli II of Hatti (1295-1275) in the climactic battle of Kadesh (in 1278 BCE) for control of the Orontes.

A careful reconstruction of the itinerary of Seti shows that the Tehenu (Libyans) and the defeated Shasu were around Gaza⁵³⁴ (land of the Philistines) and the fights against the Hittites in the Retenu, including military operations against the city of Kadesh and Amurru, took place in the north of Palestine. Upon his return, the troubles among local leaders that Seti punished took place around Beth-Shean⁵³⁵, a Canaanite area also inhabited by the Hebrews. On the stela of Seti describing his victories in Palestine, technical words used remain in line with his predecessors since ethnic groups are designated according to their geographical



location since Apiru are mainly some Amorites factious, Asiatics (*aamu*) are the inhabitants of Canaan and Shasu are the Bedouins in Palestine: *Year 1, 3rd month of the 3rd season, day 10 (... Seti) valiant leader of his army, valiant warrior in the very heart of the fray, a Bastet (lioness goddess of war) terrible in combat, penetrating into a mass of Asiatics and making them prostrate, crushing the princes of Retenu, reaching the (very) ends of him who transgresses against his way. He causes to retreat the princes of Kharu (Syria), all the boastfulness of whose mouth was (so) great. Every foreign country of the ends of the earth, their princes say: Where shall we go? They spend the night giving testimony in his name, saying: Behold it, behold it? in their hearts. It is the strength of his father Amon that decreed to him valor and victory. On this day one came to speak to his majesty, as follows: The wretched foe who is in the town of Hamath is gathering to himself many people, while he is seizing the town of Beth-Shean. Then there will be an alliance with them of Pehal (Pella). He does not permit the Prince of Rehob to go outside. Thereupon his*

⁵³³ B. MANLEY – Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypte London 1996 Ed. Penguin Books pp. 92-93.

⁵³⁴ A. DEGRÈVE – La campagne asiatique de l'an 1 de Séthi I^{er} in: *Revue d'égyptologie* 57 (2006) pp. 47-64.

⁵³⁵ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Egypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2 Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 498-504.

majesty sent the first army of Amon, (named) "Mighty of Bows," to the town of Hamath, the first army of the Re, (named) "Plentiful of Valour," to the town of Beth-Shean, and the first army of Seth, (named) "Strong of Bows," to the town of Yenoam. Campaign in Djahi: Year 1 of the Renaissance (...) Then one came to say to his majesty: The foe belonging to the Shasu are plotting rebellion. Their tribal chiefs are gathered in one place, waiting on the mountain ranges of Kharru (...) His majesty kills them all at one time, and leaves no heirs among them. He who is spared by his hand is a living prisoner, carried off to Egypt (...) The desolation which the mighty arm of Pharaoh -life, prosperity, health!- made among the foe belonging to the Shasu from the fortress of Sile (Tjaru) to the Canaan. His majesty prevailed over them like a fierce lion. They were made into corpses throughout their valleys, stretched out in their (own) blood, like that which has never been (...) Lebanon. Cutting down [cedar for] the great barque upon the river," Amon-Userhet, as well as for the great flagpoles of Amon (...) The return of his majesty from Upper Retenu, having extended the frontiers of Egypt. The plunder which his majesty carried off from these Shasu, whom his majesty himself captured in the year 1 of the Renaissance. Campaign in Upper Retenu: The going up which Pharaoh -life, prosperity, health!- made to desolate the land of Kadesh and the land of Amurru (...) Presentation of tribute by the good god to his father Amon-Re, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, at his return from the country of Hatti, having annihilated the rebellious countries and crushed the Asiatics in their places... The great princes of the wretched Retenu, whom his majesty carried off by his victories from the country of Hatti, to fill the workhouse of his father Amon-Re (...) On this day (...): The Apiru of Mount Yarmuta, with Teyer..., have arisen in attack upon the Asiatics of Rehem. Then his majesty said: How can these wretched Asiatics think of taking their arms for further disorder?... Then his majesty commanded a certain number of people from his infantry and his numerous chariotry that their faces turn back to the foreign country Djahi⁵³⁶. These stories about "Seti's great victories" are more the describing of a police operation to quell a rebellion in northern Palestine than a war between two countries⁵³⁷. However, the fact that the Hittite empire did not react against the annexation of Amurru, its vassal kingdom, is hard to explain because on his death, Muršili II (1322-1295) left to his son and successor Muwatalli II (1295-1275) a relatively stable kingdom, in addition it was fortunate for Seti that the Hittites did not retaliate promptly⁵³⁸.

The treaty between Tudhaliya IV and Šaušgamuwa⁵³⁹ confirms Seti's victory, which "was due to a betrayal of the men of Amurru(!)": [Earlier] the land of Amurru had not been defeated by the force of arms of Hatti. When [Aḫiru came] to the (great-)grandfather of My Majesty in Hatti, the lands of Amurru were still [hostile]. They [were] subjects of the King of Hurri (Mitanni). Aḫiru accordingly gave him (Šuppiluliuma) his allegiance, although he did [not] defeat him by force of arms. And Aḫiru, your (great-great-)grandfather, protected Šuppiluliuma as overlord, and he protected Hatti. Later he also protected Muršili as overlord, and he protected Hatti. In no way did he commit an offense against Hatti. But when Muwatalli, uncle of My Majesty, became King, the men of Amurru committed an offense against him, informing him as follows: We were voluntary subjects. Now we are no longer your subjects. And they went over to the King of Egypt. Then My Majesty's uncle Muwatalli and the King of Egypt fought over the men of Amurru. Muwatalli defeated him, destroyed the land of Amurru by force of arms, and subjugated it. And he made Šapili king in the land of Amurru. But when Muwatalli, the uncle of My Majesty, died, the father of My Majesty, Hattušili, became King. He deposed Šapili and made Bentešina, your father, king in the land of Amurru. He protected the father of My Majesty, and he protected Hatti. In no way did he commit an offense against Hatti. Thus, in 1295/1294⁵⁴⁰ the men of Amurru voluntarily abandoned the Hatti for going over to the King of Egypt!

⁵³⁶ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 253-255.

⁵³⁷ W.J. MURNANE - The Road to Kadesh in: *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization* n°42 (1990) pp. 39-50.

⁵³⁸ T. BRYCE - The Kingdom of the Hittites
Oxford 2005 Ed. Oxford University Press pp. 221, 228-229.

⁵³⁹ G. BECKMAN - Hittite Diplomatic Texts
Atlanta 1999 Ed. Society of Biblical Literature pp. 103-105.

⁵⁴⁰ Muwatalli's accession in 1295/1294 coincide with year 1 of Seti I in 1294 BCE.

Without the biblical account which places these events at the beginning of the judicature of Gideon (1299-1259), this change of alliance remains inexplicable⁵⁴¹. The situation in Palestine at this time is pictured as anarchic, disorders being caused by the Midianites, the Amalekites (Libyans) near Gaza and Orientals near Beth-Shean (Jg 6:1-6,33) in the plain of Jezreel (Jos 17:16). The term "Oriental" meant mostly Syrians (Gn 25:6,20). Those of this period are named Sidonians, up to the entrance of Hamath (Jg 3:3), an area controlled by the Kingdom of Amurru. Gideon, whose name means "one who cuts off", put an end to this disorder when he slaughtered 135,000 Orientals near Beth-Shean (Jg 8:10). The victory of Gideon had to have been memorable because Eusebius reports the writings of Porphyry of Tyre (234-305), who was a Neoplatonic philosopher born in Tyre, and above all an opponent of Christianity who challenged the biblical text: *the historian of this subject is Sanchuniathon, an author of great antiquity, and older, as they say, than the Trojan times [c. 1200 BCE], one whom they testify to have been approved for the accuracy and truth of his Phoenician History. Philo of Byblos, not the Hebrew, translated his whole work from the Phoenician language into the Greek, and published it*⁵⁴². *The author in our own day of the compilation against us mentions these things in the 4th book of his treatise Against the Christians, where he bears the following testimony to Sanchuniathon, word for word: Of the affairs of the Jews the truest history, because the most in accordance with their places and names, is that of Sanchuniathon of Beirut, who received the records from Hierombalus (Jerubbaal) the priest of the god Ieiüô (Yehua); he dedicated his history to Abibaal king of Beirut, and was approved by him and by the investigators of truth in his time. Now the times of these men fall even before the date of the Trojan war, and approach nearly to the times of Moses, as is shown by the successions of the kings of Phoenicia. And Sanchuniathon, who made a complete collection of ancient history from the records in the various cities and from the registers in the temples, and wrote in the Phoenician language* (Praeparatio Evangelica I:9:20-22). Several parts of Porphyry's narrative are correct: 1) the kings of Beirut⁵⁴³ were privileged witnesses of the attack against the kingdom of Amurru; 2) the official of Yehua who won a great victory near Beth-Shean in 1299 BCE (he became afterwards the ruler of the people) was actually called Jerubbaal (Jg 6:32; 7:1) or Hierombal in Greek. Thus this crushing defeat could explain the shifting alliances of the Amurru and also why Seti I could claim all the merit for the pacification of the region.

At that time the term "Shasu (Bedouins)" was still used in its original meaning "those who travel or traverse" but mainly for describing the inhabitants staying in the very South of Palestine⁵⁴⁴ (Edomites), but not anymore those in Palestine (Israelites), who were again called Aamu (Asiatics) as in the past. However, the description of these Shasu around 1200 BCE shows the Egyptian concept on this motley group was negative: *He takes what is left and joined the [ranks of] miserable ones. He mingles with the the tribes of Shasu and disguises himself as Asiatic (...) Narrow gorge is infested with Shasu hiding in bushes, some of them are 4 or 5 cubits from head to foot, fierce face, their heart is not soft and they do not lend an ear to the blandishments*⁵⁴⁵. The Shasu were perceived as perpetual seditious. On stelae, attributed to Ramses II, for example, one reads: *He who has stripped Asiatic kings in their country: he ruined the heritage of Shasu's country* (Stele of the Shardanes); *Who reduced to nothing the rebellious nations (...) has been [bring their tribute to] Shasu's country* (Stele V); *[Who pushed back] Asiatics, who captured [the people of] Shasu's country* (Stele IX). However, as Shasu from these stela are associated with the

⁵⁴¹ Even the Mitanni, an ally of Egypt, was weak since it collapsed in 1264 BCE after the attack of Assyria.

⁵⁴² This Phoenician History was translated into Greek from the Phoenician by Philo of Byblos (64-141).

⁵⁴³ Only two kings of Beirut are known: Yapah-Hadda (1355-1345) and Ammunira (1345-1335). Around 200 BCE Menander of Ephesus translated the annals of Tyre into Greek (quoted by Flavius Josephus). After the destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE these annals disappeared. In the same way, the archives of Beirut disappeared in 140 BCE when the city was destroyed by Diodotus Tryphon. Annals in Phoenician should exist at that time because the handwriting was used by Gideon (Judges 8:13-14).

⁵⁴⁴ T.E. LEVY, R.B. ADAMS & A. MUNIZ - Archaeology and the Shasu Nomads in: Le-David Maskil, Ed. Eisenbrauns 2004 pp. 63-89.

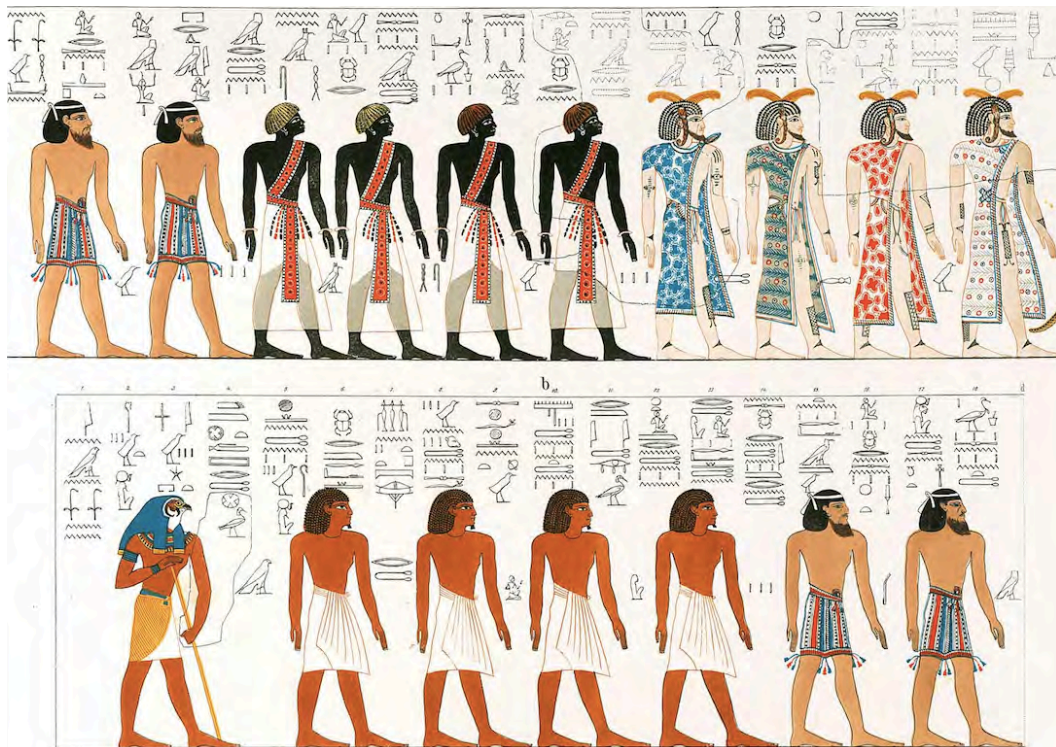
⁵⁴⁵ Pap. Anastasi I:20,3-4; I:23,7-8. Some giant Shasu (between 2 m and 2.50 m!) correspond to the Anakim living in the southwest of Palestine (Nb 13:22-33).

Hittites (enemies of Egypt) they were Syrians rather than Hebrews, especially as a lintel in Tell er-Ratabi shows Ramses II in the process of cutting down a Syrian (identifiable by his hair and his costume). Although Shasu are often mentioned during the reign of Ramses II (1283-1216) they no longer appear in the conventional list of nine hereditary enemies of Egypt as can be seen on the temple at Abydos (below):



From left to right: 1) *Tḥmw* Tehenu (Libya); 2) *N-b-r-n* Naharin (Mitanni); 3) *Sn-g-r* Shinar; 4) *H-t* Hatti; 5) *K-f-ti-w* Keftiu (Philistia)⁵⁴⁶; 6) *T-s-y* Asy (Cyprus?); 7) *Š3t* Shat (Sinai?); 8) *T-s-mw* Assur; 9) *Pd-t-jī šw-w* Bowmen of Shu[tu] (Moab?).

This change in the designation (of neighbours by Egyptians) means that the Israelites were no longer perceived as a potential enemy. In contrast, a new concept appeared⁵⁴⁷: for Egyptians humankind was made up of “Four Races” (below): Egyptians (*Rmt*) at the centre of world, Asiatics (*ʿ3mw*) northern Egypt, Nubians (*Nḥy*) southern Egypt and Libyans (*Tḥmw*) western Egypt. It is noteworthy that the Shasu of Seir (Edomites), in eastern Egypt, are not mentioned as a major race.

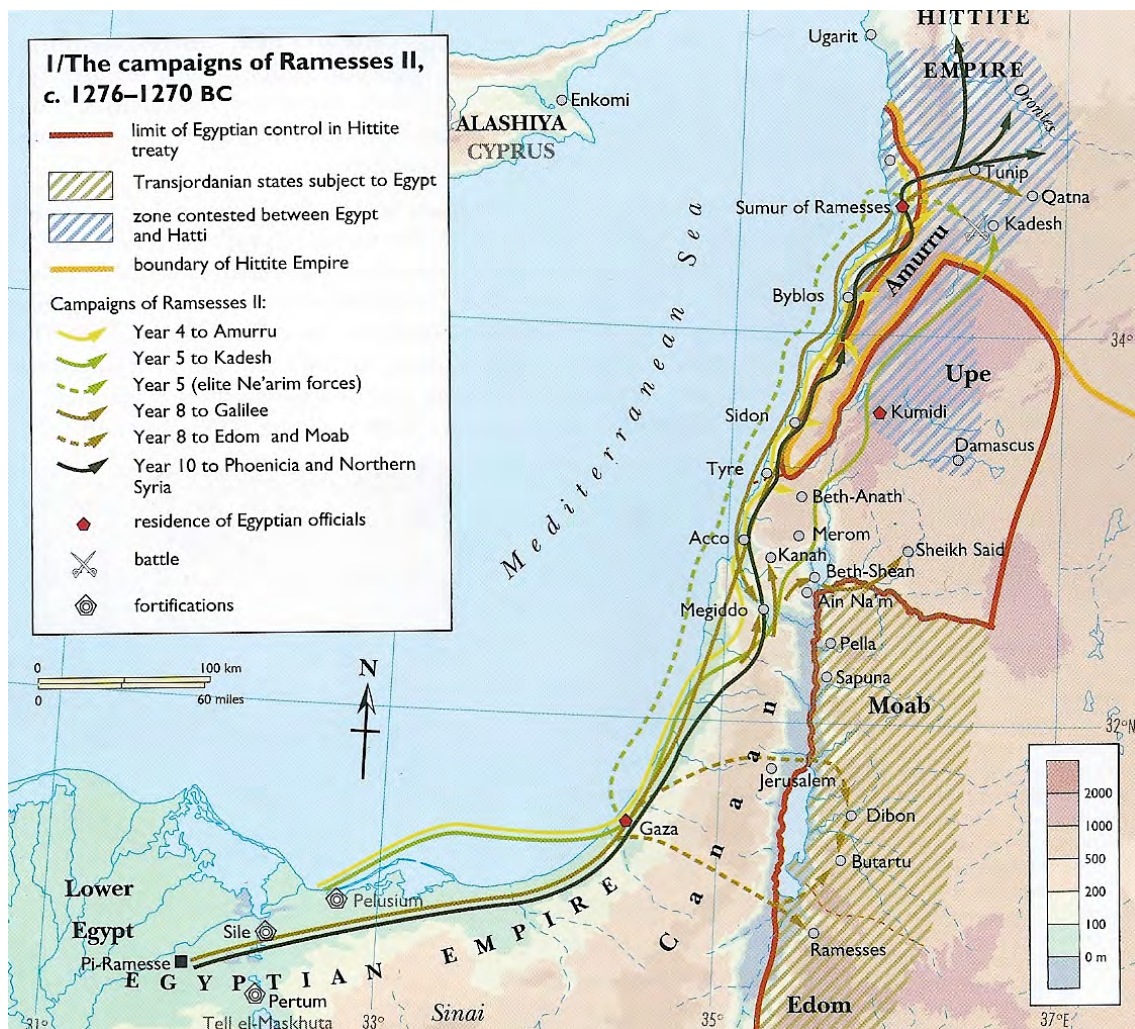


One notes that the clothes of these Asiatics living in Palestine have tassels at the 4 corners of their garments. Consequently, this painting corresponds exactly to the biblical description of the Israelites living in Israel.

⁵⁴⁶ Keftiu “those of Crete” was a colony from Crete (Dt 2:23, Jr 47:4, Am 9:7), but it disappeared after the destruction of the palace of Knossos around 1370 BCE and became “Philistia land” afterward. Salmanazar I destroyed Mitanni in 1264 BCE.

⁵⁴⁷ T.B. WOODCOCK - Noticing Neighbors: Reconsidering Ancient Egyptian Perceptions of Ethnicity Cairo 2014, PhD thesis (The American University in Cairo), pp. 8-66.

If we make an assessment of the Egyptian campaigns in Canaan we see two crucial points: 1) the objective of these military campaigns was mainly to control Syria, in contrast, 2) Palestine was a country that was systematically avoided by the Egyptians⁵⁴⁸. In the years following the Amarna period, the expansionist policies of Hatti and Assyria had led to the virtual eclipse of Mittanian independence. Of greater concern to Egypt, however was the situation of Kadesh, the great trading centre of the Orontes Valley, whose chiefs felt increasing pressure to ally with Hatti⁵⁴⁹. In his 4th Year, Ramses led his armies through the subject ports of the Palestinian coast of Byblos, and then advanced into Amurru once more. The following year he was in position to pounce on Kadesh itself. However, Ramses came close to disaster and the immediate aftermath of this inconclusive battle was to upset the *status quo* in Syria and Palestine, and the armies of Mutawilli were quick to seize the initiative by regaining control of Amurru and then invading Upe. Ramses, however, was far from subdued, and led 2 more campaigns in the next five years to reassert his authority in Canaan, the coastal ports and Amurru but because the aggressive regime of Shalmaneser I posed a mutual threat for both of them, Ramses in his 21st Year agreed with the new Hittite emperor, Hattusili II, to stabilize and freeze the political confusion in Amurru.

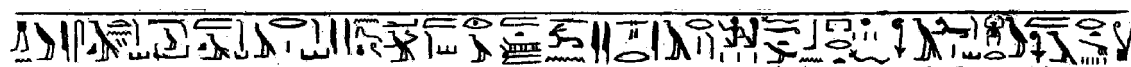


⁵⁴⁸ B. MANLEY – Historical Atlas of Ancient Egypt
London 1996 Ed. Penguin Books pp. 92-93.

⁵⁴⁹ In spite of peace treaties between the two nations, Hittite and Egyptian armies had clashed near Kadesh at some point during or after the reign of Tutankhamun. A new dynasty, the 19th, had a military background and felt it was time to reassert the role of the king as war-leader, thus Amurru briefly returned to Egyptian control after Seti I engaged a Hittite army near Kadesh. However Seti's successes were only preliminary skirmishes in which the two armies appraised the gathering storm: it was his son, Ramses II, who was destined to meet the armies of Muwatalli II in the climactic battle for control of the Orontes.

DATING THE ISRAEL STELA OF MERENPTAH (1211 BCE)

The Israel Stela, dated III Shemu 3 year 5 of Merenptah (20 April 1211 BCE), is the oldest known inscription mentioning the people "Israel", it relates the following events (line 27): *[All] Princes are prostrate, saying: "Shalam (Peace)". Not one lifts up his head among the Nine Bows. Now that Tebenu (Libya) has come to ruin, Hatti is pacified; The Canaan has been plundered into every sort of woe: Ashkelon has been overcome; Gezer has been captured; Yenoam is made non-existent. Israel is laid waste; his offsprings are no longer; Hurru (southern Syria) is become a widow because of Egypt. All lands combined, they are at peace; Whoever roams about gets subdued by the King of Upper and Lower Egypt Merenptah*⁵⁵⁰. Merenptah after having devastated Libya (first goal of his expedition) was delighted that Israel, mentioned as a people and not as a country, was laid waste and had no more any offsprings, that is to say any rulers. The pictogram of the word "seed" is composed of 3 grains so that the one of the inscription has only 1 (drawing below) and means "offspring/ posterity"⁵⁵¹ and only this latter sense fits the context.



conquered Ashkelon; captured is Gezer ; Yenoam became non-existent ; Israel (foreign people) is devastated with no more seeds; Khuru became

Although the text of Merenptah is suggesting an intervention in Palestine, historical context shows that this Pharaoh led only two campaigns (in years 4 and 5 of his reign), first of all in order to stop the Libyan invasion⁵⁵², and parallel some police operations to quell a Nubian insurgency and a few rebel cities in the south of Canaan. Several clues prove that Merenptah did not go into Palestine: only few cities in southern Canaan (Ashkelon, Gezer) are mentioned; the name Palestine (Upper Retenu) does not appear in the stela of Israel; the pharaoh was delighted that Israel was laid waste but he never said he had caused it which he would certainly have done if that had been the case because of his bragging. When Merenptah said: *The Canaan has been plundered*, he just meant: "*Gaza area*" has been plundered⁵⁵³.

The phrase "Israel is devastated, his descendants are no longer" is bewildering and raises three questions: 1) Is this description taken from real events or is it propaganda? 2) Why is the term "Israel" used instead of the usual "Palestine (Upper Retenu)"? 3) Why is the cause of the devastation of Israel not indicated? The campaign in southern Palestine had to be real for the following reasons: it is well dated and localized, in addition, there is a very realistic representation of the "taking" of Ashkelon on a wall in Karnak⁵⁵⁴. However, although Seti describe it as an overwhelming victory, it was in fact a police operation (and not a battle) to conduct an eviction, because men (and also some women!) are unarmed and were pleading Egyptian soldiers to be spared (without fighting). At that time the inhabitants of Ashkelon should have been mainly Philistines. According to the biblical text (Jg 1:1-19), the Israelites had invaded the cities of Gaza, Ashkelon and Ekron (in 1463 BCE), but could not conquer them because of the iron tanks of Philistines, these cities therefore remained under Philistine command. The Amarna letters show that their mayors were vassals of Egypt. Widya (Indo-Aryan name), for example, the mayor of Ashkelon, constantly repeats in his letters⁵⁵⁵ his allegiance to King Amenhotep IV.

⁵⁵⁰ W.K. SIMPSON – The Literature of Ancient Egypt
Cairo 2005 Ed. Yale University Press pp. 356-360.

⁵⁵¹ R.O. FAULKNER – A Concise Dictionary of Middle Egyptian
Oxford 2002, Ed. Griffith Institute p. 91.

⁵⁵² C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Egypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 559-574.

⁵⁵³ H.J. KATZENSTEIN - Gaza in the Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom
in: *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 102:1 (1982) pp. 111-113.

⁵⁵⁴ A. MAZAR – Archaeology of the Land of the Bible
New York 1990 Ed. Doubleday p. 235.

⁵⁵⁵ W.L. MORAN – Les lettres d'El-Amarna
in: *Littératures Anciennes du Proche-Orient* 13 (Cerf 1987) pp. 543-547.

Hori's satirical letter⁵⁵⁶ confirms important points: the region of Canaan was reduced to the area around Gaza at that time (*Papyrus Anastasi I* 27:1); the land of Israel had no contact with Egypt except with the tribe of Asher to the East of the city of Acco which was inhabited by the fearsome Shasu led by the famous Chief Qazardi⁵⁵⁷. This letter is dated during Sety II's reign (1207-1202) by Gardiner on paleographic grounds, in addition, the accurate topography given by Hori of the pass in a region which has been identified at el-Ahwat's area corresponds to a short-lived site dating between 1220-1160 BCE⁵⁵⁸ and the virtual campaign in Syria he described is inspired from those of Sety I and Menerptah: same cities with same enemies: Libyans associated with Sherden belonging to Sea Peoples (*Papyrus Anastasi I* 17:3). Hori describes a dangerous area infested with Shasu which fits accurately to the tribe of Asher (Jos 17:7-11; 19:24-31): *Thou hast not gone to the land of Hatti, thou hast not seen the land of Upi (Damascus area). Khedem (Lebanon?), thou knowest [not] its nature, nor Yegdy either. What is it like, the Simyra of Sessi (nickname of Ramses II) —life, prosperity, health!? On which side of it is the city of Aleppo? (19:1) What is its stream like? Thou hast not gone forth to Kadesh [on Orontes] and Tubikhi. Thou hast not gone to the region of the Shasu with the bowmen of the army. Thou hast [not] trodden the road to the Magur, where the sky is darkened by day and it is overgrown with cypresses and oaks and cedars which reach the heavens. Lions are more numerous than leopards or bears, (and it is) surrounded by Shasu on (every) side of it. Thou hast not climbed the mountain of Shave (Sana in Mount Lebanon region), barefoot, thy hands laid upon [thy bow] (...) Thou awakest, (20:1) for it is the hour of starting in the sickly night. Thou art alone for the harnessing; no brother comes for a brother. The sneak-thieves have entered into [the] camp, the horse is untied, the ... has been lost in the night, and thy clothes have been stolen. Thy groom awoke in the night, saw what he had done, and took what was left. He has entered among those who are wicked, he has mingled with the Shasu tribes, and he has made himself into the likeness of an Asiatic (aamu). The foe had come to raid furtively and found thee inert. When thou awakest, thou findest no trace of them, and they have carried off thy property. (Thus) thou art become a fully equipped mahir, as thou fillest thy ear (...) Pray, teach me about the appearance of Qiyen, let me know Rebob, explain Beth-Shan and Tirqa-EL. The stream of (23:1) Jordan, how is it crossed? Let me know the way to pass Megiddo, which is above it. Thou art a mahir, experienced in deeds of heroism. A mahir such as thou art should be found (able) to stride at the head of an army! O maryanu, forward to shoot! Behold, the ambushade is in a ravine 2000 cubits deep, filled with boulders and pebbles. Thou makest a detour, as thou graspest the bow. Thou makest a feint to thy left, that thou mightest make the chiefs to see, (but) their eyes are good and thy hand falters. "Abpaata kamô' ir, mahir ne'am!" (Thus) thou makest a name for every mahir, officers of Egypt! Thy name becomes like (that of) Qazardi, the Chief of Asher, when the bear found him in the balsam tree. The narrow valley is dangerous with the Shasu, hidden under the bushes. Some of them are of 4 or 5 cubits (from) their noses to the heel, and fierce of face. Their hearts are not mild, and they do not listen to wheedling. Thou art alone; there is no messenger with thee, no army host behind thee. Qazardi⁵⁵⁹, the "famous Chief of Asher (isr)", is unknown but it looks like it could be Gideon who gathered an army drawn from several tribes which were dwelling in Asher's area (Jg 6:33-40). Gideon's exploits (in 1209 BCE) had to be famous since Sanchuniathon, a Phoenician writer, knew them. It is noteworthy that Hori's satirical letter was copied with a lot of variations and many proper names have been distorted⁵⁶⁰.*

The land of Shasu (Israel) was inhabited by Asiatics (*Aamu*) at that time:

⁵⁵⁶ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 475-477.

⁵⁵⁷ Y. AHARONI - The Land of the Bible
Philadelphia 1979, Ed. The Westminster Press pp. 180-185.

⁵⁵⁸ S. BAR, D. KAHN, J.J. SHIRLEY - Egypt, Canaan and Israel: History, Imperialism, Ideology and Literature
Leiden 2011 Ed. Brill pp. 348-350.

⁵⁵⁹ The name Qazardi, written q-3-d-3-j-r-d-j-y and pronounced Qadjaildiye, could be Hebrew (קצר ידי ? "Short is my hand").

⁵⁶⁰ C. TANTAOUI - La lettre satirique d'Hori, le papyrus Anastasi I et les textes parallèles, Volume II
Paris 1987 Thèse de doctorat en égyptologie Paris 3, pp 272-408.

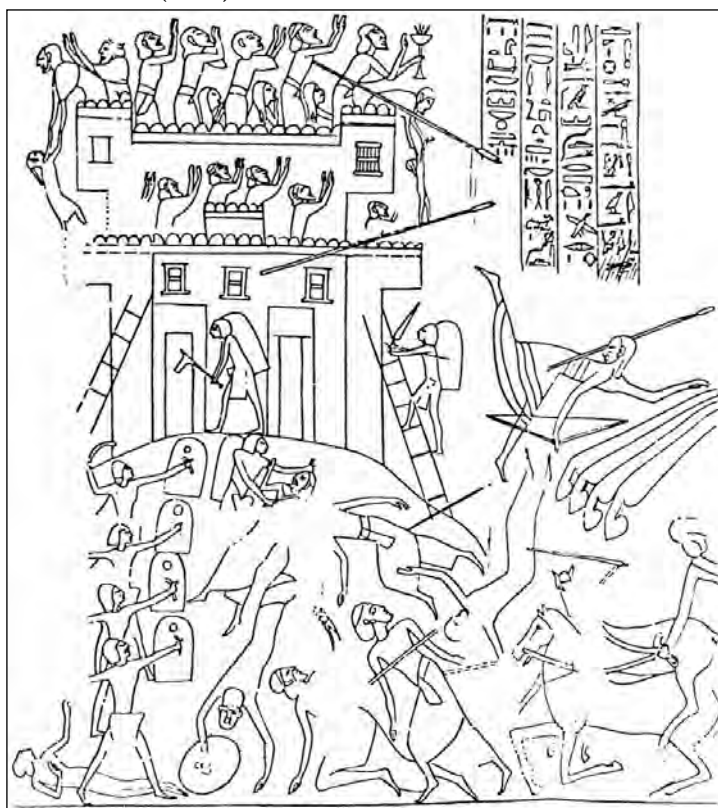


The name “Israel” appears in the stele of Israel instead of “Palestine (Upper Retenu)”, because it meant an ethnical entity: *Israel is laid waste; his offsprings are no longer*, not a geographical entity, besides the stele of Merenptah mentions a people, not a land. The word “Upper Retenu (*Rṯnw ḥrt*)” was always used after 1500 BCE⁵⁶¹ by the Egyptians to

⁵⁶¹ Retenu was used for Syro-Palestine, Upper Retenu (*Rṯnw ḥrt*) for Palestine and Lower Retenu (*Rṯnw ḥrt*) for Syria.

designate Palestine (Israel and Judah), even by Ramses III (1192-1161). The Israelites became a political entity (with a king and a Chancery) only from Gideon who refused to be king (Jg 8:22-23; 9:22) but not his son Abimelech (1259-1256). In fact, the first legitimate king of Israel was Saul (1Sa 8:5-9:16), who reigned over the period 1097-1057. The land of Israel (Upper Retenu) was regarded by the Egyptians primarily as a geographical entity over the period 1500-1100 because of the absence of an official king. The Bible replaces the phrase "the land of Canaan" by "the land" (after -1500), then "the land of Israel" from King Saul on (1Sa 13:1,19) and the inhabitants are merely called "the sons of Israel". This distinction is important, for example the geographical entity that is "Naharine" (Mesopotamia) became a political entity "Mitanni" with the appearance of its first king Kirta (1500-1485). Thus, from Thutmose III (1472-1418), Egyptian topographical lists⁵⁶² include both Naharine (*n-h-r-j-n*) and Mitanni (*m-t-n*).

The capture of Ashkelon, mentioned in the stele of Israel, has been depicted on a fresco (opposite figure). One can see that the clothes of the inhabitants of Ashkelon are of Canaanite type, which implies they were either Canaanites, or "heathen" Israelites because usually their clothes had tassels at the 4 corners of their garments. Although the city of Ashkelon was mainly populated by former Philistines and was headed by a mayor, vassal of Egypt, she had a significant Israelite population (Jg 14:19; 1Sa 6:17, 2Sa 1:20). The context allows one to understand why Merneptah wrote: *Israel is laid waste; his offsprings are no longer*.



Several texts⁵⁶³ describe foreign invaders (Sea Peoples) from 1212 BCE, who would have supported a Libyan/Philistine invasion of Egypt, as can be seen on a stele from the temple of Amada: *it was told to His Majesty that the enemy of the border had crossed it at the south. That happened in year 4, 2nd month of Shemu, 1st day. So then, the valiant army of His Majesty overthrew the Libyan vile, so that nothing remained of the people of this country (...)* He [Merenptah] protects Egypt, reassures the beloved country. He neglects the Nubians and make that comes on their feet, such as dogs, the countries of Hatti. Those previously who were ignoring Egypt come from themselves, because of the strength of the fear he inspired, because of his power. He linked the countries and gave peace to Egyptian lands. Dated year 5 of Merenptah, 2nd month of Shemu, the vast Karnak inscription reads: *The vile leader, defeated one of Libya, Meriay son of Ded goes down from the country of Libyans with his archers (...) some Shardanes [from Sardinia], Sicilians [from Sicily], Achaeans, Lycians, Etruscans, having led the elite of fighters and the warriors of his country. He also brought his wife and children (...) he had*

⁵⁶² J. SIMONS – Handbook for the Study of Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia Leiden 1937 Ed. E.J. Brill pp. 207-210.

⁵⁶³ C. LALOUE – L'empire des Ramsès Paris 1985 Éd. Arthème Fayard pp. 268-313.

reached the western boundary (of Egypt) in the campaign of Perire. According to the Israel Stela (line 27), dated year 5, 3rd month of Shemu, 3rd day: Now that Libya has come to ruin, Hatti is pacified; The Canaan has been plundered into every sort of woe: Askelon has been overcome; Gezer has been captured; Yenoam is made non-existent. Israel is laid waste; his offsprings are no longer; Haru is become a widow because of Egypt. All lands combined, they are at peace; Whoever roams about gets subdued by the King of Upper and Lower Egypt Merenptah. The chronology of these campaigns shows that the main purpose of Merenptah was to defeat an invasion coming from Libya, in:

- Year 4, 2nd month of Shemu (April 1212 BCE), Pharaoh had overthrown the ruler of Libya (Tjehenu) and had prevailed on the countries of Hatti (Arzawa, Wilusa?).
- Year 5, 2nd month of Shemu (March 1211 BCE), Pharaoh had defeated a ruler of Libya (Meriyah) with his archers whose some were Sardinians, Sicilians, Achaeans, Lycians, Etruscans having led the elite of fighters and the warriors of his country (Meriyah had brought into Egypt his wife and children).
- Year 5, 3rd month of Shemu (April), Libya had come to ruin, Hatti was pacified, Philistia had been plundered into every sort of woe and Askelon had been overcome.

The purpose of the Libyan invasion was probably to establish a colony in Egypt but not to attack this mighty country and if some Sea Peoples joined the Libyans, it was likely for commercial reasons (establishment of a trading centre). Several factors show that these Sea Peoples had not come to attack Egypt: the number of captives (ex warriors) was low: about 1,000 out of 10,000, although they had arrived in the 2nd month the Egyptians went to defeat them only a month later and most of the invaders had no chariotry but only a few carts drawn by oxen. The list of the loot is given by two documents (KRI IV, 7-9):

| Karnak list | | Heliopolis list | |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------|----------------------------|---------|
| Total of captives | 9,376 | Total of captives | 9,376 |
| Leaders' sons | 6,359 | | |
| Sicilians (warriors) | 222 | | |
| Etruscans (warriors) | 742 | | |
| Libyans (warriors) | 218 | | |
| Leader's women | 12 | | |
| Bronze swords of the Meshwesh (western Libyans) | 9,111 | Swords | 9,268 |
| | | Bows | 6,860 |
| | | Quivers and arrows | 128,860 |
| Horses having carried the leader and his children | 12 | Horses | 44 |
| Various livestock | 1,308 | Oxen, donkeys, goats, rams | 11,594 |
| | | Gold and silver jewellery | 531 |
| Various crockery | 3,174 | Bronze vases | 3,174 |

Merenptah introduced his looting as a great victory because he probably felt that the establishment of the Libyan colony (associated to some Mycenaeans) was a potential threat to Egypt which had to be quickly neutralized. The choice of Merenptah had to have deeply disrupted international relations because the Sea Peoples became enemies of Egypt (in 1211 BCE). As the king of Achaia (in Mycenaea) had previously supported a secession in western Anatolia (Arzawa) against Hattusili III, King Šuppiluliyama II (1207-1185) presumably proceeded on a copper embargo toward Achaia because this metal was an essential element for arming the soldiers. The Mycenaeans were able to continue to supply themselves with bronze thanks to their allies in Libya and Philistia. It is noteworthy that Merenptah's military campaigns in Palestine concerned only a few thousand Egyptian soldiers (maximum 5000) and mainly targeted the Libyans associated with a small fraction of the Sea Peoples. For example, an Egyptian scribe wrote around 1200 BCE in order to warn one of his colleague about the problem of a military mission: *O alert scribe, understanding of heart, who is not ignorant at all, torch in the darkness at the head of the troops — and it gives light to*

them! Thou art sent on an mission to Djahy (Phoenicia) at the head of the victorious army, to crush those rebels called Ne[h]arin. The bowmen of the army which is before thee amount to 1900; the Sherden 520, the Qebek 1600, the Meshwesh (100?), and the Negroes 880; total 5000 in all, not counting their officers. There is brought thee a peace offering before thee: bread, cattle, and wine. The number of men is too great for thee, whereas the provisions are too small for them. Afterwards the scribe quoted several regions or towns linked to Egypt: *Thou hast not gone to the land of Hatti, thou hast not seen the land of Upi (Damascus area). Khedem (Lebanon?), thou knowest [not] its nature, nor Yegdy either. What is it like, the Simyra of Sessi [nickname of Ramses II] —life, prosperity, health!? On which side of it is the city of Aleppo? What is its stream like ? Thou hast not gone forth to Kadesh [on Orontes] and Tubikhi. Thou hast not gone to the region of the Shasu with the bowmen of the army. Thou hast [not] trodden the road to the Magur, where the sky is darkened by day and it is overgrown with cypresses and oaks and cedars which reach the heavens. Lions are more numerous than leopards or bears, (and it is) surrounded by Shasu on (every) side of it (...) Let me tell thee of another strange city, named Byblos. What is it like? And its goddess ? Once again— [thou] hast not trodden it. Pray, instruct me about Beirut, about Sidon and Sarepta. Where is the stream of the Litani? What is Uzu like (Tyre on the mainland)?" They say another town is in the sea, named Tyre-the-Port. Water is taken (to) it by the boats, and it is richer in fish than the sands. Let me tell thee another difficult case —the crossing of Seram. Thou wilt say: It burns more than a sting! Very sick is the mahir. Come, set (me) on the way southward to the region of Acre. Where does the Achshaph road come ? At what town ? Pray, teach me about the mountain of User. What is its head" like ? Where does the mountain of Shechem come ? ... Where does the mahir make the journey to Hazor? What is its stream like? Put me (on) the track to Hamath, Deger, and Deger-El, the promenade ground of every mahir. Pray, teach me about its road and show me Yan. If one is traveling to Adummim, which way is the face? Do not shrink from thy teaching! Guide us (to) know them! Come, that I may tell thee other towns which lie above them. Thou hast not gone to the land of Takhsbi, Kur-mereren, Timnat, Kadesh, Deper, Azai, or Harnaim. Thou hast not seen Kiriath-Anab and Beth-Sepher. Thou dost not know Adurun or Zedpet either. Thou dost not know the name of Khenrez, which is in the land of Upi, the bull upon its boundary, the place where the battle array of every hero may have been seen. Pray, teach me about the appearance of Qiyyen, let me know Rebob, explain Beth-Shan and Tirqa-El. The stream of Jordan, how is it crossed? Let me know the way to pass Megiddo, which is above it (...) [let me relate to] thee the [foreign countries] of the end of the land of the Canaan. Thou answerest me neither good nor evil; thou returnest me no report. Come, let [me] tell thee many things as far as the Fortress of the "Ways [of Horus]". I begin for thee with the "Dwelling of Sessi —life, prosperity, health!" Thou hast not trodden it at all. Thou hast not eaten the fish of ... ; thou hast not bathed in it. Pray, let me recall to thee Husayin —where is its fortress ? Come now to the region of Uto of Sessi —life, prosperity, health!— in his stronghold of User-maat-Re —life, prosperity, health!— and Seba-El, and Ibsaqab (under Seti I). Let me tell thee the nature of Aiyenin. Thou knowest not its rules. Nekbes and Hebret, thou hast not seen them since thy birth. O mahir, where are they? Raphia —what is its wall like? How many iters ("10 km") march is it as far as Gaza? Answer quickly! Make me a report, that I may call thee mahir and boast to others of thy name maryanu —so shall I speak to them (Papyrus Anastasi I)⁵⁶⁴. It is also noteworthy that for the Egyptians at that time the land of Canaan [under Egyptian control] covered only the land around Gaza, thus Merenptah's military campaigns in Palestine have actually concerned mainly the south of the country (Philistia).*

After the death of Siptah (c. 1196 BCE), Egypt would experience a split between two pharaohs (Tausert and Setnakht) that would be a source of instability⁵⁶⁵. It is precisely at this time that the Sea Peoples tried to promote an insurrection against Setnakht (1196-1192) from Philistia. According to a stele from Elephantine (KRI IV,671-672), a coalition

⁵⁶⁴ J.B. PRITCHARD - Ancient Near Eastern Texts
Princeton 1969 Ed. Princeton University Press pp. 475-477.

⁵⁶⁵ C. VANDERSLEYEN - L'Egypte et la vallée du Nil Tome 2
Paris 1995 Éd. Presses Universitaires de France pp. 391-393.

of enemies (unspecified!) had been pushed back: *His Majesty [Sethnakht] was like his father Sutek, extending his arms to wrest Egypt to the man who had taken his power, encircling it of magical protection. So, the enemies in front of him, their hearts were filled with the fear he inspired, and they fled faster than sparrows, while the prestige of the hawk reached them. And there they left the gold and silver belonging to Egypt and which had given them the Asiatics, in order that rush to them the victories that would ensure the dominance over the beloved Country. But their plans failed and their promises were not for tomorrow (...) Year 2, 2nd month of Shemu, 10th day, it did not remain any more rebels to His Majesty, in any country, and one could say to his Majesty: O Lord of the earth, your heart is happy that the prophecy of the gods realized against your enemies, there is no longer in this country and no more any power of infantry and chariotry, except the one of your father. All the temples were reopened. One can again enter into the divine stores to increase (their provisions).* The beginning of the Papyrus Harris I which documents the reign of Ramses III, provides some details about Setnakht's rise to power: *The land of Egypt was overthrown from without, and every man was thrown out of his right; they had no "chief mouth" for many years formerly until other times. The land of Egypt was in the hands of chiefs and of rulers of towns; one slew his neighbour, great and small. Other times having come after it, with empty years. Irsu "a self-made man", a certain 'Syran' (Haru) was with them as chief (wr). He set plundering their (i.e. the people's) possessions. They made gods like men, and no offerings were presented in the temples. But when the gods inclined themselves to peace, to set the land in its rights according to its accustomed manner, they established their son, who came forth from their limbs, to be ruler, 'life, prosperity, health', of every land, upon their great throne, Userkhaure-setepenre-meryamun, 'life, prosperity, health', the son of Re, Setnakht-merire-meryamun, 'life, prosperity, health'. He was Khepri-Set, when he is enraged; he set in order the entire land which had been rebellious; he slew the rebels who were in the land of Egypt; he cleansed the great throne of Egypt; he was ruler of the Two Lands, on the throne of Atum. He gave ready faces to those who had been turned away. Every man knew his brother who had been walled in. He established the temples in possession of divine offerings, to offer to the gods according to their customary stipulations*⁵⁶⁶. Unusually no name of the invader people is mentioned, but it might have been the Sea Peoples. The allusion to the infantry and chariotry suggests that these enemies, bribed by Asiatics (in Palestine), came by land. Inasmuch as the city of Gezer belonged to Kharu area (Urk. IV,1556,10-11) Irsu had to have resided in the south of Palestine under Egyptian control (Philistia). The precise date, year 2, 2nd month of Shemu [March 1194 BCE]⁵⁶⁷, shows that the goal of Sethnakht's war was to crush a major insurrection, promoted by the Sea Peoples ("their plans and promises failed"), who came from Philistia.

One can likely conclude that Merenptah to support his vassal mayor (in Ashkelon), expelled the Israelite residents as well as the new invaders (Sea Peoples), in order to recover a fully Philistine city. The epoch for intervention in southern Palestine was well chosen because serious disorders had arisen in Israel after the death of Judge Jair (1233-1211), who was without a successor for 18 years (Jg 10:5-13): *After that Jair died and was buried in Kamon. Again the Israelites did what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah, and they began to serve the Baals, the Ashtoreth images (...) They abandoned Jehovah and did not serve him. Then Jehovah's anger blazed against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines and the Ammonites. So they crushed and greatly oppressed the Israelites in that year—for 18 years they oppressed all the Israelites on the side of the Jordan that had been the land of the Amorites in Gilead. The Ammonites would also cross the Jordan to fight against Judah and Benjamin and the house of Ephraim; and Israel was greatly distressed. Then the Israelites called to Jehovah for help, saying: We have sinned against you, for we abandoned our God and served the Baals. But Jehovah said to the Israelites: Did I not save you from Egypt and from the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines, the Sidonians, Amalek, and Midian when they oppressed you?*

⁵⁶⁶ J.H. BREASTED – Papyrus Harris I

in: *Ancient Records of Egypt* Vol. No. 4 (1906) pp. 198-199.

⁵⁶⁷ Tausert probably died one month earlier (February 1194 BCE).

Merenptah has therefore timely benefited from circumstances (death of the Israelite leader who was not replaced) to regain control of Philistia.

CANAAN ACCORDING TO EGYPTIAN DOCUMENTS

It is obvious that the Egyptians did not use the same terms as the Israelites to designate the land of Canaan and its inhabitants, however the great changes mentioned in the Bible, such as Exodus, appear filigree in the Egyptian lexicon.

| Period (BCE) | Canaan | Inhabitants | Capital | Kingdom name |
|--------------|----------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 2000-1750 | Retenu | Aamu | Hazor | - |
| 1750-1500 | Retenu | Aamu | Hazor | (Hyksos dynasties) |
| 1500-1350 | Upper Retenu | Shasu | Hazor | - |
| 1350-1200 | Upper Retenu | Shasu | Shechem | - |
| 1200-1050 | Upper Retenu | Aamu/ (Shasu) | [Shechem] | House of Israel |
| 1050-900 | (Israel) | (Israelites) | Jerusalem | House of David |
| 900-750 | Samaria/ Judea | Samarians/ Judeans | Samaria | House of Omri |

This summary table confirms the chronology from the Bible: During the period 1750-1500 the Israelites were in Egypt (Hyksos dynasties). When the Israelites left Egypt for Palestine Pharaoh Seqenenre Taa died dramatically, likewise Iahmes Sapaïr his eldest son. Forty years later, Hazor was burned and Palestine was occupied by the Shasu (Bedouins) who appeared suddenly around -1500 (after the conquest of Canaan). The political entity of Israel appeared around -1200 with Abimelech (1259-1256) its first king (Jg 9:22-29). The period following the wave of destruction by the Sea Peoples (in 1185 BCE) is called the “dark ages” because there are no documents in this period 1150-850, except in the Shoshenq I's list (980-959) appears the area called “[Hig]hlan[ds] of David⁵⁶⁸”.

The archaeologist Yohanan Aharoni and, more recently⁵⁶⁹, Aaron Burke have observed that the Bible describes the cities of Canaan as being strongly fortified. This was true at the end of the Middle Bronze Age (c. -1550), but it was not true at the end of the Late Ancient Bronze Age (c. -1200), when the prevailing view dates the ethnogenesis of Biblical Israel. The German scholars cite Israeli scholar Rivka Gonen as noting that at the end of the Late Bronze Age: *the Canaanite towns were frequently unfortified and therefore did not fit the Biblical descriptions well*. Even archaeologist Israel Finkelstein, known largely for his minimalist views, has suggested, in the words of the German scholars: *that the Biblical tradition likely contains vague memories of the expulsion of the (West Semitic) Hyksos*. Because of frequent chronological imprecisions and because of its inability to identify the ethnicity of inhabitants, archaeology cannot decide, for example, between the conquest of Canaan by Joshua and the military campaign of Thutmose III in Palestine⁵⁷⁰. Without historical accounts, it is impossible to write history. The arrival of the Israelites in Palestine was a major event in history which has been commented on by Greek and Roman historians⁵⁷¹. In contrast, Niels Peter Lemche, Professor of Old Testament exegesis at the Faculty of Theology in Copenhagen, teaches that: *The Israelite nation as explained by the biblical writers has little in the way of a historical background. It is a highly ideological construct created by ancient scholars of Jewish tradition in order to legitimize their own religious community and its religio-political claims on land and religious exclusivity* (The Israelites in History and Tradition, 1998, pp. 165-166).

⁵⁶⁸ K.A. KITCHEN - On the Reliability of the Old Testament
Cambridge 2003 Ed. W.B. Eerdmans p. 615.

⁵⁶⁹ H. SHANKS - When Did Ancient Israel Begin?

in: Ancient Israel in Egypt and the Exodus (Biblical Archaeology Society 2012) pp. 36-37.

⁵⁷⁰ E. JUNKKAALA - Three Conquests of Canaan. A Comparative Study of Two Egyptian Military Campaigns and Joshua 10-12 in the Light of Recent Archaeological Evidence. Ed. Åbo Akademi University Press (2006) pp. 303-312.

⁵⁷¹ M. STERN - Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism

Jerusalem 1976 Ed. Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities pp. 26-34.

IMPLAUSIBILITY OF EXODUS DURING RAMSES II'S REIGN

Despite much historical and archaeological evidence of the biblical Exodus at Ahmose's time, which is confirmed by the Egyptian priest Manetho, biblical scholars teach that it would have taken place under Ramses II. For example the Jerusalem Bible (Cerf, 1986, p. 1806), which is the official Bible of Catholicism, states that the Exodus occurred in 1250 BCE, during the reign of the famous Ramses II (1290-1224). This choice is manifestly preposterous because this pharaoh did not perish in the Red Sea (Ps 136:15), he didn't have to face an Asiatic who was well known to Egyptians (Ex 11:3) and obviously there was never a disaster that resulted in many deaths in Egypt during his reign (Ex 12:29-33).

The choice of the Jerusalem Bible is based on the opinion of prestigious biblical scholars as well as prominent Egyptologists. For example the Bible scholar Roland de Vaux claims⁵⁷²: *The indication of I Kings VI:1 is unusable (sic) because the number 480 is artificial (...) Similarly nothing can be taken of Jud. XI:26 which puts 300 years between the war against Sihon and time of Jephthah (...) The Bible gives only one valid indication for the date of the exodus, but it is important. According to Ex. I:11 the Israelites worked on the construction of warehouses cities of Pithom and Ramses. This information is definitely old and authentic. The exodus is therefore later than the advent of Ramses II in 1290 BC. The Egyptologist Kenneth Kitchen claims⁵⁷³: Given that we have a minimum span of 170/160 years for the known judges, prophets, and priests between about 1210/1200 and 1042 (when Saul took over), it is obvious from table 12 that those agents mentioned in the book of Judges plus 1 Sam. 1-7 cannot have been the total of all the local rulers ("judges" or tribal) that actually flourished throughout the period. It is simply a selection made by the author of Judges from a fuller tradition not now available to us (...) It now remains to turn this "relative chronology" into an approximate minimal chronology in terms of years B.C. Israel is mentioned as in Canaan by Merenptah in his fifth year in 1209 at latest, giving a rounded minimum benchmark of circa 1210. So Joshua, Moses, the wilderness years, and the exodus are all prior to that date; in theory, Joshua might also have been a contemporary of Merenptah's forces' very brief intrusion, and the elders might have followed him. The absolutely minimal dates for the exodus and wilderness forty years are between 1260/1250 and 1220/1210. An average at 1255-1215 would then give us 1215-1200 for Joshua and the elders. Thus we may for convenience begin the judges period proper at about 1200, so far as minimal dating is concerned (...) One datum not in table 15 is Jephthah's boast to the king of Ammon, that Israel had occupied the Mishor region east of the Jordan for 300 years (Judg. 11:26). At roughly about 1070, that would place that occupation at about 1370, which in itself makes no sense whatsoever on any current date of the exodus 40 years before whether in 1447, 1260/1250, or any time in between. Brave fellow that he was, Jephthah was a roughneck, an outcast, and not exactly the kind of man who would scruple first to take a Ph.D. in local chronology at some ancient university of the Yarmuk [this portrayal fits with Kitchen better than Jephthah] before making strident claims to the Ammonite ruler. What we have is nothing more than the report of a brave but ignorant man's bold bluster in favour of his people, not a mathematical precise chronological datum. So it can offer us no practical help. It is in the same class as other statements that biblical writers may well report accurately but which they would not necessarily expect readers to believe (...) For blustering Jephthah's propagandistic 300 years—it is fatuous (sic) to use this as a serious chronological datum (...) Here external evidence is more helpful. First the form of the Sinai covenant. What was found in Exodus-Leviticus, Deuteronomy, and Josh. 24 excludes not only any date of origin after 1200/1180 but also any date of origin before 1400/1360. Only with Suppiluliuma I (ca. 1360-1320 contemporary of kings Amenophis II to Ay) did this format come into use. So a Moses in Sinai in 1447 could never have seen a format still to be invented half a century into the future! What a scholarly muddle (2Tm 4:4).*

⁵⁷² R. DE VAUX - Histoire ancienne d'Israël des origines à l'installation en Canaan
Paris 1986 Éd. Gabalda p. 365.

⁵⁷³ K.A. KITCHEN - On the Reliability of the Old Testament
Cambridge 2003 Ed. W.B. Eerdmans pp. 205-209,308-310.