

A Revised History of the Era of King Hezekiah of Judah and its Background

A Master of Arts Thesis (MA)

by

Damien F. Mackey

(B.Phil, MA)



**Department of Hebrew, Biblical
and
Jewish Studies**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY
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Abstract

The reason why I have called this thesis a *revised* history for the era of king Hezekiah, and for the background to that era, is because my reconstruction of this particular period of the history of ancient Israel and of the nations associated with it will depart quite significantly from the standard text-book versions of it. My justification for blazing this unique historical trail stems from the comments made by examiners of my 1993 MA thesis, *The Sothic Star Theory of the Egyptian Calendar*, to the effect that:

- (a) I had shown the conventional chronology of ancient Egypt - to which that of the other nations (such as Assyria, Babylonia, Israel, Ethiopia and Greece) is largely tied - to be quite unsound, and that therefore,
- (b) the way lies open for 'a more acceptable alternative'.

Basically, this thesis is that 'alternative' as I see it for the era of king Hezekiah of Judah (late C8th BC), and for the background to that era (largely commencing early C9th BC).

This new thesis will be an in-depth chronological analysis and realignment of the era of Hezekiah and its background with a special focus upon trying to determine, in a revised context, who were the Judaeen king's major contemporaries and what were their origins. Though Hezekiah's era is generally quite a well-documented one, I expect to show in this thesis that it nevertheless stands in need of a substantial renovation, due especially to the over-extended Egyptian Sothic chronology and its effect upon the current version of neo-Assyrian history with which biblical historians have attempted to align the reign of king Hezekiah. The renovation to be undertaken in this thesis will reveal the era of Hezekiah to be in fact a most complex one; a meeting place for some extremely significant events in the history of Egypt/Ethiopia, Anatolia, Syro-Palestine, Greece and Mesopotamia.

Introductory Section

I review in *Chapter 1*, in a general way, the problems associated with the faulty chronology of Egypt, after having, in the *Introduction*, set the historical scene for Hezekiah, identifying the major nations at his time, and hinting at where the problems may lie and what sort of solutions will be proposed. A new set of chronological 'anchors' for the reign of king Hezekiah will be suggested.

VOLUME ONE:
A CHRONOLOGICAL REALIGNMENT OF KING HEZEKIAH AND
HIS CONTEMPORARIES

Part I: In Search of ‘A More Acceptable Alternative’ to the Conventional Background for the Era of Hezekiah

In *Chapter 2* I take an initial step back in time, in order to introduce a conglomerate of new peoples who appeared in the ancient Near East - ‘Indo-Europeans’ as I shall be generally calling them - amongst whom, as I shall argue, were the ancestors of some of the most important kings of Hezekiah’s day. Following on from this will be the introduction, in *Chapter 3*, of an early C9th BC king - arising from these immigrant peoples - whom I shall proceed to identify as a great ancestor-king, affecting major kingships contemporaneous with Hezekiah. This background analysis will continue on into *Chapter 4*, into the mid-late C9th BC, with the introduction of a second significant king, generally thought to have been a descendant of the first, who will be of crucial dynastic importance affecting Hezekiah’s time, especially in regard to Egypt.

Part II: King Hezekiah and His Mesopotamian Contemporaries Revised

In this section I consider the problems that specifically relate to the era of king Hezekiah and his connections primarily with Mesopotamia (mainly Assyria and Babylonia). In the first chapter, on Judah/Israel (*Chapter 5*), I examine the chronology of Hezekiah’s reign in its relation to the kingdom of Israel and the major events associated with the latter. Of special interest here will be the incident of the fall of Samaria. I shall, in regard to this incident, reconsider, and alter, the current dates for king Hezekiah himself; these, I shall argue, being based upon a faulty chronology of Assyria.

Related to all of this will be *Chapter 6*, my lengthy revision of neo-Assyrian history, in which I shall arrive at some quite startling conclusions that will serve to shave off thirty years or more from the conventional estimate. Only as a result of these reduced dates though, shall I argue, can there be attained a proper correspondence between king Hezekiah and his Mesopotamian contemporaries, with the resulting chronological realignment becoming *the very foundation stone* for a new chronology of Judah/Israel. This revision will continue on into *Chapter 7*, with Babylonia. There I shall examine the major problems and propose solutions that I think will serve to bring a chronologico-historical harmony and alignment right across the board.

Part III: King Hezekiah and His Egyptian Contemporaries Revised

An even more complex task than attempting to bring into proper alignment the history of Mesopotamia for the Hezekian era will be that of grounding king Hezekiah’s Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries. My discussion here will be dependent upon the conclusions already reached in **Part I**, in relation to the two seminal kings of foreign origin discussed there in detail.

In *Chapter 8*, I shall set out in summary form all of the major Egypto-Ethiopian activity - and its agents - thought to have been concurrent with the reign of king Hezekiah. Then, in *Chapter 9* and *Chapter 10*, respectively, I shall focus upon the influence, on the nation of Egypt, of those two seminal kings already discussed, with a view later to identifying in the fullest possible way all of Hezekiah's major Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries. *Chapter 11* will afford me with the opportunity of bringing the revised history right to the dawn of the era of Hezekiah; whilst in *Chapter 12*, now fully within the Hezekian era, I shall finally be able to propose specific answers - based on my lengthy (of necessity) revision of the background Egyptian history - to what will have turned out to be two extremely difficult questions to answer: namely,

Who were king Hezekiah's main Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries (and what were their origins)?

and: *To which dynasties did these particular pharaohs belong?*

VOLUME TWO: SENNACHERIB'S INVASIONS OF HEZEKIAH'S KINGDOM AND HIS DEFEAT

Part I: Sennacherib's Invasions of King Hezekiah's Kingdom

Having attempted to establish, in VOLUME ONE, a most comprehensive, revised alignment of king Hezekiah with all of his major contemporaries, from Egypt/Ethiopia to Mesopotamia, I now proceed to tackle vexed problems associated with the king's reign in regard to the incursions of Assyria into the Judaeian kingdom. For example:

Did Sennacherib king of Assyria launch a major attack on Jerusalem once or twice?
and: *What actually happened to Sennacherib's army of 185,000?*

My revision of neo-Assyrian history has now hopefully made it possible for me to provide a firm answer to the first question, to which I shall dedicate *Chapter 1*.

Part II: Demise of the Assyrian Army and of Sennacherib

To answer the second question, I shall be drawing also upon the pseudepigraphal Book of Judith in *Chapter 2* and *Chapter 3*. This action-packed book holds, I believe, the very *key* to what happened to the ill-fated Assyrian army. But I must at the same time fully integrate the Book of Judith with Kings, Chronicles and Isaiah for the era of Hezekiah so that there can be no doubt about the former's relevance. This detailed work will simply be an extension of VOLUME ONE, in which I had sought to confirm who were king Hezekiah's contemporaries. But it will also add a fascinating new dimension to it.

The *Epilogue* will provide me with an opportunity to discuss the aftermath of the Assyrian defeat and what befell some of the leading characters whom we shall have encountered.

It will also serve as a lead-in to my *Excursus* on Isaiah, whose primary purpose will be to highlight the prophet's celebrated rôle - according to this revision - in Assyria, subsequent to Israel's victory.

A reconstructed history (chronology) needs a revised stratigraphy to underpin it all. Throughout this thesis I shall also be endeavouring to lay down a sound, basic stratigraphy for king Hezekiah and his contemporaries and for the background to Hezekiah's era.

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SENNACHERIB'S INVASIONS OF HEZEKIAH'S KINGDOM
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List of Acronyms

ADP = *Addu*- Principle

AKL = Assyrian King List

BOJ = Book of Judith

BOT = Book of Tobit

EA = El Amarna

EBA = Early Bronze Age

EOH = Era of Hezekiah

HPA = High Priest of Amun

IA = Iron Age

KCI = Kings, Chronicles and Isaiah

LBA = Late Bronze Age

MBA = Middle Bronze Age

TIP = Third Intermediate Period

VLTF = Velikovsky's Lowering on Timescale by 500 Years

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My sincere gratitude must go out also to Dr. Noel Weeks of the Department of History of the University of Sydney for his patient supervision during my previous thesis (MA), which has served as a sturdy foundation for the current PhD. Dr. Weeks attempted to curb any excessive flights of fantasy throughout the course of this research, by insisting at all times on the need for "a rigorous methodology".

The MA was preceded by a course in Egyptian hieroglyphics, at Macquarie University, and I thank Professor Naguib Kanawati and his colleagues there for having successfully guided me through this new study.

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Deserving of my gratitude and congratulations, too, are all of those who have been involved with the journals *Kronos* and *Pensée*, for their vital pioneering work in the revision of ancient history and the related Sothic studies.

Enormous has been the benefit over the years that I have derived from reading the excellent, scholarly articles to be found within the pages of these fine journals, and of the more recent *Aeon*.

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My association with the Society for Interdisciplinary Studies [SIS] in the U.K. goes back to the 1980's. SIS has availed me of the opportunity of having my working papers discussed in its Ancient History Forum, and has afterwards provided me with valuable feedback. I am grateful to those who have read my papers to the Forum in my absence, such as Professor Trevor Palmer and David Salkeld. I thank too the various editors of SIS for their support over the years. My special thanks must go to Jill Aberly (Kent, U.K.) for her enduring keen interest, her kind advice and encouragement, and her tireless efforts to give a 'voice' to every contributor to SIS.

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'You are the glory of Jerusalem!
You are the great pride of Israel!
You are the highest honour of our race!'

(Judith 15:9)

Preface

This thesis, as it stands, would most definitely never have seen the light of day had it not been for my having come across, in the early 1980's, the revised historical systems of Drs. Immanuel Velikovsky and Donovan Courville (published between the early 1950's to 1970's), with their proposed radical lowering of the important 18th Egyptian dynasty by 500 years on the time scale, and their subsequent stratigraphical realignments. After that, the work was continued in the U.S. and Canada with some genuine developments, and certain necessary modifications, by the contributors to *Pensée*, founded by David Talbott - a journal important for, amongst other things, its scholarly treatment of Sothic dating, including specialized pieces by Velikovsky - and *Kronos*, edited by Professor Lewis M. Greenberg, and spanning thirteen years (1975-1988), with its highly important contributions towards bringing art history into a proper perspective. The Associate Editor of *Kronos*, Ev Cochrane, would go on (since 1988) to publish the important journal *Aeon*, still functioning today, with its relevant publications in history, comparative mythology, and archaeoastronomy; whilst Dwardu Cardona, the founder of the Canadian Society for Interdisciplinary Studies, would become *Aeon's* senior editor. The Los Angeles based journal of the later 1970's and early 1980's, *Catastrophism & Ancient History*, edited by Marvin Luckerman, featured some useful and wide-ranging contributions - particularly of an historical nature - from both the U.S. and the U.K.

In the U.K, the Velikovskian-based (initially, at least) revision was championed especially by the *Society for Interdisciplinary Studies*, particularly by what became known as the 'Glasgow School', in the late 1970's and early 1980's, some of whose modifications of Velikovsky I think have been highly impressive.

There have also arisen, in the more recent decades, certain fine individual contributions of a multidisciplinary (or transdisciplinary) nature from members of some of the above-mentioned journals and/or schools, who may have decided to branch out on their own and develop their idiosyncratic systems of revision.

Overall, I have endeavoured to take into account what I consider to be the best and most historically plausible contributions of this growing body of scholarship, always with due acknowledgement, and to synthesise these, as far as possible, into a coherent whole: historical, stratigraphical (including art history) and archaeo-astronomical.

Apart from the absolute chronological factor of the Velikovskian (taken up by Courville) downward shift in time of 500 years, as referred to above, there is another more specific aspect of Velikovsky's revision upon which I shall be most heavily dependent throughout chiefly VOLUME ONE of this thesis, *A Revised History of the Era of King Hezekiah of Judah and its Background*. I refer to Velikovsky's identification - one formerly approved and supported by competent revisionists from the 'Glasgow School' - of two successive 'Amorite' kings in the el-Amarna correspondence (conventionally dated to the C14th BC) with successive 'Syrian' (biblical) kings of the C9th BC: namely, Velikovsky's identification of el-Amarna's *Abdi-ashirta* and *Aziru*, with, respectively, Ben-Hadad [I] and Hazael.

Whilst, on the one hand, fully embracing this particular cross-identification by Velikovsky of these two ‘Syrian’ kings (i.e. their el-Amarna and C9th BC *alter egos*) - with the added support of the ‘Glasgow School’ - I shall, however, also be significantly expanding them:

- (i) by tracing their origins back to foreign immigrants (‘Indo-Europeans’) to the region, and
- (ii) by even further multi-identifying them.

It will in fact be owing to the results obtained from my filling out of these two kings that I shall be able to, as I see it, propose a solution to ‘The Assuruballit Problem’: that is, the historical bottleneck that has arisen, particularly in neo-Assyrian chronology, due to Velikovsky’s re-locating of el-Amarna’s “king of Assyria”, Assuruballit, to the precise time of the mid-C9th BC king of Assyria, Shalmaneser III. But these two ‘Syrian’ kings will be, despite their major importance in the context of any Velikovskian-based revision, serving in this thesis mainly as a firm and well-established *starting-point* for my attempted reconstruction of the background to the era of Hezekiah. My more pressing purpose in seeking to establish them securely in their place will be to show how two other biblical kings, either related to these by blood, or ethnically (and hence also of foreign origin and situated to the C9th BC) - and who also figure in the Old Testament as kings of no little stature - managed radically to influence affairs, even kingly dynasties (apart from Syro-Palestine), in Mesopotamia and Egypt, even down to the time of Hezekiah. I am referring to kings OMRI and JEHU, of whom we shall be hearing a lot more (cf. **Part I**, *Chapter 3* and *Chapter 4*; & **Part III**, *Chapter 9* and *Chapter 10*).

Now, moving on down to king Hezekiah’s own century, my restructuring and shortening of C8th BC neo-Assyrian history in connection with Hezekiah in **Part II**, *Chapter 6*, by controversially identifying Sargon II with Sennacherib, will be an original contribution, though undoubtedly much assisted by those who have argued for a more significant than generally accepted period of co-regency between Sargon II and Sennacherib. I am particularly indebted to Eric Aitchison in this regard. This basis (Sargon = Sennacherib), allied to the recognition of a necessary ‘folding’ of ‘Middle’ and ‘Neo’ Babylonian history, will enable for me to arrive at the radical conclusion that the so-called ‘Middle’ Babylonian king, Nebuchednezzar I, was in fact this composite neo-Assyrian monarch (Sargon/Sennacherib) in the latter’s guise as ruler of Babylon (*Chapter 7*).

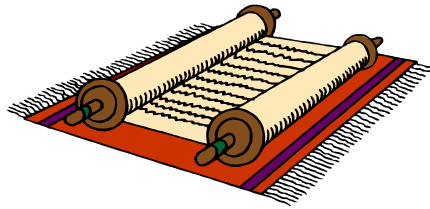
Any such proposed syncretism, however, between a ‘Middle’ and a ‘Neo’ dynasty Assyro-Babylonian king would have been inconceivable had not Velikovsky, and others, insisted upon the need for a merging of these two phases of Mesopotamian history. And the same general comment applies to my proposed merging, still in *Chapter 7*, of Tiglath-pileser I with Tiglath-pileser III, as being the one king of Assyria. Though, in this specific case, I am indebted to Emmet Sweeney for his having argued this identification and for his having also provided a series of useful comparisons in support of it. And that comment applies yet again in the case of my identifying the ‘Middle’ Babylonian king, Merodach-baladan I, with Merodach-baladan II, the latter being the king of Babylon (a late contemporary of Tiglath-pileser III) who would become allied to Hezekiah against Assyria, and who will become especially significant in VOLUME TWO of this thesis.

Now with regard to Egypt, certainly a most complex aspect of this thesis, I am once again dependent for my chronological perspective upon Velikovsky and the systematic Courville; though with the necessary later modifications to their pioneering efforts already referred to above. For the important identification of the biblical “So, king of Egypt” (2 Kings 17:4), in *Chapter 12, 1.* (with preliminary material set out in *Chapter 8*), I am again indebted to Velikovsky and Courville and also to those other revisionist historians (e.g. Sieff, Dirkwager, Clapham, Korbach) who have expended a great deal of mental energy in trying to resolve this complex issue. They have at least created a useful context towards the resolution of this enigmatic period of history.

To be rejected in this thesis, though, will be that controversial view of Courville’s and some others that the 22nd dynasty was of Assyrian, rather than Libyan (as according to convention), origins.

Turning to VOLUME TWO, my attempt in **Part I** (*Chapter 1*) to settle the contentious issue of whether Sennacherib had commanded one, or two, major campaigns against the city of Jerusalem will be based upon the research of Bright, Childs and others who have painstakingly sought to determine the correct answer to this question, but who tend to favour the ‘two-campaign’ theory. The full resolution of this complicated matter though, as I see it, will not be found until **Part II**, with my merging of the Book of Judith with the Books of Kings, Chronicles and Isaiah for the era of Hezekiah (*Chapter 2* and *Chapter 3*). I have nowhere read where this particular historical scenario for Judith has been attempted; though, in retrospect, the C8th BC Hezekian era for the Judith drama, with Sennacherib ruling in Assyria, now seems to me to be rather obvious. Be that as it may, I know of virtually no current historians who even consider the Book of Judith to be anything other than a ‘pious fiction’, or perhaps ‘historical fiction’, with the emphasis generally on the ‘fiction’ aspect of this. Thus I feel a strong empathy for the solitary Judith in the midst of those differently-minded Assyrians (Judith 10:11-13:10).

Finally, the *Excursus* on the prophet Isaiah, being as it is a product of my merging of Judith with Kings, Chronicles and Isaiah, a new concept, will inevitably result in some re-casting of the life and movements of Isaiah; and, hopefully, in attaining more precise geographical locations for this most influential prophet to king Hezekiah.



Introductory Section

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1. General Chronologico-Historical Problems and Proposed Solutions	10

Introduction

Setting the Historical Scene. The Main World Powers at the Time of Hezekiah of Judah (namely, Assyria; Babylonia and Egypt/Ethiopia).

The era of Hezekiah [hereafter EOH], when properly co-ordinated as I shall be attempting to accomplish in this thesis, will be found to be an extremely exciting one, and quite well documented. This last will be somewhat contrary to Tadmor's view of "the poorly documented period in Egypt during the last two decades of the 8th century".¹ "The Sargonidae, the most important of the various Assyrian dynasties, comprising Sargon (722-705 B.C.), Sennacherib (705-686 B.C.), Esarhaddon (686-668 B.C.), and Ashur bani apal (668-626 B.C.)", according to Olmstead,² "furnish us a most embarrassing wealth of historical material, while the problems, especially as to priority of date and as to consequent authority, become most complicated". There is, for EOH, a convergence of written or documentary information right across the 'Fertile Crescent', from Assyria/Babylonia, through Palestine, to Egypt/Ethiopia. We can ascertain who were the Judaeen king Hezekiah's contemporaries. The three major powers at the time, figured in Isaiah 27:1 as great dragon-serpents or sea monsters, were:³

- ASSYRIA, that is, "Leviathan the swift serpent" (לְוִיָּתָן נָחֵשׁ בָּרֵחַ), where the adjective "swift" (בָּרֵחַ) points to Assyria's rapid Tigris (the "arrow-river" of the Persians), the fit symbol of Assyria's rapid, prompt action;
- BABYLONIA, "Leviathan the crooked serpent" (לְוִיָּתָן נָחֵשׁ עִקְלָתוֹן). The winding Euphrates is a perfect symbol of the tortuous Babylonian diplomacy, first shifting this way then that; and
- EGYPT/ETHIOPIA, "The Dragon that is in the sea" (הַתַּנִּין אֲשֶׁר בַּיָּם). In Isaiah 51:9, "the dragon", Heb, הַתַּנִּין, is used as a parallel to *Rahab* (רַהַב), "the proud" - meaning Egypt (cf. Isaiah 30:7). The "sea", that is, the Nile, indicates the territorial vastness of the Egypto-Ethiopian power of the time.

As to the rulers of these three nations at this time:

¹ 'The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur', *JCS*, vol. xii, pp. 78.

² 'Assyrian Historiography', ch. 1: "Assyrian Historians and their Histories", (un-numbered pages).

³ I am indebted to C. Boufflower for these correlations. *The Book of Isaiah*, pp. 1-2.

- ASSYRIA, during the most climactic part of Hezekiah's reign, is traditionally thought to have been dominated by the neo-Assyrian kings, SARGON II and SENNACHERIB;
- BABYLONIA by the wily MERODACH-BALADAN II, of what is sometimes called the 9th Babylonian Dynasty; though van de Mieroop gives "uncertain dynasties";⁴
- EGYPT/ETHIOPIA, in part, by a 'KING SO OF EGYPT' (usually thought to be of the 24th dynasty), and then by what is called the 25TH ETHIOPIAN (or KUSHITE/CUSHITE) DYNASTY.

According to 2 Kings, ISRAEL, under king HOSHEA, was in its death throes in the early reign of king HEZEKIAH, and was taken into Assyrian captivity in the latter's sixth year, which was Hoshea's ninth year (18:10). Hezekiah himself had succeeded his father Ahaz, in Jerusalem, after a period of coregency - and had immediately instigated a wide-ranging socio-political and religious reform, to undo Ahaz's disastrous rule (cf. 2 Chronicles 28 & 29). Hezekiah is seen by some as a 'new king David', who would manage for a time to unite the two kingdoms again and greatly diminish the territory of the Philistines.⁵

The prophet ISAIAH played a major rôle in Palestine at this time.

We know the names of many contemporary rulers and princes from the Mesopotamian and Egypto/Ethiopian records, and from the Scriptures. We read of Egypt's 'Turtan', *Sib'e*, and of pharaohs *Shilkanni* and *Tirhakah* as well from the Assyrian records, which also refer to *Ilu-bi'di*, king of Hama; *Hanuna*, king of Gaza; *Tuba'lu* of Tyre, *Azuri*, *Iatna-Iamani* and *Akhi-miti*, successive governors of 'Ashdod', and many, many other Syro-Hittite, Phoenician, Philistine, Greek and Mesopotamian dignitaries. The contemporary Egyptian genealogies of officials and lists of High Priests are extremely important also from both an historical and chronological point of view see *Chapter 11* and *Chapter 12*). In 2 Chronicles 29:12-14 we can read a list of king Hezekiah's Levites and also of his trio of leading officials, *Eliakim son of Hilkiyah*, *Shebna*, and *Joah son of Asaph*, who met the Assyrian trio (un-named) of the 'Turtan', 'Rabshakeh' and 'Rabsaris'.

No one disputes any of this.

Yet, having said all that, I suspect that there is still an enormous amount of historical (also involving geographical) detail that current textbook history has not settled with certainty about EOH. E.g:

- Can it convincingly identify the pharaoh *So* to whom Hoshea, the last king of Israel, turned (2 Kings 16:4)? Or tell of his origins?
- Or *Shilkanni King of Egypt* of the Assyrian records?
- Or properly co-ordinate the reigns of the contemporary neo-Assyrian kings, firstly amongst themselves, and then in relation to rulers of Egypt/Ethiopia, Judah/Israel and Babylonia?

⁴ *A History of the Ancient Near East*, pp. 291-292.

⁵ This the Judaeon king so successfully achieved that Sennacherib spoke of Hezekiah's kingdom as "the wide territory of Judah" [*rapshu nagû (matu) Ya-û-di*]. Nebí Yunas Inscription. D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria & Babylonia*, vol. 2, #347.

- Can it accommodate both the specific biblical chronological data and the Assyrian records for the incident of the fall of Samaria?
- Or tell conclusively how many times Sennacherib seriously threatened Jerusalem?
(Note the vast, conflicting literature on this subject⁶).
- Can it say exactly what happened to Sennacherib's huge army in the west?

These are only a handful of the queries that will need to be faced as we probe into what will turn out to be an extremely complex and fascinating era of history. It is my conviction that the answer to the above questions is generally 'No'; and that a compelling solution to such difficulties, as well as various others, can be found only after there has taken place a radical revision and thorough overhaul of even this well-documented era of history and its background. So, despite my having accepted those above-mentioned premises about which I noted: 'No one disputes any of this', I believe that the revision to be undertaken in this thesis, *A Revised History of the Era of King Hezekiah of Judah and its Background*, will serve greatly to amplify and elucidate EOH, once all of the synchronisms across the board have been slotted into their proper place.

The problem starts with Egypt, to whose chronology that of the other ancient nations is largely tied (see *Chapter 1*). The solution therefore also starts with Egypt, a consideration of which will of necessity occupy a large amount of space throughout this thesis. It was with Egypt in fact that revisionists Velikovsky⁷ and Courville⁸ began in around the mid-20th; their crucial contribution being to scrutinize the conventional method of dating Egypt as designed by, most notably, Eduard Meyer of the Berlin School of Egyptology⁹ based on the heliacal rising of the star Sirius (Gk. *Sothis*, Egyptian *Spdt/Sopdet*), showing Meyer's theory to have been artificially constructed and thereby leading to a massive over-extension of ancient chronologies. Their solution was to relocate early Egyptian history - most notably that of the famous 18th dynasty - 500 years later on the time scale than according to the conventional estimate, with the corresponding lowering of the Early Bronze Age [hereafter EBA].

The pioneering efforts of Velikovsky and Courville were most effectively developed, often modified, as we saw, in the US by the contributors to *Pensée*¹⁰ and *Kronos*¹¹, *Catastrophism and Ancient History*¹², and, more recently, the journal *Aeon*¹³.

⁶ E.g. J. Bright, *A History of Israel*, Excursus I: 'The Problem of Sennacherib's Campaigns in Palestine', pp. 296-308; L. Honor, *Sennacherib's Invasion of Palestine*; B. Childs, *Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis*; H. Rowley, *Hezekiah's Reform and Rebellion*, pp. 98-132; G. Fohrer, *Das Buch Jesaja*, pp. 151-181; W. Eichrodt, *Der Herr der Geschichte, Jesaja 13-23, 28-39*, pp. 225-260.

⁷ *Theses for the Reconstruction of Ancient History*; and also *Ages in Chaos*, vol. 1.

⁸ *The Exodus Problem and its Ramifications*, vols. 1 & 2.

⁹ *Ägyptische Chronologie*.

¹⁰ Including two articles by Velikovsky, 'The Foundations of Egyptian Chronology' and 'The Lion Gate at Mycenae' and L. Greenberg's article of similar title, 'The Lion Gate of Mycenae', and also his 'The Lion Gate of Mycenae Revisited' in *SISR*; and I. Isaacson's 'Applying the Revised Chronology'.

¹¹ Including R. Long's 'A Re-examination of the Sothic Chronology of Egypt'; R. Hewsen's 'Eastern Anatolia and Velikovsky's Chronological Revisions'; Velikovsky's 'From the End of the Eighteenth Dynasty to the Time of Ramses II'.

And in the UK, the leading work has been taken by the *Society for Interdisciplinary Studies*¹⁴. Moreover, individual revisionists have branched out with books of an historical and astronomical nature,¹⁵ and even, in some cases, TV documentaries.¹⁶

Today of course there is also a preponderance of web sites, including most of the above-named, dedicated to the revision of ancient history and archaeoastronomy.

Naturally, with so many now involved in this task of revision, there is far less consensus today than there was in the 1970's in relation to what might constitute a sound and accurate revision. On the positive side, the tendency is no longer to consider the pioneering work as monolithic, but as open to scrutiny. Thus for instance still holds good, in regard to Velikovsky, the warning of the editors of *Pensée* in the 1970's against erecting the former's hypotheses and evidence "into a monument which must be defended whole ... or else abandoned altogether".¹⁷ Those amongst the revisionists who have followed this sensible advice, whilst strictly adhering to the archaeological facts, have often been able to identify, and to iron out, certain significant problems with aspects of the earlier works. Less happily, though, there may now be arising a fair amount of confusion due to there being almost as many systems of revision as there are revisionists. To refer to just one example, important to this thesis, of such a diversification of views amongst revisionists, who have in turn diverged from the conventional interpretations, see section: "Interpreting Merenptah's Victory Stele" (in *Chapter 11*, pp. 300-305), in which there will be found a variety of proposals as to how to interpret Merenptah's famous ('Israel') Stele.

Hoping not just to add to the confusion, I have endeavoured to develop a sound revision by laying down deep foundations upon which to erect this. In a successful MA thesis¹⁸ that I completed a little more than a decade ago, I had scrutinized the conventional pillars of Egyptian chronology, with a special focus on Meyer's Sothic theory. In this thesis I had sought to provide a critical analysis of conventional Egyptian chronology using a combination of the standard textbooks on the subject¹⁹ and the relevant revisionist material available (or known to me) at that time.

¹² E.g. P. Clapham, 'Hittites and Phrygians'; D. Courville, 'On the Survival of Velikovsky's Thesis in *Ages in Chaos*'; A. Dirkwager, 'Pharaoh So and the Libyan Dynasty'; M. Luckerman, 'Problems of Early Anatolian History'; D. Hickman, 'The Dating of Hammurabi'; L. Mitcham, 'A New Interpretation of the Assyrian King List'; M. Sieff, 'The Libyans in Egypt: Resolving the Third Intermediate Period'.

¹³ E.g. M. Sieff's 'The Hyksos were not Assyrians'; E. Cochrane's 'Indra: A Case Study in Comparative Mythology' and 'Sothis and the Morning Star in Egyptian Pyramid Texts'.

¹⁴ E.g. B. Aaronson, 'On the Merits of the Revised Chronologies'; J. Bimson, 'Can There be a Revised Chronology Without a Revised Stratigraphy?'; G. Gammon, 'A Chronology for the Eighteenth Dynasty'; P. James, 'The Dating of the El-Amarna Letters'; M. Sieff, 'In Defence of the Revised Chronology'.

¹⁵ E.g. P. James, *Centuries of Darkness*; D. Rohl, *The Lost Testament*. L. Rose, *Sun, Moon, and Sothis*.

¹⁶ E.g. D. Rohl's *A Test of Time*.

¹⁷ *Pensée*, IVR X (1974-5), p. 43. This sentiment has since been echoed by A. Dirkwager, 'Pharaoh So and the Libyan Dynasty', p. 20.

¹⁸ *Sothic Star Theory of the Egyptian Calendar*, favourably reviewed by D. Down, 'University Scholar Attacks Sothic Cycle'. The editors of *Answers in Genesis Technical Journal* also provided me with the opportunity of summarising my thesis in an article entitled 'Fall of the Sothic theory'.

¹⁹ E.g. H. Winlock, 'The Egyptian Expedition, 1927-1928'; M. Rowton, 'Mesopotamian Chronology and the 'Era of Menophres''.; R. Long, *op. cit.*

This was in order to arrive at a balanced overview. My then supervisor, Dr. Noel Weeks, had been at pains to impress upon me the need for such a dialogue between the conventional and revisionist points of view; a piece of good advice that has recently been proposed to me again by a different source, along the lines that: ‘Whilst an author might have every right to conduct a dialogue with those who share his presuppositions, an academic thesis must engage with standard scholarship even when that scholarship is held to be incorrect’.

My MA thesis had also of necessity taken in a significant amount of astronomical and archaeo-astronomical data, with a most heavy reliance upon Neugebauer’s and Parker’s authoritative astronomical set.²⁰ This last exhaustive study has rightly been described as “a truly unique combination of first rate mathematician, first rate historian and first rate expert in ancient languages”.²¹

The Sothic theory I had concluded, as had Velikovsky, Courville and others, is artificially based and has consequently thwarted efforts by historians to establish proper syncretisms throughout (mainly early) antiquity, especially when it is considered that the chronology of the other nations is usually assessed with reference to Egypt. Happily, this testing thesis was passed by examiners on both chronologico-historical and astronomical grounds. Scientist Dr. R. Grogard for instance, one of the examiners of my thesis, referred to my:

“... critical analysis ... when examining the opposite points of view [i.e. the Sothic theory]. Indeed, most get a thrashing ...”.

Having thus cleared the ground for a new and more accurate chronology of the ancient world, with the patient support of Dr. Noel Weeks of the History Department of the University of Sydney (the MA thesis), I now offer the inevitable work of reconstruction. This was already envisaged by another of my MA examiner’s when noting, favourably, that: “It is important to show the weaknesses or errors in our understanding of a theory in order to leave our minds free to think of a more acceptable alternative”.

The opportunity to provide such an “alternative” became a reality when expert linguist Professor Rifaat Ebied, of the Department of Hebrew, Biblical and Jewish Studies, also of the University of Sydney, invited me to write a PhD under his supervision. It was Professor Ebied who proposed that I should use EOH as my starting point.

My intention will be, in the course of this thesis, to lay down a new foundation underpinned by a sound stratigraphy for EOH and its background; a solid realignment of king Hezekiah and his major contemporaries, from Egypt/Ethiopia, through Syro-Palestine, to Mesopotamia.

The conclusions of this thesis, relevant to the above questions for which I said the conventional history cannot provide complete answers, and to other questions as well, will at times be quite new and challenging. But I am not claiming any of this to be the last word on the subject; only the best ‘alternative’ with which I am able to come up at this point in time.

²⁰ *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*, vols. I-III.

²¹ Comment made by CSIRO scientist, R. Grogard, an examiner of my MA thesis, *op. cit.*

Moreover, for my being able to arrive at such new conclusions, I am most heavily indebted to all those who have been involved in the painstaking work of sifting and assessing the archaeological, historical, art historical and archaeo-astronomical data of which we are now the beneficiaries, standing as it were on the shoulders of so many 'giants' of previous research. My work should be regarded primarily as seminal in nature. It certainly cannot be construed as the final word on a subject that has confounded and occupied innumerable scholars over the past one hundred years.

Some of my major historical conclusions in regard to the chief nations of EOH will be:

(i) For JUDAH/ISRAEL: This thesis will re-orientate chronology, so that the biblical computation for Hezekiah - in its relation to Israel, Assyria and Babylonia - will now become a veritable foundation stone for a new, revised system. Edwin Thiele's proposed dates for Hezekiah, having been aligned to a faulty chronology of Mesopotamia, will be rejected. New multi-chronological 'pillars' will be established upon which to erect a sound EOH chronology.

Another major contribution in regard to Israel will be the introduction of the pseudepigraphal Book of Judith [hereafter BOJ] to add a whole new face to EOH. **Part II** of VOLUME TWO will in fact be devoted to showing that the drama depicted in BOJ belongs wholly to EOH; that the key players in BOJ are to be identified with outstanding characters of EOH. This new idea will have an enormous impact on what happened in regard to Sennacherib's invasion, and the involvement of his son, Esarhaddon. It - combined with vital information from the contemporary Book of Tobit [hereafter BOT] - will give names to Assyrian and Israelite officials who are not named in Kings, Chronicles and Isaiah [hereafter KCI]. It will serve to establish crucial points of geography as well in regard to the various locations of Sennacherib's forces, even identifying Isaiah's location during the invasive war.

(ii) For ASSYRIA: Whilst Hezekiah's contemporary ruler in Assyria was indeed Sargon II/Sennacherib, as the textbooks tell us, this was actually, I shall be arguing, *one and the same king of Assyria!* Conventional neo-Assyrian history has, by making two kings out of the one, completely thrown out of alignment the dates for Hezekiah so that he can no longer be a contemporary of the fall of Samaria as 2 Kings 18:10 claims him to have been.

But that is not all.

The reign of Esarhaddon, Sennacherib's favoured son, will be found to have been incorporated entirely within the latter part of Sennacherib's reign. Esarhaddon's death while on campaign will be shown to have occurred whilst Sennacherib was still alive. As Sennacherib's Viceroy, Esarhaddon will become a key player in the drama that is central to this thesis: namely, Assyria's attempt to take Jerusalem by force. This new view of Assyria will lead to fresh and startling correspondences between the Assyrian and Jewish records.

What will greatly supplement all of this, however, will be the chronological merging of the so-called ‘Middle’ Assyrian history into the ‘Neo’ Assyrian period; a consequence of Velikovsky’s lowering on the timescale by about 500 years [henceforth VLTF] of what is conventionally late 2nd millennium BC history, approximately, into the early 1st millennium BC. A significant consequence of VLTF, when applied to the early part of Hezekiah’s reign, will be that the ‘Middle’ Assyrian king, Tiglath-pileser I, will now merge with his namesake – who I believe to be his *alter ego* – Tiglath-pileser III.

(iii) For BABYLONIA: The chronology of king Merodach-baladan II, in its connection with Assyria, will provide a further crucial link between Mesopotamia and king Hezekiah. A revised view of ‘Neo’ Babylonian history, carefully merged with ‘Middle’ Babylonian history, will also throw considerable light upon Assyria’s frequent and aggressive contacts with Babylon’s perennial ally, Elam. Similarly, as with the merging of Tiglath-pileser I and III for Assyria, will the ‘Middle’ Babylonian king, Merodach-baladan I, now be merged with Hezekiah’s contemporary, Merodach-baladan II. Moreover, the latter will now be identified as an actual son of Tiglath-pileser III himself and hence a brother of Sargon/Sennacherib.

More importantly, this revision will give a whole new Babylonian ‘face’ to my merger king, Sargon/Sennacherib, as ruler of Babylon, in the person of Nebuchednezzar I, ostensibly of the C12th BC. The latter’s Elamite contemporaries, the ‘Shutrukids’, will also find their ‘other face’ amongst the Elamites of the neo-Assyrian period.

The movements of foreign immigrants, often called ‘Indo-Europeans’, who began to arrive in the ancient Near East during the mid-C2nd millennium BC, will be traced right into Mitanni and Mesopotamia, where certain descendants of these – some most powerful rulers, fully integrated into Syria and Assyria – will be discussed in detail in regard to what I believe to be, in turn, their direct ancestral or dynastic relationship to major kings at the time of king Hezekiah.

(iv) For EGYPT/ETHIOPIA: Whilst this thesis is primarily about Judah, Egypt will be a special study with much space of necessity being devoted to its realignment. Whilst king Hezekiah was a younger contemporary of ‘King So of Egypt’, I believe that certain historians have wrongly identified the latter, and his origins, with significant consequences for Egyptian history and the nations tied to it. My re-identification of this biblical ‘So’, from Egypt’s dynastic lists, in the context of this revision, will be achieved only after my having completed a complex discussion in **Part I** and **Part III**; a discussion in which certain kings of foreign origin, of ancestral and dynastic importance, will predominate. This discussion will have led me in **Part III**, *Chapter 11* and *Chapter 12*, into a basic overhaul of Egypt’s late New Kingdom and the extremely complex Third Intermediate Period [hereafter TIP] related to it.

My revision of Egyptian history will bring along with it the toppling down of a major “pillar” of conventional Egyptian chronology, namely, the identification of the biblical ‘Shishak’ (1 Kings 14:25) with Shoshenq I of Egypt’s 22nd dynasty. This, a logical development of my MA thesis, though extremely involved, will be entirely relevant to my primary intent in this thesis of synchronizing Hezekiah’s major contemporaries.

Some important geographical revisions will also be proposed in this thesis. The most significant of these will be:

‘ASHDOD’, featuring prominently in Sargon II’s records as a fort leading a western rebellion against him, usually identified with the coastal Philistine city of that name (the latter now to be now identified with the ‘Ashdudimmu’, or maritime Ashdod, of the neo-Assyrian records), will be re-identified with the mighty Judaeen fortress of LACHISH.

‘CONDUIT OF THE UPPER POOL, WHICH IS ON THE HIGHWAY TO THE FULLER’S FIELD’ (cf. 2 Kings 18:17 & Isaiah 7:3; 36:2), now to be identified as a location situated close to the Mount of olives, rather than right at the walls of Jerusalem itself.

‘BETHULIA’: Judith’s home town, to be identified with the northern BETHEL, that Jeroboam II of Israel had formerly turned into a pagan cult centre (e.g. Amos 7:10-13).

A Concluding Remark

In Genesis 2 we are given a glimpse of a pristine world of Eden enframed by four rivers, the ‘Tigris’ and ‘Euphrates’, on the one hand, and the ‘Pishon’ and ‘Gihon’, on the other. These are by and large the very same rivers that we encountered at the beginning of this Introduction, in Isaiah’s allegory of the major powers at the time of king Hezekiah. We well know the ‘Tigris’ and ‘Euphrates’. Professor Yahuda has convincingly, to my satisfaction, identified the ‘Gihon’ with the ‘Nubian Nile’, from the first to fourth cataracts. And the ‘Pishon’, he has identified with ‘the Egyptian Nile’²². Recent satellite technology though has led others to the conclusion that the original ‘Pishon’ is now a dried up fossil river in Saudi Arabia²³.

I analysed the geography of Genesis 2 in a recent article,²⁴ wherein I concluded that Eden was the site where later would stand Jerusalem and its Temple (cf. Isaiah 19:24 & Ezekiel 28:12-17).

²² *The Language of the Pentateuch in its Relation to Egyptian*, p. 107.

²³ E.g. C. Hill, ‘The Garden of Eden: A Modern Landscape’. J. Sauer, ‘The River Runs Dry’.

²⁴ ‘The Location of Paradise’. Here I had completely accepted Yahuda’s identification of the four named rivers. This was prior to my learning about the newly-discovered fossil river in Saudi Arabia. A reconciliation of Yahuda and Hill/Sauer though for the gold-bearing land of *Havilah*, region of the ‘Pishon’, may be possible. The Red Sea currently separates Yahuda’s *Havilah*: “... The gold mines of the so-called ‘Arabian desert’ on the Egyptian side, south-east of upper Egypt, between Assuan, Koptos (the

According to this biblical scenario, “a river flows out from Eden” (וְנָהָר יֵצֵא מֵעֵדֵן) (Genesis 2:10) and, going underground, emerged later as these four world rivers, all inter-connected. Now, symbolically re-assessing Meyer’s Sothic chronology in the light of this stunning allegory, but giving it all a modern (geographical) twist, we find that Meyer had - by devising an artificial Egyptian chronology - caused a major river in the western Fertile Crescent (say, for Egypt, approximately) to cease flowing, to dry up and become fossilized, thereby cutting it off completely from both its source, in Palestine, and from its Ethiopian and eastern connections. So there could no longer be any interflowing. Because of this rupture, synchronicity from Egypt/Ethiopia, through Palestine, to Mesopotamia, has been lost.

Meyer’s unreliable version of Egyptian chronology is like, if we may borrow a further symbol from Isaiah, “... a bruised [papyrus] reed that will pierce the hand of any who lean on her” (36:6). The legitimate “thrashing” of Meyer’s Sothic system that examiner Dr. Grogard said my previous thesis had achieved was therefore necessary. Now, the purpose of this new thesis (2000-2006) - at the close approximately of the centenary year of the publication of Meyer’s *Ägyptische Chronologie ...* (1904) - will be to establish a new foundation for a later re-writing of the history of the ancient world - on an ‘un-bruised’ papyrus, so to speak, that is not useless and does not ‘pierce the hand’; but upon which there is clearly outlined a blueprint, ‘a more acceptable alternative’, for re-uniting the four major rivers, those of the west and those of the east, so that these once again inter-flow as they were said to have done in pristine times.

And if indeed, as I think the Bible says, their source was once at the site of Jerusalem, then what better launching pad for this thesis than with a king of Jerusalem: HEZEKIAH? In fact Professor Ebied’s choice of EOH as the subject of this thesis may turn out to be quite providential; for, in a revised context, as we shall see, it is amazing how many historical ‘streams’ or ‘rivers’, or roads, seem to converge, and resolve themselves, in this very era of great complexity. Isaiah had hinted at as much when he had proclaimed, well in advance of the might of Rome, his ‘all roads lead through Israel’ Oracle (19:23-24):

On that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian will come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians.

On that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth

**... בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִי יִשְׂרָאֵל שְׁלִישִׁיהָ לְמִצְרַיִם וְלָאֲשׁוּר
בְּרִכָּהּ בְּקִרְבַּ הָאָרֶץ**

present Kuft), and the Red Sea” (*op. cit.*, p. 181), from Sauer’s *Havilah* (Saudi Arabian Mahd adh Dhahab, ‘Cradle of Gold’); but, according to C. Pellegrino, there was a time when “The Red Sea did not exist as yet”, *Return to Sodom and Gomorrah*, p. 46.

1

General Chronologico-Historical Problems and Proposed Solutions

Before discussing in detail in **Parts I-III** the *specific* chronological problems for EOH and its background, I shall be setting out here in this chapter a broader picture of chronological anomalies for this period, and the proposed solutions. As already said, my justification for pursuing new synchronisms is based upon recommendations by the examiners of my MA thesis that the conventional views may no longer be sustainable and that ‘a more acceptable alternative’ ought therefore to be sought. This means that (whilst this thesis is primarily about Hezekiah’s Judah) the very pillars of conventional Egyptian history, that affect the computation of the histories of various kingdoms, such as Hezekiah’s, need no longer to be regarded as fixed, but that it may now be necessary to seek after an ‘alternative’ set of pillars upon which to erect ‘a more acceptable’ historical edifice. And the same will apply to Mesopotamian history insofar as this affects EOH and its background. In my MA thesis I had identified the following “three basic ‘pillars’” of standard Egyptian chronology; all closely interconnected:²⁵

1. Manetho’s Dynasties;
2. The Sothic Calendar Theory;
3. The Era of Menophres (c. 1320 BC).

To these three I would now definitely add a fourth: namely, Shoshenq I as the biblical ‘King Shishak of Egypt’ (1 Kings 14:25). I did in fact make the latter ‘pillar’ a prominent part of a Sothic article that I wrote for the Answers in Genesis *TJ*.²⁶ Rohl has identified what he calls “four great pillars to the chronological edifice of Egypt”, which set does not, however, include my number 3. above:²⁷

The Four Great Pillars

1. The sacking of Thebes by Ashurbanipal (664 BC).
2. Identifying Pharaoh Shoshenq I of the so-called 22nd dynasty with the Biblical Shishak of 1 Kings 14:25-26 (925 BC). This sets the beginning of the 22nd dynasty to 945 BC.
3. Using the Sothic dating system and the Ebers papyrus to date the accession of Ahmose to 1550 BC.
4. The accession of Ramesses II in 1279 BC based on a lunar date.

It is from such sure signposts as these, as it is thought, that the Egyptologists are able to set securely in place their chronology of ancient Egypt.

²⁵ *The Sothic Star Theory of the Egyptian calendar*, p. viii.

²⁶ ‘Fall of the Sothic Theory’, pp. 71-72.

²⁷ *A Test of Time*, ch. five: “The Four Great Pillars”, pp. 119-135.

According to the revisionists, however, the largely Sothic-based ‘pillars’ of conventional Egyptian chronology are not to be relied upon. This is because the very Sothic scheme itself is deemed to be an artificial construct. Courville, for instance, had argued in 1971, in the course of two chapters, the limitations of dating methods (e.g. Carbon-14 and Astronomical methods); his discussion including a solid critique of Sothic dating.²⁸ And Velikovsky, at about the same time, wrote an article on the very foundations of Egyptian chronology, in which he also discussed the Sothic problem in considerable depth.²⁹ Long too, a conventional scholar, wrote a critical analysis of Egypt’s Sothic Chronology, and his lengthy article was later reprinted in the revisionist journal, *Kronos*.³⁰ The contributions to the study of Sothic theory by these three scholars I have already thoroughly discussed and referenced in my MA thesis.

Unknown to me though at the time, but well worthy of noting now, was the fact that there had also been published, in *Kronos*, a special supplement on Sothic dating, in which no less than nine authors had discussed the weaknesses of Sothic dating and its limitations.³¹

Let us now recapitulate on some of the most important of those Sothically-based chronological anchors – a brief summary of my MA thesis.

Anchors Away

The ‘heliacal rising’ of the Dog Star, Sirius (basically, its first visible rising shortly before sunrise), mentioned in various Egyptian documents (as *peret Sopdet*), would recur on the Egyptian New Year’s Day, at the same observational site, every 1460 years (365 x 4). This 1460-year span was known later in the Classical era as the ‘Great Year’. But Meyer’s belief that the ancient Egyptians had actually used this Sothic period of 1460 years as a kind of long-range calendar is pure supposition, with no evidence in support of it. In fact Meyer had to go to Classical texts to get some of his key information, to Theon, an Alexandrian astronomer of the late C4th AD, and to the C3rd AD Roman author, Censorinus.

According to Meyer’s interpretation of the Sothic data as provided by Censorinus, there had occurred a coincidence between the heliacal rising of Sirius and New Year’s Day in the 100th year before Censorinus wrote his book, *De Die Natali Liber*: thus in c.140 AD.³² Meyer was therefore able to determine from there, using multiples of 1460, his Sothic series of c.140 AD; 1320 BC; 2780 BC & 4240 BC. Upon this chronological bed he eventually spread out the entire dynastic history of Egypt.

²⁸ *The Exodus Problem and its Ramifications*, vol. 2, ch’s 3-4, with pp. 52-82 on Sothic dating.

²⁹ ‘Astronomy and Chronology’, *Pensée*, IV, pp. 38-49. This article, updated and slightly revised, later appeared in Velikovsky’s *Peoples of the Sea*, pp. 205-244.

³⁰ ‘A Re-examination of the Sothic Chronology of Egypt’, pp. 261-274; reprinted in *Kronos* II:4, pp. 89-101.

³¹ ‘Special Supplement on Sothic Dating’, *Kronos* VI:1, pp. 51-85.

³² *Ägyptische Chronologie*, p. 28.

Never mind that Censorinus had not actually connected the 1460-year period with Sirius,³³ or that his evidence appeared patently to contradict that of Theon, according to whom the conclusion of a 1460-year period had occurred in the 5th year of the emperor Augustus, or 26 BC, as opposed to Censorinus' testimony that a Great Year had commenced in c.140 AD.³⁴

Most crucial to this theory was the year 1320 BC, a meeting point, supposedly, between one of Meyer's key heliacal risings of Sothis and a presumed historical era. For Theon left a much-discussed statement that:³⁵ "Since Menophres and till the end of the era of Augustus, or the beginning of the era of Diocletian, there were 1605 years". Long has done the maths for this, in a conventional context:³⁶

From [Theon's] quotation we gather that the era of Menophres (*apo Menophreos*) lasted from circa 1321-1316 BC to AD 285 or the duration of 1,605 years, i.e. from Emperor Diocletian back to someone or something designated "Menophreōs".

The trouble is that Theon did not elaborate upon whether Menophres was a 'someone' or a 'something', e.g. a pharaoh or a city (as some³⁷ have argued), hence his depriving historians of the chance to arrive at an unequivocal identification. 'Menophres' though is generally presumed to have been a pharaoh; one especially of the early 19th dynasty. Most identify him with Ramses I, whose throne name was *Menpehtire* (hence *Menophres*, as it is suggested); though *Menpehtire* is by no means a perfect linguistic equivalent of *Menophres*. Ramses I's (approximately) one-year reign is traditionally believed to have occurred during c.1321/20 BC. And most conveniently, since that pharaoh is generally considered to have been the first ruler of the 19th dynasty, this date is also thought to have marked the inauguration of a new era.

From a combination of this key date of 1320 BC and another Sothic date to be found in the medical papyrus, Ebers - a presumed heliacal rising dated to the reign of the 18th dynasty's pharaoh Amenhotep I - the beginning of Egypt's New Kingdom could be mathematically ascertained, retro-calculating back using estimates of reign lengths in the dynastic lists. Here is part of what I wrote on the Ebers Papyrus in my MA thesis:³⁸

After Illahûn [see below], according to Hayes ..., the "next astronomically determinable 'anchor point' in Egyptian history is the ninth year of the reign of King Amenophis [Amenhotep] I, the second ruler of the Eighteenth Dynasty". The 'anchor point' in question is the Sothic date provided by the Ebers Papyrus, which Meyer accepted as belonging to the era 1550/49-1547/46 BC

³³ This point I discussed in my thesis, *op. cit.*, pt. 3b, ch. 10, p. 184.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 176-192.

³⁵ Theon of Alexandria, as cited in Velikovsky's *Peoples of the Sea*, p. 229.

³⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 269.

³⁷ E.g. M. Rowton, 'Mesopotamian chronology and the 'Era of Menophres'', p. 109.

³⁸ *Op. cit.*, ch. 6, p. 94.

The rough parameters allowed by the two supposedly fixed Sothic points of Illahûn and Ebers have been refined by dates drawn from comparing modern retrocalculations of past lunar cycles with Egyptian records of the moon's phases known from the reigns of some pharaohs.

The importance of the Ebers document is that it – dating as it is generally thought close to the rise of the New Kingdom era and the corresponding beginning of the Late Bronze Age – has enabled the Sothic theorists to fix with precision an important new phase in history. Meyer, working from the fixed date he had settled upon from the Ebers Papyrus, and taking Manetho's reasonable figure of 25-26 years for the reign of Pharaoh Ahmose (Amenhotep I's predecessor), had no trouble thereafter calculating the beginning of the New Kingdom and the simultaneous era for the expulsion of the Hyksos by Ahmose: viz at c. 1580 BC. Thus Long was not exaggerating when he stated that the "New Kingdom and Late Bronze chronology are largely dependent on the Ebers Sothic date for the ninth year of Amenhotep I"

I went on to note, with reference to Brugsch³⁹ and Long⁴⁰, that:⁴¹

The Ebers Papyrus has ... turned out to be intrinsically unreadable. Because of its illegibility, Brugsch described the document as: "Dieser Text, in hoechst fluechtigen hieratischen [i.e. 'This text, in highly cursory hieratic'] ...". The fairly significant amount of "divisive comments and interpretations" [ref. to Long] ... to which the Ebers Papyrus has given rise, seems due largely to the problematic reading of the document. Three main areas of difficulty in this regard may be isolated: viz the identification of the ruler; the regnal year; and the purport of the text.

The Shoshenq/'Shishak' Synchronism

Another key chronological 'pillar', or anchor, for Egypt's New Kingdom - not Sothically-based, but a 'sighter' for the Sothic dates, as I called it in my article for the Answers in Genesis *TJ*⁴² - is Champollion's identification of Shoshenq (Shoshenk) I with 'Shishak': the pharaoh who invaded Jerusalem and pillaged the Temple of Yahweh there in the 5th year of Solomon's son, Rehoboam (1 Kings 14:25-26 & 2 Chronicles 12:2-9).

³⁹ 'Ein neues Sothis-Datum', p. 108.

⁴⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 264.

⁴¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 97-98.

⁴² 'Fall of the Sothic Theory', p. 71.

This fateful identification, according to which Shoshenq I's incursion into Palestine in approximately his twentieth year – as recorded on his triumph scene on the Bubasite Portal at Karnak – was the very campaign that the Bible attributes to 'Shishak', I described in my article for *TJ* as being “an unshakeable pillar of Egyptian chronology, seemingly tied to the Bible”.⁴³ How it has enabled conventional scholars to fix the reign of Shoshenq I in the C10th BC is well explained by Rohl:⁴⁴

The books of Kings and Chronicles detail chronological links between the reigns of the kings of Israel and Judah during the DIVIDED MONARCHY period and these (in combination with Assyrian annals mentioning Hebrew rulers) have enabled scholars to determine, with a fair degree of accuracy, the post-Solomonic biblical chronology.

Again, as a direct result of some penetrating research undertaken by American biblical chronologist Edwin Thiele modern scholarship has reduced the Old Testament dates by fifty years, fixing Year 5 of Rehoboam at 925 BC. Shoshenq I's twentieth year was thus attached to the same anchor date and his first regnal year (the founding of the 22nd Dynasty) set at 945 BC.

Egypt's TIP and the early Divided Monarchy of Israel can now be firmly tied together, it is thought, by the convergence of pharaoh Shoshenq I's Year 20 and Rehoboam's Year 5. I intend to examine this presumed Egypto-biblical synchronism in more critical detail in *Chapter 8*. Here though I should like to continue on somewhat further with Rohl's comments, especially his claim that the methodology in question is rather dubious:⁴⁵

There is a fundamental methodological problem here. Scholars are underpinning Egyptian chronology with a biblical synchronism. They readily accept the name-equation Shoshenk = Shishak and proclaim a correspondence between the Year 20 campaign of Shoshenk I and the Shishak assault upon Jerusalem. In doing so they dismiss the obvious discrepancies of fact between the two sources. If you are going to use biblical data to establish both the chronology of Egypt and the stratigraphical framework of Levantine archaeology, you cannot then go on to arbitrarily disregard selected sections of the historical material contained in the biblical source simply because they do not fit your theory. Surely, if this were any sort of reliable historical synchronism, the facts from both sources, supposedly recording a single historical event, would agree in a substantial way. As it stands they do not agree at all. Confidence in this key synchronism and resulting chronological anchor point is misguided and dangerous.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴ *Op cit*, p. 122.

⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 127.

Rohl next proceeds to show how a combination of this presumed synchronism and the well established date, as he thinks, for the sack of Thebes in 664 BC,⁴⁶ has enabled for historians to determine the length of time from the 22nd dynasty to the end of the TIP:

To demonstrate how reliant we are upon this synchronism to determine the chronological length of the Third Intermediate Period in Egypt we need only refer to a statement by one of the leading authorities on Egyptian chronology – Professor Kenneth Kitchen himself. First he establishes a date for the beginning of the 25th Dynasty working back from our safe fixed point of 664 BC (death of Taharka) using the highest regnal dates for the Kushite pharaohs. He thus arrives at a date between 716 and 712 BC for the year 1 of Shabaka, founder of the dynasty Kitchen then reveals the conventional chronology’s crucial reliance on the Bible to establish the TIP chronology:

Over two centuries earlier, the 21-year reign of the founder of the 22nd Dynasty, Shoshenk I can be set at *ca.* 945-924 B.C., *thanks (i) to his synchronisms with the detailed chronology of Judah and Israel, itself linked closely to a firm Assyrian chronology ..., and (ii) to the series of known regnal years of his successors, which fill up the interval 924-716/712 B.C. almost completely ...* [Rohl’s emphasis].

Rohl concludes:

Note that the regnal years of Shoshenk I’s successors are made to ‘fill up’ a period of time which has been entirely established in its length by the biblical synchronism between Shoshenk I (= Shishak) and Rehoboam – which in turn is dated by the biblical chronology of Edwin Thiele. No wonder Kitchen regards the link between Shoshenk and Rehoboam as ‘the essential synchronism’! ...

The Illahûn Papyrus

Leaving the later Egyptian history just for the moment, let me conclude this section with mention of the key conventional Sothic anchor for the Middle Kingdom; albeit briefly, though, as a study of Egypt’s Middle Kingdom era is well beyond the scope of this thesis. The chronology of the Middle Kingdom has also been erected around a Sothic date, the Illahûn papyrus. Thus Professor Lynn E. Rose:⁴⁷ “Our only known “Sothic date” from the Middle Kingdom occurs on an El-Lahun [Illahûn] papyrus that is customarily dated to the nineteenth century B.C.E. – and usually to the reign of Sesostri III of the Twelfth Dynasty”.

⁴⁶ But see my *Excursus* on Isaiah at the end of this thesis re this supposedly mid-C7th BC era.

⁴⁷ ‘The Astronomical Evidence for Dating the End of the Middle Kingdom of Ancient Egypt to the Early Second Millennium’, p. 237. Rose tells of a newly recognized Sothic date in his ‘The Sothic Date from the Ptolemaic Temple of Isis at Aswan’.

In my MA thesis I dedicated chapter 5 to a discussion of the Illahûn document and the problems associated with it. Here is part of what I then wrote⁴⁸, with reference to Edgerton⁴⁹ and to Long:⁵⁰

The earliest Sothic-dated source used by Meyer and his colleagues for establishing their mathematically precise scheme of chronology were the two papyri fragments discovered by Ludwig Borchardt in 1899, in a precinct of the Illahûn Temple at Fayyûm. This document does not give the beginning of a Sothic cycle, but instead a calendar date, year 7 of an un-named pharaoh, for the rising of Sirius; which - when retrocalculated [with the assistance of the dynastic lists] - yielded the approximate figures of 1876-1872 This date quickly became the accepted one [as] attested by Edgerton

From 1899 until 1937, inclusive, all publications on the chronology of the Twelfth Dynasty seem to have accepted the view that a certain fragment of the el-Lahun [ie Illahûn] temple register foretold a heliacal rising of Sothis on the sixteenth day of the eighth month in the seventh year of Sesostris III. No king is named in the fragment.

... Long, from a chronological point of view, attributed to Borchardt's decision concerning the Illahûn fragment ... [a] ... far-reaching significance. On what he called "this supposition" of Borchardt, rested - he said ...: "... the chronology of the Middle Kingdom, the likewise dependent absolute dating of the Old Kingdom, and the First Intermediate". And, regarding the dependence of the historians of the non-Egyptian nations on Borchardt's estimate ... Long further claimed that: "... the dating of the Early and the Middle Bronze Ages in Palestine, Greece and Mesopotamia are to a great degree founded on faith in the veracity and accuracy of the document ...".

From this Illahûn date, combined with estimates of reign lengths in the dynastic lists, it could be determined that the Middle Kingdom's 12th dynasty had come to its end in c. 1786 BC. This has become a real anchor date for early Egyptian history and all that depends upon it. "Feelings that border on panic seize scholars who trust the Sothic theory when doubt is cast upon it" wrote Down, adding that:⁵¹

[Professor] Lynn Rose quotes Sir Alan Gardiner as saying, 'To abandon 1786 BC as the year when Dyn XII ended would be to cast adrift from our only firm anchor, a course that would have serious consequences for the history, not of Egypt alone, but of the entire Middle East (JNES 94-4-237)'.

⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 78-80.

⁴⁹ 'Chronology of the Twelfth Dynasty', p. 307.

⁵⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 263.

⁵¹ 'University Scholar Attacks the Sothic Cycle', p. 24.

Egypt as the Measuring Rod

Dr. Simms' view that the chronology of antiquity "has often been used in a circular manner ... to uphold questionable traditional interpretations of the past ...",⁵² is perfectly true I think in regard to Meyer's Sothic theory. Unfortunately the circular merry-go-round does not stop with Egypt, because as Egyptologist Sir Flinders Petrie had correctly noted back in 1901:⁵³ "Egypt is the sounding line for the un-measured abyss of European history". In other words, the artefacts of ancient Greece, Italy, France, etc., are traditionally dated according to the Sothic rule. But in order to make the shorter chronology of, say, Greece, fit the Procrustean bed of an over-extended Egyptian chronology, it has been necessary to stretch the former with the insertion of 'Dark Ages' of about half a millennium's duration (c.1200-700 BC). The same is done for other nations (e.g. the Ethiopians, the Anatolians) whose archaeology is tied to that of Egypt. Petrie had found that in Greece the Mycenaean Age pottery was always stratified together with artefacts from Egypt's 18th-20th dynasties (Sothically dated to c.1600-1100 BC). In his view there was no alternative to following the Egyptian dates and placing Mycenaean civilization squarely in the 2nd millennium. In 1890 Petrie confidently asserted that:⁵⁴ "... the main light on the chronology of the civilizations of the Aegean comes from Egypt; and it is Egyptian sources that must be thanked by classical scholars for revealing the real standing of the antiquities of Greece". But many of the classicists were not ready thus to give thanks to Petrie, whose Egyptian-derived dates had, for them, produced a huge hiatus between the Mycenaean world and that of the C8th Greek city-states. Commenting on this awkward situation, Professor Greenberg has written most reasonably:⁵⁵

Unfortunately, the Egyptian chronology is nowhere near as solid as the architectural wonders which are its hallmark. As a matter of fact, our knowledge of Egyptian events is extensively based upon the disjointed reports of Classical authors, damaged and incomplete written records, and chance records of astronomical phenomena Even the latter factor has been questioned

The above statements are not meant to be disparaging, for no one can deny the admirable work of the Egyptologists over the past century. But, a more realistic and objective view of the current historical and art historical situation must be taken. Thus Demargne's ... statement that the Mycenaean chronological problem "was solved in an article by Flinders Petrie ... in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (1890), which established an absolute chronology of the Greek civilization on an Egyptian basis" is a somewhat bare one. Besides, even Petrie's work has been superseded in the realm of Egyptian chronology

⁵² 'Editorial', p. 1.

⁵³ W. Petrie, as cited by P. James in *Centuries of Darkness*, p. 20.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

⁵⁵ 'The Lion Gate at Mycenae' (1973), p. 27, with references to C. Aldred, *The Egyptians*, pp. 62-64; I. Velikovskiy, *Ages in Chaos I*, p. 76; P. Demargne, *The Birth of Greek Art*, p. 8; W. Petrie, 'Notes on the antiquities of Mycenae', pp. 199-205.

Previously it had been the standard practice to date the end of the Mycenaean civilization as late as 800, allowing continuity - even an overlap - with the succeeding Geometric period. The gap in time in so many nations and fields (literature, art, architecture, etc.) has completely baffled scholars. I could provide many examples of anomalies caused by this approximately 500-year hiatus as pointed out by revisionists. Here are just a few historical puzzles to which they refer, some of which I intend to tackle in the course of this thesis:

- How is it that the Lion Gate at Mycenae, sculpturally an C8th BC monument, is dated by the bulk of the scholarly world to the C14th-C13th BC?
- How could the vaulted tombs of Ugarit serve as models for Cypriots, Israelites, Urartians, Anatolian peoples, and Phoenician colonists, if contemporaneity is denied, and they went out of use and were thus forgotten 500-600 years earlier?
- How could the Babylonians, the Cypriots, have left virtually no evidence of writing for about 500 years, after which they continued to use basically the same scripts?
- How to explain the 200 plus year gap during the early TIP, with no Apis bulls apparently buried in Egypt.
- Why do the inscriptional writings of pharaoh Hatshepsut of Egypt's 18th dynasty (Sothically dated to the C15th) bear such a remarkable similarity to the writings attributed to David & Solomon (traditionally dated to the C10th)?
- How to explain why the Iron Age levels of Palestine produced nothing reflecting the 'Golden Age' of King Solomon?
- Why have so many perceived that the Sun Hymn written in the reign of pharaoh Akhnaton (Sothically dated to the C14th) bears such a likeness to Psalm 104 of the Hebrew Psalter, ascribed to king David?
- How to explain the fact that the material and technological culture of the C9th BC Assyrian kings, beginning with Ashurnasirpal II, closely matches that of the 18th and 19th dynasties in Egypt? (The same goes for the C8th BC culture of the 25th Ethiopian dynasty).
- Why do bronzes made in Cyprus during the C12th BC frequently occur elsewhere in C9th or later deposits?
- How is it that the objects of Egyptian pharaohs from the 10th-9th centuries are always found abroad in contexts hundreds of years later?
- How to explain the complete disappearance of Nubian culture for 300 years from the Late Kingdom of Egypt to the rise of the 25th dynasty?

Throughout this thesis we shall encounter further such anomalies as well.

For the past several decades, revisionists have striven to amend the time warp, to bridge the 'Dark Ages' gap. Courville, for instance, had proposed this general solution to the problem by way of summary of his own revision:⁵⁶

⁵⁶ *Op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 100.

In the preceding chapters we have shown how numerous archaeological difficulties and historical anomalies disappear with the simple and single alteration in the dating of the end of the Early Bronze [Age]. ... When the necessity of this single alteration of dates in antiquity is recognized, there begins to emerge the general outlines of a revised chronology of Egypt and of all other nations of antiquity whose chronology is tied to that of Egypt.

And Professor Greenberg has written, on the basis of his detailed art-historical study of the Lion Gate at Mycenae:⁵⁷

If the basic premise of this paper, namely that the Lion Gate at Mycenae is sculpturally an eighth century B.C. monument, should prove to be correct and other Mycenaean problems are resolved as a result of an alteration of chronology in favor of a later dating, then the “Dark Ages” of Greece ... would be instantly swept away. This would not be the first time a “Dark Age” has vanished in the light of new discoveries and willing critical reevaluation

More recently, James and his colleagues, “with a background of research in many different but related fields”, pooled their resources and began an in-depth investigation into the:⁵⁸

... dilemma into which so many archaeologists have been forced, dating and re-dating artefacts backwards and forwards across the span of the Dark Age, in attempting to fit their evidence into a framework defined by Egyptian chronology. Stretching the sides of the time puzzle by raising the dates further would only make the problems more acute. The only remedy ... would seem to be to shorten the sides and compress the overall scheme.

But not only has Meyer’s ‘erste sichere Datum’ [‘first sure date’] of 4240 BC long since been abandoned in favour of the current c. 3100 BC, even his second Sothic date of 2780 is looking somewhat insecure. As O’Mara has correctly stated, this figure of 2780 has been re-worked frequently because of what he calls “numerous technical complexities, with varying results ranging from 2781 BC to 2772 BC”.⁵⁹

Even the third famous ‘Sothic’ date, c. 1320, based on Theon,⁶⁰ is by no means rock solid, at least according to Rowton, given that as early as 1928, as he wrote:⁶¹ “... it was obvious that Meyer had by then completely discarded the Menophres theory”, by moving the 19th dynasty forward somewhat from his original date.

⁵⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

⁵⁸ *Centuries of Darkness*, Preface, p. xxi.

⁵⁹ *The Chronology of the Palermo and Turin Canons*, p. 37.

⁶⁰ E.g. R. Lepsius, *Königsbuch der Alten Ägypten*, p. 123.

⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 110, n. 1.

It actually seems, anyway, that the Sothic dating sequence overall might need to undergo a significant overhaul, given a new scholarly view about heliacal rising observation. Rohl tells of this, with reference to Hornung⁶², in Rohl's own discussion of the Ebers Calendar, that we saw he had nominated as being one of the four key 'pillars' of the conventional chronology:

Now if a contemporary Egyptian text could be found with a calendar date for the heliacal rising of Sothis dated to a specific year in a pharaoh's reign, it would be a simple matter to place that year in absolute time by a straightforward calculation using the Sothic-dating framework. That is precisely what happened in the 1870s when just such a calendar (acquired by Georg EBERS) was found at Thebes. This 'Ebers Calendar' was datable to the ninth year of AMENHOTEP I and it recorded the heliacal rising of Sothis on the ninth day of the third month of Shemu. The Sothic calculation made by the great calendrical scholar Richard PARKER in 1950 established the absolute date at 1542 BC (assuming an observation point at Memphis) which gave a date of 1575 BC for the start of the New Kingdom.

The date of the heliacal rising observation has more recently been adjusted downwards by twenty-five years as a result of a scholarly consensus that the observation probably took place at Thebes (where the papyrus was found) rather than Memphis ... [Rohl's ref. to Hornung]. The difference in latitude between the two cities would require a lowering of the date because the heliacal rising of Sothis would have been one day earlier at the more southerly latitude on account of the earth's curvature. Thus the currently accepted date for Year 9 of Amenhotep I is 1517 BC and the beginning of the 18th Dynasty set at 1550 BC with the accession of Ahmose I, Amenhotep's father.

[End of quote]

After Meyer's original enunciation of the Sothic theory, its chief promoter appears to have been the influential Professor Henry Breasted of the University of Chicago. The latter took the theoretically possible dates within the Sothic scheme and set them down as astronomically certain. Breasted's *A History of Egypt*, which incorporated Meyer's figure of 4240 BC for Egypt's presumed unification under Menes, "still forms the basis for most modern historical syntheses", according to Grimal.⁶³ Breasted used asterisks in his chronological table to denote those dates that he considered to be astronomically fixed. He even specified the precise day each of two events that occurred during pharaoh Thutmose III's (18th dynasty) first Asiatic campaign: namely, his crossing of the Egyptian frontier "about the 19th of April, 1479 BC", and his going "into camp on the plain of Megiddo on the 14th of May" of that same year.⁶⁴

⁶² *Op. cit.*, pp. 130-131, with reference to E. Hornung, 1964, pp. 20-21 (relevant bibliographical details are not given however in Rohl's Bibliography).

⁶³ *A History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 1.

⁶⁴ *A History of Egypt*, pp. 285, 287.

And it should be noted that things chronological have not changed much to this day, for Grimal gives that very same year of 1479 as the first year of Thutmose III's reign. Grimal's date, too, of 1785 BC for the close of Egypt's 12th dynasty is completely Sothic.⁶⁵

Revisionist scholars today seem to be returning to the views of some of the earlier Egyptologists (like Maspero, von Bissing and Jéquier) who regarded Meyer's Sothic scheme with suspicion, if not contempt. The complex elabo-structure yields so many inaccuracies and anomalies that I felt it appropriate to summarise my MA thesis discussion on the Sothic theory with this quote from Jéquier:⁶⁶

Perhaps we may collectively sum up the views of these non-Sothically inclined Egyptologists by quoting from the following pages of Jéquier's 'Histoire de la Civilization Égyptienne' "The Sothic periods, far from simplifying the chronological calculations for us, have no other effect than to introduce a new element of uncertainty and perhaps a new opportunity for error".

In a new view of things, though based on the early assessment of Jéquier and his colleagues that Meyer's Sothic theory is unreliable, it becomes necessary to abandon those key Sothic-based dates of c. 1786 (end of 12th dynasty); c. 1580 (inauguration of the New Kingdom); c. 1542 or 1517 (Year 9 of Amenhotep I); c. 1320 (for Ramses I); and, *a fortiori*, 1279 BC for the accession of Ramesses II, based on a lunar date - despite Gardiner's apprehensions about letting slip the "firm anchor".

Revisionists, regardless of their differing views on how to achieve a new reconstruction of Egyptian history, or the degree of abridgement required, are in agreement at least that the Sothic scheme is invalid and that those seemingly artificially contrived 'Dark Ages' must be largely eradicated.⁶⁷ They tend to agree, too, that Egypt's TIP (c. 1100-664 BC, conventional dates) needs to be significantly shortened - which abridgement will in turn compensate to some extent for the dramatic lowering of the New Kingdom (18th dynasty) dates, as first proposed by Velikovsky. According to James, for instance, "many [TIP] kings allowed generous reigns [by convention] are actually mere ciphers".⁶⁸

In Search of 'Alternative' Historical Anchor Points for EOH

Having discussed the problems, and having proposed the need for a lowering of early Egyptian chronology, and of those nations chronologically tied to Egypt, I shall now focus upon my blueprint for an 'alternative' model. More specifically, I shall propose in outline here an 'alternative' set of chronological anchor points that are relevant to EOH and that, as far as possible, combine Egypt/Ethiopia, Israel and Mesopotamia.

⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, Appendix, p. 392. D. Brewer, as late as 2005, gives Sothic-based dates for Egypt's dynasties, e.g. 1782 for the end of the 12th dynasty. *Ancient Egypt: Foundations of a Civilization*, Table 1.1, pp. 9-11.

⁶⁶ *Histoire de la Civilization Égyptienne*, my translation, pp. 26, 27.

⁶⁷ But revisionists disagree as to the degree of lowering required: some following Velikovsky and Courville in favouring the 500 year downward shift; others, like James and Rohl, now preferring to go about halfway between the early revision and the conventional scheme.

⁶⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 272.

These points I shall elaborate upon in subsequent chapters.
My starting point and foundation will be:

1. THE FALL OF SAMARIA

This famous event has traditionally been dated to c. 722/21 BC⁶⁹ and, according to the statement in 2 Kings, it occurred “in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which was the ninth year of King Hoshea of Israel” (18:10). While all this seems straightforward enough, more recent versions of biblical chronology, basing themselves on the research of the highly-regarded Professor Thiele,⁷⁰ have made impossible the retention of such a promising syncretism between king Hoshea and king Hezekiah by dating the beginning of the latter’s reign to 716/715 BC, about six years after the fall of Samaria. Moreover, there is disagreement over whether Samaria fell once or twice (in quick succession) to the Assyrians (e.g. to Shalmaneser V in 722 BC, and then again to Sargon II in 720 BC); with Assyriologist Tadmor, whom Thiele has followed, claiming a ‘reconquest’ of Samaria by Sargon II.⁷¹ Let us briefly touch upon these objections here, to be discussed and analysed in more detail in *Chapter 5* (p. 127) and *Chapter 12* (3.).

Firstly, regarding the Hezekian chronology in its relationship to the fall of Samaria, one of the reasons for Thiele’s having arrived at, and settled upon, 716/715 BC as the date for the commencement of reign of the Judaeian king was due to the following undeniable problem that arises from a biblical chronology that takes as its point of reference the conventional neo-Assyrian chronology. I set out the ‘problem’ here in standard terms.

If Samaria fell in the 6th year of Hezekiah, as the Old Testament tells it, then Hezekiah’s reign must have begun about 728/727 B.C. If so, his 14th year, the year in which Sennacherib threatened Jerusalem, must have been about 714 B.C. But this last is, according to the conventional scheme, about ten years before Sennacherib became king and about thirteen years before his campaign against Jerusalem which is currently dated to 701 B.C. On the other hand, if Hezekiah’s reign began fourteen years before Sennacherib’s campaign, that is in 715 B.C, it began about twelve to thirteen years too late for Hezekiah to have been king for six years before the fall of Samaria. *In short, the problem as seen by chronologists is whether the starting point of Hezekiah’s reign should be dated in relationship to the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C, or to the campaign of Sennacherib in 701 B.C.*

A second reason for Thiele’s divergence from the traditional dating for Hezekiah, to be more fully discussed in *Chapter 5*, is that Thiele, following others such as Zöckler,⁷² had found no evidence whatsoever for any contact between king Hezekiah and king Hoshea.

⁶⁹ E. Thiele dates it to 723/722 BC. *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 162.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, ch. 9: “The Chronology of the Kings of Judah (715-561 BC)”.

⁷¹ H. Tadmor, ‘The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur’, p. 94. Tadmor here refers to Sargon’s “reconquest of Samaria”. For Thiele’s discussion of what he calls Tadmor’s “masterly analysis”, see Thiele, *op. cit.*, e.g. pp. 167-168.

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 169, with reference to O. Zöckler *et al.* in n. 20.

Not even when Hezekiah had, in his first year, sent his invitations throughout Hoshea's territory for the great Passover in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 30). Thus Thiele could not accept that these two kings had reigned concurrently.

In regard to the first point, the true date of commencement of the reign of king Hezekiah, I should simply like to make the general comment here that this is in fact an artificial 'problem'. The situation has arisen, as we shall find, from Thiele's heavy reliance upon the conventional neo-Assyrian chronology, which, as I shall be arguing in *Chapter 6*, has been significantly over-stretched, thereby doubling the activities of the one Assyrian king: Sargon II/Sennacherib.⁷³ Failure to recognize this - and a too confident reliance upon the conventional scheme in general - has caused Thiele, and those who have followed him, to turn the reign of Hezekiah of Judah into one of the most vexed problems of Old Testament chronology.

And, despite the undoubted merits of Thiele's own chronological scheme, his treatment of the chronology of king Hezekiah, specifically, is perhaps the least satisfactory part of his entire work.

With Sennacherib found (as will be the case in *Chapter 6*, e.g. p. 146) to have been at work in connection with both the fall of Samaria and, of course, the campaign in Hezekiah's 14th year, then it becomes necessary to date the Judaeen king's reign in relationship to *both*, and not merely to one, of these significant Assyrian campaigns.

Thiele's other point, about the lack of evidence for contemporaneity of reigns between Hoshea and Hezekiah, is indeed a legitimate one, as is also Tadmor's argument - in connection with the neo-Assyrian evidence - in favour of two actual conquests of Samaria by the Assyrians. I shall be returning to these two matters, to discuss them, in **Part II** and **Part III**; Thiele's point in *Chapter 5* (pp. 126-127) and Tadmor's in *Chapter 5* (pp. 127-128) and *Chapter 12* (3.).

The biblical dating of the fall of Samaria in relation to Hezekiah, which I shall be defending - after having endeavoured properly to co-ordinate all of the relevant syncretisms - will turn out to be almost perfect for my multi-chronological purposes; though unfortunately lacking any unequivocal link with Ethiopia/Egypt. However, in my next 'anchor' point below, **2. 'King So of Egypt'**, I shall be proposing such a connection between the fall of Samaria and Egypt; one to be more fully developed in **Part III**, *Chapter 8* and *Chapter 12* (1.). But even without any reference to Ethiopia/Egypt, this famous incident - when properly co-ordinated - connects:

- (i) a regnal year of a king of Judah and
- (ii) a regnal year of a king of Israel, with
- (iii) an Assyrian reference to the incident, biblically reinforced (see *Chapter 5*, p. 127), and
- (iv) a chronological connection with Babylonia via the Assyrian records (see *Chapter 5*, p. 128). Moreover,
- (v) it belongs within EOH.

⁷³ See e.g. Thiele's acceptance of the conventionally determined "701 [BC as] a precise date from which we may go forward or backward on the basis of the regnal data to all other dates in our pattern". *Ibid*, p. 174.

My entire thesis will in fact be built around this conventional date of c. 722 BC - though now in need of restoration - and the perspective that this incident offers in its relation to the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah.⁷⁴ The fall of Samaria in c. 722 BC will enable me to develop a most satisfactory chronology for the 29-year reign of Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:2); for, if the king's sixth year fell in c. 722 BC, then I do not think that I shall err too far mathematically if I set down 727-699 BC as the period for king Hezekiah's reign, from his accession year to death. (See **Table 7**, p. 393).

This is quite different of course from Thiele's proposed chronology for king Hezekiah, which has sacrificed those vital biblical syncretisms.

Now, to the related incident concerning:

2. 'KING SO OF EGYPT'

But the king of Assyria found treachery in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to King So of Egypt (סֹא מֶלֶךְ־מִצְרַיִם), and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria as he had done year by year; therefore the king of Assyria confined him and imprisoned him. (2 Kings 17:4)

I need firstly here to introduce Velikovsky's own proposed resolution to the identity of 'King So of Egypt', involving as it does the dismantling of one of the key 'pillars' of conventional Egyptian chronology, namely that Sosenk (Shoshenq) I = 'Shishak', and the establishment of an entirely new one, Sosenk (Shoshenq) = 'So'; this last being of the utmost relevance to this thesis.

We saw that Breasted, in thrall to the mathematical bonds of the Sothic theory, had astronomically fixed, to the C15th BC, two incidents in the first campaign of the warrior-pharaoh, Thutmose III. Velikovsky however, unfettered by the tyrannical ties of 'Sothicism', was free to reconsider the place of Thutmose III in history. In Velikovsky's re-setting of the 18th dynasty - with Egypt's resurgent New Kingdom after the Hyksos era chronologically paralleling the emergence of Israel's monarchy after the oppressive period of the Judges - Thutmose III newly emerged as a younger contemporary of king Solomon of Israel and a contemporary of the latter's son, Rehoboam. In Velikovsky's revised location this most potent of pharaohs, Thutmose III, whom Breasted had eulogized as a "genius which ... reminds us of an Alexander or a Napoleon ...",⁷⁵ had inevitably displaced the unlikely Sosenk (Shoshenq) I as the biblical 'Shishak'.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ The actual numerical date 722, though, is a figure that I shall retain only for convenience's sake as I do not consider it to be an entirely accurate mathematical figure that will stand the test of a full BC revision. To perfect the date for the fall of Samaria would require a complete revision of the final 7 centuries of the BC period, a task obviously well beyond the scope of this thesis.

⁷⁵ As cited by E. Danelius, 'Did Thutmose III Despoil the Temple in Jerusalem?', p. 68.

⁷⁶ *Ages in Chaos*, ch. 4.

It remained to be shown that Thutmose III had ‘Shishak’-like features, apart from his obvious military brilliance. Velikovsky was, as I see it, partly stunningly successful in his demonstrating of this, and partly rather inadequate.

On the positive side, Velikovsky had importantly created ‘a context’ for Thutmose III in his *Theses* and in his *Ages in Chaos* I, by his re-setting of the entire 18th dynasty, from its founder Ahmose (time of Saul), through Queen Hatshepsut (biblical ‘Queen Sheba’), Thutmose III (‘Shishak’),⁷⁷ and on into the el-Amarna [hereafter EA] period of Amenhotep III and IV (Akhnaton); the latter being a richly documented era that Velikovsky had painstakingly integrated with the mid-C9th BC scene in Palestine and Mesopotamia; sometimes with brilliant results, sometimes with embarrassing gaffes. See my own detailed discussions of EA, in a significantly modified Velikovskian-based context, in **Part I**, *Chapter 3* and *Chapter 4* and **Part III**, *Chapter 9* and *Chapter 10*.

And Velikovsky had a trump card in his revisionist pack. For he was able to show, from a detailed comparison of the luxurious items that Thutmose III and his military officers had carried back to Egypt from the first campaign into Palestine, with items that the Bible attributes to the Temple of Yahweh built by Solomon, and to Solomon’s palace, that Thutmose III had indeed plundered Jerusalem of its fabulous Solomonic wealth.⁷⁸

Less convincing though were Velikovsky’s attempts to link any name of Thutmose III with ‘Shishak’, or to reconstruct a geography for the pharaoh’s first campaign that showed Thutmose III had actually come unto Jerusalem. But these matters may have since, I think, been largely rectified by Velikovskian modifiers⁷⁹.

Thus Velikovsky had, with some later astute help from colleagues, whether acceptable to him or otherwise,⁸⁰ sent crashing to the ground one of the main chronological ‘pillars’ of the text book Egyptian history: namely, that Shoshenq I = ‘Shishak’. At the same time, Velikovsky had been careful to replace what he had snatched away. For not only had he established Thutmose III (= ‘Shishak’) as a resplendent new ‘pillar’ of biblico-historical chronology, and one that I think will stand the test of time, but he also took the pharaoh whom he had knocked down from his pedestal, Shoshenq I, and set him up, too, as a new ‘pillar’, likewise Bible-based, as ‘King So’.

Or at least Velikovsky took a pharaoh ‘Shoshenq’, though he appears to have identified him in his *Theses* preferably with Shoshenq IV, whom he nonetheless connected with Shoshenq I:⁸¹ “Pharaoh So who received gifts from Hoshea was Sosenk IV, and his bas-relief scene pictures this tribute. Sosenk regularly placed as I (first) was IV (last)”.

⁷⁷ This colourful phase of Velikovsky’s revision has since been greatly modified and developed by revisionists, including E. Metzler’s ‘Conflict of Laws in the Israelite Dynasty of Egypt’, and my own ‘Solomon and Sheba’.

⁷⁸ *Ages in Chaos*, pp. 148-154. Courville fully endorsed Velikovsky’s reconstruction in this regard. *Op. cit.*, I, pp. 271-272.

⁷⁹ E.g. (a) geographically, by Danelius, *op. cit.*; and (b) the name factor, by K. Birch, who proposed that the name ‘Shishak’ may have been taken from one of Thutmose III’s other names, *Tcheser-kau*, or *Sheser-kau*, ‘Shishak Mystery?’, p. 35.

⁸⁰ It should be noted for instance that Velikovsky himself, as much as he claimed to have admired the research of Dr. Danelius, did not actually accept her geographical modification of his thesis. ‘A Response to Eva Danelius’, p. 80.

⁸¹ Velikovsky, as quoted by A. Dirkzwager, ‘Pharaoh So and the Libyan Dynasty’, p. 19.

King Hoshea of Israel's decision to woo Egypt would turn out to be a most fateful one for the northern kingdom. The narrative of 2 Kings continues on to tell of what followed subsequent to Hoshea's imprisonment by the Assyrians:

Then the king of Assyria invaded all the land and came to Samaria; for three years he besieged it. In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria captured Samaria; he carried the Israelites away to Assyria. He placed them in Halah, on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. (vv. 5-6)

One can easily see from the course of this narrative that the involvement of pharaoh 'So' in the affairs of Israel, and the consequent siege of Samaria by the king of the Assyrians, were closely related events and could not therefore have been far apart in time. In other words, Hoshea's turning to 'So' must have coincided very closely to c. 725 BC, the generally estimated date for the commencement of Assyria's siege of Samaria. Hoshea would have sent his ambassadors to pharaoh 'So' not long prior to that date; hence, very close to c. 727 BC, our estimated year of commencement for the reign of Hezekiah. Possibly there may even have been a connection between Hoshea's revolt against Assyria and Hezekiah's far-reaching first-year reform; a reform that would go counter to his father Ahaz's policies (2 Chronicles 29:3-31-21) - perhaps including the latter's pro-Assyrian stance, since Hezekiah's own reform was immediately followed by Sennacherib's invasion (32:1).

Thus there is an undeniably close connection between 'anchor' points **1.** and **2.**, with the latter now likely providing us with our hitherto lacking Egyptian contemporary for the fall of Samaria. I shall look to identify and consolidate this candidate in *Chapter 12*.

The next anchor point that I shall propose for EOH belongs to a most climactic year midway through the reign of king Hezekiah.

It is:

3. HEZEKIAH'S FOURTEENTH YEAR

This Hezekiah-linked date is spelled out in grand terms, in almost exactly the same words in fact, in 2 Kings 18:13 and Isaiah 36:1: "In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, King Sennacherib of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them".

וַיְהִי בְּאַרְבַּע עָשָׂר שָׁנָה לְמֶלֶךְ: חִזְקִיָּהוּ
עָלָה סִנְחַרִּיב מֶלֶךְ: אֲשׁוּר עַל כָּל-עָרֵי יְהוּדָה הַבְּצֻרוֹת
וַיִּתְּפָשֶׂם

We are going to find also that this was the year that Merodach-baladan [II] of Babylonia sent presents to Hezekiah, making this a year that links up Judah, Assyria and Babylon. Once again Ethiopia/Egypt is missing from the scenario. But this is such a key incident in the reign of king Hezekiah, and one that is dated, that it cannot be left out. By biblical reckoning, taking c. 722 BC to be Hezekiah's sixth year, then his "fourteenth year" when Sennacherib invaded Judah must have been c. 714 BC.

But what do we find in the conventional history? And indeed in Thiele's chronology? Certainly not Sennacherib, whose reign is estimated to have commenced at 704 BC, but Sargon II, who is supposed to have reigned until 705 BC,⁸² almost a decade after Hezekiah's fourteenth year! No wonder that Thiele had found himself stranded between two non-harmonious points of reference for Hezekiah!

A similar sort of anachronism arising from the conventional estimation of Sargon II's reign has emerged in the past few years with the publicising of the Iranian Kurdistan inscription of Tang-i Var, showing neo-Assyrian history to be significantly out of harmony with the 25th Ethiopian (or Cushite) dynasty of Egypt. (See *Chapter 6*, p. 144, and *Chapter 12, 2*, for further consideration of this important text). The Tang-i Var inscription pertains to the revolt against Assyria of one *Iamani* of 'Ashdod' (who figures also in anchor no. 4. below), and I suspect that its contents will require Egyptologists to revise their current absolute chronology for Egypt's 25th dynasty.

Thus there appears to be both biblical and non-biblical support for the view that neo-Assyrian chronology (like the Egyptian chronology) has not been properly constructed.

My fourth anchor point for EOH will be:

4. SARGON II'S 'ASHDOD' CAMPAIGN

Redford has actually called this campaign, that he dates to 712 BC, "an anchor date". Here is his account (my dating of these events will be slightly different from his).⁸³

Thanks to a variety of studies over the last 25 years, the year 712 B.C. has emerged as an anchor date in the history of the Late Period in Egypt. The general course of events leading up to and culminating in the Assyrian campaign against Ashdod in that year is now fairly sure, and may be sketched as follows. Sometime early in 713 B.C. the Assyrians deposed Aziri [Azuri], king of Ashdod on suspicion of *lese-majeste*, and appointed one Ahimetti [Akhi-miti] to replace him. Very shortly thereafter, however, and probably still in 713, a spontaneous uprising of the Ashdod populace removed this Assyrian puppet in favor of a usurper Yamani [Iamani].

⁸² These dates are the ones given for instance by M. van de Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East*, p. 292, and by G. Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, 'Chronological Tables, vii: Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian Periods (744-539 BC)'.

⁸³ 'A Note on the Chronology of Dynasty 25 and the Inscription of Sargon II at Tang-i Var', pp. 6-7.

Throughout the fall and winter of 713 Yamani contacted the other Philistine cities and the inland states of Judah, Moab, and Edom in an effort to organize an anti-Assyrian coalition, and sent to “Pharaoh (Pir’u) king of Egypt” for aid.

In the spring of 712, however, Sargon dispatched the tartan [Turtan] with a detachment of troops against Ashdod, and Yamani fled in haste to Egypt. Unable to find a safe haven in Egypt, Yamani passed clean through the land *ana ite Musri sa pat Meluhha*, “to the frontier of Egypt which is (contiguous) to the territory of Kush.” At this point he fell into the hands of the king of Kush who, at an unspecified later date, extradited him to Assyria.

The incident discussed here will become a crucial one in this thesis (see *Chapter 12, 2, 5.*), serving a truly multi-chronological purpose for EOH, with Assyria, Palestine, Egypt and Ethiopia (‘Kush’) all being involved here.

My final anchor point for EOH will be:

5. THE DEFEAT OF SENNACHERIB’S ARMY

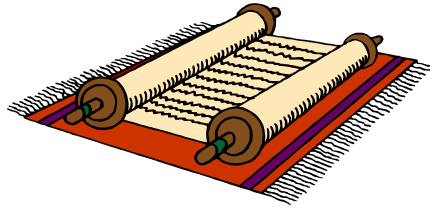
This is really still a work-in-progress at this stage, since this most famous incident has not yet been established, but still needs to be found, and securely dated. To achieve this end will be one of the primary tasks of this thesis (culminating in VOLUME TWO), as this event would have to be considered as being the pinnacle of Hezekiah’s entire reign. The defeat of Sennacherib’s army, the *when*, *how* and *why* of it, will be the climax of the tense drama that will be found to emerge from VOLUME TWO, **Part II** of this thesis.

To give the reader a date preview, though, I shall be dating the defeat of Sennacherib’s army of 185,000 troops, in correlation with my previous dates for king Hezekiah, to approximately 703 BC.

Now, arranging these five anchor points for EOH into their proper chronological order, we find that they range very nicely through almost the entire (revised) reign of king Hezekiah of Judah (c. 727-699 BC):

- **727 BC. KING SO (HEZEKIAH YEAR 1).**
- **722 BC. FALL OF SAMARIA (HEZEKIAH YEAR 6).**
- **714 BC. SENNACHERIB INVADES JUDAH (HEZEKIAH YEAR 14).**
- **712 BC. SARGON II’S ‘ASHDOD’ CAMPAIGN (HEZEKIAH YEAR 16).**
- **703 BC. SENNACHERIB’S ARMY DEFEATED IN PALESTINE (HEZEKIAH YEAR 25).**

VOLUME ONE:
A CHRONOLOGICAL REALIGNMENT OF
KING HEZEKIAH AND
HIS CONTEMPORARIES



Part I

In Search of “A More Acceptable Alternative” to the Conventional Background for the Era of Hezekiah

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2

The Philistines and their Allies

Introduction

I briefly mentioned at the beginning of this thesis that king Hezekiah greatly diminished the territory of the Philistines; that perennial foe of Israel. Much of this was territory that the Philistines had actually taken from Hezekiah's father, Ahaz, at about the same time that the Edomites were afflicting the kingdom of Judah. The situation is thus recorded in 2 Chronicles 28:17-18:

... the Edomites had again invaded and defeated Judah, and carried away captives. And the Philistines had made raids on the cities in the Shephelah and the Negeb of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco with its villages, Timnah with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages; and they settled there.

Consequently, Ahaz "sent to the king of Assyria for help" (v. 16). This king was Tiglath-pileser [III] (v. 20). We know from history that the latter proceeded to inflict a series of crushing defeats upon the Philistines.⁸⁴ These campaigns are conventionally dated to the late 730's BC, with the main one being in 734 BC, with the capture and sacking of Gaza, and a follow-up one in 733 BC. However, according to the revision of neo-Assyrian history that I shall be arguing in **Part II, Chapter 6**, the dates for Tiglath-pileser III's campaigns against Philistia would be about half a dozen years later than this. Unfortunately for Ahaz, the king of Assyria turned out to be no more of an effective ally to Judah than would the Egypto-Ethiopians later be to his son, Hezekiah. This was, according to v. 19, because "Ahaz ... had behaved without restraint in Judah and had been faithless to the Lord". Thus: "... King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came against him, and oppressed him instead of strengthening him" (v. 20).

Hezekiah on the other hand, in the very early part of his reign, "rebelled against the king of Assyria and would not serve him" (2 Kings 18:7). And he was successful also against the Philistines: "He attacked the Philistines as far as Gaza and its territory, from watchtower to fortified city" (v. 8). Boutflower, commenting on this same verse, claimed that:⁸⁵

This agrees exactly with what we learn from the inscriptions of Sennacherib. Sennacherib speaks of Joppa and the neighbouring cities being under *Tsidqa*, i.e., Zedekiah, king of Ashkelon. The Jewish name of this monarch bespeaks him a nominee of Hezekiah. His cities would therefore be regarded by the Assyrian as belonging to Judah.

⁸⁴ J. Bimson summarises these Assyrian campaigns in 'An Eighth-Century Date for Merenptah', p. 58.

⁸⁵ *The Book of Isaiah*, p. 202.

Ekron, too, had also lost her independence, her king, Padi, according to Sennacherib having been imprisoned by Hezekiah in Jerusalem.

“Padi”, he adds, with reference to Schrader,⁸⁶ “is the Hebrew name Pedaiah “Jehovah hath ransomed” [פְּדִיָּה e.g. 2 Kings 23:36], and Tsidqa is Zedekiah “Jehovah is righteous” [צִדְקִיָּה e.g. 1 Kings 22:11]. This is most interesting, since we see in the bearers of these two last names the evidence of Hezekiah’s conquests in Philistia, as recorded in 2 Kings xviii. 8”.

No one doubts that Philistines occupied the coastal region of Palestine during the era of Israel’s Unified and Divided Monarchy, including the reign of Hezekiah and his father. However, since historians can find no archaeology, or documentary evidence, for this people prior to c. 1200 BC, conventional dating, they tend to disbelieve the biblical accounts of Philistines occupying parts of this land between, say, the time of Abraham and the Conquest under Joshua.

My primary task in this chapter, then, will be to trace back the Philistines to their archaeological roots, and to identify their origins and ethnicity. This last will have significant ramifications for what will follow in the subsequent chapters of **Part I**, and indeed for the remainder of this thesis.

THE SEA PEOPLES

Boutflower has offered this fairly standard account of the Philistines, though with the biblically-based inclusion - one that he does not attempt to defend archaeologically - of their being in southern Palestine at the time of Abraham:⁸⁷

The Philistines were not Semites, but a European people who came to Palestine – with which their name is forever associated – from Caphtor, *i.e.* Crete. We read of them first in the time of Abraham, when they are settled at Gerar in the extreme south of Palestine. In the Egyptian annals the *Pulasati* [*Peleset*] appear first in the reign of Rameses III, about 1232 B.C., when, as forming one section of the “Peoples of the Sea”, they invaded Egypt in great force both by sea and by land.

Historians though, whilst they would agree with Boutflower’s comment that the Philistines are first mentioned in the Egyptian records at the time of Ramses III, would generally - as we are going to find - deny that this people was in occupation of any part of Palestine as early as the time of Abraham (say, early C2nd millennium BC).

I shall return to that in a moment.

Before that I should just like to comment on Boutflower’s assertion that the Philistines “were not Semites, but a European people”.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, p. 255, with reference to Schrader’s *The Cuneiform Inscriptions and the Old Testament*, vol. i, p. 152.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 253-254.

According to Genesis 10:6, 13-14, the Philistines were actually a *Hamitic* people; they, along with Caphtorim, being descended from Egypt (or Mizraim), through Casluhim:

... וּבְנֵי חָם ... וּמִצְרַיִם יָלַד ...
וְאֶת-כְּסֹלְחִים אֲשֶׁר יָצְאוּ מִשָּׁם פְּלִשְׁתִּים וְאֶת-כַּפְתֹּרִים

This passage is sometimes translated with the following adjustment, enabling for the Philistines to have descended instead from Caphtorim:⁸⁸ “Egypt became the father of Casluhim, and Caphtorim, from which the Philistines come”.

A similar situation apparently arises with the Hittites, also regarded as being European, whereas Genesis 10 again has them as Hamitic, descended from Canaan (through Heth), cf. v. 15 & 23:7 (where “children of Heth” can also be translated as “Hittites”). It is generally considered though that the famous Hittites of history were later immigrants to Anatolia, having largely displaced and absorbed the older inhabitants, the Hattians - perhaps in part the biblical Hittites; then having assumed the latter’s name. Though the new Hittites in fact referred to themselves as *Nesians*, and their language, *Nesiti*, or Neshite.⁸⁹

The invasion of the Sea Peoples, including the *Peleset* (Philistines), will be found to have been a later wave, though having some ethnic connection with the earlier one that had brought the ‘Indo-European’ Hittites to Anatolia. According to Keller, the new wave was Indo-Germanic, and it coincided with Joshua’s arrival in Canaan:⁹⁰

At the end of the 13th century B.C. a great new wave of foreign peoples surged down from the northern Aegean. By land and water these “Sea Peoples” flowed over Asia Minor. They were the fringes of a great movement of population to which the Dorian migration to Greece also belonged. The impetus of these foreigners – they were Indo-germanic – was directed to Canaan and Egypt. For the time being Israel, waiting poised by the Jordan, had nothing to fear from them. And the Canaanites were divided and weak. Israel’s hour had come. The Biblical trumpets of Jericho gave the signal.

According to the chronological framework being pursued in this thesis, however, this new wave of immigrants occurred only about a century before the reign of Hezekiah himself, and many centuries after Joshua. But obviously, whichever chronology one prefers, if this marked the beginning of the Philistines in Palestine, then this people could not have been in the land as far back as the Old Testament claims them to have been.

Courville has told of the biblical scenario for the Philistines, and has afterwards outlined a corresponding archaeology for them. I take up the initial part of his discussion here, with the later part of it to be discussed further on:⁹¹

⁸⁸ E.g. in NRSV. Catholic Edition.

⁸⁹ S. Lloyd, *Ancient Turkey*, pp. 35, 37.

⁹⁰ *The Bible as History*, p. 157.

⁹¹ *The Exodus Problem and its Ramifications*, vol. 2, p. 223.

I. *The Philistines in Early Scripture*

According to the table of nations as given in Genesis 10, the Philistines are the descendants of Philistim in the line of Casluhim, son of Mizraim, ancestor of the Egyptians. Since the Philistines are stated to have come from Caphtor, which is undoubtedly correctly identified as Crete, they would certainly be closely related to the Caphtorims, who are also of the line of Mizraim and who, from their name, also must have settled in Crete (Caphtor) and have given the island its ancient name.

Courville is here following the general view that ‘Caphtor’ refers to Crete. Bimson has noted, though, that this view has its critics:⁹²

According to Jeremiah 47:4 and Amos 9:7, the original home of the Philistines was the island of Caphtor (hence their designation as Caphtorim). Caphtor of the scriptures, along with *Keftiu* of Egyptian sources, is usually identified with Crete, though this view has not been without its critics. For example, J. C. GREENFIELD comments: “... There is no evidence for a Philistine occupation of Crete, nor do the facts about the Philistines, known from archaeological and literary sources, betray any relationship between them and Crete”. Greenfield suggests that perhaps Caphtor was a term used very broadly for the Aegean area.

Bimson himself, at least in 1978, preferred Velikovsky’s view⁹³ that Caphtor was Cyprus:⁹⁴ “It also seems that Keftiu of Egyptian sources is Cyprus, in spite of the many claims that it is Crete, based on a misinterpretation of the literary and pictorial evidence”. Certainly Cyprus was an island of great geographical importance in relation to southern Anatolia and Phoenicia. However, I think that the standard view, that Caphtor was Crete, is the correct one, and that one can in fact trace an archaeological trail for the Philistines right back to Crete.

Courville continues:

Scripture records the presence of the Philistines in the territory just to the south of Palestine from the time of Abraham. At this time, they may not have comprised a vast population, but neither were they an insignificant people, since they had a king over them (Abimelech) and his people (armies) are referred to as a host. At the time of the Exodus, the Philistines continued to occupy this same territory, as evidenced by the routing of the escaping Israelites to avoid passing through Philistine territory, though this was the more direct route.

⁹² ‘The Arrival of the Philistines’, p. 13, citing J. Greenfield, *IDB* (1962), vol. 1, p. 534. Lord Taylour, though, has adopted the standard view that “Keftiu [is] the Egyptian word for Crete ...”. *The Mycenaean*, p. 29.

⁹³ As discussed in *Ages in Chaos*, I, ch. v.

⁹⁴ ‘The Arrival of the Philistines’, p. 15, n. 9.

Courville continues on, to a consideration of:

II. The Philistines in Scripture for the Post-Exodus Period

The Philistines appear as a fully settled and organized people in the area south of Palestine at the time of the conquest under Joshua. At that time, the people were ruled by five lords or kings, each ruling over a city state. They also appear among the oppressors of Israel during the period of the Judges; the earliest mention is at the time of Shamgar.

This Shamgar, according to Bright, “was not even an Israelite”. And Bright refers to various sources in regard to “this enigmatic figure”, whose name, he says, “appears to be Hurrian”.⁹⁵ Bright has also suggested here a possible connection between the biblical Sisera (of the same approximate era of the Judges as Shamgar) and “Aegean elements” related to the Sea Peoples.

“Even at this time”, Courville continues, “the Philistines were evidently not a vast population, since the slaughter of 600 of them is represented as a significant victory”. He then proceeds on to discuss the Philistines in relation to Israel’s monarchy, including the reign of Hezekiah.⁹⁶

After an interval of somewhat less than 300 years, the Philistines had become sufficiently powerful to dominate the Israelites, at least locally. From this time on through the era of the monarchy, we find periodic mention of the Philistines, who continue to occupy territory on the southern border of Israel; at times they are even within Israelite territory. That their power was intermittently broken is indicated by the stated results of the wars with the Israelites at the time of Samuel, at the time of David, in the reign of Uzziah, and in the reign of Hezekiah.

Just because the Bible tends to speak of the Philistines in connection with localized areas, though, does not mean that their geography was thus limited. This brings me to the introduction of a principle of biblical interpretation that will become important throughout this thesis. Liel has expressed it as follows, though not in terms of geography:⁹⁷ “Remember--the Bible is a didactic history. Its goal is to teach ideas, not political science”. The biblical writers were not interested in writing a history or geography of the Philistines, or of the rulers of Mitanni, or of the Egyptians. They were essentially concerned with Israel, and any ‘accidental’ information with which they might have provided us concerning elements foreign to Israel would depend entirely upon the degree to which these elements impacted upon Israel itself. So, just because most of our biblical information about the Philistines pertains to their activity along the southern coast, close to the kingdom of Judah, does not mean that the historical Philistines themselves were in fact largely confined to that particular region.

⁹⁵ *A History of Israel*, p. 172, n. 80.

⁹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 224.

⁹⁷ ‘What’s In a Name?’, section: “Labaya”.

Courville now proceeds to tell of the Philistine occupation of parts of northern Israel at the time of Saul. This will lead him to important archaeological considerations further on:

Pertinent to the problems to be dealt with is the appearance of the Philistines along the *northern* coastal region of Israel in the area of Megiddo and Beth Shan at the time of Saul, as well as in their more commonly recognized home in the south. To have maintained their presence in territories thus far separated suggests that they controlled the coast between these territories, either by land or by sea or both.

And, during the neo-Assyrian era:

The Philistines continued to occupy the territory in the south into the reign of Ahaz Since the Assyrians already were harassing the southern kingdom of Judah also, the Philistines would appear to have been competing with the Assyrians for the diminishing Israelite territory. Such a situation could be expected to be a source of difficulty between the Assyrians and the Philistines. It is apparent from the inscriptions of Tiglathpileser of Assyria and of his successor, Sargon, that untoward relations *did* exist at this time between these two peoples.

Having summarised the biblical account of the Philistines, Courville now proceeds to introduce the somewhat different history of this people as held by the historians.⁹⁸

III. Current Views on the Origin of the Philistines in Palestine

While Scripture indicates the presence of the Philistines in Palestine from the time of Abraham, this concept is generally rejected by archaeologists. This latter view is based on the absence of *recognized* archaeological evidence for such occupation prior to the incident of the invasion of Egypt by the Sea Peoples in the reign of Rameses III (c. 1200 B.C. by current views), or possibly a few years earlier in the reign of Merneptah. This invasion was a failure and the remnants of the abortive attempt were thrown back on Palestine and Syria.

These invaders, known as the Sea Peoples, represented a mixture of races who had origins in the islands of the Mediterranean, including Cyprus, Crete, and the islands of the Aegean Sea near Greece. However, some of the names indicate a possible origin in Greece or in southwest Asia Minor. The inscription of Rameses III mentions peoples by the names Palusathu (generally identified with the Philistines), the Shakalaha, the Sherdanu, the Zakkaru, the Ashwaka (thought by some to refer to the Achaeans of Greece), and the Danaus (whom Gordon would identify with the Danites of the tribe of Dan on the basis of Judges 5:17, but whom most scholars take to be one of the several peoples related culturally to the Philistines). The Egyptian list provides the names of ten different peoples who comprised the invaders.

⁹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 225.

Courville is here referring to the vast literary and pictorial account of this land and sea invasion as recorded by Ramses III on his mortuary temple at Medinet Habu.

Scholars can vary quite considerably in their attempts to identify each of these peoples (even to transliterate their names), and as to the degree to which they managed to discomfort Egypt. Lloyd has high praise for the painstaking study of them by Sandars:⁹⁹

During Ramesses' land- and sea-battles with the Peoples of the Sea, many prisoners were taken, and on the walls of Medinet Habu his sculptors not only listed their supposed countries of origin but depicted in relief their national dress and other peculiarities. The information thus provided has been studied with great care, notably by N. K. Sandars in a book which is a small masterpiece of patient scholarship.

Sandars herself, speaking of Merenptah's time, has written thus of the 'Sea Peoples', including the important Libyans:¹⁰⁰

With the Libyans, and their neighbours the Meshwesh, came a number of northern allies: the Sherden or Shardana and the Lukka, already well known; also three new names, Ekwesh (Egyptian 'Ikwš), Teresh (Trš) and Shekelesh (Škrš).

... The name Sherden-Shardana has, since it was first recognized, been connected with Sardinia ... It has also, rather less convincingly, been linked with Sardis. That the Shardana wore horned helmets is one of the few sartorial certainties in the complicated history of Egypt's friends and attackers. ... Horned helmets were alien to the Aegean ... but they were indigenous in Mesopotamia, Anatolia and the Levant. ... The Lukka, who also joined the Libyan invaders, had been allies of the Hittites at the battle of Kadesh. We have met them already as pirates from south-western Anatolia. ... Also among the Libyan allies are the Ekwesh, not heard of before this time They have been connected with the Ahhiyawa of the Hittite texts ... and so with the Homeric Achaeans; if so, it is rather surprising that, as Indo-Europeans, they were circumcised. ... A Hittite text ... refers to Taru-(u)i-ša (Taruisha), which may be the same as the Teresh The Hittites located their Taruisha in northern Assuwa near the Troad, but they have also been placed not far from the land that was later Lydia ... and from where, according to Herodotus, the Tyrrhenians migrated to central Italy. This would link the Teresh-Taruisha-Tyrsenoi with the Etruscans. ... The Hittite texts appear to be silent concerning the Shekelesh But just as the Shardana are linked with Sardinia, and the Teresh with the Etruscans, so the Shekelesh have for a long time been identified with the inhabitants of south-eastern Sicily.

Trigger, Kemp *et al.* argue a relatively feeble Egyptian response to these incoming hordes.¹⁰¹

⁹⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 55-56, with reference to N. Sandars, *The Sea Peoples*, p. 29.

¹⁰⁰ *The Sea Peoples*, pp. 105-110.

¹⁰¹ *Ancient Egypt: A Social History*, pp. 203-204.

During the reign of Ramesses III ... the political and ethnic structure of Syria, Palestine and Anatolia was drastically altered as the result of a mysterious population movement, that of the 'Sea-Peoples', who surged along the eastern Mediterranean and had to be repulsed at the seaward and eastern frontiers of Egypt itself. At the same time, perhaps not coincidentally, Libyan pressure ... reached a climax in two abortive invasions of the western Delta. To a degree, these developments were uncontrollable; neither the Hittites nor any other state in the region had been able to resist the 'Sea-Peoples' But it is significant that Egyptian reaction was comparatively weak.

According to Brewer and Teeter, the invasion altered the balance of power in the region:¹⁰² "The "People of the Sea" ultimately changed the entire balance of power in the Near East, sweeping away the Hittites and setting the stage for Assyria to step into the void as the new dominant power in the Near East".

Courville now turns to the all-important consideration of a distinctive pottery type introduced by this new mix of peoples:¹⁰³

On the basis of the appearance of a new type of pottery in the area occupied by the Philistines following the attempted invasion, and in the absence of any earlier *recognized* evidence of the Philistines in Palestine, the new occupants are identified with the Philistines of Scripture in the time of the late judges. This view, of necessity, must reject the earlier references to the Philistines in Scripture. Wright would explain this discrepancy by assuming that a later writer was bringing the account up to date in terms of the later occupation.

... Another example [of modernizing Scripture] is the mention of the Philistines as living along the southern coast of Palestine ... but we now know that the settlement of the Philistines did not occur until five or six hundred years later ... Later Hebrews were simply bringing the stories up to date, and what modern teller of tales does not do the same?

Courville proceeds to challenge the standard archaeological view on the Philistines:¹⁰⁴

IV. The New Pottery appearing in the Territory of the Philistines is not of Cretan Origin

The archaeology of Crete ... yields most damaging evidence for the view that these invaders and their culture came from Crete; hence it becomes necessary to refer to one phase of Cretan history. Using the *popularly accepted dates*, the following facts are to be noted. The dates by the proposed revision will be five to six hundred years later.

¹⁰² *Egypt and the Egyptians*, p. 48.

¹⁰³ *Op. cit, ibid.*, citing G. Wright, *Biblical Archaeology*, 1957, p. 40.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 226-227.

The sea power and culture of Crete reached its zenith in the period dated c. 1500-1400 B.C. During this century, Crete represented the major sea power of the ancient world, and produced some of the most beautiful and elaborately decorated pottery known anciently. About 1400 B.C. Crete was the victim of an overwhelming catastrophe from which neither its power nor its culture ever recovered ... The evidence indicates that the same culture survived the catastrophe but underwent a steep decline, so that by 1200 B.C. the power and culture of Crete was at its nadir, the residual culture being but a crude remnant of its predecessors. If the Sea Peoples who invaded Egypt at this time came from Crete under these conditions, then how could they suddenly be in full possession of a high level of pottery culture as indicated by the appearance of this new pottery type in southern Palestine? This new pottery is stated to be on a higher level than that used by the occupants prior to this (as compared to the pottery in the level below it) The anachronism that results from supposing that this pottery had a Cretan origin was recognized by Baikie who commented:

... But the remaining tribes [mentioned in the Egyptian inscriptions] are in all probability Cretans, fragments of the old Minoan Empire which had collapsed two centuries before, and was now gradually becoming disintegrated ... There remain the Pulosathu, who are, almost beyond question, the Philistines, so well known to us from their connection with the rise of the Hebrew monarchy. The Hebrew tradition brought the Philistines from Kaphtor, and Kaphtor is plainly nothing else than the Egyptian Kefti, or Keftiu. In the Philistines, then, we have the last organized remnant of the old Minoan sea-power. Thrown back from the frontier of Egypt by the victory of Rameses III, they established themselves on the maritime plain of Palestine But all the same the Philistine was an anachronism, a survival from an older world.

An examination of the new pottery that appeared in Philistia at the time of this attempted invasion of Egypt, and comparison of it with that used in Crete at this time, and prior to this for two centuries, provides no basis for presuming that this new pottery is of Cretan origin.

Courville next proceeds to argue that:¹⁰⁵

V. This New Pottery in Philistia Is of Aegean Origin

A comparison of this pottery with that of the Aegean area for this and the preceding era leaves no room for doubt on this point. While this pottery found its way to Cyprus and even to the mainland to the north, its origin may be placed unequivocally to the Aegean Islands and the immediate area. Miss Kenyon commented thus on this pottery:

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 227-228.

There is, however, one class of archaeological material which may reasonably be associated with the newcomers. This is a type of pottery entirely new to Palestine [*sic*], decorated with elaborate patterns. The most *characteristic elements in the decoration are metopes enclosing stylized birds, very often with back-turned head*, friezes of spirals, and groups of interlocking semicircles. The form of the vessels and the elements in the decoration all have their origins in the Late Helladic ceramic art of the Aegean. [Emphasis Courville's].

“But if the pottery is of Aegean origin, and not Cretan”, Courville continues, “then it is most inconsistent to identify the pottery as Philistine on the basis of the Scriptural statements to the effect that the Philistines came from Crete”. “And if it is not Philistine, then what basis is there for presuming”, he asks, “that this pottery provides any evidence at all that this is the date for the first appearance of the Philistines in Palestine?”:¹⁰⁶

To be sure, it remains possible, though not demonstrated, that this pottery is Philistine of Aegean origin. But if shelter is to be taken under this possibility, then consistency would require that not only the early Scriptural references be rejected, but also the later references which so clearly portray a Cretan origin of the Philistines. It is to be noted that Miss Kenyon recognized the insecurity of the proposed identification of this pottery as Philistine.

It cannot of course be accepted without question that this pottery is necessarily associated with the Philistines, but the evidence does seem to be strongly in favour of this ascription.

Courville will eventually trace back this distinctive pottery type to the earliest phase of Cretan archaeology, in support of the biblical view that the immigrant Philistines were of Cretan origin. More on that later.

I think we need to recognize, with Rohl, that the coming of the Sea Peoples was “a secondary wave of migrants”, following on from an earlier influx of ‘Indo-Europeans’. With that in mind, whilst Caphtor would still stand - as it does conventionally - for Crete, Cyprus may later have become prominent as a base and stepping-stone for these peoples during the second invasion. Here is Rohl’s account, with a corresponding stratigraphy (he juxtaposes here OC - Old Chronology dates - against his NC - New Chronology dates):¹⁰⁷

... who were these Philistines and where did they come from?

Of course, in the conventional chronological scheme, the Philistines appear in Philistia not during the Middle Bronze Age but at the beginning of the Iron Age (OC – c. 1200 BC).

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 228.

¹⁰⁷ *The Lost Testament*, pp. 266-267.

They are identified with a group called the Peleset who attack Egypt by land and sea in the 8th year of Pharaoh Ramesses III (OC – 1177 BC, NC – 856 BC).

These Iron Age invaders are indeed Philistines – but they are not the first ‘Sea Peoples’ to arrive in the region. In the New Chronology the original incursion of Indo-European peoples from the Aegean occurs towards the end of the Middle Bronze Age (NC – c. 1350 BC). The Peleset of Ramesses III’s time are a secondary wave of migrants moving into the Levant (to dwell alongside their ancestral Philistine kin) during the period of collapse of the Mycenaean Bronze Age city states of Greece. This collapse was triggered by the long and debilitating campaign of the Trojan war (NC – c. 872-863 BC) and the subsequent Dorian invasion (NC – c. 820 BC) which ousted the Mycenaean élites onto the islands of the eastern Mediterranean and into the Levant itself. But these events are hundreds of years in the future as the original Philistine migrants arrive on the Canaanite coast during the Hyksos period.

I had earlier referred to the person of Shamgar, during the period of the Judges, and had noted Bright’s indication that his name, at least, might be Hurrian. Now Rohl has dated the arrival of the first wave of ‘Indo-Europeans’ precisely to this very same time of the Judges, conveniently, according to his New Chronology, in 1300 BC:¹⁰⁸

During the judgeship of EHUD only one minor *external* conflict occurred in this long period of internal squabbling amongst the tribes. Shamgar, son of Anath, came up against a raiding party of Philistines (Hebrew *Pelishtim*) in the Shephelah hills which border the coastal plain. As had happened with the Edomites and the Moabites, here too the Israelites managed to push this new enemy back from their territory. But behind this apparently insignificant biblical story – which occupies just one line in the book of Judges [Judges 3:31] – is a momentous event in the history of the ancient Near East. This first mention of the Philistine soldiers heralds the arrival of a new Indo-European-speaking political force in the region.

The year of Shamgar’s run-in with these strange foreigners from a far-off land was 1300 BC. In Egyptian terms, this places the Philistine ‘arrival’ on the biblical stage right in the middle of the Hyksos period – a little over a century after the invasion of the eastern Delta by King Sheshi (in c. 1409 BC) and the subsequent demise of the remnant native 13th Dynasty.

Whilst it is perhaps arguable that the Old Testament, with its aforementioned emphasis upon pedagogy rather than having any particular concern for recounting the history of foreign nations, could relegate to “just one line”, in only one of its books, an event as momentous as the incursion of the ‘Indo-Europeans’ into the ancient Near East, I would nevertheless instead embrace the view of Courville¹⁰⁹ and Bimson (see next page) that there was an actual biblical tradition associated with the arrival of these foreign masses.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 265-266.

¹⁰⁹ *Op. cit*, p. 230.

And, according to such tradition, this significant event pertains to a period somewhat earlier than the one that Rohl thinks he has pinpointed to the time of Ehud and Shamgar, in the era of the Judges. Here I take up Bimson's account of this biblical tradition:¹¹⁰

There is a tradition preserved in Joshua 13:2-3 and Judges 3:3 that the Philistines were established in Canaan by the end of the Conquest, and that the Israelites had been unable to oust them from the coastal plain There is also an indication that the main Philistine influx had not occurred very much prior to the Conquest. As we shall see below, the Philistines are the people referred to as "the Caphtorim, who came from Caphtor" in Deuteronomy 2:23 ... where it is said that a people called the Avvim originally occupied the region around Gaza, and that the Caphtorim "destroyed them and settled in their stead". Josh. 13:2-3 mentions Philistines and Avvim together as peoples whom the Israelites had failed to dislodge from southern Canaan. This suggests that the Philistines had not completely replaced the Avvim by the end of Joshua's life. I would suggest, in fact, that the war referred to in Ex. 13:17, which was apparently taking place in "the land of the Philistines" at the time of the Exodus, was the war of the Avvim against the newly arrived Philistines.

As conventionally viewed, the end of MB II C coincides with the expulsion of the Hyksos from Egypt. Bimson however, in his efforts to provide a revised stratigraphy for the revision of history, has synchronised MB II C instead with the *start* of Hyksos rule. He will argue here in some detail that the building and refortifying of cities at this time was the work of the Avvim against the invading Philistines, with some of the new settlements, however, likely having been built by the Philistines themselves. Rohl, basically following Bimson, has identified certain MB pottery as Philistine, and representing his first wave of 'Indo-Europeans'. And he will link it to a similar form of pottery belonging, later, to the Sea Peoples – the second wave:¹¹¹

Towards the end of the Middle Bronze II-B era a new kind of pottery begins to appear in the Levant – particularly on the coastal plain and at Tell ed-Daba (ancient Avaris) in Egypt. This 'bichrome ware' is finely decorated pottery with designs painted in black and red on a beige slip (background). The designs include metopes (rectangular boxes) running around the shoulder of the vessel, within which stylized birds and geometric designs are placed.

¹¹⁰ 'The Arrival of the Philistines', p. 13.

¹¹¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 266-267.

Figure 1: Bichrome Ware



In the above illustration, the two bichrome vessels on the left belong to the first wave of Philistine migrations, whereas the two on the right belong to the second wave. “Note the backwards-looking bird motif common to both types of ceramic decoration, four hundred years apart”.¹¹²

Rohl continues:¹¹³

The basic principles of such decoration are witnessed once more, three hundred years later, when the so-called ‘Philistine ware’ proper appears in the archaeological record at the beginning of the Iron Age (around the time of Ramesses III). This later pottery is Aegean in origin and is regarded as being a rather degraded development from Mycenaean Bronze Age ceramics. Given that the earlier bichrome ware of the late MB II-B/LB I is very similar in terms of its decoration to the Iron Age ‘Philistine ware’, you should not be surprised to learn that the clay from which many of the earliest bichrome pots were made comes from Cyprus, thus confirming the Mediterranean connection to the culture which introduced it into the Levant and Egypt. It seems that the first generation of bichrome ceramics was made in Cyprus and brought by newcomers to the southern Levant who then began to produce these distinctive vessels from local clays found in their newly adopted lands.

[End of quote]

It thus appears that there were two major waves of ‘Indo-European’ migrations, connected the one to the other by this distinctive form of pottery: the first wave being coincident in my revision with the early Conquest and the Hyksos invasion of Egypt, and the second wave occurring early in the reign of Ramses III (that era to be dated in **Part III**, *Chapter 11* and *Chapter 12*). The prophet Amos even seems to synchronise for us the first wave against a biblical era (9:7): ‘Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor ...?’ It remains to be seen if we can also find a biblical resonance for the upheaval that was the second wave: the ‘Sea Peoples’.

Whilst it was mentioned above that famine might have been a factor driving the second wave of immigrants, Bimson will, in his joint discussion of the Exodus and the arrival of the Philistines, the first wave, propose that plague had been a significant factor in both movements of peoples in this case.

¹¹² Photo and quote from *ibid*, p. 266.

¹¹³ *Ibid*, p. 267.

Let us follow Bimson's discussion, centring upon Cyprus, in which he believes "we find some interesting correlations emerging":¹¹⁴

Bichrome pottery began to be manufactured on Cyprus at the beginning of the period known as Late Cypriot I (abbreviated to LC I) Since, as we have seen, it occurs on the mainland at some sites before the end of Palestine's MB II C period, it is clear that the transition from the latest Middle Cypriot period (MC III) to LC I occurred some while before the end of MB II C on the mainland. In terms of the scheme proposed here, we may tentatively place the beginning of LC I roughly at the time of the Exodus, the end of MB II C marking the Conquest This means that the first Late Bronze period on Cyprus, LC I A, was at least partially contemporary with the time the Israelites spent in the wilderness. This synchronism is significant. A number of writers have noted that LC I was a period of considerable unrest of some kind. A striking feature of the first part of the period is the occurrence of mass burials, which are without precedent in the Early and Middle Cypriot periods. The reason for their sudden appearance throughout the length of the island is much debated, plague and warfare being the two most favoured explanations. Against the view that the people thus buried were killed in battle are the facts, pointed out by SCHAEFFER, that no wounds are evident on the skeletons, and that the grave-goods do not suggest that the graves are those of warriors. Schaeffer therefore prefers to view many of these burials as the result of plague.

Here Bimson makes mention of Velikovsky's novel view that the earth had suffered catastrophes at the time of the Exodus and Conquest due to "the effects of a close approach of the proto-planet Venus", before adding:

But even without the global catastrophe theory, the mass burials would still provide support for our synchronisms of early LC I with the time of the Israelites' wilderness journeys. There is ample evidence from the Old Testament that this was a time when plague was rife on the mainland. Apart from the fact that Egypt was affected by plague shortly before the Exodus (Ex. 9:8-12), the Israelites themselves were hit by plague no less than five times between the Exodus and the start of the Conquest (cf. Ex. 32:55; Num. 11:33; 14:37; 16:46-50; 25:9). I have referred elsewhere to KENYON'S conclusion that plague affected the inhabitants of Jericho shortly before the end of the MB II C city, and have noted the possibility that this outbreak should be linked with the plague mentioned in Num. 25:9 Thus if we follow Schaeffer, and see Cyprus suffering the effects of plague at the start of LC I, it is logical to synchronise this time with the period when the mainland was similarly afflicted However we interpret the mass burials, there is no doubt that on Cyprus at the start of LC I, "abnormal conditions had begun to affect the pattern of contemporary life"

¹¹⁴ 'The Arrival of the Philistines', p. 15.

One important result of those abnormal conditions was the abandonment of several previously important centres at the eastern end of the island

In the light of the arguments presented above, that the Philistines arrived in Canaan from Cyprus in MB II C, it would be logical to identify them specifically with the people who were abandoning the island's eastern centres in LC I

[End of quote]

Rohl has proposed an alliance between these 'Indo-Europeans' and the Hurrians:¹¹⁵

These foreign settlers were Indo-Europeans – in other words speakers of an Indo-European language rather than Semites. They came from the north, landing near the city of Ugarit before setting off on their march south towards Egypt, their fleet moving down the coast in support of the land army. During the first stage of this military migration, the largest tribal group of the Caphtorim confederacy – the Pelasts (known in the later Greek literature as Pelasgoi from an original Pelastoi) – had allied themselves with another group of migrants from the Zagros mountains known as the Hurrians.

In later years the Egyptians would refer to Syria as Hurri-land (or Kharu) after the new settlers in the region, whereas the Bible calls the allies of the Philistines 'Horites'. In the Classical period, the Greeks knew them as the Kares (Carians).

Velikovsky too had, in a detailed discussion, argued for an identification of the enigmatic Hurrians with the Carians.¹¹⁶

Rohl continues:

Together the two allies from the north virtually took over the territories which the Israelites (who were still contained within the hill country) had failed to occupy. They massacred the indigenous ethnic population known in the biblical text as the Avvim and even came to rule over the Aamu/Amalekites of the Egyptian delta. These élite Indo-European rulers founded both the 'Greater Hyksos' Dynasty at Avaris and the kingdom of Mitanni beyond the Euphrates river. The latter would be a powerful political and military force in the region during the Late Bronze I period when they at first became the principal enemy and then subsequently (during LB II-A) the main political ally of the Egyptian 18th-Dynasty pharaohs.

[End of quote]

Rohl has raised here a series of thought-provoking points. His view that the Hurrians were the 'founders of the kingdom of Mitanni' seems to concur with the testimony of both Grimal and van de Mieroop, who refer to Mitanni as a "Hurrian" entity.

¹¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 268.

¹¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

According to Grimal, for instance:¹¹⁷ “Mitanni is the name of the Hurrian civilization which was contemporary with the Kassites in Babylonia”. Van de Mieroop tells that the “rulers of Mittani, the Hurrian state in northern Syria, bore Indo-European names and their charioteers were designated with the word *mariyannu*, a term that might include the Vedic word for “young man”.”¹¹⁸ Van de Mieroop has also attempted to explain here the connection between the Hurrians and the ‘Indo-Europeans’:

These [Hurrian] immigrants probably brought some cultural elements we usually associate with Indo-Europeans, even if Hurrian itself is not an Indo-European language. Later Hurrians honored the Indian gods Mitra, Varuna, and the divine pair Nasatya [and Indra]. There has been much speculation as to whether the Hurrians themselves were subjected to an Indo-European military upper-class: later rulers of Mittani, the Hurrian state in northern Syria bore Indo-European names The evidence is inconclusive as to the character of the military class, however, and it seems best to regard its members as men with a special training for warfare.

Perhaps it may be time to reconsider an earlier view that the new bichrome ware pottery that we have been discussing was Hurrian in origin.¹¹⁹ The Philistines would then be a part of the Hurrian polity. I should also like to see reconsidered the equation between the Hurrians and the *Habiru* (or *Hapiru*), referred to e.g. in the EA letters, given that I shall be arguing, in *Chapter 4* (pp. 109-111), that Philistines were among the *Habiru* (Egyptian ‘PR.W) ‘rebels’ of EA. The Tikunani Prism, conventionally dated to c. 1550 BC, lists the names of 438 *Habiru* soldiers or servants of king Tunip-Teššub of Tikunani, a small city-state in central Mesopotamia. The majority of these names are typically Hurrian.¹²⁰ Rohl has also, above, made the fascinating suggestion that these foreigners were the founders of the ‘Greater Hyksos’ Dynasty, though apparently continuing to preserve the Velikovskian connection between (at least the broader) Hyksos/Amu and the Amalekites. But, given the view of Courville and Bimson, that the incursion of the ‘Indo-Europeans’ coincided approximately with the Exodus/Conquest - rather than Rohl’s estimation of its coincidence with a later biblical period - is it not now logical to consider the entire Hyksos invasion of Egypt, from its very beginning, as being the overflow of this new people into Palestine and Egypt? According to Keller:¹²¹ “... rulers of foreign lands”. That is the meaning of the name Hyksos”. What better description for this new people? Moreover, Keller quotes Manetho in regard to the Hyksos as follows: “Unexpectedly from the regions of the East, came men of unknown race. Confident of victory they marched against our land. By force they took it, easily, without a single battle”. Likewise, Ramses III will later refer to the confident attitude of the ‘Sea Peoples’:¹²²

¹¹⁷ *A History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 213.

¹¹⁸ *A History of the Ancient Near East*, p. 116.

¹¹⁹ E.g. K. Kenyon, *Archaeology in the Holy Land*, p. 200.

¹²⁰ M. Salvini, *The Habiru prism of King Tunip-Teššub of Tikunani*.

¹²¹ *The Bible as History*, p. 101.

¹²² As cited by Keller, *ibid*, p. 171.

“Their hearts were high and their confidence in themselves was supreme: ‘Our plans will succeed’.” According to Keller:¹²³ “The reliefs at Medinet Habu indicate ... the faces of the Biblical Philistines. ... The tall slim figures are about a head higher than the Egyptians”. (See **Figure 2**, p. 50).

In the case of this second wave of ‘Indo-Europeans’ though, at the time of Ramses III, the attempted invasion was not successful; even though this people too had come fully confident of victory.

Manetho would not likely perhaps have referred to the indigenous Amalekites as “men of unknown race”; but he might well have said this of the first wave of ‘Indo-Europeans’. It is quite possible, however, that the Amalekites had allied themselves to this formidable host of invaders and had thereby become partners in the conquest of Egypt; just as indigenous Philistines would no doubt later have been caught up in the relentless southward movement of the ‘Sea Peoples’. Indeed one finds, late in the reign of Saul, Philistines and Amalekites apparently acting as allies against Israel (1 Samuel 30 and 31; 2 Samuel 1:1-16).

Rohl has provided archaeological evidence - for approximately the same era of MB (towards the end of MB II B) in which Bimson had dated the beginning of Hyksos rule (MB II C) - for the appearance of the new pottery type at ancient Avaris in Egypt. It makes sense, then, to connect the Hyksos – at least in part – with the first wave of ‘Indo-European’ invaders. In *Chapter 11*, I shall even be proposing an ethnic connection between the Hyksos and the early (19th dynasty) Ramessides. Bimson has grappled with trying to distinguish between what might have been archaeological evidence for the Philistines and evidence for the Hyksos, though in actual fact it may be fruitless to try to discern a clear distinction in this case. Thus he writes:¹²⁴

Finds at Tell el-Ajjul, in the Philistine plain, about 5 miles SW of Gaza, present a particularly interesting situation. As I have shown elsewhere, the “Palace I” city (City III) at Tell el-Ajjul was destroyed at the end of the MBA, the following phase of occupation (City II) belonging to LB I There is some uncertainty as to exactly when bichrome ware first appeared at Tell el-Ajjul. Fragments have been found in the courtyard area of Palace I, but some writers suggest that this area remained in use into the period of Palace II, and that the bichrome ware should therefore be regarded as intrusive in the Palace I level

It seems feasible to suggest that the invading Philistines were responsible for the destruction of City III, though it is also possible that its destruction was the work of Amalekites occupying the Negeb (where we find them settled a short while after the Exodus; cf. Num. 13:29); in view of Velikovsky’s identification of the biblical Amalekites with the Hyksos ... the Amalekite occupation of the Negeb could plausibly be dated, like the Hyksos invasion of Egypt, to roughly the time of the Exodus But if our arguments have been correct thus far, the evidence of the bichrome ware favours the Philistines as the newcomers to the site, and as the builders of City II.

¹²³ *Ibid*, p. 174.

¹²⁴ ‘The Arrival of the Philistines’, pp. 14-15.

The Earlier Philistine History

It remains to be determined whether or not the Philistines can be traced all the way back to Crete in accordance with the biblical data; though obviously, from what has been said, to well before the time of the ‘Sea Peoples’, whose immediate origins were Aegean, not Cretan.

Courville has looked to trace just such an archaeological trail, back through the era of the late Judges/Saul; to Alalakh (modern Atchana) at the time of *Iarim-Lim* (*Yarim-Lim*) of *Iamkhad* (*Yamkhad*) and Hammurabi of Babylon; and finally to Crete in early dynastic times. I shall be basically reproducing Courville here, though with one significant chronological divergence, in regard to his dating of the Alalakh sequences. Courville has, according to my own chronological estimation for Hammurabi and *Iarim-Lim*, based on Hickman,¹²⁵ dated the Hammurabic era about four centuries too early (as opposed to the conventional system’s seven centuries too early) on the time scale. Courville had wonderfully described Hammurabi as “floating about in a liquid chronology of Chaldea”, just after his having also correctly stated that:¹²⁶ “Few problems of ancient chronology have been the topic of more extensive debate among scholars than the dates to be ascribed to the Babylonian king Hammurabi and his dynasty ...”. And so he set out to establish Hammurabi in a more secure historical setting.

This, I do not think he managed successfully to achieve however.

Courville’s re-location of Hammurabi to the approximate time of Joshua and the Conquest is still fairly “liquid” chronologically, as it seems to me, without his having been able to establish any plausible syncretisms beyond those already known for Hammurabi (e.g. with Shamsi-Adad I and Zimri-Lim). Revisionist Hickman on the other hand, despite his radical lowering of the Hammurabic era even beyond the standard VLTF scale, by about seven centuries to the time of kings David and Solomon (c. C10th BC), has been able to propose and develop what are to my way of thinking some promising syncretisms, e.g. between David’s Syrian foe, Hadadezer, and Shamsi-Adad I (c. 1809-1776 BC, conventional dates), with the latter’s father Ilu-kabkabu being the biblical Rekhob, father of Hadadezer (2 Samuel 8:3);¹²⁷ and between *Iarim-Lim* and the biblical Joram (var. Hadoram), son of To’i, and prince of Hamath (cf. 2 Samuel 8:10 & 1 Chronicles 18:10).

I shall have cause to re-visit some of these kings in the following chapter.

So now, with Hammurabi and his era somewhat more securely located, as I think, than according to Courville’s proposed re-location - and hence with the potential for a more accurate archaeological matrix - we can continue on with Courville’s excellent discussion of the archaeology of the early Philistines:¹²⁸

¹²⁵ ‘The Dating of Hammurabi’.

¹²⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 289.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.* In n. 21, Hickman explains how Ilu-kabkabu can also be rendered in Sumerian as Uru-kabkabu (Rekhob).

¹²⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 231-232.

VIII. *The Culture of the Sea Peoples in the Era of the Late Judges*

The new pottery found at Askelon [Ashkelon] at the opening of Iron I, and correlated with the invasion of the Sea Peoples, was identified as of Aegean origin. A similar, but not identical, pottery has been found in the territory north of Palestine belonging to the much earlier era of late Middle Bronze. By popular views, this is prior to the Israelite occupation of Palestine. By the altered chronology, this is the period of the late judges and the era of Saul.

... That the similar pottery of late Middle Bronze, occurring both in the north and in the south, is related to the culture found only in the south at the later date is apparent from the descriptions of the two cultures. Of this earlier culture, which should be dated to the time of Saul, Miss Kenyon commented:

The pottery does in fact provide very useful evidence about culture. The first interesting point is the wealth of a particular class of painted pottery The decoration is bichrome, nearly always *red and black*, and the *most typical vessels have a combination of metopes enclosing a bird or a fish with geometric decoration* such as a “Union Jack” pattern or a Catherine wheel. At Megiddo the first bichrome pottery is attributed to Stratum X, but all the published material comes from tombs intrusive into this level. It is in fact characteristic of Stratum IX. *Similar pottery is found in great profusion in southern Palestine ... Very similar vessels are also found on the east coast of Cyprus and on the coastal Syrian sites as far north as Ras Shamra.* [Emphasis Courville’s]

Drawings of typical examples of this pottery show the same stylized bird with back-turned head that characterized the pottery centuries later at Askelon.

... The anachronisms and anomalies in the current views on the interpretation of this invasion and its effects on Palestine are replaced by a consistent picture, and one that is in agreement with the background provided by Scripture for the later era in the very late [sic] 8th century B.C.

[End of quotes]

Courville now turns to the archaeology at the site of Alalakh on the shore of the Mediterranean at its most northeast protrusion, in order “to trace this culture one step farther back in time” (though in actual fact, by my chronology, it will bring him to approximately the same time – though a different place).¹²⁹

IX. *The Culture of Level VI at Alalakh Is Related to That of the Philistines*

He commences by recalling Sir Leonard Woolley’s investigations at this site in the 1930’s, during which Woolley discovered “seventeen archaeological levels of occupation”:

¹²⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 232-233.

A solid synchronism is at hand to correlate Level VII at Alalakh with the era of Hammurabi of the First Dynasty at Babylon The basis for this synchronism is found in the Mari Letters where it is stated that

“... there are ten or fifteen kings who follow Hammurabi of Babylon and ten or fifteen who follow Rim-sin of Larsa but twenty kings follow Yarim-Lim of Yamkhad”.

Investigations at Alalakh revealed numerous tablets inscribed in cuneiform, most of which are by the third of the three kings of the dynasty, Yarim-Lim by name. He was the son of the first king of the dynasty, who had the name Hammurabi, and who is believed to have been the brother of Hammurabi in Babylon. Since the First Dynasty at Babylon was of Amorite origin, then so also was the Yarim-Lim dynasty of Amorite origin.

In the reports by Woolley, he indicates the find at Alalakh of two characteristic pottery types which were designated as “White-Slip milk bowls” and “Base-Ring Ware”. As the digging proceeded downward, he found that such types of pottery were plentiful in Level VI, all but disappeared in Level VII, and then reappeared in all levels from VIII to XVI. Level VII, which did not contain the pottery, was the level containing the inscribed tablets of the Yarim-Lim dynasty. The obvious conclusion was that the people of Yarim-Lim (Amorites) had conquered this city and probably also the surrounding territory, ruling it for a period estimated to have been about 50 years. At the end of this time, the original inhabitants were able to reconquer the site and reoccupy it.

Courville now turns his attention to seeking an identity for the people from whom the city of Alalakh was taken for about half a century, but who then reoccupied it:¹³⁰

What then was this culture like ...? We let Woolley tell us about the culture:

... We do indeed know extremely little about the Level VI buildings.

It is to the pottery that we must look for information about Level VI, and the pottery can tell us a good deal. On the one hand we have what I have called the “nationalist revival” of the traditional *painted ware* which had been suppressed under the late regime, and some examples of this are *perfect replicas of the old* both in form and in decoration, but as time goes on, there appear modifications of the long-established types – instead of the *isolated and static figures of birds or animals* these become active and are combined in running scenes surrounding the whole pot without the *interruption of the triglyph-like partitions* which were once the rule ... For the first time we get a *polychrome decoration in red and black paint* on a buff surface, and the design includes not only birds but the “Union Jack” motive which is *specially characteristic of contemporary Palestine* ... [Emphasis Courville’s]

¹³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 235.

As one examines this pottery description, he will be struck with the notable similarities of decoration found on the pottery at Megiddo for the era of Philistine occupation in the time of Saul. There is the same use of red and black paint, the similar use of birds as a decoration motif, and the same use of the “Union Jack”.

[End of quotes]

Finally, Courville traces this distinctive archaeological path all the way back to Crete. I am giving only the barest outlines of his discussion here:¹³¹

X. The Sea Peoples of Crete

With the evidences thus far noted before us, we are now in a position to examine the archaeological reports from Crete for evidences of the early occupation of this site by the Capthorim (who are either identical to the Philistines of later Scripture or are closely related to them culturally). We now have at least an approximate idea of the nature of the culture for which we are looking

... we can hardly be wrong in recognizing the *earliest occupants* of Crete as the people who represented the beginnings of the people later known in Scripture as the Philistines, by virtue of the stated origin of the Philistines in Crete. This concept holds regardless of the name that may be applied to this early era by scholars.

The only site at which Cretan archaeology has been examined for its earliest occupants is at the site of the palace at Knossos. At this site deep test pits were dug into the earlier occupation levels. If there is any archaeological evidence available from Crete for its earliest period, it should then be found from the archaeology of these test pits. The pottery found there is described by Dr. Furness, who is cited by Hutchinson.

“Dr. Furness divides the early Neolithic I fabrics into (a) coarse unburnished ware and (b) fine burnished ware, only differing from the former in that the pot walls are thinner, the clay better mixed, and the burnish more carefully executed. The surface colour is usually black, but examples also occur of red, buff or yellow, sometimes brilliant red or orange, and sometimes highly variegated sherds”.

A relation was observed between the decoration of some of this pottery from early Neolithic I in Crete with that at the site of Alalakh

Continuing to cite Dr. Furness, Hutchinson commented:

¹³¹ *Ibid*, pp. 236-237.

Dr. Furness justly observes that “as the pottery of the late Neolithic phases seems to have developed at Knossos without a break, it is to the earliest that one must look for evidence of origin of foreign connections”, and she therefore stresses the importance of a small group with plastic decoration that seems mainly confined to the *Early Neolithic I levels*, consisting of rows of pellets immediately under the rim (paralleled on *burnished pottery of Chalcolithic [predynastic] date from Gullucek in the Alaca [Alalakh] district of Asia Minor*). [Emphasis Courville’s]

While the Archaeological Ages of early Crete cannot with certainty be correlated with the corresponding eras on the mainland, it would seem that Chalcolithic on the mainland is later than Early Neolithic in Crete; hence any influence of one culture on the other is more probably an influence of early Cretan culture on that of the mainland. This is in agreement with Scripture to the effect that the Philistines migrated from Crete to what is now the mainland at some point prior to the time of Abraham.^[132]

[End of quotes]

Conclusion

This lengthy discussion of the Indo-Europeans, including the Philistines who also play a significant role at the time of king Hezekiah, has prepared the ground for a consideration in the next two chapters of two successive kings who would arise from this very same ‘foreign’ stock, and who would become kings of major ancestral and dynastic significance in relation to certain key monarchs of EOH.

Figure 2: Philistine Captives¹³³



Examination of Philistine prisoners by Egyptian officers.

¹³² It is interesting in light of this that Dr. J. Osgood has synchronized Chalcolithic En-geddi with the era of Abraham. ‘Times of Abraham’, p. 181.

¹³³ Reproduced from W. Keller’s *The Bible as History*, pp. 174-175.

3

Background to Era of Hezekiah. An Ancestral King (early C9th BC)

Introduction

Our study of the background to EOH now brings us into the C9th BC (though these dates will be raised somewhat in *Chapter 11*, due to the inclusion of various interregna), the century prior to Hezekiah's (C8th), where we shall remain for this chapter and the next. Here we shall encounter firstly, in the early C9th BC, a famous - though so far little-known - king, who will become important, not only in regard to Syro-Palestinian affairs, but who will be found also to have influenced dynasties in both Mesopotamia and Egypt. I am referring to king OMRI (c. 885-874 BC, conventional dates).¹³⁴ My locating of Omri in a revised setting will be an important continuation of my study of the *background to EOH* that constitutes an integral part of the subject matter of this thesis. My reason for including a background study to EOH in the first place is because I believe that it is only by one's knowing this earlier period that one can arrive at a proper understanding of the origins of the dynasty that ruled Egypt at the approximate time of king Hezekiah: namely, the RAMESSIDES.

Whilst this might seem like a roundabout way to engage in a study of EOH, it is the only way that I can envisage for bringing to a full and complete conclusion my identification and realignment of king Hezekiah's major contemporaries, which is indeed the specified purpose of this VOLUME ONE; a purpose that will continue on into VOLUME TWO.

Then, in the following chapter (*Chapter 4*), my background study will take me a large step closer to EOH, to the mid-late C9th BC (dates though to be revised upward in *Chapter 11*, due to the inclusion of interregna), with the consideration there of one who was ethnically related to Omri, also a biblical king, who I believe to have been the very founder of the Ramesside 19th dynasty. I am referring to JEHU (c. 841-815 BC, conventional dates). This chapter and the next will have an important bearing also upon what I consider to be clearly the three most problematical aspects of the VLTF matrix: namely,

- (i) 'The Assuruballit Problem' [henceforth TAP];
- (ii) where to locate Ramses II in the new scheme; and
- (iii) the resolution of the complex TIP.

A proposed solution for (i) TAP will be offered in the *Excursus*, beginning on p. 230. And in *Chapter 11* and *Chapter 12*, I hope to provide a solution to (ii), and at least the outline of a plan for unravelling (iii), some of which though being chronologically beyond the scope of this thesis. The reader will need to get used to several *multi-identifications* here, since this is the methodology that, in part, I consider to be required for tackling (i) - (iii). There will be various major multi-identifications in this thesis: e.g. of Ben-Hadad I; of Hazael; of Jehu.

¹³⁴ These are e.g. the dates that E. Thiele has given for Omri's "total rule". *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 88.

A Solid Starting Point

We are now in the C9th BC, about 500 years after the well-documented EA period of the 18th dynasty pharaohs AMENHOTEP III (c. 1390-1352 BC) and AMENHOTEP IV [Akhnaton] (c. 1352-1348 BC), according to the Sothic chronology, but squarely within EA according to Velikovsky's revision.¹³⁵ Courville had accepted Velikovsky's basic 18th dynasty scenario, without adding much to it. My starting point here will be with what competent revisionists in the late 1970's to early 1980's, who had followed Velikovsky, considered to have been a most convincing aspect of Velikovsky's EA restructuring: namely, his identification of the two chief EA correspondents from Amurru, *Abdi-ashirta* and *Aziru*, with two successive Syrian kings of the Old Testament in the C9th BC, respectively, Ben-Hadad I (c. 880-841 BC, conventional dates) and Hazael (c. 841-806 BC, conventional dates). Thus James had written, favourably:¹³⁶

With [these] two identifications [Velikovsky] seems to be on the firmest ground, in that we have a succession of two rulers, both of whom are characterised in the letters and the Scriptures as powerful rulers who made frequent armed excursions - and conquests - in the territories to the south of their own kingdom. In the letters their domain is described as "Amurru" - a term used, as Velikovsky has pointed out ... by Shalmaneser III for Syria in general, the whole area being dominated by the two successive kings in "both" the el-Amarna period and the mid-9th century.

From Assyrian evidence it is known that Hazael succeeded to the throne between 845 and 841 BC, and thus we have a reasonably precise *floruit* for those el-Amarna correspondents who relate the deeds of Abdi-Ashirta and Azaru [Aziru], particularly for Rib-Addi, whose letters report the death of Abdi-Ashirta and the accession of Azaru [Aziru].

Bimson for his part, referring to the second of these two kings of Amurru, would write:¹³⁷

In the first volume of his historical reconstruction, Velikovsky argues that ... Aziru of Amurru, well known from the Amarna letters, should be identified with Hazael of Damascus The identification is well supported, and has implications for the slightly later period now being discussed.

The same writer, using the Hittite records for the late to post-EA period, would in fact take Velikovsky's Syrian identification into even a third generation, his "slightly later period", when suggesting that *Aziru's* son, *Du-Teshub*, fitted well as Hazael's son, Ben-Hadad II (c. 806- ? BC, conventional dates), thus further consolidating Velikovsky's Syrian sequence for both Amarna and the mid-C9th BC:¹³⁸

¹³⁵ *Ages in Chaos*, vol. 1, ch. 6. Also, his *Oedipus and Akhnaton*.

¹³⁶ 'The Dating of the El-Amarna Letters', p. 80.

¹³⁷ 'Dating the Wars of Seti I', p. 21.

¹³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 32.

The Hittite treaties with Amurru also throw light on another issue raised earlier in this paper. It was noted that, according to the Old Testament, Ben-Hadad [II] was militarily active in the reign of Jehoahaz while his father Hazael was still king. It is gratifying to find this same relationship between father and son referred to in the treaty between the Hittite king Mursilis and Aziras' grandson, Duppi Tessub. The treaty refers to Duppi-Tessub's father (i.e. the son of Aziras) as DU-Tessub, and if Aziras is the Bible's Hazael, this DU-Tessub must be Ben-Hadad [II]. The meaning of the ideogram which forms the first part of his name is obscure But Tessub is the name of the Hittite/Hurrian Weather-god known to be the equivalent to Adad or Hadad. Part of the treaty refers to past relations between the two powers, and says of Aziras: "When he grew too old and could no longer go to war and fight, DU-Tessub fought against the enemy with the foot-soldiers and the charioteers of the Amurru land, just as he had fought ..." This parallel neatly supports the double identifications, Aziras = Hazael; DU-Tessub = Ben-Hadad [II].

These revisionists of the 'Glasgow School', as they became known, including Sieff, Gammon and others, were able, with a slight modification of Velikovsky's dates, to re-set the EA period so that it sat more comfortably within its new C9th BC allocation. Thus pharaoh Akhnaton, James argued, was a more exact contemporary of king Jehoram of Judah (c. 848-841 BC, conventional dates) - and hence of the latter's older contemporary, Jehoram of Israel (c. 853-841 BC, conventional dates) - rather than of Velikovsky's choice of king Jehoshaphat (c. 870-848 BC, conventional dates), father of Jehoram of Judah and contemporary of king Ahab of Israel (c. 874-853 BC, conventional dates).¹³⁹ Correspondingly, Sieff determined that:¹⁴⁰

The great famine of II Kings 8:1, found by Velikovsky to be a recurrent theme in the letters of Rib-Addi ... was that of the time of Jehoram. The earlier drought of King Ahab's time lasted 3½ years rather than 7 [cf. 1 Kings 17:1; Luke 4:25] ... and was associated with the activities of Elijah, and not his successor Elisha, who figures in the famine of Ahab's son.

With this relatively slight refinement in time, then the results could be quite stunning. James, for instance, found that the king of Jerusalem (*Urusalim*) for EA, *Abdi-hiba*, an obviously polytheistic monarch, who had not identified well with the pious king Jehoshaphat of Jerusalem, Velikovsky's biblical choice, however, matched Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram, down to the last detail. I shall take a section of James' important alignment of this Jehoram of Judah with *Abdi-hiba* in *Chapter 4* (pp. 111-115).

¹³⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 82-84.

¹⁴⁰ 'The Two Jehorams', p. 89.

At this early stage in my discussion I must briefly mention, and attempt broadly to answer, a general objection that has been raised against any possibility of locating the EA era in the C9th BC. Conventional scholars have objected that the geopolitical situation at the time of *Abdi-hiba* of EA does not fit at all that of king Jehoram of Judah's day, but is more appropriate in the context of the small states of the second millennium as reconstructed on the basis of second millennium Assyrian sources. Also crying out for an explanation, seemingly, is why rulers of Syro-Palestine at the time might have had Hurrian/Hittite elements in their names. Though, I think that our detailed discussion in the previous chapter of the first wave of 'Indo-European' peoples into the region would now go a long way towards accounting for this situation. Furthermore, in *Chapter 4* (on p. 108) I shall be introducing a view according to which there is some doubt anyway as to whether the name of EA's king of Jerusalem really should be read as the Semitic-Hurrian combination, *Abdi-hiba*; a strange mix, somewhat like 'Abdi-Zeus' would be. But let us firstly address that general objection regarding Velikovsky's location of EA. Day, for instance, has argued for the division of the land into small states at this time:¹⁴¹

The fundamental objection ... is that the El Amarna letters clearly presuppose a time when Palestine was divided into a number of city states, each with its own king, whereas in the time of Jehoshaphat and Ahab to which Velikovsky assigns the El Amarna letters, there were simply two kingdoms, Israel in the North and Judah in the South.

While Sieff will, in support of Velikovsky, respond at some length to Day's objection,¹⁴² I shall simply quote here from Cook - with some further, though unintended, support, later, from Aharoni - wherein are described from a conventional viewpoint the duplicitous tactics of *Abdi-Hiba* of *Urusalim*, "full of complaints against Labaya and other anti-Egyptian leaders", but denounced by *Shuwardata* of Keilah as "another Labaya", showing that the king of Jerusalem was under assault from the very same opposition as we are going to find in the next chapter James gives as having menaced Jehoram:¹⁴³

... we may recognize Jerusalem as an influential city with extensive interests, exposed to the attacks of hostile neighbours in the west and the north – *corresponding to the Philistines and (north) Israelites of a later [sic] time* – and ready to seize any opportunity to extend its influence.

This, a geopolitical structure quite reminiscent of that of the Divided Monarchy, is exactly what one might expect from Velikovsky's relocation of EA.

¹⁴¹ As quoted by M. Sieff, 'In Defence of the Revised Chronology', p. 17.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*

¹⁴³ 'Syria and Palestine in the Light of External Evidence', pp. 316, 317. Emphasis added.

Liel, who also makes mention of such criticism of Velikovsky's EA revision, thinks however that Velikovsky's thesis is defensible on the grounds of 'biblical perspective'; the latter being a second such principle that I have garnered from her article, that will be important throughout this chapter, and indeed for the rest of the thesis - whether or not Liel has properly applied this concept in the following explanation of hers:¹⁴⁴

As has been noted by many critics of Velikovsky's revised chronology, the Bible describes the kingdoms of North Israel and Judah as sovereign states, while the picture gotten from the Amarna letters is one of petty princedoms in thrall to Egypt. If we assume, as we have been doing, that the Bible and the Amarna letters are referring to the same place and time, which of them is right? The answer is that it depends on your point of view. As an example, the Bible refers to the king of Edom as a mere governor, and Edom as no more than a possession of Judah. Were we to find contemporary Edomite records, we would no doubt find a somewhat different description. The Israelites likewise considered themselves a sovereign people, with vassaldom to Egypt a temporary situation. As it turned out, they were right. But at the time, political exigencies demanded that they conform to the Egyptian view, unless they wanted to find Egyptian troops on their doorsteps.

Now, turning to Velikovsky's identification of EA's kings of *Amurru*, I do not intend here unnecessarily to cover ground or comparisons already treated by Velikovsky. Rather, I basically want to begin where Velikovsky had left off; my having accepted as a firm starting-point his argument that *Abdi-ashirta* was Ben-Hadad I (c. 880-841 BC), who was a known contemporary of king Ahab of Israel. But having firmly accepted that Velikovskian premise, I shall now launch into a discussion of origins and connections of, and between, Ben-Hadad I and Ahab, and of the Omride dynasty in general, that will differ significantly from both Velikovsky's view of these and the conventional view. This difference will become even more pronounced due to my connecting of this dynasty with the 'Indo-European' element, as discussed in the previous chapter. And I shall be flatly rejecting that aspect of Velikovsky's EA reconstruction according to which Ahab of Israel was *Rib-Addi* of *Gubla* of the EA correspondence. (See e.g. p. 83).

THE OMRIDES

What I am going to propose in this section is admittedly tentative, and certainly open to criticism, but I also believe that it may serve to resolve not a few problems.

¹⁴⁴ 'What's In a Name?', section: "The King of Sumur and Gubla".

According to 1 Kings, Ben-Hadad I,¹⁴⁵ who first emerges late in the reign of the long-reigning Asa of Judah (c. 911-870 BC, conventional dates), was “son of Tab-rimmon son of Hezion of Aram” (15:18). Now, I am going to suggest that the obscure Tab-rimmon, father of Ben-Hadad I, was the same person as Omri, and that therefore Ben-Hadad I and Ahab, son of Omri, were brothers. And I shall be basing myself on this text (20:32-33):

... [Ben-Hadad’s] servants tied sackcloth round their waists, put ropes on their heads, went to the king of Israel, and said, ‘Your servant Ben-Hadad says, ‘Please let me live.’ And [Ahab] said, ‘Is he still alive? *He is my brother*’. Now the men were watching for an omen; they quickly took it up from him and said, ‘Yes, *Ben-Hadad is your brother*’. (20:32-33)

The context for this exchange was after Ben-Hadad I had suffered successive defeats at the hands of Ahab of Israel (20:21, 29-30), and the former’s servants, recognizing that “the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings” (v. 31), had approached Ahab as suppliants, hoping that the king of Israel would spare Ben-Hadad’s life. This Ahab did, apparently on the grounds that Ben-Hadad was his ‘brother’ (Hebrew אָח).

Admittedly, the term ‘brother’ could then be used broadly to include ‘brother-in-law’. Terms like this, also the use of ‘father’, ‘my son’, were idiomatic forms of speech at the time, and - as we shall be seeing in the next chapter - Velikovsky had pounced upon such idioms as being common both to EA and to the mid-C9th BC. However, they were also common at least to the era of David and Solomon, if not as well to the C6th BC. In *Chapter 4* I shall be saying a little more about these idioms and there, too, I shall consider whether Ben-Hadad I and Ahab were in fact ‘brothers’ also in the sense of their having been bound by a marital alliance.

However, I think that it would make the greater sense in the above context if Ben-Hadad and Ahab were actual siblings, sons of the same father, and that it was a recollection of this fact that had prompted Ahab to spare the life of Ben-Hadad.

Let us then consider the possibility that Ben-Hadad I and Ahab were brothers in the deeper sense of the word, inasmuch as they shared the same father: that Ben-Hadad’s father, *Tab-rimmon*, was the same person as Ahab’s father, *Omri*. This is a proposal that, as we shall now see, will seem to be blatantly contradicted by a statement from Ben-Hadad, implying that the two kings had different fathers, opponents the one of the other (vv. 33-34):

Then [Ahab] said, ‘Go and bring him’. So Ben-Hadad came out to him; and he had him come up into the chariot. Ben-Hadad said to him, ‘I will restore the towns that my father [אָחִי] took from your father [אָחִי]; and you may establish bazaars for yourself in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria’. The king of Israel responded, ‘I will let you go on those terms’. So he made a treaty with him and let him go.

¹⁴⁵ I accept Albright’s view that Ben-Hadad I, the foe of king Baasha of Israel - a contemporary and foe of king Asa of Judah - was the same ‘Ben-Hadad’ as Ahab’s foe (and later ally). W. Albright, in *BASOR*, 87 (1942), pp. 23-29, as referred to by J. Bright, *A History of Israel*, p. 236, n. 36.

If these two kings were ‘brothers’ in the sense of ‘brothers-in-law’, then this occasion of their having agreed upon a treaty would have been the most likely opportunity for, say, an exchange of a daughter, or daughters, in marriage. That was a customary thing for kings to do in this approximate era of history (revised).¹⁴⁶ But it would not of course account for Ahab’s calling Ben-Hadad ‘my brother’, which sentiment was expressed prior to any mention of a treaty. In *Chapter 9* (see section, “Queen Jezebel”, beginning on p. 209) I shall explore the possibility that Ben-Hadad I did in fact give his daughter to Ahab at the time of this treaty; the two thereby becoming brothers-in-law as well.

The real issue here is that Ben-Hadad would clearly seem to be indicating that he and Ahab had arisen from different fathers - kings of different cities (Damascus and Samaria), who, moreover, were opposed to each other. And that view would certainly be the traditional view of long-standing, according to which Ben-Hadad I was a *Syrian*, from the line, Tab-rimmon and Hezion, whilst Ahab was an *Israelite*, from the line of Omri.

There are also extra-biblical references to the line of Ben-Hadad I and to the House of Omri. A stele of Ben-Hadad’s dedicated to Baal Melqart, “erected in 850 BC near Aleppo” according to Herm,¹⁴⁷ confirms the biblical data by naming Ben-Hadad’s father as *Tab-rimmon* and his grandfather as *Hezion* (var. *Hadyan*).¹⁴⁸ Omri is mentioned retrospectively in the neo-Assyrian records, in the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, who calls a descendant of his from whom he took tribute, another king of Israel, *Ya-u-a apal Khu-um-ri-i*, generally thought to indicate ‘Jehu the son of Omri’¹⁴⁹ (to be discussed in *Chapter 4*). Omri is also referred to by Sargon II, as we shall soon read.

Thus, on the face of things, it would seem that Tab-rimmon and Omri were two quite distinct kings, differing in their origins and belonging each to a different regal ‘House’, and having two different geographies of rule. Such is a view that would be accepted by conventional and revisionist scholars alike. (Moreover, there is a chronological stretching involved with my interpretation. See p. 64).

Nevertheless that long-standing view is not without difficulties of its own. These, as we are going to see, have been pointed out by commentators, who have not, however, thought to challenge the basic premise: namely, that Ben-Hadad I and Ahab were of different fathers. I think that my account of the situation below can at least perhaps resolve some of the difficulties with which commentators have had to grapple in connection with the terms of the treaty just discussed between Ben-Hadad I and Ahab. And I even think that Ben-Hadad’s bald juxtaposition of ‘my father’, and ‘your father’, can be accounted for to some degree in terms of this new identification.

What, then, are the main difficulties I find with so literal an interpretation of the treaty as is the standard version of it?

¹⁴⁶ Thus Suppiluliumas the Hittite would give his daughter Mursil to *Aziru* when the two kings formed a treaty (see *Chapter 4*). Later, with the conclusion of a peace treaty between Hattusilis the Hittite and pharaoh Ramses II, the latter took a daughter of the Hittite king as his wife. See e.g. G. Herm, *The Phoenicians*, p. 46.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 125.

¹⁴⁸ Though, confusing the issue somewhat, it has recently been suggested to me that ‘Tab-rimmon’ here ought to be read instead as ‘Attar-hamek’. 2005 e-mail from J. Zwick (CIAS, California).

¹⁴⁹ Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III (in British Museum) as quoted by C. Boutflower, *The Book of Isaiah*, p. 57.

One is that Omri, a most powerful king as we are going to see - upon whom the kings of Assyria looked “as the father of the Israelite royal house”¹⁵⁰ - would have to be regarded in the conventional scheme of things as having been subjugated by the Syrians, with even his capital city occupied. The second main point is that, despite Ben-Hadad’s reference to Samaria as having been occupied by his father, that is, Tab-rimmon, the Old Testament nowhere records any invasion by the armies of Syria of this vital part of Israel. The only previously mentioned incursion into Israel by the troops of Syria was during the reign of Baasha of Israel, when Ben-Hadad I had ravaged northern Galilee; this being quite a distance, however, from Samaria.

There is nothing whatsoever in the Old Testament account of Omri’s rule, albeit briefly recorded (1 Kings 16:23-28), to suggest that this king had suffered, at the hands of Syria or of anyone else, anything like a significant reversal - which the loss of Samaria, whether of brief or long duration, would most assuredly have been. Had Omri, for whatever duration of time, forfeited, to an enemy power, control of his newly-bought site, then the recorder of his history would doubtlessly have experienced the greatest satisfaction in having been able to recount that Omri, “who did more evil than all who were before him” (16:25), was thus punished for his sins by the occupation of his capital city by a foe. Instead, the writer of Omri’s history tells only of “the power that [Omri] showed”; a view apparently shared by neo-Assyrian kings and by modern historians (see e.g. Finkelstein and Silberman, p. 64 below).

Bright, obviously aware of the difficulty associated with the view that Omri had been forced to pay tribute to the Syrians, has written with reference to Mazar:¹⁵¹ “If these concessions were wrung from Omri himself (so Mazar ...), this must have been before he established himself firmly in power”. Bright then adds: “But the language is formulaic in character: “father” can mean merely “predecessor”; a view that is also endorsed by Lasor *et al.*¹⁵² Ellis, for his part, has speculated about “... possibly ... cities lost by Omri in an otherwise unrecorded war”.¹⁵³

On the strength of Bright’s linguistic distinction above, between ‘father’ and ‘predecessor’, Ben-Hadad I’s concessions could have this, admittedly somewhat complex, meaning: namely, that he would return to Ahab, king of Israel, those northern cities of Israel that his ‘father’ (their father), as ruler of Syria, had taken (by the hand of his son, Ben-Hadad) from king Baasha, Ahab’s ‘predecessor’ in Israel.

Thus Ben-Hadad and Ahab could still physically be brothers.

Moreover, according to this interpretation, there does not arise the awkward situation whereby the mighty ancestral king and dynast, Omri, was subservient to the rulers of Syria, even in an early phase of his career.

¹⁵⁰ Boutflower, *ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 237, n. 38, with reference to B. Mazar, *BA*, XXV, 1962, p. 106.

¹⁵² *Old Testament Survey*, p. 261, n. 7. “Terms of relationship in the Bible should not always be taken literally, for they are often used for wide relationships ...”.

¹⁵³ ‘1-2 Kings’, 10:28-34, p. 196.

Omri was in fact the aggressor, the ruler of Syria who had, presumably with the assistance of his militant son, Ben-Hadad, conquered northern Galilee and had eventually extended his power even further southwards, until he was elected the king of Israel – probably by force of arms. “... we know of no action of Omri against the Arameans [Syrians]”, wrote Bright.¹⁵⁴ Whilst Herm goes so far as to suggest that “Omri ... was probably of Arab origin”.¹⁵⁵

Thus the ‘establishing of bazaars in Samaria’ by the king of Syria, as referred to by the latter’s son, Ben-Hadad, was not something that was done to the discomfort of Omri “before he established himself firmly in power”, but was what the astute Omri had in fact ventured upon after his having already reigned over Israel for six years at Tirzah (16:23). Omri then made the tactical move of buying the hill of Samaria (v. 24) - just as king David had bought the threshing floor from Araunah the Jebusite in Jerusalem, to erect his altar there (2 Samuel 24:18-25) - thereby making it his.

That it was Omri who firstly made the strategic Samaria strong and famous - and that it was not already an important place coveted by Syria before Omri had been established in power - seems to be borne out by the stratigraphical evidence for the site, when re-ordered in a revised context. James has attempted to do just that, and I find his revised archaeological model for Samaria, here outlined, to be a most reasonable one when aligned against the biblico-historical data:¹⁵⁶

The Samaria conundrum

A prime test of such a large-scale revision is provided by Samaria, the key site for the Iron Age archaeology of the northern kingdom, and often hailed as a case of perfect agreement between the archaeological and biblical records. Samaria was founded by King Omri of Israel (father of Ahab); after noting that he spent six of his twelve years’ reign at his capital in Tirzah, the Bible relates the following:

And he bought the hill Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver, and built on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, owner of the hill, Samaria ... Omri slept with his fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead. (I Kgs. 16:23-8)

Thereafter Samaria remained the capital of Israel.

[End of quote]

This scriptural reference to the death and burial of Omri, who had been made king of Israel apparently based on his military strength and familiarity with the land (16:15-17), may be the only reference that we have to the death and burial of the (so far) obscure Tab-rimmon, given my identification of the latter with Omri.

¹⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 239.

¹⁵⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 103.

¹⁵⁶ *Centuries of Darkness*, pp. 183-187. D. Rohl has however suggested a different, revised model for Samaria. *The Lost Testament*, pp. 452-453.

James now turns to review the archaeology of the site of Samaria:

The generally accepted interpretation of its archaeology in the light of this passage is reasonable: the first evidence of major building activity should date from the reign of Omri (885-873 B.C.). This ground rule was followed by both the American and British teams who worked at the site. Uncovering the remains of a series of palaces, they attributed the first (Building Period I) to Omri

....

Although it was generally accepted that the city was founded in the early 9th century BC, a conspicuous problem was raised by the pottery associated with the buildings. According to standard classification, the pottery found under the Samaria I floor belonged to the 10th century. The British excavator, Kenyon, believed that the closest date for the architectural phase is provided by the latest pottery discovered in the rubble used to create a base for its construction. In this case, convinced that she was dealing with a 9th-century building, Kenyon had to argue that the generally accepted ceramic chronology was too high. In her opinion the pottery dated to the early 9th century B.C.

This was the starting point of a major dispute.

....

Kenyon's main critic, G. Ernest Wright, suggested that 'Omri purchased not a bare hill, but a hill with a village on it'. This hypothetical village curiously left no building remains, with the possible exception of two walls. More awkward were the attempts to explain why the same ware found underneath Samaria I also occurred above it. Wright believed that the pottery got there in debris from the pre-Omrid 'village' used to build the foundations of Samaria II. His argument breaks down under close examination. The ware in question was described by Kenyon as 'entirely uniform'. This is surprising if it was introduced as levelling material. Underneath the floors of Samaria I it was frequently mixed with Early Bronze Age pottery from a long-abandoned prehistoric settlement. It seems incredible that the builders of Samaria II selected the rubbish of only one period to use in their construction work. Wright himself noted that such a deposit 'would be expected to contain pottery from all earlier occupation levels on the site'. According to the excavator it did not.

How to reconcile the two views? James continues:

Both sides in the dispute tended to minimize the discrepancy between the dates for the building phases and the pottery. While Wright referred to the anomalous pottery as '10th-century B.C.', his own observations, as well as Kenyon's, reveal that many forms were actually characteristic of the 11th century BC.

At the same time Kenyon kept her pottery dates as high as the historical evidence would allow. She believed that the entire palace complex of Period I was built by Omri in his last six years, attributing Period II to Ahab (873-853 BC). This meant, in her view, that the controversial pottery could be dated no later than c. 870 BC.

As Wright pointed out, it seems excessive to allocate both kings a separate building phase, especially given Omri's short reign. More likely Omri began Samaria I and it was completed by his son. If one were to take Wright's estimate of the time taken to build Samaria I together with Kenyon's understanding of the pottery, some of the '10th'-century ceramics would postdate the reign of Ahab. The palace of Samaria I, after Ahab had finished it, could have been used for another two generations or so, which would mean that pottery styles conventionally dated around 1000 BC might actually have been used as late as *c.* 800 B.C.

James now attempts to put all this into a broader sequential context, including which level at Samaria he deems the likely one for king Hezekiah's contemporaries, Hoshea of Israel and Sargon II of Assyria:

Examination of the later strata suggests that a reduction of this order does need to be made for the pottery of Samaria I-II. Beginning with the higher levels, VIII contains 5th- and 6th- century Greek pottery, and is thus reasonably securely dated; VII contains 'Assyrian Palace Ware', and is presently believed to represent Samaria under Assyrian rule, despite the fact that nothing found in this phase reflects the large-scale reconstruction which the Assyrian King Sargon II (721-705 BC) claimed to have carried out:

[The town I] re[built] better than (it was) before and [settled] therein people from countries which [I] myself [had con]quered. I placed an officer of mine as governor over them and imposed upon them tribute as (is customary) for Assyrian cities.

Following the dating of 'Assyrian Palace Ware' discussed above, VII would largely be a Babylonian level. This being the case, the Building Period termed Samaria V/VI would not be the last Israelite level before Sargon's conquest, but rather the final Assyrian, before their withdrawal *c.* 630 BC. This reduction is in step with the revised dates of 701-587 BC for Lachish III, the pottery of which is contemporary with that of Samaria V/VI.

I shall consider the Lachish archaeology in *Chapter 12* (section: "Lachish"), when dealing with the stratigraphy of EOH.

James now tells of what he considers to be the likely phase at Samaria for Sargon II, and for Hoshea of Israel, an older contemporary of Hezekiah of Judah:

The work of Sargon of Assyria may then be reflected in Samaria Period IV. This included new constructions, repairs and alterations to the old casemate walls and buildings; most significantly, it was linked with 'the most important break' in the pottery sequence ... - a change that could reflect the Assyrian deportation of the Israelites and resettlement of the site with foreigners from Syria and Babylonia.

The famous Samaria ostraca, dated by the years of an anonymous ruler, belong to this level, judging from the type of sherds on which they were written. It seems that they do not relate to any of the Israelite kings previously suggested, ranging from Ahab in the 9th century to Pekah in the mid-8th, but in fact to an Assyrian ruler, most likely Sargon or [sic] Sennacherib.

This would make Samaria III the final Israelite level, possibly built under Hoshea, last King of Israel (732-722 BC). The extensive work undertaken during Building Period II would then belong to a powerful king such as Jeroboam II (793-753 BC). The bulk of the beautiful ivories found at the site have generally been attributed to this phase and the time of Ahab (although they were actually found in disturbed or later contexts). However, an 8th-century date seems more likely. As specialists in ancient ivory-working have repeatedly stated, they are extremely close stylistically to the ivories collected by Sargon II in his palace at Khorsabad.

Indeed, the Assyrian group includes many pieces probably manufactured in Israel. The prophet Amos (3:9-15), a contemporary of Jeroboam II, railed against the luxury exhibited by the Israelite royalty, who dwelt in ‘houses of ivory’.

[End of quote]

From this very reasonable account of the progression of Samaria’s stratigraphy - though a full comparison will eventually need to be done between Samaria and the other northern sites, like Hazor and Megiddo - it would follow that Omri was already very well established in power before he had actually bought Samaria from Shemer and made it his capital. Ben-Hadad I, using the clumsy formulaic language of diplomacy before king Ahab, has made it appear to us as if it were a Syrian takeover of Israel’s capital; even though, as I think, the perpetrator was none other than Ahab’s own father, who was also the father of Ben-Hadad.

Omri’s Fame

Further on in this chapter I shall be arguing for an ‘Indo-European’ origin for the Omrides. It may perhaps therefore be interesting that, in regard to the Omride names, Ellis has made the observation, without however linguistically qualifying it, that:¹⁵⁷ “Neither ‘Omri’ nor ‘Ahab’ would seem to be Israelite names”. And he has further suggested - with reference to Noth - that perhaps Omri “was a foreign mercenary who rose through the ranks to become general of the militia”. I certainly believe this last to have been basically the case. If indeed these Omrides were of foreign origin, the likelihood in my revised context would be that they were ‘Indo-European’ and/or Hurrian. For more on this, see section (a), beginning on p. 71.

¹⁵⁷ *Op. cit.*, 10:37, p. 193.

At this point I am more interested in the name, ‘Omri’ (Hebrew: **עֹמְרִי**), and he who bore it, rather than Ahab and his name, since I shall be discussing these latter in some detail towards the end of this chapter. It is possible that ‘Omri’ was just a standard Syro-Palestinian name, e.g. *Amariah*, or *Amur* (we shall see below that Liel has equated the name *Amur-Adda* with Hazeal); or was a variant of the Syrian name, *Omar*. We also saw that Herm considered Omri to have been ‘of Arab origin’. Thus there seems to be a fair scholarly consensus that Omri was a non-Israelite foreigner of some sort; or that, at least, his name was foreign. But whether or not Omri’s name was Syrian (Aramaean), I am arguing that Omri himself at least *was* ‘Syrian’; at least ‘Syrian’ in the geographical sense of his having ruled Syria - though one of actual ‘Indo-European’ and/or Hurrian origin. But it may be quite futile to try to trace Omri back to foreign beginnings based on name alone. Certainly any such attempt would fall completely flat in the case of (who I believe to be) his son, Ben-Hadad I, bearer of a standard western Semitic name. The opportunity for tracing back this dynasty will come in section (a) below, through Ben-Hadad rather than the more obscure Omri, when I consider what I believe to be an important *alter ego* of this Ben-Hadad I.

Bright has written about the ongoing fame of the Omride dynasty and the impressive mark that it has left on history:¹⁵⁸ “Although the Bible dismisses [Omri’s] reign with five or six verses (1 Kings 16:23-28), Omri was obviously a man of great ability. The Assyrians referred to Israel as “the House of Omri” long after his dynasty had been overthrown! ...”. And on the next page we shall read that the Omride king, Ahab, was the “strongest member of the anti-Assyrian coalition” ranged against the mighty Shalmaneser III at the battle of Qarqar. King Omri’s/Tab-rimmon’s history as father of Ben-Hadad I can be glimpsed only dimly though in 1 Kings. King Asa of Judah had, when strongly opposed by king Baasha of Israel in the 36th year of the kingdom of Judah (2 Chronicles 16:1-3), turned for help to Ben-Hadad I at Damascus, thereby ratifying an alliance that the king of Judah held with Tab-rimmon.¹⁵⁹ I say ‘held’ because there is no indication that Tab-rimmon had yet died - the Old Testament in fact nowhere refers to the death of Tab-rimmon, at least by that name. Thus Asa besought Ben-Hadad: ‘Let there be an alliance between me and you, like that between my father and your father’ (1 Kings 15:19).

בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵינְךָ בֵּין אָבִי וּבֵין אָבִיךָ

Possibly Ben-Hadad was acting independently of his father here and there. We are going to find time and time again that Ben-Hadad I, under his various guises, was wont to act duplicitously, undermining his allies whilst at the same time swearing his allegiance to them. Bright has in fact spoken of his “characteristic duplicity”.¹⁶⁰ Wherever there was gold on offer, there was Ben-Hadad, and Asa must well have known this: ‘I am sending you a present of silver and gold’.

¹⁵⁸ *Op cit*, p. 237.

¹⁵⁹ P. Mauro, *The Wonders of Bible Chronology*, p. 48, has estimated this event as having occurred in the 16th year of Asa and the 13th year of Baasha. Thiele, *op. cit*, has discussed synchronisms between these two kings on pp. 87-89.

¹⁶⁰ *Op. cit*, p. 231.

We have no actual record though of any treaty between Asa and Syria (and/or Omri). Also, the chronology is very stretched here, with Ben-Hadad appearing in the reign of Baasha, whilst Omri (who I say was his father) was elected king even after the death of Baasha's son, Elah (cf. 1 Kings 15:19-20 & 16:8-16). However, the fact that Omri was campaigning against the Philistines in Gibbethon (vv. 15-16), deep within Asa's territory, when Omri was proclaimed king of Israel, could perhaps suggest that he was fighting in company (hence in treaty) with the king of Judah (with both likely in turn serving Egypt). There is no doubt, however, that the Omride dynasty was a most powerful one. When the mighty Shalmaneser III fought against a coalition of Syro-Palestinian princes at Qarqar, Ahab was, according to Finkelstein and Silberman, foremost amongst the opposition:¹⁶¹

This Omride "empire", we also learn, possessed a mighty military force. ... Shalmaneser III, one of the greatest Assyrian kings ... offers perhaps the clearest (if entirely unintentional) praise for the power of the Omride dynasty. In the year 853 ... Shalmaneser led a major Assyrian invasion force westward to intimidate and possibly conquer the smaller states of Syria, Phoenicia, and Israel. His advancing armies were confronted by an anti-Assyrian coalition near Qarqar on the river Orontes in western Syria. Shalmaneser boasted of his great victory in an important ancient text known as the Monolith Inscription.... The dark stone monument, thickly inscribed with cuneiform characters, proudly recorded the forces ranged against Shalmaneser: "1200 chariots, 1200 cavalry men, 20,000 foot-soldiers of Hadadezer of Damascus, 700 chariots, 700 cavalymen, 10,000 foot soldiers of Irhuleni from Hamath, 2000 chariots, 10,000 foot soldiers of Ahab, the Israelite, 500 soldiers from Que, 1000 soldiers from Musri, 10 chariots, 10,000 soldiers from Irqanata...". Not only is this the earliest [sic] nonbiblical evidence of a king of Israel, it is clear from the mention of the "heavy arms" (chariots) that Ahab was the strongest member of the anti-Assyrian coalition. And although the great Shalmaneser claimed victory, the practical outcome ... spoke much louder than the royal boasts. Shalmaneser quickly returned to Assyria, and at least for a while the Assyrian march to the west was blocked.

[End of quote]

Velikovsky had noted in favour of his EA reconstruction the contribution from Egypt, "1000 soldiers from Musri".¹⁶² The leader of the coalition from Damascus, given by Finkelstein and Silberman as 'Hadadezer', is generally considered to have been Ben-Hadad I himself. The former is variously named *Adad-idri*, or *Biridri*, and, interestingly, Velikovsky identified him, not with Ben-Hadad, but with *Biridia* of EA, Egyptian governor in Syro-Palestine.¹⁶³ Certainly, according to my reconstruction (see e.g. my *Excursus* on TAP, on p. 230), this Hadadezer could not have been Ben-Hadad I (unless these Omrides had taken duplicity to almost unimaginably new levels).

¹⁶¹ *The Bible Unearthed*, p. 178.

¹⁶² *Ages in Chaos*, pp. 300-301.

¹⁶³ *Ibid*, pp. 298, 300, 302, 310, 319. E. Campbell, *The Chronology of the Amarna Letters*, lists an EA correspondent, Biryawaza of Damascus, from the beginning of Akhnaton's reign to possibly the reign of Smenkhare. "E: Chart Summarizing Chronological Conclusions" (no page number).

My above identification of the famous Omri with Tab-rimmon may now perhaps enable for the solution of a biblical riddle, and, in so doing, may connect this composite king with EOH approximately. In Isaiah 7 we are given a brief narration of a union between the king of Israel, Pekah, and the king of Syria, Rezin. These kings were conspiring against the kingdom of Judah then ruled by Hezekiah's father, Ahaz, and they had resolved (v. 6): 'Let us go up against Judah and cut off Jerusalem and conquer it for ourselves and make the son of Tabeel king in it'. This would have spelt the end of the Davidic line in Jerusalem. The hitherto unmentioned Tabeel (or Tabel) is introduced here and here only. Isaiah does not refer to him before or after this, at least by the particular name of Tabeel; nor does he appear anywhere else in KCI. Yet one might expect that he was a prince of some importance, and that his father, Tab-el, was well known.

Now, the name Tab-el is comparable to Tab-rimmon, as Boutflower has noted:¹⁶⁴ "The obscure individual, whom it was proposed to set on the throne of David, bore the name Tabe-El, "God is good": compare the similar name Tab-rimmon, "Rimmon is good". Tab-el was therefore, I would suggest, Omri/Tab-rimmon, whose name and fame had continued to be celebrated down through the generations. Shalmaneser III, as we read, had spoken of a king *Ya-u-a* of Israel with reference to his ancestor Omri, as his 'father', well after Omri had died. Sargon II, as we shall read in *Chapter 12*, referred to *Bît Humria* ('House of Omri'). And now here we find Isaiah, a contemporary of Sargon II's, referring to a son of this same ancestral king, Omri, more than a century after the latter had died. In *Chapter 12*, in the section, "The Son of Tabeel", I shall attempt to identify this obscure foe of the House of David.

The Omride Origins

Unfortunately our knowledge of Omri, and of the Tab-rimmon (Tab-el) with whom I am identifying him, is meagre at this stage. But the same does not apply to his son, Ben-Hadad I, about whom we have significant biographical detail – even more so when he is supplemented by the EA *alter ego* of *Abdi-ashirta* with which Velikovsky had invested him. Thus, as already noted, I shall be tracing back the origins of the Omrides through Ben-Hadad I, rather than Omri, taking as my starting-point the Velikovskian equation of Ben-Hadad I = *Abdi-ashirta*, but significantly adding to it.

Now, an apparent anomaly immediately strikes me in regard to this connection between Ben-Hadad I and *Abdi-ashirta*, though it is not one of Velikovsky's making but one that pertains to the EA structure itself. It is this: *Why do we never hear of a conflict - or perhaps an alliance - between this Abdi-ashirta and Tushratta (var. Dushratta) of Mitanni?* Why, in fact, do we never hear any mention at all of these two kings together in the same EA letter? I ask this firstly because, as Campbell has shown, *Abdi-ashirta* and *Tushratta* were exact contemporaries, reigning during at least the latter part of the reign of pharaoh Amenhotep III and on into the reign of Akhnaton,¹⁶⁵ and, secondly, because their territories were, at the very least, contiguous.

¹⁶⁴ *Op. cit*, p. 42. S. Irvine calls him *Tabe'al*. In *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis*, p. 152.

"This spelling follows the pointing of the Masoretic text. Compare *Tabeel* in the Septuagint". *Ibid*, n. 70.

¹⁶⁵ *Op. cit, ibid*.

At about the same time (judging that is by Mercer's numbering of the EA Letters) as *Tushratta's* raid on *Sumur*, generally considered to be Simyra north of Byblos, *Rib-Addi* made the following famous protest about *Abdi-Ashirta* to pharaoh (EA 76): "... is he the king of Mitanna [Mitanni] or the king of Kasse [Babylon] that he seeks to take the land of the king [Pharaoh] himself?" This huge region coveted by *Abdi-ashirta* (Mitanni to Kasse) would have, even in the most minimal terms, spanned from eastern Syria to southern Babylonia. Either *Tushratta* was trespassing all over *Abdi-ashirta's* region, or vice versa. Whatever the case, we should thus expect some mighty clash between the forces of *Abdi-ashirta* and those of *Tushratta*, who ruled Mitanni.

Yet we hear of none.

Proponents of the conventional system would probably have a ready-made answer to this, insofar as experts on the EA period, such as Campbell, tend to divide the kings of the EA correspondence into 'Great Kings' or 'vassal kings', depending upon their status in relation to the EA pharaohs.¹⁶⁶ For instance those kings who could aspire to call pharaoh, 'brother', having given the latter a sister or daughter[s] to marry - and hence meaning 'brother-in-law' (e.g. as in the case of the kings of Mitanni, Arzawa, Karduniash) - are classified by commentators as 'Great Kings', whilst the rest are said to be merely 'vassal kings'. Nonetheless, even the Great Kings were expected to toe the pharaonic line, and commentators express surprise when they (most notably *Tushratta*) do not thus comply. With *Tushratta* rated as a 'Great King', and *Abdi-ashirta* as a 'vassal king', it might be argued that there was never going to be any clash or coincidence between them; for *Abdi-ashirta* was simply subservient to *Tushratta*. Though I myself have not actually read where anyone has specifically written this.

Nor, as far as I am aware, has it been explained why *Abdi-ashirta's* aspirations to become 'king of [Mitanni]' would not have caused some major preventative action on the part of *Tushratta*, the ruler of Mitanni.

Anyway, whatever might be the standard answer to my query above, the Velikovskian equation of EA's *Abdi-ashirta* as Ben-Hadad I would seriously contradict the view that the latter was a relatively minor, though problematical, king in the EA scheme of things; for Ben-Hadad I was no lesser king: "King Ben-hadad of Aram gathered all his army together; thirty-two kings were with him, along with horses and chariots" (1 Kings 20:1). Thirty-two kings! The great Hammurabi of Babylon, early in his reign, had only ten to fifteen kings following him, as did his peer kings. Even the greatest king of that day in the region, *Iarim Lim* of *Iamkhad*, had only twenty kings in train.¹⁶⁷ But Ben-Hadad's coalition, raised for the siege of Ahab's capital of Samaria, could boast of thirty-two kings. Surely Ben-Hadad I was no secondary king in his day, but a 'Great King'; *the* dominant king in fact in the greater Syrian region - a true master-king.

Indeed Ben-Hadad I was, as I am arguing, the son of Omri, and he was able to war against, and greatly discomfort, another son of Omri, Ahab, who would for his part most powerfully assist a coalition against the might of Assyria itself.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, ch's iii and iv.

¹⁶⁷ Thus Zimri-Lim's testimony in the Mari Letters. *Archives royales de Mari*, Paris 1950-1964, as cited by J. Kupper, 'Northern Mesopotamia and Syria', p. 10. I accept D. Hickman's re-locating of Hammurabi of Babylon to the C10th BC. 'The Dating of Hammurabi'.

And by whatever status in the EA scheme of things one might like to designate *Abdi-Ashirta* and his successor, *Aziru*, and however much at times they might appear to grovel to the EA pharaohs, these kings were quite a law unto themselves. This is attested by Tyldesley when she writes:¹⁶⁸ “Abdi-Ashirta and his son Aziru – both nominally Egyptian vassals – were able to continue their expansionist policies unchecked”. Such would hardly have been the case, however, if these really were merely abject vassal kings as they are generally presumed to have been.

With all of this in mind then it might not be so surprising that Ben-Hadad I, in his EA guise as *Abdi-ashirta*, whose kingdom, at the very least, must have been adjacent to that of EA’s ‘Great King’, *Tushratta*, was bent upon ruling Mitanni - which after all was, as we are going to find, a natural extension of Syrian territory into the Upper Khabur and Balikh regions. And he even apparently coveted rule over Babylonia.

So, my question persists: *How is it that there is no record of a clash, or a treaty, between Abdi-ashirta and Tushratta?*

Not only that, but they are never mentioned anywhere together in any context. *Tushratta* was the king of Mitanni, that apparently buffer state between Syria and Assyria which however scholars have found somewhat difficult to circumscribe,¹⁶⁹ and it is even thought sometimes that *Tushratta* must have controlled part of Assyria itself, given that he was able to send Amenhotep III the statue of Ishtar of Nineveh, in the hope that it would cure the declining pharaoh of his serious illness. I shall be returning to this in (b) (on p.76).

And my answer to the puzzle is that the reason why history has left us no record of any encounter of whatever kind between the contemporary EA kings *Abdi-ashirta* and *Tushratta* is because this was one and the same king.

The so-called ‘Mitannians’ were in their origins, as we shall soon discuss, an ‘Indo-European’ people, and their names, such as *Tushratta*, *Shuttarna* and *Artatama*, are thus thought to have been likewise ‘Indo-European’. However, whilst Singh has given a highly plausible ‘Indic’ interpretation of the name *Tushratta*, from *Tvesh-ratha*, ‘one whose chariot moves forward violently’ (some echo of *Dashrath*), as he says,¹⁷⁰ I would nonetheless like to venture an alternative suggestion: namely that the seemingly ‘Indo-European’ name, *Tushratta*, or *Dushratta*, is simply a variant form of *Abdi-Ashirta*, var. *Abdi-Ashrati*, meaning ‘slave of Ashtarte’, being simply *Ab-DU-aSHRATTA*, or *DUSHRATTA*.

This, I propose, was basically a western Semitic name; but perhaps written by ‘Indo-European’ and/or Hurrian scribes (see comments on the name *Intaruda* on next page), and so it was just the one king ruling Syro-Mitanni.

Thus, we now have the extension: Ben-Hadad I = *Abdi-ashirta* = *Tushratta*.

¹⁶⁸ *Nefertiti*, p. 35.

¹⁶⁹ A. Harrak, for instance, has this to say of “the extensive territories of Hanigalbat” (with which Mitanni can be equated): “This land formed by Hurrian tribes and city-states, stretched from the region of Kirkuk eastwards, to the upper reaches of the Tigris northwards, and to Syrian Aleppo and Nuhashshe westwards”. *Assyria and Hanigalbat*, p. 1. Cf. *ibid*, n. 1.

¹⁷⁰ ‘Iraq’ (un-numbered pages).

Liel, in her discussion below of the seemingly non-Semitic EA name *Intaruda*, which she has nonetheless concluded was “perfectly semitic”, may perhaps have opened the door to some degree for the acceptance of my bold view that the seemingly Indic name, *Tushratta*, might actually have been a (western) Semitic name, *Abdi-ashirta*; that perhaps certain, at least, of the so-called ‘Mitannian’ names known to us may have been attempts by ‘Indo-European’ and/or Hurrian scribes to write standard Semitic names, e.g. *Dushratta* for *Abdi-ashirta*, *Shuttarna* for *Samsu-ditana* (?).

To this I should like further to propose that certain names - as in the case of Liel’s now to be introduced example of *Intaruda* - whilst being of quite normal Semitic construction, may have a meaning that one might not associate with Semites, but with other races. But, leaving aside my speculations, allow me to give Liel’s example of the EA name, *Intaruda*, which one might even imagine to have been Indic (e.g. *Inda-ruda*):¹⁷¹

“Intaruda” This name has been called non-semitic, and in fact does not look like a normal semitic construction. However, it may be read “In-Daruta”, which is perfectly semitic, if a bit unusual. It is Akkadian for “The Eye of Eternity”. It may rightly be asked why someone would bear such a name (or title), but the fact remains that there does exist a possible semitic reading. More realistically, it may be a contraction of “Intaru-Adda”, which means “Light of God”, and is the equivalent of Uriah, Uriel, Neriah and Yair.

This explanation by Liel opens up at least the possibility I think that we have here non-Semitic (perhaps Indic) concepts being used in Semitic languages.

Velikovsky did not take any further, beyond *Abdi-ashirta*, his identification of Ben-Hadad I; though I think that the next step that I have proposed, that *Abdi-ashirta* = *Tushratta*, is quite a logical one. It is an identification that I think has to be made in the context of the revision, given both the contemporaneity and the power of *Abdi-ashirta* (Ben-Hadad I) and *Tushratta*, and even the seeming name similarity. Nor will it be the last of my *alter egos* for this ubiquitous Omride, Ben-Hadad I, as we still need to discuss how he, as *Tushratta*, came to have access to the statue of Ishtar of Nineveh in Assyria, and whether or not he did in fact, as *Abdi-ashirta*, become the king of *Kasse*, as *Rib-Addi* had seemed to fear he might.

Now, since my further identifications of Ben-Hadad I will not involve name similarities, as did however my equation, *Abdi-ashirta* = *Tushratta* (*Dushratta*), I need to give some justification for this future lack of consistent onomastic thread. For this I turn again to Liel, for yet a third principle of hers, which I shall be calling the *addu*-principle [henceforth, ADP]. Of this ADP I shall be making some solid use in this thesis. Here is how Liel has explained it, again in connection with EA’s *Rib-Addi*:¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ *Op. cit.*, section: “Intaruda”.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, section: “The King of Sumur and Gubla”.

The *Addi* in Rib-Addi is written in two different ways in the Amarna letters. The first is with the two signs *ad* and *di*. The prevalence of this usage seems to be the reason this name is read *addi*. The second way is with the two signs IM and *di*, where IM may be read *addu* (when a transcription from a cuneiform text is written in all capital letters, it means that the expression in question is either an ideogram or of unknown meaning). We would like to find a reading which is common to both of these versions, and two such readings exist.

One, which is the conventional one, is to see the *di* in IM-*di* as a determinative, telling us that IM is to be read, not *addu* and not *adda*, but *addi*. Thus, both versions may be read as *addi*, which accounts for the conventional Rib-Addi. Alternatively, the *ad* in *ad-di* may be seen as the Sumerogram AD, which like IM may be read *addu*. Thus, both versions may be read *addu-di*, or taking *di* as a Sumerogram, Addu-DI. The significance of this second reading is that it is the usual form taken by semitic names.

Generally, semitic names are made up of a divine name (abbreviated DN) and a radical, which may be an adjective, verb or noun. Sometimes the DN precedes the radical, as in Jehoiachin (Yeho-Yachin -- “YHVH will make firm”) and Elimelech (Eli-Melech -- “God is a King”), but sometimes it follows the radical, as in Gabriel (Gavri-El -- “Mighty One of God” or “My Mighty One is God”) and Jechoniah (Yechon-Yahu -- “may YHVH make firm”). There are exceptions to this rule, like Michael (Mi Cha-El -- “Who is like God?”) and Benjamin (Bin-Yamin -- “Son of the Right Hand” or “Southerner”), but the majority of semitic names do follow it. And this is not only true of semitic names found in the Bible. Shulmanu-asharid (Shalmaneser) means “Shulman is the foremost”, and Ashur-uballit means “May Ashur give life”; both are normal semitic constructions.

If the Amarna letters were written in the 9th century BCE, we would expect to find mostly semitic names being used. And if there are two equally valid readings for a particular name, the one which is identifiable as semitic would be preferred. Of course, if the Amarna period was in the 13th century (as in the conventional chronology) or the 11th (as in the Rohl/Newgrosh New Chronology), we would have less reason to prefer such a reading, but within our framework, the reading Addu-DI is to be preferred. The radical DI has the meaning “compassionate”, which in Akkadian is *ram*. Addu-DI may therefore be read Addu-Ram or Adduram, which is immediately recognizable as the biblical Adoram or Hadoram (cuneiform has no way of representing the consonant “h”, which is why the DN which appears as Hadad in the Bible is Adad in cuneiform, and which is why both the forms Adoram and Hadoram are attested).

One individual bearing this name is Hadoram son of To'i, prince of Hamath (I Chronicles 18:10), who is also called Joram (II Samuel 8:10).

At this point, we might simply point out that “Addi” is more likely to be read “Adduram,” and that we have an attested case of Hadoram and Joram being used for the same individual, which seems to make the equation of Rib-Addi and Jehoram son of Ahab a foregone conclusion.

Here Liel is referring to the modification by Sieff of Velikovsky's thesis that king Ahab of Israel was to be found again in EA's *Rib-Addi*. According to Sieff, however, *Rib-Addi* would better be identified with Ahab's son, Jehoram of Israel.¹⁷³ I shall briefly return to this proposal when I discuss who I consider to be Ahab's *persona* in the EA documents. Liel continues:

But I would like to take this a step further. The DN Addu has been understood in more than one way. Due in part to the parallel occurrences of names such as Shamshi-Addu and Shamshi-Adad, and in part to the phonetic similarity between the two names, many scholars have seen Addu as a mere corruption of Adad. Yet IM, which is the common sign used for Addu, has also been read as Baal. For example, the name Adda-Danu (an Amarna correspondent) has also been read Balu-Shipti. The difference in the second part of this name is due to the fact that it is actually the compound Sumerogram DI.KUD, meaning "to judge". In East Semitic (Akkadian), this is expressed as *danu*, while the West Semitic (Hebrew or "Canaanite"), which is more commonly used in the Amarna letters (except for those from Mesopotamia), is *shiptu*. The reading of IM as Baal may be due to the names Balu-Shipti and Shipti-Balu appearing elsewhere in the Amarna correspondence. The explanation of how the same sign could be used to denote two different deities may lie in the meaning of the word *addu*. *Addu* is Akkadian for "father", and is generally understood as an Akkadianization of the Sumerian AD, also meaning father (the semitic word for father, *abu*, is also represented often by the sign AD). We know that *abu* (or *abi*) was used as a DN in such names as Abimelech, Abinadab, Abinoam, Abiram, and so on.

Now Liel comes to the crux of the matter (or of what I am calling the ADP principle):

I suggest that *Addu* was used in much the same way as the modern "God"; that it was interchangeable with the local chief deity. In Syria, this might be Adad; in Phoenicia, it might be Baal; in Israel, it would be YHVH (cuneiform *Yau*) or El. This would explain the fact that in two of the three occurrences of the name (H)adoram in the Bible, a parallel name of the form DN-ram is given for the bearer of the name. As noted above, Hadoram son of To'i is also called Joram. And (H)adoram, the officer in charge of the labor details under David and Solomon (II Samuel 20:24, I Kings 12:18, II Chronicles 10:18), is also referred to as Adoniram (I Kings 4:6, 5:28).

According to the ADP principle, Liel has shown that: "In Syria, this [*Addu*] might be Adad" - and indeed 'Adad' [Hadad] is the very theophoric that we find in the name of our composite king as ruler of Syria, [Ben-Hadad I] - and "in Phoenicia, it might be Baal", and this last theophoric element, too, is what we are going to find later to be the case also for the same king in his role as master of Phoenicia.

¹⁷³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 87-89.

And we could add to Liel that, in Assyria, the *Addu* might be ‘Ashur’; and that also will be found later to constitute the theophoric element of our king’s name as ruler of Assyria. What arises too, from Liel’s new analysis of the EA names, seemingly adding some further weight to VLTF, is that C9th BC biblical names now start to emerge in the pharaonic EA correspondence supposedly 500 years earlier. To give just a sample of Liel’s examples: *Amur-Adda* = Hazael; *Addaya* = Elijah; *Yawa* = Jehu; *Abdi-Addu* = Obadiah (I Kings 18:3). [For more on Obadiah, see p. 98]. Perhaps, if Velikovsky was basically right in his reconstruction, further linguistic studies will lead scholars to finding a plethora of C9th BC names in EA.

Having commenced with Velikovsky’s Ben-Hadad I = EA’s *Abdi-ashirta* as a firm foundation for this chapter, I am now going to propose three further identifications for this king beyond this one given by Velikovsky; these three including the already mentioned *Abdi-ashirta* = *Tushratta*.

A fourth one will be given in connection with Egypt in *Chapter 9* (p. 195).

(a) *Ben-Hadad I as Tushratta of Mitanni*

I have already argued that Ben-Hadad I came from a potent line, being an Omride, and that he had, at the peak of his power, a very large following of kings, and that he had even given the impression (as *Abdi-ashirta*) - at the time of one of his campaigns into Phoenicia - of having coveted rule over Mitanni and Babylon. I now propose that he, as *Tushratta*, actually came to rule Mitanni and had at least some control over Assyria itself (the latter to be discussed in **(b)**).

Whilst all this may seem to be too fantastic to be credible, what may perhaps help us to gain some real perspective on potential range of rule at this approximate time in ancient history are the geographical terms of a recorded message from *Iarim-Lim* - whom we met as a powerful (older) contemporary of Hammurabi - to the prince of Dêr in Babylonia, whom, incidentally, *Iarim-Lim* calls ‘brother’. Kupper tells of it:¹⁷⁴

In this message, Iarimlim reminds his ‘brother’ that he had saved his life fifteen years before, at the time when he was coming to the help of Babylon, and that he had also given his support to the king of the town of Diniktum, on the Tigris, to whom he supplied five hundred boats. Outraged by the prince of Dêr’s ingratitude he threatens to come at the head of his troops and exterminate him.

.... Whatever the circumstances of the [Babylon] expedition were, it says a great deal for the military power of Iarimlim, who had led the soldiers of Aleppo as far as the borders of Elam [modern Iran].

Conventionally, of course, we are talking about two entirely different eras, with king *Iarim-Lim* thought to have preceded Ben-Hadad I in time by something more than half a millennium.

¹⁷⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

In terms of VLTF, however, that gap in time would be almost entirely bridged. Hickman may perhaps have successfully managed to lay that bridge due to his having proposed - in the context of his revision of the Hammurabic era - a connection between this *Iarim-Lim* of *Iamkhad* and the biblical Joram (var. *Hadoram*) of Hamath already met above, by his actually identifying *Iarim-Lim* with this Joram (*Iarim*), and his tentatively identifying *Iarim-Lim*'s kingdom of *Iamkhad* with the kingdom of Hamath.¹⁷⁵ If so, then that would bring *Iarim-Lim* well in range for him to have been something of a model Syro-Phoenician king for Ben-Hadad I to have emulated. And, given *Iarim-Lim*'s extraordinary range of influence, it is not unrealistic to suggest that the even more powerful Ben-Hadad I (32 follower-kings as compared to *Iarim-Lim*'s 20) might have wielded an influence that had also, like *Iarim-Lim*'s, stretched from Phoenicia to Elam. Such a range of influence, if it were indeed a fact - and my revision of Ben-Hadad I is certainly opening up the possibility for a vast theatre of rule for this king - would, according to ADP, make distinctly possible for Ben-Hadad I also to have possessed a 'Baal' (Phoenician) name; an 'Ashur' (Assyrian) name; and perhaps even some form of Kassite name, all to add to this ubiquitous king's growing collection of names. However, the Bible will provide us with virtually no detail at all of this vast geographical theatre of rule in the case of Ben-Hadad I, who is simply presented therein as a ruler of Syria. In fact we find Ben-Hadad I in his first appearance in the Bible, and in the account of his death, residing in Damascus (cf. 1 Kings 15:18 & 2 Kings 8:7-15). And this brings me back to our principle of 'biblical perspective' in the geographical sense. Let us listen to a little more of what Liel has written on this principle, though not speaking of geography, but of history. Her comment here also includes an observation on Sennacherib that will be of interest particularly in relation to our VOLUME TWO:¹⁷⁶

Remember--the Bible is a didactic history. Its goal is to teach ideas, not political science. We cannot assume that situations which are implied by the biblical text are historically factual as we would if the same implication was made in a modern history book. For example, the campaigns of Sennacherib against Jerusalem and his death at the hands of his sons are seen as a connected series of events and are consequently related as if they happened in immediate succession. We know, however, that they happened over a period of thirty [sic] years. The Bible cannot be accused here of being inaccurate, as it does not state that all these events occurred in the 14th year of Hezekiah; only the first one. Historical fact is not misrepresented.

In a similar way, but now speaking geographically, the biblical scribe is content to record that Ben-Hadad I was a ruler of Aram (Syria), and stationed at Damascus. "[The Bible's] goal is to teach ideas", to use Liel's phrase, and not in this case to lay down a geography of the realm of Ben-Hadad I, nor to itemise from whence came the thirty-two kings over whom he ruled.

¹⁷⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 15. Cf. footnote 34 above.

¹⁷⁶ *Op. cit.*, section: "Labaya".

As we are going to find, the Bible tends to record the major city of a king that stood the closest to Israel: thus ‘Damascus’ for Ben-Hadad I, ‘Tyre’ for Hiram; even though one or other king may also have ruled an even more substantial or important city further afield.

Our composite king, of immense power, who as *Tushratta* would campaign as far north-west as Byblos, and was threatening even Simyra (*Sumur*) further north, according to *Rib-Addi* (EA’s 85:51ff. and 86:10ff.), seems to have been playing a double game with Egypt, forever protesting his loyalty, but always looking to extend his boundaries. Campbell, astonished at the extraordinary boldness of this action, sought for “... a way to explain a Mitannian raid into upper Syria sometime during the final years of Amenophis [Amenhotep] III, carried out by Tušratta while he was maintaining loyal friendship with Egypt”. But Campbell finally had to admit to having “no satisfactory explanation”.¹⁷⁷ Similarly, *Abdi-Ashirta* had been a continual threat to *Rib-Addi*’s region that included approximately the upper half of the modern Lebanese coastal plain, with Simyra, presumably the seat of the Egyptian *rabis*, at the northern boundary of his territory. And, later, *Aziru*’s reign would prove completely disastrous for *Rib-Addi*, who would even lose his city to the invader.

At an early stage the king of Damascus (presumably allied with his many kings, ‘all the major chieftains’), invaded Phoenicia. In a letter of *Rib-Addi*, we find this complaint:

LETTER 90: All the majors [chieftains] are one with Abdi-Ashirta.

This invasion must have occurred during the reign of Amenhotep III, not Akhnaton, because *Rib-Addi* would later remind the generally inactive Akhnaton of how his father had intervened by sending archers up from Egypt. *Rib-Addi* repeated in several letters that hostility against *Sumur* had become very great. We know from *Rib-Addi*’s letters that *Abdi-Ashirta* and his son, *Aziru*, did both attack his cities, and that he was wounded and nearly killed by the ‘Syrians’ (EA 81). Hence his good reason for concern. Yet this *Tushratta* never seems to have encountered *Abdi-ashirta*, or vice versa.

But I have now suggested what I think is a compelling reason why.

Tushratta was an energetic and powerful king who eventually waged war against the Hittites (EA 17, 30ff.). It seems that in those early days even the Assyrians were his subjects.¹⁷⁸ This is quite apparent from his having been in a position (EA 23) to lend Amenhotep III the image of ‘Ishtar of Nineveh’ (allegedly possessing therapeutic value).¹⁷⁹ But soon (in **(b)**) we are going to find that this king was in fact a mighty ruler of Assyria.

Tushratta loved Egyptian gold (EA 19) - a recurrent theme with this son of the Ancestor King (Omri), from his very earliest years as Ben-Hadad I, when Asa of Judah paid him off - and he loved conquest. Because of *Tushratta*’s ambitious ways, the Hittite emperor Suppiluliumas would speak retrospectively of “the presumption of Tushratta”.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

¹⁷⁸ See Harrak, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

¹⁷⁹ P. Clapham, ‘Hittites and Phrygians’, p. 89.

¹⁸⁰ As quoted by Harrak, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

This, I suggest, would reflect the early arrogance of Ben-Hadad I (in those days for example when he led the formidable coalition against Ahab's Israel: 1 Kings 20:1-6), before the former had begun to decline politically.

But this *Tushratta* and the dynasty to which he belonged, so-called 'Mitannians', are commonly thought - e.g. based on their names and the names of their gods - to have been of 'Indo-European' origin; a part of that great wave of Aryans who entered Anatolia supposedly around 1600 BC (conventional dating).¹⁸¹ This would likely correspond with the 'first wave' of 'Indo-Europeans' as discussed in the previous chapter. If so, then this would mean that our composite king, Ben-Hadad I/*Abdi-ashirta* - through whom I have thought it most appropriate to trace the origin of the Omrides - was also of 'Indo-European' origin, as *Tushratta* of Mitanni. At this stage then, based upon my identification of Ben-Hadad I with *Tushratta* of Mitanni, I can logically provide his father Omri's 'Mitannian', or 'Indo-European' identity. For *Tushratta's* father is known through the EA correspondence: he is *Shuttarna* [I] of Mitanni. *Shuttarna's* father was in turn *Artatama* [I], hence the grandfather of *Tushratta*. *Artatama* was thus presumably the Hezion (Hadyan) who was, as we have seen, the father of Tab-rimmon and grandfather of Ben-Hadad I.

These rulers of Mitanni were apparently on excellent terms with the contemporary 18th dynasty pharaohs, to whom they gave their daughters as wives. Tyldesley tells of it:¹⁸²

Tuthmosis IV had married the daughter of Artatama I but this link was severed by the death of the two kings. Therefore, in the tenth year of his reign Amenhotep III married Gilukhepa, the daughter of Shuttarna, king of Mitanni, and a scarab was issued to commemorate the arrival of the bride and her retinue

It is also thought that *Artatama* had sent Thutmose IV his daughter, Mutemwija, who was Amenhotep III's mother. And Amenhotep III's formidable wife, Tiy, was Mitannian.¹⁸³ "It has ... been repeatedly conjectured that one of Tiy's parents was of Mitannian origin". (I shall discuss in more detail in *Chapter 4*, *Chapter 9* and *Chapter 10* the close family relationships that existed between Egypt and Mitanni).

So now perhaps we can begin to appreciate the importance of Omri, because he, as *Shuttarna*, was connected to Egypt's 18th dynasty through marriage, as his own father had been for the same reason. Moreover, *Abdi-ashirta* (as *Tushratta*) probably had every right to aspire to being the king of Mitanni, since his father and his grandfather before him had ruled as kings of Mitanni.

Tushratta considered himself as being on very good terms with pharaoh Amenhotep III, addressing himself to the great pharaoh as 'thy brother'. Besides lists of presents, the EA documents contain seven of *Tushratta's* letters to Amenhotep III, one to the widow of that pharaoh and three to Akhnaton.

¹⁸¹ See e.g. van de Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East*, p. 115.

¹⁸² *Op. cit.*, p. 28.

¹⁸³ I. Velikovsky, *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, p. 88. In Part 1, Velikovsky identifies Tiy with Oedipus' mother, Jocasta.

There is an important letter (EA 29) from *Tushratta* to *Naphuria* (Akhnaton), in regard to the recent death of the latter's predecessor, *Nimmuria* (Amenhotep III), in which the wily *Tushratta* refers to *Nimmuria* as "my brother", adding that he and *Nimmuria* "were on excellent friendly terms". In EA 28, *Tushratta* had advised *Naphuria* that Queen *Tiy* alone knew about these "friendly terms".

It seems that *Tushratta's* rise to the throne would involve, perhaps at pharaoh's request, the murder of a predecessor. Thus van de Mieroop:¹⁸⁴

... over the relatively short period of the Amarna archive, from about 1365 to 1335 [sic], the Mittani state suffered a number of internal and external difficulties. Internally, two branches of the royal family competed for the throne, each seeking support for their respective claims from outside powers. *Tushratta*, who corresponded with the Egyptian King Amenhotep III (ruled 1390-53), had been placed on the throne by the murderer of his older brother. Initially Egypt had resented this state of affairs, and only after *Tushratta* executed his brother's murderer did its king reestablish diplomatic relations.

EA 17, in which we learn about the assassination of *Artaššumara*, eldest brother of *Tushratta*, deals with a conflict between *Tushratta* and a regent, *Tuḥi*, and the death of *Tuḥi* at the hand of *Tushratta*. "When I sat upon my father's throne, I was still young, and *Tuḥi* did evil to my land, and he killed his lord. And, therefore, he did not treat me well, nor the one who was on friendly terms with me. I, however, especially because of those evils, which were perpetrated on my land, made no delay. But the murderers of *Artashumara*, my brother, along with all that they had, I killed".

Tushratta's Death

The relations between the rulers of Mitanni and their fellow 'Indo-European' Hittites in Bogazkoy, nearly 250 km north east of Turkey's capital Ankara, appear to have been far less cordial than were those between the rulers of Mitanni and Egypt. Certainly *Tushratta*, at least, seems to have maintained a persistent enmity with the Hittites. The ultimate decline of *Tushratta* is thought in fact to have been aggravated by the disloyalty of his 'brother', *Artatama* [II], who had come to an agreement with the Hittites.

Finally, *Tushratta* was, like *Abdi-Ashirta*/Ben-Hadad, assassinated, and *Tushratta's* son, *Kurtiwaza* (var. *Mattiwaza*, *Shattiwaza*), seems to have been implicated in the plot.¹⁸⁵ Presumably, in my context, *Kurtiwaza* is the same as *Aziru*/Hazeal because the former

- (i) was the successor of *Tushratta*; and
- (ii) probably assassinated the latter.

And so this formidable 'master-king', Ben-Hadad I/*Tushratta*, departed the throne, and his life, having been assassinated.

¹⁸⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 143.

¹⁸⁵ See G. Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 239. Cf. *CAH*, I, 7-8, 14-16; Index to *Kurtiwaza*.

(b) Ben-Hadad I as Ashurnasirpal II of Assyria

The ruler of Assyria during the early reign of Ben-Hadad I, was the powerful Ashurnasirpal II (c. 883-859 BC, conventional dates).

Now, Ben-Hadad I's vast geography of rule must have extended also into Assyria; for Ben-Hadad I was also *Tushratta*, the best known of the rulers of Mitanni, and the state of Mitanni included at least a part of Assyria. Thus Clapham:¹⁸⁶ "The kings of Mitanni called themselves the "kings of the warriors of Khurri land" and "kings of Khanigalbat".... At the peak of its power the Mitanni dynast ruled from Syria to Armenia in the north and beyond Assyria in the east ...". I must now therefore ask the question: *Was Ashurnasirpal II also our composite king?*

Ashurnasirpal II's conventional date of beginning, 883 BC, harmonises rather well with Ben-Hadad I's estimated commencement at 880 BC; though the latter would be considered to have reigned substantially longer than Ashurnasirpal.

Velikovsky did not, as far as I can recall, attempt - at least in a detailed manner - to knit Ashurnasirpal II into a pattern with any particular EA correspondent. The only living "king of Assyria" mentioned in the EA letters is one "Assuruballit" (EA 15 & 16), whose father is there said to have been *Assur-nadin-ahhe*. Now "Assuruballit" has not yet been properly knitted into the revision by anyone: hence TAP.

Velikovsky did, however, look to identify Ashurnasirpal II's son, Shalmaneser III (c. 858-824 BC, conventional dates) with the Kassite king and EA correspondent, *Burnaburiash II* (c. 1375-1347 BC, conventional dates), another very powerful and forthright king. And I accept this connection.

Now this last identification has implications for Ashurnasirpal II; for the father of *Burnaburiash II*, *Kadashman-Enlil* (var. *Kurigalzu*),¹⁸⁷ who had indeed corresponded with Amenhotep III, must now - according to the terms of my reconstruction - be none other than Ashurnasirpal II. We do know from Ashurnasirpal II's records that he had overrun the Chaldean territories. Thus he boasted:¹⁸⁸ "The fear of my sovereignty prevailed as far as the country of Karduniash [Babylonia]; the might of my weapons overwhelmed the country of Kaldu".

Had not *Rib-Addi* also complained that this belligerent king, as *Abdi-Ashirta*, was aspiring to be the king of *Kasse*, or Babylonia?

We saw that this same *Abdi-ashirta* had, in his guise of *Tushratta*, been in a position to have given a statue of Ishtar of Nineveh to pharaoh Amenhotep III during the latter's illness. Putting all this together, our composite king (Ben-Hadad I/*Abdi-Ashirta*/*Tushratta*) must have been also, I believe - and I am really putting ADP to use here - the same person as the Assyrian king, Ashurnasirpal II.

¹⁸⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 85. See also Thiele's discussion on the problems associated with the chronology of the reign of Ashurnasirpal II, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

¹⁸⁷ See E. Campbell, *op. cit.*, pp. 36ff. Cf. W. Albright, 'A Revision of Early Assyrian & Middle Babylonian Chronology'.

¹⁸⁸ As quoted by Boufflower, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

Remember, ADP is the theophoric *Addu* being interchangeable with the local chief deity; in Syria, this might be Adad, in Phoenicia, Baal; in Israel, YHVH (cuneiform *Yau*) or El. In Assyria, it might be Ashur. “With [Ashurnasirpal] we meet the first great Assyrian monarch of the new period. Ambition, energy, courage, vanity, cruelty, magnificence”.¹⁸⁹ This certainly reads like our composite king. Taken by surprise, the Hittite princes of northern Syria had offered no resistance to Ashurnasirpal. Likewise, *Tushratta* had defeated the Hittites, his constant enemies. One of the latter’s letters describes a portion of “booty” taken from the “land of Hatte” that he had sent to pharaoh.¹⁹⁰ That Ashurnasirpal II had, like our composite king of ‘Indo-European’ origins, managed to conquer Phoenician coastal cities, such as Tyre, Sidon and Byblos, is clear from this other boast of Ashurnasirpal’s:¹⁹¹

I cleaned my weapons in the deep sea [Mediterranean] and performed sheep-offerings to the gods. The tribute of the sea-coast – from the inhabitants of Tyre, Sidon, Byblos, Mahallata, Maiza, Kaiza, Amurru, and (of) Arvad which is (an island) in the sea ... their tribute I received and they embraced my feet.

Amongst these suppliants would have been, I suggest, *Rib-Addi of Gubla* (‘Byblos’). Now, it is somewhat interesting in regard to Ashurnasirpal’s boast - and the (related) frequent Syro-Mitannian incursions into Phoenicia - that one of the rulers of Tyre, estimated as ruling in approximately 920 BC, was named *Abd-Ashtart*.¹⁹² Could he too be our composite king, as *Abdi-ashirta*? I shall revisit the possibility of a Phoenician connection in *Chapter 9* (pp. 207-208).

Ashurnasirpal II Seizes the Throne

I find no clear evidence that our Ancestral King, Omri - under the guise of *Shuttarna* of Mitanni - had ever actually ruled Assyria (though see p. 95). But his son, as *Tushratta*/Ashurnasirpal II, certainly did. The consideration of how Ashurnasirpal came to the throne of Assyria may perhaps also serve to assist further in the necessary folding of so-called ‘Middle’ Assyrian history into ‘Neo’ Assyrian history. Velikovsky of course had set this latter operation in process by his dramatic shifting of Assuruballit of EA from the C14th BC into the C9th BC. Whilst this is a subject that I intend to take up in some detail in *Chapter 6*, we may here be able to catch a glimpse of how a particular folding may perhaps be effected in relation to king Tukulti-Ninurta of Assyria.

In *Chapter 6* we shall see that there are two yawning chronological gaps in particular in ‘Middle’ Assyrian history, pertaining, respectively, to the era of Tukulti-Ninurta I (c. 1244-1208 BC, conventional dates), and of Tiglath-pileser I (c. 1115-1077 BC, conventional dates). My solution for Tiglath-pileser I, to be discussed in *Chapter 7* (pp. 181-183), will be to merge and identify him, with his namesake, Tiglath-pileser III, an early contemporary of king Hezekiah of Judah.

¹⁸⁹ Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 288.

¹⁹⁰ See e.g. Clapham, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

¹⁹¹ As quoted by Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

¹⁹² B. Feldman, ‘Tyre: “Joy, shipmate, joy”.’ p. 30.

Here though I want briefly to consider whether a similar sort of folding-to-namesake, affecting Ashurnasirpal II, may be plausible between Tukulti-Ninurta I and Tukulti-Ninurta II (c. 891-883 BC, conventional dates), supposed father of Ashurnasirpal II. What might appear to be interesting here, particularly given my argument that *Tushratta* (whom I have identified with Ashurnasirpal II) had at least strengthened his hold on the throne owing to the murder of a regent, *Tuḥi* - who prior to that had, according to EA 17, slain *Artasšumara*, eldest brother of *Tushratta* - is that Tukulti-Ninurta I was slain by an *Ashur-nadin-apli*,¹⁹³ sometimes thought to have been Tukulti-Ninurta I's successor on the throne. This could lead me to draw the conclusion, in connection with VLTF, that this *Ashur-nadin-apli* was Ashurnasirpal II – especially given that *Ashur-nadin-apli* is given, in the Babylonian Chronicle, as 'Ashurnasirpal' - and that the regent *Tuḥi* murdered by *Ashur-nadin-apli*, the latter, in his guise as *Tushratta*, was the murdered Tukulti-Ninurta I (now to be identified with Tukulti-Ninurta II), whether he be the actual father, or simply 'predecessor', of Ashurnasirpal (according to Bright's distinction, on p. 58).

If he were only 'predecessor', then this might be explained by the factionalism and rivalry amongst the Mitannians (to be discussed below). If 'father', then this would mean – in the context of my reconstruction – that Ben-Hadad I/Ashurnasirpal II had actually murdered his father, Omri. That Ashurnasirpal II, "preceded by a well-deserved reputation for cruelty"¹⁹⁴, could be a patricide, is not beyond the realms of credibility. However, had Omri indeed been murdered, and by his own son, then this fact is unlikely to have been omitted by the Old Testament writers. (I shall tentatively propose a slightly revised scenario of all this on p. 95, at the end of this chapter).

Sweeney has made a connection between whom he calls Ashurnasirpal I and II:¹⁹⁵

An Assyrian Great King named Tukulti-Ninurta ... was murdered in a palace conspiracy by one of his own sons. The Babylonian Chronicle gives us the name of the parricide: Ashurnasirpal. According to conventional ideas, this was the first king of that name ... though five centuries later another Ashurnasirpal, who was also son of a king Tukulti-Ninurta, launched a great age of Assyrian power and expansion. It will be obvious that the present writer regards Ashurnasirpal I as Ashurnasirpal II....

These new connections based around Tukulti-Ninurta and Ashurnasirpal, will, apart from (i) assisting a revision of 'Middle' Assyrian history, (ii) open the door for the resolution of TAP, beginning on p. 230.

The situation of two branches of the same supposedly 'Mitannian' royal family vying for supremacy may perhaps be reflected in the conflict between *Tushratta* and *Tuḥi* (though *Tuḥi* could perhaps even be the Hittite king, *Tudhaliya*, known contemporary of Tukulti-Ninurta I). Likely related to the royal conflict was that between the two rival brother-states, Mitanni and Hurri, the one at enmity with the Hittites, the other favouring them.

Van de Mieroop tells of this dual situation, though he is not entirely sure whether or not it actually involved separate states:¹⁹⁶

¹⁹³ Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 264.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 290. See also p. 291. It is thus interesting that the cruel Ashurnasirpal II had, as Ben-Hadad I, turned to Ahab for clemency, because the kings of Israel were known to have been merciful.

¹⁹⁵ Sweeney, E, *Ramessides, Medes and Persians*, p. 37.

... during Tushratta's reign, another brother, Artatama [II], established a rival kingship, receiving initial support from the Hittites. A later Hittite treaty described the existence of two kingdoms: one of Mittani under Tushratta and one of the Hurrians under Artatama. The latter, if indeed a separate state, was probably located in the north-east of Syria.

Moreover, whilst *Artatama [II]*, father of *Shuttarna [III]*, is usually referred to as the brother of *Tushratta*, according to Harrak:¹⁹⁷ "... the documents available do not elaborate on whether Artatama II and Tushratta were of common descent". If they were brothers, then this would certainly be the Mitannian version of the fierce rivalry between Ahab (*Artatama*) - *Hurri* then here pertaining to Palestine - and Ben-Hadad (*Tushratta*).

Sickness of Ashurnasirpal II and Possible Co-Regency with his Son

Whilst chronologically, as I said, the commencements of the 'reigns' of Ben-Hadad I and Ashurnasirpal II are satisfyingly close, the endings do not match satisfactorily; Ashurnasirpal's conventional date of death at c. 859 BC does not closely correspond with Ben-Hadad I's, estimated at c. 840 BC. But it seems that Ashurnasirpal had suffered a long illness at the end, in which case Sweeney's proposal of a co-regency between him and his son and successor, Shalmaneser III, might have some merit.¹⁹⁸ We saw, too, that *Abdi-Ashirta*/Ben-Hadad had suffered from a serious illness in his later years, and that is another factor our composite king apparently has in common with Ashurnasirpal II. For Ashurnasirpal - according to Sweeney, with reference to Olmstead¹⁹⁹ - we have "a long prayer lamenting a debilitating illness and asking the goddess Ishtar for deliverance". The king pleads: "The afflictions which I behold, before thee I bewail; to my words full of sighing, let thy ears be directed. To my afflicted speech let thy mind be opened." The prayer continues at length in the same vein, and it is evident, says Sweeney, "that this Ashurnasirpal had been struck by a very serious and enduring illness".

But the goddess Ishtar, who had failed to cure pharaoh Amenhotep III, when the king of Assyria (as *Tushratta*) had sent her statue to him, now failed to deliver again in the case of Ashurnasirpal II. In the meantime, one might suspect that the primary rule of Assyria and Babylonia would have fallen to the sick king's legitimate son, Shalmaneser III, whereas Hazael, "the son of a nobody",²⁰⁰ the *Aziru* of EA, was presumably son by a concubine. But both sons would have figured amongst 'the sons of Abdi-Ashirta, the dogs' frequently complained about by *Rib-Addi* and other of the EA correspondents. Thus Ashurnasirpal, even on his sick-bed, continued to be a scourge to the Phoenicians. My reconstruction of EA's Assyrians would thus necessitate some degree of alteration of dates for Shalmaneser III. Sweeney, too, has called for a restructuring of the traditional dating of Shalmaneser:²⁰¹

¹⁹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 143.

¹⁹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 38. *seea*

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, with reference to Olmstead's *History of Assyria*, pp. 72-74.

²⁰⁰ Shalmaneser III as cited by Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 297.

²⁰¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.

Ashurnasirpal II, we are told, reigned for twenty-five years as king of Assyria, and took part in military action almost every summer for the first nine years; after which no further expeditions are recorded. This is a strange circumstance to say the least, in view of the relish with which the king described the details of his various exploits in the field. Such being the case, it would appear that he became ill or incapacitated in some way, and for the final sixteen years of his reign entrusted the defence of the kingdom to the crown prince - the future Shalmaneser III. There may indeed have been a long co-regency (quite common in the ancient East), and this seems all the more likely when we consider the otherwise uncommon length of Shalmaneser's reign, almost forty years.

There is no account of which I am aware of the death of Ashurnasirpal under that name; though I believe that we can know quite sufficient about it through accounts relating to his *alter egos*. Ashurnasirpal II was a mighty and influential ruler in the Middle East during the first half of the C9th BC; a ruler who could, and did (as is apparent from his bas relief from the Central Nimrud Palace), boast dozens of titles and epithets. (For a sample of these, see *Chapter 9*, pp. 208-209).

Some Related Technological and Art Anomalies

Though a neo-Assyrian king as to dating (C9th BC), there are strong indications that Ashurnasirpal II was also in fact closely contemporaneous with the early 19th dynasty (c. 1300 BC, conventional dating) and the latter's Hittite opponents - and by no means, therefore, was he separated from these by the approximately four centuries that are usually estimated. Similarities between C9th BC Assyrian art and that of the early Ramessides (and contemporaneous Hittites) is of course just what one should expect in terms of this revision. They are reflected in both warfare - particularly in cavalry tactics and horsemanship - and in art. (For more on this, see *Chapter 10*, p. 250).

That comes as no surprise to me any more, as I shall be identifying Ashurnasirpal II and his father, Omri, of 'Indo-European' origins - particularly in **Part III** - as close contemporaries of the 19th dynasty: i.e. the Ramessides, with some of the 20th dynasty Ramessides being contemporaneous with king Hezekiah himself.

Here is what Sweeney has noted in regard to the similarities between Ashurnasirpal's cavalry tactics and that of the Hittite opponents of pharaoh Seti I (c. 1294-1279 BC, conventional dates):²⁰² "Hittite cavalry are shown in action against Seti I, and their deployment etc. displays striking parallels with that of the cavalry belonging to Ashurnasirpal II". Thus for example the Assyrian horsemen, he says, "ride bareback, obtaining a firm grip by means of pressing the raised knees against the horse's flanks - exactly the method of riding employed by the Hittites portrayed on the monuments of Seti I and Ramses II". Again, both the early neo-Assyrian cavalry and those of the Hittites against whom Seti I battled, employed the bow as their only weapon. "Even more importantly, they are used in an identical way tactically: they are invariably used in conjunction with the chariotry".

²⁰² *Ibid*, p. 24.

Sweeney next turns to Maspero's description of the cavalry of Ashurnasirpal: "The army [of Assyria] ... now possessed a new element, whose appearance in the field of battle was to revolutionize the whole method of warfare; this was the cavalry, properly so called, introduced as an adjunct to the chariotry." More specifically, he writes:

This body of cavalry, having little confidence in its own powers, kept in close contact with the main body of the army, and it was not used in independent manoeuvres; it was associated with and formed an escort to the chariotry in expeditions where speed was essential, and where ordinary foot soldiers would have hampered the movements of the charioteers.

Again, this is just what one would expect from the prevailing 'Indo-European' influence, the 'chariot-riding aristocracy', with its magnificent horsemanship. Similarly, James tells of the definite likeness between the neo-Assyrian art of Ashurnasirpal II and that of the 'Middle' Assyrian period several centuries earlier, C13th-12th BC:²⁰³

One scholar noted that the forms of decoration of the intricately carved Assyrian seals of the 12th century are 'clearly late', as they 'point the way to the ornate figures which line the walls of the Neo-Assyrian palace of Assurnasirpal [mid-9th century BC]'. The sculptors employed by this king, in the words of another expert on Assyrian art, 'worked within a tradition that went back to the thirteenth century BC'.

Professor Greenberg has observed, along the same lines, that Mycenaean Greece Shaft Grave Stelae, currently dated variously to the late C14th, or mid C13th BC, "make a good deal more art historical sense when compared, for example, with the hunting scenes of Ashurnasirpal II from Nimrud, which are dated in the ninth century BC ...".²⁰⁴

(c) Ben-Hadad I as Kadashman-Enlil of Babylonia

The reign of the 'Indo-European' Kassite king *Kadashman-Enlil* (or *Kurigalzu*), known correspondent with pharaoh Amenhotep III, would also - according to my revision - have continued on for a period into the reign of pharaoh Akhnaton. We recall *Tushratta's* (hence Ben-Hadad I's) fondness for Egyptian gold, and the marrying of his daughters to Amenhotep III and Akhnaton. Similarly we read about "the Kassite Kadashman-Enlil I [who] added his sister and daughter to [Amenhotep III's] opulent harem and received from him large quantities of gold".²⁰⁵ This was our composite king all over again, now in his sovereignty over "Kaidu", still providing pharaoh with women in exchange for the coveted Egyptian gold. For Kadashman-Enlil likewise had given his sister, as well as his daughter, in marriage to Amenhotep III. In this regard he wrote cunningly to pharaoh:²⁰⁶

²⁰³ *Centuries of Darkness*, p. 273.

²⁰⁴ 'Lion Gate at Mycenae' (1973), p. 28.

²⁰⁵ Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

²⁰⁶ Quote from J. Fletcher, *The Search for Nefertiti*, pp. 231-232.

Now as to the gold I wrote to you about, send me whatever is available so I can finish the work I am doing this summer. If you send the gold I will give you my daughter If you do not, and I cannot finish the work, what would be the point sending it later? Then you could send me 100 tons of the stuff and I wouldn't accept it. I would send it back, and wouldn't give you my daughter in marriage.

Moreover Kadashman-Enlil would, as did *Tushratta*, show concern for the well-being of his sister and daughter, according to Tyldesley.²⁰⁷ Though, of course, the saying and doing of similar things by 'these monarchs' does not, in itself, guarantee that 'they' were identical persons. Mesopotamian kings routinely - as did others such as the Egyptians - used formulaic language that was similar, even sometimes identical, to that of their predecessors. On p. 148, n. 49 (of *Chapter 6*) we shall read, for instance, that two distinct neo-Assyrian kings, Tiglath-pileser III and Sennacherib, used an identically worded phrase to describe their respective containment of a Syro-Palestinian enemy; one of these latter being king Hezekiah of Judah himself.

My identification of this Kadashman-Enlil with Ashurnasirpal II, conqueror of Kasse (Babylonia) - and I shall be saying some more on this on p. 95 - also enables for my revision to dovetail with Velikovsky's in regard to the latter's view that EA's best known Kassite king, *Burnaburiash*, was Shalmaneser III himself (son of Ashurnasirpal II) in the latter's rôle as ruler of Babylon.²⁰⁸ For *Burnaburiash* was the son of *Kadashman-Enlil*, that is, Ben-Hadad I, and I have already identified Shalmaneser III as a son of this same Ben-Hadad. *Burnaburiash* was yet another 'Great King' at the time of pharaoh Akhnaton. He, like *Tushratta*, addressed himself to the pharaoh as 'thy brother'.

What is gratifying here is that the rulers of Mitanni and the Kassite kings of Babylonia, of identical origin in the context of my revision, are likewise considered to have been of 'Indo-European' extraction. The Kassites were I believe simply those 'Indo-European' immigrants, now as conquerors and rulers of Babylonia.

There is still one more important identity for our master-king, Ben-Hadad I (*Tushratta*), and that is in relation to Egypt (see *Chapter 9*, p. 195), where he will be found to be, as a son of Omri, an ethnic (at least) 'relative' of the 19th Ramesside dynasty. But this remaining connection will make more sense only after we have discussed how the final conquest by these 'Indo-European' kings, the conquest of Egypt, was achieved - and this by a son of our composite king: namely, *Aziru/Hazael*.

The Omride King Ahab in EA

We should not expect the early part of Ahab's relations with Ben-Hadad I to be reflected in Akhnaton's correspondence; Akhnaton's reign being a bit too late for that. The EA letters seem to commence rather with the latter decade or so of pharaoh Amenhotep III, and flow over into the approximately 17-year reign of Akhnaton; and possibly even down to the beginning of Tutankhamun's reign.²⁰⁹

²⁰⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.

²⁰⁸ *Ages in Chaos*, pp. 307-309, 313, 317.

²⁰⁹ Thus Campbell, *op. cit.*, ch's ii-iii.

Now EA's *Lab'ayu*, whom I shall be identifying with Ahab of Israel (c. 874-853 BC, conventional dates), appropriately straddles both part of Amenhotep III's reign and the early part of Akhnaton's. Velikovsky, for his part, had, as already mentioned, looked to identify Ahab with *Rib-Addi* of *Gubla*, the most prolific Syro-Palestine correspondent to the EA pharaohs (over 50 letters in number).²¹⁰ And this was surely a big mistake. For, in order for him to 'make' Ahab, like *Rib-Addi*, a very old man at death, Velikovsky was prepared to fly in the face of the biblical data and completely re-cast the chronology of Ahab's life. He had convinced himself that there existed a contradiction between the accounts of Ahab in Kings and Chronicles so that, as he claimed, Ahab did not die at the battle of Ramoth-gilead as is stated in 1 Kings 22 (cf. vv. 6, 29 & 37), but rather reigned on for a further 8-10 years. Thus, according to Velikovsky's view, king Jehoram of Israel (c. 853-841 BC, conventional dates), never truly existed, but was a ghost.

From a biblical point of view, the fact that *Rib-Addi* had been able to report the death of *Abdi-Ashirta* (Velikovsky's Ben-Hadad I) meant that Velikovsky was quite wrong in identifying *Rib-Addi* with king Ahab; since Ahab's death preceded that of Ben-Hadad (cf. 1 Kings 22:40 & 2 Kings 8:15). But this was Velikovsky in his favourite rôle as "the arbiter of history", according to Sieff,²¹¹ forcing historical data to fit a pre-conceived idea. Velikovsky called this *Rib-Addi* king of *Gubla* and *Sumur* (var. *Sumura*),²¹² which EA cities he had tried to equate with Ahab's chief cities of, respectively, Jezreel and Samaria; though they are usually identified with the coastal cities of Byblos (Gebal) and Simyra. Moreover, letters from Egypt may indicate that *Sumur* was not really *Rib-Addi*'s concern at all.²¹³ Velikovsky greatly confused the issue of Ahab of Israel for those coming after him, since *Rib-Addi* was chronologically and geographically unsuitable for Ahab. Revisionists have since rightly rejected this part of Velikovsky's EA reconstruction, with Sieff suggesting instead that *Rib-Addi* may have been Jehoram of Israel.²¹⁴ Liel favours this view from the perspective of her linguistic name studies. She has analysed the EA name, *Rib-Addi*, in the context of Israel's Divided Monarchy - I have already discussed her treatise on the *Addi* element in the name (ADP) - and has come to the same conclusion as had Sieff, assisted by James, but in her case on name basis alone:²¹⁵

This king, whose name is read conventionally as Rib-Addi, was identified by Velikovsky as Ahab son of Omri, king of Samaria and Jezreel. Within our framework of a biblically aligned stratigraphy, it is certain that this king reigned during the divided monarchy.

²¹⁰ *Ages in Chaos*, ch. vi.

²¹¹ 'Velikovsky and His Heroes', p. 115. Velikovsky is referred to in the same article (on the very next page) as the 'conquistador of history', p. 116.

²¹² Velikovsky had noted that: "... not only personal but even geographical names were spelled in the letters in different ways: ... Biridia (in one instance he wrote his name Biridri) announced to the pharaoh that he was defending Makida; another time he wrote that he was defending Magiidda. There are many similar examples in the letters". *Urusalim* also appears in the letters as *Buruzilim*, whilst *Sumur* is also given as *Sumura*. *Ages in Chaos*, p. 300.

²¹³ According to Campbell, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

²¹⁴ 'The Two Jehorams', *ibid.*

²¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, section: "The King of Sumur and Gubla".

But which king of North Israel he was, assuming that he was indeed a king of North Israel, is less certain. Peter James and Martin Sieff have presented impressive arguments for identifying him as Ahab's son Jehoram, and the late Bronson Feldman considered him to have been the usurper Jehu. For now, we will concern ourselves with the reading of this king's name. ... [Rib-Addi] the king of Sumur and Gubla, we see that his name, in a 9th century context, is best read Rib-Addu-DI, or Rib-Adduram. With "Addu" understood as a general term denoting the local chief deity, it is perfectly legitimate to read this name as Rib-Yauram, or Jehoram the Elder.

As described in the *Jerusalem Chronology of the Israelite Monarchies (JCIM)*, Jehoshaphat appointed his son Jehoram coregent while he was in the North, helping Ahab to fight against Aram. But Ahab's son Jehoram became king of North Israel before Jehoshaphat died.

In order to avoid the confusion that was bound to arise with two Jehorams ruling in the same general area, Ahab's son signed himself as Jehoram the Elder, or Jehoram the Greater. The particle "rib" can be understood in either way, and there is actually no reason to assume that this king was older than his southern brother-in-law. Why was this necessary? After all, the Bible distinguishes these two kings by patronymic: Jehoram son of Ahab and Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat.

The answer lies in the political situation at the time. ... One of the signs of a sovereign state is that it chooses its own rulers. A state which is subject to another has its rulers chosen for it. As a matter of practice in the ancient world, this was usually limited to confirming the heir of the previous ruler. If there was a question of loyalties, the imperial power might take more active steps, such as choosing between two rival heirs or even putting an end to a ruling dynasty. This was the exception rather than the rule. But even when succession was automatically confirmed, the legality of the situation, at least from the standpoint of the imperial power, was that vassals ruled, not as their fathers' heirs, but by appointment.

We find an illustration of this in a letter sent from the king of Jerusalem to Pharaoh (EA 286). The king of Jerusalem protests his loyalty to Egypt, proclaiming: Behold, neither my mother nor my father has put me in this place. The mighty hand of the king had led me into the house of my father. Despite the clear indication of dynastic succession ("the house of my father"), the king of Jerusalem is here proclaiming his loyalty in the clearest way possible, by acknowledging that he rules only at the whim of Pharaoh. For Jehoram son of Omri to have referred to himself as "Yauram mar Humri" would have implied that he held his throne by virtue of his birth, and would have constituted an act of rebellion against Egypt.

More problematical to the *Rib-Addi* = Jehoram of Israel theory though are the geographical difficulties, as Liel now admits:

Certain questions remain regarding the identification of the Rib-Yauram of the Amarna letters and the biblical Jehoram son of Omri.

The main one is geographical; i.e., can Sumur and Gubla be identified with Samaria and Jezreel? This question will be dealt with in a forthcoming paper to be entitled “The Hebrew-Phoenician-Aramean Kingdom of North Israel.”

It remains to be seen whether Liel can sort out the geography required to enable *Rib-Addi* to be also Jehoram of Israel. Certainly we have seen that the Omrides, as rulers of Mitanni, governed a vast territory, which apparently also incorporated Phoenicia. Though whether Jehoram could feasibly have been the aged *Rib-Addi* is another consideration. Whether or not *Rib-Addi* turns out to be Jehoram of Israel, a far better EA candidate for Ahab than *Rib-Addi*, in my opinion, and indeed a more obvious one – and I am quite surprised that no one has yet taken it up – is *Lab'ayu*, known to have been a king of the Shechem region, which is very close to Samaria (only 9 km SE distant); especially given my quote earlier (p. 54) from Cook that the geopolitical situation at this time in the “(north) [was akin to that of the] Israelites of a later [sic] time”. *Lab'ayu* is never actually identified in the EA letters as king of either Samaria or of Shechem. Nevertheless, Aharoni has designated *Lab'ayu* as “King of Shechem” in his description of the geopolitical situation in Palestine during the EA period (Aharoni, of course, is a conventional scholar writing of a period he thinks must have been well pre-monarchical):²¹⁶

In the hill country there were only a few political centres, and each of these ruled over a fairly extensive area. In all the hill country of Judah and Ephraim we hear only of Jerusalem and Shechem with possible allusions to Beth-Horon and Manahath, towns within the realm of Jerusalem's king.

... Apparently the kings of Jerusalem and Shechem dominated, to all practical purposes, the entire central hill country at that time. The territory controlled by Labayu, King of Shechem, was especially large in contrast to the small Canaanite principalities round about. Only one letter refers to Shechem itself, and we get the impression that this is not simply a royal Canaanite city but rather an extensive kingdom with Shechem as its capital.

Against all objections already discussed, this description sounds very much to me like the distinct northern and southern realms during the split kingdom era! Note, too, how the more northerly region of Galilee is missing from this description. We might recall that Ben-Hadad I and/or Tab-rimmon had taken these towns from Israel's king Baasha. De Vaux considered Aharoni's identification of Shechem as the capital of *Lab'ayu's* kingdom as being by no means certain:²¹⁷

Lab'ayu was not, however, given the title of king of Shechem and it is very doubtful whether he ever was. *It would seem too that he did not live at Shechem; his authority was probably exercised from elsewhere* by means of an agreement made with the inhabitants.

²¹⁶ *The Land of the Bible*, p. 163.

²¹⁷ *The Early History of Israel*, p. 801. Emphasis added.

The latter took care of the internal administration of the city and recognised Lab'ayu's authority as a kind of protectorate....

In the light of this, the conclusion of Rohl and Newgrosh is valid:²¹⁸ "In most scholarly works Labayu is referred to as the king or ruler of Shechem and this, we feel, has been misleading".

Neither is *Lab'ayu*, as I already have noted, ever specifically mentioned in EA as a ruler of Samaria. However, given the close proximity of Shechem to Samaria - and given the apparently "extensive" rule of *Lab'ayu* - then he stands, in a revised context, as the ideal identification for king Ahab of Israel. I am encouraged in this by the fact that Aharoni's description of the kingdom over which *Lab'ayu* reigned appears to correspond very well with the realm of Ahab as far as we know it.²¹⁹

Lab'ayu was a serious contender with the kings of Jerusalem and Gezer. EA 250 indicates that ... he even dominated the entire Sharon, having conquered Gath-padalla (Jett in the central Sharon) and Gath-rimmon (apparently the biblical town of this name ...). Even in the north Lab'ayu was not content to possess only the hill country; he tried to penetrate into the Jezreel Valley, laying siege to Megiddo (EA 244) and destroying Shunem and some other towns (EA 250).

Jericho is supposed to have been rebuilt at the time of king Ahab, and Rohl has, in an overview of the stratigraphy of Jericho - from Joshua to Ahab - managed to locate, as he believes, the building phase undertaken there during Ahab's reign:²²⁰

It was during the twenty-three year reign of AHAB that the ruin-mound of Jericho was reoccupied on a *permanent* basis by the Israelite clan chieftain, Hiel of Bethel. As had been the custom for centuries in the ancient Levant, Hiel ritually sacrificed his eldest and youngest sons, Abiram and Segub, in order to lay their bodies as foundation deposits beneath the chieftain's new residence and town gate. Thus Joshua's curse, made before the smouldering ruins of Jericho over five centuries earlier, came to be fulfilled.

"Accursed before Yahweh be the man who rises up and rebuilds this city (of Jericho)! On his first-born will he lay its foundations! On his youngest son will he set up its gates!" [Joshua 6:26].

Hiel's new town is represented in the archaeological record by Iron Age pottery found at Jericho, the succeeding phases of which continue on down into Byzantine times.

²¹⁸ 'The el-Amarna Letters and the New Chronology', p. 25.

²¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 175.

²²⁰ *The Lost Testament*, p. 401.

Now that the Holy Land stratigraphical timeline has been re-synchronised with ... biblical history ... the pattern of archaeological remains at Tell es-Sultan (the ruin mound of Jericho) corresponds remarkably with the biblical narrative.

First the well-fortified Middle Bronze II-B city is destroyed by fire and abandoned for decades, its walls having tumbled down in an earthquake – this, of course, is Joshua’s Jericho destroyed during the ... conquest of the Promised Land.

A brief occupation of the site by Eglon, ruler of Moab, follows (represented by the ‘Middle Building’ and LB I pottery). Then, after several centuries, there is another brief reoccupation by David’s ambassadors in 1000 BC (re-use of the Middle Building and LB II-A pottery). This too was abandoned and the site left to the wind and rain for a further one hundred and ninety years before Hiel’s resettlement in 869 BC (the Iron Age I remains).

The Jericho of the conventional chronology – a site which consistently failed to match the biblical story at every archaeological stage – moves out of the realms of mythology and suddenly fits like a freshly cut key.

Lab’ayu’s Speech

Lab’ayu is thought to have been no timid lackey of pharaoh, at least according to Albright:²²¹ “The truculence of Labaya’s tone in writing to the court contrasts oddly with the grovelling subservience of most Palestinian chieftains”. Most grovelling of all perhaps was *Abdi-Ashirta* himself, who had written to pharaoh during a time of crisis:

LETTER 64: To the king, my lord, say. Thus says Abdi-Ashtarti [Ashirta], the servant of the king: At the feet of my king, my lord, I have fallen seven times ... and seven times in addition, upon breast as well as back. May the king, my lord, learn that enmity is mighty against me

Like *Lab’ayu*, the biblical Ahab could indeed be an outspoken person, bold in speech to both fellow kings and prophets (cf. 1 Kings 18:17; 20:11). But *Lab’ayu*, like all the other duplicitous Syro-Palestinian kings, instinctively knew when, and how, to grovel to pharaoh. Thus, when having to protest his loyalty and readiness to pay tribute to the crown, *Lab’ayu* really excelled himself:²²² “Further: In case the king should write for my wife, would I refuse her? In case the king should write to me: “Run a dagger of bronze into thy heart and die”, would I not, indeed, execute the command of the king?”

Lab’ayu moreover may have - like Ahab - used Hebrew speech. The language of the EA letters is Akkadian, but one letter by *Lab’ayu*, EA 252, proved to be very difficult to translate.²²³

²²¹ ‘The Amarna Letters from Palestine’, p. 115.

²²² S. Mercer, *The Tell El-Amarna Tablets*, # 254, p. 663.

²²³ C. Gadd, ‘The Tell el-Amarna Tablets’, p. 123. “No. 252 is a very obscure letter, and K[nudtzon]’s uncertainty is plainly shown by the gaps and italics of his translation”.

Albright,²²⁴ in 1943, published a more satisfactory translation than had hitherto been possible by discerning that its author had used a good many so-called ‘Canaanite’ words plus two Hebrew proverbs! EA 252 has a stylised introduction in the typical EA formula and in the first 15 lines utilises only two ‘Canaanite’ words. Thereafter, in the main body of the text, Albright noted (and later scholars have concurred) that *Lab’ayu* used only about 20% pure Akkadian, “with 40% mixed or ambiguous, and no less than 40% pure Canaanite”. Albright further identified the word *nam-lu* in line 16 as the Hebrew word for ‘ant’ (*nemalah*), נְמָלָה, the Akkadian word being *zirbabu*. *Lab’ayu* had written: “If ants are smitten, they do not accept (the smiting) quietly, but they bite the hand of the man who smites them”. Albright recognised here a parallel with the two biblical Proverbs mentioning ants (6:6 and 30:25).

Ahab likewise was inclined to use a proverbial saying as an aggressive counterpoint to a potentate. When the belligerent Ben-Hadad I sent him messengers threatening: ‘May the gods do this to me and more if there are enough handfuls of rubble in Samaria for all the people in my following [i.e. my massive army]’ (1 Kings 20:10), Ahab answered: ‘The proverb says: The man who puts on his armour is not the one who can boast, but the man who takes it off’ (v.11).

“It is a pity”, wrote Rohl and Newgrosh,²²⁵ “that Albright was unable to take his reasoning process just one step further because, in almost every instance where he detected the use of what he called ‘Canaanite’ one could legitimately substitute the term ‘Hebrew’.”

Lab’ayu’s son too, *Mut-Baal* - my tentative choice for Ahaziah of Israel (c. 853 BC) [especially if *Rib-Addi* proves to be Ahab’s other royal son, Jehoram] - also displayed in one of his letters (EA 256) some so-called ‘Canaanite’ and mixed origin words. Albright noted of line 13:²²⁶ “As already recognized by the interpreters, *this idiom is pure Hebrew*”. Albright even went very close to admitting that the local speech *was Hebrew*.²²⁷

... phonetically, morphologically, and syntactically the people then living in the district ... spoke a dialect of Hebrew (Canaanite) which was very closely akin to that of Ugarit. The differences which some scholars have listed between Biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic are, in fact, nearly all chronological distinctions.

But even these ‘chronological distinctions’ cease to be a real issue in the Velikovskian context, according to which both the EA letters and the Ugaritic tablets are re-located to the time of the Divided Monarchy.

Liel has shown just how interesting, in this revised context, can be a linguistic study of EA names.

²²⁴ ‘An Archaic Hebrew Proverb in an Amarna Letter from Central Palestine’, pp. 29-32.

²²⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 27.

²²⁶ ‘Two Little Understood Amarna Letters from the Middle Jordan Valley’, p. 11. Emphasis added.

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 7-8.

The Name, 'Lab'ayu'

Lab'ayu, according to Rohl and Newgrosh, means "Lion Man", or - as explained as follows - "Lion of [God]".²²⁸

The name Labayu has the meaning 'lion (of [Divine Name])' In this respect it is similar to the names of other Amarna personalities who bear names such as Kalbaya = 'dog (of [Divine Name])' or Tadia = 'beloved (of [Divine Name])' or Aziru = '([Divine Name] is) he who helps'. The names of the deities in each case are not mentioned but are understood: one might imagine perhaps Kalbaya-[Baal], Tadia-[Heba], [Hadad]-aziru, etc.

Campbell noted that there has in fact been suggested a similarity between *Lab'ayu* and the name, *Kalbaya*, found in EA 32:²²⁹

Letter 32 concerns itself with *Kal-ba-ia*, the name bearing Hittite case-endings, nominative in line 1 and accusative in lines 4 and 10. The name has been read *Lab-ba-ia* also, and there is no orthographic argument against such a reading of the first sign....

Campbell then shows the name's relationship (at least in part) to Hebrew:

Albright has effectively shown that Lab'ayu's name is built upon the root *lb'* with the *-ay-* ending common to many early Hebrew and Ugaritic personal names, and indeed common probably to the name *Kal-ba-ia*, which he suggests as the correct reading of the name in letter 32.

If the Omride king Ahab were of 'Indo-European' and/or Hurrian origins, then perhaps this might help to explain Campbell's identification of 'Hittite case endings' in connection with his name, as *Lab'ayu*, or *Kal-ba-ia*.

The name 'Ahab' itself might indeed be a variation of *Ahba*, or *Hiba*, the Hittite/Hurrian goddess. Similarly, there was an *Eliahba* (*Eli-Hiba*) amongst David's officers (2 Samuel 23:32). Liel though, in her analysis of the name 'Ahab' in relation to Velikovsky's attempted identification of him with EA's *Rib-Addi*, has given no indication whatsoever of her having picked up any foreign aspect to Ahab's name:²³⁰

In *Ages in Chaos*, Velikovsky identified [*Rib-Addi*] with Ahab son of Omri. As a linguistic justification of this identification, he wrote,

²²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 28.

²²⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

²³⁰ *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

The name Rib-Addi, written in ideograms, means “the elder [brother among the sons] of the father”, the first part of the name signifying “the elder” or “the elder” son, and the second part “father.” It is constructed like the Hebrew name Ahab, the first part of which means “brother” (ah), the second part “father” (ab).

While it is true that “rib” derives from the Akkadian word denoting “great” or “big” (*rab*), and may well mean “the elder”, the addition “[brother among the sons]” is an invention of Velikovsky’s, seemingly for the sole purpose of identifying the two names. “The elder father” is not an exceptionally strange title for a king to use, although we may be left with the question of why Jehoram chose to use such a title.

On a different note, Campbell could not believe that so petty a king as he imagined *Lab’ayu* to have been would have, as EA 32 indicates, ranged as far northwards as Arzawa (not certainly located, but thought to be in Cilicia or in Lydia), to get a foreign wife:²³¹

To assume, however, that Lab’ayu, who did wander as far afield as Megiddo and the outskirts of his hill-country stronghold [sic], should go so far as to try to make a marriage contract with the daughter of the king of a region fully 300 miles away, is at best a strain on one’s credibility. ...

Ahab though, as we have seen, was by no means a petty king. We know that Ahab’s influence, as an Omride, *did* extend northwards, and that he *did* enter into a marriage contract with Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, ruler over the Sidonians (1 Kings 16:31); a marriage contract that I shall link up in *Chapter 9* with both Ahab’s treaty with his brother Ben-Hadad I and with *Lab’ayu’s* venture to Arzawa to gain a foreign wife (see section, “Queen Jezebel”, beginning on p. 209). Thus EA 32 might be giving some true indication of the extent of Ahab’s influence (and this might further support Liel’s hypothesis that Jehoram of Israel had solid Phoenician connections).

Lab’ayu’s Sons

There are several letters that refer to the “sons of Lab’ayu”, but also a small number that, after *Lab’ayu’s* death, refer specifically to “the two sons of Lab’ayu” (e.g. EA 250). It follows from my reconstruction that these “two sons of Lab’ayu” were Ahab’s two princely sons, Ahaziah and Jehoram; the former actually dying in the same year as his father.

Only one of the sons though, *Mut-Baal* of *Pi-hi-li* (= Pella, on the east bank of the Jordan), is specifically named. He, my tentative choice for Ahab’s son, Ahaziah - as well as *Shuttarna II* of Hurri/Mitanni - was the author of EA 255 & 256.

²³¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

Campbell,²³² rightly sensing that “Mut-Ba‘lu’s role as prince of Pella could conceivably coincide with Lab‘ayu’s role as prince of Shechem [sic]”, was more inclined however to the view that “Mut-Ba‘lu would not be in a prominent enough position to write his own diplomatic correspondence until after his father’s death”.

But when one realises that *Lab‘ayu* was not a petty ruler, but a powerful king of Israel - namely, Ahab, an Omride - then one can also accept that his son, *Mut-Baal*/Ahaziah could have been powerful enough in his own right (as either co-rex or pro-rex) to have been writing his own diplomatic letters.

That Ahaziah of Israel might also have been called *Mut-Baal* is interesting. Biblical scholars have sometimes pointed out, regarding the names of Ahab’s sons, that whilst Jezebel was known to have been a fierce persecutor of the Yahwists, Ahab must have been more loyal, having bestowed upon his sons the non-pagan names of ‘Ahaziah’ and ‘Jehoram’. Along similar lines, Liel has written in her ADP context:

One reason for the use of the generic Addu in place of the actual DN, especially in correspondence between nations worshipping different deities, might have been to avoid the profanation of the divine name by those who did not have the same reverence for it. This would be the case especially for the Israelites. Even Israelites such as Ahab, who introduced Baal worship, did not do so, in their estimation, at the expense of YHVH, Whom they continued to revere. Ahab gave his children (at least those mentioned in the Bible) names containing YHVH: Jehoram, Ahaziah, Jehoash and Athaliah. He also showed great respect and deference to the prophet Elijah.

The truth of the matter is that Ahab called Elijah “my enemy”, אִיְבִי (1 Kings 21:20). And, if Elijah were also the prophet, Micaiah son of Imlah, as I shall be suggesting later, then Ahab also said of him: ‘... I hate him ...’ (v. 8). Moreover, if, as I am claiming here, Ahaziah were in fact EA’s *Mut-Baal* - a name that refers to the Phoenicio-Canaanite gods *Mot* and *Baal* - then such arguments in favour of Ahab’s supposed reverence for Yahwism might lose much of their force. Given the tendency towards syncretism in religion, a combination of Yahwism and Baalism (e.g. 1 Kings 18:21), we might even expect the Syro-Palestinians to have at once a Yahwistic and a pagan name.

Scholars find that *Mut-Baal*’s kingdom, like that of his father, spread both east and west of the Jordan. They infer from the letters that *Lab‘ayu* had ruled a large area in the Transjordan that was later to be the main substance of the kingdom of *Mut-Baal*. In EA 255 *Mut-Baal* writes to pharaoh to say he is to convey one of the latter’s caravans to *Hanigalbat* (Mitanni); he mentions that his father, *Lab‘ayu*, was in the custom of overseeing all the caravans that pharaoh sent there. *Lab‘ayu* could have done so only if he controlled those areas of Transjordan through which the caravans were to pass. The area that came under the rule of *Mut-Baal* affected territories both east and west of the Jordan. In EA 256 we learn that the kingdom of Ashtaroth bordered on *Mut-Baal*’s (to the N and E: Ashtaroth being the capital of biblical Bashan) and that this neighbour was his ally.

²³² *Ibid*, p. 97.

That *Mut-Baal* held sway west of the Jordan may also be deduced from EA 250, whose author complains that the “two sons of Labayu” had written urging him to make war on Gina in Jezreel (modern Jenin). The writer also records that the messenger of *Milkilu* “does not move from the sons of Labayu”, indicating to pharaoh an alliance between these parties, which further suggests that *Mut-Baal* had interests west of the Jordan.

It will be seen from the above that the territory ruled by *Lab'ayu* and his sons, which bordered on the territories of Gezer in the west and Jerusalem in the south, also including the Sharon coastal plain, reaching at least as far as the Jezreel valley/Esdrælon in the north, and stretching over the Transjordan to adjoin Bashan, corresponds remarkably well with the territories ruled by Ahab of Israel and his sons.

Mut-Baal, as a king of a region of Transjordan (no doubt as a sub-king with his father) had been accused to the Egyptian commissioner, *Yanhamu*, of harbouring one *Ayyab* (var. *Aiab*); a name usually equated with *Job*. Could this though be a reference to his own father, Ahab (by the latter's biblical name)? *Mut-Baal* protested against this accusation, using the excuse that *Ayyab* - whom the Egyptian official apparently suspected of having also been in the region of Transjordan - was actually on campaign elsewhere [EA 256]:

Say to Yanhamu, my lord: Message of *Mutbaal*, your servant. I fall at the feet of my lord. How can it be said in your presence: ‘Mutbaal has fled. He has hidden *Ayab*’? How can the king of Pella flee from the commissioner, agent of the king my lord? As the king, my lord, lives ... I swear *Ayab* is not in Pella. In fact, he has [been in the field] (i.e. on campaign) for two months. Just ask *Benenima*....

It should be noted that kings and officials were expected to ‘inform’ even on members of their own family. *Lab'ayu* himself had, prior to this, actually informed on one of his fathers-in-law.²³³ These scheming ‘vassal kings’ were continually changing allegiance; at one moment being reckoned amongst the *habiru* insurgents, then being attacked by these rebels - but, always, protesting their loyalty to the crown.

Queen Jezebel

Velikovsky had, with typical ingenuity, looked to identify the only female correspondent of EA, *Baalat Neše*, as the biblical ‘Great Woman of Shunem’, whose dead son the prophet Elisha had resurrected (cf. 2 Kings 4:8 & 4:34-35).²³⁴ Whilst the name *Baalat Neše* is usually translated as ‘Mistress of Lions’, Velikovsky thought that it could also be rendered as “a woman to whom occurred a wonder” (thus referring to Elisha's miracle). This female correspondent wrote two letters (EA 273, 274) to Akhnaton, telling him that the SA.GAZ pillagers had sent bands to Aijalon (a fortress guarding the NW approach to Jerusalem). She wrote about “two sons of Milkili” in connection with a raid.

²³³ Or even his son, according to one version of *Lab'ayu's* letter EA 254: “Besides, the king has written about my son. I did not know that my son associates with the *habiru*. Right now I am sending him to Addaya [the Egyptian commissioner]”.

²³⁴ *Ages in Chaos*, p. 220.

The menace was not averted because she had to write again for pharaoh's help. Liel, in the process of linguistically unravelling the Sumerian name of this female correspondent, points to what she sees as being inaccuracies in Velikovsky's own identification of her:²³⁵

NIN.UR.MAH.MESH

This lady's name is generally transcribed as "Baalat Nese", which means "Lady of Lions". Velikovsky either saw a transcription where the diacritical mark above the "s" which indicates that it is pronounced "h" was omitted, or didn't know what the mark meant.

[Since this character doesn't show up well in HTML, I've used a regular "s". The consonant is actually rendered as an "s" with an upside-down caret above it, like a small letter "v".] [Liel's comment]

He also took the "e" at the end of the word as a silent "e", the way it often is in English. Having done all this, he concluded that the second word was not "nese," but "nes," the Hebrew word for miracle. He then drew a connection with the Shunnamite woman in the book of Kings who had a miracle done for her.

Flights of fancy aside, the name has in truth been a subject of debate, so much so that many books nowadays tend to leave it as an unnormalized Sumerogram. The NIN is no problem. It means "Lady," the feminine equivalent of "Lord." Nor is the MESH difficult at all; it is the plural suffix What is UR.MAH? One attested meaning is "lion." This is the source of the "Lady of Lions" reading.

In a revised context *Baalat Neše*, the 'Mistress of Lions', or 'Lady of Lions', would most likely be, I suggest, Jezebel, the wife of king Ahab. Jezebel, too, was wont to write official letters - in the name of her husband, sealing these with his seal (1 Kings 21:8). And would it not be most appropriate for the 'Mistress of Lions' (*Baalat Neše*) to have been married to the 'Lion Man' (*Lab'ayu*)? *Baalat* (*Baalath*, the goddess of Byblos) is just the feminine form of *Baal*. Hence, *Baalat Neše* may possibly be the EA rendering of the name, *Jezebel*, with the theophoric inverted: thus, *Neše-Baal(at)*. Her concern for Aijalon, near Jerusalem, would not be out of place since *Lab'ayu* himself had also expressed concern for that town.

Death of Lab'ayu (Ahab)

The Scriptures describe the death of king Ahab in battle in a passage so descriptive as to convey to the reader the impression of eye-witness reporting (1 Kings 22:29-38). The EA letters may throw further light upon the situation by revealing that the war between Israel and the Syrians was not just limited to Ramoth-gilead - as one might have imagined from the brief biblical account. *Lab'ayu* had apparently felt free to resume his warlike activities because the Egyptian garrison had quit the fortress of Megiddo and returned to Egypt. Thus *Biridiya*, commandant of Megiddo, wrote:

²³⁵ *Op. cit.*, section: "Nin.Ur.Mah.Mesh".

LETTER 242: Let the king know that ever since the archers returned (to Egypt?), Lab'ayu has carried on hostilities against me, and we are not able to go outside the gate in the presence of Lab'ayu since he learned that thou hast not given archers; and his face is set to take Megiddo.

Biridiya asked pharaoh for 100 garrison troops (just as *Rib-Addi* had asked on behalf of *Sumur*). "Verily, there is no other purpose in Lab'ayu. He seeks to destroy Megiddo". The Bible gives the clear impression that Hazael's star was now in the ascendancy over that of Ben-Hadad I. Thus the prophet Elijah, whilst at Sinai, had been commanded (1 Kings 19:15-16):

'Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; and when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria; and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place'.

It would thus be likely that Ahab's last war with Syria was directed largely against Hazael, rather than Ben-Hadad. Perhaps Elijah had recognised that Hazael was a better prospect than his now wavering father for helping to wipe out the line of Ahab. And apparently Egypt had become similarly discontent with *Lab'ayu*; for Akhnaton had issued a warrant for his arrest. Pharaoh, by this stage, had wanted the rebel *Lab'ayu* in person as a captive, in Egypt. But the latter proved to be too slippery for him. From the following letter by *Biridiya* it seems that, whilst *Zurata* of Acco (*Biridiya's* son) had managed to capture *Lab'ayu*, he had then - perhaps having been bribed by *Lab'ayu* with the same amount as the pharaoh's ransom - allowed him return home:

LETTER 248: ... and *Zurata* removed *Lab'ayu* from Megiddo, saying to me: "I will send him by ship to the king [pharaoh]", and *Zurata* took him and sent him home from Hannathon, for *Zurata* had received his ransom money in his hand. *Zurata* has sent *Lab'ayu*, and *Zurata* has sent *Ba'lu-mihir* to their homes, and let the king, my lord, be informed!

Biridiya importantly records the violent death of *Lab'ayu*:

LETTER 248: Further, I said to my brethren, 'If the gods of the king, our lord [i.e., pharaoh Akhnaton], grant that we capture *Lab'ayu*, then we will bring him alive to the king our lord'; but my mare was felled by an arrow, and I alighted afterwards and rode with *Yasdata*, but before my arrival they had slain [*Akkad. dâku*] him.

This report, if able to be coupled with *Mut-Baal's* information that *Ayab* had been on campaign - and presuming that *Ayab* and *Lab'ayu* were the same person - would mean that *Lab'ayu* was, like Ahab, actually slain in battle.

After the death of *Lab'ayu* - a “veritable chronological landmark”, as Rohl and Newgrosh have called it²³⁶ - we find the western powers making large territorial gains. The consequence of their northern victory over *Lab'ayu* is spelt out by *Abdi-Hiba* in EA 289, when he writes that “the men of Gath have a garrison in Beth-Shan”.

A Tentative Identification for Tukulti-Ninurta

Though Tukulti-Ninurta, whether I or II, is generally followed in the king lists by an Ashurnasirpal, I am going to make the tentative suggestion now that Tukulti-Ninurta I, whom I have identified with II, was in fact *the very same person* as our composite Ashurnasirpal (= Ben-Hadad I/*Abdi-Ashirta/Tushratta*). The description, “... *first great Assyrian monarch of the new period*” (p. 77), applied to Ashurnasirpal II, would certainly fit well the potent Tukulti-Ninurta I. Our composite Tukulti-Ninurta, like the composite *Tushratta*, (i) fought effectively against the Hittites; (ii) conquered Babylon; and (iii) was murdered by his son.

Omri would then be the *Shalmaneser*, father of Tukulti-Ninurta I (presuming this information is itself correct). This means that Omri, then, probably did rule over Assyria. Thus he could have parcelled out other kingdoms (e.g. Syro-Palestinian kingdoms) to his sons, just as Shamsi-Adad I had, in an earlier era, given kingdoms, or delegated responsibilities, to his sons.

Though to merge Tukulti-Ninurta with his presumed son would go against all orthodoxy in Assyriology, I shall be considering this same situation again in relation to a very important neo-Assyrian king in *Chapter 6*, where I shall argue that the ancient texts have, in certain important cases, been made by certain eminent Assyriologists to say what they originally did not say, greatly to the detriment of the reconstruction of ancient history and chronology.

According to this new scenario (and this has significant ramifications for TAP), the *Ashur-nadin-apli* who murdered Tukulti-Ninurta I would then be Assuruballit/*Aziru*, who I have argued murdered his father, *Abdi-Ashirta/Tushratta*. Also called *Ashurnasirpal* (though this is apparently from the late record of the Babylonian Chronicle), the patricide was not the well-known Ashurnasirpal of Assyrian history, but rather Assuruballit.

Conclusion

Having introduced here, in a significantly revised context, the ancestrally important Omri, his sons and contemporaries, we can now push on in the next chapter to study Jehu, closely involved with these Omrides - and the latter's revised environment. This Jehu will become, according to this thesis, the dynastic founder of the Ramessides. Now it was the later 20th dynasty Ramessides, as we shall find in *Chapter 12*, who were contemporaneous with EOH.

²³⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 36.

4

Background to Era of Hezekiah. A Dynastic King (mid-late C9th BC)

Introduction

This chapter will be built largely around the terms of the Sinai commission to the prophet Elijah, but with JEHU being the central character (1 Kings 19:15-17):

Then the Lord said to [Elijah], ‘Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael [הַחַזְאֵל] as king over Aram. Also you shall anoint Jehu [יְהוּא] son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha [אֵלִישָׁא] son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill ...’.

Thus Hazael, Jehu and Elisha were to form a triumvirate to wipe out the House of Ahab and to eradicate the worship of Baal in the region. In history the three were to become, as I shall endeavour to show in this chapter and in *Chapter 10*, men of great fame and renown. Velikovsky had already ‘enlarged’ Hazael by his identifying of him with EA’s *Aziru*, son of *Abdi-ashirta*. And we saw in significant detail in the previous chapter just how mighty and influential this *Abdi-ashirta* was, particularly at the peak of his power. Velikovsky had also, in his discussion of idioms that he thought were common to EA and the Old Testament, referred to certain texts culminating in the prophet Elisha’s weeping at the prospect of the mighty deeds – but terrible to Israel – that Hazael would accomplish. He had observed that certain idiomatic phrases in the EA correspondence occurred again in the Old Testament for the C9th BC. For instance, the use of the term ‘brother’, or ‘my [thy] brother’, was, as we have seen, very common amongst the more powerful of the EA kings. Another recurring EA idiom was the use of the term/phrase: ‘[a] [the] dog[s]’. Velikovsky had noted for instance in regard to Hazael of Syria’s reply to the prophet Elisha, ‘... is thy servant a dog [כִּי מֵה עֶבְדְּךָ הַכֶּלֶב], that he should do this great thing?’, when Elisha had foretold that Hazael would set on fire Israel’s strongholds (2 Kings 8:13), that:

[Hazael’s] expression, ‘is thy servant a dog ...?’ which incidentally escaped oblivion, was a typical figure of speech at the time of the el-Amarna letters. Many chieftains and governors concluded their letters with the sentence: ‘Is thy servant a dog that he shall not hear the words of the king, the lord?’

Velikovsky found the idiom used again by *Rib-Addi* of *Gubla* with reference to *Aziru* and his father *Abdi-Ashirta*:

Letter 125: Aziru has again oppressed me My cities belong to Aziru, and he seeks after me ... What are the dogs, the sons of Abdi-Ashirta, that they act according to their heart's wish, and cause the cities of the king to go up in smoke?

Whilst that was an encouraging find, some of these idioms - including the two just mentioned ('am I a dog' and '[my] brother') - were also used at the time of kings David and Solomon (cf. 1 Samuel 17:43 & 1 Kings 9:13), and the second at least is found again in the C6th BC Lachish letters, a fair spread of time of about half a millennium; so these idioms apparently were not peculiar to EA. I had also pointed out that 'brother' was a term used by *Iarim-Lim* of *Iamkhad* to the prince of Dêr in Mesopotamia; though not in a fraternal, but in a threatening, business-like context.

Velikovsky, as we saw earlier, had quoted another EA letter, too, in connection with the Old Testament, in which *Rib-Addi* had reported that *Abdi-Ashirta* had fallen seriously ill:

Letter 95: Abdi-Ashirta is very sick, who knows but that he will die?

About which Velikovsky commented: "He died on his sickbed, but not from his disease; he was killed". Then, connecting all this with Elisha's statement, Velikovsky was able to make this most striking observation:

In the only dialogue preserved in the Scriptures in which Hazael participates, there are three turns of speech that also appear in his [EA] letters. The context of the dialogue - the question of whether the king of Damascus would survive, and the statement that he, Hazael, the new king, would cause the cities of Israel to go up in smoke - is also preserved in the el-Amarna letters. It is therefore a precious example of the authenticity of the scriptural orations and dialogues.

Now since this Hazael has, like his already multi-identified Omride father, Ben-Hadad I, various *alter egos*, he will always be looming in the background whilst I discuss Jehu, a partner of Hazael's in fulfilling the Sinai commission. Briefly I shall say in summary of what will follow in this chapter, and in *Chapter 10*, that, apart from the Velikovskian identification of (i) Hazael with *Aziru* (to correspond with Velikovsky's Ben-Hadad I = *Abdi-ashirta*), Hazael also had at least (ii) a 'Mitannian' identification, to correspond with his father *Tushratta*, whom he, as *Kurtiwaza* (var. *Mattiwaza*, *Shattiwaza*), had murdered; and (iii) an Assyrian identification (to correspond with his father Ashurnasirpal II), as the important 'Assurballit'. Other identifications for Hazael will also come to light in the course of this thesis.

But it is Jehu, so far the third character in this thesis to be multi-identified, who will figure the more prominently here and in *Chapter 10* - though not necessarily due to his having been historically any more influential than Hazael - and his origins will need to be clearly established since I have designated him as a Dynastic King of great importance.

Now it is generally thought that the *Ya-u-a*, son of Omri, to whom Shalmaneser III referred in the Black Obelisk inscription, was Jehu, and that Jehu was therefore a 'son of Omri', in the sense at least of 'descendant'. If so, then what was Jehu doing wiping out the entire House of Ahab - Ahab too being a son of Omri?

Origins of Jehu

That very question: ‘Did King Jehu Kill His Own Family?’ has been pondered by Schneider who has given this as the title to her article on this intriguing matter. Schneider here is intent upon showing that Jehu, despite his having wiped out the entire House of Ahab, was nonetheless an Omride as thought to be represented by Shalmaneser III in his Black Obelisk inscription. Schneider, in support of her thesis, has noted, quite correctly, that Jehu was a familiar figure at the royal palace of Israel.²³⁷

Jehu’s relationship with the Israelite palace and royalty also hints at a family connection. Several Biblical passages clearly indicate that Jehu is no stranger to the king or palace. For example, when Jehu is proclaimed king by his troops and rides to the palace, he is recognized from afar by the way he rides (2 Kings 9:20). When riding out to greet him, Joram [Jehoram], about to be killed, calls Jehu by name (2 Kings 9:22). Jehu comments that he once rode behind Joram’s father, Ahab, in battle (2 Kings 9:25). Even Jezebel’s greeting to Jehu—she calls him a “Zimri”—may indicate he was a palace insider (2 Kings 9:31). Clearly, Jehu was no stranger to the royal family.

This situation of familiarity at the royal palace will be strengthened even further, later, as Jehu becomes fitted with his own *alter egos*.

Now, there is an important chronological note in Schneider’s quote, that Jehu was already serving as a charioteer in the days of Ahab. In revised terms, this would make Jehu, too, an active contemporary of Amenhotep III, late in the latter’s reign. Schneider had commented on Jehu’s idiosyncratic charioteering. In fact a sentinel at the time of Jehu’s deadly pursuit of Jehoram of Israel had reported: “It looks like the driving of Jehu son of Nimshi; for he drives like a maniac” (v. 20). Art from those days (including Ramses II) shows the archer with the reins wrapped round his waist, to enable him both to shoot and to keep his war-chariot on course. Jehu’s shield-bearer, Bidkar, accompanied him (vv. 24-25). Who was this Bidkar in the EA scheme of things? Perhaps Pihuru (the ‘h’ to be pronounced as the ‘ch’ in Scottish ‘loch’), as in EA 116 and 117 where *Rib-Addi* requests that Yanhamu and Pihuru (Pahuru) go with their governors to take Amurru. Bidkar was likely too, I think, the Yahwist Obadiah of Elijah’s and Ahab’s time (I Kings 18:7-15).

Shalmaneser III’s Black Obelisk

Schneider’s case will rest largely upon the apparent reference to Jehu by Shalmaneser III as a ‘son of Omri’. She, having accepted that this was indeed Jehu, and that Jehu was in fact an Omride, has put together the following explanation:²³⁸

The four-sided limestone monument [Black Obelisk] is decorated with five registers of relief sculptures depicting the bringing of tribute to Shalmaneser. Each register reads around four sides, one panel to a side, portraying a particular tribute and tribute-bearers. The second register from the top shows the tribute of the Israelite king Jehu (ruled 841-814 B.C.E.).

²³⁷ ‘Did King Jehu Kill His Own Family?’, p. 80.

²³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 26.

The central figure on the first panel of this register, presumably Jehu himself, prostrates himself, forehead to the ground or possibly kissing the feet of the Assyrian monarch. Some have suggested that this figure might be Jehu's emissary. But if it is Jehu, this panel offers the only extant picture of a king of ancient Israel from the First Temple period [sic].

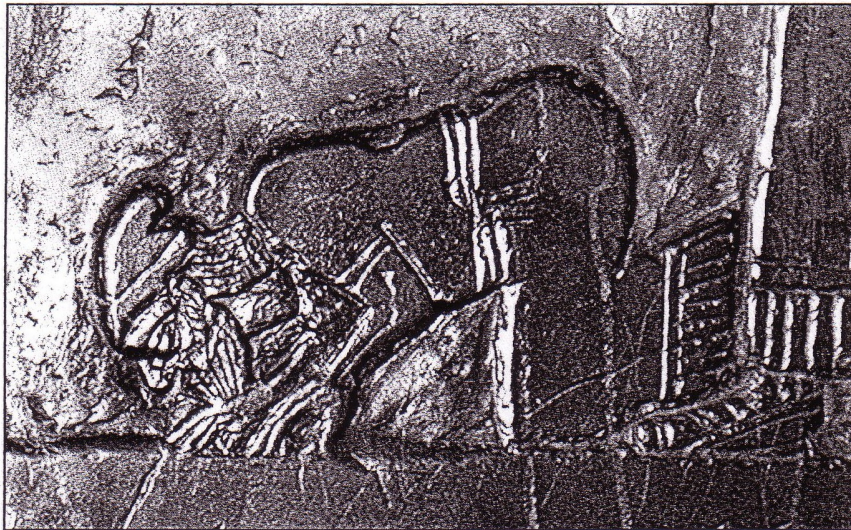
The cuneiform caption above this register identifies the scenes as representing the tribute of Jehu and reads as follows:

“Tribute of Iaua [Jehu], son of Omri. Silver, gold, a golden bowl, a golden beaker, golden goblets, pitchers of gold, tin, staves for the hand of the king, [and] javelins, I [Shalmaneser] received from him.”

... The Bible does not mention Jehu paying tribute to Shalmaneser. But obviously the Bible does not record everything that occurred in a reign that began in 841 B.C.E. and ended in 814 B.C.E.

[End of quote]

Figure 3: King of Israel Bringing Tribute to Shalmaneser III²³⁹



Schneider next moves on to discuss the Omride problem in relation to Jehu:²⁴⁰

There is another problem, however. The inscription calls Jehu the son of Omri. This does not necessarily mean that Jehu was Omri's literal son. It could well mean he was a descendant of Omri, that is of the House, or dynasty, of Omri. But that does not solve the problem.

²³⁹ Photo reproduced from D. Rohl's *The Lost Testament*, p. 436.

²⁴⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 26-28.

According to conventional scholarly wisdom, Jehu was not even a descendant of Omri. On the contrary, Jehu staged a coup d'état that supposedly brought an end to the 40-year rule of the Omride dynasty.

As recounted in 2 Kings 9-10, Jehu, a commander in King Joram's [Jehoram's] army, was instructed by Elisha to murder the king, which ended the line of Omri. In Judah, the southern kingdom, the Davidic kings ruled continuously for 400 years, whereas murder and usurpation were common occurrences in the northern kingdom of Israel. Omri, also a general, became king of the northern kingdom in 882 B.C.E. after attacking his predecessor. Omri was succeeded by his son Ahab (ruled 871-852 B.C.E.), who in turn was succeeded first by one son, Ahaziah (ruled 852-851 B.C.E.), and then by another son, Joram (ruled 851-842 B.C.E.), whom Jehu murdered. ... The grisly paradox of the cuneiform inscription on the Black Obelisk is that it identifies Jehu as the son of Omri, the very house he is famous for destroying. Modern scholarship assumes, based on all the information available in the Hebrew Bible, that to destroy the House of Ahab would be to destroy the House of Omri as well. But the Hebrew text never explicitly draws that conclusion. Throughout the Ahab/Jehu cycle the house that is destroyed is called the House of Ahab, while the House of Omri is never mentioned.

Schneider then asks: "Why does the Bible make this peculiar distinction between the House of Ahab and the House of Omri?" And her explanation of the 'son of Omri' conundrum is as follows:²⁴¹

I propose that the Black Obelisk inscription is correct, that Jehu was indeed a "son" of Omri—that is, a descendant of Omri—but through a different line from that of Ahab, and that the House of Omri therefore did not come to an end when Jehu wiped out the House of Ahab. Traditional explanations for the supposed mistake on the Black Obelisk—the identification of Jehu as a son of Omri—point out that the Assyrians may have misunderstood Israelite politics or that modern interpretations of the cuneiform text may be in error. How much credibility should we give them? Was it a mistake to identify Jehu as a son of Omri? ... why is Jehu referred to as "son of Omri"? A traditional explanation is that the Assyrians referred to a kingdom by using the name of the first ruler from that kingdom with whom they had contact. Since Assurnasirpal II campaigned in the west (though not far enough to the southwest to reach Israel) [sic], it is possible that he came into contact with Omri, who ruled Israel at that time.

According to the traditional view, the Assyrians for that reason referred to Israel as the "house of Omri" until it was destroyed in 721 B.C.E. —despite the fact that Jehu represented the beginning of a new, if short-lived, dynasty.

Thiele will thus comment, in relation to the Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III, that:²⁴²

²⁴¹ *Ibid*, pp. 28-29.

²⁴² *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 104.

“It is interesting to note that this Assyrian record applied to the nation of Jehu the name of the king [i.e. Omri] whose dynasty he had destroyed”.

Given my previous identifications of Ashurnasirpal II and Shalmaneser III as, respectively, a son and a grandson of Omri, I would be extremely surprised if “the Assyrians ... misunderstood Israelite politics”, as Schneider has put it, or if they were even the least bit mistaken about the Omride succession.

Schneider, herself unconvinced by the standard interpretation, continues:²⁴³

If that is so, however, we would not expect the first Assyrian reference to an Israelite ruler, on the Kurkh Monolith, to mention Ahab as ruling the land of sir-‘i-la-a, probably Israel, though possibly Jezreel. No reference to King Omri in the Assyrian inscriptions has been discovered. Thus the standard explanation for the reference to Jehu as “son of Omri”—that Omri was the Assyrian term for Israel—is unsupported by the evidence.

I presume she means here that there is ‘no reference to Omri in the Assyrian inscriptions pertaining to Ahab’. Schneider now turns to the matter of Jehu’s biblical lineage:²⁴⁴

.... A clue: In the Hebrew Bible, Jehu is called “Jehu son of Jehoshaphat son of Nimshi” (2 Kings 9:2, 14). Jehu is the only king of Israel to have his grandfather’s name listed in his patronymic. Why? Traditional explanations would suffice were it not for the Assyrian references. These explanations usually suggest that Jehu’s father was not as well known in the community as his grandfather, or that Nimshi is a clan name whose meaning has been lost over the centuries.

Another explanation is that Jehu’s grandfather’s name is included to show that Jehu’s father was not King Jehoshaphat of Judah, Jehu’s contemporary.

Whether Schneider is right in her assertion that “Jehu is the only king of Israel to have his grandfather’s name listed in his patronymic” has probably yet to be fully determined in the light of a revised history of Israel. Moreover, that her explanation above has its problems is indicated by the three points that she will now outline:

Although the foregoing explanations are consistent with Biblical accounts, they face some significant problems: (1) There is no other Biblical reference to a person named Nimshi, so that he was probably not all that well known; (2) the name “Nimshi” appears as a personal name on a Samarian ostrakon, making it unlikely that the name referred to a clan; (3) not only are grandfathers’ names never listed in the patronymics of Israelite kings, but other Israelite kings who usurped the throne, such as Zimri and Omri, have no patronymics at all [sic]!

On the other hand, if Jehu claimed descent from Omri, the inclusion of his grandfather’s name may have been necessary to establish the genealogical link.

.... I propose that Jehu was indeed a descendant of Omri.

²⁴³ *Op. cit.*, p. 32.

²⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

.... Without contradicting information provided by the Hebrew Bible, this suggestion would answer many questions. Assuming that Omri had sons from more than one wife would explain the Assyrian reference to Jehu as belonging to the House of Omri. It would also account for Jehu's unusual patronymic, why he was a commander so familiar to the royal family, and why the purge of the House of Ahab, extending to Judah, was so severe.

This new way of thinking about Jehu solves problems on both the cuneiform and Biblical sides without having to make excuses for any of the texts involved.

Whilst, in a conventional context, Jehu fits chronologically as the king of Israel, son of Omri, referred to by Shalmaneser III in the Black Obelisk inscription, our raising of the dates for Shalmaneser III, as discussed on p. 80, makes it now most likely that Jehoram, and not Jehu, was in fact the king from whom Assyria took tribute. This would immediately solve the problems with which Schneider and others have had to contend, regarding a presumed descendant of Omri's wiping out his father's house; problems relating to Jehu's grandfather; and an apparent Assyrian ignorance of the genealogical situation. Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi – who claims to have followed Ahab into battle, and Ahab was Omri's direct son - was simply from a different line. Though, being a 'Syrian' (as we shall see below), Jehu was probably at least ethnically related to the Omrides. But he himself was not an Omride.

The Sinai commission, quoted at the beginning of this chapter, introduces a new triumvirate whom Elijah (or his designated disciples) will anoint for the purpose of instigating a radical purge. According to my revision, this triumvirate was at least two-thirds 'Syrian', in the sense already explained. We find that, peculiarly:

Firstly, Hazael's father is not even named;

Secondly, Jehu's father is named differently from how he is named in 2 Kings 9:2.

Thirdly, Elisha's father is given virtually the same name, Shaphat [i.e. Eli- or Jeho-shaphat], as was given to Jehu's father, Jeho-shaphat, in 2 Kings.

The name of Elisha's father, though, was then a common name. I shall return to this in *Chapter 10*, on p. 249.

The reason that Jehu's grandfather, *Nimshi*, is given precedence over Jehu's father, *Jehoshaphat*, is I believe because this Nimshi may actually have been, for the briefest possible time, likewise a king of Israel. Queen Jezebel had actually addressed Jehu as '*Zimri, murderer of your master*' (2 Kings 9:31); Zimri being a commander of the chariotry who had slain king Elah of Israel and had then become king of Israel himself for a mere seven days, before being in turn overthrown by Omri (cf. 1 Kings 16:9-10, 15, 17-18). Nimshi, I suspect, was the same as this Zimri, and hence Jezebel was making a clear point, just prior to her violent death, that Jehu was a conspirator against the crown just as his grandfather had been.

As far as I am aware, Velikovsky did not propose any EA identification for Jehu. Liel, as we saw in the previous chapter, claimed to have found a name equivalent to Jehu in EA's *Yawa*; no doubt also a most common name in Syro-Palestine.

But she did not attempt to develop any strong connection between this *Yawa* and the person of Jehu. But I think that there *is* an EA connection with Jehu in the person of *Ianhaamu*, whom Velikovsky had identified with the biblical Naaman [נַעֲמָן], a Syrian.²⁴⁵

Jehu as Naaman (Iaanhamu)

While once again I do not intend to reproduce Velikovsky's full discussion concerning a double identification, I shall nevertheless take several quotes from him here, with comments added, in order to set the revised scene. Velikovsky referred to a couple of facts in the Naaman story that he said seemed "somewhat strange"; though I think perhaps a little less so in the context of our Velikovskian modification (perhaps e.g. the protracted illness and inactivity of Ben-Hadad I):²⁴⁶

In ... the [Naaman] story, two facts are somewhat strange. First, inasmuch as Ben-Hadad himself was at the head of the thirty-two captains of his army, why, in the story of the wondrous healing, is the deliverance of Syria credited to a captain Naaman? Second, the king of Israel was a lifelong rival of the king of Damascus. Why, then, did this request to cure a sick captain inspire in the king of Israel such a dread that he rent his clothes?

Velikovsky then proposed his identification for this *Naaman* in the EA Letters:

For an explanation of the real role of this captain Naaman we shall look to the contemporaneous letters. A man by whom Syria received deliverance must be identifiable in the letters. We recognize him in the person of Ianhama, called also Iaanhamu ... the pharaoh's deputy in Syria, [who] was sent to the king of Damascus with prerogatives similar to those which Aman-appa had.

Velikovsky continues, with a quote from Mercer:²⁴⁷

... Naaman's title in the Scriptures - sar [Hebrew: שַׂר] - is also used in the letters. He was a plenipotentiary of the king of Egypt, in charge of the army and walled cities of Amuru land (Syria), later also the overseer of stores of grain. He had great influence in all matters of Syrian administration. Judged by his name, he was of Syrian origin, as were some other dignitaries at the court of Thebes. Ianhama is a Semitic name: "Ianhamu was a powerful Egyptian agent in Syria, where he was respected as a good and wise man, and where he proved himself to be the most faithful of the pharaoh's servants".

²⁴⁵ *Ages in Chaos*, vol. 1, pp. 274ff.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, quoting S. Mercer, *The Tell El-Amarna Tablets*, p. 297.

That a transformation of some kind had come over this *Iaanhamu* Velikovsky inferred from *Rib-Addi's* revised attitude towards him; an attitude that had changed dramatically in the course of *Rib-Addi's* reign:

In [Rib-Addi's] early letters ... his fear of the mighty deputy of the pharaoh is plainly expressed. In one letter he wrote to the pharaoh: "Thou must rescue me out of the hand of *Iaanhamu*". He asked the pharaoh to inform his deputy that he, *Ianhama*, would be responsible if anything should happen to [Rib-Addi's] person

....

"Say to *Ianhamu*: 'Rib-Addi is even in thy hands, and all that will be done to him rests upon thee'."

But, Velikovsky continued (typically substituting Samaria for EA's *Sumur*):

Later on, when *Aman-appa* left Samaria ..., [Rib-Addi] ... wrote to the pharaoh asking him to appoint *Ianhama* governor in Samaria ...: "May it seem right to my lord to send *Ianhama* as his deputy. I hear from the mouth of the people that he is a wise man and all people love him".

We recall the scriptural words about *Naaman*, that he was an "honourable" man.

The reason for the official's change in attitude, Velikovsky suggested, was to be found in the Scriptures:

In another letter [Rib-Addi] again asks the pharaoh to send *Ianhama* and in the next one he praises him in these words: "There is no servant like *Ianhama*, a faithful servant to the king".

... The letters do not show why the fear of [Rib-Addi] ... changed into confidence with respect to the Syrian deputy. The Scriptures provide the explanation in the story of the healing of *Naaman* by the prophet of Samaria. *Naaman* was very grateful to the prophet ... (II Kings 5:15). *Elisha* even declared that he would heal *Naaman* in order to help the king of Israel politically.

So [*Ianhamu*] became a friend.

[End of quotes]

Here too, perhaps, is an explanation as to how a bond might have been forged between *Jehu* (as *Naaman*) and *Elisha*, two of the Sinai commissioned triumvirate.

Velikovsky then went on to point out what he called "certain other features of the role and character of *Ianhama*, reflected in the letters, [and] shown also in the Scriptures". For example:

He was a generous man. This appears in the story of the healing: he gave to the servant of the prophet two talents of silver and two changes of garments, more than the servant had asked for, when the prophet refused to take ten talents of silver, six thousand pieces of gold, and ten changes of raiment.

It is of interest to find that, according to the letters, Ianhama was in charge of the pharaoh's treasury in Syria, being over "money and clothing".

... The el-Amarna letters also speak of him as the generous patron of a Palestinian youth, who was educated in Egypt at his expense. The man "by whom the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria" ... was Ianhama. How this captain changed his attitude and became a supporter of the king of Samaria is recorded in the letters and is explained by the Scriptures.

Hirsch *et al.* tell of this interesting Rabbinical tradition in regard to Naaman:²⁴⁸

According to the Rabbis, Naaman was the archer who drew his bow at a venture and mortally wounded Ahab, King of Israel (I Kings xxii. 34). This event is alluded to in the words "because by him the Lord had given deliverance unto Syria" (II Kings v. 1), and therefore the Syrian king, Naaman's master, was Benhadad Naaman is represented as vain and haughty, on account of which he was stricken with leprosy

That Naaman, though a leper, regarded himself as being an official of no small importance may be reflected in his initial response to the fact of Elisha's merely sending a messenger to advise him: '... I thought that *for me* he would surely come out' (5:11).

... הנה אִמְרָתִי אֵלֶי

Here we have the biblical instance of Naaman's riding up "with his horses and chariots", to Samaria, to seek a cure from Elisha. Hence a further argument for the Syrian's familiarity with Israel and its palace. And, later, Naaman will return to thank the prophet, "he and all his company"; Naaman himself certainly riding in his chariot at the time (cf. 2 Kings 5:9; 5:21). In *Chapter 9* (p. 195) I shall be identifying Naaman's older contemporary, Ben-Hadad I - through *Tushratta* of 'Indo-European' origins - with *Yuya* of non-Egyptian appearance. That these 'Syrians' of the Akhmim clan (in regard to their Egyptian home) were expert horse handlers and trainers may be deduced from this comment by Aldred:²⁴⁹

As they held offices of Master of the Horse or Lieutenant of the Chariotry, for three generations at least, it is probable that they had an Asiatic *maryannu* as an ancestor, since such skilled chariot warriors had introduced their fighting machines into Syria, Palestine and Egypt

Hirsch *et al.* also claim that: "Naaman was a "ger toshab" [literally, 'a strange-settler'; a resident alien of different religion], that is, he was not a perfect proselyte, having accepted only some of the commandments ...".

²⁴⁸ 'Naaman' (un-numbered pages). This tradition, they add, "seems to have been adopted by Josephus ("Ant." viii. 15, § 5)".

²⁴⁹ *Akhenaten Pharaoh of Egypt*, p. 212. Cf. Aldred (1987), as quoted by M. Lorenz. *Queen Tiye A Biography*, section: "Origins": "[Asiatics] had the reputation of being skilled in the government of horses ...".

This assertion might gain further credibility if Naaman were to be identified with Jehu, who clearly displayed some ambivalence in matters religious (10:31). Note, too, Jehu's embarrassed reluctance to have to admit to his fellow military officers that he had just been anointed king by a prophet (9:11). And Naaman had, subsequent to his cure by the prophet Elisha, apologised in advance to the latter for his involuntary adoration of the Syrian divinity, Rimmon, when having to escort his king into Rimmon's temple (2 Kings 5:18). We recall that Ben-Hadad I's father, *Tab-rimmon*, had borne the name of this Syrian god.

There is also a reference to "Naaman the Syrian" in the New Testament (Luke 4:27).

Naaman and Jehu, in this revised context, appear to share a strikingly common portfolio. Thus, as:

- (a) 'Syrian' army commander, but well-known to Israel and the royal palace;
- (b) charioteer and deadly archer;
- (c) determined Yahwist, though with some religious ambivalence;
- (d) having a connection with the prophet Elisha;
- (e) contemporary of Ahab (and the Jehorams);
- (f) vain and haughty,
- (g) military (tide-turning) genius.

What Velikovsky's equation *Naaman = Iaanhamu* adds to all this is the further dimension of the *Egyptian* connection. This facet of the life of our 'Syrian' commander, which will become of the highest importance in *Chapter 10* (pp. 219ff.), is simply ignored however by the biblical scribes (see previous comments on 'biblical perspective'), as is Jehu's ethnicity as a 'Syrian'.

I now take up the relevant parts of Campbell's narrative concerning this important EA official, *Iaanhamu*.²⁵⁰

Yanhamu began his service under Amenophis III.

[Comment: I have already noted that Jehu was an active commander with Ahab during the reign of pharaoh Amenhotep III].

Yanhamu appears, then, to have held an extremely important position in Syria throughout the period of Rib-Adda's [Rib-Addi's] correspondence. The later letters of Rib-Adda show this prince defending Yanhamu and asking for his appointment as *rabis* in Sumur. One might almost imagine that Yanhamu's rebuff of Aziru described in 171 led Rib-Adda suddenly to realize that he had a true ally in Yanhamu.

This *Iaanhamu* was, according to Campbell, in charge of grain supplies:²⁵¹

In the early group of letters from Rib-Adda, Yanhamu seems to have held a position having to do with the supplying of the vassals from a store-city of Egypt (83:27ff., 39f.; 85:23f., 48ff.; 86:15f.).

²⁵⁰ *The Chronology of the Amarna Letters*, Section C. "Yanhamu and the South", pp. 93, 91.

²⁵¹ *Ibid*, pp. 91-92.

This source of supply is named Yarimuta in many places in the Rib-Adda correspondence, and that Yanhamu was its chief appears clear from 85:12-35. In this passage, Rib-Adda first explains that he has had to “pawn” virtually everything of value in his city in return for grain from Yarimuta. Sons and daughters of his serfs have been sold into slavery at Yarimuta in return for grain. Grain is needed simply to keep the people alive and able to protect their city.

... From the context it is not certain that Yanhamu is chief of Yarimuta, but everything points that way. Being the chief of the grain supply would place Yanhamu in a very powerful position.

That *Iaanhamu* was of a high rank in relation to pharaoh is borne out by this testimony of Campbell's:²⁵² “[Iaanhamu] bears an extremely important title, that of “Fan-Bearer at the king's right-hand” (musallil), a title which Mâya of Tomb 14 also bears”. This ‘Mâya’ [May], I shall be identifying in *Chapter 10* (beginning on p. 234) with Hazael/*Aziru*. Indeed, the careers of Hazael and Jehu will be found closely to parallel one another; though with the former always having the seniority and superiority.

Another official who would bear this exalted title of “Fan-Bearer at the king's right-hand”, was, as we shall see, Horemheb - also a military man. He I shall be identifying in *Chapter 10* (beginning on p. 239) with our composite Dynastic King, Jehu (Naaman).

Abdi-Hiba of Urusalim

Abdi-Hiba of Jerusalem, whom I shall here - following James and Sieff - be identifying with the Judaeen king, Jehoram, appears to express a certain dissatisfaction with *Iaanhamu* in EA 285:9ff. Campbell has pointed to this, adding:²⁵³

The objection of Abdi-Heba [Abdi-Hiba] against the rule of Yanhamu is further expressed in 286, for here Yanhamu has taken away the garrison force which had been assigned to Abdi-Heba.

In 289:45 Yanhamu appears again with his name spelled *Ya-ah-en-ha-mu*. This time Abdi-heba is requesting his intervention, because “all the land of the king has revolted ...”.

Later of course, as Jehu, this *Iaanhamu* will assassinate *Abdi-hiba's* (as Jehoram's) very son, Ahaziah (2 Kings 9:27-28).

Before summarising James' excellent discussion of *Abdi-hiba* and his *habiru* opponents in a revised context, I need briefly to introduce Liel's linguistic analysis of the name *Abdi-hiba*, as promised in the previous chapter:²⁵⁴

²⁵² *Ibid*, p. 90.

²⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 99. Abdi-Hiba himself is likened in an EA letter to “another Labaya” [Lab'ayu]. See S. Cook, ‘Syria and Palestine in the Light of External Evidence’, p. 316.

²⁵⁴ ‘What's In a Name?’, section: “The King of Jerusalem”. Her emphasis.

This king's name has been read in three basic ways. 1) Abdi-Hiba, 2) Puti-Hiba and 3) Abdi-Taba (variations such as Abdi/Abdu and Hiba/Heba/Hepa are not relevant to the meaning of this name, while the reading Ebed-Tob is not a transcription, but rather a possible translation). The first two readings have the same meaning: "Servant of Hiba" (a Hurrian goddess). The difference stems from an uncertainty over the language in which the ideogram IR (servant) should be rendered. The East Semitic (Akkadian) for "servant" is *ardu*, the West Semitic (Hebrew) is *abdu*, and the Hurrian is *putu*.

The difference between the first two readings and the third (which means "Servant of the Good One" or "Good Servant") is a result of the uncertainty inherent in cuneiform. The signs in question can be read as Hiba, Heba, Hepa or Taba, not to mention other combinations. *Neither Hiba nor Taba is superior from either a linguistic or orthographic point of view.*

It should be apparent that the second and third readings are more likely than reading the first. We would expect a name to be either Hurrian or Semitic--not a mixture of the two. Abdi-Hiba is like Abdi-Zeus--a bizarre mismatch. Anton Rainey has written, "note that [the] semitic reading of IR with [a] Hurrian D.N. (deity name) [is] still unproven though quite possible." The strangeness of this reading has thus not gone unnoticed.

Why are scholars so insistent on reading the second part of this name as Hiba, rather than Taba? The answer lies in the Bible. We are told in II Samuel 24:16-24 that David purchased the threshing floor of Aruana the Jebusite. This is the only Jebusite name known to us with certainty. Scholars have identified Aruana as a corruption of the Hurrian *awri* (literally: "leader"), a Hurrian royal title. Given that the only example we have of a Jebusite name appears to be Hurrian, and further, that the conventional chronology seems to demand a Jebusite presence in Jerusalem at the time of the Amarna correspondence, it is entirely reasonable to choose a Hurrian reading for this king (that is, if we ignore the king of Jerusalem defeated by Joshua, whose name, Adoni-Zedek, is purely semitic). On the other hand, the particle "utu" is otherwise unattested in Canaan/Israel during this period, in contrast to "abdu", which is widely used. For this reason, scholars have been unwilling to adopt the reading Puti-Hiba, preferring the strange Abdi-Hiba (the names Gilu-Hiba and Tadu-Hiba are not relevant to this question, since they are Mitannian princesses from Mesopotamia, while Jerusalem lies in the south of Israel).

Once we, consistent with our premise, place the Amarna correspondence during the period of the Divided Monarchies, we can abandon the search for a Hurrian (or half-Hurrian) name, and accept the consistently semitic Abdi-Taba. As Peter James has shown in his "The Dating of the El-Amarna Letters" (SIS Review II:3), the best match for Abdi-Taba is Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat. Given our above identification of Rib-Yauram as Jehoram son of Ahab, this seems to be confirmed.

....

[End of quote]

I can only briefly summarise here James' critique of Velikovsky with regard to EA's *Abdi-hiba* and the opposition that the latter faced. James has, as we have just read, opted for Jehoram of Judah in preference to Velikovsky's choice of Jehoram's pious father, Jehoshaphat. Importantly too, in connection with my *Chapter 2*, James has, from a geographical estimation of EA activities at the time, concluded that the lands of *habiru* incursion against Judah were, not Transjordanian - as Velikovsky had argued - but clearly the coastal lands of the Philistines:²⁵⁵

... before turning to a detailed comparison of the reigns of Jehoram, as recorded in the Books of Kings and Chronicles, and Abdi-Hiba, as known from the el-Amarna letters, it would be as well to reconsider Velikovsky's reasons for originally identifying the latter with Jehoshaphat. In a section of Chapter VII entitled "Jerusalem in peril", he pointed to various passages in the letters of Abdi-Hiba which he believed described the invasion of Judah by bands of Moabites, Ammonites and Seirites in the days of Jehoshaphat. (See II Chronicles 10:1-30). The invaders of the letters were the famous *habiru*, once thought to be the invading Hebrews under Joshua, and the subject of over eighty years of controversy. Velikovsky suggested that this term should be understood, simply, as the Hebrew for "members of a band", "bandits", a suggestion which may meet with some philological objections ... but which is eminently plausible for the contexts it is used in, particularly since *habiru* has been discovered to be interchangeable with the ideogram SA.GAZ, "bandits", "cut-throats"....

James now pinpoints the rebels' theatre of action²⁵⁶:

Rubuta of the letters, a town seized by the *habiru*, [Velikovsky] associates with Rabbath-Ammon, a Transjordanian city.... It is, however, usually identified as Biblical Rabbah (Joshua 15:60), in the northern Shephelah This location is well supported by Egyptian townlists – the list of Thutmose III places a r-b-t next to Gezer, while that of Shoshenk I ... lists r-b-t between Gezer and Aijalon.... And the context in which Rubuta is mentioned in the letters leaves no doubt that a city in the Shephelah, and not Transjordania, is intended. EA 290 states:

"Behold the deed which Milkilu and Shuwardata did to the land of the king, my lord! They rushed troops of Gezer, troops of Gath and troops of Keilah; they took the land of Rubutu"

Gezer, Gath and Keilah are all cities on the border of Judah and Philistia, and Milkilu is known from his own letters as the ruler of Gezer

²⁵⁵ 'The Dating of the El-Amarna Letters', pp. 81-82. On p. 81, James credits Sieff with co-responsibility for equating *Abdi-Hiba* with Jehoram.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid*, p. 82.

Continuing on James is able most satisfactorily, as I think, to solve the long-standing problem of the identity of the *habiru* with whom this particular king of Jerusalem was now having to contend:

A reading of the letters of Abdi-Hiba can leave little doubt as to the identity of the invaders described as *habiru*. Several of their leaders are referred to by name: as well as Milkilu of Gezer, there is Lab'ayu and his sons from Shechem [sic], Tagu from Gath-Carmel, and Shuwardata from Keilah or Gath Lachish and Sile (the first Egyptian fortress in Sinai) were also involved in the revolt:

“Behold Zimreda, the townsmen of Lachish have smitten him, slaves who had become ‘Apiru [i.e. Habiru]. Yaptih-Hadad has been slain in the (very) gate of Sile”. (EA 288).

Elsewhere, the cities of Gezer, Ashkelon, and Lachish are accused of supplying the *habiru*:

“Behold the land of Gezer, the land of Ashkelon, and Lachish, they have given them grain, oil, and all their requirements” (EA 287).

James is then able to conclude that the *habiru* were Philistine rebels against the Egyptian crown:

All the cities accused by Abdi-Hiba of participating in the *habiru* uprising are to the west or south-west of Judah, with the exception of Shechem in Israel. The idea, then, that Abdi-Hiba's letters are describing an invasion from Transjordan, is quite untenable. It is clear from his letters that rebellions are occurring in, and on the border with, Philistia, and that the invaders of Abdi-Hiba's territories are, in the main, the Philistine rebels. This view would be in good accord with the current opinion of Biblical scholars that “the Apiru are not a foreign element in the land, coming from outside, but an indigenous element”, as expressed by Edward F. Campbell Jr.:

“If instead the term ‘Apiru is seen to be a label simply meaning ‘outlaw’ or ‘rebellious’ in this context it is at least possible, and to me very probable, that to ‘become ‘Apiru’ means ‘to defy the authority of the crown’ ...”.

Such intensive activity by the Philistines and their allies was unlikely, James rightly suggests, during the strong reign of Jehoshaphat. 2 Chronicles, far from mentioning that the Philistines took common cause with the Moabite invaders against Jehoshaphat, records that: “Also some of the Philistines brought Jehoshaphat presents and tribute silver” (17:11). It was only after Jehoshaphat's death, when his son Jehoram was on the throne, that Judah gradually began to lose control of the Shephelah.

And I think that ‘gradual’ is the operative word here as it is apparent that some of those named in EA as enemies of *Abdi-Hiba* had formerly been his allies.

It is perhaps an indication of the prominence of Jerusalem that *Abdi-Hiba* could insist that he was no ‘prefect’ (*khazân*) like the rest, but a ‘shepherd’ (*ú-e-ú*) of the pharaoh; a title employed too by great kings like Hammurabi and pharaoh Seti I. But Jehoram’s power was to be greatly diminished, and James believed that “something of this waning hegemony over Philistia can be detected in the letters of *Abdi-Hiba*”:

- *EA 287* had indicated that the king of *Urusalim* had been superior to the Egyptian governor of Gaza, an important city in the SW of Philistia - making it likely that the authority of Jerusalem originally extended over much of the coastal plain. This is confirmed by the fact that the rebel Philistines, when “becoming *habiru*” rebels against the crown, were fighting against *Abdi-Hiba* himself, the representative of Egyptian authority in southern Palestine.
- But one of the rebels, *Milkilu* of Gezer, wrote to another, *Tagu*, saying: “... let us break away from the city of Jerusalem”. And so they did as both Scripture (II Chronicles 21:16) and the EA letters testify.

James, honing in on the historical setting for the drama involving *Abdi-Hiba*, then went on to provide an in-depth comparison between the latter and Jehoram. And whilst the Chronicler did not bother to give very much space to Jehoram, James found nevertheless what he thought to be “... enough given on the important events of his reign to test the hypothesis identifying him with *Abdi-Hiba* of the el-Amarna letters”. Briefly:

After recounting the coup in which Jehoram disposed of his brothers, and how he “wrought that which was evil in the eyes of the Lord”, Chronicles goes on to describe a revolt of the Edomites (II Chron. 21:8-10). Edom had been tributary to Judah during the reign of Jehoshaphat, and had been ruled by his deputy (I Kings 22:47). Jehoram led his chariotry into Edom in an attempt to crush the revolt, but suffered a serious defeat ..., and Edom remained independent of Judah “unto this day”. Libnah, a city in the northern Shephelah, rebelled with Edom:

“The same time did also Libnah revolt from under his hand, because he had forsaken the Lord God of his fathers” (v.10).

EA 288 is most useful here especially for the geographical information that it supplies; for, as James notes: “... *Abdi-Hiba* defines the extent of the revolts against his authority: “Let my king take thought for his land ... is lost; in its entirety it is taken from me; there is war against me, as far as the lands of Seir and as far as Gath-carmel! ...”. Since, according to James, *Seir* is Edom and *Gath-Carmel* is almost certainly the famous Gath, one of the five old Philistine capitals, he can go on to say that:²⁵⁷

²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 83.

“... EA 288, describing the rebellion of Seir (= Edom) and Gath-carmel ... parallels exactly the account in II Chron. 21:10, which says that Edom and Libnah broke away from Judah at the same time”.

Liel, commenting on this same revolt, has similarly written:²⁵⁸

During the reign of Jehoram of Judah, we are told that after Edom rebelled against Judah, so too did Libnah. This seems strange. After all, Edom was another nation. Rebelling against a foreign ruler is not unusual. But Libnah was a city within Judah itself. As Peter James has suggested (following John Gray), Libnah, placed by some at Tell es-Safi, may be the same as Gath-Carmel. Thus, when Abdi-Taba complains in EA 288 that there is hostility against him as far as Seir and Gath-Carmel, we have a perfect echo of the rebellions of Edom and Libnah (the territory of Edom was centered at Mount Seir, for which reason Seir is often used to denote Edom).

James also quotes from the Second Book of Chronicles, which tells of the king of Jerusalem’s trouble with the Philistines:²⁵⁹

“Moreover, the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and the Arabians, that were near the Ethiopians: and they came up into Judah, and brake into it, and carried away all the substance that was found in the king’s house, and his sons also, and his wives; so that there was never a son left to him, save Jehoahaz, the youngest of his sons” (II Chron. 21: 16-17).

This is clearly a description of Judah in a critically dangerous state.

James believed that such a perilous situation, with Judah on the verge of collapse, was “... amply reflected in the desperate letters of Abdi-Hiba, full of pleas to his Egyptian overlord [Akhnaton] for the troops needed to defend his fief - “Let the king ... my lord, send out troops of archers, for the king has no hands left!”.” (EA 286)

Having seen that Jehoram and *Abdi-Hiba* had ‘both’ suffered revolts in Edom and Philistia, we can now follow James further through the passage from Chronicles quoted above, to compare the later events of ‘their’ reigns:²⁶⁰

... two questions spring to mind immediately - did the Arabians attack in concert with the Philistines, or was one group responsible for the sack of Jehoram’s palace, and the other for invading Judah? And who were these “Arabians that were near the Ethiopians [Cushites]”?

²⁵⁸ *Op. cit*, section: “The King of Gath”.

²⁵⁹ *Op. cit*, p. 82.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 83.

“A later passage in Chronicles (II, 22:1) concerned with the succession after Jehoram”, he says, “suggests that it was the Arabs, rather than the Philistines, that were responsible for the sack of Jehoram’s palace and the murder of his sons:

“Then the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah his youngest son king in his stead: for the band of men that came with the Arabians to the camp had slain all the eldest”....

It may be that the clipped account in Chronicles has run together the actions of the Philistines, in invading Judah, and the Arabs, in sacking Jehoram’s palace, its brevity obscuring the distinction between the two The question of the “Arabians that were near the Cushites” has been a vexed one for Biblical scholars.

...

The revised chronology solves the problem entirely, and makes good sense out of the Biblical narrative. Amenhotep III was the ruler of Ethiopia as well as Palestine After the suppression of a revolt in his fifth year, the south was at peace, and Amenhotep was able to construct two massive temples near the Third Cataract.... Troops were conscripted by Amenhotep III in Ethiopia and these were used in Palestine, as we know from the letters of Rib-Addi of Gubla:

“If the heart of the king, my lord, is in favour of Gubla, then let my lord send four hundred soldiers and one hundred people of the Kasi lands that they may protect Gubla, the city of my lord”....

This term, *Kaši*, James explains:

... is acknowledged to be a cuneiform spelling of “Cush” or Ethiopia In which case the solution to the problem of the “Arabians that were near the Cushites” is clear - they were simply conscripts of the Egyptian army from the “Kasi lands” that were on service in Palestine

James continues, beginning to tie together all the threads of his intriguing modification of Velikovsky:²⁶¹

It now remains to examine the letters of Abdi-Hiba for an account of a Philistine invasion, coupled with a sack of his palace by rioting troops from the “lands of Kasi”, in order to leave no doubt that he was Jehoram of Judah. El-Amarna letter 287 describes the Philistine invasion, discussed earlier in this paper: Milkilu of Gezer and Tagu of Gath-carmel ... supported by the lands of Ashkelon and Lachish, invaded Abdi-Hiba’s kingdom and “caused their troops to enter the town of Rubutu”.

²⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 84.

Another letter, EA 290, describes a later stage of their advance, when they were joined by the rebel Shuwardata of Keilah:

“They rushed troops of Gezer, troops of Gath and troops of Keilah: they took the land of Rubutu; the land of the king went over to the ‘Apiru people.”

As the letter goes on to show, even Jerusalem itself came under grave threat. I continue with James:

... the Moabites did not reach Jerusalem, but, as we shall see, the royal palace itself was sacked during Jehoram’s reign, for which we return to EA 287:-

“With reference to the Nubians [Kasi], let my king ask the commissioners whether my house is not very strong! Yet they attempted a very great crime; they took their implements and breached ... of the roof. If they send into the land of Jerusalem troops, let them come up with an Egyptian officer for regular service. Let my king take heed for them - for all the lands are impoverished by them - and let my king requisition for them much grain, much oil and much clothing ... the men of the land of Nubia have committed an evil deed against me; I was almost killed by the men of the land of Nubia in my own house. Let the king call them to account. Seven times and seven times let the king, my lord, avenge me”.

James has noted the impact that the description of this striking incident has had upon one conventionally-minded scholar:

A commentator on II Chronicles 21:17 could hardly believe the Biblical claim that the Arabs “that were near the Cushites” had actually sacked Jehoram’s palace: “This curious verse can hardly signify that the Arabians took and plundered Jerusalem”.... But the letters of Abdi-Hiba confirm that this was actually done by “men from the land of Kasi”. Evidently, they had been stationed in Jerusalem as a garrison, but their Egyptian master had neglected to supply them with provisions, and they took to plundering, “for all the lands are impoverished by them”.

Their assault upon *Abdi-Hiba’s* palace was evidently part of a concerted plan of the Philistines, timed to coincide with their own invasion of Judah.

James, I think, has hardly exaggerated in his conclusion, in which he has noted that the same distinctive circumstances could not have befallen two different kings of Jerusalem, separated in time the one from the other by half a millennium:

To sum up: the disasters that befell Jehoram of Judah and Abdi-Hiba of Jerusalem were identical. Both suffered revolts of their subject territories from Philistia to Edom.

During the reign of both the Philistines invaded and swept right across Judah, entering Jerusalem itself, in concert with the sack of the king's palace by "men of the land of Kaši" or men "that were near the Cushites". These peculiar circumstances could hardly be duplicated in such detail after a period of five hundred years. It is clear that Velikovsky's general placement of the el-Amarna letters in the mid-ninth century must be correct, and that the modification of his original model suggested here, that Abdi-Hiba was Jehoram rather than Jehoshaphat, is preferable.

Jehoram, who had initially slain his own brothers, was fortunate enough to have died before the fiery wrath that was Jehu was unleashed upon the House of Ahab and the worshippers of Baal. The dark era of Ahab and Jezebel, wrote Mauro with reference to 2 Kings:²⁶²

... was brought to a bloody end by a ministry of judgment executed by the hand of Jehu. He made a thorough work of it, slaying Joram (Jehoram) and his mother Jezebel (2 Kings 9:21-37), and the seventy sons of Ahab (10:1-7) and "all that remained of the house of Ahab ... until he left him none remaining" (10:11).

Moreover, when Jehu came to Samaria: "... he slew all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the saying of the Lord which He spake to Elijah" (10:17). And finally, he executed the vengeance of God upon the priests and worshippers of Baal (10:19-27)".

Jezebel mentioned above by Mauro, whom I identified in her EA guise in the previous chapter as *Baalat-neše* (Sumerian: NIN.UR.MAH.MESH), will be more fully identified in *Chapter 9* (beginning on p. 204), with regard to her connection with Egypt.

This was how Jehu fulfilled his part of the Sinai commission. Though, as we are going to learn in *Chapter 10*, his radical and violent reform was not confined to Syro-Palestine, but also involved Egypt; specifically Akhnaton's Egypt. For there Jehu will be identified as Horemheb, the reformer, whose Horus name contained the Egyptian verb, *seped*, "a technical term describing the process of putting things in order ...".²⁶³ And I should like to venture a parallel between the Egyptian *seped* and the Hebrew *shaphat* (שָׁפַט), found in the names of the father of both Elisha and Jehu. In *Chapter 10* I shall go so far as to describe the Sinai commissioned triumvirate as 'shaphat-police'; a kind of military police with a penchant for legalized reform.

But what were Hazael and Elisha doing while Jehu was so busy bloodying his chariot? Well Hazael was doing exactly what Jehu was doing. Though the Bible, by way of narration, attributes the extermination of the House of Ahab entirely to Jehu, Hazael himself claimed the credit for it in the Tell Dan inscription, at least according to Finkelstein and Silberman:²⁶⁴

²⁶² *The Wonders of Bible Chronology*, p. 53.

²⁶³ N. Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 243.

²⁶⁴ *The Bible Unearthed*, p. 129. Tiglath-pileser III may later have distinguished a kingdom of 'Beth-Hazael' separately from 'Beth-Omri'. See S. Irvine, *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis*, cf. pp. 40, 60.

... the “House of David” inscription, part of a black basalt monument, found broken and reused in a later stratum as a building stone. Written in Aramaic, the language of the Aramean kingdoms of Syria, it related the details of an invasion of Israel by an Aramean king whose name is not mentioned on the fragments that have so far been discovered. But there is hardly a question that it tells the story of the assault of Hazael, king of Damascus, on the northern kingdom of Israel around 835 BCE. ... The most important part of the inscription is Hazael’s boasting description of his enemies: “[I killed Jeho]ram son of [Ahab] king of Israel, and [I] killed [Ahaz]jahu son of [Jehoram kin]g of the House of David. And I set [their towns into ruins and turned] their land into [desolation]”.

Elisha the patriot had lived to see the fulfilment of his prophecy that Hazael would set on fire Israel’s strongholds (2 Kings 8:12).

Yet, in the biblical narration, the annihilation of the royal house is attributed entirely to Jehu. This is yet another example of ‘biblical perspective’ and selectivity. But it is all one and the same thing, as Jehu was the subordinate of Hazael; the former doing the dirty work whilst the latter gave the orders and gained the credit for it. And this situation, we shall find, will prevail during the whole of their long partnership. [Hazael, an Omride, did indeed wipe out the Omride House of Ahab – but we know he was a patricide, anyway].

Finally, what about Elisha, who was commissioned to “kill” (יָמַית) those who would manage to escape the carnage wrought by Hazael and Jehu? Actually Elisha, as I believe, will also have a huge part to play, though generally later chronologically. In *Chapter 10* (and beginning on p. 237) I shall be identifying the famous prophet in quite a new guise, as a law-enforcing (*shaphat*) reformer-priest. Here as briefly as possible, to conclude this chapter, I should like to lay a foundation for this novel idea.

Elisha the Rechabite

If one cares to read through the sequences of incidents in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles in which Elisha (when going under the name of ‘Elisha’) is involved, one will find that the multi-miracle-working prophet is never reported as having raised a sword in anger (as e.g. Samuel did against Agag, king of the Amalekites, 1 Samuel 15:33).

Was Elisha perhaps a pacifist, who despised violence?

One might think that that would not have been in keeping with the mentality of the age in which he lived. (Though see quote at bottom of p. 239, in *Chapter 10*). I am going to argue that the prophet Elisha had actually joined up with Jehu - whom (as Naaman) he had cured of leprosy. I shall also suggest that Elisha was already quite an old man even when he left everything to follow Elijah in obedience to the Sinai commission. For this reason, Elisha tended to delegate tasks, and send messengers, rather than personally to carry out these tasks. Soon after Elijah’s death we read of that bizarre incident in which Elisha, coming to Bethel, was jeered at by some small boys: ‘Go away, baldhead!’ ‘Go away, baldhead!’ (2 Kings 2:23) [עֲלֵה קָרְחָם עֲלֵה קָרְחָם]. Might Elisha’s baldness have been due entirely to his advanced age, rather than to what some think could have been a tonsure-like appearance that he had adopted upon his having become a prophet?

Another possible indication of Elisha's old age was his constant reliance upon his servant Gehazi, or upon other young men, and various messengers, to carry out his bidding, sometimes unreliably, so that the prophet himself then personally had to intervene. We saw that Elisha had not even come out to meet Naaman the first time, much to the latter's chagrin, but had characteristically sent a messenger to him.

Jehu, we later read, was on his way to Samaria, after his having just overseen (at Beth-eked of the Shepherds) the slaughter of forty-two relatives of king Ahaziah of Judah, whom he had previously slain (cf. 2 Kings 9:27 & 10:12-14). It was then that this meeting occurred (10:15-17):

When [Jehu] left there, he met Jehonadab son of Rechab coming to meet him; he greeted him, and said to him, 'Is your heart as true to mine as mine is to yours?' Jehonadab answered, 'It is'. Jehu said, 'If it is, give me your hand'. So he gave him his hand. Jehu took him up with him into the chariot. He said, 'Come with me, and see my zeal for the Lord'. So he had him ride in his chariot. When he came to Samaria, he killed all who were left to Ahab in Samaria, until he had wiped them out, according to the word of the Lord that he spoke to Elijah.

Since this 'Jehonadab son of Rechab' is the only person actually named as a willing supporter of Jehu's purge, then he stands as the most likely person to be Elisha, son of Shaphat, in Elisha's rôle as terminator of Baalism. [The question of 'Rechab' will be considered briefly in *Chapter 10*, on p. 238]. And notice that Jehu extended his hand to Jehonadab to help him into his chariot; possibly another indication of Elisha-as-Jehonadab's age. (One cannot imagine for instance the athletic Elijah, who had run before Ahab's chariot to Jezreel, 1 Kings 18:46, needing a helping hand to get into a chariot). We must be very grateful for the fine eyewitness-like detail to be found in the Jehu narratives.

Though this Jehonadab comes across in 2 Kings as being a very obscure figure, the Book of Jeremiah fortunately provides some important further detail about him. His loyalty and example were apparently still, about 250 years later in the days of Nebuchednezzar's siege of Jerusalem, ruling the lives of those known as 'Rechabites'. Thus the 'Rechabites' tell Jeremiah and those accompanying the prophet (Jeremiah 35:6-7):

'We will drink no wine, for our ancestor Jonadab [Jehonadab] son of Rechab commanded us, 'You shall never drink wine, neither you nor your children; nor shall you ever build a house, or sow seed; nor shall you plant a vineyard, or even own one; but you shall live in tents all your days, that you may live many days in the land where you reside'.'

The Rechabites then added (vv. 8-11):

'We have obeyed the charge of our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab in all that he commanded us, to drink no wine all our days, ourselves, our wives, our sons, or our daughters, and not to build houses to live in.

We have no vineyard, or field or seed but we have lived in tents, and have obeyed and done all that our ancestor Jonadab commanded us. But when king Nebuchedrezzar [Nebuchednezzar] of Babylon came up against the land, we said, 'Come, let us go to Jerusalem for fear of the army of the Chaldeans and the army of the Arameans'. That is why we are living in Jerusalem'.

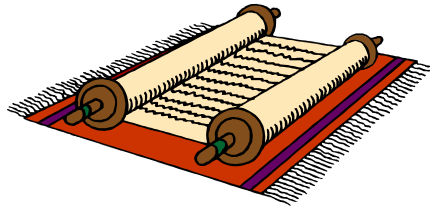
This explanation by the Rechabites accounts fully I suggest for a statement made by Elisha to his servant Gehazi, when severely reprimanding Gehazi for his having accepted presents from the willing Naaman, recently cured of his leprosy. Whilst Gehazi had received from Naaman only silver and clothing (2 talents of the former and two changes of the latter) (2 Kings 5:23), Elisha had taken the matter further, to include cultivated land, livestock and servants; none of which Gehazi - as far as we know - had actually received from Naaman (v. 26): 'Is this a time to accept money and to accept clothing, olive orchards and vineyards, sheep and oxen, and male and female slaves?'

**הֵיטָ לְקַחַת אֶת־הַכֶּסֶף וְלְקַחַת בְּנָדִים וְזִיתִים
וְכִרְמִים וְצֹאן וְבָקָר וְעֶבְדִים וְשִׁפְחוֹת**

Elisha was apparently thus seriously reminding Gehazi of his 'Rechabite' calling. Gehazi's punishment for his infidelity was to be struck leprous, he and his descendants for ever (v. 27). No wonder the 'Rechabites' continued to hold firm down through the centuries!

So Jehonadab accompanied Jehu to Samaria where Jehu, by a ruse, killed all the Baal worshippers in their temple. Jehu and his men also burned the pillar of Baal and his temple, turning it into a latrine (2 Kings 10:18-27). But in all this there is no mention whatsoever of any actual physical involvement by Jehonadab himself. He was taken along by Jehu to witness the destruction of which he obviously approved, given that 'his heart was true' to Jehu's. But perhaps he himself was by then too old to have been able to take any active part.

Later Elisha, perhaps due to his having had the opportunity of observing at close hand the tactics of the brilliant Jehu, will himself assume a very positive rôle, to complete the Sinai commission. But even then he will act entirely as a leader giving orders, rather than as one personally involved in the slaughter. (See *Chapter 10*, pp. 237-238).



Part II

King Hezekiah and His Mesopotamian Contemporaries Revised

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5

Specific Chronologico-Historical Problems – and Proposed Solutions – for the Era of Hezekiah

In regard to

Judah/Israel

“A River Flows Out from Eden”

וְנָהָר יֵצֵא מִעֵדֶן

Restoring the Hezekian Chronology

With regard to ancient Israel, the problem that confronts historians has truly become an enormous one. It is not simply a case here of alignment and chronological precision. Judah and Israel need in fact to be rescued completely from oblivion in some quarters. Far from Israel's being, as Isaiah had envisaged it (19:24), “the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth ...”, Israel's life-giving river (נָהָר) has, in the minds of some archaeologists, almost entirely dried up. Professor Heinsohn is not really exaggerating when he writes in his historical revision:²⁶⁵ “Mainstream scholars are in the process of deleting Ancient Israel from the history books. The entire period from Abraham ... in the -21st century ... to the flowering of the Divided Kingdom in the -9th century ... is found missing in the archaeological record.

Such a bold conclusion about “9th century” archaeology, especially (we already discussed this era in a revised context in **Part I**), must surely impact also upon the archaeology of EOH in the C8th BC. High profile archaeologists excavating in Palestine have, in recent publications and media interviews, been casting doubt upon much early Israelite history as recorded in the Bible. Sturgis, in a book that became a TV documentary²⁶⁶ - featuring Beirut hostage victim, John McCarthy, interviewing leading archaeologists currently digging in Israel - set out to determine whether the Exodus and Conquest, or David and Solomon, were historical realities. Archaeologists such as Israel Finkelstein of Tel Aviv University and Bill Dever of the University of Arizona were interviewed on actual sites where they could point directly to stratigraphical levels where they thought the evidences for Joshua, the Conquest, or king Solomon, ought to be; but where there was in fact a complete lack of such relevant archaeological data. Whilst doing this they were often, as I believe, ‘standing upon’, so to speak, the very levels in which the data can be found.

That huge slice of pre-Hezekian history, from the C21st – C9th century BC, “found missing” [sic] - by the archaeologists. Rohl, quoting from Sturgis's book, tells of some of the conclusions reached by these archaeologists and historians:²⁶⁷

²⁶⁵ *The Restoration of Ancient History*, (un-numbered pages).

²⁶⁶ *It Ain't Necessarily So*.

²⁶⁷ *The Lost Testament*, pp. 5-6.

- **Ze-ev Herzog on the Exodus** – ‘a history that never happened’.
- **Bill Dever on Jericho** – ‘Joshua destroyed a city that wasn’t even there’.
- **Sturgis on Davidic Jerusalem** – ‘After a century and a half of surveying, digging and sifting, almost no clear archaeological evidence for King David’s capital has come to light’.
- **Israel Finkelstein on United Monarchy Jerusalem** – ‘There is almost no evidence for the tenth century. There is almost no evidence for Solomon. Jerusalem at this time was probably a very small village, or a very poor town’.

And so on and on it went. These archaeologists actually have their historical sights set at the entirely inappropriate Late Bronze Age [hereafter LBA] - the era to which David and Solomon did actually belong - for the Exodus, and the Conquest by Joshua, and at a most impoverished archaeological phase during the Iron Age [hereafter IA] for evidence of the glorious era of David and Solomon. Whilst they tend to write off Solomon, they are forced to concede at least the existence of king David - though greatly diminished - due to the Tell Dan evidence of the ‘House of David’.²⁶⁸ (I discussed this document on pp. 115-116 of the previous chapter). Without Solomon, however, one wonders how, based on 1 Chronicles 3:10-13, there could have been a Hezekiah, who is named there amongst “the descendants of Solomon” (וּבְנֵי-שְׁלֹמֹה... חִזְקִיָּהוּ). The attack on Israel’s rôle in antiquity has been launched in various ways in the past century and a half; for example by:

- *dismissing the patriarchs and early kings as virtually a complete myth.*

(a) Abraham (Abram)

We saw above, quoting Heinsohn, that a huge slice of Israel’s history, beginning with Abraham, is under question today because of the apparent lack of archaeology to support it. Yet this Abraham was also the father of Isaac, the father of Jacob who became Israel, and thus the father of the twelve tribes of Israel with all the attendant history associated with these tribes. Abraham is also considered to have been the father of the monotheistic religions. Relevant to king Hezekiah, Abraham was also the ancestor of the royal tribe of JUDAH from which this Hezekiah would of course later spring. Moreover, as the ancestor of the tribe of LEVI, Abraham was the father of the Israelite priesthood. Hence St. Paul can speak of Levi as being “in the loins” of Abraham (Hebrews 7:10). From this priestly Levi came the many Levites listed in KCI for EOH (2 Chronicles 29:12-14), and, presumably, “the high priest, Joakim” of Judith 4:6. (For more on this Joakim, see VOLUME 2, **Part II**).

From the tribe of SIMEON, there arose Judith herself (Judith 8:1), and also Isaiah as I shall be proposing in the same **Part II**, and in the *Excursus* on Isaiah.

And from the northern tribe of NAPHTALI, came Tobit and his son, Tobias, and also Tobit’s nephew, *Achior* (var *Ahikar*) (Tobit 1:1, 9, 22); an official who will figure most prominently again in this same **Part II**. Hence these four tribes (JUDAH, LEVI, SIMEON and NAPHTALI) in particular will be of utmost importance in my reconstruction of EOH.

²⁶⁸ See e.g. Finkelstein’s and Silberman’s discussion of this document in *The Bible Unearthed*, p. 129.

(b) Jacob (Israel)

Jacob also must disappear from history if certain contemporary archaeologists are to have their way. Judith will refer back to an incident in the life of Jacob concerning the latter's daughter, Dinah, who was raped by a Canaanite prince and then avenged by her brothers; most notably, in Judith's case, by her ancestor Simeon. This brief story narrated in Genesis 34:1-31, which separates Jacob's arrival at Shechem from his return to Bethel - and which precedes the beginning of the Joseph narrative (37:2b) by three chapters - will be recalled a full millennium later by Judith as an heroic deed by her ancestor Simeon against the Hivite prince, Shechem. Actually it was both Simeon and Levi, not Simeon alone, who subsequently slaughtered, not only the chief culprit, Shechem, but all the male Canaanites in the city; a fact that the parochial Simeonite Judith seems to have overlooked. She also failed to note that Jacob had been less than impressed with Simeon and Levi for their violent retaliation: 'You have brought trouble on me by making me odious to the inhabitants of the land ...'; an incident that Jacob will actually recall on his deathbed, there cursing the anger of Simeon and Levi (cf. 34:30 & 49:5-7).

שְׁמֵעוֹן וְלוֹי אֲחִים כָּלֵי חָמַס מְכַרְתֵּיהֶם

Judith however will re-cast her ancestral history in favour of Simeon when, in her prayer before entering the camp of the Assyrians, she prays that Dinah's fate will not befall her, too, at the hands of *Holofernes* (Judith 9:2-4).

(c) Moses

Meyer had, in 1906, cast serious doubt upon the historicity of Moses:²⁶⁹

After all, with the exception of those who accept tradition bag and baggage as historical truth, not one of those who treat [Moses] as a historical reality has hitherto been able to fill him with any kind of content whatever, to depict him as a concrete historical figure, or to produce anything which he could have created or which could be his historical work.

In arriving at this conclusion, as in many other ways, Meyer may have been a victim of his own system; for one of the unhappy consequences of Sothic displacement is that historical characters are sought for in kingdoms or eras where they do not belong.

Shoshenq I as 'Shishak' is, I believe, one classical example of this.

Just as the memory of Joseph's contribution to Egypt was forgotten - (Hebrew: **לֹא יָדַע**, that is, by 'not recognising' what Joseph had done) - by the 'hostile new king who arose over' the land (cf. Exodus 1:8 & Judith 5:11), so apparently has the identity of the Moses, who was born during the reign of this same inimical ruler (cf. Exodus 1:8 & 2:2), been 'forgotten' to historians; buried under the immense rubble of the Sothic chronology.

²⁶⁹ As quoted in the *Preface* to M. Buber's *Moses*.

Thus Meyer was being perfectly logical, according to his own artificial context - with its subsequent misalignment of the early history of Israel - when issuing his bold challenge to gainsay the traditional view that Moses was a real historical person. And Meyer was entirely correct too back then, in 1906 (a full century ago), when stating that “not one of those who treat [Moses] as a historical reality has hitherto been able to fill him with any kind of content whatever ...”. For Meyer’s chronology, as promoted by the Berlin School of Egyptology, and later by Sir Henry Breasted, which had become the standard, had made it quite impossible for scholars even to locate Moses in that complex scheme, let alone “to fill him with any kind of content”. Whilst an independent-minded historian like Sir Flinders Petrie might try valiantly to make a major adjustment to Sothic chronology - though still unfortunately based on that system’s faulty premises, by adding an extra Sothic period - he did not like what he eventually saw and so had to reject his novel idea.²⁷⁰ Meyer’s Sothic chronology therefore survived the challenge and prevailed.

Today, for those who do give some credence to the story of Moses and the Exodus account, the favoured era is, as it was in Meyer’s day, the 19th Ramesside dynasty, Sothically dated to the C13th-C12th’s BC – but still two or more centuries after properly calculated biblical estimates for Moses. Ramses II (c. 1279-1212 BC, conventional dates) is now generally considered to have been the Pharaoh of the Exodus; though no evidence whatsoever for a mass exodus of foreigners can be found during his reign.

Fortunately, the work of revision is serving to resurrect some long-lost biblical characters of great import. I have already shown in fair detail in **Part I** how C9th BC biblical characters, for instance, emerge in some profusion when a Velikovskian-based revision is carefully applied to the well-documented EA period. According to the model for Egypt that I shall be proposing in *Chapter 11* (section: “A Basic, Revised Chronology for Ramses II”), the reign of Ramses II actually straddled the last half of the C9th and the first part of the C8th BC; the latter being the same century to which king Hezekiah in fact belonged. Thus Ramses II came into being more than half a millennium after Moses. He was certainly not the pharaoh of the Exodus.

Just as Abraham cannot be so easily brushed aside, with so much history attached to him, neither can one simply erase Moses as Meyer had thought. For, intricately connected with Moses, and with his older brother, Aaron, are detailed genealogies of Israel that, running from the sons of Jacob (Israel), and passing through EOH, course all the way down to the Babylonian Captivity, and even beyond (e.g. Matthew 1:2-17). Thus we read in Numbers 1, in the case of the first census of Israel, of Moses and Aaron being commanded to enroll the people “company by company” (v. 3). In this task, the brothers were assisted by men selected from each of the twelve tribes; the leader selected from the Simeonites being “Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai” (שֵׁלֻמִּיֶּל בֶּן־זוּרִישַׁדַּי ...) (v. 6). And these two Simeonite names are the very same ones that head the list in the Simeonite Judith’s own genealogy: “Salamiel son of Sarasadai [son of Israel]” (Judith 8:1). In other words, the author of BOJ details Judith’s genealogy of about sixteen generations extending all the way back to the time of Moses.

²⁷⁰ *Researches in Sinai*, ch. xii; *q.v.* his *A History of Egypt*, vol. i, add. xvii, xviii.

The selection from the tribe of Judah, given in the very next verse (v. 7), was “Nahshon, son of Amminadab”; Nahshon and his father being regal ancestors of David, who was in turn a regal ancestor of Hezekiah (cf. 1 Chronicles 2:10-15 & 3:1-13).

And the Levites, too, have genealogies extending from Levi, through Aaron, brother of Moses, all the way down to the time of Solomon, and on down to the Babylonian Captivity (e.g. 1 Chronicles 6:1-15), including specific reference to EOH (4:41).

Moreover, all of these individuals belong to eras that have their own attendant history; some of it very detailed. So there *is* some real traditional “bag and baggage”, to quote Meyer, in support of the historical authenticity of Moses, and so, for one to be properly convincing in challenging such a tradition, one would need to overthrow, not only Moses, but the attendant genealogical “baggage”.

It was not until about half a century later than Meyer, with the publication of Volume 1 of Velikovsky’s *Ages in Chaos* series (1952), that, as far as I see it, there first became available a basic model for the proper alignment of ancient Egypt with ancient Israel. This prepared the way for an historical identification of Moses himself; though Velikovsky, for his part, hardly mentioned the great man,²⁷¹ let alone tried to identify him. Velikovsky did, however, point to some stunning parallels between various Middle Kingdom payrii (e.g. Ipuwer, Ermitage) and the biblical description of the Ten Plagues.²⁷² In more recent times Dr. Rudolph Cohen, Deputy Director of the Israeli Antiquities Authority, seems to have accepted this basic sort of scenario, in a 12th dynasty context, and he has also supported Courville’s view that the Israelites were the MBI people.²⁷³ Professor Emmanuel Anati, an archaeologist of the University of Lecce, has added his weight to the argument for the historical reality of Moses and Joshua by pointing to the appropriate archaeology, including his now famous identification of the true Mount Sinai: Har Karkom.²⁷⁴

- *metamorphosis of Hebrew (Israelite) patriarchs into non Hebrews (Israelites).*

Psychoanalyst Freud’s view in *Moses and Monotheism* that Moses was an Egyptian²⁷⁵ has recently been revisited by Islamic writer Osman in a provocative book,²⁷⁶ in which he claims to have identified as 18th dynasty *Egyptian* characters, not only the early patriarchs of Israel, but even the New Testament’s ‘Holy Family’. These biblical characters, some traditionally separated from others by as much as one and a half millennia, are all herded together by Osman into Egypt’s 18th dynasty. There, king David becomes pharaoh Thutmose III (and father of Isaac, no less); Moses becomes Akhnaton, the supposed founder of monotheism. But when the revision, with its solid foundations in archaeology, is applied to Osman’s major premises, almost the entire book can be shown to be nonsense.

²⁷¹ See M. Sieff’s intriguing discussion of this peculiarity in ‘Velikovsky and His Heroes’.

²⁷² *Ages in Chaos*, vol. 1, ch. 1: ‘In Search of a Link Between Israelite and Egyptian Histories’, pp. 1-52.

²⁷³ ‘The Mysterious MB I People’. Cohen has been more forthcoming on this in private conversations with Dr. David Down.

²⁷⁴ *The Mountain of God*.

²⁷⁵ As discussed by I. Velikovsky in *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, p. 195.

²⁷⁶ *Out of Egypt. The Roots of Christianity Revealed*.

At the request of Dr. Simms, I wrote a critique of Osman's book;²⁷⁷ a highly unfavourable one. Now I doubt if Osman would be over-impressed by professor Thiede's quotation, in *The Wanderer*, of noted biblicist Herschel Shanks, who puts a recent commentator "in the same category as those cranks who claim that Jesus was not Jewish but Egyptian".²⁷⁸

- *late dating the Hebrew writings and making them dependent upon Babylonian myths.*

The view that Genesis and Exodus were late compilations, having been handed down by oral tradition before being committed to writing during the Babylonian Exile, was formed by biblical commentators of the C19th, when it was still thought that writing had not developed until about 1000 BC, the approximate time of king David; and before ancient scribal methods had become properly known. This approach culminated in what is known as Graf-Wellhausen's 'Documentary Hypothesis'. While we well know now how completely naïve in archaeological terms some of these premises were, this outdated system has - like Meyer's Sothic scheme - tended to stick. The issue is far too vast to go into here. Two colleagues and I wrote a two-part critical analysis of all this in 1987.²⁷⁹ Suffice it to say that the language and structure of the Pentateuch completely refute the Graf-Wellhausen system of *Pan Babylonianism*, because:

- A. the language of the Pentateuch is found to be saturated with Egyptianisms²⁸⁰ - a fact of which the *Pan Babylonianists* seem to be generally unaware; and
- B. the Pentateuchal texts contain the most ancient of scribal structural elements, whose colophon 'signatures' attest to them being very early compilations.²⁸¹

The Egyptologists' lack of knowledge of - even, in some cases, contempt for - Hebrew and the Bible was the reason, according to Professor Yahuda, for their failure to appreciate the prevailing Egyptian element in the Pentateuch. Yahuda himself, who lacked expertise in neither Hebrew nor Egyptian (not to mention Akkadian), summed up the situation:²⁸² "The Assyro-Babylonian school has undoubtedly been very successful in shedding new light on many parts of the Bible and also on some chapters of Genesis. But far from solving the problems of composition and antiquity of the Pentateuch, it rather complicated them". And:

Egyptology, too, failed, to furnish a solution only because after the rise of the *Graf-Wellhausen* School some of the leading Egyptologists accepted its theories without having sufficient knowledge of Hebrew and the Bible to enable them to take any initiative in these questions.

²⁷⁷ 'Osman's "Osmosis" of Moses'.

²⁷⁸ H. Shanks as cited in 'Thiede's Witness'.

²⁷⁹ Mackey, Calneggia & Money, 'A Critical Re-Appraisal of the Book of Genesis'.

²⁸⁰ See A. Yahuda, *The Language of the Pentateuch in its Relation to Egyptian*.

²⁸¹ See P. Wiseman, *Ancient Records and the Structure of Genesis*.

²⁸² *Op. cit.*, p. i.

As they could not find more than any occasional connexions between Hebrew and Egyptian, they simply took it for granted that Egyptology had very little to yield for the study of the Bible ... Professor Adolf Erman went so far as to affirm that all 'that the Old Testament had to say about Egypt could not be regarded with enough suspicion'.

One cannot but pick up amongst various of these commentators (e.g. Erman, Meyer, Wellhausen) that same tendency that Bernal has been at pains to identify;²⁸³ namely, a Western European reluctance to give credit where it is due *to the east*; in this case, notably, to Israel. Ironically, Israeli scholars are at the forefront of this. Thus Heinsohn:²⁸⁴

The worst enemy of Israel's history, indeed, is biblical chronology. Whoever puts his faith in it, cannot help but be tempted to extinguish Ancient Israel from the map. This is not only true for anti-Semites and anti-Zionists and neutral researchers, *but even for the best and brightest of Israeli scholars.*

- *ignoring clearly stated biblical syncretisms.*

I gave the example in *Chapter 1* of Thiele's widely accepted, neo-Assyrian-based 'biblical' chronology, according to which Thiele has completely rejected - and hence lost - that triple biblical link of the 9th year of *Hoshea*, the 6th year of *Hezekiah* and the *fall of Samaria*. I intend now to discuss this further.

A Solid Foundation Needed for EOH

Despite this current mood in academic thinking, let us not forget that the testimony of Israel has sometimes been our only source of knowledge about a particular king, nation or event, prior to the flowering of archaeology in modern times. Thus, for twenty centuries or more, the only mention of the great Assyrian king, SARGON II, was to be found in the opening verse of Isaiah 20: "In the year that the commander-in-chief, who was sent by King Sargon of Assyria, came to Ashdod and fought against it and took it".

**בְּשֵׁנַת בָּא תִרְתֵּן אֲשֶׁדּוּדָה בְּשֶׁלַח אֲתוֹ
סַרְגּוֹן מֶלֶךְ: אֲשׁוּר וְיִלְחָם בְּאֲשֶׁדּוּד וְיִלְכְּדָהּ**

Historians doubted Isaiah's testimony that there even was such an Assyrian king, 'Sargon'. Again, relevant to EOH, there is, as discussed in *Chapter 1*, some interlocking chronology between the Assyrian records and 2 Kings for the incident of the fall of Samaria. These syncretisms, I suggest, should not be lightly dismissed. Potentially, they are fully preserved in my five chronological 'anchors' for EOH as listed in *Chapter 1* (p. 28); but they are annihilated in Thiele's chronology, despite the latter's assertion that:²⁸⁵

²⁸³ *Black Athena. The Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization.*

²⁸⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 26.

²⁸⁵ *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 174.

... never will the events of the Old Testament record be properly fitted into the events of the Near Eastern world, and never will the vital messages of the Old Testament be thoroughly or correctly understood until there has been established a sound chronology for Old Testament times.

Montgomery tells of the devastating effect that Thiele's chronology has had upon the traditional dating of Hezekiah in its relation to Hoshea of Israel and the fall of Samaria:²⁸⁶

Thiele's chronology has the fall of Samaria in 722 BC, Hezekiah's accession year in 715 BC and his 14th year in 701 BC – 21 years apart. He insists that Hezekiah and Hosea [Hoshea] had no contact at all. He says "... it is of paramount importance that synchronisms (II Kings 18:1, 8, 10) between him (Hezekiah) and Hosea be recognized as late and artificial." [12, p174], i.e. they are false.

This is an extremely bold conclusion for Thiele to have reached in regard to an ancient document that provides us with multi-chronological links; especially given his insistence upon "a sound chronology for Old Testament times". Admittedly though, as already noted in *Chapter 1*, there are problems to be sorted out in connection with the biblical link between Hoshea and Hezekiah, the beginning of whose reign is said to have occurred during Hoshea's third year (2 Kings 18:1): "In the third year of King Hoshea son of Elah of Israel, Hezekiah son of King Ahaz of Judah began to reign". Thiele has discussed this in several places,²⁸⁷ and has rejected the veracity of the biblical evidence. His argument firstly centres upon the fact that Hezekiah had, in the great Passover he proclaimed in his first year, sent invitations to Israel – to Ephraim and Manasseh and even Zebulun (2 Chronicles 30:1, 6, 10), leading Thiele to conclude:²⁸⁸ "While the northern kingdom was still in existence, it would not, of course, have been possible for the envoys of Judah to pass through the territory of Israel; so we have here a clear indication that it was no longer in existence". On a more general note, Thiele has offered this related objection:²⁸⁹

Nowhere in the record of Hezekiah's reign is mention made of any contact by him with Hoshea. In less serious times there was always a mention in the account of a king of Judah of some contact with the corresponding king of Israel, but none is found here. If it had been during the days of the God-fearing Hezekiah that Assyria was bringing Israel to its end, it is almost certain that Hezekiah would have had some contact with Hoshea and mentioned that contact. The deafening silence in this regard is a clear indication that Hoshea and his kingdom were no more when Hezekiah began.

This is a legitimate point. The most likely solution to the problem, in my opinion, is that Hoshea was no longer in charge of Israel.

²⁸⁶ 'Towards a Biblically Inerrant Chronology', section: "The Divided Kingdom".

²⁸⁷ *Op. cit.*, ch's 8 and 9.

²⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 169.

²⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

I suggested in *Chapter 1* (p. 26) that Hoshea's revolt against Assyria, involving his turning to 'So King of Egypt', would have occurred close to 727 BC, the beginning of Hezekiah's reign. Some years earlier, with the Assyrian forces of Tiglath-pileser III "approaching the very border of Israel and ... threatening to push onward to Samaria", according to Irvine's construction of events, Hoshea had led "a pro-Assyrian, anti-Pekah movement within Israel ...".²⁹⁰ But now, in the face of Hoshea's revolt, the swift-acting Shalmaneser V,²⁹¹ (who I am identifying with Tiglath-pileser), had promptly "confined [Hoshea] and imprisoned him" (2 Kings 17:4) (אֲשׁוּר וַיֹּאסְרֵהוּ בַּיַּת כְּלֵא ...). Hoshea was thus rendered inactive from about the beginning of Hezekiah's reign and on into the siege and subsequent capture of Samaria. And so the Egyptian-backed Hezekiah, who had like Hoshea rebelled against Assyria, became for a time the sole ruler of the entire land, prior to the Assyrian incursions into Judah. In this way, one presumes, Hezekiah would have been able to have sent his messengers into northern Israel.

The other legitimate objection that I had noted in *Chapter 1* (on p. 22) concerned Tadmor's view, followed by Thiele, that Samaria was captured twice by Assyria; a second time in 720 BC.²⁹² Moreover, Roux considers whether it were Shalmaneser V or Sargon II who captured Samaria as "still a debated question".²⁹³ While van de Mieroop writes of Shalmaneser V as conquering Israel's capital "just before his death",²⁹⁴ adding that: "His successor Sargon II claimed the victory for himself and turned the region into the province of Samaria". Whilst I intend to discuss in detail, in the next chapter, the neo-Assyrian chronology in its relation to Hezekiah, I should like to make some preliminary comments here, following Bouffler. Sargon, according to Luckenbill, had claimed that the fall of Samaria occurred (i.e. he caused it) in his first year.²⁹⁵ "[At the beginning of my rule, in my first year of reign ... Samerinai (the people of Samaria) ... 27,290 people, who lived therein, I carried away ...]". I see no good reason though not to accept Sargon's plain statement here. There is apparently a one year discrepancy between Sargon II's *Annals* and the document that Winckler called Cylinder B, according to which the fall of Samaria could not have occurred in the reign of Sargon, but of his predecessor, Shalmaneser. Here is Bouffler's explanation of the apparent puzzling discrepancy:²⁹⁶

... the *Annals* make Sargon's reign to commence in the year 722 BC., styled the *rish sharruti* or "beginning of the reign", 721 being regarded as the first year of the reign; whereas our cylinder, which after Winckler we will call Cylinder B, regards 721 as the "beginning of the reign", and 720 as the first year of the reign.

²⁹⁰ *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis*, p. 34.

²⁹¹ We recall, from the Introduction to this thesis, the metaphor of Assyria as the swiftly flowing Tigris river. And Irvine has labelled Tiglath-pileser III's campaign against Philistia at this approximate time as "a kind of *Blitzkrieg*", adding that: "The lack of Philistine opposition to the advancing Assyrian army seems to reflect the suddenness with which the army appeared in the area". *Ibid*, p. 47.

²⁹² 'The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur', p. 94. Tadmor here refers to Sargon's "reconquest of Samaria".

²⁹³ *Ancient Iraq*, p. 310.

²⁹⁴ *A History of the Ancient Near East*, p. 235.

²⁹⁵ As quoted by D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria & Babylonia*, vol. 1, # 4. At least, the fall of Samaria is generally regarded as being the incident to which Sargon referred here.

²⁹⁶ *The Book of Isaiah*, pp. 112-113.

From this conclusion we obtain the following remarkable result. The capture of Samaria is assigned by the Annals to the “beginning of the reign” of Sargon, *i.e.* to the last three months of the year 722, and it is recorded as the first event of the reign. But according to this new reckoning of time on Cylinder B *that event would not be included in the reign of Sargon at all, but would be looked upon as falling in the reign of his predecessor Shalmaneser V.*

When, then, it is objected that in 2 Kings xvii. 3-6 the capture of Samaria - which took place in 722 - appears to be assigned to Shalmaneser ... we can answer that the sacred writer is no more at fault than the scribe who wrote Cylinder B

It does appear from Sargon II's *Annals* that Samaria revolted again even after it had been captured by the Assyrians. This action, tied up I believe with Hezekiah's own revolt - part of an Egyptian-backed Syro-Palestine rebellion against Sargon II (and in *Chapter 12, 3.*, I shall be looking to identify the Egyptian involvement in this) - was, as we shall find, followed by further such revolts, possibly also involving Samaria. It does not alter the fact that Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, had fallen to Shalmaneser V and Sargon II in the ninth year of Hoshea, which was the sixth year of Hezekiah. When the plain testimony of Sargon II above, in relation to the capture of Samaria, is synthesized with that of 2 Kings 18:10, we gain this four-way cross-reference for c. 722 BC: (a) fall of Samaria; (b) beginning of Sargon's rule; (c) sixth year of Hezekiah; (d) ninth year of Hoshea.

We can even add to this list (e) year one of Merodach-baladan as king of Babylon, according to Sargon's testimony:²⁹⁷ “In my twelfth year of reign, (Merodach-baladan) ... For 12 years, against the will (heart) of the gods, he held sway over Babylon ...”. And, in *Chapter 12, 2* (pp. 371-372), I shall be adding a further element to the Assyrian aspect of this (b). Thus, in regard to the one historical incident of the fall of Samaria (c. 722 BC), one can bring into solid alignment three of the four major nations with which this thesis is primarily concerned (Judah/Israel; Assyria and Babylonia); but not as yet the far more complex Egypt/Ethiopia (f)-(g).

I shall attempt to complete this link-up (a)-(g) in *Chapter 12*, with the full inclusion of Egypt/Ethiopia, properly developed.

Unfortunately, as already noted, historians and biblical chronologists, notably Thiele, have basically ignored the above four-way (potentially five-way) synchronism, (a)-(d)-(e), preferring to align Hezekiah's regnal years to a miscalculated neo-Assyrian history²⁹⁸ [more on that in the next chapter], making Hezekiah a late contemporary of Sargon II's, and dating the former to c. 716/5-687 BC. This means, as we also saw, that Hezekiah would have begun to reign about a decade later than where 2 Kings locates him; far too late for his having been the king of Judah during the fall of Samaria.

My revised dates for Hezekiah will be c. 727-699 BC. (See **Table 7**, p. 393).

In this thesis, the above five-way synchronism (a)-(e) based on the fall of Samaria will now take its place as a veritable foundation stone for a new historical revision.

²⁹⁷ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 31.

²⁹⁸ See e.g. E. Aitchison's 'Thiele's Assyrian Reliance'.

Thiele had had the right idea though when trying to fix a precisely synchronized date, e.g. Hezekiah's fourteenth year dated to Sennacherib's attack - which he had estimated to have taken place in 701 BC; the right idea, that is, at least insofar as he had had in mind the following valid purpose:²⁹⁹ "This [701 BC] is a precise date from which we may go forward or backward on the basis of the regnal data to all other dates in our pattern". That is indeed the very purpose that I, too, am trying to achieve: namely, to fix precise dates for king Hezekiah, based on solid synchronisms, in order to enable future chronologists to work 'forward or backward' from there to build a sound chronology. An actual revision of biblical dates beyond the reign of Hezekiah is however beyond the scope of this thesis. Unfortunately Thiele though, as it seems to me, despite his good intentions, was not able to achieve his aim, due to his having claimed a "precise date" on the basis of an improperly synchronised neo-Assyrian history. Consequently, he sacrificed a clearly stated biblical syncretism for king Hezekiah.

Another most significant point of biblical chronology that Thiele and chronologists generally tend to have missed, or ignored - though it was picked up in early days by Anstey³⁰⁰ - is that Judah and Israel had, between the death of Jehu and the fall of Samaria, a total of three interregna (one for Judah and two for Israel), together totalling about four decades. To omit from one's chronology these three interregna, so precisely calculated in the Second Book of Kings (see explanation and calculations in *Chapter 11*, especially in section, "A Basic, Revised Chronology for Ramses II", pp. 286-288), is to end up with an impossibly cramped time line. Hence, though I just said that I shall be discussing precise biblical dates only in relation to Hezekiah, one cannot neglect so large a period of time as these interregna, combined, with their ramifications for the revision of Egyptian and neo-Mesopotamian history.

Restoring a Jewish Heroine

But chronological precision is not the only jewel from Israel's legacy for EOH that must be preserved, as I now intend to mention. A contributing factor to my efforts in VOLUME TWO of this thesis with trying to reinstate Judith as an historical character - a 16th generation Simeonite (Judith 8:1), fiercely loyal to Jerusalem - will be for the sake of restoring for modern Israelis one of their nation's greatest heroines. Perhaps the need to do this becomes even more urgent now in the face of Heinsohn's testimony above that notable Israeli scholars are currently in the process of deleting ancient Israel from the historical map. Judith was in fact generally considered to have been an actual historical person right down through the centuries, until modern times. See my discussion on this long tradition in VOLUME TWO ('**A History and Critical Evaluation of BOJ**', pp. 17ff.). To reinstate the heroine, Judith, to her rightful place in the history of Israel, as (I believe) a contemporary of king Hezekiah and of his son Manasseh, and of Sargon II/Sennacherib and Esarhaddon of Assyria, will be a pressing consideration throughout VOLUME TWO of this thesis as a continuation of my effort to establish king Hezekiah's contemporaries.

²⁹⁹ *Op. cit*, p. 174. Cf. Thiele's similar comment in relation to Jehu's era, *ibid*, p. 77.

³⁰⁰ *The Romance of Bible Chronology*, pp. 184-185.

6

Specific Chronologico-Historical Problems – and Proposed Solutions – for the Era of Hezekiah

In regard to

Assyria

“Leviathan the Swift Serpent”

לְוִיָּתָן נָחֵשׁ בָּרָחַם

The core of this thesis, on EOH, will be most heavily dependent upon the startling conclusions that I shall arrive at in this section regarding the traditional neo-Assyrian succession of Tiglath-pileser III, Shalmaneser V, Sargon II, Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal. It will of necessity be lengthy, in three sections.

Introductory Comment

The requisite lowering of EA by 500 years, to the mid-C9th BC, as argued by Velikovsky, necessitates that the era of ‘Middle’ Assyrian history tied to EA by correspondence needs also to undergo a 500-year time shift. I discussed all this in **Part I**. There it was shown that EA’s Assyrian correspondent, ‘Assuruballit’ (letters 15 & 16), is to be lowered on the time scale by half a millennium from his traditional location in the C14th; a lowering that must impact later on the neo-Assyrian period around the time of king Hezekiah. This is a chronological shift that is demanded, not only by revisionism, but, more to the point, by sound stratigraphical evidence. Moreover, it is a shift that is allowed for by the ‘Dark Ages’ factor. James has devoted several chapters to a discussion of the ‘Dark Ages’ of Assyrian history as well as those better known ones of Greece, showing the similar anomalies that these have created in the history of Mesopotamia.³⁰¹ Speaking about ‘the gap in Assyrian chronology’, James has written of the Middle to Late period:³⁰²

Following this line of kings (presently dated to 1132-1056 BC), available documents dry up again for another 120 years - at the time of the mysterious gap which confronted 19th-century Assyriologists.

³⁰¹ *Centuries of Darkness*, esp. ch. 11, “Riddles of Mesopotamian Archaeology”.

³⁰² *Ibid*, p. 272.

The King List provided the name and reign-lengths of a sequence of monarchs to fill the lacuna, yet the discovery made little practical difference. The kings of this blank period appear to have left few, if any, records of their campaigns, decrees, building work or other efforts. Some are completely unattested in contemporary monuments or inscriptions [James refers here to his Chapter 12]. It is difficult not to draw a comparison with the Third Intermediate Period in Egypt

James had previously extended back even further this blank period of Assyrian history, arriving at the following conclusion:³⁰³

Thus for over 250 years, from the death of Tukulti-Ninurta I in 1208 BC to the renaissance at the end of the 10th century BC, Assyrian history is an almost complete blank - apart from the interlude around the time of Tiglath-pileser I. The gap in documentation extends to all kinds of literature. Assyriologist Simo Parpola recently drew attention to the fact that:

“... with the exception of a few scattered royal inscriptions, virtually no contemporary texts such as letters, administrative records, or legal documents are extant from the early part (1200-1150) or the crucial second half of the period (1050-900)”.

This Parpola’s testimony will become hugely significant in *Chapter 7*, when I scrutinise the so-called ‘Middle’ Kingdom eras in Assyro-Babylonia and re-set them in context with EOH. Whilst my actual ‘folding’ of ‘Middle’ Assyrian history, relevant to EOH, will begin with Tiglath-pileser I (1115-1077 BC, conventional dates), whom I shall identify with his C8th BC namesake, Tiglath-pileser III, an earlier contemporary of king Hezekiah, I shall also need to revisit the revisionist discussion of the important Assurballit, since this will have, in my reconstruction, great bearing upon both the later Egyptian and Mesopotamian histories (see *Chapter 10* and *Excursus* on p. 230).

Olmstead has signified the time of Tiglath-pileser I as ‘the beginnings of true history’.³⁰⁴ But, as I shall be proposing in *Chapter 7* (section: “Assyro-Babylonian Connections”, beginning on p. 181), the king has been wrongly dated. Here, I shall be more concerned with introducing a new and radical trimming of neo-Assyrian history for Sargon II/Sennacherib, showing these ‘two’ perhaps best known of the Assyrian kings to be actually the one person (Section One & Section Two).

And I shall continue this revision in Section Three, with some extraordinary developments in regard to Sennacherib’s son and designated successor, Esarhaddon; and, to a lesser extent, Esarhaddon’s son, Ashurbanipal.

³⁰³ *Ibid*, p. 220.

³⁰⁴ ‘Assyrian Historiography. A Source Study’. Ch. II “The Beginnings of True History”.

I shall also discuss where relevant, and fuse into one, the so-called succession of kings prior to Sargon II, namely Tiglath-pileser III and Shalmaneser V. Overall, I shall reduce this celebrated and seemingly extremely well-known period of neo-Assyrian history, from Tiglath-pileser III to Ashurbanipal (c. 744 BC-627 BC), by over 30 years.

Sargon as Sennacherib

The Assyrians kept well-ordered bureaucratic records (the year-by-year *Limmu* or eponym lists - officials in office). How do these *Limmu* lists stand up for the time of Sennacherib? Aitchison, who is critical of what he considers to be the over reliance on these lists by historians, writes:³⁰⁵

Before we wax so bold as to challenge this perceived snug arrangement, we must also take on board the received opinion that the history of Assyria becomes more accurate as we come forward in time. Specifically the near-end kings from Assurbanipal (626/668), through Esarhaddon (669/680) to Sennacherib (681/704) are considered rock solid. But notice if you will, a curiosity. All of this “rock solid” history is just out of reach of the “best” of the Limmu Lists, which, in 702, revert to the limited information ... entry in use prior to 860.

My first impression was that there must have been a substantial overlap in the reigns of Sargon II and Sennacherib. This is already a fairly radical departure from convention which considers co-regencies to be virtually non-existent amongst neo-Assyrian kings.³⁰⁶ And convention gives no hint of any co-regency for Sargon II and Sennacherib in particular, who are dated, respectively, to 721-705 BC and 704-681 BC.

What had struck me forcefully, though, was that Sargon II's Year 12 and Year 14 campaigns³⁰⁷, respectively, were worded very similarly to Sennacherib's *First* and *Second Campaigns*. I have added italics to facilitate comparison:

Sargon: “In my twelfth year of reign, Marduk-apal-iddina [<i>Merodach-baladan</i>] and Shuturnahundu, the <i>Elamite</i> ... I ... <i>smote with the sword, and conquered</i> ...”	Sennacherib: “In my first campaign I <i>accomplished the defeat of Merodach-baladan</i> ... together with the army of <i>Elam</i> , his ally....”.
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And:

³⁰⁵ ‘Assyria; Is the Conventional Profile Believable?’, p. 20.

³⁰⁶ M. Anstey, though, did propose a co-regency between Sargon II and Sennacherib. *Romance of Bible Chronology*, p. 210.

³⁰⁷ D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, II, # 47, gives it as Year 15 with a question mark.

<p>Sargon: “Talta, king of the Ellipi ... reached the appointed limit of life ... Ispabara [his son] ... fled into ... the fortress of Marubishti, ... that fortress they overwhelmed as with a net. ... people ... I brought up.”</p>	<p>Sennacherib: “... I turned and took the road to the land of the Ellipi. ... Ispabara, their king, ... fled The cities of Marubishti and Akkuddu, ... I destroyed Peoples of the lands my hands had conquered I settled therein”.</p>
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Added to this was the possibility that ‘these two kings’ had built ‘their’ respective ‘Palace Without Rival’ complexes close in time, because the accounts of each were worded almost identically:³⁰⁸

<p>Sargon: “Palaces of ivory, maple, boxwood, musukkani-wood (mulberry?), cedar, cypress, juniper, pine and pistachio, the “Palace without Rival”, for my royal abode. with great beams of cedar Door-leaves of cypress ... shining bronze and set them up in their gates. A portico, patterned after a Hittite (Syrian) palace, which in the tongue of Amurru they call a bit-hilanni ...”.</p>	<p>Sennacherib: “Thereon I had them build a palace of ivory, maple, boxwood, mulberry (musukannu), cedar, cypress ... pistachio, the “Palace without a Rival”, for my royal abode. Beams of cedar Great door-leaves of cypress ... shining copper and set them up in their doors. A portico, patterned after a Hittite (Syrian) palace, which they call in the Amorite tongue a bit-hilani ...”.</p>
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Both long accounts of the building constructions, much edited here, conclude with, precisely: “I made them objects of astonishment”.

But I have more recently moved beyond the co-regency view to thinking that this was in fact the same person recording. That *Sargon* was, say, the throne name of a king whose personal name was *Sennacherib*³⁰⁹ and that, as regards the two ‘Palace[s] Without a Rival’, it was the same king, with the same architect(s), doing all of this building.

I wish to stress the fact that this conclusion was reached slowly, over a period of time, and as the result of my becoming increasingly aware of the - actually quite striking - likenesses between the activities (building and military) of Sargon II and Sennacherib.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid*, # 73 (for Sargon II) and #'s 366, 367 (for Sennacherib). E. Aitchison had in e-mails drawn my attention to the striking similarities between these texts.

³⁰⁹ *Sin-ahhê-eriba*, ‘the god Sin has compensated (the death of) the brothers’. *Sharru-kîn*, ‘true king’.

Hence, though this coalescing of reigns certainly does admirably serve my purpose of producing a shorter chronology for the neo-Assyrians - and will later serve me very well indeed when I attempt to propose an identification for the “Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled over the Assyrians” in Judith (1:1) - it was not a forced conclusion that I manufactured in order to arrive at these ends. I repeat that it was a conclusion arrived at due to a realisation of the undeniable likenesses between who are regarded as being two kings; likenesses of which I became more increasingly aware over time.

That this conclusion happens also to serve two important purposes of this thesis is simply a bonus.

In order to test this new theory of only the one king, I tried interweaving all eight of Sennacherib’s war campaigns with the regnal year accounts of Sargon II. The results, to be set out below, were far more positive than I could have hoped for. I found that there emerged an almost perfect chronological tapestry. Not only that, but the new arrangement seems to have opened the door to further important discoveries, most notably my finding a succession of high officials of the Hezekian era in Sargon’s annalistic account of his storming of ‘Ashdod’ (to be identified now as Lachish).

I shall re-trace this interweaving pattern of regnal years (Sargon) and campaigns (Sennacherib) in Section Two - the most crucial section of this neo-Assyrian revision - after firstly giving a little bit more background on Sargon, and pointing to strengths and weaknesses in the conventional scheme.

Section One

Sargon was for many centuries a complete mystery as Boutflower has explained,³¹⁰ with reference to Isaiah’s verse 20:1, which Boutflower gives as: “The year that the Tartan [Turtan] came to Ashdod, when Sargon king of Assyria sent him”:

... Sargon, the founder of the last and greatest dynasty of Assyria’s warrior kings. Of the dynasty which he founded Sargon was the ablest monarch: indeed he is regarded by some as the greatest of all Assyrian kings For long ages the only mention of this great king was found in the opening verse of Isa. xx, which heads this chapter. Accordingly, the older Biblical commentators were much puzzled as to who Sargon could be. Was he Sennacherib? or Shalmaneser? or a successor of Shalmaneser and immediate predecessor of Sennacherib?

The early archaeological efforts of the mid-C19th solved the problem, so Boutflower thought:

³¹⁰ *The Book of Isaiah*, p. 110.

The mystery was at length solved when the first Assyrian palace, brought to light by the excavations of Botta at Khorsabad in 1842, proved to be the palace of Sargon, erected by him in his new city of Dur-Sargon: and it was presently seen that the last guess was the right one.

Indeed there are several very strong indicators, at least on the surface of things, as to why one should adhere to the textbook view, as summed up by Boufflower, that Sargon was “a successor of Shalmaneser and immediate predecessor of Sennacherib”.

Let us critically discuss the strong points of the conventional view first, and then its weaknesses; making a summary of it all at the end.

(A) Conventional Theory’s Strengths

Primary Sources

The most telling evidence of all that I find is the testimony of Sennacherib’s son, Esarhaddon, in Prism S: “I am Esarhaddon, king of the universe, king of Assyria ... son of Sennacherib, king of Assyria; (grand)son of Sargon, king of the universe, king of Assyria”. It should however be immediately noted, regarding this Prism S, that it and Prism B which it is thought to supplement are referred to by Luckenbill as “The Broken Prisms B and S”, and “the fragmentary Prism S”.³¹¹

Prism A, in the British Museum, gives the following heavily bracketted titulary sequence:³¹²

[Esarhaddon, the great king, the mighty king, king of the universe, king of Assyria, viceroy of Babylon, king] of [Sumer] and Akkad, [son of Sennacherib, the great king, the mighty king], king of Assyria, [(grand)son of Sargon, the great king, the mighty king], king of Assyria

Luckenbill describes it as “the best preserved of the Esarhaddon prisms, only the tops of the columns having suffered slight injury”.³¹³ Its translation though is noticeably much more heavily bracketted than is that of Prism S, which, though damaged, is better preserved at the top.

Regarding the condition of Esarhaddon’s extant documents, Luckenbill has admitted at the start of his chapter on this ruler that:

³¹¹ *Op. cit.*, ch. vii, p. 199, # 499.

³¹² *Ibid.*, p. 211, # 526. Note the equally heavy bracketted, supposed reference to Sargon by Ashurbanipal in *ibid.*, # 986.

³¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 199, # 498.

Owing to the condition in which the documents have come down to us, and to the fact that the scribes did not arrange the events of the king's reign according to years or campaigns, the modern editor's task becomes somewhat difficult. However, the publication of Prism S by Scheil in 1914, went a long way in establishing the broken Prism B, which it restores for the greater part, as a primary source for the events of the reign.

Olmstead seems to me to be rather less optimistic about the fact that, given the scant documentation for the reign of Esarhaddon, we are forced to fall back on the Display Inscriptions which are not a reliable source of documentation, with all their "possibilities for error":³¹⁴

The deliberate destruction of the greater portion of the annals of Tiglath Pileser [III] forces us to study the display documents in greater detail and the loss of all but a fragment of the annals of Esarhaddon makes for this period, too, a fuller discussion of the display inscriptions than would be otherwise necessary.

...

It is a poetic justice rarely found in history that the man who so ruthlessly destroyed the Annals of Tiglath Pileser [III] is today known to us by still smaller fragments of his own. Aside from five mutilated lines from the ninth expedition, only a part of the first expedition against Egypt has survived and that in a very incomplete manner. We are accordingly dependent for our knowledge of the reign on the display inscriptions, with all their possibilities for error, and only the Babylonian Chronicle gives a little help toward fixing the relative order of events.

And the Babylonian Chronicle is of course a late document.

Olmstead too, then, turns to the three Prisms as source material:

The greater part of the history of the reign must be secured from the three most important cylinders. A and C are complete and are practically identical. ... B is broken and was originally considerably fuller, but seems to be from the same general series. ... The date of all three is probably 673. ... [Footnote: C is dated in the month Abu, cf. Harper, *_Hebr_*, IV. 24; B, according to Budge, *_ad loc_*, has Abu of the year 673, but Winckler, *_l. c._*, omits the month. If the month is to be retained, the identity of month points to identity of year, and there is nothing in B to prevent this conjecture. A is from Nebi Yunus, B from Koyunjik.]

More modern efforts to reconstruct the chronology of Esarhaddon and his genealogy³¹⁵ are still dependent upon the same broken and incomplete sources as were the earlier Assyriologists.

³¹⁴ *Op. cit, ibid.*

³¹⁵ E.g. the standard work on Esarhaddon by R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Asarhaddons Königs von Assyrien* (1967).

Another seemingly compelling evidence in favour of the conventional chronology, but one that has required heavy restoration work by the Assyriologists, is in regard to Sennacherib's supposed accession. According to the usual interpretation of the eponym for Nashur(a)-bel, (705 BC, conventional dating), known as Eponym Cb6, Sargon was killed and Sennacherib then sat on the throne:³¹⁶

The king [against Tabal....] against Ešpai the Kulummaean. [.....] The king was killed. The camp of the king of Assyria [was taken.....]. On the 12th of Abu, Sennacherib, son [of Sargon, took his seat on the throne].

Tadmor informs us about this passage that: “Winckler and Delitzsch restored: [MU 16 Šarru-ki]n; ana Ta-ba-lu [illik]”. That is, these scholars took the liberty of adding Sargon's name.

Jonsson, who note has included Sargon's name in his version of the text, gives it more heavily bracketted than had Tadmor:³¹⁷ “[Year 17] Sargon [went] against Tabal [was killed in the war. On the 12th of Abu, Sennacherib, son of Sargon, sat on the throne]”. This document will become hugely significant in the context of this thesis.

Returning to Olmstead's discussion of the cylinders, we might note the degree of guesswork involved, as evidenced by his thrice successive use of the phrase “must have”:³¹⁸

In comparing the texts of A-C and B, we note that in the first part, there seem to be no important differences, save that B adds an account of the accession. In the broken part before this, B must have given the introduction and the murder of Sennacherib. Computation of the minimum in each column of B, based on the amount actually preserved in A and C, will give us some idea of what has been lost. Column II of B must have been devoted in part to the final defeat of the rebels and in part to the introduction to the long narrative concerning Nabu zer lishir. As at least four lines were devoted to this introduction in the usually much shorter D, it must have been fairly long in B. Why A omitted all this is a question. That these two events are the first in the reign is made clear by the Babylonian Chronicle, so that thus far the chronological order has been followed.

What one cannot help but noticing in every case of what I have deemed *primary* evidence is that bracketting is always involved. Prism S, the most formidable testimony, has the word “(grand)son” in brackets. In Prism A, the entire titulary has been square bracketted, which would indicate that Assyriologists have added what they have presumed to have been in the original, now missing. And, in the case of Eponym Cb6, an un-named king is presumed to have been Sargon.

³¹⁶ H. Tadmor, ‘The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur’, p. 97.

³¹⁷ ‘The Foundations of the Assyro-Babylonian Chronology’, p. 21.

³¹⁸ *Op. cit, ibid.*

Luckenbill, in his introduction of the Khorsabad texts of Sargon II, has discussed the inadequacies of Winckler's edition, contrasting it with Lyon's version:³¹⁹

Lyon's work is a model of accurate, painstaking scholarship. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of Winckler's edition of the Sargon texts. With nothing more than Botta-Flandin for comparison, it was possible to show that Winckler's texts are far from what they might have been. When the long text recounting the events of the eighth campaign (§§ 140 ff.) became available for comparison with Winckler's text of the *Annals* for the year 8, our complacent belief that we had a text that was "nearly final" was rudely shattered. A new edition of the Sargon texts is greatly to be desired.

It was customary for the Assyrian kings to record their titulary back through father and grandfather. There are 'two' notable exceptions in neo-Assyrian history: interestingly, Sargon II and Sennacherib, who record neither father nor grandfather. Russell's explanation for this omission is as follows:³²⁰

In nearly every other Assyrian royal titulary, the name of the king was followed by a brief genealogy of the form "son of PN1, who was son of PN2," stressing the legitimacy of the king. As Tadmor has observed, such a statement never appears in the titulary of Sennacherib. This omission is surprising since Sennacherib was unquestionably [sic] the legitimate heir of Sargon II. Tadmor suggests that Sennacherib omitted his father's name either because of disapproval of Sargon's policies or because of the shameful manner of Sargon's death

This may be, but it is important to note that Sargon also omitted the genealogy from his own titulary, presumably because, contrary to this name (Sargon is the biblical form of Šarru-kên: "the king is legitimate"), he was evidently not truly the legitimate ruler.

Perhaps Sennacherib wished to avoid drawing attention to a flawed genealogy: the only way Sennacherib could credibly have used the standard genealogical formulation would have been with a statement such as "Sennacherib, son of Sargon, who was not the son of Shalmaneser", or "who was son of a nobody", and this is clearly worse than nothing at all.

That there was an unusual situation here cannot be doubted. And the bracketing that we find in Esarhaddon's titulary may be a further reflection of it.

By contrast, Esarhaddon's son, Ashurbanipal, stated plainly:³²¹ "I am Assurbanipal ... offspring of the loins of Esarhaddon ...; grandson of Sennacherib ...".

³¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 1-2, with reference to D. Lyon's *Die Keilschrifttexte Sargons ...* (1883).

³²⁰ *Sennacherib's Palace Without Rival at Nineveh*, p. 243.

³²¹ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 842.

My own proposed explanation of this unorthodox situation takes its lead from Russell's phrase above, "... disapproval of [predecessor's] policies". And I suggest it can be accounted for only if Sennacherib be merged with Sargon II, who, at the very beginning of his reign had to undo the unpopular policies of his hated predecessor, Shalmaneser (so-called V). Thus Olmstead:³²²

A slight laid upon the city of Ashur by Shalmaneser proved his undoing. Ashur became angry at the sacrilegious wretch who feared not the lord of all, overthrew his rule in the wrath of his heart, called Sargon to the kingship, lifted up his head, gave him sceptre, throne, and crown. To establish his royalty, Sargon granted freedom from tribute to the sacred cities of Ashur and Harran, and every citizen found his privileges increased as never before. They were freed from the levy of the whole land for military purposes, from the summons of the levy master; like the other temple cities of Assyria, they were freed of all dues. The charter containing the grant of privileges was written on a great silver tablet which was set up before the image of Ashur.

Clearly Sargon who now claimed to be 'True King' (the meaning of 'Sargon') - whether or not he may have slain his predecessor - did not want to include in his titulary a king (albeit his father, as I think) who had made himself unpopular with his god Ashur, and with the masses. In the following chapter I shall suggest a stronger reason for why Sargon may have detested Shalmaneser.

And the same comment applies to Sennacherib if he and Sargon are one - and does not Tobit 1:15 inform us after all that Sennacherib's father was "Shalmaneser", not Sargon? (For more on this, see p. 150).

Esarhaddon, who remained ever faithful and obedient to his father, Sennacherib - as we are going to see - might well have considered himself to have had good cause to vandalise the Annals of Tiglath-pileser III in *damnatio memoriae*, if the latter were indeed the hateful, and much hated, Shalmaneser. Certainly Tiglath-pileser III, as described by Smith, would fit Sargon's description of his odious father Shalmaneser:³²³ "... the annals of Tiglath-pileser's reign were mutilated by Esarhaddon, and there can be little doubt that the Sargonid dynasty must have held Tiglath-pileser in peculiar hatred to commit a desecration apparently rare in their land".

Stylistic Differences?

A further objection to my reconstruction might be that scholars have pointed to the difference in tone between the inscriptions of Sargon and Sennacherib, especially when it comes to the rôle of deities.

³²² *History of Assyria*, pp. 206-207.

³²³ 'The Supremacy of Assyria', p. 47. Sargon II's failure to record early in his reign, in 722 BC, the capture of Samaria, that Thiele has taken as an indication that Sargon II had not actually conquered Samaria (*The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 164), may have been due to his not wanting to credit Shalmaneser V with any part in it.

Tadmor³²⁴ highlights a case in which he determines, on the basis of deity references, that a certain document must have belonged to Sargon II rather than to Sennacherib, despite the fact that the Assyrian king in question was undertaking an incursion into Judaeen territory as far as Azekah, “not far from Lachish”;³²⁵ Lachish being of course famous for Sennacherib’s siege and conquest of it in 701 BC (conventional dating). Here is how Tadmor has introduced this interesting document (that I shall be re-visiting again soon when discussing Sargon II’s campaigns), dating it to Sargon’s 712 BC campaign to Philistian Ashdod, as he thinks; but I am later going to identify this ‘Ashdod’ with Judaeen Lachish.³²⁶

In connection with Sargon’s campaign to Philistia, a small fragment 81-3-23, 131 in the British Museum, published only in transcription by Winckler some fifty years ago ... and not utilized since in any historical presentation, must now be considered.

Leaving aside for the moment Tadmor’s description of the geography of this document, which I shall be discussing further on, I move on to Tadmor’s consideration of its tone and genre, relevant – as he thinks – to differentiation between Sargon II and Sennacherib. Note firstly that Tadmor seeks to distinguish Sargon from Sennacherib based on the style of this document which he himself concedes at the start to be a fairly unique style of document - and probably not therefore typical even of Sargon.³²⁷

The inscription is written in a poetic style, different from the style of the Annals and of the Display Inscriptions, with some expressions that do not have any parallels elsewhere

A similar form of narration is attested in the report to the god Aššur of Sargon’s eighth campaign ... and in the report of Esarhaddon’s campaign in Shupria- the best examples of this style. Thus, our fragment may well belong to the type of “Letters to Gods.”

Tadmor next proceeds to discuss Sargon’s use of the deity name:

The rendering of Aššur’s name by An-šár helps to determine the authorship of the inscription. This way of writing the name Aššur started with Sargon and was extensively used in the historical inscriptions of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal. Apparently the Babylonian or the pro-Babylonian scribes in the court of Sargon ... intended to transform Aššur into a neutral cosmic deity, Anšar (known from the divine genealogy of *Enûma Eliš*). Sennacherib, being the most nationalistic of the Assyrian kings, in principle accepted this device, but in fact supplanted Marduk by Anšar.

³²⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 80-83.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

The best example of this substitution is the complete replacement of Marduk by Anšar in the Assyrian recension of *Enûma Eliš* which was edited during the reign of Sennacherib. In the *historical* inscriptions of this king from Nineveh only the traditional spelling of Aššur was used; Anšar was restricted to the building inscriptions from Assur and to the literary genre.

This substitution is again reflected in K 1356, the descriptions of a door relief cast by Sennacherib, in which Anšar - and neither Marduk nor Aššur - leads the gods to the battle against Tiamat. In this document as well as in other building inscriptions of Sennacherib from Assur composed after the destruction of Babylon (689) and relating to the building of *bît-akîtu* in Assur (replacing the Babylonian original), ... Sennacherib is referred to as *êpiš salam Anšar* = “the maker of the statue of Anšar.”

Thus Tadmor concludes, on rather flimsy grounds as I see it - or have I missed the point? - that the fragment could not pertain to the reign of Sennacherib:

In view of this exceptional usage we eliminate the possibility that our fragment refers to the campaign of Sennacherib against Judah in 710. This conclusion can also be supported by the fact that not one of the standard accounts of Sennacherib’s campaign against Hezekiah nor any other of his inscriptions ever uses this epic style.

Nor Tadmor thinks, for the following reasons, can this document belong to either Esarhaddon or Ashurbanipal:³²⁸

The alternative that this fragment might be attributed to Esarhaddon or to Assurbanipal is ruled out on the grounds that in their time no real military activities were undertaken in Philistia and that the term *Amurru* as a collective was no longer applied to the Syrian and Palestinian kingdoms. Therefore we must attribute this inscription to Sargon.

Later, Tadmor will distinguish between two contemporary styles of writing in Assyria: the “Assur School” and the “Kalah School”.³²⁹ This may have significance with regard to scribal variations in tone and style.

Other factors seemingly in favour of the standard view that Sargon II and Sennacherib were two distinct kings may be, I suggest, put down to being ‘two sides of the same coin’. For example, one might ask the question, in regard to Russell’s statement: “... Nineveh, where there is little evidence of Sargon’s activities”:

³²⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 82-83.

³²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 92.

- *Why would so proud and mighty a king as Sargon II virtually neglect one of Assyria's most pre-eminent cities, Nineveh?*

- *Conversely, why did Sennacherib seemingly avoid Sargon's brand new city of Dur-Sharrukin?*

- *Again, why did Sennacherib record only campaigns, and not his regnal years?*

Bright muses without much confidence upon a possible later discovery “of Sennacherib’s official annals for approximately the last decade of his reign (if such ever existed)”.³³⁰ I shall propose in Section Three that such “official annals” are available, but in Esarhaddon’s and Ashurbanipal’s records. Further, as regards this ‘economy’ factor in inscriptions, we shall see in Section Two that, wherever Sargon II goes into detail about a particular campaign, Sennacherib tends to be brief; and vice versa.

One perhaps cannot say whether there was any marked personality difference ‘between’ Sargon II and Sennacherib (by way of trying to find any distinctions between the ‘two’), because, as Russell has concluded, after an exhaustive study of Sennacherib, “we actually know little about the man”.³³¹

(B) Conventional Theory’s Weaknesses

Consider these categories:

- Worrying Duplications and Anomalies.

1. The ubiquitous king of Babylon, *Merodach-baladan II*, was:

- already a political factor in the days of Tiglath-pileser III (c. 744-727 BC).
- He then, supposedly two reigns later, becomes a complete thorn in Sargon II’s side for the latter’s first, approximately, 12 years of reign (c. 721-710).
- He then resurfaces at the time of Sennacherib, who defeats him in his first campaign and then, finally, in his fourth campaign (c. 704-700).

Kings can reign over long periods of time, but this Merodach-baladan seems perhaps to have overstayed his welcome.

Mitinti of ‘Ashdod’ ranges through the same approximate, long neo-Assyrian period.

³³⁰ *A History of Israel*, p. 296.

³³¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 241.

Perhaps even more telling in this regard is the case of:

2. *Deioces*, king of the Mannaeans and the Medes.

A study of *Deioces* in relation to the succession of neo-Assyrian kings (Sargon II to Ashurbanipal) who I am arguing were all contemporaries of Hezekiah, would tend to support my argument that this period stands in need of a significant time reduction. Sargon II, in his Annals for c. 715 BC, refers to *Daiukku* as a ruler of the Mannai (the *Minni* of the Bible),³³² allies of the Medes.

Most scholars consider *Daiukku* to be the same as the *Deioces* of the Greek sources, the founder of the Median empire. *Daiukku* followed Aza and Ullusuv as ruler of Mannai. According to Luckerman, *Daiukku* had a very short reign as Sargon deposed him from the throne after only a year in power and exiled him to the west.³³³ Herodotus, on the other hand, makes *Deioces* an approximate contemporary of Gyges, who made a treaty with Ashurbanipal, thought to be Sargon's great grandson. Herodotus wrote that Alyattes, the son of Sadyattes, the son of Ardys, the son of Gyges, made war with Cyaxares, the son of Phraortes, the son of *Deioces*.³³⁴ Luckerman, not surprisingly, has some problem with the chronology of all this:³³⁵

If this be the case, then *Deioces* would be a contemporary of the early part of Ardys' reign or the late part of Gyges' reign. However, if we recall that in 660 BC Gyges made a treaty with Ashurbanipal, it would seem strange to find *Deioces*, who was transported by Sargon in 715 BC to Hamath, to be still found at the time of Ashurbanipal.

A span of 55 years (715-660 BC) for *Deioces*, though humanly possible, is somewhat unlikely. Thus Luckerman, in order to maintain the traditional identification between *Deioces* and *Daiukku*, feels it necessary to stretch the matter a bit:

It is not beyond the realm of possibility that *Daiukku*, if he is correctly identified with *Deioces*, was only a child ruler when first overthrown by Sargon of Assyria. Later, while the successors of Sargon expended Assyria's power in debilitating warfare, *Daiukku/Deioces* was able to take advantage of the situation to found a Median dynasty.

And such a stretching is indeed necessary if one maintains the conventional linear succession of (i) Sargon II, (ii) Sennacherib, (iii) Esarhaddon and (iv) Ashurbanipal.

³³² Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, cf. #'s 12 & 56.

³³³ 'Problems of Early Anatolian History (Part 1)', p. 17.

³³⁴ *The Histories*, Book. I, cf. pp. 46-47 & 81.

³³⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 18.

According to the model being proposed here, and in Section Three, on the other hand, with Sargon II identified as Sennacherib, and with Esarhaddon's entire reign being incorporated within his father's reign - and with Ashurbanipal even being active in the latter part of Esarhaddon's reign - then the conventional 55 years for Deioces can be reduced by approximately 30 years, to a more realistic 25 years. In that case Luckerman's "child ruler" theory for Deioces need no longer be proposed.

3. Sennacherib is thought, already by 713 BC, to have been the recipient, as crown prince, of the heavy tribute from *Azuri* of 'Ashdod', who was in fact Sargon's foe.³³⁶

4. Disturbing, too, is the following unprecedented situation at 'Ashdod' as viewed by Tadmor from the conventional angle:³³⁷

Ashdod was then organized [by Sargon] as an Assyrian province. Sennacherib however restored it to its former state as a tributary kingdom. Mitinti, the king of Ashdod, is mentioned in the Annals of Sennacherib There is no doubt, therefore, that at the time of the campaign of Judah (701) Ashdod had an autonomous king and not an Assyrian governor. The reorganization of Ashdod - from a province back to a vassal kingdom - has no precedent. in the time of Esarhaddon Ashdod was again turned into a province.

All this topsy turvy supposedly in the space of a few decades!

5. The somewhat recently published Tang-i Var inscription (to be considered further in *Chapter 12*) cannot possibly accommodate the conventional links between Sargon (died 705 BC) and the 25th (Ethiopian) dynasty, since it now reveals that pharaoh Shebitku, thought not to have begun to reign until c. 702 BC, was the Cushite pharaoh who handed over to Sargon the rebel, *Iatna-Iamani*; an incident currently dated to c. 711 BC.

- Eponym Irregularity.

According to Tadmor:³³⁸

The primary source for the chronology of Sargon's reign is the Eponym Chronicle, preserved in two recensions RM. 2, 97 and K. 4446, referred to henceforth as Cb4 and Cb6, respectively. Unfortunately only a small part of the original four columns of Cb4 is preserved, thus leaving much to be restored.

The Chronicle thus leaves itself open to various interpretations.

³³⁶ Tadmor, *op. cit.*, p. 79, n. 211.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 83-84.

³³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

Tadmor, for instance, is critical of one case in which an event thought to be late in the reign of Sargon II is attributed by Olmstead to the early part of Sennacherib's reign:³³⁹ "... Olmstead was compelled [sic] to assign the entry ... for 706 ([šarru ina mâti] rabûte ina KUR Kar-al-li) to 703, in the reign of Sennacherib".

Newton's interpretation of the limmu lists, that:³⁴⁰ "... king Sargon II is believed from other evidence to have reigned only 17 years, but the number of limmu listed for his reign is 32 Thus we must allow the possibility that there are gaps in the list", is criticised by Jonsson:³⁴¹

Such a conclusion rests upon the erroneous assumption that the Eponym Canon indicates that kings regularly held the eponymy in their first regnal year. But an examination of the Eponym Chronicle as well as other contemporary documents clearly demonstrates that this is not intended by the Canon.

It is certainly true that in the earlier periods the kings held the eponymy in their first or second regnal years, but in later times they deviated from this practice. For example, Shalmaneser V (726-21 BC) held the eponymy in his fourth regnal year.

.... Shalmaneser's successor, Sargon II, held the eponymy in his third regnal year.

.... But the greatest departure from the earlier 'rule' is listed for Sennacherib, Sargon's successor [sic], who held the eponymy in his eighteenth year!

Sennacherib's eponymy "in his eighteenth year" is certainly a huge departure from Assyrian tradition. Perhaps easier to believe, in the context of this thesis, that this was Sennacherib's second eponymy; his first being in his (i.e. Sargon's) Year 3.

- Clear Statements Contravened.

There are two similar problems here:

1. Sennacherib, with reference to his *Third Campaign* in the west, mentions that he had already been receiving tribute from Hezekiah of Judah prior to that. Yet Sennacherib's two previous campaigns (*First* and *Second*) were nowhere near Judah in the west; but were waged in the east.³⁴² So one wonders when had the king of Assyria managed initially to enforce his supremacy over Hezekiah?
2. Sennacherib claims to have employed Mannaeans as slave labourers, even though he is thought never to have campaigned against this people.³⁴³

³³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 84, n. 437.

³⁴⁰ Newton, as quoted by Jonsson, *op. cit*, pp. 20-21.

³⁴¹ *Ibid*.

³⁴² Sennacherib's First Campaign was directed against Merodach-baladan in Babylonia; whilst his Second Campaign was against the Kassites also in the east.

³⁴³ Russell, *op. cit*, p. 227.

Russell can only conclude here that “the best [sic] way to account for the captives from Mannea ... this early in Sennacherib’s reign is to assume that they were left over from the reign of Sargon II, who did campaign in these areas”. An even better way to account for these captives, in my opinion, would be to recognize that Sennacherib had already in his *Second Campaign* fought against the Mannaeans and the Medes (see p. 153 below).

- Invalidates Testimonies of Israel’s Writings

(i) *2 Kings*

The chronology of 2 Kings absolutely forbids adequate space for the reign of Sargon II as an entity separate from Sennacherib. Sargon was in the west (Samaria) in his accession year and again in his Year 2 when he ventured even southwards of Gaza, to Raphia, to defeat an Egyptian army. It is at this early stage of his kingship that the Assyrian would have been able to have collected his first tributes from the kingdom of Judah; more specifically, from Hezekiah himself, already past his sixth year of reign. This, in the context of my reconstruction, validates Sennacherib’s boast that he had already, by his *Third Campaign*, been receiving tribute from Jerusalem.

The conventional system, on the other hand, now runs into the following mathematical conundrum when faced with the scriptural data; a dilemma, the ‘solution’ to which Thiele was able to provide only by completely ignoring half of its terms. It is this:

A mere eight years later than the sixth year of Hezekiah, in that same king’s fourteenth year - which mathematically should be about Year 9 of Sargon II - Sennacherib is found to be the king of Assyria. Thus we read only 3 verses later, in verse 13: “In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah, King Sennacherib of Assyria came up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them”. Sargon, it appears, has disappeared from the Assyrian scene at a point about mid-way through his presumed 17-year reign!

That is a real problem for Thiele and his colleagues who, meanwhile, entirely ignore the five-way correlation (a)-(e), as discussed in *Chapter 1*, which their fixed chronological scheme cannot possibly accommodate.

(ii) *Isaiah*

The Book of Isaiah, in its use both of the name *Sargon* (20:1) and of *Sennacherib* (36:1), chapters apart, might appear to intend two distinct kings. But it seems that the second of these (36:1) has been lifted straight out of the narrative of 2 Kings and slotted into Isaiah (or vice versa), which reads in part like an appendix to the historical books. Now it is not unknown for a particular king to be given different names in the one book of Scripture. In fact we have two different names for a neo-Assyrian king in the space of a mere 10 verses in 2 Kings. Thus:

- In 15:19 we read: “King Pul of Assyria came against the land ...”.
- And in 15:29 that king is called “King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria”.

Most historians today would accept that the same king is meant in both cases: namely, Tiglath-pileser III (c. 744-727 BC, conventional dates), in the first instance by his Babylonian name, *Pul(u)*.

And the above can perhaps be extended to ‘three different names for a neo-Assyrian king in the one book of Scripture’ if Tiglath-pileser III is to be equated with Shalmaneser V, as I have already suggested and will now argue a little more. For two chapters later, in 2 Kings 17:3, we read: “King Shalmaneser of Assyria came up against [Hoshea of Samaria who] became his vassal, and paid him tribute”.

Shalmaneser V (c. 726-722 BC, conventional dates)

Looking at the conventional date for the death of Tiglath-pileser III, c. 727 BC, we can see that it coincides with the biblically-estimated date for the first year of king Hezekiah. But, if the former is to be identified with Shalmaneser V, thought to have reigned for five years, then this date would need to be lowered by about those five years (right to the time of the fall of Samaria), bringing Tiglath-pileser III deeper into the reign of Hezekiah. Now, that Tiglath-pileser III is to be equated with Shalmaneser V would seem to be deducible from a combination of two pieces of evidence from BOT: namely,

1. that it was “King Shalmaneser of the Assyrians” who took Tobit’s tribe of Naphtali into captivity (1:1, 2); a deportation generally attributed to Tiglath-pileser III on the basis of 2 Kings 15:29; and
2. that: “when Shalmaneser died ... his son Sennacherib reigned in his place” (1:15).

Unfortunately, very little is known of the reign of this ‘Shalmaneser’ [V] to supplement BOT. According to Roux, for instance:³⁴⁴ “The short reign of ... Shalmaneser V (726-722 B.C.) is obscure”. And Bouffler has written similarly:³⁴⁵ “The reign of Shalmaneser V (727-722) is a blank in the Assyrian records”. It seems rather strange, though, that a king who was powerful enough to have enforced a three year siege of Israel’s capital of Samaria (probably the *Sha-ma-ra-in* of the Babylonian Chronicle), resulting in the successful sack of that city, and to have invaded all Phoenicia and even to have besieged the mighty Tyre for five years,³⁴⁶ and to have earned a hateful reputation amongst the Sargonids, should end up “a blank” and “obscure” in the Assyrian records.

The name *Tiglath-pileser* was a throne name, as *Sargon* appears to have been – that is, a name given to (or taken by) the king on his accession to the throne. In Assyrian cuneiform, his name is *Tukulti-apil-ešarra*, meaning: “My confidence is the son of Ešarra”. This being a throne name would make it likely that the king also had a personal name - just as I have argued above that Sargon II had the personal name of *Sennacherib*. The personal name of Tiglath-pileser III I believe to have been *Shalmaneser*.

³⁴⁴ *Ancient Iraq*, p. 310. And S. Smith wrote: “Of the short reign of Shalmaneser V no historical record is extant”. ‘The Supremacy of Assyria’, p. 42.

³⁴⁵ *Op. cit.* p. 341.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 184-185.

A problem though with my proposed identification of Shalmaneser V with Tiglath-pileser III is that, according to Boutflower,³⁴⁷ there has been discovered “a treaty between Esarhaddon and Baal of Tyre, in which Shalmaneser is expressly styled the son of Tiglath-pileser”. Boutflower makes reference here to H. Winckler (in Eberhard Schrader’s *Keilinschriften*, 3rd Edn. pt. I, p. 62, note 2); Winckler being the Assyriologist, we might recall, who had with Delitzsch spirited Sargon’s name into Eponym Cb6 and whose edition of Sargon’s *Annals* had disappointed Luckenbill. So far, I have not been able to find any solid evidence for this document.

Boutflower had surmised, on the basis of a flimsy record, that Tiglath-pileser III had died in battle and had been succeeded by Shalmaneser:³⁴⁸ “That Tiglathpileser died in battle is rendered probable by the entry in the Assyrian Chronicle for the year 727 B.C. [sic]: “Against the city of Shalmaneser seated himself on the throne”.” Tiglath-pileser is not even mentioned.

A co-regency between Shalmaneser V and Sargon II can be proposed on the basis that the capture of Samaria is variously attributed to either king. According to my revision, that same co-regency should exist between Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon; and indeed we find that both Tiglath-pileser III and Sargon campaigned on the borders of Egypt; both defeated Hanno the king of Gaza, and established (opened) there a *karu* “quay”; both received tribute from Queen Tsamsi of Arabia; both had encounters with Merodach-baladan. Further, according to my revision, that proposed co-regency can be extended to accommodate Sennacherib (as Sargon). Perhaps a clear proof is that, whilst Sennacherib claimed that the Medes had not submitted to any of his predecessor kings (see p. 153), both Tiglath-pileser and Sargon claimed to have received tribute from the Medes.

Interestingly, nowhere in Kings, Chronicles, or in any other of the books traditionally called ‘historical’, do we encounter the name ‘Sargon’. Yet we should expect mention of him if his armies really had made an incursion as close to Jerusalem as ‘Ashdod’ (be it in Philistia or Judah). Certainly, Sargon II claimed that Judah (*Iaudi*), Philistia (*Piliste*), Edom and Moab, had revolted against him.³⁴⁹ If the Assyrian king, Sargon II, can have two different names – as is being argued here – then so might his father. So I conclude that 2 Kings, in the space of 2 chapters, gives us three names for the one Assyrian king:

- 15:19: “King Pul of Assyria came against the land ...”.
- 15:29: “King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came and captured ...”.
- 17:3: “King Shalmaneser of Assyria came up”.

(iii) *BOJ*

The testimony of *BOJ* should not be dismissed lightly for it is – as we shall discover in VOLUME TWO – a very ancient document that has been copied frequently.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 75-76.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 75.

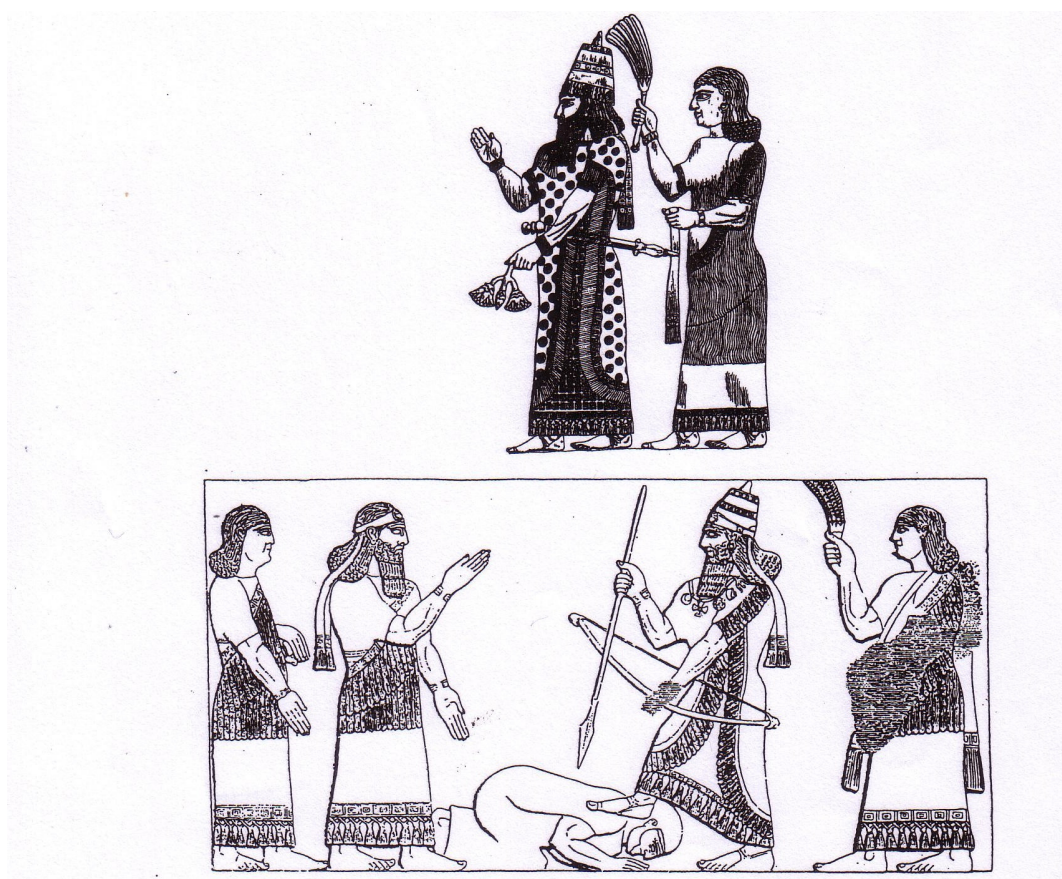
³⁴⁹ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 195, p. 105. Again, the Assyrian scribes of Tiglath-pileser III and Sennacherib used “stereotypical military imagery” in regard to, respectively, Rezin of Syria and Hezekiah of Judah, each having been “shut in like a bird in a cage”. S. Irvine, *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis*, p. 30, including n. 21.

Now, there is only the one Assyrian king, ‘Nebuchadnezzar’,³⁵⁰ ruling throughout the entire drama of BOJ, and he has likenesses to ‘both’ Sennacherib and Sargon II. Thus:

- (As *Sennacherib*) The incident to which the climax of the BOJ drama could be referring, if historical, is the defeat of Sennacherib’s army of 185,000; yet
- (As *Sargon II*) The Assyrian king in BOJ 1 seems to equate well with Sargon, inasmuch as he commences a war against a Chaldean king in his Year 12.

So it might be asked: *Was BOJ’s Assyrian king, Sargon or Sennacherib?*
The question of course becomes irrelevant if it is one and the same king.

Figure 4: Sargon II / Sennacherib³⁵¹



Stylistic likeness and even personal likeness in the case of both the king
and of the accompanying official

³⁵⁰ Regarding the use of ‘Nebuchadnezzar’ for Sargon/Sennacherib, see *Chapter 7* of this thesis.

³⁵¹ Taken from C. Archer’s *The Assyrian Empire*, p. 66 for Sargon II (“Sargon II and an attendant eunuch. Young boys were made eunuchs when given to the king as tribute. In Assyrian art they are always shown as being both beardless and chubby. Drawing of a bas-relief from Khorsabad”); p. 79 for Sennacherib (“Sennacherib accepting the defeat of the vanquished. Engraving of a bas-relief from Nimrud”).

(iv) BOT

BOT, like BOJ, was a popular and much copied document. The incidents described in BOT are written down as having occurred during the successive reigns of ‘Shalmaneser’, ‘Sennacherib’ and ‘Esarhaddon’. No mention at all there of Sargon, not even as father of Sennacherib. Instead, we read: “But when Shalmaneser died, and his son Sennacherib reigned in his place ...” (1:15). Moreover this ‘Shalmaneser’, given as father of Sennacherib, is also - as we saw - referred to as the Assyrian king who had taken into captivity Tobit’s tribe of Naphtali (vv. 1-2); a deed generally attributed to Tiglath-pileser III and conventionally dated about a decade before the reign of Sargon II. This would seem to strengthen my suspicion that Shalmaneser V was actually Tiglath-pileser III, despite Boutflower’s claim of a treaty document specifically styling Shalmaneser as son of Tiglath-pileser III.

A Summarising and Concluding Note

The neo-Assyrian chronology as it currently stands seems to be, like the Sothic chronology of Egypt - though on a far smaller scale - over-extended and thus causing a stretching of contemporaneous reigns, such as those of Merodach baladan II of Babylonia, Mitinti of ‘Ashdod’ and Deioces of Media. There are reasons nonetheless, seemingly based upon solid primary evidence, for believing that the conventional historians have got it right and that their version of the neo-Assyrian succession is basically the correct one. However, much of the primary data is broken and damaged, necessitating heavy bracketting. On at least one significant occasion, the name of a king has been added into a gap based on a preconception. Who is to say that this has not happened more than once? Esarhaddon’s history - a right interpretation of which is so important to this thesis - is so meagre that recourse must be had to his Display Inscriptions, thereby leaving the door open for “errors” according to Olmstead.

With the compilers of the conventional neo-Assyrian chronology having mistaken one king for two, as I am arguing to have occurred in the case of Sargon II/Sennacherib, and probably also with Tiglath-pileser III/Shalmaneser V, then one ends up with duplicated situations, seemingly unfinished scenarios, and of course anomalous or anachronistic events. Thus, great conquests are claimed for Shalmaneser V whose records are virtually a “blank”. Sargon II is found to have been involved in the affairs of a Cushite king who is well outside Sargon’s chronological range; while Sennacherib is found to be ‘interfering’ in events well within the reign of Sargon II, necessitating a truncation of Sargon’s effective reign in order to allow Sennacherib to step in early, e.g. in 714 BC, “the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah” (2 Kings 18:13; Isaiah 36:1), and in 713 BC (tribute from *Azuri* of ‘Ashdod’).

Again, Sargon II claims ‘former’ conquests of regions though there appears to have been no follow up by him (i.e. as Sargon); the follow up being found only in Sennacherib’s records. One often has to ask, and to try to discover, if a certain event occurred in the reign of Sargon or of Sennacherib.

Eponym trends, literary trends, colonisation trends (e.g. at ‘Ashdod’) can be perfectly consistent from Sargon on to Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, as long as the inconsistent, tradition-breaking Sennacherib is left out of the picture.

Sargon is virtually missing from Nineveh. Sennacherib is missing from Dur-Sharrukin. Sennacherib is missing the last decade of his *Annals*. Sargon is prolix about a region of campaign where Sennacherib is correspondingly brief about his own adventures in that region. And vice versa. Sargon will give a detailed account of his famous conquest of ‘Ashdod’ (identified in this thesis as Lachish); though pictorial representation of it is lacking. Sennacherib conquers the mighty Lachish, and lavishes his throne room with pictorial detail of this triumph; but hardly mentions it in writing.

These are simply I believe the two faces of the one coin, Sargon II = Sennacherib; ‘Ashdod’ = Lachish; and the two faces need to be put together if we are to make the ‘currency’ functional.

Admittedly, there are problems in connection with my revision, especially with regard to Esarhaddon’s titulary; but I think they are well outweighed by the anomalies, duplications and anachronisms resulting from the conventional structure.

New foundations are needed for indeed, to recall Aitchison’s words, “we wax so bold as to challenge this perceived snug arrangement” of conventional Assyro-Babylonian history. To establish EOH on firm foundations one ought to take seriously that five-fold synchronism cross-checking (i) *Hezekiah* and (ii) *Hoshea*, with (iii) the *fall of Samaria* at the hands of (iv) *Sargon* of Assyria, who in turn has provided a chronological link with (v) *Merodach-baladan*. We have already seen, and shall see even more clearly in Section Two, that identifying Sargon II with Sennacherib solves a host of chronological and interpretative problems.

Section Two: The Merger

I intend to show here that the eight listed campaigns of Sennacherib can be matched, in compelling chronological order, with year events during the reign of Sargon.

The accounts of Sargon’s regnal years will be taken from the comprehensive reconstruction by Tadmor,³⁵² supplemented in places by Boufflower.³⁵³ The eight campaigns of Sennacherib will be taken from the famous Taylor Prism.³⁵⁴ Sargon lists his *Annals* according to his regnal years, from Year 1 as far as his Year 15. Sennacherib does not connect his campaigns to regnal years.

³⁵² *Op. cit.*

³⁵³ *Op. cit.*

³⁵⁴ I shall also be drawing from Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, #'s 4-47 (for Sargon II) and #'s 234-252 (for Sennacherib). Emphasis added to highlight comparisons.

Some think that Sennacherib's recorded campaigns were the ones personally conducted by him; for Sennacherib is considered to have been rather cowardly, with "most of his wars fought by his generals".³⁵⁵ Whether or not this last is a true assessment of the man - and it may need seriously to be reassessed if Sennacherib's *alter ego* truly were Sargon - I do think that the view about his personal involvement in his listed campaigns is a perfectly correct interpretation; one that will indeed serve to add further weight to this reconstruction.

My conclusion will be that we are dealing here with one and the same king, one and the same reign, and the same campaigns.

Sargon's Accession/Year 1 Corresponds to Sennacherib's First Campaign = Hezekiah's Sixth Year (722 BC)

Sargon, as we have already seen, tells us plainly that he captured Samaria at the beginning of his rule in the first year of his reign. I have accepted the legitimacy of this testimony. He appears to have been co-regent with Shalmaneser V at this point. There are also - as can be seen from the following comparison - some good correspondences between Sargon's records and the *First Campaign* of Sennacherib who tells of his Babylonian campaign in much more detail than does Sargon (emphasis added to highlight similarities):

Sargon's Accession	Sennacherib's First Campaign
<p>"... in my first year of reign ... <i>Merodach-baladan</i>, king of Chaldea, who exercised the kingship over <i>Babylon</i> against the will of the gods ...".</p>	<p>"In my first campaign I accomplished the defeat of <i>Merodach-baladan</i>, king of <i>Babylonia</i>, together with the army of Elam, his ally, in the plain of Kish".</p>
<p>Sargon also tells us that, during this year: "On the <i>Tu'munu</i> tribe I imposed Assur's yoke".</p>	<p>After describing his subsequent entry into Babylon,³⁵⁶ Sennacherib also mentions the <i>Tumunu</i>: "On my return (march), the <i>Tu'muna</i> ... not submissive ... I conquered".</p>

It was no doubt with the spoils and slaves gained from these victories that Sennacherib was able to commence building his 'Palace Without Rival' at Nineveh; a project that, as we shall see, was the prototype, since the foundations for the new city at Khorsabad were not laid until a few years later.

³⁵⁵ Thus Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 323.

³⁵⁶ Jonsson, *op. cit.*, p. 23, n. 24, tells us of the strange situation as established by Lewy in 1935, from the eponym lists, that Sennacherib's reign in Babylon began actually one year before his reign in Assyria.

Sargon's Year 8 Corresponds to Sennacherib's Second Campaign = Hezekiah's Thirteenth Year (715 BC)

Sargon was obviously immensely proud of this campaign which is one of the most detailed accounts in ancient records. Sennacherib is correspondingly brief.

It was this, Sennacherib's *Second Campaign* against Ispabara of Ellipi, that I had originally thought matched Sargon's Year 14 campaign. Now I can revise this because Sargon records, in his Year 14, that he had, "in the course of my *former* campaign", subdued Taltâ of Ellipi. Sennacherib's *Second Campaign* can thus be seen as the record of this "former campaign", which is mentioned only in passing in Sargon's most detailed Year 8 account.

Sargon Year 8	Sennacherib's Second Campaign
<p>"The tribute of the Manneans, <i>Ellipi</i> ... I received".</p> <p>Sargon commenced this huge campaign against the mountain kingdom of Rusa, the Urartian (Armenian), with an assault upon the Mannaeans and their allies, the Medes.</p> <p>"In my eighth year of reign I went against the lands of the Manneans and the <i>Medes</i> I carried off their spoil".</p>	<p>"... I turned and took the road to the land of the <i>Ellipi</i>. ... Ispabara [son of Taltâ], their king, ... fled</p> <p>Historians wonder why Sennacherib had so little contact with the Medes who posed such a problem for other Assyrian kings. Sennacherib's brief mention of the Medes at the end of this his <i>Second Campaign</i> is considered by historians to have been insignificant - mere gift receiving; even though there he claims to have "received the heavy tribute of the distant <i>Medes</i>, whose name none of the kings my fathers had ever heard".</p>

Whilst Sennacherib's last statement about his receiving "heavy tribute" from the Medes might appear, from a conventional point of view, as being mere bravado on his part, it becomes worthy of very serious attention in the context of this revision.

Sargon's Year 9 Corresponds to Sennacherib's Third Campaign = Hezekiah's Fourteenth Year (714 BC)

Year 9, according to what was determined in Section One, should coincide mathematically with the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah. Thus it should tell us of an Assyrian incursion into southern Palestine. It does in fact, but only after a certain degree of probing.

With Boufflower's help we shall discover that Sargon's Year 9 was the very year that the king of Assyria sent his *Turtan* to 'Ashdod', as recorded in Isaiah 20:1, but that this actually corresponds to Year 10 in Sargon's *Annals*. Sargon was intending soon to follow up the conquest by his *Turtan*.

Both the Assyrian records and the Bible telescope what was actually a lengthy campaign, waged in various stages.

'Ashdod'

Now, when Sargon refers to 'Ashdod, we need to be clear as to which exact location he had in mind, for he also refers in the same account to an 'Ashdod-by-the-Sea'. Thus we read: "Ashdod, Gimtu [Gath?], Ashdudimmu [Ashdod-by-the-Sea], I besieged and captured". It is the maritime Ashdod³⁵⁷ that I am going to propose - contrary to the usual view - is the well known Ashdod of the Philistine plain; whilst the 'Ashdod' mentioned first here by Sargon I shall identify as the mighty inland stronghold of Lachish (approx. 50 km south west of Jerusalem), the most important Judaeon fort after Jerusalem itself. These three cities of Lachish, Gath and Ashdod, taken together, formed something of a line of formidable forts in Judaea³⁵⁸. Assyria had to take them as they were a dangerous base for hostile Egypt.

That Sargon would have had to confront Lachish would seem to be inevitable, militarily, due to the fact that he did indeed capture its neighbouring fort of Azekah.³⁵⁹ (For more on this, see pp. 158-159 below). Did not Sargon II boast anyway of his having been the "subduer of the land of Iaudu (Judah), which lies far away ..."?³⁶⁰

Now, the fortress of Lachish was the high point of Sennacherib's western campaign. To no Judaeon city apart from Jerusalem itself would the description 'Ashdod' (Hebrew: אֲשְׁדֹד) that is, 'a very strong place', apply more aptly than to Lachish. The name 'Ashdod', from the root *shádad* (אֲשַׁד), 'to be strong', signifies 'a stronghold'. "What a surprise, then", writes Russell,³⁶¹ regarding the surrender of Lachish, "to turn to the annalistic account of that same campaign - inscribed on the bulls at the throne-room entrance - and discover that Lachish is not mentioned at all".

³⁵⁷ Tadmor distinguishes "Ashdod and Ashdod-*Maritima*", *op. cit.*, p. 83, to which he attaches n. 244: "Ashdud-di-im-mu (Annals 258; Display Inscription 104) = Hebrew Ašdōd-iām = Azotus Parallus of the Byzantine period, located probably at Minet el-Qal'a, 3 miles from the modern Isdūd on the Mediterranean coast (cf. Mazar in the Hebrew *Encyclopaedia Biblica* I, col. 752)".

³⁵⁸ The location of Gath though, according to Lawrence, "is perhaps the most debated issue in Palestinian geography", 'Ekron and Gath - The Location of the Interior Cities of the Philistines Reconsidered', p. 3. Probably, Libnah, not Gath, Lawrence further argues, should be identified with Tell es Safi. *Ibid.*, p. 4.

³⁵⁹ According to Bright, in regard to the pairing of Lachish and Azekah, these two were the last forts taken by the Babylonians in 588 BC. "The fall of Azekah is perhaps illustrated by one of the Lachish Letters, in which an officer in charge of an observation post writes to the garrison commander in Lachish that the fire signals of Azekah can no longer be seen". *Op. cit.*, p. 329.

³⁶⁰ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 137. Cf. Tadmor, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*

³⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 253-254.

Was it that Sargon II - hence, that Sennacherib - had instead referred to Lachish by the descriptive title of 'Ashdod', whose capture Sargon covers in detail?

Let us now follow Boufflower in his reconstruction of this somewhat complex campaign, referring to the fragment Sm. 2022 of Sargon's Annals, which he calls "one particularly precious morsel":³⁶²

The longer face [of this fragment] ... has a dividing line drawn across it near the bottom. Immediately below this line, and somewhat to the left, there can be seen with the help of a magnifying-glass a group of nine cuneiform indentations arranged in three parallel horizontal rows. Even the uninitiated will easily understand that we have here a representation of the number "9". It is this figure, then, which gives to the fragment its special interest, for it tells us, as I am about to show, "the year that the Tartan came unto Ashdod".

Boufflower now moves on to the focal point of Assyria's concerns: mighty 'Ashdod':³⁶³

The second difficulty in Sm. 2022 is connected with the mention of Ashdod in the part below the dividing line. According to the reckoning of time adopted on this fragment something must have happened at Ashdod at the beginning of Sargon's ninth year, i.e. at the beginning of the tenth year, the year 712 BC, according to the better-known reckoning of the Annals. Now, when we turn to the Annals and examine the record of this tenth year, we find no mention whatever of Ashdod. Not till we come to the second and closing portion of the record for the eleventh year do we meet with the account of the famous campaign against that city.

What, then, is the solution to this second difficulty Boufflower asks? And he answers this as follows:³⁶⁴

Simply this: that the mention of Ashdod on the fragment Sm. 2022 does not refer to the siege of that town, which, as just stated, forms the second and closing event in the record of the following year, but in all probability does refer to the first of those political events which led up to the siege, viz. the coming of the Tartan to Ashdod. To make this plain, I will now give the different accounts of the Ashdod imbroglio found in the inscriptions of Sargon, beginning with the one in the Annals (lines 215-228) already referred to, which runs thus:

³⁶² *Op. cit.*, p. 111.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 113-114.

“Azuri king of Ashdod, not to bring tribute his heart was set, and to the kings in his neighbourhood proposals of rebellion against Assyria he sent. Because of the evil he did, over the men of his land I changed his lordship. Akhimiti his own brother, to sovereignty over them I appointed. The Khatte [Hittites], plotting rebellion, hated his lordship; and Yatna, who had no title to the throne, who, like themselves, the reverence due to my lordship did not acknowledge, they set up over them. In the wrath of my heart, riding in my war-chariot, with my cavalry, who do not retreat from the place whither I turn my hands, to Ashdod, his royal city, I marched in haste. Ashdod, Gimtu [Gath?], Ashdudimmu ... I besieged and captured. ...”.

Typical Assyrian war records! Boufflower shows how they connect right through to Sargon’s Year 11, which both he and Tadmor³⁶⁵ date to 711 BC:³⁶⁶

The above extract forms ... the second and closing portion of the record given in the Annals under Sargon’s 11th year, 711 BC., the earlier portion of the record for that year being occupied with the account of the expedition against Mutallu of Gurgum. In the Grand Inscription of Khorsabad we meet with a very similar account, containing a few fresh particulars. The usurper Yatna, i.e. “the Cypriot”, is there styled Yamani, “the Ionian”, thus showing that he was a Greek. We are also told that he fled away to Melukhka on the border of Egypt, but was thrown into chains by the Ethiopian king and despatched to Assyria.

.... In order to effect the deposition of the rebellious Azuri, and set his brother Akhimiti on the throne, Sargon sent forth an armed force to Ashdod. It is in all probability the despatch of such a force, and the successful achievement of the end in view, which were recorded in the fragment Sm. 2022 below the dividing line. As Isa xx.1 informs us - and the statement, as we shall presently see, can be verified from contemporary sources - this first expedition was led by the Tartan. Possibly this may be the reason why it was not thought worthy to be recorded in the Annals under Sargon’s tenth year, 712 BC. But when we come to the eleventh year, 711 BC, and the annalist very properly and suitably records the whole series of events leading up to the siege, two things at once strike us: first, that all these events could not possibly have happened in the single year 711 BC; and secondly, as stated above, that a force must have previously been despatched at the beginning of the troubles to accomplish the deposition of Azuri and the placing of Akhimiti on the throne. On the retirement of this force sedition must again have broken out in Ashdod, for it appears that the anti-Assyrian party were able, after a longer or shorter interval, once more to get the upper hand, to expel Akhimiti, and to set up in his stead a Greek adventurer, Yatna-Yamani. The town was then strongly fortified, and surrounded by a moat.

³⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 96.

³⁶⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 114, 116.

It is at about this stage, Year 11, that Sargon was stirred into action:³⁶⁷

Meanwhile, the news of what was going on at Ashdod appears to have reached the Great King at the beginning of his eleventh year, according to the reckoning of the annalist So enraged was Sargon that, without waiting to collect a large force, he started off at once with a picked body of cavalry, crossed those rivers in flood, and marched with all speed to the disaffected province. Such at least is his own account; but I shall presently adduce reasons which lead one to think that he did not reach Ashdod as speedily as we might expect from the description of his march, but stopped on his way to put down a revolt in the country of Gurgum. In thus hastening to the West Sargon tells us that he was urged on by intelligence that the whole of Southern Syria, including Judah, Edom, and Moab, as well as Philistia, was ripe for revolt, relying on ample promises of support from Pharaoh king of Egypt.

We find, as we switch to what I believe to be Sennacherib's corresponding campaign (his *Third Campaign*) to discover how Assyria dealt with the Egyptian factor, that a ringleader in this sedition was king Hezekiah himself:³⁶⁸

The officials, nobles and people of Ekron, who had thrown Padi, their king, bound by (treaty to) Assyria, into fetters of iron and had given him over to Hezekiah, the Jew (Iaudai), - he kept him in confinement like an enemy, - they (lit., their heart) became afraid and called upon the Egyptian kings, the bowmen, chariots and horse of the king of Meluh-ha (Ethiopia), a countless host, and these came to their aid. In the neighborhood of the city of Altakû (Eltekeh), their ranks being drawn up before me, they offered battle. (Trusting) in the aid of Assur, my lord, I fought with them and brought about their defeat. The Egyptian charioteers and princes, together with the charioteers of the Ethiopian king, my hands took alive in the midst of the battle.

Boutflower was able to deduce from the record of Sargon's Year 10 what he considered to have been the reason why the first expedition against 'Ashdod' was led, not by Sargon in person, but by his 'Turtan'.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 116-117.

³⁶⁸ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 240.

This was because “Sargon was busy over his darling scheme, the decoration of the new palace at Dur-Sargon. ... It was with this object in view that Sargon remained “in the land”, i.e. at home, during the year 712, entrusting the first expedition to Ashdod to his Tartan, as stated in Isa xx.1”³⁶⁹

Boutflower’s detailed chronological reconstruction of the events associated with the siege of ‘Ashdod’ seems to be right in line with Tadmor’s more recent, and more clipped, reconstruction of the same events.³⁷⁰

The Storming of Azekah, Lachish & Other Judaeen Forts

Upon deeper probing, following Tadmor, we find that Sargon actually took the Judaeen fort of Azekah (Azaqâ) as well.

This, coupled with Sargon II’s reference to himself as ‘subduer of Judah’, is the very link that was needed to connect Sargon II’s activities in Philistia with Sennacherib’s in Judah.

Let us follow Tadmor when giving his account of what is now a heavily bracketted cuneiform sequence; a document that we had discussed earlier:³⁷¹

In connection with Sargon’s campaign to Philistia, a small fragment 81-3-23, 131 in the British Museum, published only in transcription by Winckler some fifty years ago and not utilised since in any historical presentation, must now be considered....

2. [...] the second time and to the land of Ju[dah]
3. [... with that Aššur, my lord, that province [.....]
4. [...] the city of Azaqâ [Azekah], his stronghold, which is (situated) in the mid(st of the mountains]
5. [...] located on a mountain ridge like a pointed dagger [.....]
6. [... it was made like an eagle’s] nest and rivaled the highest mountains and was inac[cessible]
7. [... even for stamped ra]mps and for the approaching with battering rams, it was (too) strong....
8. [...] they had seen the [approach of my cav]alry and [they had heard] the roar of my soldiers [.....]
9. [... conquered, and I carried off their spoil.

³⁶⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 119.

³⁷⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 79-84.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

Tadmor, in explaining this passage of Sargon's - that incidentally has descriptive parts strikingly similar to those used by Sennacherib³⁷² - includes highly important geographical data in relation to Lachish:³⁷³

Our restoration of KUR Ia-[.....] in line 2 to KUR Ia[udi] and the conclusions that the fragmentary lines deal with Judah are based on the following considerations:

(a) The alternative reading *ana mâlti-ia* "to my land" at the beginning of an account does not lead to any reasonable restoration....

(b) The identification of Azaqâ with 'Azeqah-(=Tel ez-Zakariye) in Judah is postulated, especially if we consider the fact that the campaign against Philistia follows immediately. Accordingly, lines 4-9 refer to the Assyrian assault on that Judaeian stronghold, situated on the top of a lofty hill, facing the valley of Elah, not far from Lachish. Lines 6-7 indicate that the terrain was so tortuous that even the usual siege technique could not be fully employed. Apparently the people of 'Azeqah surrendered, impressed by the strength of the Assyrian army. Line 10 begins with the description of the military operation in Philistia.

Whilst there may indeed be no annalistic reference specifically to Lachish in Sennacherib's *Third Campaign* account, there is abundant pictographic detail of it in his 'Palace Without Rival' at Nineveh. Sennacherib used the area as his base whilst in Judaea. "Recent excavations at Lachish", Russell tells us, "show that Sennacherib concentrated immense resources and expended tremendous energy in its capture".³⁷⁴ But the formidable Assyrians took more than "Lachish", which city - according to the prophet Micah - was only "the beginning of sin to daughter Zion ..." (1:13),

... לְכִישׁ רֵאשִׁית חֲטָאתָהּ הִיא לְבַת-צִיּוֹן ...

referring to Judah's reliance upon Egypt, not Yahweh. For "... disaster has come down from the Lord to the gate of Jerusalem" (v.12).

... כִּי-יָבֹד רַע מְאֹד יְהוָה לְשַׁעַר יְרוּשָׁלַם ...

Sennacherib is less poetical and more statistical.³⁷⁵

As for Hezekiah of Judah, who did not submit to my yoke, 46 of his strong walled cities, as well as the small cities in their neighbourhood ... by levelling with battering-rams and advancing the siege engines, by attacking and storming on foot, by mines, tunnels, and breaches, I besieged and captured. 200,150 people, great and small, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, cattle and sheep without number, I brought away ... counted as spoil.

³⁷² *Ibid*, p. 81, n. 221.

³⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 81.

³⁷⁴ *Op. cit*, p. 256.

³⁷⁵ As cited by Luckenbill, *op. cit, ibid*.

Now if Sargon's 'Ashdod' really were Lachish as I am proposing here, and his war were therefore being brought right into king Hezekiah's Judaeian territory, then we might even hold out some hope of being able to identify, with Hezekian officials, the succession of rulers of 'Ashdod' whom Sargon names. I refer to *Azuri*, *Yatna-Yamani* and *Akhimiti*. The first and the last of these names are Hebrew. The middle ones, *Yatna-Yamani*, are generally thought to be Greek-related, as we saw above; but Tadmor supports the view of Winckler and others that *Yamani* at least "was of local Palestinian origin"; being likely the equivalent of either *Imnâ* or *Imna*.³⁷⁶ I intend to consider this matter further in *Chapter 12*, section 5), when endeavouring to trace the origins of this interesting character who will then become an important figure in my revision of EOH.

Hezekiah had, much to Assyria's fury, enlarged the territory of his kingdom by absorbing Philistia, and had placed captains over key cities. This would no doubt have included those governors with Jewish names in the Philistine cities. Thus Sennacherib, as we saw, refers to a *Padi* (Pedaiah) in Ekron and a *Tsidqa* (Zedekiah) in Ashkelon. As for Lachish, we could expect that the king of Jerusalem might have entrusted to only a very high official the responsibility of so important a fort. I propose to identify Sargon's:

- *AzURI* with the high priest *URLah* (אֲוֹרֵיָהּ), most notably in the time of Hezekiah's father, Ahaz (2 Kings 16:10-11; cf. Isaiah 8:1-4);
- *YatNA* with the ill-fated *ShebNA* (שֶׁבְנָא), of Hezekiah's time; and
- *AKHI-Miti* (*Azuri's* brother) with Hezekiah's chief official, *EliAKIM* (אֵלִי־אֲכִים). *Akhi-miti* correspondingly appears as *Mitinti* (thought to be Hebrew, Mattaniah, מַתַּנְיָהוּ) as the ruler of 'Ashdod' in Sennacherib's *Third Campaign* account.

Of course I am not claiming here a perfect match between the Assyrian and Hebrew representations (אָ) e.g. being a common name ending).

My reconstruction of an approximate flow of events regarding this succession of rulers of Lachish would be as follows:

- *Azuri* was king Ahaz's apparently accommodating high-priest who, when ordered by his pro-Assyrian king, built an altar (based on either a Syrian or Assyrian model) in Jerusalem (2 Kings 16:10-11). [This was at the very time when kings Rezin of Aram (Syria) and Pekah of Israel had combined to mount a war against Jerusalem, with the intention, according to Isaiah (7:6), of placing "the son of Tabeel" (i.e. of Tab-rimmon/Omri) upon the throne of Jerusalem. So Ahaz had called upon Tiglath-pileser III for assistance]. Perhaps *Azuri* was rewarded for this act of 'loyalty' by Tiglath-pileser III with the prestigious governorship of Lachish.

³⁷⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 80, n. 217.

But during the next reign, that of Hezekiah, *Azuri* typically adjusted to fit in with Judah's now pro-Egyptian tendencies, and for this he was subsequently deposed by Sargon II along with other of Hezekiah's officials. Assyria replaced him with his brother, *Akhi-miti*.

- This choice of *Akhi-miti* as governor, however, did not suit the Syro-Hittites, who were then in league with Egypt against the Assyrians. Hence they elevated to the governorship of Lachish one *Yatna-Yamani*, who, according to Sargon, "had no title to the throne". [This I believe to have been a continuation of the wishes and intentions of the organizers of the Syro-Palestinian league against Assyria to place in high positions pro-Egyptian leaders]. *Yatna-Yamani*, given his newly found prestige, began to lord it over the kingdom of Judah as *Sobna* (var. *Shebna*), the apparent imposter, or usurper, of whom the Lord would complain to Isaiah (22:15-16):

'Come, go to this steward, to Shebna, who is master of the household, and say to him: 'What right do you have here? Who are your relatives here, that you have cut out a tomb here for yourself, cutting a tomb on the height, and carving a habitation for yourself in the rock?''

Sobna is rightly considered to have been "the leader in this pro-Egyptian movement",³⁷⁷ hence anti-Assyrian, which fits this new scenario perfectly. Tadmor, taking the standard view that 'Ashdod' was a Philistine city, suggested here the following pattern of events:³⁷⁸

... we may tentatively reconstruct the events of 712 in the following sequence:

Yamani of Ashdod had initiated a new rebellion against Assyria and had made contact with the rulers of the few still autonomous principalities in Palestine in an effort to revive the Syria-Palestinian league of 720. He was assisted or backed by the king of Egypt, called *Pir'u* here. It is likely that Judah offered more than tacit assistance. Early in 712 Sargon's army invaded Philistia, conquering the northern Gath (*Gitajim*), *Gibeton*, and 'Eqrone on his way. We have to assume that afterwards he assaulted 'Azeqah and finally conquered it. We may even assume, though the inscription does not mention it, that Judah averted [sic] by some means the central Assyrian attack.

This information will become crucial when, in *Chapter 12*, I endeavour to identify the elusive Egyptian links with EOH.

³⁷⁷ Thus Olmstead, *History of Assyria*, p. 217. According to Prism A, *Iamani* incited the kings of Philistia, Judah, Edom and Moab to join him in his rebellion. See also Tadmor, *op. cit.*, p. 83, n. 240. Irvine has argued for the priest Uriah's actually being "fully orthodox". *Op. cit.*, pp. 82-83.

³⁷⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 83.

- Under mounting pressure from Assyria, *Yatna-Yamani* abandoned Lachish and, according to Sargon, fled to Ethiopia. [See previous comments on the Tang-i Var inscription, in *Chapter 1*, p. 27 and p. 144 of this chapter; and see also *Chapter 12*, pp. 373-374, 380, in regard to the impossible chronology of this incident in a conventional context]. But here again the king of Assyria may be telescoping events; for firstly we find *Yatna-Yamani*, as *Shebna*, now playing second fiddle (as “the secretary”, **הַסֵּפֶר**) to the reinstated *Akhi-miti*/Eliakim (e.g. 2 Kings 18:18), as according to Isaiah 22:17-21:

‘The Lord is about to hurl you [Shebna] away violently, my fellow. He will seize firm hold on you, whirl you round and round, and throw you like a ball into a wide land; there you shall die, and there your splendid chariots shall lie, O you disgrace to your master’s house! I will thrust you from your office, and you will be pulled down from your post. On that day I will call my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiyah, and will clothe him with your robe and bind your sash on him. I will commit your authority to his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah ...’.

Historians, not knowing who *Shebna* really was, tend to doubt that he ever suffered the grim fate of death in exile that Isaiah had foretold for him. Olmstead, for instance, thinks that:³⁷⁹ “In part, Isaiah’s prediction was successful, for Shebna, though not entirely removed, was demoted ...”. But, with *Shebna* now identified with Sargon’s *Yatna-Yamani*, we can tell exactly what did happen to him, and it is fully in accordance with Isaiah. Sargon tells us that he fled to Ethiopia, on the border of Egypt, but was thrown into chains by the Ethiopian king and despatched to Assyria. Thus, “like a ball” (**כַּדֹּר**), as Isaiah had said, this opportunist was tossed from one place to another; and finally to Assyria, never to be heard of again.

I would connect Sennacherib’s account of his assault on the Syro-Hittites on his way to Judaea with Sargon II’s Syrian foray as a prelude to ‘Ashdod’. Thus Boutflower:³⁸⁰

.... it is not a little remarkable that in the Annals, which are strictly chronological, this [Ashdod] campaign is recorded, not as the first, but as the second and closing event of the year, being preceded by the campaign against Gurgum [which] ... lies a little to the north-west of Carchemish, and therefore only slightly off the track of an army advancing to the West. It would, then, be a likely move, so one thinks, for the Assyrian king to set matters right in Gurgum, and put down the rebellion which had broken out there, before advancing south to Ashdod.

....

Now there are not wanting other indications that this was the course actually pursued by the Assyrian king. On the Grand Inscription of Khorsabad, lines 85, 86, the march to Gurgum is described thus:

³⁷⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 218.

³⁸⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 122.

“In the rage of my heart, riding in my war-chariot, with my cavalry ... I turn my hands. To Marqasa” - the capital of Gurgum, represented by the modern Marash - “I marched in haste”.

Here it will be observed that the language used, except in one single instance, is word for word identical with that in which the king describes his hasty march to Ashdod in line 220 of the Annals

Boutflower finds the whole account here highly dramatic and personal, leaving “no doubt upon the mind that both expeditions were undertaken by the king in person”.

Sennacherib Exacts Tribute from Jerusalem

Naturally the Assyrian king also placed Jerusalem under siege during his diminishing of Hezekiah’s kingdom:³⁸¹ “[Hezekiah], like a caged bird, in Jerusalem, his royal city, I shut up. Earthworks I threw up about it That Hezekiah, - the terrifying splendor of my royalty overcame him ...”. Moreover:³⁸² “... the Arabs and his picked troops whom he had brought into Jerusalem, his royal city, ran away ...”. As may be gathered from Isaiah 22:2-3, Hezekiah’s mercenaries and princes fled without even putting up a fight, their bows lying on the ground. No doubt it was this cowardly desertion, coupled with Sennacherib’s taking of all Hezekiah’s strong cities (2 Kings 18:14), that would prompt the king of Jerusalem to yield to Sennacherib and pay him 30 talents of gold; a figure that accords exactly with Sennacherib’s record:³⁸³

In addition to 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver ... as well as his daughters, his harem, his male and female musicians, (which) he had (them) bring after me to Nineveh, my royal city. To pay tribute and to accept ... servitude he dispatched his messengers.

...

That ends my account of Assyria’s crucial western campaign.

We now return again to the east, where our composite Assyrian king has to tackle, for the second time, the wily Merodach-baladan. Sargon II goes into great detail over this his Year 12 campaign, culminating with his own triumphal entry into Babylon. Sennacherib predictably gives a much shorter account of the campaign. He, too, refers to Elam as an ally of the Chaldean, and he also implies that he took control of Babylon; for he adds the detail that he set his son there upon the royal throne.

³⁸¹ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 312.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, # 240.

³⁸³ As cited by Boutflower, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

Sargon's Year 12 Corresponds to Sennacherib's Fourth Campaign = Hezekiah's Seventeenth Year (711 BC)

Sargon Year 12	Sennacherib's Fourth Campaign
<p>“In my twelfth year of reign, (<i>Merodach-baladan</i>), ... violated the oath and curse (invoked in the name of) the great gods, and withheld his tribute. ...”.</p> <p>“Humbanigash, <i>the Elamite</i>, came to his aid. ...”.</p> <p>“The might of Assur ... and Marduk, which I had made to prevail against those cities ... <i>Babylon</i>, the city of the lords, I entered amidst rejoicing...”.</p>	<p>“In my fourth campaign <i>Merodach-baladan</i>, whose defeat I had brought about in the course of my first campaign, and whose forces I had shattered ... his cities I destroyed, I devastated, I made like ruin heaps. Upon his ally, <i>the king of Elam</i>, I poured out terror”.</p> <p>“On my return I placed on [<i>Babylon's</i>] <i>royal throne</i>, Assur-nâdin-shum, my oldest son, I made subject to him the wide land of Sumer and Akkad”.</p>

This Year 12 (“twelfth year”) is precisely where BOJ opens. See VOLUME TWO, **Part II**.

Fifth Campaign

According to Russell:³⁸⁴ “The fifth campaign ... which militarily was ... relatively insignificant, may ... be completely absent from [Sennacherib's] reliefs ... [it] is not depicted in the throne-room suite, nor for that matter in any of the surviving palace reliefs...”.

It most likely corresponds with Sargon's Year 13, about which Tadmor has noted:³⁸⁵ “The account of palû [Year] 13 in the Annals is not fully preserved. Due to its fragmentary state one cannot decide whether a part of the material assigned to this *palû* belongs in fact to 708 [Tadmor's date for the following year]”.

³⁸⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 165, 258.

³⁸⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 96.

Sargon's Year 14 Corresponds to Sennacherib's Sixth Campaign = Hezekiah's Nineteenth Year (709 BC)

Sargon Year 14	Sennacherib's Sixth Campaign
<p>Another detailed account. It focusses on Sargon's destruction of the Chaldean strongholds previously ruled by Merodach-baladan, especially the capital, Dur-Iakin, and his defeat of the Elamites. Here are the relevant portions:</p> <p>"Dûr-Iakini, his stronghold, <i>I burned with fire; its high defences I destroyed, I devastated; ... I made it like a mound left by the flood</i>".</p> <p>"The people of Sippar, Nippur, <i>Babylon</i>, Borsippa, who were imprisoned therein through no fault of theirs, - I broke their bonds and caused them to behold the light (of day)".</p> <p>"...I waged bitter warfare against the people of <i>Elam</i>".</p> <p>"... <i>people from Bît-Iakin</i> [which my hands had conquered], I settled [in Calah]...".</p>	<p>This has exactly the same elements as Sargon's account, most notably the deportation to Assyria of the "people of (from) Bît-Iakin". Even the same violent, robotic language is used for the destruction of the cities of Chaldea.</p> <p>"The cities which were in those provinces <i>I destroyed, I devastated, I burned with fire. To mounds and ruins I turned (them)</i>".</p> <p>"On my return march Shuzubu, the <i>Babylonian</i>, who during an uprising in the land had turned to himself the rule of Sumer and Akkad.... I accomplished his defeat in a battle".</p> <p>"... The king of <i>Elam</i> His forces I scattered and I shattered his host".</p> <p>"... <i>the people of Bît-Iakin</i> ... not a rebel (lit., sinner) escaped".</p>

Sargon's Year 15 (?) Corresponds to Sennacherib's Seventh Campaign = Hezekiah's Twentieth Year (708 BC)

Luckenbill gives this, the last listing for Sargon - though we know he reigned on longer - with a question mark: Year 15(?). Tadmor assigns it tentatively, following Winckler, to the "[14th *palû*].³⁸⁶ So apparently the date is not securely established. It is not a long account, and the text is broken. There does appear to be a complication inasmuch as, whilst Sargon names the Elamite as *Shutur-nahundu*, Sennacherib calls his Elamite foe, *Kudur-Nahundu*. The latter though may well have been the son of Shutur-nahundu [see *Chapter 7*, section on the Elamite Shutrukids]. The two accounts below, which are possibly different phases of the same campaign, share at least the common denominator of a war with Elam. Ellipi, mentioned here by Sargon, Sennacherib refers to in his *Eighth Campaign* account.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.* "Winckler had tentatively assigned this section to the 14th *palû* ...".

Sargon's Year 15 (?)	Sennacherib's Seventh Campaign
“... Shuturnahundu, <i>the Elamite</i> . [He lent his aid and came] to [the king of Ellipi's] rescue. Seven of my officials, governors, I sent 4,500 Elamite bowmen, fled to save their lives and went up into the city of Marubishti”.	“ <i>The Elamite</i> , Kudur-nahundu, heard of the overthrow of his cities, terror overwhelmed him, the (people of) the rest of his cities he brought into the strongholds”.

Sargon's regnal year accounts peter out at this stage. A double-dated eponym text tells us that his Year 16 as king of Assyria corresponded with his fourth year as king of Babylon.³⁸⁷ This leaves us still with some half a dozen or so years yet to account for if Sennacherib did in fact reign for 22-24 years.³⁸⁸

But we have not yet exhausted Sennacherib's campaign records. Nor have we gone beyond the 1st chapter of BOJ, which book, I believe, wonderfully supplements the Assyrian records. Indeed, the most exciting and dramatic phase of Sargon II's/ Sennacherib's most eventful reign is yet to come.

A Question By Way of Summary

What are the chances of two successive kings having, in such perfect chronological sequence - over a span of some two decades - the same campaigns against the same enemies; even allowing for a certain sameness amongst Assyrian kings due to their heavy use of repetitive, formulaic language?

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Merodach-baladan (Sargon). | Merodach-baladan (Sennacherib). |
| 2. Ellipi, Medes and Tumunu (Sargon). | Ellipi, Medes and Tumunu (Sennacherib). |
| 3. Egypt-backed Judah/Philistia (Sargon). | Egypt-backed Judah/Philistia (Sennacherib) |
| 4. Merodach-baladan and Elam (Sargon). | Merodach-baladan and Elam (Sennacherib). |
| 5. (Not fully preserved) (Sargon). | (Not fully preserved) (Sennacherib). |
| 6. Babylon, Elam and Bit-Iakin (Sargon). | Babylon, Elam and Bit-Iakin (Sennacherib). |
| 7. Elam (Sargon). | Elam (Sennacherib). |

³⁸⁷ Jonsson, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

³⁸⁸ According to the Babylonian Chronicle, a late source: “... For 24 years Sennacherib reigned over Assyria”. As quoted by Bouffler, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

Section Three: Esarhaddon

Esarhaddon (680-669 BC, conventional dating) tells us that he was “still a youth” when his father Sennacherib secured his accession.³⁸⁹ He is universally thought to have outlived - and reigned subsequently to - Sennacherib. But that is not the scenario that will be presented here. Instead, Esarhaddon’s reign will be found to have been encompassed entirely by the reign of Sennacherib.

Esarhaddon, after having put down a revolt by Sennacherib’s presumably patricidal sons, is thought to have begun his reign by rebuilding the Babylon that his father is said to have destroyed. The young Viceroy had made his famous march from Babylon northwards to Nineveh against the brothers who had rebelled against him, who blocked his path: “The terror of the great gods, my lords, overwhelmed them”, he said.³⁹⁰ Warmly welcomed by the Assyrian people, and by some of the opposing army which defected to him, Esarhaddon proclaimed: “I entered into Nineveh, my royal city, joyfully, and took my seat upon the throne of my father in safety”. Luckenbill thinks that Esarhaddon’s brothers had actually, in the course of this particular revolt, slain their father Sennacherib:³⁹¹

A firm [determination] “fell upon” my brothers. They forsook the gods and turned to their deeds of violence, plotting evil. Evil word(s) and deed(s), ... they perpetrated against me.... They revolted (?). To gain the [kingship] they slew [Sennacherib, their father.]....

The Bible and pseudepigrapha seem to support this sequence of events. Thus for instance 2 Kings, having briefly narrated Sennacherib’s murder, adds: “His son Esarhaddon succeeded him” (19:37) (אֶסְרָחְדָּן בֶּן־שַׁנְחַרְיָא).

But according to Roux:³⁹² “The parricide is not mentioned ...”.

Could this perhaps be yet another case where the modern restorers of the Assyrian records have filled in the blanks with bracketted data according to their preconceived notions, thereby wreaking havoc with neo-Assyrian history?

Then, again, what about the testimony of the scriptural data cited above?

Well, the Hebrew root *ben* here is not too much of a problem, as it can mean both ‘son’ and ‘grandson’.³⁹³ As for the name, Esarhaddon, BOT, which had been an ally for me in my theory that Sennacherib was the successor of ‘Shalmaneser’, now seems to desert me by distinctly naming Esarhaddon as the successor after Sennacherib’s death (1:21).

Still, that is only in translation.

³⁸⁹ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 500.

³⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, # 504.

³⁹¹ *Ibid.*, #'s 501, 502.

³⁹² *Op. cit.*, p. 325.

³⁹³ C. Seow, *A Grammar for Biblical Hebrew*, p. 44.

The name currently translated as ‘Esarhaddon’ is given in the Greek as *Sacherdonos*; a name that has some resemblance to the *Saosduchin* said in a note to the Douay version of BOJ to have “succeeded Asarhaddon in the kingdom of the Assyrians”.³⁹⁴ In the Latin Vulgate, no successor of Sennacherib is even named where Sennacherib’s assassination is referred to (v. 24). A *Sacherdonos*, who “succeeded Asarhaddon in the kingdom of the Assyrians”, can only be Ashurbanipal, son of Esarhaddon.

Similar confusion has arisen as to whether the “great and noble Osnapper” (‘Asenaphar’ in the Douay) referred to in Ezra 4:10, should be identified with Esarhaddon or Ashurbanipal. Whilst North has taken this as a reference to Esarhaddon,³⁹⁵ *The Jerusalem Bible* translates the character in this verse as “Assurbanipal the Great”.

With Esarhaddon generally considered to have been a younger son of Sennacherib, the eldest being Ashur-nadin-shumi whom Sennacherib made Viceroy of Babylon during his Twelfth Year (*Fourth Campaign*) (711 BC, revised), the chronology I am trying to develop here would be extremely tight indeed. But Esarhaddon in fact calls himself “the oldest son of [Sennacherib ...]”.³⁹⁶ And, whilst this would appear to be contradicted by another statement of his, that Marduk had called him “from among my older brothers”,³⁹⁷ it may indicate that he had become the oldest of Sennacherib’s sons in line for the throne; with his previously older brothers either dead or no longer in contention because of their revolt.

This primary piece of evidence of Esarhaddon as “the oldest son” not only assists my reconstruction, but now makes highly attractive also an identification of Esarhaddon (i.e. Ashur-akhi-iddina) with Ashur-nadin-shumi, Sennacherib’s eldest. The latter’s supposed six years of reign over Babylon (c. 700-694 BC, conventional dating) would thus correspond with Esarhaddon’s reign over that city. And I suggest it was during this early period that Esarhaddon rebuilt, probably magnified, Babylon; but while his father Sennacherib was still alive, and indeed as a servant of the latter. They would have been co-regents of Babylon, given that Sargon’s Year 16 was also his 4th year as king of Babylon (the second time around). See next chapter for a discussion of Sargon II’s/ Sennacherib’s restoration work in Babylon. According to this new scenario, Esarhaddon would have served for six years as ruler of Babylon, from Sennacherib’s Year 12 to Year 18, and his reign would have terminated prior to the end of his father’s own reign.

My proposed identification of Esarhaddon with Ashur-nadin-shumi (and I am not of course claiming a precise name identification here) would not stand up though if the latter had really suffered the fate that Roux has attributed to this Ashur-nadin-shumi:³⁹⁸ “... disappeared, probably murdered” in Iran after the Babylonians had handed him over to the Elamites. However, I have not yet read anywhere that Ashur-nadin-shumi’s death at this stage was more than ‘probable’. There is no certainty attached to it.

³⁹⁴ Douay Bible, p. 615, n. 1:5.

³⁹⁵ ‘The Chronicler ... Ezra ...’, 24:89, p. 430.

³⁹⁶ Luckenbill, *ibid*, # 591.

³⁹⁷ *Ibid*, # 6.

³⁹⁸ *Op. cit*, p. 322.

And, if Ashur-nadin-shumi were Esarhaddon as seems very likely - and I hope to strengthen this case further on - then his death did not occur in Elam; though the circumstances of it may have been equally unfortunate as those given by Roux for Ashur-nadin-shumi ("disappeared, probably murdered").

(See VOLUME TWO, *Chapter 3*, section: "**Downfall of the Assyrian Commander-in-Chief**", beginning on p. 75, for a revised account of what I believe to have been Esarhaddon's miserable death).

Co-Regency

If Sennacherib, soon to be ensconced in his glorious new palace at Khorsabad, had virtually abdicated in favour of his son Esarhaddon, whom as heir he re-named Ashur-etil-ilani-mukin-aplu ('Ashur, the lord of the gods, has established an heir'), this would go a long way towards explaining historians' puzzlement over the fact that there are no official annals for the last decade of Sennacherib's reign. The annals are in fact available, I suggest, but they need to be looked for under the name of Esarhaddon, and even partly, as we shall see, under the name of Ashurbanipal. Unfortunately, Esarhaddon's annals are, as noted earlier, fragmentary and carelessly arranged, making the editor's job extremely difficult.

Perfectly in accordance with the new chronology of co-regency that is being developed here is this comment, in regard to Isaiah's reference to the conquest of Egypt in his taunting response to Sennacherib's letter:³⁹⁹ "Moreover, it is not Sennacherib who is being taunted, but Esarhaddon, who invaded Egypt in 671". (Cf. Isaiah 37:9-14 & 37:21-35). Thus an unconventional coincidence of Sennacherib's reign with Esarhaddon's conquest of northern Egypt!

Along similar lines, Hall has made the suggestion in regard to the famous loss of Sennacherib's army - at Pelusium in Egypt according to Herodotus - that:⁴⁰⁰ "... the disaster really happened, not to Sennacherib, but to Esarhaddon, who in 675 attacked Egypt, when, as the Babylonian chronicle tells us, 'the troops of Assyria went to Egypt: they fled before a great storm'."

This new arrangement makes it likely that Esarhaddon's recovery of the Assyrian throne occurred, not after Sennacherib's death - as is commonly thought - but while the latter was absent in the west, preoccupied with his *Third Campaign*. Sennacherib, as a reward for his son's loyalty, immediately made him Viceroy. Esarhaddon soon became a potent force in the land, as commander-in-chief of Assyria's armies. His military prowess became legendary; not least in his own mind:⁴⁰¹ "... My equal did not exist, [my power] being unrivaled; and among the princes who went before me, none ...".

Esarhaddon would now also greatly augment the Assyrian army:⁴⁰²

³⁹⁹ F. Moriarty, 'Isaiah 1-39', *JBC*, 16:64, p. 282.

⁴⁰⁰ 'The Ethiopians and Assyrians in Egypt', p. 278.

⁴⁰¹ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 521.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, # 606.

In addition (?) the charioteers (?) of the bodyguard (?), cavalry of the bodyguard(?), governors, many of them (?), chiefs (captains) (of?) the bowmen (kitkittu), the workmen, the sappers, the shield-(bearers), the “killers”, the farmers, the shepherds, the gardeners, to the masses of Assur’s host and to the (military) establishment of the former kings, my fathers, in large numbers, I added and Assyria, to its farthest border, I filled up like a quiver.

Esarhaddon was also ever loyal to his father, Sennacherib - as borne out in the case of the revolt against the Assyrian throne - and was thus especially vengeful against insolent kings. “Those who were insolent toward the kings, my fathers, and committed [crimes]”, Esarhaddon raged, “the corpses of their warriors I forbade to be buried”.⁴⁰³ Good examples of kings who stubbornly resisted Assyria during Esarhaddon’s *floruit* were Abdi-Milkuti of Sidon, whom Esarhaddon captured and beheaded, Baal of Tyre (likely the Tubaal whom Sennacherib had set up at Tyre during his *Third Campaign*), and his ally, Tirhakah of Ethiopia:⁴⁰⁴

... I threw up earthworks against Ba’lu, king of Tyre, who had put his trust in his friend Tirhakah ..., king of Ethiopia, had thrown off my royal yoke and had sent me insolent (messages). Food and drink (water) (which would) keep them alive, I withheld....

Baal and Tirhakah are thought to be the two figures depicted at Esarhaddon’s feet in the victory (Senjirli) stele the Assyrian set up in northern Syria. Esarhaddon holds a cup in his right hand and from the left hand extend the ropes (“reins”) which pass through the lips of these two conquered figures.⁴⁰⁵

Some Chronological Ramifications

The implications are enormous for having Esarhaddon’s reign encompassed entirely by the latter part of Sennacherib’s reign. This would mean for instance that:

⁴⁰³ *Ibid*, # 521. Similarly, Esarhaddon referred to himself as “... avenger of his father ...”. *Ibid*, # 727.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ibid*, # 556.

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid*, # 573.

- The serious chronological problems of having Tirhakah of Ethiopia as an opponent of Sennacherib's⁴⁰⁶ no longer exist;
- Hezekiah's son, Manasseh, must already have begun to rule with his father even during the reign of Sennacherib.⁴⁰⁷ Now since, as with Sennacherib, the latter part "of Hezekiah's reign is very obscure", according to Cook,⁴⁰⁸ then a co-regency situation in Judah similar to the one in Assyria, between Sennacherib and Esarhaddon, may be suggested;
- Even Esarhaddon's son, Ashurbanipal (668-627 BC, conventional dates), cannot be overlooked in this new context, having been appointed by his father as heir-apparent in Assyria in 670 BC (conventional);⁴⁰⁹
- A massive re-think will be needed for Egypt's TIP, which is traditionally thought to have terminated early in the reign of Ashurbanipal.

Esarhaddon's Death

It is well-known from other sources that Esarhaddon died on his way to Egypt. But here I am going to identify what may be the Assyrian account of his death, the important Eponym Chronicle⁴¹⁰ that I have already discussed critically. It contains some crucial historical detail when properly interpreted. I have argued that a succession from Sargon II to Sennacherib, as Tadmor had proposed in regard to this document, is impossible. The dead "king" referred to in the Chronicle should in fact be identified as Esarhaddon, not Sargon II. The ageing Sennacherib by no means at this point - as suggested by Tadmor - "took his seat on the throne". We saw previously that this data has been artificially reconstructed by Winckler and Delitzsch. Rather, Sennacherib had to undertake a far less pleasant task. Tadmor tells what this was, though wrongly supposing that it was Sargon's demise that was the matter that Sennacherib had to investigate:⁴¹¹

The death of a king on a battlefield, killed in action, is as yet unparalleled in the history of Mesopotamia. Sennacherib had to investigate closely into the hidden reasons of his father's [sic] death in order to find out what were the sins (*hīṭati*) of Sargon [sic].

What was an added shame for Assyria - pointing to the sins of the slain king of Assyria - was that he was not buried in "his house". According to Tadmor: "This may mean that either his corpse was cremated at the battlefield or that it was not recovered from the enemy".

⁴⁰⁶ See e.g. Bright, *op. cit.*, pp. 297-305.

⁴⁰⁷ Thiele, for instance, considered that "everything points to [Manasseh's] having spent ten or eleven of his fifty-five years on the throne as coregent with Hezekiah". *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 174.

⁴⁰⁸ 'The Fall and Rise of Judah', p. 372. And: "Little can be said about the activities of Hezekiah after the removal of the Assyrian threat". *Ibid.*, p. 391.

⁴⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴¹⁰ Given as Cb6 by Tadmor, *op. cit.*, p. 97.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, n. 311.

Did this Esarhaddon, who had forbidden burial to so many enemy warriors, himself suffer that same fate of being unburied?

The Esarhaddon Chronicle gives the exact day of Esarhaddon's death, "on the [tenth] day of the month Marchesvan", which is the eighth month.⁴¹²

⁴¹² As quoted by Jonsson, *op. cit.*, p. 16.

Specific Chronologico-Historical Problems – and Proposed Solutions – for the Era of Hezekiah

In regard to

Babylonia

“Leviathan the Crooked Serpent”

לְוִיָּתָן נָחֵשׁ עֲקָלָהוֹן

Introduction

Firstly I should like to make some observations of a more general nature, following on from *Chapter 1*, before embarking upon a discussion of Babylonia specifically in relation to EOH. In recent decades revisionist scholars have come to recognize that Mesopotamian history overall stands as much in need of a revision as does Egyptian history.⁴¹³ Of course the two cannot be separated in the case of well-documented periods like EA, in which there is frequent recorded interchange between Mesopotamian and Egyptian rulers. Now, various attempts have been made in recent years to show how one might be able to achieve a revision of Mesopotamia. Some of these efforts, for example Rohl's, go right back to Abrahamic times and even further, working downwards from there.⁴¹⁴ Dr. Osgood, in his mainly archaeological approach, went back even further still, commencing with an attempted revision of the Stone Ages, before embarking upon a stratigraphically-based realignment of ancient history proper.⁴¹⁵ Hickman, whose Mesopotamian revision centred largely upon Hammurabi of Babylon and his era, projected back nonetheless to Sargon of Akkad and his dynasty (late C23rd - late C20th's BC, conventional dating).⁴¹⁶ Mitcham, loosely accepting Velikovsky's revision, attempted to find whether he could achieve an historical 'folding' between the so-called 'Middle' and the 'Neo' Assyrian kings.⁴¹⁷

Some of this recent Mesopotamian revision I have already discussed in *Chapter 3* and *Chapter 4*, absorbing into my own system whatever I have considered to be relevant. My starting-point for a merging of 'Middle' with 'Neo' Assyro-Babylonian history was of course with Velikovsky's own relocating of EA's Assuruballit and *Burnaburiash [II]*, formerly dated to the C14th BC, to the 'Neo' Mesopotamian era of the mid-C9th BC.

This inevitably led me to TAP, that knotty problem towards the solution of which I have set aside an *Excursus* beginning on p. 230.

⁴¹³ L. Mitcham, for instance, has indicated this in his article, 'A New Interpretation of the Assyrian King List'.

⁴¹⁴ E.g. *A Test of Time*, ch's i-vi.

⁴¹⁵ 'A Better Model for the Stone Age', 'From Abraham to Exodus', 'The Time of the Judges'.

⁴¹⁶ 'The Dating of Hammurabi'.

⁴¹⁷ *Op. cit.*

Further ‘Middle’ mergers with ‘Neo’ Assyro-Babylonian ones that I had tentatively proposed in **Part I** were those of Tukulti-Ninurta I and II with Ashurnasirpal I and II (these connections will be found to assist my resolution of TAP in the *Excursus*); and – to be further developed in this chapter – of Tiglath-pileser I and III. In this chapter also I shall be proposing some related Babylonian, and Elamite, ‘foldings’.

Though I try not to base myself simply on name identification, as I have already discussed, it is always gratifying when a ‘folding’ does involve ‘kings’ of the same name. Clapham, for instance, has attempted ‘foldings’ of Assyrian kings with entirely different names; not necessarily with striking results (e.g. Tukulti-Ninurta 1, who was murdered, with Sennacherib, who was also murdered - but he soon dropped that idea).⁴¹⁸ Mitcham has instead thought that he could discern a ‘second’ Assyrian dynastic line beginning with Ninurta-apil-Ekur (c. 1050 BC, conventional dating), contemporaneous with Tukulti-Ninurta 1. He did not press for any name similarity here. Though his effort was more scientific than Clapham’s, the results were, for mine, similarly inconclusive.

We saw at the beginning of *Chapter 6* that there is something seriously wrong with the so-called ‘Middle’ Assyrian period for about 250 years after Tukulti-Ninurta I; this period having been identified by James as “almost a complete blank”. The “blank”, however, is well filled in, according to my revision, by the reign of Ashurnasirpal II and the neo-Assyrian period, marvellously augmented by the well-documented EA period. However, for a 500-year lowering of so-called ‘Middle’ Mesopotamian kings to be complete, one must also be able to show how these Mesopotamian kings, Kassites, are to be merged with the ‘Neo’ Babylonian kings (see next section).

Also, though most of the Hammurabic dynasty would have concluded before this period, its final (weaker) kings, who would date to the very period under consideration, would need to be accounted for. Here is my proposal. Hammurabi and his powerful son, Samsuiluna, would now fit into the uncertain phase of Babylonian history of the first half of the C10th BC. The next son, Abi-eshuh, under extreme pressure from the Kassite, Kashtiliash, would be a contemporary of Tukulti-Ninurta, who defeated a Kashtiliash. As the Kassites had increased their pressure, Hammurabi’s later successors were driven northwards; so that, by the time of Shamsi-Adad V, son of Shalmaneser III, ‘descendants of Hammurabi’ are found in the Mari region. Thus there is no crush, with, all at once, Babylonian, Kassite and Assyrian kings occupying Babylon at the one approximate time.

The Kassites

Velikovsky had already, in my view, made a positive start towards a necessary merging of the ‘Middle’ with the ‘Neo’ Babylonian period by his identification of EA’s *Burnaburiash [III]*, Kassite ruler of Babylonia, with Shalmaneser III, mid-C9th BC ruler of Assyria and Babylonia. That meant that, logically, the father of Shalmaneser III, Ashurnasirpal II, must have been EA’s *Kadashman-Enlil* (var. *Kurigalzu*), father of *Burnaburiash*. I argued this in *Chapter 3* (p. 76, but esp. section (c)), where I also devoted much space (with more to come in *Chapter 9*) arguing for the ‘Indo-European’ origins of this Ashurnasirpal [II] and his dynasty.

⁴¹⁸ ‘Hittites and Phrygians’, cf. pp. 111 & 113.

So, it is gratifying to find that EA's primary rulers of Babylonia, contemporaneous with this dynasty by my revision, and identical to it, were Kassites; likewise an 'Indo-European' people. Since I have discussed this situation already, a single quote from Roux might suffice here:⁴¹⁹

Hittites, Mitanni and the ruling class of the Kassites belonged to a very large ethno-linguistic group called 'Indo-European', and their migrations were but part of wider ethnic movements which affected Europe and India as well as Western Asia.

The Kassites, 'Mitanni' and Hurrians all seem to have expanded to approximately the same places eastwards at approximately the same time (by the revision). The Subarians and Lullubi are sometimes linked with these. An 'Indo-European' connection as noted by Roux, especially between the Kassites and the so-called 'Mitanni', would certainly account for the skilled horsemanship attributed to the Kassites; for the Kassites were, I am proposing, these very 'Indo-European Mitanni' ruling 'Kasse' (Chaldea) land. The 'Mitanni', like the Kassites (who they were) seem to have been something of a horse-riding aristocracy or élite amongst the Hurrians and other associated nations. The Hurrians (already discussed in *Chapter Two*) are often linked with the 'Mitanni' as *Hurri-Mitanni* – but were apparently though neither Semitic nor 'Indo-European' in the language they spoke. It has sometimes been called *Asiatic*.

It is not I think too much to say that the Kassites are an enigma for the over-extended conventional scheme. Roux has given the standard estimate for the duration of Kassite rule of Babylonia:⁴²⁰ "... a long line of Kassite monarchs was to govern Mesopotamia or, as they called it, *Kar-Duniash* for no less than four hundred and thirty-eight years (1595-1157 B.C.)". This is a substantial period of time; yet archaeology has surprisingly little to show for it. Roux again:⁴²¹

Unfortunately, we are not much better off as regards the period of Kassite domination in Iraq ... all we have at present is about two hundred royal inscriptions – most of them short and of little historical value – sixty *kudurru* ... and approximately 12,000 tablets (letters and economic texts), less than 10 per cent of which has been published. This is very little indeed for four hundred years – the length of time separating us from Elizabeth 1.

Lloyd, in his book dedicated to the study of Mesopotamian archaeology, can give only a mere 4 pages (including pictures) to the Kassites, without even bothering to list them in the book's *Index* at the back.⁴²²

⁴¹⁹ *Ancient Iraq*, p. 225.

⁴²⁰ *Ibid*, p. 246.

⁴²¹ *Ibid*, p. 247. Brinkman continuously laments the dearth of information, "fragmentary inscriptions" (p. 88), "veiled in obscurity" (p. 89), "relatively obscure" (p. 90), "quite uncertain" (p. 92), and so on. *A Political History of Post-Kassite Babylonia*.

⁴²² *The Archaeology of Mesopotamia*, pp. 172-175.

Incredibly, though the names of the Kassites “reveal a clearly distinct language from the other inhabitants in the region”, as van de Mieroop writes, “and Babylonian texts indicate the existence of a Kassite vocabulary, no single text or sentence is known in the Kassite language”.⁴²³

Obviously, new interpretations are required. The Kassite period is thought to have been brought to its end by the Elamites in the mid-C12th BC. But there emerges quite a new picture about the Kassites when their history is condensed in the context of Velikovsky’s EA revision (VLTF) and this people is re-located well down the time scale. When this is done, the extremely meagre archaeological and historical traces of the Kassites become supplemented by the abundant archaeology and documentation from Syro-Mitanni through to Babylonia during the early to mid C1st millennium BC.

Kassites and Chaldeans

Initially I had found rather appealing the thought that the Kassites of mysterious origin were to be identified with the much-discussed-in-antiquity, but little-known, Chaldeans;⁴²⁴ my reason for this being that it might have enabled me seamlessly to merge the now-folded Kassite history into EOH, since the Babylonian contemporary of king Hezekiah was indisputably Merodach-baladan [II], thought to have been a Chaldean. The latter was, as we have seen, in his 1st year of reign right at the beginning of Sargon II’s rule, in c. 722 BC; this year being also Hezekiah’s 6th year of kingship. Described in Isaiah 39:1 as “Merodach-baladan son of Baladan of Babylon”, this Merodach-baladan had “sent envoys with letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been sick and had recovered” (Isaiah 39:1). Hezekiah’s sickness had occurred in his 14th year; the very year of Sennacherib’s first major incursion into the land.⁴²⁵ The wily Merodach-baladan [II] likely had ulterior motives in this as well, since he was, as usual, looking to cause trouble for the Sargonids. Bright has outlined this wider picture:⁴²⁶

In Babylon, Marduk-apal-iddina (Merodach-baladan), the Chaldean prince who had maintained his independence against Sargon through the greater part of that king’s reign, had reestablished himself as king and, with Elamite help, was defying Assyrian efforts to dislodge him Simultaneously, revolt flared in the west. This was part of a concerted plan, for we know that Merodach-baladan sent envoys to Hezekiah (II Kings 20:12-19; Isa., ch. 39), as he doubtless did to other kings also, seeking to enlist his participation. Egypt was likewise committed to lend support

I shall be having much more to say about this revolt against Assyria in VOLUME TWO, **Part II.**

⁴²³ *A History of the Ancient Near East*, pp. 115, 116.

⁴²⁴ A connection that I thought had been made by Professor G. Heinsohn; though I cannot now find evidence for this.

⁴²⁵ See P. Mauro on Hezekiah’s 14th year and illness. *The Wonders of Bible Chronology*, p. 69.

⁴²⁶ *A History of Israel*, pp. 282-283.

But I now believe that an identification of the Kassites with the Chaldeans would encounter serious ethnographical problems. The Chaldeans must have been quite ethnically distinct from the Kassites; the former being Semitic relatives of the Hebrews (e.g. Acts 7:4), the latter, as we saw, ‘Indo-Europeans’.

Let us dwell on this for a bit.

Though it is thought to have been the Greeks who had put the letter *lambda* λ (= l) in the name *Chaldeans* (χαλδαιοι), whom the Hebrews knew as *Kasdim* (כַּשְׁדִּים), I would favour this suggestion by Boutflower that the letter change was instead one quite natural to the Assyrian language.⁴²⁷

The Chaldeans or *Kasdim* of the Hebrew Old Testament appear in the Assyrian cuneiform as the *Kaldi*. The original form of *Kaldi* was probably *Kasdi*, since according to a rule very common in the Assyrian language a sibilant before a dental is frequently changed into *l*.

Note that the Semitic root *Kas-* (*Kash-*) is common to both the name *Kassites* (known in Akkadian as *kashshû*) and the *Kasdim* (Chaldeans). The form *Kaldu* for the land of the Chaldeans is thought to have been first used by Ashurnasirpal II himself:⁴²⁸ “The fear of my sovereignty”, he boasted, “prevailed as far as the country of Karduniash; the might of my weapons overwhelmed the country of Kaldu”. This linguistic alteration, from *kas-* to *kal-*, has made it even less easy for historians to connect the Chaldeans with the Kassites, who, in Akkadian were known as *kashshû*. The Kassites were not actually native Chaldeans, though, but were ‘Indo-European’ rulers of the land known as *Kasse* (Babylonia), which they called *Kar-Duniash*. We recall *Rib-Addi*’s reference to “Kasse” in EA letter 76.

Origins of Merodach-baladan

It is generally thought that “Merodach-baladan, son of Baladan”, was a Chaldean, as I have said - an example of this being apparent in the quote from Bright on the previous page, where he refers to Merodach-baladan as “the Chaldean prince”. If this were the case, then I would not be able seamlessly to ‘fold’ the Kassite rulers of Babylon - who, as I have argued, included kings of Assyria of ‘Indo-European’ origin who ruled Babylonia - into the kings of the dynasty to which Merodach-baladan belonged (sometimes called the 9th Babylonian Dynasty).

However, I do not find to be at all conclusive the arguments that I have read on behalf of Merodach-baladan’s supposedly having been a Chaldean.

⁴²⁷ *The Book of Isaiah*, p. 93.

⁴²⁸ As cited by Boutflower, *ibid*, p. 95.

Boutflower for instance, who has accepted this traditional view,⁴²⁹ does not as far as I can tell come up with any hard evidence in favour of his conclusion. For instance, he will tentatively argue that the “Baladan” whose son the Old Testament says that Merodach-baladan was - and who he suggests was “Nabu-apal-iddina, who reigned from 885 to 855 [BC]” - “was probably a Chaldean himself”, and was “not unlikely ... a direct ancestor of Merodachbaladan”.⁴³⁰

It is of course possible that the Old Testament, or any other ancient Middle Eastern text, could mean “son of” in the sense of “ancestor”. Boutflower has given an example of this very situation (at least in his context) in the case of Tiglath-pileser III, for instance:⁴³¹ “Hitherto [Tiglath-pileser III] has been regarded as a usurper, but according to the inscription on a brick recently found in the temple of Ashur at Ashur he claimed to be the son of Adad-nirari king of Assyria (812-783 B.C.)”. That would indeed be a case of considering, as one’s ‘father’, an illustrious ancestor who had ruled almost half a century earlier. And certainly the term ‘illustrious’ could be applied to the Adad-Nirari [III] whom Boutflower intends here, who was the grandson of Shalmaneser III, and who was a great conqueror in his own right. Whether that term though could also be applied to Nabu-apal-iddina is not quite so apparent. This Nabu-apal-iddina was conquered by Ashurnasirpal II when the might of the latter’s weapons had overwhelmed the country of *Kaldu*. On one occasion Ashurnasirpal captured, so he tells us “fifty cavalry horses together with the soldiers of Nabu-apal-iddina, the king of Karduniash ... and Zabdanu his brother, and Bel-apal-iddina the prophet who went in front of their army”.⁴³² Thus Nabu-apal-iddina became a vassal to the Kassite king and remained that way also during the reign of the latter’s son. Despite this, Boutflower found some reason as to why he thought this Nabu-apal-iddina might have been memorable:⁴³³

... he was in some sense an ancestor to be proud of, for, if not a warrior king, he had at least done well by his country in establishing friendly relations with Shalmaneser III of Assyria, and in subduing the roving Sutû – a semi-nomad tribe of Arameans living beyond the Euphrates. His name has also come down to posterity as the rebuilder of the famous temple of the Sun-god at Sippar.

I however think it doubtful whether Merodach-baladan would have specifically called himself a ‘son’ of such a king, who had been conquered by a mighty ‘Indo-European’ king, and had subsequently served as a vassal to him, and to his son, and whose few recorded achievements were probably at the service of these Kassite overlords anyway.

⁴²⁹ *Ibid*, ch. x: ‘Chaldean Princes on the Throne of Babylon’, pp. 93-103.

⁴³⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 95, 141.

⁴³¹ *Ibid*, p. 71.

⁴³² As cited by Boutflower, *ibid*, p. 95.

⁴³³ *Ibid*, p. 141.

Moreover, Nabu-apal-iddina was situated in time more than a century before Merodach-baladan. And below I am going to suggest that the ‘Adad-Nirari’ whose ‘son’ Tiglath-pileser III claimed to be in the Ashur inscription was not Adad-Nirari III, but a son of a descendant of that king, known as Ashur-nirari V.

Nor can we be certain anyway whether Nabu-apal-iddina himself was a Chaldean, a native Babylonian, or a Kassite. And if he were a Chaldean, as Boutflower has thought, then this would not necessarily indicate any link whatsoever with Merodach-baladan, since our only two Old Testament references to the latter, under that specific name at least (2 Kings 20:12 & Isaiah 39:1), do not actually say that he was a Chaldean.

Since Merodach-baladan will be a key figure in this thesis, I think that we may need to be somewhat more definite about his origins, and who was his father, ‘Baladan’.

I think that the door is still open, therefore, for Hezekiah’s Babylonian contemporary Merodach-baladan, son of Baladan, to have been of Kassite origins, despite his Babylonian name, and therefore perhaps capable of being merged with the Kassite rulers of that land. Admittedly the Kassite names tend to have disappeared by this late point in time, possibly due to Aramaean incursions into the region, and their influence, during the weak phase of Assyria’s rule after Adad-Nirari III, and before the rise of Tiglath-pileser III.

So, with what ‘Middle’ Babylonian period are we to merge the ‘Neo’ Babylonian Merodach-baladan [II], in order to show that VLTF is convincing for this part of the world as well at this particular time?

Actually, there is a perfect opportunity for such a merger with one who is considered - perhaps rightly - to have been one of the last Kassite kings: namely, Merodach-baladan [I] (c. 1173-1161 BC, conventional dates). Now, as I have emphasized in the course of this thesis, identical names do not mean identical persons. However, there is more similarity between Merodach-baladan I and II than just the name I would suggest. For instance:

- There is the (perhaps suspicious?) difficulty in distinguishing between the building efforts of Merodach-baladan [I] and Merodach-baladan [II].⁴³⁴

Four kudurrus ..., taken together with evidence of his building activity in Borsippa ... show Merodach-baladan I still master in his own domain. The bricks recording the building of the temple of Eanna in Uruk ..., assigned to Merodach-baladan I by the British Museum’s *A Guide to the Babylonian and Assyrian Antiquities* ... cannot now be readily located in the Museum for consultation; it is highly probable, however, that these bricks belong to Merodach-baladan II (see *Studies Oppenheim*, p. 42 ...).

⁴³⁴ Brinkman, *op. cit.*, p. 87, footnote (456).

Further:

- Wiseman contends that Merodach-baladan I was in fact a king of the Second Isin Dynasty which is thought to have succeeded the Kassites.⁴³⁵ Brinkman, whilst calling this view “erroneous”, has conceded that:⁴³⁶ “The beginnings of [the Second Dynasty of Isin] ... are relatively obscure”.
- There is the same approximate length of reign over Babylonia for Merodach-baladan [I] and [II]. Twelve years as king of Babylon for Merodach-baladan II, as we have already discussed. And virtually the same in the case of Merodach-baladan I.⁴³⁷

The Kassite Dynasty, then, continued relatively vigorous down through the next two reigns, including that of Merodach-baladan I, the thirty-fourth and third-last king of the dynasty, who reigned *some thirteen years* Up through this time, kudurrus show the king in control of the land in Babylonia.

- Merodach-baladan I was approximately contemporaneous with the Elamite succession called *Shutrukids*. Whilst there is some doubt as to the actual sequence of events⁴³⁸ - *Shutruk-Nahhunte* is said to have been the father of *Kudur-Nahhunte* - the names of three of these kings are identical to those of Sargon II's/ Sennacherib's Elamite foes, supposedly about four centuries later.

Now, consider further these striking parallels between the C12th BC and the neo-Assyrian period, to be developed below:

Table 1: Comparison of the C12th BC (conventional) and C8th BC

<u>C12th BC</u>	<u>C8th BC</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some time before Nebuchednezzar I, there reigned in Babylon a <i>Merodach-baladan</i> [I]. • The Elamite kings of this era carried names such as <i>Shutruk-Nahhunte</i> and his son, <i>Kudur-Nahhunte</i>. • Nebuchednezzar I fought a hard battle with a ‘<i>Hulteludish</i>’ (<i>Hultelutush-Inshushinak</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Babylonian ruler for king Sargon II's first twelve years was a <i>Merodach-baladan</i> [II]. • SargonII/Sennacherib fought against the Elamites, <i>Shutur-Nakhhunte</i> & <i>Kutir-Nakhhunte</i>. • Sennacherib had trouble also with a ‘<i>Hallushu</i>’ (<i>Halutush-Inshushinak</i>).

Too spectacular I think to be mere coincidence!

⁴³⁵ *Ibid*, footnote (455), with reference to D. J. Wiseman in *CAH*, vol. ii, part 2, xxxi, p. 39.

⁴³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 90.

⁴³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 87.

⁴³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 109.

So this may be where Mitcham, for example, had needed to look for a ‘folding’, beyond the EA period, between the ‘Middle’ and ‘Neo’ periods of Assyro-Babylonian history. Soon I shall be supplementing, with further examples, these notable parallels between two supposedly distinct eras. But firstly I should like to recall that my revision of this actual period of Mesopotamian history may have some degree of art-historical support; for, as already noted in *Chapter 3* (p. 81), James claims to have found artistic likenesses between the C13th-12th,s BC and the neo-Assyrian period – though admittedly the data is scarce:⁴³⁹

Developments in art are also difficult to trace. Not only is there a dearth of material, but styles on either side of the gulf between the 12th and 10th centuries BC are curiously similar. One scholar noted that the forms and decoration of the intricately carved Assyrian seals of the 12th century are ‘clearly late’, as they ‘point the way to the ornate figures which line the walls of the Neo-Assyrian palace of Assurnasirpal [mid-9th century BC]’. The sculptors employed by this king, in the words of another expert on Assyrian art, ‘worked within a tradition that went back to the thirteenth century BC’. Not surprisingly, then, the dating of the few sculptures which might belong to this grey period has been hotly debated.

Having thus begun to establish a reasonably solid base around our composite king Merodach-baladan, we can now perhaps use the better documented C8th BC to help sort out the more fragmentary C12th BC so-called.

Assyro-Babylonian Connections

Our now composite Merodach-baladan [I] and [II] of Babylon can be recognised as both a contemporary of the early Second Isin Dynasty and of king Hezekiah of Judah. But the era is, not the C12th BC, but the C8th BC. The reign of Merodach-baladan, as a contemporary of the early Second Isin Dynasty as presently estimated, would have been reasonably close to the reign of that mighty ‘Middle’ Assyrian king, Tiglath-pileser I (1115-1077 BC, conventional dates), who dominates this era. If Merodach-baladan I is the same as Merodach-baladan II, as I am arguing, then the former’s near contemporary, Tiglath-pileser I, must be Merodach-baladan’s older Assyrian contemporary, the similarly mighty Tiglath-pileser III.

We saw in our discussion of Assyrian history in *Chapter 6* that Tiglath-pileser I stands out amidst a most poorly documented age of so-called ‘Middle’ Assyrian history that James has called a ‘Dark Age’. I suspect the reason for this is that the documents for this period are actually to be found in *neo-Assyrian* history. That:

Tiglath-pileser [I], son of *Ashur-resh-ishi*, grandson of *Ashur-dan*, is none other than *Tiglath-pileser [III]*, son of *Ashur-nirari* (var. *Adad-nirari*), grandson of *Ashur-dan*,

a contemporary of both Merodach-baladan II - in the latter’s early days - and of king Hezekiah of Judah.

⁴³⁹ *Centuries of Darkness*, p. 273.

Common to Tiglath-pileser I/III were a love of building (especially in honour of Assur) and hunting, and many conquests, for example: the Aramaeans, with frequent raids across the Euphrates; the Hittites (with the possibility of a common foe, *Ini-Tešub*); Palestine; to the Mediterranean; the central Zagros tribes; Lake Van, Nairi and Armenia (Urartu); the conquest of Babylon. Just to name a few of the many similarities. I think that historians really repeat themselves when discussing these presumably ‘two’ Assyrian ‘kings’. Consider this amazing case of repetition, as I see it, from Lloyd.⁴⁴⁰

The earliest Assyrian references to the Mushki [Phrygians] suggest that their eastward thrust into the Taurus and towards the Euphrates had already become a menace. In about 1100 BC Tiglath-Pileser I defeats a coalition of ‘five Mushkian kings’ and brings back six thousand prisoners. In the ninth century the Mushki are again [sic] defeated by Ashurnasirpal II, while Shalmaneser III finds himself in conflict with Tabal But when, in the following century, Tiglath-pileser III once more records a confrontation with ‘five Tabalian kings’, the spelling of their names reveals the fact that these are no sort of Phrygians [sic], but a semi-indigenous Luwian-speaking people, who must have survived the fall of the Hittite Empire.

I think that we should now be on safe grounds in presuming that the ‘five Mushkian kings’ and the ‘five Tabalian kings’ referred to above by Lloyd as having been defeated by Tiglath-pileser I/III – but presumably separated in time by more than 3 centuries – were in fact the very same five kings.

To Tiglath-pileser I there is accredited a reign length of about 38 years, which is significantly longer than the 17 years normally attributed to Tiglath-pileser III. However, in *Chapter 11* (pp. 356-357) we shall learn that Tiglath-pileser III was extremely active for at least two decades before he actually even became the primary ruler of Assyria.

After Tiglath-pileser [I] had sacked the city of Babylon, he placed on the throne there one Adad-apla-iddina (c.1067-1046 BC, conventional dates), generally thought to have been amongst Aramaean newcomers at the time.⁴⁴¹

... Adad-apla-iddina During his reign, the Arameans and Sutians living along the Euphrates irrupted into the land ... fomenting trouble in Babylon itself. Relations between the Assyrian and Babylonian kings remained friendly for the most part during this period of changing regimes in the south. Though Assyria may have assisted Adad-apla-iddina in gaining the throne, he paid the northern country back by later interfering in the Assyrian royal succession.

This Adad-apla-iddina has several notable likenesses now to our composite king of Babylon, Merodach-baladan I/II. Firstly, he came to power in Babylon during the reign of a Tiglath-pileser.

⁴⁴⁰ *Ancient Turkey*, pp. 68-69.

⁴⁴¹ Brinkman, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

Secondly, though established by the ‘Assyrians’, he tended to bite the hand that fed him. Thirdly, the name Adad-apla-iddina (var. Rimmon-bal-iddina)⁴⁴² is of identical construct to Marduk-apla-iddina (Merodach-baladan), though with the Assyrian theophoric in the former case substituted for the Babylonian theophoric in the latter: our ADP principle. Brinkman’s account of Adad-apla-iddina above could perhaps even be a plausible explanation of how Merodach-baladan I/II actually came to power in Babylon: namely, with the assistance of Tiglath-pileser. And his having ‘Assyrian’ support would account for how he managed to survive for so long. Though, all the time, this wily king of Babylon apparently had his own agenda that would eventually bring about his ruin at the hands of his ‘Assyrian’ benefactors.

I think that there may be even more to it than this.

It was customary for the kings of the neo-Assyrian period at least to place their sons on the throne of Babylon. Sargon II/Sennacherib would do it in the case of Esarhaddon, for instance. And the latter followed suit, proclaiming one son, Ashurbanipal, heir to the throne of Assyria and another son, Shamash-shum-ukîn, heir to the throne of Babylon. With this in mind, might not the father of Sargon II/Sennacherib, whom I now believe to have been Tiglath-pileser I/III, also have done this? Might not then the Adad-apal-iddina whom Tiglath-pileser had placed on the throne of Babylon have been his very own son, an ‘Aramean’ only in the sense that his fathers had been Aramaeans (‘Indo-European’ rulers of Amurru, or Syria)? Having come to the throne of Babylon, he might then have altered his name to Merodach-baladan in honour of the local god, Marduk.

That would mean that Tiglath-pileser III was himself the father of Merodach-baladan, and that he (rather than the obscure mid C9th BC Nabu-apal-iddina) was the very ‘Baladan’ of the Scriptures; an illustrious king indeed, and one too well-known for any need for his full name to have been given. Tiglath-pileser III was also known in history and the Old Testament (as we saw), by his supposed Babylonian name, or nickname, *Pul* (var. *Pulu*, *Pulus*, *Porus*); a name that could well be an abbreviation, deriving from the *apal* element in -apal-iddina (var. -bal-iddina), presumably the latter part of Tiglath-pileser’s name as ruler of Babylon.

If Merodach-baladan were indeed the very son of Tiglath-pileser III, and presumably older than his brother, Sargon II/Sennacherib, then this would explain the former’s tenacity in clinging to the throne of Babylon, presumably as the rightful heir to his father, despite Sargon’s protest that Merodach-baladan had reigned ‘against the will of the gods’. It might also go a long way towards accounting for Sargon II’s hatred of his father, as *Shalmaneser*, and his utter contempt for Merodach-baladan. In one place, for instance, he (as Sennacherib) will call Merodach-baladan “an evil-doer, whose guilt is heavy”.⁴⁴³ Sargon II had much about which to be resentful in the case of Merodach-baladan:⁴⁴⁴ “Seriously defeated by [Merodach-baladan and his Elamite allies], Sargon lost control of Babylonia and did not regain it for approximately a dozen years”.

⁴⁴² Boutflower, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

⁴⁴³ Taylor Cylinder, col. V. 70, as cited by Boutflower, *ibid.*, p. 305.

⁴⁴⁴ Bright, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

Such a dynastic situation might also explain, finally, Sargon II's choice of throne name, meaning, basically, 'True King', which one might take as being somewhat suspicious - as if the man 'doth protest too much'. Roux, for instance, allows for Sargon to have been a "usurper" (and even a son of Tiglath-pileser, as I am claiming):⁴⁴⁵ "Equally obscure are the circumstances which brought [Shalmaneser V's] successor to the throne, and no one can say whether he was a usurper or another of Tiglathpileser's sons".

Did Sargon II actually kill his father, and then attempt to dispose of his brother, Adad-apla-iddina (Merodach-baladan), who was however long able to withstand him: all the while blackening their names for posterity?

If the revised historical scenario that I am presenting in these pages is correct, then I was not wasting valuable space in **Part I** - my background study to EOH - in tracing right back to their 'Indo-European' roots some of king Hezekiah's major contemporaries. For, arising from our Ancestral King of *Chapter 3*, TAB-RIMMON/OMRI - hence, as being of 'Indo-European' origins - are:

- (i) the powerful neo-Assyrian contemporaries of Hezekiah;
- (ii) perhaps the contemporary ruler of Babylonia at the time, Merodach-baladan, hence a 'Kassite'; and, as noted in a previous chapter
- (iii) "the son of Tabeel" (i.e. descendant of Tab-rimmon/Omri), a contemporary and foe of Tiglath-pileser III.

In **Part III** (especially *Chapter 12*) I expect to be extending all this a stage further in relation to EOH.

Identifying Nebuchednezzar I in a Revised Context

The terms of this revision almost demand now that the important C12th BC (according to convention) ruler of Babylon, Nebuchednezzar I (c. 1124-1103 BC, conventional dates), a close contemporary of a 'Tiglath-pileser' and of a 'Merodach-baladan', be recognised as the Babylonian version of Sargon II/Sennacherib; in other words, this powerful Assyrian king as ruler of Babylon, which he and his son most certainly were in successive phases. We now know that Assyrian kings might assume a different name as ruler of Babylon (e.g. Shalmaneser III/*Burnaburiash*; Tiglath-pileser III/*Pul*; Ashurbanipal/*Kandalanu*).

Apart from the approximate synchronisms 'each' with three successive Elamite *Shutrukids*, as tabulated above (**Table 1**), we find too that Nebuchednezzar I's reign length of 22 years conforms very well to Sennacherib's period of rule of about the same duration. Again, 'both' Nebuchednezzar I and Sargon II/Sennacherib fought with the Elamites outside Dêr. The former, like Sennacherib, had successful and unsuccessful campaigns against Elam, on one occasion striking deep into the Elamite heartland.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 310.

⁴⁴⁶ Cf. Brinkman, *op. cit.*, p. 106 & Roux, *op. cit.*, pp. 321-322.

‘Their’ restoration work in Babylonia may perhaps be compared. We know that Nebuchednezzar, in Babylon, constructed a shrine for the god Adad (an Assyrian god, note), “another of his divine patrons in war”; and he restored a statue of the god Marduk to his temple. In Nippur, he restored the famous Ekur temple; and, at Ur, he gave to a temple ‘precious gold’ and ‘two bowls of red gold’.⁴⁴⁷ Sargon simply records, without specific details:⁴⁴⁸ “I undertook the (re)habilitation of Sippar, Nippur, Babylon and Borsippa, ... and remitted the taskwork of Dêr, Ur, Uruk, Eridu, Larsa ...”.

Any full and proper comparison between the ruler of Babylon and the Great King of Assyria in terms of my revision would need however to take into account the fact that our king of Assyria is composite (Sargon II/Sennacherib) and also that his son, Esarhaddon, ruled Babylon while his father was still ruler of Assyria.

This new scenario, identifying Nebuchednezzar I as the Great King of Assyria, puts a completely new slant on Sargon II’s/Sennacherib’s presumed ‘modesty’ in not taking the title of ‘King of Babylon’ as had Tiglath-pileser III, preferring to use the older *shakkanaku* (‘viceroy’). That modesty however was not an Assyrian characteristic we have already seen abundantly. And so lacking in this virtue was Sargon in fact, I believe, that *historians have had to create a complete Babylonian king, namely, Nebuchednezzar I, to accommodate the Assyrian’s rôle as ‘King of Babylon’.*

An apparently major problem though with this identification, Sargon II/Sennacherib = Nebuchednezzar I, would be that Nebuchednezzar’s father is thought to have been one Ninurta-nadin-shumi,⁴⁴⁹ whose name does not of course bear any resemblance to the various names proposed for the father of Sargon II/Sennacherib. This is admittedly a difficulty. A possible explanation, given the dearth of genealogical material for Ninurta-nadin-shumi⁴⁵⁰, is that Ninurta-nadin-shumi was instead actually Ashur-nadin-shumi, son of Sennacherib, whose name though precedes Sennacherib’s as ruler of Babylon, as given in the 10th Babylonian Dynasty list;⁴⁵¹ hence, perhaps, the son was later taken to be the father.

If I am right in identifying Merodach-baladan’s father as Tiglath-pileser, then we might have yet another name for the latter, given Smith’s statement that Merodach-baladan II was the “eldest son of the earlier great monarch Eriba Marduk”.⁴⁵² But this would seemingly do little, if anything, to account for the Ninurta-nadin-shumi difficulty above.

A Legendary Vizier (Ummânu)

Perhaps a further indication of a need for merging the C12th BC king of Babylon, Nebuchednezzar I, with the C8th BC king of Assyria, Sargon II/ Sennacherib, is that one finds during the reign of ‘each’ a vizier of such fame that he was to be remembered for centuries to come. It is now reasonable to assume that this is one and the same vizier.

⁴⁴⁷ Brinkman, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

⁴⁴⁸ D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, II, # 182.

⁴⁴⁹ Brinkman, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁴⁵¹ See e.g. Boutflower, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

⁴⁵² ‘The Supremacy of Assyria’, p. 47. This could explain the unknown ‘Jarib’, ‘Iarib’ (𐎠𐎢𐎽) of Hosea 5:13.

I refer, in the case of Nebuchednezzar I, to the following celebrated vizier:⁴⁵³ “The name Esagil-kini-ubba, *ummânu* or “royal secretary” during the reign of Nebuchednezzar I, was preserved in Babylonian memory for almost one thousand years – as late as the year 147 of the Seleucid Era (= 165 B.C.) ...”.

Even better known is *Ahikar* (var. *Akhiqar*), of Sennacherib’s reign, regarding whose immense popularity we read:⁴⁵⁴

The story of *Ahikar* is one of the most phenomenal in the ancient world in that it has become part of many different literatures and has been preserved in several different languages: Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Greek, Slavonic, and Old Turkish. The most ancient recension is the Aramaic, found amongst the famous 5th-cent. BC papyri that were discovered ... on Elephantine Island in the Nile. The story worked its way into the Arabian nights and the Koran; it influenced Aesop, the Church Fathers as well as Greek philosophers, and the OT itself.

According to the first chapter of BOT: “*Ahikar* had been chief cupbearer, keeper of the signet, administrator and treasurer under Sennacherib” and he was kept in office after Sennacherib’s death. At some point in time *Ahikar* seems to have been promoted to *Ummânu*, or Vizier, second in power in the mighty kingdom of Assyria, “Chancellor of the Exchequer for the kingdom and given the main ordering of affairs” (1:21, 22). *Ahikar* was Chief Cupbearer, or *Rabshakeh* (רַב־שָׁקֵה) during Sennacherib’s *Third Campaign* when Jerusalem was besieged (2 Kings 18:17; Isaiah 36:2). His title (Assyrian *rab-šakê*) means, literally, ‘the great man’. It was a military title, marking its bearer amongst the greatest of all the officers. Tobit tells us that *Ahikar* (also given in the Vulgate version of BOT as *Achior*) was the son of his brother Anael (1:21). *Ahikar* was therefore Tobit’s nephew, of the tribe of Naphtali, taken into captivity by ‘Shalmaneser’.

This *Ahikar/Achior* was - as I shall be arguing in VOLUME TWO (cf. pp. 8, 46-47) - the same as the important *Achior* of BOJ.

Kraeling, whilst incorrectly I believe suggesting that:⁴⁵⁵ “There does not appear to be any demonstrable connection between this *Achior* [of BOJ] and the *Ahikar* of the [legendary] Aramaic Story”, confirms however that the name *Achior* can be the same as *Ahikar* (but see again VOLUME TWO, pp. 46-47).

⁴⁵³ Brinkman, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-115.

⁴⁵⁴ R. Murphy, ‘Introduction to Wisdom Literature’, 28:28, p. 491.

⁴⁵⁵ ‘*Ahikar*’, p. 222. On p. 69, the author notes the name similarity, but is likewise reluctant to identify the two. According to van de Mieroop, *op. cit.*, p. 193, “... a cuneiform text from second-century Babylonia ... lists as adviser to King Esarhaddon “Aba-Enlil-dari, whom the Aramaeans call *Ahiqar*”.”

Perhaps even the name *Achior* - whether or not the very same person - can be found in Bel-akhi-erba (i.e. Bel-AKHI-ERba = AKHIOR), the governor of Babylon during the reign of Merodach-baladan II. A relief on the Merodach-baladan Stone depicts the latter making a grant of land to this Bel-akhi-erba, governor of Babylon.

Figure 5: Merodach-baladan and Bel Akhi-erba⁴⁵⁶

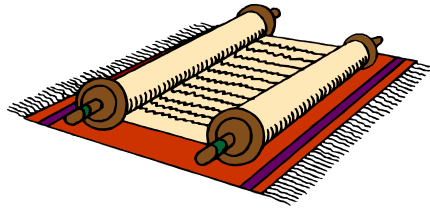


I had suggested above that Adad-apla-iddina, ruler of Babylon at the time of Tiglath-pileser I, may have been the same person as Merodach-baladan I/II. I may now be able to strengthen this link to some degree through the agency of the vizier just discussed. For, according to Brinkman:⁴⁵⁷ "... Esagil-kini-ubba served as *ummânu* ... under Adad-apla-iddina...".

Babylonia, a cunning, 'crooked serpent' diplomatically, has also been a tortuous riddle for historians to try to unravel.

⁴⁵⁶ Taken from Boutflower, *op. cit.* (facing p. 134).

⁴⁵⁷ *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*, n. 641.



Part III

King Hezekiah and His Egyptian Contemporaries Revised

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Specific Chronologico-Historical Problems – and Proposed Solutions – for the Era of Hezekiah

In regard to

Egypt

“The Dragon that is in the Sea”

תַּנִּינָן אֲשֶׁר בַּיָּם

The much tighter ‘Neo’ Assyro-Babylonian history that has been established in the previous chapters, as synchronized against the reign of king Hezekiah, must significantly impact upon Egypt’s TIP, both in general terms but especially where TIP is tied to these Assyro-Babylonian kings. In this **Part III**, I shall be applying this revised chronology with the aim of properly identifying the various Egypto-Ethiopian rulers known (or estimated) to have been contemporaneous with Hezekiah (c. 727-699 BC, revised dates). These are, according to a revised listing:

1. ‘King So [נִס] of Egypt’ (2 Kings 17:4). Hoshea of Israel’s appealing to this pharaoh (c. 727 BC) precipitated Assyria’s siege of Samaria (c. 725 BC);
2. The Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries of the fall of Samaria, c. 722 BC;
3. The *Turtan* ‘Si’be’ encountered by Sargon II in c. 720 BC;⁴⁵⁸
4. ‘Shilkanni king of Egypt’ [*Ši-il-kan-ni ... Mu-uš-ri ša*], who gave tribute to Sargon, in c. 716 BC, in the form of “12 big horses of Egypt”;⁴⁵⁹
5. ‘Pir’u [Pharaoh], king of Egypt, a prince who”, according to Sargon “could not save them” [i.e. his Syro-Palestinian allies] at the time of *Iatna-Iamani*’s revolt, c. 713 BC;
6. The “Egyptian kings ... the king of Meluhha (‘Ethiopia)”, defeated by Sennacherib at Eltekeh, c. 712 BC;⁴⁶⁰ “the King of Meluhha” [Ethiopia] perhaps being the same as the Ethiopian king who later captured *Iatna-Iamani* and sent him in chains to Sargon in Assyria;⁴⁶¹
7. ‘Tirhakah king of Ethiopia’ (Isaiah 37:9), who was rumoured to have been marching against Sennacherib.

All of these kings/incidents 1-7 should now find their place during the reign of Hezekiah.

⁴⁵⁸ D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. ii, # 5. Luckenbill gives the name here as *Sib’u*.

⁴⁵⁹ H. Tadmor, ‘The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur’, p. 78.

⁴⁶⁰ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 240.

⁴⁶¹ *Ibid.*, # 63.

But before my even attempting a complete identification of each of these rulers, or officials, in a revised context (the subject matter of *Chapter 12*), I shall need to trace, in the next two chapters, the influence, now in Egypt, of our two seminal kings: namely, the Ancestral King (*Chapter 9*) and the Dynastic King (*Chapter 10*). The remainder of this present chapter though will be taken up with my trying to determine the suitability, or otherwise, of Shoshenq I for ‘Shishak’; that key syncretism of conventional history.

‘King Shishak of Egypt’

My Egypto-biblical re-alignment will be fully in accordance with Velikovsky insofar as least as he had removed one of the most fundamental pillars of the conventional Egyptian chronology: namely, that Shoshenq I was ‘Shishak’. Whether Velikovsky was also correct in his identifying of the biblical ‘King So of Egypt’ with one or other Libyan Shoshenq⁴⁶² will still need to be determined.

Just How Important is Shoshenq I in the Conventional Scheme?

Bimson has claimed that the present identification of Shoshenq I with ‘Shishak’ is so firmly fixed in the minds of the conventional historians that it constitutes a “major obstacle” standing in the way of their acceptance of the revised scheme of ancient history.⁴⁶³ Ever since Champollion proposed this identification, he says, it has been well nigh universally accepted by the scholarly community, becoming “axiomatic among Egyptologists and biblical scholars alike”.

Superficially, the link appears impressive enough. Apart from the fact that (i) Shoshenq I is conventionally dated to the approximate time of ‘Shishak’, it seems (ii) his name is similar to ‘Shishak’, and (iii) Shoshenq is known to have campaigned in Palestine.

The reality, however, is very much different from the appearance!

I will provide sufficient synchronisms later in this **Part III** to indicate that Shoshenq I does not by any means correspond chronologically with ‘Shishak’. And I can add to this the pertinent observation that historians - as a result of their dating Shoshenq I, as ‘Shishak’, to the time of Rehoboam of Judah (c. 925 BC) - find themselves having to look, for ‘So’, at the time, say, of pharaoh Tefnakht (c. 727-716 BC, conventional dates), a TIP ruler of the 24th dynasty. But since it is immediately apparent that the name ‘Tefnakht’ is entirely inappropriate for ‘So’, proponents of this view must then resort to such far-fetched explanations as this one mentioned by Grimal:⁴⁶⁴ “Some scholars have treated [So] as a mistaken Hebrew spelling for the city of Sais, in which case - by a process of metonymy - Hosea would have been appealing to King Tefnakht [who reigned from there]”. 2 Kings 17:4, however, clearly identifies ‘So’ as “King ... of Egypt”; hence the name does not pertain to a city, such as Sais.

⁴⁶² ‘From the End of the Eighteenth Dynasty to the Time of Ramses II’, section vii, # 163.

⁴⁶³ ‘Shoshenq and Shishak’, p. 36.

⁴⁶⁴ *A History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 342. For various conventional and revisionist attempts to identify ‘So’, see D. Hickman, ‘The Chronology of Israel and Judah’, part 2, p. 21, n. 26. See also my *Chapter 12*, p. 335.





Kitchen moreover has listed a number of reasons why he thinks that Tefnakht is unsuitable for ‘So’.⁴⁶⁵

Gardiner has looked more realistically to identify “So with the Sib’e, *turtan* of Egypt, whom the annals of Sargon state to have set out from Rapihu (Raphia on the Palestinian border) together with Hanno, the King of Gaza, in order to deliver a decisive battle”.⁴⁶⁶ Though such a view would need to address why one whom the Second Book of Kings had entitled ‘King’, prior to the fall of Samaria, had become, some half a dozen or so years later, a mere Egyptian official (*turtan*); albeit an important one.

Name (Linguistic) Arguments

The vocalisation of the Egyptian hieroglyphs as *Shoshenq* is based upon the spelling of the name *Shushinqu* (or *Susinku*) in Assyrian records from the 7th BC. We find experts ranged on both sides in regard to whether the two names *Shoshenq* and *Shishak* are sufficiently close to confirm their identity. Gardiner, for instance, plainly felt that the Hebrew name was incompatible with the hieroglyphic original.⁴⁶⁷ Kitchen⁴⁶⁸ has on the other hand defended the plausibility of the Hebrew rendering. More recently, Bimson⁴⁶⁹ has accepted Gardiner’s estimation that the name fit is not entirely compelling; whilst Bimson’s critic, Shea,⁴⁷⁰ has fully supported Champollion’s identification.

Figure 6: Egyptian Name ‘Shoshenq’ and Corresponding Hebrew Consonants

	ש
	ש
	
	ק

The most problematical linguistic aspect for the likes of Kitchen and Shea is the second vowel in the name *Shishak*, about which Bimson has this to say:⁴⁷¹

... there is the omission of the ‘n’ from the Hebrew name. Kitchen points to several instances of the ‘n’ being dropped from cartouches of the name *Shoshenq* during the 22nd Dynasty

⁴⁶⁵ *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt*, § 333, pp. 372-374.

⁴⁶⁶ *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, p. 342.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 448, n. 1. “... the Old Testament gives *Shishak* wrongly”.

⁴⁶⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 73, n. 356.

⁴⁶⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 37, 39.

⁴⁷⁰ ‘The Military Strategy of *Shishak/Sheshonk* in Palestine’, pp. 2f.

⁴⁷¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 39.

Two of these involve the prenomen Hedjkheperre, i.e. the prenomen borne by the Shoshenq normally identified as the biblical Shishak; and two other instances are associated with his known relatives. It is therefore possible that the Hebrew name Shishak represents this abbreviated form of the Egyptian.

However, Kitchen's case would be stronger if there were instances of the 'n' being dropped in *non*-Egyptian sources. The Assyrian Shushinqu preserves it, and it is retained in the Greek form employed by Manetho and his excerptors.... Should we therefore *expect* the Hebrew scribes to omit the 'n'? Probably not.

With Velikovsky's Shoshenq (Sosenk) = 'So', any linguistic difficulty is greatly reduced, at least, since the whole of 'So' is contained in the first syllable of the pharaonic name. And we should not be surprised about the abbreviation of the name 'Shoshenq' to 'So', since, according to Kitchen:⁴⁷² "Abbreviations of private names are common from the New Kingdom onwards". More specifically, Kitchen tells here of Shoshenq's name having been actually shortened to 'Shosh' on scarabs.

Moreover, Hebrew *shin* (שׁ) and *samek* (ס) are reasonably close in pronunciation. The difference between the *sh* (שׁ) and *s* (ס) sounds could simply be one of dialect as is apparent from the celebrated case in Judges 12:6 where the Ephraimites were distinguishable from the Gileadites in their inability to pronounce the password, *Shibboleth* (שׁבֹלֶת), which the Ephraimites rendered as *Sibboleth* (סבֹלֶת).

Shoshenq's Activity in Palestine

Whilst the linguistic argument in favour of Champollion's choice of Shoshenq as 'Shishak' has at least something to recommend it, the same cannot be said I think for Shoshenq's most misunderstood actions in Palestine, as recorded on the Bubasite Portal at Karnak. Shoshenq I's activities in Palestine just cannot be made to fit the bold campaign by 'Shishak' against Jerusalem!

By today's standards Champollion's understanding of Shoshenq's Bubasite list was, as Bimson has noted, quite unsophisticated. Instead of his recognising all of the name-rings on Shoshenq's inscription as being the names of towns and cities in Palestine, he believed that the list included "the leaders of more than thirty vanquished nations".⁴⁷³ Among the names Champollion read No. 29 as 'Ioudahamelek', which he took to be the name 'Judah' (Heb. יהודה) followed by 'the kingdom'⁴⁷⁴ – though, more preferably, it would be 'the king' preceded by definite article (Heb. המלך). Consequently, Champollion translated this name-ring as "the kingdom of the Jews, or of Judah" (cf. Hebrew *ha(m)malcûth*).

He thus concluded that Judah was among the many "nations" that the pharaoh claimed to have conquered.

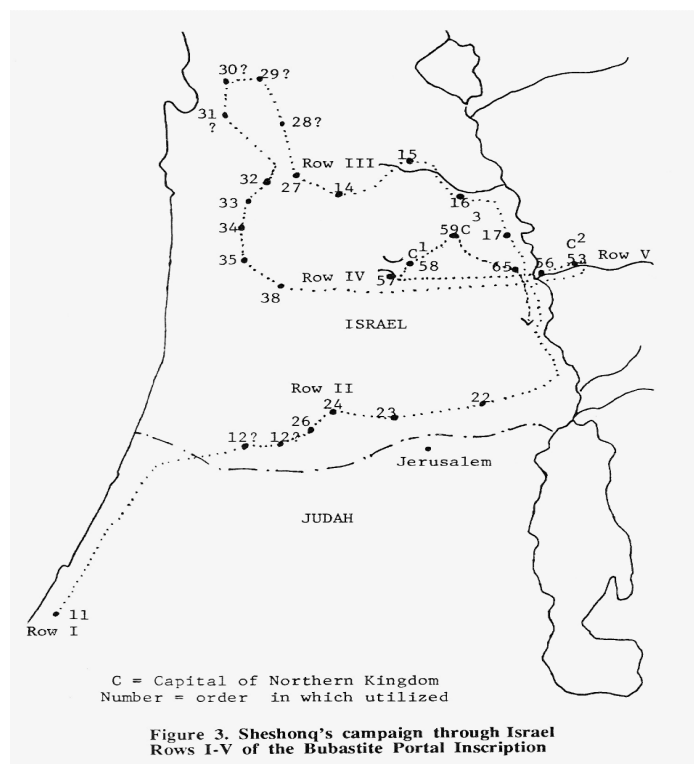
⁴⁷² *Op. cit.*, p. 374, n. 751.

⁴⁷³ *Lettres écrites d'Égypte et de Nubie en 1828 et 1829*, p. 80.

⁴⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 81.

Champollion's reading of name No. 29 was subsequently challenged by Brugsch, who made a new and detailed study of the list. Brugsch identified names both before and after No. 29 as belonging to Israel as well as to Judah, and therefore felt that its position in the list contradicted Champollion's reading.⁴⁷⁵ The now generally accepted view, according to Bimson, is that proposed by Müller:⁴⁷⁶ namely, that No. 29 stands for a place, *Yad-ha(m)melek*. Whilst this location has not yet been identified, its position in the list would definitely seem to suggest that it refers to a location in the NW coastal plain of Israel, far from Jerusalem. This fact, however, does not appear to have weakened acceptance of the identification of Shoshenq with 'Shishak'.

Map 1: Shoshenq I's Activity in Palestine⁴⁷⁷



A considerable number of names in the Bubastite list had come to be identified with towns in Israel and Judah, establishing that Shoshenq's forces had campaigned in Palestine. Unlike in the campaign of 'Shishak', however, the kingdom of Israel too was attacked according to Donner.⁴⁷⁸

⁴⁷⁵ *Geographische Inschriften ...*, II, pp. 56 ff, as cited by R. Poole in W. Smith's *A Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 3, p. 1293.

⁴⁷⁶ W. Max Müller in T. Cheyne and J. Black (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, col. 4486, n. 5.

⁴⁷⁷ Reproduced from Shea, *op. cit.*, figure 3, p. 5.

⁴⁷⁸ H. Donner, as cited by J. Hayes and J. Miller (eds.), *Israelite and Judaeen History*, p. 389.

In regard to certain ‘explanations’ that “Rehoboam might have captured various towns in Israel, or that the pharaoh was simply prepared to override friendship with Jeroboam for the sake of political gain, these”, says Bimson, “are either flatly contrary to Scripture (1 Kings 12:21-4), or completely unattested therein”.⁴⁷⁹ “Such conjectures are necessary”, he adds, “only because of the identification of Shoshenq I with Shishak. It is entirely consistent with the Bible’s portrayal of Shishak as Jeroboam’s ally that it contain no reference whatsoever to an Egyptian invasion of Israel”.

Jerusalem Not Listed by Shoshenq

Scholars for and against Champollion’s reconstruction, alike, have generally concluded that Jerusalem is not even mentioned in Shoshenq’s Bubasite list. Velikovsky, for instance, claimed that:⁴⁸⁰ “Neither Jerusalem, Hebron, Beer-Sheba, Bethlehem, nor any other known place was among the names on the list; nor was Jaffa, Gath, or Askelon”. And Bimson has regarded “Shoshenq’s failure to include Jerusalem in his list of cities ...” as being far more serious than any other problem raised by the opponents of the conventional view; “a major stumbling block”.⁴⁸¹

But even the proponents of the Shoshenq = ‘Shishak’ view are puzzled by this apparent omission. Judah’s wealthy capital features in the Scriptures as being the prime target of the biblical pharaoh’s expedition; but when we turn to Shoshenq’s inscription, as Hermann says:⁴⁸² “It is remarkable that Jerusalem does not seem to be mentioned on it, and does not therefore belong among the places seized ...”. Kitchen also thinks it extremely unlikely that Jerusalem ever featured in any of the sections of the bas-relief now damaged.⁴⁸³

Shea, on the other hand, claims to have found Jerusalem and its environs described in various of Shoshenq’s name rings.⁴⁸⁴ In *Chapter 11* (pp. 338-339) however, where I shall present my revised interpretation of - and setting for - Shoshenq I’s Bubasite list (section: “Shoshenq I and his Famous ‘Campaign’”), I shall consider the possibility that these sites of special interest to Shea may even have been Moabite locations.

⁴⁷⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

⁴⁸⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 165, with reference to *Klio Beihefte*, XXXVIII.

⁴⁸¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 40, 42.

⁴⁸² *History of Israel in Old Testament Times*, p. 196, n. 35.

⁴⁸³ *Op. cit.*, p. 298.

⁴⁸⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 6-10.

Influence of the Great Ancestral King on Egypt

Introduction

Once again here, as in *Chapter 3* - due to the dearth of information in relation to our Ancestor King (Omri), whose origins we needed to trace through his son Ben-Hadad I, under his various guises - we shall likewise be tracing the former's influence upon Egypt largely again through that same son. The latter, as *Tushratta*, had, as we also read in *Chapter 3* (on p. 75), very close connections with the EA pharaoh Amenhotep III in particular. This was no doubt due to the fact that one or more of his sisters, and his daughter, were married to that pharaoh. But it was *Tushratta's* father *Shuttarna* [*Šuttarna*] - who, if indeed he were *Tushratta's* genuine father, must have been according to my reconstruction, our very Ancestor King, Omri/Tab-rimmon - who would have set the trend. This *Shuttarna* had, according to Grimal,⁴⁸⁵ given his daughter *Gilu-Hepa* to pharaoh Amenhotep III.

Thus we have a family connection between our Ancestral King and Egypt's famous 18th dynasty; one that would be greatly strengthened by *Tushratta*.

Rohl claims that "Akhenaten's second wife, Queen Kiya, was the sister of King Tushratta of Mitanni".⁴⁸⁶ Whilst *Tushratta* himself, says Grimal, gave his daughter *Tadu-hepa* to Amenhotep III. Moreover, this ubiquitous *Tushratta* had, it seems, close connections even to Amenhotep's chief wife, the influential Queen *Tiy*, who was the daughter of *Yuya* and his wife, *Tuya*. In EA 29 the wily *Tushratta*, congratulating Akhnaton upon his accession to the throne, implies a great familiarity with *Tiy*:

And when my brother Nimmuria [Amenhotep III] died, they proclaimed it, and ... I also learned. He was gone ... and I wept on that day ... But when Naphuria [Akhnaton], the great son of Nimmuria by Tiy his wife the great one, wrote to me: "I will enter upon my reign," I said: "Nimmuria is not dead". Now Naphuria, his great son by Tiy, his great wife, has placed himself in his stead, and he will not change from its place one thing from what it was before ... Tiy, his mother ... the great wife of Nimmuria ... is alive, and she will report the words to Naphuria, the son of Nimmuria her husband, that we were on excellent friendly terms.

Now, *Yuya's* contribution of wives to the harem of Amenhotep III 'the Magnificent' was equally as impressive as was the contribution made by *Tushratta* of Mitanni. And these women, too, are thought to have borne Mitannian blood, at least from one of their parents. Whilst *Yuya's* nationality is only guessed at, he is sometimes thought to have been a northerner, a Syro-Mitannian, or 'Asiatic' (see also pp. 206-207).

⁴⁸⁵ *A History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 233.

⁴⁸⁶ *The Lost Testament*, p. 302.

Thus, one of *Yuya's* daughters, the Mitannian *Mutemwija*, had been a concubine of Thutmose IV, the father of Amenhotep III. *Tiy*, as already said, was given to Amenhotep III. It has even been suggested that *Tiy's* mother, *Tuya*, had been a wife of pharaoh Thutmose IV.

All of this leads me to the inevitable conclusion that *Tushratta* and *Yuya* were one and the same 'Syro-Mitannian' father-in-law of Amenhotep III, and that here we have yet another extension, this time into Egypt, of the son of our 'Indo-European' Ancestor King. But in this instance we also have a 'body of evidence', as *Yuya's* mummy – as indeed that of his wife, *Tuya* – has been discovered and examined. More on that on pp. 206-207. It is also fairly inevitable now that some of the pharaonic wives of different names, mentioned above, ought to be matched together as being the one person; e.g. it has been speculated that *Tiy* and *Tadu-hepa* (*Tadukhepa*) might have been the one, same queen. Petrie though, according to Tyldesley,⁴⁸⁷ had strongly supported the theory that *Tadu-hepa* was the famous Nefertiti.

The powerful *Yuya* and his wife *Tuya* were also the parents of *Ay*, the brother of Queen *Tiy*, and presumed father of Nefertiti. *Ay*, who would later become pharaoh, also had a wife called *Tiy*, though her name is usually spelt in a variant form (e.g. *Tey*) in order to differentiate her from the famous Queen *Tiy*. This influential family, the 'Yuya family' (or 'Yuyides') as I shall be calling it (them), is thought to have been of foreign origin. This estimation is supported by - given my equation, geographically, of the Mitannian with the Syrian kingdom - the common view that *Tiy* was, at least partly, of Mitannian origin. I intend to develop this 'foreign' aspect of the 'Yuyides' in the following pages, even eventually attempting to specify their exact ethnic origin.

Gardiner had recognized such "an incontestable affinity" between *Yuya* and *Ay* that he had even entertained Newberry's view that these were simply the same person, before rejecting it on chronological grounds and leaning instead towards Aldred's estimation that *Ay* was the son of *Yuya*. Here is Gardiner's commentary on this pair:⁴⁸⁸

There is, at all events, an incontestable affinity between him [*Ay*] and that *Yuia* [*Yuya*] whom we have seen to have been the father of Queen *Tiye* [*Tiy*] and consequently the father-in-law of Amenōphis III Both prefixed to their name the epithet 'god's father', which in some cases appears to signify little more than a person of advanced age and recognized respectability. *Yuia* in his tomb at Thebes bore the title 'overseer of horses', while *Ay* at El-'Amārna is 'overseer of all the horses of His Majesty'.

The term 'God's Father' likely had in their cases, I would think, the rather more specific meaning of 'father-in-law of pharaoh'.

We have already taken a close look at the association with horses and chariotry of the 'Indo-European' immigrants in general - and of Ben-Hadad I and the Omrides in particular. Apart from the supply of harem women, the EA pharaohs were dependent upon these 'Mitannians' for horses and horsemanship.

⁴⁸⁷ *Nefertiti*, p. 43.

⁴⁸⁸ *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, pp. 239-240.

Gardiner continues, now including mention of their wives as well:⁴⁸⁹

Even more remarkable is the connexion of both of them [*Yuya* and *Ay*] with the town of Akhmîm, where *Yuia* was a prophet of Mîn as well as superintendent of that god's cattle ... and where King *Ay* erected a shrine and left a long inscription Just as *Yuia*'s wife *Tjuia* [*Tuya*] was the mother of Queen *Tiye*, so Queen *Tey*, the spouse of King *Ay*, had previously been the nurse of Queen *Nefertiti*. Little wonder if, in view of these facts, P. E. Newberry propounded the theory that *Yuia* and *Ay*, as well as their wives *Tjuia* and *Tey*, were actually identical. ... Chronologically, however, Newberry's view ... is absolutely impossible; since, moreover, the mummies of both *Yuia* and *Tjuia*, evidently very aged people, were discovered in their Theban tomb, it would be necessary to assume that *Yuia* or *Ay* ... had before his death been forced to renounce his kingly title, and to revert to the position of a commoner. C. Aldred has made the plausible suggestion ... that the future monarch *Ay* was the son of *Yuia*; this certainly would explain the similarity of their titles and their close connexion with Akhmîm, but is unsupported by any definite evidence.

Inevitably, I must conclude that *Ay* was again our second master-king, *Hazael/Aziru* (but especially under the guise of *Assurballit* as 'subduer of Egypt'), son of the master-king, *Ben-Hadad I/Abdi-ashirta* (i.e. *Yuya*), and grandson of the Ancestor King, *Omri*. (For more of *Ay*'s sinister influence, see next chapter, esp. pp. 225-236).

Due to the fact that *Yuya/Tushratta* and his wife had so intimate a connection with the royal family of EA Egypt, we might expect the pair for that very reason to have been given special honour in Egypt, for example with a lavish tomb prepared for each. Indeed, the powerful *Tiy*, and *Amenhotep III*, would have insisted upon it. *Grimal* tells about this very situation of diplomatic marriages, and how it had empowered certain presumably 'non-royal' officials in Egypt:⁴⁹⁰

In the Eighteenth Dynasty ... family ties dominated the national political scene. The main government posts were shared out among the members of the royal family and marriage into that family came to be a way of officially recognizing the influence of *the non-royal official who had become too important to be ignored*. This was the case with *Tuthmosis I* and later with *Ay* and *Horemheb*.

Assuredly, we can add here to "Tuthmosis I ... *Ay* and *Horemheb*", the important *Yuya*. Now none of these four was, according to my revision, of actual native Egyptian origin; though in this chapter and in the next I shall be discussing only the last three, as *Thutmose I* is beyond the scope of this thesis.⁴⁹¹

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p. 240.

⁴⁹⁰ *Op. cit*, p. 221. Emphasis added.

⁴⁹¹ I have independently arrived at the same conclusion as has Dr. Metzler - both of us though based on *Velikovskiy's* revision of Egypt's 18th dynasty - that *Thutmose* [*Tuthmosis*] *I* was king *David* himself, with Metzler concluding that *David* was also the "pharaoh" of 1 Kings 9:16 who gave *Gezer* to his daughter,

Nor do I think that any of these four was generally situated in Egypt, but tended to serve, or defy, Egypt - even sometimes to dominate Egypt - from Syro-Palestine and perhaps later, in the case of Ay (as Assuruballit), from Babylon. (See next chapter, p. 233). From the point of view of Egypt, they were often regarded as mere officials, though “important” ones. Hence their lavish tombs. The EA pharaohs would no doubt have hoped that these “nominally Egyptian vassals”, as Tyldesley has called them (refer back to p. 67), who were actually powerful kings in their own right, would use their abundant military skills to police Syro-Palestine against insurgents (like *Lab’ayu/Ahab*, apparently, and the *habiru*), and as a buffer against the Hittites. These are those *shaphat*-police to whom we referred in *Chapter 4* (on p. 115). The fact is that these ‘Syro-Mitannian’ royals were actually bent upon preserving their own selfish interests. And they seem to have had plenty of forces at their disposal: “King Ben-Hadad of Aram gathered all his army together; thirty-two kings were with him, along with horses and chariots” (I Kings 20:1. Cf. 20:25).

The ‘Yuya family’ was obviously made up of some extremely forceful and assertive personalities in *Yuya*, *Tuya*, *Ay* and *Tiy*. This would not be at all surprising if the group were, as I am claiming, the ‘Indo-European’ Ben-Hadad I and his company. This Ben-Hadad was, as we have seen so abundantly, a master of political intrigue: duplicitous and seemingly ubiquitous. *Ay* and his sister, Queen *Tiy*, too, were undoubtedly very strong personalities. Regarding *Tiy*, for instance, Velikovsky thought it more appropriate to say that Amenhotep III “was married ... by”, than “married to”, this formidable woman.⁴⁹² And he re-cast her as the equally forbidding, even harpy-like, *Jocasta*, in his brilliant comparison of the EA saga with the *Oedipus Rex* cycle of the Greeks.⁴⁹³

And we may even have the ‘Yuyide’ name, so to speak, of the obscure Omri himself, given that Aldred has, in discussing the provenance and family of *Tiy*’s parents, “discovered a reference to a mid-eighteenth Dynasty official Yey who was, like Yuaa [*Yuya*], “Father of the God and Master of the Horse”.”⁴⁹⁴ All in all, the ‘Yuya family’ comes across as being a most powerful dynasty of northern origin closely connected to the throne of Egypt; a family according to Grimal “evidently always at the center of the Amarna drama”.⁴⁹⁵

Origin of the ‘Yuyide’ Names

An outstanding feature of the ‘Yuyides’ is each one’s distinctive, un-Egyptian name (*Yey?* *Yuya*, *Tuya*, *Tiy*, *Ay*, *Inen*), and hence suggestive of foreigners – though they are generally considered to have been Egyptian nicknames. Tyldesley tells of the difficulty that the Egyptian artisans had with the name *Yuya*, for instance:⁴⁹⁶

who was Solomon’s Egyptian (on her mother’s side) bride (i.e. Hatshepsut, the biblical ‘Queen Sheba’). ‘Conflict of Laws in the Israelite Dynasty of Egypt’, section B. I have also developed Velikovsky’s thesis that Hatshepsut was ‘Queen Sheba’. My article, ‘Solomon & Sheba’.

⁴⁹² *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, p. 35.

⁴⁹³ *Ibid*, ch: “The King’s Mother and Wife”.

⁴⁹⁴ As cited by J. Collier, *King Sun. In search of Akhenaten*, pp. 54-55.

⁴⁹⁵ *Op. cit*, p. 226.

⁴⁹⁶ *Op. cit*, p. 21. Emphasis added.

... we are not altogether certain how Yuya was pronounced but it is likely to have been something close to 'Aya' 'Yuya' ... was certainly an unusual name in ancient Egypt; the semi-literate artisans ... had trouble with the spelling and each eventually produced his own Yuya variant. Mis-spellings were by no means uncommon in Egyptian tombs, but Yuya's name seems to have caused more problems than most, and *this has led to the suggestion that Yuya may have been an Asiatic with an unfamiliar foreign name.*

Yuya was in fact, as I am arguing, of 'Indo-European' origins. I hope to be even more specific about this later on in this chapter, and in the next ones, when considering that the 'Yuyides' - hence the Omrides - may have been of actual Libyan origin (of the 'Meshwesh' variety), possibly from Anatolia. In *Chapter 11* I shall further suggest that *Yuya* of difficult name was the first mentioned Libyan ancestor (*Buyuwawa*) of - and hence the key to - the Pasenhor genealogy. If my Libyan origins theory is correct, then one might even hope to find some resonance of the 'Yuyide' names amongst those strange names of the Libyan dynasts. Gardiner, from whom we learn that the name *Inini* (which appears to me to be the very same as the name of Ay's brother, *Inen*) was Libyan, has also written, with reference to the Libyans - and inadvertently perhaps to the 'Yuyides':⁴⁹⁷

Not long after 950 B.C. [sic] the Pharaonic sway passed into the hands of a family of alien race. Their earliest rulers styled themselves 'chiefs of the Meshwesh', often abbreviated into 'chiefs of the Ma' ... but sometimes paraphrased as 'chiefs of foreigners'. They were evidently closely akin to those Libyans whom Merenptah and Ramessēs III had repelled with such difficulty. But they are not to be regarded as fresh invaders; the most plausible theory is that they were the descendants of captured prisoners or voluntary settlers who, like the Sherden, had been granted land of their own on condition of their obligation of military service. Be that as it may, they had waxed so numerous and so important that they were able to take over the government with the minimum of friction. Like the Hyksōs before them they were anxious to pose as true-born Egyptians, though retaining on their heads the feather which had always been characteristic of their appearance. But their foreign origin was also betrayed by such barbarous names as Shōshenq, Osorkōn, and Takelōt, to mention only those borne by actual kings. These three names were known to Manetho as members of his TWENTY-SECOND DYNASTY

Some revisionists, beginning with Courville,⁴⁹⁸ have been insistent however that Egypt's 22nd dynasty, whose seemingly rock-solid place in the C10th BC had been shattered by Velikovsky's toppling down of the Shoshenq I = 'Shishak' pillar, was not a Libyan dynasty at all; but that it, now to be situated in the C7th BC as they have thought, was rather of neo-Assyrian origins.

⁴⁹⁷ *Op, cit*, p. 290: "... Inini is described as a Libyan ..."; and pp. 324-325.

⁴⁹⁸ *The Exodus Problem*, vol. 1, pp. 314-319.

Thus those “barbarous” Libyan names of “Shōshenḳ, Osorkōn, and Takelōt”, according to Gardiner, were now taken by Courville and others as being Assyrian names, e.g. ‘Shoshenq’ could be ‘Shushan ki’, ‘Osorkon’ could be ‘Sargon’ or ‘Ashur-kan’, whilst ‘Takelot’ could be ‘Tiglath’, and ‘Namareth’ might be ‘Nimrod’. This reconstruction also admirably served the necessary revisionist purpose of condensing a dynasty at the lower end of the time scale.

I shall dwell on this ingenious suggestion for a little while, because TIP’s 22nd dynasty (to be examined in more detail in *Chapter 11* and *Chapter 12*) will turn out to be of the greatest import to this thesis, being contemporaneous with king Hezekiah himself.

Courville has told of the significance of the 22nd dynasty in the revisionist scheme of things, starting with Velikovsky:⁴⁹⁹

Velikovsky recognized that for his thesis to survive it must be demonstrated that the period of the late dynasties must be condensed by some 500 years. The method for accomplishing this, as provided in his later volumes, was found unacceptable by many - perhaps most - of his proponents. Rameses II and his dynasty must be left in sequence to the Amarna period [comment: Velikovsky had separated the end of EA from the beginning of the Ramesside 19th dynasty by some 150 years]. An altered arrangement was proposed which corrected this error but which still left Dynasty XXII in the Persian period following the fall of Egypt in 525 B.C.

This alternate proposal was abandoned by its authors shortly after having been proposed, as it should be. The equivocal link, which is deemed to demand a sequence of Dynasty XXIII following XXII, has been retained. With the abandonment of this proposed alternative the equivocal link can be abandoned. It was based on the identification of the Pesibkhenno [Psibkhenno], whose daughter married Osorkon I, as Pesibkhenno II. This link is equivocal since the second name of Pesibkhenno II is not the same as that of the bride’s father. This evidence in itself may not be adequate basis for rejecting this sequence between dynasties XXI and XXII. But it should be rejected on the basis of the fragile evidence used to support the conventional setting of this dynasty in the first place, namely, that this dynasty was of Libyan origin though its kings clearly have Assyrian names.

Conventionally, with Dynasty XXII dated to the tenth century and Sheshonk I identified as the one who sacked Solomon’s temple, an Assyrian origin of the dynasty could not be recognized. Assyria at this time was so weak it was having difficulty maintaining its own position. To presume that Assyria was providing kings to the throne of Egypt in the tenth century was a violent anachronism.

The pressure for such a theory is eliminated by Velikovsky’s revision and the theory of a Libyan origin must be abandoned. The dynasty is Assyrian in origin and must be placed at the only [sic] time in Egypt’s history when Assyria is known to have been in political possession of territory there. That point is in the era of the late reign of Esarhaddon and of ... Ashurbanipal, c. 672-669 B.C.

⁴⁹⁹ ‘On the Survival of Velikovsky’s Thesis in *Ages in Chaos*’, p. 70.

Courville seems here to have overlooked the testimony of Adad-nirari, that his ancestor Assurballit (significantly earlier than Esarhaddon by any scheme) had conquered and subdued Egypt. (See next chapter, section “Syria (Assyria) Comes to Egypt”, beginning on p. 226). But let us turn to Courville’s earlier work, in which he first raised the view that the 22nd dynasty was Assyrian, not Libyan, since this includes his discussion of a most intriguing inscription, presumably telling of an Assyrian king who *had* come to Egypt:⁵⁰⁰

Freed of the pressures rising from an unnecessarily expanded chronology of Egypt and from the faulty premise which requires a sequence in the dynasties, Dynasty XXII, with the clearly Assyrian names of its kings, belongs to the era when the Assyrian armies are known to have been on Egyptian soil. At this time Assyria is known to have held at least a degree of control in Egypt. This was in the 7th century B.C. and not in the tenth century at the time of Rehoboam. Since the control of Egypt by Assyria at this later time was certainly not a total control, a basis is provided for recognizing that Dynasty XXII did not represent the sole government of Egypt and that this dynasty also ruled contemporaneously with another dynasty, either with or without the consent of the Assyrians.

Courville continues, concluding this next section on the Esarhaddon and Tirhakah conflict with successive quotes from Breasted, Rogers and Brugsch-Bey:⁵⁰¹

... Egypt had been invaded by an Assyrian army under Esarhaddon (681-699). The invasion was successful to the point of setting up governors in the various cities of Egypt, particularly in the critical northern area. With this organization, the Assyrian armies were withdrawn. But, no sooner had the armies left than plans were initiated for a revolt under Taharka (Tirhakah of Scripture) of the Ethiopian XXVth Dynasty. On receiving word of the revolt against the appointed governors, Esarhaddon again set his armies on the march toward Egypt, but in the course of the march, he died.

The result was that the Delta kinglets, who had sworn allegiance to the Ninevite, immediately plotted with Taharka for the resumption of his rule in Lower Egypt, which he thereupon assumed without much delay on the withdrawal of the Assyrian army. ... Esarhaddon was thus forced to begin his work over again; but in 668 B.C., while on the march to resume operations in Egypt, he died. With but slight delay the campaign was continued by his son, Assurbanipal, who placed one of his commanders in charge of the expedition. The forebodings of Esarhaddon had been well founded.

Courville now tells about the intriguing inscription found in Egypt:⁵⁰²

⁵⁰⁰ *The Exodus Problem*, p. 314.

⁵⁰¹ *Ibid*, pp. 314-315.

⁵⁰² *Ibid*, p. 315.

A lengthy inscription was found on Egyptian soil telling of the presence of an Assyrian king who had come to Egypt to examine the tomb of his son who had died in Egypt.

... The name of the son is transliterated as Namareth, a name which Brugsch regarded as the equivalent of Nimrod. The father of this Nimrod had the name Pallashnes or Pallashnisu. He had an Egyptian wife by the name of Mehtenusekh, indicating that prior to this time, the Assyrians had been on good terms with the ruling kings of Egypt

Courville has estimated that, say, northern Egypt was, at this time, “under the fragmented rule of the Ramessides, though the high priests at Tannis [Tanis] were attempting to take over the residual authority”. I continue his discussion now with this account of the father of Namareth:⁵⁰³

On the death of Namareth, son of Pallashnes, the Egyptian mother wished to have her son buried in Egypt. When the father later came to Egypt to examine the tomb, he found it uncared for and in shambles. Evidently the Egyptians were not too eager to spend either time or funds in taking care of the tomb of an Assyrian king, an attitude which would be particularly true of the high priests. The efforts to supplant the Ramessides ... had evidently been sufficiently successful to have banished them and their supporters to the Oasis. With the reconquest of Egypt under the commander of Assurbanipal, the son of this Namareth was installed as the king of Egypt. His name was Sheshonk, who thus became the first king of the XXIIInd Dynasty. This name was taken after the name of his grandfather, Pallashnes, who also had the name of Sheshonk. It is thus clear that the XXIIInd Dynasty *did* have an Assyrian origin and not a Libyan origin as has been popularly held. Brugsch commented on this inscription thus ...

My respected colleagues in science will, I think, readily admit that in spite of its very ruinous and injured state, this inscription is one of the most remarkable, and, I will add, one of the most surprising, ever found on Egyptian soil. Who could have expected such direct evidence of the presence of an Assyrian great king in the valley of the Nile, while the monuments had obstinately suppressed all information of the fact? We can only suppose that the Egyptians, after the departure of their Assyrian great kings, carefully destroyed all of their monuments, and that the one we have quoted only escaped the same fate because it was used as a convenient block to work into some building in the cemetery of Abydos.

Naturally, the supposed presence of an Assyrian great king in Egypt in the C10th BC (the conventional period for Shoshenq I) mystified Brugsch and his colleagues.

⁵⁰³ *Ibid*, pp. 315-316.

In my reconstruction, such a situation perhaps would not come as a big surprise even in the C9th BC, given the testimony of Adad-nirari that Ashurballit had conquered Egypt. Courville, for his part, had looked to set the Namareth inscription, connecting it with Esarhaddon, in the C7th BC. It is actually not easy to link up the set of names in the inscription to any known Assyrian sequence of rulers. *Pallashnes* (*Pallashnisu*) could perhaps, in a C9th BC context, pertain to Ashurnasirpal (*Tushratta/Yuya*), who we now well know did have intimate connections with pharaonic Egypt. Or perhaps the Assyrian king was Assurballit (*Aziru*), enquiring about the untimely death of one of his sons in Egypt. The name Tiglath-*pileser* (for a later period) comes to mind for *Pallashnes*; though we know of no really close connections between himself and Egypt.

As to the incident itself though, according to which an Assyrian ‘Great King’ enquired about the death of his son away from Assyria, that would seem to apply more specifically (though not it seems in all of its details) to Sennacherib, in his enquiries regarding his dead son, Esarhaddon.

I shall be taking up again this whole intriguing situation in *Chapter 11*, in the section: “Linking the Pasenhor Genealogy with the Namareth Inscription” (pp. 331-332), where I shall actually be suggesting a link between the Namareth inscription and the ‘Yuyides’ of the important Pasenhor (Horpasen) Genealogy.

Ashurballit’s era was, as we shall read in more detail in the next chapter, the first period when the ‘Assyrians’ came and subdued Egypt. These were actually ‘Syrians’ of ‘Indo-European’ (likely, Libyan) origin, who - as we read - had taken control of Assyria in the days of Ben-Hadad I (Ashurnasirpal II). It was during the height of power of the latter’s son, Hazael (Assurballit), that these foreigners actually came to Egypt by force. Gardiner had told of the ‘chiefs of the Meshwesh’ Libyans - with whose stock I am tentatively identifying these people - as “sometimes paraphrased as ‘chiefs of foreigners’”; a designation that I think recalls the Hyksos. And Gardiner does in fact liken them to “the Hyksōs before them”. I had already, in *Chapter 2*, proposed that the Hyksos were part of the first wave of ‘Indo-European’ invaders of the ancient Near East. Finally, it is to be questioned whether Courville’s superficially attractive thesis, that the 22nd dynasty was Assyrian, not Libyan, can be sustained linguistically. Aaronson⁵⁰⁴ had attempted to show how the supposedly Libyan names could be ‘Akkadian-ised’, e.g. “Osorkon ... more likely to be derived from Sargon (Sharru-kin) than from Ashur-kan”. But we know both the Assyrian name for Sargon and that for Osorkon, and they are quite different. The name ‘Sargon’ was indeed *Sharru-kin*, as Aaronson has noted, whilst Sargon II himself referred to Osorkon as *Shi-il-kanni*. Two apparently quite different names! Moreover, concerning Aaronson’s proposed connection between the Assyrian Tukulti and Takelot, Rohl has argued (with reference to Dr. Walker) that, whilst the word *tukulti* (meaning something akin to ‘supporter’) does indeed exist on its own, *Tukulti* as a name never does:⁵⁰⁵ “... the name *tukulti* is *only found in compound names* which form phrases with integral meaning or as a noun within a sentence. It could not therefore be used on its own to form a royal name of any sense ... [e.g.] Tukulti = Takelot”.

⁵⁰⁴ ‘On the Merits of the Revised Chronologies’, p. 18.

⁵⁰⁵ ‘David Rohl Responds’, p. 21.

What I am going to be arguing in the next two chapters is that Jehu/Horemheb, probably ethnically related to the Omrides (though himself a Zimride), was himself the father of the first king of the 19th (Ramesside) dynasty, whose origins were military. About him, Ramses I, Gardiner can give only the briefest of information:⁵⁰⁶ "... Ramessēs I ... was of relatively humble origin, his father Sety having been a simple 'captain of troops'." "Ramesses I", according to Grimal,⁵⁰⁷ "was not of royal blood. He came from a long line of soldiers whose homeland [sic] was in the eastern Delta, probably in the region of Qantir". It is perhaps more accurate to say that the eastern Delta was, not the actual 'homeland', but was the region allocated to these skilled foreign soldiers for defence against the invasion of Egypt by troops descending from the north-east. Recall Gardiner's "they are not to be regarded as fresh invaders; the most plausible theory is that they were the descendants of captured prisoners or voluntary settlers who, like the Sherden, had been granted land of their own on condition of their obligation of military service. Be that as it may, they had waxed so numerous and so important that they were able to take over the government with the minimum of friction". And: "Like the Hyksōs before them they were anxious to pose as true-born Egyptians, though retaining on their heads the feather which had always been characteristic of their appearance".

In *Chapter 11* we shall find that the eastern Delta was in fact the very region to which later conquered Libyan mercenaries (and perhaps the Sherden too) - part of the Libyan and later 'Sea Peoples' invasion at the time of the Ramessides - had been assigned by these pharaohs for that very purpose of defence. But these latter constituted that 'second wave' of 'Indo-Europeans' as discussed in *Chapter 2*. Our Ancestor King and his immediate descendants, on the other hand, belonged earlier, to the 'first wave'. In the case of the 'Yuyides', they had apparently 'been granted land of their own by the EA pharaohs on condition of their obligation of military service'. It seems that the 'land granted' to them, the 'seat' of their power in Egypt, was the town of Akhmim; though they themselves, as I noted earlier, were probably hardly ever physically located there. *Yuya*, as Ben-Hadad I, had actually died in Damascus. His death had been a long time coming, so it is possible that preparations were made well in advance, e.g. by his daughter, *Tiy*, for his mummification, and then burial in Egypt. Hence the exceptionally fine quality of the mummification process in his case (see pp. 206-207 below).

It is not beyond the realms of possibility that *Yuya's* devious, patricidal son, *Ay*, had actually ordered the mummification procedure, as indeed we shall see in the next chapter he did for Tutankhamun, after having possibly hastened the death of that young pharaoh. This *Ay*, for his part, was generally based in Syro-Palestine in the early days, as Hazael. He was certainly prominent in Egyptian affairs later, during the reigns of Smenkhare and Tutankhamun, and he personally assisted at Tutankhamun's funeral. But, in later times, he may mostly have been physically stationed in Babylon (as Assuruballit) from where he largely operated through subordinates in the west. And of course we have already read that his son, Ben-Hadad II, had come to prominence in Syro-Palestine during his father's declining years. [A possible Egyptian identification of this Ben-Hadad II will be proposed in *Chapter 11*, p. 289, in the context of the Horpasen Genealogy].

⁵⁰⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 248.

⁵⁰⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 245.

Grimal has provided this brief account of the career of *Yuya* in its connection with Egypt:⁵⁰⁸

The marriage of Amenophis III to the commoner Tiy was, from this point of view, by no means the passionate romance that it is sometimes claimed to have been. Yuya was an officer in the Chariotry and Master of the Stud Farms. It is thought that he was also the father of the queen-mother Mutemwia [Mutemwija], which would make him Amenophis III's uncle. He installed his son Ay as master of the Stud Farms during the reign of his grandson Amenophis IV, having already made his other son, Inen, the Second Prophet of Amun at Thebes and the 'Chief of Seers' in the temple of Ra at Karnak.

In Ay and *Inen*, referred to here, we have (according to my revision) two of those belligerent 'sons of Abdi-Ashirta' as complained about by EA's *Rib-Addi* and others. This prominent 'Yuya family' was 'Indo-European', possibly of Anatolian origin from *Arzawa*, the homeland of 'another' of EA's 'Great Kings', *Tarhundaraba*, who corresponded with Amenhotep III, and who - because of the fact that he, too, gave his daughter in marriage to Amenhotep III - may also be *Tushratta* (or, less likely, his father); or possibly one of the great Hittite kings.

Nefertiti's 'Indo-European' Origins

Now, what was there about the *Arzawan* women that had caused *Lab'ayu* (my proposed Ahab) to journey the approximately 300 miles to gain a wife from there (refer back to p. 90), and from where Amenhotep III had also apparently acquired a wife? Or, rather, was there one woman in particular living in *Arzawa* who had caught the eye of both the king of Israel and the pharaoh of Egypt?

Whereas Ahab had married Jezebel (EA's *Baalat Neše*), daughter of a king of the Sidonians, Ethbaal (Ittobaal) (1 Kings 16:31), one woman whom Amenhotep III married was Nefertiti, thought by some to have been the daughter of *Tushratta*. But, if - through an albeit tentative connection between *Tushratta* (father of Jezebel?) and *Tarhundaraba* of *Arzawa* - Jezebel and Nefertiti had hailed from the same country, *Arzawa*, then might not 'they' also be one and the same queen? This certainly is an intriguing consideration: Jezebel, perhaps the most notorious woman of the Old Testament, just possibly to be identified with the bearer of the most famous face in antiquity, Nefertiti!

Nefertiti: 'The Beautiful (or Perfect) Woman Has Come'

When Yakutchik writes early in an article of hers:⁵⁰⁹ "Essentially nothing is known about Nefertiti before she became co-regent of Egypt with her husband, Pharaoh Akhenaten, who ruled from 1352 B.C. to 1336 B.C.", then one does not feel over confident that she will be able to answer the question posed in the title of her article, 'Who Was Nefertiti?'

⁵⁰⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 221-222.

⁵⁰⁹ 'Who Was Nefertiti?' (un-numbered pages).

Nor is one's confidence lifted at all when she goes on to tell (concerning Tyldesley's efforts in her book, *Nefertiti*) that "Nefertiti was an elusive subject for Tyldesley because, she says, "meager shreds of evidence" can support a variety of interpretations about the sun queen". And Yakutchik's further comment, that "Nefertiti's origins - as well as her demise - remain shrouded in mystery", is echoed by the following one taken from the similarly uninformative, because uncertain, AkhetEgyptology article 'Nefertiti': "Little is known about the origins of Nefertiti but it seems unlikely that she was of royal blood". I have already commented about this over-used phrase in conventional Egyptology, "... little is known about ...".

By comparison, a sensible revision can be most fruitful. And I hope to show this yet again, this time in regard to queen Nefertiti, so that she will now become very well known and her origins will be fully revealed: but in the C9th BC, not in the C14th BC. We are apparently free to scrutinise Nefertiti's origins because these, as we have just read, have by no means been established by the Egyptologists. Dunn gives the typical sort of hypothetical version of what Nefertiti's origins might have been:⁵¹⁰

Nefertiti may or may not have been of royal blood. She was probably a daughter of the army officer, and later pharaoh, Ay, who may in turn have been a brother of Queen Tiye. Ay sometimes referred to himself as "the God's father", suggesting that he may have been Akhenaten's father-in-law, though there is [sic] no specific references for this claim. However, Nefertiti's sister, Mutnojme, is featured prominently in the decorations of Ay's tomb in the Valley of the Kings on the West Bank at Thebes (modern Luxor). However, while we know that Mutnojme was certainly the sister of Nefertiti, her prominence in Ay's tomb clearly does not guarantee her relationship to him. Others have suggested that Nefertiti may have been a daughter of Tiye, or that she was Akhenaten's cousin.

Nevertheless, as "heiress", she may have also been a descendant of Ahmose-Nefertari, though she was never described as God's wife of Amun. However, she never lays claim to King's Daughter, so we certainly know that she cannot have been an heiress in the direct line of descent.

Plenty of suppositions here, but no certainty, about the origins of Nefertiti. Nor can any presumed link with Ay be properly established.

Moreover if Nefertiti were Jezebel, as I am beginning to wonder, then the typical view that she may not have been of royal blood can no longer be upheld, because (1 Kings 16:31): "Jezebel [was the] daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians".

Though this would still of course translate in Egypt as 'commoner'.

We know that the ubiquitous *Tushratta*, son of the Omride Ancestor King, was in the business of selling women to the EA pharaohs in exchange for Egyptian gold. This now makes it possible that Nefertiti was the *Tadu-hepa* (Tadukhepa) whom *Tushratta* gave to Amenhotep III towards the end of the pharaoh's life, and who seems to have disappeared from the scene just as Nefertiti arises.

⁵¹⁰ 'Queen Nefertiti', section: "Family Line".

According to Tyldesley,⁵¹¹ Petrie was “a strong supporter of the Nefertiti as Tadukhepa theory ... suggesting that Tadukhepa was herself of mixed Egyptian-Mitannian parentage and an ‘heiress’ capable of transmitting the right to rule Egypt to her husband”. Let us now begin to consider more closely the physical appearance of these ‘Yuyides’: *Yuya*, *Tiy*, Nefertiti. Here is Miller’s description of *Yuya*’s mummy, whose appearance and pose were apparently far from being typically Egyptian:⁵¹²

Details: The mummy of Yuya was found along with that of his wife, Tuyu [Tuya], in their tomb in the Valley of the Kings. ... KV 46 was one of the few non-royal burials in the Valley, and indicates the high esteem in which Yuya and Tuyu were held by Amenhotep III, their son-in-law.

When found, Yuya was still in his coffins, but the lids had been removed and the mummy had been rifled by thieves in search of valuables. In spite of this, Yuya’s mummy was not substantially damaged, and a few objects remained on the body or in the torn bandages.

Quibell and Davis both mention a gold plate, which had been used to cover the embalming incision. Davis goes on to describe “numerous valuable religious symbols, several scarabs, and various objects of interest and beauty,” including “a necklace of large beads made of gold and of lapis lazuli, strung on a strong thread” which were found on the mummy.

Quibell further notes that Yuya had gold finger stalls covering his fingers, and X-rays taken by Harris show finger-rings still in place on Yuya’s hands. The Cairo Museum also has an amulet (CG51167) and some beads (CG51184, perhaps the ones referred to by Davis above) deriving from Yuya’s mummy. G. E. Smith describes the mummy of Yuya as one of the finest examples of the embalming practices of the 18th Dynasty. The mummy is that of an old man, and Maspero stated that Yuya was probably in his sixties when he died. His thick, wavy hair is a yellowish color, and was probably bleached by the embalming materials rather than being naturally blonde. Smith says the hair was white when Yuya died. His body cavity was packed with balls of linen soaked in resins, and his perineum is thickly coated with resinous material to such an extent that his genitals are completely covered. Yuya’s arms were crossed over his chest, with the fingers of the hands extended. His eye sockets were packed with linen and the eyelids had been pulled closed. Yuya’s mummy, like that of his wife, was equipped with an openwork cartonnage “cage,” coated with a thin layer of plaster, inscribed and covered with gold foil

This well-preserved mummy, *Yuya*’s, has been variously described as being ‘of Asiatic origin’ and ‘of unusual, almost European physiognomy’.

⁵¹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 43.

⁵¹² ‘XVIII’th Dynasty Gallery’ (un-numbered pages). And C. Aldred has written: “Yuya proved to be a man of striking appearance, fairly tall for an Egyptian with a head of long, wavy, white hair, a large beaky nose and prominent lips. His unusual physiognomy and the various spellings of his name ... have induced some scholars to accredit him with a foreign origin”. *Akhenaten Pharaoh of Egypt* ..., pp. 43-44.

According to an Internet article:⁵¹³ “[Yuya’s] mummy was not crossed in the usual Osiris form over the chest. Instead the palms of the hands were facing the neck under the chin. No Egyptian mummy was ever found with the hands in this position”. Given the nature and origins of *Yuya*, we should not be surprised that he is often classified as being “a foreigner” to Egypt. Thus Parker:⁵¹⁴

Amenhotep the Third, married one of the most remarkable feminine characters of Antiquity, Tiy, daughter of Yuua and of Tuau, or Tua. Although Yuua was a priest of the age-old Egyptian fertility-god, Min, he was a foreigner “from North Syria”, or, to be more precise, from the Vedic Mitanni Kingdom.

Similarly, some have claimed that both *Tiy* and Nefertiti were of non-Egyptian, perhaps Hittite, appearance, or that they were even actually Hittite. Though such a view has not always been well received, as Lehmann tells:⁵¹⁵

In 1923 ... the American authority Nora Griffith sought to prove that Tiye, mother of the Egyptian heretic-king Akhenaten, was a Hittite. It was allegedly through her that Hittite ideas and customs were introduced into the court of Amenophis III, so that all Akhenaten did, in essence, was to proclaim the Hittite sun-cult. ... If Nora Griffith found that Queen Tiye looked Hittite – an extremely arbitrary view – it was inevitable that others would later pronounce Nefertiti to be typically Hittite too, and this reduced the whole thing to absurdity.

But perhaps it was not as absurd as Lehmann had thought.

Lehmann himself had described the typical ‘Hittite’ look (of Hittite prisoners) as portrayed by the Egyptians, as having “a high domed forehead which merged directly with the nose [producing] a strange combination of Greek profile and Semitic nose”.⁵¹⁶ “Nefertiti”, he goes on to write, “also had a ‘Greek’ profile, but nobody would claim that she was a Greek in consequence”.

That is true, but I am proposing here that Nefertiti was probably ‘Indo-European’; hence likely of a Greek-related origin.

But so much for the origins of Nefertiti. What about those of Queen Jezebel with whom I am tentatively looking to identify Nefertiti? One might conclude from 1 Kings 16:31 that she was of Phoenician origin, being the daughter of the king of the Sidonians. Whilst *Arzawa* and Sidon were both coastal Mediterranean locations, they are several hundred miles apart. So, how could our son of the Ancestor King be the father of Jezebel as well? But note that we are not told that Jezebel’s father, Ethbaal, was a Sidonian, but only that this “Ethbaal [was] king of the Sidonians” (אֶתְבַּעַל מֶלֶךְ: צִדְוֹנִים). Now, ‘king’ or ‘ruler’ of the Sidonians was certainly applicable to our composite king, especially as *Abdi-ashirta/Tushratta/Ashurnasirpal II*.

⁵¹³ ‘The Descendants of Joseph in Egypt’, p. 2.

⁵¹⁴ ‘Vedik Africa’, p. 2.

⁵¹⁵ *The Hittites. People of a Thousand Gods*, pp. 82-83.

⁵¹⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 56-57.

We know from the EA letters (especially those of *Rib-Addi*) that *Abdi-ashirta* had invaded the Phoenician coast, from Sidon towards Byblos. Campbell has written as follows about this:⁵¹⁷

The first criterion by which the Rib-Adda [*Rib-Addi*] letters may be arranged is the role played by Abdi-Aširta of Amurru and his sons, the most prominent of who is Aziru. Rib-Adda and his small area of land are constantly under the threat of these troublemakers, who conspire, according to Rib-Adda's version of the story, with anyone who will help them gain more power. The impression given by the letters which mention these men by name is that Abdi-Aširta *advances step by step towards Byblos, taking one outlying city after another.*

The invader king's now legendary illness apparently prevented him from actually capturing Byblos; at least on this occasion, as referred to by Campbell:⁵¹⁸ "Abdi-Aširta never seems to have taken Byblos (Gubla) itself. Presumably his rebellious subjects interrupted this plan ... from which he had withdrawn because of sickness".

All of this I believe would correspond with the western coastal activity of the belligerent Ashurnasirpal II of Assyria, who had boasted of having taken tribute at least from Tyre, Sidon and Byblos. Ashurnasirpal's son Shalmaneser III (one of those many troublesome "sons of Abdi-ashirta") would later emulate this feat (perhaps even during his father's sickness). In the EA letters, the king of Sidon was one *Zimrida* [Zimrêda]; though he was apparently a servant of *Abdi-ashirta*. "In 83:25 Rib-Adda threatens to make an alliance with Abdi-Aširta, as have Zimrêda and Yapa(h)-Adda".⁵¹⁹ We met a variant of this name, *Zimrida*, in Jehu's father (as I am proposing), *Zimri*. What is certain at least is that our son of the Ancestor King was, like Jezebel's father, Ethbaal, a 'ruler over the Sidonians'. Moreover, the Baal Mel'quart inscription of Ben-Hadad I, giving the names of his father (Tab-rimmon) and his grandfather (Hezion), was situated at Aleppo, suggesting that these Omrides controlled the Phoenician coast to a vast degree.

Given Ben-Hadad I's many names, the ADP principle can come into effect here, according to which a king might take the name 'Baal' in Phoenicia, 'Hadad' in Syria, 'Ashur' in Assyria, and so on. Moreover there was, according to Feldman, an *Abd-Ashtart* (*Abdi-ashirta*?) who ruled Tyre.⁵²⁰ And Josephus has recorded that Ethbaal, the father-in-law of Ahab, was a priest-king of Tyre. Similarly, 2 Kings 5:18 may indicate that Ben-Hadad I himself was a priest-king, worshipper of Rimmon. We saw on the previous page that he was (as *Yuya*) "a priest of the age-old Egyptian fertility-god, Min". Certainly the dual rôle, king-priest, was a common situation for monarchs at the time. Ben-Hadad I, for instance, was certainly a priest in his guise of Ashurnasirpal II, who listed "priest of Assur" amongst his many titles and epithets. Thus:⁵²¹

⁵¹⁷ *The Chronology of the Amarna Letters*, pp. 78-79. Emphasis added.

⁵¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 79.

⁵¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 94.

⁵²⁰ 'Tyre: "Joy, shipmate, joy",' p. 30.

⁵²¹ D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. 1, #'s 532, 437, 507.

Assur-nâsir-pal, viceroy of Enlil (Bêl), the priest of Assur, the great king, the mighty king, the king of the universe, king of Assyria ... the king without a rival, the king of the whole four quarters (of the world), the Sun of all peoples, favorite of Enlil ... and Urta, the beloved of Anu and Dagan ... valiant hero

Neither Phoenicio-Canaanite Baalism however, nor Assyrian worship of Ashur and other local gods, is really adequate to explain the idiosyncratic nature of the Aton cult that was introduced into Egypt in the EA era. I shall be discussing this religious phenomenon in the next chapter (section: **Akhnaton, Nefertiti and the Aton Cult**, beginning on p. 211).

Queen Jezebel

We can now place Ahab's marriage to Jezebel in a chronological context. It was I believe an outcome of the treaty between Ahab and his defeated brother, Ben-Hadad I, until then a most powerful master-king. I discussed all this in *Chapter 3* (section: **The Omrides**, beginning on p. 55). Ben-Hadad I gave his (possibly *Arzawa*-situated) daughter to Ahab (*Lab'ayu*), thereby making the latter also his 'brother-in-law'. Ahab's marriage to Jezebel was not therefore a marriage arranged early for him by his father, Omri, as is thought.⁵²² Had Ben-Hadad I, until his defeat by Ahab, intended to sell his daughter Jezebel to Amenhotep III, with whom he had been doing a trade in harem women, for Egyptian gold? Prior to this defeat, Ben-Hadad I had arrogantly demanded of his brother (after the typically formulaic introduction, v. 2): 'Your silver and gold are mine; your fairest wives and children also are mine' (1 Kings 20:3).

כַּסְפְּךָ וְזָהָבְךָ לִי-הוּא וְנָשֶׁיךָ וּבָנֶיךָ הַטּוֹבִים לִי-הֵם

This was the 'Yuyide Mafia' characteristically at work. Perhaps later, Akhnaton, too, would express his personal interest and make overtures for the apparently much-coveted Jezebel, i.e. Nefertiti, who had, as *Baalat-Neše*, actually corresponded with this pharaoh. We recall from *Chapter 3* (p. 87) *Lab'ayu's* grovelling words to Akhnaton that he would not even withhold his wife from the pharaoh, were Akhnaton to write for her. The duplicitous *Lab'ayu* (Ahab) had here typically protested his loyalty to the Egyptian crown, though perhaps with no real intention of complying – perhaps instead intending in his own mind that he would rather have 'a dagger of bronze plunged into his heart than to yield up to pharaoh his beloved wife'. Though Ahab was the king of the land of Israel, it becomes clear from reading the relevant sections of 1 Kings that Jezebel virtually ruled Ahab. He ever turned to her when a setback occurred, and she promptly proposed a plan, sometimes involving murder and betrayal. Moreover, she greatly encouraged the spread of paganism in Israel. "Indeed, there was no one like Ahab, who sold himself to do what was evil in the sight of the Lord, urged on by his wife Jezebel" (21:25).

כִּי לֹא-הָיָה כָאֲחָאָב אֲשֶׁר הִתְמַכֵּר לַעֲשׂוֹת הַרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה
אֲשֶׁר-הִסְתָּה אֹתוֹ אֵיזָבֵל אִשְׁתּוֹ

⁵²² E.g. by J. Bright, *A History of Israel*, p. 238.

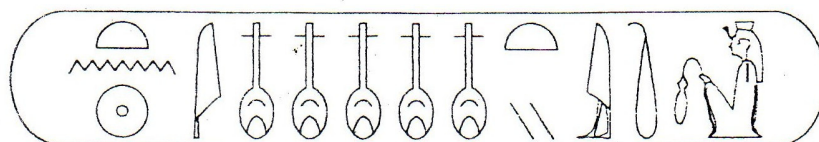
During this period the prophet Elijah practically fought a one man battle to keep all of Israel from accepting Baal as their god (1 Kings 17-19). He eventually had to flee from Jezebel in fear of his life (19:1-3).

What Egyptologists have always found most obscure about Nefertiti, namely *her beginnings* and *her end*, can now, I believe, be factually revealed - through the medium, so to speak, of this Jezebel. So, let us try briefly to construct the life of this famous queen, as Jezebel in the remainder of this chapter, and as Nefertiti, in the next, thereby further tying up the chronology of Israel, Judah and Egypt for the EA era and beyond.

Now, if this woman Jezebel were so singularly beautiful (as we know she, as Nefertiti, indeed was), then there is the likelihood that some of the great kings of the day would have wanted to snare her away from Ahab, a very powerful king in his own right. And I have just suggested that Akhnaton may have expressed his deep interest in her, especially since she had written to him on occasion to ask for his help. Even more likely, Akhnaton's uxorious father, Amenhotep III 'the Magnificent', would have made inquiries with the harem-trading *Tushratta*/Ben-Hadad I about how this queen might be acquired for him and brought to Egypt.

In light of this, and also of *Lab'ayu's* insurgent inclinations, it is not surprising to find that the net was out to bring Jezebel's husband, the king of Israel, in chains to pharaoh. *Lab'ayu*, as we read in *Chapter 3*, was actually captured once, but he escaped through bribery. Soon afterwards though he would fall victim to a violent death, and the Egyptians would presumably be free to make their move on his wife. There would now be nothing to prevent pharaoh Amenhotep III - with whom Akhnaton may then have been co-ruler⁵²³ - from doing what he had so longed to do, to claim Jezebel for himself. So, late in the reign of Amenhotep III, this queen - who was now also a mother [of Ahab's sons Ahaziah and Jehoram] - did what the Egyptians must long have been anticipating. She went to Egypt to marry an ageing pharaoh, before becoming the wife of his son, the oddest of pharaohs. Not surprisingly, she was greeted there rapturously and given an Egyptian name: *Nefertiti*: "The beautiful (or perfect) woman has come".

Figure 7: Nefertiti's Name in a Cartouche⁵²⁴



⁵²³ See e.g. Collier's discussion of this, with reference to Aldred. *Op. cit*, pp. 114-117.

⁵²⁴ Taken from Tyldesley, *op. cit*, p. 64, fig. 2.6.

Influence of the Great Dynastic King on Egypt

Introduction

This chapter will largely be a continuation of my discussion of the Sinai-commissioned triumvirate of Hazael, Jehu and Elisha that I had begun in *Chapter 4*. But here the emphasis will be on Egypt, not Syro-Palestine. Once again our central character will be JEHU, but this time in his guise as an EA governor, subordinate to Hazael: both of whom would actually come to rule Egypt for a period of time. Some significant historical characters will emerge from these pages. We shall trace Jehu's career ultimately to the stage where he became pharaoh and the dynastic founder of the 19th dynasty Ramessides. Other descendants of his will be found to be ruling at the time of king Hezekiah of Judah.

We might recall from *Chapter 4* that the task assigned to Hazael, Jehu and Elisha had been to annihilate the House of Ahab and to destroy the cult of Baal in Syro-Palestine. Thus so read the relevant Scriptures. However, I believe that the commission actually extended further, to include Egypt (of no particular interest in this case to the biblical scribes): that the cult of Baal that had been at least allowed by Ahab, and fiercely promoted by his wife, Jezebel, was basically the same as the strange cult of Aton in Egypt, at least allowed by Akhnaton, and promoted by his wife, Nefertiti. For I am now of the opinion that Jezebel *was* Nefertiti, and that the designated agent of the purge in Israel, Jehu, was the same as the reformer-pharaoh, Horemheb, who would, with the assistance of Ay (Hazael), wipe out Atonism from Egypt.

But Jehu and Hazael would have to bide their time during the height of Atonism fervour, until the appropriate moment had arrived. And Elisha would, as we shall find (p. 237), have to wait even longer than his fellow triumvirs before he could openly play his hand. Let us now follow Jezebel to Egypt, as Nefertiti.

Akhnaton, Nefertiti and the Aton Cult

Her Egyptian name, as Yakutchik has noted,⁵²⁵ “prompts some scholars to think that Nefertiti traveled to Egypt from a foreign land”. Tyldesley, too, has entertained this idea.⁵²⁶

This [her name] has naturally led to the suggestion that the new queen may have been a foreigner who, quite literally, arrived at the Egyptian court in order to marry the king. The idea of a foreign queen has a certain attraction ... because it allows Nefertiti to introduce strange, un-Egyptian religious ideas into the hitherto highly conservative royal family and thus provides a neat explanation for Amenhotep's [i.e. Akhnaton's] defection from the traditional Egyptian gods.

⁵²⁵ ‘Who Was Nefertiti?’ (un-numbered pages).

⁵²⁶ *Nefertiti*, pp. 41-42.

It allows Nefertiti a certain romantic glamour to match her regal status.

And whilst I believe that Tyldesley has largely hit the nail on the head in regard to her four major points of observation here (though with the last point to be queried), that Nefertiti was:

a ‘foreigner’, who
 ‘came to Egypt specifically to marry the king’, and
 ‘who brought with her strange, un-Egyptian religious ideas’, thereby
 ‘explaining Akhnaton’s defection’,

Tyldesley herself will go on to conclude to the contrary:⁵²⁷ “... Nefertiti, far from being a foreigner, must have been born a member of Egypt’s wealthy élite”. Though not an Egyptian royal, she adds:⁵²⁸ “... the fact that Nefertiti never refers to herself as a ‘King’s Daughter’ makes such speculation fruitless. Nefertiti could not have been a royal princess”. Nefertiti, I am proposing, *was* foreign in her origins, being ethnically ‘Indo-European’, and not a native Egyptian, princess, who had firstly married a king of Israel, and who had brought her strange un-Israelite religious ideas into that land. Though these ideas may not have been entirely ‘strange’ in regard to Ahab (*Lab’ayu*), who was, I believe, of the same foreign Omride origins as was his wife. The queen had exerted so strong an influence over Ahab in Israel that he had, somewhat like king Solomon about a century before him, built a pagan temple for his wife and had also set up a shrine to the goddess Ashtarte (1 Kings 16:32-33; cf. 11:5-8).

Subsequent to her husband’s death (or at least late in his reign), the queen had gone to Egypt to marry the pharaoh, Amenhotep III, who too was partly of her own nationality. When this pharaoh shortly died, she married his son, Akhnaton, who may have been almost entirely of her same nationality. That Nefertiti spurred on Akhnaton in the same way as she (as Jezebel) had urged on Ahab, may be apparent from the most prominent religious and ritual rôle that the queen played in the Aton cult;⁵²⁹ a cult that, it needs to be kept in mind however, Akhnaton’s father Amenhotep III had already, even as early as his Year 11, shown signs of favouring.⁵³⁰

Enough has been written about Nefertiti’s career with Akhnaton in el-Amarna (ancient Akhetaton), where she is said to have given him six daughters, but no sons. This period of her life at least is generally well known as there are representations of it everywhere in el-Amarna. The two were apparently very much in love⁵³¹ and were not afraid to make this public. Many pictures show Akhnaton and Nefertiti embracing. Other pictures portray the whole family in domestic scenes. Nefertiti appeared to be a beloved wife and mother. The pair often presented themselves to their subjects at the Window of Appearance (or palace balcony), depicting themselves there as basking in the rays of the Aton.

⁵²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 46.

⁵²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 47.

⁵²⁹ See e.g. *ibid*, pp. 3-4, 58-59, 60-63, 79-81, 103-104.

⁵³⁰ According to J. Collier, *King Sun. In search of Akhenaten*, p. 87.

⁵³¹ “She was ‘*Mistress of Happiness*’, [Akhnaton] wrote, the ‘*Beloved Wife of the King*’.” *Ibid*, p. 93.

Nefertiti also it seems, at least according to Tyldesley, fulfilled an important religious rôle in the Aton cult and mythology, even venturing beyond Egyptian women's traditionally allowed service in temples, as "priestesses, musicians and dancers [whilst] many queens had held honorary positions in the cult of Hathor". Thus:⁵³²

Some queens had enjoyed a more intimate relationship with the gods. It was recognized that the queen could stimulate or arouse susceptible male deities, and the king's grandmother Mutemwia [Mutemwija] had even conceived a child with Amen. Centuries of tradition, however, decreed that the king, and only the king, as chief priest of all cults, should offer to the gods. Within the precincts of Hwt-Benben it was Nefertiti and not Amenhotep who took the king's role of priest.

Nefertiti had transformed herself into a semi-divine human being. She was a virtual goddess:⁵³³

... Akhenaten's wife was not only a highly capable woman but was – if the evidence from Amarna is to be believed – the passion of his life and the centre of his universe. It is therefore not surprising that Akhenaten, conscious of the lack of a female aspect to the Aten and aware of just how useful an ally a strong queen could be, promoted Nefertiti to provide the absent element of the new cult This aspect of Nefertiti's queenship was now to be emphasized as never before. Nefertiti was to become Akhenaten's religious twin, the female complement to his male role. The Aten, Akhenaten son of Re, and Nefertiti, his wife, now formed an inverted semi-triad which paralleled the ancient triad formed by the creator god, his son Shu, and Shu's twin consort Tefnut.

Nefertiti, Tyldesley had earlier written, introduced this female element of herself into Egyptian mythology, as "a living female fertility symbol".⁵³⁴ In Baal-ian terms, she may have in fact served as the fertility goddess, Ashtarte/Baalat, to Akhnaton, perhaps as Baal. Remember her EA name, I have argued, was Baalat-neše (*Chapter 3*, section: "Queen Jezebel", beginning on p. 92). Assuredly, the cult that Ahab and Jezebel/Baalat had practiced in Israel, which the Bible dismisses simply as Baalism, must have been much the same as the radical Atonism practiced by Akhnaton and Nefertiti in Egypt; though allowing for local variations. And it apparently had, as we might expect, some distinctly 'Indo-European' aspects. Velikovsky had already discerned this according to his view that the Mitannians were related to the Iranians (Persians), and that this latter influence was the key to some peculiar aspects of Egypt at this time.⁵³⁵ Now Parker tells of how profoundly 'Mitannian' he thinks Akhnaton himself was and how this "Vedic influence", as he calls it, is the key to the idiosyncratic nature of his Aton worship.⁵³⁶

⁵³² *Op. cit.*, p. 58.

⁵³³ *Ibid.*, p. 79. Cf. pp. 145-147.

⁵³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵³⁵ *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, p. 89.

⁵³⁶ 'Vedik Africa', (un-numbered pages).

Not enough has been written about the probable Vedic influence of the many Mitannians [Mitanni] who lived at the Egyptian Court. In particular, not enough is publicly known about the influence of the Vedic Mittani [Mitanni] in Amenhotep the Third's "house of women" – upon the education of the young prince who was to ascend the throne as Amenhotep the Fourth. He has become immortal under the name of Akhnaton, the well known father of King Tutankamen [Tutankhamun].

What has been virtually ignored are the deep Vedic roots of Akhnaton. On his Father's side, his Grandmother was Mittani, and his father was half Mittani. On his mother's side, his Grandfather was Mittani, his Grandmother at least half Mittani and his own Mother was half or maybe a full blooded Mittani. Since there is no doubt as to the Vedic/Aryan identity of the Mittani, we can be confident of the fact that Akhnaton was strongly influenced by Vedic Culture. This explains the many similarities between his religion of the Sun and Vedic Spirituality.

...

Parker continues, designating Nefertiti a daughter of *Tushratta* (his 'Dashratta'):⁵³⁷

The evidence proving the Vedic influence - via the Mittani - on Akhnaton is beyond questioning. In fact, not only were a majority of his relatives Mittani, his wife was also a Mittani princess, the daughter of King Dashratta, the famous Nefertiti. It is a well known fact that she, along with Akhnaton, were acting in the role of High Priest and Priestess in the religion of Aton. It has erroneously been stated that Aton's worship was "invented" by pharaoh Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten. However, beginning with Akenaten's father, Amenhotep III, Aten enjoyed a higher level of worship.

... Akhnaton spoke of the Sun disk as being the Eye of Aton and a representative of Aton's Power. In the Bhagavad Gita, the Sun is described as one of the unlimited eyes of God's Universal Form. In the Brahma-Samhita the Sun is also described as the Eye of God. Akhnaton's reverence of the Sun is properly understood in this context. The symbol of Aton, as presented by Akhnaton, was an image of the Sun Disc with many sunrays extending out, ending in hands, in a kind of triangle shape. ... The similarity between Akhnaton's Aton and Surya is indeed striking. The Sanskrit description of the Divine source of light corresponds perfectly with the picture of Aton given in the Egyptian King's hymns.

"As the Vivifier and Quickener, He raises His long arms of gold in the morning, rouses all beings from their slumber, infuses energy into them, and buries them in sleep in the evening" (From a Vedic prayer to Sun God).

This description also fits perfectly with the carvings of Aton as the Solar disc extending its golden arms to the earth. Archeologists have confirmed that all these images and engravings were covered in gold at one time.

⁵³⁷ *Ibid.*

“The cult of the Aten became more uncompromising as the reign of Akhenaten wore on”, wrote Aldred.⁵³⁸ During this peak phase, Hazael and Jehu had had to bide their time, even to compromise here and there. Both of them appear to have been eminently capable of doing this. Regarding Jehu (Naaman), for instance, I have already pointed to his religious ambivalence (p. 106). In the case of Hazael (as Ay), he was in fact highly honoured by Akhnaton and his wife; more so than his father, *Tushratta*, who - whilst having been most confident about his relationship with pharaoh Amenhotep III, whom he called “my brother” (EA 19), adding “and let us act as friends” (EA 23) - seemed unsure as to how he stood in relation to the enigmatic Akhnaton. There is very little direct exchange of letters between the latter and *Tushratta*, with the king of Mitanni preferring to communicate with the Egyptian throne via his daughter, *Tiy*, Akhnaton’s mother. Regarding one such letter to *Tiy*, EA 26, Tyldesley has written:⁵³⁹

Tushratta manages to combine his expressions of sorrow at the passing of the old king with a lengthy grumble about the quality of gold statues sent to Mitanni by the new king. Apparently Amenhotep III (called Nimmuarria by Tushratta) had promised to send statues of solid gold ornamented with lapis lazuli, but Amenhotep IV (a.k.a. Napkhururiya) had substituted cheap wooden statues plated in gold Amenhotep IV probably seemed something of an unknown quantity, and Tushratta may have calculated (wrongly) that his best chance of receiving the precious statues was to beg *Tiy* to plead his cause with her son. However, Tushratta may have already been aware that the new king was by no means as friendly towards Mitanni as his father had been.

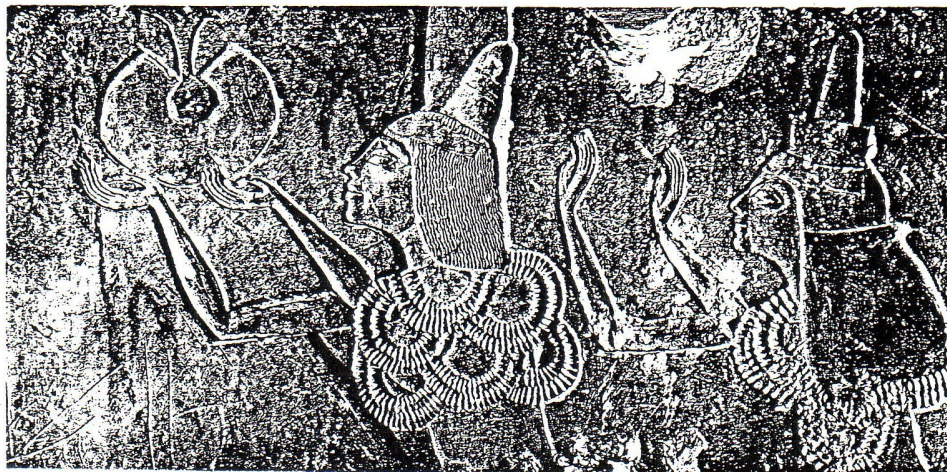
The great favours bestowed by Egypt upon *Tushratta*, as *Yuya*, would likely therefore be largely attributable to Amenhotep III and *Tiy*, rather than to Akhnaton and Nefertiti. This might seem strange, given my view (also Parker’s above) that Nefertiti was *Tushratta*’s daughter. *Tushratta*’s/*Yuya*’s son *Ay* on the other hand, a patricide, was directly honoured by Akhnaton and Nefertiti, who are depicted publicly lavishing collars of gold upon him and his wife, *Tiy* (II); *Ay* being as covetous of Egyptian gold as was his father. Tyldesley has described the scene:⁵⁴⁰

Both *Ay* and *Tey* [*Tiy* II] are clearly having a wonderful time. *Ay* already has five necklaces around his neck as he reaches out to catch another, and included in a pile of loot at his feet is a remarkable pair of red leather gloves. The next scene shows *Ay* departing the palace, wearing his gloves and holding them out to the admiring crowds.

⁵³⁸ *The Egyptians*, p. 166.

⁵³⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 44-45.

⁵⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

Figure 8: Ay and Tiy II Receiving Royal Gold⁵⁴¹

I shall be suggesting below that it was actually Ay, Nefertiti's brother, rather than *Tushratta/Yuya* himself, who had in this particular case – but following the paternal example – completed the arrangements for the female relative, that is, Nefertiti, to enter the harem of pharaoh. If Akhnaton had initially been cool towards Mitanni, it seems that he no longer was. But, during the reign of Akhnaton, Ay was still only 'master of the horses [chariotry]'. Doherty, who has variously described Ay as "the king-maker, the overlord" and "cunning as a mongoose",⁵⁴² also recounts Ay's political machinations:⁵⁴³

Ay was ... well placed for a position of great power. He never took the title of vizier [sic], that was too lowly an honour for the likes of him. Indeed, as I shall prove, Ay saw himself as wielding supreme power over Egypt and Pharaoh Tutankhamun, the fruit of years of scheming and plotting.

... A member of the powerful Akhmim clan, he would owe his rise not only to family connections but to his own innate ability and skill. Ay also proved to be a man who could swim with the tide and trim his sails to whatever wind blew.

Doherty also tells that Ay was, for a time, "for his own secret purposes" one of the Aton cult's "most fervent supporters".⁵⁴⁴ He then describes Ay's 'Bismarckian' influence:⁵⁴⁵

Ay was the head of the Akhmim Mafia. In this case the word Mafia most accurately describes his spider-like power and influence. Ay's parents were the father and mother-in-law of the great Amenhotep III, his sister that magnificent Pharaoh's Chief Wife and Great Queen

⁵⁴¹ Photo taken from *ibid*, figure 15.

⁵⁴² *The Mysterious Death of Tutankhamun*, pp. 149, 81.

⁵⁴³ *Ibid*, pp. 77, 78, 79.

⁵⁴⁴ Velikovsky had, in this same context, mentioned that "certain historians" have actually credited Ay with the authorship of "the self-glorifying Akhnaton's hymn". *Op. cit.* p. 116.

⁵⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

Ay could boast of powerful connections in the priestly caste of Amun through his brother Anen and be on speaking terms with all the great and good in Pharaoh's court, as well as the civil and military administration. Ay had shown himself indispensable to Akhenaten, whilst at the same time feathering his own nest with promotions and honours. Ay is portrayed as a sly old man. The evidence however indicates a Mafia chief of personal charisma, power and cunning, a man to be feared, a tough former soldier, a skilled administrator, held in awe for his talents by all at Pharaoh's court. Ay was not some sly Polonius hiding behind the arras but rather the Metternich or Bismarck of post-Amarna Egypt.

Ay had in fact inherited the same range of devious political skills as had been possessed by the 'duplicitous' father of his whom he had murdered. He could emulate the latter's (as *Abdi-ashirta*) wretched grovelling to pharaoh (e.g. EA 64). Compare Ay's "nosing the ground before Nefertiti, grovelling in the dust before Akhenaten's throne".⁵⁴⁶ Or - again like his father, as Kadashman-Enlil, who had urged Amenhotep III (EA 4) to change age-old Egyptian practice for his sake, by letting him marry the pharaoh's daughter: "You are the king and you may do as you please. If you were to give a daughter, who would say anything about it?" - Ay might radically break with Egyptian tradition by his outrageous usurping of the place of the god Amun-Re, or Montu, in one of Tutankhamun's smiting scenes.⁵⁴⁷ "Here was a man with truly grandiose dreams", wrote Brier.⁵⁴⁸

It may have been Ay and his partner, Horemheb, who in fact deposed Akhnaton eventually and so brought to an end the Aton 'heresy'. I shall return to this (pp. 223-225).

The Tide Turns: the Queen Returns to Israel

In *Chapter 4* (e.g. p. 106) I had compared Jehu's with Naaman's military genius: his ability to turn the tide. This the general would manage to do in no uncertain terms in Israel, with the return there of Jezebel/Nefertiti. For her, the fairytale in Egypt had ended. How did it happen?

Nefertiti, though undoubtedly Akhnaton's chief wife, was no more Akhnaton's only wife than she had been Ahab's sole wife. "Nefertiti is so consistently presented as Akhenaten's consort, and is so obviously at the centre of the nuclear royal family", writes Tyldesley,⁵⁴⁹ "that there is a tendency to forget that Akhenaten followed New Kingdom tradition in having many secondary wives". It is sometimes even suggested that it was with another royal wife called *Kiya* that the king sired his successors, Smenkhkare and Tutankhamun. Fletcher goes so far as to say of "Kiya, 'the other woman,'" that her "unique title, 'Greatly Loved Wife of the King', perhaps reflects the feelings she may have inspired in him in contrast to his chief wife, the powerful, intimidating and perhaps none too lovable Nefertiti".⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁶ *Ibid*, p. 243.

⁵⁴⁷ *Ibid*, p. 147.

⁵⁴⁸ *The Murder of Tutankhamen*, p. 108.

⁵⁴⁹ *Op. cit*, pp. 121-122.

⁵⁵⁰ *The Search for Nefertiti*, p. 271.

Nefertiti had also, apparently, shared her husband with other royal wives, as well as later with her probable daughter, Meritaten. Then, all of a sudden, Nefertiti disappears from the Akhetaton scene. And no one can say exactly why. However, our parallel of her with Jezebel will allow us to go all the necessary steps further, right to the very end in fact. If Jezebel, whose ending we know, were Nefertiti as I am proposing here, then that would abruptly end all speculation as to whether Nefertiti was murdered in Egypt, or died in Egypt. The fact is that she must have left the country alive and spent her last days in Israel.

Perhaps, as the former great beauty, Nefertiti (her epithet: ‘The Beauty of the Beauties of Aten’, or *Neferneferuaten*⁵⁵¹), advanced to middle age, and having been unable to produce the required male heir for pharaoh, she was naturally superseded by the younger woman, Meritaten, and therefore divorced. As Tyldesley has well observed:⁵⁵² “[Nefertiti’s] political role may well have stemmed from her religious prominence”. And that ‘religious prominence’ was based upon her fecundity. She had outlived her usefulness and was no longer needed. Though Collier has suggested that the sudden departure of Nefertiti at this point may have been due to Akhnaton’s having commenced a homosexual relationship, even “physical marriage”, with Smenkhare, husband of Meritaten, to whom Nefertiti’s name, *Neferneferuaten*, was now transferred.⁵⁵³

Nefertiti may even have come to anticipate this. Nevertheless, there is a certain pathetic and tragic aspect to it all. “It is sad to see in [Nefertiti’s] last portrait how tired and sorrowful she grew”, wrote Velikovsky.⁵⁵⁴ And that tragic element was only about to intensify as pent-up anger against the murderous Baal régime/Atonism, that the queen had embodied, would detonate in the person of general Jehu.

Nefertiti would take her ‘banishment’ from Egypt with her customary dignity, like the king’s daughter she was. Tyldesley has noted how Nefertiti always maintained her composure, even as she began to age; for example in regard to her deportment:⁵⁵⁵ “Whatever her shape, Nefertiti appears consistently graceful in her movements”. Keeping up appearances was always most important to the queen, and this applied even, as we shall see (pp. 220-222 below), when she was faced with her own death.

Leaving behind her, in Egypt, a daughter to serve as Akhnaton’s wife, the ageing queen returned to Israel (perhaps with her remaining daughters) to be with her king-son, Jehoram, in Jezreel. But not for long. General Jehu was waiting in the wings.

Quite a different ending for Nefertiti though is currently being championed by Fletcher, both in print and on TV. She has taken up an earlier view that Smenkhare, generally thought to have been Akhnaton’s son and successor, and briefly co-ruler with him, was actually Nefertiti herself as pharaoh:⁵⁵⁶ “Then finally, at Akhenaten’s death, she took the throne herself as King Ankhkheperura Smenkharā”. This belief has led Fletcher on a quest to find Nefertiti’s mummy; a fascinating, though I personally think, futile, search.

⁵⁵¹ Collier, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

⁵⁵² *Op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

⁵⁵³ *Op. cit.*, p. 181. Cf. p. 179.

⁵⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 97.

⁵⁵⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

⁵⁵⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 72.

The Queen, Slain By Order of Jehu (Horemheb)

There are such striking similarities between the agent of the bloody purge in Israel, Jehu (serving Hazael), and the agent of the reform in Egypt, Horemheb (serving Ay), that I must identify ‘these’ as the one, same general. There is a description of Horemheb in his tomb - relating to before he came to the throne - that I think might well apply to Jehu, especially after the latter’s bloody massacre of Ahab’s line:⁵⁵⁷ “... [a henchman] at the feet of his lord on the battle-field on this day of slaughtering Asiatics”.

Again, fully compatible with the biblical portraits of Jehu are Tyldesley’s references to Horemheb as “a solid, old-fashioned [pharaoh]”, possessing “excessive religious zeal”;⁵⁵⁸ and Doherty’s descriptions of Horemheb as being “an inveterate red-neck [hating] everything [the cult of Aten] stood for [and] only too ready to launch the most savage persecution against [the cult]”.⁵⁵⁹ As a balance to this, Collier has discussed Horemheb “as a good king” and a reformer of abuse.⁵⁶⁰ Recall (from p. 103) Mercer’s description of *Iaanhamu* (Horemheb’s *alter ego*) as “a good and wise man”. Consequently, it is thought that Horemheb was able to make a new start, being supposedly (like Jehu) untainted by the old heresy. Tyldesley at least contrasts “the heretic [Atonist] regime [with] the orthodox Horemheb”.⁵⁶¹ But Horemheb, like Ay, as an EA official for Egypt, must have paid lip service to Atonism,⁵⁶² just as he as the converted Naaman still paid lip service to Rimmon in Damascus. Horemheb would have been largely absent anyway, defending Egypt’s borders. It seems that he later covered his tracks; for Collier writes of “Horemheb’s concern in hiding his association with Akhenaten ...”.⁵⁶³ Despite his religious ambivalence, though, the Bible depicts Horemheb, as Jehu, as basically the new man for the new job, and this is well reflected in Grimal’s description of the reformer:⁵⁶⁴

The vilification of the memory of the heretic pharaoh [Akhnaton] perhaps began as soon as the worship of Amun had been restored, but the Amarna period does not seem to have finally ended with the beginning of the reign of Ay ... his family was too closely linked with the Thutmosids for his reign to be seen as a true break with the past. *A new man was needed if a new start was to be made.*

As is often the case in such circumstances, it was a military man - the commander-in-chief of the army - who took charge.

What we are going to find is that this reformer ‘left no stone unturned’, quite literally in one outstanding case (see p. 242), in eradicating the hated pagan cult.

⁵⁵⁷ A. Gardiner, ‘The Memphite Tomb of the General Haremhab’, pp. 3-4. Cf. K. Pflüger, *Haremhab und die Amarnazeit*, p. 16; also R. Hari, *Horemheb et la reine Moutnodjemet*, p. 89, and Plate XIV. J. Collier has argued that Horemheb’s king (“lord”) at this time was Akhnaton. *Op. cit.*, pp. 177-178.

⁵⁵⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 185.

⁵⁵⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 79-80.

⁵⁶⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 223.

⁵⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 60.

⁵⁶² See Doherty, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

⁵⁶³ *Op. cit.*, p. 176.

⁵⁶⁴ *A History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 242. Emphasis added.

The word 'obscure' is often used in regard to Horemheb and his origins. And this uncertainty about the great man is reflected in the following words by Velikovsky:⁵⁶⁵

It is regularly admitted that it is not known how and when Haremhab [Horemheb] became king of Egypt. Some think that he was the last king of the Eighteenth Dynasty; some place him at the beginning of the Nineteenth Dynasty. ... He was not the son of a king, nor was he the father of Ramses I, who followed [sic] him. ... "Nothing is known of his antecedents".

My identification of Horemheb with Jehu should serve to lift the veil of obscurity surrounding the former. We know that Horemheb's long and illustrious career had commenced during the reign of Amenhotep III, and had continued on through Akhnaton, reaching a high point during the reign of Tutankhamun. After that, things are somewhat less clear; but he is supposed to have succeeded Tutankhamun's successor, Ay, himself having become pharaoh of Egypt for perhaps almost three decades (c. 1323 BC - 1295 BC, conventional dates). That is an exceedingly long *floruit*.

As to why Elijah would have chosen as an agent of Yahweh's purge this furious, chariot-riding 'Syrian', is probably explainable due to the fact that the latter was Naaman. He was a military man of sufficient zeal and competence to have been able to accomplish the required task. As EA's *Iaanhamu*, he was a man of vast administrative experience, having been placed in charge of grain supplies. As we saw, *Iaanhamu* (like Horemheb) had firstly come into prominence towards the end of the reign of Amenhotep III.

But it was not until after *Aziru's* (Hazeal's/Ay's) own rise to prominence, well into the reign of Akhnaton, that *Rib-Addi*, for instance, began to value the 'Syrian' officer as a friend and potential *rabis* of *Sumur*. *Iaanhamu's* experience as an exactor, and a careful distributor of grain, will become apparent again when he, as Horemheb, will in his famous Edict, after the demise of Akhnaton, severely penalize those who had been guilty of extortion towards the poor.⁵⁶⁶ The military combination of the fierce commanders, Jehu/Naaman and Hazeal (Ay), respectively a Zimride and an Omride, was irresistible. Little wonder, then, that Elijah had chosen them. The House of Ahab was now utterly doomed.

Queen Jezebel, having seen to the murder of so many in Israel (and perhaps also in Egypt),⁵⁶⁷ would now meet her own bloody death, before the rampaging Jehu (Horemheb) (2 Kings 9:30-37):

When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; she painted her eyes with kohl, and adorned her head, and looked out of the Window.

נִבְּוֹא יְהוּא יִזְרְעֵאלָה וְאִיזָבֵל שְׂמָצָה
וַתִּשֶׂם בַּפּוֹךְ עֵינֶיהָ וַתִּטֵּב אֶת-רֵאשָׁהּ
וַתִּשְׂקֶף בְּצַד הַחַלּוֹן

⁵⁶⁵ *The Assyrian Conquest*, part II: "The Assyrians in Egypt".

⁵⁶⁶ See e.g. Collier, *op. cit.*, p. 223.

⁵⁶⁷ See *ibid.*, pp. 185-187, for a description of the religious persecution by the Atonist régime.

As Jehu entered the gate, she said, ‘Is it peace, Zimri, murderer of your master?’ He looked up to the Window and said, ‘Who is on my side? Who?’ Two or three eunuchs looked out at him. He said, ‘Throw her down’. So they threw her down; some of her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses, which trampled on her. Then he went in and ate and drank; he said, ‘See to that cursed woman and bury her; for she is a king’s daughter’. But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. When they came back and told him, he said, ‘This is the word of the Lord, which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite. ‘In the territory of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel; the corpse of Jezebel shall be like dung on the field in the territory of Jezreel, so that no one can say. This is Jezebel’.

בַּחֶלֶק יִרְעָאֵל יֹאכְלוּ הַכֹּלְבֵּיִם אֶת-בֶּשֶׂר אֵיזָבֵל
וְהִיָּת נִבְלַת אֵיזָבֵל כְּדָמָן עַל-פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה בַּחֶלֶק יִרְעָאֵל
אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יֵאמְרוּ זֹאת אֵיזָבֵל

Rohl has explained the full impact here of the Hebrew’s playing on names:⁵⁶⁸

According to the biblical practice of translating foreign names into Hebrew words, the queen’s Phoenician hypocoristic nomen was changed from Yezebul (‘[Baal] is exalted’) to Hebrew Ayzebel (i.e. Jezebel – ‘where is the piece of dung?’) – a pejorative which has become synonymous with the harlot – the archetypal sinful woman whose body-parts were strewn across the fields of Jezreel, scattered amongst the cattle droppings.

This is a graphic narrative. Indeed, according to Ellis:⁵⁶⁹

The account of Jehu’s revolt has long been recognized as a masterpiece of historical narrative. The wealth of detail, the sure touch in the delineation of the various strong personalities involved, and the headlong pace of the narrative make it certain that the author is a contemporary and perhaps even an eyewitness.

It is even more compelling as we have just discovered when read in the Hebrew original. Notice, too, the Akhetaton-like, or Nefertiti-like, elements in the above biblical narrative. The queen hastily paints her eyes with kohl: ... **וַתִּשֶׂם בְּפוּךְ: עֵינֶיהָ**. Tyldesley tells that the right - and only - eye of the queen’s famous Berlin bust is “ringed with a black kohl line”.⁵⁷⁰ And she adorns her head, and she takes her place at the Window; most likely Israel’s version of Amarna’s ‘Window of Appearance’ (hence I have taken the liberty of using the capital ‘W’), which was the palace balcony. And this may only highlight the tragic aspect of her death.

⁵⁶⁸ *The Lost Testament*, p. 436.

⁵⁶⁹ ‘1-2 Kings’, 10:56, p. 200.

⁵⁷⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 196.

For did the queen's mind flit back fleetingly to those glory days when she and her husband Akhnaton had presented themselves at Amarna's 'Window of Appearance' to those seemingly adoring crowds? Indeed, the general himself had once stood below the 'Window of Appearance' at Amarna in much happier circumstances for the queen. Collier has described one such occasion as follows:⁵⁷¹ "... a scene from Horemheb's Memphite tomb depicts the king and queen leaning forward over a cushioned balcony to listen to the words spoken by Horemheb who, loaded with golden necklets, raises his right arm towards the sovereign ...". But on this present occasion, instead of adoring subjects below to greet her, the queen looked down upon the sullen face of Jehu (Horemheb). And the palace balcony upon which she stood in her regal adornment would now be the stage for her headlong fall to her tragic death.

Nor had she been under any illusions about Jehu's intentions for her. Far from having adorned herself for the purpose of attempting to seduce Jehu, she did so in order that she might face death like a queen. It was perfectly in keeping with Jezebel's proud character. She even, by naming Jehu as 'Zimri' - no doubt intending this as an insult - recalled to Jehu's mind that his grandfather (as I have interpreted it) had likewise staged a coup against the crown, thereby assuming rulership of Israel for himself:

... וַתֹּאמֶר הַשְּׁלוֹם זִמְרִי הֲרֵג אֶלְנִי

The narrative of the queen's death as told above provides us, in just a few verses, with certain facts about Nefertiti that Egyptologists would dearly love to know about her. These are basically summed up in this series of questions as put by Holmes:⁵⁷² "Was Nefertiti's walk to the temple her *last* walk? How did Nefertiti die? Was she killed by her own hand? Or was it by the hands of others? Was Nefertiti a religious traitor? These questions remain unanswered. But the search for Nefertiti continues". One could add to this list of questions, *Where (or which) is Nefertiti's mummy?*; a mystery that Fletcher believes she may now have solved.⁵⁷³

Akhnaton had once decreed:⁵⁷⁴ "If the Great Queen Nefertiti who lives, should die in any town [suburb] of north, south, west or east, she shall be brought and buried at Akhetaten". But that was not destined to happen. The queen did not die in any one of Akhetaten's suburbs, but had actually left the city before she died. It is generally thought that Nefertiti either fell (excuse the pun) from favour, or died at around year 12 of Akhenaten's reign. We now know, I think, *how* and *where* she died; and that, at her death, she was in fact *un-buriable*.

Projecting back those 12 or so years from c. 841 BC, the approximate (conventional) year of the commencement of Jehu's reign over Israel, when the queen met her violent death, we arrive right at the time of Ahab's year of death in 853 BC (conventional date). This is a very encouraging chronological fit indeed. *The queen noticeably disappears from the biblical narrative for this entire period.*

⁵⁷¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 162.

⁵⁷² *Nefertiti: The Mystery Queen*, p. 48.

⁵⁷³ *Op. cit.*, esp. ch. 12.

⁵⁷⁴ As cited by Tyldesley, *op. cit.*, p. 116.

Jehu, when later he as Horemheb had the opportunity to erase the Atonist images in Egypt, would (as we shall read on p. 242) memorialise Nefertiti's/Jezebel's shattering death, that he himself had overseen in Jezreel, by turning the *talatat* blocks upside down and defacing her, and slashing the Aton's rays across the fingertips. Here were those *shaphat*-police fully in action, and this was the one concerted religious campaign of reform in Israel and Egypt, as called for by the prophet Elijah.

One can easily understand why a persecuting woman such as Jezebel/Nefertiti - as would her husband, Akhnaton - have accumulated, in the course of her public life, plenty of enemies. And, unfortunately for her, one of these enemies was general Horemheb, known in Syro-Palestine as Jehu (or Naaman/*Iaanhamu*). This man, an unsentimental Zimride, and despising the queen, was not easily put off, having a mind like a steel trap.

As for Akhnaton himself, the idyll continued on for perhaps a few years longer, during which he 'lived the life of Akhetaton' with his new wife, Meritaten, generally considered to be referred to in EA 11 by *Burnaburiash*, as *Shalmaiati*. But the pharaoh's reign, too, was coming to an end. As we are going to see, Akhnaton may just possibly have been deposed and blinded by the *shaphat*-police, incarcerated, and eventually driven out; all in accordance with Velikovsky's Oedipus parallel.⁵⁷⁵ Mutilation was, as we shall read below, part of the punishment inflicted by Horemheb upon criminals. Moreover, Horemheb was perhaps of the same ethnic stock as was Ashurnasirpal II, who, according to Roux, "surpassed ... all ... conquerors of antiquity ... and the Assyrians":⁵⁷⁶

Not only were the rebellious or recalcitrant rulers put to death, flayed and their skin 'spread over the walls of their city', but in a few, exceptional cases unarmed prisoners and innocent civilians, were tortured with sadistic refinements:

'I built a pillar over against his city gate and I flayed all the chiefs who had revolted, and I covered the pillar with their skin. Some I walled up within the pillar, some I impaled upon the pillar on stakes, and others I bound to stakes around the pillar ... And I cut the limbs ... of the royal officers ...'.

Velikovsky had raised the possibility, in consultation with Dr. Federn, that Akhnaton might have suffered blindness, and that Herodotus had actually intended Akhnaton in his account of the blind king, Anysis.⁵⁷⁷ "Herodotus' King Anysis", Velikovsky wrote, "occupied the throne of Egypt towards the end of the dynasty which is known as the Eighteenth; he was blind, he went into exile, and these are also major circumstances in the life of Oedipus, king of Thebes". Whilst Egyptologists are generally less than impressed with the "sensational" biographical parallels that Velikovsky had offered in his *Oedipus and Akhnaton*,⁵⁷⁸ some of these parallels I myself find compelling and quite apt.

⁵⁷⁵ *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, ch: 'The Blind King'.

⁵⁷⁶ *Ancient Iraq*, p. 290.

⁵⁷⁷ *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, pp. 112, 114. Though Herodotus' connecting of the reign of Anysis with the time of "Sabacos ... the Ethiopian", presumably Shabaka of the 25th (Ethiopian) dynasty, would seem contrary to Velikovsky's assertion that Herodotus' Anysis belonged to the end of the 18th dynasty, and would make Anysis too late for any possible identification of him with Akhnaton. *The Histories*, Book 2, p. 183.

⁵⁷⁸ See e.g. Tyldesley, *op. cit.*, pp. 138, 212, n. 40.

In fact I shall have occasion to call upon several more of these as I enter upon an attempted reconstruction of the obscure period immediately post-EA. For instance, given Akhnaton's apparent co-regency with his eldest son, Smenkhare, at the end of his reign, I think that Velikovsky's use of the Oedipus legend as follows is quite intriguing:⁵⁷⁹

According to Euripides' version of the legend, Oedipus, after his removal from the throne, lived a blind man in a secluded prison-palace in Thebes. But according to Sophocles, Oedipus, having blinded himself when he found out the cruel truth, lived for some time in his palace, a deposed king, and then, a blind and broken man, was expelled from Thebes by his sons, actually during the reign of the elder son. All versions agree that he was blind.

As with their annihilation of the House of Ahab, so too with their obliteration of all that pertained to Akhnaton, did Hazael (Ay) and Jehu (Horemheb) make a thorough job of it. According to Collier:⁵⁸⁰

This happened with startling suddenness in year 17 [of Akhnaton]. Although in the 'City of the Horizon' [Akhetaton] the stage is in shadow, the actors can still be perceived. Akhenaten, Pharaoh of Egypt, is still alive; Nefertiti withdrawn to her palace ... and Tutankhamen and four of the queen's remaining daughters are with her. Suddenly, before the play ended, the curtain falls. The spectator is left robbed of the grand finale, with nothing to guide [sic] as to the fate of these great ones of Egypt. Nothing at all. Gone are the king, the queen, and three of the princesses. Smenkhare in the first flush of youth has died at Thebes.

When the curtain again rises, it discloses what appears to be a different play, acted with different characters. The child king, Tutankhamen, holds the centre of the stage, married to Queen Ankhesenpaaten. The clouds have lifted. The Sun (a Theban Sun) beams on them, reflecting their youthful innocence, charm and happiness. In control in the wing are Ay, now Regent, and Horemheb, Generalissimo of the Armies and Vice-Regent. These two at least must have known the fate of Akhenaten, Nefertiti, and Smenkhare, but left no records.

A silence so profound, an obliteration so complete, hints at *a tragedy of classical proportions*.

Has not Velikovsky told us that this 'tragedy' was later enshrined by the Greeks in their tragedy of all tragedies, the legend of Oedipus Rex!

Now was therefore the opportunity for the dramatic rise to power of Ay (Hazael), the Creon of the Greek tragedy. And so I must turn to a discussion of the influence upon Egypt of this most powerful, first-named triumvir of the Sinai commission. Though he is neither our Ancestral King, nor our Dynastic King - but related to the former and a partner of the latter - Ay (Hazael) is just too important merely to brush over.

⁵⁷⁹ *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, p. 111.

⁵⁸⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 190-191. Emphasis added.

For one he is, I believe, the key to TAP. (See *Excursus* beginning on p. 230). For another, it is with Ay - as I am going to argue - that the Omrides, for so long having close connections to Egypt, first came to power there; the occasion being the deposition of Akhnaton and the return of the kingship to Thebes. Finally, Ay's brief reign as pharaoh will bring us right to the dawn of the 19th dynasty Ramessides.

So let us now take a look at Ay's impact upon Egypt, before rounding up our discussion of our Dynastic King, Jehu/Horemheb, and also concluding our account of Elisha.

Hazael's Various 'Egyptian' Guises

In the early post-EA period of Egypt's New Kingdom, the textbooks introduce us to 'two' powerful 'Chancellors' (variously called viziers), of similar name structure: namely, (i) Ay; and (ii) *May(a)*, a contemporary of Horemheb. In this section I intend to propose that these 'two' were likely one and the same 'Chancellor', our composite Ay (Hazael/*Aziru*). There is also, at a presumably later period, a third 'Chancellor', (iii) *Bay*, again of similar name structure, currently dated to the late 19th dynasty (c. 1190 BC). Gardiner has described *Bay* in terms most reminiscent of Ay, as "a Syrian by birth", "the great chancellor of the entire land", and "king-maker".⁵⁸¹ I shall be seriously considering, in the next chapter, a possible connection of the intriguing Chancellor *Bay* with Ay/*Aziru*. And there I shall also argue for a connection between the latter, as *May*, and the *Mauasa*, second name after *Buyuwawa*, of the Horpasen Genealogy.

Similarly to my identifying Ay with *May*, I shall, further on, equate Horemheb with *Huy*, Tutankhamun's general. Failure perhaps to connect Ay with *May*, and Horemheb with *Huy*, may have led historians into some awkward explanations when trying to distinguish between the respective rôles of supposedly four, rather than two, powerful officials.

Velikovsky, as noted, had put a convincing case for Ay's being the prototype of king Creon of the Oedipus legend;⁵⁸² and I do not think his identification would suffer at all from the inclusion of *May* as Ay. Here is a segment of what Velikovsky wrote on this:⁵⁸³

If we are on the right path in our search for the roots of the Oedipus legend in the closing years of the Eighteenth Dynasty, then clearly Ay was the prototype of Creon

It was Creon who gave his sister, the queen, to Oedipus; it was he who had the most exalted position in the realm, second only to the king himself; it was he who coerced Oedipus into vacating the throne and who ruled the country in the days of the youthful Eteocles; and it was he who, after the premature death of the king, became king himself.

This was the era of the return to Thebes and restoration of the priesthood of Amun.

⁵⁸¹ *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, p. 277.

⁵⁸² "'Creon' in Greek means merely 'ruler'." *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, p. 102.

⁵⁸³ *Ibid*, p. 72.

It was a revolution that neither Smenkhare (read ‘Polyneices’) nor his brother, Tutankhamun (read ‘Eteocles’), would presumably have been strong enough to have staged.

*Syria (Assyria) Comes to Egypt*⁵⁸⁴

According to the relevant Egyptian documents, at least as I shall be interpreting them, the revolution against the Amarna régime came from outside Egypt (“from without”). It was led by Ay and Horemheb. The northern ‘Syrians’ had come to Egypt in full force. There are several historical documents that I think may recall this momentous event, wherein Ay (Hazael) is referred to by various of his many names:

- (i) One is the ‘Great Papyrus Harris’ which tells of an ‘Aziru’ (var. Irsu, Arsa), thought to have been a Syrian, or perhaps a Hurrian.⁵⁸⁵ I have already followed Velikovsky in identifying Hazael with EA’s *Aziru*; though Velikovsky, owing to the quirks of his revision, could not himself make the somewhat obvious (to my mind) connection between EA’s *Aziru* and *Aziru* of the Great Papyrus Harris.⁵⁸⁶
- (ii) Another is the reference by Adad-nirari of Assyria to his ancestor Ashuruballit’s [Assuruballit’s] having subdued Egypt. I have already argued, too, that Ashuruballit was the ‘Assyrian’ face of our composite king, Hazael/*Aziru*.

These two cases (i) & (ii) are, according to my revision, references to the same ‘Syrian’ (Assyrian) subduer of Egypt, Ay/Hazael, who held power there as Chancellor and king maker, and finally, for a brief period, as pharaoh.

The Papyrus Harris is a most important document for the period now under consideration, the chaotic years immediately post-EA. But it is also important as an introduction to the Ramessides, largely to be discussed in the next chapter, it being a retrospective glance back by so-called 20th dynasty Ramessides on those turbulent times. This very well-preserved papyrus, Rohl has called “the funeral scroll of Ramesses III”;⁵⁸⁷ the pharaoh famous for his land and sea war against the ‘Sea Peoples’, including the Philistines. It recalls an unhappy era for Egypt, followed by the overlordship there of a certain ‘Syrian’. And it commemorates Seti-nakht (Setnakhte), the father of Ramses III, who had restored order to Egypt.

⁵⁸⁴ Velikovsky had referred to Herodotus (VII, 63) and Strabo (II, I, 31 and XVII, I, 1-3) to the effect that “... the terms Syrian and Assyrian ... were [once] not distinct and the same term was applied to both”. *Peoples of the Sea*, pp. 27-28, n. 7.

⁵⁸⁵ Gardiner, for instance, calls him *Arsu*, “a Syrian condottiere”. *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, p. 281. According to Clapham, “Breasted translation reads “Arzu, a certain *H-rw* ...” ‘A Solution for the Third Intermediate Period of Egypt, p. 10, n. 45.

⁵⁸⁶ Velikovsky’s failure to make this connection may have, in turn, hampered his efforts to arrive at a satisfactory resolution of TAP; though he did consider that Assuruballit was a Syrian. See P. James’ comments on “Velikovsky’s Unpublished Solution”, in his ‘Some Notes on the “Assuruballit Problem”’, p. 19 # 2. Velikovsky’s proposed solution on ‘Assuruballit’ was posthumous in 1988 in *Kronos*. In his *Peoples of the Sea*, ch’s i and v, Velikovsky would connect the *Aziru*, or *Arsa*, of the Papyrus Harris with one *Arsames*, of the Persian era, who had governed Egypt from Babylon through puppet Egyptian ‘kings’.

⁵⁸⁷ *The Lost Testament*, p. 406.

Let us now consider the sequence of events as outlined in the papyrus, placing these in a revised scenario, whilst linking them to evidence from Tutankhamun's 'Restoration Stela' (Karnak), which document I believe to be also recalling the same approximate era:

- The first phase recorded by the papyrus was, I suspect, the wretched era of neglect and inactivity, especially for northern Egypt, of Akhnaton's reign, as also recalled by Tutankhamun in his 'Restoration Stela', subsequent to the latter's return to Memphis. There may also be a reference here to the foreign influence ("outsiders") of the Akhmim Mafia. I give both texts below, beginning with the Papyrus Harris (as quoted by Rohl):

The land of Egypt was overthrown from without (i.e. by outsiders), and every (Egyptian) man was denied his right. They (the people) had no leader for many years. The land of Egypt was in the hands of chieftains and of rulers of towns. Each slew his neighbour, great and small.

The name of the 'criminal' and 'heretic' Akhnaton is completely absent in Manetho's king list. "According to the monuments", wrote Courville,⁵⁸⁸ "Akhnaton was followed by the brief reigns of Tutenkhamen [Tutankhamun], Sakere [Smenkhare] and Eye [Ay]". And: "Manetho does not recognize any of these successors of Akhnaton ...".

Next, I give the relevant part of Tutankhamun's stela, describing what I believe to have been the same wretched period (or its aftermath) as referred to in the Papyrus Harris:⁵⁸⁹

Now when his majesty (Tutankhamun) appeared (i.e. was crowned) as king, the temples of the gods and goddesses from Elephantine (Aswan) [down] to the marshes of the delta [had been neglected and] fallen into ruin. Their shrines had become desolate and had become mounds overgrown with [weeds]. Their sanctuaries were as if they had never been. Their halls were a footpath. The land was in chaos and the gods turned their backs upon this land. If [soldiers were] sent to Djahi (the Levant) to extend the frontiers of Egypt, no success whatsoever came to them. ...

This document was perhaps inspired by Horemheb (e.g. Doherty calls it 'Horemheb's Manifesto');⁵⁹⁰ Horemheb having carved his name on it over Tutankhamun's name.

- The Papyrus Harris narrative continues on to the next phase, though closely connected to the first I believe, with the introduction of one 'Aziru [the] Syrian', or Hurrian, during those "empty years" (when the throne was considered effectively to have been vacant, or usurped). This *Aziru* I am convinced can only be EA's *Aziru* (biblical Hazael).⁵⁹¹

⁵⁸⁸ *The Exodus Problem and its Ramifications*, vol. 1, p. 276.

⁵⁸⁹ As cited by Rohl in *The Lost Testament*, p. 345.

⁵⁹⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 93; cf. p. 91.

⁵⁹¹ As cited in *The Lost Testament*, p. 407.

(I have taken the liberty here of changing Rohl's version of this person's name, *Arsa*, to the equally acceptable variation of it, *Aziru*):

This was then followed by the empty years when [Aziru] – a certain Syrian – was with them as leader. He set the whole land tributary before him. He united his companions and plundered their (the Egyptians') possessions. They made gods like men and no offerings were presented in the temple.

LeFlem, borrowing a phrase from Gardiner, has asked this question with reference to *Aziru*:⁵⁹² "Who was this so-called 'Syrian *condottiere*'?" LeFlem's question by now I think emphatically answers itself: he was EA's *Aziru*! This was the foreign takeover of Egypt, an action of the Sinai commission, to depose the irresponsible Akhnaton and his régime and to re-establish *ma'at* (order, status quo). Though *Aziru*'s involvement was not necessarily so highly regarded by later Ramessides. Velikovsky has discussed the change of situation and its aftermath as follows, again with reference to 'the Oedipus cycle':⁵⁹³

Whereas Akhnaton when on the throne assumed the appellation 'Who liveth in truth', Ay, upon becoming king, applied to himself the cognomen, 'Who is doing right'. Such titles were rather unusual among the kings of Egypt. Yet one can understand Ay's selecting this motto. Like Creon of the Oedipus cycle, Ay professed to be doing his duty to the crown and the nation by deposing Akhnaton, installing Akhnaton's sons, and then siding with the younger son in the brothers' conflict.

In Assyrian history, this appears to have been the situation of which Adad-nirari I (c. 1305-1274 BC, conventional dates) had cause to boast, namely that his great-grandfather, Ashuruballit, had subdued Egypt. Harrak gives the relevant text as follows:⁵⁹⁴

Adad-narari [Adad-nirari] I had summarized in an inscription the achievements of his royal predecessors. He said the following about Ashur-uballit:

(31) *mušekniš mât Musri museppih ellât* (32) *mât Šubârê rapalti murappiš misrî u kudurrî*

Subduer of the land Musru, disperser of the hordes of the extensive land of the Shubaru, extender of borders and boundaries.

My revision necessitates of course that Ashuruballit's great-grandson, Adad-nirari I, be the same as Adad-nirari III, great-grandson of Ashuruballit - due to the latter's marrying his daughter, Muballitat-Šerua, to *Burnaburiash's* (i.e. Shalmaneser III's) son, *Karaindaš*; Shalmaneser III being the grandfather of this same Adad-nirari [III].

⁵⁹² 'Amenophis, Osarsiph and Arzu', p. 15. Cf. footnote 61 above.

⁵⁹³ *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, p. 175.

⁵⁹⁴ *Assyria and Hanigalbat*, pp. 8-9.

Was this the very situation as referred to by *Burnaburiash* (i.e. Shalmaneser III), as told by Doherty:⁵⁹⁵ “The King of Babylon asks Tutankhamun: “Why have they [the Assyrians] gone to your country? ... Let them return here empty-handed”.” It seems that *Burnaburiash*/ Shalmaneser III may have lost control of Assyria.

Ashurballit had been wooing Egypt for years (EA 15 and 16).

This foreign Syrian/Assyrian presence in Egypt during the neo-Assyrian phase has been sensed by revisionists. Courville, as we saw, had looked to locate it though to the time of Esarhaddon and his son Ashurbanipal (C7th BC). Velikovsky had placed it a little earlier, at the time of Sennacherib, whilst however maintaining the link with Horemheb, at whose coronation he suspected the presence of a powerful king of Assyria (viz. Sennacherib).⁵⁹⁶ But the great ‘Assyrian’ king who would crown Horemheb - if indeed one such king had actually performed this coronation - would most assuredly have been Ashurballit (Ay) himself: the ‘king-maker’ and ‘subduer of the land of Egypt’. Thus I think Courville and Velikovsky had placed the incident about a century too late; this causing Velikovsky to miss out on any opportunity to link his ‘Syrian’ *Aziru*/Hazael with *Aziru* of the Papyrus Harris – and, consequently, not having the necessary foundation to solve TAP (see discussion beginning on next page).

Rohl will, in his explanation of the name *Arsa*, by which he designates the ‘Syrian’ *Aziru*, even come to the conclusion - interesting in my context - that this name can be rendered as ‘Asa-el’, which is equivalent to Hazael; though Rohl himself will actually look to date this *Arsa* to the time of king Asa of Judah (early C9th BC, conventional dating). Here is Rohl’s account of this:⁵⁹⁷

ARSA: also written Arsu or Irsu. However the hieroglyph usually transcribed as ‘u’ was invariably vocalised as ‘a’ (e.g. Hut-waret = Haware; Hut-Hor = Hathor).

- The link between the Israelite Arsa and the Arsa of the Egyptian texts is intriguing but there is another identification possibility. The short name Asa could be a hypocoristicon of a longer nomen containing a theophoric element. The name Asa-el (‘El has made’) does occur in 2 Chronicles 17:8 The name Asa combined with the theophoric element El is attested at this time Asa, like the king of Damascus Hazael (Aramaean *Haza-ilu*)

[End of quote]

The Old Testament, not surprisingly, is entirely silent about any ‘Syrian’ or ‘Assyrian’ invasion of Egypt, though it does tell of Hazael at a later time fighting against Gath and even threatening Jerusalem itself, until king Joash [Jehoash] of Judah paid him off with all the votive offerings and gold upon which he could lay his hands, including the gold in the treasuries of the Temple (2 Kings 12:17-18). Presumably, Hazael was assisted in all this by his militant son Ben-Hadad II (cf. 13:3). The whole Hazael and Joash scenario will take on a new dimension in the next chapter (in relation to *Bay*).

⁵⁹⁵ *Op. cit*, p. 125.

⁵⁹⁶ *The Assyrian Conquest*, section: “Harmenhab Appointed to Administer Egypt”.

⁵⁹⁷ *The Lost Testament*, p. 406, footnote.

EXCURSUS: 'THE ASSURBALLIT PROBLEM' [TAP]

Here, amidst a discussion of EA's Assuruballit [Ashuruballit], is the ideal opportunity to touch upon what I consider to be about the greatest complexity that the revision has encountered, known as 'The Assuruballit Problem' [TAP]. At least to my mind it ranks alongside *where to locate Ramses II* and *how to revise TIP* (these last two being a large part of the subject matter of *Chapter 11* and *Chapter 12*), as a major problem for a Velikovskian-based revision.

TAP is this:

If EA is to be lowered to the mid-C9th BC, as Velikovsky had argued, why then is EA's 'king of Assyria' called 'Assuruballit' (EA 15 & 16), and not 'Shalmaneser', since Shalmaneser III – by current reckoning – completely straddles the middle part of this century (c. 858-824 BC)?

That king Assuruballit is a problem for the revision cannot be denied. However, he turns out to be a real problem for the conventional system as well. Whereas Assuruballit's father - as given in EA - was called *Assur-nadin-ahē*, his father is named in the King List as Eriba-Adad, not *Assur-nadin-ahē*. Here I take the main part of James' account of the problem for the conventional system of this Assuruballit.⁵⁹⁸

... Assyria and Egypt (14th century BC)

The only synchronism between named kings of Egypt and Assyria during the Late Bronze Age is provided by two letters from the El-Amarna collection (EA 15, 16). These were written by Assuruballit, King of Assyria, one (EA 16) being addressed to Pharaoh *Naphuria*, the cuneiform version of Neferkheprure, prenomen of Akhenaten. Their author is assumed to be the Assuruballit known from the Assyrian King List and dated by its chronology to the 14th century BC. Although universally accepted, the identification is not without problems. In EA 16 Assuruballit mentions that his father Assur-nadin-ahē corresponded with Egypt; yet the King List and the available monuments agree in describing Assuruballit as the son of Eriba-Adad.

In his introduction to the inscriptions of Assur-uballit I, Luckenbill reviewed a possible explanation:

“The word ‘father’ [abu] may here have the meaning ‘ancestor’, as often in the Assyrian texts, but even so our difficulties are not cleared up. In the texts ... Assur-ubal-lit does not include Assur-nâdin-ahê among his ancestors, although he carries his line back six generations”.

⁵⁹⁸ *Centuries of Darkness*, pp. 340f. His emphasis.

While the El-Amarna letter may well reflect some other relationship (e.g. adoptive) other than direct filiation between Assuruballit I and an Assur-nadin-ahhe, this is merely hypothetical, and the possibility remains that the El-Amarna correspondent was not the Assuruballit son of Eriba-Adad known from the monuments, but another, as yet unattested, ruler.

Thus the much vaunted synchronism between Akhenaten and Assuruballit I, the main linch-pin between Egyptian and Assyrian Late Bronze Age chronologies, is flawed and must be treated with caution.

[End of quotes]

Outline of a Solution for TAP

Basically I have already, in the course of this thesis, laid the foundation for my own resolution of TAP with my introduction of the Omrides, their family interconnections, and multi-identifications - particularly my development of the Velikovskian-based identification of those two successive rulers of Syria (Amurru): namely, Ben-Hadad I (as EA's *Abdi-ashirta*) and Hazael (as EA's *Aziru*). My solution to TAP has its foundation in the fact that *Tushratta* of Mitanni - whom I have identified as Ben-Hadad I/*Abdi-Ashirta* - had apparent control of Assyrian Nineveh at least; whereupon I had further identified this composite king with Ashurnasirpal/Tukulti-Ninurta I and II of Assyria. This was admittedly a heavy use of the ADP principle. Velikovsky, who had suspected that Assuruballit may have been a Syrian ruler, was not able to establish how exactly, however, such could have become a king of Assyria, as Assuruballit most certainly was (refer back to p. 226, n. 60).

And Ben-Hadad I's son, Hazael/*Aziru*, I had further identified as Assuruballit, a brother of Shalmaneser III, son of Ashurnasirpal II.

This new arrangement seems to be able to accommodate the complex situation discussed above - a problem for both the conventional system and previous revisions - of why Assuruballit's father is called, now *Assur-nadin-ahhe*, now Eriba-Adad. I believe this to be one and the same person, Ashurnasirpal, standing for EA's *Assur-nadin-ahhe*; whilst the King List name, Eriba-Adad, is closer to the king's Syrian name, Ben-Hadad. There was in fact an Aramaean Eriba-Adad (so-called II), conqueror of Assyria, who may even as well fit my reconstructed Ben-Hadad I conquest-wise, in that this Eriba-Adad II "claims to have ruled Assyria and the Aramaeans, and catalogs conquests far and wide that have been compared with those of Tiglath-pileser I".⁵⁹⁹

Thus Assuruballit and Shalmaneser III were two of those troublesome (esp. for *Rib-addi*) 'sons of *Abdi-ashirta*'. *Abdi-ashirta* was thus dominating much of the EA world through his sons, who were in turn vying for supremacy amongst themselves in their own regions. That there was a continual tension, alleviated by the occasional alliance, between Shalmaneser III and Assuruballit, under their various guises, is apparent from *Burnaburiash's* complaint above to Tutankhamun (p. 229), and also from the following sequence of events, whose exact chronology though is difficult to determine:

⁵⁹⁹ A. Olmstead, *History of Assyria*, p. 118, n. 122; with reference to CAH, p. 469, and more fully, *CAH*, Vol. 1:1, Index to 'Eriba Adad II'.

- The first clash between the two brothers seems to have occurred after Assuruballit (as *Kurtiwaza*) had slain their father (as *Tushratta*) and had fled to *Burnaburiash*/Shalmaneser III. The latter not only would not give his brother asylum, however, but sought to kill him.
- The fugitive then fled to Suppiluliumas the Hittite (the Hittites having been steadfast enemies of *Tushratta*), who welcomed him and established him on his throne (of Syro-Mitanni?) with a back-up force of Hittites. Suppiluliumas also made a treaty with him (as *Aziru*) and wed him to his daughter, *Mursil*.
- Shalmaneser III boasted in his first campaign (assuredly while his father was still alive) of having taken tribute from ‘Sapalulme of Khattina’,⁶⁰⁰ whom the conventional chronology however cannot accommodate as being Suppiluliumas of Hatti (dated to the C14th BC). Shalmaneser III also attacked Assuruballit (as Hazeal), whom he contemptuously called ‘son of nobody’. But he was unable to conquer Damascus.
- Later, though, Assuruballit would marry his daughter, Muballitat-Šerua, to *Burnaburiash*’s son, *Karaindaš*.
- Assuruballit, in EA 15, represents himself to an un-named pharaoh as “king of Assyria”. And EA 16 is addressed by him, the “great king”, to his “brother” *Naphuria* (i.e. Akhnaton), “king of Egypt”, complaining about the miserable quantity of gold that the pharaoh had sent him. “... Ashur-uballit’s diplomatic overture to Egypt ...”, Harrak has observed in relation to these two letters, “was certainly the result of high political and military achievements of the Assyrian monarch”.⁶⁰¹ It is interesting in the light of all this that Shalmaneser III, if he is *Burnaburiash*, appears only as king of Babylon in the EA letters; though he does call the Assyrians his “subjects”. However, as we saw, *Burnaburiash* seems to have complained to Tutankhamun that the Assyrians were acting independently of him. “Why have they [the Assyrians] gone to your country? ... Let them return here empty-handed”.

This last is an important text. Shalmaneser III’s hold on power most certainly did diminish as his long reign wore on. “Shalmaneser’s many years of vigorous campaigning apparently ended in his 30th year (829 BC). Thereafter, for the years 828 to 823 BC, the eponym lists record laconically, “revolt” ...”.⁶⁰² Assuruballit (var. *Ashur-nadin-apli*, murderer of his father, Tukulti-Ninurta) could then be the Ashur-danin-apli, who took most of Assyria away from Shalmaneser III in revolt.

Also to be taken into account now would be the conquest of Babylon by the Hittite king, Mursilis I; this famous incident conventionally dated to c. 1590 BC,⁶⁰³ but in my revision it would correspond with the era of Mursilis, the son of Suppiluliumas, during either the weak phase of the reign of Shalmaneser III (perhaps even being connected with the “revolt”), or the reign of the latter’s son, Shamsi-Adad V (c. 824-812 BC, conventional dates). This would approximate to the reign of Tutankhamun (revised) in Egypt.

Note: The First Dynasty of Babylon, Hammurabi’s, is conventionally thought to have come to its end with the Hittites in c. 1590. This is a gross miscalculation, as, in actual fact, Hammurabi’s last descendants were about 8 centuries later than that, in the time of Shamsi-Adad V.

⁶⁰⁰ J. Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, pp. 277-278.

⁶⁰¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 25.

⁶⁰² P. James, ‘Some Notes on the “Assuruballit Problem”,’ p. 20, with reference to D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, II, p. 432.

⁶⁰³ E.g. Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

Apparently Assurballit's star was still on the rise, unlike that of his brother *Burnaburiash*/Shalmaneser III. No doubt the former would have benefitted from the Hittite conquest of Babylon, by Mursilis, given his (as *Aziru*) earlier alliance with Suppiluliumas; an alliance that, as we read in *Chapter 3* (p. 53), continued on (or was resurrected) in the reign of Mursilis at the time of Assurballit's (as *Aziru*/Aziras) grandson, *Duppi Teššub*. Certainly we find Assurballit interfering in the affairs of Babylon, where a grandson of his had in fact been murdered.⁶⁰⁴ It is clear that Assurballit's daughter was married to a son of *Burnaburiash*, and that their son Kadashman-Harbe was overthrown by a revolution, and that a son of the last-named was made king through the help of Assurballit, namely a *Kurigalzu*. Here is our composite king again acting as king-maker.

Thus, Assurballit *spanned three generations of Babylonian kings*.

He may actually have operated largely from Babylon as his base, even whilst being the effective ruler of Egypt. That such was a manageable situation is apparent from the case of one *Arsames*, a satrap of the Persian period, who - according to Velikovsky's excessively radical, as I think, converging of this later time with a part of the Ramesside era - was the very *Arsa* of the Papyrus Harris.⁶⁰⁵ Assurballit could have ruled Egypt through his governors, including Horemheb - just as Velikovsky told of *Arsames* as having done - with the occasional personal visit by him to Egypt:⁶⁰⁶

From farmers and herdsmen living and toiling on the immense tracts of land given to him, and also appropriated by him, he exacted heavy toll; the administrators (governors) and treasurers of the satrapies acted also as his private employees, collecting revenues chiefly for him but also for a few other privileged members of the royal family with residences in Babylon, Susa, or Persepolis.

On top of this exploitation by its satrap Egypt had to pay a yearly tribute to the Persian crown, collected by the administrator (governor), who was also chief treasurer, and brought personally to Arsames in Babylon.

... [certain leather scrolls] were dispatched from the chancery of Arsames ... *in Babylon where he maintained his chief residence, appearing in Egypt only occasionally to look over his possession and give instructions*.

Likely, an opportune era for the control of Babylon by the long-reigning Assurballit (Hazael), supported by Mursilis and his Hittites, would have been during the reign of Shalmaneser III's son, Shamsi-Adad V, who had significant trouble with Babylon. According to van de Mieroop:⁶⁰⁷ "A chronicle mentions that there were no kings in Babylon [at this approximate time] for more than a decade ... although king lists give some names".

⁶⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 260.

⁶⁰⁵ *Peoples of the Sea, ibid*.

⁶⁰⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 23, 24. Emphasis added.

⁶⁰⁷ *A History of the Ancient Near East*, pp. 199-200.

Ay as *May(a)*

The same person Assuruballit (*Aziru/Ay*), Egypt's subduer, was likely, as I have indicated, also *May*.⁶⁰⁸ Failure to link together important historical characters of different names can lead to complications of interpretation that disappear though when the connections are made. A classic example in Egyptology is that of the priest, Roma-Roy, whom historians for a long time considered as two distinct persons, a Roma and a Roy. That I believe to be also the case with *Ay/May*; and too, I suspect, with Horemheb/Jehu and (Tutankhamun's) general, *Huy* (to be argued in section: "Horemheb as General Huy", beginning on p. 242). To give an example in regard to *Ay/May*, Doherty, one finds, when trying to juxtapose - rather than to identify - *May(a)* with Ay as both overseer of building works and of the Treasury during the reign of Tutankhamun, has written:⁶⁰⁹

Ay would have direct responsibility for this [immense building programme] but the king's chief adviser was Maya who bore the titles, Overseer of the Building Works in the Place of Eternity, Overseer of the Building Works in the West, Overseer of the Treasury, the King's Scribe. Maya was responsible for raising the money and spending it on behalf of Egypt. If Ay was cunning, Maya was also a man to watch.

In actual fact it was I believe one and the same cunning and gold-greedy *Ay*, in charge of both building works and the Treasury. Doherty continues, depicting the canny *May* as a political survivor (surviving noticeably, and not surprisingly, during the very same period as did *Ay*), but as an awkward 'link' between what Doherty maintains were two conflicting parties, instead of as the actual puppet-master:

[Maya] had undoubtedly experienced the years of Akhenaten and survived. He would serve Tutankhamun well and perhaps, even his successor, whilst he managed to survive the swift accession to power of General Horemheb where, for services rendered, he was given further dignities: Fan-Bearer on the Left of the King, Leader of the Festival of Amun in Karnak. Maya was a man with a foot in either camp. He had links with Horemheb, building a tomb for himself next to that of the general in the Necropolis at Sakkara, near Memphis.

This last however, I suspect, was nothing other than the grandiose northern tomb of *Ay*, who had also, as one might have anticipated, a "most elaborate tomb" in Amarna;⁶¹⁰ a tomb that Petrie had described as one of the most magnificent tombs to be found there.⁶¹¹ Martin is at a complete loss to explain why the supposedly inferior *May* would have had a far more lavish tomb at Saqqara than the nearby one of his superior, Horemheb.⁶¹²

⁶⁰⁸ Tyldesley at least has substituted *May* for the more common *Maya*. *Op. cit.*, p. 132.

⁶⁰⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 101.

⁶¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 134.

⁶¹¹ According to Doherty, *op. cit.*, p. 78.

⁶¹² *The Hidden Tomb of Memphis*, p. 184.

As one stands in these subterranean chambers ... one gets the impression of being in the Netherworld. There are no other burial chambers like these in the Saqqara necropolis, since this kind of iconography was, until the Ramesside Period, usually reserved for Pharaoh and members of his family. That Maya was able to commission such work gives an inkling of his status The underground rooms in the tomb of Horemheb, who outranked [sic] Maya, had only rather crude linear decoration. How can we account for the fact that Maya's subterranean chambers were so lavishly decorated? We can only speculate, but it must be supposed that Maya was especially influential at court. Indeed we learn from the newly discovered biographical texts on the pylon, that he was brought up in the royal entourage Can he even have been a member of the royal family?

Brier, following the standard view that *Ay* and *May* were separate individuals, has depicted the latter as being one of the post-EA officials especially hand-picked by the ever-adaptable *Ay*:⁶¹³

The officials in charge [early in Tutankhamun's reign] were new players, men untainted by the Amarna days. Aye [*Ay*] must have been instrumental in their recruitment, and he chose well. Maya, Tutankhamen's new treasurer, was central to the restoration plan. We know a great deal about the internal workings of the government during Tutankhamen's reign because Maya inscribed his autobiography on his tomb wall. He was in charge of collecting the taxes, overseeing their registry in the royal treasury, then allocating their distribution From his office in Memphis, Maya dispatched an army of scribes to all the nomes (provinces) of Egypt to record how much grain was collected from each farmer.

Towards the end of Tutankhamun's reign, this avaricious Treasurer oversaw a tax increase, supposedly at the behest of pharaoh:⁶¹⁴ "In the eighth year of Tutankhamen's reign Maya was instructed "to tax the entire land and to institute divine offerings [for] all [the gods] of the land of Egypt". In this oppressive rôle *May* was, I believe, none other than (a) the foreign Ashuruballit who subdued the land of Egypt (refer back to pp. 236-238), and (b) the 'Syrian' *Aziru* of the great Papyrus Harris who laid a heavy tax on Egypt. *May* would supervise "the casting of gold statues for the temple".⁶¹⁵ "*Mâya* in the letters is", wrote Campbell,⁶¹⁶ "a man of considerable influence, who commands Ba'lu-šipti to give up a house he has built so that *Mâya* may place his *rabiš* in it (292:29-36)". Similarly the letters of *Arsames* had, according to Velikovskiy,⁶¹⁷ reflected "the haughty attitude" of that Chancellor to his subordinates ("no introductory salute") and his greedy annexation of people's property whilst showing no interest whatsoever in alleviating the misfortune into which some of these had fallen.

⁶¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 106.

⁶¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

⁶¹⁶ *The Chronology of the Amarna Letters*, p. 75.

⁶¹⁷ *Peoples of the Sea*, pp. 25, 26, 27.

Elisha's Rôle in the Sinai Commission

I had previously, in *Chapter 4* (section: "Elisha the Rechabite", beginning on p. 116), proposed an identification of Elisha with Jehonadab the Rechabite, who had supported Jehu in his initial campaign against the worshippers of Baal; though seemingly as an onlooker. From this and from other biblical descriptions of Elisha, I had concluded that the prophet was already an old man by the time that Elijah had anointed him. All this had led me to ponder the biblical statement according to which '... Elisha shall kill'.

Who in fact did he 'kill'?

My suggestion is that, whilst it befell Jehu and Hazael to wipe out Baalism from Israel, and Atonism from Egypt, *it befell Elisha to eradicate Baalism from Judah*. And his target would be queen Athaliah and her murderous régime (2 Chronicles 22:10); that other unsavoury woman at the time, according to the Bible, and possibly also a daughter of the notorious Jezebel/Nefertiti. Queen Athaliah had succeeded to the throne of Jerusalem at the same time as Jehu had become king of Israel (cf. 2 Kings 11 & 2 Chronicles 22:10-11; 23:1-21). It is with Athaliah that we can finish our account of the prophet Elisha.

The bloody Jehu had looked to make a start towards reforming the kingdom of Judah by his assassination of king Ahaziah and his relatives (2 Kings 10). But this violence would actually cause a backlash; for it now brought the vengeful Athaliah to the throne for six years. Thus Elisha, like Jehu, would have to contend with a fiery Baal-worshipping queen. For Jehu, she would be queen Jezebel/Nefertiti. For Elisha, she would be Jezebel's daughter (or a near kinswoman of Jezebel's), Athaliah; a veritable 'clone' of queen Jezebel.

Athaliah was also the mother of the slain king Ahaziah (2 Kings 11:1).

According to Liel, this Athaliah was actually the sole female EA correspondent, NIN.UR.MAH.MESH, whom I had identified instead with Jezebel.⁶¹⁸

What is UR.MAH? One attested meaning is "lion." This is the source of the "Lady of Lions" reading. But MAH is the sumerogram for "holy". The compound Sumerogram LU.MAH means "high priest," where LU means "man". UR means "city". Thus, UR.MAH would be the city parallel of "high priest". Since we don't know whether the MESH applies to UR.MAH or only to MAH, this name could mean "Lady of the Holy Cities," or "Lady of the City of Holies". Do we know of a woman who ruled from a city that was considered holy around the same time as the two Jehorams and Jehu? Of course we do: the usurper Athaliah.

Does Athaliah also have an Egyptian identity? Later I shall suggest that Athaliah was Ankhesenamun *ta-sherit* and also Queen Tausert. I am retaining my original view, though, that the only female EA correspondent was queen Jezebel (Nefertiti).

It would take Elisha some half a dozen years before he could even make a start. But he would finally triumph in Judah, I think, as the priest, Jehoiada - the very Jehonadab who had seen first-hand how the tactical genius Jehu had negotiated the Baal problem. (Though I am not claiming a perfect name correspondence here, Jehoiada = Jehonadab).

⁶¹⁸ 'What's In a Name?', section "Nin.Ur.Mah.Mesh".

The narrative of 2 Kings 11:1-3 tells that when queen Athaliah saw that her son Ahaziah was dead, “she set about to destroy all the royal family”. But Jehoshabeath (var. Jehosheba 2 Kings 11:2), Ahaziah’s sister and king Jehoram’s daughter – who we learn was also the *wife of the priest, Jehoaida* (2 Chronicles 22:11) - took the king’s son, the infant Joash (Jehoash), and hid him with his nurse in a bedroom (2 Kings 11:2), where “he remained with her for six years, hidden in the House of the Lord” (v. 3). “For a six-year reign of terror, Athaliah held all the power in Judah”, according to North.⁶¹⁹

The Priest Jehoiada

Elisha as the priest Jehoiada (therefore a Levite) - as I see it - who must have been just as much in fear for his life as had been his predecessor Elijah, when faced with the wrath of queen Jezebel, eventually became emboldened to act. And act he did, with Jehu-like decisiveness (2 Chronicles 23:1). “But in the seventh year Jehoiada took courage, and entered into a compact with the commanders of the hundreds ...”; men who had probably also served general Jehu. According to 2 Kings 11:4, Jehoiada also employed Carite (i.e. ‘Indo-European’) mercenaries for the task. (See brief art-historical note on the Carians/Carites, as possibly connected to a combined Horemheb-Jehu scenario, on p. 252, under **Figure 10**). Jehoiada’s plan apparently was to surround the palace and Temple, and to guard the young Joash in his comings and goings, and to proclaim the boy as king of Jerusalem (vv. 5-11). And so we read (v. 12): “Then [Jehoiada] brought out the king’s son, put the crown on him, and gave him the covenant; they proclaimed him king and anointed him; they clapped their hands and shouted, ‘Long live the king!’.”

The narrative goes on to recount the death of Athaliah, who met her end with the same courage and defiance as had her mother (or kinswoman), Jezebel. Jehoiada ordered the queen to be slain by the sword outside the Temple ‘Let her not be killed in the House of the Lord’ (v. 15). **אַל-תּוֹמַת בַּיִת יְהוָה**. Notice that once again the aged Jehoiada gave the order rather than wielded the sword by which the queen was dispatched.

So, what was Jehoiada’s actual status here? Well, that has caused commentators to scratch their heads a bit. Thus North has written, with reference to 2 Chronicles 23:⁶²⁰ “Jehoiada is left strangely without an introduction [sic]. He would appear to be the chief of police, but turns out to be a high priest in v. 8 (= 2 Kgs 11:9)”. This Jehoiada, as Elisha son of Shaphat, was apparently, like Jehu and Hazael, one of those *shaphat*-police, who happened also in Elisha’s case to have been a priest; even a high priest, according to North. So this, the story of Jehoiada, is how, I suggest, the prophet Elisha himself became involved in the Sinai-commanded reform action: as a priest, and, in Judah.

The people of Jerusalem, and the king, all of whom Jehoiada had now bound to a covenant with the Lord, then did as Jehu had previously done in Samaria. They went to the temple of Baal and tore it down, “his altar and his images they broke in pieces, and they killed Mattan, the priest of Baal, before the altars” (vv. 17-18). The rest of Jehoiada’s glorious career as priest in Jerusalem can be read in some detail in 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles.

⁶¹⁹ ‘The Chronicler ...’, 24:64, p. 421.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid*, 24:65.

One of his most notable achievements was the massive repair work done under his supervision on the Temple of the Lord – no doubt a necessary reconstruction after the ravages of Baalism. As long as Jehoiada lived, king Joash (who reigned for 40 years in Jerusalem) whom Jehoiada instructed in Yahwism, was kept in check as a servant of the Lord (though with some ambivalence). But immediately after Jehoiada's death, at age 130 (2 Chronicles 24:15), king Joash took counsel with his Judaeen officials and the kingdom reverted to its former idolatry. Jehoiada's son, Zechariah, having boldly denounced his compatriots for their apostasy, was stoned to death upon the orders of the king. As he was dying, Zechariah cried out: 'May the Lord see and avenge!' (vv. 20-22). Commentators have stumbled over Matthew's reference to the same Zechariah as a 'son of Barachiah'. Thus North again:⁶²¹ "This Zechariah is doubtless that of Luke 11:51, called son of Barachiah in Mt 23:35 by assimilation to Is 8:2". Whether or not there is in fact any connection with the person intended by Isaiah, could Matthew's name, *Barachiah* - the priest Jehoiada, according to my reconstruction - have a connection (albeit linguistically imprecise) with 'son of Rechab' (thus *Bar-rachiah*)? I have ventured an identification between Jehoiada and Jehonadab, son of Rechab (בֶּן־רַחֲבָה יְהוֹנָדָב).

The Prophet's Death and Burial

The Rechabite tradition, I propose, arose from Elisha rather than his father, Shaphat. Elisha, seemingly wealthy, a farmer possessing land and oxen - and probably all of those other things that the Rechabites had denounced – and married to royalty, left everything to follow Elijah, who was undoubtedly the prototypal 'Rechabite' in his poverty and nomadic style of existence. The father and mother whom the already old Elisha had kissed before he left (1 Kings 19:20) must have been aged indeed. There is no indication that the father was living a 'Rechabite' existence at the time. He was probably a wealthy farmer, just like his son appears to have been, until now.

A blessing of the ascetical, nomadic lifestyle that Elisha came to embrace in following Elijah was, according to the Rechabites to 'live many days in the land'. That blessing was certainly bestowed upon Elisha in abundance; for he, as the priest Jehoiada, lived to be 130 years of age. And apparently the blessing was bestowed upon his descendants too, inasmuch as they were still faithful to that lifestyle even in Jeremiah's time.

Had Elisha been buried in Samaria, then this alone would have been sufficient to shatter my proposed identification of him with Jehoiada, because the aged Jehoiada was buried in Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 24:16): "And they buried him in the city of David among the kings, because he had done good in Israel, and for God and his House". When we turn to read about the end of Elisha - who incidentally died (strikingly like Jehoiada), *in the very last few years of Joash of Judah's long reign* (with Jehu's grandson Jehoash now reigning in Israel) - we simply read: "So Elisha died, and they buried him" (2 Kings 13:20).

Notice, too, that, when Elisha was dying, king Jehoash of Israel "went *down* to him"

... בּוֹ נִרְדָּ אֵלָיו יוֹאָשׁ מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל

⁶²¹ *Ibid*, 24:66.

(v.14; cf. 8:29), thus seemingly supporting my view that Elisha did not die in Samaria; hence, possibly, in Judah. The narrative of 2 Kings here does not actually tell us where the great prophet was buried. The Chronicler I think supplies the necessary information.

A note on Elijah and Elisha. As I asked about Elisha's adversary Athaliah above, so now I ask: Do Elijah and Elisha each also have an Egyptian identity? One would now think that virtually certain. A likely candidate for Elijah, chronologically suitable, would be the aged and mysterious Amenhotep son of Hapu of the EA era, whom Velikovsky had equated with the seer, *Tiresias*, in relation to the Oedipus legend.⁶²² Collier gives a most interesting account of this "Son of Hapu",⁶²³ who claimed to have been "introduced to the knowledge of the Holy Book and [who] beheld the glories of the god [and was] enlightened in all mysteries"; "beloved of both king and commoner"; who partook "of a divine nature both as to wisdom and [prophecy]". Collier goes on:⁶²⁴

The sage was from the north and had studied at Heliopolis. *At this time he was already an elderly man.* It is suggested that he derived his renowned wisdom and spiritual understanding, directly or indirectly, from the great religious thinker Moses. Was it the 'Wisdom of Moses' that the king [i.e. Amenhotep III] desired to be taught when he asked "to become a spectator of the Gods"?

Collier now, with reference to Manetho, tells of the seer's attitude to the Atonists:⁶²⁵

Manetho goes on to relate that the son of Hapu told the king that his wishes could not be granted unless the country was purged of 'impure people' – which included 'some of the learned priests'. And that these would be assisted by some who "would conquer Egypt and keep it in their possession thirteen years". At this point Akhenaten's name had evidently been deleted, but not the thirteen years of the length of time he reigned at Akhet-Aten. Amenhotep, the wise man and prophet is afraid that the gods would be angry at him and the king if there should appear to have been violence offered to them (the impure people). He therefore counsels that they should be sent to the east side of the Nile, that they "might be separated from the rest of the Egyptians".

Given that Elijah was praised by Elisha as "The chariots of Israel and its horsemen!" (2 Kings 2:12), and given also what I have written about these men as *shaphat*-police, then I wonder if Elijah were (also) the important Mahu, Chief of the *Medjay* (police) and 'General of the Army of the Lord of the Two Lands'. This Mahu, like Elijah, ran alongside the king's chariot.

Elisha could well be the enduring vizier, Ramose, of EA,⁶²⁶ who could boast of titles similar to those held by Horemheb. This Ramose may have been either a "brother or cousin" of Amenhotep the sage⁶²⁷; hence a fellow priest/Levite. I shall develop this in *Chapter 11* (e.g. p. 308).

Having discussed Jehu's fellow triumvirs (Hazael and Elisha), I can now turn my attention fully to our central character himself, Jehu/Horemheb, and tell how I think he might have become the father of the 19th dynasty Ramessides.

⁶²² *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, ch. "The Blind Seer", pp. 104-110. According to Collier: "[The Son of Hapu] was reputed by James Breasted to have lived to a ripe age ...". *Op. cit.*, p. 89.

⁶²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 110-114.

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 111. Emphasis added.

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-112.

⁶²⁶ Collier, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

⁶²⁷ *Ibid.*

Jehu/Horemheb: Ruler of Israel and Egypt

Jehu, though a ‘Syrian’, was essentially a king of Israel where he ruled for 28 years, and was subsequently buried in Samaria with his ancestors (2 Kings 10:35-36), who I believe to have been Zimrides. These Zimrides, likely too, were of ‘Indo-European’ origin. Such I believe to have been the background to the enigmatic Horemheb, whose ‘parentage’ is thought to be ‘completely unknown.’ Doherty, for instance, considers Horemheb to have been “a northerner of obscure origins”.⁶²⁸ He was certainly, I believe, “a northerner”; though his origins, as a Zimride, were far from being “obscure”.

This Horemheb, as I am going to argue, matches Jehu in some significant ways. (For a quick summary, see points of comparison (a)-(g) on p. 245). He, our main character I have further identified with the ‘Syrian’ Naaman, whom Elisha had cured of leprosy. And I have in turn accepted Velikovsky’s EA identification of Naaman with *Iaanhamu*. Basically, then, our main character was a governor for Egypt of Syro-Palestine, who - ever subordinate to Hazael (Ay) - eventually became the latter’s governor (vice regent), with more direct power over Egypt. In this guise, he was, I am arguing, Horemheb. “The nature of his duties must have removed Horemheb often from court”, wrote Collier.⁶²⁹ And, according to Newby, “[Horemheb] had been an indefatigable traveller ...”.⁶³⁰

Whilst Horemheb is accredited with 28 years of rule in Egypt, from c. 1323-1295 BC (conventional dates)⁶³¹ - exactly the same period of rule, incidentally, as Jehu had enjoyed - the archaeological evidence would not seem to support the view that Horemheb had ruled Egypt continuously for so substantial a period of time. Gammon⁶³² may therefore have a point with his estimated “7/8 years” for the reign length of Horemheb inasmuch as - whilst Horemheb’s total length of kingship, as Jehu, may have been 28 years - perhaps only “7/8” of these involved his direct and individual rule of Egypt. A figure of around 8 years would probably account for the fact that Horemheb’s building activity in Egypt is considered not to represent nearly three decades of rule, consistent with my view that Horemheb was largely a ruler of Syro-Palestine, not Egypt. Gammon continues:⁶³³ “... apart from instances of usurpation, Horemheb’s building activity was substantially less than that of Seti I in a period of between 10 and 15 years. Specifically, his tomb in the Valley of the Kings was unfinished at his death”.

Horemheb’s birth name and epithet are thought to have been *Horemheb meryamun*, meaning “Horus is in Jubilation, Beloved of Amun”; though there is some difference of opinion as to how the first part of this name is meant to be represented (e.g. Horemheb, Horemhab, Haremhab?). The name Horemheb/*Horam*-heb, though it can certainly be a genuine Egyptian name, looks suspiciously also like the Hebrew name, *Jehoram* (יהורם).

⁶²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 41.

⁶²⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 151.

⁶³⁰ *Warrior Pharaohs*, p. 136.

⁶³¹ Grimal’s dates for Horemheb. *Op. cit.*, p. 392.

⁶³² ‘The Place of Horemheb in Egyptian History’, p. 85. Gammon’s estimation concurs with an earlier one of 8 years made by J. Harris, ‘How Long was the Reign of Haremheb?’, pp. 95ff.

⁶³³ *Ibid.*

We have found that Jehoram was also a name used amongst the Omride royals. It is possible that Jehu too was variously called Jehoram; though the name by which he is known in the Bible, as king of Israel, is JEHU,⁶³⁴ arising from ‘Yawheh’ and ‘huw’, and meaning ‘Yahweh (is) He’. Below I shall argue that Jehu/Horemheb was also the same as Tutankhamun’s general, *Huy*, whose name I think may possibly be compatible with *Huw*. This essentially military man, Horemheb, had served during the time of both Amenhotep III and Akhnaton, during whose reign he became Great Commander of the Army.

Jehu/Horemheb, as I have noted, cannot really be separated from Hazael/Ay, either in Egyptian or biblical history. Doherty has given a realistic account of these two characters (in their Egyptian guise), alike at least in their innate practicality, “born pragmatists”.⁶³⁵ Horemheb though was perhaps the more refined, possessing, as he did, “a strong but sensitive face”.⁶³⁶ Brier has, by contrast, gives an unflattering view of Ay’s appearance.⁶³⁷ The situation of Jehu as an apparent subordinate to Hazael seems to be paralleled in the case of their *alter egos* in Egyptian history. Consider, for example, Doherty’s estimation here:⁶³⁸ “The Restoration Stela [Tutankhamun’s] committed Egypt to re-establishing its power abroad and this was Horemheb’s duty. Yet, even here there is evidence that, *if Horemheb did the hard work, Ay ... [was] more than prepared to take the glory*”.

Horemheb was, as Jehu is represented in the Bible, the restorer of established order. This is indicated, as we saw, by his royal titulature (especially the verb *seped*, ‘setting things in order’). Horemheb is most famous as a reformer king; his Great Edict, or code of laws, was cruel but effective. He and Ay, and apparently Elisha as well, were law enforcers, or police, who depended on the sword to bring about order. We recall that Ay would adopt the cognomen: ‘Who is doing right’, and this motto seems to tie in well with Horemheb’s titular *seped* and the Hebrew *shaphat* (שֹׁפֵט), ‘to judge, govern, administer right’.

Horemheb was, according to Holmes, “a favorite of the priests of Amon”.⁶³⁹ I think that we might add ‘a favourite of the priest Jehoiada in Jerusalem’. “He tore down the Temple of Aton at Karnak and built two towers in front of the Temple of Amon. With the backing of the priests, he declared that he had actually been king since 1369 B.C. [sic] – as if Akhenaton, Tutankhamon, and Aye had never existed”.⁶⁴⁰ Speaking of this situation, Gardiner wrote:⁶⁴¹ “... it is clear that when an inscription of the time of Ramessēs II speaks of a law-suit as having taken place in Haremḥab’s fifty-ninth year, this includes the twenty-eight or thirty years from the death of Amenōphis III to that of King Ay”.

Horemheb’s titular program, of *seped*, is reflected in his Edict. Those guilty of extortion, for example, had their noses cut off and were sent into exile. Was mutilation and exile also Akhnaton’s fate? Ashurnasirpal II, Jehu’s earlier contemporary, arguably the most cruel of law-enforcing kings in antiquity, had - in the case of captives who had revolted - cut off their noses, ears and fingers, and put out their eyes.

⁶³⁴ Liel considers this name to be the same as EA’s *Iawa/Iama*, *op. cit.*, section: “Iawa”.

⁶³⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 96.

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 80.

⁶³⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 187.

⁶³⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 117. Emphasis added.

⁶³⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

⁶⁴¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 242.

Like Jehu, against Baal, Horemheb initially left no stone unturned in eradicating the 'heretic' religion. He turned upside down some of the stone blocks from queen Nefertiti's pillars in the *Hwt-Benben* ('Mansion of the *Benben* stone'),⁶⁴² so as to make partial scenes. And he defaced her images. Thus Tyldesley, quoting from R. Winfield Smith:⁶⁴³

It is certain that the queen was held in contempt by those responsible for this undignified treatment. To turn a beautiful female upside-down, to slash her viciously, and to place her where she would be symbolically crushed by the enormous weight of massive, soaring walls, can hardly be explained otherwise.

This immediately recalls for me the similar contempt with which the same general (as Jehu) had earlier treated queen Jezebel, because of her religious and political affiliations. Horemheb had, in his purge of Atonism, acted with the same sort of single-minded intent as had Jehu in his persecution of the Baal cult throughout Israel. He had overseen the crushing death of Jezebel in Jezreel, and he had 'commemorated' that same death, I believe, by having the queen (as Nefertiti) symbolically crushed in walls of stone in Egypt. The general would have kept well in mind that this was that "Jezebel [who] had killed the prophets of the Lord" (I Kings 18:13), and who had, as Nefertiti – if this is what Manetho was talking about – "... ejected the priests and prophets naked out of [Egypt]"⁶⁴⁴.

Bright though has detected, in regard to Jehu - whom I am identifying as Horemheb - that afore-mentioned ambivalence in matters of worship:⁶⁴⁵ "One must remember that Jehu's purge had been directed against the Tyrian [substitute 'Mitannian'?] Ba'al and had not uprooted native paganisms, nor even seriously tried to".

Horemheb as General Huy

With regard to the highly successful Nubian campaign effected during the reign of Tutankhamun, Horemheb is thought to have played a rôle only secondary to *Huy*. And Horemheb was entirely absent from Tutankhamun's burial, according to Doherty,⁶⁴⁶ who has told of Ay's sinister part in the entire funerary rites.⁶⁴⁷ Horemheb's presumed absence though may be a misconception, based on what might be a one-dimensional view of this multi-dimensional official. He was I believe to the fore in both the Nubian campaign and the funeral; but not under the actual name of 'Horemheb'. It is here I submit that my connection of him with Jehu may take on a further significance; for Horemheb is perhaps also the multi-titled *Huy*, "one of Ay's close lieutenants",⁶⁴⁸ who *was* at the forefront of both the Nubian campaign and Tutankhamun's funeral.

⁶⁴² Tyldesley, *op. cit.*, p. 126.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁶⁴⁴ Manetho, as cited by Collier, *op. cit.*, p. 186.

⁶⁴⁵ *A History of Israel*, pp. 257-258.

⁶⁴⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 151.

⁶⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, ch. 4.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

Doherty has described the Nubian campaign, with Tutankhamun as merely a passive onlooker by contrast with the real power in Egypt at the time:⁶⁴⁹

If Tutankhamun was not the real leader in the projected campaign against Kush then who was? General Horemheb must have played a part: paintings from his tomb at Sakkara portray the general bringing Nubian captives before Pharaoh and receiving [his] approval and approbation Horemheb was involved in the Nubian campaign and displayed his exploits both in his tomb at Sakkara and on the stela describing the events which led to his own coronation as Pharaoh. Nevertheless, his nose may have been put out of joint, for the real star [sic] of Tutankhamun's Nubian campaign was ... the court official ... Huy ... Viceroy of Nubia and Huy unashamedly described his achievements in his own tomb paintings ... These paintings place Huy very much at the heart of affairs. ...

But this *Huy* was, I suspect, Horemheb himself. And this makes it almost certain that he was therefore the same also as Amenhotep Huy, king's son of Kush, not to be confused with Amenhotep/*Haya* (perhaps *Ay/Maya*). Whilst Doherty can only conclude about the Nubian campaign:⁶⁵⁰ "Very little if any mention is made of General Horemheb's role", the situation of course takes on a completely different aspect when Horemheb is equated with *Huy*. General *Huy*, as Doherty tells it, had returned victorious from Nubia as a virtual pharaoh (if he had not been that already before he had departed):⁶⁵¹

Huy's tomb also gives an insight into the power structure at Thebes. He is not bashful in viewing himself as Viceroy, or even more. One scene ... depicts Huy's return *almost as a Pharaoh* holding the flail as well as the crook. He may pay homage to Tutankhamun but Huy's tomb pictures also illustrate Nubian tributes being presented directly to the Viceroy ... nosing the ground ... in front of [him]. ... The inescapable conclusion ... is that Huy saw himself very much in charge. He is active while the Pharaoh is passive. He does not receive the seal of office directly from the Pharaoh but from another powerful official which can only be Ay. Tutankhamun can be depicted as a warlike chieftain in the pictures on the fan found in his tomb. He may have had body armour buried with him but, as far as Huy was concerned, Huy was the victor of Nubia and, *rather than Huy basking in Pharaoh's glory, the positions are reversed.*

Doherty will discuss what he calls "three versions of the Nubian campaign": i.e. one in the tomb of Tutankhamun, one in the tomb of *Huy*, and one in the tomb of Horemheb.⁶⁵² But his complete separation of these last two, which I consider to belong to the one general, will necessitate from him this somewhat convoluted explanation:⁶⁵³

⁶⁴⁹ *Ibid*, pp. 119-120.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 120.

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid*, pp. 121-122. Emphasis added.

⁶⁵² *Ibid*, p. 121.

⁶⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 122.

On one level these different versions can be amusing but they do betray the tensions [sic] at Tutankhamun's court. Huy, in his paintings, claims the credit, whilst General Horemheb presents an alternate [sic] version. There is no evidence of two Nubian campaigns. Horemheb may have gone ahead to prepare the ground for Huy or may have acted in concert with him. Nevertheless, the inescapable conclusion is that both [sic] men claimed the glory for ... a victorious campaign.

Horemheb as *Huy* certainly also attended Tutankhamun's funeral. Doherty again:⁶⁵⁴

Huy, who was also present at Tutankhamun's mysterious burial, rejoiced in some of the highest titles in the land. He was not only Viceroy of Nubia but 'Divine Father', one of the 'Fanbearers on the King's Right Hand', 'Supervisor of the Amun's Cattle in the land of Kush', 'Supervisor of the Land of Gold of the Lord of the Two Countries' ... His Majesty's Brave in the Cavalry.

We read in *Chapter 4* (p. 107) that the prestigious title, 'Fanbearer [at] the King's Right Hand' had been borne by EA's *Iaanhamu* (Naaman), Horemheb's *alter ego*. Horemheb had other astonishing titles as well [e.g. 'King's Deputy in All Countries', 'King's Elect', 'The Greatest Amongst the Favourites of the Lord of the Two Countries', 'The True Scribe Well Beloved of the King'].⁶⁵⁵ Courville marvelled at the nature of Horemheb's titles and privileges.⁶⁵⁶ That Horemheb was already at least quasi-pharaoh during the reign of Tutankhamun is quite apparent from the fact that Horemheb's cartouche has been found together with that of Tutankhamun on commemorative stone slabs found at the base of sphinxes as part of the Avenue of Sphinxes at Karnak.⁶⁵⁷

During the reign of the feeble Tutankhamun, Ay (Hazael) and his colleague, Horemheb (Jehu), seem largely to have shared the royal power. Horemheb had married Mutnodjmet, thought by some to have been the sister of Nefertiti. Thus Doherty:⁶⁵⁸ "Mutnedjmet apparently disappeared from Akhenaten's court around Year 8 of that Pharaoh's reign, I consider this to be the year she married Horemheb, a political marriage alliance arranged by Ay". "Mutnodjmet", writes Tyldesley,⁶⁵⁹ "died aged between thirty-five and forty during Year 14 or 15 of her husband's rule, and was buried in the tomb which Horemheb had prepared for himself at Memphis". This was, she says, a "second marriage, following the death of his first wife ...".⁶⁶⁰ Interestingly, both Ay and Horemheb would designate themselves as heir. (On p. 252 I shall show a connection between Horemheb and the 25th (Ethiopian) dynasty). In the case of Ay, for instance, Tyldesley has written:⁶⁶¹ "... Ay is described as the 'Eldest King's Son', an obviously honorary title which nevertheless implies that the elderly Ay is recognized as the young Tutankhamen's heir".

⁶⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 120.

⁶⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 124.

⁶⁵⁶ *Op. cit*, p. 288.

⁶⁵⁷ J. Zwick, 'The Age of Pharaoh Horemheb', with reference to *KMT Magazine*, Vol. 10, Summer, 1999, p. 38.

⁶⁵⁸ *Op. cit*, p. 81.

⁶⁵⁹ *Op. cit*, pp. 184-185.

⁶⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 184.

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 182.

And Doherty has written similarly about Horemheb, in regard to his statue in the Turin Museum:⁶⁶² “The impression given by these inscriptions is that Horemheb not only became Pharaoh but that he was his predecessor’s legitimate heir”. Who his “predecessor” actually was, however, “is left vague”.⁶⁶³

During the reign of Tutankhamun, Horemheb became King’s Deputy (and very likely vice-regent), then quasi-pharaoh, with Ay (Hazeal). “The coronation proclamation depicts Horemheb sweeping into Thebes to a rapturous reception”, writes Doherty.⁶⁶⁴ Did he ‘sweep in’ on his chariot, just as he (as general Jehu) had swept through the Valley of Jezreel to despatch king Jehoram, and the latter’s mother, Jezebel (2 Kings 9)?

Jehu/Naaman, it seems, matches Horemheb/*Huy* in at least the following significant ways, as:

- (a) an army commander, charioteer, apparently allied to a Syrian (Assyrian) potentate; as
- (b) likely a non-Egyptian;
- (c) chronologically, in a revised context;
- (d) having reigned for 28 years;
- (e) a cruel law enforcer;
- (f) restorer of the *status quo*;
- (g) a fanatical religious reformer-king.

We know nothing from Egyptian records about the death of Horemheb. His mummy has not been found. The reason for this, I suggest, is because he was not buried in Egypt (cf. 2 Kings 10:35). Now, my revised date for the death of Horemheb, in identifying him with Jehu, would be c. 815/814 BC, were I to follow the conventional date for Jehu’s death. However, at the end of *Chapter 5* (on p. 129) I had noted the need for the inclusion into one’s chronological scheme of various interregna that Anstey had discerned. (For new calculations re the death of Jehu, see early part of next chapter).

According to Booth:⁶⁶⁵ “*Considering that Horemheb was one of the most important kings of the eighteenth dynasty [sic], who instigated major changes and reforms in what was essentially a country of chaos after the Amarna Period, there is very little evidence of his life and times. There is more evidence of the 17-year reign of Akhenaten than the 27-year reign of Horemheb*”.

The Juxtaposition of Horemheb with Ramses I

But now we arrive at a new complication in regard to the difficult matter of anchoring Horemheb precisely in Egypt’s dynastic history. Horemheb, a quasi-pharaoh even during the reign of Tutankhamun, and, with Ay, designated as heir to the throne, is now found even, apparently, to have shared a co-regency with Ramses I, the first of the Ramessides. Did Horemheb, after the death of Tutankhamun, rule simultaneously with Ramses I?

⁶⁶² *Op. cit.*, p. 217.

⁶⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 226.

⁶⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶⁵ *People of Ancient Egypt*, p. 164.

Zwick tells of Aldred's discussion of the cartouches of Ramses I and Horemheb found together on the same blocks of stone:⁶⁶⁶

A short stone (ca. 10.7 cm), probably broken off of a larger piece, reworked with 3 of its sides polished, bears the hieroglyphic name of Horemheb and Ramses I. Cyril Aldred concluded on the basis of this item that there was a co-regency between the two. One side, we call it A), bears the "titulary of King Horemheb, ... giving the end of his Horus name, his nebty-name in full, and the beginning of his Golden Horus name; B) gives the end of his Horus-name, and his prenomen preceded by the titles of *nsw bity* and *nb t3wy*. C) gives part of the middle titulary of King Ramesses I, viz. the end of his Horus-name, his nebty-name in full and the beginning of his prenomen preceded by the title of *nsw bity*. The juxtaposing of the titularies of these two kings on the same monument without any traces of usurpation implies that it was made during a co-regency between them and not that a monument of Horemheb was completed by his successor Ramses I. This presumption is strengthened by the form of the nebty-name of Ramesses I which is given here as *whm rnpwt mī 'Itm* 'repeating years like Atum', for which reading we are indebted to Cerny, and not the more usual *h'm nsw mī 'Itm*, 'arising as King like Atum': for it is extremely improbable that two versions of the nebty-name of Ramesses I would have been composed during the mere sixteen months of his brief reign. Moreover, what we may identify as the latter part of his nebty-name as given on the monuments cited by Gauthier is more appropriate to a sovereign who has achieved sole rule".

What conclusion should be drawn from this surprising hard evidence? Should it lead us to conclude that we have virtually three pharaohs in harness together after Tutankhamun: namely, Ay, Horemheb and Ramses I, all at once laying claim to the throne of Egypt?

Or, was Ramses I the same person as Ay; this stone inscription thus providing yet another documentary example of the close partnership that had prevailed between Ay and Horemheb? If so, then the foreigner, Ay, must have been the founder of the Ramesside line, and the father of Seti I.

Again, should Horemheb and Ramses I be simply identified as just the one ruler?

Or is there yet another explanation? I am going to be suggesting that there is.

Ramses I is, for all his dynastic importance, yet another obscure character in Egyptology; at least under that particular name, or under his throne name, *Menpehtire*. Thought to have reigned for little more than a year - in Sothic terms the famous 'Era of Menophres', dated by Meyer to 1321/20 BC (as discussed in *Chapter 1*, on p. 12) - and to have been actually elevated to power by Horemheb, there appears to be little documentary evidence for this pharaoh.

Gardiner has given the following meagre information about Ramses I:⁶⁶⁷

⁶⁶⁶ *Op. cit.*, with reference to C. Aldred's 'Two Monuments of the Reign of Horemheb', pp. 100ff.

⁶⁶⁷ *Op. cit.*, pp. 247-248.

... a man from the north-eastern corner of the Delta whom Ḥaremḥab raised to the exalted rank of vizer. Pra´messe, as he was called until he dropped the definite article at the beginning of his name to become the king known to us as Ramessēs I, was of relatively humble origin

The statues ... portray Pra´messe as a royal scribe squatting upon his haunches The half-opened papyrus on his lap enumerates the various high offices to which his lord had raised him Most significant of all is his claim to have been ‘deputy of the King in Upper and Lower Egypt’, as Ḥaremḥab had been before him [Ramses I] was not destined to enjoy the royal power for long. Manetho, as quoted by Josephus, allows him only one year and four months of reign, a span not necessarily contradicted by the dating in year 2 on the sole dated monument which we possess, a stela from Wādy Ḥalfa now in the Louvre.

Before concluding that: “... Ramessēs I’s monuments in other parts are very scanty. ...”. Ramses I, under that name, is so briefly mentioned in other books that I have consulted, or even not mentioned at all, that there is nothing worthwhile to quote from them about him.⁶⁶⁸ Grimal at least offers this much:⁶⁶⁹

Ramesses I was not of royal blood. He came from a long line of soldiers whose homeland was in the eastern Delta Ramesses married the daughter of another soldier, Satre, who gave him a son, the future Sethos I. Through his Golden Horus name of ‘He who confirms Maat throughout the Two Lands’. Ramesses I indicated his desire to carry on the work of Horemheb.

... The brevity of Ramesses I’s reign precludes a proper evaluation of the immediate consequences of his policies, but the contents of his tomb in the Valley of the Kings (KV 16) suggest that his inspiration came primarily from the past. The only decoration in the tomb is from the *Book of Gates*, modelled on that of Horemheb, but the funerary equipment ... is closer in style to the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty than the reign of his son Sethos.

One might firstly think, in this new context, to identify Ramses I with Ay, given that Ramses I was thought to have been, like Ay, an aged pharaoh of short reign. Moreover, the juxtaposition of the name of Ramses I with that of Horemheb, as discussed above, could be taken as indicating a co-regency between the closely-associated pair. Furthermore, as we shall read in the following chapter, Ramses I (*Menpeḥtire*), had concluded a treaty with the Hittite emperor, Suppiluliumas, as indeed we know Ay to have done under his guise of EA’s *Aziru* (refer back to *Chapter 3*, p. 57, n. 13).

However, there may also be a reason why I think that Ay may not be a likely candidate for Ramses I, the father of the 19th dynasty. Ay, if *Aziru*, is - as we saw in our discussion of the Papyrus Harris - referred to by the Ramessides in quite an impersonal way, as if ruling over Egypt as a usurper (“empty years”), in a heavy-handed manner.

⁶⁶⁸ E.g. B. Trigger, *et al.*, *Ancient Egypt: A Social History*; D. Brewer *et al.*, *Egypt and the Egyptians*; S. Donadoni (ed.), *The Egyptians*; P. Newby, *op. cit.*

⁶⁶⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 245-246.

He (whether he be *Ay* or a presumed later person, e.g. *Bay*, see below) is there contrasted with pharaoh Seti-nakht, the restorer of order. The papyrus text certainly creates a miserable impression of *Aziru's* time; one that has reminded Černý in fact of *Bay's* era. Thus Gardiner has written, with reference to Černý:⁶⁷⁰

The sole specific fact recorded is the emergence of a Syrian condottiere who gained mastery over the entire land; the identity of this foreigner has been much debated, the most interesting suggestion, due to Černý, being that we have here a veiled reference to the 'king-maker' Bay

By stark contrast, the so-called 20th dynasty Ramessides looked to the founder of that dynasty, Seti-nakht, as a hero, and it is he, not *Aziru*, who is celebrated in the papyrus:⁶⁷¹ "But the writer's *only purpose* here was to extol the new sovereign of Egypt ... Setnakhte ...". Gardiner, having highlighted the contrast, then has to fall back here upon that stock phrase:⁶⁷² "*Little is known* about Setnakhte except that he was the father of the great king Ramessēs III and the husband of the latter's mother Tiye-merenēse". According to Grimal:⁶⁷³ "[Seti-nakht] ... announced that he had 'driven out the usurper' ... and Papyrus Harris I cites him as the reorganizer of the country".

Ramses I I suggest, rather than being Horemheb's predecessor, was in fact his son and successor. If so, then he was certainly 'a chip off the old block'; he being "from a long line of soldiers" like Horemheb; an old-fashioned pharaoh like Horemheb surely was (as mentioned on p. 219); 'confirming *ma'at*' like Horemheb and desirous of 'carrying on the work of Horemheb'; whose name is juxtaposed on an inscription with Horemheb's and whose tomb decoration was modelled on Horemheb's. I tentatively conclude therefore (to be greatly elaborated upon in the next chapter) that Ramses I was in fact the very son of our Dynastic King of *Chapter 4* and of this *Chapter 10*. This would have enormous chronological implications. It would mean that, given my view that Horemheb was Jehu, king of Israel, then Ramses I could well be Jehu's son and successor, Jehoahaz of Israel (2 Kings 10:35). This further means that, not just Jehu can now be chronologically set in relation to Egypt, but that the entire dynasty of Jehu can now be anchored in a revised fashion to the 19th dynasty of Egypt.

To conclude such, though, would immediately raise the problem of pharaonic mummies, given that, e.g. whilst Jehoahaz was buried in Samaria (13:9), the mummy of Ramses I may be known. Though, according to Ikram and Dodson, this is open to serious doubt:⁶⁷⁴

Ramesses [I] was originally buried in the valley of the Kings (KV 16), and was probably moved later to the Deir el-Bahari cache, where a coffin bearing his name was found; but his body has never been identified. It is possible that it was his mummy that was sold by the nineteenth-century robbers to a pair of ladies who later discarded it in the Nile.

⁶⁷⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 281-282.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 282. Emphasis added.

⁶⁷² *Ibid.* Emphasis added.

⁶⁷³ *Op. cit.*, p. 271.

⁶⁷⁴ *The Mummy in Ancient Egypt*, p. 325,

The implication of having Ramses I as Jehoahaz of Israel, if such be the case, is that the celebrated Ramesside line was not native Egyptian, but ‘Syrian’/Israelite, though - as I have argued - of ‘Indo-European’ origins. Horemheb and his presumed dynasty will in fact turn out to be a most important dynastic link in Egyptian history. In the brief ‘Art-Historical’ section at the end of this chapter, we shall find that Horemheb appears to have some connection with both the 25th Ethiopian dynasty, through Hezekiah’s contemporary, Tirhakah - even leading Velikovsky actually to date Horemheb to the time of Hezekiah and Sennacherib - and with the 22nd Libyan dynasty. Any 25th dynasty connection, for instance, may have been established when Horemheb - whom I identified in this chapter with the conqueror of Nubia (and Viceroy of Nubia), general *Huy*, and Amenhotep *Huy*, ‘king’s son of Kush’⁶⁷⁵ - had been heavily involved with this southern region.

To conclude that the two names (Horemheb’s and Ramses I’s) found on the blocks of stone, as discussed above, also pertain to, respectively, Jehu and his son/successor, Jehoahaz, may perhaps serve to achieve a number of happy results, namely:

- It would be a perfect confirmation of the view that Horemheb was equally close to the 18th dynasty as he was to the 19th dynasty: the ‘bridge’ or ‘link’, so to speak;
- It would ideally account for how the tomb paintings of the tomb of Ramses I can be so much like those of Horemheb;
- It would also account fully for the similarity of Ramses I’s titles of “Conductor of the Chariot of His Majesty,” “Deputy of His Majesty in North and South,” “Fanbearer of the King on His Right Hand”, as Gardiner has noted, with those of Horemheb.⁶⁷⁶

Finally, it would make unnecessary Velikovsky’s locating of Horemheb to EOH, as well as Courville’s complicated interpretation of Josephus:⁶⁷⁷ “We have here the peculiar situation of the reign of one son of Ramses I (Harmhab) preceding his father on the throne, while his successor was another son of Ramses I (namely Seti I)”.

One might draw the conclusion from 2 Kings 13:3 that Hazael (hence Ay) had outlived Jehu (hence Horemheb), since Hazael - along with his son, Ben-Hadad II - was still giving trouble to Jehu’s son, Jehoahaz of Israel, presumably after Jehu’s death.

⁶⁷⁵ Ikram and Dodson give evidence that I think shows this official to have been close in time to Ramses II: “The granite sarcophagus of Amunhotpe [Amenhotep]-Huy was a curious specimen. It dates to the reign of Ramesses II and is most unusually found in a re-used context at Memphis”. *Op. cit.*, p. 261.

⁶⁷⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 248.

⁶⁷⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 287.

Though, from the Egyptian perspective, Horemheb appears to have outlasted Ay as an influence. Eventually the tension that had been building up between the two triumvirs (Ay and Horemheb) may have exploded in all-out enmity, with Horemheb apparently defacing Ay's inscriptions. According to Brier, "...even at Aye's [Ay's] mortuary temple, his name was replaced with Horemheb's cartouches".⁶⁷⁸ Though this could have been the work of the later 19th dynasty (Jehu-ide) rulers. But Brier has badly underestimated Ay in his claim on the same page that: "[Ay] is remembered today only because of his association with Tutankhamen". Velikovsky has discussed the vengeful assault upon the memory of Ay in the context of the *Oedipus* legend.⁶⁷⁹ According to Taylor:⁶⁸⁰ "*Kings of the 19th Dynasty were to regard [Horemheb] as the founder of their line, and this probably explains why a number of tombs and officials, as well as that of Ramesses II's sister, the princess Tia, were deliberately placed near his Saqqara tomb*".

Some Further Art-Historical Notes Seemingly in Favour of this Revision

(a) Velikovsky on Horemheb and the neo-Assyrians

Velikovsky was not far wrong I think in his arguing for a neo-Assyrian era placement for Horemheb; though not as late as Sennacherib. In favour of his view, he had described this evidence of "the Assyrian way of riding horses" as depicted on the northern (Memphite) tomb of Horemheb (refer back also to pp. 80-81 of this thesis):⁶⁸¹

Another fragment from the ... tomb of ... Haremhab ... has a scene chiseled in low relief showing a horse rider between groups of what appear to be soldiers and laborers A horse rider is practically unknown from Egyptian art—the Egyptians used horses to draw chariots or wagons, but not to ride horseback. ... "A person is shown mounted on a horse without a saddle—a representation most unique *rarissime* ... in Egyptian art, and the person has not the appearance of an Egyptian, though he holds in his hand an emblem of a dignitary . . ."

... But this was the Assyrian way of riding horses—never with a saddle ... [differing] greatly from the ways they are presented in Egyptian, Mycenaean, or Scythian reliefs The design of the horse with its rider on the stone plate in the Bologna collection from the ... tomb of Haremhab is not Egyptian, but clearly Assyrian. The prancing horse under a rider with one of the front legs raised from the ground, and also its mane arrangement, and the way the artist generally treats the horse, are eminently Assyrian. The Egyptian steed, never for horseback riding and regularly drawing a chariot whether in war or in hunt, has traditionally two forelegs raised, thus charging in gallop, differs in every detail from the horse under the rider on the Bologna fragment from Haremhab's bas-relief.

⁶⁷⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 210.

⁶⁷⁹ *Oedipus and Akhnaton*, ch: "King Ay and a 'Tumult of Hatred'."

⁶⁸⁰ *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, p. 138.

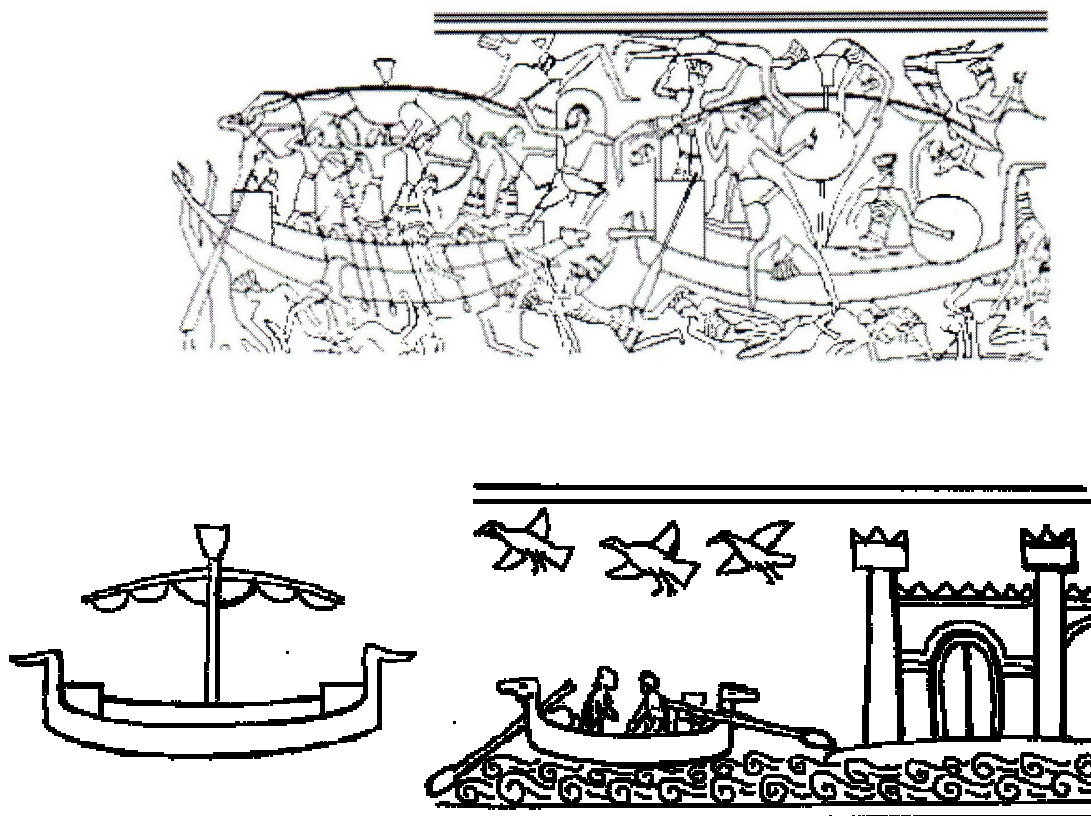
⁶⁸¹ *The Assyrian Conquest*, part II: "Haremhab's Contemporaries", (un-numbered pages). See also Velikovsky's published work on Haremhab and Tirhaka in *Kronos* III:3 (Spring, 1978), pp. 17-20, specifically pp. 17-18; and *Kronos* IV:3 (Spring 1979), pp. 5-14.

(b) The ‘Sea Peoples’ and the neo-Assyrians

De Meester has discerned a likeness between the ships of the Sea Peoples and ships depicted in neo-Assyrian art at the time of Shalmaneser III, presumably centuries later.⁶⁸²

The Sea Peoples had typical ships with two animal heads on the bow and poop. *The only other representation of such ships that I know is on the bronze door ornaments of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III (around 850 BC) from Balawat, now in the British Museum.* Sandars does not show the door ornaments in her book, probably because they are supposed to date from a much later period. Ships with only one animal head are more common.

Figure 9: Sea Peoples’ Ships and Shalmaneser III’s Depiction of Ships



⁶⁸² ‘Ramses III and the Sea Peoples’, section “The Sea Peoples”. Emphasis added.

Figure 10: Foreign Captives on Medinet Habu Relief



“On this relief in Medinet Habu six captives are depicted. They are, from left to right: 1) a Hittite (with pigtail), 2) an Amorite (he looks very much like the prisoners on Horemheb’s reliefs), 3) a Tyeker (TKRY), 4) a SRDN of the sea (in my opinion, probably a Carian; SRDNs and Carians served as mercenaries for the Egyptians), 5) a S... and 6) a TRS of the sea (in my opinion, a Trojan). If the TRS really is a Trojan, it is strange that he looks like a Phoenician, with a crooked nose and a cap. *He also resembles the ambassadors of king Jehu* [in the Black Obelisk depiction]...”.

(c) Intriguing Connections Between Horemheb and the TIP

Ethiopians

The appearance of Horemheb in an inscription with Tirhakah ruler of Ethiopia, a contemporary of king Hezekiah and Sennacherib (2 Kings 19:9), led Velikovsky to conclude that Horemheb had belonged to an era much later than the late C14th BC accredited to him by the conventional chronology, and that he was in actual fact a contemporary of this Tirhakah of the 25th (Ethiopian) in the C7th BC. Thus he wrote in an unpublished work:⁶⁸³

... In this reconstruction Haremhab and Tirhaka, the Ethiopian, are contemporaries; in the conventional version of history they are separated by more than six centuries, Haremhab being dated to the late fourteenth and Tirhaka to the early seventh. A certain scene, carved on one of the walls of a small Ethiopian temple at Karnak, shows them together. The scene proves not only the contemporaneity of Haremhab and Tirhaka, but also permits to establish a short period in their relations from which it dates.

Given, though, that Egyptian monuments sometimes represented two pharaohs of completely different eras, together, e.g. “... Egyptian artwork shows [the 12th dynasty’s] Sesostri I seated side by side with [the 18th dynasty’s] Amenhotep I ...”,⁶⁸⁴ I cannot agree with Velikovsky that the particular carving to which he referred necessarily “proves the contemporaneity of Haremhab and Tirhaka”.

⁶⁸³ “Haremhab’s Contemporaries”.

⁶⁸⁴ According to C. McDowell, ‘The Egyptian Prince Moses’, p. 5, fig. 1.

Though I do believe that these two kings were far closer in time (approximately a century apart) than the “more than six centuries” gap separating them in the conventional history, and that there was some sort of relationship between them.

Libyans

Montgomery has also found this apparent connection between Horemheb and one of the Libyan pharaohs:⁶⁸⁵

[Horemheb's] cartouche appears on the tomb of a Shoshenq ... which was excavated in Saqqara by Badawi The wealth of the tomb would suggest Osorkon IV. Haremhab's cartouche is carved on the architrave, written on his shoulder with no attempt to erase it. Also, a picture on an outside wall shows a king performing a ritual dance. A cartouche of Seti-Merenptah ... of the 19th Dynasty, is still recognizable on the water flask in his right hand. Badawi assumed that these blocks had been reused from the 19th Dynasty tombs nearby
....

The apparent link between Horemheb and certain TIP royalty will be a matter to consider in the next two chapters.

⁶⁸⁵ A. Montgomery, 'A Chronological Model of the First and Second Millennium', as cited by Aitchison, 'Haremhab', p. 2.

From the Death of the Great Dynastic King to the Dawn of Hezekiah's Era

A Preliminary Note

My revised chronology here of the Ramesside era and TIP, to the dawn of Hezekiah, largely based on what I have so far determined, will be controlled by the following factors: (i) my broad acceptance (though with significant modifications) of Velikovsky's 18th dynasty revision; (ii) acceptance of the standard view that the 19th dynasty followed on from the 18th (beginning on p. 274, I shall give solid reasons, mainly genealogical, for rejecting Velikovsky's separation of the 18th from the 19th); (iii) my identification of Horemheb with the biblical Jehu (d. 814 BC, conventional date), and so the Jehu-ide succession with the Ramesside succession (to be developed); and (iv) the three interregna, combined, for Judah and Israel prior to the fall of Samaria (as referred to in *Chapter 5*, p. 129).

Introduction

We left the previous chapter at c. 814 BC, as the conventional date for the death of Jehu, but not the date that I shall actually be following. (See next page for new calculations, based on my inclusion of the interregna as discussed by Anstey). Were one to follow this standard date (c. 814), then there would still be the need for bridging a gap of 8-9 decades (c. 814-727) in order to reach the beginning of the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah and his Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries. I also, towards the end of the last chapter, proposed that Ramses I, the presumed founder of the 19th (Ramesside) dynasty,⁶⁸⁶ was the actual son of Horemheb/Jehu, and so, possibly, was Jehoahaz. This would inevitably mean that Ramses II 'the Great' - the pharaoh who has perhaps been the most controversial major pharaoh in terms of the revision, and the most difficult for revisionists to assign an appropriate place to - the grandson of Ramses I, ought to span the greater part of this interim period (814-727), given his reign of almost seven decades. And this is indeed the approximate revised period to which Courville, with proposed dates of c. 792/791-726/725 BC for Ramses II,⁶⁸⁷ and Gammon, with dates of 804-738 BC,⁶⁸⁸ have assigned this pharaoh.

However, when Anstey's chronological adjustments in regard to interregna are taken into account, then the standard Jehu-ide dynasty dates must be raised by some several decades. This has the advantage of course of providing a more expansive chronology; something for which revisionists are always most grateful.

⁶⁸⁶ Coincidentally, Gammon has revised the one year reign of Ramses I to 814-813; though with no intention whatsoever of identifying Ramses I with Jehoahaz. 'The Place of Horemheb in Egyptian History', p. 56.

⁶⁸⁷ *The Exodus Problem and its Ramifications*, vol. I, cf. pp. 292 & 297. Courville would give slightly different dates for Ramses II in 'On the Survival of Velikovsky's Thesis in *Ages in Chaos*', p. 71, but his historico-biblical conclusions would remain the same.

⁶⁸⁸ *Op. cit, ibid.*

And though I noted in *Chapter 5* that I am concerned with precise biblical dates for EOH only, I also stated that the interregna, combined, were too substantial a chronological factor to be passed over.

I also mentioned there that standard chronologists (including Thiele) have generally not taken into account these interregna. Nor, indeed, have revisionists Courville and Gammon; though other revisionists (e.g. Hickman, Sieff) have, as I shall discuss in a moment. Here is how Mauro has calculated the 22-year interregnum for Israel:⁶⁸⁹

There was also an interregnum in Israel between the reign of Jeroboam II and that of Zechariah; for Jeroboam's 41st year, which was his last, coincided with the 15th of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Zechariah did not succeed until the 38th of Uzziah (2 Kings 14:29; 15:8). This makes an interval of 22 years.

Mauro had noted a paragraph earlier that "Uzziah did not come to the throne until the 27th year of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 15:1)". He also calculated an 8-year interregnum period for Israel between Hoshea's slaying of Pekah and Hoshea's becoming king of Israel.⁶⁹⁰

Revisionists Hickman⁶⁹¹ and Sieff,⁶⁹² on the other hand - who have, like Courville and Gammon, accepted that the 19th dynasty followed on from the 18th - have taken into account the interregna periods. Whilst, as thus might be expected, Sieff has arrived at dates earlier than Courville and Gammon for Ramses II (I am presuming c. 850-780 BC in Sieff's case, based on his assessment of Merenptah's beginning at c. 780 BC⁶⁹³), Hickman surprisingly gives 775 BC (even later than Courville) for year 1 of Ramses II.⁶⁹⁴ My own chronology for Ramses II will now be based on my new proposal (though perfectly in accord with the view that "*many of Horemheb's successors in the 19th Dynasty considered him to be the founder of their line*"⁶⁹⁵) that Horemheb (my Jehu) was in fact Ramses II's great-grandfather.

Now Horemheb's year of death will need to be adjusted (based on Mauro's inclusion of three interregna) from the usual c. 814 BC to 867 BC.⁶⁹⁶ Starting now at 867 BC, the 95 years of Jehu-ide dynasty post Jehu (as calculated by Anstey and Mauro), i.e., Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II and Zechariah, should close at 772 BC; a mere 50 years before the Fall of Samaria. Taking Jehu as Horemheb, the father of Ramses I (or Jehoahaz), then that would likely mean that the main part of the 19th dynasty, including Seti I, Ramses II and Merenptah, would have ceased by 772 BC. It remains to be seen how well Jehu and his four descendants can be aligned, in a revised context, with Horemheb (already explained) and the four great Ramessides. Firstly I shall give (i) a *general* assessment, with pros and cons, of such a revised alignment. Then I shall (ii) *specifically* examine each individual pharaoh in relation to his proposed biblical counterpart.

⁶⁸⁹ *The Wonders of Bible Chronology*, p. 59. He also discusses there an 11-year interregnum for Judah.

⁶⁹⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 57, 59-60.

⁶⁹¹ 'The Chronology of Israel and Judah'.

⁶⁹² 'The Libyans in Egypt: Resolving the Third Intermediate Period'.

⁶⁹³ *Ibid*, cf. pp. 29 & 31.

⁶⁹⁴ *Op. cit*, p. 18, Table 5.

⁶⁹⁵ Dunn, 'Horemheb, the Last King of Egypt's 18th Dynasty'.

⁶⁹⁶ Mauro, and revisionist Hickman, both of whom follow Anstey, give approx. 145 years as the span from the fall of Samaria back to the death of Jehu. Cf. Mauro, *op. cit*, pp. 55, 57; Hickman, *op. cit, ibid*.

(i) A General Estimate

I have already, especially in *Chapter 10*, provided a detailed account of how our Dynastic King, Jehu/Horemheb, can serve as both a king of Israel and a pharaoh of post-Amarna Egypt. We even read that the biblical span of 28 years, applied to Jehu, is also accorded to the reign of Horemheb. And we learned that, since the mummy of Horemheb is unknown, there is no added complication in regard to the fact that Jehu was buried in Samaria. But does the same sort of consistency with **A. Jehu**, apply to Jehu's four successors, when these are matched to Horemheb's four successors in the 19th dynasty? Thus: **B. Jehoahaz**, as Ramses I; **C. Jehoash**, as Seti I; **D. Jeroboam II**, as Ramses II; and **E. Zechariah**, as Merenptah?

B. Jehoahaz = Ramses I

Though Ramses I is not thought to have been even a relative of the supposedly son-less Horemheb,⁶⁹⁷ but merely an un-related official appointed by him to be his successor, Josephus seems to say otherwise:⁶⁹⁸ "... *his son Harmais [Horemheb?] for 4 years 1 month, his son Ramesses for 1 year 4 months, his son Harmesses Miamun for 66 years 2 months ...*". Whilst, oddly, Seti I is omitted here, we seem to have the succession that I am tentatively proposing: namely, Horemheb, *his son* Ramses I (no Seti), then Ramses II. That is a promising start. "*Historians like to think of [Ramses I] as the first king of the nineteenth dynasty and of the line of Ramesside kings although Horemheb really started the changes that could be seen as the beginnings of a new era*".⁶⁹⁹

Problems arise however after that. Whereas Jehoahaz reigned for 17 years (2 Kings 13:1), Ramses I is thought to have reigned for a mere 1-2 years. Moreover Jehoahaz, too, was buried at Samaria (13:9), whilst there is supposed to be an Egyptian mummy of Ramses I. Though I noted Ikram's and Dodson's objection to this on p. 248 of the previous chapter. And most recently Clayton has written that "*Ramesses [I]'s mummy may not have survived (it certainly has not been identified) ...*".⁷⁰⁰

Despite the fact that Jehoahaz was oppressed by the Syrians virtually all the days of his reign (13:3-7), the Second Book of Kings also speaks of "*all that he did, including his might*", without however bothering to elaborate upon this. In other words, there was more to Jehoahaz than is recorded in the Old Testament. A possible explanation in my context is that Jehoahaz, like Jehu, reigned over Israel for a substantial period of time, but only effectively over Egypt for a short period (respectively, 28 and 7-8 years for Jehu; 17 and 1-2 years for Jehoahaz). A significantly longer than 1-2 years of reign for Ramses I would however serve to ease an art-historical problem (refer back to p. 247): namely, the apparent dissimilarity between the funerary equipment of Ramses I and that of his son, Seti I – extremely hard to explain if Ramses I had actually reigned for only 1-2 years.

⁶⁹⁷ According to Booth, *People of Ancient Egypt*, p. 159: "*The body of what is thought to be Mutnodjmet [Horemheb's wife], appeared to have died in childbirth and the pelvis suggests that she had given birth many times. This would suggest that they had only girls ...*".

⁶⁹⁸ *Op. cit.*, citing Josephus, *ibid* (fr. 50 97/98).

⁶⁹⁹ Booth, *op. cit.*, *ibid*.

⁷⁰⁰ *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, p. 141.

Also, Ramses I's work in Egypt may have been effected right at the beginning of his reign. The *'all that Jehoahaz did, including his might'*, unelaborated upon in the Second Book of Kings, could now, for instance, incorporate his reign, however brief, over Egypt.

C. Jehoash = Seti I

With Jehoash and Seti I we gain a much better general fit than with **B**. The former reigned for 14 years, after a 3-year co-regency with his father;⁷⁰¹ while a *"fourteen-year reign"* is also the figure attributed to Seti I by Grimal.⁷⁰² Jehoash had some significant, though not total, success in a series of battles in Syro-Palestine (2 Kings 13:15-19), especially early in his reign, as did Seti I.

The mummy problem now definitely arises, though, with the well-known mummy of pharaoh Seti I in Egypt, whereas Jehoash was buried in Samaria (14:29). When I come to discuss *"Ramesside Mummies"* on pp. 310-313, though, I shall consider the possibilities of (a) wrong identification and/or (b) removal of mummies from a previous location.

D. Jeroboam II = Ramses II

Here, again, there is a generally encouraging fit, with, in both cases, a reign of more than four decades. Though Ramses II, of course, went even two decades beyond that. Both were glorious kings, builders and conquerors. Ramses II, a genuine megalomaniac, is the best known pharaoh of Egypt (with perhaps the exception of Tutankhamun for his gold), whilst Jeroboam II managed to extend Israel's domains back to the extent that they had been during the glorious reign of king Solomon (2 Kings 14:25). *"Although the Bible gives scant space to Jeroboam II (just three paragraphs), this king was perhaps the greatest of the post-Schism rulers of Israel"*.⁷⁰³ And, just as the last several decades of the reign of Ramses II were ineffectual, so was there a two-decade plus interregnum of confusion following Jeroboam II's rule in Israel. The interregnum would perhaps account for the difference in reign lengths. The aged pharaoh had ceased to be able to retain his rule over Israel, but had continued rather ineffectually in Egypt for two more decades. The king's great age might also provide one reason at least for the *fact* of this 22-year interregnum in Israel, about which the Bible offers hardly any detail at all.

Once again, there may be the mummy problem, with that of Ramses II being well-known in Egypt; whereas *"Jeroboam slept with his ancestors, the kings of Israel"* (14:29).

E. Zechariah = Merenptah

Zechariah, who reigned for six months, is completely obscure: Merenptah, somewhat so. According to David, Merenptah's was a *"ten-year reign"*.⁷⁰⁴ The more widely accepted figure is *"just under a decade"*.⁷⁰⁵ In **E**. (beginning on p. 297), I shall consider more closely the suitability of Merenptah for Zechariah.

⁷⁰¹ Mauro, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

⁷⁰² *A History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 247. 13-15 years seems to be the general estimate.

⁷⁰³ Rohl, *The Lost Testament*, p. 443.

⁷⁰⁴ *Discovering Ancient Egypt*, p.163.

⁷⁰⁵ Thus Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

The ‘Glasgow School’ of revision had done an excellent job in showing that the battles fought by Seti I, and Ramses II, were basically against the same sorts of enemies, Syrians and Hittites, in the same sorts of regions, as those of the early Jehu-ides.⁷⁰⁶ The conclusion then was, not that the 19th dynasty Ramessides were Jehu-ides, as I think, but that the oppressed Jehu-ides received help from the more potent of the 19th dynasty pharaohs, Seti I and Ramses II ‘the Great’. So, even if I have gone too far in my bold suggestion that the 19th dynasty was in fact ‘Syrian’ Jehu-ide, I would nonetheless confidently accept the Glasgow view - now however discarded by its chief exponents - that the Jehu-ides were contemporaneous with the main 19th dynasty rulers. Though I myself would have Seti I more adjacent to Jehoash than to Jehoahaz, hence a little later than then proposed by Dr. Bimson. Now, most interestingly in regard to this, the biblical span for the Jehu-ides, 124 years,⁷⁰⁷ is almost identical to Grimal’s estimate for (my equivalent era) Horemheb to Merenptah (1323-1202), 121 years.⁷⁰⁸ Given my foundational argument, that Horemheb was Jehu, then my chronology for the 19th dynasty Ramessides is going to be very accurate indeed even if these were not - as I think they may well be - the Jehu-ides.

Summation

In general, then, we have a broad similarity amongst the succession **A-E**, at least, in that we have there five successive kings of Israel (including Jehu) loosely aligned to five successive pharaohs, over an approximately same period of time, with a certain feebleness in **B**. following the strong reign of **A**; a revival, though not complete, with **C**; a glorious and outstanding era of building and conquest, followed by a late period of weakness again, with **D**; and an obscure and relatively insignificant **E**.

Moreover, there is some overall degree of similarity in a Palestine at times under extreme pressure from the Syro-Hittites.

In terms of reign length, though, Ramses I is an extremely poor fit for Jehoahaz; whilst Jeroboam II, despite his exceptionally long reign of 41 years, still falls well short of Ramses II’s 66-67 years. The problem of mummies in **A-E** ranges from extreme, through uncertain, to non-existent. What I am firmly holding to is that the era of the main Ramessides was contemporaneous with the Jehu-ides. That at least provides us with a basic general chronology (revised) for these Ramessides all the way down to within comfortable range of EOH. Whether I can take things that step further though, to secure the Ramesside chronology by equating individual Ramesside pharaohs with individual Jehu-ides, as just outlined, still needs to be determined. Before specifically examining in detail each of the above four cases of Jehu’s successors (**B-E**), I should just like to suggest how I might begin to take steps to resolve the differences in reign lengths, in some cases, and also the mummy problem, in some cases.

Here, then, is the basic pattern of events as I envisage it.

⁷⁰⁶ Most notably J. Bimson, ‘*Dating the Wars of Seti I*’ and ‘*An Eighth-Century Date for Merenptah*’, including a section on Ramses II co-authored by Bimson and P. James, pp. 60-61.

⁷⁰⁷ Mauro’s estimate, *op. cit.*, pp. 55-56.

⁷⁰⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 392-393.

Jehu, a long-time governor and military commander in Syro-Palestine for the EA pharaohs, eventually became king of Israel where he ruled for 28 years, before he was buried in Samaria. He also directly ruled Egypt for a period of time, post-Amarna. Whilst this is also given as 28 years, his effective rule there is thought to have been more like 7/8 years (perhaps only 4 years), as we read. This establishes a general rule, that these Jehu-ides were actual kings of Israel, who also ruled Egypt (even Syria?) to a greater or lesser extent. The Old Testament scribes in their selectivity, as previously discussed, did not as a rule exhibit much interest in what was happening in Egypt at the time. In some cases I shall suggest that, depending on their strength, the rule of these Jehu-ides over the more prestigious Egypt was even more significant than was their rule over Israel.

The situation of mummies is rather more problematical. It seems that these kings were customarily buried in Samaria. That is not recorded, though, in the case of Zechariah; or even specifically (though implied) with Jeroboam II. Horemheb is not a problem, because there is no mummy attributed to him. Also, uncertainty apparently pertains to the alleged mummy of Ramses I. But with Seti I and Ramses II, especially, there seems to be a well-established mummy each in Egypt conflicting with the idea of a burial in Samaria; though I shall have some cause to query the case of Ramses II in particular. We know that the coffins and mummies of these pharaohs were moved around. My suggestion will be that, if I am right in identifying the Ramesside dynasty as Jehu-ide, then whatever *genuine* mummy of these Ramessides we do now possess must have been moved later from Samaria (where they were mummified due to close Egyptian connections) to Egypt.

(ii) *A More Specific Account*

THE RAMESSIDES

The accepted Ramesside 19th dynasty succession, spanning c. 1300 BC-1200 BC,⁷⁰⁹ is:

Ramses I;
 Seti (Sethos) I ‘the Great’;
 Ramses II ‘the Great’;
 Merenptah
 Seti II Merenptah
 Amenmesse
 (Seti II)
 Siptah, Queen Tausert, or Twosre (and Bay)

This mighty Ramesside dynasty is thought to have followed Horemheb (to whose line it apparently belonged), whom I have identified as the Great Dynastic Ramesside King, also re-adjusting the latter’s year of death downwards by almost half a millennium, from c. 1300 BC (1320 BC according to Meyer’s ‘Era of Menophres’) to 867 BC, to correspond with Jehu’s death (revised dating). Thus, as I shall outline in this chapter, the almost seven decade rule of Ramses II ‘the Great’, grandson of Ramses I, would span approximately the last third of the C9th BC and the first third of the C8th BC.

⁷⁰⁹ Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, p. 445, gives BC 1309-1194? N. Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, Appendix, pp. 392-393, gives BC 1295-1188.

In *Chapter 12, 2*, I shall consider that Hezekiah's very mother, "Abi daughter of Zechariah" (2 Kings 18:2) may have been of Jehu-ide (king Zechariah's) stock.

Thankfully, the conventional sequence of the early Ramessides, at least, is secure due to a known correlation with a sequence of contemporary Hittite kings. A peace treaty between Egypt and the Hittites was signed by *Usermare Setepenre* (royal name of Ramses II), son of *Menmare* (Seti I), grandson of *Menpehtire* (Ramses I); and by *Khetasar* (Hattusilis), son of *Merosar* (Mursilis), grandson of *Seplel* (Suppiluliumas).⁷¹⁰

Table 2: Egyptian-Hittite Syncretisms

Egyptian	Hittite
Ramses I (<i>Menpehtire</i>)	Suppiluliumas (<i>Seplel</i>)
Seti I (<i>Menmare</i>)	Mursilis (<i>Merosar</i>)
Ramses II (<i>Usermare Setepenre</i>)	Hattusilis (<i>Khetasar</i>)

This early Ramesside order in relation to the Hittite succession for this era is a vital chronological link considering the dearth of such links that so often confronts the historian. This is a rock-solid synchronism that can serve as a constant point of reference; it being especially important in the context of the revision, given the confusion that arises with the names 'Seti' and 'Sethos' in connection with the 19th dynasty (see **C.** below). Without this established sequence one might have been tempted, for instance from an art-historical perspective, to experiment with a different order for these early 19th dynasty rulers. We recall, for example (from p. 247), the apparent dissimilarity between the funerary equipment of Ramses I and that of his son, Seti I.

We can be extremely grateful for this much certainty at least (**Table 2** above). For I shall soon be arguing that the very last part of the 19th dynasty in the conventional scheme in reality pre-dates these kings. And of course I am also (as explained above) differing most significantly from convention (and indeed from other revisionists) regarding the nature of the Ramesside 19th dynasty (apart from VLTF), by my tentatively identifying its major rulers with the Jehu-ides of Israel. Soon, too, I shall be suggesting a similar sort of ethnic shift, with a biblical base, for the 20th dynasty Ramessides, who in my revision will not entirely follow the 19th dynasty as according to convention. Furthermore, I shall be, like Courville and Velikovsky, proposing a chronological location of the 22nd dynasty different from that of the conventional sequence. And, just as Courville did, I shall be identifying the origins of the 22nd dynasty differently from the conventional viewpoint. Moreover, I shall have cause to query radically the standard duration of the TIP.

Of course, to provide a comprehensive revision of this last, most complex era of Egyptian history (TIP) would be an extremely difficult and time-consuming project, and I would be highly presumptuous were I to imagine that I could master the situation - and that largely in the space of two chapters - I am nevertheless hoping to be able to set down at least the basic outline for a far 'more acceptable alternative' to the current scheme.

Let us now continue with our comparisons between the Ramesides and the Jehu-ides.

⁷¹⁰ List taken from I. Velikovsky's, *Ramses II and His Time*, p. 65.

Basically, I must be able to show how the long-reigning Ramses II especially can find his appropriate place during the Jehu-ide dynasty, down to an early phase of the C8th BC, king Hezekiah's own century. Also to be keenly considered is how one may, in this revised context, account for the famous Victory Stele, or 'Israel Stele' so-called, of pharaoh Merenptah, son of Ramses II. This last is a document that conventional and revisionist scholars alike have found so difficult to interpret historically. (See my detailed discussion, "Interpreting Merenptah's Victory Stele", pp. 300-305).

This chapter and the next will thus afford me the opportunity of tackling those remaining two - apart from (i) TAP (refer back to discussion, pp. 230f.) - major problems for VLTF: namely, (i) where to locate Ramses II; & (ii) how to set in its proper perspective the TIP.

B. Ramses I = Jehoahaz

Ramses I is perhaps best known as the pharaoh thought to be connected with the Sothic "Era of Menophres". He was formerly the vizier Pramesse.⁷¹¹ Ramses I is considered to have been an aged official from a military background when he came to the throne of Egypt. 'Aged' and 'military background' would certainly also fit Jehoahaz, after the long *floruit* of his father. Unfortunately, as we read in the previous chapter, hardly anything is known of Ramses I. The same may be said for his possible *alter ego*, Jehoahaz. Generally, the Old Testament does not provide much detail at all about Jehu's four successors in Israel. There is no hint of any co-regency between Jehu and Jehoahaz.

I suggest that Ramses I/Jehoahaz was largely concerned with the affairs of Israel, not Egypt, having to serve there against the Syrians as Jehu's reign began to fall apart. "*In those days [Jehu's] the Lord began to trim off parts of Israel. Hazael defeated them throughout the territory of Israel ...*" (2 Kings 10:32). Though Hazael is mentioned here, the actual fighting would now most assuredly have been done by his son, Ben-Hadad II, as *Du-Teššub* - as we learned from Mursilis the Hittite - and perhaps also by his son, *Duppi-Teššub*, rather than by the aged Hazael.

Now this situation of oppression by Syria continued right through the 17-year reign of Jehoahaz, until the very end when there appears to have been some respite. "*The anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, so that He gave them repeatedly into the hand of king Hazael of Aram (Syria), then into the hand of Ben-Hadad son of Hazael*" (13:3). This led Jehoahaz to turn to God. "*Therefore the Lord gave Israel a saviour [Heb: מוֹשִׁיעַ] so that they escaped from the hand of the Arameans; and the people of Israel lived in their homes as formerly*" (vv. 4, 5).

The identity of this "saviour" has been much debated by conventional and revisionist scholars alike. In the 'Glasgow' context, which is the closest to the one that I am now proposing, candidates for the "saviour" of Jehu-ide Israel are, variously, Jehoahaz's son, Jehoash, or his son, Jeroboam II; or pharaoh Seti I; or king Adad-Nirari III of Assyria, who smashed Damascus; or Zakir of Hamath and Luash, who apparently defeated the Syrian, Ben-Hadad II.⁷¹² Rohl would later propose Shoshenq I for this "saviour".⁷¹³

⁷¹¹ Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

⁷¹² Bimson discusses the merits of all of these possible candidates for Israel's "saviour" in his 'Dating the Wars of Seti I', p. 22.

⁷¹³ *The Lost Testament*, pp. 440-442.

My own preference for the “saviour” of Israel will be Jehoash himself (see section, C, “*Israel’s ‘Saviour’*”, pp. 269-270), which does not therefore rule out pharaoh Seti I who is my proposed *alter ego* for this Jehoash.

All in all, though, the reign of Jehoahaz himself was generally a miserable one: “*Nevertheless ... Jehoahaz was left with an army of not more than fifty horsemen, ten chariots and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Aram had destroyed them and made them like dust at the threshing*” (vv. 6, 7). A pitiful remnant for the once great Jehu-ides!

C. Seti I (‘Sethos’) = Jehoash

With Seti, at least with the name Seti, or ‘Sethos’, things can become rather complicated. According to tradition - albeit late (Manetho, Josephus) - the founder of the 19th dynasty, the Ramessides, was one ‘Sethos’; a name (including the variant, ‘Seti’) that can be the cause of quite some headaches when one is confronted with the attempted unravelling, in a revised context, of the Ramessides. But I shall endeavour to make some sense of it.

I had quoted Gardiner in the previous chapter to the effect that the father of Ramses I was Sety, a simple ‘captain of troops’. And Courville has told:⁷¹⁴ “*Both Africanus and Eusebius give Sethos as the founder of Dynasty XIX*”. As I have just said, though, this is a late tradition.

Josephus is thought to have told of the famed deed of this ‘Sethos’ in the following intriguing passage in which he also outlined an apparent dynastic sequence for the Ramessides, seemingly as far as one ‘Amenophis’:⁷¹⁵

Sethos drove out Hermaeus and reigned for 59 years; then Rampses, the elder of his sons, for 66 years. Thus, after admitting that so many years had elapsed since our forefathers left Egypt, Manetho now interpolates this intruding Amenophis.

This information could also to some extent remind one of the situation at the beginning of the 20th dynasty, when the famed Seti-nakht (‘Sethos’) was reputed to have ‘driven out’ a usurper of some unspecified kind and to have restored order, and was also succeeded by a Ramses (‘Rampses’), in this latter case, Ramses III so-called. However, the identification of Josephus’s “Rampses”, who, based on his “66 years” of reign, could only have been pharaoh Ramses II ‘the Great’, seems at least assured. That is the beauty of the exceedingly long reign of Ramses II, at least, that he stands out in obscure texts like this, without any possible ambiguity; his identification being about the only certainty here. Rohl has attempted to offer a feasible interpretation of this text:⁷¹⁶

[Josephus] is clearly referring here to the first half of the [19th] dynasty and the kings Horemhab, Seti I, Ramesses II, and Merenptah. Later he adds the name of Amenophis’s son – “... Sethos, also called Ramesses after his grandfather Rampses ...” which gives us Seti II, grandson of Ramesses II.

⁷¹⁴ *The Exodus Problem*, I, p. 279.

⁷¹⁵ In *Contra Apionem* (I. fr. 54 231-232), as cited by Rohl. ‘Comments by David Rohl’, p. 17.

⁷¹⁶ *Ibid.*

But did Seti I himself ‘drive out’ anyone, as Josephus says “Sethos drove out Hermaeus”? Josephus, it seems, may have confused Seti I with another of the pharaohs Seti, e.g. Seti-nakht or Seti II. To add to the confusion, the name ‘Hermaeus’ is very much like that of ‘Harmais’, referred to in a previous passage from Josephus. Rohl, who quotes this passage, confidently identifies this ‘Harmais’ with the presumed usurper Amenmesse, conventionally dated near to the end of the 19th dynasty:⁷¹⁷

Earlier ... Josephus cites the same list of rulers with the exception of Sethos who for some reason is omitted and is substituted by his father Ramesses I:

... his son Harmais for 4 years 1 month, his son Ramesses for 1 year 4 months, his son Harmesses Miamun for 66 years 2 months, his son Amenophis for 19 years 6 months, and his son Sethos, also called Ramesses, whose power lay in his cavalry and his fleet. This king appointed his brother Harmais viceroy of Egypt ... When a considerable time had elapsed, Harmais who had been left behind in Egypt, recklessly contravened all his brother’s injunctions. He outraged the queen and proceeded to make free with the concubines; then, following the advice of friends, he began to wear a diadem and rose in revolt against his brother.

Thus, here we have the sequence of kings: Horemhab, Ramesses I, Ramesses II, Merenptah, Seti II and a certain usurper whom Josephus names as Harmais. This character must undoubtedly be Amenmesse, whose position in the dynasty has always been controversial. Josephus thus confirms in which reign the activities of Amenmesse took place.

[End of quotes]

In regard to these passages, and Manetho, I shall consider LeFlem’s view that:⁷¹⁸ “*Manetho-Josephus confused the identities of Seti I (Sethos) and Seti II (Sethosis) ...*”, and also Rohl’s comment, in response to LeFlem, that “*a certain usurper whom Josephus names as Harmais ... must undoubtedly be Amenmesse*”;⁷¹⁹ a view that LeFlem himself in fact supports. Despite the apparent similarity in name between “Harmais” and Horemheb, the latter cannot properly be placed after the “66 years” reign of Ramses II (‘Harmesses Miamun’).

I suspect that Gardiner, who claimed that the father of Ramses I was one ‘Sety, a simple captain of troops’, may also have been a victim here of a late confusion of ‘Seth’-ite identities. And who could blame him? Egyptologists in general may have become confused by the admittedly confusing traditions. However I must disagree with parts of LeFlem’s claim that this ‘Harmais’ is not the same as ‘Hermaeus’, who he says is Horemheb:⁷²⁰ “*... Armais (Amenmesse) should not be confused with the Hermaeus associated with Sethos, who corresponds to Horemheb, contemporary of Seti I*”.

⁷¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, citing Josephus, *ibid* (fr. 50 97/98).

⁷¹⁸ ‘Amenophis, Osarsiph and Arzu’, p. 14.

⁷¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 17.

⁷²⁰ *Op. cit.*, *ibid*.

All of this is extremely confusing!

It is doubtful whether pharaoh Seti I actually drove out any usurper - and least of all Horemheb the dynastic founder. I am going to suggest here that Seti I may have been confused here with the legendary Seti-nakht of the 20th dynasty. Soon also I shall be arguing that this Seti-nakht, the actual founder of that particular dynasty, was in fact king Joash of Judah (the latter bearing the same name as Jehoash of Israel, but it is customary to shorten one name so as to avoid confusion), whom we encountered in our discussions of the priest Jehoiada (Elisha). The ‘usurper’ who was driven out (more owing to the intervention of the priest than by the then child-king, Joash, who might nonetheless have taken the credit), was Queen Athaliah (and her minions); she being also the Queen Tausert of the time of Seti-nakht, thought to have reigned in the late 19th dynasty. However, since king Joash belonged late in the reign of Jehu (Horemheb), then he must pre-date the rule of Ramses I, the first Ramesside name. In this sense, then, a Seti (Seti-nakht = Joash) *was* the founder of a Ramesside line (but of the 20th, not the 19th dynasty); he being a younger contemporary of the founder of the 19th dynasty, Horemheb (Jehu). Amenmesse, who may not even have been a usurper, will be considered on pp. 306-309. Probably some of these old legends contain a mixture of events anyway; for there were various ‘usurpers’ to be ‘driven out’, such as Akhnaton; perhaps Ay; and Queen Athaliah.

Fine Tuning the Revision for Seti I and the 19th Dynasty

As in the case of Ramses II, so with his father Seti I, have revisionists had a fair amount of difficulty in determining how the latter might be fitted into their new scheme of things. Courville for instance, in his attempt to make sense of Seti I in the light of tradition, seems to have greatly complicated the matter. Determined to preserve the ‘Sethos as dynastic founder’ tradition - which I have argued above was likely a confused tradition - Courville awkwardly made Seti I that which I think he almost certainly was not: namely, the founder of what Courville has called “*a brief offshoot from Dynasty XVIII*”.⁷²¹

Velikovsky, too, would attempt to preserve the ‘Sethos as founder’ tradition; though his radical solution to the problem - and indeed to the very structure and location of the entire 19th dynasty - would differ greatly from Courville’s comparatively modest attempt (that is, within a VLTF context) to show how Seti could be the founder pharaoh.⁷²²

Velikovsky renumbered pharaoh Seti I, whom he often calls ‘Seti the Great’, as Seti II.⁷²³ The reason for this is that Velikovsky had moved the pharaoh conventionally known as Seti (or Sethos) II Merenptah (c. 1202-1196 BC) from his usual position at the end of the 19th dynasty to become a predecessor of Ramses I at the *beginning* of that dynasty; thereby preserving the tradition of a Seti (or Sethos) as founder of the dynasty. Velikovsky also removed the minor rulers, Siptah and Tausert, to the beginning of the 19th dynasty. I shall consider the merits or otherwise beginning on p. 307.

I have just noted that Queen Tausert at least most likely *did* belong to that revised era.

⁷²¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 284.

⁷²² Velikovsky’s long-awaited revision of the 19th Egyptian dynasty was the subject matter of his book, *Ramses II and His Time*.

⁷²³ See e.g. *ibid*, p. 10, n. 1.

Velikovsky's scheme also involved the identification of the 19th dynasty with that normally known as the 26th (or Saitic) dynasty of the C7th and C6th's BC. According to Velikovsky's radical proposal, Ramses II 'the Great' was the *alter ego* of the pharaoh Necho [II] who had opposed Nebuchednezzar II, the destroyer of Jerusalem (conventionally estimated at c. 587 BC). And Seti I, father of Ramses II, was to be identified with Psammetichus I, who reigned from the mid to late C7th BC.⁷²⁴ Thus the so-called 'Israel Stele' of Ramses II's son, Merenptah - whom Velikovsky identified with pharaoh Apries of the 26th dynasty - was now explained by Velikovsky as pertaining to the Babylonian Exile of the Jews by Nebuchednezzar, in the first half of the C6th BC.

Until the advent of Velikovsky's *Ramses II and his Time*, in 1978, the US and British revisionists alike had generally tended to follow and accept his reconstruction of history as proposed in his *Theses ...* and in his early *Ages in Chaos* series. But Velikovsky's new proposal, which broke radically with standard archaeology, by separating the 19th dynasty from the 18th, inserting in between two foreign dynasties (Libyan and Ethiopian) of about 150 years duration, led to a great rift amongst revisionists with many (particularly British) finding themselves unable to accept this new interpretation of the archaeology.⁷²⁵ Courville's scheme, on the other hand, which had embraced Velikovsky's major 18th dynasty syncretisms with the biblical era, firstly of Israel's Undivided Monarchy, followed by the early Divided Monarchy period, had retained the standard archaeological view that the 19th dynasty followed immediately the 18th. The 'Glasgow School' now began to test if it were possible to arrive at a revised history that would combine Velikovsky's 18th dynasty revision with the conventional archaeological sequence. Naturally now also Courville's own system, which *did* combine these two aspects, came under greater scrutiny. For a time, the efforts of the 'Glasgow School' basically converged chronologically with Courville's on major aspects of the 19th dynasty: e.g. the location of Ramses II and Merenptah (and his Stele). Though Bimson soon modified Courville's 721 BC date for the 'Israel Stele' (for more, see pp. 300-302), by re-setting it to a little earlier phase, to the Philistine campaigns of Tiglath-pileser III in the 730's BC (conventional dates).⁷²⁶

However, with the passing of time, as serious difficulties were met especially in regard to finding a compelling location for the long-reigning Ramses II himself, and also for finding sufficient space for the five TIP dynasties (21st-25th), now that the Ramessides had been brought down some 500 years on the time scale, some of the most notable contributors to the 'Glasgow School' eventually looked to locate the 19th dynasty to an earlier period - about midway between Velikovsky's and the conventional estimate. Whilst this new option now offered more chronological room in which to manoeuvre, it also meant inevitably the abandonment of all of Velikovsky's promising 18th dynasty syncretisms, including the previously highly regarded sequence of Ben-Hadad I = EA's *Abdi-ashirta* and Hazael = EA's *Aziru*. That was, I believe, a fatally wrong move.

⁷²⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 206, 212-217.

⁷²⁵ Some notable early criticisms of Velikovsky's re-location of the 19th dynasty to the Babylonian era were P. James' 'A Critique of "Ramses II and His Time"', M. Jones' 'Some Detailed Evidence From Egypt Against Velikovsky's Revised Chronology', and J. Bimson's 'An Eighth-Century Date for Merenptah'.

⁷²⁶ Bimson, 'An Eighth Century Date for Merenptah'.

Courville himself, though, persevered with a Velikovskian-based 18th dynasty, whilst rejecting Velikovsky's 19th dynasty scenario. I think that perseverance *was* necessary here, and that the promising efforts of the 'Glasgow School' came to nothing, at least for many of its former proponents, due to the eventual complete abandonment of the original scheme in favour of an entirely new approach.

Now according to Courville's system (which I first encountered in 1981, before I had actually read any of Velikovsky's own writings), Ramses II, whose reign would have terminated in 726/725 BC, must have been the biblical "*King So of Egypt*" with whom Hoshea of Israel conspired against the king of Assyria (2 Kings 17:4). Courville had plausibly (in his context) suggested that the reason why 'So' was unable to help Hoshea of Israel was because the Egyptian king was, as Ramses II, now right at the end of his very long reign, and hence aged and feeble. Courville had looked to find the name 'So' amongst the many names of Ramses II, and had opted for the rather obscure 'So' element in that pharaoh's Suten Bat name, Ra-user-Maat-Sotep-en-Ra.⁷²⁷ (See also pp. 286-287).

Far more compelling though, at least superficially, was Courville's synchronising of Merenptah's 5th year, 'Israel Stele', with 721 (722) BC, the year of the Fall of Samaria.

I personally believe however that Courville's dates for Ramses II and his son, Merenptah, are about half a century too late, because of Courville's failure to take into account the interregna periods for Judah/Israel. Moreover Courville, as it seems to me, was unable properly to accommodate the 22nd dynasty into his scheme. Admittedly, his identifying of these kings as governors appointed by Assyria (as I discussed in *Chapter 9*, pp. 199-202) was a clever way of relieving the 'downward' pressure on the TIP resulting from VLTF. But I am going to be rejecting this approach in favour of a new and original view of the 22nd dynasty that I shall be explaining later in this chapter (beginning on p. 315).

For Velikovsky, the problem of a chronological squeezing of the TIP, due to a radically lowering of the Ramessides (19th and 20th dynasties), was ingeniously avoided by his allowing for the TIP, in part, to sit between the 18th and 19th dynasties, with the latter (19th) now reidentified with the 26th dynasty (*Ramses II and His Time*), and with the 20th dynasty now located to as late as the Persian era (*Peoples of the Sea*). I have also rejected this proposed solution however, most notably on genealogical grounds which I believe render these later aspects of Velikovsky's *Theses* biologically impossible. And I shall be giving a series of examples in support of this below (beginning on p. 274).

Over the years certain revisionists who have continued to follow the complete Velikovskian historical package have strongly urged me to reconsider my rejection of Velikovsky's placement of the 19th-20th dynasties. And several times I have duly paused to give serious reconsideration to Velikovsky in this area. But on each occasion I have ultimately been convinced that the archaeological and genealogical facts just do not allow for Velikovsky's bold re-location of the Ramessides.

Basically my own proposed solution to the Ramessides, which owes a lot to many, but which also has its own quite distinctive characteristics, is to recognize the 19th dynasty Ramessides as being of Jehu-ide (Zimride) origin. This now affords me an extremely solid base when I endeavour to account for the 20th dynasty and the most complex TIP.

⁷²⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 297. Courville more recently seemed to drop this chronological coincidence of Ramses II with 'So'. 'On the Survival of Velikovsky's Thesis in *Ages in Chaos*', p. 71.

A revised system with which mine does converge here and there for this particular era of history is that of Sieff,⁷²⁸ whose revision is based around three of the four points (i) - (iv) that I had listed in 'A Preliminary Note' right at the beginning of this chapter. Instead, though, of my anchoring point ((iii) in my list) of Horemheb as Jehu, Sieff has included Velikovskian catastrophism in his scheme. I believe that Sieff has come fairly close to the mark, chronologically at least, in his attempted realignment with biblical history of the late 19th dynasty, the 20th dynasty, and the early TIP. Though Sieff's identification of 'So' as an Osorkon is no more convincing linguistically, I find, than was Courville's Suten Bat name of Ramses II. Sieff has also made an initial attempt to accommodate the 22nd dynasty alongside the Ramessides, where I think chronologically it must be placed. Though, as it seems to me, he has not really managed to anchor and/or integrate the two. Whilst Sieff and I seem to have based ourselves upon very similar foundations, and hence have arrived at some quite similar conclusions, I think that my system may benefit from the advantage of its having a firm anchor point insofar as I have identified the founding pharaoh of the 19th dynasty (Horemheb, in my case) with a biblical dynastic king for whom there are quite solid dates: namely, JEHU. Moreover, if the primary Ramessides can also be shown to be the same as the biblical successors of Jehu, then this would bring the revision of the 19th dynasty perfectly into alignment with the entire biblical scenario for the C9th and C8th's BC.

Co-Regency Between Ramses I and Seti I

Just as *Aziru* (Hazael), when he had become old, had - according to Mursilis the Hittite - handed over military responsibilities to his son (who I believe to have been the biblical Ben-Hadad II), so, similarly, might *Aziru's* later contemporary, Ramses I, have done in the case of his son Seti I. And, just as Mauro has calculated a three-year co-regency between Jehoahaz (my Ramses I) and Jehoash (my Seti I), so, in regard to Egypt, does Ramses I appear to have associated his son with him on the throne. This is borne out by Grimal's claim that Seti I, upon his accession to the throne, "*had already been closely linked with the kingship, probably from the very beginning of Ramesses I's reign ... a prior association with the throne [that Seti himself] stressed*".⁷²⁹ Newby has referred to a fascinating incident involving Seti I, occurring probably during the reign of Horemheb, even - according to Newby - before Seti was a pharaoh. This incident was recorded by Seti's son, Ramses II, on a stele found at Tanis:⁷³⁰

Among the statues, the pillars, and the stelae thus transported [to Tanis] was a stela set up by Ramesses to honour his father, Seti I. The stela tells how Seti, when still a general and not yet a pharaoh, came to Avaris to do honour to the god Set after whom he was named. This visit, the stela said, was in the four-hundredth year of the god being established there, a reference now widely understood to mean that this was the period of time that had elapsed since the Hyksos built their great temple of Setekh.

⁷²⁸ *Op. cit.*

⁷²⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 246.

⁷³⁰ *Warrior Pharaohs*, p. 167.

If Seti's visit can be placed in the reign of Horemheb, in 1320 BC [sic], as seems likely, then 1720 BC is the date of the Hyksos first assuming full control of Avaris. For ... Egyptian chronology this is an important piece of evidence but what is fascinating about the stela is the way it makes clear that for Seti and Ramesses the once hated Hyksos no longer had the power to stir any patriotic passions. They made a clear distinction [sic] between the Hyksos ... and the cult of Set who, after all, was an Egyptian god long before the Hyksos were heard of. But it nevertheless seems oddly demonstrative to make a pilgrimage to Avaris on the four-hundredth anniversary of the setting up of a foreign power there.

[End of quote]

I shall return to this intriguing situation on pp. 285-286. And in **D** (on p. 292), we shall read of Ramses II's actual likening of himself to Seth, and to the Canaanite god, Baal. The son of Ramses I became ever more active as his father aged. He, Seti I (*Menmare*), would even conclude a treaty with Mursilis (*Merosar*) just as Ramses I (*Menpehtire*) had with Suppiluliumas (*Seplel*). We might recall too from *Chapter 3* (p. 53) that *Aziru's* grandson, Duppi-Teššub, son of DU-Teššub (Ben-Hadad II), had concluded a treaty with Mursilis.

Seti I became sole ruler after the 17-year reign of his father, hence in (867-17 =) 850 BC. His early series of northern campaigns, largely against the Syro-Hittites, may now be seen as being the same as those of Jehoash (rather than Bimson's era of Jehoahaz, though there may have been some overlap) against the Syrians. Bimson has summarised these campaigns of Seti I, including the capture of the important Qadesh [Kadesh]:⁷³¹

Along with the capture of Yanoam, the second register at Karnak depicts the submission of the Lebanese princes, which therefore presumably took place in the same year. With this particular phase of the campaign in Year 1 we should probably connect the capture of Acco and Tyre, listed on the Kurna sphinx.

.... the missing third register may have recorded a campaign through the Amorite coastland, taking Zimyra and Ullaza. The capture of Kadesh which survives on the fourth register may have been a phase of the same campaign [it] appears at the end of a wall as far as possible from the central doorway, and it has been pointed out by Breasted and Gardiner that the events placed furthest from the doorway are those which occurred furthest from the border of Egypt.

Grimal also tells of Seti I's Qadesh - and subsequent - campaigns:⁷³²

Sethos [Seti] I drew on the experience of [his first] campaign to organize the second one in the following year, which took him to the city of Qadesh. The temporary pacification of the country of Amurru then enabled him to organize a third campaign, this time against the Libyans.

⁷³¹ 'Dating the Wars of Seti I', pp. 16ff.

⁷³² *Op. cit.*, p. 247.

It was only after his fourth expedition into Asia that Egypt was respected again in the Near East. There are few details about this fourth expedition, which was waged against the Hittites. After it the Egyptians felt assured that they had full control of Syria – their influence ended just south of Qadesh, which had resumed its traditional role of frontier town.

Seti I's inauguration of *wehem mesw.t* in the first years of his reign may thus simply be based on his having re-established control of coastal Syria and Lebanon for Egypt and Israel against the Syro-Hittites. According to Gardiner's estimate of the relationship between Seti I and his father:⁷³³ “[Seti I, despite his having been] imbued with true affection and loyalty towards his father”, would proclaim a new era, ‘Repetition of Births’ (*wehem-mesw.t*). “Yet for all the recognition which Sethōs [Seti I] was prepared to pay his father, he was not averse to regarding himself as the inaugurator of a new period”.

Israel's "Saviour"

I think that Seti I ought also to be recognized as the “saviour” of the prayers of Jehoahaz. We do not need to look then to Adad-nirari III, or Zakir of Hamath - neither of whom is even named (as such) in the biblical account - since the Second Book of Kings goes on to tell us that Jehoash (my Seti I) thrice actually defeated the Syrians. And, according to the Bible, Jehoash would have completely defeated this foe had he responded even more enthusiastically to the challenge offered to him by the prophet Elisha (2 Kings 13:14-19). Bimson has considered the possibility that Jehoash, amongst other candidates, may have been this “saviour”, whilst also stating the objections to this view:⁷³⁴

There has been much discussion over the identity of the anonymous “saviour”. One view is that the verse refers to Joash [Jehoash], Jehoahaz's successor, who defeated Ben-Hadad [II] three times and regained some of the lost Israelite cities (II Kings 13:24-25); or to Jeroboam II, son of Joash, who restored Israel's Transjordanian territory and even conquered Damascus and Hamath (II Kings 14:25-28). But as J. Gray remarks: “The main objection to this view is that this relief is apparently a response to the supplication of Jehoahaz (v. 4), whereas relief did not come until the time of Joash and Jeroboam” ... [Reference: *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, 2nd edn., 1970, p. 595, where references can be found to scholars who favour Joash and/or Jeroboam as the deliverer]. Other scholars do not acknowledge this difficulty, pointing to II Kings 13:22 (“Hazeal king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days of Jehoahaz”) as evidence that deliverance did not come until after the reign of Jehoahaz ... [Reference: K. A. Kitchen in *NBD*, p. 58].

My explanation of the situation would however be based on the previously mentioned three-year co-regency between Jehoahaz and Jehoash.

⁷³³ *Op. cit.*, p. 249.

⁷³⁴ ‘Dating the Wars of Seti I’, p. 22.

The relief for Jehoahaz's Israel could have begun to arise right near to the end of Jehoahaz's reign, when there began the co-rule of the now more energetic Jehoash. However, this deliverance was only gradual and its proper effects would become manifest only after Jehoahaz had passed away. Correspondingly, with Jehoash as Seti I, the deliverance from Syria began at the end of the reign of the aged Ramses I.

Seti I was already proclaiming a new era.

Bimson has provided a most useful account of the similarities between Israel's wars against Syria at this approximate time and Seti I's campaigns into Syro-Palestine, leading him to consider the possibility that Seti I may in fact have been the "saviour" of Israel. This consideration of Bimson's - which I in fact fully accept (given my combination: Jehoash = Israel's "saviour"; Jehoash = Seti I) - I shall return to again after giving relevant parts of Bimson's account of Seti's I's campaigns in this revised context. Bimson's account may, in my context, require some degree of geographical fine tuning:⁷³⁵

In the chronology which we are testing here, the time of Jehoahaz [my comment: more exactly, I think, Jehoash] corresponds to the time when Seti I campaigned in Palestine and Syria. It therefore seems very probable that the Aramaean [Syrian] oppression of Israel is the event of which we have already read on Seti's Beth-Shan stelae.

... *Aram is "the wretched foe"*. Several parallels confirm that we are reading about the same events in both sources. Firstly we have seen that the stelae refer, in Rowe's words, to "an invasion by tribes from the east side of the Jordan"; the Old Testament records that in Jehu's reign Hazael occupied all of Transjordan as far south as the Arnon; it was therefore presumably from there that he launched his further offensives into the centre of Israel in the reign of Jehoahaz.

Furthermore, we have seen that the attacking forces of Seti's day were operating from a base called Yarumtu, or Ramoth, probably Ramoth-gilead. [My comment: or Jarmuth/Yarmuth?].

Once west of the Jordan, the immediate objective of Seti's opponents was apparently the capture of towns in Galilee and the Plain of Esdraelon. In the time of Jehoahaz this was part of the kingdom of Israel. II Kings 13:25 speaks of towns in Israel which Ben-Hadad "had taken from Jehoahaz ... in war". Unfortunately the captured towns are not named, but we know they lay west of the Jordan, since all the territory east of the Jordan had been lost in the previous reign.

The invaders whom Seti confronted also had objectives further afield; they were attempting "to lay waste the land of Djahi to its full length". We have seen that Djahi probably comprised the Plain of Esdraelon and the coastal plain to the north and south, extending southwards at least as far as Ashkelon. The capture of towns such as Beth-shan was probably an attempt to gain control of the Plain of Esdraelon, which provided access from the Jordan to the coastal strip, both to the north and (via the pass at Megiddo) the south. The coastal plain to the south was certainly one of Hazael's objectives.

⁷³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp, 20, 22.

A Lucianic addition to the Greek text of II Kings 13:22, considered by H. Tadmor to be an “authentic tradition”, relates that Hazael took territory from Jehoahaz “from the western sea as far as Aphek” Presumably this is Aphek-Antipatris rather than one of the lesser Apheks mentioned in the Old Testament, in which case this action by Hazael was a prelude to the taking of Gath (II Kings 12:17 ...). The Lucianic addition shows, however, that Hazael did not simply march down the coastal plain in order to reach Gath and from there to threaten Jerusalem; he actually captured a considerable portion of the coastal plain itself.

In short, the movements and objectives of Hazael’s forces exactly parallel those of the forces opposed by Seti I, so far as they can be reconstructed. This is not to say that specific moves recorded in the Biblical and Egyptian accounts are to be precisely identified Seti’s two stelae from Beth-shan show that the invaders pushed westwards on more than one occasion, so it would be a mistake to envisage one invasion by the Aramaeans, repulsed by one attack by Seti. The important point is that in both sources we find the same objectives, the same direction of attack, and the probability that in both cases the enemy was operating from the same base.

According to 2 Kings 13:19, Jehoash would defeat the Syrians “*three times*”.
Bimson continues:

Furthermore, commenting on the text of the smaller stela, Albright notes that since the attacking Apiru [Habiru] “are determined in the hieroglyphic text by ‘warrior and plural sign’ [not merely ‘man, plural sign’], they were not considered ordinary nomads” The stela is not describing mere tribal friction, as is conventionally assumed, but an attack by an organised and properly equipped military force. This would certainly fit an attack on Israel by Hazael’s troops in the late 9th century BC.

Bimson now proceeds to consider other of Seti I’s inscriptions:

Turning from the Beth-shan stelae to the other sources of Seti’s campaigns, we may now suggest that some of Seti’s larger measures, not just his forays into northern Israel, were also directed against the growing power of Damascus. “... at the close of the ninth century, Hazael and Ben-hadad had imposed Aramaean rule upon vast South-Syrian territories, including Samaria, as far as the northern boundary of Philistia and Judah”. [Reference: H. Tadmor, *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 8, 1961, p. 241.]. It is logical that Egypt would see this expanding power as a threat to her own security and act to curb it. Seti’s military action in Palestine’s southern coastal plain (first register of his Karnak reliefs) may well have been aimed at establishing a bulwark against southward Aramaean advances along the coastal strip. His campaign into Phoenicia and Lebanon may have been to protect (or reclaim?) the coastal cities of that region (important to Egypt for supplies of timber and other commodities) from the westward expansion of Hazael’s rule.

We have already noted Faulkner's suggestion that the reference to a campaign by Seti into "the land of Amor", on the damaged Kadesh relief, refers to the conquest of "an inland extension of Amorite territory into the country south of Kadesh, possibly even as far south as Damascus" [Reference: Faulkner, *JEA* 33, 1947, p. 37, emphasis added].

In all this, the Zimride Jehoash may have found support in the great king of Assyria, Adad-nirari III, whose predecessors, though related as Omride to Hazael, as I have argued, were at least sometimes extremely hostile to the latter. Adad-nirari III did in fact conquer Damascus, which would presumably have been to Israel's advantage. However, according to Page's rather convincing linguistic argument, it was Jehoash himself (my Seti I) who was the actual Jehu-ide king recorded as having paid tribute to this Assyrian king on the Rimah Stele.⁷³⁶

Seti I was indeed a great king, though perhaps one who fell short of total expectations. He:

- (i) built extensively and lavishly, his tomb, for instance, being "*the most magnificent in the Valley of the Kings*";⁷³⁷
- (ii) "... [his] greatest achievement of [his] ... reign was his foreign policy";⁷³⁸ and
- (iii) "... the Egyptian turquoise mines in the Sinai had already been reopened under Rameses I, and their exploitation continued under Sethos I".⁷³⁹

These are perhaps some of those great deeds of his (as Jehoash) about which the Second Book of Kings fails to elaborate, when it merely recalls "*all that he did ... the rest of the acts that Jehoash did, his might ...*" (13:12, 15). He was militarily powerful enough to have been in a position to have hired out "*one hundred thousand mighty warriors from Israel for one hundred talents of silver*" to Amaziah king of Judah (2 Chronicles 25:6). These were later discharged, however (v. 10). I shall be writing much more on this fascinating incident, e.g. in section: "Jehoash Sacks Jerusalem" (beginning on p. 276). The pharaoh could have loomed even greater, had Velikovsky been able successfully to have identified him also with Seti II. On the positive side, to have done so could have accounted for why, despite the fact that, as Grimal has written,⁷⁴⁰ "*Sethos II claims to have undertaken an extensive building programme*", there is, as he goes on to tell, "*little indication that [Sethos'] words were transformed into actions*". Similarly:⁷⁴¹ "*There is no evidence of foreign policy during this period, but it is no doubt significant that the Serabit el-Khadim mines were in use*".

⁷³⁶ See the strong linguistic argument for this as provided by Page, 'A Stela of Adad-Nirari III and Nergal-Ereš From Tell Al Rimah'.

⁷³⁷ Newby, *op. cit.*, p. 142.

⁷³⁸ Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 247.

⁷³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 269-270.

⁷⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 269.

According to Bimson,⁷⁴² “*Velikovsky’s order cannot be sustained*”. For, he explains:⁷⁴³

Genealogical material surviving from the late XIXth Dynasty provides clear evidence that Usikheprure-setpenre Seti [II] reigned shortly after Merenptah. The genealogies of various non-royal families directly attest the contemporaneity of their members with certain XIXth Dynasty pharaohs. While this material still leaves some doubt about the precise order in which [Seti II], Amenmesse and Siptah came to the throne, it leaves no doubt whatever that all three, and ... [Tausert], reigned within a short period after the death of Merenptah. ...

Bimson here makes reference to Černý⁷⁴⁴ and Bierbrier.⁷⁴⁵ And I shall be discussing their contributions in a moment. I shall nonetheless be seriously considering whether it may be possible for Seti II and Amenmesse, along with Bay, Siptah and Tausert, to be re-located to a period significantly earlier than their customary place at the end of the 19th dynasty. (See pp. 308f.). Bimson then turns to this new consideration:⁷⁴⁶

The remains of a small temple at Hermopolis bear inscriptions by Merenptah and Usikheprure-setpenre Seti, in which both kings claim some part in building it. Velikovsky notes that Merenptah claims “to have completed the structure and to have dedicated it to the deity, presumably Thoth”. He then argues that this is an illogical claim if Merenptah preceded Seti, and that the temple’s inscriptions support the revised order, in which Seti precedes Merenptah by more than a century [ref to *Kronos* IV:3 (1979), pp. 20-21]. However, this argument is not strong enough to counteract the genealogical material which proves the conventional order. Faulkner’s understanding of the temple’s inscriptions, which Velikovsky rejects, is perfectly plausible: Merenptah completed the fabric of the building and dedicated it; a short while after, Seti II completed its decoration [ref to R. Faulkner, *CAH*, vol. II, pt. 2 (3rd edn), 1975, p. 237].

But I think Velikovsky may have a point here. And this would be reinforced by the fact that the mummy of Seti II (if it is in fact he) is, as we shall find, distinctly ‘Thutmocide’. According to Gardiner, though:⁷⁴⁷ “*There is little doubt but that Merenptah was followed by his son ... Sethōs II. Memoranda on ostraca mention both the date of his accession and that of his death, this latter occurring in his sixth year*”. Gardiner’s statement alone, though, does not tell us how this relates Seti II to Merenptah. And van der Veen has claimed that:⁷⁴⁸ “*Hornung finally located Amenmesse’s reign before that of Seti II, in line with the inscription on the pylon of the Armant Temple where the cartouches of Merenptah hotep-hir-ma were firstly overwritten by the cartouches of Amenmesse but later by those of Seti II*”.

⁷⁴² ‘Dating the Wars of Seti I’, p. 13.

⁷⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁷⁴⁴ ‘Papyrus Salt 124’, pp. 251-258.

⁷⁴⁵ *The Late New Kingdom in Egypt*, pp. 4, 16, 22, 23, 26, 37 & 121, n. 104.

⁷⁴⁶ ‘Dating the Wars of Seti I’, *ibid.*

⁷⁴⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 276.

⁷⁴⁸ ‘Sethosis: the Seti II from the Kinglists?’, p. 20.

Unfortunately, though, van der Veen does not provide any actual reference here for Hornung. And, that Bimson could make so definite a statement, in regard to Černý at least, that: “*The [late 19th dynasty] material ... leaves no doubt ...*”, is surprising I find after having actually read Černý’s relatively brief article, in which one encounters, at regular intervals, Černý’s presuppositions in relation to un-named kings. Thus:⁷⁴⁹

“Ostrakon Cairo J 49887 ... dated in the year 5 of *an unnamed king* [presumed to be Sethos II]”.

And:⁷⁵⁰ “... years 12 and 15 respectively, *the king is not named* but must be Ramesses III”.

And:⁷⁵¹ “... the Vizier Hori occurs on some unpublished Cairo ostraca dated in the first year of *an unnamed king* ... either Ramesses III or one of his immediate predecessors”.

Moreover, Bierbrier’s painstaking and laudable attempts to establish a clear chronological framework for Egyptian officials and workmen for the most difficult phase of the 19th dynasty, the 20th dynasty, and the TIP, based on important genealogical lists - for which Bierbrier is most heavily reliant upon Černý⁷⁵² - ends up yielding a host of very aged personages indeed when estimated according to the conventional arrangement for this era of Egyptian history. But about 14 years will be shaved off if the supposedly post-Merenptah 19th dynasty rulers are subtracted and transferred to an earlier period.

Before listing some of Bierbrier’s actual case studies, I should like to make the point - using an example still from Bierbrier - that Horemheb cannot apparently be well separated in time from the 19th dynasty, as Velikovsky had attempted to do by assigning the 19th dynasty to the C6th BC, whilst making Horemheb a contemporary of Tirhakah (as we saw at the end of *Chapter 10*, on p. 252) - and, hence, of Hezekiah - in c. 700 BC. Bierbrier is here discussing the family of the foreman Neferhotep:⁷⁵³

The earliest known member of the family, the chief workman Neferhotep i, is attested in office under Horemheb and survived into the early part of the reign of Ramesses II since he is shown in the tomb of the scribe Ramose i He was also a colleague of the chief workman Kaha who is known to have been in office in the first half of the reign of Ramesses II

Bierbrier continues, now bringing Merenptah into the picture:

By his wife Iemwaw i, Neferhotep i had at least two sons, his successor Nebnufer i and the army scribe Nakhy i. The chief workman Nebnufer i also appears in the tomb of the scribe Ramose so he must have succeeded his father in the course of Ramose’s term of office. Nebnufer i was also a contemporary of the vizier Khay, but by year 2 of Merenptah he seems to have been replaced by his son Neferhotep ii. ...

⁷⁴⁹ *Op cit*, p. 252. Emphasis added.

⁷⁵⁰ *Ibid*, p. 255. Emphasis added.

⁷⁵¹ *Ibid*, p. 256. Emphasis added.

⁷⁵² Bierbrier, *op. cit*, pp. 145-146, lists 17 of Černý’s publications in his Bibliography, including Černý’s ‘Papyrus Salt 124’.

⁷⁵³ *Ibid*, p. 21.

And I should like to couple this information with the following quote by Gammon in favour of the conventional sequence for the 18th-19th dynasties, including Horemheb, and against Velikovsky's separation of these two famous dynasties:⁷⁵⁴

A further link between the Amarna period and not only Horemheb but also Ramesses II is provided by the account in the Memphite tomb chapel of Mose of a prolonged lawsuit over the ownership of some land This account was written after a hearing of this case in Year 18 of Ramesses II (against which Mose appealed) at which his mother, Nubnofret, widow of Huy, had failed to establish her claim to the land. An earlier stage of these proceedings, involving Huy's mother Urnero and his aunt Takharu, is dated to year 59 under the Majesty of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Djeserkheprure Setepenre [son of Re] Haremhab Meriamun".... At this hearing, evidence was given about some activity by Sheritre, the mother of Urnero and Takharu. The text is mutilated but includes the following:- "... in the time of the enemy from Akhetaten ... Akhetaten [where] one was ... The Citizeness Sheritre, the mother of the citizeness ...". ... The designation "enemy from Akhetaten" can only apply in this context to Akhenaten, from which one is bound to conclude that a grandchild and great-grandchild of one of this pharaoh's subjects were living in the first half of the reign of Ramesses II.

Here now I list in brief some of Bierbrier's series of case studies. Note the mathematical juggling that Bierbrier had found it necessary to undertake, in order to keep the ages of these officials reasonable within the conventional structure, using minimalised dates. My revision as it develops, especially pertaining to Merenptah - and I have already suggested the removal of Queen Tausert from the end of the 19th dynasty - will be found satisfactorily to ease this severe chronological pressure:

Mayor Paser of Thebes:⁷⁵⁵ "Paser in year 16 of Ramesses IX It is barely conceivable that he is to be identified with Paser II If Paser II was born c. year 3 of Siptah when his father [mayor Amenmose I] was about thirty, then he would have been aged about eighty in year 16 of Ramesses IX".

Prophet of Amun, Nesiamun I:⁷⁵⁶ "If ... Nesiamun I was born c. year 15 of Ramesses III, he would have been a minimum of 44 in year 2 of Ramesses IX when his father last appears and a minimum of 89 in year 25 of Ramesses XI".

Workman Pashedu III:⁷⁵⁷ "If Pashedu iii was born c. year 20 of Ramesses II when his father Hehnekhu would have been at least 30, he would have been 47 at the death of Ramesses II, 67 at that of Sethos II, and 75 at the beginning of Dynasty XX on minimum dates. ... If ten years were added to the reign of Merenptah, or the reigns of Siptah and Tewosret [Tausert/Twohre] were counted separately, or an interregnum was accepted, then Pashedu iii would have been a nonagenarian when attacked in the Salt papyrus".

⁷⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 56.

⁷⁵⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 5-6.

⁷⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 12-13.

⁷⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 25-26.

Workman Hay IV.⁷⁵⁸ “The career of Hay iv is long and significant. He is first attested in office in year 1 of Amenmesse and continued to function throughout the reigns of Sethos II, Siptah, Setnakht, and Ramesses III He is last attested in year 19 of the reign of Ramesses III and probably died in year 21 or 22 since his son was a deputy in year 21 but chief workman in year 22.... On minimum dates his career spanned about 40 years. If he was 30 when he first appeared in office and was born c. year 47 of Ramesses II, he would have been a minimum of 70 at his death. The career of Hay iv again illustrates the unlikelihood of a long reign for Merenptah or an interregnum”.

Workman Anherkhawi II.⁷⁵⁹ “On minimum dates Anherkhawi ii would have been about 72 in year 4 of Ramesses VII if not indeed older. Again the career of Anherkhawi ii demonstrates the impossibility of a long interregnum or separate reigns for Siptah and Tewosret since such circumstances would turn Anherkhawi ii into an octogenarian or more”.

[End of quotes]

I shall be looking at further case studies from Bierbrier later (beginning on p. 353), in relation to the TIP.

Unfortunately, “*Dr Velikovsky does not discuss this material*”, wrote Jones,⁷⁶⁰ who has based his critique of Velikovsky’s later revision on Černý and Bierbrier. If this genealogical material might involve some mathematical stretching for the proponents of the conventional scheme, despite Jones’ rather optimistic claim that “*the continuity of archaeological and linguistic development ... finds comfortable accommodation within the framework of the existing chronology*”,⁷⁶¹ then one must say that it all becomes quite biologically impossible in the context of Velikovsky’s revision, which separates the 18th, 19th and 20th dynasty sequences, the one from the other, by centuries.

Jehoash Sacks Jerusalem

I wrote above that the Second Book of Kings fails to elaborate, when it merely recalls “*all that [Jehoash] did*” (13:12). However, I had deliberately ignored what follows here, “*as well as the might with which he fought against Amaziah of Judah*”, as it – being of the greatest importance, since it involves also an assault upon Jerusalem itself – deserves separate treatment. Now Amaziah was the son of Joash of Judah, who I have suggested above was Seti-nakht founder of the 20th dynasty. Joash had come to the throne in Year 7 of Jehu (2 Kings 12:1). Amaziah would then be Ramses III. Since Amaziah began to reign “*in the second year*” of Jehoash (14:1) (my Seti I), then Amaziah (my Ramses III) must have been in fact an earlier contemporary of Ramses II (son of Seti I), who was co-regent with Seti I in the latter’s Year 7.

⁷⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 37.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 38.

⁷⁶⁰ *Op. cit*, p. 27. Jones has actually misrepresented Velikovsky, factually, in regard to certain points relating to the latter’s *Peoples of the Sea*. Gammon has called attention to these inaccuracies in his ‘Michael Jones and “Peoples of the Sea”’: Some clarifying comments’, p. 33.

⁷⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 32. Emphasis added. For D. Courville’s critique of Bierbrier’s genealogical study, see his ‘On the Survival of Velikovsky’s Thesis in *Ages in Chaos*’, pp. 71-72.

It would have been with the death of the Omride Queen Tausert, that is, Queen Athaliah (Athaliah was “*a granddaughter of King Omri of Israel*”, 2 Kings 8:26), that the Judaeans would have been able to have assumed some degree of control also over Egypt, inaugurating what has become known as the 20th dynasty. However, this occurred, not at the *end* of the 19th dynasty (bringing that dynasty to an end), but during a weakened phase of the very first generation of the 19th dynasty. Judah was in fact then allied to the Jehu-ides, through Elisha (i.e., the priest Jehoiada) in common cause against the Baalists/Atonists. There is not much evidence of Seti-nakht (my Joash) in Egypt, despite his great reputation; for, according to Grimal, “*Papyrus Harris I cites him as the reorganizer of the country*”.⁷⁶² But Grimal here accords him “*only two years*” of reign. Rohl, however, more than doubles this:⁷⁶³ “*SETNAKHT ruled for seven years, crowning his son, Ramesses III, as co-regent in his third regnal year ...*”. The truth is, I believe, that Seti-nakht ruled Judah for 40 years, whilst a portion of this reign (say, 2-7 years) also involved his rule over Egypt. “*Ramses III’s father Setnakht was the founder of the twentieth dynasty although how and why he came to the throne is uncertain as there is no firm evidence that he is related to the previous [thought to have been the 19th] dynasty ...*”.⁷⁶⁴ Courville argued that the 20th dynasty kings were largely confined to the Delta region, claiming that even “*the most outstanding of the [20th dynasty rulers, Ramses III] never claimed to be more than a local prince at Heliopolis [Haq An]*”.⁷⁶⁵

This I think was likely to have been the case *as a general rule*.

Now, given that Ramses III (Amaziah) was an earlier contemporary of Ramses II - the latter’s sole reign of Israel, as king Jeroboam II, beginning about a third of the way through the reign of Amaziah, when he was about at his peak, as we are going to find - then the traditional view as espoused for example by Grimal, in relation to Ramses III’s great funerary temple in Western Thebes (Medinet Habu), as having “*epitomized the outward grandeur of his reign as a second Ramesses II*”,⁷⁶⁶ may need to be seriously reconsidered. “*From the very outset*”, he also wrote, “*Ramesses III’s role-model was Ramesses II. His successors also modelled themselves on the earlier Ramesses, but it was Ramesses III who went to the greatest lengths, from the choice of his titlature to the construction of a mortuary temple copying the plan of the Ramesseum*”. Booth likewise thinks that “*Ramses III, although not a son of Ramses II, greatly admired this king and tried to emulate him*”.⁷⁶⁷

There is more to be said on all of this.

This Amaziah, after he had achieved a comprehensive victory over the Edomites (v. 7) - like Ramses III who had declared that he had “*destroyed the Seirites [Edomites] among the tribes of the Shasu*”⁷⁶⁸ - sent his messengers to Jehoash of Israel with this bold challenge: ‘*Come, let us look one another in the face*’ (v. 8). To this Jehoash replied with a mixture of contempt and diplomacy:

⁷⁶² *Op. cit.*, p. 271.

⁷⁶³ *The Lost Testament*, p. 409.

⁷⁶⁴ Booth, *op. cit.*, p. 217.

⁷⁶⁵ *The Exodus Problem*, I, p. 308.

⁷⁶⁶ *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

⁷⁶⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 217.

⁷⁶⁸ Levy, *et al.*, *Archaeology and the Shasu Nomads*, ch. 6.

‘A thorn-bush on Lebanon sent to a cedar on Lebanon, saying, ‘Give your daughter to my son for a wife’; but a wild animal of Lebanon passed by and trampled down the thorn-bush. You have defeated Edom, and your heart has lifted you up. Be content with your glory, and stay at home; for why should you provoke trouble so that you fall, you and Judah with you?’

These words, however, failed to deter Amaziah (14:11-12): “*But Amaziah would not listen. So King Jehoash of Israel went up; he and King Amaziah of Judah faced one another in battle at Beth-shemesh, which belongs to Judah. Judah was defeated by Israel; everyone fled home*” (14:11-12). It is next recorded that Jehoash captured king Amaziah at Beth-shemesh. Jehoash then “*came to Jerusalem and broke down the wall of Jerusalem from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, a distance of four hundred cubits*”. Next: “[*Jehoash*] *seized all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were found in the House of the Lord and in the treasuries of the king’s house, as well as hostages: then he returned to Samaria*” (vv. 13-14). The Second Book of Chronicles, which provides a very similar account of this famous incident (25:20-24), adds this unqualified statement about a certain Obed-edom: Jehoash seized all the Temple gold and silver “*and Obed-edom with them*” (v. 24).

This would presumably have been the end of the Judaeen domination of northern Egypt, at least for a time, it seeing the rise of Ramses II especially in that land. This significant incident, too, should be recorded, even lavishly, in the Egyptian inscriptions if I am right in my reconstruction of Jehoash and his era. Can we find it?

Indeed, I think that we can. As, however, I believe that the record of Israel’s plundering of Jerusalem in the late C9th BC is to be found most graphically depicted in the inscriptions of Jeroboam II as Ramses II, son of Jehoash/Seti I, I shall be dealing with it in the next main section, **D**.

There is an interesting varying of Hebrew verbs to describe two separate of Jehoash’s journeys to Jerusalem: the first being when he came to visit the ailing Elisha, and the second being his march to Beth-shemesh against king Amaziah, on his way to Jerusalem. (I am basing this on my earlier identification of Elisha with the priest Jehoiada, thus presuming that Elisha had died in Jerusalem). On the first occasion (13:14), king Jehoash “*went down*” (Hebrew **אָלַי**) to Elisha. On the second occasion (14:11), king Jehoash “*went up*” (Hebrew **אָסַח**) to Beth-shemesh. The Latin Vulgate has, respectively, *descenditque* and *ascenditque*. Could this variation perhaps allow for one of these incidents (presumably the second one) to have commenced from Egypt, whilst the other (presumably the first one) commenced from Samaria? After his war with Amaziah, we are told that “[*Jehoash*] *returned to Samaria*”.

Or, is there more to be read into all of this?

Prior to Amaziah’s defeat, “*the cities of Judah [extended] from Samaria to Beth-horon*” (2 Chronicles 25:13). Yes, king Amaziah of Judah in fact ruled Samaria, and Jehoash (Seti I in Egypt), with his great victory over Amaziah, apparently took it back. It was presumably to Samaria, then, that he carried all the captured Temple and palace treasures. He may also have returned there (from Egypt) to die.

Seti I's Death

The evidence from the mummy of Seti I, “*the finest of the surviving royal mummies*”, according to Clayton,⁷⁶⁹ would seem to indicate that he, unlike his father, Ramses I, or his grandfather, Horemheb, had died at a relatively early age; for Seti was apparently less than forty years old when he died, possibly from heart trouble.⁷⁷⁰ Thus passed away a revered ruler of Ramesside Egypt. Seti I died, as Tyldesley tells,⁷⁷¹ “*before he could finalize his funerary preparations, and it would be left to Ramesses II to finish his father's work*”. This chronological factor would further account for the dissimilarity between Seti I's and his father's funerary equipment. Reeves *et al.* tell of Seti I's mummy being restored several times, by - in Reeves' order - the high priest, Herihor, by Smendes in Year 10 and possibly Year 15, by Psusennes I in Year 7. Moreover.⁷⁷²

A further docket on the king's coffin records the removal of Sethos I from KV17 in Year 10 of Siamun ... and another its reburial three days later in the *kay* of Queen Inhapi. By Year 11 of Shoshenq I, Sethos I ... had been transferred yet again, to DB320 where [his mummy] eventually came to light in 1881.

Reeves also refers to the “*Osirification of Ramesses III in Year 13 of Smendes*”.⁷⁷³

Suggested Interrelationships between the 19th and 20th Dynasties

Is it realistic to suggest that these two powerful dynasties, the 19th and 20th, could have been contemporaneous? I think so, since they basically reflect (according to my revision) the actual historical relationship between Israel and Judah from the late reign of Jehu. Generally speaking, when one was strong, the other was weak. Occasionally both were strong together, and then there was either co-operation – albeit brief – or a clash.

It may have been during the last years of Jehu of Israel (Horemheb of Egypt) and during the reign of his son, Jehoahaz (Ramses I), when Israel was weak and under pressure from the Syrians, that Joash of Judah (Seti-nakht of Egypt) flourished.

My connection of Seti-nakht with Joash enables for some of the mystery to be lifted from whom Tyldesley describes as “*the unknown Setnakht ...the mysterious founder of Dynasty 20*”.⁷⁷⁴ Hence I cannot accept the first part of her further view that:⁷⁷⁵

It seems likely that the new king [Seti-nakht] was connected with the preceding regime [19th dynasty]. [Seti-nakht] himself, however, makes no effort to justify his rule by linking himself to the successful Ramesside kings, a surprising omission ... [he] simply tells us, on a stele ... at Elephantine, that he came to the throne via a divine oracle, and that in so doing he brought *maat* to a land of chaos.

⁷⁶⁹ *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, p. 145.

⁷⁷⁰ Cf. Ikram and Dodson, *The Mummy in Ancient Egypt*, p. 325; and Wikipedia's 'Seti I'.

⁷⁷¹ *Ramesses: Egypt's Greatest Pharaoh*, p. 43.

⁷⁷² *The Complete Valley of the Kings*, p. 138.

⁷⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

⁷⁷⁴ *Ramesses*, p. 193.

⁷⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 193-194.

Seti-nakht in turn, towards the very end of his reign, became weak from Syrian pressure, and this then saw the rise of Jehoash (Seti I), who several times turned back the Syrians. Seti I's main period of rule over Egypt, and building enterprises there, and wars, would have spanned the period of his co-regency with Ramses I to the rise of king Amaziah of Judah (my Ramses III) culminating in the latter's victory over Edom, about a decade later, when Amaziah's army slew 10,000 Edomites in battle and another 10,000 in captivity (cf. 2 Kings 14:7 & 2 Chronicles 25:12). Some of his father Ramses I's works were actually completed by Seti I. Thus Tyldesley tells, in connection with Seti's mortuary temple, of his incorporating "a small chapel for Ramesses I who had died before he could complete his own provisions for eternity".⁷⁷⁶ Moreover, at Abydos:⁷⁷⁷ "Seti built a small *mahat* for his father, Ramesses I, and an enormous one for himself". There seems to be the suggestion, though, that Jehoash/Seti I, at a stage prior to his defeat of Amaziah, when he as Jehoash assaulted Jerusalem, was not actually the primary ruler of Israel's cities (Samaria to Beth-horon). It was then Amaziah who ruled this region. So there is a certain amount of complexity. Amaziah of Judah (Ramses III) must have ruled the land, though in co-operation with Jehoash, from whom he hired a massive mercenary army. It appears also that Amaziah was trying to form a marital alliance with the House of Israel. It was most likely during this earlier phase of his reign that Amaziah, too, built in Egypt, from, say Year 8 (his victory over Edom and the 'Sea Peoples', see below) to Year 12. The temple at Medinet Habu was probably completed in his 12th year.⁷⁷⁸ "His funerary temple of Medinet Habu stands as the ultimate indication of his achievement, but he also built at Karnak and prepared a fine tomb in the Valley of the Kings".⁷⁷⁹ Amaziah may just possibly also, later, have had a secondary phase of building activity in Egypt, now as a servant of (or in partnership with) Ramses II; from, say, Years 18-24, corresponding to Years 10-18 of Ramses II, since, according to Thomas:⁷⁸⁰ "Between the years ten and eighteen there are few documents that tell us what the king was doing". One might suggest a possible collaboration between the two, as earlier between Jehoash and Amaziah, for this period. Indeed, Ramses III (... hekaon ... ka-nekht) might even have been someone like Hekanakht, viceroy of Ramses II in the latter's own years 18-24, equating to Ramses III's years 24-30 (revised). One chronological factor that does need to be taken into special consideration is that, according to the so-called "Strike Papyrus", preserved in the Egyptian Museum in Turin, "an attempt was made by two individuals to enter the tomb of Ramesses II ... in Year 29 of Ramesses III. They stripped stones from above the tomb entrance. One robber named in the papyrus as Kenena, son of Ruta, made a similar attempt on the tomb at KV5, the tomb believed now to hold the sons of Ramesses II".⁷⁸¹ Considering that Ramses II's funerary complex, the Ramesseum, was "begun early in the king's reign",⁷⁸² and his tomb as early as "year two of his reign",⁷⁸³ then this would not perhaps be so much of a chronological problem.

⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 43.

⁷⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁷⁷⁸ Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

⁷⁷⁹ David, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁷⁸⁰ *Rameses II*, p. 69.

⁷⁸¹ Parsons, *Tomb Robbery*.

⁷⁸² Thomas, *Rameses II*, p. 161.

Moreover, the tomb complex of Ramses II's sons is thought to have been originally begun much earlier than the Ramesside era, in 18th dynasty times.

The Harris Papyrus, writes Tyldesley,⁷⁸⁴ tells of Ramses III's "*impressive building works at Pi-Ramesse and at Tell el-Yahudiya, a successful trading mission to the mysterious Land of Punt, and the resumption of expeditions to the copper and turquoise mines*". The Syro-Palestinian influence of this Judaeen king (as I am proposing) may perhaps be discerned from the fact that the eastern entrance portal to Ramses III's Medinet Habu Temple was "*built in imitation of a **migdol**, or Syrian fortress*".⁷⁸⁵ Again, Ramses III married a woman named Isis, about whom Clayton has commented:⁷⁸⁶ "*Basically Isis was of Asiatic extraction since her mother's name was Habadjilat, a distinctly un-Egyptian name*". If Ramses III were indeed Amaziah, then the latter's mother, Jehoaddin of Jerusalem (2 Kings 14:2), must be Ramses III's mother, Tiy-merenese.

An eventual happy working relationship between Ramses III and Ramses II, who had once defeated the former, might explain the apparent reverence thought to have been shown to Ramses II in the inscriptions of Ramses III and his sons. Though, given that (according to this thesis) Ramses III was himself a mighty king, who chronologically preceded Ramses II, then it could be partly the other way round: Ramses III influencing Ramses II. Amaziah was a great army organizer (cf. 2 Kings 14:9 & 2 Chronicles 25:5), and it may be that the 19th dynasty rulers even took some lead from him in developing their own skilled units. None of this though, of course, would be the conventional view. Thus Tyldesley:⁷⁸⁷ "*Ramesses III was a determined monarch who set out to model his reign on the reign of Ramesses II, without ever claiming direct descent from his great role model ...*". Indeed there appears to have been no blood connection. Thus Clayton:⁷⁸⁸ "*Despite the grandeur of the name [i.e. Ramses], none of [the 20th Dynasty rulers] had any ancestral connection with their great predecessor, Ramesses II*".

Perhaps Ramses III ultimately managed to achieve that marital alliance for his House with Ramses II that he, as Amaziah, had previously sought with Jehoash/Seti I. But the exact interconnections between these two dynasties still need to be fully determined.

Seti I's fairly substantial building work could have been continued by his grandiose son, Ramses II, who "*restored, enlarged and rebuilt temples everywhere*".⁷⁸⁹ Whilst building works of Ramses III could have been continued by his son, Uzziah, himself a great builder and most powerful king. The mortuary temple of Seti I for instance, located in the Theban necropolis, seems to have been constructed towards the end of the reign on Seti, and may have been completed by his son Ramses II after his death. Thus Tyldesley:⁷⁹⁰ "*On the architrave above the portico [Ramses II] claims to have 'renewed' and 'erected' his father's monuments*". One of the chambers contained a shrine or sanctuary dedicated to Seti I's father Ramses I, who did not construct a mortuary temple for himself.

⁷⁸³ Booth, *op. cit.*, p. 180.

⁷⁸⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 199.

⁷⁸⁵ Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

⁷⁸⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 164

⁷⁸⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 194.

⁷⁸⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 168.

⁷⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

⁷⁹⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 90.

Some of Seti I's buildings were completed - even built - by his grandson, Merenptah. David, writing of the Osireion, tells that it was "*completed under Merenptah (the reliefs decorating some of the chambers date to his reign), although others would date it completely to Merenptah's period*".⁷⁹¹ At Abydos, Seti "*also allowed his son to start building his own smaller cenotaph. Ramesses II subsequently completed both [Ramses I's and Seti I's] monuments ...*".⁷⁹²

Eventually, there occurred the major clash between the 19th and 20th dynasties, when Amaziah elected to take on Jehoash himself, and failed. Jeroboam II (Ramses II) was now leading the Egyptian armies, and he would become the main power, as Jehoash soon died and the remainder of Amaziah's reign is not documented. Unfortunately, we lack individual regnal year dates for both king Jehoash of Israel and king Amaziah of Judah. However, Jehoash's (as Seti I's) early clashes with the Libyans (Year 4) resonate in Ramses III's (as Amaziah's) earliest clash with this people (Year 5).

What at first glance seems to be completely lacking from the biblical account is any mention of that major incident in the reign of Ramses III (presuming he is Amaziah): namely, the invasion of the 'Sea Peoples' (Year 8). However, I suspect that this is approximately the same as the incident of Amaziah's discharging of Jehoash's 100,000 mercenaries, who may well have been Greek-related peoples. Jehoiada had, as we read above, employed Carite mercenaries to overthrow Queen Athaliah and to establish Amaziah's father on the throne. The mercenaries hired out by Jehoash, as Seti I, were more than likely an assortment of peoples whom he had conquered in his early campaigns against the 'Syrians' and Libyans - now to be considered as a combination - incorporating many of these into his army. His son, Ramses II, would do the very same (see next page). The Bible, most selectively again, tells only of their trashing of Judah's northern cities. But it may be that the rampage of these disgruntled "*mighty warriors*" (Ramses III calls them "*valiant warriors*" in the Medinet Habu account) included, as in the case of the 'Sea Peoples', "*... the Hittites, Cyprus and the coast of Syria [and] ... Palestine*".⁷⁹³ The strong army of Amaziah, returning from its great victory in Edom, his "*frontier in Zahi [Djahi]*", was able, by land, to prevent the rampaging hordes from assaulting Judah proper. But the invaders were able to overflow into Egypt's Delta by sea:⁷⁹⁴

... they joined cause with the Libyans to attack the Delta from the west. As they marched by land, they were accompanied offshore by a considerable fleet, so that Ramesses III had to face them on two fronts, mobilizing his forces in Palestine and preparing the troops in Egypt with the Palestine garrisons, and in a successful battle in one of the mouths of the Nile, the enemy fleet was ... destroyed.

Rohl has even identified the *Shosu* Bedouin of the Edomite region with "*the shepherds (Greek sos in Manetho's Hyk-sos) who are expelled from Egypt with the Indo-European Hyksos rulers by Ahmose [18th dynasty]*".⁷⁹⁵

⁷⁹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 77.

⁷⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 44.

⁷⁹³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹⁵ *The Lost Testament*, p. 442.

Hence they, too, were probably part of the ‘Sea Peoples’ collective with which the Ramessides combined were now having to contend. For there is yet an extra factor to be taken into consideration here. This Year 8 of Ramses III, as Amaziah, corresponding with Year 9 of Seti I (Jehoash), will be found to be the same as Year 2 of Ramses II (according to co-regency calculations in **D.**). This gives rise to a most interesting correlation:⁷⁹⁶ “*In the second year of his reign, Ramesses II ... had to deal with a raid by the Sherden pirates, whom he defeated in a sea battle and subsequently incorporated into his own army*”. This must then be the very same incident as the famous sea battle attributed to Ramses III, against the coalition that also “*included the Sheklesh, Sherden ... mercenaries ...*”. Some of these later “*took up residence in Egypt, first as soldiers and then as landowners*”,⁷⁹⁷ settling largely in the Delta. For now, Israel and Judah had been forced to unite against this tidal wave of foreign peoples. No doubt many of them also became an integral part of Ramses II’s (and Ramses III’s massive combined?) labour force. “*It is doubtful*”, wrote David,⁷⁹⁸ “*whether Ramesses [II] would have completed his ambitious building programme without the ‘help’ of foreign workers*”.

If this reconstruction is basically correct (and obviously it is going to need refining), then we now know that a motivation for this particular movement of ‘Sea Peoples’, at least, was not so much famine or due to an earthquake (though these may have caused the initial mass movement – and some think that the Hekla-3 volcano in Iceland occurred close to the reign of Ramses III⁷⁹⁹). It was in fact due to their being disgruntled by the off-handed treatment of Amaziah; a factor that also occurs in the case of Ramses III.⁸⁰⁰

One may wonder whether Amaziah eventually challenged Jehoash in anger as a result of the mercenary revolt, or merely because the former was proud of his combined victory over Edom and the ‘Sea Peoples’ (in the latter of which Jehoash must have had some share) and now wanted to test his strength against his former business partner. Newby has called this “*the first naval engagement in history ... to be fully recorded. Judging by the evidence provided on the walls of Medinet Habu it took place in the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, some distance north of Per-Ramesse, where it entered the Mediterranean*”.⁸⁰¹

Whatever the reason, the disastrous outcome led to a downturn in Amaziah’s prestige. And this decline in Amaziah’s fortunes from approximately mid-way through his 29-year reign is certainly paralleled in the case of Ramses III. “*After [Ramses III’s] twelfth year, he was beset by both political and economic problems*”.⁸⁰²

The 29-year reign of Amaziah also rather nicely, incidentally, matches the 31-33 years of Ramses III that includes a 3-year co-regency with his father.

In the end, king Amaziah of Judah was assassinated. We are given very little detail of it; but both 2 Kings and 2 Chronicles use the word “conspiracy” in their identical accounts. “*They made a conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish. But they sent after him to Lachish and killed him there*” (2 Kings 14:19; 2 Chronicles 25:27).

⁷⁹⁶ Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

⁷⁹⁷ David, *op. cit.*, p. 164.

⁷⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁷⁹⁹ See e.g. Wikipedia, ‘Ramesses III’.

⁸⁰⁰ See e.g. Tyldesley, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

⁸⁰¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 187.

⁸⁰² Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 275.

Now, Johnson is quite sure that assassination, as the result of a “conspiracy”, was also the fate of Ramses III:⁸⁰³ *“The last really masterful king of independent Egypt, Ramesses III, was almost certainly murdered ... the juridical investigation which followed revealed a ramifying conspiracy which went right through the court administration and army”*. Tyldesley also entertains this idea:⁸⁰⁴

We do not know whether, after thirty-two years on the throne, Ramesses was indeed murdered. ... The mummified body of Ramesses III show no obvious wound, but the hardened 20th Dynasty linen which still sticks to his limbs makes it difficult to be certain of this. Poison, often considered a woman’s weapon, need not of course leave any tell-tale signs. Ramesses’s head, freed from its linen mask by Maspero on 1 June 1886, revealed such a grim aspect that it has since served as the model of a number of mummy-based horror films.

Ikram and Dodson, writing in relation to the pharaoh’s mummy, consider assassination “likely”, but “impossible to check”. They have written:⁸⁰⁵ *“[The mummy of Ramses III] was found well wrapped by restorers in antiquity, the linen carapace over the body still being in place. It has thus been impossible to check the body for any wounds that might derive from his likely murder”*. No mention of it is found in the Great Papyrus Harris.

Suspicious for the conventional view is the following strange situation as told by Clayton:⁸⁰⁶ *“Ramesses III himself commissioned [sic] the prosecution; however, since he is spoken of later in the papyrus as ‘the great god’, i.e. dead, he must have died during the course of the trial”*. But I think rather that Ramses III could only have been ‘prosecuting the entire trial from the grave’, so to speak.

The age of Ramses III at death is estimated to have been between 55 and 65. The latter would be the correct age for him if he were Amaziah, who came to the throne aged 29 and reigned for 30-odd years. According to one source:⁸⁰⁷ *“Ramesses III died after a reign of 33 years, probably aged around 65 years old”*.

Conclusion

From the above it appears that it is possible largely to synchronise these two strong dynasties, 19th and 20th, as, respectively Israelite and Judaeen, owing to their already-established biblical alignment. For the most part there is no major clash, except in the case of a recorded one between Jehoash and Amaziah. What is most difficult to determine is just what was the exact status of Jehoash, particularly when Amaziah’s reign was strongest, when the former does not seem to have even been fully ruling the kingdom of Samaria - though he apparently had a large army of mercenaries there. This seeming ‘absence’ from the north at least assists my view that Jehoash was also a pharaoh.

And, did Ramses III eventually become the servant of Ramses II, but in a partnership?

⁸⁰³ *The Civilization of Ancient Egypt*, p. 209.

⁸⁰⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 200.

⁸⁰⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 327. Gardiner has written boldly: “... no trace of wounds is reported. Nor is there any reason for dating the plot towards the end of the reign; it may have occurred much earlier”. *Op. cit.*, p. 292.

⁸⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁸⁰⁷ *Egyptian Art*.

D. Ramses II = Jeroboam II

Ramses II, the son of Seti I, “*can rightly be said to merit his popular title, ‘Ramesses the Great’,*”, writes Clayton.⁸⁰⁸ “*During his long reign of 67 years, everything was done on a grand scale. No other pharaoh constructed so many temples or erected so many colossal statues and obelisks*”. Collier tells of the enormous family this king sired:⁸⁰⁹

Ramses II of the 19th Dynasty produced two hundred children, of whom one hundred and eleven sons and fifty-nine daughters are known by name. Was this army of descendants all considered royal, as in European kingly houses, and thereafter their children and children’s children?

Revisionists have, however, experienced the most extreme difficulty in locating pharaoh Ramses II ‘the Great’ (conventionally dated to the C13th BC) within their new scheme of things, despite his uniquely long reign.

According to the revised system that is being developed here, this Ramses II was the great-grandson of Horemheb, a Syrian Zimride of ‘Indo European’, perhaps Libyan, origins. And his father was, as according to convention, Seti I. I have discussed now at great length in this thesis an ‘Indo European’ (coupled sometimes with Omride) influence upon the mid to late 18th dynasty rulers and the 19th dynasty rulers. This might, for one, account for the side locks worn by the Ramesside princes and princesses (and indeed by 18th dynasty ‘Mitannians’ before them), which was a distinguishing Libyan feature. It might also account for the apparently fair-skinned appearance of the Zimrides, as fairness was traditionally attributed to certain of the Libyans.⁸¹⁰ According to Gardiner.⁸¹¹

Colour on some of the sculptured reliefs [of Ramses III at Medinet Habu] shows prisoners with red beards, side-locks, and long richly ornamented cloaks. Three tribes are here mentioned, the Libu or Libyans ... the Sped ... and the Meshwesh ... commonly thought of as the equivalent of the Maxyēs located by Herodotus (iv. 191) in the neighbourhood of Tunis.

It would also account for the anomaly for Egyptologists, as expressed above by Newby (pp. 267-268), as to why presumably Egyptian kings like Seti I and Ramses II would go to such great lengths to honour, or commemorate, an incident relating to the hated Hyksos. For, as I had suggested in *Chapter 2* (pp. 41, 44-45), the Hyksos themselves may well have been prominent amongst that ‘first wave’ of ‘Indo European’ immigrants into the ancient Near East, from whose stock arose the Syro-Mitannians.

⁸⁰⁸ *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, p. 146.

⁸⁰⁹ *King Sun*, p. 46.

⁸¹⁰ According to Newby, for instance: “The Libyans were ... rather lanky people with some, particularly in the north, who were fair-headed and blue-eyed, the result of migration across the Mediterranean Judging by the way they were represented in Egyptian art [they] wore their hair braided with a prominent side-lock ...”. *Op. cit.*, p. 179.

⁸¹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 283. Cf. Herodotus, *The Histories*, Bk. 4, p. 334. “... the Maxyes [Libyan tribe = Meshwesh?], a people who grow their hair on the right side of their heads and shave it off on the left”.

And it was from these latter, as I have gone on to argue, that there arose in turn the ‘Yuyides’ and the Ramessides (Zimrides) in Egypt. What is therefore quite an anomaly in relation to the conventional Egyptology is perfectly reasonable according to the ‘alternative’ model that I am proposing. Newby does however take his explanation further, thereby, as I think, getting closer to the actual situation:⁸¹²

Old Delta families like the one Ramesses [II] came from may have taken pride in a more personal link with the past – a tradition, perhaps, of Hyksos blood in their veins which owed something to the same atavistic promptings that cause an American to talk of his Red Indian ancestry. As can be seen from their mummies, Seti and Ramesses belonged to quite a different physical type from the previous dynasty.

As with his father Seti I before him, Ramses II appears to have shared a co-regency with his father; although some prefer the term, ‘prince regency’. Gardiner has referred to “*scenes at Karnak and at Kurna [that] confirm Ramessēs’s co-regency with his father*”.⁸¹³ I am going to be suggesting a prince- or co-regency of about seven years.

A Basic, Revised Chronology for Ramses II

My tentative, revised dates for Ramses II, based on a broad acceptance of Velikovsky’s re-location of the 18th dynasty, but also maintaining the traditional view that the 19th (Ramesside) dynasty followed directly on from the 18th, will be somewhat earlier than those assigned to the same pharaoh by either Courville or Gammon, neither of whom had taken into consideration the periods of interregna for Judah/Israel. They will correspond fairly closely with Sieff’s dates. Sieff, who *has* taken into account the interregna periods, has also tried to build into his chronology an added element pertaining to a Velikovskian-based astronomical catastrophism. My chronological anchor, on the other hand, will be my identification of the 19th dynasty founder with the biblical Jehu (d. 876 BC revised). All of these various revised sets of dates for the Ramesside era (Courville’s, Gammon’s, Sieff’s, mine) are of course, according to the VLTF factor, some 500 years lower than the conventional era for Ramses II; but they also differ somewhat from Velikovsky’s dates, for he, as we read on p. 265, had assigned Ramses II to the C6th BC.

Whereas Courville’s dates for Ramses II (792/791-726/725) had brought the final years of this important pharaoh to just within the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah, beginning in 727 BC (according to my estimate), mine now see the reign of Ramses II terminate about half a century before EOH.

Courville, not surprisingly, had concluded that Ramses II ‘the Great’ must also be the biblical ‘King So of Egypt’ (c. 727-725 BC) at the time of Shalmaneser V (who is also Tiglath-pileser III in my revision) of Assyria.⁸¹⁴ He had, as we have already read, dissected Ramses II’s Suten Bat name of Ra-user-Maat-Sotep-en-Ra, which name Petrie accepted as the throne name of Rameses II, and found a *So* element embedded in there.

⁸¹² *Op. cit.*, pp. 167-168.

⁸¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 257.

⁸¹⁴ *The Exodus Problem*, p. 297.

Ramses II did, however, use a name abbreviation. Thus, according to Newby:⁸¹⁵ “*Alone [sic] of pharaohs [Ramses II] was regularly referred to during his lifetime by a nickname, Sesse*”.[⁸¹⁶] Rohl has in fact made much of this hypocoristic name, plus the apparent fact that Ramses II did attack Jerusalem, to identify this great pharaoh as the biblical ‘Shishak’ at the time of Solomon’s son, Rehoboam.⁸¹⁷ A bit further on (p. 290), I shall have cause to criticise this choice, intriguing though it may be. I believe in fact that my identification of Ramses II ‘the Great’ in a biblical context will be an even more striking one; and it, too, will include a despoiling of Jerusalem.

Neither Courville’s, nor indeed Gammon’s, dates for the era of Ramses II, I find, are based on anything that one could really call ‘fixed’, in the sense of anchored. The two seem to have been arrived at from approximate estimations of the termination of the Amarna age (in Velikovsky’s revised context) in relation to the rise and progress of the 19th dynasty; which, according to Courville’s estimate at least - with Seti I being “*a brief offshoot from Dynasty XVIII*” (refer back to p. 264) - does not appear to be at all convincing. And, given his lack of a solid chronological anchor, one wonders if Courville might have subconsciously forced this convergence, attractive though it might at first seem to be, between Merenptah’s 5th year (‘Israel Stele’) and 721 BC (Fall of Samaria). With the three interregna taken into consideration, then Ramses II cannot be ‘So’, and nor can Merenptah’s Stele pertain to the fall of Samaria in 722/721 BC. See pp. 300-305 for a discussion of this stele (section, “Interpreting Merenptah’s Victory Stele”), including both modifications (by revisionists), and criticisms, of Courville’s thesis.

My revision for the Ramesside era, unlike Courville’s - and even Sieff’s superior version - has, I boldly suggest, a rather firm chronological anchor, as I have said, inasmuch as I have co-ordinated the death of the Ramesside founder, now Horemheb, with that of the biblical Jehu (revised from c. 814 BC to 876 BC). I have devoted many pages of this thesis to Jehu as a Dynastic King (most notably, *Chapter 4* and *Chapter 10*). It seems to be generally accepted amongst conventional and revisionist scholars alike that Jehu died in the latter part of the C9th BC, with many favouring c. 814 BC.⁸¹⁸

Most however, as has already been noted, do not take into account the three interregna, which, along with other chronological considerations, would raise Jehu’s standard date at death to 867 BC.⁸¹⁹ Following on from this anchor date of 867 BC, I have calculated that the 17 years of Jehoahaz (Ramses I) and the 14 years (sole rule) of Jehoash (Seti I), would then take one to 836 BC for the beginning of the reign of Ramses II; some 3-4 decades earlier than Gammon’s estimate of 804 BC for the beginning of Ramses II, and Courville’s 792/791 BC.

⁸¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 168.

⁸¹⁶ This, Ramses II’s nickname, which Rohl gives as “Sysa ... Semiticised as Shysha”, is one of Rohl’s key arguments for Ramses II’s being the biblical ‘Shishak’. *The Lost Testament*, p. 392.

⁸¹⁷ *A Test of Time*, ch. 7.

⁸¹⁸ E.g. G. Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, “Chronological Tables”, VI, gives 814 BC for the year of Jehu’s death, as does E. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, p. 103. And so, too, does revisionist, D. Rohl, *The Lost Testament*, p. 421.

⁸¹⁹ I have based my biblical chronology, in outline, on time spans estimated by Mauro and Hickman. See also footnote 104.

However, this date of 836 BC may perhaps need to be raised a bit, to account for my proposed 7-year co-regency between Seti I and Ramses II, for Egypt (though there does not seem to have been a co-regency between Jehoash and Jeroboam II, for Israel – the two can be separate, however). Based on this co-regency, then the reign of Ramses II would span from c. 843 (-66/67 =) to c. 776 BC (843-776); still some five decades short of Hezekiah and ‘King So of Egypt’.

My estimation then for the era of Ramses II, revised (c. 843-776 BC), is very close to Sieff’s 850-780 BC, approximately, for Ramses II (refer back to p. 255).

The prince regency of Merenptah, son of Ramses II, is likely to have commenced in Ramses II’s 56th year, thus in c. 787 BC,⁸²⁰ with his sole reign beginning in c. 776 BC, the year when his father died. This would mean that the famous Stele of Merenptah, the Victory or ‘Israel Stele’ in that king’s 5th year, approximately, would date to c. 771 BC, at least approximating – as according to Sieff – to the troubled years of interregnum. Whether Merenptah reigned for 10 years,⁸²¹ or somewhat less, then his death in c. 766 BC, would likewise fall short of EOH. And it would fall even somewhat short of the birth of Hezekiah himself since the latter, according to 2 Chronicles 29:1, “began to reign when he was twenty-five years old” (... מֶלֶךְ: בֶּן-עֶשְׂרִים וְחָמֵשׁ שָׁנָה ...), in c. 727 BC, and must therefore have been born about c. (727 + 25 =) 752 BC.

Beginning on p. 297 (section E), I shall be considering Merenptah’s reign in more detail, in preparation for my detailed discussion of his Stele on pp. 300-305. Due to the chronological uncertainties (e.g. the likelihood of some co-regencies) in regard to the 19th dynasty, as well as to the complexities of biblical chronology, I dare not be so bold as to propose exact dates and time correspondences. I look to avoid claiming a neat convergence such as Courville had (5th year of Merenptah = 721 BC, Fall of Samaria), appealing though this may be. In fact, and this is an important point, none of this chapter, or the next, is to be regarded as being dogmatic. It is simply the best ‘alternative’ that I am able to propose at this particular point in time. However, if I am correct in recognising the main Ramessides as Jehu-ides, then this does enable for a very firm chronology indeed to be established for this most important era of Egyptian history.

Ramses II’s Assyrian and Syrian Contemporaries

From the Assyrian evidence we learn that Jehoahaz of Israel’s successor, Jehoash (Jehu’s grandson) apparently, gave tribute to Adad-Nirari III, grandson of Shalmaneser III.⁸²² This then would make Adad-Nirari III also a contemporary of Ramses II; as indeed would have been the former’s successor, Shalmaneser IV. It is therefore interesting (though it may be purely arbitrary) that Ramses II had also, conventionally, Assyrian contemporaries named Adad-Nirari [I] and Shalmaneser [I]; the former of whom I have identified with Adad-Nirari III - revised contemporary of Ramses II.

⁸²⁰ Rohl gives the 56th Year of Ramses II as the year when “Merenptah ... had been crowned as Ramesses II’s co-regent ...”. *The Lost Testament*, p. 402.

⁸²¹ Gardiner accredits Merenptah with 10 years of reign, *op. cit.*, p. 276; and so does Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

⁸²² For what may be a conclusive linguistic argument on this, see S. Page’s ‘The Tablets From Tell Al-Rimah’.

Ramses II must also have been a contemporary of the Syrian king, Du-Teššub, or his son, Duppi-Teššub, referred to by Mursilis as the grandson of *Aziras* (*Aziru*). Other known Syrian contemporaries of Ramses II were *Benteshina* and *Shaushka-muwa*; the latter to become a key figure later in this chapter. *Benteshina* himself was a Hittite ally against Egypt in the 4th year of Ramses II.⁸²³ I shall later propose that *Benteshina* and *Shaushka-muwa* belonged to a branch of the Syrian family related to that of the key Omrides.

Campaigns of Ramses II

Briefly, Ramses II's campaigns, as summarised by Grimal,⁸²⁴ were:

- against the Sherden pirates (2nd year);
- the Syrians (4th year);
- then the famous battle of Qadesh against the Hittites (5th year), "*the military high point of his reign*";
- Judah (including Jerusalem), Edom and Moab (7th year);
- the Syrians, recapturing Qadesh (8th and 9th years);
- Edom and Moab (18th year).
- "*Three years later he signed with Hattusilis the first [sic] state-to-state treaty in history ...*"⁸²⁵ (21st year).

Ramses II's earliest campaign against the Syrians would have taken place during the reign of his father, Seti I. The Hittite-backed Syrian foe was, as we saw, one *Benteshina*, who - I suggest - was at least related to the 'Yuyides'. Following on from my previous, tentative suggestion that Pasenhor's *Buyuwawa* was *Yuya*/Ben-Hadad I, and his son, *Mauasa* (var. *Mawasen*) was *Ay*/Hazeal, then *Mauasa*'s son, *Nebneshi*, would likely, I think, be Ben-Hadad II. Duppi-Teššub could be *Nebneshi*'s son, *Paihuty*. *Benteshina*, I am going to suggest, belonged to this same family, but to a different branch; the branch to which the elusive *Shoshenq I* also belonged. From these two family branches, I suspect, there arose what we know as the first two TIP dynasties, the 21st and the 22nd, both therefore being Libyan 'Syrian'.

What is the significance of Ramses II's campaigns in my revised context?

It cannot be as according to Rohl, who has gone to great lengths in trying to identify Ramses II as the actual biblical 'Shishak',⁸²⁶ whilst however emphatically rejecting the conventional view about 'Shishak':⁸²⁷ "*There is no getting away from it. Shoshenq I cannot be identified as the Bible's Egyptian 'king Shishak', plunderer of Solomon's temple*". Apparently in Rohl's favour, though, is the fact that Ramses II had in his seventh year campaign - unlike Shoshenq I in his 20th/21st year campaign - actually marched on Jerusalem.⁸²⁸

⁸²³ Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

⁸²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 250, 253, 256, 257.

⁸²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 257.

⁸²⁶ *The Lost Testament*, ch. 16: "Schism", pp. 389-414.

⁸²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 390.

⁸²⁸ Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 256. Whereas Grimal has dated the Jerusalem campaign to the seventh year, Rohl seems to have placed it here in Ramses II's seventeenth year.

Moreover, Rohl has connected the name ‘Shishak’ to what he calls Ramses II’s “*hypocoristicon – Sysa (Semiticised as Shysha)*”, which he has apparently derived from “*Ramesses-meriamun (pronounced something like ... Riamashesha-miamana) ...*”. Murphie, however, has produced a strong point of criticism against this scenario, inasmuch as the most potent years of the long-reigning Ramses II would now clash with the most potent years of the expansionist king Asa of Judah.⁸²⁹

Firstly, given Ramesses’ 67 year reign, he would only have reached Year 22 when Asa of Judah, grandson of Rehoboam, ascended his throne. The significance of this date is that only one year previously Ramesses concluded his famous treaty with the Hittite King, Hattusilis. At this stage, with Egypt and the Hatti entering a long period of unprecedented harmony, consider the remarkably provocative actions of miniscule Judah [which] ... under her new king, flouted the Egyptian/Hatti pact (which provided for mutual aid in just such an event), by starting the greatest fortress building phase of its entire history and developing a standing army of 540,000 men [II Chronicles 14:6-8] ... and where did this military build up take place? Not in some distant corner of Egyptian/Hatti territory ... but right in the demilitarised zone between the two powers, where all might see and not be under the slightest doubt that Judah meant business.

Murphie now adds a further dimension to this part of his critique:

To compound this difficulty, the Hebrew annals declare that in Asa’s 10th Year [II Chronicles 14:9-15] ... (Ramesses’ 31st year in the New Chronology) Judah was invaded from the south. However the biblical record says the foe was neither Ramesses nor Hattusilis (as would be expected in Rohl’s scenario) but another character entirely: Zerah the Ethiopian. Would Hatti and Egypt stand back to allow this fourth party with a massive army (suggested as from Arabia rather than Nubia) to invade *their* territory? Moreover, Zerah’s expedition suffered a major thumping at the hands of the Judaeans, enhancing Asa’s reputation throughout the region. Still the New Chronology [Rohl’s] has us believe that Ramesses and Hattusilis did nothing! Even if Zerah was acting in some way as *agent provocateur* to take out the Judaeans’ *Maginot Line* of fortresses, how could Ramesses have tolerated Asa’s humiliation of his agent?

One really does need to be circumspect in regard to *with whom* one is aligning this long-reigning and most potent of pharaohs, Ramses II. One might also argue that it would be disastrous to suggest a chronological alignment of Ramses II with Jeroboam II of Israel; that a huge clash between the two would be expected. If Ramses II *were* Jeroboam II, however, as I am proposing, then this major problem (and indeed the whole problem of placing Ramses II in a revised history) dissolves completely. Even if Ramses II were not Jeroboam II himself, but a related Jehu-ide, presumably a brother, then one could perhaps argue that there might have been a fraternal partnership of mutual support between the two relatives, to the detriment of Judah (a weakened Amaziah/early Uzziah).

⁸²⁹ ‘Critique of David Rohl’s *A Test of Time*’, p. 31.

Rohl though, for his part, is able to raise a further telling argument against the conventional placement of Ramses II and Merenptah, as pharaohs of the Exodus and Conquest era, from Frank Yurco's identification of chariots in the Israel blocks of the Ashkelon Wall at Karnak:⁸³⁰

I have a final point to add to the 'Ashkelon Wall' discussion which hammers one more nail into the coffin of the conventional chronology. The campaign scene which Yurco has identified as a battle against Israel (whether it belongs to Ramesses or Merenptah) presents a major problem for the orthodox dating of the Exodus. Beneath the horses of the pharaoh's chariot you can just make out a much smaller chariot belonging to a fleeing enemy chieftain. This is a typical iconographic formula which is illustrated ... in Egyptian battle scenes – the mighty king crushing his enemies under the hooves of his advancing chariot team. But just a minute! Is this not the time when Moses is leading the Israelites out of Egypt in the orthodox scheme? Even if we assume that Ramesses II was not only the Pharaoh of the Oppression but also the Pharaoh of the Exodus and the 'Israel' scene belongs to Merenptah ... we could at best be in the time of the Conquest of the Promised Land and no later. So how come the Israelites are gadding about in chariots? There is no evidence whatsoever that the Israelites had chariots before the time of Solomon Indeed, their military tactics during the Conquest and Judges period demonstrate that they had no access to this form of military technology The appearance of a chariot in the 'Israel' register at Karnak is a complete historical contradiction within the conventional dating scheme.

But there is no contradiction with Ramses II and Merenptah re-set to the time of Jeroboam II of Israel, who had – initially at least – had to fight to reclaim the land of Israel from Syria as well as having to prevent king Amaziah of Judah from prevailing. One can see that the campaigns of Ramses II were aimed mainly against the 'Syrians', backed by the Hittites. Ramses II was simply continuing the war that his own father (Israel's "saviour"), Seti I, and grandfather before that, Ramses I, had had to wage against Ben-Hadad II (DU-Teššub) and now likely, too, Duppi-Teššub. But, in my context, the Libu (Libyans) with whom Seti I and Ramses III fought could also be classified as 'Syrian'. These Libu were assisting the host of 'Sea Peoples' against whom Ramses III fought in his Year 8; a campaign that I had previously proposed to align, approximately, with Ramses II's Year 2 war against the Sherden. These Hittite-backed 'Syrians' were again the target of Ramses III's Year 11 campaign. Now this would connect chronologically with Ramses II's most famous of all wars, his Year 5 against the Hittites, which must also – in my chronology – pertain to the late era of Seti I. The size and high organization of the Egyptian army at the time, a legacy of Seti I, was along the lines of what Amaziah (my Ramses III), was, for his part, organizing in defence of Judah (2 Chronicles 25:5). Ramses II, originally a king of Israel as I am claiming, also used elite Nearim troops of Israel in his battle against the Hittites according to Rohl.⁸³¹

⁸³⁰ *A Test of Time*, p. 171.

⁸³¹ *The Lost Testament*, p. 380.

“... *Egypt's troop levels [at the battle of Orontes had reached] thirteen thousand, plus the five thousand Nearim from Israel*”.

May Ramses II have been fighting the Hittites in the north, whilst Ramses III engaged their allies in the south? But Ramses III himself also claimed to have fought Hittite and Syrian troops; a boast whose veracity the historians tend to dispute.

As with Ramses III, there are also certain apparent ‘Syrian’, or Syro-Palestinian, features pertaining to Ramses II. This is all to be expected in terms of my revision. For one, his celebrated wife Nefertari may have been of an important ‘Syrian’ line: namely, Ay’s. Thus Reeves:⁸³² “*If the inclusion of Ay’s cartouche within Nefertari’s tomb was deliberate rather than accidental, can we hazard a guess that the queen was actually a member of [Ay’s] close family?*” Moreover, some of the daughters of Ramses II had Syrian names. Clayton writes, for instance, of “...*Bint-Anath (a definitely Syrian name meaning ‘Daughter of Anath’) ...*”.⁸³³ And, according to Booth:⁸³⁴ “*It would ... appear that there were Asiatic women in the royal harem as two of Ramses’ other children were named Meher-anath (Child of Anath) and Astarteherwenemef (Astarte is on the right) both Asiatic names*”. Again, Ramses II honoured Baal, the god of northern Israel:⁸³⁵ “*In the moment of battle [Kadesh] Ramses is described as Seth or Baa’l (the **Canaanite** storm god) ...: ‘I was after them like Baa’l in his moment of power ...’.*”

Epigraphical and Art-Historical Considerations for the Ramesside Era (Revised)

- Writing Styles

*Firstly a note of caution. Since Ramses II reigned for nearly 7 decades, one needs to be careful when talking about artistic and literary styles for his era; an era that was so long that it may have passed through several phases of stylistic development.

Velikovsky had shown that Hebrew inscriptions pertaining to Ramses II, and also to Shoshenq I, fall in a writing style that can be firmly dated stylistically between c. 850 BC and c. 700 BC (the time of Hezekiah). Now this is the very era within which, according to the Ramesside and TIP model that I am - and shall be in the case of Shoshenq I - developing, that Ramses II, c. 843-776 BC must have belonged!

In his chapter “The Tomb of King Ahiiram”,⁸³⁶ Velikovsky had provided strong evidence from inscriptions at the entrance to the tomb, and on the sarcophagus, of this king of Byblos, suggesting the need for a much later than conventional dating of Ramses II. Pierre Montet he wrote, digging at Byblos in 1921, had discovered the tomb of one king Ahiiram (Hiram) that his son, Ithobaal (Ethbaal), had prepared for him. A short Hebrew inscription was cut into the southern wall of the shaft leading into the burial chamber:

“Attention! Behold, thou shalt come to grief below here!”

⁸³² *Op. cit.*, p. 125.

⁸³³ *Op. cit.*, p. 147.

⁸³⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 172.

⁸³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 176. Emphasis added.

⁸³⁶ *Ramses II and His Time*, ch. iii.

Velikovsky told of the Ramesside connection with this Ahiram:⁸³⁷

Near the entrance to the burial chamber several fragments of an alabaster vase were found, and one of them bore the name and royal nomen of Ramses II. Another fragment, also of alabaster, with Ramses II's cartouche was in the chamber The scholars had to decide on the time in which King Ahiram lived. The Phoenician inscriptions on the sarcophagus did not reveal it. Montet ... assigned the tomb to the time of Ramses II, thus to the thirteenth century. He subscribed to the view that all the objects in the tomb, the Cyprian vases included, were of the time of Ramses II. But the age of the Cyprian pottery was claimed by other scholars to be that of the seventh century. Dussaud, a leading French orientalist, agreed that the tomb dated from the thirteenth century, the time of Ramses II, but he insisted that the Cyprian ware was of the seventh century.

Dussaud had concluded, based on obvious signs of intrusion and violation of the tomb, that, in the 7th BC, tomb robbers had broken in and left pottery of their own age. Velikovsky's response to this was:⁸³⁸

Even if it were possible to explain the presence of the Cyprian vessels in the tomb of Ahiram as the work of thieves, there was something in the tomb that could not be attributed to the looters: the inscriptions. An inscription in Hebrew letters at the entrance warns against any sacrilegious act and invokes a curse on any king, soldier, or other person who should disturb the peace of the sepulchre. The other inscription, on the sarcophagus, says that a king, whose name is read Ithobaal and who speaks in the first person, built the sarcophagus for his father, Ahiram, king of Gwal (Byblos). The two inscriptions are carved in the same characters and are of one age. If the tomb was prepared in the days of Ramses II the inscriptions were written in his time. But inscriptions in Hebrew characters in the time of Ramses II, in the thirteenth century, were quite unexpected.

Velikovsky went on to tell of a hotly waged dispute ensuing upon Montet's discovery that had not by then been concluded, and, in the process, he revealed the closeness in time between Ramses II, the Libyan dynasty, and, indeed, king Hezekiah of Judah:⁸³⁹

On one side were the archaeologists, who regarded the archaeological proofs of the origin of the tomb under the Nineteenth Dynasty, or in the thirteenth century BC, as conclusive. On the other side were the epigraphists, who would not concede that the inscriptions of Ahiram's tomb were of a period as early as the thirteenth century; they found a close similarity between these characters and the characters inscribed by Abibaal and Elibaal, Phoenician kings, on statues of their patrons, the pharaohs of the Libyan Dynasty, Shoshenq and Osorkon respectively, presumably of the tenth to the ninth centuries.

⁸³⁷ *Ibid*, p. 81.

⁸³⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 82-83.

⁸³⁹ *Ibid*, p. 83. Emphasis added.

From the time the inscribed statues of Shoshenq and Osorkon came to the notice of scientists until the discovery of Ahiram's tomb, the dedications on these statues in the names of Abibaal and Elibaal were supposed not to have been contemporaneous with the statues themselves: *the letters of the dedication were intermediate between the Mesha stele letters of about -850 and the Hezekiah letters chiselled into the rock wall of a water conduit of the Shiloah spring near Jerusalem, of about -700, and must have been written between these two time points.*

This epigraphical evidence, along with a perceived similarity between the great triumph scene of Shoshenq I at Karnak and that of Merenptah at Karnak,⁸⁴⁰ might perhaps suggest a far closer proximity in time between Shoshenq I and both Ramses II and his son, Merenptah, than is allowable by the conventional chronology, which has both the 20th and 21st dynasties (a span of about two to three centuries) separating Shoshenq I from these two 19th dynasty pharaohs.

Velikovsky's observation on the archaeological dilemma presented by Ahiram's tomb was as follows:⁸⁴¹

According to the conventional chronology, Ahiram, being a contemporary of Ramses II, must have lived and died almost four centuries before Shoshenq and Osorkon. In four centuries a script must have undergone considerable change. But there were no marked changes in the characters from the time of Ahiram to that of Abibaal and Elibaal.

In a later section, "The Byblite Succession" (pp. 325-326), I shall attempt to align the above-mentioned kings of Byblos with the Ramessides and the TIP.

- Art and Architecture

Professor Greenberg has, in his art-historical study of Mycenaean monuments, brought arguments from Greece in support of Velikovsky's thesis that an over-extended Egyptian chronology has adversely affected the dating of ancient art and architecture. He begins:⁸⁴²

Chronological and Historical Considerations

Almost from the moment of its rediscovery, the Lion Gate [of Mycenae] and other adjacent material gave rise to "vehement disputes between 1880 and 1890 about the dating of the Mycenaean finds" [ref. to P. Demargne, *The Birth of Greek Art*, p. 8]. Dates were put forward assigning the monuments to either the years 1400-1100 B.C., 800-700 B.C., or Byzantine times The dating of the Lion Gate at Mycenae has had a "checkered career", to say the least.

⁸⁴⁰ See Clapham, 'A Solution for the Third Intermediate Period of Egypt', p. 2.

⁸⁴¹ *Ramses II and His Time*, *ibid.*

⁸⁴² 'The Lion Gate at Mycenae' (1973), p. 26.

Sherds found under the threshold have currently placed the gate towards the latter part of Late Helladic IIIB (ca. 1250 B.C.) [ref. to G. Mylonas, *Mycenae and the Mycenaean Age*, pp. 20-21 and notes 23 & 26]. However, it was Egypt which provided the dates for LH III B, as well as LH IIIA [ref. to W. Taylour, *The Mycenaean Age*, p. 57; A. Wace, *Mycenae ...*, pp. 10-12; R. Higgins, *Mycenae and Mycenaean Art*, pp. 12-14]. The work of Furumark [*The Chronology of Mycenaean Pottery*, Stockholm, 1941] has further solidified the absolute chronology of the pottery categories, but again this was based upon “chiefly the synchronisms that can be established by comparison and correlation of Mycenaean objects found in datable Egyptian contexts and of Egyptian objects recovered in observed Mycenaean stratigraphic associations [ref. to C. Blegen, *Troy and the Trojans*, pp. 159-160]”.

Professor Greenberg proceeds from this to discuss Petrie’s presumed solution to the chronological problem, based on the latter’s Egyptian model. He also notes Velikovsky’s disagreement with this latter chronological scenario:⁸⁴³

... Demargne’s [ref. to *op. cit.*, p. 8] statement that the Mycenaean chronological problem “was solved in an article by Flinders Petrie ... in the *Journal of Hellenic Studies* (1890), which established an absolute chronology of the Greek civilization on an Egyptian basis” is a somewhat bare one.

... Actually, Petrie based his conclusions upon Mycenaean objects found with Egyptian ones in the Fayum, dating from the reign of Amenhotep III and his successors, as well as Egyptian items such as a scarab bearing the name of Queen Tiy, wife of Amenhotep III and mother of Akhnaten, found at Mycenae. The assumption was made that the Egyptian works should be dated between the years 1400-1100 B.C., but Velikovsky [ref. to *Ages in Chaos* I, pp. 229ff; *Theses ...*, pp. 12ff.] has argued the incorrectness of these dates, suggesting a ninth century B.C. date for the rule of Amenhotep III and his son Akhnaten. If true, this would invalidate the present belief that the Lion Gate may be dated to ca. 1300 B.C.

.... Velikovsky himself actually maintains an eighth century date for the buildings and fortifications of Mycenae and Tiryns [ref. to *Ages in Chaos* I, p. 182; *Theses ...*, p. 11]; Ramsay had already proposed a similar dating in 1888 [ref. to W. Ramsay’s ‘A Study of Phrygian Art’ (Part I), *JHS* 9, pp. 351; 369-371] and again in 1889 [ref. to his ‘A Study of Phrygian Art’ (Part II), *JHS* 10, p. 147] for the Lion Gate as a result of comparisons made with art in Phrygia [ref. to Ramsay’s ‘Studies in Asia Minor’, *JHS*, pp. 19-25; 256-263]. ...

Such a later dating for the Mycenaean architecture was already envisaged by late C19th scholars:⁸⁴⁴

⁸⁴³ *Ibid*, p. 27.

⁸⁴⁴ *Ibid*.

Murray in 1892 [ref. to *A Handbook of Greek Archaeology*, pp. 177-178] also placed the Lion Gate and walls of Mycenae in the eighth to seventh centuries B.C. on the basis of Mycenaean gem comparisons and apparently believed in the possibility of following a “stream of Greek art backward without interruption to a powerful source in an age of great popular activity [ref. *ibid*, pp. 178-179]”.

Gardner also in 1892 observed close analogies between Mycenaean and Phrygian lions [ref. to P. Gardner, *New Chapters in Greek History*, pp. 81-82]. It is interesting to note that both Murray and Gardner held to their own convictions pertaining to Mycenaean chronology even after Petrie’s “solution” to the problem.

Professor Greenberg now asks the question:⁸⁴⁵ “If, in fact, the lions - actually lionesses ... - of the Lion Gate at Mycenae do indeed date from the eighth to seventh centuries B.C., what would or could have been their source of artistic inspiration and execution?” He then, by way of answering it, goes on to highlight the dilemma that arises from the conventional dating of this monumental sculpture, the Lion Gate:⁸⁴⁶

Ramsay ... argued that the Mycenaean gateway most likely belonged to the eighth century B.C. due to the lively intercourse which took place between Argos and Asia Minor at that time, during which the Argives would have learned “to fortify their city in the Phrygian style with lions over the gate”. He also raised the logical question, “Is it probable that all traces of the greatest period in Argive history have altogether disappeared, while numerous remains exist of Argive glory during the unknown period 1500-1000 B.C., and again of Argive bronze work of the sixth century B.C. ...?”

... There seems to be no doubt of Greek and Anatolian as well as Levantine contacts in the eighth or seventh century B.C. on the basis of literary [ref. to D. Page, *History and the Homeric Iliad*, p. 40, n. 63] as well as artistic [ref. to E. Akurgal, *The Art of Greece ...*, p. 162] documentation, but as to the specific identity of these “Greeks” there is still considerable debate

Ramsay ... assumed that they were Mycenaean who were artistically influenced by their Asiatic (Phrygian) encounter. But Ramsay was referring to people now placed five to six hundred years earlier in time. Unfortunately, there is a terrible confusion “who was where when” and “who was influenced by whom” among scholars due to the existing state of chronological affairs

The Gordian knot of art historical controversy is not so easily cut, either. As Demargne has asked, “to what extent was the Mycenaean world influenced by Syria or Egypt either directly or via Cyprus

⁸⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 27.

⁸⁴⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 27-28.

Conversely, to what extent were the civilizations of the Syrian towns, of the Egypt of Amarna and the XIXth Dynasty, accessible to Aegean influences ...?" Nevertheless, one thing is certain and that is the fact that *according to the now accepted art historical framework, we have a renowned work of monumental sculpture which timewise exists in apparent "splendid isolation" and alien in spirit to the Cretan artistic temperament*

[End of quotes]

To re-locate the approximate 'centre' of the long reign of Ramses II at c. 800 BC, as I have done, is thus apparently right in accord with the findings of art history and ancient epigraphy.

E. Merenptah = Zechariah

Merenptah, son of Ramses II, is thought to have been well over 50 years of age when he succeeded to the throne. Rohl gives his own version of this unique situation:⁸⁴⁷

... the rule of Ramesses the Great had finally come to an end. Twelve crown-princes had died before their father. The thirteenth in line – Prince Merenptah – had been crowned as Ramesses II's co-regent in the old and ailing king's fifty-sixth regnal year

The last few years of Ramesses's life had seen the mighty warrior humbled by infirmity. Egypt's neighbours sensed a weakness and sought to test Egypt's resolve. King Merenptah (already himself in his fifth decade of life) successfully fought off invasion by Libyans and Aegean/Anatolian sea-farers whilst his father was still alive. But the power and influence of the pharaonic state seemed to be on the wane. The ancient world was entering a new era

Faulkner tells more of Merenptah's early trouble with the Libyans:⁸⁴⁸

... [Merenptah] inherited a difficult situation, for during his father's old age the vigilance of the frontier patrols had slackened and the army had fallen into neglect, with the result that, driven by famine in their own land, roving bands of Libyans were raiding into the western Delta and terrorizing the people. With the threat of invasion from the west steadily growing, the first task to which the new king had to set his hand was the reorganization of the army, and the effectiveness of his work was demonstrated when in Year 5 the storm burst.

These Libyans belonged to the 'second wave' of 'Indo-European' immigrants, contemporaneous with the 'Sea Peoples', as opposed to the Ramessides who I believe were the descendants of the earlier 'first wave' immigrants. The 22nd dynasty Libyans may, as we shall see, have had connections to both 'waves'.

⁸⁴⁷ *The Lost Testament*, p. 402.

⁸⁴⁸ 'Egypt: From the Inception of the Nineteenth Dynasty to the Death of Ramesses III', ch. ix: "Merneptah: Egypt on the defensive", pp. 232-234.

We need also to understand them as, in part, geographically ‘Syrians’. The coalition that Merenptah now faced was a continuation of the invasion(s) by the ‘Sea Peoples’ that had occurred during the early reign of his father, Ramses II. Rohl tells of it:⁸⁴⁹

A coalition consisting of Libu, Meshwesh, and Kehek, together with certain ‘peoples of the sea’, to wit, Sherden, Sheklesh, Lukka, Tursha, and Akawasha, led by a prince named Mauroy, overran Tjehenu and advanced on the Delta. These ‘Peoples of the Sea’ who allied themselves with the invading Libyans seem to have come from the coasts of Asia Minor and the Aegean Sea, and as Gardiner wrote, were ‘forerunners [sic] of the great migratory movement about to descend on Egypt and Palestine from north and west’.

.... At the news of this threat Merenptah consulted the oracle of Amun at Thebes. The god expressed his approval of the war, while Ptah of Memphis appeared to the king in a dream, seeming to hand him a scimitar. A fortnight was taken up with the mobilization of the army Contact was made on the western frontier at an unidentified place named Pi-yer, and after a 6 hour battle the invaders were routed. Over 6000 were killed and many prisoners ... taken. The Libyan prince Mauroy fled

The Libyan name, *Mauroy*, here, has an element of identity (*Mau-*) with the name, *Mauasa* (*Mau* being an abbreviated form of *Ma* or *Meshwesh*), mentioned second in the Pasenhor Genealogy. This *Mauasa* I have tentatively identified as *Ay*.

Faulkner links this war with that recorded in, amongst other documents, the famous Merenptah Stele:⁸⁵⁰

The principal sources for the Libyan War are a long inscription at Karnak and a stela from Athribis, but there is a third inscription that must be mentioned, the so-called Israel Stela. The information it yields concerning the cause of the war adds nothing material to what is known from the other sources, but it expresses at length the intense relief felt by the Egyptians at the defeat of the invaders.

Trigger *et al.* tell of consistent 19th dynasty (Seti I to Merenptah) encounters with the Libyans (variously Libu, Meshwesh and Tjehenu/Tjehemu).⁸⁵¹ I proposed in *Chapter 2* (pp. 41-43) that plague had been a possible catalyst for some movements of peoples associated with the ‘first wave’ of migrations. And, according to the quote above from Faulkner, “famine” drove this later wave of peoples encountered by Merenptah. Trigger *et al.* seem to concur with such a view, at least in connection with the Libyans.⁸⁵²

What were the causes of this unprecedentedly intense and long-sustained interaction between Libya and Egypt? ...

⁸⁴⁹ *The Lost Testament*, p. 409.

⁸⁵⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 234.

⁸⁵¹ *Ancient Egypt: A Social History*, p. 275.

⁸⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 276.

There may have been pressure upon Cyrenaica's food supplies, due to climatic change or to a population increasing ... by immigration. The texts of Merenptah's reign suggest that the Libyan invasion of his time was caused by famine, and the Mashwash [Meshwesh] invasion under Ramesses III had the character of a true migration, since substantial numbers of women and enormous numbers of animals accompanied the fighting men.

"It is plain that Merenptah himself took no part in the struggle", wrote Gardiner; *"he must have been already an old man when he came to the throne. Still, the victory was naturally credited to him ..."*.⁸⁵³ As with Ramses before him, Merenptah was able to incorporate a number of captive Libyans and their allies into the Egyptian army, to defend Egypt's Delta.

Rohl goes on to tell of what he considers to have been the next subsequent phase, when Amenmesse arose in Egypt:⁸⁵⁴ *"With the death of Ramesses II ... things now got decidedly worse. Egypt was plunged headlong into civil war – one faction supporting the legitimate king, Merenptah, another backing a royal usurper called Amenmesse"*. Previously (p. 263) we had read about the presumed misdeeds of this Amenmesse if he were the *Harmais* of Josephus's account. *Harmais* had been appointed by, presumably, Seti II, as *"viceroy of Egypt"*, but – apparently in the absence of the legitimate line of rule – he rose in revolt against his brother, outraged the queen, and began to wear the royal diadem. Whilst it is extremely difficult to disentangle this incident from other seemingly similar situations, perhaps involving usurpation, that occurred during phases of the 18th, 19th and 20th dynasties, I shall endeavour, in the next section (which also includes my discussion of the Merenptah Stele), to offer an explanation for it. There I shall try to establish whether the era of Amenmesse and his presumed contemporaries, apart from Merenptah whose era in history is - I think most would agree - well established, were of the same approximate era as Merenptah, or earlier, as I have suggested that Queen Tausert most likely was.

To move all of the conventionally post-Merenptah 19th dynasty rulers as a whole piece away from the end of this dynasty, as I shall be contemplating, would mean that Merenptah was in fact the last ruler of the 19th dynasty. This, in my context, would then leave Merenptah as the only available candidate for the last of the Jehu-ide rulers - the apparently ephemeral king Zechariah of Israel. Merenptah was, at least, a son of Ramses II - fitting in my context, since Zechariah was the *"son of Jeroboam [II]"* (2 Kings 15:8); Jeroboam II being of course my *alter ego* for Ramses II.

Finally, if Merenptah were to be identified as Zechariah king of *Israel*, then the former's 'Israel Stele' would take on a whole new meaning.

⁸⁵³ *Op. cit*, p. 272.

⁸⁵⁴ *The Lost Testament*, p. 405.

Interpreting Merenptah's Victory Stele

Relevant Strophe of Stele:⁸⁵⁵ “The princes are prostrate, saying ‘Peace!’. Not one raises his head among the Nine Bows. Desolation is for Tjehenu; Hatti is pacified; plundered is Pa-Canaan with every evil; carried off is Ashkelon; seized upon is Gezer, Yanoam is made non-existent; Israel is laid waste – its seed is no more; Kharru has become a widow because of Egypt. All lands together are pacified. Everyone who was restless has been bound”.

Obviously this, “the first time that Israel is mentioned in Egyptian annals” according to Hunt,⁸⁵⁶ makes of this stele a document of primary importance for biblical historians. But today, particularly with revisionist scholars adding their point of view about the import of this stele to the conventional one(s), there are now various datings - hence interpretations - amongst which to sort, in order to try to ascertain to which era, precisely, Merenptah and his famous stele actually belonged. For example:

In (i) *conventional* history, with Merenptah, son of Ramses II (both 19th dynasty pharaohs), dated to the C13th BC - an era to which the Exodus of Israel and the early Conquest of Canaan are now perhaps thought to belong⁸⁵⁷ - the reference to ‘Israel’ in the stele can be interpreted as being either an attack on Israel in the Sinai by the pursuing Egyptian army, or an attack on Israel newly settled in Canaan. Though Gardiner, even in his day, could say that:⁸⁵⁸ “The explanations [of the stele] now given are very various”. And this same statement of Gardiner’s can currently be applied, too, to (ii) the *revisionist* schemes. For example:

- According to *Courville*, as we have seen, the stele’s inscription pertains to the Assyrian deportation of Samaria in c. 722/721 BC.
- *Velikovsky* would later look to connect it with the deportation of the Jews to Babylon after the sack of Jerusalem by Nebuchednezzar II;⁸⁵⁹ though Bimson has estimated Velikovsky’s date for the 5th Year of Merenptah at “no earlier than 564 BC ... 23 years after the fall of Jerusalem”.⁸⁶⁰
- *Bimson* thought (at least as late as 1980) that Merenptah’s Stele had pre-dated the fall of Samaria by about a decade, to c. 734-733 BC; it being a reference rather to the earlier Assyrian deportations of Israel by Tiglath-pileser III.⁸⁶¹
- Rohl has in turn dated the conquests described in the stele to those effected by Seti I and Ramses II, his candidate for the biblical ‘Shishak’, himself regarding the stele as being Merenptah’s merely basking in the glory of what these, his great predecessors, had achieved before him.⁸⁶²
- And Sieff, as we read, related Merenptah’s victory to what he called the “time of troubles in the northern kingdom of Israel after the death of Jeroboam II”.

⁸⁵⁵ As quoted in D. Rohl’s *A Test of Time*, p. 168.

⁸⁵⁶ ‘Excursus: Israel and Her Neighbours’, 11:21, p. 219.

⁸⁵⁷ See e.g. Newby, *op. cit.*, pp. 175, 182.

⁸⁵⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 273.

⁸⁵⁹ *Ramses II and His Time*, pp. 189-196.

⁸⁶⁰ ‘An Eighth Century Date for Merenptah’, p. 57.

⁸⁶¹ *Ibid.* See also ‘John Bimson replies on the “Israel Stele”,’ pp. 59-61.

⁸⁶² *A Test of Time*, ch. 7, pp. 164-171.

So which of the above, if any, is right?

The weakness of any *conventional* interpretation of Merenptah's Stele lies in the fact that such would be, according to what I have written at length about the Sothic dating system (esp. *Chapter 1*), anachronistic (by about 500 years) to the document itself. We also found that the early wars of Ramses II coincided with chariot-riding Israelites; clearly an anachronism in a conventional context.

For their part the *revisionist* versions listed here, bar Rohl's and Sieff's, suffer from their pertaining to *non-Egyptian* (namely, Mesopotamian) victories over Israel/Judah. Rohl, whilst he has indeed considered the stele to be a record of Egyptian victories, in line with the conventional view, does not generally attribute these to pharaoh Merenptah himself, but to his more illustrious predecessors. Sieff's is thus the only revised version that allows for an *Egyptian* victory over Israel that was actually achieved by Merenptah.

Conventional scholar Day has attempted to bring a note of cold realism to the discussion by revisionists when he, in a critique of Bimson's interpretation of the stele as referring to conquests in Palestine in the 730's, by the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III, argued:⁸⁶³

Bimson's views on the date of Merenptah and the so-called "Israel stele" are no more sound than those of Velikovsky First of all I would note that everything supports the view that the oft-quoted lines from the stele refer to an *Egyptian* victory in Palestine. This is supported by the following: -

(i) The whole stele clearly relates to *Merenptah's* victories: cf. the references to his defeat of the "Nine Bows", the Libyans, Tehenu, etc. earlier in the stele, paralleling the references to the "Nine Bows" and Tehenu in the section in question. It is most natural to suppose that the Palestinian references also therefore relate to Merenptah's victory.

(ii) This is further supported by the fact that we read that "Hurru [Greater Palestine] is become a widow *for Egypt*".

(iii) Immediately following the famous lines cited by Bimson, we read: "Everyone who was restless, he has been bound by the King of Upper Egypt: Ba-en-Re Meri-Amon; the Son of Re: Mer-en-ptah hotep-hir-Maat, given life like Re every day". The reference here to Merenptah's binding all who were restless immediately after the famous passage referring to Israel, etc., only makes sense if we are to understand Israel, etc., as having been bound by Merenptah.

(iv) Very interestingly, Merenptah is elsewhere, in an inscription from Amada in Nubia, described as "Binder of Gezer". This is independent corroboration of Merenptah's invasion of Palestine, specifically Gezer, as in the "Israel stele", and on any natural understanding they must refer to the same event.

This is further supported by the fact - unmentioned by Bimson - that the reference to Merenptah as "Binder of Gezer" on the Amada inscription is parallel to a reference to Merenptah as "Seizer of Libya", the latter certainly referring to his victory over the Libyans in his 5th year, the same event recounted at length in the "Israel stele"....

⁸⁶³ 'An Eighth-Century Date for Merenptah? A Colloquium on John Bimson's Proposals', p. 58.

The reference to the seizing of Gezer on the “Israel stele” in conjunction with the victory over Libya must refer to the same event - *Merenptah’s* capture of Gezer, not an Assyrian one as Bimson argues. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that if, as Bimson supposes, the invaders are the *Assyrians*, Merenptah would certainly have no cause to rejoice over it! In the 8th century BC Egypt and Assyria were deadly rivals, and any Assyrian invasion of Palestine, reaching as far as the very doorstep of Egypt (Ashkelon, Gezer) would represent a threat to Egypt itself, not a thing to rejoice over as in the “Israel stele”.

Though Bimson would vigorously defend his view against Day,⁸⁶⁴ his location of the document to the era of Tiglath-pileser III, in the 730’s BC, is, I believe, somewhat too late. And I would very much doubt if Bimson would stand by his reconstruction today. That leaves us with Sieff and his thesis that the stele pertains to Merenptah’s own victory over Israel, during a time of trouble after the cessation of the reign of Jeroboam II in Israel, when there prevailed in that land a 22-year interregnum. I would accept that Merenptah’s Victory Stele belongs to this approximate time. It is dated to his 5th year,⁸⁶⁵ and thus to the era of c. 771 BC according to what I calculated back on p. 288. This would place the Stele right at the end of Israel’s interregnum and close to the very brief rule of the last of the Jehu-ides, Zechariah, for six months in 772 BC.

If Merenptah reigned for a decade, and this is by no means certain, then he would have died some several years after the publication of his famous Victory or ‘Israel Stele’. A supposed Year 8 for Merenptah is apparently dubious. My own view is that Merenptah reigned from 5-6 years, dying therefore not long after the publication of his stele.

We are now in the time of the prophets Amos and Hosea, contemporaries of Jeroboam II, and, later, of Hezekiah of Judah. These long-lived prophets then emerge from our background study of EOH as the first actual contemporaries of king Hezekiah. I shall be discussing them in real detail in VOLUME TWO of this thesis. There, and in the *Excursus* on Isaiah (beginning on p. 87), I shall claim that Amos and Hosea were, respectively, a father and his son combination. Hickman thinks that the prophet Amos was actually even referring to the violent death of Jeroboam II in one of his proclamations:⁸⁶⁶

The prophet Amos, a contemporary of ... Jeroboam II, adds another perspective to the matter when Yahweh states: “I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword” (7:9), a symbol of war. Amaziah, a priest of Bethel, interpreted this statement as predicting that “Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land” (7:11).

This Amaziah might even be Ramses II’s famous son, Khaemwaset, High Priest of Ptah. King has suggested, however, that Amaziah had misrepresented Amos here:⁸⁶⁷ “By taking Amos’ words out of context, Amaziah distorted them and accused Amos of conspiracy against the king’s person”.

⁸⁶⁴ ‘John Bimson replies on the “Israel Stele”.’

⁸⁶⁵ Cf. Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 270; B. Trigger *et al.*, *Ancient Egypt: A Social History*, p. 272.

⁸⁶⁶ ‘Evidence of the Prophets in Egypt’, p. 141.

⁸⁶⁷ “Amos”, *JBC* 14:24.

Perhaps Amos had actually foretold the passing of the House of Jeroboam by violence. Such, as we are going to find, was to be the fate of the last Jehu-ide, Zechariah.

My own preferred interpretation of the 'Israel Stele' - which accords quite well, at least chronologically, with Sieff's view - is that it represents the scene that greeted Merenptah's army upon Egypt's return to Israel after more than two decades of hiatus, and shortly after the death of Ramses II. The stele's celebrated phrase, "*Israel[']s] ... seed is no more*", could well be then, as Sieff had noted, a reference to Israel's then state of kinglessness; a disaster that seems to have been foretold by the prophet Hosea, when he proclaimed: "*For the Israelites shall remain many days without a king or prince ...*" (3:4; cf. 10:3). For some reason, Jeroboam II, as Ramses II, had ceased to be present in Israel, but had passed the latter part of his rule entirely in Egypt. And it is possible that Israel as a whole went with him. Hosea seems to be referring in part to an *Egyptian* 'captivity' of Israel, when he exclaims: "... *their officials shall fall by the sword because of the rage of their tongue. So much for their babbling in the land of Egypt*" (7:16); but more especially: "*They shall not remain in the land of the Lord, but Ephraim shall return to Egypt ...*" (9:3). "*For even if they escape destruction, Egypt shall gather them, Moph [Memphis] shall bury them*" (v. 6). Merenptah had in fact "*increased the importance of Memphis*", according to Grimal.⁸⁶⁸ Also, as Sieff has written.⁸⁶⁹ "*Hoshea [Hosea], who started to prophesy in Jeroboam II's reign ... predicted a time when "all would be carried into Egypt" as tribute [his ref. is to Hosea 12:1] ...*".

The impression that one gets from reading Hosea is that Israel will go once again into captivity in Egypt, as it had of old. Merenptah, it seems, could truly write, upon his campaign arrival in Palestine:

Israel is laid waste – its seed is no more

The Old Testament tells us little in concrete, non prophetically-cast terms, about the 22-year interregnum period for Israel. Anstey, who had chronologically identified this interregnum period in Israelite history, attempted to fill it out somewhat despite the meagre details available:⁸⁷⁰

No account is given of the events which occurred in Israel during this interregnum which lasted 22 years. But the history indicates very plainly the straitened character of the times, and suggests a reason for the interregnum, for we are told that the country was overrun by enemies, and the name of Israel was in danger of being "blotted out from under heaven" (2 Kings 14^{26.27}). Some mystery seems to hang over this period. During the first part of it Assyrian history is also a blank.

According to Anstey this was also the time of the prophet Jonah's intervention in Nineveh.

⁸⁶⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 268.

⁸⁶⁹ 'The Libyans in Egypt', p. 31.

⁸⁷⁰ *The Romance of Bible Chronology*, p. 185.

(But see my discussion of this in the *Excursus* on Isaiah, according to which Jonah's intervention in Assyria was probably much later).

Here, nevertheless, is Anstey's description of this troubled era:⁸⁷¹

It is the time of the earthquake, two years before which Amos began to prophecy (Amos 1¹), an earthquake that was remembered even to the days of Zechariah, nearly 300 years later, the terror of which Zechariah uses as an image of the terror of the Day of Judgment. It was a time when the affliction of Israel was bitter, for there was not any shut up nor left in Israel (2 Kings 14²⁶). The author of the *Companion Bible* suggests that the words "shut up" are to be interpreted as meaning "protected", like those shut up in a fortress, and the word "left" is a mistranslation. He derives the word so translated from the Hebrew word **צִנַּב** 'azab, to fortify, not from the Hebrew word **אַזַּב** 'āzab, to leave, to forsake. The meaning then is "there was no fortress and no fortification", or "no protection and no defence" against their foes. The bitterness of Israel's affliction at this time may possibly be connected with the Civil War by which the Kingdom of Israel was torn asunder from the reign of Jeroboam II to the close of its history.

[End of quote]

The "earthquake" to which Anstey referred, that so dramatically heralded the prophetic ministry of Amos, Courville had looked to connect with the cataclysmic Thera (Santorini) eruption, whose conventional alignment with the Amarna period (though now an earlier 18th dynasty phase seems to be favoured) Courville thought to have been based on no solid evidence.⁸⁷² The catastrophe (whether or not it was also the Thera incident), would most definitely have added further to the chaos of these troubled times. It may also be possible, chronologically, to link this disaster with an earthquake known to have affected Egypt about mid-way through the reign of Ramses II; hence approximately at the beginning of the interregnum. Tyldesley has estimated it to have occurred in the pharaoh's 30th year:⁸⁷³ "*Year 30 [of Ramses II] saw an unexpected catastrophe – earthquake – at Abu Simbel The Great Temple was badly affected*". Year 30 of Ramses II as ruler of Egypt would correspond to his Year 37 as Jeroboam II of Israel, hence very close to the beginning of the interregnum in Jeroboam's Year 41.

The earthquake, which could have been far more severe in the north, may have been at least a cause of Israel's leaving the land, to take up permanent residence in Egypt.

When Egypt finally returned to the land of Israel, under Merenptah - during a late phase of Uzziah the leper's reign, when his son, Jotham, was still a boy (so with Judah perhaps in a temporary phase of weakness) - a depressing scene of desolation (to which Merenptah presumably would have added further misery) may have greeted these 'Syrian' Egyptians whose fathers had ruled Israel.

"Israel is laid waste – its seed is no more ...".

⁸⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷² *Op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 122-132.

⁸⁷³ *Ramesses*, p. 107.

Hosea, though, seems to have been referring to an actual military defeat for Israel at the time of Jeroboam II when he stated, in connection with the naming of his new male child, 'Jezreel' (Hosea 1:4-5): "*And the Lord said to him, 'Name him Jezreel; for in a little while I will punish the house of Jehu for the blood of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. On that day I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel.'*" This utterance so early in Hosea, and therefore almost certainly in the reign of Jeroboam II (cf. Hosea 1:1), was an announcement of the demise of the latter's kingdom, and of a substantial period of kinglessness in Israel. But it also may be meant to include, *ab extenso*, the final termination of the Jehu-ide line, with the assassination of Zechariah. We have read that famine was also a problem in Syro-Palestine at the time of Merenptah. This may perhaps have been an effect of whatever cause, or causes, had actually triggered the interregnum period mainly prior to Merenptah's rule. Later, I shall also suggest that the 'Syrians' (Libyans), specifically Osorkon II - possibly backed by Judah - had again been active in the land prior to Egypt's revival there. This will enable me later to account also for an archaeological correlation between Osorkon II and Jeroboam II. Merenptah may eventually have been able to rise up with the assistance of the Ethiopians, as the 'Amenophis' legend (presuming it refers to Merenptah and not to Akhnaton) may suggest, and re-take Syro-Palestine for Egypt. Merenptah, if he were Zechariah, was a 'child (albeit aged) of destiny', because it had been prophesied that yet one more Jehu-ide would reign on the throne of Israel.

Did Merenptah come back to Israel to ensure that that prophecy would be fulfilled? According to my reconstruction, Merenptah himself was of the Jehu-ide line of Israelite kings, a 'Syrian'. His secondary wife at least, too, was apparently of the same nationality; for, according to Tyldesley, she was "*of Syrian origin named Sutilja*".⁸⁷⁴

More specifically perhaps, in my context, Merenptah could have been intending with this famous statement that there the Jehu-ides, his very family, had ceased to rule over Israel. Was his campaign then an inspired mission to fulfil the prophecy that the Lord had given to his great ancestor, Jehu: "*Your sons shall sit on the throne of Israel to the fourth generation*". (2 Kings 15:8-12)? Merenptah was, according to my reconstruction, of this very fourth generation. Anyway, the prophecy itself was apparently fulfilled, for: "*In the thirty-eighth year of King Azariah [Uzziah] of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam reigned over Israel in Samaria six months*" (15:8). Now, this Zechariah continued his ancestors' policy of doing "*what was evil in the sight of the Lord*" (v. 9).

However, Merenptah's triumph was to be short-lived, if he were indeed Zechariah, son of Jeroboam II. Then: "*Shallum son of Jabesh conspired against him, and struck him down in public and killed him, and reigned in place of him*" (v. 10).

I wish now to try to determine if all of the conventionally reckoned post-Merenptah rulers of the 19th dynasty can actually be moved as a block to an earlier period. This would mean that the 19th dynasty would now terminate with Merenptah himself. It would also shave off more than a dozen years from those genealogies with which Bierbrier had had to grapple. And, in my context, it would enable for the last 19th dynasty ruler (Merenptah) to coincide with the last Jehu-ide ruler (Zechariah).

⁸⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 191.

The Time of Amenmesse

Conventionally, Amenmesse is assigned to the period directly post-Merenptah, as a contemporary of Seti II, thought to be Merenptah's son. Whilst Amenmesse is generally thought to have been a usurper - equated variously with 'Harmais', or *Osarsiph*, or even *Bay* - Reeves seems to leave open the possibility that Amenmesse, sometimes considered to have been a son of Ramses II,⁸⁷⁵ may actually have been a legitimate successor:⁸⁷⁶

Whether [Seti] II was by-passed, however, and the throne passed directly to a rival claimant, Amenmesse (possibly the son of a daughter of Ramesses II ...), or whether Amenmesse established himself as an independent king in the south, is at present unclear.

This is also thought to have been the time of Manetho's (through Josephus) rebel *Osarsiph*. Here is LeFlem's account of this *Osarsiph*, locating him, "*as Siptah*", to the time of Merenptah:⁸⁷⁷

Manetho ascribes almost 20 years to the reign of Merenptah (Amenophis), a reign which was disrupted by the incursion of the rebel *Osarsiph* These rebels called for help from the "shepherds" of Jerusalem, who sent a 200,000 strong army to their aid. Since *Osarsiph*'s rebellion succeeded, he must have become a king, and I would therefore identify him as *Siptah*.

Rohl has, quite understandably, come to light with different preferences, on different occasions, for the enigmatic *Osarsiph*, who is said to have changed his name to "Mose". Firstly Rohl opted for Ramesses-Siptah:⁸⁷⁸

The proposition on offer here is that the original view of two pharaohs called *Siptah* is correct Ramesses-Siptah would then be the usurper *Osarsiph*/Moses, the "Mose" being a derivation of Ra-"mose"-ses coupled with the obvious similarities of *Osarsiph* and *Siptah*.

then, later, Amenmesse. I shall take some of Rohl's account of the legend here, as it may serve to summarise Manetho's tale for us:⁸⁷⁹

Manetho tell us ... that Amenmesse – here called by his hypocoristicon *Mose* – was a priest of Heliopolis who had previously borne the name *Osarsiph*. *Mose* seized Avaris and requested support from Jerusalem in his bid to overthrow Merenptah – here called Amenophis son of Rampses (i.e Ramesses II) by Josephus but Amenophthis in all the other redactions of Manetho.

⁸⁷⁵ Grimal refers to this Amenmesse as "*the son of an otherwise unknown daughter of Ramesses II called Takhat*". *Op. cit.*, p. And Tydelesley thinks similarly that Amenmesse was "*most likely to have been the son of either Merenptah or Ramesses II*". *Ramesses*, p. 170.

⁸⁷⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 150.

⁸⁷⁷ 'Amenophis, *Osarsiph* and Arzu', p. 14.

⁸⁷⁸ 'Comments by David Rohl', p. 18.

⁸⁷⁹ *The Lost Testament*, p. 405.

Here Rohl gives this explanatory footnote: “*Manetho’s Amenophthis is almost certainly a corruption of Menophthah where the ‘r’ of mr(y)-n-Pth (‘beloved of Ptah’) has been dropped in the foreign (Greek) vocalisation of the Egyptian name*”. Rohl continues:

Mose reminded the people of Jerusalem that they had once lived at Avaris (a direct reference to the Israelite sojourn in the eastern delta ...). And so, according to Manetho, the Jerusalemites (i.e. Judahites) sent troops to fight on behalf of Mose who, as a result, was able to overthrow Amenophis. The old king fled into exile, heading south into Kush where he found refuge under the protection of the friendly Kushite ruler. There, Amenophis and his son Sethos prepared an army to retake their rightful inheritance. [This ...] apparently took thirteen years

But, as Rohl rightly goes on to point out, it is not entirely clear that all of the *Osarsiph* legend even finds its place comfortably in the era of Merenptah. It seems to be, as he calls it, “*a conflation*” of eras:⁸⁸⁰

Josephus’ legend of Amenophis/Amenophthis seems to be a conflation of at least two separate characters and eras. The story surrounding Ahenaten (Amenhotep IV) and his religious revolution is certainly one element - especially the part of the story dealing with the polluted people settled in the quarries on the east bank of the Nile (i.e. el-Amarna) and the role played by Amenophis son of Paapis (i.e. Amenhotep son of Hapu). However, the sequence of rulers given by Josephus – Sethos (Seti I) – Rampses for 66 years (Ramesses II) – Amenophis/Amenophthis (Merenptah) – Sethos – appears to set the story at the end of the 19th Dynasty. So the civil war between Mose and Amenophis/Amenophthis which produced 13 years of instability must be a quite separate tradition from the Akhenaten heresy which was dated to well over a century earlier.

Before we can even begin to unravel this story, we need clearly to distinguish in this ancient account what might be 18th dynasty (EA era) elements from 19th dynasty ones. On p. 264, I had proposed the entirely new idea that the ‘driving out of the usurper by a Sethos’ pertained to *Seti-nakht as Joash of Judah*. Actually this ‘driving out’ action was really the work of the priest Jehoiada (my prophet Elisha) in deadly opposition to the Baalist Queen Athaliah; a ‘second phase’ (in Judah) of the ‘first phase’ work of reform already done (in Israel) by Hazael and Jehu – who also acted in Egypt, as Ay and Horemheb, against the Atonist regime.

Amenhotep son of Hapu I had tentatively proposed as being Elijah himself (*Chapter 10*, p. 239).

Now, with the news that the mummy of Seti II (presuming that it is really his), is clearly ‘Thutmoside’⁸⁸¹ (see pp. 312-313 below for an account of this) then it becomes quite anachronistic I think to talk about Seti II in terms ‘post-Merenptah’. And the same must then apply also to his contemporary, Amenmesse.

⁸⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, footnote *.

⁸⁸¹ Luban, *Where is the Mummy of King Horemheb?*

So, along with my previous suggestion that *Bay* and Tausert be connected with, respectively, *Ay* and Queen Ankhnesneferibre - hence at the end of the EA period, and not at the end of the 19th dynasty - I should now like to re-unite them with their presumed contemporaries anyway, Seti II and Amenmesse. But not with Merenptah.

Seti II, so-called (*Userkheperure Setepenre*), the same as Sethos Merenptah,⁸⁸² would probably now be Seti-nakht (*Userkhaure Setepenre*), my Joash of Judah. Tyldesley has written of Seti II, that:⁸⁸³ “*His titles are strongly militaristic ...*”. This extra dimension to the pharaoh, as Seti-nakht, would at least serve to fill him out. The ‘Thutmoside’ aspect, too, would even be appropriate, given my identification elsewhere⁸⁸⁴ of the Thutmoside dynasty as Davidic Judaeon. Amenmesse would now not be “Harmais”, who possibly pertains to *Ay* again; but he could just perhaps be Elisha/Jehoiada, the real force behind Seti-nakht, as Joash of Judah.

Osarsiph, who changed his name to ‘Mose’, could also – as a priest of Heliopolis – be the influential Elisha/Jehoiada again, whose reform, like that of *Ay* and Horemheb, must have reverberated in Egypt – though he was based in Jerusalem. I have already suggested that Elisha was the same as Ramose of EA (p. 239); this giving us the ‘mose’ element (Amen-‘mese’ perhaps being a variant). He certainly, like *Osarsiph*, relied on Judaeon forces. And the *siph* element of the name could pertain to *shaphat* (the name also of Elisha’s father). I have talked about the *shaphat*-police. But if the *Osarsiph* incident had in fact occurred at the time of Merenptah, as I think more likely, then my candidate for *Osarsiph* instead would be Osorkon II (to be discussed on pp. 343-345), presumably backed by the large military force of king Uzziah of Judah. Certainly the “200,000-strong army” would be far more appropriate at the time of Uzziah, than in the EA era.

If Seti II Merenptah were, under the auspices of the priest Jehoiada, involved in the same reform as was Horemheb, then this may serve in part to explain the association of both Horemheb and Seti-Merenptah in the tomb of a Shoshenq, at Saqqara, as I had discussed in *Chapter 10* on p. 253.

Tomb of Amenmesse

Certainly, in my context, Amenmesse must have pre-dated (been an older contemporary of) kings Joash and Amaziah of Judah, since Amenmesse’s tomb, clearly pre-dated that of Ramses III (my Amaziah) and the time of his father, Seti-nakht (my Joash). Clayton tells of this situation:⁸⁸⁵ “[*Seti-nakht*] had begun to excavate another tomb (KV11), but this had intruded upon the tomb of Amenmesse (KV10) and been abandoned. Subsequently it was to be realigned and used by his son, Ramesses III”. There was, however, no evidence of an actual internment here. Thus the ‘Amenmesse Project’:⁸⁸⁶ “*Most significant for the early history of the tomb, there was nothing discovered which could be attributed to the burial equipment of either Amenmesse or Baketwerel*”.

⁸⁸² Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

⁸⁸³ *Ramesses*, p. 191.

⁸⁸⁴ ‘The House of David’.

⁸⁸⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 161.

⁸⁸⁶ *Amenmesse Project*.

Whilst, according to Reeves:⁸⁸⁷ “... it is not yet known if Amenmesse was ever interred in this tomb, or what relationship, if any, Amenmesse bore to the ‘king’s mother’, Takhat or the ‘great royal wife’ Baketwerel, for whom parts of the tomb were redecorated”.

The priest Jehoiada, whom I am most tentatively identifying with Amenmesse, was - we might recall - at least married to royalty; his wife being the very sister of Queen Athaliah. I have re-identified *Bay* with *Ay*, and Queen Tausert (Ta-sherit) with Ankhesenmaun *ta-sherit*. Presumably, in this context, Siptah would be Ankhesenamun’s son. Though Rohl claims that “there is direct evidence to confirm that Siptah succeeded Seti II ...”,⁸⁸⁸ he does not offer any reference. And we have just considered that there may have been two pharaohs Siptah. The case of the deformed Siptah, with a “distorted left foot and an atrophied lower leg, possibly the result of cerebral palsy”, according to Tyldesley,⁸⁸⁹ may be medically harmonious with the fact that Ankhesenamun had, according to Tyldesley “two still-born daughters”, one of whom was deformed. Thus she tells:⁸⁹⁰ “... Professor Harrison ... [claimed that] the older child may have suffered from a condition known as Sprengel’s deformity, which would have led to spina bifida and scoliosis”. Patients with cerebral palsy indeed have a high incidence of scoliosis.

The following conundrum for archaeologists in relation to Siptah’s supposed funerary equipment (tomb KV47), as described by David, may take on a different perspective in my context:⁸⁹¹ “However, some of the coffin fragments are said to carry the name of Merenptah, and be associated with the anthropoid coffin fragment of this king now in the British Museum. **Their presence within KV47 has not yet been explained**”. In both the conventional context, and mine, Siptah would be considered to have been close in time to Seti-nakht (my Joash of Judah), hence the similarity between Seti-nakht’s coffin lid and Siptah’s.⁸⁹² But, conventionally, one should not expect any intrusion of Siptah into Merenptah’s funerary equipment.

Names of female characters, supposedly at the time of Amenmesse, such as Tausert (or *ta-Sherit*), or Beket-wer-El, may in fact recall Amarna, and, respectively, Nefertiti’s daughter (Ankhesenamun *ta-Sherit*⁸⁹³) and Beketaten (the presumed daughter of *Tiy*⁸⁹⁴). Beket-wer-El could conceivably, in a revised context, have been this obscure Beketaten. Now *Ay* himself, as we have read, had been married to a *Tiy*, usually called *Tiy* or *Tey* II, to distinguish her from the more famous *Tiy*. Though, amidst all the intrigue that was Amarna, one would even have to consider the possibility that *Ay* had married his very own sister, *Tiy*, and that their child was Beketaten. *Ay*, as *Bay* in terms of my revision, according to Grimal “seduced the pharaoh’s widow, who then - if tradition is to be believed - gave him total control of the Treasury”.⁸⁹⁵

Grimal adds the note here: “Both *Bay* and *Twosre* had evil reputations”.

⁸⁸⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 150.

⁸⁸⁸ ‘Comments by David Rohl’, p. 17.

⁸⁸⁹ *Ramesses*, p. 192.

⁸⁹⁰ *Nefertiti*, p. 182.

⁸⁹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 156. Emphasis added.

⁸⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁸⁹³ Courville has written of 2 rulers (one male) by the name of Tausert (or *Thuoris*). *Op. cit.*, pp. 284-286.

⁸⁹⁴ Collier, *op. cit.*, p. 79. “... the little Princess Beketaten, child of *Tyi*’s [*Tiy*’s] middle age”.

⁸⁹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 270.

Ramesside Mummies

A potential trap for a revision of Egypt, often involving *alter egos*, will be mummies. Obviously a certain ruler can have only one genuine mummy. When proposing multi-identifications for a pharaoh, as I have already done, one must make sure that, for example, there is not a well-identified mummy each for that ruler plus his proposed *alter ego(s)*. And, in the case of someone like Horemheb, identified with Jehu, whose burial place is recorded as being Samaria, there should be no mummy at all in Egypt.

Whilst there has been publicity over the supposed mummy of Ramses I (my Jehoahaz), I have already (refer back to p. 248) pointed out that there is significant doubt as to the reliability of this particular identification. Hence my specifying 'well-identified' mummies. The latter may be relevant, though, in the case of Seti I, Ramses II and Merenptah.

But as we have already noted there is now, at least in the case of Seti II, a well-established anomaly within the 19th dynasty mummy sequence.

So far there is no problem of mummy or burial duplication in the case of Horemheb, of whom Tyldesley has written:⁸⁹⁶ "*Horemheb's body has never been recovered*". Though Luban thinks that the mummy attributed to Seti II may actually be Horemheb's.⁸⁹⁷ But the mummies of Seti I, Ramses II and Merenptah, seem to be well known and publicised.

In the case of Ramses II, however, Velikovsky, at least, had argued that there was significant doubt in regard to the mummy attributed to that pharaoh. Velikovsky, following certain specialists, insisted that the mummy reputedly of Ramses II was nowhere near the required age of "*late eighties or nineties at his death*".⁸⁹⁸ For instance Rudolph Virchow, "*the renowned anatomist*", he wrote, "*investigated the skull of Ramses' mummy and wondered at the form of the jawbone; it could not be that of a very old man*". And "*G. Elliot Smith, anatomist at the University of Cairo ... wrote It is a curious problem to determine why this exceedingly old man should have healthy and only slightly worn teeth*". Tyldesley, though, reminds us that Smith had made his diagnosis "*without the benefit of X-ray analysis*", and that modern scientific tests have led to the conclusion that "*[Ramses II's] teeth were badly decayed and, in his final years, must have caused him constant pain*".⁸⁹⁹

Lastly, Velikovsky told of:

Dr William Krogman, working with the University of Michigan team that performed the X rays, [who] interprets the result as indicating that Ramses II was in all likelihood "between 50 and 55" years old at the time of his death. This figure was obtained from a careful study of demineralization of the pelvis.

The question might still legitimately be asked: Do we have here the true mummy of Ramses II?

⁸⁹⁶ *Ramesses*, p. 36.

⁸⁹⁷ *Where is the Mummy of King Horemheb?*

⁸⁹⁸ *Ramses II and His Time*, p. 216.

⁸⁹⁹ *Ramesses*, p. 15.

Specialists Ikram and Dodson, though, have not queried the identification.⁹⁰⁰ Strangely, details of Ramses II's death are completely missing. Moreover, the alleged mummy of Ramses II was certainly moved about a lot, and was apparently not processed near the Nile, as Tyldesley tells in various places.⁹⁰¹

... examination of [Ramses II's] mummy has revealed marine rather than riverine sand within his bandages; a clear indication that he was not mummified on the banks of the Nile. No official document preserves the details of his passing

Unfortunately very little [of Ramses II's funerary] equipment has survived.

By now Ramesses rested in his nest of coffins. None of these has survived

And, in the case of Merenptah:⁹⁰²

The body of King Merenptah ... was, when recovered from the Valley of the Kings, coated in salt. At first this was interpreted as absolute proof that Merenptah had drowned in the Red Sea, or in the Reed Lakes, while chasing Moses and the Israelites. Today it is realized that this salty deposit is an unexpected and unexplained side-effect of the mummification process. Merenptah was eventually discovered by Victor Loret lying with other members of the royal family in the tomb of Amenhotep II

Was Merenptah slain, as in the case of his presumed *alter ego*, Zechariah? Certainly the mummy (whether his or not) revealed extensive damage, thought to be by tomb robbers. According to an Internet article:⁹⁰³ "... thieves ... had broken his right clavicle, tore off his right arm, chopped through the anterior abdominal wall, and generally hacked at the mummy with an adze ... Merenptah's penis and his scrotum are missing ...". According to this article, he may even have been castrated "*before ... his death*". If such be the case, then this would probably signify that he had suffered a violent death, as indeed Zechariah had.

Reeves has, I think, asked the relevant question: "*Royal mummies: are they what they claim to be?*", in relation to which he provides the following assessment:⁹⁰⁴

Seeds of doubt were first sown when, in the summer of 1881, the DB [Deir el-Bahri] 320 mummies arrived in the British Museum and it was found that several of the bodies had become separated in antiquity from their intended coffins and replaced in cases to which they had no legitimate claim. In 1898, Loret discovered that the occupants of the KV35 cache had been similarly mixed up.

⁹⁰⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 326.

⁹⁰¹ *Ramesses*, pp. 179, 182.

⁹⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 57, 188-189.

⁹⁰³ *View 19th Dynasty Royal Mummies*

⁹⁰⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 202.

It was clear, therefore, that none of the mummies could be determined with complete confidence from the formal inscriptions of the coffin in which they were contained – a conclusion few would argue with. Rather it was the labelling directly on the mummy bandages that gave the reliable identification.

At least so thinks Reeves, who goes on to blame Maspero for confusing matters:

Unfortunately, the waters were muddied considerably a short time later by Maspero, who argued that one of the DB320 mummies was not the lady she purported to be. Though clearly labelled across the bandages covering the breast as ‘The King’s daughter and King’s Sister, Meryetamun, may she live!’, Maspero claimed that this was, in fact, a mummy of the Middle Kingdom, rewrapped as a replacement of the original, 18th dynasty mummy, which he suggested, had been destroyed in antiquity. The anatomist Eliot Smith demonstrated in 1912 that this was an aberration on Maspero’s part. But too late; a precedent had been set for dismissing the ancient attribution out of hand where the anatomical data for the corpse seemed to contradict the evidence of the docket.

Reeves’ optimism does not accord with the facts, however. The recent research by both Weeks⁹⁰⁵ and Forbes⁹⁰⁶ clearly testify to the fact that some important mummies, at least, have been mixed up. To illustrate this, here is what they both have to say regarding the alleged mummy of Seti II. Firstly Forbes:⁹⁰⁷

When Smith physically examined the Royal Mummies for the purpose of preparing his *Catalogue Général* volume, he noted certain discrepancies, among them that the mummy labeled “Seti II” by the Twenty-first Dynasty necropolis priests — who rescued and rewrapped the desecrated New Kingdom royalty — bore no facial resemblance whatsoever to the heavy-jawed Ramesside kings of the Nineteenth Dynasty (of whom Seti II represented the fifth generation), but instead had the skull shape, small aquiline nose and pronounced dental overbite characteristic of the kings of the Eighteenth Dynasty. Likewise, Smith felt that the mummification technique employed on “Seti II” was consistent with that of the early part of the latter dynasty rather than of the Nineteenth.

Similarly Weeks:⁹⁰⁸

... statistical comparisons demonstrated that some of the royal mummies in the [Cairo] museum had been mislabeled by ancient priests when they moved the bodies from their original tombs to protect them from thieves. For example, the mummy labeled Seti II (Twentieth Dynasty) is more likely to be that of Thutmose II (Eighteenth Dynasty), because it shows far greater craniofacial similarity to the Thutmosid series than to pharaohs of later times.

⁹⁰⁵ *The Lost Tomb*.

⁹⁰⁶ *Tombs. Treasures. Mummies*. Addendum to Appendix Three, “Catalogue of the Mummies of KV35”.

⁹⁰⁷ *Ibid*.

⁹⁰⁸ *Op. cit.*, pp. 28-283.

This reattribution is supported by the age at which our pathologists said this mummified man had died.

Thus there must be some serious doubt as to proper identification of mummies. But, if we do in fact have the true mummies of some of the important 19th and 20th dynasty Ramessides, then I can only suggest that they were later moved from their original burial place in Israel - where, given the prevailing Egyptian influence of the time, they could still have been mummified - and taken to Egypt. No one doubts, at least, that these mummies were moved around. We have already discussed the several movements of the alleged mummy of Seti I. And one finds that, in the case of Ramses II's mummy as well, it was moved at least once in antiquity. Thus Booth:⁹⁰⁹

The funeral [of Ramses II] was problematic
Ramses's body rested in the tomb [KV7 in the Valley of the Kings] for 200 years before being moved to the Deir el Bahri cache, where he laid for a further 2000 years before being moved again to his new home in the Cairo Museum

According to Weeks, the tomb of Ramses II, KV7, is "*a tomb that remains one of the valley's great puzzles*".⁹¹⁰

'Syrian' Origins

Further to my remarks above about certain Syro-Palestinian aspects of Ramses II and III, I should like to add a general but important note in regard to the physical appearance of the Syrian 'Yuyides' and Jehu-ides. I have already (in *Chapter 9*) alluded to the fact that the very well-preserved mummy of *Yuya* (Ben-Hadad I), who may have been ethnically related to Horemheb (Jehu), is considered to have been of foreign, northern, even perhaps European, appearance (refer back to p. 206). *Yuya* I have identified as an Omride, and - through his *alter ego*, *Tushratta* - as being of 'Indo-European' background. Thus I would not be surprised to learn that he did not have typically Egyptian, or Semitic, features. *Yuya's* mummy has been described as "*one of the best-preserved examples known*",⁹¹¹ had a "*Caucasian facial structure*" and may have had blonde hair.⁹¹² According to Ikram and Dodson:⁹¹³ "*The body has flaxen hair It is unknown if the hair colour is natural, or a result of henna and chemicals mixing over time*". "... *Yuya has been interpreted as having an unusual, almost European, physiognomy ...*", writes Tyldesley.⁹¹⁴ Tyldesley however has dismissed:⁹¹⁵ "*The suggestion that Tiy and Yuya were blue-eyed blondes ... the blue eyes were the unfortunate result of a modern misinterpretation of an ancient portrait*".

⁹⁰⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 180, 181.

⁹¹⁰ *The Lost Tomb*, p. 162.

⁹¹¹ Ikram & Dodson, *The Mummy in Ancient Egypt*, p. 122, n. 124.

⁹¹² Lissner, 'Red Haired Mummies of Egypt', section: "Blue Bloods. What Does It Really Mean?"

⁹¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 324.

⁹¹⁴ *Nefertiti*, p. 22.

⁹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

I had already though, in *Chapter 9*, referred to Nefertiti's apparently classical Greco-Hittite profile (p. 207).

Certainly the 'white' aspect of the Ramessides can be over-stated, especially by Aryanists.

Points to consider, though, are the seemingly clear Caucasian features of Seti I, another very well-preserved mummy⁹¹⁶ (presuming that we have the right one). Seti I was the son of Ramses I, hence of the Zimride Horemheb/Jehu, according to my reconstruction. There is also the possibility that Ramses II had red (or silky yellow) hair and Nordic features (once again depending on right identification of the mummy).

Now, just as we found in *Chapter 3* that there is fairly consistent scholarly opinion that Omri was a foreigner, so, correspondingly (in my context), there appears to be some generally consistent evidence that the Ramessides, too, tended to be fair-haired, presumably fair-skinned, rulers, of possible Nordic-like appearance. Smith, according to Tyldesley,⁹¹⁷ observed in the case of Ramses II, "... *many alien [Asiatic] traits, curiously blended with Egyptian characters ...*".

And:⁹¹⁸

... modern scientific analysis of [Ramses II's] hair-roots has confirmed that in his youth the king was indeed a natural red-head ... considered to have an affinity with Seth.

Given the link between the god Seth and the colour red it is tempting to speculate that red hair was a Ramesside family trait, with Seti (or Seth) I, the father of Ramesses, being named with reference to his auburn tresses.

Also to be re-considered in our 'Syrian' context are the singular names of the 'Yuyide' family:⁹¹⁹ "'Yuya' – *perhaps because it was a nickname – was certainly an unusual name in ancient Egypt ...*", pointing I think to this family's foreign origins. And *Inen (Inini)* we found to have been a Libyan name. (Refer back to discussion, "The Origin of the 'Yuyide' Names", beginning on p. 198).

Soon we are going to read also of the apparently un-Egyptian features exhibited by sculptures of a late 20th Dynasty pharaoh; a dynasty that I am claiming to have been of Judaeen origins.

We have now come as far as the year 772 BC (temporary revised date), the 38th Year of Uzziah of Judah. This year signalled the end of a most vibrant era: the Jehu-ides in Israel and the corresponding 19th dynasty in Egypt.

⁹¹⁶ According to P. Newby, "[Seti I] was a handsome man with a firm, almost peaked jaw and an expression that could verge on the genial". *Warrior Pharaohs*, p. 145.

⁹¹⁷ *Ramesses*, p. 14.

⁹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁹¹⁹ Tyldesley, *Nefertiti*, p. 21.

The Third Intermediate Period [TIP]: How Does It All Fit In?

Petrie - as explained in a useful, recent analysis by Rohl⁹²⁰ - may have succeeded in unravelling the proper progression of the highly important for TIP, but rather troublesome, Pasenhor Genealogy. Rohl's Petrian outcome, with its careful observation of the hieroglyphic signs, is also critical of Kitchen, about whom Rohl begins in response to a colleague:

First, in his criticisms of [Rohl's Chronology] published in the revised introduction to his TIPE book (3rd edition) Kitchen does not mention the Pasenhor genealogy. I think you [i.e. Rohl's colleague] may feel it is important (and you are probably right) but Kitchen has never, to my knowledge, either privately or in print, introduced it into the discussion.

Rohl then goes on to explain:

These are the FACTS:

- (1) There is no genealogical link between the anonymous King Shoshenk (i.e. without determining premen) at generation 9 and the Great Chief Nimlot and his wife Tentseph (Kitchen's generation 10). This is the ONLY place in the whole genealogical sequence where the goose sign (s3) for 'son of' is completely missing. The stela inscription therefore categorically does not say that King Shoshenk was the son of Nimlot and Tentseph. This is indisputable as has been confirmed by both Manley and Collier.
- (2) Earlier in the genealogy (at generation 5) we also find a couple named Nimlot and Tentseph. And, strangely enough, here too we have an anomaly in the text. For instead of the s3 goose (found everywhere else in the genealogy except generation 9) we have the s3 egg sign. Given the fact that there is plenty of room in the line and that this generation appears mid-text, there can be no argument that the scribe was hard pressed for space and used the smaller egg sign instead of the goose sign. So there has to be another reason for employing a different sign to link this 5th generation to the 6th generation. The 6th generation is where the royal part of the genealogy ends with Osorkon II (who can be confirmed as Osorkon II via the name of his wife in the genealogy ... Djedmutesankh). Thus the sequence from generation 9 down to generation 6 is King Shoshenk, father of King Osorkon, father of King Takelot, father of King Osorkon II. I have argued that the change from s3 (goose) to s3 (egg) suggests a different affiliation between Nimlot and his father ... Osorkon II ... i.e. that he is not a direct son of Osorkon but rather a son-in-law through his marriage to Tentseph. And this is the reason why the genealogy breaks at the second occurrence of Nimlot and Tentseph.

⁹²⁰ *Pasenhor Genealogy.*

Pasenhor wished to record that his ancestors were connected with the royal blood line of the 22nd Dynasty through his great, great, great grandmother Tentsepeh. Having taken the genealogy back through four generations of kings (to the founder of the dynasty - Shoshenk I) he then, at the break following generation 9, continued the genealogy of his great, great, great grandfather Nimlot (generation 5) whose ancestors formed the line of Great Chiefs as far back as Buyuwawa ... the Libyan....

Thus we have:

Pasenhor --- Hemptah --- Pasenhor --- Hemptah --- Djedptahefankh --- Tentsepeh (wife of Nimlot) --- Osorkon II --- Takelot (I) --- Osorkon = (I) --- Shoshenk (I), where the Tentsepeh line ends.

Then, starting again from the couple Nimlot and Tentsepeh, we have Nimlot --- Shoshenk --- Paihuty --- Nebneshi --- Mawasan --- Buyuwawa, where the Nimlot line ends.

This construction of the genealogy (first proposed by Flinders Petrie) is absolutely in line with the text, whereas Kitchen's interpretation (followed by you) requires the assumption that a s3 sign has been inadvertently left out of the genealogy just at the crucial point where the identically-named couple reappear. So, I am entitled to argue that the twin-stem genealogy, branching off from one couple named Nimlot and Tentsepeh, represents a perfectly reasonable reading of the original stela inscription and is more consistent with the text than Kitchen's version.

Rohl goes on to tell of:

The consequences:

Nimlot's father, the Great Chief Shoshenk, now becomes a contemporary of Osorkon II and not his ancestor by 5 generations. Shoshenk's wife, Mehtenweskheth ... called Mother of the King (mwt nsw) ... is both the mother of the Great Chief Nimlot and a king ... otherwise identified by an inscription on the roof of the Temple of Khonsu at Karnak as a King Osorkon (no prenomen). Kitchen has no satisfactory explanation for Mehtenweskheth's claim to be the mother of a king two generations before the start of the 22nd Dynasty. And there is absolutely no proof that the anonymous King Akheperre of the Karnak Priestly Annals is one and the same person as the Osochor of Manetho's 21st Dynasty. So it is an assumption that Osochor is Akheperre Osorkon ... the elder ... (a non-existent pharaoh in my opinion).

.... Thus we have two branches of the family, (i) Nimlot's, from *Buyuwawa* down to Nimlot son of a Shoshenq; and (ii) Tentsepeh's, from *Shoshenq I* all the way down to Pasenhor himself.

[End of quote]

It may be a situation similar to the sometime Mitannian divide between branches of the same family, e.g. that between *Tushratta* and *Artatama*; whether, in this case, hostile or not. Apparently there was intermarriage between these two lines, or “branches” (or ‘genealogical stems’) of the family.

I am going to be identifying these two branches as two of the TIP dynasties.

Petrie’s, if it is indeed the correct interpretation of the Pasenhor Genealogy, establishes, in my own context, that the elusive Shoshenq I, who cannot be “*Shishak*” at the time of Solomon’s son, Rehoboam (as Rohl would also agree), belongs to the same family as the major ‘Yuyides’, but in a separate branch. Thus the so-called 22nd dynasty is a branch parallel to that of pharaoh Ay, represented by *Mauasa* (*Mawasan* above), the second name in the Pasenhor list. In fact, following Rohl’s estimation, with Osorkon II parallel to ‘the anonymous Shoshenq’, then Shoshenq I would be of the same generation as *Mauasa*. However, given the longevity of *Mauasa*, and presumably that of his immediate successors, then Shoshenq I may actually have seemed to be of another generation comparatively speaking.

So how are we going to fit into our scheme of things (a) this extra dynasty (22nd), given that we already have (b) Ay (*Mauasa*) close to Horemheb (and hence to the 19th dynasty Ramessides), and also close to (c) Seti-nakht (and hence the 20th dynasty Ramessides)? And what of (d) the 21st dynasty, that is conventionally thought to have followed the 20th dynasty, but to have preceded the 22nd? I shall consider the 21st dynasty shortly.

Who, then, was the Libyan pharaoh Shoshenq I, if he were not ‘Shishak’, as already argued at length, but who apparently cannot now be ‘So’ either, given that I am now proposing for Shoshenq I a proximity at the time of Ay, well before the time of ‘So’?

Who was Shoshenq I and how did he get that Name?

From what we have just decided, Shoshenq I, the founder of the 22nd (Libyan) dynasty, was (as according to convention) a Libyan ‘Syrian’. He was related to the ‘Yuyide’ line whose founder was the biblical Omri, but whose best known representative was the master king, Ben-Hadad I, or *Yuya* in Egyptian terms. *Yuya*’s son was the devious Ay, the biblical Hazael, a partner of the Zimride king, Jehu, or Horemheb, the founder of the Ramesside 19th dynasty. Shoshenq I would be a younger contemporary of Ay’s and Horemheb’s, probably being closer in age to Horemheb’s son, Ramses I (biblical Jehoahaz) and perhaps the latter’s son Seti I (biblical Jehoash). This would mean that Shoshenq I was also an older contemporary of Ramses II (biblical Jeroboam II). We read on pp. 293-294 of the epigraphical evidence for a far closer proximity in time than according to the conventional separation by three centuries, approximately, for Ramses II and Shoshenq I.

Well now, accordingly, I am giving the two as actual contemporaries.

From whence comes the ‘barbaric’ name, *Shoshenq*, to use Gardiner’s appellation? Despite appearances, it is not Assyrian, as Courville had suggested. Our reconstruction, if it has any value, ought to give us the clue. And I think it does; not only for the origin of the name, *Shoshenq*, but also as to the actual identification of Shoshenq I. He ought to be (i) a ‘Syrian’, at least geographically, but (ii) of ‘Indo-European’ origins.

As to ‘Syrian’, an alleged brother of the *Benteshina* against whom we read that Ramses II had campaigned, was one *Shaushka-muwa*. He is my candidate for Shoshenq I. The name ‘Shoshenq’, I suggest, is simply that of the Luwian goddess, Shaushka (var. Shaushga). It would not be surprising that the Egyptian scribes, who had had such difficulty when rendering the name, *Yuya*, might have turned Shaushka into *Shoshenk*. This *Shaushka-muwa* would, like his ‘Yuyide’ relatives, make a treaty with a great Hittite king, in this case, conventionally, Tudhaliyas IV.

Further on, though, I shall have cause to query the identification of this Hittite king as Tudhaliyas IV.

As to ‘Indo-European’, Shoshenq I could now be the great ‘Greek’ hero, *Mopsus*, or *Mopshush* (*Muwa-Shaushka*), or *Mukshush*, who – according to some – led the massive invasion of the ‘Sea Peoples’ in Year 8 of Ramses III. I have already reconstructed this famous event according to my revised context, which saw Seti I, Ramses II & III all having to fend off the ‘Sea Peoples’, who had run amok in Palestine. This would make Shoshenq I also a younger contemporary of Ramses I, my Jehoahaz. Here my reconstruction accords perfectly with that of Rohl, chronologically speaking, insofar as Rohl has designated Shoshenq I as the ‘saviour’ of Israel at the time of Jehoahaz.⁹²¹ My own view, though, was that this ‘saviour’ was Jehoahaz’s son, Jehoash (my Seti I).

Just as the ancients referred to a ‘House of Omri’ and a ‘House of Hazael’, so too apparently did they know of a ‘House of Mopsus’. Thus Wikipedia:⁹²²

Historical Person

Since the discovery of a bilingual Luwian-Phoenician inscription in Karatepe (in Cilicia) in 1946-7, it is assumed that Mopsos was an historical person The inscription is dated to c. 700 BC, and the person speaking in it, ‘-z-t-w-d (Phoenician)/ Azatiwataš (Luwian), professes to be king of the d-n-n-y-m/Hiyawa and describes his dynasty as “the house of M-p-š/ Mukšuš”. Apparently he is a descendant of Mopsus. The Phoenician name of the people recalls one of the Homeric names of the Greeks, Danaoi, whereas the Luwian name Hiyawa probably goes back to Hittite Ahhiyā(wa), which is, according to most interpretations, the “Achaean”, or Mycenaean Greek, settlement in Asia Minor. Ancient Greek authors ascribe a central role to Mopsus in the colonization of Pamphylia

Now there also seems to be evidence that this Mopsus belonged to the same century as Ramses II, conventionally the 13th. Wikipedia continues:

The existence of a 13th-century date of the historical Mopsos is confirmed by a Hittite tablet from Boğazkale which mentions a person called Mukšuš in connection with Madduwattaš of Arzawa and Attaršiyaš of Ahhiyā. This text is dated to the reign of Arnuwandaš III.

⁹²¹ *The Lost Testament*, pp. 440-441.

⁹²² *Mopsus*.

Therefore, some scholars ... associate Mopsus' activities along the coast of Asia Minor and the Levant with the famous Sea Peoples attacking Egypt in the beginning of the 12th century BC, one of those peoples being the Denyen, cf. the *d-n-n-y-m* of the Karatepe inscription.

Of course I am re-dating this 13th century era to approximately 800 BC, which would make it roughly half a millennium closer than according to the conventional estimate to the c. 700 BC Karatepe inscription.

The two names with which Mukšuš here is said to be 'connected' are most interesting. Madduwattaš may remind one instantly of *Mattiawaza* (var. *Kurtiwaza*), the assassinator of *Tushratta*; that is, respectively (according to my revision), Hazael and Ben-Hadad I. The name recurs, I suggest, in Pausanias's *Mauasa*, with whom I have already identified Hazael (Ay), as a contemporary of Shoshenq I. (And I had also told of a possible Arzawan connection, *Chapter 9*, p. 204). And the element 'Attar' in the name Attaršiyaš (thought by some to be the very Atreus, father of Agamemnon⁹²³) is the same as the first part of the name, *Attar-hamek*, which – as we read back on p. 57 (n. 15) – may be an alternative name for Tab-rimmon (my *Omri*), grandfather of Hazael.

Now, one who does "... associate Mopsus' activities along the coast of Asia Minor and the Levant with the famous Sea Peoples attacking Egypt ...", is Rohl:⁹²⁴

The Lydian historian, Xanthus, tells us that, having left Colophon and established his power base in Cilicia (south-east Anatolia) – where he founded several cities – Mopsus eventually led a mighty invading army down the Levantine coast ... to the Philistine city of Ashkelon. In turn, the Egyptian records of Ramesses III tell of a great invasion by the 'Peoples of the Sea' in the pharaoh's eighth year

As noted in Wikipedia, there is uncertainty as to the precise nationality of this Mopsus:⁹²⁵

The ethnicity of Mopsus himself is not clear. The fragmentary Lydian historiographer Xanthus has made him a Lydian campaigning in Phoenicia If we may believe the transmission of Nicolaus of Damascus who quotes him, Xanthus wrote the name with *-ks-* like in the Hittite and Luwian texts; given that Lydian also belongs to the Anatolian language family, it is possible that Xanthus relies on a local non-Greek tradition according to which Mukšuš was a Luwian.

Are Luwian and Libyan therefore interchangeable: yet a further 'extension' of ethnicity for the 'Yuyides'?

With all of this in mind, one might sympathise with the Egyptian scribes – as in the case of the name, *Yuya* – when having to render this 'barbaric' name (Mopsus/Muksus) in the hieroglyphics. It is no wonder that they sometimes chose to abbreviate the name simply as *Shosh*. (Refer back to p. 191 of *Chapter 8*).

Because of the extreme complexity of the TIP, we need to begin to establish a definite archaeological/art historical, epigraphical and genealogical perspective for Shoshenq I.

⁹²³ E.g. Rohl, *The Lost Testament*, pp. 409-410. He gives the name as *Atarisiyas* (Atreus).

⁹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 412.

⁹²⁵ *Op. cit.*

We are going to find that some of this is most favourable to our proposed reconstruction, whilst some of it is, at first sight, not so encouraging, or even, sometimes, seemingly impossible.

TIP Archaeology and Art History

Shoshenq I was a great pharaoh in his own right, and so I - and also Sieff with his reconstruction - might need to be able to explain how this pharaoh could have achieved all that he did achieve if he were in conflict with the (late, in Sieff's case) 19th dynasty Ramessides. Shoshenq I is thought to have built on a grand scale, along the lines of the powerful Ramesside pharaohs; his constructions apparently continuing their work. Jones tells of their splendour and magnificence:⁹²⁶

The buildings of Shoshenq I at Karnak are among *the most magnificent and grandiose monuments surviving from ancient Egypt*. He constructed there an open court surrounded by colonnades and entered through a vast stone pylon gateway, which completely transformed the existing façade of the temple. At the end of the New Kingdom the approach to the Great Temple of Amun-Ra, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, King of the Gods, led from the east bank of the river Nile by way of a canal, to a stone quayside and jetty, from which the sacred barques of the Theban deities were launched during the Festival of Opet every year. From the quayside an avenue of ram-headed sphinxes, which were originally dedicated by Ramesses II, lined a ceremonial roadway to the doors of the huge pylon at the entrance of the great Hypostyle Hall constructed during the reigns of Horemheb, Seti I and Ramesses II.

Incidentally, it is in relation to these building by Shoshenq I that Rohl has produced what appears to me to be a most convincing architectural proof that the 22nd dynasty could not, as a whole entity, have preceded the 19th dynasty as Velikovsky had maintained; "*a third argument*", as Rohl has called it,⁹²⁷ following on from earlier historical and genealogical criticisms of this part of Velikovsky's revision. Thus Rohl explains:⁹²⁸

It is difficult to conceive, let alone suggest, that, even from these basic plans, it is possible for the Great Court colonnades and the Portal itself to have been built before either the pylon gate of Ramesses II or the mini temple of Ramesses III. The existence of the latter must have been a prerequisite for the design and placement of the Portal itself which could not have stood in isolation, detached from any supportive structures on either side. Equally, what sense is there in building a courtyard if neither the hypostyle hall of Seti I nor the pylon gateway of Ramesses II existed at the time?

⁹²⁶ 'Shoshenq I and the Traditions of New Kingdom Kingship in Egypt', p. 31. Emphasis added.

⁹²⁷ 'The Bubasite Portal', p. 34.

⁹²⁸ *Ibid*, p. 35.

The Great Court of the Libyan era would then have been detached from the rest of the earlier temple (built predominantly by Thutmose III and his immediate successors) by an open space of some 100 metres – a stranger architectural scheme would be hard to find, let alone within the confines of the strict laws of proportion which governed the building of sacred temples in Egypt at this time!

Confirmation of Rohl's view is that "*cartouches of Ramesses II [can be seen] disappearing behind the left buttress of the Libyan structure, unequivocally indicating that the pylon inscriptions were carved before the building of the Portal*". From this it would seem apparent that Shoshenq I post-dated Ramses II and, apparently even, according to the conventional view, Ramses III (hence also Merenptah).

One must not in one's eagerness to revise history, go against hard archaeological evidence. Velikovsky, as now seems apparent, did in fact do this in the case of his reconstruction of the 22nd dynasty in its relationship to the 19th. However, it may be difficult to establish that Shoshenq I himself actually built these "*magnificent and grandiose monuments*". De Meester gives this account:⁹²⁹

David Rohl writes about the first courtyard in an answer to Frank Yurco, who had written that there was nothing wrong with the traditional chronology. In his opinion 'there is no proof whatsoever that Shoshenq I built the Great Court at Karnak. He did build a gateway (the Bubasite Portal) upon which he recorded his campaign against Israel and the Negev fortresses, but the rest of the Great Court is completely uninscribed and unfinished. The construction work may well have continued throughout the Third Intermediate Period and very little of it, in fact, need be attributed to Shoshenq I of the 22nd Dynasty'.

Could it be that Sheshonk built *only the gate*? That is only possible, of course, if the temple of Ramses III already existed or was built at the same time.

Possibly the situation in the case of architectural works attributed to Shoshenq I may have been somewhat akin to what we found in the case of Seti I. For some of Seti's major projects were completed by his son, Ramses II, with even Seti's grandson, Merenptah, completing (and perhaps in some cases building entirely) Seti's monuments. In other words, there may have been a long hiatus (especially given the length of the reign of Ramses II) between Seti himself and the last constructed monument in his name. And so too may have been the case with Shoshenq I, with the major 22nd dynasty work being completed at the time of, say, Osorkon II and his descendants, when much Ramesside work in the Delta region was dismantled and re-used for 22nd dynasty purposes.

Even the Bubasite Portal itself, dated to Year 21 of Shoshenq I, may have been a later addition, given that Shoshenq I is thought to have died at about this time, based on the Manethonic figure of 21 years of reign for him.⁹³⁰ Though Wentz has argued for a 33-year reign for Shoshenq I,⁹³¹ and I myself shall actually be favouring this estimate.

⁹²⁹ *The Relief of Sheshonk in Karnak*.

⁹³⁰ Kitchen certainly has the great triumph scene of Shoshenq I at Karnak dated to the very final years of that king, *The Third Intermediate Period of Egypt*, p. 73.

⁹³¹ E. Wentz *JNES* 35 (1976), 275-278, as cited by J. Korbach, 'Dirkzwager's Revision Questioned', p. 95.

According to this explanation, works attributed to Shoshenq I - though a contemporary of Ramses III and II – could nevertheless have post-dated the works of these two great Ramessides.

Whatever of Shoshenq I's work in Egypt was actually contemporaneous with him is most likely I think to have been undertaken by him during the reign of the highly obscure Ramses I (my Jehoahaz), when Israel was hard pressed by these 'Syrians'. It was for this very reason that Jehoahaz had stood so desperately in need of a 'saviour', who - as I have argued - arrived late in his reign, in the form of his very son, Jehoash. This would have been a phase when these 'Syrians' could have had something of a free hand in Egypt before the rise of Seti I (my Jehoash), who had then managed to harness these foreign troops to his own advantage. It could have been during this pre-Seti I phase that Shoshenq I had managed to set up an initial 22nd dynasty infrastructure in the land.

Initially, Seti I/Jehoash managed to defeat, repeatedly, these 'Syrians', many of whom must have come to make up the host of mercenaries that he was then able to hire out to king Amaziah of Judah (Ramses III). They would also have provided labour forces for the Egyptians. These mercenaries, later disgruntled as we read, went on a rampage through the land. And I have related this to the activities of the 'Sea Peoples' in Year 8 of Ramses III. But I should now like to propose that the wild march of the mercenaries, from Beth-horon to Samaria, was indeed the very same incident as that most celebrated of campaigns (thought to be 'Shishak's') in Year 21 of Shoshenq I (to be developed below). If so, then this would provide us with an important approximate correlation between Year 8 of Ramses III and Year 21 of Shoshenq I.

Though the Egyptians eventually managed to defeat these foreigners, the latter may have been far more troublesome to the land than the inscriptions actually concede.

As primarily a coastal power, it is not surprising to find that Shoshenq I and his son, Osorkon I, had meaningful contact with the kings of Byblos.

Further to Velikovsky's epigraphical evidence in relation to both the tomb of Ahiiram and the Byblite dedications of Shoshenq I and Osorkon I - indicating the latter to belong to midway in the era c. 850-700 BC (i.e. 775 BC as an approximation) - is James' re-dating of 22nd and 23rd dynasty rulers to the C8th BC, based on Libyan finds outside Egypt.⁹³²

James begins by discussing the Byblite dedications and the Byblite succession in relation to the 22nd dynasty. I have already quoted Velikovsky on this (p. 294), and shall have more to say in my section: "The Byblite Succession" (pp. 325-326). When reading James here, we shall need mentally to adjust his dates upwards by about half a century (due the interregna factor), in accordance with our re-dating (beginning of this chapter) of the death of Jehu from the conventional c. 814 BC to c. 867 BC.

James writes:⁹³³

⁹³² *Centuries of Darkness*, pp. 247ff.

⁹³³ *Ibid*, p. 251.

Other evidence for a lowering of 22nd Dynasty dates comes from the find of a relief chalice fragment at Buseirah in Edom, southern Palestine. The distinctive style of the piece means that it must belong to the early 22nd Dynasty, conventionally the 10th to early 9th centuries BC. However, the date of its context is some 200 years later. The major occupation at Buseirah is currently dated to the 8th to early 7th centuries BC, agreeing with the fact that the earliest biblical references to Bozrah (Buseirah) were made by the mid-8th-century prophet Amos (1:12) and Micah (2:12) The excavator Crystal Bennett was certainly correct to state that ‘there is still no evidence to support a sedentary occupation of Buseirah before the beginning of the 8th century BC’

Angela Milward, a specialist in Egyptian chalices invited by Bennett to comment, could only assume that the find was part of an ‘heirloom’. Nevertheless, since Buseirah was of so little importance before the 8th century, she had to add that: “... it is rather remarkable that an Egyptian chalice, which would have been a rare and costly item even then, should have found its way to Buseirah at such an early date, possibly the tenth or ninth century ...”.

James now moves on to consider “Osorkon I or II”:⁹³⁴

Moving later into the 22nd Dynasty, a scarab of Osorkon I or II was found in a tomb at Salamis, Cyprus, the other contents of which were dated by Karageorghis to around 700 BC. It is assumed to be another heirloom At Samaria, the conventional dates for Osorkon II (Kitchen: 874-850 BC) have been used to support a 9th-century date for the famous ivories (to the time of Ahab) through an associated find of an imported alabaster vase bearing the name of this pharaoh. However, specialists in ivory-working have long noted the close resemblance of the Samaria examples to 8th century BC ivories from Phoenicia, Syria and Assyria. A similar date should be given to the Samarian material. If the ivories are allowed to date the alabaster, rather than the converse, then the Egyptian vase would belong to the mid-8th rather than the mid-9th century BC

The next example given by James connects TIP with Esarhaddon of Assyria:⁹³⁵

Finds of Libyan material with more direct Assyrian links confirm this pattern of ‘late’ contexts. At Assur an alabaster vase was found with an inscription of a Libyan prince called Takeloth ... whose titles suggest that he was the son either of Shoshenq III (825-773 BC) or of Osorkon III (787-759 BC)

But the vase also bore a secondary inscription of the Assyrian King Esarhaddon ... stating that it was looted from the palace of the King of Sidon, a city which he sacked in 677 BC [sic]. On the analogy of the Byblite statues, we can assume that the vase arrived at Sidon as a gift, probably in the early 7th century BC.

⁹³⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 251-252.

⁹³⁵ *Ibid*, p. 252.

Similar alabaster vases are known from Nimrud, also from a 7th-century BC context, linked with Esarhaddon, which may also have been looted during Esarhaddon's attack on Sidon, or perhaps his conquest of Egypt in 671 BC [sic]

Turning now to Spain:⁹³⁶

Further alabaster vases bearing the cartouches of Osorkon II (874-850 BC), Takeloth II (850-825 BC) and Shoshenq III (825-773 BC) come from Spain. They occur as cinerary urns in the graves at Laurita (Cerro de San Cristobal near Almuñécar) associated with Greek and Phoenician pottery datable to c. 700 BC. For example, the burial with the Shoshenq vessel was accompanied by two Early Protocorinthian vases which cannot date any earlier than the first quarter of the 7th century BC A scarab of Pedubast I (818-793 BC) comes from a similarly dated Spanish grave at Baixo Alentejo A comparable date is suggested by the discovery of an alabaster vase fragment with the name of 'Pashedenbast son of [King] Shoshenq' from the royal cemetery at Nuri in Sudan, in which the earliest burials are from the reign of Taharqo [Tirhakah] (690-664 BC) [sic]. Whilst much of the other TIP material from Nubia can be associated with the 25th Dynasty conquest of Egypt

There are some earlier small objects including scarabs of Shoshenq I and III from the cemetery of Sanam, which is supposed to have begun with the reign of Piye [Piankhi], and a scarab of Shoshenq I from Gebel Moya

And again, now in northern Africa:⁹³⁷

At Carthage a number of Libyan period scarabs were found in tombs, along with pottery from the earliest days of the city. The scarabs carry the names of Pedubast I (eight tombs), Pimay son of Shoshenq III (one tomb) and Osorkon III (one tomb) Cintas attempted to use these finds to date the tombs to the early 8th century BC, supplying the evidence needed to take the history of Carthage back to its traditional foundation date of 814 BC. Unfortunately for Cintas, the Greek and Phoenician pottery also excavated from the lowest levels shows that they can be no earlier than about 720 BC which would leave the scarabs, now rarely mentioned, as another collection of ostensible 'heirlooms'.

Individually, these finds of 22nd-23rd Dynasty material in 'late' contexts (Byblos, Buseirah, Salamis, Samaria, Assur, Nimrud, Almuñécar, Baixo, Alentejo, Nuri, Sanam and Carthage) can conceivably be explained as valued objects treasured for many years after their manufacture.

⁹³⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 252-253.

⁹³⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 253-254.

However, taken together there seems to be a disturbing number of such finds. There also seems to be a pattern in the 'late' contexts running from c. 800 BC for the founder of the 22nd Dynasty through the mid-8th century to a late-22nd Dynasty group around 700 BC

James will later conclude, on the point of TIP genealogies:⁹³⁸

.... A general lowering of Libyan period dates can be effected, which would suit the evidence from private genealogies showing a much shorter time between the contemporaries of Osorkon III and individuals of the late 25th/early 26th Dynasties.

.... The genealogical and related evidence establishing that Osorkon II and III were separated by no more than two generations ... means that the dates for the mid-22nd Dynasty as a whole should be considerably lowered.

The Byblite Succession

A strong reason why revisionists tend to have both Shoshenq I and his son, Osorkon I, ruling prior to the 730's - hence militating against any possibility of revising Shoshenq I from convention's 'Shishak' to 'So', in about 725 BC - is due to their interpretation of the known connection between these 22nd dynasty pharaohs and the kings of Byblos thought to be prior to Tiglath-pileser III. I give here first of all Dirkwager's explanation of all this:⁹³⁹

Now we will turn to more evidence on the times of Sheshonq [Shoshenq] I and Osorkon I. Statues of these pharaohs were used by kings of Byblos in Phoenicia in order to dedicate them to Baalat, the goddess of Byblos. The inscriptions of the Phoenician kings are made by Abibaal (statue of Sheshonq I) and by Elibaal (statue of Osorkon I). Elibaal is a son of Yehimilk; of Abibaal no father's name is known. Moscati made him the predecessor of Yehimilk, whereas Albright put him between Yehimilk and Elibaal. Abibaal and Elibaal are made contemporaries of the pharaohs of the statues they used. For our purpose it is not very important where we place Abibaal. About Elibaal we know more: he had a son called Shipitbaal. So we have three generations of kings of Byblos: Yehimilk, Elibaal, and Shipitbaal. Abibaal must have lived somewhere before Elibaal.

In the annals of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III we read, in the account of the year 739, about King Sibitti-bi'li of Byblos! This Sibitti-bi'li, who is of course identical to Shipitbaal, was the son of Elibaal, the contemporary of Osorkon I.

A connection between Shipitbaal, son of Elibaal, and the Byblite king, *Sibitti-bi'li*, contemporary of Tiglath-pileser III, allowable according to Dirkwager's chronology, is one of course that cannot possibly be made in the context of the conventional scheme, according to which the *Sibitti-bi'li* of Tiglath-pileser's time must be a Shipitbaal II.

⁹³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 255.

⁹³⁹ 'Pharaoh So and the Libyan Dynasty'. p. 22-23.

From information such as Dirkzwager's, revisionists arrive at a Byblite succession somewhat along the lines of this one given by Rohl:⁹⁴⁰ "Zikarbaal (14? years); Abibaal (14? years); Yehimilk (8? years) Elibaal (30? years) Shipitbaal (25? years)", with the last Byblite king here being the one contemporaneous with Tiglath-pileser III. Rohl does not include in his sequence Ahiram of Byblos, whose tomb I discussed archaeologically, in a Velikovskian context, on pp. 292-294. Furthermore, not all revisionists would agree with Rohl's view that the Byblite king, Zakar-baal [Rohl's 'Zikarbaal'], whom Wenamun would visit in his famous adventure, had actually preceded these other kings. (For my discussion of the era of Wenamun and Zakar-baal, see *Chapter 12, 7*).

If indeed, not only Shoshenq I's, but even Osorkon I's, contact with Byblos belonged before Tiglath-pileser III's encounter with Sibitti-bi'li [Shipitbaal] of Byblos, in approximately the 730's BC, then this would definitely seem to negate the Velikovsky-based view (that I myself have also long favoured) that Shoshenq I, father of Osorkon I, could have been 'King So of Egypt', due to the very tight and seemingly impossible chronology (as explained by Dirkzwager above) that would require Shoshenq I as 'So' at c. 730 BC, but his son, Osorkon I, still before c. 739 BC. And thus we have found Sieff, who does accept the basic Byblite synchronization with the Libyan pharaohs as outlined by Dirkzwager, logically (in Sieff's context) locating Shoshenq I to an era about half a century earlier than 'So'. Similarly, Rohl has placed Shoshenq I and Osorkon I much earlier than the era of Tiglath-pileser III, and has instead designated Shoshenq III - as separate from Shoshenq I - as biblical 'So'. I shall be returning to this in *Chapter 12, 1*.

The Byblite succession in relation to the chronology of the 22nd dynasty (and its presumed link with the Old Testament for those who equate Shoshenq I with 'So') is certainly a problem with which I, too, have had to grapple. But with my re-dating now of Shoshenq I to c. 800 BC, then there is plenty of chronological space for he and his son, Osorkon I (still to be considered) to have reigned before Tiglath-pileser III, an older contemporary of Hezekiah.

There is yet another dimension to be included in the era of Shoshenq I; one which now forces us to turn our attention also to the 21st dynasty, the TIP's first dynasty. I refer to a documented alliance between a Psusennes/Psibkhenno of the 21st dynasty and Shoshenq I of the 22nd dynasty. TIP is thought to have begun with Smendes I, the 21st dynasty successor of the very last of the Ramessides, the 20th dynasty's Ramses XI, with whom Smendes and Herihor had formed something of a triumvirate. According to how my revision is developing, however, the era of Ramses XI is of a somewhat later date, to be considered in *Chapter 12, 7*. The Smendes contemporaneous with Ramses XI may be Smendes II, not I – as is usually thought. Or, the order of Smendes I and II may perhaps need to be reversed. Smendes I, or II *Nesubanebjed*, could also be the *Nebnesha* of the Pasenhor Genealogy, the third entry following *Mauasa*, whom I am tentatively identifying as Ay/Hazael. That would mean that the 21st dynasty was 'Yuyide', and of the main Mitannian branch, whilst the 22nd was of the secondary branch.

Indeed, the little-known Smendes⁹⁴¹ would benefit from an *alter ego*, to flesh him out.

⁹⁴⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 453.

⁹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 255, par. 2.

For: “[Smendes’] origins are unknown”, according to Grimal,⁹⁴² who adds, “... the familial links which he claimed to have with Herihor seem unlikely ...”. Grimal also wrote here of Smendes’ “apparent lack of royal blood”, despite which, “his authority was openly acknowledged in Thebes”. And he thinks it “probable that [Smendes] legitimized his power by marrying a daughter of Ramesses XI”.

Anyway Rohl tells of the apparent alliance - a further embarrassment to the conventional system - between a Psusennes/Psibkhenno and Shoshenq I, presumed to have post-dated the 21st dynasty.⁹⁴³

The possibility of an alliance between Shoshenq I and a Psusennes is indicated by a problematic (for the conventional chronology) statue inscription found at Thebes. It appears that Shoshenq had the cartouche of a Psusennes inscribed along with his own on an old statue of Thutmose III ... a peculiar action if Psusennes was already deceased at the time!

A further embarrassment pertains to Siamun, as Rohl adds here:

... the mummy of Djedptahefankh who died in Year 10 of Shoshenq was found in the secret royal cache at Deir el-Bahari along with the great kings of the 18th to 20th Dynasties, re-interred there during the reign of Siamun. Not only is this an embarrassing problem for the orthodox chronology, which places Shoshenq I 80 years after Siamun but it is also significant that Djedptahefankh is called “King’s Son of Ramesses and King’s Son of the Lord of the two Lands” ... which must surely point to a close relationship to one of the last Ramessides of the 20th Dynasty. This is only satisfactorily catered for in a chronology which assumes Shoshenq I to have followed on soon after the Ramesside period [sic] and therefore at a time when Psusennes was also on the throne in Tanis. The Horus and Golden Horus names of Shoshenq also closely reflect those of king Smendes giving us another reason to place the Libyan king at this time.

Velikovskiy had shown just how dubious was the presumed link between Psusennes II, the last ruler of the 21st dynasty, and Shoshenq I, the first ruler of the 22nd dynasty.⁹⁴⁴ Velikovskiy’s potential disengagement of the 22nd dynasty from the 21st may now spur one to reassess the 21st dynasty (Tanite) in its relationship to the 22nd. Shoshenq I may indeed have married a Maatkare, given by Grimal as the daughter of Psusennes II.⁹⁴⁵ But the standard order of the pharaohs Psusennes may need to be reversed.

Anyway, these were just the two branches of the ‘Syrian’ family, intermarrying.

For Rohl to have attempted a king-by-king and priest-by-priest revision of the TIP (dynasties 21-25) was a very courageous undertaking.

⁹⁴² *Op. cit.*, p. 311.

⁹⁴³ “David Rohl replies”, p. 20.

⁹⁴⁴ *Peoples of the Sea*, pp. 188-189.

⁹⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 321-322. In Rohl’s New Chronology, the conventional order of pharaohs Psusennes “is changed in chronological terms”. ‘David Rohl replies’, p. 19.

Rohl, with some initial help from James,⁹⁴⁶ is the only revisionist so far I think to have attempted this.⁹⁴⁷ Other revisionists, e.g. Sieff⁹⁴⁸ and Clapham,⁹⁴⁹ have provided a basic alignment of the TIP and the Ramessides, dynasty by dynasty, but without entering upon the sort of detailed, ruler by ruler, and priest by priest, analysis that Rohl has. For anyone today embarking upon a Velikovskian-based (broadly speaking) revision of TIP, and who must therefore reject the conventional models - most notably Kitchen's, whose time span the revision cannot possibly accommodate - they can at least use Rohl's charts as most useful points of reference.

I myself, though, have no intention of embarking here upon a king to king revision of the TIP - any more than James has decided to do (see **Towards a new Egyptian chronology**, on pp. 357-358). My intention for TIP is, as I have reiterated in this thesis, to lay down a basic pattern for a 'more acceptable' arrangement than the conventional one. And, here, I am endeavouring to grasp some archaeological perspective on this most complex period of Egyptian history. I have already begun to suggest how the 22nd dynasty must sit in its relationship to the most important of the 19th and 20th dynasty Ramessides. And I am now considering how it might sit in its relation to the 21st dynasty. Let us firstly look at the 21st dynasty's archaeology and art history, which also seems to be fraught with problems.

Dearth of 21st Dynasty Artefacts

The 21st dynasty, to which at least two pharaohs Psusennes are assigned, is extremely problematical, as we saw in the previous chapter. So much of it seems to be missing, archaeologically speaking. Ways have to be invented to 'explain' this dearth of information. Rohl for instance, according to de Meester,⁹⁵⁰ "*thinks that the 21st and 22nd Dynasties coexisted in the same period, but in a different way. He ... thinks [for example] that Siamun was not a king but a Theban high-priest*". De Meester though, regards this as being "*unlikely because Siamun left buildings in Memphis and Tanis and did not bear the title of High Priest of Amun*". "Velikovsky", de Meester adds, "*thought that all kings of the 21st Dynasty were only High Priests in the western oases*".

The TIP is thought, as we read, to have begun with a Smendes. This Smendes, according to Gardiner, "*can have had no personal right to the throne*".⁹⁵¹ And James, who, firstly having noted that the 22nd dynasty pharaoh "*Osorkon I is attributed thirty-five years (924-889 BC) on the most equivocal evidence*", then adds:⁹⁵² "*Equally suspect is the twenty-six years of sole rule accorded to Smendes (1069-1043 BC), whose reign is thought to have bridged the transition between the 20th and 21st Dynasties*".

Just as Smendes may be lacking substance, so, too, is the dynasty to which he belongs, the 21st, lacking in archaeological information.

⁹⁴⁶ For a while this was known as "the Rohl/James revision". See e.g. 'David Rohl replies' to the 'Rejoinder from Lester J. Mitcham', p. 17.

⁹⁴⁷ Rohl's tables of complete TIP kings, revised, can be found for instance on *ibid*, pp. 19 & 21.

⁹⁴⁸ 'The Libyans in Egypt'.

⁹⁴⁹ *Op. cit.*

⁹⁵⁰ 'The relief of Sheshonk in Karnak', section: "The end of the 22nd Dynasty", (un-numbered pages).

⁹⁵¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 316.

⁹⁵² *Centuries of Darkness*, p. 232.

The way I now see it, the 21st and 22nd dynasties were virtually parallel, even integrated in places; as two branches of the one ‘Syrian’ family, at times intermarrying. And the sometime lack of archaeology of these kings would be due to the fact that they, like Horemheb, mainly inhabited regions (e.g. Syro-Palestinian) to the north of Egypt. Bierbrier has written about the dearth of 21st dynasty material:⁹⁵³

With the advent of Dynasty XXI the copious sources of information which were available in the previous two dynasties vanish. Administrative papyri and ostraca prove practically non-existent. Votive statuary would seem to disappear almost totally. Graffiti and inscriptions decline to a few badly preserved examples. Most important of all, tombs which have provided the basic material for the study of the families of Dynasty XIX and Dynasty XX are for the most part no longer built but are replaced by small intrusive burials in older tombs or by large caches of coffins secreted in obscure tombs in the rock cliffs of Thebes. ... Because of this dearth of material, it is not possible as in Dynasty XIX and Dynasty XX to present a coherent outline of the descent of various families and their interrelations”.

Bierbrier thought that:⁹⁵⁴ *“This paucity of information is partly due to the shift of political power to the northern cities which have been less well preserved and excavated than those of the south and partly due to the less prosperous and more unsettled times”*. James refers to the lack of stone statues at the time as described by Bierbrier as *“a bizarre absence not encountered in other periods of Egyptian history”*.⁹⁵⁵ And he adds here: *“Yet with the advent of the 22nd Dynasty, ‘a wealth of data on the priests and officials of Thebes’ is known ...”*. A ‘coherent genealogical outline’ for the 21st dynasty, which Bierbrier deemed impossible to arrive at, may well be achievable however, I suggest, via the Pasenhor Genealogy (to be further reconsidered in section: “Linking the Pasenhor Genealogy with the Namareth Inscription”, beginning on p. 331).

- Apis Bulls

James again, in his discussion of Apis bull burials at Saqqara - which burials he considers to be *“potentially one of the most important sources of chronological information for the TIP”* - gives this yet further example of the lack of 21st dynasty evidence:⁹⁵⁶

The most striking gap in this sequence [of Apis burials] is for the 21st and early 22nd Dynasties, so far totally unattested. On the conventional dating this period was some 210 years, during which time there should have been about 12 Apis burials, based on the average life expectancy of eighteen years, as calculated by Jean Vercoutter. An ‘embalming table’ with the name of Shoshenq 1 suggests that there may have been one 22nd Dynasty burial which has not been recovered, but *the complete lack of records for the 21st Dynasty* is still extraordinary.

⁹⁵³ *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

⁹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁹⁵⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 235.

⁹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 236, 238. Emphasis added.

- *Tanis Royal Tomb Complex*

A further clear indication that something is seriously wrong with the usual reconstruction of this early TIP phase is provided by the tomb evidence at Tanis. Thus James again:⁹⁵⁷

Striking evidence that something is amiss with the conventional placement of the 21st and 22nd Dynasties comes from the royal tomb complex at Tanis, discovered by Pierre Montet. In the south-western corner of the main temple enclosure he uncovered the underground burials of Psusennes I and Amenemope of the 21st Dynasty, Osorkon II and Shoshenq III of the 22nd Dynasty, as well as three unattributed tombs. Montet and his architect Lézine were clearly puzzled by the relationship between Tomb I, belonging to Osorkon II, and Tomb III, containing the burials of Psusennes I, Amenemope and others. After careful examination they reluctantly concluded that Tomb I had been constructed *after* Tomb III - this in spite of the usual understanding that Osorkon died more than a century *later* than the reign of Psusennes.

Whilst, according to the conventional arrangement, the 22nd dynasty followed on in succession from the 21st, I have already begun to propose that these dynasties were largely concurrent. Basically these early TIP royals were, I suspect, part of the large family generated by the Omrides of Libyan origins. What is striking is how similar the two TIP dynasties (21st and 22nd) appear when lined up side by side as follows:

Table 3: Comparison of Names of 21st & 22nd Dynasty Kings

<u>TANITE KINGS (21st dynasty)</u>	<u>THE SHOSHENQS (22nd dynasty)</u>
1. <i>Hedjkheperre Setepenre</i> Nesu-ba-neb-djed Beloved of Amun	I. Prenomen, <i>Hedj-kheper-re (Setepenre)</i>
2. <i>Akheperre Setepenamun</i> , Psibkhanno I, Beloved of Amun	II. Prenomen, <i>Heqa-kheper-re Setepenre</i>
3. <i>Neferkare Heqa-Waset</i> , Amenemnisu Beloved of Amun	
4. <i>Usimare Setepenamun</i> , Amenemope Beloved of Amun	IIIa. Prenomen, <i>Usimare Setepenamun</i>
5. <i>Akheperre Setepenre</i> [...]	V. Prenomen, <i>A-kheper-re (Setepenre)</i>
6. <i>Neterkheperre Setepenamun</i> , Siamun Beloved of Amun	VI. Prenomen, <i>Was-neter-re Setep(en)re</i>
7. <i>Tyetskheperre Setepenre</i> (har)-Psibkhenno II, Beloved of Amun	VII. Prenomen, <i>Sekhem-kheper-re Setepenamun</i>

In most cases above there would appear to be an almost perfect match between the names on the left and those on the right; the only substantial difference being the variation of the theophoric suffixes, *Re* and *Amun*.

⁹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 243.

Linking the Pasenhor Genealogy with the Namareth Inscription

We have seen that certain personages listed in the Pasenhor Genealogy were concurrent; that (working from top to bottom) Shoshenq I aligns generationally with *Mauasa*; Osorkon I with *Nebnasha*; Takelot I with *Paihuty*; and Osorkon II with a *Shoshenq*. As the 19th dynasty waned, these two (foreign) family lines managed to take control of Egypt to a greater or lesser extent. Now, according to Rohl's revised system (the 1986 version)⁹⁵⁸, Osorkon II (and also his son, Takelot II) and Shoshenq III reigned, in part, contemporaneously (while Pedubast I reigned contemporaneously with the latter two). It is thus possible that, given that Osorkon II now aligns with the anonymous Shoshenq, he in turn being followed by a Nimlot - the name common (with his wife *Tenstepeh*) to both family lines - then it is at this particular point in history, during the TIP, that the Namareth Inscription becomes relevant.

Here is my tentative reconstruction of it.

The 'Syrians' of the 21st and 22nd dynasties had, as in the days of their ancestors, ruled both Syro-Palestine and Assyria (the kingdom of Mitanni), with the dominant branch, the 21st, being the sometimes rulers of Assyria – just as Assurballit (*Mauasa* of Pasenhor) had been. The weak Assyrian phase after Adad-nirari III might have been an opportune time for this. In *Chapter 9* (see p. 201), I introduced the Namareth Inscription where we learned of the death of a prince 'Namareth' in Egypt and the visit there by his father, the King of Assyria, 'Pallashnes' or 'Pallashnisu' - whose Egyptian wife was 'Mehtenusekh' - to examine his son's tomb. We also learned that this 'Pallashnes' was called 'Shoshenq', as was his grandson, who became ruler of Egypt. I should like to identify the grandfather, Shoshenq, with both a Psusennes and the anonymous Shoshenq' of Pasenhor, approximately contemporaneous with Osorkon II. I accept Rohl's reconstruction according to which the Psusennes contemporaneous with Shoshenq I was Psusennes II, not I.⁹⁵⁹ The short-lived Namareth would then be Nimlot, the common denominator of the Pasenhor list. The Shoshenq who succeeded him (and who became a ruler of Egypt) would then be Shoshenq III, who was not a descendant of Shoshenq I's. Rohl more recently gave this revised account of Shoshenq III and connected TIP characters:⁹⁶⁰

I also argued in 1982 that Takelot II (son of Osorkon II) and Shoshenq III (father unknown) were contemporary rulers and not sequential as Kitchen has it in his TIPE. Other Egyptologists then came to the same conclusion ... later and this parallel rule between the two kings is now widely accepted within Egyptology. As a consequence, Shoshenq III belonged to the generation following Osorkon II and therefore the generation of Nimlot and Tentsepeh. Mehtenweskheth, granddaughter of Mehtenweskheth (mother of Nimlot), was thus of the generation following Shoshenq III. This second Mehtenweskheth married Shedsunefertem who was a contemporary of the second King Hedjkheperre Shoshenq (IV) whose reign fell in the years immediately after the reign of Shoshenq III.

⁹⁵⁸ 'David Rohl replies', p. 21.

⁹⁵⁹ As discussed for instance in *ibid.*

⁹⁶⁰ *Pasenhor Genealogy*.

The name *Psusennes* would by no means be the worst possible candidate for *Pallashnes*. I have just explained how he might have been a (sometimes) king of Assyria, as according to the ‘Namareth’ inscription. Courville, in his discussion of this inscription has provided a most interesting piece of information, with reference to Brugsch-Bey, that “*Assyrian kings had consummated marriages with daughters of the Ramessides*”.⁹⁶¹

Pasenhor himself was a priest who lived under a king Shoshenq, normally identified with Shoshenq V (c. 767-730 BC, conventional dating), but whom Dirkwager has implied might have been the *Susinqu* mentioned in the Annals of Ashurbanipal (see *Chapter 12*). Pasenhor traces his origins back to one ‘Tahenbuyana’; the element ‘Tahen’ here of course representing the Egyptian name for ‘Libyan’ (Tehenu or Tjehenu). ‘Tahenbuyana’ is one of those “*barbarous*” Libyan names, as we saw Gardiner had called them (refer back to p. 198); Buyana being variously given as *Buyuwawa* and *Buiuaua* (my *Yuya*).

When the Hittite king forbade *Shaushka-muwa* to ally himself with the King of Assyria, he was likely referring to *Shaushka-muwa*’s own relative, just as in the case of *Aziru* who had made a treaty with Hatti against his own half-brother.

21st and 22nd Dynasties Concurrent

Sieff would insist, following Jones, on placing the 21st dynasty later than the 20th.⁹⁶²

Michael Jones has clearly noted that the Twenty-First Dynasty most definitely follows immediately after the Twentieth It was the time when the children and grandchildren of the very workmen who had produced the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasty tombs in the Valley of the Kings now plundered these same vaults in a period of upheaval ...”.

According to my system, though, the 20th and 21st dynasties were largely concurrent. To suggest at least a substantial contemporaneity between the 21st and 22nd dynasties is to return somewhat to the view of Lieblein (1914)⁹⁶³ - one of the earliest scholars to make an extensive examination of the complex genealogical material for the TIP. Lieblein considered there to be at least a large overlap between the 21st and 22nd dynasties. Kitchen, on the other hand, connects the 22nd dynasty with the 21st only at *the very end*, making Shoshenq I the son-in-law of the supposed very last 21st dynasty king, Psusennes (Psibkhenno) II.

The TIP in general is most complex and difficult in the extreme, and no one I am sure would argue with Grimal’s view, which he gives interestingly with reference to revisionist Peter James’ *Centuries of Darkness*, that the TIP is “*one of the most confused periods in Egyptian history, a period which historians have still not been able to disentangle satisfactorily from the fragments of evidence (James 1991)*”.⁹⁶⁴

⁹⁶¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 318, with reference to H. Brugsch-Bey’s *Egypt Under the Pharaohs*, vol. II, pp. 203ff.

⁹⁶² ‘The Libyans in Egypt’, p. 35, with reference to M. Jones, *op. cit.*

⁹⁶³ As referred to in P. James’ *Centuries of Darkness*, p. 242.

⁹⁶⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 331-332.

Certainly this most arduous and intricate *Chapter 11* has provided me with far more problems in the writing of it than have any others in this entire thesis, and it has been most difficult to present it in a way that might make it reasonably coherent for the reader. But, whilst it should require future updating, I am still hopeful that it has served to create a useful matrix for TIP. Gardiner, for his part, revealed a degree of frustration (bordering even on despair of ever finding a proper resolution) in this following statement of his:⁹⁶⁵

Here we encounter one of the principal difficulties confronting study of the [22nd dynasty] period, the recurrence over and over again of the same names in both parts of the country; this applies even to the royal Prenomen, no less than eight kings using that which long before [sic] had been employed by Ramessēs IV, namely, Usima‘rē‘-setpenamūn [setepenamun]. ... The problems are most baffling, nor can they be tackled with much profit until the scattered and fragmentary inscriptions have been collected anew, accurately copied, and properly edited; and even then it is extremely doubtful whether a coherent account will emerge.

In regard to this interesting statement by Gardiner, I should like to make the following comments or suggestions pertaining largely to methodology. A revised approach to this admittedly problematical era of history - an approach that, like the revision being employed in this thesis, has the potential to align dynasties and propose the occasional *alter egos* - can well serve to ‘collect anew, into a coherent account’, and therefore to fill out, what Gardiner has called “*scattered and fragmentary inscriptions*”. And what Tadmor (as quoted on p. 1 of this thesis) - referring to the Egyptian era that pertains to EOH - had called “*the poorly documented period in Egypt*”, is largely the case because ‘poor’ and ‘fragmentary’ is what is left when the habitually linear approach of convention is applied to the dynasties of Egypt, stripping these to the bare bones.

I have opened up for consideration the possibility of a 20th dynasty Ramesside contemporaneity with the 22nd Libyan dynasty, thereby serving to erase Gardiner’s notion of Ramses IV’s being “*long before*” these Libyan rulers, and hence providing at least an historical context for a common use of the prenomen, *Usimare Setepenamun*. The same explanation would account for Psusennes I’s “*renaming himself ‘Ramesses-Psusennes’*”;⁹⁶⁶ most appropriate now considering that he was contemporaneous with some of the latter Ramessides.

I might now begin to attempt to gather together my own ‘scattered’ and ‘fragmentary’ threads by trying to summarise - in a general fashion - with much assistance from James, what has so far been determined in relation to Shoshenq I and his dynasty, before tackling more specific points on the way to concluding this discussion of the TIP (including the remainder of the 20th dynasty), so as to take this thesis right into EOH.

I give here my slightly simplified version of James’ summarizing chronological Table⁹⁶⁷ (conventional dates on the left, revised dates on the right):

⁹⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 333-334.

⁹⁶⁶ Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

⁹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 253. His Table 10:3.

Table 4: Revised Approximate Dates for 22nd and 23rd Dynasty Kings

Shoshenq I (945-924 BC)	-	c. 800 BC (Byblos)
Osorkon I (924-889 BC)	-	early 8 th century BC (Byblos)
Osorkon II (874-850 BC)	-	mid-8 th (Samaria); c. 700 BC (Spain)
Takeloth II (850-825 BC)	-	c. 700 BC (Spain)
Shoshenq III (825-773 BC)	-	c. 720 BC (Carthage); c. 700 BC (Spain)
Pedubast I (818-793 BC)	-	c. 720 BC (Carthage); c. 700 BC (Spain)
Prince Takeloth (c. 800 or 765 BC)	-	early 7 th century BC (Sidon/Assur)
Pimay (773-767 BC)	-	c. 720 BC (Carthage)
Osorkon III (789-759 BC)	-	c. 720 (Carthage); c. 700 BC (Spain)

From what we have learned so far from archaeology and epigraphy about the correct location in time for pharaoh Shoshenq I, he must be (i) dated to c. 800 (+ 50 years for interregna =) 850 BC (**Table 4** above); (ii) epigraphically within range of Ramses II, at approximately 775 BC (+ 50 years for interregna =) 825 BC (refer back to p. 322), with works attributed to him having been (iii) built over the works of both Ramses II and Ramses III, and he must have been (iv) somewhat close to Merenptah, son of Ramses II, based on the likenesses between their respective Karnak victory inscriptions (see p. 294). Since all the indicators would seem to be strongly in favour of a c. 800 plus BC date for Shoshenq I - coupled with the Byblite data – then he most definitely could not be the ‘King So of Egypt’ of the time of Hoshea of Israel and Hezekiah of Judah (c. 730 BC).

Now to the attempted clarification of some specific points and problems relating to my reconstruction of the early TIP; especially the 22nd dynasty.

Firmly Dating Shoshenq I and Specifying his Contemporaries

That Shoshenq I perhaps had some trouble in securing the throne, could be indicated by the following evidence from his 5th year as provided by Gardiner:⁹⁶⁸ “... a stela from the oasis of Dâkhla ... dated in Shōshenq’s fifth year speaks of warfare and turmoil as having prevailed in that remote province”. This, 856 BC as I should calculate it, would have been very late in the reign of Ramses I (Jehoahaz), died 850 BC, when – quite appropriately – the latter was under the most extreme pressure from the Syrians.

Gardiner goes on to tell here of the foresight of Shoshenq I: “Several sons of the new ruler are known and he seems to have assigned to them positions as would most likely secure the permanence of his régime”. Amongst these sons was Iuput whom Shoshenq appointed “simultaneously to the offices of chief priest of Amun, commander-in-chief of the armies and governor of Upper Egypt ...”.⁹⁶⁹ Another son may have been “Djedptahefankh, acting in the role of third prophet of Amun”. And we have frequently referred to the important son, Osorkon I.

As for the duration of his reign, both inscriptional and traditional evidence might seem to converge in supporting a 21-year reign only for Shoshenq I. Thus Gardiner:⁹⁷⁰

⁹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 327.

⁹⁶⁹ Grimal, *op. cit*, p. 322.

⁹⁷⁰ *Op. cit*, pp. 328-329.

A rock-inscription at Silsila West ... records the opening of a new quarry to supply the sandstone for this projected court and pylon; the inscription is dated in Shōshenḳ's twenty-first year, his last according to Manetho, but it is difficult to believe that the first step, namely, the building of the portal, had not long since been taken. The decoration of its wall illustrates the event to which Shōshenḳ I, the Biblical Shishak [sic], owes a unique celebrity.

But I shall have cause to query this below.

Now Kitchen has described the Libyan Shoshenq I at his accession as “*another Smendes*” and a “*new Smendes*”, which would not be at all surprising, either, if - as I am arguing - these two rulers both hailed from the same ‘Syrian’ family:⁹⁷¹

[Shoshenq I's] very titulary exemplifies his qualities and policies. By taking the prenomen Hedjkheperre Setepenre, that of Smendes I, founder of the previous dynasty, Shoshenq proclaimed at one stroke both his continuity with the past - i.e. that he was, so to speak, ‘another Smendes’ - and a new beginning. Like Smendes, he now opened a new era. Nor is the concept of a ‘new Smendes’ limited to Shoshenq's prenomen. He also adopted Horus, Nebty, and Golden Horus names reminiscent of those of Smendes I. Just as the latter had been Horus ‘Strong Bull, beloved of Re’ plus epithets (whose arm Amun strengthened to exalt Truth), so now Shoshenq I was Horus, ‘Strong Bull, beloved of Re’ plus epithets (whom he (= Re) caused to appear as King to unite the Two Lands).

I have no doubt at least, based on the archaeological and epigraphical studies of this chapter, that the Ramessides and the TIP need to be lowered considerably on the time scale (the VLTF factor), with Ramses II to be relocated in the region of 850 BC, and the 22nd Libyan dynasty largely to the C8th BC. Thus I concur with all revisionists that the conventional estimate for the duration of the TIP will have to be significantly shortened. Rohl, by rejecting Velikovsky's 18th dynasty scenario and replacing Thutmose III with Ramses II (19th dynasty) as his candidate for ‘Shishak’, has given himself more room within which to accommodate a revised TIP. Despite this, his beginning date for Shoshenq I (and hence for the 22nd dynasty), at c. 833 BC,⁹⁷² is not all that much earlier than is Sieff's estimate for Shoshenq I's beginning, at c. 780 BC, and that not withstanding the fact that Sieff has retained Velikovsky's 18th dynasty syncretisms. That the Bubasite Portal at least was built later than the temple of Ramses III at Karnak would seem to be apparent from what Gardiner has written:⁹⁷³

A third son of Shōshenḳ I was Iuput, whom he appointed to be a high-priest of Amen-Rē' at Karnak, thus breaking with the tradition of heredity previously observed for that post. This was a particularly wise move, bringing that ... office under the close control of the sovereign, and the same policy seems to have been pursued for several generations to come.

⁹⁷¹ *The Third Intermediate Period of Egypt*, pp. 287-288.

⁹⁷² *The Lost Testament*, p. 441.

⁹⁷³ *Op. cit.*, p. 328.

That the position was fraught with danger is clear from the retention of the title ‘great commander of the army’; the high-priests were not merely priests, they were also military men. The outstanding achievement of Iuput, or perhaps ... rather ... of his father, was the erection of an entrance into the precincts of the main temple of Karnak continuing westward the south wall of the vast Hypostyle Hall. The Bubasite Portal, as it is generally called, was squeezed in between the Second Pylon and a small temple of Ramessēs III standing in the way of a huge first court which Shōshenq undoubtedly planned from the start, but which he did not live to accomplish.

Though we read above de Meester’s tempering of this standard view following Yurco. Shoshenq I’s and his dynasty’s real emergence would seem to me to be most appropriate during the reign of Ramses III, the latter part of whose reign was a time of “*general malaise*”, according to Newby.⁹⁷⁴ So far I have concluded that Shoshenq I could be the ‘Syrian’ king *Shaushka-muwa*, of the same Mitannian family as the biblical Hazael and his famous successors, and I have tentatively dated Shoshenq I’s celebrated 21st year Syro-Palestinian ‘campaign’ to approximately Year 8 of Ramses III (my Amaziah of Judah). I have also co-ordinated this Year 8 of Ramses III with Year 10 of Seti I (my Jehoash of Israel) and with Year 2 of Ramses II (my Jeroboam II of Israel).

The year would be c. 840 BC.

This would mean that Shoshenq I began to reign in c. (840 + 21=) 861 BC, about a decade before the death of Ramses I (my Jehoahaz of Israel) at 850 BC, and approximately the same in relation to Seti-nakht (my Joash of Judah). If Shoshenq I died close to his 21st year, then his death would have been about 840 BC. But, if Wentz is right, then the death of Shoshenq I may have been as late as c. (861 - 33=) 828 BC. All of this accords with our **Table 4**’s c. 800 (+ c. 50) for Shoshenq I.

By no means, then, could the mummy of Seti I, who died in 836 BC (refer to p. 287), have been transferred to DB320 in the 11th year of Shoshenq I (refer to p. 279). This Shoshenq must have been the later Shoshenq 1(B)/IV *Hedjkheperre* (see pp. 331, 341f.).

In terms of the 21st dynasty, if Year 33 of Psusennes did indeed correspond with Year 3 of Osorkon I, son of Shoshenq I, then - presuming the shorter chronology for Shoshenq I - Psusennes must have begun to reign in c. (840-3 = 837 + 33 =) 870 BC, about three years before the death of Jehu in 867 BC. Psusennes would thus have been a close contemporary at least of Hazael’s son, Ben-hadad II, but probably also of the latter’s son. Or, presuming the longer chronology for Shoshenq I, then Psusennes’ reign would begin in c. (828-3 = 825 + 33 =) 858 BC, about a decade after the death of Jehu in 867 BC.

However, if Shoshenq I did reign for 33 years, then it must be considered that he, and not Psusennes, is the un-named ruler being referred to on the bandage epigraph. The dating for Psusennes and Smendes would then need to be recalculated. It is this version of events that I should favour. According to what I have argued re the Namareth Inscription, Psusennes was a king of Assyria, contemporaneous with Osorkon II.

I have tentatively identified a Smendes with *Nebnesha* of the Pasenhor Genealogy.

⁹⁷⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 195. According to Grimal: “Ramesses III’s reign ... was not without its troubles. After its twelfth year, he was beset by both political and economic problems”. *Op. cit.*, p. 275.

Now in need of an explanation - given my identification of Shoshenq I with *Shaushka-muwa* - is the known syncretism between the latter and one of the Hittite kings; particularly considering that the Hittite king is thought to have been Tudhaliyas IV, a contemporary of the very late period of the reign of Ramses II. This, if correct, would appear to militate against my proposed location of Shoshenq I early in relation to the Ramessides. However, there must be some serious doubt as to the true identity of the Hittite king who had conferred a treaty with *Shaushka-muwa*. The document, as given by van de Mieroop, seems to be most obscure as to the name of the Hittite king, as it is heavily bracketted just as we found in *Chapter 6* to have been the case with some of the broken neo-Assyrian genealogies. Van de Mieroop renders it as follows:⁹⁷⁵

[Thus says Tabarna, Tudhaliya], Great King, [King of] Hatti, hero, beloved of the Sun-goddess of Arinna, [son of Hattusili, Great King, King of] Hatti, hero, [grandson of] Mursili, Great [King], King of Hatti, hero [descendant of] Tudhaliya, [Great King, King of] Hatti, hero.

When stripped down, the only actually preserved names of kings here are: *Mursilis ... Tudhaliyas*, with the Hittite king who signed this treaty probably being an unidentified grandson of a Mursilis, descendant of a Tudhaliyas. He could therefore be Suppiluliumas. This Hittite king, whoever he may have been, had rated as his equals “... *the King of Egypt, the King of Babylonia, the King of Assyria, and the King of Ahhiyawa*”, with the latter being erased from the tablet. And, since he was at war with the King of Assyria, he had charged *Shaushka-muwa* also with treating the King of Assyria as an enemy. It must have been a situation similar to when *Aziru* had signed a treaty with Suppiluliumas against *Tushratta*'s line. And the King of Assyria here may have been of the other branch of the Mitannian family, related to *Shaushka-muwa* (Shoshenq I), during the anarchical phase of Assyrian history after Adad-nirari III. But *Shaushka-muwa* may have broken this treaty with the Hittites since the ‘Sea Peoples’ are said to have attacked even the land of Hatti. (See section: “Shoshenq I and his Famous ‘Campaign’”, beginning next page). Interestingly, Shoshenq I claimed in his Karnak list to have defeated the armies of Mitanni. This may have been achieved with Hittite help. According to de Meester:⁹⁷⁶ “*Mitanni was ... wiped off the map shortly after Ramses II. According to the usual chronology Mitanni had ceased to exist some 400 years before Sheshonk lived*”. Shoshenq I also apparently, to commemorate his victories, set up a great stela in Megiddo, a fragment of which has been excavated. According to Rohl:⁹⁷⁷ “...*the Shoshenk stela fragment belongs to Stratum V-B (Iron Age I-B)*”. Archaeology though is by no means an exact science. Thus, whilst my placement basically fits with James' relocation of IA II (A & B) to c. 800-700 BC,⁹⁷⁸ Rohl may also be correct in saying:⁹⁷⁹

⁹⁷⁵ *A History of the Ancient Near East*, p. 157, **Document 8:1** *Excerpts from the treaty between Tudhaliya IV of Hatti and Shaushka-muwa of Amurru*.

⁹⁷⁶ *The Relief of Sheshonk in Karnak*.

⁹⁷⁷ *The Lost Testament*, p. 441.

⁹⁷⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 195, Table 8:3.

⁹⁷⁹ *The Lost Testament*, p. 441.

“In ... [Megiddo Shoshenq I] set up a great stela commemorating his victory over [the Aramaeans], a fragment of which was recovered from the excavation debris of Megiddo. ... the Shoshenq stela fragment belongs to Stratum V-B (Iron Age I-B)”. Shoshenq I, who was certainly not the biblical pharaoh ‘Shishak’, can neither be pharaoh ‘So’ of the time of kings Hoshea of Israel and Hezekiah of Judah, in the last quarter of the C8th BC.

Shoshenq I and his Famous ‘Campaign’

The period of Ramses III appears to have been a time of great mobilization of western peoples against Syro-Palestine and Egypt, when the ‘Sea Peoples’ had attempted to overrun Egypt. This, the ‘second wave’ of ‘Indo-Europeans’ - as opposed to the ‘first wave’ more than half a millennium earlier, in Exodus times, affected both the 19th and 20th dynasties. “[Ramses III] was convinced that the great pincer movement on Egypt was a conspiracy”, wrote Newby.⁹⁸⁰ “He declared that foreigners in their islands to the north – he was still unclear that Anatolia was not a group of islands – had plotted to invade Egypt”. These same western peoples, notably including Philistines, were thus part of a far more vast movement than one merely affecting Israel and Judah, as recorded in the Old Testament. Once again the Bible, as observed earlier in this thesis, offers only the limited view that was relevant to Palestine. But, according to Ramses III:⁹⁸¹ “No land could stand against them. Khatti, Cyprus, Arzawa, and the city states of Syria, Carchemish, and Qode had already fallen”.

It was therefore the Philistines of the late C9th BC (revised dating) I suggest, and not Velikovsky’s hopeful C5th Persians, who were the *Peleset* of Ramses III’s Medinet Habu inscriptions. Though, as I shall be considering on pp. 352-353, the Persians, and presumably their Egyptian name, *Pereset* [PRST], arose from this very stock; hence the distinct similarities between the two as so keenly discerned by Dr. Velikovsky.

Whilst the 20th dynasty pharaoh was able to prevent this tidal wave of peoples from overwhelming Egypt, and Judah, its activity now in Syro-Palestine would greatly affect the socio-political situation there for decades to come, including EOH.

Shoshenq I’s campaign was a most important chapter in this massive upheaval. I have identified and dated it in a biblical context, though it is less apparent how, precisely, it might fit into the overall action of the ‘Sea Peoples’. Also, enigmatic in my context, is Shoshenq I’s boast to his god Amun in his great triumph scene at Karnak – reminiscent of a similar scene of Merenptah at Karnak – that:⁹⁸² “When I made it as thy tribute of the land of Palestine [Khuru] which had turned away from thee”. Was he reclaiming the land for Egypt and Syria from the Ramessides?

As we have discovered, neither Jerusalem nor Samaria appears to have been specifically listed in Shoshenq I’s celebrated ‘campaign’. The pharaoh’s forces marched from Gaza up through the Beth-horon pass, to Gibeon (as all agree no mention of Jerusalem here), to the north, moving through the Esdraelon (Jezreel) Valley into Galilee, also into Transjordanian Ammon (e.g. Penuel, Mahanaim).

⁹⁸⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 187.

⁹⁸¹ As cited, *ibid.*

⁹⁸² Kitchen, *op. cit.*, p. 302.

They also coursed through the Jordan valley and spent substantial time in the Negev. The Libyan pharaoh's 'campaign' covered all the major points of the Palestinian compass: W (Philistia), S (Judah, the Negev, Edom), N (Esdrælon, Galilee) E (Ammon); locations that Ramses II would soon recover.

As for Moab, where the forces of Ramses II also campaigned, it seems to me that the various name rings that Shea had attempted to associate with Jerusalem and its environs⁹⁸³ may actually have been Moabite place names. Thus *Goren* (גֹרֵן Heb. for "threshing floor") was not, I suggest, Shea's hopeful 'threshing floor of the Temple Mount at Jerusalem' - which would hardly still be referred to as a threshing floor now with a massive Temple standing there - but was more likely, say, the southern Transjordanian site of *Goren ha Atad* to where the body of Jacob had been carried on the way to his burial at Machpelah (Genesis 50:11). *Abel* may then be the corresponding *Abel Mizraim*, place of mourning, and not Shea's proposed 'field of Bethlehem'. *El-Mattan* could now be the Moabite *Mattanah*, having nothing to do with Jerusalem. *Ma^caleh*, 'ascent, pass' could possibly refer to 'the ascent of Luhith' (מַעְלֵה הַלּוּחִית) (Isaiah 15:5), which latter might then be the [J-R-H-T] to which Shea refers. Beth Anath could still be the place of that name near Hebron; the Egyptian army perhaps having crossed from *Abel Mizraim* in the direction of Hebron just as the party from Egypt carrying Jacob's body had done (Genesis 50:11-13) about a millennium earlier.

In deference to Danelius, according to whom:⁹⁸⁴ "[Shoshenq I's] list is most fragmentary, and it is doubtful whether it refers to a campaign at all", and to Mazar's view of it as more of "a circular 'Cook's Tour'",⁹⁸⁵ I have always referred to this above as a 'campaign' in inverted commas. This would perhaps be appropriate according to my view that it constituted a rampage, not a properly organised campaign, through Israel, by Jehoash's mercenaries disgruntled at their treatment by Amaziah of Judah. The primary area covered by Shoshenq I and his marauders (ignoring Moab and the Negev, Biblical selectivity again?) is exactly the same as described in 2 Chronicles 25:13: "... [they] fell on the cities of Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon".

The campaign of 'Shishak' against Jerusalem, however, this most definitely was not.

Osorkon I

Rohl has elaborated as follows upon the apparent link (already referred to) between Osorkon I and a Psusennes:⁹⁸⁶

Our primary fixing point between the 21st and 22nd Dynasty is the bandage epigraph which associates the year dates 33 and 3 with king Sekhemkheperre Osorkon

⁹⁸³ 'The Military Strategy of Shishak/Sheshonk in Palestine', pp. 6-10.

⁹⁸⁴ 'Did Thutmose III Despoil the Temple in Jerusalem?', p. 67. Emphasis added.

⁹⁸⁵ Kitchen, *op. cit.*, p. 444, is critical of Mazar at least for having given such an impression of Shoshenq I's campaign.

⁹⁸⁶ 'David Rohl Replies, *ibid.*

As we have previously argued, the Year 3 should be attributed to Osorkon I of the 22nd (Libyan) Dynasty whilst the only suitable candidate for the Year 33 is the first Psusennes of Manetho's 21st Dynasty This fairly secure anchor provides us with a neat little calculation which leads to our second fixing point. According to Manetho, Osorkon I reigned 15 years and was followed by Takelot I for 13 years – a total of 25 years from the former's Year 3. On the other hand, after Year 33, Psusennes continued to rule for another 16 years before being succeeded by his son Amenemope for 9 years (Amenemnisu being only a co-regent either at the beginning or end of Psusennes' long reign). Thus the time interval between Year 33 to the beginning of the reign of Osochor, the successor to Amenemope is also 25 years. From the Pasenhor genealogy we know that Takelot I was succeeded by Osorkon II and hence our identification of Osochor with the latter. Is it really just coincidence that the independent calculations of the reigns in two different dynasties (from the common starting point of the Year 3 = Year 33 bandage epigraph) end up, exactly 25 years later, with an Osorkon ascending the throne in both dynasties – especially considering that this Osorkon was also buried within the temple precinct at Tanis, home of the 21st Dynasty?

Osorkon I's 3rd year appears to have corresponded with Psusennes's 33rd year; though I have suggested that this latter may even refer to a late year in the reign of Shoshenq I. The date would be (c. 840-3=) 837 BC (short), or 825 (long). This accords with our **Table 4's** early C8th BC (+ c. 50) for Osorkon I. I am favouring the long version. Osorkon I's presumed 35-year reign would then have concluded at [either c. 802 BC (short)] or 790 BC (long). These dates are about midway into the reign of Ramses II. Revisionists tend to limit the reign of Osorkon I to 15 years, the figure that Manetho gives for Osorkon I in his *Aegyptiaca*, on the basis of the presumed link with a Psusennes; whereas Wikipedia,⁹⁸⁷ thinks that “[Manetho's figure] is most likely an error for 35 Years based on the evidence of the Heb Sed bandage, as Kenneth Kitchen notes”. But if a Psusennes is not the personage on the Heb Sed mummy bandage epigraph, but Shoshenq I is, then there would be no reason why Manetho's figure for Osorkon I cannot be retained.

Genealogy of Nespaherenhat

There is, however, a very important Egyptian document, the Genealogy of Nespaherenhat (Statue 42189 in the Cairo Museum), dedicated by his son Ankhefenkhons, the conventional interpretation of which would appear to suggest that the chronology that I am developing here is completely impossible. This detailed genealogical data would seem to suggest that the 22nd dynasty (specifically Osorkon I) was significantly closer in time to Ramses II than is conventionally allowed. Thus van der Veen has noted, with reference to Rohl:⁹⁸⁸

⁹⁸⁷ *Osorkon I*.

⁹⁸⁸ *Op. cit.*, section v: “Nine Generations”.

Rohl has elsewhere discussed the Genealogy of Ankhefenkhons (BGA V, 4, p. 5) and shown that the reigns of Osorkon I and Ramesses II were separated by only nine generations [A Test of Time, pp. 379-381]. Rohl argues that when Ipyu served at the funeral of Baenre Merenptah he was probably already an old man. Ipyu's father, Roma, had served as 2nd Prophet of Amun during the early years of Ramesses II. In the conventional scheme, nine generations between Osorkon I in c. 920 BC and Ramesses' early years in the first quarter of the 13th century BC is impossible unless we are prepared to consider 38-year generations! The Ankhefenkhons Genealogy strongly supports the proposal that the interval between Ramesses II and the 22nd Dynasty was considerably shorter than is currently accepted.

But considerably longer than is the case with my scheme.

According to Rohl's explanation of this genealogy, as discussed in an appendix,⁹⁸⁹ there were nine generations back from Nespaherenhat, a contemporary of Osorkon I, to a Second Prophet of Amun, Roma, a contemporary of Ramses II. This span of nine generations is quite impossible according to my revision, which has Osorkon I as a younger contemporary of Ramses II himself. And Rohl thinks that, based on a 20-year generation, the conventional chronology offers about 170 years too many (c. 1270-920 BC) for Nespaherenhat's genealogy, which "*strongly indicates that the interval between the 19th and 22nd Dynasties must be radically reduced ...*"⁹⁹⁰. On the other hand, Rohl believes that his own revised dates of 970-790 BC can satisfactorily accommodate this. I have already argued, however, against Rohl's identification of Ramses II 'the Great', as the biblical 'Shishak'. And his separation of Ramses II from Osorkon I by about two centuries does not conform as closely as does my system to the epigraphical and monumental data that would suggest a greater closeness in time between Ramses II and Merenptah, on the one hand, and Shoshenq I and Osorkon I, on the other. On this basis, I must suggest that the Osorkon Sekhemkheperre, during whose reign Nespaherenhat died, cannot be Osorkon I, but must be a later Osorkon. Rohl had, in the previous appendix of the same book,⁹⁹¹ identified a second Shoshenq Hedjkheperre (other than Shoshenq I). He was actually Shoshenq IV, as now determined. And De Meester may have done the same in the case of Osorkon Sekhemkheperre, when arguing for a likeness between the names of Osochor and Osorkon IV.⁹⁹²

The last king of the 22nd Dynasty was Osorkon IV (called Osorkon V in the *Atlas of Ancient Egypt*) who had as his throne name 'A'akheperre Setepenre' [de Meester apparently meant 'Setepenamun' here?]. The Osorkon or Osochor of the 21st Dynasty had a very similar throne name: 'A'akheperre Setepenre'. The only difference is the last part: - re/amun. According to the *Atlas* all pharaohs of the 22nd Dynasty had one of these throne names and Sheshonk III and Pami [Pimay] used both forms.

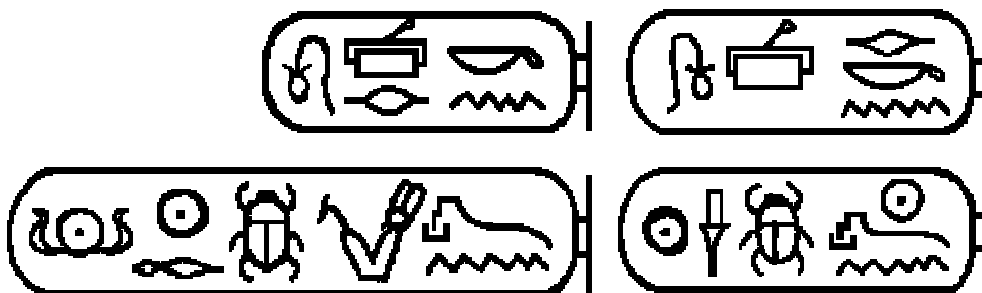
⁹⁸⁹ *A Test of Time*, Appendix B, pp. 379-381.

⁹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 381.

⁹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, Appendix A, p. 378.

⁹⁹² *Op. cit.*, section: "The end of the 22nd Dynasty".

So it appears that ‘Setepenre/amun’ (Chosen by Re/Amun) was no more than a tradition postfix. Could the last pharaoh of the 22nd Dynasty perhaps be *the same pharaoh* as the Osorkon of the 21st Dynasty? To find that out I have copied their cartouches from *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*:



On the left the names of Osorkon IV, on the right those of Osochor or Osorkon the Elder of the 21st Dynasty. The names on top are exactly the same, the names below should be ‘A'akheperre Setep[en]amun’ and ‘A'akheperre Setepenre’. Apart from the name of the god (the sitting figure is Amun, the circle represents the sun god Re) there is one important difference: on the left is the sign for ‘A'a’ (a column, here horizontal: this sign can be written both horizontally and vertically), on the right there is the sign of ‘sekhem’ (a kind of staff). That must be a mistake, because ‘Sekhemkheperre’ is the throne name of Osorkon I, the son of Sheshonk I. Apart from that, everything else is practically the same.

Another vitally important list is the Memphite Genealogy. Rohl⁹⁹³ has interpreted this, in favour of his own revision, as indicating that two generations (of about 40-50 years) separated Ramses II from the beginning of the 21st dynasty. Whilst I basically agree with him thus far, Rohl then - though admitting that “*the conventional chronology allocates 117 years to the 20th Dynasty ...*”⁹⁹⁴ - goes on to claim that the 20th dynasty must fit into this small space between the 19th and 21st. The 20th dynasty though, I believe, was at least as long as the conventional figure, 117, and not Rohl’s less than half (in fact, I should extend it significantly longer than even the 117 years). Moreover, no 20th dynasty name is to be found in the Memphite list, which I take (according to my on scheme) as indicating that this dynasty was contemporaneous with the 19th, and not in linear succession to it. The 21st dynasty sequence: Amenmnisu; Akheperre; Psusennes (2 generations), and, about three generations later, Shoshenq, seems to be apparent. These could represent, respectively: Amenmnisu; Osorkon the Elder; a Psusennes; and Rohl may be right in his proposal that ‘Shoshenq’, listed about 9 generations after Ramses II, was Hedjkheperre Shoshenq 1B (see p. 346 below).

According to Kitchen, Osorkon I followed the tradition of his father, Shoshenq I, and also of Psusennes I in his choice of titles:⁹⁹⁵

⁹⁹³ *A Test of Time*, Appendix B, pp. 381-384.

⁹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 384.

⁹⁹⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 302-303.

[Osorkon I] took official titles much in the style of his father. He also was Horus, 'Strong Bull, beloved of Re', augmented with epithets - in this case, 'whom Atum placed on his throne to provide for the Two Lands'. More original was his Nebty name, 'magnifying Forms, rich in marvels', while his Golden Horus name was closer to those of his father and of Psusennes I: 'Strong in might, subduing the Nine Bows, Sovereign who conquers all lands'. His prenomen, Sekhemkheperre Setepenre, combined originality with formation on his father's pattern.

I calculate Osorkon I's 15-year reign to c. 828-813 BC, making him contemporaneous with part of the first half of the reign of Ramses II.

Takelot I

His approximately 12-13 years of reign would bring us down to c. (813-13 =) 800 BC. Takelot I would therefore have died about a quarter of a century before Ramses II did.

Osorkon II

Osorkon II, as we discovered, has to be contemporaneous with the Jeroboam II stratum at Samaria; a syncretism that is quite impossible, however, according to the conventional sequence that has Osorkon II ruling about mid-way through the C9th BC (about a century earlier than Jeroboam II). Van der Veen has explained the situation as follows:⁹⁹⁶

In Samaria a house has been found containing a seal with the name of Osorkon II. On the same spot ostraca ... have been found which were first dated to the time of King Ahab That was evidence that Osorkon II and Ahab were contemporaries. But Velikovsky writes that the ostraca were later dated to the time of King Jeroboam II of Israel Also the archaeologists discovered that the house with the ostraca had been demolished before the building of the Osorkon house. That fits perfectly if Osorkon II lived around 730 [van der Veen's date for Osorkon II].

This also well accords with our **Table 4's** range for Osorkon II between the mid C8th BC (+ c. 50) and c. 700 BC (+ c. 50), as I should place Osorkon II in the early C8th BC. It now seems that he must have reigned for somewhat longer than was earlier thought. His reign length is discussed in Wikipedia:⁹⁹⁷

Osorkon II ... is now believed to have reigned for more than 30 years, rather than just 25 years. The celebrations of his first Sed Jubilee was traditionally thought to have occurred in his 22nd Year but the Heb Sed date in his Great Temple of Bubastis is damaged and can be read as Year 30, as Edward Wente notes

⁹⁹⁶ *Op. cit.*, section "Pianchi and Osorkon".

⁹⁹⁷ *Osorkon II.*

Recently, it has been demonstrated that Nile Quay Text No. 14 (dated to Year 29 of an Usimare Setepenamun) belongs to Osorkon II on palaeographical grounds This finding suggests that Osorkon II likely did celebrate his first Heb Sed in his 30th Year as was traditionally the case with other Libyan era Pharaohs such as Shoshenq III and Shoshenq V. In addition, a Year 22 stela from his reign preserves no mention of any Heb Sed celebrations in this year as would be expected

With Osorkon now re-dated from c. 800-770 BC, or a bit later, then he would be contemporaneous with the last quarter of a century of reign of Ramses II, the brief rule of Merenptah, and the latter's 'Israel Stele'. He would also be contemporaneous with the mid to late rule of the powerful king Uzziah of Judah.

Now, if Merenptah were the *Amenophis* of the *Osarsiph* legend, then Osorkon II, a powerful ruler in his own right, would also be the most likely candidate for the rebel priest *Osarsiph* himself. Perhaps he, like Psusennes I, would change his name to 'Ramses' (having intermarried with the Ramessides?), Osorkon II being a possible candidate then also for Ramses-Siptah.

The name *Osarsiph* might thus be a combination of *Osorkon* and *Siptah*.

Osorkon II had, according to Clapham, also opted for a traditional Ramesside titulary:⁹⁹⁸

Osorkon II of the 22nd Dynasty possessed a Golden Horus epithet "great of strength, smiting the Mentyu [Asiatics; var., Enemies], Rich in Splendour". His expanded Golden Horus name is reminiscent of Osorkon I and Psusennes I, "subduer of barbarians, sovereign who conquers all lands".

Certainly this Osorkon II did usurp some of the great monuments of the late 19th dynasty Ramessides. And he could have done it with Judaeen help, as in the case of *Osarsiph*, devastating Egypt in turn as according to the *Osarsiph* legend. I should suggest that this was the era when the most significant of the 22nd dynasty works were undertaken in Egypt. Like Shoshenq I early, Osorkon II would have had the opportunity to have set up a 22nd dynasty infrastructure in Egypt. Rohl has suggested, in connection with Osorkon II's son prince Harnakht, that the eldest son of the pharaoh, for instance, was early given the title of 'High Priest of Amun':⁹⁹⁹ "... this 'High Priest of Amun' [Harnakht] was only about eight years old when he died. What this suggests to me is that it was customary, if not obligatory, at this time for the eldest born son of the reigning monarch to be given this title, almost from birth!"

The complexities surrounding the TIP priests certainly need to be explained. I am going to make the tentative suggestion that Osorkon II may have been descended from the great Elisha himself, who had in fact married into the Omride family (refer back to p. 237). This might explain why, if the former were also the priest *Osarsiph*, he received help from the pious king Uzziah of Judah.

In *Chapter 12, 7*, I shall in fact be going so far as to propose that the greatest of the 25th dynasty rulers were actual priests serving king Hezekiah of Judah.

⁹⁹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 4.

⁹⁹⁹ 'David Rohl replies', p. 18.

Astute revisionists like Dirkzwager and Sieff had recognised that the beginnings of the 22nd dynasty must have occurred during the first half of the C8th BC, as the 19th dynasty began to weaken. Though it might seem like they were now stuck with a profusion of strong dynasties together, this is actually a scenario that accords with Uzziah's rise whilst a powerful dynasty of Israel was still ruling. Sieff, who follows the conventional view that the 22nd dynasty was Libyan, is again fairly close to the mark when he writes:¹⁰⁰⁰

... I would suggest the Libyan Dynasty [22nd] incursion be dated from within the reign of Menreptah [Merenptah], specifically, from where he first records his problems with the Libyans. After their eventual triumph over the Nineteenth Dynasty it would be understandable for Shoshenq I to count his reign-length from the establishment of his first bridgehead in the land of the Nile. Dirkzwager [*op. cit.*] suggested that “during the late years of Ramses II ... a prominent role could have been played by Sheshonq [Shoshenq] I and Osorkon I”.

I should simply adjust Dirkzwager's estimate of the Libyans back by about a generation. Osorkon II now becomes the 22nd dynasty ruler late during the long interregnum in Israel. He may have staged a rebellion against Merenptah, whose contemporary he likely was, given the Samaria evidence associated with Osorkon II. If he were *Osarsiph* as well, then the Jerusalemite help that he received would most certainly have come from the powerful Uzziah of Judah, out to take back Syro-Palestine from the 19th dynasty rulers.

Takelot II

According to Wikipedia:¹⁰⁰¹

[Takelot II] has been identified as the High Priest of Amun **Takelot F**, son of the High Priest of Amun Nimlot C at Thebes and, thus, the son of Nimlot C and grandson of king Osorkon II Most Egyptologists today ... also accept David Aston's hypothesis ... that Shoshenq III was Osorkon II's actual successor at Tanis, rather than Takelot II

Takelot II rather ruled a separate kingdom that embraced Middle and Upper Egypt, distinct from the Tanite Twenty-second Dynasty who only controlled Lower Egypt. Takelot F ... served for a period of time under Osorkon II as a High Priest of Amun before he proclaimed himself as king Takelot II in the final three regnal years of Osorkon II. This situation is attested by the relief scenes on the walls of Temple J at Karnak which was dedicated by Takelot F – in his position as High Priest – to Osorkon II, who is depicted as the celebrant and king

Takelot II's presumed 25 years of reign, beginning in the last three years of Osorkon II, would now date to c. 773-748 BC. This accords well with our **Table 4's** estimation of Takelot II at c. 700 BC (+ c. 50). Takelot II will re-emerge in *Chapter 12, 7*, as a figure of possible dynastic importance.

¹⁰⁰⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 30-31.

¹⁰⁰¹ *Takelot II*.

Shoshenq III

With Shoshenq III (a slightly later contemporary of Takelot II) following Osorkon II, his long reign (whether 39 or 52 years) would have commenced in c. 770 BC and finished in c. 731 BC (short - 39 years), or c. 718 BC (long - 52 years). I shall be favouring 39 years. The longer figure may be an artificial one. Thus Wikipedia:¹⁰⁰²

Shoshenq III did live to reign a long time - fifty two years**, but by the end of his reign not only were there effectively two pharaohs ruling in Egypt, but the various chieftains of the Ma across the Delta were slowly acquiring authority and power and forming close family dynasties of their own. (** - David Rohl points out that the highest regnal dates found for Shoshenq III date to Year 39 – Kitchen assigns 52 years to Shoshenq III in order to keep the Old Chronology correct).

The reign of Shoshenq III would probably have terminated then in c. 731 BC. This accords very well indeed with our **Table 4's** range for Shoshenq III between c. 720 BC (+ c. 50) and c. 700 BC (+ c. 50). Shoshenq III's reign (c. 770-731 BC) would have terminated on the very eve of EOH. Was Shoshenq III, then, the biblical 'King So'? Rohl, not surprisingly, since he has Shoshenq III's beginning at c. 755 BC¹⁰⁰³ - hence chronologically ideal for 'So' - has designated Shoshenq III as 'So'. I shall be taking up this matter again in my discussion of 'So' in *Chapter 12, 1*.

To complicate matters, it seems that there is now, at this approximate time, another pharaoh Shoshenq with whom we have to contend. For Rohl has discovered a second *Hedjkheperre* Shoshenq (whom he designates IB), reigning for about a dozen years - contemporaneously with Shoshenq III, according to Rohl.¹⁰⁰⁴ This Shoshenq IB, whose existence Egyptologists now tend to accept, is now designated as Shoshenq IV.

Continuing with the 20th Dynasty Ramessides

The 20th Dynasty, which conventionally follows the 19th - though I have argued for a fair degree of overlap - spanning an extra century plus (c. 1188 BC-1069 BC, conventional dates),¹⁰⁰⁵ is considered to have comprised:

Seti-nakht;
Ramses III;
Ramses IV- Ramses XI

Though the Jehu-ide and 19th dynasty had now faded out, these 20th dynasty Ramessides, whose origins I have identified as Judaeans, would thus continue on until Ramesses XI, right into EOH. (See *Chapter 12*). I firstly take part of Gardiner's account of this era:¹⁰⁰⁶

¹⁰⁰² *Shoshenq III*.

¹⁰⁰³ 'David Rohl replies', p. 21.

¹⁰⁰⁴ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁰⁵ Grimal's dates, *ibid*, p. 393. Gardiner has 1184-1087 BC. *Op. cit*, p. 446.

Although Ramessēs III reigned for full thirty-one years ... and celebrated a Sed-festival ... there are signs of various internal troubles ... towards the end of his life [Ramses III] was followed by eight kings ... each of whom bore the illustrious name of Ramessēs, now so firmly associated with the thought of Pharaonic grandeur that even when his descendants had long relinquished any pretensions to the throne certain functionaries of high station still prided themselves upon the title 'king's son of Ramessēs'. That Ramessēs IV was a son of Ramessēs III is clear both from the Harris papyrus and from other evidence, but the insistence with which he introduced into Prenomen and Nomen the goddess of Truth whilst protesting that he had banished iniquity arouses the suspicion that his claim was not substantiated without some difficulty. Of his successors at least two appear to have been his brothers.

The reigns of all eight kings except Ramessēs IX and Ramessēs XI were short, so that the total for the dynasty works out at less than the figure given by Manetho.

Whatever the real length of the 20th dynasty, it seems most unlikely that it could be squeezed into the estimated two generations between the 19th and 21st dynasties of the Memphite Genealogy. Moreover, we are going to consider in the next chapter archaeological evidence that the 20th dynasty may have been, at least in part, quite later - closer to the 25th dynasty - than has so far been allowed. We are now going to need to align these remaining Ramessides presumably with Uzziah's successors, and even identify king Uzziah himself as one of the sons of Ramses III. After all regarding Uzziah, 2 Chronicles 26:8 tells, "... *his fame spread even to the border of Egypt, for he became very strong*". So we should certainly expect some degree of recognition in Egypt for this Uzziah as well. Whilst, surprisingly, most versions of history, conventional or revisionist, do not find any significant rôle for Uzziah in Egypt, Dirkzwager and Sieff have at least done so, regarding him as the mysterious *Aziru* of the Harris Papyrus. Though I have already proposed an alternative, earlier historical identification for this *Aziru*, I should nevertheless expect that Uzziah and his son Jotham, at their peak, would have made a very profound impression upon Egypt. We read that (vv. 6-8):

[Uzziah] went out and made war against the Philistines, and broke down the wall of Gath and ... Jabneh and ... Ashdod; he built cities in the territory of Ashdod and elsewhere among the Philistines ... against the Arabs who lived in Gurbaal, and against the Meunites. The Ammonites paid tribute to Uzziah, and his fame spread even to the border of Egypt, for he became very strong.

The narrative then tells of the work that the king did in Jerusalem, before describing the might of his army (vv. 11-15):

Moreover Uzziah had an army of soldiers, fit for war, in divisions according to the numbers in the muster made by the secretary Jeiel and the officer Maaseiah, under the direction of Hananiah, one of the king's commanders. The whole number of the heads of ancestral houses of mighty warriors was 2,600.

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Op. cit.*, pp. 288, 294.

Under their command was an army of 307,500, who could make war with mighty power, to help the king against the enemy. Uzziah provided for all the army the shields, spears, helmets, coats of mail, bows, and stones for slinging. In Jerusalem he set up machines, invented by skilled workers, on the towers and the corners for shooting arrows and large stones. And his fame spread far

In some of this at least Uzziah, who became leprous, was assisted by his equally capable son, Jotham.

Logically, following my view that the 20th dynasty was Judaeen, Uzziah (son of Amaziah) must be a son of Ramses III. Despite Velikovsky's view that the latter 20th dynasty Ramessides (VIII on) had no connection with the earlier ones, I should now expect that the most important amongst Ramses III-XI were all C8th BC Judaeen kings.

But which one of these in Egyptian history was the great Uzziah of 52-years reign?

Though, logically again, one might expect Uzziah to have been Ramses IV, the son of Ramses III, who succeeded his father, this cannot have been the case, as Ramses IV would have been older than Uzziah upon the death of his father. Whereas Uzziah came to the throne at the age of 16 (2 Chronicles 26:3), after an interregnum of 11 years (as calculated by Anstey), Ramses IV, according to Wikipedia¹⁰⁰⁷, "*was appointed the crown prince by Year 22 of his father's reign when all four of his elder brothers predeceased him ...*". This means that Ramses IV would have been well past 16 years of age when he came to the throne.

And it is highly unlikely that Ramses V could have been Uzziah, since a mere 4 years are attributed to this ephemeral pharaoh,¹⁰⁰⁸ who, moreover, may have been a son, not of Ramses III, but of Ramses IV (and, despite the fact that his mummy exhibited small pox - like Uzziah's leprosy?).

It is thought that there may have been civil war raging at the time of Ramses V and VI. Thus Clayton:¹⁰⁰⁹ "*On the evidence of the fragmentary hieratic papyrus in Turin, there appears to have been a civil war raging during Ramesses V's short four-year reign*". This, as well as the fact that some of Ramses III's sons had died during their father's reign, may have been a further reason for the unexplained interregnum.

Since Ramses VI died in early middle age, then he too is unlikely to have been king Uzziah of Judah.

Nor could Ramses VII have been Uzziah, since he was the son of Ramses VI, not III. The mummy of Ramses VII "*has not yet been identified*", according to Clayton,¹⁰¹⁰ and his burial place is "*unknown*".

Ramses VIII was apparently a son of Ramses III, but his reign lasted only 3 years according to Grimal.¹⁰¹¹

¹⁰⁰⁷ *Ramesses IV.*

¹⁰⁰⁸ Here I am basically following Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

¹⁰⁰⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 167.

¹⁰¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹¹ However, Reeves *et al.* give him only 1 year. *Op. cit.*, p. 167.

Ramses IX, who is in fact my tentative choice for king Uzziah of Judah, may indeed also have been a son of Ramses III. Sitek has included this possibility amongst other ones:¹⁰¹²

Descent of this ruler is not well established. Presumably he was son of Montuherchopshaf, who in turn was son of Ramesses III by Takhat. However E. F. Wente states that Ramesses IX was son of Ramesses VIII, while according to one of the K. Kitchen's hypotheses his father was Ramesses VII. Additionally *some scholars believe that he was son of Ramesses III* and a queen of unknown name, he could also be a brother of Ramesses VIII.

... Burial place – tomb KV6 in the Valley of the Kings. Mummy of the king was discovered in the DB320 cache at Deir el-Bahari.

Ramses IX is seemingly the only 20th dynasty ruler in range of Ramses III to have reigned long enough to qualify, in my revised context, for the very substantial Uzziah. Clayton tells of the improvement in the situation of the dynasty at this time:¹⁰¹³

With Ramesses IX Egypt returned to a degree of stability in as much as the king enjoyed a reign of some 18 years. Building work in Ramesses's name at the ancient sun centre of Heliopolis in the Delta indicates the greater emphasis being placed on Lower Egypt. This was probably one of the reasons why the High priests of Amun at Thebes were increasingly able to assert their own power in Upper Egypt and to sow the seeds for the final insurrection to come during the 21st dynasty. Ramesses IX's tomb is a long one in the tradition of the 'syringe' tunnels of the later [sic] 19th and 20th Dynasties.

Prior to this, Clayton had quoted John Gardner Wilkinson in regard to the very unusual and un-Egyptian appearance of the sculptures of Ramses IX:¹⁰¹⁴ *"The features of the king are peculiar, and the form of the nose, so very unlike that of the usual Egyptian face, it becomes very probable that their sculptures actually offer portraits"*. And, if this is indeed Uzziah, might we even go so far as to suggest that this 'peculiar form of nose' may have been an effect of leprosy?

Unfortunately, the mummy of Ramses IX has not been properly examined.

The reign of Ramses IX was apparently an era of growing Libyan (Meshwesh) influence; for Gardiner has written, with reference to work sites at Medinet Habu and the neighbouring Deir el-Medina:¹⁰¹⁵ *"The picture disclosed by the day-to-day journals of work in the necropolis is one of great unrest. Long stretches of time found the workmen on the royal tomb idle, and there are ominous references ... many of them dating from the later years of Ramessēs IX, to the presence at Thebes of foreigners or Libyans or Meshwesh, though we do not know exactly how these ought to be interpreted"*.

In this regard, we might recall Uzziah's constant need for vigilance with the Philistines.

¹⁰¹² *Ancient Egypt: History and Chronology*. My emphasis.

¹⁰¹³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 169-170.

¹⁰¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

¹⁰¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 299.

We have read that, because king Uzziah had turned leprous, his son Jotham took over the reins of government. However, that could not have been immediately; for Jotham was only 16 years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned singly for 16 years. Uzziah's (as Ramses IX's) main years of power could have been approximately the same as those 18 years recorded for him as pharaoh of Egypt, particularly of the Delta region (or, "even to the border of Egypt", as the Bible puts it). Since we hear about Uzziah up to Year 38, when Zechariah came to the throne in Israel, then it could be that the greater part of the former's 18 years of power had occurred during the interregnum, after Jeroboam II had quit ruling Israel in about Uzziah's 16th Year (794 BC). According to a revised scenario, the peak phase of Uzziah's reign would have been from this approximate date, 794 BC, until c. 772 BC ('Israel Stele'), including the rebellion of Osorkon II/*Osarsiph*, after which Merenptah/Zechariah briefly regained control of Syro-Palestine. Since Uzziah would then have flourished during the early part of Merenptah's reign (and also during a phase of his pre-pharaonic career in general), then Uzziah (Ramses IX) would be well placed, chronologically to have been associated with the rebel *Osarsiph* (Osorkon II?) who had risen up against *Amenophis* (Merenptah). This *Osarsiph* was, in Rohl's words, "an individual of great authority throughout the later reigns of the [19th] dynasty".¹⁰¹⁶ He was anti the Egyptian gods and allied to Judah.

A Brief Outline for Ramses IV-XI

Ramses IV, according to Grimal:¹⁰¹⁷

... considered himself to be a temple-builder of such stature that he asked the gods to grant him a reign longer than Ramesses II's in exchange for everything that he had done for them during the first five years of his reign. But the gods were evidently deaf to his prayers, for he died two years afterwards, leaving unfinished a construction programme that was still far below his ambitions.

Ramses IV apparently abandoned some of his construction work, due, it is thought to his death. Grimal tells here of Ramses IV in this regard:¹⁰¹⁸

[Ramses IV] was forced to abandon the construction of a gigantic mortuary temple in the vicinity of the causeway of the temple of Deir el-Bahri and instead had to content himself with a small establishment between the temple of Amenhotpe son of Hapu and Deir el-Medina. Nevertheless, he also built at Abydos, Heliopolis and Karnak, where he dedicated statues and decorated part of the Temple of Khonsu. He left his name in the Great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak, as well as Luxor, Deir el-Bahri, the Ramesseum, Memphis, Koptos, Medamud, Armant, Esna, el-Tod, Edfu, Elkab, Buhen, Gerf Hussein and Aniba, while scarabs bearing his cartouche have been found as far afield as Palestine.

¹⁰¹⁶ "Comment by David Rohl", p. 18.

¹⁰¹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 276.

¹⁰¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 277.

He sent expeditions to the Wadi Hammamat quarries and the Sinai, and the village at Deir el-Medina was at its peak in the Twentieth dynasty, when the size of its work teams doubled to a total of 120 workmen.

The 6-7 year reign of Ramses IV would date approximately to 757 -750 BC. This was during the 11-year interregnum, now for Judah, following the death of Uzziah, after which Uzziah's son Jotham became sole ruler of Judah.

Hezekiah (b. 752 BC) would first have seen the light of day during this era.

Grimal tells now of two branches of the Ramesside family vying for supremacy, after the short reign of Ramses V, who he says was not a son of Ramses III:¹⁰¹⁹

The situation did not improve with the reign of Ramesses VI Amonhirkhepeshef II who, unlike his predecessor, was actually a son of Ramesses III. The two branches of the royal family – those claiming direct descent from Ramesses III and those descended from his sons and nephews – fought for power among themselves until the end of the Twentieth Dynasty.

Since Uzziah reigned for 52 years, then Jotham, who was then 16, could not have been born until his father's 34th Year. Jotham must therefore have substituted for his father rather late in the latter's reign.

This situation may perhaps be viewed in tomb KV19, where the son of Ramses IX, Mentuherkhepeshef, appears unaccompanied by his father. Thus Clayton:¹⁰²⁰

The 20th dynasty occupant of the tomb had been Ramesses Mentuherkhepeshef, a son of Ramses IX ... who appears to have been interred here during the reign of Ramesses X. The decoration of KV19 is very similar to that found in the tombs of royal sons in the Valley of the Queens, except for the fact that ... as an adult son, Mentuherkhepeshef is shown alone rather than escorted by his father.

It would now follow logically on my view that the 20th dynasty comprised Judaeans kings, that the remaining two Ramessides, X and XI, were, too, kings of the dynasty of Joash (Seti-nakht). I tentatively propose that Ramses X was Jotham's son, Ahaz, the very father of Hezekiah, and that Ramses XI, of about 27 years of reign, was none other than king Hezekiah himself, of 29 years of reign. I shall be taking all this up again in *Chapter 12*. For the remainder of this chapter we simply need to bridge the 30-year gap now between the death of Uzziah (757 BC) and the first year of Hezekiah (727 BC). But firstly:

More Genealogical and Art-Historical Anomalies

On a genealogical note, Courville has made a telling point in regard to what had appeared to be the following severe genealogical problem with the current chronological setting of Ramses III in relation to the early 19th dynasty.¹⁰²¹

¹⁰¹⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 288.

¹⁰²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 170-171.

The case of Bokenkonsu, the architect under Seti I, presents another anomaly, by current views, which is eliminated by the altered placements Bokenkonsu lived to have his statue carved under Rameses III By current views, Bokenkonsu must have lived at least to an age of 118 years ... even if the “many years” of the Harris Papyrus are limited to the brief reign of Siptah as proposed by Petrie. The more time that is allotted to this “many years” only makes the necessary age of Bokenkonsu more and more improbable.

Bierbrier had also included treatment of Bokenkonsu and his family amongst his case studies (“The Bakenkhons Family”¹⁰²²). And here, once again, we encounter the apparently extreme age of an Egyptian official even when minimal conventional date estimates are used. There is no stretch at all, though, with my arrangement that has Ramses III a slightly later contemporary of Seti I.

But what might appear to be a significant difficulty for the conventional chronology becomes a complete impossibility in Velikovsky’s context, as already argued.

More positively for Velikovsky, both he¹⁰²³ and Courville¹⁰²⁴ had rightly insisted upon a dating much later than that conventionally given for Ramses III on the basis of Greek writing on the backs of Ramses III’s building tiles.

I take here Courville’s very brief account of it, beginning with his quoting of Petrie:

“... A subject of much difficulty in the earlier accounts of the objects was the marking of “Greek letters” on the backs of many of the tiles; but as we know that such signs were used long before the XXth dynasty, they only show that foreigners were employed as workmen in making these tiles”.

About which Courville then commented:¹⁰²⁵ “*The difficulty with this explanation is that it does not explain the use of Greek letters centuries before the Greeks adopted the alphabet Hence the dating of Rameses III in the 11th century is a gross anachronism*”. With Ramses III re-located to about the mid C8th BC though - and given also the influx during his reign of ‘Sea Peoples’, likely including Greeks - then the ‘anachronism’ readily dissolves.

Velikovsky had brought some surprising evidence in support of his sensational view that Ramses III had actually belonged as late as the Persian period, with his identification of the *Peleset* arm of the ‘Sea Peoples’ - generally considered to indicate Philistines - as Persians.¹⁰²⁶ This Velikovsky did through comparisons between the *Peleset*, as shown on Ramses III’s Medinet Habu reliefs, and depictions of Persians for instance at Persepolis, both revealing a distinctive crown-like headgear. And he also compared Ramses III’s references to the *Peleset* to the naming of Persians as *P-r-s-tt* (*Pereset*) in the C3rd BC Decree of Canopus.

¹⁰²¹ *Ibid*, p. 307.

¹⁰²² *Op. cit*, pp. 2-5.

¹⁰²³ *Peoples of the Sea*, pp. 7-13.

¹⁰²⁴ *The Exodus Problem*, p. 307.

¹⁰²⁵ *Ibid*. Emphasis added.

¹⁰²⁶ *Peoples of the Sea*, ch. II: “Persians and Greeks Invade Egypt”.

My explanation though for this undeniable similarity would be, not that Ramses III had belonged to the classical Persian era, but that the ‘Indo-European’ Persians were related to the waves of immigrants, hence to the Mitannians (who may therefore connect with the Medes), but perhaps to the Philistines in particular. These ‘Indo Europeans’ had, as we read in *Chapter 2*, gradually progressed from Anatolia in a south-easterly direction. Eventually we find for instance Kurigalzu [II], set up on the throne of Babylon by the ‘Mitannian’ Assurballit, conquering Elam (Persia) and ruling there for a time.¹⁰²⁷

Jones has I believe produced some solid genealogical or bureaucratic evidence for why Velikovsky’s late location of Ramses III to the Persian era is impossible.¹⁰²⁸ The career of the Chief Workman Paneb for instance, according to the Salt Papyrus, “*can be traced from the 66th year of Ramesses II to the 6th year of Ramesses III*”, Jones has written.¹⁰²⁹ This, a span in conventional terms of a bit over thirty years (c. 1212-1180 BC), is most reasonable. But Velikovsky’s span for Workman Paneb, with Ramses III located by him to the Persian era, would be biologically impossible. And the same applies to the situation of other workmen (e.g. Neferhotep and Sennedjem) investigated by Jones, following Bierbrier, the connections of which workmen are between the 18th and 19th dynasties that Velikovsky had also well separated. Thus Jones can rightly conclude in this instance:¹⁰³⁰

... the earliest members of these two families, Neferhotep and Sennedjem link the reign of Horemheb and the XVIIIth Dynasty with the reigns of the XIXth Dynasty, without any intervening years. A similar condition can be observed in the transition from the XIXth to the XXth Dynasty. If an interregnum had occurred then, the workmen first attested under Ramesses II, Merenptah and Seti II *would all have been extremely old men* by the time they ended their lives in the later years of Ramesses III If the hundred years proposed by Dr Velikovsky had taken place, *none of them would have been alive at all*.

Bierbrier also has case studies this time affecting TIP. Note again that the chronology of this period seems to have been over-stretched.

Nesipakashuti iii:¹⁰³¹ “The genealogy of the family of Nesipakashuti iii has been needlessly confused by Kees. Since Nesipakashuti iii’s father is known to have married a daughter of a Pharaoh Shoshenk and the reign of Shoshenk III began a minimum of 73 years after that of Shoshenk I, Kees argued that Nesipakashuti iii was the grandson of Shoshenk III In view of his long reign Shoshenk III must have come to the throne when he was under thirty, and it is thus physically impossible for him to have been the grandfather of an elderly vizier in the early part of his reign ...”.

¹⁰²⁷ Cf. M. van de Mieroop’s *A History of the Ancient Near East*, p. 171; G. Roux’s *Ancient Iraq*, pp. 257, 260, 262.

¹⁰²⁸ *Op. cit.*

¹⁰²⁹ *Ibid*, p. 29.

¹⁰³⁰ *Ibid*, p. 30. Emphasis added.

¹⁰³¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 65.

Nebneteru iii:¹⁰³² “The statue of Nebneteru iii was dedicated by his ‘son’ Hor viii, and Kees has suggested that in fact Hor viii was none other than his grandson Hor vii/ix/xi who had the same name and titles Kitchen has rejected this identification on the grounds that a contemporary of Osorkon II whose name also appears on this statue would hardly have married a granddaughter of that king and lived into the reign of Pedubast However, there is no evidence that Hor viii was close in age to Osorkon II, and it is uncertain when in the reign the statue was made, probably not as early as Kitchen implies. In any case, Nebneteru iii who had died at ninety-six should certainly have had an adult grandson unless both he and his son married very late.

.... if the statue was dedicated c. year 15 of Osorkon II as has already been postulated, the grandson of Nebneteru iii ... could have been about 30 at that time. He could easily have married and survived the lady Shebensopdet i, who may have been much younger than him, by the end of the reign of Osorkon II. Either before or after her death, he would have married Merutamun i daughter of a colleague or relative. At the end of the reign of Takelot II, he would have been aged 64 and would have been preparing his tomb so his funerary cones would have been inscribed early in the reign of Shoshenk III. In year 8 of that reign when aged about 72, he would have switched his allegiance to Pedubast I and died some time afterwards. On Kitchen’s dating he could not possibly have survived until the reign of Osorkon III some 40 years later If he was a decade younger and Osorkon III came to the throne a decade earlier, he might conceivably have lived until then if he emulated his grandfather’s longevity”.

Nebneteru iv:¹⁰³³ “Between Pedubast I and Osorkon III, Kitchen places a ten year reign of Iuput I ... and a six year reign of Shoshenk IV. On this reckoning, Nebneteru iv would have been a minimum of 83 on the accession of Osorkon III and still survived for an unknown length of time, while Nakhtefmut B would have been alive at least 72 years after the death of his maternal grandfather Takelot II. ... The careers of Nebneteru iv and Nakhtefmut B also make it unlikely that Osorkon III could have succeeded as late as the death of Shoshenk III. Indeed, he may have started to reign about year 39 of Shoshenk III when Osorkon B disappears from history, but it is difficult to believe that Osorkon B would have been proclaimed pharaoh at the age of c. 65 and then reigned until the age of c. 93.”

[End of quotes]

And James gives the following evidence in support of his view “*that the length of the 22nd Dynasty has been greatly overstretched*”:¹⁰³⁴

¹⁰³² *Ibid*, pp. 76-77.

¹⁰³³ *Ibid*, pp. 100, 101.

¹⁰³⁴ *Centuries of Darkness*, pp. 255-256.

The chronicle of Prince Osorkon lists the offerings he made as High Priest of Amun at Thebes between year 11 of his father, Takeloth II, and year 28 of Shoshenq III There is nothing recorded after year 24 of Takeloth or before year 22 of Shoshenq III. Unless we assume a gap of twenty years in his career as High Priest, there must have been a considerable overlap between these two reigns. Such an overlap is supported by the Apis data, where there are no known bulls between year 23 of Osorkon II and year 28 of Shoshenq III. A compression of the chronology at this point would also remove the only obstacle to the otherwise attractive identification of Osorkon the High Priest of Amun with the future Osorkon III, assumed by earlier Egyptologists ... but incompatible with Kitchen's long chronology. To have served under both pharaohs (without any overlap of reigns) his pontificate would have had to have lasted for fifty-five years, and if twenty years old when appointed, Osorkon would have been seventy-five years old at his accession and, after twenty-eight years of reign, about 103 at his death

A New Era For Israel and Assyria

Irvine, basically following Procksch's interpretation of Isaiah 9:7-10:4, gives us a lead into the period extending from the late phase of Jeroboam II's reign to the Syro-Ephraïmitic conflict that shook Palestine during the reign of Ahaz (some of his dates, though, would need to be raised due to the interregnum factor):¹⁰³⁵

While the details of Procksch's interpretation may need adjustment, it correctly tries to understand 9:7-10:4 against the background of the recent past leading up to the Syro-Ephraïmitic crisis. As in 8:23-9:6, the range of Isaiah's vision extends from the last years of Jeroboam II to the current situation in 734. This was a stretch of history which the prophet and his audience themselves had experienced and could vividly recall. The episodes which Isaiah describes all damaged Israelite society. These, we suggest, include the earthquake that struck Palestine during the 750s or 740s (vv 7-9); the encroachment of Syrians and Philistines on Israelite territory toward the end of Jeroboam's reign and during the years of Menahem (vv 10-11a); Shallum's coup and the fall of the house of Jehu (vv 12-16a); the civil war and internal strife in the Shallum-Menahem-Pekah conflicts (vv 17-20); and perhaps the current activity of Pekah and Israel in the anti-Assyrian rebellion (10:1-2). The end of the speech turns to the future and anticipates the forthcoming attack of the Assyrians against Israel and the rest of the anti-Assyrian coalition (10:3-4a).

Irvine's view of "*the encroachment of Syrians and Philistines on Israelite territory toward the end of Jeroboam's reign*" is fully in accord with my view of 'Syrian'-Libyan ('Indo-European') activity towards the end of the 19th dynasty (Jeroboam II = Ramses II).

¹⁰³⁵ *Ibid*, pp. 236-237, with reference to O. Procksch, *Jesaja I*, pp. 100-107.

I shall be discussing fully in the next chapter (in **1.**), the Syro-Ephraïmitic activity later than the reign of Jeroboam II - a union eventually of Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel, as we shall see. And there I hope also to offer an identification for this powerful 'Syrian', Rezin.

The Syro-Ephraïmitic crisis was in turn, I believe, a forerunner to the Syro-Palestinian revolt of 720 BC against Sargon II (see *Chapter 12, 3.*), in which the rebels would now be supported by Egypt. "*Syrian aggression continued after the death of Jeroboam*", writes Irvine.¹⁰³⁶ "*During the reign of Menahem, Rezin encroached further on Israelite territory from the east, whilst his Philistine allies "devoured Israel with open mouth on the west" (Isa 9:11)*". Menahem of Israel (771-761 BC), who is - along with Uzziah of Judah - referred to in the campaign records of Tiglath-pileser III, belongs to the decade following the death of Zechariah's murderer Shallum, who was in turn slain by this Menahem (2 Kings 15:14). In the 38th and 39th years of king Uzziah of Judah, Israel had been in complete chaos, with the murders, respectively, of Zechariah and Shallum. At least the regicide, Menahem, seems to have brought some sort of stability to Israel, as he reigned there for ten years (771-761 BC), until the 49th year of Uzziah, when Jotham was no doubt by now at the helm in Judah. It was during the reign of Menahem, presumably late, that the mighty Tiglath-pileser III first arose on the scene. This at last brings us to a ruler (apart from the important prince, Isaiah) who will also be an older contemporary of king Hezekiah of Judah (not yet born in 761). Tiglath-pileser III also mentions Uzziah - in the latter's declining reign - and even Hezekiah's father, Ahaz, and Hezekiah's Israelite contemporary, Hoshea. Anstey tells of this, using, of course, non-revised dates:¹⁰³⁷

Tiglath-pileser III ... mentions (1) Azariah of Judah (= Uzziah, 806-755) as a great military power to whom certain cities turned when they revolted from Assyria; (2) Menahem of Israel (768-758) as one who paid tribute to him; (3) Rezin of Damascus and Pekah of Israel (755-735, dethroned 736) as defeated and deposed by him; (4) Yauhazi or Joachaz (Ahaz, 739-723) as submitting to his dominion and paying tribute; and (5) Hoshea (736-719, King of Israel 727-719) as set up by him, not as king but as governor, as Gedaliah was set up later by Nebuzaradan for Nebuchednezzar. Thus altogether no fewer than five Kings of Judah and Israel are mentioned by Tiglath-pileser III ... in those of his Inscriptions which have a bearing on the Chronology of the Old Testament

With Tiglath-pileser III, we find ourselves firmly in EOH. However, there is also a new chronological problem now to be dealt with. Tiglath-pileser III is known to have reigned for 17 years, until 722 BC (hence c. 739-722 BC) according to my revised chronology. Yet here we find him active as early as the reign of Menahem of Israel, 761 BC at the latest, about 2 decades before he is supposed to have come to the throne. Anstey gives Schrader's account of this discrepancy, and then provides his own resolution to it:¹⁰³⁸

¹⁰³⁶ *Ibid*, p. 105.

¹⁰³⁷ *The Romance of Bible Chronology*, pp. 200-201.

¹⁰³⁸ *Ibid*, p. 201-202.

Schrader says: “The Azariah (Uzziah) here mentioned must be a contemporary of Tiglath-pileser III The date of Uzziah’s death according to the ordinary Chronology (of the Bible) is 758, while Tiglath-pileser, according to the Assyrian fivefold guaranteed Canon [sic], did not ascend the throne till B.C. 745. There gapes here a chronological discrepancy which refuses to be explained away. If the Assyrian Chronology, certified as we have said fivefold, be the correct one, the Biblical cannot be correct”.

There is no discrepancy whatever. The Inscription does not say when these 19 Cities revolted to Uzziah, but only when Tiglath-pileser destroyed them. It does not say whether he destroyed them before he ascended the throne of Assyria, as General of Ashur-dân III (773-754), or as General of Ashur-nirari (754-745), or after he ascended the throne B.C. 745. On the one hand, there is no reason why these cities should not have revolted to Uzziah long before the campaign of Tiglath-pileser III ...; and on the other, there is no reason why Tiglath-pileser III ... should not have made his military expedition long before he came to the throne of Assyria, B.C. 745, for he exacted tribute from Merodach-baladan of Babylon in 751, six years before he came to the throne. And to crown all, this Inscription, like every other Inscription of Tiglath-pileser III ... yet recovered, is *an undated, mutilated fragment*, the date having been *given to it*, and not *derived from it*.

[End of quote]

Towards a new Egyptian chronology

With the demise of Sothic dating and the apparent untenability of the equation of Shoshenq I with the biblical ‘Shishak’, the entire basis for the conventional length of time estimated for the TIP collapses. A throng of evidence from almost every area of the Mediterranean, and from Nubia on the very doorstep of Egypt, calls for a lowering of the Egyptian dates and a radical shortening of the TIP. Indeed, my review of the internal evidence from Egypt itself suggests the same. At this stage, having finally completed my detailed study of the background to EOH, most of which has, of necessity, involved the complex matter of Egypt (and Ethiopia), I should like here to quote the following words of James, since I think that these basically sum up much of the Egyptian aspect of my own thesis to this point:¹⁰³⁹

It is too early to offer a complete revised scheme, with every king slotted neatly into place. The sheer bulk of the material to be assessed requires lengthy re-examination. But without giving precise dates for each pharaoh, broad lines of a new construction already emerge from the evidence.

¹⁰³⁹ *Centuries of Darkness*, p. 254.

To which I should like to add, and apply to my own effort, these related words of Sieff:¹⁰⁴⁰ “*I have no doubt this will not be the last word on an immensely complex subject; it would be presumptive indeed to make such a claim*”.

But I should also hope that the new pillars that I have established are, as Sieff has added here, “*the necessary pillars on which to build a lasting solution to this most complicated and mysterious of the chronological problems of ancient Egypt*”.

Table 5: A Revised History for the C9th and C8th's BC

Conventional		Revised
<i>C14th BC (18th Dynasty)</i>		<i>C9th BC (dates now to be revised upwards)</i>
Thutmose IV		Omride era
<i>Yuya/Abdi-ashirta</i>	=	Ben-Hadad I (Ashurnasirpal II)
Amenhotep III		
Akhnaton		
<i>Ay/Aziru</i>	=	Hazael
Horemheb	=	Jehu of Israel (d. 867 BC)
Nefertiti	=	Jezebel
Conventional		+Revised
<i>C13th BC (19th Dynasty)</i>		<i>C9th-8th BC (dates now to be revised upwards)</i>
Horemheb	=	Jehu of Israel (d. 867 BC)
Ramses I	=	Jehoahaz of Israel (d. 850 BC)
Seti I	=	Jehoash of Israel (d. 836 BC)
(Ramses III)	=	(Amaziah of Judah)
Ramses II	=	Jeroboam II of Israel (d. 776 BC) <i>22-Year Interregnum</i>
Merenptah	=	Zechariah of Israel (d. 772 BC)
(Anarchy)		End of Jehu-ides
Ramses IX	=	Uzziah of Judah (d. c. 758 BC)
Osorkon II (<i>Osarsiph?</i>)	=	Rezin of Syria (?)
Shoshenq III	=	Syrian and Philistine activity Tiglath-pileser III and Ahaz
Ramses XI	=	Hezekiah of Judah (d. 699 BC)

¹⁰⁴⁰ ‘The Libyans in Egypt’, p. 38.

The Egyptian Dynasties and Pharaohs Contemporary with Hezekiah

Introductory Comment

With this chapter I might finally be able to determine, according to my revised context, who were the Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries of king Hezekiah's reign, whom I listed (though without specifically naming them as actual rulers of the Ramesside or TIP dynasties) as 1-7 at the beginning of Chapter 8; this list commencing with 'So' at no. 1. In fact I shall be structuring this chapter in 7 main sections, in order to deal with (and hopefully to identify), in succession, each of these 1-7 Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries of king Hezekiah. This chapter should also enable me to conclude the (a) – (g) list from *Chapter 5* (p. 128), the contemporaries of the fall of Samaria, until now lacking completion (i.e. the identifications of (f) and (g)).

Furthermore, 1-7 will supplement those 5 'anchor points' for EOH that were outlined in *Chapter 1* (and are listed at the end of p. 28); some of which (e.g. 'So'; Fall of Samaria) are common to both listings.

Let me now try to establish 1-7: Who were the Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries of the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah (c. 727-699 BC)? I must here insist that, due to extreme difficulties, some of the following will be most tentative; with this task being undertaken, to use Rohl's words, "*with the understanding that there are other possible scenarios that might supersede this one as research continues*".¹⁰⁴¹

1. 'KING SO [𓂏𓂏] OF EGYPT' (C. 727 BC)

FIRST YEAR OF KING HEZEKIAH

Having followed Velikovsky (and others since him) in rejecting the classical view that pharaoh Shoshenq I of the 22nd (Libyan) dynasty was the biblical 'Shishak' at the time of king Solomon's son, Rehoboam of Judah (c. 925 BC, conventional date) - and accepting instead Velikovsky's identification of 'Shishak' with Thutmose III of the 18th dynasty - I can now consider Velikovsky's alternative view that *a* Shoshenq was in fact the biblical 'King So of Egypt', at the time of Hoshea of Israel and Hezekiah of Judah (c. 727 BC). According to my revision, with Shoshenq III reigning until c. 731 BC, and perhaps even a few years longer, then he is still a possible candidate for this 'King So of Egypt'.

The 'So' incident occurred, as I also concluded, at the approximate time of the Syro-Ephraïmitic war with Judah, late in the reign of Hezekiah's father, Ahaz.¹⁰⁴²

Let us look in turn at these two phases (the Syro-Ephraïmitic war and the 'So' incident).

¹⁰⁴¹ 'David Rohl replies', p. 18.

¹⁰⁴² In the conventional scheme, Piankhi of the 25th dynasty now ruled Egypt. Irvine refers to him as "Piye". *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraïmitic Crisis*, p. 54.

The Syro-Ephraïmitic War (and “the son of Tabeel”).

On p. 355 of the previous chapter, I gave Irvine’s summary of Procksch’s useful interpretation of Isaiah 9:7-10:4; with Procksch outlining Isaiah’s historical background to the Syro-Ephraïmitic crisis. This Syro-Ephraïmitic activity, a union eventually of Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel, was, as I suggested, a forerunner to the Syro-Palestinian revolt of 720 BC against Sargon II of Assyria (see **3.** below), in which the rebels against the Assyrian crown would now be supported by Egypt. Hence I basically accepted Irvine’s interpretation (though not his date) “*that the episode in fact related to a broad anti-Assyrian movement in Syria and Palestine during the late 730s*”. Irvine has somewhat, I think, captured the essence of the early Isaian phase of history in his account of Isaiah 9:10-11 and the activity of what he has called the “western powers”.¹⁰⁴³

Verses 10-11 recount a second instance of divine punishment. Because the earthquake did not bring about the repentance of the people, Yahweh struck Israel again, this time by means of foreign enemies.

10. So Yahweh exalted the oppressors [in the charge] of Rezin ... over it, and stirred up its enemies.

11. Syria from the east and the Philistines from the west devoured Israel by the mouthful.

The verses are understandable against the background of Israel’s territorial reduction during the last part of Jeroboam’s reign [I should add, ‘and during the interregnum’] and the early years of Menahem.

Under the leadership of Rezin, Syria and/or surrogate powers encroached on Israelite holdings in Transjordan and the Galilee. At the same time, Syria and Philistia together may have overrun the Sharon Plain. The aggression of both countries fits into a larger pattern of Syrian expansionism and anti-Assyrian movements during the second half of the eighth century. Rezin was intent on two related goals: (1) re-establishing a “Greater Syria:” that would dominate Palestine; and (2) leading other western powers into a coalition that could eventually check Assyrian efforts to control the Eastern Mediterranean Seaboard.

[End of quote]

It was inevitable that then Assyria-allied countries like Israel would suffer at the hands of Rezin and his allies.

Hoshea of Israel’s later invitation to ‘King So of Egypt’, which is most definitely represented as a revolt against Assyrian overlordship (“*The king of Assyria found treachery in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to King So of Egypt*”, 2 Kings 17:4), would simply be a continuation of the Syro-Palestinian revolutionary activity, about a decade later (and now post-Ahaz, in the reign of his son, Hezekiah).

¹⁰⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 239-240.

Shoshenq III, of apparently 39 years of reign,¹⁰⁴⁴ would, it seems, have been the pharaoh during at least the first Syro-Palestinian revolt against Assyria in the 740's (that of Rezin and Pekah), since I had calculated his beginning at c. 770 BC (e.g. *Chapter 11*, p. 346). Shoshenq III would thus have reigned until at least 731 BC.

Always to be kept in mind in relation to this particular era, given that I am identifying Tiglath-pileser III with Shalmaneser V, is that Assyrian activity involving the former (e.g. campaigns dated to the 740's-730's) may need to undergo about 5 years of shortening. Even Assyrian support from Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria for Menahem of Israel was not able to prevent the Ephraïmite hill country (2 Kings 15:19) from eventually falling, eventually thanks now to the strong union now between Rezin and Pekah, who had overthrown Pekahiah of Israel (15:25). According to Irvine:¹⁰⁴⁵ *“Rezin likely engineered the coup, thereby reducing Israel to a client state”*.

Nor was Judah to be left alone.

Second Kings 15:37 reports how Rezin and Pekah were moving against Judah even during the reign of Jotham, Hezekiah's grandfather. Jotham successfully resisted this. And later his son Ahaz would take the same stand, but not without some lengthy consideration. When Isaiah had confronted Ahaz, the king and his royal court were apparently facing this dilemma: should they resist the formidable coalition, or not? According to Irvine, Isaiah advocated that *“Ahaz should “remain aloof”, that is, from the coalition. The house of David should abide by its long-standing policy of political neutrality vis-à-vis anti-Assyrian movements ...”*¹⁰⁴⁶

Here at least is the prophet Isaiah's brief account of the political scenario at the time, commencing at the beginning of chapter 7, verses 1-2:

In the days of Ahaz son of Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel went up to attack Jerusalem, but could not mount an attack against it. When the house of David heard that Aram had allied itself with Ephraim, the heart of Ahaz and the heart of his people shook as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.

וַיִּנְעַע לְבָבוֹ וּלְבַב עַמּוֹ כְּנוֹעַ עֲצֵי יַעַר מִפְּנֵי-רוּחַ

Commenting on this last verse, or at least on one of its key words, **לְבָב**, Irvine has written:¹⁰⁴⁷

Most translations render *lēbab* (v 2b) as “heart”, but the term actually exhibits a wide semantic range in the Hebrew Bible – the inner person, mind, knowledge, memory, conscience, desire, and so forth Commentators usually construe the word in Isa 7:2 in the sense of courage: the Syro-Ephraïmitic threat caused alarm and fear within the Davidic house. *Lēbab*, however, might also refer to will or resoluteness

¹⁰⁴⁴ E.g. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, p. 448. D. Rohl also accepts this figure. *Op. cit.*, p. 21.

¹⁰⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 106.

¹⁰⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 150.

¹⁰⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 140.

We render the term in this sense and suggest that the text has in mind the weakening resolve of the Davidic leadership to persist in its longstanding course of political neutrality.

At such a critical moment, the prophet Isaiah came to strengthen king Ahaz against the foe (vv. 3-4):

Then the Lord said to Isaiah, ‘Go out to meet Ahaz, you and your son Shear-jashub, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool on the highway to the Fuller’s Field, and say to him, ‘Take heed, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smouldering stumps of firebrands, because of the fierce anger of Rezin of Aram and the son of Remaliah’.’

Isaiah was sent here to exactly the same location as to where king Hezekiah’s three chief envoys will later be sent in a time of even greater crisis for Jerusalem, at the height of Sennacherib’s invasion of Judah. In VOLUME TWO, *Chapter 1* (see discussion beginning on p. 5), I shall endeavour to identify this site with precision.

The House of David had every good reason to feel nervous. Had Rezin and Pekah been able to achieve their aim, then this would have seen the end of the Davidic dynasty. For it is here that Isaiah mentions the “son of Tabeel” (verse 6): ‘Because Aram – with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah – has plotted evil against you, saying, ‘Let us go up against Judah and cut off Jerusalem and conquer it for ourselves and make the son of Tabeel king in it ...’.’ “According to v 6a”, writes Irvine,¹⁰⁴⁸ “the Syrian plan to invade Judah involved “splitting it open for ourselves” Verse 6b names the son of Tabe’al (Tabe’el in the Septuagint) as the intended replacement of Ahaz”.

Despite the prophet’s optimistic assessment of the situation, as interpreted by Irvine:¹⁰⁴⁹ “Just as the ends of firebrands only smoke and, if left alone, soon go out, so also the plans of Rezin and Pekah would come to nothing”, Ahaz would finally decide, against Isaiah’s counsel, to call upon Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria to help Judah resist the coalition (2 Kings 16:7).

“The Son of Tabeel”

Who, then, was this “son of Tabeel” of Isaiah 7:6, whom we met briefly in *Chapter 3*? This obscure personage is not even specifically named, and is nowhere else mentioned in Scripture under that particular appellation, “the son of Tabeel”. And why would two kings powerful enough to have contemplated conquering Jerusalem ‘for themselves’ (viz., Rezin and Pekah) presumably not have elected to rule it themselves?

I have already, in my discussion of Omri as Tab-rimmon, in *Chapter 3* (p. 65), proposed that ‘Tabeel’ was simply the great ancestor king, Tab-rimmon/Omri, whose descendants Ben-Hadad I (as *Tushratta/Yuya*) and Hazael (as *Ay*) had played so significant a rôle in Egyptian affairs during, and post, EA.

¹⁰⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 153.

¹⁰⁴⁹ *Ibid*, p. 151.

Thus “the son of Tabeel” (בֶּן־טַבְעָל) was an Omride descendant. He is therefore a most important link in the chain; a nexus between Omri and EOH.

The “son of Tabeel” was apparently no insignificant character.

The designation *Bêt Tâb’el* found in near contemporary Assyrian records, thought to have been “*an Aramean land probably in northern Transjordan*”,¹⁰⁵⁰ was likely I think simply a reference to the Syrian kingdom of Tab-rimmon/Omri – more than a century after that ancestor king’s death; just as the designation *Bêt Humri(a)* was the Assyrian reference to that same ruler’s kingdom of Israel, used even as late as EOH by Sargon II.¹⁰⁵¹

But I had not yet (in *Chapter 3*) specifically identified this “son of Tabeel”, who was significant enough for Rezin and Pekah to have desired him as the ruler of Jerusalem. Who was he then? And why did the kings of Syria and Israel want him, rather than Ahaz, upon the throne of Judah?

According to Irvine, basing himself here on Levine, the “son of Tabeel” was probably a king of Tyre:¹⁰⁵²

The most promising clue to the identity of the son of Tabe'al lies in the Assyrian tributary list published by L. D. Levine The inscription mentions Tubail, king of Tyre, among other rulers of Anatolia and Syria-Palestine who paid tribute to Tiglathpileser in 738 or earlier. The Hebrew *tābē'al* (literally, “good-for-nothing”) is likely a deliberate misspelling of the name of the Tyrian king, expressing either Isaiah’s or later copyists’ pejorative attitude toward the intended replacement of the Davidic king

And I think that there may possibly be some merit in this estimation, at least in the sense that “the son of Tabeel” was, almost certainly, more than just some *unknown* “*son of Uzziah or Jotham by an Aramean princess*”, as Albright had tried to guess.¹⁰⁵³

In my scheme, “the son of Tabeel”, an Omride, could be Anatolian, Phoenician (e.g. a ruler of Tyre), Syrian, Assyrian, or even Egyptian. In the last case, the designation (meaning, as I think, ‘son of Tab-rimmon’) would be applicable to TIP kings descending from Omri. However, it is hardly likely that Egypt would be looking to Syria to help it seize the throne of Jerusalem; especially since Syro-Palestine had been tributary to Egypt now at least since the intervention there of Seti I (Israel’s one-time “saviour”? Refer back to pp. 269-270), after Adad-nirari III of Assyria had taken tribute from the Jehu-ide dynasty. (Though things may have changed temporarily, during the interregnum).

Whilst it is conceivable, I suppose, that the Syro-Israelite coalition could have elected to have placed an Egyptian Omride on the throne of David, e.g. a descendant of Ay’s, it was more in keeping with Egyptian policy to support such revolts from afar.

My own view is that “the son of Tabeel” was simply Rezin himself, a ‘Syrian’ (in the very broad sense) descendant of Tab-rimmon, just as Hazael had been - and most definitely now one of the TIP kings.

¹⁰⁵⁰ Thus Bright, *A History of Israel*, p. 272.

¹⁰⁵¹ Sargon II entitled himself “conqueror of Samaria and the whole land of Bêt-Humria”. As cited by Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. 1, # 99.

¹⁰⁵² *Op. cit.*, p. 154.

¹⁰⁵³ In *BASOR*, 140 (1955), pp. 34f, as described by Bright, *op. cit. ibid.*, n. 11.

That would answer my query as to why two kings (Rezin and Pekah) powerful enough to have contemplated conquering Jerusalem ‘for themselves’ (or Irvine’s “*splitting it open for themselves*”) were seemingly not intending themselves to rule Judah. The fact is that they *were* thus intending, with Rezin ‘son of Tabeel’ though having the primacy. This was part of his plan to re-establish, recalling Irvine, “a “*Greater Syria*” that would dominate Palestine”, perhaps rivalling the earlier Omrides from whom I believe he was descended; a kingdom that would embrace Phoenicia, perhaps even Anatolia, and Mitanni. Pekah of Israel would be the lesser partner in this conspiracy, a ‘client king’ subordinate to Rezin, just as Jehu of Israel had been subordinate to Hazael.

[Note, incidentally, how the cramped conventional chronology can by no means accommodate the full 20-year reign of Pekah (2 Kings 15:27), and so Wright *et al.*, for example, have to truncate this king’s actual reign of 758-738 BC to a mere c. 737-732 BC, conventional dates¹⁰⁵⁴]. There is also the peculiar situation that Rezin, like Hazael before him (1 Kings 19:15), has no patronymic; whereas Pekah of Israel does, as had Jehu before him. Pekah is called “*the son of Remaliah*” which phrase Irvine thinks is “*tacked on ... a late addition*”.¹⁰⁵⁵ The same may be the case with the phrase, “son of Tabeel”, perhaps a later included reference to Rezin himself, an Omride.

My proposed candidate for this mysterious Rezin, the “son of Tabeel”, is Shoshenq III, since (i) I have already identified the latter as an Omride, and (ii) he seems to fit well chronologically, especially given that his end occurred at roughly the same time (731 BC) as did that of Rezin’s partner in crime, Pekah (738 BC). Here Wright *et al.* may be more accurate, when designating the “son of Tabeel” as “*probably an Aramean*”.¹⁰⁵⁶ This would mean that Shoshenq III was basically a king of Damascus (at least in relation to Israel), which might account for why his building work in Egypt would by no means represent four decades or more of activity. His opportunity for occupation of Egypt may have corresponded with that disastrous phase of the reign of Ahaz of Judah, father of Hezekiah, when Ahaz began to suffer heavy defeats at the hands of the Rezin-Pekah coalition (2 Chronicles 28:6, 8), losing Edom and being driven from Elath (2 Kings 16:6), and more; for in 2 Chronicles 28:17, 18 we read of a new ‘Sea Peoples’ like attack on southern Palestine, as in the era of Ramses III and Shoshenq I (revised): “... *the Edomites had again invaded and defeated Judah ... [and] the Philistines had made raids on the cities in the Shephelah and the Negeb of Judah, and had taken Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco with its villages, and Gimzo with its villages; and they settled there*”.

But the extent of his rule in Egypt appears to have been fairly limited:¹⁰⁵⁷ “*Shoshenq III’s authority seems to have extended little further than the Damietta branch of the Nile, even if the autonomous region of Athribis is considered part of his territory. In the central Delta the princedoms of Busiris, Sais and Buto were all subject to his hegemony*”.

But I accept that there might be found a more apt candidate than Shoshenq III, for Rezin. With Judah (hence the 20th dynasty) now seriously weakened, there was nothing to prevent these ‘Syrians’ from having a free hand in at least Lower Egypt.

¹⁰⁵⁴ ‘A History of Israel’, 75:78.

¹⁰⁵⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 152.

¹⁰⁵⁶ *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁵⁷ Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 329.

Now, if Rezin were Shoshenq III, as I am tentatively proposing, then I wonder if the latter's presumed co-ruler, Pedubast I (son of Harsiese), could be Rezin's partner, Pekah. (I am not claiming anything like an exact name correspondence of course between *Pedu-* and *Pekah*). Though Rohl has argued that:¹⁰⁵⁸ “*There is absolutely no direct evidence to support the orthodox view that Pedubast I began his reign in the 8th year of Shosenk III*”, he has nevertheless aligned the two reigns. [Soon, though, we shall learn that a Shoshenq and a Pedubast, presumably II, were in fact contemporaries decades later, in the early years of Ashurbanipal]. It was a time of disruption, with Harsiese B being an integral part of an almost three-decade civil war,¹⁰⁵⁹ during the mid to late C8th BC.

Amidst all of this pressure from the Syro-Ephraimitic coalition, Ahaz would ultimately ignore Isaiah's advice to trust in the Lord, and would turn for help instead to the potent king of Assyria, Tiglath-pileser III, who was perhaps also a distant descendant of Omri (through Ashurnasirpal II), though apparently no friend at all of “the son of Tabeel”. Consequently Isaiah warned Ahaz: *‘The Lord will bring on you and your people and on your ancestral house such days as have not come since the days that Ephraim departed from Judah – [namely] the king of Assyria’* (v. 17).

The Assyrian menace would go on increasing in its force against Judah until its culmination in the reign of Sargon II/Sennacherib, the son of Tiglath-pileser III.

The plot to set up “the son of Tabeel” upon the throne of Judah dissolved, then, due to the intervention by Tiglath-pileser III. Rezin's coalition ultimately failed to achieve its aim. Early in the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, “*the Assyrians captured Damascus [and] executed Rezin ...*”, writes Irvine.¹⁰⁶⁰ This accords with 2 Kings 16:9. Irvine continues: “*Hoshea led a revolt against Pekah ... probably with Assyrian approval ... he took Samaria [and] executed Pekah ...*” (cf. 2 Kings 15:30). However, this would not be the end of the resistance to Assyria, which would soon re-emerge in the person of this same Hoshea, now as king of Israel, and, this time, with intended Egyptian backing: namely, ‘King So of Egypt’. And that will bring us squarely into the reign of king Hezekiah.

Hoshea's Call to 'King So of Egypt'

The Syro-Palestinian resistance to Assyria - a resistance now to be supported by Egypt - will be a consistent factor throughout the reign of Hezekiah, who, unlike his father, Ahaz, would choose to be politically ‘pro-Egyptian’, as would Hezekiah's contemporary, Hoshea of Israel. Hoshea's decision to throw off the Assyrian yoke and to court pharaoh ‘So’ was simply the next link - and by no means the last - in the chain of Syro-Palestinian rejections of Assyrian overlordship. The invitation to ‘So’ was apparently the first Egyptian-related incident that occurred during the reign of king Hezekiah of Judah, having taken place in approximately the latter's first year (c. 727 BC). According to the account of it in 2 Kings 17:4: “*Hoshea ... sent messengers to King So of Egypt, and offered no tribute to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year; therefore the king of Assyria confined him and imprisoned him*”. The king of Assyria was then “Shalmaneser” (v. 3), who, in my scheme, was none other than Tiglath-pileser III.

¹⁰⁵⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁵⁹ See e.g. Wikipedia's *Harsiese B*.

¹⁰⁶⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 299.

And Irvine has, as we shall read on pp. 371-372 below, considered serious conflict by this same Tiglath-pileser against Samaria. Commentators have had the greatest of difficulty once again in determining the true historical identity of the biblical pharaoh at this time, 'King So of Egypt'. And so have I. 'So' has been variously identified as (a) from a *conventional* point of view, Egypt's *Turtan*, Si'be, of Sargon II's records;¹⁰⁶¹ Osorkon IV,¹⁰⁶² if not a reference to a place (Saïs), rather than to an actual person;¹⁰⁶³ or, (b) by *revisionists*, as, for instance, Ramses II¹⁰⁶⁴; or Shoshenq III.¹⁰⁶⁵ My own general opinion until recently has been, consonant with my 'alternative' chronology, that of Velikovsky, that 'So' was *a* Shoshenq.¹⁰⁶⁶ Were this to be the case, then it might have been appropriate that the Palestinians, in referring to 'So', had used an abbreviation, more technically 'hypocoristicon', for the name 'Shoshenq', which name - as we saw in reference to Shoshenq I (p. 191) - was in fact sometimes abbreviated in Egyptian writings as 'Shosh'. But I have now moved away from this view.

Anyway Rohl, whose placement of Shoshenq III is about two decades later than mine, has offered the following brief account of his choice of this Shoshenq III for 'So':¹⁰⁶⁷

For a while the new king of Israel [Hoshea], established on the throne by his Mesopotamian masters, continued to pay the annual tribute to Assyria, now under the rule of SHALMANESER V. But Hoshea was also writing to Pharaoh So, asking for his help to throw off the Assyrian yoke. According to the New Chronology, the senior monarch in Egypt at this time was the long-reigned USERMAATRE SHOSHENK III. The biblical name 'So' is thus a hypocoristicon of Sho[shenk] (Assyrian *Su[sinku]*). The reality was that Shoshenq III was in no position to campaign in Canaan because of the growing threat of his southern border from a Kushite line of pharaohs which would soon rule Egypt as the 25th Dynasty.

Certainly 'So' as related to the name, Shoshenq (*So-senk*), would be far preferable I think to Courville's obscure *So* element in the unwieldy Suten Bat name of Ramses II, as well as being preferable also to Sieff's and others' Osorkon for 'So'.

According to Boutflower, whose identification of 'So' with Shabaka I shall actually be accepting:¹⁰⁶⁸ "*The Hebrew characters read "So" should probably be read "Sěvě".*"

Rohl names Shoshenq III 'the senior monarch' then in the land of Egypt, implying that there was now more than one ruler there. And indeed he has, in line with convention, 22nd and 23rd dynasty rulers side by side, with the 20th dynasty no longer in existence.

¹⁰⁶¹ Cf. Boutflower, *The Book of Isaiah*, p. 126; Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

¹⁰⁶² Cf. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period ...*, p. 551; Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, p. 342.

¹⁰⁶³ Thus Grimal, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁴ Courville, *The Exodus Problem and its Ramifications*, vol. I, p. 297. I have discussed this in *Chapter II*, pp. 266, 286-287.

¹⁰⁶⁵ Rohl, *The Lost Testament*, p. 448.

¹⁰⁶⁶ 'From the end of the 18th Dynasty to the time of Ramses II', p. 8; cf. *Ages in Chaos*, I, p. 174. According to Clapham, 'A Solution for the Third Intermediate Period of Egypt', p. 2: "It is a central synchronism of Velikovsky's revision that Pharaoh So of the Biblical narrative should be identified with Shoshenq of the 22nd Dynasty ...".

¹⁰⁶⁷ *Lost Testament*, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 126.

But I still have in contention that very last Ramesside, Ramses XI, who, I have suggested, may have been Hezekiah himself. In fact Hezekiah may have been Ramesside on two counts: a 20th dynasty Ramesside on his paternal side (tracing back to Seti-nakht/Joash of Judah), and a 19th dynasty Ramesside from his mother, Abi, a daughter of Zechariah (see pp. 372-373), and possibly, then, the daughter of the last 19th dynasty king, Merenptah. But, with the rise of Shoshenq III, the power of the 20th dynasty was seriously weakened. However, though I have biblically extended Shoshenq III, by tentatively identifying him with Rezin, I do not think that he is the best candidate for ‘So’, as according to Rohl. First of all, his reign seems to fall short - albeit only just - of the time of Hoshea’s call to ‘So’. And, even if a few more years could be squeezed out of him, he would by now have been a very old pharaoh; something akin to Ramses II at the advanced stage that Courville had identified him as So’. There is that other Shoshenq, I(B) - now generally designated IV - closely following III, and IB’s approximately decade-long reign would equip him nicely, chronologically, to be ‘So’. If this were the case, then Velikovsky would have been right in a sense, though quite fortuitously, in his naming of Shoshenq IV as ‘So’. However, this Shoshenq appears to have been a fairly ephemeral character, about whom we know little. ‘So’, on the other hand, ought to be a character of real substance. In attempting to ascertain, and explain, who I think ‘So’ actually was, I need to resort to a further biblical principle; one that has stood me in good stead so far. It is this: *The Bible does not generally introduce a person of note (in connection with Israel) in one isolated case, but tends to identify, or round out, this person somewhere else.* We have just been considering the case of the “son of Tabeel”, who seems to appear out of the blue, without any specific identification - but I have looked to link him with the biblical Rezin. And in *Chapter 4* (p. 98), I had connected Jehu’s unknown officer, Bidkar, with Obadiah of the same period.¹⁰⁶⁹ Can this principle offer us a clue also for the unqualified ‘King So’? The clues at this time are scarce indeed. Apparently Egypt was of no vital interest at all to the biblical scribes. The only scriptural character of note south of Judah who I think can possibly complement ‘So’ at this time was Tirhakah, king Hezekiah of Judah’s ally; though admittedly 2 Kings 19:9 specifically labels him “King Tirhakah of Ethiopia” - ‘So’, on the other hand, being a king of Egypt. But this Tirhakah will turn out to be a figure of the greatest complexity, and significance, striding a very large stage indeed; he being for instance, as we shall find, both a ruler of Egypt and Ethiopia. Tirhakah will in fact be my primary key for unlocking the mysteries of this most complex period of history and especially for the 25th dynasty. He will of necessity be multi-identified, beginning with Tirhakah = Shabaka, to be properly explained as this chapter develops. As I briefly mentioned above, I shall be favouring Boutflower’s view that Shabaka (my Tirhakah) was ‘So’. I shall also be favouring Boutflower’s rendering of ‘So’ as *Sěvě*:¹⁰⁷⁰ “*Sěvě*” ... *is to be identified with Shabaka [Shabako] the son of Kashta, who succeeded his father in 715” [sic].* The name ‘So’, it seems, can be variously rendered: e.g. *Sěvě*; *Sua*; *Soan* (Josephus¹⁰⁷¹); *Soa*, *Soba*, *Segor* (LXX).

¹⁰⁶⁹ In my *Job’s Life and Times*, I connected Job of no genealogy or patronymic with Tobias of Tobit’s substantial genealogy.

¹⁰⁷⁰ *Op. cit.*, p. 126.

¹⁰⁷¹ *Antiquities*, 9:14:1.

Most interestingly, in my new context, the Lucianic recension of the LXX has ‘So’ as an “*Ethiopian, living in Egypt*” (one *Adrammelech*). Presuming for the present, then, that Tirhakah is Shabaka (i.e. ‘*Soba an Ethiopian in Egypt*’), then this composite king of ours has some attributes that might well qualify him for ‘So’: e.g. (i) his name *Soba-Shabaka* (cf. *So-Sěvě*) – though ‘So’ is spelt with a *samek* and Shebna with the equivalent of a *shin*, the ‘Shibboleth’ factor (as discussed in *Chapter 8*, p. 191) might explain this difference; (ii) his approximate chronological era; (iii) he was at least pro-Egyptian, certainly anti-Assyrian; (v) he was of renowned military and strategic ability, as we are going to find out. None of the pharaohs Shoshenq of this era, on the other hand, appears to have ‘So’-like attributes, with only Shoshenq I, of an earlier era, having at least, appropriately, campaigned in Palestine. I shall be developing this vital biblical character, ‘King So of Egypt’, further, especially in **7**, in relation to Egypt’s TIP.

If Ramses XI were king Hezekiah, then it would be likely that he assumed some significance in Egypt (albeit briefly) during the zenith of his rule prior to the first invasion by Sennacherib of Assyria, in Hezekiah’s Year 14, say, Hezekiah’s Years 12-14. For:¹⁰⁷² [“*Ramses XI’s*] *first eleven years have left no contemporary records.*” Certain likenesses are sometimes drawn between events in the reign of Ramses XI and events in the reign of Ramses IX¹⁰⁷³ (my tentative king Uzziah) both being, I believe, most powerful kings of Judah. Again, Ramses X (Ahaz?) and XI (Hezekiah?) shared the same ‘Horus’ name (*Kanakht Meryre*) and the same *nebty* name (*userkhepesh hedhefenu*).

The division of Egypt now between the last of the 20th dynasty rulers and the TIP must have been the situation that would prevail throughout the entire reign of king Hezekiah, when the 25th dynasty especially came to the fore. And, on pp. 376-377, I shall introduce James’ archaeological data that would accordingly indeed suggest the necessity for a lowering of the 20th dynasty to much closer in time to the 25th dynasty.

At about the same time as Shoshenq I(B) began to rule, Prince Osorkon B, opponent of Pedubast I, also began his approximately 29-year reign as Osorkon III.¹⁰⁷⁴ Thus Wikipedia:¹⁰⁷⁵ “... *Year 1 of Osorkon III is likely equivalent to Year 1 or 2 of Shoshenq IV instead, rather than Year 39 of Shoshenq III*”. Thus began the 23rd dynasty (in conventional terms) – though I am going to be identifying this Osorkon III also with Tirhakah of the 25th dynasty. The year would be approximately 730 BC.

A generally new state of affairs might seem to have come into effect in Egypt a bit later, with the advent of Tefnakht (24th dynasty), mentioned in the famous stele dated to the 21st year of Piye of the 25th dynasty.¹⁰⁷⁶ This was, according to what we shall find, the era of Ashurbanipal of Assyria; though Piye’s Stele would, in conventional terms, date much earlier than Ashurbanipal, to c. 726 BC.¹⁰⁷⁷

¹⁰⁷² Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

¹⁰⁷³ Cf. *ibid.* & Grimal, *op. cit.*, p. 289.

¹⁰⁷⁴ Rohl has provided a useful outline of the early career of HPA and crown prince Osorkon, who - as is commonly held now - became Osorkon III. *A Test of Time*, Appendix A, pp. 373, 375.

¹⁰⁷⁵ *Osorkon III*.

¹⁰⁷⁶ E.g. Grimal, *ibid.*, p. 336. The name *Piye* is nowadays preferred to *Piankhi*. *Encyclopedia > Piye*.

¹⁰⁷⁷ Grimal has 747 BC as Piankhi’s first year, *ibid.* “Appendix”, p. 394; whilst Gardiner has 751 BC. *Op. cit.*, p. 450.

I have already (*Chapter 8*, p. 189) quoted Grimal in regard to the view (albeit forced) of some conventional scholars that Tefnakht himself was the biblical ‘King So’. And I went on to note (p. 190) Kitchen’s reasons why he thought Tefnakht was unsuitable for ‘So’. Piye’s 21st (his stele) year can by no means be brought into correspondence with the ‘So’ incident at the beginning of the reign of king Hezekiah, when Shalmaneser V was king of Assyria. It is clearly of a later era, having its resonance in the records of Ashurbanipal. This is yet another example, it seems to me, of the chronological anomalies caused by the conventional structure of the TIP, including especially, in this case, the presumably well-known 25th dynasty ruler, Piye. Here is how Clapham has explained it:¹⁰⁷⁸

The Piankhi Stele records the name and titles of the Egyptian kings and princes who had rallied behind Tefnakhte [Tefnakht] in rebellion against the Ethiopian pharaohs. These compare remarkably well with the names of Egyptian kings recorded by Assurbanipal [Ashurbanipal] in 667 BC [sic] and still others are known from the reign of Psammetich I (given in Kitchen’s index to names):

- (i) Osorkon of Bubastis (later seat of the 22nd Dynasty ...);
- (ii) Namilt, Prince of Hermopolis (recorded the same by Assurbanipal ...);
- (iii) Iuput of Leontopolis (a seat of the 23rd Dynasty according to Kitchen, Iuput son and co-regent of Pedubastis);
- (iv) Pef-tjau-awy-Bast (Pedubastis?) of Heracleopolis (Pudubisti of Assurbanipal?);
- (v) Akunosh of Sebennytos (an Akunosh of Sebennytos was the contemporary of Psammetich I, early reign, according to Kitchen);
- (vi) Bakennefi and Pediese of Athribis (Bakennefi of Assurbanipal);
- (vii) Patjenfy of Pi-Sopd (a Patjenfy, husband of a granddaughter of Takeloti I is given by Kitchen, possibly the same);
- (viii) Pamiu (Pimay of Assurbanipal and Pimay of Busiris from the early reign of Psammetich I);
- (ix) Tefnakhte (and Assurbanipal gives a Tefnakhte of Punubu);
- (x) Harseise [Harsiese] of Assurbanipal (a High Priest Harseise was extant in the reign of Osorkon II (Kitchen), and resurfaces in the reigns of Shoshenq III and Pedubastis (conventional scheme)),

which appears to indicate that the conventional 22nd/23rd chronology is in error.

[End of quote]

This new situation later in EOH, during the reign of Ashurbanipal (with Hezekiah’s son Manasseh soon to become sole ruler in Judah), is described also by Dirkwager, in regard to the Annals of Ashurbanipal, complementing Clapham’s account of the Piye Stele:¹⁰⁷⁹

... I looked into the Annals of Assurbanipal [Ashurbanipal] ... where Assurbanipal in the year after his accession to the throne (667) [sic] had to deal with an insurrection of Egyptian princes: 20 “roitelets” are named in the annals. We meet Necho (I), the father of Psammetichus I.

¹⁰⁷⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 7.

¹⁰⁷⁹ ‘Pharaoh So and the Libyan Dynasty’, p. 20.

But we find Pūtubišti reigning in Tsa'nu and Susinqu of Puširu too! Why cannot they be Petubastet of the 23rd and Sheshonq [Shoshenq] III ...? The time fits well in our scheme. We learn that Manetho or the annalists made a mistake by putting Bubastis or Busiris where the other name would be right. It is curious to meet a king Pamai (Puaima) [Pimay] as well. He was reigning at Mendes. Perhaps Pamai of the 22nd [sic] dynasty was not the successor of Sheshonq III, but was given a little kingdom under the Assyrians (the 20 kings were vassals of the Assyrians) where he might have reigned contemporaneously with Sheshonq III.

I think the list of Assurbanipal deserves a closer look, for I find there a Puqrur, a Bocchoris, a Wen-Amun, and a Tefnacht [Tefnakht].

“*Are there chronological consequences?*”, Dirkwager proceeds to ask here. The ‘chronological consequences’ of Dirkwager’s suggestions would perhaps be nothing less than the coalescing, in virtually one point of time, early in the reign of Ashurbanipal, kings (say, Shoshenq V - perhaps preferable to Clapham’s Shoshenq III - to Necho I) who are conventionally separated the one from the other by about a century.

Our situation of multiple dynasties, including now the 25th Ethiopian dynasty, seems to find confirmation in the fact that the Assyrian records tell us that such (say, a confederation of kings) was precisely what Sennacherib did encounter when he came into southern Palestine. For in 6. below we are going to learn from the Assyrian records that, when Sennacherib defeated Egypt and her allies in the battle of Eltekeh (c. 712 BC), there were *at least three pharaohs* ruling simultaneously (“kings” plural from Egypt and a “king” from Ethiopia). And of course, by the time of Ashurbanipal, a few years later, there were these numerous ‘roitelets’, or Assyrian-appointed governor-kings of Egypt.

‘King So of Egypt’ (my Tirhakah/Shabaka) would have been approximately contemporaneous with Shoshenq I(B)/IV and Osorkon III. However, as briefly mentioned above, I am also going to extend Tirhakah’s identity to include Osorkon III. The latter would be the king of Ethiopia’s guise (or at least one of them) as ruler of Egypt. It will also serve to challenge the usual view that Tirhakah was ethnically Nubian. Indeed, Esarhaddon calls Tirhakah “*the king of Egypt and Kush*”.¹⁰⁸⁰ The name *Osorkon* can be sensed in the various names given to our composite king, *So-Tirhakah-Shabaka*: thus, *Segor* (LXX); *Saracus* (= Tirhakah, Greeks & Latins), *Tirhakan* (Esarhaddon), *Tharsikēn* (Josephus); *Sabacōn* (= Shabaka, Manetho; Herodotus, *Sabacos*).

If this is so, then Courville’s valiant attempt to Assyrianise these 22nd dynasty names was misguided.

The Egypto-Ethiopian confederation of kings, competent though it may have been, was apparently unable to match in speed the rapid *Blitzkrieg* inclined Assyrians.¹⁰⁸¹ We might recall from the thesis *Introduction* (p. 1) Isaiah’s metaphorical distinction between the Assyrians represented by the swift-flowing Tigris river, and Egypt as the vast, but sleepy, serpent of the Nile. King Hoshea was imprisoned by Tiglath-pileser III/Shalmaneser V and Samaria was besieged. Hezekiah was now in his 3rd year of rule.

¹⁰⁸⁰ Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. 2, # 580.

¹⁰⁸¹ Irvine has discussed this factor for instance in connection with Tiglath-pileser III’s Philistine campaign. *Op. cit.*, p. 47.

And, in his 6th year, Samaria fell (as we now know to the king of Assyria in union with his son, Sargon II/ Sennacherib). Thus there is a very close connection between the ‘So’ incident and the Fall of Samaria that I am now going on to discuss in revised terms.

2. EGYPTO-ETHIOPIAN CONTEMPORARIES OF THE FALL OF SAMARIA (C. 722 BC)

SIXTH YEAR OF KING HEZEKIAH

Hopefully, I have managed to ascertain at least who would have been the ruler(s) of Egypt itself contemporaneous with the Fall of Samaria, the until now undetermined (f) of *Chapter 5* (p. 128). I have just proposed that there were in fact several rulers at the time, ‘King So of Egypt’ (= Tirhakah/Shabaka/Osorkon III) and Shoshenq I(B)/IV. I am presuming at this stage, to satisfy (g), that Shebitku, Tirhakah’s 25th dynasty contemporary and predecessor on the throne, was then the primary king of Ethiopia. Before taking this any further, I should like now to add a further dimension to the Assyrian aspect of it all, based on Irvine. According to my revised neo-Assyrian chronology (as argued in detail in *Chapter 6*), Tiglath-pileser III himself was heavily involved in the last days of the kingdom of Israel. And indeed Irvine has discussed the surrender of Hoshea to Assyria, interestingly, and quite significantly, to Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria, in connection with what he refers to as “*ND4301 and ND4305 ... adjoining fragments of a summary inscription found during the 1955 excavations at Nimrud and subsequently published by D. J. Wiseman*”.¹⁰⁸² Here is Irvine’s relevant section of this:¹⁰⁸³

Line 11 reports that Hoshea ... submitted personally to Tiglathpileser. Where and when this occurred is not altogether clear, for the Akkadian text is critically uncertain at this point. Wiseman reads, *ka-ra-ba-ni a-di mah-ri-ia*, and translates, “pleading to my presence”. This rendering leaves open the date and place of Hoshea’s submission. More recently, R. Borger and H. Tadmor restored the name of the southern Babylonian town, Sarrabanu, at the beginning of the line On linguistic grounds this reading is preferable to “pleading” (*karabani*). It appears then that Hoshea paid formal homage to Tiglathpileser in Sarrabanu, where the Assyrian king was campaigning during his fourteenth year, Nisan 731 – Nisan 730. The event thus occurred well after the conclusion of the Assyrian campaigns “against Damascus” (Nisan 733 – Nisan 731).

This may have vital, new chronological ramifications. If this were indeed the “fourteenth year” of the reign of Tiglath-pileser III, who reigned for seventeen years,¹⁰⁸⁴ and if he were Shalmaneser V as I am maintaining, then this incident would have been the prelude to the following Assyrian action as recorded in 2 Kings 17:5:

¹⁰⁸² *Ibid*, p. 56.

¹⁰⁸³ *Ibid*, pp. 59-60.

¹⁰⁸⁴ E.g. M. van de Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East*, p. 233.

“Then the king of Assyria invaded all the land and came to Samaria; for three years he besieged it”. These “three years” would then approximate to Tiglath-pileser III’s 14th-17th years. “In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria captured Samaria; he carried the Israelites away to Assyria” (v. 6). That event, as we know, occurred in c. 722 BC. And it may just be that this apocalyptic moment for Israel is recorded in the fragments of Tiglath-pileser III now under discussion. I continue with Irvine’s account:¹⁰⁸⁵

The Assyrian treatment of Israel at large, presumably once described in 1. 10, is also uncertain. According to Wiseman’s translation, the text refers cryptically to “a district” and “their surrounding areas” Alternatively, Borger and Tadmor restore the Akkadian along the lines of III R 10,2:15-18: “[House of Omri] in [its] en[tirety ...together with their pos]sessions [I led away] to [Assyria]” This reading is conjectural but possible. If it is correct, *the text reports the wholesale deportation of Israel*. The truth of this sweeping claim is a separate question

Further on, Irvine will propose that this “*statement exaggerates the Assyrian action against Israel*”, though he does not deny the fact of an Assyrian action. Thus:¹⁰⁸⁶ “*Not all the people could have been exiled, for some people obviously must have remained for the new king Hoshea to rule*”. But if this were, as I am maintaining, the time of Hoshea’s imprisonment by Assyria, with the subsequent siege and then capture of Samaria, his capital city, then there may have been no king Hoshea any more in the land of Israel to rule the people.

As Thiele has found out, it is often extremely difficult to date with precision campaign events associated with Tiglath-pileser III. Thiele agonises over, for instance, whether the Assyrian king’s campaign to ‘Kullani’ - in connection also with his collecting of payment from Menahem of Israel - had taken place in 742 BC or 738 BC (conventional reckoning).¹⁰⁸⁷ Here though, I believe, we have a classic instance of the 5-year discrepancy that might be expected as a result of the failure to identify Tiglath-pileser III with Shalmaneser V, who reigned for five years. (I have already discussed this in *Chapter 6*, section: “Shalmaneser V”, beginning on p. 147).

It would have been during this approximate time of Shalmaneser V’s intervention in Israel that the new king Hezekiah (possibly the future Ramses XI), now a young man in his mid twenties, may have seized his opportunity. Perhaps, between Hoshea’s imprisonment and the beginning of the siege in Hezekiah’s 3rd year, the latter may have sent his messengers into the north, in the hope of including Israel in his grand reform: his attempt to reunite north and south as had been the case in the time of kings David and Solomon. This meant of course throwing off the Assyrian yoke to which his father Ahaz had submitted in opposition to the warnings of Isaiah. Such would have been a bold action on the part of king Hezekiah. It could be that Jehu-ide blood also flowed through his veins, from his mother’s side. This at least is the opinion of Irvine:¹⁰⁸⁸

¹⁰⁸⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 60. Emphasis added.

¹⁰⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

¹⁰⁸⁷ *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*, pp. 143-144.

¹⁰⁸⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 78.

It may be significant ... that Hezekiah's mother was a certain Abi, the daughter of Zechariah [2 Kings] (18:2). Quite possibly this Zechariah was the last member of the Jehu dynasty whom Shallum brutally assassinated (15:8). If so, it would appear that Ahaz had been married into the Israelite royal house. The political marriage, perhaps arranged by Jotham ... would have served to buttress an alliance between the two kingdoms that had existed during the first half of the eighth century and possibly had begun as early as the Omride period

The situation of rulership in Egypt in c. 722 BC would probably have been the same, I have concluded, as it was during the 'So' incident, about 5 years before. 'So' was largely in charge of Egypt, along with Shoshenq I(B)/IV, perhaps. Multiple rulership would certainly be the case later during EOH, as noted above, when there was a combination of rulers of Egypt and Ethiopia, as during at least a part of the reign of Ramses XI (to be fully discussed in 7.) with whom I am tentatively identifying Hezekiah. Ramses XI then represented the 20th dynasty, whilst a Smendes represented the 21st dynasty, with the important Herihor (see pp. 388-390) possibly completing with them a triumvirate. A deeper consideration of who might have been the ruler of Ethiopia contemporaneous with the incident of the Fall of Samaria - the (g) of *Chapter 5* (p. 128) - will serve to immerse us further into the complexities of the 25th dynasty.¹⁰⁸⁹

The Presumed 'Ethiopians'

The conventional chronology offers a scenario entirely different from the one that I have just proposed for the era of the Fall of Samaria in c. 722 BC. But at least it gives us an 'Ethiopian' ruler for that era; though somewhat wrongly dated as I shall attempt to show: namely, Piye (c. 747-716 BC, conventional dates). Piye of the 25th Ethiopian dynasty is known from his detailed stele to have been at odds with the 24th dynasty pharaoh, Tefnakht (c. 727-716 BC, conventional dates). I discussed this particular scenario above (pp. 368-370), where I however rejected any such a view that would date Piye's Stele (in his 21st year) to the approximate time of 'So', as is conventionally done. Instead, I argued for an era somewhat later (viz., Ashurbanipal's, revised) for this document. We recall that the name of Piye's northern opponent, Tefnakht, was included in the Annals of Ashurbanipal; apparently indicating that Piye continued to rule into a period significantly later than according to convention. "*Here at last*", wrote Gardiner, with an apparent sigh of relief upon his introduction of the 25th dynasty,¹⁰⁹⁰ "*we are heartened by some resemblance to authentic history ...*". Perhaps though, from a conventional perspective, he could not have been more wrong. The Tang-i Var inscription dated to Sargon II's Year 15 (c. 707 BC), according to which Shebitku - not Shabaka as was long thought - was the 25th dynasty pharaoh who had dispatched the rebel *Iatna-Iamani* in chains to Sargon II, has brought new confusion. Here is the pertinent section of this document:¹⁰⁹¹

¹⁰⁸⁹ Gardiner has dated this dynasty to 751-656 BC, from its first major ruler, Piankhi, to its last ruler. *Op. cit.*, p. 450.

¹⁰⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 335.

¹⁰⁹¹ Wikipedia's *Shebitku*.

... I (... Sargon) plundered the city of Ashdod, Iamani, its king, feared [my weapons] and he fled to the region of the land of Meluhha and lived (there) stealthfully (lit. like a thief) Shapataku' (Shabatka) king of ... Meluhha ... put (Iamani) in manacles and handcuffs ... he had him brought captive into my presence

This means that Shebitku and Tirhakah must now be re-located upwards by at least a decade in relation to Sargon II. Perhaps nowhere does the conventional separation of Sargon II from Sennacherib show up as in this case. Yet even revisionist Rohl, as late as 2002, was ignoring the Tang-i Var evidence, dating Tirhakah's first appearance, at the battle of Eltekeh, to 702 BC, an incredible "*thirty-one years earlier*" than his actual rule of 690-665 BC,¹⁰⁹² which is, however, about two decades too late. Thus he wrote:¹⁰⁹³

For five years the new king of Napata (ruling from Kush) had reigned in co-operation with his cousin Shabataka [Shebitku], king of Egypt (son of Shabaka). Then Taharka [Tirhakah] became sole 25th Dynasty ruler of both Kush and Egypt in his sixth regnal year following the death of Shabataka in 684 BC. There were other Libyan pharaohs in Egypt (such as Shoshenk V of Tanis and Rudamun of Thebes) but they were all subservient to the Kushite king.

The year 684 BC is far too late for the beginning of Tirhakah's sole rule in relation to Shebitku and his known connection with Sargon II's 15th year! And that is by no means the only problem with the current arrangement of the 25th dynasty. In fact there appears to be a significant problem in the case of virtually each one of its major kings. Regarding its first (according to convention) major ruler, Piye, for instance, Gardiner has written:¹⁰⁹⁴

It is strange ... that Manetho makes no mention of the great Sudanese or Cushite warrior Pi'ankhy who about 730 B.C. suddenly altered the entire complexion of Egyptian affairs. He was the son of a ... Kashta ... and apparently a brother of the Shabako [Shabaka] whom Manetho presents under the name Sabacōn.

And whilst, according to Herodotus, Shabaka (his *Sabacos*) reigned for some 50 years,¹⁰⁹⁵ he has been reduced by the Egyptologists to a mere 15-year reign.¹⁰⁹⁶ Furthermore:¹⁰⁹⁷ "*The absence of the names of Shabako and Shebitku from the Assyrian and Hebrew records is no less remarkable than the scarcity of their monuments in the lands over which they extended their sway*". These anomalies, coupled with the surprise data from the Iranian Tang-i Var inscription (which is in fact an Assyrian reference to Shebitku), suggest that there are deep problems right the way through the current arrangement of the 25th dynasty. I hope that I am now beginning to propose plausible solutions to at least some of these.

¹⁰⁹² *The Lost Testament*, p. 463.

¹⁰⁹³ *Ibid.*, footnote **.

¹⁰⁹⁴ *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

¹⁰⁹⁵ *The Histories*, II, pp. 137 & 140.

¹⁰⁹⁶ Gardiner's figure for example. *Op. cit.*, p. 450.

¹⁰⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 344.

Piye's chronology now heavily overlaps with the chronologies of Shebitku and Tirhakah. And soon I shall provide definite proof that Piye was in fact also the fascinating Tirhakah (= Shabaka) - a contemporary already of Sennacherib's *Third Campaign* - the chronological problems peculiar to whom will be discussed in more detail chiefly in 7. below. There also I shall attempt to reconstruct in outline Tirhakah's entire rule, now in relation to a much revised neo-Assyrian history.

And little wonder that the history of the 25th dynasty is confused, built as it is upon an apparently faulty archaeology and certainly a faulty neo-Assyrian based chronology. James' chapter on the 'Dark Age' in Nubia¹⁰⁹⁸ shows again - consistent with his evidence as discussed in the previous chapter (and consistent also with the epigraphical and art-historical evidence of Velikovsky and Professor Greenberg) - how the Sothic chronology of Egypt has yielded certain baffling anomalies in the archaeology of associated nations. I give here some relevant parts from James' chapter:¹⁰⁹⁹

Having created a Dark Age in Nubia, it is not surprising that historians have treated the appearance of the Egyptianized 'Kingdom of Kurru' ... [mid C9th BC] as a new beginning, largely unrelated to the end of the Viceregal period. So firmly entrenched has this idea become that Adams was forced to make the bizarre comment that 'it took some time for the lesson of the pharaohs to sink in'.

.... Indeed, few writers considering the end of the viceregal administration and the rise of the Kingdom of Kurru discuss the Dark Age itself; most restrict themselves to a passing comment on the lack of evidence from this period. Accordingly, the sudden expansion of Kurru power in the second half of the 8th century BC has baffled Nubian archaeologists. As rulers of Egypt the Kushite kings became involved in the politics of the Near East, and their conflict with Assyria for the mastery of Palestine and Phoenicia ensured them a place in the biblical record.

We recall that Gardiner had considered himself to be closer to the realm of true history when discussing the 25th dynasty. James though, whilst noting that such is the general view of scholars today, adds that this was not always so:¹¹⁰⁰

Scholars can say that with the 25th Dynasty Egyptian history is once again on firm ground after the problems of interpreting the evidence for the preceding dynasties (21-24) of Libyan rule. But this confidence is relatively new. Earlier Egyptologists, notably Petrie, had profoundly different understandings of what was essentially the same evidence. The classical tradition has it that the Kushite king who conquered Egypt was Shabako, and, indeed, he is acknowledged as the first ruler of the Dynasty in the King List of Manetho However, because the massive Invasion Stela of Piye (or Piankhy) ... unearthed by Auguste Mariette records *his* conquest of Egypt and the submission of the Delta dynasts, Piye is now accredited with the foundation of ... the 25th Dynasty and it is assumed that Shabako's invasion was later, and simply consolidated Kushite power.

¹⁰⁹⁸ *Centuries of Darkness*, ch: "The Empty Years of Nubian History".

¹⁰⁹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 208.

¹¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*, p. 209.

Here James gives Gardiner's very quote about Piye that I used on p. 374. He continues:¹¹⁰¹

A number of factors in the inscriptions of Piye, and the building activities in the Sudan which carry his name, created such difficulties that scholars, including Petrie and the brilliant German Egyptologist Richard Lepsius, thought that there were as many as three kings of this name; the earliest the conqueror of Egypt, and the others ruling after the 25th Dynasty withdrawal from Egypt Although Egyptology is doubtless correct to accept the existence of only one Piye, the material still presents a number of problems and focuses attention on a further question – the origins of the 25th Dynasty in Nubia.

I want to take just one more section of James' discussion here, because he now goes on to consider the early Ethiopians in connection with the 20th dynasty. Here James, discussing the el-Kurru cemetery, concludes – right in line with my own thesis, in which the 20th and 25th dynasties partly overlap – that the 20th dynasty was much closer in time to the 25th than convention would have it:¹¹⁰²

The Kurru cemetery was excavated by George Reisner, the founder of Nubian archaeology, on behalf of Harvard University and the Boston Museum of Fine Arts in 1918 and 1919 The latest burials were of those kings well-known from inscriptional evidence as the founders of Kushite power, Kashta and Piye (Piankhy), and as rulers over Egypt, Shabaqo, Shebitqo [Shebitku] and Tanwetamani [or Tantamani] The prime position in the site was dominated by a sequence of burials which Reisner attributed to five ancestral 'generations' ending with Alara. Allowing twenty years per generation and a base date for Alara of c. 760 BC, Reisner calculated the date of the commencement of the el-Kurru cemetery at about 860 BC. Reisner based his interpretation on the developmental nature of the graves in the cemetery, moving from simple tumuli to pyramids. This sequence is logical, and given the small number of tombs there seems to be no good reason to increase Reisner's number of generations However, some of the artefacts from the earliest of the 'ancestral' burials have recently been identified as 20th Dynasty (i.e. 12th-11th century BC) in date This material is, by its nature, unlikely to be 'heirloom' or acquired from rifled New Kingdom tombs. Some of the most significant is painted pottery which was clearly manufactured for the funeral ceremony and ritually broken at the time It seems that this first generation must indeed be attributed to the later 20th Dynasty ... However, the radiocarbon tests carried out on the material, admittedly insufficient and so far unpublished, would seem to fit Reisner's calculated 9th-century BC date for the earliest graves The re-examination of the material from el-Kurru presents Nubian studies with a serious problem: either Reisner's chronology (internal and exact) is correct, or the cemetery comprises two or more groups of graves, of different periods, having no relationship to each other.

¹¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, pp. 209-210.

¹¹⁰² *Ibid*, pp. 212-213.

It is impossible to have a compromise solution which spreads the ancestral burials over the 300 or so years from the late 20th Dynasty to the mid-8th century, because of the limited number of graves If Reisner's interpretation is correct, then the 20th Dynasty finds were deposited in the 9th rather than the 11th century BC. Such a radical compression of the length of time from the end of the 20th Dynasty until the beginning of the 25th, whilst flying in the face of conventional Egyptology, removes the Nubian Dark Age at a single stroke.

How, then, can we now adapt this Ethiopian material (revised) to the era of the Fall of Samaria in c. 722 BC, having basically determined so far who were the primary rulers of Egypt at this time: namely, 'King So of Egypt' and Shoshenq I(B)?

By fusion, I shall be arguing. I have basically returned to Manetho's view that Shabaka was the first king of the 25th dynasty, and that he reigned for an extensive period of time, but I am also extending this Shabaka with some important *alter egos*, most notably with Tirhakah. And who is Piye (Piankhi)? He too, I believe, is Shabaka/Tirhakah.

This will all take some further developing (mainly in 7. below) and explaining.

Anyway, in this year of c. 722 BC, being Hezekiah's 6th year, Samaria - as we now know - fell to Shalmaneser V (i.e. Tiglath-pileser III) and his son, Sargon II (i.e. Sennacherib). However, as mentioned in *Chapter 5* (p. 127), in relation to Tadmor's view, Sargon II appears to have had to return again, in 720 BC, for a second conquest of Samaria.

3. TURTAN 'SI'BE' ENCOUNTERED BY SARGON II (C. 720 BC)

EIGHTH YEAR OF KING HEZEKIAH

When next Assyria encounters Egypt, in c. 720 BC in the reign of Sargon II, no pharaoh is initially referred to, but Egypt's *Turtan*, Si'be.¹¹⁰³ Gardiner had in fact identified the latter with 'So', claiming that scholars are in agreement with this¹¹⁰⁴ (see next page). Whilst chronologically I might be able to accept this conclusion, it would not explain why a 'King So' has all of a sudden become a mere *Turtan* (Si'be). Kitchen, however, had argued that Si'be should instead read *Re-e* (in the Akkadian) and *Ria'a* (in the Egyptian).¹¹⁰⁵ Clapham has seized upon this as being an opportunity to identify the *Turtan* of the Egyptian armies with a Ramesside ('Ramses' = *Ria'a*) - late 19th dynasty as applicable to his own revision.¹¹⁰⁶

Others, though, claim that Si'be equates to Shabaka of the 25th Ethiopian dynasty.¹¹⁰⁷ Boutflower had in fact looked to tie up, all together, 'So', *Sibe* and *Shabaka*.¹¹⁰⁸

¹¹⁰³ D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. II, # 5. Luckenbill gives the name here as *Sib'u*.

¹¹⁰⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 342.

¹¹⁰⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 373.

¹¹⁰⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹¹⁰⁷ E.g. K. LeFlem, 'Amenophis, Osarsiph and Arzu', p. 15.

¹¹⁰⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 126.

According to Gardiner, however, a connection between Si'be and Shabaka is unlikely:¹¹⁰⁹

Scholars are agreed to identify this So with Sib'e, *turtan* of Egypt, whom the annals of Sargon state to have set out from Rapihu (Raphia ...) together with Hanno ... of Gaza Sargon tells us that Sib'e, 'like a shepherd whose flock has been stolen, fled alone and disappeared ...'. For phonetic and probably also chronological [sic] reasons So and Sib'e cannot be ... Shabako, so that these names are supposed to have been those of a general. This seems the more probable since the Assyrian text goes on to say "I received the tribute from Pir'u of Musru ..." which can hardly mean anything but 'from the Pharaoh of Egypt'.

Finally, Rohl has made the suggestion that would appear to have at least real phonetic value, that "*we might find the true identity of Si'be in the 21st Dynasty king Psibkhenno, more commonly known by the classical name of Psusennes*".¹¹¹⁰ Whilst I find this last to be so far the most compelling suggestion for Si'be, linguistically speaking, the fact is that, in my chronology, there are probably left no more bearers of the name Psusennes. We found that Psusennes II, probably, was associated with Shoshenq I(A) *Hedjkheperre*, and that - according to the Memphite Genealogy - there was another Psusennes, presumably Psusennes I, several generations before Shoshenq I(B) *Hedjkheperre* of the approximate time of Si'be. Moreover:¹¹¹¹ "*Psusennes II is often considered the same person as the High-Priest of Amun known as Psusennes III ...*".

That would seem now to leave us with only a 25th dynasty candidate for Si'be. We have just read that Boutflower had considered Shabaka to equate with this *Turtan*. However, I have already identified Shabaka as the king of Egypt. My own choice for Si'be, or Si'bu, for reasons that I hope will become more apparent further on, would now be Shebitku. Admittedly, Sargon II had referred to Shebitku differently from Si'be (or Si'bu), as *Shapataku'* in the Tang-i Var inscription; but the rendering *Si'bu*, for example, seems to me to be a fairly reasonable abbreviation for *Shapataku'*. And we are going to find that Shebitku, as a *Turtan*, is appropriate at least chronologically in 720 BC. [The Assyrians sometimes varied how they wrote in their records the name of a king or official (e.g. *Mitinti*, also rendered as *Akhi-miti*)].

'So'/Osorkon III, would then be the 'Pir'u of Musru' ('Pharaoh of Egypt') referred to in the above quote, who gave tribute to Sargon II subsequent to the flight of Egypt's *Turtan*. Though I have identified 'So'/Osorkon III also as the 25th dynasty composite king, Tirhakah/Shabaka, the latter is attested mainly in Egypt not Kush (and then largely in Lower or northern Kush). The same goes for Shebitku. In fact, according to Gardiner:¹¹¹²

Considering the combined lengths of these two reigns, it is strange how seldom the names of Shabako [Shabaka] and Shebitku are encountered. Apart from the pyramids at Kurru where they were buried and from a horse-cemetery in the same place, their Nubian home has hardly a trace of them to show

¹¹⁰⁹ *Op. cit, ibid.*

¹¹¹⁰ 'Comments by David Rohl', p. 19.

¹¹¹¹ Wikipedia, *Psusennes II*.

¹¹¹² *Op. cit.*, pp. 342f.

What had happened between the Fall of Samaria (c. 722 BC) and 720 BC, to have caused Sargon II to return to that region? My tentative suggestion is that ‘King So of Egypt’, who had been too slow (by comparison with Tiglath-pileser III of Assyria), in c. 727 BC, to respond to Hoshea of Israel’s call to him for assistance, had finally managed to rouse himself and march northwards. Or at least his *Turtan*, Si’bu, did on behalf of the king. The Assyrians were inevitably going to respond to so belligerent an act. And so Sargon II did, sending the *Turtan* of the Egyptian army into ignominious flight. And ‘King So of Egypt’, the “*prince who could not save*” his allies, as Sargon put it, was forced now to give tribute to Assyria. Tirhakah and Shebitku were, I think, a fraternal combination.

4. ‘SHILKANNI KING OF EGYPT’ AND SARGON II (C. 716 BC)

TWELFTH YEAR OF KING HEZEKIAH

Sargon II of Assyria’s next recorded encounter with Egypt was in c. 716 BC, the pharaoh being referred to by Sargon as ‘Shilkanni king of Egypt’ [*Ši-il-kan-ni ...Mu-uš-ri ša*]. This pharaoh gave tribute to Sargon in the form of “12 big horses of Egypt”.¹¹¹³ *Shilkanni* is generally considered to be the Assyrian rendering of ‘Osorkon’, with Osorkon IV (also the choice of some for ‘So’) tending to be the preferred candidate. Thus Grimal:¹¹¹⁴

In about 716 BC the Assyrians resumed their intervention in Transjordan; this time they reached the Wadi el-Arish, and only the town of Sile was left between them and the eastern Delta frontier. On this occasion, Osorkon IV chose to employ diplomatic methods, presenting Sargon II with gifts in the form of ‘twelve great horses from Egypt, which are unrivalled in the whole country’.

According to my chronology, here basically following Rohl’s, *Shilkanni* would be again the long-reigning Osorkon III, who had become pharaoh by c. 730 BC, at about the same time as had the little known Shoshenq I(B). Osorkon III was ‘So’/Tirhakah. The rulers of Ethiopia were noted for their wonderful horses, and in 7. I shall be further extending this *Shilkanni* (= Osorkon III/Tirhakah) in regard to his rulership over also Ethiopia.

5. ‘PIR’U [PHARAOH] KING OF EGYPT’ (C. 713 BC)

FIFTEENTH YEAR OF KING HEZEKIAH

This ‘Pharaoh’ would again be Osorkon III, *Shilkanni*, my composite king. Already, in *Chapter 6* (pp. 156, 160-162) I wrote in some detail about the revolt of Yatna-Yamani (or *Iatna-Iamani*) in this same year of c. 713 BC (Year 15 of Hezekiah), which revolt had led to Sargon II’s/Sennacherib’s march to the west in c. 712 BC.

¹¹¹³ H. Tadmor, ‘The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur’, p. 78.

¹¹¹⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 342-343.

And I had, there, tentatively identified this *Iatna-Iamani*, in a biblical context, with Shebna, or Sobna. Now I should like to propose, again most tentatively, a TIP Egyptian identity for Sobna, including a possible Egyptian foundation for at least the *Iamani* (*Yamani*) element of his name; this contrary to Tadmor, who had supported the view of Winckler and others (refer back to p. 160) that *Iamani* “was of local Palestinian origin”. Instead of Tadmor’s *Imnâ* or *Imna*’ for *Iamani*, I should like to suggest *Imn*, that is Amun (Amen). Now a candidate at the approximate time, according to my reconstruction, who might just fit this scenario, would be the priest Amenhotep of overweening character during the early reign of Ramses XI, prior to the ‘Renaissance’ period. Sobna-Shebna, too, was of presumptuous character, with his grandiose tomb and his “*splendid chariots*” (Isaiah 22: 16, 18). Very Egyptian-like! Have we thus finally found a revised placement for Amenhotep and for his contemporary, Herihor?

I shall be giving some further consideration to Amenhotep in a Judaeian context, potentially as *Iatna-Iamani*/Shebna in VOLUME TWO, *Chapter 2* (on p. 55). Whilst in 7. below I shall be considering possible further identifications for Ramses XI’s other known contemporary of the ‘Renaissance Era’, the powerful priest, Herihor (with Smendes making up a triumvirate).

Grimal tells of the civil war and eventual exile of Amenhotep during the reign of pharaoh Ramses XI (potentially my Hezekiah):¹¹¹⁵

... the fighting of great battles fell increasingly within the domain of the chief priests, who usurped the royal prerogatives so that they were virtually equal to the pharaohs. The chief priest Amenhotep had himself depicted at Karnak at the same scale as the king, thus demonstrating his low regard for the power of the pharaoh. It seems, however, that Amenhotep may have gone a little too far, for he was sent into exile in the first part of the reign of Ramesses XI.

Gardiner has told us a little more of this conflict and what “*a porter named Hōwentūfe*” had called the “*wrong ... done to Amenhotpe [Amenhotep] [re ...] a momentous event*”.¹¹¹⁶ It would be most intriguing to have more details about this “*momentous event*”. Now, was Amenhotep’s exile, and *Iatna-Iamani*’s exile, the same event? And what of the ‘Renaissance’ period? (See 7. below).

It is at this stage too, especially, that the 25th dynasty becomes really problematical for the conventional scheme. It was during Sennacherib’s first major western invasion (as a result of *Iatna-Iamani*’s revolt) that “King Tirhakah of Ethiopia” (2 Kings 19:9), supposedly not king until 690 BC (more than two decades later), began to march (or was rumoured to have marched) against Sennacherib. Tirhakah is known to have succeeded Shebitku; but we still find Shebitku, several years later, figuring in Sargon II’s records (Tang-i Var). Do we have Tirhakah and Shebitku in the wrong order? Or were they co-rulers? “*I received the Crown in Memphis after the Falcon (i.e. Shebitku) flew to heaven*”.¹¹¹⁷ From the context of this document, “*the Falcon*”, Tirhakah’s predecessor, was clearly Shebitku.

¹¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 291-292.

¹¹¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 301.

¹¹¹⁷ Kitchen, *op. cit.*, p. 167. The name Shebitku is customarily added in brackets after “*the Falcon*”.

6. 'EGYPTIAN KINGS ... THE KING OF MELUHHA [ETHIOPIA] DEFEATED BY SENNACHERIB AT ELTEKEH (C. 712 BC)

SIXTEENTH YEAR OF KING HEZEKIAH

One of the Egyptian kings in 712 BC would still be Osorkon III, with any other still to be decided - perhaps Osorkon IV by now and the long-reigning Shoshenq V, son of Pimay. Shebitku at least would still be a ruler of Ethiopia. The plans of the Syro-Palestinians, backed by the Egypto-Ethiopians, came to nothing, as Sennacherib soundly defeated the 'allies' in the battle of Eltekeh in c. 712 BC. I gave Sennacherib's triumphant account of this campaign and battle in *Chapter 6* (p. 157). According to the conventional chronology, that dates this event to almost a decade later, in c. 704 BC, Shebitku and Tirhakah were both involved:¹¹¹⁸

Shabaka died in 702 BC after a reign of fifteen years [sic]. ... in 704 BC, when Sennacherib succeeded Sargon II [sic], Phoenicia and Palestine seized the chance to rise up in revolt. Sidon was led by King Lule, Ashkelon by Sidka, and Judah by Hezekiah. Shebitku responded quickly to Hezekiah's request for assistance, sending an expeditionary force led by his son [sic] Taharqa [Tirhakah], while Sennacherib was advancing on Ashkelon, having routed Lule of Sidon. Ashkelon fell and Sidka was carried off in exile to Assyria. The allies engaged the Assyrian troops to the north of Ashdod at Elteqa [Eltekeh]. Sennacherib then made a foray towards Lachish and sent the main body of his troops to lay siege to Jerusalem. Hezekiah surrendered in order to preserve his city. In Sennacherib's harangue of Hezekiah, demanding his surrender, he painted a portrait of the strength of his Egyptian ally which, though unflattering, was undeniably close to the truth:

What confidence is this wherein you trust? You say (but they are but vain words), 'I have counsel and strength for the war'. Now in whom do you trust, that you rebel against me? Now behold, you trust in the staff of this bruised reed, even in Egypt, on which if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it; so is pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust in him. (II Kings 18: 19-21).

While this was taking place, the 'bruised reed' was making a move towards Lachish. The Assyrians attacked the Egyptian troops and Taharqa chose to withdraw to Egypt. Sennacherib also retreated - without invading Egypt - in order to face a renewed threat from Babylonia.

[End of quote]

Egypt as "bruised" would almost certainly have been a reference by Sennacherib to Egypt's recent crushing defeat at the hands of the Assyrians in the battle of Eltekeh. As Isaiah had truly predicted, regarding the much-vaunted Egypto-Ethiopian military assistance, "*the helper will stumble, and the one helped will fall*" (31:3). It may have been not long after this that Tirhakah retreated to Ethiopia.

¹¹¹⁸ Grimal, *op. cit.*, pp. 345, 346-347.

Whilst Grimal's dates in the above quote would now need to be raised by almost a decade, he may well be right in bringing both Shebitku and Tirhakah into the frame. Indeed we know from Tang-i Var that *Iatna-Iamani* went into exile in Sargon II's 15th year (in c. 707 BC) due to the intervention of Shebitku, who had assumed control of southern Egypt. And we also know from the Bible that Tirhakah had made a move during a phase that would correspond with this particular campaign of Sennacherib's (namely, his highly successful *Third Campaign*). And the flight and eventual exile of *Iatna-Iamani* might also correspond with the time of exile of the priest Amenhotep, if there be any value in my very tentative suggestion that this Amenhotep was *Iamani* (or *Imn*, Amen). The incident pertaining to Amenhotep, at least, occurred during the reign of the last of the Ramessides, Ramses XI, who may turn out to be Hezekiah himself. Whatever be the case, from 712 BC on, we find the 25th dynasty now right at the forefront in Egypto-Ethiopian affairs, as Sargon II/Sennacherib intensifies his pressure upon the west. Before concluding this section, dealing with Sennacherib's significant *Third Campaign*, we might pause here to consider the archaeology of the period at some important sites.

A Stratigraphical Outline for the Libyan Era and for Hezekiah

I have tentatively identified the biblical Sobna-Shebna, possibly TIP priest, Amenhotep, as 'King So of Egypt', and I locate him archaeologically to the IA phase, given Bimson's view, now to be considered, that LBA was basically brought to an end by the neo-Assyrian invasions - which began just prior to the reign of Hezekiah and continued on into his reign. We should even expect some overlap between Hezekiah and LBA. Bimson brings into a revisionist perspective the transition from LBA to IA:¹¹¹⁹

It is well known that at the end of the LBA several cities in Palestine were destroyed. These destructions are conventionally dated to the 13th century BC, and those scholars who favour the theory of a 13th century date for the Exodus and Conquest have often attributed the destructions at Hazor, Lachish, Debir and elsewhere to the Israelites invading Canaan under Joshua The Iron Age culture which follows these destructions has been viewed as that brought by the newcomers, and hence has often been described as Israelite. However, it has been pointed out that this culture is only an impoverished form of that of the LBA ... and that there is no reason to attribute it to a nation of newly-arrived settlers apart from the *a priori* assumption that the settlement by Israel was taking place at this time The logical revised position for these destructions is the 8th century, from 733 BC onwards, when Palestine suffered a series of invasions by the Assyrians For example, the final destruction of LBA Hazor ... currently dated to about 1230 BC, would be the work of Tiglath-pileser III in 733 BC, as recorded in II Kings 15:29; the end of LBA Gezer ... was probably the work of the same campaign, during which the Assyrian armies also attacked Philistia; a conquest of Gezer is depicted in reliefs from Tiglath-pileser III's palace of Nimrud

¹¹¹⁹ 'Can There be a Revised Chronology Without a Revised Stratigraphy?', p. 18.

Bimson's further view, however, that "*the end of Lachish level VI, currently dated to around 1200 BC ..., would be the work of Sennacherib in 701 BC*",¹¹²⁰ has since been modified by James and Rohl, who have argued that Sennacherib's level was definitely Level IV (see next section, "Lachish").

Lachish

James has produced a plausible argument that Lachish IV is actually the stratigraphical level for Sennacherib's destruction; with Lachish III - usually thought to relate to Sennacherib - belonging to the time of Nebuchednezzar (c. 587 BC) and Lachish II to the Persian era of Nehemiah (c. 440 BC); tying it all in with information from the famous Lachish Letters.¹¹²¹ "[Ussishkin's] main conclusion [that Lachish III pertained to Sennacherib] ... was actually based on a negative argument – the elimination of the other possible candidates for the city supposedly laid waste and burnt by Sennacherib". From our reconstruction we now know that Lachish ('Ashdod') was not burned down at the time by the Assyrians. Rohl likewise identifies the city of Hezekiah's time, besieged by Sennacherib, as "Stratum IV".¹¹²² Also, in regard to Lachish, Bimson has noted:¹¹²³

Further evidence comes from Tell Deir Alla, in the Jordan Valley Here we have a LBA settlement destroyed, according to present estimates, at the beginning of the 12th century BC From the destruction of the LBA occupation come several plates of scale armour Now fragmentary, these were clearly rectangular in shape originally, and thus resemble the plates of scale armour worn by Assyrian troops in reliefs, e.g. those depicting the siege of Lachish in 701 BC [sic] If the end of the LBA occupation does in fact date to the late 8th or early 7th century BC, these fragments of armour would indeed belong to the time of the Assyrian invasions

In VOLUME TWO, *Chapter 1*, I shall be extending the rôles of Shebitku and Tirhakah to their being military guardians of the important fort of Lachish as well.

7. 'TIRHAKAH KING OF ETHIOPIA' (ISAIAH 37:9)

TWENTY-FIFTH YEAR OF KING HEZEKIAH

We know from the Bible and the Assyrian records that Tirhakah was the ruler of Ethiopia contemporaneously with Hezekiah for the most climactic years of the latter's reign in regard to the Assyrian wars. Tirhakah is listed as the penultimate king of the 25th dynasty, following Shebitku, and preceding Tanutamun. Bright has provided, in a conventional context, a detailed discussion of the chronological problems associated with Tirhakah.¹¹²⁴

¹¹²⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹²¹ *Centuries of Darkness*, pp. 173-178.

¹¹²² *The Lost Testament*, p. 460.

¹¹²³ 'Can There be a Revised Chronology Without a Revised Stratigraphy?', p. 19.

¹¹²⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 297-305.

In this section I shall continue greatly to revise the conventional (and even revisionist) origins of the 25th dynasty and its order of kings. Given, for instance, that Piye has now necessarily been re-located, in part, to the reign of Ashurbanipal, with whom we know Tirhakah also to have fought, then we might perhaps consider the possibility of identifying, as one, these two competent and warlike monarchs (Piye and Tirhakah), both of whom reigned for a quarter of a century or more. It is less easy (though perhaps still possible in view of a ‘confederation of kings’) to regard them as separate individuals ruling side by side. My radically shortened version of neo-Assyrian history now virtually demands a drastic reduction, and merging, of rulers within, the 25th dynasty; whereas my employment of Anstey’s interregna, earlier, had provided me with extra space lacking in other schemes (e.g. enabling me to accommodate the full reign of Pekah of Israel).

Here is my most tentative new scenario for the 25th dynasty.

The colourful character Prince Osorkon B (son of Takelot II), who had had a long wait to possess Middle and Upper Egypt during the reign of Shoshenq III and Pedubast I, before coming to the throne in c. 730 BC, eventually became ruler of southern Egypt as Usermaatre Setepenamun, Osorkon [III] Si-Ese Meryamun, Netjer-Heqa-waset:¹¹²⁵ *Shilkanni*, for short. Thus he adopted a Ramesside-like title. Now Piye, conventionally considered to have been the first major 25th dynasty pharaoh, and whose beginning of reign (revised) must have been very close to 730 BC (given that he reigned for 31 years), and whose 21st year (Stele) fell during the reign of Tefnakht - had also adopted the name of Usermaatre. Thus Grimal:¹¹²⁶ “[Piankhy] identified himself with the two great rulers who were most represented in the Nubian monuments, Tuthmosis III and Ramesses II, and adopted each of their coronation names: Menkheperre and Usermaatra respectively”. In other words, Piye was an eclectic in regard to early Egyptian history; and this fact may provide us with a certain opportunity for manoeuvring, *alter ego* wise.

Fortunately we do not need to guess who Piye was, because there is a scarab that tells us precisely that Snefer-Ra Piankhi was Tirhakah, much to the puzzlement of Petrie.¹¹²⁷ It reads: “*King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Tirhakah, Son of Ra, Piankhi*”. Piye’s 31-year reign, if beginning in 730 BC as Osorkon III/Tirhakah, would thus have terminated in about the same year as did Hezekiah’s, 699 BC (revised). The two (Piye and Hezekiah) were therefore almost exact contemporaries. Tirhakah’s quarter of a century plus reign must, too, like Piye’s, have spanned EOH, necessitating, it seems, that Piye was Tirhakah, the most famed of the 25th dynasty rulers, whose building works in Egypt and Ethiopia are abundant. In fact my fusion of these kings - and of 23rd with 25th dynasty kings - may begin to explain the anomalies; e.g. (i) that “... *Manetho does not mention ... Piye*”,¹¹²⁸ and (ii) the failure of the Assyrian and Hebrew records to mention Shabaka (Gardiner) (though the Hebrew may do so, under the name of ‘So’), and (iii) the scarcity of monuments for Shabaka and Shebitku (Gardiner), despite their fame. And so on.

¹¹²⁵ Wikipedia, *Osorkon III*.

¹¹²⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 340. The name *Sneferre* today replaces *Menkheperre* (“now ... recognised as belonging to a local Theban king named *Ini* instead ... a contemporary of Piye”). *Encyclopedia > Piye*.

¹¹²⁷ *A History of Egypt*, Vol. 3, p. 290.

¹¹²⁸ Wikipedia, *Twenty-fifth dynasty of Egypt*.

Also, to identify Piye with Tirhakah may help to allay the problem for the early Egyptologists (refer back to p. 376) of seemingly *three* kings Piye; a matter that James had remarked “*focuses attention on a further question – the origins of the 25th Dynasty in Nubia*”. Whilst James did not attempt specifically to determine these origins, I am suggesting now that these need to be seriously recast as Libyan, not ethnically Ethiopian. 2 Kings 19:9, for instance, refers to “*King Tirhakah of Ethiopia*”, not ‘King Tirhakah the Ethiopian (or Kushite)’. Compare and contrast this usage with that of 2 Chronicles 14:9, “*Zerah the Ethiopian*”, at the time of king Asa of Judah. *Zerah* was ethnically Nubian. Since the father of Osorkon III was Takelot II, then it might prove profitable to search through the latter via the Libyans (e.g. the Pasenhor Genealogy) for the origins of the so-called 25th dynasty. Though of Libyan origins, as I am arguing, some of the 25th dynasty may have had Ethiopian blood in their veins, due to intermarriage with Ethiopian women. And they could easily also have adopted Nubian iconography.

These 25th dynasty kings were bent on resurrecting the past, hence their choice of names such as *Neferkare* (Shabaka), *Sneferre* (Piye) and *Djedkare* (in the case of Shebitku), along with Ramesside names as already noted. This eclecticism, plus their sometimes dual rule of Ethiopia and Egypt, might in part explain the potential name variations for any one 25th dynasty ruler. It would be in this eclectic sort of context too, I suggest, that Tirhakah had decided to associate himself in art with the great Horemheb, who had also, of course, been heavily involved in Nubian affairs. The rulers of these TIP dynasties often harkened back to the 19th dynasty Ramessides, whose founder was, I have argued, this Horemheb, a ‘Syrian’ of Libyan ethnicity. Some TIP rulers had in fact intermarried with Ramessides - just as king Hezekiah may have done - and had, as we have read, adopted the name *Ramses* and Ramesside titulary. This may be as far as the connection goes. Certainly, at least, Velikovsky was wrong in deducing from it a firm chronological link as he did: namely, that Tirhakah was an actual contemporary of Horemheb’s.

In VOLUME TWO, I shall be going so far as to suggest an even deeper connection between the 25th dynasty kings and the Ramesside period, that the former may actually have been descendants of the priest, Elisha (Ramose?), Horemheb’s great friend and ally. Boutflower has in fact called the 25th dynasty kings “*priest-kings*”. Thus he wrote:¹¹²⁹

They were priest-kings, of Egyptian royal and priestly race, and their worship was copied from the worship of Amon [Amun] at Thebes; in fact, their ancestors appear to have been emigrants from Thebes, who to escape persecution had gone up the Nile in the days of the XXIst Dynasty; and as far as hereditary right goes they were probably the true kings of Egypt.

Perhaps Tirhakah, though, is the only 25th dynasty king who comfortably lends himself to an *alter ego* in the sense that he was buried at Nuri; the others all attested at el-Kurru.¹¹³⁰

Osorkon III (Piye/Tirhakah), as an opponent of Shoshenq III, whom I have most tentatively identified with Rezin, would likely, then, have been on the side of Judah which had resisted this coalition. Similarly, Tirhakah fought on behalf of Judah.

¹¹²⁹ *Op. cit.*, p. 126

¹¹³⁰ Thus Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, p. 190.

Tirhakah, prior to his battles with Ashurbanipal, who ultimately defeated him, was of course the foe of both Sennacherib and Esarhaddon. And he would have been alive, after Esarhaddon's capture of him along with Baal of Tyre, even until the time of the final defeat of Sennacherib's army in c. 703 BC (my revised date), and slightly beyond.

Shoshenq V (conventional dates, 767-730 BC¹¹³¹), of almost identical reign length to Shoshenq III, would likely be the *Susinku* mentioned in the Annals of Ashurbanipal. He too, like Shoshenq III, ruled over a similarly restricted area of the Delta.

Tirhakah (and his *alter egos*), who as Osorkon III “*probably lived into his eighties*”,¹¹³² became a truly legendary figure. “*He was described by the ancient Greek historian Strabo as being counted among the greatest military tacticians of the ancient world*”.¹¹³³

Aubin considers Tirhakah's forestalling of Sennacherib's attempt to destroy Jerusalem and deport its inhabitants as being a critical action that has shaped the Western world.¹¹³⁴

And finally, since our composite king, would also have been a contemporary of Bocchoris (Bakenrenef) of the 24th dynasty, then he may even have been the foundation for Herakles (Terakah/Terakles?) with whom this Bocchoris is said to have tangled.¹¹³⁵

It would be no wonder that some of these kings of Libyan origin, which I think Tirhakah was, were rulers over vast regions, as the ancients accredit Tirhakah with having been – though historians do not tend to believe them. Inheritors of the Syro-Mitanni kingdom, which might include Assyria, some of these went on to conquer Egypt and even Ethiopia, which means that they must have gained control also over Palestine. All of these places are anciently attested for Tirhakah, including Arzawa, Khatti, Babylonia, Edom and Qadesh, which in this case might even mean Judah. In VOLUME TWO, I shall argue that Shebitku and Tirhakah wielded enormous influence over Hezekiah's kingdom of Judah.

So far I have, in accordance with Boufflower, connected Shabaka with the biblical ‘So’, though not with *Sibe*, whom I have tentatively identified as Shebitku, the brother of Tirhakah. There is some scant evidence, the Turin Stela 1467 - though now thought to be a forgery (but even so it might be based on a true document),¹¹³⁶ and anyway it may not be the only evidence¹¹³⁷ - of a co-regency between Shabaka (my Tirhakah) and Shebitku. The brothers, Shebitku and Tirhakah, appear largely to have carved up Egypt and Ethiopia for themselves, whilst allowing other minor kings to rule as governors over selected areas. This region was far too extensive for just one king to rule. Boufflower:¹¹³⁸

For so vast was the territory under the Ethiopian kings - reaching nearly a thousand miles up the Nile - that they were forced to place Egypt under the viceroyalty of one of their sons, in the same way that in a previous age, when Ethiopia was under Egypt, the Egyptian kings appointed a “royal son of Cush” (Ethiopia) to rule the country south of Assouan [Assuan].

¹¹³¹ Grimal's dates, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

¹¹³² Wikipedia, *Osorkon III*.

¹¹³³ Wikipedia, *Taharqa*.

¹¹³⁴ In *The Rescue of Jerusalem*.

¹¹³⁵ See e.g. Clayton, *op. cit.*, p. 189.

¹¹³⁶ Wikipedia, *Shebitku*.

¹¹³⁷ There is also the Nile Level Text No. 30. Wikipedia, *ibid*.

¹¹³⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 126.

Though it is difficult for me at this stage to decide exactly the circumstances of interaction between Shebitku and Tirhakah, especially as Osorkon III (I shall be attempting to clarify this to some degree in VOLUME TWO), there is apparent archaeological evidence at least that Osorkon III and Shebitku were far closer together in time that convention might allow. Rohl has explained this in relation to the Temple of Osiris Hekadjet (with no intention, of course, of equating Osorkon III with Tirhakah):¹¹³⁹

... The inner sanctum [of this temple] is decorated with scenes depicting the gods and members of the family of Osorkon III. Here the cartouches of Osorkon III, his co-regent Takelot III, his son Rudamun [Rudamon] and the God's Wife all appear. On the façade of the two inner rooms the God's Wife Shepenwepet is joined by a second ("adopted") God's Wife. She is Amenirdis, the daughter of king KASHTA of the proto-25th Dynasty and the sister of King Piankhy.

The walls of the small court which stands immediately before the sanctuary are decorated with more scenes of Amenirdis, but this time she is accompanied by King Shabataka [Shebitku] ... of the 25th Dynasty, whilst the outer façade of the temple also has a large scene of the same Kushite ruler. The important point is that this is a small temple which could not have taken more than a few years to build, yet the interval between the co-regency of Osorkon III and Takelot III (... c. 750 BC) and the reign of Shabataka (... c. 700 BC) is calculated as 50 years. This seems far too long for the construction work unless there was a long cessation in the building operations. This is of course possible, but equally likely is that the building was completed within five years

Osorkon III, very late in his reign, associated his son Takelot III with him on the throne. "... *Quay Text No. 13 ... equates Year 5 of Takelot III to Year 28 of Osorkon III*¹¹⁴⁰ Another of his sons was Rudamon, possibly now the 25th dynasty's *Urdamane*, who is probably not the same as the obscure Tanutamun, who may have been the son of Shebitku - though he is usually considered to have been a cousin of Tirhakah's.¹¹⁴¹ Strangely, again, "*Manetho does not mention ... Tantamani [Tanutamun]*"¹¹⁴² (as was also the case with Piye).

According to Grimal's version of events,¹¹⁴³ Shabaka (whom he dates to 715 BC) was "*residing at Memphis, where he undertook the restoration of the Serapeum He brought an end to the reign of Bakenrenef, strengthened his control over the oases and the Western Desert, and perhaps installed an Ethiopian governor in Sais, thus effectively taking over the whole of northern Egypt*". And, in the previous chapter (p. 346), we read that: "*The various chieftains of the Ma across the Delta were slowly acquiring authority and power and forming close family dynasties of their own*". Tefnakht of the 24th dynasty was one of these.

¹¹³⁹ *A Test of Time*, p. 372.

¹¹⁴⁰ Wikipedia, *Takelot III*. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Takelot_III

¹¹⁴¹ Grimal's view, for instance. *Op. cit.*, p. 351.

¹¹⁴² Wikipedia, *Twenty-fifth dynasty of Egypt*.

¹¹⁴³ *Op. cit.*, p. 343.

We do know that there was serious tension between this Tefnakht and Piye, whose famous Year 21 campaign, so richly documented, seems to have been aimed primarily at putting in his place, Tefnakht, the leader of a northern coalition. Piye's famous northern campaign would have occurred in c. 709 BC, a couple of years before Shebitku is known from the Tang-i Var record to have handed over *Iatna-Iamani* to Sargon II.

Osorkon III, as Piye/Tirhakah, may have made his permanent home in Ethiopia as Assyria began to pressurise Palestine and Egypt. We must remember that Osorkon III was now, anyway, quite an old man. He had in 716 BC, as *Shilkanni* I believe, given to the victorious Sargon II a gift of "12 big horses of Egypt", as we read above. This may have been a very 'Nubian', so to speak - and even Tirhakian (or Piye-an) - sort of gift, since we read this in Grimal of the death of Piye:¹¹⁴⁴

Piankhy died after a long reign of thirty-one years and was buried in Napata along with two of the famous Egyptian chargers he had loved so much – the same horses which had aroused the admiration of Sargon II. His brother Shabaka [sic] then rose to the throne and set out to take personal control of the whole Nile Valley.

Herihor

Another important official whom we found in *Chapter 6* to have been substituted by Sargon II/Sennacherib to replace an unco-operative predecessor, was *Azuri* of 'Ashdod' (my Lachish) whom the king of Assyria replaced with *Azuri's* brother, *Akhimiti*. I have argued that these two were priests of king Hezekiah, respectively Uriah and Eliakim. Now, in VOLUME TWO (*Chapter 2*, p. 54) I shall be further identifying these two priests with, respectively, Shebitku and Tirhakah, 25th dynasty priest-kings, possible descendants of the priest-prophet Elisha.

Finally, in this section, I am going to consider briefly Herihor, who may even turn out to be the priest Shebitku (Uriah). This Herihor is considered to have been closely involved with pharaoh Ramses XI (my Hezekiah). Indeed, it may actually have been the great victory by Hezekiah's people over Sennacherib's 185,000 troops in Israel, occurring at this approximate time (revised), that had led to the inauguration of Ramses XI's, or Herihor's (as some think), enigmatic era of 'Renaissance' or 'Rebirth' (*wehem mesw.t*), thought to date to Ramses XI's 19th year. There is some chronological uncertainty associated with establishing the date for Ramses XI's institution of this *wehem mesw.t*, presumably in his 19th year, given that Ramses XI is not even specifically mentioned in Papyrus Mayer A; the document that, according to Gardiner, has enabled for this correspondence with Ramses XI to have been estimated:¹¹⁴⁵ "After much hesitation and discussion it has been realized that this year 19 could only belong to the reign of Ramessēs XI who, however, was known from a stela found at Abydos to have survived until his twenty-seventh year". According to Grimal,¹¹⁴⁶ "... Ramesses XI ... reigned for twenty-seven years, of which only the first nineteen were to any extent effective".

¹¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁵ *Op. cit, ibid.*

¹¹⁴⁶ *Op. cit, p. 291.*

There is no doubt at least that the ‘Renaissance’ in the time of Ramses XI *et al.* was quite a unique phase in Egyptian history. And its likeness to the ancient Hebrew system may suggest that it had some relationship to the defeat of Sennacherib’s huge army in Israel. (See VOLUME TWO, Chapter 3). For according to Berlev, it led to the creation of a theocratic “*state of Amun*” that was “*totally comparable to the religious state of the ancient Hebrews*”.¹¹⁴⁷ Berlev has examined in detail here this extraordinary new era, in connection with Wenamun’s famous journey to Byblos at the time. The revolution led to the creation of a new type of state previously unknown in Egypt: a theocracy:

... in which a king who had not been formally overthrown and had retained all his divine-royal titles was officially acknowledged to be, not god, but a mere man, albeit the man with the highest rank in the state. In the famed Report of Wenamun, who traveled to Byblos, this is stated unambiguously. ... In general, the Report was undoubtedly proffered as the manifesto of the new ideology. It is emphasized that Wenamun serves god and not man, that the king of Byblos, Zakar-baal (cf. Janssen 1976, no. 72071), is obliged to comply with Wenamun’s wishes because the latter is the envoy not of a man but of a god, Amun.

Grimal, though, does not seem to read anything so dramatic into this *wēhem mesw.t*, which “*phrase*”, he says blandly “*sanctioned a kind of equilibrium between three powerful men: Ramesses XI, Smendes and Herihor*”.¹¹⁴⁸

Piye, who was a contemporary of Tefnakht of the 24th dynasty, also appears to have been a contemporary of this Wenamun (according to a comparison of Piye’s Stele and Ashurbanipal’s records). Wenamun was, in turn, a contemporary of both Zakar-baal of Byblos and of Ramses XI (and the presumed triumvirate). If the famous Wenamun is in fact the one also referred to in Ashurbanipal’s records, then the conventional system must have set Ramses XI and the triumvirate about four centuries too early.

Now, in relation to Herihor, a further possible identity for Piye (= Shabaka-Tirhakah), at least chronologically acceptable, would be as Piankh,¹¹⁴⁹ the HPA, “King’s Son of Cush”, who is thought to have succeeded Herihor, and who may have been the latter’s son-in-law.¹¹⁵⁰ Though Gardiner has given Piankh as Herihor’s actual son:¹¹⁵¹

The figure of the high-priest is accompanied by the words ‘The fan-bearer to the right of the King, the King’s Son of Cush, the First prophet of Amen-Rē’, King of the Gods, the Commander of the Army, the Prince Pay’onkh [Piankh]’. Now Pay’onkh was Hrihōr’s eldest son

Certainly, Herihor had a large family. A wife of his, Nodjme[t], according to Gardiner,¹¹⁵² “*apparently gave him nineteen sons and five daughters*”.

¹¹⁴⁷ G. Berlev in *The Egyptians* (ed. S. Donadoni), ch. 4: “Bureaucrats”, pp. 102-118.

¹¹⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 292.

¹¹⁴⁹ I owe this proposed identification to Clapham, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

¹¹⁵⁰ Thus Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

¹¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 305.

¹¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 306.

Herihor was (probably as was Shebitku) a ‘Commander of the Army’ (*Turtan?*). Thus Gardiner:¹¹⁵³

There is no evidence, however, that [Herihor] passed through the various priestly grades which normally led up to the high-priesthood, whence it became fashionable to suppose that originally he, like King Haremhab before him, had previously been an army officer. It is true that together with the son and grandson who succeeded him, he habitually used the title ‘Commander of the Army’, or ‘Great commander of the army of Upper and Lower Egypt’.

Gardiner goes on to tell that Herihor had taken over the dignities of the rebellious Pinhasi [Panehesy], whose governorship of Nubia he had then likely exercised. And at some unknown stage he also laid claim to the title of vizier.

It may be that Herihor’s passing through the priestly grades is not attested in Egypt, because he was basically, like Horemheb, a Syro-Palestinian. And the apparent character likenesses between the two may be due in part to their common Yahwism (as I see it).

Grimal adds the point that Herihor was probably a ‘Libyan’, which I think most likely (just as I have argued that Horemheb was):¹¹⁵⁴ “*A little before the nineteenth year of Ramesses XI there appeared a new chief priest of Amun with a strong personality: Herihor. His origins are not properly known, but he was probably descended from a Libyan family*”. Gardiner goes on to tell here of what he considers to have been Herihor’s strong “ambition”:¹¹⁵⁵ In VOLUME TWO I shall be suggesting, as a possible explanation for priestly so-called ‘ambition’ at this time, that the leading priest was actually compelled to take the lead over the king (Hezekiah) due to the latter’s infirmity. If so, then it may not have been a case so much of presumptive ‘ambition’, as of necessity.

Table 6: A Revised History for the 20th Dynasty and TIP

Conventional	=	Revised
<i>C12th-11th,s BC</i>		<i>C8th BC (dates now to be revised upwards)</i>
Ramses IX	=	Uzziah of Judah (d. 758 BC)
Ramses X	=	Ahaz of Judah (d. 727 BC)
Shoshenq III (d. 731 BC)	=	Rezin
Osorkon III (d. c. 699 BC)	=	‘King So of Egypt’ (and Shabaka/Tirhakah)
Ramses XI	=	Hezekiah of Judah (d. 699 BC)
Herihor	=	(Uriah) Shebitku

¹¹⁵³ *Ibid*, pp. 302-303.

¹¹⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 292.

¹¹⁵⁵ *Op. cit.*, pp. 303-304. Emphasis added.

Conclusion

As far as I have been able to determine, the following equations would apply for EOH:

1. 'King So [𓂏𓂛] of Egypt' (2 Kings 17:4), c. 727 BC =	Osorkon III (= Shabaka (<i>Seve</i>)/Tirhakah) of the 23 nd (Libyan) and 25 th dynasty.
2. The Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries of the Fall of Samaria, c. 722 BC =	Osorkon III (= Shabaka/Tirhakah) of the 23 nd (Libyan) and 25 th dynasty. Shoshenq I(B)/IV
3. The <i>Turtan</i> 'Si'be' encountered by Sargon II in c. 720 BC =	Shebitku.
4. 'Shilkanni king of Egypt' [<i>Ši-il-kan-ni ...Mu-uš-ri ša</i>], who gave tribute to Sargon, in c. 716 BC =	Osorkon III.
5. 'Pir'u [Pharaoh], king of Egypt, at the time of <i>Iatna-Iamani</i> 's revolt, c. 713 BC =	Osorkon III.
6. The "Egyptian kings ... the king of Meluhha ('Ethiopia)", defeated by Sennacherib at Eltekeh, c. 712 BC =	Osorkon III (= Shabaka/Tirhakah/Piye). Shebitku Shoshenq V and Pimay (perhaps). Later (707 BC) Shebitku was "the king of Meluhha" who sent <i>Iatna-Iamani</i> in chains to Sargon II of Assyria.
7. 'Tirhakah king of Ethiopia' (Isaiah 37:9), who was rumoured to have been marching against Sennacherib =	Tirhakah (= Shabaka/Piye, Osorkon III).

Thus, finally, for (f) and (g) of *Chapter 5*, the Egyptian and 25th dynasty kings (but not ethnically Ethiopians) contemporaneous with the Fall of Samaria, were, respectively, Osorkon III (= Shabaka/Tirhakah/Piye) and, perhaps Shoshenq I(B).

Summary of VOLUME ONE

At last we are in a position to conclude that 7-way synchronism (**a-g**) - albeit tentatively for (**f**) and, especially, for (**g**) - for the year c. 722, in relation to king Hezekiah of Judah, as introduced in **PART II, Chapter 5** (see p. 128) of this VOLUME ONE.

But we are no longer now looking for an ethnic Ethiopian (**g**), but a 25th dynasty Libyan, who also ruled Egypt. Thus (**f**) and (**g**) can now merge.

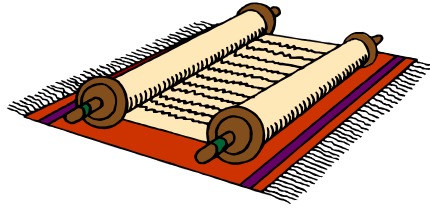
That same year of c. 722 BC saw:

- (a) the fall of Samaria;**
- (b) beginning of Sargon II's (= Sennacherib's) rule (& 17th year of Tiglath-pileser III's (= Shalmaneser V's) rule (Assyria);**
- (c) sixth year of Hezekiah (Judah);**
- (d) ninth year of Hoshea (Israel);**
- (e) year one of Merodach-baladan I/II (Babylon);**
- (f) year eight of Osorkon III and, possibly, reign of Shoshenq I(B)/IV (Egypt);**
- (g) reign of Shabaka (=Tirhakah/Piye) (king of Ethiopia) (= Osorkon III).**

Table 7: Synchronisms with the Reign of King Hezekiah (c. 727-699 BC)

BC Date	<u>Hezekiah</u>	<u>Hoshea</u>	<u>Assyria</u>	<u>Babylonia</u>	<u>Egypt/Ethiopia</u>	<u>Incident</u>
727	1 st Year	3 rd -4 th Year	T-Pileser/Shal. 12 th Year	(<i>Ululai</i>)	Osorkon III/ 'So' (Seve) & Shoshenq I(B)	Hoshea turns to 'So' in Egypt
726	2 nd Year	4 th -5 th Year	13 th Year	“ “	“ “	
725	3 rd Year	5 th -6 th Year	14 th Year	“ “	“ “	Shalmaneser's siege of Samaria
724	4 th Year	6 th -7 th Year	15 th Year	“ “	“ “	
723	5 th Year	7 th -8 th Year	16 th Year	Sennacherib	“ “	
722	6 th Year	8 th -9 th Year End of Israel	17 th Year Sargon II Accession/1 st	Merodach-baladan 1 st Year	(Osorkon III & Shoshenq I(B))	Fall of Samaria
721	7 th Year		1 st -2 nd Year	2 nd Year		
720	8 th Year		2 nd -3 rd Year	3 rd Year	(<i>Turtan Si'be/ Shebitku</i>)	Sargon II takes tribute from Egypt
719	9 th Year		3 rd -4 th Year	4 th Year	“ “	
718	10 th Year		4 th -5 th Year	5 th Year	“ “	
717	11 th Year		5 th -6 th Year	6 th Year	“ “	Foundations of Dur-Sargon laid
716	12 th Year		6 th -7 th Year	7 th Year	Osorkon III/ 'Shilkanni'	Sargon II takes tribute from Egypt
715	13 th Year		7 th -8 th Year	8 th Year	“ “	
714	14 th Year (king ill)		8 th -9 th Year	9 th Year	“ “	Assyrian <i>Turtan</i> sent to 'Ashdod'.
713	15 th Year		9 th -10 th Year	10 th Year	“ “	Assyrian king at home. Yatna Revolt
712	16 th Year		10 th -11 th Year	11 th Year	(<i>Yatna's</i>) Exile. Shebitku	Sargon /Sennach. in Philistia/Judah.
711	17 th Year		11 th -12 th Year (<i>Esarhaddon, co-ruler</i>)	12 th Year Esarhaddon Year 1	“ “	Assyria's war with Merodach-baladan
710	18 th Year		12 th -13 th Year	Year 2	Tirhakah	
709	19 th Year		13 th -14 th Year	Year 3	“ “	
708	20 th Year (<i>Manasseh, co-ruler?</i>)	Manasseh 1 st Year	14 th -15 th Year	Year 4	“ “	
707	21 st Year	2 nd Year	15 th -16 th Year	Year 5	“ “	
706	22 nd Year	3 rd Year	16 th -17 th Year	Year 6	“ “	Dur-Sargon Inaugurated
705	23 rd Year	4 th Year	17 th -18 th Year	Year 7	“ “	Babylon Destroyed
704	24 th Year	5 th Year	18 th -19 th Year	Year 8 (<i>Ashurbanipal, as heir</i>)	“ “	Assyria's Western Plan of Revenge. Manasseh Exiled
703	25 th Year	6 th Year	19 th -20 th Year	Year 9 Ashurbanipal	“ “	Esarhaddon Killed
702	26 th Year	7 th Year	20 th -21 st Year	Year 1	(<i>Takelot III/co-ruler</i>)	
701	27 th Year	8 th Year	21 st -22 nd Year	Year 2	“ “	
700	28 th Year	9 th Year	22 nd -23 rd Year	Year 3	“ “	Sennacherib Killed
699	29 th Year	10 th Year		Year 4	“ “	Death of Hezekiah

**VOLUME TWO:
SENNACHERIB'S INVASIONS OF
HEZEKIAH'S KINGDOM
AND HIS DEFEAT**



Part I

Sennacherib's Invasions of King Hezekiah's Kingdom

1. Distinguishing Sennacherib's Two Major Invasions

1

Distinguishing Sennacherib's Two Major Invasions

We are now well equipped it would seem to answer with conviction an age-long question as formulated by Bright:¹¹⁵⁶ “The account of Sennacherib’s actions against Hezekiah in 2 Kings 18:13 to 19:37 (//Isa., ch.36f.) presents a difficult problem. Does it contain the record of one campaign or two?” The answer is, according to the revised history that was developed in VOLUME ONE, *two campaigns*. These are:

- (i) Sennacherib’s *Third Campaign* (conventionally dated to 701 BC, but re-dated by me to 712 BC); and
- (ii) his campaign about a decade later, during the co-reign of Esarhaddon, after the destruction of Babylon.

These were not of course Sennacherib’s only western campaigns, for he (as Sargon II) had conquered Samaria in 722 BC, and had likely reconquered it in 720 BC. Sennacherib moreover claimed to have been taking tribute from king Hezekiah of Judah even before his *Third Campaign* (refer back to p. 145 of *Chapter 6*).

It remains to separate invasions (i) and (ii) as given in KCI; a task that proponents of the ‘two invasions’ theory, myself included, have found far from easy to do. Bright, himself a champion of this latter theory, has referred to the “infinite variations in detail” amongst scholars trying to settle the issue.¹¹⁵⁷ He has rightly observed, as have others as well,¹¹⁵⁸ that there is a good match between Sennacherib’s *Third Campaign* account and the early part of 2 Kings. Beyond this, Bright has noticed a polarity in KCI - suggesting the telescoping of what were two separate campaign accounts - with Hezekiah on the one hand being castigated by Isaiah for resisting the Assyrians, by turning to Egypt for help, and on the other being told that the Assyrians would be defeated.¹¹⁵⁹

... Isaiah’s utterances with regard to the Assyrian crisis are, it seems to me, far better understood under the assumption that there were two invasions by Sennacherib. The sayings attributed to him in II Kings 18:17 to 19:37 (//Isa., chs. 36f.) all express the calm assurance that Jerusalem would be saved, and the Assyrians frustrated, by Yahweh’s power; there is no hint of rebuke to Hezekiah reminding him of his reckless policy which had brought the nation to this pass.

... Yet his known utterances in 701 [sic] and the years immediately preceding (e.g., chs. 28:7-13, 14-22; 30:1-7, 8-17; 31:1-3) show that he consistently denounced the rebellion, and the Egyptian alliance that supported it, as a folly and a sin, and predicted for it unmitigated disaster.

¹¹⁵⁶ *A History of Israel*, p. 296.

¹¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, p. 300. B. Childs thinks that “a definite impasse has been reached” amongst scholars, with: “No consensus [having] developed regarding the historical problems of the [701 BC] invasion ...”. *Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis*, p. 12.

¹¹⁵⁸ *Ibid*, p. 297. Cf. J. Pritchard, *ANET*, pp. 287f; Childs, *ibid*, p. 72 (he claims a “striking agreement ...”).

¹¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 306. Emphasis added.

In 701, when Sennacherib had ravaged the whole land and had Jerusalem under blockade (ch. 1:4-9), if words mean anything (“Why be beaten any more, [why] continue rebellion?” v. 5), he counseled surrender; and ch. 22:1-14 ... suggests that nothing in the course of these events had caused him to alter his evaluation of the national character and policy. *It is not easy to believe that in this very same year he also counseled defiance and promised deliverance.*

One can easily agree with Bright when he goes on to say that “different sets of circumstances must be presumed”,¹¹⁶⁰ and that “telescoping” has been employed.¹¹⁶¹ For the ancient Jews, apparently, there was a strong link in the overall scheme of things between Assyria’s first and second efforts to conquer Jerusalem, though well separated in time. The KCI narratives read as if virtually seamless. In attempting to separate the two campaigns, we shall need to draw upon a variety of sources in order to determine where the actual break occurs. But, thanks to our findings in VOLUME ONE, we no longer have the problem facing proponents of the ‘two campaigns’ theory of having to establish the fact of a second Assyrian invasion into Palestine.

First Major Invasion

Sennacherib’s first major campaign against Hezekiah (i.e. his *Third Campaign* in 712 BC) was preceded by the *Turtan’s* arrival at ‘Ashdod’ (Lachish), in c. 714 BC. KCI, as we saw, telescopes this as if all taking place “in the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah” (cf. 2 Kings 18:13 & Isaiah 36:1), though we now know that the Assyrian king did not personally come up in that year. Hezekiah’s fourteenth year corresponds rather with Isaiah 20:1: “In the year that the commander-in-chief, who was sent by King Sargon of Assyria, came to Ashdod and fought against it and took it”. This calculates as the same year of Hezekiah’s near fatal illness (cf. 2 Chronicles 29:1 & Isaiah 38:5), which must have occurred at some stage after the Assyrians had made their move, because Isaiah tells Hezekiah (38:4): “... Thus says the Lord, the god of your ancestor David: ... I will add *fifteen years* to your life. I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and defend this city”. About this time also Merodach-baladan, the king of Babylon, who - with Elamite help - was defying Assyria’s efforts to dislodge him, sent envoys to Hezekiah, as he doubtless did to other kings as well, seeking to enlist their participation against Assyria. (For more on this, see next chapter, pp. 37-38). Merodach-baladan would almost certainly have appealed to Tyre, which now became a ringleader in this sizeable Syro-Palestinian coalition against Assyria (following on from the revolt of 720 BC). Isaiah predicted that, in three years (Jewish reckoning), the Egypto/Ethiopian forces upon which the Jews were relying, would be carried off into captivity (20:2-4). The Egyptian-backed insurgent, *Iatna/Iamani*, no doubt encouraged by the prevailing Syro-Palestinian support, strongly fortified ‘Ashdod’, surrounding it by a moat. And Hezekiah appears to have supported this upstart’s interference in his realm.

¹¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 307. Childs will apply a form critical study to test if the historical impasse can be broken, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

¹¹⁶¹ *Ibid*, p. 303.

An ardent nationalist anyway, Hezekiah was no doubt under fearful pressure as well from both 'patriotic' Judaeans nobles and the Syro-Hittites, all allied now with Egypt. Above all, he may have been bolstered by the promise that the Lord would save Jerusalem from the Assyrians. In spite of the earnest warnings of Isaiah, who branded the whole thing as folly and rebellion against Yahweh, Hezekiah joined in and sent - or allowed - envoys to TIP Egypt to negotiate a treaty (cf. Isaiah 19:11, 13; 30:1-7; 31:1-3), and to invite Egypt's assistance in strengthening his kingdom's defences. In fact, Hezekiah himself became a ringleader in the revolt. He must fully have realised that the king of Assyria would not overlook this. In preparation for the inevitable assault upon Jerusalem, the king built up the walls of Jerusalem and stopped up the flow of waters outside the city. He hewed a 500 metre long tunnel to channel the water from the Spring Gihon into the south of the city so that the defenders would have an adequate supply of water: the famous Siloam tunnel. He also strongly fortified the city and appointed captains and guards, urging the people not to be afraid of the Assyrians (2 Chronicles 32:2-8).

The Assyrian king's Year 11 saw him personally stirred into action. We know about this campaign from the notice in 2 Kings 18:13-16, but more especially from Sargon II's/Sennacherib's own inscriptions, which corroborate but vastly augment it. Moving against Gurgum, and then southward along the coast, the king of Assyria crushed resistance in the kingdom of Tyre, replacing its king - who had fled to Cyprus - with a ruler of his own choosing. With Tyre's submission, the revolt began to fall apart. Kings from far and near - Byblos, Arvad, Ashdod, Moab, Edom, Ammon - hastened to Sennacherib with tribute. But the states of Ashkelon and Ekron, together with Judah, still held out. Sennacherib marched against them, first reducing dependencies of Ashkelon near Joppa and then moving southward to deal with Ekron whose king *Padi*, it will be recalled, was being held prisoner in Jerusalem. A substantial Egypto-Ethiopian army marching to the relief of Ekron was met at Eltekeh and defeated. Sennacherib then took Ekron and other rebellious Philistine cities at his leisure, punishing offenders with execution or deportation. Around Ekron he left a ghastly ring of impaled corpses.¹¹⁶²

Meanwhile Sennacherib turned on Judah. He tells us that he reduced forty-six of Judah's fortified cities and deported their population.¹¹⁶³ Hezekiah's case was hopeless. Deserted by his nobles and his mercenary troops, he sent to Sennacherib while the latter was still besieging Lachish and sued for terms. "I have sinned; return from me; whatever you put on me I will bear" (2 Kings 18:14). The terms were severe. The king of Ekron was handed over and restored to his throne. Portions of Judah's territory were divided amongst him and the loyal kings of 'Ashdod' and Gaza. In addition, Sennacherib demanded a dramatically increased tribute.

Hezekiah's decision to try to buy off Sennacherib was perhaps based on his hope of a last minute Divine intervention. He might also have reasoned that, because Egypt was Sennacherib's primary goal, and the Assyrian was already some distance on the way there, he might continue *en route* after receiving the heavy tribute, without taking the time needed to complete the siege of Jerusalem. This operation would later take Nebuchednezzar II 'the Great' (C6th BC) about one and a half years to complete.

¹¹⁶² For a related discussion of this, see E. Bleibtreu, 'Grisly Assyrian Record of Torture and Death', p. 60.

¹¹⁶³ Taylor Cylinder, col. iii. II-20. As referred to by C. Boutflower, *The Book of Isaiah*, p. 201.

A Proposed Break

It is at this point - the conclusion of the account of Hezekiah's paying heavy tribute to Assyria - that Ellis, for instance, chooses to make a break between the two invasions, cleanly separating the tribute-giving episode from the very next portion of the narrative that describes Sennacherib's sending up of a large army to Jerusalem.¹¹⁶⁴ This manoeuvre by Ellis clearly has points in its favour. For instance:

- Hezekiah had apparently yielded completely to the king of Assyria, yet the latter immediately sends an army against him; the spokesman of which army asks why Hezekiah continues so stubbornly to resist.
- Hezekiah's act of filling in the breaches in the city's walls is seen as being an action in response to an already prior assault on the walls of Jerusalem by the Assyrian army.

However, I think that Ellis's decision turns out to be premature, and that no actual break in campaign ought to be read into the KCI texts at this point. A comprehensive scenario may be attained by 'reading between the lines', so to speak, by turning to other sources. The two incidents that Ellis completely separates, whilst not significantly apart in time - as he would have it - neither follow immediately the one from the other. There were other interim events that, not only took up a certain amount of time, but the recognition of which makes more intelligible the whole flow of incidents. I refer for example to:

- Isaiah 33:7, where we learn that the "ambassadors of peace", apparently those who had taken the tribute to Sennacherib, then returned "weeping bitterly".

... מְלָאכֵי שְׁלוֹם מֵרַבְּיּוֹן

And 24:16 (cf. 21:2): "For the treacherous deal treacherously, the treacherous deal very treacherously".

... לִי בִגְדִים בְּגָדוֹ וּבְגָד בֹּגְדִים בְּגָדוֹ

Sennacherib, marked as "treacherous" according to Boutflower,¹¹⁶⁵ received the tribute, but now demands the surrender of the city!

- 2 Chronicles 32:9-10, where we learn that there was a further prelude to the arrival of the main Assyrian army. Sennacherib had even before this sent his servants to undermine Hezekiah's confidence in his God.

Nor should we have expected, given the nature of the Assyrian king, that he would ever have intended for Jerusalem to have gone free after her pre-meditated rebellion.

¹¹⁶⁴ '1-2 Kings', 10:70-71, pp. 205-206.

¹¹⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 267.

There is also the fact to be considered, in the context of this revision, that *Sobna* (*Shebna*) was still at this point in Jerusalem; an unlikely scenario if this were the time of a second Assyrian invasion.

As to the breaches in the wall, we are told that Hezekiah repaired and greatly strengthened these, adding a second wall, as well as fortifying the Millo; all probably achieved even prior to Sennacherib's arrival at Lachish. (Cf. 2 Chronicles 32:5-6 & 32:9).

With all this in mind, I would be inclined towards accepting a scenario according to which Hezekiah's payment of tribute was followed, *in the course of the same campaign*, by the Assyrian army's siege of Jerusalem.

Great would have been the alarm amongst the Judaeans when, eventually - and there may have been a reasonable lapse of time - a strong force made its appearance on the neighbouring hills, for a visible and unmistakable proof was then given that the Assyrian 'Great King' meant to have the fortress of Jerusalem. (2 Kings 18:17): "The king of Assyria sent the Turtan, the Rabsaris and the Rabshakeh with a great army from Lachish to king Hezekiah at Jerusalem". (I have already, in *Chapter 7*, p. 186, proposed an identification of Sennacherib's *Rabshakeh* with the famous *Ahikar*, or *Achior*).

There are several reasons though for thinking that the army, even at this stage, did not come all the way to Jerusalem, but stood some distance off - Sennacherib's plan being to terrify the Jews into submission rather than having to undergo the inevitable long siege.

I refer to this combination of data:

- I. the description of the place of meeting between the Assyrian delegation and the Judaeans officials (*Eliakim* now having taken leadership over *Sobna*, who had succumbed to the Assyrian pressure), combined with
- II. the geographical description of the Assyrian advance in Isaiah 10 (see next page), plus the fact that
- III. the Judaeans officials "went out" to meet the Assyrians.

Let me try to explain these points:

According to Isaiah 36:2: "The cupbearer-in-chief (i.e. *Rabshakeh*) took up a position *near the conduit of the upper pool on the road to the Fuller's Field*". Commentators usually presume that the *Rabshakeh's* position was right outside the walls of Jerusalem, and that he had addressed *Eliakim* and his fellow Judaeans officials within earshot of those on the ramparts of the capital city. After all, Sennacherib had sent his army to the king in Jerusalem (Isaiah 36:2).

The geographical experts, as well, generally seem to accept this view; although none of them has, to my knowledge, succeeded in pinpointing this rather precisely named spot in a way that inspires complete confidence.

There are reasons I think to suspect that the Upper Pool was not right at Jerusalem at all, but was some distance off from the city.

The very fact that the Judaeen delegation “went out” וַיֵּצֵא אֵלָיו (Isaiah 36:3), to the Assyrians, to meet the *Rabshakeh*, might indicate that Hezekiah’s embassy went some distance from Jerusalem, to a strategic position guarding the capital city. That the *Rabshakeh* marched from Lachish towards Jerusalem, but did not come all the way, might also be implied by a clever passage in Isaiah (10:27-32) that describes the onrushing Assyrian cavalry force, moving with incredible speed to within close range of Jerusalem - and that I am going to suggest just might describe the *Rabshakeh*’s march:

He advances from the district of Rimmon, he reaches Aiath,
he passes through Migron, he leaves his baggage train at Michmash.
They file through the defile, they bivouac at Geba.
Ramah quakes, Gibeah of Saul takes flight.
Bath-gallim, cry aloud! Laisah, hear her!
Anathoth, answer her!

Madmenah is running away, the inhabitants of Gebim are fleeing.
This very day he will halt at Nob. He will shake his fist against the mount of the
daughter of Zion, against the hill of Jerusalem.

Now Boutflower¹¹⁶⁶ thought that this fearsome charge might pertain to Sargon II’s army, as it was certainly a characteristic tactic of his. What would seem most likely, at least, was that this passage pertains to an *Assyrian* action (and not e.g. to a Syro-Ephraimitic one), given that these verses are located in Isaiah after a speech about the Assyrians (10:5-27). Though, in my context, it needs to be explained how a *Rabshakeh*, departing from Lachish to the south-west of Jerusalem, would all of a sudden be approaching the capital city from the north. An important consideration of strategy may come in here. It is an interesting fact that, though Sennacherib’s army was commanded by three officials, it is only the *Rabshakeh* of whom we hear as being present before the Judaeen officials, and it is only the *Rabshakeh* who then returns to tell Sennacherib of the outcome (Isaiah 37:8). The clue to the precise Assyrian strategy and progress may well lie in the reversion in Isaiah 10 from the plural (v. 29), עָבְרוּ, “they file through” and, לָנוּ, “they bivouac” [i.e. the *masculine plural* form of the verb], to the singular (v. 32), יִנָּפֵף יָדוֹ “he will shake his fist”.

The *Rabshakeh*, after having left Lachish where Sennacherib had established himself, may have firstly had to connect with the main body of the Assyrian army - which was steadily dismantling the forts of Judah - before coming in person to parley with Hezekiah’s officials at ‘Nob’ - so far not unequivocally identified, but apparently in sight of Jerusalem. If so, then this location must coincide with the “conduit of the upper pool ... Fuller’s Field”. Certainly the verse, “he will shake his fist against the mount of the daughter of Zion”, is an appropriate description of the *Rabshakeh*’s contemptuous words against Jerusalem and its king (e.g. Isaiah 36). So where *was* this precise location? Boutflower who, keeping open his geographical options, was not sure if the Upper Pool were “north, west or south of the Sacred City”, imagined that it must have been at least “very close to the walls”.¹¹⁶⁷

¹¹⁶⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 104-105.

¹¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 269, with reference to F. Josephus’s *War of the Jews*, Bk. V, 7, 3 & 4, 2.

He refers here to Josephus' testimony that north of the city, in the same quarter as the "camp of the Assyrians", there "stood a monument called 'the Monument of the Fuller'." According to Burrows,¹¹⁶⁸ it was probably to the south of the city, near the Gihon Spring. I think however that one can be somewhat more specific than any of this, and can perhaps tie up, all together, (a) the Upper Pool location, (b) the Fuller's Field, and (c) the 'Nob' of Isaiah 10.

A Clue from 2 Samuel

'Nob' is usually thought to be either Mt. Scopus, or the Mount of Olives. I am going to suggest the latter, following Macduff, who went even further to equate 'Nob' with the New Testament's Bethphage:¹¹⁶⁹

Bethphage is literally "the house of unripe or early figs". Dr. Barclay identifies it with the ruins of a village on the southern crest of "the Mount of Offence", above the village of Siloam. He describes it as "a tongue-shaped promontory or spur of Olivet, distant rather more than a mile from the city, situated between two deep valleys, on which there are tanks, foundations, and other indubitable evidences of the former existence of a village". ... - *City of the Great King*, 67.

.... the direction, indeed the spot, is visible from the Hosanna road; and I have no hesitation in expressing accordance with the above reliable authorities. In his account of the travels of the Roman lady Paula [Jerome] mentions that she had visited [Bethphage]. They describe it as a Village of the Priests, possibly from "Bethphage" signifying in Syriac "The House of the Jaw;" and the jaw in the sacrifices being the portion of the priests.

'Nob' of the Old Testament was most certainly, likewise, a 'village of the priests' (cf. 1 Samuel 22:11, 19).

The Fuller's Spring

During Absalom's revolt, more than two centuries before Hezekiah, king David had been forced to abandon Jerusalem, which he fled via the Mount of Olives. Beyond the summit of Olivet was a place called Bahurim (cf. 2 Samuel 15:30; 16:1, 5). [For the approximate location of Bahurim, see **Map 1** on next page]. Now Jonathan and Ahi-maaz, acting as spies for David, "were stationed at the Fuller's Spring", which was apparently on the road close to Bahurim (cf. 17:17, 18).

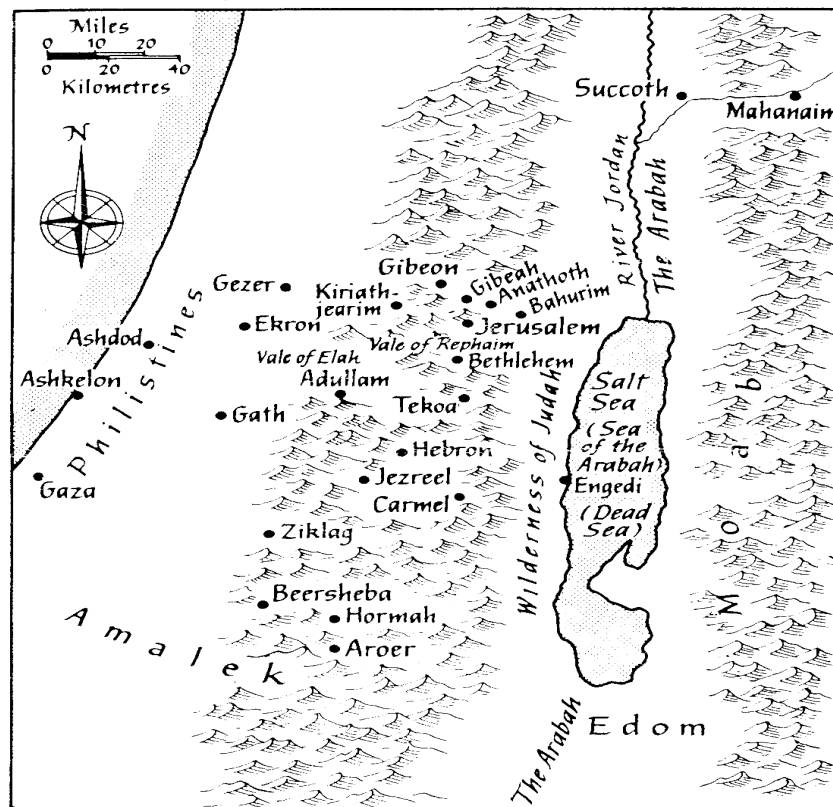
Thus we seem to have our location: a spring or pool (conduit); with the name 'Fuller', apparently on a main road. All about a mile or so from Jerusalem.

That would appear to be our perfect location for the *Rabshakeh's* address.

¹¹⁶⁸ 'The Conduit of the Upper Pool', pp. 221-227. F. Moriarty similarly thinks that the conduit "was a channel through which water from the Gihon spring in the Kidron Valley was brought to the Upper City". 'Isaiah 1-39', 16:18, p. 270.

¹¹⁶⁹ *Memories of Olivet*, p. 148.

Map 1: Bahurim



Since Sennacherib had sent his officials, and did not come in person, “the strong, proud Hezekiah” - as Sennacherib called him¹¹⁷⁰ - perhaps would not give the Assyrians the satisfaction of his coming out in person to meet them, but would send his own chief officials, *Eliakim*, *Sobna* and *Joah*. Although there is also the possibility that Hezekiah himself was by now too feeble to come out, despite his having recovered from his illness. *Ahikar the Rabshakeh* delivered his notorious harangue in which he made it clear that the Jews were to go into captivity. He ridiculed their continuing reliance upon Egypt, “that broken reed of a staff” (Isaiah 36:6); no doubt a telling reference to the disastrous (for the ‘allies’) battle of Eltekeh. The fact that the Jews were continuing to rely on Egypt (Ethiopia?), though, would indicate that they thought there was more help to come from that direction.

Most interestingly, Childs - who has subjected the *Rabshakeh’s* speech to a searching form-critical analysis, also identifying its true Near Eastern genre - has considered it as well in relation to an aspect of the speech of BOJ’s *Achior* (who I shall actually be identifying with this *Rabshakeh* in *Chapter 2*, e.g. pp. 46-47) to *Holofernes* (Judith 5:20f.).¹¹⁷¹

¹¹⁷⁰ Sennacherib’s *Bull Inscriptions*, 1, 2 & 3, as cited by Boutflower, *op. cit.*, pp. 300-301.

¹¹⁷¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 82, n. 36.

After his having delivered his speech in Hebrew, so that all could understand it, the *Rabshakeh* “returned, and found the King of Assyria fighting against Libnah; for he had heard that the king had left Lachish” (2 Kings 19:8). Now, whilst the *Rabshakeh* went to report back to Sennacherib, Hezekiah, his clothes torn and in sackcloth, sent his trio of officials to Isaiah to inform the prophet of the speech by the *Rabshakeh* whom Sennacherib “had sent to mock the living God” (2 Kings 19:1-4). This was to be the turning point for Isaiah who, when he heard the message - realizing that the Assyrian king had now gone too far - would thus confidently predict his downfall (37:6-7):

Thus says the Lord: ‘Do not be afraid because of the words that you have heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have reviled me. I myself will put a spirit in him, so that he shall hear a rumour [שמועה] and return to his own land; I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land’.

The first part of this prophecy will be fulfilled very soon - at least in terms of scriptural verses - as we are going to see. The second part, much later. The fulfilment of the first part of Isaiah’s response will be our actual *break point* between the two campaigns. After this we hear no more of *Sobna*, and it could well be that the very sight of the Assyrian cavalry - with the main part of the army massed so near to Jerusalem - would have been cause enough now for him to have fled the city, just as he had previously fled in terror from ‘Ashdod’. He fled towards Ethiopia, but was thrown into chains by the Ethiopian king and despatched to Assyria. We learn from the Tang-i Var inscription that Shebitku was the Ethiopian pharaoh in question. He would soon be succeeded by Tirhakah. These were pharaohs of the 25th (Ethiopian) dynasty; the last of the TIP dynasties.

Sennacherib, having received his *Rabshakeh*’s report, would then have ordered his army to proceed against Jerusalem, and commence the siege. The Assyrian king tells us that he threw up earthworks against Hezekiah, ‘shutting him in like a bird in a cage’, and preventing any egress. *Akhi-miti*/Eliakim, on the other hand, came out of it all rather well, perhaps due to his having followed the counsel of Isaiah. He was given back the fort of ‘Ashdod’ that *Yatna* (whom I identified as *Sobna* in *Chapter 6*, p. 160) had taken from him; *Akhi-miti* being the loyal king *Mitinti* of ‘Ashdod’ of Sennacherib’s records, to whom the Assyrian gave - as we saw - portions of Judaeen territory.

There is no reason to believe that the siege of Jerusalem was of short duration. Eventually, though, Sennacherib “heard concerning King Tirhakah of Ethiopia, ‘He has set out to fight against you’” (Isaiah 37:9); this presumably being the “rumour” referred to above, that was to prompt Sennacherib’s “return to his own land”. Probably, also, Tirhakah’s predecessor (Shebitku) had died, or as Tirhakah put it, “the Falcon flew to heaven”,¹¹⁷² and it was left to the energetic Tirhakah to continue the war. Sennacherib opted at this stage to lift the siege. Perhaps he also had in mind now finally to finish off Merodach-baladan, before committing his troops to any further action in the west. There may have occurred at this point, as previously suggested, the revolt back in Assyria in the course of which Esarhaddon would secure the throne for his absent father.

¹¹⁷² As cited by K. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt*, p. 387.

The Greek (Septuagint) version of 2 Kings 18:9 (Greek uses IV Kings) reinforces this scenario with the crucial phrase, “and he returned” [*καί επέστρεψε*], corresponding precisely with Isaiah’s prediction two verses earlier (v. 7) that Sennacherib would “return [*καί αποστραφήσεται*] to his own land” upon hearing the “rumour”.¹¹⁷³ (This important text will be considered further, beginning on p. 12 below). This was in effect a first deliverance of Jerusalem.

We know that Sennacherib proceeded in his next (*Fourth*) campaign to attack the rebellious Merodach-baladan. He also made his son Viceroy at this stage. It is more than likely too that Sennacherib now sent Esarhaddon to tackle Tirhakah’s Egypto-Ethiopian army, since Esarhaddon’s first notable encounter with Egypt, at the border (conventionally dated to c. 674 BC), to be re-dated to c. 709-707 BC, was against this very Tirhakah. Whilst apparently the relatively inexperienced Assyrian Viceroy suffered an initial setback, he would eventually return in force to punish Egypt.

Interim: An Historical Note

Regarding Egypt, Esarhaddon is conventionally thought:

- (i) to have attacked the Wadi el-Arish in about 677 BC;
- (ii) to have retreated from Tirhakah in 674 BC;
- (iii) to have seized Memphis and captured the crown prince in 671 BC; and
- (iv) to have died on his way to Egypt in 669 BC.

These dates will now need to be collectively brought much closer together and then, as a whole, raised by more than 30 years, with the last, 669, revised to c. 703 - all now to be included during the reign of Sennacherib.

I suggest that Esarhaddon’s eventual taking of Memphis, referred to in Isaiah’s taunt song: ‘By your servants you have mocked the Lord, and you have said ... I dried up with the sole of my foot all the streams of Egypt’ (37:24, 25), occurred not many years before the ultimate disaster for Sennacherib’s army. Ashurbanipal, now co-regent, also claimed credit for this Egyptian campaign; though he did not personally accompany it. In turn, Esarhaddon’s death on campaign - with the subsequent loss of the Assyrian army - would have occurred about a year or two before the assassination of Sennacherib.

Second Major Invasion

Hezekiah had been left in utter misery by the Assyrians, with his once wide kingdom greatly reduced. But now a more optimistic Isaiah would predict for the Jews happier days: the king of Judah in his glory once again, ruling over a wide land; the memory of the besieging Assyrian army having all but faded (33:17-20).

Meanwhile, the Assyrians were again at war in the east. And, judging by BOJ Chapter 1, the ‘whole world’ must have been cheering on Merodach-baladan (i.e. ‘Arphaxad’, see next chapter, p. 38) when he found himself the target of Assyria yet again, in his Year 12.

¹¹⁷³ Septuagint, p. 520.

The entire empire virtually snubbed the king of Assyria when he “sent messengers”, as was his wont, to garner support against the Chaldaeo-Aramaean coalition. We have seen Esarhaddon refer to these rebels as “insolent” (*Chapter 6*, p. 170). The leaders of many of these nations would live to regret - even die regretting - their choice. But that would be still some years in the future.

We now come to a seemingly seamless section of Scripture that would appear immediately to link incidents that I am going to argue were in fact years apart.

Isaiah 37:9-10 directly connects Sennacherib’s learning about Tirhakah, the “rumour”, with his sending to king Hezekiah, via Assyrian messengers, of the blasphemous letter that would elicit Isaiah’s taunt song against Sennacherib and Esarhaddon. This incident, in turn, is directly linked to the destruction of the Assyrian army. “That very night” (בלַיְלָה הַהוּא), according to 2 Kings 19:35 - presumably ‘the night’ following either Isaiah’s issuing of the taunt, or Hezekiah’s reception and reading of it - “... the angel of the Lord set out and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians”.

... וַיֵּצֵא מִלְאָךְ: יְהוָה וַיִּךְ: בְּמַחְנֵה אֲשׁוּר
מֵאָה שְׁמוֹנִים וְחֲמִשָּׁה אֲלֶיךָ ...

However, there are several reasons for believing that the Tirhakah “rumour”, and the issuing of the taunt song, could not have belonged to the same invasion period. Firstly, there is the reference in Isaiah’s taunt to Esarhaddon’s successful invasion of Egypt. No Assyrian king (i.e. post Assurballit) had, to this stage, managed to conquer Egypt. Secondly, Isaiah taunts Sennacherib (or Esarhaddon) with a prediction that could hardly have been uttered about the time of the Assyrian army’s encirclement of Jerusalem (37:33): “Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the king of Assyria: ‘He shall not come into this city, shoot an arrow there, come before it with a shield, or cast up a siege ramp against it. ...’.” Most of these things that Isaiah says the Assyrian king will not do, Sennacherib did in fact do during his *Third Campaign!*

Isaiah 37:36 does not use 2 Kings’ chronologically specific phrase: “That very night (19:35); but simply has: “Then the angel of the Lord set out [... יְהוָה וַיִּכֶּה: מִלְאָךְ] and struck down 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians ...”. The Septuagint equivalent to 2 Kings 19:35, too, gives the far less temporally specific: “And it came to pass at night that the angel of the Lord went forth ...” (*και εγενετο νυκτος, και εξηλθεν αγγελος ...*) (IV Kings 19:35).¹¹⁷⁴ On this point, I think it would be strange if the Assyrian army were in fact routed closer to the time of Isaiah’s issuing of his taunt, because Isaiah’s words seem to indicate the passing of a substantial period of time – certainly, at least, beyond three Jewish years (37:30-32). “And this shall be the sign for you: This year eat what grows of itself, and in the second year what springs from that: then in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit ...”. And this was to be only “the sign”, pointing to – and confirming – what was to follow: namely, the failure of the Assyrian king to reach Jerusalem (vv. 33-34).

¹¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

This is where a form critical analysis, such as Childs, can be most useful, even though Childs himself will conclude that:¹¹⁷⁵ “The results of our study in reference to the historical problem have been mainly negative”. Childs has textually distinguished 2 Kings 18:13-16, the account of “Hezekiah’s capitulation to Sennacherib” (or Account A), from 2 Kings 18:17-19:37 // Isaiah 36:1-37:8 (Account B) – the latter of which he then splits up into a B¹ and a B²; the break occurring between 19:9a and 19:9b:¹¹⁷⁶

The change in style from the condensed, descriptive report of the annal to the extended, dramatic representation of events and persons is striking. Moreover, the latter account in II Kings 18.17-19.37 // Isa. 36.1-37.38 (= B account) makes no reference to the events in A, and, in fact, takes no cognizance whatever of the reported capitulation.

... Stade’s initial insight was in recognizing in 19.9 the seam by which the two accounts were connected. He suggested that 9a related closely to the prophecy in 7. There the prophet announced that Sennacherib would ‘hear a rumour’ (*šāma’ šēmû’ āh*), and would ‘return to his own land’ (*šābh lē aršô*). In v. 9 he ‘hears’ and ‘returns’. Stade assumes that the reference to his own land had been omitted by the fusion of the two sources, but that it was implicit.

Following Stade, others ... have attempted slight modifications of his theory. The expression ‘he returned’ (*wayyāšobh*) in 9b was usually taken as the beginning of the B² account, and, in accordance with the well-known Hebrew idiom, translated ‘again’ (cf. II Kings 1.11). This seemed to establish an excellent beginning for B².

Apart from the historical considerations,¹¹⁷⁷ there is also to be considered the interesting personal development of king Hezekiah himself. In the first case the king of Judah, having learned of the *Rabshakeh’s* words, had most nervously sent his trio of delegates to Isaiah. For rightly does Childs say, in this case:¹¹⁷⁸ “[Hezekiah’s] request for intercession is given *with the utmost reserve and even timidity*”. Thus the king told his officials to say to Isaiah (2 Kings 19:4): ‘It may be that the Lord your God heard all the words of the Rabshakeh ...’.

אולי ישמע יהוה אלהיך את כל-דבריך כבשקה ...

‘It may be ... Lord *your* God ...’. The king of Judah, the great erstwhile reformer, was no longer confident that God was listening - certainly not to him, at least - and was now entirely dependent upon Isaiah’s own faith and trust in Yahweh. Contrast this with what Childs has written about the presumably later source:¹¹⁷⁹ “However, in B² Hezekiah does not even inform Isaiah, but enters the temple, approaches the very presence of God, and offers as a royal priest the prayer of his people”.

¹¹⁷⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 118.

¹¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 73, 74. (Ch. iii, pp. 69-103, is dedicated to a discussion of these texts).

¹¹⁷⁷ Childs thinks that “the role of the historical Isaiah is not at all clear in many areas”. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

¹¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 90. Emphasis added.

¹¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

So radical a change in attitude would presuppose the passing of a significant period of time, I should imagine.

During its second invasion, the Assyrian army – as Isaiah had predicted – did not come *unto* the city (Jerusalem), אֶל-הָעִיר (37:33), let alone *into* it. As is going to be fully argued in the next chapter, with the integration of the important BOJ, the army did not manage to proceed even beyond the towns facing the plain of Esdraelon in the north, including Judith’s town of *Bethulia*. There I shall discuss in detail Esarhaddon’s march into Syro-Palestine and Isaiah’s words in connection with the activities of the Simeonite heroine, Judith.

The Douay and (the longer) Greek versions of BOJ are unanimous in saying that the king of Nineveh made war against the Chaldean foe in his “twelfth year” (1:1). They diverge in assigning the destruction of the latter’s city to, respectively, the “twelfth year” and the “seventeenth year”. This may be explained to some degree by the fact that Sargon II/Sennacherib *twice* conquered Babylon. The destruction of Babylon in the “seventeenth year” though accords well with the sequence outlined in the Esarhaddon section (i.e. “Section Three: Esarhaddon” in *Chapter 6*) of my neo-Assyrian revision, which took us as far as Sennacherib’s *Seventh Campaign*. For, in his *Eighth Campaign* (now c. 705 BC), against the Elamite king, Umman-menanu, the Assyrian king ravaged the southern capital, Babylon – which I shall argue in the following chapter (see ii. “Ecbatana”, commencing on p. 40) to have been intended by the name “Ecbatana” in BOJ.

<p>Eighth Campaign</p> <p>“I advanced swiftly against Babylon Like the on-coming of a storm <i>I completely invested that city, with mines and engines The plunder ...</i>”.</p>	<p>Year 17 (Judith 1:13, 14)</p> <p>“In the seventeenth year [the Assyrian king] ... came to Ecbatana [read Babylon], <i>captured its towers, plundered its markets, and turned its glory into disgrace</i>”.</p>
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Then, still in the “seventeenth year” according to BOJ, “... he returned to Nineveh, he and all his combined forces ... and there he and his forces rested and feasted for one hundred and twenty days” (v.16). Sargon II does not actually tell how long his ‘Dedication Feast’ lasted, upon the completion of the construction of Dur Sharrukin and its palaces. He dates this feast however to “the month of *Tashrîtu*”.¹¹⁸⁰

<p>Sargon's ‘Dedication Feast’</p> <p>... with the princes of (all) countries, the governors of my land ... nobles, officials ... of Assyria, I took up my abode in that palace and instituted a <i>feast</i> of music.</p>	<p>Year 17 (Judith 1:16)</p> <p>Then he returned to Nineveh, he and all his combined forces, a vast body of troops; and there he and his forces rested and <i>feasted</i> for one hundred and twenty days.</p>
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¹¹⁸⁰ For Sargon’s accounts of this feast, see D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, Vol. 2, #’s 87 and 94, pp. 44, 47.

This “feast” I believe connects back to BOJ 1:2, which tells of the king (generally though thought to intend *Arphaxad*) building, or restoring, a great city. In the following chapter (see section: “Fortifying (Building) A City”, beginning on p. 42) I shall argue that this is in fact a reference to the construction by Sargon II of his new city, Dur-Sharrukin (‘Sargonsburg’), at Khorsabad.

Sennacherib’s *Eighth Campaign*, though, is about as far as the Great King’s war records take us. And we could be left feeling very empty. Where is the account of that most notorious of all wars of his, the one against the west – as recorded by Herodotus, and in the Scriptures and in the pseudepigrapha (BOJ, BOT, 2 Maccabees 8:19; 15:22) – when Sennacherib’s army of almost 200,000 was devastated? So catastrophic a defeat for Assyria cannot by any means be accommodated during Sennacherib’s *Third Campaign*, against the west, which was by and large, as we saw, a complete success for Assyria; though Jerusalem was not actually taken.

Historians have agonised over this. *Was there a further western campaign after Hezekiah of Judah had initially been brought into submission?*

And, I must add, what about the showdown between Judith and the Assyrian commander-in-chief, *Holofernes*, who completely lost his head over this Jewish beauty? We have found no indication whatsoever in what we have already read about the incursion of Sargon II’s *Turtan* into Judaeian territory that the official came under even the least pressure from Hezekiah’s subjects.

By contrast to this, the impressive Greek version of BOJ records a massive military campaign - ultimately disastrous - first envisaged by the Great King of Assyria in his Year 18 (now revised to c. 704 BC), and to be led by a commander of enormous prestige:

In the eighteenth year, on the twenty-second day of the first month, there was talk in the Palace of [the] king of Assyrians about carrying out his revenge on the whole region, just as he had said. (Judith 2:1).

.... When he had completed his plan, Nebuchadnezzar, king of the Assyrians, called Holofernes, the chief general of his army, second only to himself ... (v. 4).

The commander-in-chief duly raised an army of 120,000 picked troops by divisions,¹¹⁸¹ together with 12,000 archers on horseback, plus immense numbers of animals for baggage and food, ample rations and a huge amount of gold and silver from the royal palace (vv. 14-18).

Sheer desire for revenge is given as being the Great King of Assyria’s motivation for this campaign, especially against the west, because the nations from “Cilicia” (used here seemingly in the later sense of the coastland adjoining Syria) as far as the borders of Ethiopia had refused to support him upon his request during his “twelfth year” war against the Chaldaeo-Elamite coalition (1:7-12). “... they were not afraid of him, but regarded him as only one man. So they sent back his messengers empty-handed and in disgrace” (v. 11). A desire to conquer wealthy Egypt was undoubtedly a major motivational factor for Sennacherib.

¹¹⁸¹ Exactly the same number as Shalmaneser III had fielded about a century and a half earlier, at the battle of Qarqar. See e.g. G. Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 348.

The commander-in-chief went forth with his huge army, and by the time that he had brought the west into quaking submission, and had come “toward Esdraelon, near Dothan, facing the great ridge of Judaea” (3:9), his fighting forces had swollen to “one hundred seventy thousand infantry and twelve thousand cavalry, not counting the baggage and the footsoldiers handling it, a very great multitude” (7:2).

This overall total of 182,000 plus equates strikingly to the 185,000 men of Sennacherib’s defeated army.

It was down upon such an immense host, encamped before Dothan, that there gazed in awe the northern Israelites. Amongst these were Judith of the tribe of Simeon and her townspeople of *Bethulia*; this town to be identified in *Chapter 3*. (See section: “Identification of Bethulia”, commencing on p. 69). The Israelites commented: ‘They will now strip clean the whole land; neither the high mountains nor the valleys nor the hills will bear their weight’ (7:4).

Nonetheless, urged on by their high priest in Jerusalem, Joakim (var. Eliakim) (cf. also 2 Chronicles 36:4), they had resolved to resist (BOJ 4) and live with the consequences.

Who was Assyria’s Ill-Fated Commander-in-Chief?

The commander-in-chief named *Holofernes* in BOJ was most unlikely the same person as the *Turtan* (perhaps Sargon’s *Turtan*, Ashur Isqa Danin) whom Sargon II/Sennacherib had previously sent against ‘Ashdod’, who would by now presumably, about a decade later, have been well familiar with the various nations of the west.

Figure 1: Sargon II and his Turtan



SARGON THE KING. (PALACE OF SARGON.)



ASHUR-ISQA-DANIN, HIS TURANU.
(PALACE OF SARGON.)

The commander-in-chief in the BOJ narrative, on the other hand, had to ask the locals: ‘Tell me, you Canaanites, what people is this that lives in the hill country?’ (5:3). To identify him as the very *Turtan* of the successful first western campaign would also make for a very tight chronology indeed in the context of this revision. He was in fact higher in rank than *Turtan*, hence my adhering to the term, ‘commander-in-chief’. BOJ is quite specific: “Holofernes” was “*second only* to [the king] himself ...”.

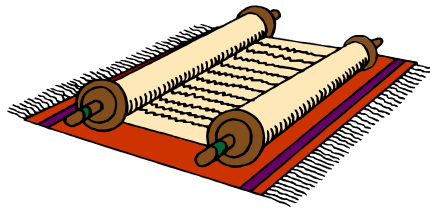
History apparently knows of no such named Assyrian commander-in-chief.

However, there was a notable Assyrian blue-blood at the time of king Hezekiah who is a most appropriate candidate for *Holofernes* inasmuch as he was a potent leader, who invaded even Egypt, and who died mysteriously on campaign. And he fits exactly the description given in BOJ of “*second only* to [the king] himself”. I refer to Sennacherib’s favourite son and heir, the Viceroy, ESARHADDON.¹¹⁸²

Whilst I would naturally expect immediate, strong objections from a conventional point of view to this identification of Esarhaddon with *Holofernes* - considering that the former is supposed to have reigned after Sennacherib’s death - I am confident that my revision of neo-Assyrian history has at least opened the door for the possibility of this by incorporating the reign of Esarhaddon entirely within the reign of his father, Sennacherib. The heroine Judith, in her definition of the precise relationship between the Great King of Assyria and his Viceroy - when face to face with the latter - would make it clear that, whilst the Viceroy now had full charge of military affairs, it was nonetheless the ageing king who still cracked the whip (11:7). And she will shrewdly play on the commander-in-chief’s reputation for having no military rival: ‘... it is reported throughout the whole world that you alone are the best in the whole kingdom, the most informed and the most astounding in military strategy’ (v. 8). This would have been music to the ears of the proud Esarhaddon; especially coming from a beautiful woman.

We also learned of Esarhaddon’s great and persistent loyalty to his father, Sennacherib. But Esarhaddon’s, and his father’s, enemies - at least those who survived their vengeful régime - would have the last laugh. In a relatively short space of time, Assyria would lose to violence its Viceroy - slain during the campaign that was intended to culminate in his second invasion of Egypt - much of the powerful Assyrian army, and, not very long afterwards, the Great King himself, assassinated.

¹¹⁸² Esarhaddon though could also have held the office of *turtan*, or *rabshakeh*, just as did his father, Sennacherib, according to Tablet K 2169, in which the latter is called “Rabsaki” (*rabshakeh*). As referred to by M. Anstey, *The Romance of Bible Chronology*, p. 213.



Part II

Demise of the Assyrian Army and of Sennacherib

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Sennacherib's Ill-Fated Invasion

Introduction

The answer to *what really happened to Sennacherib's army* is to be found in detail, I believe, in BOJ. Thus in this chapter, in which I shall be analyzing major aspects of BOJ at some length, I intend to complete my reconstruction of the conflict between king Sargon II/Sennacherib (and his son Esarhaddon) and king Hezekiah (and his son Manasseh) by interfacing KCI with BOJ. For this, I shall generally be using the more detailed Greek version of BOJ. All English translations will be taken from the NRSV, unless otherwise stated. But firstly:

A HISTORY AND CRITICAL EVALUATION OF BOJ

A. Versions, Genre (Historicity), Canonicity, Problems

The Ancient Versions

The title of the book, according to Charles, is based upon a personal name:¹¹⁸³

The title of the book in Greek is simply Ἰουδαίθ In Hebrew it would have been מגלת יהודית, like מגלת אסתר ... or מעשה יהודית, derived from the name of the principal character. The name, of course, simply means 'Jewess', and hence Grotius, explaining the story allegorically, makes it represent the Jewish people. But apart from the fact that this method of interpretation is forced and unconvincing, there is no need to suppose that the name suggested this meaning. It is used personally in Gen. XXVI. 34 as belonging to the Hittite wife of Esau, where at any rate it cannot mean 'Jewess'.

It is widely agreed that the book was originally written in Hebrew.¹¹⁸⁴ What seems at least certain, anyway, is that the Greek version was based on an earlier Hebrew version:¹¹⁸⁵ "Owing to the fact that the Greek text which we possess contains so many Hebraisms, modern critics generally maintain that the original text of Judith, of which no manuscripts survive, was written in Hebrew". Of the Greek translation, "the earliest form in which we have the book ... the only primary version existing", according to Charles, "there are three recensions".

¹¹⁸³ *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, p. 243.

¹¹⁸⁴ E.g. cf. *ibid.*, § 3; M. Leahy, 'Judith', p. 403; C. Moore, *The Anchor Bible. Judith*, pp. 66f.

¹¹⁸⁵ Leahy, *ibid.* T. Craven gives as examples of "Hebraisms", of which she says the Greek version is "replete", "... ka, for the waw-consecutive, šn for כּ, prōswpon for י ב פ ל, and many other idioms ..." *Artistry and Faith in the Book of Judith*, p. 5.

Charles has listed these as follows, with his explanation included:¹¹⁸⁶

(1) the usual and no doubt the most original form, represented by the MSS. **Ⲙ**, A and B (Swete's text); (2) that contained in codd. 19, 108; (3) that of cod. 58, with which the Old Latin version (VL) and the Syriac (Syr) agree in a remarkable manner. All three recensions, however, represent the same version and go back to the same original. Their differences are due to corrections made not on a fresh comparison with the Hebrew, but subjectively by editors of the version, and though considerable, they concern the form rather than the matter.

...

The Greek version, at least as contained in **Ⲙ**, A B, is as a rule easily intelligible and probably a correct rendering of the original, but it is very hebraistic. From it were made the Syriac and the Old Latin, both of them fairly close and agreeing in general with cod. 58 VL is rough, often merely latinized hebraistic Greek, and sometimes misunderstands the Greek which it translates ...

Dumm, in his brief account of the BOJ text, corroborates Charles, though naming the three recensions differently from him:¹¹⁸⁷

The Book of Judith is presently extant in Gk and later versions only. Scholars agree, however, that the Gk edition is a translation of an original Semitic (probably Hebr) text. The best of three divergent forms of the Gk version is represented by codices Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, and Sinaiticus. (For details cf. Dubarle [*Judith: formes et sens des diverses traditions*, 2 vols, Rome, 1966], and the review by P. Skehan in *CBQ* 28 [1966] 347-49).

Regarding Jerome's version of BOJ (the Vulgate), Charles considered it to be "of less value for textual purposes":¹¹⁸⁸

Jerome's own account of it, in his preface, is not altogether clear. He says that he found great variations in the MSS. ('multorum codicum varietatem vitiosissimam amputavi') and implies that he endeavoured to produce a consistent text by embodying in his work only what he found in the 'Chaldee'. The questions which naturally present themselves are, What were these divergent MSS. and what was the 'Chaldee' text? The MSS. cannot have been Greek, because the Vulgate differs from that version in important particulars: e.g. xiv. 5-7 comes at the end of xiii; i. 12^b-16 and iv. 3 are omitted; iv. 13-15 is altered; additions are made after xiv. 12 and elsewhere; names and numbers often differ. In fact, if compared with the Greek, the Vulgate presents the appearance of a paraphrastic recension.

¹¹⁸⁶ *Op. cit., ibid.*, §'s 3 and 4.

¹¹⁸⁷ 'Judith', in 'Tobit, Judith, Esther', 38:17, p. 624.

¹¹⁸⁸ *Op. cit.*, § 4, pp. 243-244.

Charles will go on to conclude, from a brief consideration of Jerome's 'Chaldee' text:¹¹⁸⁹ "Thus the Vulgate of Judith is a hurried version of an Aramaic midrash containing a free presentation of the story, rather than a translation of any given text. It omits about one-fifth of the book".

So difficult have commentators found it to secure an historical *locus* for the events described in BOJ that the almost universal tendency today - for those who give the book at least some sort of credence as a recording of historical events - is to relegate the book to the category, or *genre*, of 'historical fiction', as, for instance, some kind of literary fusion of all the enemies (Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Syrian, etc.) with whom ancient Israel had ever had to contend. Charles, for one, has proposed the likelihood of this particular *genre* to account for BOJ:¹¹⁹⁰ "But if the book is historical *fiction*, as it seems to be, we need not expect to explain all its statements. The writer selected such incidents as suited his purpose, without troubling about historical accuracy ... The details are not meant to be historical".

Such a view is perhaps not entirely surprising, considering that whoever might aspire to show the historicity of the book tends to stumble right at the very start, with verse 1:1:

"It was the twelfth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar [Nebuchednezzar], who ruled over the Assyrians in the great city of Nineveh. In those days Arphaxad ruled over the Medes in Ecbatana".

At first appearance, we have here:

- (i) A great *Babylonian* king, 'Nebuchadnezzar', ruling over
- (ii) an *Assyrian* capital city, 'Nineveh' [that had ceased to exist several years before Nebuchednezzar II the Great's rule] and whose contemporary rival, 'Arphaxad' [a historical unknown], was apparently
- (iii) a *Mede*. For, as we learn a bit further on, in verse 5, the ruler of 'Nineveh' will make war on the Medes [who were in fact the allies of Nebuchednezzar II the Great]. And, to complete this *potpourri*, Nebuchadnezzar's commander-in-chief, introduced into the narrative in chapter 2, will be found to have a name that is considered to be
- (iv) *Persian*, 'Holofernes', as will be thought to be the case also with his chief eunuch, 'Bagoas'.

No wonder then that earlier commentators had sought for the book's historical *locus* in periods ranging over hundreds of years. Thus, according to Charles:¹¹⁹¹ "Attempts have been made to identify the Nebuchadnezzar of the story with Assurbanipal, Xerxes I, Artaxerxes Ochus, Antiochus Epiphanes: Arphaxad with Deioeces or Phraortes".

¹¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, p. 244.

¹¹⁹⁰ *Ibid*, § 6, p. 246. H. Pfeiffer has also strongly argued for BOJ's belonging to the *genre* of "historical fiction". *History of New Testament Times*, p. 297.

¹¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 245.

Moore gives a similar list of candidates for BOJ's 'Nebuchadnezzar':¹¹⁹²

Although a large number of Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, and Syrian kings have been suggested by scholars as the particular pagan king in question several rulers have had a goodly number of scholars supporting their identification with Judith's "Nebuchadnezzar", notably, Ashurbanipal of Assyria; Artaxerxes III, Ochus, of Persia; Antiochus IV, Epiphanes, of Syria; and Demetrius I, Soter, also of Syria.

To which Moore adds this intriguing point: "Ironically, the two Babylonian kings with the actual name "Nebuchadnezzar" (i.e., Nebuchadnezzar II and "Nebuchadnezzar IV") have won virtually no supporters ...".

Apparently Nebuchadnezzar I, whom I have identified in *Chapter 7* (section: "Identifying Nebuchadnezzar I in a Revised Context", beginning on p. 184) with Sargon II/Sennacherib, is chronologically – in conventional terms – much too far out of range to be seriously considered as a candidate for the 'Nebuchadnezzar' of BOJ.

Leahy has pointed to the following seeming "Historical Inaccuracies" in the book:¹¹⁹³

... (i) Nabuchodonosor [Nebuchadnezzar] bears the title 'king of the Assyrians' and is said to reign in Nineveh. But the historical Nabuchodonosor was king of the Neo-babylonian empire from 604 to 562 B.C. The Assyrian empire had then ceased to exist and so also had Nineveh which was destroyed in 612 B.C. (ii) The Assyrian monarchy is assumed to be still in existence, yet the following passages seem to assign the events narrated to the period following the Babylonian captivity – 4:3 (LXX) reads, 'For they were lately come up from captivity ... and the vessels, the altar and the house were sanctified after their profanation'; 5:18 f. (LXX) reads, "they were led captive into a land that was not theirs, and the temple of their God was cast to the ground (*εγενήθη εις εδαφος*) ... and now they are returned to their God, and are come up from the dispersion where they were dispersed, and have possessed Jerusalem where their sanctuary is'; 5:22 f. (Vg) reads, 'many of them were led away captive into a strange land. But of late returning ... they are come together ... and possess Jerusalem again, where their sanctuary is'. Moreover other passages (*e.g.* 4:5) imply that there was no king reigning, for the supreme authority, even over the Northern Kingdom, was vested in the high-priest assisted by the Sanhedrin (*ἡ γερουσία cf.* LXX 4:8; 15:8). (iii) None of the known Median kings was named Arphaxad. (iv) Holofernes was a Persian as his name implies, and we should not expect a Persian in command of the Assyrian armies.

Another proponent of the historical fiction *genre* for BOJ is Montague, whose explanation Moore has quoted in the context of whom he calls "present-day scholars who regard Judith as having "a certain historicity"¹¹⁹⁴:

¹¹⁹² *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

¹¹⁹³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 403-404.

The author, writing resistance literature under the rule of a foreign power, has used the Assyrians as types of the Greeks and used Nebuchadnezzar as a coded symbol for Antiochus the Illustrious, the Greek Seleucid king who persecuted the Jews. ... *the author reworked for this purpose a story whose historical nucleus went back two centuries, to the Persian period.* ... Thus, we can conclude that the book of Judith is historical in two senses: one, there is a historical nucleus which gave rise to the Judith tradition, *though this nucleus is now difficult to recover*; the other, the story witnesses to the way believing Jews of the post-exilic period understood the challenge of their existence when pressured by tyrants to abandon their sacred traditions. [italics added] (*Books of Esther and Judith*, p. 8).

“Once scholars stopped regarding Judith as a purely historical account, they started looking for a more accurate characterization of its literary genre”, writes Moore, who adds:¹¹⁹⁵

Starting with Martin Luther, who characterized Judith as a poem, “a kind of allegorical ... passion play,” ... scholars have had continued difficulty in establishing the precise genre of the story. To say that the book is a fictional account where historical and geographical details serve a literary purpose, while somewhat helpful, is not precise enough. In other words, exactly what kind of fiction is it?”

“Perhaps the most popular hypothesis among scholars”, according to Moore, “has been what might be called the two-accounts theory”:¹¹⁹⁶

... that is, the book of Judith consists of two parts of unequal length: (1) a “historical” account of a pagan’s war in the East and/or his subsequent invasion of the West (chaps. 1-3); and (2) the story of Judith’s deliverance of her people (chaps. 4-16). While these two sections of the Judith-story are sometimes thought to reflect the same historical period, more often scholars have thought otherwise, especially those scholars who view the story of Judith itself as being essentially fictitious.

According to Leahy, on the other hand, there is a very long tradition of historicity associated with BOJ:¹¹⁹⁷

- (a) Jewish and Christian tradition and all commentaries prior to the sixteenth century regarded the book as historical;
- (b) the minute historical, geographical, chronological and genealogical details indicate a straightforward narrative of real events;

¹¹⁹⁴ Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

¹¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

¹¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 54. Though, according to Bruns: “The prevailing tendency today is to classify this work as an edifying fiction or apocalypse”. ‘Judith, Book Of’, p. 43.

¹¹⁹⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 404. See also H. Pope, ‘Judith, Book of’, p. 554.

(c) the author speaks of descendants of Achior being alive in his time (14:6), and of a festival celebrated annually up to his day in commemoration of Judith's victory (16:31).

And Pope thinks that the variants in the present text indicate a most ancient original:¹¹⁹⁸ "With regard to the state of the text it should be noted that the extraordinary variants presented in the various versions are themselves a proof that the versions were derived from a copy dating from a period *long antecedent to the time of its translators*". In the following chapter we shall discover also that Judith's hymn of praise for instance (16:1-17), following her victory, is regarded as being quite ancient (see p. 82).

Hebrew Canon

"The book of Judith is not a part of the Hebrew canon. It is an "outside book" ...".¹¹⁹⁹ Moore gives his reasons for why he thinks the book was not accepted as canonical by the Rabbis, contrasting it here with the fate of the Book of Esther:¹²⁰⁰

The book of Esther had a long and difficult time attaining Jewish canonicity, but it finally did so. ... Yet the book of Judith, which in its Semitic form had all the essentials of Palestinian Judaism (i.e., God, prayer, dietary scrupulousness, sacrifice, Temple, Jerusalem – *none* of which are [sic] even so much as mentioned in the MT of Esther ...), was never admitted to the Palestinian canon, nor is the book known to have been present at Qumran.

... Judith may have been excluded from the Hebrew canon because the Rabbis, who were responsible for fixing the canon in the last stages of the canonizing process, disapproved of the book's universalism, i.e., its accepting attitude toward the towns of Samaria and its approval of an Ammonite's admittance into the Jewish faith (so Steinmann ...).

... There is genuine merit to Craven's view that Judith was simply too radical a woman for the rabbis who fixed the Jewish canon to memorialize:

To accept the Book of Judith as a canonical book would be to judge the story holy and authoritative. And to judge the story of the woman Judith holy and authoritative could indeed have been deemed a dangerous precedent by the ancient sages. ... she is faithful to the letter of the law but not restricted to traditional modes of behavior. ... she fears no one or thing other than Yahweh. Imagine what life would be like if women were free to chastise the leading men of their communities, if they dared to act independently in the face of traumas, if they refused to marry, and if they had money and servants of their own. Indeed if they, like Judith, hired women to manage their households what would become of all the Eliezers of the world?

¹¹⁹⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 555, citing Calmet's *Introd. In Lib. Judith*. Emphasis added.

¹¹⁹⁹ M. Enslin, *The Book of Judith*, p. 24. Cf. Leahy, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*

¹²⁰⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 86-87.

I suspect that the sages would judge that their communities simply could not bear too many women like Judith. The special genius of this story is that it survived and grew in popularity despite its treatment at the hands of the establishment.

Craven again, citing several commentators in support, will refer to “the often made claim that the Book of Judith represents one of the best examples of Jewish story-telling ...”¹²⁰¹

Moore, with a quote from Orlinsky, now gives what he considers to be the most likely reason amongst those he has already mentioned as to why BOJ was not accepted into the Hebrew canon. And I would agree with his estimation here, though I would note at least also the apparent historical and geographical anomalies in the book:¹²⁰²

However, the most likely reason for Judith’s omission from the Hebrew canon is, as H. M. Orlinsky (*Essays in Biblical*, pp. 279-81) has noted, that the rabbis could not accept it because the book ran counter to their *halakah* ... that a Gentile convert to Judaism had to be circumcised *and baptized* in order to become a Jew. ... In other words, not only did Judith have Achior, an Ammonite, accepted into Judaism, which in itself ran counter to Deut 23:3 ... but he was not baptized.

To canonize a book – that is, to make it officially a source of doctrine – when the doctrine did not conform to that of the canonizers, was too much to ask. The Book of Esther, with all its “faults”, offered nothing specific that violated Pharisee *halakah*. (p. 218)

Enslin, too, has focussed primarily upon the apparently irregular *Achior-as-an-Ammonite* situation, as the reason for BOJ’s not having become a part of the Hebrew canon, comparing - and contrasting - it with the unusual situation of Ruth:¹²⁰³

The author of the book relates that after the triumph of Judith, an officer in the camp of Holofernes, Achior, an Ammonite, “joined into the house of Israel”. According to the Pentateuch, “An Ammonite or a Moabite shall not enter into the assembly of Yahweh, even to the tenth generation shall none of them enter into the assembly of Yahweh forever” [Deuteronomy 23:4] If the book of Judith should gain acceptance into the Holy Scriptures, it would contradict the Pentateuchal laws. It is true that Ruth was a Moabite and she converted to Judaism, nevertheless the book of Ruth became a part of the Holy Scriptures. The sages, in order to reconcile the contradictory and opposing view between the book of Ruth and the Pentateuch, declared that the Pentateuchal prohibition regarding the Ammonite and the Moabite referred only to the male but not to the female Thus the book of Ruth could be very well accepted in the Hebrew canon.

¹²⁰¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 6 and n. 20.

¹²⁰² *Op. cit.*, p. 87. “*Halakah*”, Moore notes, “is that body of Jewish Law in the Talmud which interprets and supplements the laws of the O.T”, n. 75.

¹²⁰³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 24-25.

He goes on to tell which Jewish sage it was who was of sufficient authority to have prevented canonical acceptance of BOJ: namely, Gamaliel:¹²⁰⁴

It is also true that sages during the Second Commonwealth encouraged proselytism regardless of race and no obstacles were placed against the Ammonites. A Mishne relates: “On that day, came Judah, an Ammonite proselyte, and stood before them in the *Beth Hamidrash*, and said to them, ‘May I enter into the community?’ Rabban Gamaliel said to him: ‘You are not allowed.’ Rabbi Joshua said to him: ‘You are allowed.’” ... Thus we have to conclude that in the academy of Javneh there was a division of opinion among the sages regarding the acceptance of Ammonite proselytes. The opinion of Rabbi Joshua became the established law. The opinion of Rabban Gamaliel, however, was enough to keep the book of Judith from inclusion in the Hebrew Bible.

Enslin, continuing on with his discussion of *Achior*, now turns to a consideration of circumcision and baptism:¹²⁰⁵

Again, it is stated in the book of Judith that when Achior converted to Judaism, he was circumcised; it does not say that he was baptized. During the Second Jewish Commonwealth, the ritual of immersion was not required for conversion to Judaism. At the conclave of the year 65 CE, it was decreed that a proselyte must go through the rites of baptism in order to enter the Jewish community. ... The fact that in the book of Judith it is stated that Achior became a proselyte by circumcision alone without baptism was enough to keep the book out of the Hebrew canon. If this book should be included in the Hebrew Bible, it would mean that the book of Judith was holy and authoritative; thus there would be a contradiction between the statement in Judith and the decree of the sages who maintained that baptism is a *sine qua non*.

As his final reasons for BOJ’s non acceptance into the Hebrew canon, Enslin will argue that the book was written too late for it to have been an ‘inspired’ text, and, moreover, it was written in the ‘diaspora’:¹²⁰⁶

The book of Judith was written in a late period, after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, as we shall subsequently show. According to the rabbinic tradition, books written after the Persian period were not “inspired” ... thus they could not be a part of the Hebrew Bible. Esther’s story was placed in the time of Ahasuerus, while the story of Judith was placed after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes [sic], long after prophecy ceased in Israel. Again, the book of Esther was written in Judaea, while the book of Judith was compiled in the diaspora, and that is also a good reason for its not being included in the Hebrew canon.

¹²⁰⁴ *Ibid*, p. 25.

¹²⁰⁵ *Ibid*.

¹²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, pp. 25-26.

No books written in the diaspora were included in the Hebrew Bible.

I have already though, in *Chapter 7*, begun to pave the way for a resolution to the *Achior* problem, which is apparently *the* most serious obstacle to BOJ's canonical acceptance,¹²⁰⁷ by my hinting at an identification of BOJ's *Achior* with *Ahikar*, a nephew of Tobit, and hence a Naphtalian Israelite, not an Ammonite. I shall be discussing this *Achior* in more detail later in this chapter (e.g. pp. 46-47), along with the other matters raised by Enslin, of late authorship, and, supposedly written in the diaspora (e.g. pp. 58-59).

Catholic Canon

“Although the book did not form part of the Hebrew Canon”, as Leahy explains:¹²⁰⁸

... the [Catholic] Church considered it from the beginning as divinely inspired, having received it together with the other sacred books contained in the LXX. It was quoted with approbation by Clement of Rome (I Cor 55) and cited on an equality with other Scripture by Clement of Alexandria (*Strom.* 2, 7), Origen (*De Orat.* 13, 29; *Hom.* 9 on Jg; *Hom.* 19 on Jer.) and Ambrose (*De Off. Min.* 3, 13). The Councils of Hippo (A.D. 393) and Carthage (A.D. 397 and 419) enumerated it among the canonical books. St Augustine (*De Doctrina Christiana* 2, 8) had it on his list of sacred books.

And Dumm tells:¹²⁰⁹ “[Judith] never came into the Hebr. Canon, but it was adopted for reading for the feast of Hannukah, and even Jerome [who did not accept the book as canonical] admitted that the work was “read” in the Church. Final recognition of its canonicity came with the Council of Trent”. Consequently, as Leahy explains (regarding the early C20th view):¹²¹⁰

The vast majority of Catholic critics regard the book as a record of fact and they endeavour to answer the difficulties urged in the name of history against its accuracy. The arguments which they advance are the following: (a) Jewish and Christian tradition and all commentators prior to the sixteenth century regarded the book as historical; (b) the minute historical, geographical, chronological and genealogical details indicate a straightforward narrative of real events; (c) the author speaks of descendants of Achior being alive in his time (14:6), and a festival celebrated annually up to his day in commemoration of Judith's victory (16:31). Those who uphold the historicity (or, at least, a historical nucleus) of the narration take the view that ‘Nabuchodonosor’ and ‘Arphaxad’ are pseudonyms disguising historical persons whose identity cannot be ascertained with certainty.

¹²⁰⁷ Moore has allowed for the possibility of “a number of considerations” rather than simply “*the* [one major] reason why Judith was not included in the Jewish canon”. *Ibid.* His emphasis.

¹²⁰⁸ *Op. cit, ibid.*

¹²⁰⁹ *Op. cit, ibid.*

¹²¹⁰ *Op. cit, ibid.*

(i) *Some Evidences Against BOJ's Historicity*

According to Moore:¹²¹¹

... since Martin Luther, who viewed Judith as a poem and an allegorical passion play, scholars have noted the book's shocking carelessness with well-established historical and geographical facts. As early as 1689, Capellus delivered a scathing evaluation of Judith: "a most silly fable invented by a most inept, injudicious, impudent and clownish Hellenist" (*Commentarii et notae criticae in Vet. Test. ...*). Oddly enough, although as early as the fifth century A.D. a few writers had reservations about the authenticity of Judith's Nebuchadnezzar (Sulpicius Severus, for instance, thought that he should be identified with Artaxerxes III), the Church Fathers did not question the book's essentially historical character (see Bielek, *Weidenauer Studien* 4 [1911]: 335-68).

Catholic scholars generally continued to hold on to the historicity of BOJ until the mid-C20th. Thus Craven:¹²¹² "... prior to the publication of Pius XII's encyclical *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943), Roman Catholic critics defended the deuterocanonical text of Judith as historical ...".

Moore goes on to mention two problems to be found in the opening verse of BOJ ('Nebuchadnezzar' ruling over (i) *the Assyrians*, at (ii) *Nineveh*), which he calls "two of the most egregious "blunders" of the entire book". The book's main historical anomalies have already been listed above. But there are also some serious geographical problems with BOJ in its present form. Whilst all of these will be taken into account in the course of this chapter, I shall focus here upon those pertaining to the account of *Holofernes'* march from Nineveh to Syro-Palestine, and on to Dothan (near *Bethulia*).

Here, firstly, is the description of that western campaign from Judith 2:19, 21-28 and 3:9:

Then [Holofernes] set out with his whole army They marched for three days from Nineveh to the plain of Bectileth near the mountain that is to the north of Upper Cilicia. From there Holofernes took his whole army, the infantry, cavalry, and chariots, and went up into the hill country. He ravaged Put and Lud, and plundered all the Rassisites and the Ishmaelites on the border of the desert, south of the country of the Cheleans. Then he followed the Euphrates and passed through Mesopotamia and destroyed all the fortified towns along the brook Abron, as far as the sea. He also seized the territory of Cilicia, and killed everyone who resisted him. Then he came to the southern borders of Japheth, facing Arabia. He surrounded all the Midianites, and burned their tents and plundered their sheepfolds. Then he went down into the plain of Damascus during the wheat harvest, and burned all their fields and ... sacked their towns and ravaged their lands and put all their young men to the sword.

¹²¹¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 46.

¹²¹² *Op. cit.*, p. 7. Craven also mentions other "special turning points in the study of [BOJ]" in the early and mid-C20th. *Ibid.*, including n. 24.

So fear and dread of him fell upon all the people who lived along the seacoast, at Sidon and Tyre, and those who lived in Sur and Ocina and all who lived in Jamnia. Those who lived in Azotus and Ascalon feared him greatly.

... Then [Holofernes] came toward Esdraelon, near Dothan, facing the great ridge of Judea; he camped between Geba and Scythopolis, and remained for a whole month in order to collect all the supplies for his army.

Moore tells of some of the problems associated with this particular campaign account:¹²¹³

Chaps. 2 and 3 of Judith continue to offer serious errors in fact but of a different kind, namely, geographical. Holofernes' entire army marched from Nineveh to northern Cilicia, a distance of about three hundred miles, in just *three days* (2:21), after which they cut their way through Put and Lud (usually identified by scholars with Libya in Africa, and Lydia in Asia Minor, respectively ...), only to find themselves crossing the Euphrates River and proceeding west *through Mesopotamia* (2:24) before arriving at Cilicia and Japheth, facing Arabia (2:25)! Either something is now missing from the itinerary, or the author knew nothing about Mesopotamian geography

Once Holofernes reached the eastern coastline of the Mediterranean, his itinerary becomes more believable even though a number of cities and peoples mentioned are unknown, e.g. Sur and Okina (2:28) and Geba (3:10). Just exactly what route Holofernes' army took to get from the coastal cities of Azotus and Ascalon (2:28) to the place where they could encamp and besiege Bethulia is unknown. The LXX seems to suggest that Holofernes' attack on Bethulia came from the north (cf. 4:6; 8:21; 11:14, 19). ...

According to verse 4:4: "So [the Israelites living in Judaea] sent word to every district of Samaria, and to Kona, Beth-horon, Belmain, and Jericho, and to Choba and Aesora, and the valley of Salem". Moore finds this highly problematical also:¹²¹⁴

Starting with chap. 4, the problem shifts from the author's errors and confusion over geographical names and locations to the reader's ignorance and confusion as to the geographical locations of sites near Bethulia. For instance, of the eight Israelite places named in 4:4, five are totally unknown, namely, Kona, Belmain, Choba, Aesora, and the valley of Salem. ...

Craven though, whose purpose will be rather a literary assessment of BOJ, has no qualms therefore in dismissing as insignificant the historical and geographical problems of BOJ with which other commentators of the book have tried to grapple:¹²¹⁵ "The Book of Judith simply does not yield literal or even allegorical data. Instead, its opening details seem to be a playful manipulation of both historical and geographical facts and inventions".

¹²¹³ *Op. cit.*, p. 47.

¹²¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²¹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 73.

(ii) *Some Evidences For BOJ's Historicity*

Moore continues on with certain arguments in favour of BOJ's historicity, beginning with this general remark:¹²¹⁶ "The book purports to be a historical account. Moreover, it has all the outward trappings of one, including various kinds of dates, numerous names of well-known persons and places, and, most important of all, a *quite* believable plot". All of this data - what Leahy called "the minute historical, geographical, chronological and genealogical details [that] indicate a straightforward narrative of real events" - was what impressed upon me (back in the early 1980's, my first recollection of having read BOJ) that here was an account of a real history (albeit an anciently written one). Moore again:¹²¹⁷

Typical of genuine historical accounts, Judith includes a number of quite specific dates ...:

the twelfth year ... of Nebuchadnezzar (1:1)
 In [Nebuchadnezzar's] seventeenth year (1:13)
 in the eighteenth year on the twenty-second day of the first month (2:1)

and exact periods of time:

feasted for four whole months (1:16)
 stayed there a full month (3:10)
 blockaded them for thirty-four days (7:20)
 hold out for five more days (7:30)
 a widow ... for three years and four months (8:4)
 It took the people a month to loot the camp (15:11)
 For three months the people continued their celebrations in Jerusalem (16:20)

as well as some vague and imprecise expressions of time:

during the wheat harvest (2:27)
 they had returned from exile only a short time before ... Temple had just recently been rededicated (4:3)
 For many days the people ... kept on fasting (4:13)
 At one time they settled (5:7)
 and settled there for a long while (5:8)
 settled there as long as there was food (5:10)
 There they settled for a long while (5:16) ...
 died during the barley harvest (8:2)
 For there has not been in our generation (8:18)
 today is the greatest day of my whole life (12:18)
 more than he had ever drunk on a single day since he was born (12:20) ...

¹²¹⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 38.

¹²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39, 44.

Because there is a plethora of geographical names in Judith, only a representative sampling will be cited. Suffice it to say, some place names are quite well known:

Nineveh and Ecbatana (1:1)	Damascus (1:7)
Rages (1:5)	Esdraelon (1:8)
Samaria and Tahpanhes (1:9)	Sidon, Tyre, and Azotus (2:28)
Memphis (1:10)	Dothan (3:9)
Cilicia (1:12)	Scythopolis (3:10)
Euphrates (2:24)	Jerusalem (4:2)

while other sites are uncertain:

The river Hydaspes (1:6)	Bectileth (2:21)
the brook of Egypt (1:9)	Put and Lud (2:23)
the two seas (1:12)	Beth-horon and Jericho (4:4)

...

[Though Beth-horon and Jericho, and even ‘the brook of Egypt’, would hardly be regarded as “uncertain” by historians/geographers familiar with Palestine].

Moore also favourably (his “evidence for”) refers to Judith’s genealogy (to which I shall be returning right at the beginning of the following chapter).¹²¹⁸ “As for Judith’s own historical roots, she claims for herself the longest genealogy of any woman in the Bible, sixteen known ancestors ...”.

B. Proposed Historical Settings for BOJ

Though I have already made it quite apparent in VOLUME ONE in what particular historical era I believe the Judith scenario to have taken place (repeating this at the beginning of this chapter), namely, the era of king Hezekiah and his son, Manasseh, it is only fair in this study of BOJ to outline to what eras others have proposed to assign this drama. The most popular choices for BOJ’s era appear to have been:

1. Ashurbanipal (C7th BC, conventional dating). The emphasis on “the Medes” in BOJ chapter 1 had led certain able commentators in the past, wishing to uphold the book’s historical integrity, to try to locate it to the era of Ashurbanipal, grandson of Sennacherib. These claimed to have found similarities between *Nebuchadnezzar’s* war with *Arphaxad* and Ashurbanipal’s war with the Median king, Phraortes. Such an historical scenario, moreover, provides an opportunity to account for the lack of a king of Jerusalem in BOJ; for Ashurbanipal had held captive, in Babylon, Hezekiah’s son and successor, Manasseh, leaving Jerusalem temporarily king-less. The Ashurbanipal scenario too has the advantage of preserving the pervading *Assyrian* element in BOJ, which I think frankly must be taken seriously into account.

¹²¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 39.

2. *Second Commonwealth* (5th BC). For others, the political set-up, the absence of any mention of a king, and with a *gerousia*, “the people’s Council of Elders” sitting in Jerusalem (Judith 4:8), has confirmed them in their view that BOJ might pertain to the time of the Second Commonwealth period, when Jerusalem was ruled by only a council, and no king.

3. *Artaxerxes III ‘Ochus’* (4th BC). Others (indeed from the C5th AD, as we saw) have suggested that the period in question was c. 352 BC, when the Persian king Artaxerxes ‘Ochus’ is thought to have invaded Palestine *en route* to Egypt, and *Holofernes*, a Cappadocian prince, fought against Egypt.¹²¹⁹ *Holofernes* and *Bagoas* are considered to be “definitely Persian names”.¹²²⁰ In fact this period, according to Leahy, was (at least at his time of writing) the favoured period for the setting of the BOJ story:¹²²¹ “... the most widely-held opinion being that according to which the name [Nebuchadnezzar] stands for the Persian king Artaxerxes III Ochus (359-336)”.

4. *Maccabees* (C2nd BC). For others again, the socio-political situation as described in BOJ more exactly fits the Maccabean age. Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* is to be identified with one or other Greek ruler (e.g. Antiochus *Epiphanes*) who hated the Jews and who had ordered his armies against a beleaguered Jerusalem.

The era that I myself have chosen for BOJ, EOH, actually misses out here completely. I have already given reasons for why this might be the case, and these will be developed below (in section: “**BOJ AS A HISTORY**”, beginning on p. 37). But let me, before concluding my development of EOH for BOJ, enlarge a little on scenarios 1-4 above, by giving some examples, to each of which I shall add a brief comment.

1. *Ashurbanipal*

Leahy has briefly set the scene:¹²²²

Another opinion which still finds some supporters holds that Nabuchodonosor [Nebuchadnezzar] is the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (669-626) and that Arphaxad is either the Median king Deioces or his son Phraortes. The high-priest was in charge of political affairs because the victorious advance of Holofernes (who was probably a tributary king) coincided with the period when Manasses [Manasseh] of Judah was held captive in Babylon (*cf.* 2 Par 33:11 ff.). The return from captivity refers not to the whole people but rather to some isolated group, and the casting down of the temple refers to its profanation in the days of Manasses (4 Kings 21:7; 2 Par 33:7).

¹²¹⁹ Thus Diodorus Siculus xvii, 6, 1, as referred to by J. Grintz, ‘Judith’, p. 452.

¹²²⁰ *Ibid.* Douay Bible gives *Vagao*, rather than *Bagoas*, e.g. p. 625.

¹²²¹ *Op. cit, ibid.*

¹²²² *Ibid.*

Moore, in his discussion of an ‘Ashurbanipal scenario’ for BOJ, replaces the Median king with “Ashurbanipal’s brother Shamashshumukin, the deputy king of Babylon who led an empire-wide revolt against Ashurbanipal in 662 B.C [sic]”.¹²²³

Comment:

Actually - as I already suggested in *Chapter 6* - to locate the high point of the BOJ drama to the time of Ashurbanipal is to be right on the mark, given that my radical shortening of neo-Assyrian history has enabled for Ashurbanipal to have already made an appearance at the time – albeit as a very young nominated heir to Esarhaddon. And Hezekiah’s son, Manasseh, appears to have been acting as king of Jerusalem in the latter years of his father Hezekiah’s reign – just as Esarhaddon was ruling as Viceroy in the last decade of Sennacherib’s reign. (Refer back to **Table 7** on p. 393 of VOLUME ONE). So a virtually kingless Judah, with the effective king Manasseh being temporarily in exile, sent there from Palestine by Esarhaddon and perhaps received by Ashurbanipal - basically according to Leahy’s proposal - is perfectly in harmony with the scenario for the culmination of the BOJ drama.

Seemingly on the negative side, for an Ashurbanipal setting, Judith is said to have lived to the age of 105 and Israel was not troubled again during her lifetime “or for a long time after her death” (cf. 16:23, 25). On this, Leahy has observed:¹²²⁴

“It seems, therefore, that Judith’s glorious deed cannot have taken place in the reign of Ashurbanipal, because [King] Josias of Judah was defeated and slain at Megiddo in 609”.

But see my Epilogue: “The Aftermath” (p. 85), for a reconsideration of the significance of this verse (16:25).

And what also ‘cannot have taken place in the reign of Ashurbanipal’, to borrow Leahy’s phrase - and I am speaking here now entirely in a conventional sense, to which Leahy would adhere - is the defeat of a massive Assyrian army in this Great King’s seventeenth (or even thirteenth, by the Latin version) year.

This important fact alone disqualifies Ashurbanipal as a serious candidate for the ‘Nebuchadnezzar’ of BOJ.

2. *Second Commonwealth*

This era does not seem to have any really strong support, with those who mention it generally giving it only as a secondary consideration. But I should like to make the following point, nevertheless, which is actually applicable to 2-4 above.

¹²²³ *Op. cit.*, p. 54.

¹²²⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 407.

Comment:

It should be noted that the Greek word translated as “Council”, *γερονται*, is the one used also of the “ancients” in Leviticus 9:1 (Hebrew **זקני**). So it could simply mean the ‘elders’ of Jerusalem. And indeed we find “the elders of the town” also guarding Judith’s *Bethulia* at the time of the Assyrian invasion (6:16). It does not necessarily mean that the BOJ era was post-monarchical.

3. *Artaxerxes III*

This era, most favoured by Leahy,¹²²⁵ is also the one opted for by Moore:¹²²⁶

Many scholars, past and present, have argued that chaps. 1-3 of Judith have drawn upon the campaigns and accomplishments of the energetic but ruthless Artaxerxes III ... who, early in his career, had to establish himself in the east This Achaemenian ruler did, in fact, invade the west, wreaking terrible destruction on such Phoenician cities as Sidon ... and by 343 B.C. he had reconquered Egypt. Artaxerxes III actually had a general by the name of Holofernes ... and an advisor named Bagoas Thus, the postexilic setting of Judith; the presence of Persian practices, terms, and names ... plus the absence of Greek personal and place names – all ... make it quite likely, in the judgment of the present writer, that the author utilized information, possibly oral in character, from the time of Artaxerxes III. But if so, then – as many supporters of this identification quickly concede – the year of Judith’s composition does not date to this period.

Comment:

This is all rather impressive. And it seemingly becomes even more impressive in light of these points provided by Leahy:¹²²⁷

Moreover Eusebius (*Chron.* I, 11) states that Artaxerxes [III] deported some Jews to Hyrcania near the Caspian Sea. Furthermore, Nabuchodonosor’s demand of ‘earth and water’ in token of submission (*cf.* Gk 2:7) is reminiscent of a Persian custom (*cf.* Herodotus 6, 48 f.). Again the mention of Persians in 16:12 seems to show that the author was really thinking of the campaign of a Persian king. We should also note that Persian kings were sometimes called kings of Assyria (*cf.* I Esd 6:22).

Moore has supplied even more presumably Persian elements:¹²²⁸

¹²²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 404.

¹²²⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 55. Bruns also favours Artaxerxes III, though he considers Darius I as well. *Op. cit.*, pp. 43-44.

¹²²⁷ *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

¹²²⁸ *Op. cit.*, p. 50.

... There are also allusions to certain Persian practices and terms (e.g., “to prepare ... earth and water” [2:7]; *kidaris*, “turban” [4:15]; *satrapes*, “governor” [5:2]; and *akinakès*, “sword” [13:6]), not to mention allusions to the Medes (1:1; 16:10) and Persians themselves (1:7; 16:10). Then too, the appellation “God of Heaven” (see 5:8) was an expression common in the Persian period. Finally, the information in 4:3, while vague and imprecise (i.e., “they had returned from exile only a short time before; ... and the Temple had just recently been rededicated”) strongly suggests a Persian setting.

A revision of Persian history is well beyond the scope of this thesis. I have however already hinted at the need for some reconsideration of it, beginning with Ramses III (C8th BC, revised) and the contemporaneous ‘Sea Peoples’ (see e.g. *Chapter 11*, pp. 282-283). Moreover, I cannot here avoid entirely a discussion of relevant parts of ‘Persian history’; for it does appear that certain achievements attributed to the Persians were originally Assyrian - just as the Greeks would later gain the credit for much that had originated in Egypt or Palestine.¹²²⁹ The western invasions of Sargon II/ Sennacherib were on such a grand scale, with so many troops involved, that I think there are loud reverberations of these in Greco-Persian folklore. And I shall give a specific example of this in the next chapter (see pp. 67-68), in connection with BOJ and the Lindian chronicle (supposedly relating to a Persian invasion of Greece). The same comment re the appropriation of the achievements of Sargon II/Sennacherib into Greco-Persian folklore, applies, according to my revision, to the corresponding BOJ drama, that I think has echoes and resonances in later, non-Jewish folklore. Some of these ‘echoes’ I shall allude to in the course of this interfacing of BOJ with KCI.

Sweeney, for one, has detected certain extraordinary likenesses between the Assyrian king, Sennacherib, and a (Medo-)Persian king - not actually Artaxerxes III, but Xerxes.¹²³⁰ My own preference though is, not to identify these two as one, as Sweeney has, but rather to suggest that what was originally Assyrian was later appropriated by the Persians. Sweeney, following Heinsohn, has been at pains to explain what these two consider to be the mystifying lack of a full stratigraphy for the Medo-Persians.¹²³¹ And I think that, if an explanation is needed, it might be, as with the lack of archaeology for the Kassites (refer back to *Chapter 7*, pp. 175-176), that the apparent dearth of such archaeological data is to be accounted for in the archaeology of a parallel (when the revision takes effect) kingdom.

Anyway, here is Sweeney’s summary of the notable likenesses that he believes he has found between Sennacherib and Xerxes:¹²³²

¹²²⁹ J. Breasted, for example, made the point that Hatshepsut’s marvellous temple structure was a witness to the fact that the Egyptians developed architectural styles of which the Greeks, later, would be credited as the originators. *A History of Egypt*, p. 274.

¹²³⁰ *Ramessides, Medes and Persians*, pp. 108-111. Cf. ‘Emmet Sweeney’s Historical Revision’, p. 56.

¹²³¹ *Ibid*, following G. Heinsohn’s ‘Mesopotamian Historiography’, pp. 20-22.

¹²³² *Ramessides, Medes and Persians*, pp. 108-111.

Sennacherib

Made war on Egypt in his third year.

Fought a bitter war against the Greeks.

Suppressed two Babylonian rebellions. First in his second year, led by Bel-Shimanni. The second, years later, led by Shamash-eriba.

The Babylonians were well-treated after the first rebellion; but savagely repressed after the second

After the second rebellion, Sennacherib massacred the inhabitants, razed the city walls and temples, and carried off the sacred golden statue of Marduk.

Thereafter the Babylonian gods were suppressed in favour of Ashur, who was made the supreme deity.

After a reign of 22 years Sennacherib was murdered in a palace conspiracy involving at least two of his sons.

Xerxes

Made war on Egypt in his second year.

Fought a bitter war against the Greeks.

Suppressed two Babylonian rebellions. First in his third year, led by Bel-ibni. The second, years later, led by Mushezib-Marduk.

The Babylonians were well-treated after the first rebellion, but savagely after the second

After the second rebellion, Xerxes massacred the inhabitants, razed the city walls and temples, and carried off the sacred golden statue of Bel-Marduk.

Thereafter the Babylonian gods were suppressed in favour of Ahura-Mazda, who was made the supreme deity.

After a reign of 21 years Xerxes was murdered in a palace conspiracy involving at least two of his sons.

[End of Sweeney's comparisons]

Also to be taken into account in connection with this are problematical points raised by historians in regard to Xerxes' supposed invasion of Greece; for example, there perhaps being no archaeological evidence for the king's supposed bridging of the Hellespont. Not to mention the impossible size of the king of Persia's army.¹²³³

In the next chapter (p. 78, n. 44), I shall point out a degree of similarity between the fate of Esarhaddon, as commander-in-chief of the Assyrian armies, and Mardonius the Persian general for Xerxes, thus perhaps strengthening Sweeney's argument.

As may be in the case of Xerxes – if Sweeney is correct – then likewise do I propose with Artaxerxes III a possible confusion of Greco-Persian folklore with documented Assyrian history. Be all this as it may, Artaxerxes III cannot be the enemy king who dominates the early part of BOJ, since - apart from the fact that he was not an Assyrian, ruling over Nineveh, nor was he campaigning beyond his very earliest years - *Artaxerxes III did not suffer a crushing defeat in Palestine.*

¹²³³ For Herodotus' account of these, see *Histories*, Book 7, pp. 441-524. As for the supposedly problematical 'Greek' element in BOJ, the welcoming of *Holofernes* and his victorious troops by the Palestinians "with garlands and dances and tambourines" (3:7), Sayce has attested to traces of Greek colonies on the coast of Palestine in the time of Hezekiah. *Higher Criticism and the Monuments*, p. 494.

4. Maccabees

Moore has discussed this possibility at some length. I shall take only a part of it here:¹²³⁴

That both “sections” of the Judith-story have Maccabean elements cannot be denied. There is in Judith, for instance, the religious crisis, i.e., the potential destruction of the Temple and the compulsory worshiping of “Nebuchadnezzar” as god. ... However, it is the second part of Judith (chaps. 4-16) that is more clearly Maccabean in spirit, in its religious practices and political institutions. ... Not surprisingly then, some scholars would equate Judith’s “Nebuchadnezzar” with one of the Syrian kings during the lifetime of Judas Maccabeus ... namely, Antiochus IV, Epiphanes (175-163 B.C.) or Demetrius I (162-150 B.C.). “Parallels” between the activities of Antiochus IV and “Nebuchadnezzar” would be that both had a Western campaign against Egypt and Judea (Jdt 1:9-12 and I Macc 1:16) and an Eastern one (against Media and Ecbatana in Jdt 1:14; against Persia and Persepolis in 1 Macc 3:31 and 2 Macc 9:2-3).

... the book of Judith unquestionably contains some Hellenistic elements, notably, such practices as wearing garlands [re this, see my footnote 51 on previous page] and olive wreaths (... 3:7 and 15:13 ...), worshiping a king as a god (3:8), and reclining while eating (12:15). Certain institutional arrangements seem to have developed after 165 B.C., with the rise of the Maccabees: the sweeping military and political powers of the high priest (4:6) and the supremacy of the Jerusalem Council over other Jewish councils (4:6, 8; 11:14). Some scholars would regard it as no coincidence that Judith’s life span of a hundred and five years (16:23) was exactly the same length of time as the Maccabean period (i.e., 168-163 B.C. [sic] ...). More specifically, a number of items in the Judith-story are strikingly reminiscent of the story of Judas Maccabeus (167-161 B.C.) as recorded in 1 and 2 Maccabees ... especially with reference to Judas’s defeat of Nicanor

Craven gives ‘the Maccabean period’ more accurately as 168-63 (thus 105 years).¹²³⁵

Comment:

If the Greek word *ἑβρουσα* had the specific meaning of ‘Sanhedrin’, then this might well suggest that the Judith story could not pre-date the Maccabees; for, according to Leahy, “the actual Sanhedrin [was] an institution which was not earlier than the Maccabean age ...”¹²³⁶

Whilst there are admittedly certain likenesses between the character and death of *Holofernes* and those of Nicanor - for both, arrogant enemies of the Jews, who had threatened Judah, were beheaded, in the region of Samaria - there are important dissimilarities as well. For *Holofernes*, whose beheading was the actual cause of his death, was beheaded in his tent, by a woman; Nicanor, who was beheaded subsequent to his death, was beheaded on the battlefield, presumably by male soldiers (cf. Judith 13:1-10 & 2 Maccabees 8:21-36).

¹²³⁴ *Op. cit.*, pp. 55, 50.

¹²³⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 112, n. 86.

¹²³⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 404. Leahy himself thinks however that the word “does not here mean the actual Sanhedrin”.

Also *Holofernes* had, until that point, been undefeated in Palestine; whereas Nicanor had already experienced one crushing defeat by Judas Maccabeus (8:21-35).

Interestingly, Judas Maccabeus had recalled to his troops, before this particular battle, “how, in the time of Sennacherib, when one hundred and eighty-five thousand perished ...” (v. 19). And he repeated this in the face of Nicanor’s second assault (15:22): “... O Lord, you sent your angel in the time of King Hezekiah of Judea, and he killed fully one hundred eighty-five thousand in the camp of Sennacherib”.

Finally, a Maccabean scenario for Judith takes us ever further away from the Assyrian era. (And one has only to peruse Assyrian art to find depictions of neo-Assyrian kings ‘reclining while eating’).

In conclusion, I can say that each one of these proposed scenarios (1-4) has points in its favour. And each has its defects. But none of them (though the Maccabean scenario has similarities) has the *main incident*: namely, the destruction of a massive Assyrian army in the vicinity of Samaria. It took me over a decade, in fact, to realize that the key to deciphering BOJ was *firstly to identify in ancient history the main incident*, and then, only after that, to see if all the lesser details could be synchronized into one coherent historical picture. Thus I would have to agree with Montague (quote on p. 21 above), with regard to the historical essence of BOJ, that “this nucleus is now difficult to recover”. The conclusion though, in retrospect, was obvious; *for there was only one incident in the entire history of the Jews when a massive, world-conquering Assyrian army almost 200,000-strong was stopped dead in its tracks as it marched to conquer Jerusalem. That was the demise of Sennacherib’s army concerning the date of which there has been much debate.*

This was the *main incident* to be matched with the BOJ scenario. But it also needed to be accompanied by an in-depth revision of EOH. Then, slowly but surely, the details in BOJ take care of themselves, in EOH: e.g., the pervasive Assyrian element; the ‘Nebuchadnezzar’ of ‘Nineveh’, who built a great city; the Year 12 war in the east, with a battle in a great plain; the destruction of the enemy’s city; the kinglessness in Judah with a high priest at the helm; and so on. Such a scenario would also perhaps remove Enslin’s two secondary reasons as to why BOJ could not be accepted into the Hebrew canon: namely, that it was written after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and, in the diaspora. (See section: “The Author of BOJ”, beginning on p. 58).

Having the core of the story in hand, one can then proceed to fix up the details. But this, as I have just recalled, has proved to be easier said than done. One then encounters, for instance, those hotly-debated problems that we have seen associated with Sennacherib’s invasions of the west: namely,

- How many times did the Assyrian king target Jerusalem?
- In what particular campaign did the destruction of his army occur?
- And how did it occur?

We have recently discussed the first two questions in detail, and I have hinted at the resolution of the third. I am confident from what has already been determined that all the requisite details needed to answer this last point will be found in BOJ.

BOJ AS A HISTORY

Verses 1:1, 5

The two greatest difficulties (already introduced above, and discussed in part in section **B**, beginning on p. 29) with which I must fully come to grips in my attempted interfacing of KCI with BOJ are:

- (i) those elements in the latter that would seem to point definitely to a setting for the story later than EOH; especially the Septuagint's implication that the whole drama belongs to a post-exilic era after the destruction of the first Temple; and
- (ii) the failure of any major version to refer to a king ruling over Jerusalem. Such no doubt are the main reasons why commentators do not usually even consider the era of Sennacherib as being relevant for BOJ.

Substantially, the details in BOJ find their place, as I am arguing, in EOH, largely in the conflict between the Assyrians (Sennacherib and his son, Esarhaddon) and the Jews (Hezekiah and his son, Manasseh); though names have been confused and certain later foreign elements appear to have been interpolated. I put down these anomalies and interpolations largely to copyists' mistakes and ignorance (historical and geographical) on the part of the later editors and translators. This last is not just an excuse. The pseudepigraphal BOT and BOJ were extremely popular down through the centuries and were copied many times, with mistakes inevitably creeping in. (Refer back to quote by Pope, on p. 22 above).

In the light of such explanations, let us try to restore to pristine condition that extremely problematical beginning to BOJ, whilst locating it to what I believe to be its proper historical setting (1:1, 5):

It was the twelfth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled over the Assyrians in the great city of Nineveh. In those days Arphaxad ruled over the Medes in Ecbatana.

... Then King Nebuchadnezzar made war against King Arphaxad in the great plain that is on the borders of Ragau.

“Twelfth year”. We are by now well familiar (e.g. from *Chapter 6*, pp. 163-164) with the fact that Sargon II (my Sennacherib), king of Assyria, had, in his “twelfth year”, successfully waged an eastern war against a stubborn opponent, Merodach-baladan. Sargon tells us:¹²³⁷ “In my twelfth year of reign (Merodach-baladan) For 12 years, against the will (heart) of the gods, he held sway over Babylon ...”.

¹²³⁷ D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, vol. II, # 31.

Moreover, I went on to propose in that same volume, in *Chapter 7*, that the so-called ‘Middle’ Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar I, was in fact Sargon II/Sennacherib *as ruler of Babylon*. Sennacherib in fact began to rule Babylon even before his rule over Assyria had commenced.¹²³⁸

This, if correct, would immediately account for one of BOJ’s most controversial details, having a king named ‘Nebuchadnezzar’ ruling over the Assyrians at Nineveh!

Given this premise, then BOJ’s *Arphaxad*, with whom the Assyrian king fought in his Year 12, can only be Merodach-baladan of Babylon (cf. 2 Kings 20:12; Isaiah 39:1), whom I have suggested in *Chapter 7* (p. 183) may have been the actual brother of Sargon II. Likely, then, this was a civil war between two mighty kings of Assyrian stock.

Merodach-baladan’s rule over Chaldea and the Chaldeans (see p. 40 below) seems to be reflected in the name, ‘Arphaxad’ (Ur-pa-chesed), i.e., ‘*Ur of the Chaldees*’. And that is confirmed by what we are told in verse 6: “Thus, many nations joined the forces of the *Chaldeans*”, including the “Elymeans” (Elamites), perennial allies of Babylon against Assyria. Thus we can probably now isolate, as copyists’ mistakes, “Medes” and “Ecbatana” in 1:1, and also the associated “Ragau” mentioned in 1:5. *Arphaxad*/Merodach-baladan did not ‘rule over the Medes’, at least not primarily, as the current translations of BOJ 1:1 would have it. And this seems to be underlined by the fact that verse 6 identifies his army as *Chaldean*, without any mention here of the Medes.

Now, it is most interesting to note that these very same three geographical entities, “Medes”, “Ecbatana” and “Ragau”, that have served only to make an historical reconstruction of BOJ so problematical, have apparently been wrongly inserted into BOT as well (in the form of “Media”, “Ecbatana” and “Rages”), causing havoc there too with that book’s geography. The integrity of BOT, geographically, can be fully restored though, I believe, with the aid of the *Heb. Fagii* (or HF) and *Heb. Londinii* (or HL) versions, which replace “Media” with “Midian” and “Ecbatana” with “Bathania” (i.e. Batanaea/Bashan).¹²³⁹ This substitution serves to rectify the formerly impossible geographical scenario, that has the angel Raphael, in the guise of Tobit’s relative Azariah (Tobit 5:13) - ostensibly well familiar with the route (5:4, 6) - ‘guiding’ the young Tobias from Nineveh to Media (an *eastward* journey), but arriving in the evening at the Tigris (which is in fact to the *west* of Nineveh) (cf. 1:10; 5:4, 6; 6:2); thereby eliciting this comment from Dumm:¹²⁴⁰ “Raphael knows the journey of life far better than the route to Media!”

There is no need, however, to accuse the author of BOT of geographical ignorance. When the above-mentioned textual emendations are made, then the narrative makes perfect sense.

¹²³⁸ Refer back to *Chapter 6*, p. 152, footnote 56.

¹²³⁹ For a detailed discussion of the geography of BOT, see my ‘Job’s Life and Times’, section: “Locating Tobit’s “Rages” & “Ecbatana”,” pp. 62-70.

¹²⁴⁰ ‘Tobit’ in ‘Tobit, Judith, Esther’, 38:8, p. 622.

The young Tobias, travelling from Nineveh to the Damascene province of Batanaea (“Bathania”) - probably the “Ecbatana in Syria” that Herodotus had distinguished from the Median Ecbatana¹²⁴¹ - would indeed have come in due course to the Tigris River. This itinerary also accounts for the Douay version of BOT’s having a “Charan ... in the midway to Nineveh”, mentioned on the return journey (11:1);¹²⁴² “Charan” undoubtedly here meaning Haran (var. Harran).

As we continue our pursuit of BOT’s geographical place names, now turning to “Rages”, in its relationship to “Ecbatana”, we learn that, not only was the author not ignorant of his geography, but he was in fact very precise, revealing his keen familiarity with the region of Damascene Batanaea. “Rages” is described as “a city” (Douay 3:7). And (NRSV 5:6): “It is a journey of two days from Ecbatana to Rages; for it lies in a mountainous area, while Ecbatana is in the middle of the plain”. Such a description can by no means be applied to the Median Ecbatana and Rages, since, for one thing, these are almost 200 miles apart. Hence Simons has stated (in a Median context) that the journey described in BOT “would be a forced ‘journey of two days’ even for an express messenger”.¹²⁴³

An immediate suspicion now that “Rages”, a city in the mountains, must be the city of Damascus that dominated the province of Batanaea, is confirmed as one studies the very precise details that the author of BOT has supplied here. As I argued in my Job article,¹²⁴⁴ central Batanaea [“Ecbatana”] lies “in the middle of the plain” of Hauran, and “is perfectly situated in relation to Damascus [“Rages”] being about 50 miles distant. Indeed, Jâkût el-Hamawi says of Batanaea’s most central town of Nawâ ...: “Between Nawa and Damascus is *two days’ journey* ...”.

Whilst it is not at all hard to imagine how confusion might have arisen between the similarly appearing names “Media” and “Midian”, and “Ecbatana” and “Bathania”, there is no likeness whatsoever between “Rages” and “Damascus”. It was only thanks to the author of BOT’s very precise description of the location of this city in its relation to “Ecbatana” - following on from the geographical clues supplied by the (HF) and (HL) versions referred to on the previous page - that this identification could be made. And this factor of name dissimilarity will now need to be taken into account as we turn to a consideration of the three names in BOJ, for the primary purpose here of disentangling verses 1:1, 5. Whilst assuredly our task would have been made easier if the three geographical elements in BOT, properly identified, could now simply be transferred over to their three ‘namesakes’ in BOJ, that unfortunately - and not surprisingly, given the historical scenario that has been developing for BOJ - will turn out not to be the case. In fact, the task of completing the identification of the latter will prove to be quite a complex one, due to difficulties surrounding “Ecbatana”.

What one might confidently expect though to be applicable to BOJ, as to BOT, is the basic principle: namely, *find the original name and the scenario is no longer ridiculous, but now makes perfect sense.*

¹²⁴¹ *Op. cit.*, Book. 3, p. 230. In this case the name “Ecbatana” may have arisen from the Greek phrase *ek Bathania* (‘out of Batanaea’).

¹²⁴² Douay Bible, p. 611.

¹²⁴³ *The Geographical and Topographical Texts of the Old Testament*, p. 504.

¹²⁴⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 64. My emphasis.

Thus, just as the author of BOT (via Raphael) can be exonerated from Dumm's charge of his not knowing "the route to Media", since the travelling party was not in actual fact bound for Media, so might the author of BOJ escape Moore's proposal (p. 27 above) that perhaps he "knew nothing about Mesopotamian geography ...".

Let us try to make sense of these three names in BOJ: "Medes", "Ecbatana" and "Ragau":

(i) "Medes"

In the context of my revision, "Medes" in 1:1 becomes irrelevant, and should be substituted with "Chaldeans", as indeed appears to be the case in 1:6, "forces of the Chaldeans".

(ii) "Ecbatana"

This problematical name element will turn out to be, as I suggested on the previous page, extremely complex. In 1:1 it would appear to stand for one of Merodach-baladan's key cities: either Babylon or Dur-Yakin (Tell Lahm) in Sumer. And that indeed is surely the case further on, in 1:14, where we read that the Assyrian king, who had just defeated *Arphaxad* in battle, "took possession of [*Arphaxad's*] towns and came to Ecbatana, captured its towers, plundered its markets, and turned its glory into disgrace". Or, "its beauty into shame", which, according to Charles, is "a play on words in the Hebrew **יְפֵי בְדָפִי**".¹²⁴⁵ This last was in the Assyrian king's "seventeenth year", as opposed to the first war BOJ records that *Nebuchadnezzar* waged against *Arphaxad*, which was in the former's "twelfth year" (cf. 1:1, 5).

We can probably however discount Dur-Yakin for "Ecbatana", since - as discussed already in *Chapter 6* (on p. 165) - Sargon II claimed to have destroyed that city in his Year 14: "Dûr-Iakini, [Merodach-baladan's] stronghold, I burned with fire; its high defences I destroyed, I devastated ...". Thus Dur-Yakin, whilst still relevant in the Assyrian king's Year 12 (cf. BOJ 1:1), had ceased to be relevant by Year 17 (1:14). So I take *Arphaxad's* "Ecbatana" (1:1), seriously assaulted by *Nebuchadnezzar* in his Year 17 (1:14), to indicate Babylon. And so now, finally, we seem to be in a position to be able to disentangle that problematical verse 1:1 of BOJ; the first half of which in fact needs little emendation. The whole verse can be re-cast as follows, with my proposed alterations added in square brackets:

It was the twelfth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar [Nebuchadnezzar I], who ruled over the Assyrians in the great city of Nineveh. In those days Arphaxad [Merodach-baladan] ruled over the Medes [Chaldeans] in Ecbatana [Babylon]

¹²⁴⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 248, n. 14.

Whilst this, hopefully, restores verse 1:1 to something akin to its former glory, it does not however fully account for the complex “Ecbatana” that we shall be meeting again on the next page, when we come to discuss verses 1:2-4: *Fortifying (Building) a City*.

(iii) “Ragau”

This name appears in 1:5 and again in 1:15 (see “Defeat of Arphaxad ...”, on p. 47 below). According to its first occurrence: “... King Nebuchadnezzar made war against King Arphaxad in the great plain that is on the borders of Ragau”. This battle, occurring as it does in the Assyrian king’s Year 12 (cf. 1:1), must - according to what was determined in *Chapter 6* - correspond with Sennacherib’s *Fourth Campaign* (Sargon II’s Year 12), against Merodach-baladan, in c. 711 BC. We seem to gain some supplementary assistance from the next verse (v. 6), which tells us of a coalition of peoples involved in the battle on this occasion: “There rallied to him all the people of the hill country and all those who lived along the Euphrates, the Tigris, and the Hydaspes, and, on the plain, Arioch, king of the Elymeans. Thus, many nations joined the forces of the Chaldeans”. Though this verse, too, is not without its problems; some of these being:

- does the pronoun “him” here refer to *Arphaxad*, or to *Nebuchadnezzar*?
- to which location does “Hydaspes” pertain?
- who was “Arioch, king of the Elymeans”?

From the context of BOJ 1, the “him” would appear to indicate, as Leahy has put it,¹²⁴⁶ “... Arphaxad the Mede [sic], very probably and not Nabuchodonosor ...”. This choice would seem to be confirmed by the concluding sentence in this verse: “Thus, many nations joined the forces of the Chaldeans”. And it is further strengthened by what we learn five verses later (v. 11), regarding the isolation of the Assyrian king at this time: “... they were not afraid of him, but regarded him as only one man” (אֲשֶׁר לֹא פָּחַדוּ בּוֹ וְרָאוּ אֶת־עֹשֶׂה). The pronoun “they” here refers to all of the peoples within the Assyrian empire to whom *Nebuchadnezzar* “sent messengers”, to garner support against *Arphaxad* (vv. 7-10). Thus it was *Arphaxad*, not *Nebuchadnezzar*, who was the beneficiary of all the coalitional support at this time.

Moreover, one might have expected “the Elymeans”, generally regarded as Elamites - perennial allies of Babylon against Assyria - to have supported *Arphaxad* rather than *Nebuchadnezzar* (presuming the latter to have been an Assyrian). The obscure “Hydaspes” (the second query above) could then be, as Charles has suggested, the “Choaspes” river of the Elamites.¹²⁴⁷ The Syriac has “Ulai” (cf. Daniel 8:2), which, according to Leahy,¹²⁴⁸ “is the Eulaeus of Pliny ... and flowed near Susa”. Actually Nebuchadnezzar (Nebuchadnezzar) I, my *alter ego* for Sargon II/Sennacherib, had fought a battle against the Elamites on the banks of this river. Roux tells of it:¹²⁴⁹

¹²⁴⁶ *Op. cit.*, p. 405.

¹²⁴⁷ “Perhaps the Choaspes is meant”. *Op. cit.*, p. 248, n. 6: “Hydaspes”.

¹²⁴⁸ *Op. cit.*, *ibid.*

¹²⁴⁹ *Ancient Iraq*, p. 278.

The battle was fought on the banks of the River Ulaia (Karun):

At the command of Ishtar and Adad, the gods of the battle, Hulteludish, King of Elam, fled and disappeared for ever, and king Nebuchedrezzar stood up in victory: he took Elam and plundered its treasures.

This almost certainly though relates to a later Elamite campaign of Sennacherib's (currently dated to c. 694 BC), when he was opposed by Hallushu (var. Halutush-Inshushinak), king of Elam, whom I have equated in *Chapter 7* (see **Table 1**, p. 180) with Nebuchedrezzar I's Shutrukid opponent, Hulteludish-(Inshushinak).

We turn now to Sennacherib's own account of his *Fourth Campaign* (enlarging upon what I gave of it in *Chapter 6*, beginning on p. 164), to see if it accords at all with the brief account of the battle as described in BOJ 1:5-6. It does in fact accord very well with it, and from it we probably learn to which Mesopotamian city the "Ragau" of BOJ applies: namely, Kish. Sennacherib had boasted in this campaign:¹²⁵⁰

In open battle (in the plain of Kish) ... I overthrew Merodach-baladan, king of Babylonia, I deprived him of his kingdom All of the Chaldeans, together with the numerous hosts of Elamites, his allies, I cut down with the sword.

This record appears to contain *all* the elements of the BOJ scenario: namely, a great Assyrian king defeating, in a pitched battle, on an open plain, near a city (presumably), a king ruling over the Chaldeans; the latter being supported by his Elamite allies. Moreover, according to my revision, this battle took place in that Assyrian king's Year 12, again corresponding to BOJ.

"Ragau" of BOJ was therefore a city of Mesopotamia (Kish), and not the distant Ragaë (var. Rhagaë), modern Rai, a city of Media, as commentators think.¹²⁵¹ The name dissimilarity ("Ragau", meaning Kish) is quite as marked as in the 'corresponding' case in BOT ("Rages", meaning Damascus).

As for the problematical "Arioch, king of the Elymeans", I shall deal with him separately (pp. 46-47 below), after completing my discussion of "Ecbatana".

Verses 1:2-4: Fortifying (Building) a City

Commentators, I find, do not tend to linger much over this little passage, which reads:

He built walls around Ecbatana with hewn stones three cubits thick and six cubits long; he made the walls seventy cubits high and fifty cubits wide. At its gates he raised towers one hundred cubits high and sixty cubits wide at the foundations. He made its gates seventy cubits high and forty cubits wide to allow his armies to march out in force and his infantry to form their ranks.

¹²⁵⁰ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 324, p. 147.

¹²⁵¹ E.g. Charles, *op. cit.*, p. 248, 5; Dumm, 'Judith', 38:18, p. 625.

It might not be surprising that any commentator who considers BOJ to be other than a genuine history would show little interest in so dry an account. Charles, for instance, does not even comment on it. Whilst Dumm takes it entirely as allegorical:¹²⁵² “The “wall” and its gateway are of such fantastic proportions that one may assume the author merely wishes to suggest an image of massive power and permanence”. Moore has written along somewhat similar lines as has Dumm here, looking for a metaphorical meaning in these verses, though in the process comparing the BOJ account to the actual Median city of Ecbatana. He thus, unlike Dumm, does supply also some interesting factual detail:¹²⁵³

... surrounded ... with walls ... seventy-five feet wide. Although scholars have often compared the walls of Ecbatana with those of other great cities, such as Babylon (seventy-five feet wide [Herodotus *Hist.* 1.178]) or Nineveh (wide enough for three chariots to drive abreast on it [Diodorus Siculus, *Historical Library* 2.3]), to make such comparisons is really to miss the author’s point: while Ecbatana’s grandeur and massiveness attested to the almost superhuman power of Nebuchadnezzar, who was able to conquer such a city, his army was still unable to take insignificant Bethulia, a town protected only by the God of Israel (so Steinmann, p. 48).

All the prodigious dimensions in vv 2-4 are totally fictitious, the invention of the author to evoke an atmosphere of grandeur. To date, no such protective walls have been found at Ecbatana, although, in fairness, it must be noted that because the modern city of Hamadan now covers it, Ecbatana has not been scientifically excavated by archaeologists. On the other hand, other great Persian cities, such as Persepolis, have been excavated thoroughly; and no such protective walls have been found there, either.

The whole thing though takes on a far deeper significance if one regards BOJ, as I do, as being a true history, set in EOH, with the city of “Ecbatana” therefore to be looked for in Mesopotamia, not in ‘Persia’.

When scanning these three verses (Judith 1:2-4) in translation above, one finds a heavy use of the pronoun “he”, but not one reference to a personal name. However, it is generally presumed that the king doing the building (fortifying) of this “Ecbatana” is *Arphaxad*, considering that the latter had just, in the previous verse (1:1), been named as ruler “over the Medes in Ecbatana”.

Such a connection, though, I think is quite unlikely to have been the case in reality. We saw in *Chapter 7* (p. 179) that Merodach-baladan may have been, even in his composite form of [I] and [II], a very modest builder indeed. Whereas the building work described in verses 2-4 is on a massive scale,¹²⁵⁴ prompting Moore to label it all as “totally fictitious”.

¹²⁵² *Ibid.*

¹²⁵³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 124-125.

¹²⁵⁴ “The word ‘built’ corresponds to the Heb. *banah*, which may also have the meaning of repairing with the added notion of enlarging, cf. Jos 19:50; Jg 21:23 ...) ...”. Leahy, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*

The king who was doing all the magnificent building work in Mesopotamia at this time was in fact Sargon II (*Nebuchadnezzar*), and the city then being worked on was his pride and joy, Dur-Sharrukin, and not Babylon. Dur-Sharrukin's foundations had been laid half a dozen years ago (Year 6), and, four years later (Year 10), the king had stayed at home to work on the decoration of its palaces when his *Turtan* had marched to the west. The work must have been well advanced by now (Year 12) and the whole project would be completed and dedicated in a further half dozen years.

BOJ chapter 1 is all about *Nebuchadnezzar*, not *Arphaxad*, and this is no doubt an intentional aspect of the story's drama, to show what a mighty foe Israel was up against. Moore had referred above to "the almost superhuman power of Nebuchadnezzar". *Arphaxad* is just a necessary 'parenthesis'. Confusion may have arisen over the fact that the historical 'Nebuchadnezzar' could boast two mighty cities: namely, Nineveh (as Sennacherib) - called "the great city of Nineveh" in BOJ 1:1 - and Dur-Sharrukin (as Sargon II) - called "Ecbatana" in 1:2-4. Roux, unaware that Sargon II was Sennacherib (who had initially favoured Nineveh) contrasts Dur-Sharrukin instead with Calah (Kalhu).¹²⁵⁵

As a war-chief Sargon liked to live in Kalhu (Nimrud), the military capital of the empire, where he occupied, restored and modified Ashurnasirpal's palace. But moved by incommensurable pride, he soon decided to have his own palace in his own city. In 717 B.C. were laid the foundations of 'Sargon's fortress', *Dûr-Sharrukîn*, a hitherto virgin site twenty-four kilometres to the north-east of Nineveh, near the modern village of Khorsabad

It would not surprise if Dur-Sharrukin were quickly forgotten, and later easily confused with some better known city such as Babylon. For, as Lloyd has explained:¹²⁵⁶ "If ... we turn to Khorsabad, we find a city built, occupied and abandoned *in the space of a single generation*". I think that such a case of forgetfulness might have applied to the city described as being 'built' in BOJ 1:2-4, and thus I suggest that the multiple usages of the pronoun "he" in the translation of these verses all refer to *Nebuchadnezzar*, rather than to (the usual view) *Arphaxad*; that the only reference to the city ruled by the latter is in the case of the first mention of "Ecbatana". The second reference to "Ecbatana", immediately following it, is actually therefore a reference to the king of Assyria's jewel city, Dur Sharrukin. The amended text (1:1-4) I propose, should read something like this:

It was the twelfth year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, who ruled over the Assyrians in the great city of Nineveh. (In those days Arphaxad ruled over the [Chaldeans] in [Babylon]). He [Nebuchadnezzar] built walls around [Dur-Sharrukin] ... he made the walls seventy cubits high ... he raised towers He made its gates seventy cubits high and forty cubits wide to allow his armies to march out in force and his infantry to form their ranks. Then King Nebuchadnezzar made war against Arphaxad in the great plain

¹²⁵⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 315.

¹²⁵⁶ *The Archaeology of Mesopotamia*, pp. 210-202. Emphasis added.

Admittedly, the text as it reads here abruptly juxtaposes “Ecbatana” in the first and second mention – which I am arguing actually intend two different cities. So much so in fact that I am inclined to think, borrowing that phrase from Moore (refer back to p. 27), that “something is now missing ...”. On the positive side, there does now seem to be a consistency in the fact that this belligerent king of Assyria, having purposely had the gates of his new city made tall enough and wide enough to accommodate the exit of his massed army, should then (in the next sentence, so to speak) make war against his foe.

Later though, in 1:14, “Ecbatana” resorts back to its first meaning of *Arphaxad’s* city, which *Nebuchadnezzar* successfully assaults.

That the walls and gates of Dur-Sharrukin were indeed formidable, we might glean from these accounts of their measurements by Lloyd, with which I shall juxtapose relevant portions of BOJ in italics:¹²⁵⁷

The city which [Sargon II] laid out took the form of a square, with sides measuring rather more than a mile each, and was surrounded by towered walls with seven gateways. ...

[Nebuchadnezzar] built walls around Ecbatana ... At its gates he raised towers.

The city walls, which were over 20 m thick, were revetted at their base with dressed stonework up to a height of 1.10 m. Behind this facing, undressed stone was roughly laid to form a base for the brick upper structure, which terminated in a crenellated parapet with stone merlons. ... the palace platform had a facing of stone in blocks up to 2.7 m long, weighing as much as 23 tons apiece. ...

... walls ... with hewn stones three cubits thick and six cubits long; he made the walls seventy cubits high and fifty cubits wide

The possibly meaningful measurements that can be compared here are (a) the length of the stone blocks, 2.7 metres long, according to Lloyd, and 6 cubits long according to BOJ 1:2, and (b) the thickness (width?) of the city’s walls, over 20 metres thick, or 50 cubits wide. What however immediately complicates any attempted comparison are (i) the variations in measurements and (ii) the fact that BOJ is obviously using round figures, not precise mathematical numbers. “Then, as now”, explains Moore,¹²⁵⁸ “the standards of weights and measurements varied not only among the nations but also within the same nation, depending upon time, place, and circumstance”. The cubit, for instance, can vary in length from approximately 440 mm - 640 mm, with what Petrie has called the ‘eastern foot’ being, as he has written, “one-sixth longer than 21.6 [inches] i.e. 25.2” (640).¹²⁵⁹ “At Khorsabad” he wrote earlier, which is the place of interest here, “there was a standard of 10.8 (276.8)”.¹²⁶⁰ Berriman gives what he has called the “Assyrian Foot” as 329 mm.¹²⁶¹

¹²⁵⁷ *Ibid*, pp. 197, 203.

¹²⁵⁸ *Op. cit*, p. 125, n. 2, with reference to O. Sellers’ ‘Weights and Measures’, *IDB*, IV, pp. 828-839.

¹²⁵⁹ *Measures and Weights*, p. 7.

¹²⁶⁰ *Ibid*, p. 6.

¹²⁶¹ *Historical Metrology*, p. 55.

And Berriman gives the “Assyrian cubit” as 494 mm.¹²⁶²

Of course a third complicating factor is that we do not know (iii) to which actual cubit the author of BOJ is referring.

Anyway, taking the ‘Assyrian cubit’ of 494 mm as an approximation, and multiplying it by BOJ’s “six cubits”, we get (494 x 6 =) 2964 mm, or 2.9 metres, comparing favourably with Lloyd’s 2.7 metres for the length of the blocks. And, for the thickness of the walls, we then get (494 x 50 =) 24700 mm, or 24.7 metres, as compared with Lloyd’s “over 20 m thick”. What this does indicate at least is that BOJ has provided us with reasonable figures of measurement, that can indeed be applied to significant Mesopotamian cities, and are not merely fictitious or fantastic.

Verses 1:6: “Arioch, king of the Elymeans”

In BOJ 1:6, which gives a description of the geographical locations from which *Arphaxad*’s allies came, we learn that some of these had hailed from the region of the “Hydaspes, and, on the plain, Arioch, king of the Elymeans”. I disagree with Charles that:¹²⁶³ “The name Arioch is borrowed from Gen. xiv. i, in accordance with the author’s love of archaism”. This piece of information, I am going to argue here, is actually a later gloss to the original text. And I hope to give a specific identification to this king, since, according to Leahy:¹²⁶⁴ “The identity of Arioch (Vg Erioch) has not been established ...”.

What I am going to propose is that *Arioch* was not actually one of those who had rallied to the cause of *Arphaxad* in Year 12 of *Nebuchadnezzar*, as a superficial reading of BOJ though might suggest, but that this was a later addition to the text for the purpose of making more precise for the reader the geographical region from whence came *Arphaxad*’s allies, specifically the Elamite troops. In other words, this was the very same region as that which *Arioch* had ruled; though at a later time, as I am going to explain. But commentators express puzzlement about him. Who was this *Arioch*? And if he were such an unknown, then what was the value of this gloss for the early readers?

Arioch, I believe, was the very *Achior* who figures so prominently in the story of Judith. He was also the legendary *Ahikar*, a most famous character as we read in *Chapter 7*. Therefore he was entirely familiar to the Jews, who would have known that he had eventually governed the Assyrian province of Elam. I shall tell about this in a moment.

Some later editor/translator presumably, apparently failing to realise that the person named in this gloss was the very same as the *Achior* who figures so prominently throughout the main story of BOJ, has confused matters by calling him by the different name of *Arioch*. He should have written: “*Achior* ruled the Elymeans”.

BOT tells us more. Some time after the destruction of Sennacherib’s armies, he who had been Sennacherib’s *Rabshakeh* was appointed governor (or ‘king’) of Elymaïs (Elam) (cf. 1:18, 21: 2:10). This was Tobit’s very nephew, *Ahikar/Achior*.

¹²⁶² *Ibid*, p. 29.

¹²⁶³ *Op. cit*, p. 248, n. 6.

¹²⁶⁴ *Op. cit*, *ibid*.

But the latter ruled Elam, not in *Nebuchadnezzar's* Year 12, or at about the time when he himself was a high officer in the Assyrian army, but (approximately a decade) later, during the reign of Ashurbanipal - as previously determined - when the king of Assyria sent him to Elam. From there it is an easy matter to make this comparison:

“Achior ... Elymeans” (BOJ); “Ahikar (var. Achior) ... Elymaïs” (BOT).

Suffice it to say here that this ubiquitous personage, *Ahikar/Achior*, would have been *the eyewitness extraordinaire* to the detailed plans and preparations regarding the eastern war between the Assyrians and the Chaldean coalition as described in BOJ 1.

Defeat of Arphaxad (Merodach-baladan)

The Assyrian king, as he was wont to do, sent messengers to all the nations that he had brought into submission in his previous campaigns – from Persia to Ethiopia – to enlist their help in his war against Merodach-baladan (1:7-11). But these blatantly refused. We recall Esarhaddon's references to “insolent” kings and his claim to have been the “avenger of his father” (*Chapter 6*, p. 170, also n. 103). This last would only confirm some in the standard view that Esarhaddon had actually avenged his father's murder, which I think not to have been the case. Instead, such statements by Esarhaddon seem to me to be perfectly in accord with the following ‘revenge’ sentiments expressed in BOJ: e.g. 1:12: “Then Nebuchadnezzar became very angry with this whole region, and swore by his throne and kingdom that he would take *revenge* on the whole territory ...”; 2:1: In the eighteenth year ... there was talk in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar ... about carrying out his *revenge* on the whole region, just as he had said”; finally, *Holofernes'* first words to Judith would be: ‘Take courage woman ... for I have never hurt anyone who chose to serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of all the earth’ (11:1).

This refusal on the part of the nations tributary to the Great King of Assyria now become the catalyst for the commencement of the story's central drama, the revenge-prompted invasion of the west, including Israel.

But in the year prior to this western invasion, in “the seventeenth year” - about five years after the war in the east had commenced - the king of Assyria finally defeated the troublesome *Arphaxad* (Merodach-baladan) in battle and attacked and captured his city (1:13-14). Moreover, according to the Septuagint (v. 15): “[Nebuchadnezzar] captured Arphaxad in the mountains of Ragau and struck him down with his spears, thus destroying him once and for all”.

This was Sennacherib's *Eighth Campaign*, in which he also brutally destroyed Babylon.

The War Plan of Revenge

BOJ 2:1: “In the eighteenth year, on the twenty-second day of the first month ...”.

Plans were now being set in motion for the Great King's war of revenge against his recalcitrant subjects.

This day, according to Charles,¹²⁶⁵ “evidently ended the 120 days’ rest, so that the return to ‘Nineveh’ took place just before the end of the ninth month of the seventeenth year of Neb[uchadnezzar]”. To which he adds: “The precise date is meant to give the appearance of real history”.

Achior the *Rabshakeh* would no doubt have attended the war council, along with Sennacherib’s other “ministers and nobles”, during which the king “set before them his *secret plan*” (תֹּ מִסְתָּרִים תְּסִבּוּ לְכָל) for the destruction of all the disobedient (v. 2). Presumably these “ministers and nobles” were already present as the “princes of (all) countries, the governors of my land ... nobles, officials ... of Assyria”, who - as we saw in the previous chapter (p. 13) - had assembled for Sargon II’s “feast of music”.

‘Holofernes’

BOJ 2:4. We are now introduced for the first time to *Holofernes*, the commander-in-chief of the Assyrian army, whom I had identified in the previous chapter with Sennacherib’s own son, Esarhaddon. His presumed six-year rule over Babylon as Ashur-nadin-shumi, commencing in Sennacherib’s Year 12, would thus have concluded in the very Year 18 that the Assyrian king in BOJ had ordered the war campaign against the west. *Holofernes* is described as “second only to the king himself” (v. 4). As in history, so in BOJ, does he remain loyal to his father, Sennacherib, showing the greatest contempt and hatred for those who had resisted his predecessors.

The Great King now orders his commander-in-chief to organise a huge army of foot-soldiers and cavalry, saying (v. 5). ‘Go out against all the kingdoms of the west, and against them especially that despised my commandments’ (2:5). Previously, at the Council, the king had, in the typical speech of the time, referred to “all the wickedness of the land” (2:2). Indeed the Assyrians were wont to call “sinners” whosoever would disobey them and their gods; and earlier (p. 3) we saw king Hezekiah declare before the Assyrians: ‘I have sinned’. There is plenty of this throughout BOJ and in the Assyrian annals. Sargon II, for instance, will record, regarding his raids into the provinces of king Midas of Phrygia:¹²⁶⁶ “Not a sinner escaped”.

The immense army that departed Nineveh, accompanied by its baggage train and transport animals, is described thus: “Along with them went a mixed crowd like a swarm of locusts, like the dust of the earth – a multitude that could not be counted” (v. 20). Sargon II had, with reference to a campaign in his Year 6, used for his armies that exact same metaphor, *word for word*:¹²⁶⁷ “In the anger of my heart I overran (lit., covered) these lands *like [a swarm] of locusts ...*”.

The prophet Joel was almost certainly referring to Assyria’s army, rather than to flying insects, when he spoke of an invasion of various kinds of “locust”, גָּזְמִים (1:4), which he soon metamorphosises into “a nation has invaded my land” (v. 6),

... גּוֹי עָלָה עַל-אַרְצִי

¹²⁶⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 249, n. 1.

¹²⁶⁶ As cited by Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

¹²⁶⁷ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 42. Emphasis added.

and later a “northern army”, צפוני (2:20), to lay it waste utterly. Interestingly, a footnote to Douay’s Joel 2:20 reads:¹²⁶⁸ “*The northern enemy*. Some understand this of Holofernes and his army; others, of locusts”. It was not uncommon for the prophets to use beast-like metaphor to describe an enemy. Had not Isaiah himself referred to successive neo-Assyrian kings in similar, un-endearing metaphor, as a “serpent” נחש, a “viper” צפע, and a “flying fiery serpent”, שרף מעופף (14:29)? Joel again, describing the typical Assyrian assault by escalade, exclaimed: “They run like mighty men, they climb the wall like men of war: the *men* [not locusts, note – the Hebrew word איש specifically distinguishes man from beast¹²⁶⁹] shall march every one on his way ...” (2:7).

בְּגִבּוֹרִים יִרְצֹן כְּאִשֵּׁי מְלַחְמָה יַעֲלוּ חוֹמָה
... וְאִישׁ

In regard to locust-like numbers, I discussed earlier Esarhaddon’s augmentation of the Assyrian army.

We come now to that most famous, but also most elusive, of campaigns, that resulted in the destruction of the huge Assyrian army. I shall break it up into its three main phases.

- **Great Western Campaign (Phase 1): To Lebanon and the Damascus region**

Whilst Sennacherib could claim this western campaign as his own, he did not personally lead it. His plan was as with his *Third Campaign*, in which he had followed up his *Turtan’s* successes, to come afterwards. Thus he now informs his commander-in-chief: ‘You shall go and seize all their territory for me in advance. They must yield themselves to you, and you shall hold them for me until the day of their punishment’ (v. 10).

Commentators have not found it easy to unravel geographically, in its various stages, the BOJ narrative of the Assyrian army’s march westwards (2:19-3:9). A difficulty is that the account of its route, from Nineveh to its eventual arrival in northern Israel, varies from version to version. The situation is not made any easier by the corrupt nature of Esarhaddon’s extant documents which I think might have served for the purposes of cross checking. Nevertheless, Simons has made quite a good attempt to unravel BOJ’s geography here. He begins with the Assyrian army’s departure, from Nineveh:¹²⁷⁰

- a) v. 21: after mentioning NINEVE [Nineveh] as Holofernes’ starting-point this verse deals with the first stage of the expedition, i.e. a “three days march” which brings the army to the border of the enemy country, viz. to “the plain of Bectileth”, which was apparently the site of a base-camp close to the general area of military operations (similar to the camp on the plain (of) Esdraelon [Esdraelon] ... before the final stage of these operations: iii 10);

¹²⁶⁸ Douay Bible, p. 1161.

¹²⁶⁹ K. Feyerbrand, *Langenscheidt’s Pocket Hebrew Dictionary*, p. 15. “איש man [as opposed to beast and woman and God], a mortal ...”.

¹²⁷⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 491-494.

- b) v. 22 relates the opening proper of the military operations, viz. by saying that the army leaves the base-camp on the plain and moves up the mountain-land (*εις την ορεινήν*).
- c) V. 27: (from this mountain-land) the army “descends into the plain of DAMASCUS”, the territory first to suffer;
- d) V. 28: the chastisement of the land of DAMASCUS causes a panic in the “coastland” (*παραλία*), from where several cities mentioned by name send ambassadors to offer submission (iii 1 ff.).

As regards the cartographic interpretation of this part of the expedition preceding that attack on Judaea ... itself we submit the following remarks:

Independently of every hypothesis or reconstruction of Holofernes’ expedition it appears that the transmitted text does not mention Cilicia ... (v. 21) as its objective or partial goal. Moreover, “Upper Cilicia” as an indication of the location of “the plain Bectileth” (“Bectileth near the mountain which lies to the left – north – of Upper Cilicia” or Cilicia above the Taurus Mountains) is completely out of the way which starts at NINEVE and is directed towards Syria-Palestine.

We suspect, therefore, that *της ανο Κιλικίας* has been inserted (perhaps in replacement of some another original reading) in order to adjust the account of the campaign to the terms of I 7 and I 12.

Secondly, “the plain of Bectileth” mentioned as the terminus of the first stage of Holofernes’ advance seems to us simply the Syrian beqā’ (*ܒܥܩܐ, ܒܥܩܐ*) between Libanos and Antilibanos ... mentioned in I 7.

Holofernes’ base-camp was not in the centre of the plain (“*απο Βεχτιλεθ*” must have developed from or be the remaining part of a statement to this effect) but “near the mountains on the left (north) side”, in other words: at the foot of the Antilibanos ... (cp. Its modern name “*ğebel esh-sherqi*”: ...).

It is this mountain-ridge (*ορεινή*) which the army has to climb (v.22) before “sweeping down (*κατέβη*) on the plain of DAMASCUS” (v. 27).

In the third place the text names (v. 28) the coastal towns, where the fate of DAMASCUS raises a panic. Most of these names create no problems:

SIDON = *saidā*

TYRUS = *sûr*

JEMNAA = *Jamnia*

AZOTUS = *isdûd*

ASCALON = *‘asqalān*

Some mss. add: GAZA = *ghazzeh*.

Though Simons does not specify here to which particular ‘mss.’ he is referring, Moore tells us that “LXXs, OL, and Syr add “and Gaza”.”¹²⁷¹ Simons continues:

¹²⁷¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 136.

The remaining two are obscure. OCINA seems to have been somewhere between TYRUS and JEMNAA and is for this reason usually identified with ‘ACCO = ‘akkā Σουρ, which neither because of the name itself nor on the ground of its location ... can be reasonably considered to render Hebrew “DOR” ... is probably but a duplicate of TYRUS (cp. Hebr: SOR). It is possible that the distinction between the island-city and the settlement on the mainland (Palaetyrus) accounts for the duplication.

[End of quotes]

This seems to me to be an entirely reasonable and plausible reconstruction, following a well-trodden route of invasion from northern Mesopotamia.

The very presence of the Assyrian armies in the north was enough to fill with dread the inhabitants of the more southerly cities. Indeed Sennacherib, in his *Third Campaign*, had needed only to put the great island-city of Tyre under pressure - without actually succeeding in capturing it - to cause most of the southern confederates of Hezekiah to sue for peace. It appears to have been similar in the case of *Holofernes*. The confederate peoples, for their part, had good reason to be fearful of the vengeful Assyrian general. BOJ 3:1: “They therefore sent messengers to [Holofernes] to sue for peace in these words: ‘We the servants of Nebuchadnezzar, the Great King, lie prostrate before you. Do with us whatever you will ...’”. *Holofernes* of course needed little prompting. “He stationed garrisons in the fortified towns and took picked men from them as auxiliaries” (v. 6). Thus we are going to find, as Assyrian “auxiliaries”, Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and coastal peoples, formerly part of the Egyptian-backed Syro-Palestinian revolt against Assyria.

In perfect accord with this, Esarhaddon claimed:¹²⁷² “I gathered 22 Princes of the Land of Khatti ... who dwell by the sea, and in the midst of it, all of them I summoned”. Among these were Manasseh, king of Judah, Baal, king of Tyre, Khausgabri, king of Edom and Mushuri, king of Moab. An almost identical list of captive princes is given by Ashurbanipal who I have argued was already serving as heir to Esarhaddon. “These Inscriptions prove that Manasseh paid tribute to both Esar-haddon and Ashur-bani-pal in accordance with 2 Kings 21:13-14 and 2 Chron. 33: 11-19”, wrote Anstey.¹²⁷³

- **Great Western Campaign (Phase 2): *To the Plain of Esdraelon***

The next crucial stopping point of the Assyrian army after its raids on the region of Damascus will effectively be its last: “Then [Holofernes] came toward Esdraelon, near Dothan, facing the great ridge of Judea; he camped between Geba and Scythopolis, and remained for a whole month in order to collect all the supplies for his army” (v. 9).

¹²⁷² As cited by M. Anstey, *The Romance of Bible Chronology*, p. 215.

¹²⁷³ *Ibid*, p. 216.

Simons thinks that the reference in the Vulgate to the Assyrians coming at this stage to “the Idumæans into the land of Gabaa” (3:14) should more appropriately be rendered “the Judæans ... Gabaa”.¹²⁷⁴ *Gabaa* would then correspond to the *Geba* of the Septuagint in the Esdraelon (Jezreel) plain. (It has of course no connection at all with the ‘Geba’ discussed on p. 6 of the previous chapter, which was just to the north of Jerusalem). Judah’s reabsorbing of this northern region (Esdraelon) into its kingdom would have greatly annoyed Sennacherib, who had previously spoken of “the *wide* province of Judah” (*rapshu nagû (matu) Ya-û-di*).¹²⁷⁵ Naturally the Israelites would have been anticipating (from what Joel called the “northern army”) a first assault *in the north*. And that this was so is clear from the fact that the leaders in Jerusalem had ordered the people to seize the mountain defiles in *Samaria* as well as those in Judah (BOJ 4:1-2; 4-5):

When the Israelites living in Judea heard how Holofernes, general-in-chief of Nebuchadnezzar king of the Assyrians, had treated the various nations, first plundering their temples and then destroying them, they were thoroughly alarmed at his approach and trembled for Jerusalem and the Temple of the Lord their God. ... They therefore alerted *the whole of Samaria*, Kona, Beth-horon, Belmain, Jericho, Choba, Aesora and the Salem valley. They occupied the summits of the highest mountains and fortified the villages on them; they laid in supplies for the coming war, as the fields had just been harvested.

We read on p. 22 above that Moore had considered that a possible reason as to why BOJ was not received into the Jewish canon was due to “its accepting attitude toward the towns of Samaria”. However, with the story here located to EOH, at a time when king Hezekiah had united north and south in the face of the Assyrian menace, this would not be relevant. The enmity between the Jews and the Samaritans had not yet presumably, in the late C8th BC, become the political issue that it was most assuredly to become centuries later.

But it is at this stage in the BOJ narrative that there occurs what has the potential to be a death blow for my location of these events to EOH. According to 4:3, that I had omitted from the above quote (but we already became acquainted with it earlier in this chapter): “They had returned from captivity only a short time before, and the resettlement of the people in Judea and the reconsecration of the sacred furnishings, of the altar, and of the Temple, which had been profaned, were of recent date”. This verse - especially when coupled with a statement made by *Achior* in 5:18 in this same Septuagint version, in regard to these Israelites, that: ‘The temple of their God was razed to the ground, and their towns were occupied by their enemies’ - if the reality, would spell the end of my reconstruction, since the Temple was only “razed to the ground” at the time of Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon (C6th BC).

¹²⁷⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 495, # 1602. “Judith iii 14 Vulg. states that Holofernes comes through Syria and Mesopotamia “*ad Idumaeos*”, doubtless a scribal error for ‘*ad Judaeos*’, as also shown by the addition “*in terram Gabaa*” which comes from *Gaibai* (§ 1604) ...”.

¹²⁷⁵ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 347.

However, the corresponding verses in the Douay version of BOJ 4 say *nothing whatsoever* about either a recent return from captivity or about the Temple's having been profaned. And the highly significant incident of the Temple's having been razed to the ground *is noticeably absent* also from *Achior's* report in the Douay version. It therefore needs to be immediately queried, since it is hardly a matter that would have been overlooked. *Achior* does mention in the Douay version of his report that 'very many of [the Israelites] were led away captive into a strange land' (5:22); though he does not specify to which land. This, in the context of my reconstruction, would refer to the Assyrian captivity of Israel in 722 BC, and also to the more recent mass deportations of Judaeans by Sennacherib during his *Third Campaign*. *Achior's* mention in the next verse (v. 23) of Judaeans 'returning ... from the different places wherein they were scattered', could simply be a reference to the return to their homes of persons inevitably displaced during the series of Assyrian invasions of Judah and Philistia by Sargon II/Sennacherib, and by his *Turtan* before him. This would fit in with the view that the Temple had recently been 'profaned', which king Hezekiah himself had done under duress (2 Kings 18:14-16). There is an enormous difference of course between the Temple's being profaned, and its being burned to the ground, which happened more than a century after Hezekiah had died!

Whilst a superficial reading of BOJ 4-5 might suggest that it was the return from the Babylonian Captivity being referred to, I think that the book overall provides sufficient evidence to make it quite apparent that this just could not have been the case. A possible one is the juxtaposition of "trembled for Jerusalem and the Temple" with "had returned from captivity only a short time before" (Septuagint 4:2, 3). This is perhaps not applicable to the return from Babylon, which saw a lengthy delay by the returnees before they even started to build the new Temple, as complained about by Haggai (1:21-11).

A second, more obvious clue I suggest is the pervasive *Assyrian* element throughout BOJ, culminating in a defeat for Assyria near Dothan; an incident that has no place whatsoever in the early Persian era of the return. Whilst admittedly the second Temple was completed under adverse circumstances, there is no record at this time of an immense north-eastern army invading with the intention of capturing the land.

The High-Priest, Joakim

Instead of a king to stir up the people, as Hezekiah had done at the commencement of Sennacherib's invasion (2 Chronicles 32:2-8), for his *Third Campaign*, BOJ 4:6-7 introduces us to: "*The high priest, Joakim, who was in Jerusalem at the time [who] wrote to the people of Bethulia and Betomesthaim, which faces Esdraelon opposite the plain near Dothan, ordering them to seize the mountain passes, since by them Judaea could be invaded ...*". The fact that the name *Joakim* is linguistically interchangeable with *Eliakim* – and *a fortiori* that *Joakim* the high priest is otherwise named *Eliakim* in the Douay BOJ (*Eliachim* in the Latin)¹²⁷⁶ – leads me now to identify him with Hezekiah's chief official, *Eliakim*, son of Hilkiah (cf. 2 Kings 18:18; Isaiah 36:3).

¹²⁷⁶ On this, Charles has written: "VL in this chapter and Vulg. throughout read Eliachim, El- being substituted for Jeho-". *Op. cit.*, p. 251, n. 6.

I have previously identified *EliAKIM* with *AKHI-Miti* (*Mitinti*) of the Assyrian records, the ruler of the great fort of ‘Ashdod’ (that is, Lachish). And in *Chapter 12* (p. 388), I even went so far as to say that *Eliakim* and his brother, *Uriah*, may have been, respectively, the 25th dynasty brothers, Tirhakah and Shebitku. These may have been descendants of the priest Elisha, friend of Horemheb (Jehu), through Elisha’s (as Jehoiada’s) Omride wife, Jehoshabeath (2 Chronicles 22:1). Now the fact that verse 6 above specifies that the high priest *Joakim* “was in Jerusalem at the time” might indicate that the capital city was not his usual abode. He, as Tirhakah, ranged far and wide in fact, including the important Lachish, with its Egypto-Ethiopian defenders. Again, previously, I had argued that the stronghold of Lachish was entrusted to a succession of high priests. Now, in light of BOJ’s information that *Joakim* was in fact the high priest, we need to examine further the office of Hezekiah’s illustrious official, *Eliakim*; his office usually being rendered as ‘Major-domo’, or ‘Chamberlain’. It is generally interpreted, from the Hebrew, **עַל־הַבַּיִת**, that *Eliakim* was in charge of palace affairs, literally ‘over the palace’: *bayit* (**בַּיִת**) being one of the Hebrew words for “palace”. However, *bayit* can also mean Temple, and it is interesting to note that in Solomon’s time the king’s chief men amongst his “high officials” were: *the Priest* (not *Major-domo*); *the Secretaries and the Recorder* (or herald) (1 Kings 4:2-3). The last two mentioned offices here are exactly the same as with Hezekiah’s trio in KCI. Only the first one, that of the Priest, seemingly diverges. *I therefore suggest for the sake of consistency that, as was the case with king Solomon, so would Hezekiah’s first official indeed be the Priest, and that the scriptural texts need to be more precisely translated to accommodate this!* I shall now add to this.

Isaiah’s Oracle Re Eliakim

We first encounter *Eliakim* son of *Hilkiah* in Isaiah 22, in what is regarded as the prophet’s ‘second oracle’ against the official, *Sobna* (or *Shebna*). Isaiah predicted that *Sobna* will be replaced by *Eliakim*. I showed in the previous chapter that this took effect during Sennacherib’s *Third Campaign* invasion, since *Eliakim* was by then the king’s chief minister. *Sobna* was now only second in command. But the vital question here is: *What was Sobna’s former office, to which Eliakim had now succeeded?* It is usually given as *Major-domo* or its equivalent; but the Douay Isaiah 22:15 translates it in terms that could only be referring to the high priesthood. Thus Isaiah is commanded: ‘Go ... to him that dwelleth in the tabernacle, to Sobna [Shebna] who is *over the Temple ...*’¹²⁷⁷ The Latin Vulgate gives the words italicized here as ‘eum qui habitat in tabernaculo’.¹²⁷⁸ Moreover, Isaiah describes and praises *Eliakim* in words that indicate, not only the man’s great authority, but that could also be taken as a description of a high priest: “He shall be as a *father* [בֶּן־אָב] to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the House of Judah” (v. 21). Strong words when it is considered that Hezekiah himself ruled over the House of Judah; but an appropriate title for a high priest who was, in a sense, ruler over even the king whom he would proclaim and anoint (cf. 1 Samuel 16:13).

¹²⁷⁷ Douay Bible, p. 917.

¹²⁷⁸ *Biblia Sacra*, p. 811.

And in Eliakim's case, with his having had to substitute for the king whilst Hezekiah was sick, the title, 'father' [אב], would take on an even more significant meaning.

As well as my tentatively identifying Ramses XI with Hezekiah himself in *Chapter 12*, and the priest Eliakim (*Akhi-miti*) with Tirhakah, I had suggested that Uriah, the brother of Eliakim, might be both Shebitku and the priest, Herihor. Finally, I proposed that the priest Amenhotep at the time may have been *Sobna/Iatna-Iamani*. Thus I gave this portion of TIP very much a Judaeian aspect.

Verse 22 describes Eliakim in high priestly terms (cf. Matthew 16:19). But perhaps the verse in Isaiah's oracular account of Eliakim that reads most like a description of the priestly office is v. 24: "On it they will hang all the glory of his father's house, offspring and issue, all the least *of vessels from cups to pitchers*"; a reference here surely to the priestly vessels. (Cf. 1 Chronicles 28:17). It seems most likely, therefore, that Eliakim's office needs to be re-translated as "*over the Temple*", rather than "over the palace", to correspond with that of the chief official of king Solomon's day.

Book of Joel

The high priest Joakim/Eliakim (my Tirhakah) had, at the height of the Assyrian invasion, called upon Judah to pray and fast. Now this exact situation seems to be reflected in the Book of Joel, in which Joel, thought by some to be *a priest and contemporary of the prophet Hosea, and situated in Jerusalem*,¹²⁷⁹ calls the nation to fast in the face of the locust-like invaders: 'Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm on my holy mountain' (Joel 2:1). Why? Because 'a great and powerful army comes; their like has never been from of old, nor will be again after them in ages to come' (v. 2). Possibly this was literally true. Esarhaddon's army may indeed have been the greatest until then ever assembled, and likewise for a long time afterwards.

From whence does this army come? From the north: 'I will remove the northern army far from you, and drive it into a parched and desolate land' (v. 20).

It appears to me that absolutely nothing substantial in Joel is out of place in the context of the priest Joakim's/Eliakim's call, from Jerusalem, for the nation to fast in the face of *Holofernes'* invasion.¹²⁸⁰ Even the aftermath is, as we shall later learn, correctly anticipated by Joel (see *Chapter 3*, section: "A Rout Involved", pp. 80-81).

The Absence in BOJ of a Judaeian King

I have already touched on this matter, that, if the heroine Judith really did belong to the time of the demise of Sennacherib's army, to EOH, then one might be quite entitled to expect to find in BOJ some mention of Hezekiah, or of Manasseh.

But there is no mention at all of any Judaeian king. And this is one of those major reasons why commentators do not even consider EOH amongst their possible choices for the historical *locus* of BOJ.

¹²⁷⁹ All of these points can be found for instance in G. Wood's 'Joel', 25:1-21, pp. 439-443.

¹²⁸⁰ Possibly Joel, son of *Pethuel* (var. *Phatuel* or *Bethuel*) (1:1), is the same person as Hezekiah's recorder or herald, *Joah* (hence Joel), son of *Asaph* (Phatuel?) (Isaiah 36:3); or is even perhaps Joakim/Eliakim himself (hence Joel).

Actually, as will become fully apparent in the next chapter, Hezekiah's son, Manasseh, had by now assumed the leading rôle during what we have already discovered was an "obscure" last phase of Hezekiah's reign; very similar to the last part of Sennacherib's reign, with his son Esarhaddon at the forefront. Indeed Esarhaddon refers to Manasseh, not Hezekiah, as king of Judah. In other words, it was the young Manasseh, not the by now inactive Hezekiah, who had gone north with the other local kings to surrender to the rampaging Esarhaddon.

But, with Manasseh's having consequently been sent by Esarhaddon as a captive to Babylon, then a virtually king-less Judaea in BOJ is not at all far-fetched, and it is a scenario that has indeed been proposed by would-be defenders of the historicity of BOJ – but in a purely 'Ashurbanipal' context, rather than one pertaining also to Sennacherib and Esarhaddon.

High-Priest Takes Control

That Hezekiah was a proud king is attested by his foe Sennacherib himself who, as we saw, had referred to him as "the strong, *proud* Hezekiah". Indeed Boutflower has wondered if the reason why Hezekiah had not gone out in person to meet the Assyrian delegation (cf. 2 Chronicles 32:31; Isaiah 39:1-8) was because Sennacherib had not come to him in person. Just as Sennacherib had sent his three chief officials, namely, "Turtan and Rabsaris, and Rabshakeh" (2 Kings 18:17), so did the proud Hezekiah respond in kind by sending out his three chief men, the *High-priest*, the *Secretary* and the *Recorder*.

A possible reason though, as already proposed, for Hezekiah's absence from this first diplomatic encounter, may be found in the words of 2 Chronicles 32:24 (cf. Isaiah 38), "In those days, Hezekiah fell ill and was at the point of death"; "those days" referring to the culminating point of the Assyrian invasion (cf. vv. 9-19). Hezekiah may have been, at that stage, too sick and feeble to come out, rather than too proud. Pride was probably no longer *the* factor, as Hezekiah's legendary pride had recently been well and truly humbled by Sennacherib (2 Kings 18:13-16). To be sure Hezekiah was still cognizant of what was going on (2 Chronicles 32:20), but he was perhaps unable to provide for his subjects that much-needed physical presence.

But there may be yet a further subtle point to be appreciated in connection with this rendezvous with the *Rabshakeh* at the Upper Pool. Whereas Sennacherib had actively "sent", **וַיִּשְׁלַח**, his three officials to Jerusalem, there is no corresponding "sent" recorded in the case of Hezekiah. As the text reads, the initiative in this case would appear to have come entirely from the Judaeans themselves, who "went out", **וַיֵּצֵא אֵלָיו**, to the Assyrians. Hezekiah may not have been in control at this stage. His chief official Eliakim likely was. With the king incapacitated, the leadership of the kingdom had fallen into the hands of the high priest, who had now become the father-figure for the entire kingdom.

And whatever the reason for Hezekiah's non-appearance again now during the invasion of Esarhaddon, not much less than a decade later - the reason almost certainly being because he had handed over control of the kingdom to his son, Manasseh, now in captivity - we do at least have that precedent of Hezekiah's previous absence. And Joakim/Eliakim is still found to be doing the king's work!

Perhaps of corresponding relevance in regard to the king-like prominence of the high priest is Sennacherib's recent exaltation of *Mitinti* (= Eliakim?).

Though this thesis is all about Hezekiah (EOH), a truly mighty king of Judah, sometimes likened to David (and Solomon),¹²⁸¹ this king's actual influence over Judah (and indeed Samaria) - though most significant for as long as it lasted - does seem nevertheless to have been of a relatively short duration, despite Hezekiah's almost three decades of reign. One cannot deny though that his was a reign full of drama.

Achior's Report

Holofernes' intelligence sources were now providing him with the surprising information that "the people of Israel", and they alone, had chosen to resist him and were actually preparing for war (5:1-2). Summoning the captive "auxiliary" princes, the commander-in-chief asked them in typically blunt fashion who these mountain people were (vv. 3-4). As also noted earlier, the fact that *Holofernes* was completely ignorant of the identity of this highland people should negate any inclination to link him with the *Turtan* of the earlier invasion (in 714 BC), who would by now presumably have been thoroughly acquainted with the Israelites. Enter *Achior*, and we must be very grateful that this illustrious personage was again at hand to be a witness to this new Assyrian council of war. He would later relate to all the citizens of *Bethulia* all that had transpired at this military council (6:17).

Given *Achior's* Israelite background, it is little wonder that Sennacherib had, during his *Third Campaign*, chosen this particular officer to address the Jews in their own language. That the *Rabshakeh* was fluent in Aramaic and Hebrew is attested by the three Judaeans who went out to meet him (Isaiah 36:11-12). And, given *Achior's* rank, it is not surprising to find him in BOJ speaking first after the commander-in-chief. He would have been *the* appropriate person to have answered *Holofernes'* questions concerning the identity of the Israelites.

But there now arises that problem with my actual reconstruction of *Achior* as an Israelite in the Assyrian army, and it is this verse: "Then Achior, the leader of all the *Ammonites*, said to [Holofernes] ..." (5:5). *Achior* is said in this verse to have been an 'Ammonite'; a matter we discussed in some detail (beginning on p. 23), when considering why BOJ was not accepted into the Hebrew canon. Whilst this does immediately loom as a major problem, there is one factor - apart from what has already been said about *Achior* - that makes his being an Ammonite highly unlikely, and this is that *Achior* will later, in BOJ 14, be converted to Judaism and will be circumcised. The author of BOJ, who is an absolute stickler for the Mosaic Law, and who writes in fact like a priest or Levite (see section: "The Author of BOJ" on the following page), would hardly have countenanced so flagrant a breach of the Law as having an Ammonite received by pious Jews into the assembly of faith, when this was clearly disallowed by Moses (Deuteronomy 23:3, 4).

Judith herself, who would so scrupulously observe all of the religious ordinances of the Law even whilst in the camp of the Assyrians (BOJ 12), would hardly (if she were real) have been a party to this forbidden situation.

¹²⁸¹ E.g. by B. Childs, *Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis*, p. 100.

Now *Achior* provides *Holofernes* with a basic run-down of Israelite history from Abraham to their present day (vv. 6-19). Again I must ask: *Would a pagan Ammonite have been likely to have known the history of Israel in such detail, going back to deep antiquity?* Anyway *Holofernes* will soon afterwards contemptuously call *Achior* an “Ephraïmite hireling [or mercenary]” (6:2). And this is a correct designation for him, *Ephraïm* being a common appellation for northern Israel. Though some versions of BOJ maintain their consistency by continuing to read ‘Ammon’.¹²⁸²

The whole exegetical problem of *Achior*’s supposedly being an Ammonite leader is solved, I think, when one recognises who *Achior* really was. He was, not a pagan Ammonite, but a Naphtalian Israelite; though at this stage an uncircumcised one.

The Author of BOJ

A tradition has *Eliakim (Joakim)*, the high priest of the story, as the author of BOJ.¹²⁸³ We already saw that the high priest was ‘a man of letters’, writing to the northern towns, including *Bethulia*. This would support the view of commentators that this highly pious work (BOJ), extremely scrupulous about religious observance, appears to have been written by a priest who was most faithful to the Mosaic Law, and who evinces a remarkable knowledge of the Old Testament, especially the Psalms.

It would also accord with the view that BOJ was an ancient document, frequently copied. No doubt the story would have been written with an enormous amount of eyewitness input from the ubiquitous *Achior*, whom the high priest would presumably have met after Assyria’s defeat. *Achior* would then have been able to fill in *Joakim* on all relevant details pertaining to the Assyrian campaign and strategy, including information in regard to the *secret* council prior to the western invasion. Less certain is how the author would have learned that *Holofernes*’ consumption of wine, just prior to his death, was “much more than he had ever drunk in any one day since he was born” (12:29). It is just possible that *Achior*, presumably a young man like *Holofernes*, had grown up with the latter in the royal palace, and thus had been familiar with the prince’s habits. Sennacherib does refer to a “Bêl-ibni ... who had grown up in Nineveh ‘like a young puppy,’” whom he made king of Babylon upon the demise of Merodach-baladan.¹²⁸⁴ Indeed, in the next chapter (on p. 80) I shall suggest that *Achior* was Esarhaddon’s (hence *Holofernes*’) very tutor.

Judith herself could have told the high priest about her personal encounter with *Holofernes* in the Assyrian camp, when they met after the victory (15:8), just as she had recounted the entire story to *Achior* and the *Bethulians* (14:8). And *Joakim* himself could have added most of the rest; all the basic narrative of the Assyrian incursion into Palestine and its effect upon Jerusalem. Finally, a later scribe could have added notes and glosses, e.g. about *Arioch* as governor of Elam; how long Judith lived; the festival.

¹²⁸² Thus Charles tells: “For *Ephraim* 19 108 read Ammon, and similarly 58 VL Syr”. *Op. cit.*, p. 253, n. 2.

¹²⁸³ “The sacred writer of this Book is generally believed to be the high priest Eliachim (called also Joachim)”. Introduction to BOJ in Douay version, p. 614. Charles, *op. cit.*, p. 246, who has dated the writing of the book to a later period, by linking the author to “the Pharisaic party”, thinks that the latter must have been “a Palestinian Jew ... a man of some literary skill ... well acquainted with the literature of his people”.

¹²⁸⁴ Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 3231.

I thus see no real obstacle in the way of the tradition that Eliakim was the author of BOJ, meaning that the original version of the book must therefore have been compiled in c. 700 BC.

Moore has counterbalanced the view of some that BOJ consists of two very unequal parts (chapters 1-7 and 8-16) - that is, in regard “to their respective importance, interest, and literary quality”, not length - by his juxtaposing of this with mention of Craven’s excellent study, which makes it “clear that the book of Judith is made of a whole cloth and was intended as a balanced and proportional narrative”:¹²⁸⁵

Craven’s study shows that the book has in each of its parts a threefold chiasmic structure and a distinctive thematic repetition. More specifically, each part has as its major chiasmic feature its own repeating theme: in chaps. 1-7, the theme is *fear* or its denial (cf. 1:11; 2:28 [twice]; 4:2; 5:23; 7:4), and men play all the leading roles; in chaps. 8-16 it is *beauty*, mentioned or implied, and a woman has center stage Thus, just as *fear of the Assyrians* had a “domino effect,” knocking down successive nations and peoples in chaps. 1-7, so *Judith’s beauty* bowled over one male after another

Perhaps to be alternatively considered (especially if the author were the high priest), would be a contrast between (a servile) *fear* and its opposite, the virtue of *courage* (prompted by trust in Yahweh), rather than a contrast of the unrelated *fear* and *beauty* (the latter though, admittedly, being an important factor in chapters 8-16). Thus, the *fear* shown by men (and nations), in the first half of BOJ, is in contrast to the courage (*trust*) borne by the beautiful woman, in the second half.

I shall focus more in the next chapter on such matters of literary interest.

- **Great Western Campaign (Phase 3): *Against Bethulia and Chelmon***

Achior had made an unexpected *apologia* on behalf of the Israelites. It had even come with this concluding warning to *Holofernes* (5:20, 21):

‘So now, my master and lord ...if they are not a guilty nation, then let my lord pass them by; for their Lord and God will defend them, and we shall become the laughing-stock of the whole world’.

These words had absolutely stunned the soldiery who were by now all for tearing *Achior* ‘limb from limb’ (5:22). *Holofernes*, for his part, was enraged with his subordinate. Having succeeded in conquering almost the entire west, he was hardly about to countenance hearing that some obscure mountain folk might be able to offer him any meaningful resistance.¹²⁸⁶

¹²⁸⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 57, with reference to T. Craven’s ‘Artistry and Faith in the Book of Judith’, pp. 75-101.

¹²⁸⁶ This fiery confrontation between the commander-in-chief, his subordinates and *Achior* would be, I suggest - following on from my earlier comments about Greco-Persian appropriations - where Homer got

Holofernes then uttered the ironic words to *Achior*: ‘... you shall not see my face again from this day until I take revenge on this race that came out of Egypt’ (6:5); ironic because, the next time that *Achior* would see *Holofernes*’ face, it would be after Judith had beheaded him.

Holofernes thereupon commanded his orderlies to take the insolent *Achior* and bind him beneath the walls of *Bethulia*, so that he could suffer, with the people whom he had just verbally defended, their inevitable fate when the city fell to the Assyrians (v. 6).

After the Assyrian brigade had managed to secure *Achior* at *Bethulia*, and had then retreated from the walls under sling-fire from the townsfolk, the *Bethulians* went out to fetch him (6:10-13). Once safely inside the city *Achior* told them his story, and perhaps Judith was present to hear it. Later she would use bits and pieces of information supplied by *Achior* for her own confrontation with *Holofernes*, to deceive him.

Northern Simeonites

The magistrates of the town of *Bethulia* before whom *Achior* appeared are named: “...Uzziah son of Micah, of the tribe of Simeon, and Chabris son of Gothoniel, and Charmis son of Melchiel” (v.15). I intend to argue in the next chapter that this *Uzziah* (var. *Ozias*) was none other than Isaiah himself. In BOJ chapter 8 we shall be told that Judith too was - like *Uzziah* - of the tribe of Simeon. Now, with Simeon being one of the southernmost tribes of Judah, with enclaves even in the Negev (1 Chronicles 4:28), is it a peculiarity having a bastion of Simeonites situated in Ephraïm? It certainly would have been in the earliest periods of Israel’s settlement in Canaan, but it would be quite allowable from the time of king Asa of Judah (c. C9th BC) onwards; for it is recorded in 2 Chronicles 15:9 that, at the time of Asa, Simeonites were residing in the north “as aliens” amongst the Ephraïmites and Manasseh-ites. Bruns has elaborated on this in his context of trying to locate BOJ to the Persian era:¹²⁸⁷

Nor ... is the most important geographical detail in the book [of Judith], namely the reference to a Jewish (Simeonite) settlement on the border of the valley of Dothan, a fabrication. For a combination of various sources (Meg. Ta’an, for 25 Marheshvan (chap. 8); Jos., Ant. 13:275f., 379f; Wars 1:93f.; and also apparently I Macc. 5:23) shows that at the time of the return in the region of Samaria, in the neighbourhood of what was known as “the cities of Nebhrakta,” there was a Jewish-Simeonite settlement (*which may in effect have existed as early as in the days of the First Temple and being of Semite origin: cf. II Chron. 34:6, 15:9; and also I Chron. 4:31*)

Thus there *were* Simeonites dwelling in this northern part of the land during, and beyond, the era of the Divided Kingdom.

his idea for the main theme of *The Iliad*: namely the argument at the siege of Troy between Agamemnon, supreme commander of the Greeks, and the renowned Achilles (*Achior*?).

¹²⁸⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 452. Emphasis added.

Assyrian Advance on Bethulia

BOJ 7:1: “The next day Holofernes ordered his whole army, and all the allies who had joined him, to break camp and to move against Bethulia, and to seize the passes up into the hill country and make war on the Israelites”. The Assyrian fighting forces, “170,000 infantry and 12,000 cavalry, not counting the baggage and the foot soldiers handling it” (v. 2), now numbered that fateful figure of 180,000 plus.¹²⁸⁸ “When the Israelites saw their vast numbers, they were greatly terrified and said to one another, ‘They will now strip clean the whole land; neither the high mountains nor the valleys nor the hills will bear their weight’.” (v. 4). One can now fully appreciate the appropriateness of Joel’s ‘locust’ imagery.

BOJ provides the reader with a precise location for the Assyrian army prior to its assault of the fortified towns of Israel facing Dothan.

- I give firstly the Douay version of it (7:3):

All these [Assyrian footmen and cavalry] prepared themselves together to fight against the children of Israel. And they came by the hillside to the top, which looketh toward Dothain [Dothan], from the place which is called Belma, unto Chelmon, which is over against Esdraelon.

- Next the Greek version, which importantly mentions *Bethulia* (v. 3):

They encamped in the valley near Bethulia, beside the spring, and they spread out in breadth over Dothan as far as Balbaim and in length from Bethulia to Cyamon, which faces Esdraelon.

The combination of the well-known Dothan (var. *Dothain*) and Esdraelon in both versions presents no problem, and fixes the area where the Assyrian army massed. The identification of *Bethulia* will be discussed separately, in the next chapter (section: “Identification of Bethulia”, beginning on p. 69). The only other geographical elements named are ‘Belma’ (Douay)/ ‘Balbaim’ (Greek); and ‘Chelmon’ (Douay)/ ‘Cyamon’ (Greek). Charles has, not illogically, linked the first of these names, which he gives as ‘Belmaim’ (var. Abelmain),¹²⁸⁹ with the ‘Belmaim’ listed in 4:4.¹²⁹⁰ And he tells that, in the Syrian version, this appears as ‘Abelmeholah’.¹²⁹¹ But both this location, and “*Cyamon*, Syr Kadmûn, VL Chelmona”, he claims to be “unknown”.¹²⁹²

¹²⁸⁸ According to Charles, “✕ ... has 8,000, corrected to 120.000”. *Op. cit*, p. 254, n. 2. The Douay version, p. 620, gives 142,000 plus: “... a hundred and twenty thousand footmen, and two and twenty thousand horseman, besides ...”.

¹²⁸⁹ *Ibid*, n. 3: “*Belmaim*, ✕ *Abelmaim*, cf. iv. 4”.

¹²⁹⁰ NRSV gives this as ‘Belmain’, whilst it gives ‘Balbaim’ for 7:3.

¹²⁹¹ *Op. cit*, p. 251, n. 4: “Syr *Abelmeholah*”.

¹²⁹² *Ibid*. Cf. p. 251, n. 4 and p. 254, n. 3.

Leahy and Simons, on the other hand, have both ventured identifications for these two locations. And they have each in fact arrived at the same conclusion for ‘Belbaim’ (‘Belma’);¹²⁹³ though Simons will reject the identification of ‘Cyamon’ (‘Chelmon’) that we shall now see that Leahy has favoured. Here firstly, then, is Leahy’s account of it, in which he also connects ‘Belbaim’ with the ‘Balamon’ of 8:3 (pertaining to the burial place of Judith’s husband, Manasseh):¹²⁹⁴

Holofernes had given orders to break up camp and march against Bethulia. Then, according to the Gk, the army camped in the valley near Bethulia, and spread itself in breadth in the direction over against Dothan and on to Belbaim (Balamon of Gk 8:3, Belma of Vg, Jible’am of Jos 17:11, the modern Khirbet Bel’ame), and in length from Bethulia to Kyamon (Chelmon of Vg, Jokne’am of Jos 12:22, the modern Tell Qaimun).

Simons will instead prefer for ‘Cyamon’, modern *el-jâmûn*.¹²⁹⁵ Here is his geographical assessment of the final location of the Assyrian army as given in the Greek version:¹²⁹⁶

Judith vii 3b describes the location of BETHULIA more closely. The clause is easily understandable on the condition that two changes are made, viz. “breadthwise ‘from’ (ⲓⲡⲔ, instead of ⲉⲡ., as also required by parallelism) DOTHAIM unto BELBAIM and lengthwise from ‘BELBAIM’ (LXX reads “BETHULIA”. However, the besieged city itself cannot have been at the extremity of the besieging army) unto CYAMON which is opposite (the plain of) Esdreton” or in terms of modern geography; from tell dôôtân unto hirbet bel’ameh and from hirbet bel’ameh unto el-jâmûn. The disposition of Holofernes’ army thus described is perfectly comprehensible, if BETHULIA was situated between the upright sides of a triangle, the top of which was the twice mentioned site of hirbet bel’ameh, while its base was a line from tell dôôtân to el-jâmûn.

That the town of *Bethulia* takes centre stage as if being *the* entire point of focus for the Assyrian attack may only be however because the heroine Judith lived there, and hence the whole drama is meant to be seen from the point of view of that town. Perhaps, more realistically, the vast Assyrian army would have been directing its front at more than just *Bethulia*. And I shall soon suggest that *Chelmon* was very much a focal point during the Assyrian advance.

But why was *Bethulia* so important anyway?

That will be discussed further in the next chapter on pp. 71-72).

¹²⁹³ In the next chapter, we shall see that Conder thought Wâdy Bel’ameh might have been the ‘Belmaim’ of the BOJ narrative.

¹²⁹⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 406.

¹²⁹⁵ *Op. cit.*, p. 499, n. 271. Simons wrote: “This identification of CYAMON is more probable than tell qaimûn (JOQMEAM of the Hebrew books) which is much too far away”.

¹²⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 499.

On the second day, *Holofernes* led out the cavalry in full view of the Israelites in *Bethulia* (v. 6). It was at this point that the local Edomite and Moabite leaders advised *Holofernes* that there was no need for him to risk any of his army in a ‘regular formation’ engagement, when he could simply bring the resisters to submission by cutting off their water supply (vv. 12, 13). Verses 16-18:

These words pleased Holofernes and all his attendants.... So the army of the Ammonites moved forward, together with 5000 Assyrians, and they encamped in the valley and seized the water supply and the springs of the Israelites. And the Edomites and Ammonites went up and encamped in the hill country opposite Dothan; and they sent some of their men toward the south and the east, toward Egrebeh, which is near Chusi beside the Wadi Mochmur. The rest of the Assyrian army remained encamped in the plain, and covered the whole face of the land. Their tents and supply trains spread out in great number, and they formed a vast multitude.

This latest strategy is geographically explained by Simons as follows:¹²⁹⁷

While a contingent of troops establishes itself (vii 17Z) in the *αὐλῶν* (= sahl ‘arrābeh ...) and occupies a spring still accessible to the inhabitants of BETHULIA on the north-western edge of this plain (vii 12.17), another part of the army moves to some high observation-posts “opposite DOTHAIM” (vii 18a) in order to watch possible attempts at escape from the beleaguered city. This section of his forces, therefore, occupied positions on the height of the north-western border of sahl ‘arrābeh, more specifically – xv 3 – “round about BETHULIA”.

... According to vii 18b a platoon was also despatched to “EGREBEL (or: ECREBEL) near CHOUS on the brook Mochmour”. On the probable assumption that this statement refers to a reconnaissance or a predatory raid, the identification of EGREBEL with ‘aqrabeh, 12 kms se. of nāblus, is not at all impossible. Perhaps it is also supported by “qūzah” (= CHOUS?) on the road nāblus-Jerusalem. “The brook Mochmour” may have left its name in an adapted Arabic form to wādi el-ahmar (“the red wadi”). In the meantime the bulk of the army withdrew from the small sahl ‘arrābeh to “the (great) plain (*πεδῖον*)”, which it covered with its many tents (vii 18c).

Charles gives the same identifications as Simons for ‘Egrebel’ (‘Akraba’) and ‘Chous’ (‘Quzeh’), and for ‘Mochmour’ he has proposed “mod[ern] Makhueh, south of Nablus ...”¹²⁹⁸

For “thirty-four days” (v. 20) this terrible situation of blockade prevailed, until the *Bethulians’* water containers were all empty. Charles, who has provided the differing figures for this period according to various versions of BOJ,¹²⁹⁹ has concluded that:

¹²⁹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 501, # 1610.

¹²⁹⁸ *Op. cit*, p. 255, n. 18.

¹²⁹⁹ *Ibid*, n. 20.

‘The long siege by this large army is meant to emphasize the importance of Bethulia’. Certainly *Bethulia* will be found in the next chapter to have been a city of ‘importance’. The citizens of the town now turned angrily on their leaders (vv. 23-25). They demanded surrender, with its attendant slavery, as being preferable to a certain death by thirst. And they added: ‘We call to witness against you heaven and earth and our God ...’ (vv. 26, 27, 28). Thus *Uzziah* found himself faced with a Moses-like situation, with the people rebelling on account of water and thirst (Numbers 20:2-13). And *Uzziah’s* response – at least as Judith will later interpret it (8:9-27) – was likewise flawed as was that of Moses (vv. 30-31; cf. Numbers 20:1-2). *Uzziah* had responded: ‘Courage my brothers and sisters! Let us hold out for five days more; by that time the Lord our God will turn his mercy to us again But if these days pass by, and no help comes for us, I will do as you say’. The people returned to their posts, but “in great misery” (v. 32). However, a recent prayer of theirs (v. 19) was about to be heard, for despite their despairing, ‘we have no one to help us’, effective help was now at hand.

A Concluding Note

We have read in this chapter that BOJ has had a very long tradition - dating back at least to the C1st AD, and continuing on until the C16th AD - of being regarded as a record of a true historical incident. Even in cases where it was not regarded as canonical (e.g. by the Jewish council of Javneh, or by Jerome), or when later, in the C5th AD, the identification of its ‘Nebuchadnezzar’ was queried (e.g. by Sulpicius Severus), there is no indication that its historicity was actually called into question. Jerome certainly considered it as historical and, presumably, so did Sulpicius Severus by the very fact that he had looked to associate ‘Nebuchadnezzar’ with a particular king of antiquity.

Whether or not there were any dissenters from this tradition down through the centuries, prior to the Reformation, I have not discovered. The first known person of importance who called into question the historicity of BOJ was Martin Luther, who was followed by Capellus.

The Council of Trent formally accepted BOJ into the Catholic canon, and there have been persistent attempts by Catholics until about the mid-C20th to defend the historicity of the book.

I personally have found though that Catholic commentaries from the mid-C20th - especially those that post-date the Second Vatican Council of the mid-1960’s - tend to reject the view that BOJ is the record of an actual historical event, arguing instead for ‘pious fiction’ and allegory.

I, for my part, have argued that BOJ is a real history (though anciently written), and belonging to EOH.

3

The Jewish Victory

THE HEROINE, JUDITH

Judith is introduced in 8:1 with an impressive Simeonite genealogy, going back (as we already read in *Chapter 5*, p. 129) some *sixteen* generations, to two known Simeonite chieftains, *Salamiel* and *Sarasadai* (var. *Shelumiel* and *Zurishaddai*), contemporary with Moses, even appointed by Moses (cf. Numbers 2:12). Thus Judith was of noble stock. And so we read (Judith 8:1): “[Judith] was the daughter of Merari son of Ox son of Joseph son of Oziel son of Elkiah son of Ananias son of Gideon son of Raphain son of Ahitub son of Elijah son of Hilkihah son of Eliab son of Nathanael son of Salamiel son of Sarasadai son of Israel”. The Douay version, which includes “Simeon” in the list, strangely as “the son of Ruben” gives from slight to significant variants for some of these ancestral names.¹³⁰⁰

- Proponents of the historicity of BOJ argue that it would have been quite pointless for the author to have gone to all that trouble of listing so extensive a genealogy if the person Judith never existed.

- Critics, though, claim the opposite:¹³⁰¹ that this is a kind of desperate measure to give the book a semblance of authenticity.

In the next verse (v. 2), as noted by Pope,¹³⁰² “... we are given details about the death of Judith’s husband [Manasses] which (viii, 2-4) can hardly be attributed to art, but are rather indications that Judith represents a really existing heroine”.

Moreover there is - as we read and discussed in the previous chapter - an approximately millennium-long tradition of historicity associated with BOJ.

Judith’s Family

The Simeonites of *Bethulia* may have been, like the Naphtalians in BOT, a closely-knit clan, intermarrying. We are told for instance that Judith’s husband, *Manasseh* [*Manasses*], now dead, had “belonged to [Judith’s] tribe and family” (v. 2). After his death by sunstroke during a barley harvest, *Manasseh* was given a very patriarch-like burial, in a cave in a field: “So they buried him with his ancestors in the field between Dothan and Balamon” (v. 3; cf. Genesis 25:9). That *Manasseh’s* burial was actually in a “cave” is noted in 16:23.

Obviously Judith and her ancestors, and her husband, were *tribally* related to *Uzziah* of *Bethulia* and his father, *Micah*.

¹³⁰⁰ Douay Bible, pp. 621, 622. Thus *Idox* (for *Ox*); *Ozias* (for *Oziel*); *Elai* (for *Elkiah*); *Jamnor* (for *Ananias*); *Gedeon* (for *Gideon*); *Raphaim* (for *Raphain*); *Achitob* (for *Ahitub*), etc.

¹³⁰¹ This view was expressed to me by correspondent, D. Salkeld, from Wiltshire, U.K, in an e-mail (dated 15/03/00), when he wrote: “If Judith was historical the recorder would not need to go back umpteen generations to establish her authenticity ...”.

¹³⁰² ‘Judith, Book of’, p. 555.

But, as I shall argue below, and in the *Excursus* on Isaiah (beginning on p. 87), there was also a *family* relationship. Judith's father was one *Merari* (8:1), of whom she appears to have been immensely proud. She calls herself "Judith daughter of Merari" in her victory canticle (16:6). *Merari* was, it seems, a well-known figure. Being a descendant of Simeonite leaders of Moses' time, *Merari* would himself have been of noble Israelite blood. Jewish tradition calls him 'Beeri', according to Moore,¹³⁰³ rather than *Merari*, and this I think is both somewhat curious, and also significant. It is curious because the only other 'Judith' in the Jewish Scriptures, a Hittite woman whom Esau married, also had a father called *Beeri* (Genesis 26:34). It is significant, at least in my context, because in the *Excursus* on Isaiah I shall be identifying:

- (a) *Merari/Beeri* also with the father of the prophet Hosea, one *Beeri* (Hosea 1:1); and
- (b) the prophet Hosea (var. *Osee*) with both the prophet Isaiah and *Uzziah* (var. *Ozias*) of Judith's *Bethulia*.

These will be the last of my multi-identifications.

This (a) - (b) will mean that *Uzziah* and Judith of *Bethulia* shared the same father, *Merari/Beeri*. Now, whilst *Uzziah's* father was named, as we saw, *Micah*, not *Merari*, that information can read like a gloss to BOJ, similar to the *Arioch* and *Achior* situation discussed on pp. 46-47 of the previous chapter.

Finally, I shall be connecting *Micah* of BOJ with Isaiah's father, Amos, not through name, but through the prophet Micah, whom biblical commentators consider to have been so like Amos that they refer to him as "Amos *redivivus*". (See *Excursus*, p. 87). Judith's father will therefore be identified with the famous prophet Amos.

Judith was probably a half-sister of *Uzziah/Isaiah*, of a different mother. She was no doubt much younger than *Uzziah*, being in fact only a girl according to the testimony of *Bagoas*, the *Rabsaris*, later in the Assyrian camp: 'Let *this pretty girl* not hesitate to come to my lord [Holofernes] to be honored in his presence ...' (Judith 12:13). This Jewish girl may have been approximately the age of the youthful Joan of Arc, whom she resembles too in her bold will and courage, if not in her tactics. Certainly Stocker has perceived likenesses between the two heroines, and she has further noted that Joan of Arc was, in her time, regarded as being a 'second Judith'.¹³⁰⁴

We are told of Judith's intense observance of Jewish ritual during her young widowhood (8:4-6). We are told of her beauty: "She was beautiful in appearance and very lovely to behold" (v. 7). Finally we are told of the enormous respect that the *Bethulians* had for her (v. 8).

Judith's husband *Manasseh* must have been extremely wealthy and influential in *Bethulia* to have left the widowed Judith "gold and silver, men and women slaves, livestock and fields" (v. 7). Is it possible that Judith had, in marrying *Manasseh*, married one of Isaiah's (*Uzziah's*) own sons; perhaps the protégée *Immanuel* himself (Isaiah 7:14).¹³⁰⁵

¹³⁰³ *The Anchor Bible. Judith*, p. 107.

¹³⁰⁴ *Judith Sexual Warrior*, p. 76.

¹³⁰⁵ And what might perhaps give this some added strength - in the context of my comparisons between BOJ and 'The Iliad', and between Judith and Helen (see nn. 17 & 27) - is that the latter's husband had the

Such an intimate family relationship with *Uzziah* might perhaps explain the young girl's forthrightness in the presence of so revered a leader (her forthrightness being another likeness to Joan of Arc); for this *Uzziah* is entitled in the Douay version both "the prince of Juda[h]" (8:34) and "the prince of the people of Israel" (13:23).¹³⁰⁶ He was therefore no mean official. But Judith was horrified that *Uzziah* and his fellow elders had put a time limit on God's deliverance. According to 8:10, Judith had actually sent her maid to "summon *Uzziah* and *Chabris* and *Charmis*, the elders of her town". This is an extraordinary situation. And when they "came to her", she did not mince her words at all (v. 11-13). Judith then went on to add a note of possibly chronological value upon which her confidence in deliverance was based (vv. 18-19):

'For never in our generation, nor in these present days, has there been any tribe or family or people or town of ours that worships gods made with hands, as was done in days gone by. That was why our ancestors were handed over to the sword and to pillage, and so they suffered a great catastrophe before our enemies'.

The 'great catastrophe' to which Judith refers here would most assuredly be a reference to the fall of Samaria at the hands of the Assyrians, occurring prior to her birth. We need to recall that the young Judith's entire life had been encompassed by the reign of the reformer king, Hezekiah, now in approximately his 25th year of reign. (Refer back to **Table 7** on p. 373). She personally had seen nothing of his idol worshipping predecessor, Ahaz. And the Assyrian captivity of northern Israel, in 722 BC, was something that she would only have learned about as a young child. Moreover, she had at all times been surrounded by exemplary Simeonite relatives.

Uzziah, confirming Judith's high reputation, immediately recognized the truth of what she had just said (vv. 28-29), whilst adding the blatantly Aaronic excuse that 'the people made us do it' (v. 30, cf. Exodus 32:21-24): 'But the people were so thirsty that they compelled us to do for them what we have promised, and made us take an oath that we cannot break'. Judith, now forced to work within the time-frame of those 'five days' that had been established against her will, then makes this bold pronouncement - again completely in the prophetic, or even 'apocalyptic', style of Joan of Arc (vv. 32-33):

Then Judith said to them, 'Listen to me. I am about to do something that will go down through all generations to our descendants. Stand at the town gate tonight so that I may go out with my maid; and within the days after which you have promised to surrender the town to our enemies, the Lord will deliver Israel by my hand'.

A Note. This 5-day time frame, in connection with a siege - the very apex of the BOJ drama - may also have been appropriated into Greco-Persian folklore.

name, Menelaus, which is not dissimilar to Immanuel. Possible equation: *Helen*, the 'Hellene', wife of *Menelaus* = *Judith*, the 'Jewess', wife of *Immanuel* (?) (*Manasseh*).

¹³⁰⁶ *Douay Bible*, pp. 623, 628.

In the 'Lindian Chronicle' it is narrated that when Darius, King of Persia, tried to conquer the Island of Hellas, the people gathered in the stronghold of Lindus to withstand the attack. The citizens of the besieged city asked their leaders to surrender because of the hardships and sufferings brought by the water shortage (cf. Judith 7:20-28).

The Goddess Athena [read Judith] advised one of the leaders [read Uzziah] to continue to resist the attack; meanwhile she interceded with her father Jupiter [read God of Israel] on their behalf (cf. Judith 8:9-9:14). Thereupon, the citizens asked for a truce of 5 days (exactly as in Judith), after which, if no help arrived, they would surrender (cf. Judith 7:30-31). On the second day a heavy shower fell on the city so the people could have sufficient water (cf. 8:31, where Uzziah asks Judith to pray for rain). Datis [read Holofernes], the admiral of the Persian fleet [read commander-in-chief of the Assyrian army], having witnessed the particular intervention of the Goddess to protect the city, lifted the siege [rather, the siege was forcibly raised].¹³⁰⁷

Craven, following Dancy's view that the theology presented in Judith's words to the town officials rivals the theology of the Book of Job,¹³⁰⁸ will go on to make this comment:¹³⁰⁹ "Judith plays out her whole story with the kind of faith described in the Prologue of Job (esp. 1:21 and 2:9). Her faith is like that of Job after his experience of God in the whirlwind (cf. 42:1-6), yet in the story she has no special theophanic experience. We can only imagine what happened on her housetop where she was habitually a woman of regular prayer".

BOJ 9:1-14 consists of Judith's prayer whilst lying prostrate before God, "at the very time when the evening incense was being offered in the House of God in Jerusalem". Clothed in her sackcloth, she extols the God of her eponymous ancestor Simeon, who had, with Divine aid, in company with his brother Levi (not mentioned) avenged his sister, Dinah, whom Shechem had raped (v. 2): 'O Lord God of my ancestor Simeon, to whom you gave a sword to take revenge on those strangers who had torn off a virgin's clothing to defile her and exposed her thighs to put her to shame, and polluted her womb to disgrace her ...'.

(See my comments on this incident in *Chapter 5*, on p. 121).

Judith begs that her voice be heard (v. 4): 'O God, my God, listen to me a widow' (e_sĕkouson šmoà). There is even a possibility that the young and apparently childless Judith, who never married afterwards (16:22), was – like Dinah – a virgin, and could therefore all the more closely empathise with her predecessor. Hebrew law made provision for 'a widow who is a virgin'. In fact, "in the shorter Hebrew version Judith is called not "the widow" but "the virgin"."¹³¹⁰

Craven, ever alert to the literary features of BOJ - and arguing a symmetry between Part I (chapters 1-7) and Part II (chapters 8-16), and hence an overall unity in BOJ¹³¹¹ - has made this comment regarding the first part of Judith's prayer:¹³¹²

¹³⁰⁷ A summary from V. Gabrielsen's 'The Lindian Chronicle and the Greek Creation of Their Past', pp. 319-322.

¹³⁰⁸ *Artistry and Faith in the Book of Judith*, p. 86, with reference to J. Dancy, *Shorter Books of the Apocrypha*, pp. 70, 99.

¹³⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-89, n. 45.

¹³¹⁰ Pope, *op. cit.*, *ibid.*

¹³¹¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 53f.

¹³¹² *Ibid.*, p. 93.

“In an intricate temporal chiasmic bridge between the preceding memory [namely, the Dinah incident] and [Judith’s] subsequent request, she acknowledges that all things past and future are in God’s foreknowledge (9:5-6)”.

Craven’s book is in fact replete with examples of unifying parallelisms, chiasms, and symmetries. To give just a small sample for instance of “parallel passages” that she has discerned between Part I and Part II:¹³¹³ Nebuchadnezzar “sent” to all who lived in Persia (1:7); Judith “sent” her maid to summon the magistrates (8:10); Nebuchadnezzar “called together” his officers and nobles and set forth a “secret plan” which he recounts fully (2:2); Judith “called” Chabris and Charmis, the elders of her city (8:10) and told them that she had a plan, the details of which she refused to discuss (8:34). And, a most important one, both claim to execute through their own hand: Nebuchadnezzar says, ‘What I have spoken *my hand* will execute’ (2:12); Judith, ‘The Lord will deliver Israel by *my hand*’ (8:33).

Her prayer finished, Judith prepared to don her ‘weapons of war’. Not men’s clothing, armour and a sword, as Joan of Arc will later use, but feminine attire (10:3-4). “The author delights in the details of her adornment, literally from head to toe”, writes Craven.¹³¹⁴ “And she does all this “to deceive” (*εἰς ἀπάτησιν*) the eyes of those who will behold her (10:4) ...”. Importantly, too, Judith will take her own food and drink, entrusted to her maid (v. 5), so that she will not have to eat the food of the Assyrians.

The elders of *Bethulia*, “Uzziah, Chabris, and Charmis - who are here mentioned for the last time in the story as a threesome (10:6)”¹³¹⁵ - are stunned by Judith’s new appearance when they meet her at the town’s gate (vv. 7-8): “When they saw her transformed in appearance and dressed differently, they were very greatly astounded at her beauty and said to her, ‘May the God of our ancestors grant you favour and fulfil your plan ...’.”¹³¹⁶

Upon Judith’s request (command?), the elders “ordered the young men to open the gate for her” (v. 9). Then she and her maid went out of the town and headed for the camp of the Assyrians. “The men of the town watched her until she had gone down the mountain and passed through the valley, where they lost sight of her” (v. 10).

Identification of Bethulia

Of particular importance is Judith’s town of *Bethulia* (*βαιτουλία*),¹³¹⁷ from which perspective the latter half of the story, especially, is largely told. Thus Judith will urge her fellow citizens (8:24): ‘Therefore my brothers, let us set an example for our kindred, for their lives depend upon us, and the sanctuary – both the Temple and the altar – rests upon us’.

¹³¹³ *Ibid*, p. 53.

¹³¹⁴ *Ibid*, p. 92.

¹³¹⁵ *Ibid*.

¹³¹⁶ Compare this scene with that of Helen at the Skaian gates of Troy, greatly praised by Priam and the elders of the town for her beauty. *The Iliad*, Book 3, p. 45.

¹³¹⁷ R. Charles, *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, has given as variants of this name: “A *Betuloúa*. Ⲡ *Baitoul...ā*”, p. 251, n. 6.

“Note the importance of Bethulia”, wrote Charles.¹³¹⁸ “It was the key of the whole situation”. Earlier, he had remarked:¹³¹⁹ “The question of the historical value of the book turns largely on this name”. Whilst Charles thought that the strategic Shechem was the “most probable” candidate for ancient *Bethulia*, both Leahy and Simons had opted for *sheih shibil* (Sheikh Shibil); whilst Leahy thought that *Betomesthaim* was Misilya:¹³²⁰

... Joachim charged the citizens of Bethulia and Betomesthaim (*i.e.* Misilya SE. of Dothan according to Abel in *Géographie de la Palestine*, II, 283) to keep the passes of the hill country, etc. (*cf.* Gk 4:6). Bethulia is probably to be located on Sheikh Shibil, above Kafr Kūd in Northern Samaria.

Conder identified this Misilya - he calls it *Mithilia* (or *Meselieh*) - as *Bethulia* itself:¹³²¹

... *Meselieh* ... A small village, with a detached portion to the north, and placed on a slope, with a hill to the south, and surrounded by good olive-groves, with an open valley called Wâdy el Melek (“the King’s Valley”) on the north. The water-supply is from wells, some of which have an ancient appearance. They are mainly supplied with rain-water.

In 1876 I proposed to identify the village of Meselieh, or Mithilia, south of Jenin, with the Bethulia of the Book of Judith, supposing the substitution of M for B, of which there are occasional instances in Syrian nomenclature. The indications of the site given in the Apocrypha are tolerably distinct. Bethulia stood on a hill, but not apparently on the top, which is mentioned separately (Judith vi. 12).

There were springs or wells beneath the town (verse 11), and the houses were above these (verse 13). The city stood in the hill-country not far from the plain (verse 11), and apparently near Dothan (Judith iv. 6). The army of Holofernes was visible when encamped near Dothan (Judith vii. 3, 4), by the spring in the valley near Bethulia (verses 3-7). ‘The site usually supposed to represent Bethulia – namely, the strong village of Sanûr – does not fulfil these various requisites; but *the topography of the Book of Judith, as a whole, is so consistent and easily understood, that it seems that Bethulia was an actual site*’.

Visiting Mithilia on our way to Shechem ... we found a small ruinous village on the slope of the hill. Beneath it are ancient wells, and above it a rounded hill-top, commanding a tolerably extensive view. The north-east part of the great plain, Gilboa, Tabor, and Nazareth, are clearly seen. West of these are neighbouring hillsides Jenin and Wâdy Bel’ameh (the Belmaim, probably of the narrative); but further west Carmel appears behind the ridge of Sheikh Iskander, and part of the plain of ‘Arrabeh, close to Dothan, is seen. A broad corn-vale, called “The King’s Valley”, extends north-west from Meselieh toward Dothan, a distance of only 3 miles.

¹³¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 257, n. 24.

¹³¹⁹ *Ibid*, p. 251, n. 6.

¹³²⁰ ‘Judith’, p. 406.

¹³²¹ *Survey of Western Palestine*, vol. II, pp. 156-157. Emphasis added.

There is a low shed formed by rising ground between two hills, separating this valley from the Dothain [Dothan] plain; and at the latter site is the spring beside which, probably, the Assyrian army is supposed by the old Jewish novelist to have encamped. In imagination one might see the stately Judith walking through the down-trodden corn-fields and shady olive-groves, while on the rugged hillside above the men of the city “looked after her until she was gone down the mountain, and till she had passed the valley, and could see her no more”. (Judith x 10) – C. R. C., ‘Quarterly Statement’, July, 1881.

I find quite satisfying this site (Mithilia/*Meselieh*), which appears to fit *Bethulia* in regard to its location, description, name (approximately) and apparent strategic importance.

Now, one would expect a town of such supposedly strategical value to be well known in the history of the northern kingdom. BOJ has partnered *Bethulia* with *Betomesthaim*, as towns serving to guard the defiles in this area against invasion. Whilst *Betomesthaim*, too, should be a well known city, for Charles however:¹³²² “*Betomesthaim* is unknown. Apparently near Bethulia and Dothan”. He does however add this view of another: “Torrey suggests that [*Betomesthaim*] is a pseudonym for Samaria, and that it is a corruption of **בית מצפה**, House of outlook, as **שומרון** from **שמר**, to watch”. This is quite plausible, given Samaria’s strategic importance in the region. We recall that Sargon II had recently rebuilt and strengthened the site: namely, the Samaria IV archaeological level. (Refer back to section: “The Samaria conundrum”, *Chapter 3*, pp. 59-62).

I am going to propose (for some further development in the *Excursus* on Isaiah) that *Bethulia* was the same as the *Bethel* where, with Dan, the Israelite king Jeroboam I in the late C10th BC had placed the Baal calf; one of his northern sanctuaries (1 Kings 12:29). I agree with Conder, following the view of the Crusaders, that this particular *Bethel* was not the Bethel of the patriarchs:¹³²³ “The Crusaders did not hold this opinion. Dan and Bethel were not, according to their view, the north and south boundary towns of the kingdom of Israel, but were places close together, in the heart of the country...”. Conder explains why he thinks Jeroboam’s Bethel would not have been the same as Jacob’s:¹³²⁴

... Jeroboam instituted these temples [Dan and Bethel] with the express intention of diverting the attention of the tribes from Jerusalem. Surely, therefore, it is most strange that he should have chosen for one of them a place which was actually within the allotted portion of Benjamin. The southern Bethel was moreover taken from Jeroboam by Abijah (2 Chron. xiii. 19), and there is no notice of its recovery, while at the same time there is no account of the destruction of the calf idol which remained ... until the time of Jehu (2 Kings x. 29), and was only finally overthrown by Josiah (2 Kings xxiii. 15). Had the calf temple been at the southern Bethel, there would surely have been some account of [its certain] destruction ... on the conquest of the town by the King of Judah.

¹³²² *Op. cit.*, p. 251, n. 7.

¹³²³ *Op. cit.*, p. 106.

¹³²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 106-107.

Bethel is mentioned as the place to which, upon the command of “the king of Assyria”, the Israelite priest returned from exile to instruct the colonists of *Samaria* to “fear the Lord” (2 Kings 17:27-28), thus perhaps further accounting for why the young Judith had never known an era of apostasy in her region. Added to this was the fact that king Hezekiah had, early in his reign, pulled down the altars and high places in this very region (2 Chronicles 31:1); which places of idolatry his son Manasseh would nonetheless later rebuild (33:3). Indeed the Greek version of the name *Bethulia* appears to have been taken from the Hebrew for ‘Bethel’. Thus Charles:¹³²⁵

Bait(o)uloÚa is now generally explained as **בית אל** = **בית אלוה** = Bethel = House of God, a name which might suitably be applied to any town which is to be represented as true to its faith in God, cf. e.g. viii. 20. What place then is hidden under this assumed [sic] name? It would be natural to think of Jerusalem (**בְּחֹלֶת בֵּית צִיּוֹן**), but this is out of the question, since in this verse Joakim wrote from Jerusalem to Bethulia.

In the Assyrian camp

The Assyrians who had intercepted Judith and her maid were, similarly to the magistrates at the gates of *Bethulia*, captivated by Judith’s beautiful appearance. They allowed her to go to *Holofernes’* tent under escort. As the rumour spread, the excited camp began gathering around her (v. 19):

They marvelled at her beauty and admired the Israelites, judging them by her. They said to one another, ‘Who can despise these people, who have women like this among them? It is not wise to leave one of their men alive, for if we let them go they will be able to beguile the whole world.’¹³²⁶

Judith, when taken into the presence of *Holofernes*, “prostrated herself and did obeisance to him, but his slaves raised her up” (v. 23).

Verses 11:1-2: “Then Holofernes said to her, ‘Take courage, woman, and do not be afraid in your heart, for I have never hurt anyone who chose to serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of all the earth. Even now, if your people who live in the hill country had not slighted me, I would never have lifted my spear against them. They have brought this against themselves.’”

Holofernes’ [i.e. Esarhaddon’s] ‘spear’, now ‘lifted’ in anger against the Israelites, was nothing less - as he claimed - than the very ‘javelin of Assur’, his god:¹³²⁷

¹³²⁵ *Op. cit, ibid*, n. 6.

¹³²⁶ Again, compare these last comments with those about Helen in *The Iliad*: ‘No shame that the Trojans and the well-greaved Achaians should suffer agonies for long years over a woman like this – she is fearfully like the immortal goddesses to look at. But even so, for all her beauty, let her go back in the ships, and not be left here a curse to us and our children’. *Ibid*.

¹³²⁷ D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria & Babylonia*, vol. II, # 561. Emphasis added.

... Like a lion I raged, I put on (my) coat of mail, (my) helmet, emblem of victory, I put on my head. I grasped in my hand the mighty bow Like a fierce eagle, with wings outspread ..., in front of my troops, I went], like a flood, I advanced. *The unsparing javelin of Assur*, fiercely, swiftly, was let loose

Judith would reply in flattering terms to *Holofernes*, after firstly giving the formulaic recognition of his father (v. 7): ‘By the life of Nebuchadnezzar, king of the whole earth, and by the power of him who has sent you to direct every living being!’ She then praised *Holofernes* himself, including in her words the statement (probably a true one) that he had no military peer: ‘For we have heard of your wisdom and skill, and it is reported throughout the whole world that you alone are the best in the whole kingdom, the most informed and the most astounding in military strategy’. Esarhaddon, of course, needed little convincing of it:¹³²⁸

... t’was I who marched triumphantly ... from the rising to the setting sun, and had no rival.
... My equal did not exist, [my power] being unrivaled; and among the princes who went before me, none....

Judith then reiterated before *Holofernes* the argument that *Achior* had used at the war council, that God was on the side of the Israelites if they were not sinning, but with the deceitful twist that her people *had* sinned by eating consecrated foods forbidden to them, and so were destined to be destroyed by the Assyrians. And Judith would fully assist the Assyrians in achieving this (v. 19). *Holofernes*, completely besotted by the Jewess, appeared to be buying the entire story (vv. 22-23).

When Judith, consistent with her piety, now refused to partake of the food and drink that the Gentile *Holofernes* offered to her, he posed the practical question (BOJ 12:3): ‘If your supply runs out, where can we get you more of the same? For none of your people is here with us’. To which Judith replied with dramatic irony (v. 4): ‘As surely as you live, my lord, your servant will not use up the supplies I have with me before the Lord carries out by my hand what he has determined’.

Holofernes even permitted Judith and her maid to go out each night, unhindered, to the valley of *Bethulia*, to pray. There, too, Judith bathed in the spring; after which, “she prayed the Lord God of Israel to direct her way for the triumph of his people” (vv. 5-9). The true reason though for *Holofernes*’ extreme liberality and kindness towards the Hebrew woman was about to become apparent. It was by now the “fourth day” of the five day matrix. *Holofernes*, who had arranged a banquet for “his personal attendants only, and did not invite any of his officers” (vv. 10-12):

... said to Bagoas, the eunuch who had charge of his personal affairs, ‘Go and persuade the Hebrew woman who is in your care to join us and to eat and drink with us. For it would be a disgrace if we let such a woman go without having intercourse with her. If we do not seduce her, she will laugh at us’.

¹³²⁸ *Ibid*, #'s 507, 521.

Judith willingly accepted the invitation of *Bagoas* (v. 14): ‘Who am I to refuse my lord? Whatever pleases him I will do at once ...’. One suspects though that she had a different ‘lord’ in mind. And she added, ironically: ‘... and it will be a joy to me until the day of my death’. Once again Judith prepared herself whilst her maid went to *Holofernes’* tent and spread out for her mistress on the ground before *Holofernes* the lambskins that *Bagoas* had provided (v. 15). Then (vv. 16-18):

... Judith came in and lay down. Holofernes’ heart was ravished with her and his passion was aroused, for he had been waiting for an opportunity to seduce her from the day he first saw her. So Holofernes said to her, ‘Have a drink and be merry with us!’ Judith said, ‘I will gladly drink, my lord, because today is the greatest day in my whole life’.

And whilst Judith ate and drank simply what her maid had prepared, *Holofernes* drank himself into a stupor (vv. 19-20).

The Heroine’s Character

Moore has, in a section of this same title, “The Heroine’s Character”, written perceptively:¹³²⁹

In commenting on Judith’s character and conduct, scholars have often said, in effect, as much about themselves as about Judith. For example, at a time when Christians found themselves mortally threatened by pagan persecutions, scholars like Clement of Rome [C1st AD] saw Judith as a brave and godly woman

Later, in the days when religious persecutions were not so much a threat to the Church Fathers as sexual temptations to a celibate priesthood, such theologians as Tertullian [c. 200 AD], Methodius of Tyre [C3rd], and Ambrose of Milan [C4th] ... praised Judith highly, not so much for her courageous assassination of Holofernes as for her self-imposed celibacy

...
The values and priorities of a Victorian England, with its patronizing and protective attitude towards “the fairer sex”, are well exemplified in the observations of Edwin Cone Bissell, writing in 1886:

The character [of Judith] is not simply objectionable from a literary point of view, but even more from a moral stand-point ... Her way is strewn with deception from first to last, and yet she is represented as taking God into her counsels and as having his special blessing in her enterprise ... she assents to his [i.e., Holofernes’] request to take part in a carousal at his tent and to spend a night in his embrace

...

¹³²⁹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 64-65.

Although the women's movement is recent, it has already provided some new insights and radically different perspectives on Judith. According to Patricia Montley ... Judith is the archetypal androgyne. She is more than the Warrior Woman and the *femme fatale*, a combination of the soldier and the seductress ...

Just as the brilliance of a cut diamond is the result of many different facets, so the striking appeal of the book of Judith results from its many facets.

[End of quotes]

Stocker will, in her comprehensive treatment of the Judith character and her actions, compare the heroine to, amongst others, the Old Testament's Jael¹³³⁰ – a common comparison given that the woman, Jael, had driven a tent peg through the temple of Sisera, an enemy of Israel (Judges 4:17-22) – Joan of Arc (as already alluded to), and Charlotte Corday, who had, during the French Revolution, beheaded the likewise unsuspecting Marat.¹³³¹ “If viewed negatively – from an irreligious perspective, for instance”, Stocker will go on to write,¹³³² “- Judith's isolation, chastity, widowhood, childlessness, and murderousness would epitomize all that is morbid, nihilistic and abortive”. This, though, is not how her fellow Bethulians, and fellow Israelites, were to consider Judith, as we shall learn from their rapturous praise of her and her lasting fame. Craven, with reference to Ruskin,¹³³³ writes: “Judith, the slayer of Holofernes; Jael, the slayer of Sisera; and Tomyris, the slayer of Cyrus are counted in art as the female “types” who prefigure the Virgin Mary's triumph over Satan”.

Downfall of the Assyrian Commander-in-Chief

The demise of *Holofernes*, in his various guises, is referred to I believe in a number of sources, some of which I shall give here.

1. In BOJ (as *Holofernes*)

With *Bagoas* and the slaves having withdrawn as the party wore on, Judith had her perfect chance. After a prayer for strength (13:4-5), she moved into action (vv. 6-10):

She went up to the bedpost near Holofernes' head, and took down his sword that hung there. She came close to his bed, took hold of the hair of his head, and said, 'Give me strength today, O Lord God of Israel!' Then she struck his neck twice with all her might, and cut off his head.

¹³³⁰ *Op. cit.*, e.g. pp. 13-15.

¹³³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-119.

¹³³² *Ibid.*, p. 173.

¹³³³ *Op. cit.*, p. 95, with reference to J. Ruskin's 'Mornings in Florence', p. 335.

Next she rolled the body off the bed and pulled down the canopy from the posts. Soon afterward she went out and gave Holofernes' head to her maid, who placed it in her food bag.

Then she and her maid went out together as the Assyrians were accustomed to seeing them do, for prayer. But then: "They passed through the camp, circled around the valley, and went up the mountain to Bethulia, and came to its gates" (v. 10). When the *Bethulians* heard Judith's voice, proclaiming her God's victory, they rushed to open the gate. They subsequently lit a fire to give light and gathered around Judith, who, still praising God, pulled the head of *Holofernes* out of the bag, whilst swearing before them that 'he committed no sin with me to defile and shame me' (vv. 12-16). Dinah, Simeon's virginal 'sister', had at last been 'revenged', and even not all that far from Shechem. After the people had sung Judith's praises (v. 17), *Uzziah* said to her (vv. 18-20):

'O daughter, you are blessed by the Most High God above all other women on earth; and blessed be the Lord God, who created the heavens and the earth, who has guided you to cut off the head of the leader of our enemies. Your praise will never depart from the hearts of those who remember the power of God. May God grant this to be a perpetual honour to you, and may he reward you with blessings, because you risked your own life when our nation was brought low, and you averted our ruin, walking in the straight path before our God'.

2. In the Assyrian Records (as 'the king')

My reconstruction of neo-Assyrian history has enabled I think for a rather plausible identification of *Holofernes* with Esarhaddon, as second only to the Assyrian king during a climactic period of history, who died during a western campaign.

All well and good as far as it goes. But what would make it all more satisfying would be to be able find some historical evidence of the Viceroy's shameful demise.

This is to be found, I believe, in the Assyrian records themselves, in the previously discussed Eponym for Nashur(a)-bel.¹³³⁴ Here again is the relevant portion of the text:¹³³⁵

The king [against Tabal....] against Ešpai the Kulummaean. [.....] *The king was killed. The camp of the king of Assyria [was taken.....].* On the 12th of Abu, Sennacherib, son [of Sargon, took his seat on the throne].

Tadmor's comment here: "There is no information from any other source on the last war of Sargon [sic], nor any plausible identification of the Kulummaeans".

¹³³⁴ Given by H. Tadmor as Cb6. 'The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur', p. 97.

¹³³⁵ This seems to give the lie to the commonly held view that the Assyrians did not record their reverses.

As I have argued, a succession from Sargon II to Sennacherib, as proposed above, is impossible. The ‘king’ referred to in this quote should in fact be identified as Esarhaddon, that is the *Holofernes* of BOJ. Compare the Eponym Chronicle’s he “was killed [with the result that] ... *The camp of the king of Assyria [was taken]*” with BOJ 13:8: “Then [Judith] ... cut off his head” and 15:6-7: “... the people of Bethulia *fell upon the Assyrian camp* and plundered it, acquiring great riches. And the Israelites, when they returned from the slaughter, took possession of what remained”.

According to BOJ, the head of the slain Assyrian commander-in-chief was actually carried away from his lifeless corpse by the triumphant Judith and her maid back to *Bethulia*. Upon Judith’s instructions it was hung on the parapet of the city wall (cf. 13:9-10, 15, & 14:11); the purpose being subsequently to strike fear into the hearts of the Assyrian soldiers and cause them to flee.

As we learned earlier, Sennacherib had to undertake the unpleasant task of investigating the reasons for the violent death of his son and heir, Esarhaddon. And I tentatively suggested in *Chapter 12* that this might be related to the incident recorded about the Assyrian king and his deceased son in the ‘Namareth’ inscription (discussion beginning on p. 369).

Roux drily tells, presuming death by sickness, that:¹³³⁶ “Esarhaddon was, once again, on his way to Egypt when he fell sick in Haran and died (669 B.C. [sic])”. But there is no solid historical evidence for Esarhaddon’s death having occurred at Haran.

3. In Isaiah 14 (as the ‘Day Star’, הַיֵּל)

Not only is Esarhaddon referred to in Isaiah’s taunt song, as conqueror of Egypt’s Delta region (Isaiah 37:25), he is also, I believe, the subject of Isaiah’s “literary masterpiece”,¹³³⁷ the Oracle about the fall of the king of Babylon (Isaiah 14). In regard to this poem’s historical basis, Boutflower is helpful when favourably recalling Sir Edward Strachey’s “belief that the king of Babylon, against whom the “parable” of Isa. xiv was hurled, was a king of Assyria”¹³³⁸ - a king of Assyria, that is, who ruled over Babylon. Whilst Boutflower was convinced that this was Tiglath-pileser III, it is my opinion - based on the reference in the poem to the violent death of this king on campaign, apparently in Israel, “in My land” (v. 25, בְּאֶרֶץ יִשְׂרָאֵל) - that he must have been Esarhaddon. Others have not been able to unravel so skillfully as did Strachey the intertwining of Babylon and Assyria in this Oracle. Thus Moriarty:¹³³⁹ “Some think this oracle ... of ch. 14, was originally applied to Assyria and only later referred to Babylon”. Strachey’s view is, I believe, the correct one.

¹³³⁶ *Ancient Iraq*, p. 329. The death of the Persian Cambyses, at Syrian *Ecbatana*, as recounted by Herodotus, is somewhat reminiscent of that of *Holofernes*, unintentionally, by his own sword, after having previously asked a question about the location (cf. BOJ 5:3; 13:6-8). *The Histories*, Book 3, pp. 230-231.

¹³³⁷ F. Moriarty, ‘Isaiah 1-39’, 16:30, p. 274.

¹³³⁸ *The Book of Isaiah*, p. 69.

¹³³⁹ *Op. cit, ibid*, 16:29.

The subject of the poem was ‘a king of Babylon *and* a king of Assyria’: namely Esarhaddon. And Isaiah has enshrined Esarhaddon’s fall in poetry. Consider, for instance, Esarhaddon’s likening of himself to “the sun”,¹³⁴⁰ with Isaiah’s addressing this king as: “O Day Star, son of Dawn!” (14:12). And Isaiah’s mocking, “Is this the man who made the earth tremble?” (v. 16), with e.g. Esarhaddon’s reference to king Shupria, whose “heart was “seized” [and] his lips *trembled* ...”.¹³⁴¹ Esarhaddon was truly a king who, as Isaiah had said in his Oracle, had “laid the nations low” (v. 12), and who “shook kingdoms, made the world like a desert and overthrew its cities, and would not let his prisoners go home” (vv. 16-17). Even a cursory perusal of Esarhaddon’s records, and of those of his fathers, will quickly make it apparent that such is what these kings gloried in. Finally, compare the king of Isaiah 14’s self-deifying boast: ‘I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit on the heights of Zaphon; I will ascend to the tops of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High’ (vv. 13-14), with Esarhaddon’s own god-like statement: “I am powerful, I am all powerful, I am a hero, I am gigantic, I am colossal, I am honored, I am magnified, I am without an equal among all kings ...”.¹³⁴² Considerable ego-mania on display here. This might indicate that these verses of Isaiah are no mere poetic exaggeration, but poetically pertain to the boasts of a real king. And they could also answer criticisms of BOJ 3:8, that the Assyrian kings were not inclined to self-deification.

One might imagine the *Bethulians*, staring at the lifeless head of *Holofernes* as it was lifted from Judith’s food bag – or when it was later hanging on the parapet of the city’s wall (14:1, 11), “those who see you will stare at you” (Isaiah 14:16) – and asking themselves, in Isaian terms: ‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble, who shook kingdoms ... who ... who ...?’.

We gather from Isaiah’s poem that all of the king’s glory came to an end in a moment, like the fall of a star from heaven. Moreover, the end was to come on the field of battle (vv. 12-20). A few verses later, Isaiah will nominate this ill-fated invader as an “Assyrian”, who will die on the mountains of Israel (vv. 24, 25):

The Lord of hosts has sworn:
... I will break the Assyrian [אֲשׁוּר] in my land.
and on my mountains trample
him under foot.

Thus the Assyrian, who was king of Babylon, would die a wretched death on the mountains of Israel, and would not be royally buried in his homeland - as are other kings - but would be trampled contemptuously under foot. Such was the fate of Esarhaddon.¹³⁴³

¹³⁴⁰ Luckenbill, *op. cit.*, # 523.

¹³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, # 593.

¹³⁴² *Ibid.*, # 577.

¹³⁴³ Esarhaddon may have been appropriated into Greco-Persian folklore as Mardonius, Xerxes’ general. Even the search for Mardonius’ dead body on the battlefield is reminiscent of Sennacherib’s enquiries about his dead son, Esarhaddon. Herodotus, *op. cit.*, Book 9, pp. 602, 610.

4. In BOT 14:10 (as *Nadab*)

In this verse we learn that a certain *Nadab* had set a trap for *Ahikar*, to kill him, but had fallen into that trap himself with fatal consequences. The description of this intriguing *bouleversement* fits *exactly* the story of *Holofernes* and *Achior* at Bethulia, thus I think providing a further confirmation of my reconstruction. In the legends of *Ahikar*, the betrayer can be called *Nadan*,¹³⁴⁴ instead of *Nadab*, and this is important; for commentators can presume that *Ahikar's* betrayer is the same as *Ahikar's* very nephew, *Nadab*. In BOT we are told that “Ahikar and his nephew Nadab were also present ...” at the celebration of the wedding of the young Tobias and Sarah in Nineveh (11:18). And, because Tobit will, three chapters later, when recalling *Ahikar's* betrayal, name the betrayer, ‘Nadab’ (14:10), then it is not unreasonably assumed that *Ahikar* was betrayed by his very own nephew. If this were the case, then of course it would instantly rule out my proposed comparison of this murderous intrigue with the *Bethulia* incident, because – apart from the fact that Esarhaddon (*Holofernes*) was not *Ahikar's* nephew – Esarhaddon was no longer, according to my chronological reconstruction, in the land of the living. An added complication is that Esarhaddon and *Nadan* (or *Nadab*) the betrayer, are two different characters in the legends of *Ahikar*. Though it is actually Esarhaddon who is said to have passed the death sentence on *Ahikar*, which fits my *Bethulia* reconstruction. But the *Ahikar* legends, as we read in *Chapter 7*, have been famous over millennia, and so it would not surprise if serious distortions had crept in, as with BOT and BOJ. I suggest that (i) *Nadan* (*Nadab*), *Ahikar's* betrayer, and (ii) *Nadab*, *Ahikar's* nephew, need to be clearly distinguished, and that (i) be identified with Esarhaddon (*Holofernes*). Here, then, is my reconstructed version of verse 14:10, with my name substitutions added in square brackets:

‘See, my son [Tobias], what Nadab [*Nadan*/Esarhaddon] did to Ahikar [*Achior*] who had reared him. Was he not, while still alive, brought down into the earth? For God repaid him to his face for his shameful treatment. Ahikar came out into the light, but Nadab went into the eternal darkness, because he tried to kill Ahikar. Because he gave alms, Ahikar escaped the fatal trap [at *Bethulia*] that Nadab had set for him, but Nadab fell into it himself, and was destroyed’.

This verse is quite mystifying in the context of BOT alone, which had, until this, told us nothing whatsoever about any misdeed on the part of *Ahikar's* nephew, but only that he, with his uncle, had been “present [at the celebration] to share Tobit’s joy” (11:18). Whilst the name *Nadab* itself, as the betrayer, does not appear to add any relevance to my reconstruction, the variant form of it, *Nadan*, surely does. *Nadan* can be connected with the Assyrian name, Ashur-*nadin*-shumi, the son of Sennacherib whom I have identified with Esarhaddon. The name connection can be deduced from the following passage:¹³⁴⁵

¹³⁴⁴ J. Marshall, ‘Tobit, Book Of’, p. 789, 2, section: “The Story of Ahikar”.

¹³⁴⁵ *IDB*, ‘Ahikar, Book of’, p. 69.

Some of the persons mentioned [in the Aramaic book of Ahikar] may even be historical. A high official named Nabu-sum-iskun is known to have served under Sennacherib. While the person of Ahikar has not been found as yet [sic], his name is Assyrian (Ahi-yaqar, “the brother is precious”). The name Nadan (better, Nadin) is a short form of some name like Adad-*nadin*-shum.

The actual name ‘Esarhaddon’ does not appear in the original BOT; though the Greek name, *Sacherdonos* - as previously noted - is usually translated as ‘Esarhaddon’.

We also learn from the legends that *Ahikar* had been *Nadan*’s actual tutor, taking many pains with the latter’s instruction (hence having “reared him”, according to Tobit 14:10 above). It is quite possible that the wise *Ahikar*, whose moral maxims seem to have been lifted straight from the sayings of Tobit¹³⁴⁶ - the latter being well-known to a succession of Assyrian kings (1:13-19, 21-22) - had been appointed as steward, or tutor, of Sennacherib’s son, just as the wise Senenmut had been ‘tutor’ or ‘steward’ of Egypt’s Thutmose [III], as a child, and of Hatshepsut’s daughter, Neferure.¹³⁴⁷ In that sense, could Tobit say that *Ahikar* “had reared him [*Nadab*]”.

Aspects of the legendary story of *Ahikar*’s condemnation and release can perhaps be seen as distortions of the original *Bethulia* incident. For instance, the tale of the executioner’s sparing *Ahikar*’s life, and imprisoning him in a cellar under his house, after which he was eventually released, might be a distortion of Esarhaddon’s deferring the execution of *Achior* until the defeat of the *Bethulians*, and having him bound below (under) the hill of *Bethulia*, from which he was liberated. For in BOJ 6:13 we read: “So [*Holofernes*’ slaves] having taken shelter below the hill ... bound Achior and left him lying at the foot of the hill, and returned to their master”.

A Rout Involved

Some think - based on the Hebrew word **רָעַשׁ** in Isaiah 29:6; sometimes translated as “blast” - that 185,000 Assyrian soldiers must have been destroyed instantly, on the spot. Perhaps by an angel of the Lord (cf. Isaiah 37:36). Or perhaps, as Velikovsky had argued, by a cosmic collision,¹³⁴⁸ his unique interpretation of **רָעַשׁ**.

For Herodotus, the agent of the army’s demise was a plague of mice.¹³⁴⁹

It was in fact, according to Judith’s careful plan of it (14:1-4), a rout. And this is also the impression that one gains from what I consider to have been the corresponding account of it in Joel 2:20:

¹³⁴⁶ Marshall, *op. cit, ibid.* “There are many features of resemblance between Ahikar’s moral teaching to Nadan, and Tobit’s to Tobias”. Moreover, J. Miller & J. Hayes have listed “Parallels Between Esarhaddon’s Vassal Treaty and Deuteronomy”, *A History of Ancient Israel and Judah*, pp. 395-397.

¹³⁴⁷ I argued in my ‘Solomon and Sheba’ article, pp. 5-11, that Senenmut was actually the wise Solomon himself, in his influence over Egypt.

¹³⁴⁸ A main theme throughout Velikovsky’s book, *Worlds in Collision*, that has launched a whole science of catastrophism.

¹³⁴⁹ *Op. cit*, Book 2, p. 185. Herodotus may in fact have picked up the idea of *mice* from BOJ, according to which the Assyrian soldiers likened the emboldened Israelites to “mice, coming out of their holes” (14:12, Douay version); a typical Assyrian simile. The Greek version of BOJ has “slaves” instead of “mice”.

I will remove the northern army far from you.
 And drive it into a parched and desolate land.
 Its front into the eastern sea,
 And its rear into the western sea

The 'angel' factor, as common to KCI and to the Second Book of Maccabees accounts, is accommodated in the Douay version of BOJ, 13:20,¹³⁵⁰ according to which God's angel, Judith's protector, was an agent of the "victory" and of Israel's "deliverance".

The *Bethulians* had been ordered by the girl, Judith, to hang *Holofernes'* head upon the parapet of the city wall and, at dawn, to feign a *sortée* against the Assyrian camp. The Assyrian soldiers would seize their arms and rush to *Holofernes'* tent, only to find there his lifeless corpse. 'Then panic will overcome them', she had predicted, 'and they will flee before you' (v. 3). The 'flight' factor it appears is likewise to be found for instance in Isaiah – likened to the hosts of Midian fleeing before Gideon and the Lord (Isaiah 9:4: 10:26; cf. Judges 78:22). Judith was perhaps inspired by the strategy of Midian, and especially also of the woman, Jael, as noted above (p. 75).

For these ancient Israelites there would have been no contradiction between the agency of Judith and the fact that an angel had dealt the blow; nor would Gideon's skilful action have cancelled out the action of the Lord. But, firstly, Judith had another use for the head of *Holofernes*. She would show it to *Achior* (presumably to verify its identity). "So they summoned Achior from the house of Uzziah. When he came and saw the head of Holofernes in the hand of one of the men in the assembly of the people, he fell down on his face in a faint" (14:6). Upon his recovery, *Achior*, too, sang Judith's praises (v. 7): 'Blessed are you in every tent of Judah! In every nation those who hear your name will be alarmed'. And upon hearing Judith's full story, *Achior*, the northern Israelite, was converted to Yahweh worship (vv. 8-10).

Meanwhile, in the Assyrian camp, *Bagoas* had discovered the headless commander-in-chief, and soon there was complete uproar throughout the camp (vv. 11-19). That initial shock for the Assyrians quickly turned to total panic (15:2): "Overcome with fear and trembling, they did not wait for one another, but with one impulse all rushed out and fled by every path across the plain and through the hill country". Soon the whole of northern Israel had mobilized to pursue them (vv. 4-5). And later the Jerusalemites as well (v. 5). The *Bethulians* and their fellow-Israelites made themselves rich from the immense plunder (vv. 6-7), which, it is said, took them "thirty days" to gather (v. 11).

Joakim himself came from Jerusalem "to witness the good things that the Lord had done for Israel, and to see Judith and to wish her well" (v. 8). He and the elders who had accompanied him "blessed her with one accord and said to her, 'You are the glory of Jerusalem, you are the great boast of Israel, you are the great pride of our nation.'" (v. 9).

Earlier, I had noted Moore's contrast between *fear*, held by the men in the story, and the *beauty* of the woman Judith. But I had suggested that the contrast might more accurately be set between *fear*, on the one hand, and *trust* or faith in God. We find that, of the three sets of praise that Judith receives after her victory (by *Uzziah*, by *Achior* and by *Joakim* and the elders of Jerusalem), there is no reference to Judith's beauty, but to her courage.

¹³⁵⁰ Douay Bible, p. 628.

Who were the Kulummaeans?

As for the “identification of the Kulummaeans”, the last people against whom the hapless Assyrian king had marched before his demise, these can be plausibly identified with the inhabitants of a town that we had previously encountered in BOJ (Douay version). I refer to ‘Chelmon’ (7:3) (*Cyamon* in the Greek). *Chelmon* was the very last place to which the Assyrian host did in fact march before its rout. The fact that this town (perhaps), and not *Bethulia* (or Bethel), is mentioned in the Assyrian records - though the record is admittedly fragmentary - may be an indication that the Assyrian army was attacking on a front wider than was now of interest to the author of BOJ.

The name ‘Ešpai’, given in the Assyrian records as, presumably, the chief of the *Kulummaeans* (Chelmonians), has a strong resemblance to *Ushpia*, which name Storck has equated linguistically with both *Ishbak* and *Aushpia*.¹³⁵¹ There might even be considered now the possibility - given that *Uzziah* of BOJ was, as we saw, “the prince of Judah” and “the prince of the people of Israel” - that *Uzziah* was this very *Ešpai/Ushpia*. That is, according to my reconstruction, the great Isaiah himself!

Canticle of Judith

Judith’s canticle of victory and thanksgiving, that occupies most of the final chapter (BOJ 16), is considered to be quite ancient. According to Grintz,¹³⁵² it certainly “antedates those found at Qumran”. And Bruns has written of it:¹³⁵³

The most interesting question raised by the canticle is whether it antedates the rest of the book in which it is found. Just as the Canticle of Deborah is much older than the prose that precedes it (Jgs 4:1-28) so, also, may be the case here. However, if this view is accepted, it does not alter the prevailing opinion that “Judith, the daughter of Merari”, is a pseudonymous characterization” [sic].

Craven, who wonders “whether the author of Judith included the poem following the models of other liberation stories which climax in song like “The Song of the Sea” (Exodus 15) or “The Song of Deborah” (Judges 5)”, believes at least that “Judith 16 fulfils a liturgical function in the story”.¹³⁵⁴ Judith’s hymn of praise acclaimed herself, by the power of God, the agent of the defeat of *Holofernes*’ mighty army (vv. 5-6):

‘But the Lord Almighty has foiled them
by the hand of a woman.
For their mighty one (Holofernes) did not fall
by the hands of the young men,
nor did the sons of Titans

¹³⁵¹ ‘The Early Assyrian King List’, p. 69.

¹³⁵² ‘Judith’, p. 451.

¹³⁵³ ‘Judith, Canticle of’, p. 45.

¹³⁵⁴ *Op. cit.*, p. 105.

strike them down,
nor did tall giants set upon him;
but Judith daughter of Merari
with the beauty of her countenance undid him’.

Judith’s telling of how the Assyrian fell “by the *hand of a woman*” may be an echo of Isaiah’s prediction that the Assyrian would fall “by the sword of *no man*”, **שֵׁלֵל־אִישׁ** (Isaiah 31:8). And *Joakim* had recently said to her (15:10): ‘You have done all of this with *your own hand* ...’. Apparently the Jews then considered Judith’s achievement so noteworthy that they - through the agency of *Joakim* - devoted an entire book to her; a book that often supplements, rather than repeats, the details in KCI. And, according to the Douay BOJ, they memorialized it all in a feast.

Enslin,¹³⁵⁵ writing of this feast, refers to the “*probability that the Judith story, along with Megillah Antiochus, was used by Jews in their synagogues at the feast of Hanukkah*”.

Conclusion

Judith’s heroic act on behalf of her people, for which she received the greatest praise and adulation from the high priest and other officials – and from the people of Israel in general – is virtually unprecedented as a single act of patriotism and enormous courage. And this by one whom the BOJ text calls a “young girl”! It can take its place amongst the most heroic moments throughout the entire history of the human race.

¹³⁵⁵ *The Book of Judith*, p. 261.

The Aftermath

So, what became of our main characters from our synthesis of KCI with BOJ for EOH?

King Hezekiah

Hezekiah, given his reign of 29 years (2 Kings 18:2), from c. 727-699 BC (revised), would have lived long enough to have savoured Judith's victory in c. 703 BC (revised). But he had, ever since his life-threatening illness in his Year 14, faded from the forefront, and we hear virtually nothing of him for the last 15 years approximately of his 29-year reign. Probably the bulk of this latter part of his reign was shared in co-regency with his son, Manasseh, who would continue to reign for almost half a century after his father's death (2 Chronicles 33:1).

King Sennacherib

He is the 'Nebuchadnezzar' of BOJ. We know that Sennacherib was assassinated by his sons. But, according to my reconstruction, he (c. 722-700 BC, revised) outlived his co-regent son, Esarhaddon (*Holofernes*), who was slain by Judith outside *Bethulia* (c. 703 BC). Sennacherib, about whom we shall read a little more in the following *Excursus*, was thus actually succeeded by his grandson, Ashurbanipal.

Eliakim/Joakim

The last we hear of the high-priest Eliakim/Joakim was his visit to *Bethulia*, to see the victorious Judith (c. 703 BC). We learn nothing more about him after that. But he may have actually written the BOJ account.

But I have added the further dimension of identifying this Eliakim as the great leader and military strategist, Tirhakah, of the 25th dynasty, about which composite character there is yet much more to be written. His death I have estimated as having occurred at about the same time as Hezekiah's.

Judith

Of our heroine it is written that (16:21-24):

Judith went to Bethulia, and remained on her estate. For the rest of her life she was honored throughout the whole country. Many desired to marry her, but she gave herself to no man all the days of her life after her husband Manasseh died and was gathered to his people. She became more and more famous, and grew old in her husband's house, reaching the age of one hundred five. She set her maid free. She died in Bethulia, and they buried her in the cave of her husband Manasseh; and the house of Israel mourned her for seven days.

The only woman of significance who emerges in the Scriptures for this period is the prophetess, Huldah, who was important enough for king Josiah, Hezekiah's great grandson, to have sent his ambassadors to, in order to 'inquire of the Lord', after Josiah had found and read the book of the law (2 Chronicles 34:15, 21, 22). Huldah, however, could not have been Judith, since the husband of the former was apparently still alive, and was likely a Levite (not a Simeonite) (v. 22), and because Huldah "lived in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter" (v. 22); whereas Judith, as we have read above, lived out her life in *Bethulia*, perhaps the northern Bethel.

It does not seem, therefore, that Judith, despite her fame, appears in any other part of the Scriptures.

BOJ ends with another of those seemingly problematical glosses (16:25): "No one ever again spread terror among the Israelites during the lifetime of Judith, or for a long time after her death". In mathematical terms this would mean that, since Judith lived for 105 years, and was probably a teenager when she triumphed over *Holofernes*, no one should have "spread terror amongst the Israelites" for, say, the 85-90 remaining years of Judith's life, nor even "for a long time after" that. Taking this literally, about 110 years of peace would probably be the minimum allowable time span. We saw in *Chapter 2* (of this VOLUME TWO), p. 31, that this verse has been used as an argument against any attempted reconstruction of the BOJ drama at the time of Ashurbanipal, because of the tragic death of king Josiah in c. 609 BC (conventional dating) at the hands of pharaoh Necho.

The death of Josiah is likewise a factor though in my reconstruction of BOJ to EOH, falling as it does, conventionally, about a century after Judith's victory – and even less than that in the context of my revision. However, what I think that the editor of BOJ would have had in mind when adding this verse – especially in the context of the drama which is about a foreign invasion into the heart of Israel for the purpose of destroying Jerusalem – would have been the sack of Jerusalem and the razing to the ground of its Temple by Nebuchednezzar II in c. 587 BC (conventional dating).

Pharaoh Necho, on his way to Carchemish to fight against the Babylonians, had specifically told king Josiah who had come out to intercept him: 'What have I to do with you, king of Judah? I am not coming against you today, but against the house with which I am at war; and God has commanded me to hurry. Cease opposing God, who is with me, so that he will not destroy you' (2 Chronicles 35: 21). Far from Necho's 'spreading terror among the Israelites', he did all he could to avoid a clash with king Josiah. Though admittedly the violent death of the Judaeen king at the hands of pharaoh would likely have struck great fear into the hearts of the Jews.

A few years before Nebuchednezzar II began to reign, pharaoh Necho had also carried king Jehoahaz of Judah captive to Egypt and had set his brother Eliakim on the throne, changing his name to Jehoiakim (2 Chronicles 36:2-4); the same two names, incidentally, that I have argued belonged to king Hezekiah's high priest (Eliakim/J[eh]oakim). Whether this constituted a 'troubling of Israel', however, is debatable. Certainly there is no indication that the Temple was under any sort of threat at this time.

Suffice it to say that at least a century, even in the strictest revised terms, is probably allowable for the period between Judith's victory and any serious assaults against Jerusalem itself threatening the Temple.

But a further estimation of all this will need to await a revision of the later Babylonian history, which is beyond the scope of this present thesis.

Achior (Ahikar)

An editor has added a gloss (BOJ 14:6) telling of descendants of *Achior* being alive even in his time. If this were added by the same editor as the one who had written about peace prevailing in Israel beyond even Judith's death, then it may well (based on what I have just written) date to some time after the destruction of the Temple of Yahweh by the Babylonians. *Achior/Ahikar*, the famous convert, would go on to become a legendary figure (as we recall from *Chapter 7* of VOLUME ONE, p. 186), remembered for many centuries after his death, in the literatures of various nations.

Isaiah

More than any of the above does Isaiah, despite his age, still, I think, have a further important public rôle to play, thereby continuing the 'aftermath' of the Judith saga. That continuing rôle of Isaiah's will now become the subject matter of the following *Excursus*.

EXCURSUS: LIFE AND TIMES OF HEZEKIAH'S CONTEMPORARY, ISAIAH

Isaiah and his Father Amos

Relevant to my efforts to merge KCI with BOJ is the need now to test whether Isaiah finds his appropriate match in the Simeonite *Uzziah*, chief magistrate of *Bethulia*, who – in the context of my reconstruction – must have been a great man in Hezekiah's kingdom. We saw recently, in *Chapter 3* (on p. 67), that *Uzziah* was entitled both 'the prince of Judah' and 'the prince of the people of Israel'. Now such an identification, of Isaiah with *Uzziah*, would necessitate that *Uzziah's* father, *Micah*, be the same as Isaiah's father, Amos (or Amoz). This is interesting. Whilst the names Amos and Micah do not immediately appear to share any similarity whatsoever, scholars find an incredible similarity though between whom they consider to be these 'two' prophets. Thus King:¹³⁵⁶

Not only did Micah live in the vicinity of Amos' home, Tekoa, but he was like Amos in many respects. He was so much influenced by the spirit of Amos that he has been called "Amos *redivivus*". Both [sic] rustic prophets attacked in a direct and forceful way the socio-economic abuses of their day.

Micah's origins we do know. He hailed from the town of 'Moreseth' (Micah 1:1) - thought to be *Moreseth-Gath*, a border town of southern Judah. It is in this location, *Moreseth-Gath*, I suggest, that we discover the place of origin of Isaiah and his father. Amos began his prophetic ministry in the latter days of the Jehu-ide king, Jeroboam II of Israel (c. 785-743 BC, conventional dates, but needing to be revised upwards). This would have been the same time as the reign of Ramses II 'the Great' of Egypt's 19th dynasty, with whom I identified Jeroboam II in *Chapter 11*. Amos was called to leave Judah and testify in the north against the injustices of Samaria. (Cf. Micah 1:2-7). Most interestingly, Amos was to be found preaching in the northern Bethel, which I have identified with *Bethulia* of BOJ (refer back to pp. 71-72 of this volume). Not unexpectedly, Amos' presence there at the time of Jeroboam II was not appreciated by the Bethelite priesthood, who regarded him as a conspirator from the southern kingdom (Amos 7:10). Being the man that he was, though, Amos would unlikely have been frightened away by Jeroboam's priest, Amaziah, when he had urged Amos (vv.12-13): 'O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is the temple of the kingdom'. Still, Amos may not have settled permanently in the north at this time, but may have waited until the fall of Jeroboam II and his régime in Israel and the onset of the long interregnum there.

Presumably Amos had chosen Bethel/*Bethulia* in which to settle because there, more than likely, he had Simeonite ancestors. Judith's husband Manasseh would later be buried near *Bethulia* "with his ancestors" (Judith 8:3). This town would thus have been one of those locations in which the migrant Simeonites of king Asa of Judah's reign (more than a century earlier) had chosen to settle; perhaps re-naming the place *Bethul* [Bethel] after a Simeonite town of that name in south western Judah (Joshua 19:4).

¹³⁵⁶ 'Micah', 17:2, p. 283.

Thus Amos of *Bethulia* would become *Merari*, father of Judith; the name *Amos* (*Amoz*), or *Amaziah*, perhaps being linguistically transformable into *Amariah*, hence *Merari*, in the same way that king *Uzziah* of Judah was also called *Azariah* (1 Chronicles 3:12). We saw that Jewish legend names Judith's father as *Beeri*. Now the names *Beeri* and *Merari* are very similar if Conder's principle, "supposing the substitution of M for B, of which there are occasional instances in Syrian nomenclature" (as quoted back on p. 70), be allowable here. This vital piece of information, that Judith's father was *Beeri*, now enables for the prophet *Hosea*, an exact contemporary of *Isaiah* in the north, whose father was also *Beeri* (Hosea 1:1), to be identified with *Isaiah*.¹³⁵⁷

If these connections are valid, then *Isaiah* must therefore have accompanied his father to the north and he, too, must have been prophesying, as *Hosea*, in the days of *Jeroboam II* (Hosea 1:1). His prophesying apparently began in the north.¹³⁵⁸ "When the Lord *first* spoke through *Hosea* ..." (1:2). He would continue prophesying right down to the time of king *Hezekiah* (cf. Hosea 1:1; *Isaiah* 1:1). The names *Isaiah* and *Hosea* are indeed of very similar meaning, being basically derived from the same Hebrew root for 'salvation', **יָשַׁע**:

- "*Isaiah*" (Hebrew יָשַׁע יְהוָה, *Yeshâ'yâhû*) signifies: "Yahweh (the Lord) is salvation".
- "*Hosea*" (Hebrew הוֹשַׁע) means practically the same: "Yahweh (the Lord) is saviour".

We can now easily connect *Isaiah* with *Uzziah* (var. *Osias*) through *Hosea* (var. *Osee*).

Hosea's/Isaiah's Family

Though no doubt young, the prophet was given the strange command by God to marry an 'unfaithful' woman: "Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry and have children of harlotry, for the land commits great harlotry by forsaking the Lord'. So he went and took *Gomer* the daughter of *Diblaim* ..." (Hosea 1:2-3). Biblical scholars have agonised over the type of woman this *Gomer* might have been: *adulteress?* *harlot?* *temple-prostitute?* But essentially the clue is to be found in the statement above that she was a citizen of the 'land of great harlotry': namely, the northern kingdom of Israel.

A further likeness between *Isaiah* and *Hosea* was the fact that 'their names' and those of 'their' children were meant to be, in their meanings, prophetic signs. Thus:

¹³⁵⁷ This connection between a father with the name *Merari*, or perhaps *Amariah*, and a son, *Hosea*, might enable for a further mystery to be solved, continuing on our Greco-Persian connections with (or appropriations of) elements of *BOJ*: namely, the identification of the great *Homer*, and his era, and also of his literary 'son', *Hesiod*. "The dating of *Homer* in Greek chronology has", according to *D. Courville*, "been a problem of longstanding". *The Exodus Problem and its Ramifications*, Vol. 2, p. 277. Generally, though, the C8th BC is the favoured era. *Ibid*, IX. "Dating *Homer*", pp. 277-280. With some distinctive aspects of *BOJ* reproduced in *Homer's The Iliad* (and also in other Greco-Persian literature), as we have seen, then the possibility can be considered that *Homer* is just a Greek appropriation of *Amariah/Merari*, and that *Homer's* later contemporary, the rustic poet, *Hesiod*, is a Greek appropriation of *Hosea*, the latter himself being of a farming background (i.e. as a son of the farmer/shepherd, *Amos*).

¹³⁵⁸ *S. Irvine* notes that *Budde* has dated the "inaugural call of *Isaiah*" to 740 BC. *Isaiah, Ahaz, and the Syro-Ephraimitic Crisis*, p. 4, n. 11.

- The prophet Isaiah tells us: “Behold, I and the children whom the Lord has given me are for signs and portents ...” (Isaiah 8:18).
- Similarly, the *names* of the children of the prophet Hosea were meant to be prophetic (Hosea 1:4, 6, 9).

Boutflower, who has written perceptively on *Isaiah’s* children, has rightly noted the prophetic significance of their names and those of Hosea’s children, without however connecting Isaiah and Hosea as one:¹³⁵⁹ “Isaiah like Hosea had three known children, all of whose names were prophetic”. It is most unlikely, one would have to think, to have two great prophets contemporaneously operating over such a substantial period of time, and each having three children whose names were prophetic. The fact is I believe that it was just the one prophet, who may possibly have had six children in all. And Irvine has, in the course of his detailed study of the so-called Isaianic *Denkschrift* [‘personal memoir’] (Isaiah 6:1-9:6) of the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis, written extensively on the chronological significance of Isaiah’s children and their names in connection with this crisis for Judah.¹³⁶⁰ I also appreciate Irvine’s concern for scholars to study the prophets (thus Isaiah) according to the “historical events and politics” of their time.¹³⁶¹

Whilst this Simeonite family was not descended from the prophetic line, as Amos himself would testify to the priest of Bethel (7:14), it was certainly a ‘family’ from the point of view of its striking the same prophetic chord. Commentators have recognised a similar strain in the writings of *Amos*, *Micah*, *Hosea* and *Isaiah*, whilst having no idea of what was - at least, as far as I see it - their proper (father-to-son) relationship. Thus King has written, in regard to the prophet Micah:¹³⁶² “... the influence [upon Micah] of Isaiah, also Hosea and Amos, is evident”. But it was rather *Micah*, as *Amos*, I suggest, who was doing the ‘influencing’; he upon his son *Isaiah/Hosea*.

Fall of Samaria

Possibly it was the anticipation of this calamity in the north (c. 722 BC) that would have prompted Isaiah to return to the southern kingdom of Judah, where king Ahaz then occupied the throne of Jerusalem. By now the prophet had taken a new wife – referred to in the Hebrew as **הַצֵּלְמָה** (‘the maiden’, ‘young marriageable woman’)¹³⁶³ (Isaiah 7:14) – who was already pregnant according to the tense of the Hebrew verb, **הָרָה** (‘conceive’): a QAL active participle having no implication of something that is only to happen in the future. We find the prophet confronting Ahaz at the Upper Pool (Isaiah 7:3); the former probably with his pregnant wife beside him. This last suggestion would seem to be compatible with Irvine’s interpretation of verse 14:¹³⁶⁴

¹³⁵⁹ *The Book of Isaiah I-XXXIX*, p. 49.

¹³⁶⁰ *Op. cit.*, pp. 141-147, 162-171, 180-184, 192-195, 229-230, 256-258.

¹³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 1.

¹³⁶² *Op. cit.*, 17:7, p. 284.

¹³⁶³ Irvine gives for “*almâ* ... young but post-pubescent [woman] of marriageable age”. *Op. cit.*, p. 168.

¹³⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 162. But I would not agree with Irvine’s view that “the young woman is a Davidic princess, and her son to be born is a potential heir ...”. *Ibid.*, p. 170.

“Look, the young woman is pregnant ... and is about to bear a son ...”. This is the celebrated child who is to be named ‘IMMANUEL’ (meaning ‘God-with-us’).¹³⁶⁵

We should expect that Isaiah would have been back in the south again, more than a decade later, when the Assyrian *Turtan* came to ‘Ashdod’. For it was precisely then that he had begun to perform that strange pantomime or “street drama”¹³⁶⁶ of his of going ‘barefoot and naked’ (Isaiah 20:1-2) as a vivid demonstration to Judah that its dependence upon Egypt/Ethiopia would end in disaster and captivity. This prophetic action would presumably have been more effective if undertaken in Judah, rather than in the north. Fortunately for Isaiah, he may not have been alone in this; for Micah his father, who like Isaiah had foretold firstly the destruction of Samaria, with wrath flowing over into Judah, was similarly warning (Micah 1: 8-9):

This is why I am going to mourn and lament, *go barefoot and naked*, howl like the jackals, wail like the ostriches. For there is no healing for the blow Yahweh strikes; it reaches into Judah, it knocks at the very door of my people, reaches even unto Jerusalem.

This, I suggest, was a father-and-son prophetic combination!

Not only did their prophetic careers overlap chronologically, but they also said and did similar things. (For a classical example of their speaking similar utterances, see the comparison of their respective oracles on the next page). And that Micah, too, had prophesied in the time of king Hezekiah - who was in fact receptive to the prophet’s message - is apparent from the Book of Jeremiah, in which Hezekiah’s response is contrasted with that of the Davidides of Jeremiah’s own day, more than a century after Micah (Jeremiah 26:16, 18-19). Thus I would not generally accept what Irvine has given as being a traditional view concerning the relationship between the prophets Micah and Isaiah and the Davidic kings (and I would also of course reject that Micah was ‘younger’ than Isaiah); though I would have no disagreement with Irvine’s concluding remarks re Ahaz.¹³⁶⁷

Scholars traditionally have viewed Isaiah and his younger contemporary, Micah, as antagonists of the Davidic monarchs, Ahaz and Hezekiah. The conclusion of G. von Rad is typical: “All the evidence suggests, however, that these prophets increasingly wrote off the reigning members of the house of David of their own day, and even that they regarded the whole history of the monarchy from the time of David as a false development”. As for Isaiah’s attitude toward Ahaz specifically, the prophet’s change from support to opposition is thought to have occurred during the course of the Syro-Ephraimitic crisis. A detailed explanation of this shift and a delineation of the issues were given classical formulation in K. Budde’s *Jesaja’s Erleben* (1928).

¹³⁶⁵ Nor would I accept a view Irvine gives that Immanuel was “perhaps Hezekiah”, *ibid*, p. 169. Cf. p. 6.

¹³⁶⁶ Irvine’s description of it, *ibid*, p. 161.

¹³⁶⁷ *Ibid*, p. 3.

Far from its being anti-Davidic, the *Tendenz* of the Isaian *Denkschrift* seems to me - and this view is based on discussions such as the following by Irvine, with reference to Würtheim - to have been a seeking to confirm Ahaz and Hezekiah in the covenant anciently established with king David:¹³⁶⁸

Verse 9b [of Isaiah chapter 7] is a warning to the entire Davidic court (the verbs are plural): “If you don’t stand firm (*’im lō’ ta’āmînû*), you won’t stand at all” (*kî lō’ tē’āmēnû*). The prophet engages here in a clever word-play: *ta’āmînû* and *tē’āmēnû* not only sound alike, but derive in fact from the same Hebrew root, *’mn* [¹³⁶⁹]. The second verb, a *nifal* form, clearly refers to the political survival of the house of David. The meaning of the first verb, a *hifil* form of *’mn* used absolutely, is less certain. ... Scholars generally translate the term as “believe”, but disagree over the prophet’s application of the word E. Würtheim contends that the implied object of “believe” is the Nathan prophecy (2 Samuel 7) and the covenant thereby established between Yahweh and the Davidic house. Isaiah is warning Ahaz not to break the covenant by appealing to Assyria [to Tiglath-pileser III] for help

Micah and Isaiah were, as I said, a father-and-son prophetic combination. Most striking of all of their ‘interconnections’ perhaps is the following case, in which one of Micah’s ‘Oracles’, regarding the future reign of Yahweh in Zion, is virtually word for word exact with one of Isaiah’s ‘Oracles’ on the same subject. I am referring to (NRSV translation):

Micah 4:1-3	Isaiah 2:2-4
In days to come the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills. Peoples shall stream to it, and many nations shall come and say: ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths’. For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between many peoples, and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more	In days to come the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised above the hills; all the nations shall stream to it. Many peoples shall come and say, ‘Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths’. For out of Zion shall go forth instruction, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

¹³⁶⁸ *Ibid*, pp. 156-157, with reference to Würtheim’s ‘Jesaja 7, 1-9’, pp. 138-143.

¹³⁶⁹ Boutflower renders this verse as “If ye have not *faith*, ye cannot have *staith*”. *Op. cit*, p. 35, quoting from G. Smith’s translation.

Here, now, is the Hebrew version of these particular verses of the two Oracles.
Firstly Micah 4:1 and Isaiah 2:2:

וְהָיָה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים יְהִיָּה הַר בֵּית־יְהוָה נְכוֹן בְּרֹאשׁ
הַהָרִים וְנִשְׂאָה הוּא מִגְּבְעוֹת וְנִהְרֹוּ עָלָיו עַמִּים

וְהָיָה בְּאַחֲרֵית הַיָּמִים נְכוֹן יְהִיָּה הַר בֵּית־יְהוָה בְּרֹאשׁ
הַהָרִים וְנִשְׂאָה מִגְּבְעוֹת וְנִהְרֹוּ אֵלָיו כָּל־הַגּוֹיִם

Next, Micah 4:2 and Isaiah 2:3:

וְהָלְכוּ גוֹיִם רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לָכוּ וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל־הַר־יְהוָה וְאֶל־בַּיִת אֱלֹהֵי
יַעֲקֹב וְיִרְגְּנוּ מִדְּרָכָיו וְנִלְכֶּה בְּאַחֲחֵתָיו כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹכָה וְדַבַּר יְהוָה
מִירוּשָׁלַם

וְהָלְכוּ עַמִּים רַבִּים וְאָמְרוּ לָכוּ וְנַעֲלֶה אֶל־הַר־יְהוָה וְאֶל־בַּיִת אֱלֹהֵי
יַעֲקֹב וְיִרְגְּנוּ מִדְּרָכָיו וְנִלְכֶּה בְּאַחֲחֵתָיו כִּי מִצִּיּוֹן תֵּצֵא תוֹכָה וְדַבַּר־יְהוָה
מִירוּשָׁלַם

And, finally, Micah 4:3 and Isaiah 2:4:

וְשֹׁפֵט בֵּין עַמִּים רַבִּים וְהוֹכִיחַ לְגוֹיִם עַצְמִים עַד־רְחֹוק וְכִתְתוּ חַרְבֹתֵיהֶם
לְאַתִּים וְנִחַיתֹתֵיהֶם לְמִזְמֵרוֹת לֹא־יִשְׂאוּ גוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי חֶרֶב וְלֹא־יִלְמְדוּן עוֹד
מִלְחָמָה

וְשֹׁפֵט בֵּין הַגּוֹיִם וְהוֹכִיחַ לְעַמִּים רַבִּים וְכִתְתוּ חַרְבוֹתָם לְאַתִּים וְנִחַיתוֹתֵיהֶם
לְמִזְמֵרוֹת לֹא־יִשְׂאָה גוֹי אֶל־גּוֹי חֶרֶב וְלֹא־יִלְמְדוּ עוֹד מִלְחָמָה

Abiding in the North

Some possible clues indicating that Isaiah may have been back in the north during the Assyrian army's actual march upon Jerusalem (Sennacherib's *Third Campaign*) are that:

- (i) Isaiah is not mentioned amongst king Hezekiah's officials at the Upper Pool *rendezvous* with Assyria's *Rabshakeh*, even though this might have been expected; and
- (ii) 2 Kings 19:2: "[Hezekiah] sent [יִשְׁלַח] Eliakim ... Shebna ... and the senior priests, covered with sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of [Amos]".

Isaiah's distance from Jerusalem might also explain the prophet's apparently being sometimes later than king Hezekiah and his officials to catch up with what had transpired in the south.

Thus, at one point, Isaiah seems aware only of what Sennacherib's servants had been saying, and not of Sennacherib's own letters (2 Chronicles 32:17; cf. 2 Kings 19:5-6). Though one could also argue Isaiah and his father were in the south at the time, pantomiming what was about to happen to the Judaeen kingdom and its fort, Lachish. Of course, according to my reconstruction, Isaiah would have been ensconced back in the north to coincide with his being *Uzziah* of BOJ at the time of Esarhaddon's/ *Holofernes'* invasion and defeat. By then, his father Amos/Micah had passed away as a legend of Israel, and had presumably been buried in that ancestral cave near *Bethulia*, with his grandson, Manasseh. Judith's victory, though, did not by any means spell the end of Isaiah's influence and activity. As we are now going to read, this long-lived prophet had yet another most challenging task to undertake.

Isaiah and the Death of Sennacherib

According to BOT Sennacherib was, after the defeat of his army – and not surprisingly – a very angry man. Tobit, in his customary charitable fashion (cf. 1:17), “buried any whom King Sennacherib put to death when he came fleeing from Judea in those days of judgement that the king of heaven executed upon him because of his blasphemies. For in his anger he put to death many Israelites ...” (v. 18). I am presuming that this is a reference to Assyria's second major invasion of Palestine, when Sennacherib's son, Esarhaddon, was slain by Judith. (Sennacherib's return “again”, as discussed in *Chapter I* of this volume, on p. 12). When an informer told Sennacherib of what Tobit was doing, the vengeful king began a search for Tobit to put him to death as well. But he fled (v. 19). “Then all my property was confiscated”, Tobit tells, “nothing was left to me that was not taken into the royal treasury except my wife Anna and my son Tobias” (v. 20). Tobit's exile though was of a relatively short duration, for as he goes on to relate: “But not forty days passed before two of Sennacherib's sons killed him, and they fled to the mountains” (v. 21). Sennacherib's death must thus have come not long after his army's débâcle in Israel. Now would be a phase of utmost chaos in Nineveh, with even its long-reigning king, Sennacherib, having been snatched away. It is into this chaos that there stepped the mysterious prophet Jonah. At least I think that this is *the only period in Assyrian history* – in the range of the life of ‘Jonah son of Amittai’ (cf. 2 Kings 14:25 & Jonah 1:1) – that is an appropriate context for this extraordinary prophet. I say this because Sennacherib's successor after the patricide – now identified by me as his grandson, Ashurbanipal, rather than his son Esarhaddon – was *the only Assyrian king* who would ever treat the Israelites with any real favour, as one might have expected the humbled “king of Nineveh” of Jonah 3:6 to have done. For one: “He appointed Ahikar, the son of [Tobit's] brother Hanael over all the accounts of his kingdom, and he had authority over the entire administration” (Tobit 1:21). This was a huge thing in Israel's favour, considering that the Naphtalian, *Ahikar*, had actually been sentenced by Ashurbanipal's father, Esarhaddon (*Holofernes*), to die amongst the *Bethulians*. Secondly, the young Assyrian king allowed the exiled Tobit to return to Nineveh after *Ahikar* had interceded for him (v. 22). And we have no further mention of any persecution of the Israelites in the Assyrian kingdom. Ashurbanipal alone, and certainly not Esarhaddon, could thus have been “the great and noble Osnapper [var. Asnapper]” referred to favourably by the author of Ezra 4:10.

Besides *Ahikar*, Tobit's family likely had another powerful ally before the young king of Assyria at this time. I return to the extraordinary prophet Jonah, in the midst of Nineveh, pronouncing doom upon a land that had then seemed utterly doomed. Though Ashurbanipal's reign is admittedly a long way removed from Jonah son of Amittai's activities in 2 Kings 14:25, as a prophet during the reign of Jeroboam II – even given my radical shortening of neo-Assyrian history – it is apparently not a biological impossibility because Isaiah himself had, as we saw in the previous section, begun to prophesy during the reign of Jeroboam II, and was yet still alive, as *Uzziah of Bethulia*, during this time of Assyria's utter collapse (late in EOH).

Now, as it is hardly likely that Israel would have had two prophets who were able actively to prophesy, contemporaneously, for so long a period of time (and we can include Hosea here as well), then I think that the scales must fall in favour of Isaiah's (Hosea's) being Jonah. Obviously Isaiah (hence Jonah) must have been very old by now. [Now, according to L. Ginzberg (*Legends of the Jews*, IV. 260-261), the prophet Hosea was about 90 years old at the time of Assyria's siege of Samaria].

An identification of Isaiah with Jonah is perhaps made even more likely by the fact that the name of Jonah's father, *Amittai*, otherwise unknown, is somewhat like one of those variations that we have discussed previously for the name of Isaiah's father, Amos/Amoz, thus *Amaziah (Amittai?)*.

There are yet further possible clues for late EOH's being the time of Jonah's intervention. Jonah seems to have been known to Tobit, who will later tell his son Tobias to take his family and flee Nineveh, "... for I believe the word of God that Jonah spoke about Nineveh, that all these things will take place and overtake Assyria and Nineveh" (Tobit 14:3, 4). Perhaps an even more precise time correspondence is Tobit's mention of "not forty days passed" before Sennacherib's assassination, possibly echoing Jonah's: 'Forty days more, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!' (Jonah 3:3-4). Indeed the last days of the furious Sennacherib, and the brief hiatus after his death, would be a most appropriate time for the intervention of Jonah in Nineveh.

Tobit 14:4 (NSRV. Catholic edition) gives *Nahum* instead of *Jonah*. I am now going to argue that it is the same prophet; though there is only a superficial similarity between the names: JoNAH and NAHum, with the former, Jonah (יֹנָתַן), meaning 'dove, whereas Nahum (נְחֻם) means 'Yahweh consoles'. If my identification (Isaiah = Jonah/Nahum) turns out to be correct, however, then the (unintended) result would be that six prophets: namely (Amos, Micah) and (Isaiah, Hosea, Jonah, Nahum), will now have been reduced to two – i.e. a father and a son (AMOS and ISAIAH).

Including Nahum in this Simeonite family though will involve an apparent further chronological stretching of the prophet's longevity, as Nahum is usually thought to have preached against Assyria about a century after Jonah.

Oracles Against Assyria

What we already have from the Old Testament about the prophet, Jonah (quite apart from what we read in the book of his name), is that Jonah was a contemporary of Jeroboam II (mid-C8th BC, conventional estimate).

Thus Jeroboam II, as recorded in 2 Kings 14:25: "...restored the border of Israel from Lebohamath as far as the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, which he spoke by his servant *Jonah son of Amittai*, the prophet, who was from Gath-hepher". It is fitting that Amos – whom I have equated with Jonah's father, *Amittai* – had earlier predicted oppression in these same regions (Amos 6:14).

Less comfortable for my revision, though, is the fact that 2 Kings has Jonah hailing "from Gath-hepher", a town ascribed to the tribe of Zebulun in northern Israel (cf. Joshua 19:10, 13). I have already argued that Isaiah and his father had come from *Moresheh-Gath* in the south. I can only conclude that, if my reconstruction is correct, *Gath-hepher* has become confused with *Moresheh-Gath*; a northern tradition for the prophet having also perhaps developed due to this family's sustained dwelling in the north.

Now the Book of Nahum is devoted entirely to the land of Assyria and Nineveh, being: "An oracle concerning Nineveh" (Nahum 1:1). That Jonah was Nahum is very important, because this gives us an extra scriptural book by which to assess this otherwise most obscure of prophets (Jonah) and the time in which he lived. The book of Nahum does add the geographical complication that Nahum was "of Elkosh" (1:1). But that need not really be a problem because there is an Al-kosh in Assyria and a tomb of Nahum identified there. It may indicate that Jonah, as Nahum, wrote his passionate "oracle concerning Nineveh" in Assyria itself; though of course he did not actually originate from Assyria. But did the prophet die there? And was he buried at Al-kosh in Assyria, or with his ancestors back in his familiar town of *Bethulia*? [In my "Towards a Full Restoration of the Prophet Jonah", <http://bookofjonah.blog.com> (post for 14th April, 2008), I have referred to a tradition that Nahum was of the tribe of Simeon, and that el-kosh was in Simeonite territory in the vicinity of Moresheh-Gath. I have also argued there more for Ashurbanipal as Jonah's "king of Nineveh"]. As to the precise historical time of Jonah's visit to Nineveh, I have not been impressed by previous attempts to locate it to the eras of the Assyrian kings who ruled close to the conventional time of Jeroboam II of Israel (such as Adad-nirari III, or even Tiglath-pileser III).¹³⁷⁰ These were all typical Assyrian kings, who continued to act like Assyrian kings without any indication of the sort of change of heart that one might expect would have accompanied the repentant king of Jonah 3:6. As I have said, the only time in Assyrian history that a king showed some sort of favouritism towards Israel – or was well-regarded by the Jews – was immediately after the death of Sennacherib.

Isaiah himself had, at *Bethulia*, witnessed the defeat of the Assyrian host and its rout. Indeed, as I have argued, he was related to the very agent of the victory for Israel, Judith. Now, shortly after this Judith-inspired victory would have been an ideal time, I suggest, for Isaiah – as Jonah – to have received the call (Jonah 1:1-2). The prophet, in his guise as Isaiah, had already uttered at least one "Oracle concerning Assyria" (Isaiah 14:24-27), as a continuation of his Oracle on the downfall of the king of Babylon, *who was an Assyrian*. He had also announced to king Hezekiah in oracular, poetic form, the downfall of Sennacherib's armies (cf. 30:31-33; 37:21-35). So his Assyrian pronouncements as, now Jonah, now Nahum, would not be at all new.

¹³⁷⁰ D. Hart-Davies, for instance, would have the intervention of Jonah in that era "from the death of Ramman-Nirari [Adad-nirari III] to the accession of Tiglath-Pileser [III] ...". *Jonah: Prophet and Patriot*, p. 113. B. Cooper has argued that "the king of Nineveh" of Jonah 3:6 would have been Tiglath-Pileser III. 'The Historical Jonah', pp. 105, 109.

Conversely, Hitzig has claimed that Jonah would have been the actual author of Isaiah's Oracle against Moab (15:1-16:12).¹³⁷¹ I would fully agree, based on my identification of Jonah with Isaiah.

City of Nineveh

The description in Jonah 1:2 of Nineveh as “that great city”, **נִינְוָה הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה**, is a biblical expression for a complex of cities (cf. Genesis 10:11, **נִינְוָה הָעִיר הַגְּדוֹלָה**), rather than indicating just the one city known archaeologically at the site of Küyünjik. By the time of Jonah's mission, ‘Nineveh the great city’ would have included Sargon II's new Dur-Sharrukin (Khorsabad), some 24 kilometres to the north-east of the original Nineveh. This city's importance though would quickly begin to diminish after the assassination of Sargon II/Sennacherib. For, as Roux tells:¹³⁷²

In one of his so-called ‘Display Inscriptions’ Sargon says:

‘For me, Sargon, who dwells in this palace, may he (Ashur) decree as my destiny long life, health of body, joy of heart, brightness of soul’.

But the god hearkened not to his prayer. One year after Dûr-Sharrukîn was officially inaugurated Sargon ‘went against Tabal and was killed in the war’ [sic] His successors preferred Nineveh to the Mesopotamian Brazilia, but Khorsabad remained inhabited by governors and their retinue: until the final collapse of Assyria

Hart-Davies has, with reference to other authorities, given an impression of the size of what he has called ‘Greater Nineveh’:¹³⁷³

“Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days’ journey”. Diodorus Siculus describes Nineveh as an irregular quadrangle of about sixty miles in circuit. Commander Jones, who made a trigonometrical survey of the district, says, “From Nineveh to Nimrud in round numbers is eighteen miles; then to Khorsabad about twenty-eight, and back to Nineveh by the road fourteen miles” The whole area of the Assyrian metropolis he computes as 350 square miles. The area of Greater London is said to be 315 square miles. Greater Nineveh ... must have included vast tracts of parks and pastures.

“The conclusion to which recent discoveries lead is,” says Keil, “that the name Nineveh, was used in two senses: first, for one particular city; and secondly, for a complex of four large primeval cities (including Nineveh proper), the circumvallation of which is still traceable, The mounds of which cover the land”.

¹³⁷¹ As referred to by J. Hastings, ‘Jonah’, p. 744.

¹³⁷² *Ancient Iraq*, pp. 315-316.

¹³⁷³ *Op. cit.*, pp. 80-81.

... To walk to the four principal points of the quadrangular city, Kouyunjik [Küyünjik], Nimrud, Karamless [possibly the ‘Resen’ of Genesis 10:12] and Khorsabad, would be to travel a total distance of sixty miles – a three days’ journey.

Our ubiquitous prophet, as Jonah, now stepped from a land exulting in victory (Israel), to a land dwelling in the shadow of death (Assyria). Ashurbanipal must have been reeling from the recent assassination of his father, Esarhaddon, the destruction of a large part of the main Assyrian army and, now, the violent demise of Sennacherib, his grandfather. The vast size of the ‘great city of Nineveh’ might account for why this new ‘king of Nineveh’ seems to have been a bit tardy in hearing any report about Jonah (3:6): “When the news reached the king of Nineveh ...” (וַיָּגַע הַדָּבָר אֶל־מֶלֶךְ נִיְנְוָה). According to the Book of Jonah, the prophet had gone to Assyria with the greatest of reluctance; even complete aversion (1:3; cf. 4:1-2). He apparently had no desire to see God’s mercy bestowed upon Nineveh. Beast-like ferocity had characterised Assyria’s treatment of subject nations and peoples. “Woe to the bloody city!” the prophet had cried, in his guise as Nahum. “It is all full of lies and rapine” (3:1). Why should Jonah now therefore have to be the instrument by which Nineveh might be given the chance to repent and be saved the destruction that he had been wont to pronounce upon her? Despite his fear of the worst, knowing that “you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing” (Jonah 4:2; cf. Nahum 1:3), the prophet sat under a booth (cf. Isaiah 4:6) that he had made, “waiting to see what would become of the city” (Jonah 4:5); because he had also (as Isaiah) proclaimed that this merciful God was a God of vengeance (Isaiah 1:24).

Whilst Jonah’s was admittedly a very long period of prophesying - from Jeroboam II to Hezekiah, as proposed here - it is the actual time span covered by Isaiah/Hosea, to whom the word of the Lord came “in the days of Kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah of Judah, and in the days of King Jeroboam ... of Israel” (Hosea 1:1; cf. Isaiah 1:1). But Tobit’s identification of Jonah with Nahum - which I have accepted - looms as more chronologically problematical, inasmuch as Nahum is thought to have lived to witness even the fall of Nineveh, conventionally dated to c. 612 BC. Now that would make of the prophet Jonah a very old man indeed, even given my shortening of neo-Assyrian history (the latter’s value to be counterbalanced, too, by my acceptance of Anstey’s interregna).

I am now going to suggest that Nahum did not in fact witness the ultimate fall of Nineveh that would occur some time after the long reign of Ashurbanipal (c. 668-627 BC, conventional dating), but that what the prophet had witnessed (as Isaiah/*Uzziah*) was the destruction of the Assyrian army under Esarhaddon (*Holofernes*). He had then, most reluctantly, gone to Nineveh to tell in advance about what could have been an impending fall of Nineveh – well knowing however that that might not happen, due to his suspicion that God was about to offer his clemency to the pagan city.

Scholars are puzzled that, whilst the Book of Nahum is *An oracle concerning Nineveh*, Nineveh is not actually mentioned until nearly halfway through the book. Chapter 2 in fact seems to be concerned with the invasion of Israel by the Assyrian army, under one *Belial* (בְּלִיעַל) (2:1); yet another reference, I suspect, to Esarhaddon/*Holofernes*.

One supposedly vital chronological note in the Book of Nahum is that Nineveh apparently will suffer the same fate as had previously the Egyptian city of 'No Amon' (3:8), thought to be the Egyptian capital of Thebes in the south, ruthlessly destroyed by Ashurbanipal in 664 BC (conventional dating). However commentators are puzzled, as we saw, by the biblical description of this Egyptian city as 'surrounded by water', quite inappropriate for Thebes. More likely then, in *No Amon*, the prophet Nahum is referring to a northern Egyptian city of Amon in the Delta (Lower Egypt) - hence surrounded by waters - destroyed much earlier than Thebes, and by Esarhaddon, not Ashurbanipal. Such a chronological revision front and back, as I have proposed above, would - especially when considered in conjunction with my detailed neo-Assyrian revision in VOLUME ONE, *Chapter 6* - shave something in the order of 80 years from the originally over-extended Nahum (from c. 750-610 BC to c. 750-690 BC) - though, to be counterbalanced by the inclusion of interregna - making it now quite feasible for him to have been a contemporary of late EOH.

Books of Isaiah and Nahum

Isaiah, as the *Uzziah* of BOJ, was very close to the scene - had a bird's eye view of it in fact - when the Assyrians were defeated before his northern town. The prophet had actually watched at the gate of *Bethulia* as the heroine Judith had departed, accompanied by her maid, and had descended into the valley to the camp of the Assyrians (Judith 10:6). Having subsequently seen the massive Assyrian army routed, Isaiah might now have hoped for the destruction of Nineveh itself by her many enemies determined for revenge. Having thus gone to Nineveh, as Nahum, he may have written his passionate oracle about Assyria there. But Nineveh was not then to be destroyed.

Wherever and whenever the Book of Nahum was in fact written, it is, as it seems to me, *pure Isaiah*. It can take its place amongst those other oracles to the various nations that Isaiah wrote, most notably his *Oracle concerning Assyria*. I find that verse after verse of the Book of Nahum can be matched with a close duplicate, or sometimes even an exact duplicate, amongst the prophecies of Isaiah/Hosea. Some common connecting key words, for example, are *vengeance ... wrath ... enemies* (Isaiah 1:24; Nahum 1:2); *rebuke sea ... dry ... rivers ... desert ... Lebanon ... Bashan ... Carmel ... wither* (Isaiah 33:9; 50:2; Nahum 1:4); *mountains ... hills ... lay waste ... melt* (Isaiah 42:15; Nahum 1:5); *break ... yoke* (Isaiah 58:6; Nahum 1:13); *mourn ... moan ... doves* (Isaiah 59:11; Nahum 2:7); *young lions* (Isaiah 5:29; Nahum 2:11); *sorceries ... sorcery* (Isaiah 47:12; Nahum 3:4)

....

To be more specific, here are just some of the many comparisons that I have found between verses in Isaiah [including Hosea in square brackets] and Nahum, when skimming through the brief Book of Nahum from its beginning to its end. I have added here the Hebrew version of these. In some cases though, it should be noted, while the same meaning is used, the author may have employed a different Hebrew word, or words, to represent that meaning (e.g. Isaiah 1:24 and Hosea 5:10 are both translated in English as "I will pour out my wrath", though quite different Hebrew words are used in each case).

Isaiah 1:24: ‘... I will pour out my wrath on my enemies, and avenge myself on my foes’.

... אַנְחָם מִצָּרֵי וְאַנְקָמָה מֵאֹיְבֵי

Nahum 1:2: “A jealous and avenging God is the Lord, the Lord is avenging and wrathful; the Lord takes vengeance on his adversaries and rages against his enemies”.

**אַל קְנוֹא וְנִקְם יְהוָה נִקְם יְהוָה וּבְעַל חַמָּה נִקְם
יְהוָה לְצָרָיו וְנוֹטֵר הוּא לְאֹיְבָיו**

[Hosea 5:10: ... ‘I will pour out my wrath ...’.]

Isaiah 33:9: “... Lebanon is confounded and withers away; ... and Bashan and Carmel shake off their leaves”.

Isaiah 50:2: ‘ ... By my rebuke I dry up the sea. I make the rivers a desert ...’.

**... לְבָנוֹן קָמַל הָיָה ... וְנִצֵּר בְּשָׁן וְכַרְמֶל
... בְּגִעְרָתִי אֶחְרִיב יָם אֲשֵׁים נְהָרוֹת מִדְּבָר ...**

Nahum 1:4: “He rebukes the sea and makes it dry, and he dries up all the rivers; Bashan and Carmel wither and the bloom of Lebanon fades”.

**גֹּעַר בַּיָּם וַיִּבְשְׁהוּ וְכָל־הַנְּהָרוֹת הֶחְרִיב אֲמָלָל
בְּשָׁן וְכַרְמֶל וּפְרַח לְבָנוֹן אֲמָלָל**

Isaiah 42:15: ‘I will lay waste mountains and hills ...’.

... אֶחְרִיב הַרִים וְגִבְעוֹת ...

Nahum 1:5: “The mountains quake before him, and the hills melt ...”.

הַרִים רָעְשׁוּ מִמֶּנּוּ וְהַגִּבְעוֹת הִתְמַלְּגוּ ...

Isaiah 33:2: “O Lord ... our salvation in the time of trouble”.

יְהוָה ... אֵף־יִשׁוּעֵתָנוּ בְּצַת צָרָה

Nahum 1:7: “The Lord is good, a stronghold in a day of trouble ...”.

טוֹב יְהוָה לְמַעוֹז בְּיוֹם צָרָה ...

Isaiah 59:18: “... requital to his enemies ...”.

... גְּמוּל לְאֹיְבָיו ...

Nahum 1:8: “... will pursue his enemies ...”.

... וְאֹיְבָיו יִכְדֶּף ...

Isaiah 58:6: "... to break every yoke ...".

... וְכָל־מוֹטָה תִּנְתְּקוּ ...

Nahum 1:13: 'And now I will break off his yoke ...'.

וְעַתָּה אֲשַׁבֵּר מִטְהוּ ...

Isaiah 44:23: "... for the Lord has redeemed Jacob, and will be glorified in Israel".

... כִּי־גָאֵל יְהוָה יַעֲקֹב וּבְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִתְפָּאֵר

Nahum 2:2[3]: "For the Lord is restoring the majesty of Jacob, as well as the majesty of Israel".

כִּי שָׁב יְהוָה אֶת־גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב כְּגְאוֹן יִשְׂרָאֵל

Isaiah 59:11: '... like doves we moan mournfully ...'.

... וּכְיוֹנִים הִגִּיהָ נִהְגָה ...

Nahum 2:7: "... moaning like doves ...".

... בְּקוֹל יוֹנִים ...

[Hosea 11:11: "Trembling ... like doves ...".

... וְכִי־וָנָה ...]

Isaiah 2:7 "... there is no end to their treasures ...".

... וְאֵין קֶצֶה לְאַצְרֹתָיו ...

Nahum 2:9: "... there is no end of treasure!"

וְאֵין קֶצֶה לְתִכּוּנָהּ

Isaiah 5:29: "... like young lions they roar ...".

... וְשָׂג כְּכַפְּרִים ...

Nahum 2:12: "... for the young lions ...".

... לְכַפְּרִים ...

[Hosea 5:14: "... and like a young lion ...".

... וְכַפְּפִיר ...]

Isaiah 2:7: "... and there is no end to their chariots". 66: 20 "... on horses and in chariots ...".

... וְאֵין קֶצֶה לְמַרְכָּבֵיהֶם
... בְּסוּסִים וּבְרֻכָּבִים ...

Nahum 3:2: "... galloping horse and bounding chariot ...".

... וְסוּס דָּהָר וּמְרֻכָּבָה מְרַקְדָּה

Isaiah 47:12: "... and your many sorceries ...".

... וּבְרַב כְּשָׁפֵיךְ ...

Nahum 3:4: "... mistress of sorcery ...".

... בַּעֲלַת כְּשָׁפִים ...

Isaiah 47:2: '... strip off your robe, uncover your legs ... your nakedness shall be uncovered ...'.

... גְּלִי צַמְתֶּךָ חֲשָׁפֵי-שֵׁבֶל גְּלִי-שׁוֹק ...
... תִּגַּל עַרְוֹתֶיךָ ...

Nahum 3:5: '... I will lift up your skirts over your face; and I will let nations look on your nakedness ...'.

... וְגִלִּיתִי שׁוֹלְיֶיךָ עַל-פְּנֵיךָ וְחָרְאַתִּי גוֹיִם מֵעַרְךָ ...

[Hosea 2:3: '... or I will strip her naked and expose her ...'.]

Isaiah 46:2: "... gone into captivity". 13:16: "Their infants will be dashed to pieces ...".

... בְּשִׁבֵי הַלְכָה
... וְעַל לֵיהֶם יִרְטָשׁוּ ...

Nahum 3:10: "... went into captivity; even her infants were dashed in pieces at the head of every street ...".

... הַלְכָה בְּשִׁבֵי גַם עַל לֵיהֶם יִרְטָשׁוּ בְּרֵאשׁ כָּל-חֻצוֹת ...

[Hosea 13:16: "... their little ones shall be dashed in pieces ...".]

Isaiah 19:14: "... as a drunken man staggers ...".

... כְּהִתְעוֹת שָׂכוֹר ...

Nahum 3:11: “You also will be drunken ...”.

גַּם־אַתָּה תִּשְׁכָּרִי ...

Isaiah 36:16: “... from your own fig tree ...”.

... וְאִישׁ הָאֵנָתוּ ...

Nahum 3:12: “... fig trees with first-ripe figs ...”.

... הָאֲנִים עִם־בְּכוֹרִים ...

[Hosea 9:10: “... like the first fruit on the fig tree ...”.

... כְּבְכוּרָה בְּהָאֵנָה ...]

Isaiah 47: 14: “... the fire consumes them ...”.

... אֵשׁ שֶׁרָפְתָם ...

Nahum 3:15: “There the fire will devour you ...”.

... שָׁם תֹּאכְלֶךָ אֵשׁ ...

Isaiah 56:11: “... The shepherds also have no understanding ...”.

... וְהֵמָּה רֹעִים לֹא יָדְעוּ ...

Nahum 3:18: “Your shepherds are asleep ...”.

... נִמּוּ רֹעֵיךָ ...

Conclusion

Whilst I find it a fairly straightforward matter to state (a) the intent or purpose of this thesis, which is quite clear in my own mind, (b) the process involved in my actually trying to achieve this intent or purpose has turned out to be an extremely complex one, especially in regard to Egypt/Ethiopia.

Firstly, (a) my purpose in writing this thesis was essentially - based on my earlier MA effort - and as I have reiterated especially in the earlier chapters, *to pursue “a more acceptable alternative” to the conventional or ‘Sothic’ system of chronology, specifically for the era of king Hezekiah (EOH) of Judah (late C8th BC)*. Owing, though, to complexities regarding the incorporation especially of Egypt/Ethiopia into EOH, I was not able to limit myself to just the late C8th BC, but needed also to include a detailed discussion of the previous century, the C9th BC, in a revised (or ‘alternative’) context. In referring to this pre-EOH period I have used the broad term ‘background’ to EOH, incorporating this term into the very title of my thesis: *A Revised History of the Era of King Hezekiah of Judah and its Background*. EOH and its background are not meant to be regarded, therefore, as two independent and largely unrelated strands in this thesis, but both are intended for the purpose of consolidating a revised EOH; an extremely complex era of history, as it has turned out. Primarily, this last (i.e. consolidating a revised EOH) has meant establishing who were king Hezekiah’s contemporaries: especially, of course, his most significant contemporaries (their origins, families, dynasties, rôles, regions, and extents of influence). I gave primary consideration here to king Hezekiah’s Assyro-Babylonian; Syro-Palestinian and Egypto-Ethiopian contemporaries; especially the kings.

Fully consistent with this intention, to establish who were Hezekiah’s contemporaries, was my absorption of BOJ into EOH in VOLUME TWO.

Necessarily, I have also attempted, as far as possible, to accompany this revised history and chronology with a revised stratigraphy (archaeology), always striving diligently to pursue an ‘alternative’ structure of history that would not contradict any well-established archaeological data, no matter how tempting such an ‘alternative’ might otherwise have appeared to be.

Secondly, (b) the process for achieving my stated intent or purpose, has led me - once the problems with the conventional system had been outlined, and proposed solutions acknowledged - to a prolonged search, back to the C9th BC (and even occasionally, of necessity, projecting back beyond this) for the origins and ancestry of king Hezekiah’s major contemporaries, with the novel result that some of the most important of these (including Egypto-Ethiopian, Assyrian and Babylonian kings) were found to have been of ‘Indo-European’ (Libyan) origins, dating back to the early influxes of these foreign peoples into the ancient Near East. A broad connection here was established with the Philistines, a people with whom king Hezekiah had significant dealings, and a revised stratigraphy was attempted for this mysterious people, the archaeological evidence for whom, as conventionally interpreted, does not square at all with the biblically recounted history for the early Philistines.

I also used this opportunity, whilst discussing the C9th BC, to attempt to consolidate what I would consider to have been the most worthwhile efforts of the revision of history to date. In particular, I looked to consolidate - though with significant modifications - Immanuel Velikovsky's relocation of the EA period to the mid-C9th BC (that had already undergone some important modifications).

No one would argue that there has emerged in this thesis a new chronological model. Whether this new model, though, turns out to be that "more acceptable alternative" to the conventional version that I have set out to achieve, is for critical and informed minds to assess and determine. Certainly the results from applying this new chronological model have been quite significant. Apart from the instant removal of a host of archaeological and art-historical anomalies (as it seems to me), with corresponding 'Dark Ages' - the result, I would suggest, of historians trying to align EOH and its 'background' to an over-extended Egyptian chronology and a corresponding faulty neo-Assyrian chronology - alternative syncretisms now emerge between Egypt, the Judaeen kingdom of Hezekiah, and the other major nations. Great kings and dynasties, e.g. the 20th dynasty Ramessides in Egypt, thought to have ceased to exist centuries before EOH, are now found actually to have been, in part, contemporaneous with king Hezekiah of Judah. And the origins of the 19th dynasty Ramessides, and those of some of their major Mesopotamian contemporaries, are found to have been 'Indo-European' (Libyan) and either biblical Omride or Zimride; though these 'foreigners' had by now become fully assimilated into their Near Eastern environment.

Also, basically new is the absorption of BOJ into EOH. Whilst this almost seems like the most logical era for BOJ (if its historicity be admitted), with the powerful Assyrian assaults on both Israel and Judah at the time, there are certain complications within the BOJ text itself, as we now have it, that make it extremely difficult for anyone to harmonise BOJ with EOH, as conventionally viewed. My revision of EOH - not manufactured just to accommodate BOJ, I must insist - has made it far easier, I believe, to integrate BOJ with EOH.

Whilst I am generally extremely satisfied with the overall results achieved in this thesis, there did arise along the way certain difficulties or obstacles that appeared to clash radically with the reconstruction here being proposed. To return to the biblical symbolism from the early pages of this thesis, I might liken these difficulties, or obstacles, to a situation in which the world rivers (symbolic of the major nations under discussion) all of a sudden in some places did not continue properly to interflow. Though nearly all of these problems were eventually resolved, to my satisfaction at least, in the course of my writing this thesis, several persisted; with two in particular still being rather problematical: namely, (i) my insistence on Esarhaddon's being a son of Sargon II, and (ii) mention in versions of BOJ of the Temple in Jerusalem's having been "razed to the ground".

(i) The chief obstacle to my reconstruction is, as I see it, the integration of Esarhaddon into my revision of neo-Assyrian history, as now a son of Sargon II (my Sennacherib). In the conventional history, Esarhaddon of course has always been identified as the grandson, not son, of Sargon II, and various historical documents would seem to back up this interpretation as constituting hard, indisputable evidence in its favour.

However, there can be demonstrated (as I have most painstakingly done in *Chapter 6*) so consistent a pattern of campaigns common to Sargon II and Sennacherib, extending for almost two decades - and hence, I think, ruling out any notion of even an extended co-regency - that I have felt entirely justified ultimately in concluding that this was the one Assyrian king, and hence the father of Esarhaddon, who no one doubts was the son of Sennacherib.

A happy effect of my Sargon II = Sennacherib equation - seemingly supported by the pseudepigraphal testament (BOT) that Sennacherib was a 'son of Shalmaneser', not Sargon - is that serious chronological problems between the Old Testament for EOH (e.g. the fall of Samaria) and Sargon II and Sennacherib, cease to exist. Similarly, impossible chronological problems for the conventional scheme arising from non-biblical historical documents, too, such as the Tang-i Var inscription, synchronizing Sargon II with a specific 25th (Ethiopian) dynasty pharaoh, namely, Shebitku, no longer loom as such a chronological difficulty. Moreover, the records of 'hard evidence' in relation to Esarhaddon's genealogy are generally fragmentary. And we also have at least one serious instance where some early Assyriologists added to a Sargonid text an unwarranted name inclusion (Sargon's) based on a preconception; with most unfortunate results (even in relation to Esarhaddon) in my opinion.

Mention, in BOT, of Esarhaddon's apparently having succeeded his murdered father, Sennacherib - which, if factual, would ruin a large part of my thesis, including the BOJ reconstruction - diminishes in importance when it is found that the name 'Esarhaddon' does not actually occur in the Greek BOT upon which our English translations are based.

(ii) I considered at some length the matter of the Temple in Jerusalem's supposedly having been "razed to the ground", and how this could, in one blow, have spelt the end to my entire interfacing of BOJ with KCI, forcing a relocating of BOJ to post-exilic times. However, the BOJ texts more consistently refer to the Temple's having been "profaned", not "razed". That is a most important distinction. Moreover, no post-exilic setting can possibly accommodate the pervading Assyrian tone of the BOJ story. And the neo-Assyrian era does traditionally provide the instance of the annihilation of an 180,000 plus Assyrian army (as we find also in BOJ) - not to mention Israel's having at that time an *Eliakim* (cf. BOJ's *Eliakim*, var. *Joakim*) at the nation's helm.

To accept that the Jews of BOJ were returnees from the Babylonian captivity would necessitate, in my opinion, a rejection of BOJ as being the record of an actual history, and would lead one to conclude that the story was merely an 'historical fiction' or a pious allegory. In my opinion, however, BOJ reads like a straightforward historical narrative. Moreover, it has an extremely long tradition associated with it that claims it to be a true history. And I have endeavoured to show (largely in VOLUME TWO) that BOJ *is* in fact a history, located precisely between the "twelfth" and "eighteenth" years of Sargon II/Sennacherib.

'The Assurballit Problem' [TAP] on the other hand, to which I devoted an *Excursus* (beginning on p. 230), can, I think, be reasonably accommodated within my revision, and does not therefore seriously threaten my 'alternative' reconstruction. It, too, is most problematical for the conventional system.

The TIP, a perennial problem, proved to be extremely complex and difficult to cope with, especially in its relationship to the Ramessides. Hence I resisted any inclination to be dogmatic about my conclusions in connection with the TIP and the Ramessides. I do not think that any knowledgeable historian though would condemn me, or anyone, for having difficulty in trying to find a way through the maze that is the TIP. A reference point for me in all this was Velikovsky's insistence, against a long-held opinion, that the TIP pharaoh Shoshenq I of the 22nd dynasty could not possibly have been the biblical 'Shishak', a younger contemporary of king Solomon. I have accepted Velikovsky's re-identification of 'Shishak' with the militant Thutmose III of Egypt's 18th dynasty. Velikovsky had gone on to re-identify Shoshenq I (probably as Shoshenq IV) with another biblical pharaoh, 'King So of Egypt', of approximately the early reign of king Hezekiah.

I have fully embraced Velikovsky's revised identification of 'Shishak' as Thutmose III (though a detailed defence of this was well beyond the scope of this thesis), with all of its chronological ramifications. 'So', on the other hand, has been most difficult to pin down, and my conclusions re him and the rest of the TIP are still only most tentative and are given simply as a possible guideline towards eventually unlocking the intricate TIP.

I had mentioned that it was my intention, in the course of this thesis, to account for, as far as it was possible, what I considered to be the three most problematical aspects of the Velikovskian-based (VLTF) revision: namely, (i) TAP; (ii) where to locate Ramses II; and (iii) how to unravel TIP. True to my word, I have discussed (i) - (iii), with definite solutions proposed for (i) and (ii), and, as I have said, at least the outline of a solution - rather than a comprehensive revision at this stage - for (iii).

I should hope that my overall revision of the 19th and 20th dynasty Ramessides - now anchored also to C9th-C8th BC Israel and Judah - and of the TIP, especially now set against a much revised neo-Assyrian history, has made these dynasties somewhat more intelligible, with a firm biblical anchor, especially from the perspective of EOH.

To reiterate briefly, this thesis has been my sincere attempt to present "a more acceptable alternative" to the conventional (Sothic) system specifically for EOH and its background. With king Hezekiah of Judah and his contemporaries now firmly established, as I hope, historically, chronologically and stratigraphically - though with much fine tuning still of course required - then my revised EOH can serve as a firm foundation for future historico-biblical revisions, both pre- and post-EOH.

Abbreviations

AASOR = Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research

AcOR = Acta Orientalia

AJSLL = American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures

ANET = Ancient Near Eastern Texts

AS = Anatolian Studies

BA = Biblical Archaeologist

BAR = Biblical Archaeology Review

BASOR = Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research

Bé = Bibliothèque égyptologique

BGA = Bijbel, Geschiedenis en Archeologie

BMMA = Bulletin of the Metropolitan Museum of Art

BO = Bibliotheca Orientalis

BR = Bible Review

CAH = Cambridge Ancient History

C&AH = Catastrophism and Ancient History

C&C Review (also known as **SIS Review**) = Chronology and Catastrophism Review

C&C Workshop (also known as **SIS Workshop**) = Chronology and Catastrophism Workshop

CBQ = Catholic Biblical Quarterly

CIAS = California Institute for Ancient Studies

EJ = Encyclopaedia Judaica

ENTJ = Ex Nihilo Technical Journal

HZ = Historische Zeitschrift

IDB = Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible

IEJ = Israel Exploration Journal

JAOS = Journal of the American Oriental Society

JARCE = Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt

JBC = Jerome Biblical Commentary

JCS = Journal of Cuneiform Studies

JEA = Journal of Egyptian Archaeology

JHS = Journal of Hellenic Studies

JNES = Journal of Near Eastern Studies

NCE = New Catholic Encyclopedia

NRSV = New Revised Standard Version

Or = Orientalia (Rome)

PEQ = Palestine Exploration Quarterly

Proceedings of APS = Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society

Rd'A = Revue d'Assyriologie

Rd'É = Revue d'Égyptologie

SIS Review = Society for Interdisciplinary Studies Review

SIS Workshop = Society for Interdisciplinary Studies Workshop

TA = Tel Aviv

TCE = The Catholic Encyclopaedia

TCR = The Classical Review

TJ = Technical Journal

VT = Vetus Testamentum

ZÄS = Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde

ZAW = Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

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