

Solomon, king of Israel and his contemporary, Amenhotep III, pharaoh of Egypt

Throughout the four books of the Displaced Dynasties series we have argued repeatedly concerning the Egyptian 18th dynasty that many of its kings had namesakes in the 25th dynasty, a fact that Egyptologists recognize in theory but not in practice. As a result the accepted history of both dynasties is hopelessly muddled. Fortunately for the discussion which follows, Amenhotep III, the ninth king of the 18th dynasty, is one of the exceptions to the rule. To our knowledge he had no 25th dynasty counterpart. All monuments and documents which bear his name legitimately belong to him and him alone. And the traditional history based on the interpretation of these documents is undoubtedly correct, at least insofar as that interpretation does not rely upon or comment on past and future historical events. The one objection the present author raises against the interpretation of Amenhotep's illustrious 38 year reign is that it did not occur in the time frame 1391-1353 B.C. (or thereabouts). The dates for Amenhotep III are roughly 966-928 B.C. Historians are in error by an astronomical 425 years!

The revised dates for Amenhotep III were discussed briefly in chapter 2 of the third volume of the Displaced Dynasties series. In table 4 on page 21 of *"The Genealogy of Ashakhet Part 1: From Amarna to Troy"* we summarized the results of our analysis of one segment of the Egyptian history preserved on the Berlin stele, an indispensable monument in our reconstruction of the Egyptian dynasties 11 through 19. For the convenience of the reader that table is reproduced below.

Based on the Berlin Stele we were able to determine approximate dates for the terminal kings of the 18th dynasty. Those dates were summarized in table 5 on page 25 of the same chapter, and they are also reproduced below.

It is important that the reader recognize that much of the Displaced Dynasties chronology of Egypt is based on the Berlin Stele. Dates of the Egyptian kings from the 11th through to the end of the 19th dynasties (i.e. from the 15th through to the mid-8th centuries B.C.) were determined from this single monument, which summarizes the carefully preserved records of the priests of Ptah in Memphis. We have not contrived our dates to suit some preconceived history of Egypt. They are, so to speak, "the hand we were dealt." If they are found to be in error in any single dynasty, because they are in conflict with Egyptian history known from independently dated sources, then the whole of the revised chronology will need to be reevaluated.

Table 1: Data summarized from the 2nd and partial 3rd row on the Berlin Stele
(copy of Table 4, page 21, Volume 3)

Position Number	High Priest/Prophet Named	Name of King Served	Approx. Date of Birth	Approx. Date of the H.P./Prophet
2.1	Ptahemakhet	not named	808 B.C.	773 B.C.
2.2	Neferrenpet	Ramses II	824 B.C.	789 B.C.
2.3	Ptahemakhet	Ramses II	840 B.C.	805 B.C.
2.4	[--]masjemet?	Ramses II	856 B.C.	821 B.C.
2.5	Ptahhotep	Ramses II	872 B.C.	837 B.C.
2.6	Neterwihotep	Menmaatre (Seti I)	888 B.C.	853 B.C.
2.7	Sekeremsaef	Menmaatre (Seti I)	904 B.C.	869 B.C.
2.8	Ty	Tjeserkheperre (Haremheb)	920 B.C.	885 B.C.
2.9	Sekeremsaef	not named	936 B.C.	901 B.C.
2.10	Aypew	Ietnetjeray (?) (Ay)	952 B.C.	917 B.C.
2.11	Wirmer	Nibmaatre (Amenhotep III)	968 B.C.	933 B.C.
2.12	Penpanebes	Nibmaatre (Amenhotep III)	984 B.C.	949 B.C.
2.13	Nekhememptah	not named	1000 B.C.	965 B.C.
2.14	Nebre	Menkheperre (Thutmose III)	1016 B.C.	981 B.C.
2.15	Damaged section		1032 B.C.	997 B.C.
3.1	Ty	not named	1048 B.C.	1013 B.C.
3.2	Pa'emrud	Djeserkare (Amenhotep I)	1064 B.C.	1029 B.C.
3.3	Ty	not named	1080 B.C.	1045 B.C.
3.4	Menet	Nebpetire (Ahmose I)	1096 B.C.	1061 B.C.

Table 2: Summary of dates for the late kings of Dynasty 18 (copy of Table 5, page 25, Volume 3)

Name	Regnal Years
Amenhotep III	966-928
Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton)	940-923
Smenkhkare	923-920
Tutankhamun	923-914
Ay	918-914

Two arguments, one simply a review of material already presented, and one examining new material directly concerned with the reigns of Solomon and Amenhotep III, combine to establish the fact that Amenhotep III (966-928) and Solomon (970-930) were contemporaries. The first of these arguments, that which is based on the preceding Egyptian history, will be summarized briefly below as Argument 1. The second Argument deals exclusively with the military capacity and activity of the two kings.

Argument 1: The revised history which postdates the time of Solomon firmly establishes the Amarna age of Egypt in the time frame 930-910 B.C. Since the later years of Amenhotep fall in this time frame, his regnal dates have already been firmly established.

The dates provided via our analysis of the Berlin Stele have already been utilized through the whole of book 2 of our Displaced Dynasties series. In particular, the dates 840-774 B.C. for Ramses II were derived using the same methodology used in extending the Berlin Stele dates backward in time through dynasty 18. By the time we determined the dates for Amenhotep III (chapter 2, page 24) we had already argued convincingly that the dates for Ramses II and Seti I of the 19th dynasty, and for Horemheb and his predecessors in the so-called Amarna age (930-900 B.C.) were extremely accurate. In the case of Ramses II the dates 840-774 were verified, in part, by comparison with the dates for the Hittite kings, with whom Ramses had frequent intercourse. Closer to home, the dates for the Amarna kings were discussed and verified via a lengthy discourse concerning the rebel king Labaya, mentioned frequently in the Amarna correspondence. In chapter two of Volume 3, in a section entitled "The Amarna Age" (chapter 2, pages 24-43), we argued at length that Labaya must be identified as Jereboam I, who along with Rehoboam, the son and successor of Solomon, ruled separate divisions of Solomon's kingdom. We have no intention of reviewing the argument here. We leave it to the interested reader to peruse and digest the relevant pages. Suffice it here to reproduce the closing addendum to that twenty page analysis.

Addendum (reproduced from page 43 of chapter 2 of Volume 3)

At minimum the preceding discussion allows the possibility that our theory regarding the Berlin genealogy chronology is correct. If we are wrong then even the staunchest critic of our revision must admit that we have been most fortunate. The Berlin chronology for the late 18th dynasty was nothing more than an extrapolation of the genealogy already applied successfully to the 7th century revisions of our earlier book and to the 8th century revisions proposed in the first chapter of the present book. This extension compelled us to place the Amarna correspondence roughly in the time frame 930-910 B.C., the time of the division of the Israelite kingdom. We had no choice in the matter.

Consequently, had we not already read the Amarna letters from the Palestine region, we would have expected to find in them reference to a rebel king, residing in Shechem and in control of the entire region north of that city, ranging from the Mediterranean to the trans-Jordan. We would have expected that he would be in conflict with Megiddo and Gezer and Jerusalem, the cities in the southern region fortified by Solomon several decades earlier and now held by Rehoboam. We would have anticipated that Egypt, the former sanctuary of the rebel king, and more recently the conqueror of Jerusalem, would have an established presence in the area. And we could have predicted that Egypt would be siding with the rebel king, considering his previous liaison with the Egyptian court, even if we discounted the midrash contained

in the Septuagint regarding a marriage between him and pharaoh's sister-in-law. We would have demanded that the city of Rehoboam be named Jerusalem and that ethnic references to the rebels, if any were given, would allude to them as Hebrews (Habiru). There is nothing in the Jewish historical books describing the actions of Jeroboam and Rehoboam that conflicts with the data in the Amarna letters, in spite of the fact that many dozens of letters are forthcoming from the region of Palestine. The reader can believe, if he/she so chooses, that this is merely a fortunate coincidence. Or he/she can accept the ever increasing volume of data, by now filling well over 700 pages of closely reasoned text in two books and the beginning of a third, arguing for the accuracy of our revised chronology.

Argument 2: The initial sentence of the last paragraph gives us some direction as to how to proceed in formulating a more direct argument, based solely on activities related to the reigns of Solomon and Amenhotep III (and to a lesser extent his co-ruler Amenhotep IV). Our intent is to peruse the chapters of the Hebrew Bible which deal with the reign of king Solomon, and from our observations describe what would likely, or even necessarily, be the state of affairs in Egypt at that time, at least regarding the military situation in each country. Confirmation that in fact our conclusions concerning Egypt are precisely what prevailed during the reign of Amenhotep III would offer valuable support for our thesis and would at minimum prove that there is no known obstacle to our relocating Amenhotep's reign to the time of Solomon.

While we might easily have documented in this section the remarkable similarity between the two kings vis-à-vis their unprecedented building activity, their enormous wealth, with emphasis on their possession of hundreds of tons of gold, apparently from newly discovered sources, and their penchant for accumulating enormous harems, and cementing diplomatic relations with other countries through marriages of convenience with daughters of foreign dignitaries, we leave that activity for others. Needless to say the similarities between the two kings in these areas are quite remarkable, so much so that at least one well intentioned but misguided scholar named Ahmen Osman, while leaving the two kings in their traditional contexts, separated in time by hundreds of years, has opined that "the inescapable conclusion is that the story of Solomon was patterned specifically after the life of Amenhotep III" (House of the Messiah, p. 218) We do not recommend reading Osmon's works, but the interested reader may be interested in viewing a one page online summary of Osmons data produced by Charles Pope, (see <http://www.domainofman.com/ankhemmaat/solomon.html>).

We now divide our attention between two aspects of the military of the two kings. In section A we discuss the military actions (or rather the lack of such) in the two countries. In section B we take a brief look at the two sections of the respective armies, the "foot soldiers" and the "horse & chariot" brigades

Part A: The actions of the military in Solomon's United Kingdom and the Egypt ruled by Amenhotep III (and his co-ruler Amenhotep IV).

The story of Solomon is told in the Hebrew Bible in 1 Kings 2:12-11:43 and 2 Chron. 1:1-9:31. For the story of Amenhotep's Egypt we restrict our quotations (primarily though not exclusively) to two recent volumes from the corpus of fine synopses of his reign, in this case the "Chronicle of a Pharaoh: The Intimate Life of Amenhotep III" authored by Joann Fletcher (Oxford University Press, 2000) and "Amenhotep III, the Radiant Pharaoh" authored by Arielle P. Kosloff (Cambridge University Press, 2012).

Military Activity in Israel

It is absolutely clear from the text of the Hebrew Bible that Israel was at peace during the whole of Solomon's reign, and that for that entire duration Solomon controlled the whole of present day Syria and Palestine, from the Euphrates to the border of Egypt

Now Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the River to the land of the Philistines and to the border of Egypt; they brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life. (1 Ki. 4:21 cf. 2 Chron. 9:26)

For he had dominion over everything west of the River, from Tiphah even to Gaza, over all the kings west of the River; and he had peace on all sides round about him.

So Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon. (1 Ki. 4:24,25)

You know that David my father was unable to build a house for the name of the LORD his God because of the wars which surrounded him, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet.

But now the LORD my God has given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor misfortune. (1 Ki. 5: 3,4)

From these texts it should be evident whatever Egyptian realm or realms we position alongside the forty year reign of Solomon, there cannot be in evidence any aggressive activity north of the border of Egypt.

Military Activity in Egypt

Considering our previous statement it is instructive, and perhaps the most powerful argument in defense of our thesis, that Amenhotep III, in spite of possessing an expansive, well trained and well equipped military, did not engage in a single land campaign north of the country. In fact, the only recorded campaign by Amenhotep took place early in his reign, the 5th year to be specific, and that was a minor campaign launched against Nubia, hundreds of miles upriver (south) of Thebes. If Solomon's reign can be styled one of "peace and prosperity", it is not surprising that Fletcher entitles one section of her 3rd chapter: "*Pax Amenophica: Peace and Plenty*", and states that:

By the thirteenth year of the reign, with Nubia stabilized and the vast empire at peace, Egypt was at the height of its wealth and power. *The rule of Amenhotep III saw four decades of prosperity uninterrupted by war: for the people of Egypt it was a time of unparalleled security and optimism – a golden age presided over by a golden king.* (p. 76) (emphasis added)

Fletcher's comments are echoed by a multitude of well researched sources on the internet, some nameless, one of which, chosen at random, adequately sums up our argument in this section. When we move Amenhotep forward in time by hundreds of years at the direction of the Berlin stele, and to a position uniquely determined by the relocation of the 18th dynasty kings who followed him, we appear to have found one of the few time frames (if not the only time frame) where he could have been positioned. How fortunate!

Before Amenhotep III rose to the throne as Pharaoh of the Egyptian Empire, it was a place of tumultuous fighting for his ancestors; he however, was to live in an Empire of peace and enjoy the delights of the Ancient world. *"Through wars, his predecessors had established an empire; it was Amenhotep's destiny to enjoy its fruits and live off his ancestor's achievements."* (Hallo & Simpson- *The Ancient Near East: A History*). When Amenhotep III succeeded the throne of Egypt, his Empire was the unrivalled leader of the known world. After the multitude of campaigns launched by his predecessors, Amenhotep rose to power with little disruption from his neighboring nations. Gold poured in from Nubia, cedars came from the forests of Syria-Palestine and within Egypt, a huge supply of luxurious foods were coming from the fertile banks of the Nile. With his extensive power and wealth Amenhotep was able to launch the greatest building program the world had ever seen. Craftsman within his reign were able to display such scenes of artistic magnificence, which were never to be equaled in the 1500 years of Egypt's Pharaohs.

<http://amenhotepiii.weebly.com/index.html>

It was essential in any Pharaoh's reign to present themselves as a warrior and protector of Egypt; this was in order to uphold their duty in maintaining *maat* throughout their Kingdom. In the reigns of Amenhotep III's predecessors this role was carried out with battles and campaigns to the various neighbors of Egypt, such as Syria-Palestine, Nubia and Babylon. However, in Amenhotep's reign this was not fulfilled like in years gone by. This was due to the peaceful relations that Egypt now held with its neighbors; the need for war was unnecessary. This of course left the army with little occupation, something the Pharaoh put to his own use in his administrative structure. Although the Pharaoh only made one military campaign in Year 5 of his reign, the King still presented himself as a warrior, hunter and protector of Egypt, as was custom.

<http://amenhotepiii.weebly.com/the-warrior-pharaoh.html>

The reader will no doubt agree that these two paragraphs could well have been describing the situation in Solomon's kingdom.

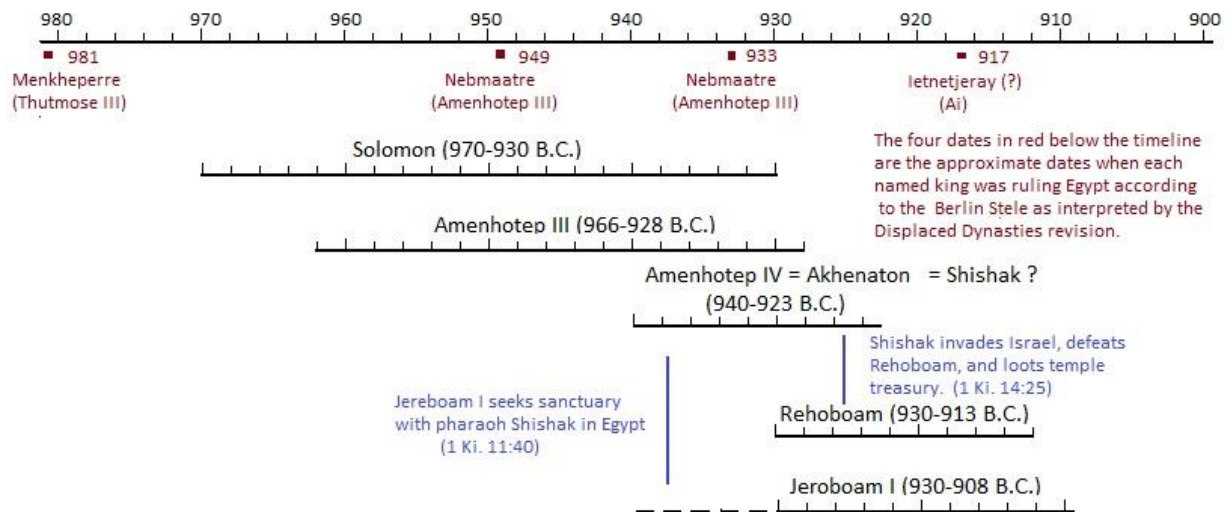
Before moving on to document the almost identical military resources of each country, we need to caution the reader about comments they are likely to read online about Egyptian dominance along the Mediterranean coastline during the reign of Amenhotep III. Nothing could be further from the truth. The source of this misrepresentation is the Amarna archives, as misinterpreted by scholars. Among this treasure trove of letters there are many written concerning the aggressive actions of an Amorite chieftain named Abdi-Ashirta and in particular this rebel chieftain's assault against a certain Rib-Adda of Byblos. The beginnings of this activity arguably took place extremely late in the reign of Amenhotep III, when Solomon was dying, but still alive. We do not doubt for a moment that immediately following the death of Solomon, the Egyptian presence along the Mediterranean coast would expand considerably and rapidly, but in the earliest documents he appears to be living. From later Amarna documents Fletcher learns that three Egyptian administrative areas have been set up, in Gaza (Canaan), Kumidu (Lebanon) and Simurru (Syria), but from these letters one cannot conclude anything about the reign of Amenhotep III. Most of this Amarna correspondence dates from the reign of Amenhotep IV (and later), but Fletcher argues from it that these areas were vassal states of

Amenhotep III, and from this conclusion she extrapolates and turns Amenhotep’s realm into a “great empire” (p. 74). In truth, Amenhotep ruled nothing beyond the borders of Egypt. Even Nubia was not demonstrably an Egyptian province.

The reader needs to be clear that the reign of Amenhotep extends at most two years beyond the death of Solomon, and Egyptologists agree that during those years he was ill and his son and eventually successor Akhenaton was the de facto ruler of the country. It follows that any expansion of Egypt toward the north, as reflected in the Amarna letters, is not in conflict with our thesis. This expansion is, in fact, an expected consequence of Solomon’s death.

We provide below (Figure 1) a timeline to add some clarity to these comments, and to assist our description in arguments to come.

Figure 1: Timeline of the reigns of Solomon, Amenhotep III, and their successors



This latter discussion is not entirely defensive posturing on our part. There is some positive argument that can be drawn from the timing of the events. In the earliest letters that refer to Abdi-Ashirta it is interesting that the rebel appears to be dealing with habiru, whom we believe to be Hebrew officers, part of a vast network of administrative officials, numbering in the thousands, installed by Solomon and acting on his behalf. We know from the Hebrew Bible that Solomon’s rule extended northward to the Amurru area, where Abdi-Ashirta ruled, and from whence Solomon’s officials “brought tribute and served Solomon all the days of his life.” (1 Ki. 4:21). Apparently, in these letters, the realm of Solomon remains intact, and tribute is still being collected. But, as stated above, these few Amarna letters are being misinterpreted by scholars. In later Amarna documents Solomon is clearly deceased. Abdi-Ashirta is acting more independently, and his adversaries are Egyptian. We quote a “brief and to the point” online document authored by a Robert McRoberts, who, like Fletcher, has also misread the situation, but who, unlike Fletcher, at least separates the two scenarios. And McRoberts has conveniently

provided a map to enable readers unfamiliar with the territories mentioned. We remind them that the one date mentioned (1350 B.C.) with which McRoberts begins his comments, is based on the traditional history, in which Amenhotep ruled in the years 1391-1353. He has only a few years left in his reign, and he is not well. In the first paragraph quoted Solomon appears to be still living; in the second he is dead and Egypt rules the day.

The Amorite Chieftain Abdi-Ashirta had gained control of the land of Amurru around 1350 B.C.E. while ostensibly acting in good faith as a vassal of the Egyptian Pharaoh Amenhotep III and possibly Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten as well. Over a period of a few years Abdi-Ashirta increased his influence over a group known as the habiru, who appear to have been a mix of tribal peoples and outlaws. By rewarding the habiru with plunder from his conquests Abdi-Ashirta was able to quickly expand his territory and his base of followers.

After consolidating the rugged hinterlands and valleys of Amurru, Abdi-Ashirta moved against the main Egyptian stronghold in the region. In a bold move he occupied the port city of Sumur, which had previously been the seat of the Egyptian commissioner. Then the ambitious warlord began to move south against the territories of Rib-Hadda the Egyptian vassal king of Gubla/Byblos.

(<https://suite.io/robert-mcroberts/3ae12z5>)

Since we have mentioned the fact that Amenhotep was not well at the end of his reign, we should perhaps justify and qualify that statement. The mummified remains of Amenhotep III were discovered in 1898 in tomb KV35, west of Thebes. The corpse was deposited among a cache of corpses hidden in the tomb of his grandfather Amenhotep II, but “it was so badly damaged that even his age at death was difficult to determine”. In 1912 the body was examined by the English anatomist Grafton Elliot Smith who “estimated that at the time of death Amenhotep III was probably “between forty and fifty years of age”. The mummy shows that “Amenhotep III spent the last years of his life as a fat, diseased, sedentary man, almost completely bald”, and was doubtless “in considerable pain from dental problems”. The quotations are all taken from James E. Harris and Kent R. Weeks, *X-Raying the Pharaohs*, p. 142.

Part B: The military resources in Solomon’s United Kingdom and the Egypt ruled by Amenhotep III (and his co-ruler Amenhotep IV).

The Military of Solomon:

In the case of Solomon the biblical text is our only source. We quote the most relevant passages.

And Solomon had 40,000 [sic] stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen. (1 Ki. 4:26)

Now Solomon had 4,000 stalls for horses and chariots and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king in Jerusalem...

And they were bringing horses for Solomon from Egypt and from all countries. (2 Chron. 9:25,28)

And Solomon amassed chariots and horsemen. He had 1,400 chariots, and 12,000 horsemen, and he stationed them in the chariot cities and with the king at Jerusalem...

And Solomon's horses were imported from Egypt [Mizraim] and from Kue [Que]; the king's traders procured them from Kue for a price.

And they imported chariots from Egypt [Mizraim] for 600 shekels of silver apiece, and horses for 150 apiece, and by the same means they [the countries of Mizraim and Que] exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram. (2 Chron. 1:14,16,17)

Also Solomon's import of horses was from Egypt (Mizraim) and Kue [Que], and the king's merchants procured them from Kue for a price

And a chariot was imported from Egypt (Mizraim) for 600 shekels of silver, and a horse for 150; and by the same means they exported them to all the kings of the Hittites and to the kings of Syria. (1 Ki. 10:28,29)

Now this is the account of the forced labor which king Solomon levied to build the house of the LORD, his own house, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer.

For Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone up and captured Gezer, and burned it with fire, and killed the Canaanites who lived in the city, and had given it as a dowry to his daughter, Solomon's wife.

So Solomon rebuilt Gezer, and the lower Beth-horon,

And Baalath and Tamar in the wilderness, in the land *of Judah*,

And all the storage cities which Solomon had, even the cities for his chariots and the cities for his horsemen ... (1 Ki. 9:15-19)

All of the people who were left of the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, who were not of Israel,

namely, from their descendants who were left after them in the land whom the sons of Israel had not destroyed, them Solomon raised as forced laborers to this day.

But Solomon did not make slaves for his work from the sons of Israel; they were men of war, his chief captains, and commanders of his chariots and his horsemen. (2 Chron. 8:7-9)

From these texts we learn that Solomon's standing army consisted entirely of chariotry, with 12,000 trained horsemen, 4,000 horses and 1,400 chariots. There appears to be no foot soldiers in that standing army, though the final verses quoted above suggests that, if warfare were to come, the descendants of the ethnic Canaanites still remaining in Israel, employed in the duration as forced laborers in Solomon's extensive building enterprises, would be called into service. Meanwhile, native Israelites only were trained to serve as captains of this army, and native Israelites alone were involved in the chariot brigades. It was a formidable army, though throughout Solomon's extensive reign it was never deployed!

From the text of 1 Ki. 9:15-19, quoted above, we learn that the towns of Hazor, in the far north of Israel, Megiddo, near the Mediterranean coast west of the Jezreel Valley, and Gezer, on the coastal plain below Jerusalem, were the principal bases for the chariot army, as we might guess from the fact that they are singled out for re- construction in verse 15 (see

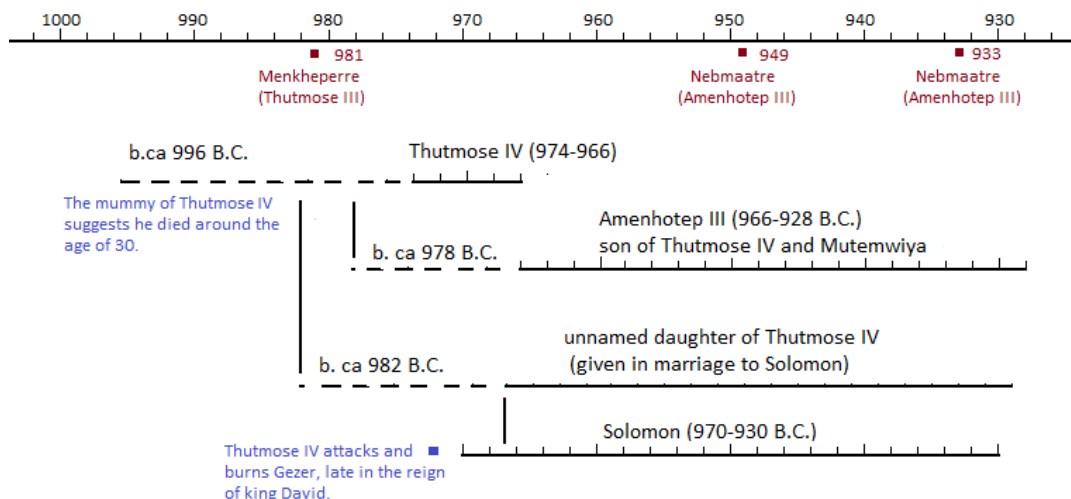
<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/1978/09/biblical-archeology>) for archaeological evidence of this Solomonic construction in the three cities).

Finally, several verses in both the 1 Kings and 2 Chronicles passages emphasize that both the horses and the chariots were procured on the open market from Egypt (Heb. Mizraim) and Que/Kue (later known as Cilicia in the extreme SE of ancient Anatolia/present day Turkey). While there is no insurmountable problem in our interpreting the Hebrew text precisely as it is interpreted by most modern day scholars, we do take exception with one aspect of that interpretation. We do not believe that the Hebrew Mizraim in these few passages is a reference to Egypt, though we admit that this is the only word used in the Hebrew Bible to refer to Egypt. The reader needs to peruse pp. 84-89 in our volume 1, a section entitled *Tushamilki, king of Musru*. In that section we describe the utter stupidity of the actions described in an Assyrian text as interpreted thoughtlessly by modern scholars, who routinely interpret the Akkadian reference to a country called Musur/Musru as a reference to Egypt. While Musur/Musru is, in fact, the common designation of Egypt in Akkadian texts, there also existed at the time another country, with the identical name, situated in the extreme SE of ancient Anatolia, near the region of Que, that much more sensibly suited the circumstances described in the Akkadian text. And since the passage in question spoke of Musur and Que in the same breath, acting in concert in a military action, the term Musur must refer to that country. Failure to do that has resulted in a major distortion of Saite dynasty history. We would caution the reader of this essay not to let that happen again. Interpreting Mizraim here as a reference to Egypt would require us to consider Egypt as a manufacturing and distribution center for horses and chariots, supplying the Near East as far afield as the Hittite region of Anatolia and northern districts of modern day Syria. And that, in turn, would open up for criticism the text of 1 Ki 10:29 and 2 Chron. 1:17. And there is no shortage of critics willing to take up the task of discrediting the Hebrew Bible. The reader might be interested in reading the article written by the conservative Egyptologist K.A. Kitchen reviewing a book by Paul S. Ash, in which Ash has argued that the two references to Egypt in these two passages are mistaken. (See pages 43,44 of the review article by Kitchen entitled "Ancient Egypt and the Hebrew Monarchies" in the journal Themelios 26:3, pp 38-50, online at http://s3.amazonaws.com/tgc-documents/journal-issues/26.3_Kitchen.pdf . In this case, in our opinion, Kitchen is wrong and Ash is correct, but not because the Hebrew Bible is in error. In a moment we will confirm our opinion that in 1 Ki 10:29 and 2 Chron. 1:17 Mizraim should not be interpreted as a reference to Egypt.

Before we turn our attention to the situation in Egypt we should examine briefly the one text quoted above that we have not commented on. According to 1 Ki 9:16, at some unspecified time prior to the marriage of Solomon and an unnamed Pharaoh's daughter, this same Pharaoh had laid siege to Gezer on the coast of Israel, annihilating its troublesome Canaanite

population, and setting the city ablaze. The remains of that city were subsequently given to Solomon as (part of) the dowry of Pharaoh's daughter. There is need for us to construct a timeline of events, if for no other reason than to answer anticipated criticism of our existing timeline in Figure 1. The problem with that diagram, as the reader may already have noticed, is not in what it describes, but what it fails to explain. More specifically, it fails to explain what, precisely, is the relationship between Amenhotep III and the Pharaoh's daughter married by Solomon. The astute critic will notice that, if we were to add to that timeline additional information concerning the birth dates of the two kings Amenhotep III and Solomon, it would be obvious that the unnamed Pharaoh in 1 Ki 9:16 cannot be Amenhotep III. As we have already noted, Egyptologists are agreed that Amenhotep III lived to be at most 50 years old, all but confirming the fact that he began his reign around the age of 12. If so, then he could hardly have fathered any offspring, much less a daughter old enough to marry king Solomon around the 3rd year of Solomon. This single observation confirms three facts, namely, 1) that the unnamed Pharaoh in 1 Ki 9:16 was Thutmose IV, the father of Amenhotep III, and 2) that Amenhotep III was therefore the brother-in-law, not the father-in-law of Solomon, and finally 3) that the destruction of Gezer was the work of Thutmose IV and therefore took place during that king's brief eight year reign, either in the latter years of king David or in the first year or two of Solomon's reign. We strongly favor the first option and argue that during the lengthy illness of king David, that which immediately preceded his death, Thutmose IV invested and burned Gezer. While we don't know why Thutmose took this action, we do not believe it had anything to do with an impending marriage. Returning the city to Israeli control and as part of his daughter's dowry, was probably an afterthought. Our Figure 2 below is provided to add some clarification to these formative years of the two kings in our earlier chart.

Figure 2: Timeline of the reign of Thutmose IV in relation to Amenhotep III and Solomon



Having dealt with the situation in Israel, we proceed with a description of the Egyptian army of Amenhotep III.

The Military of Amenhotep III

Considering the fact that Solomon and Amenhotep were roughly of the same age, were brothers-in-law, and clearly on amicable terms through the whole of their reigns, we expect that the military situation in Egypt will be virtually identical to that in Israel. And we are not disappointed.

The standing army of Amenhotep III consisted entirely of chariotry. There did exist a conscript army of foot soldiers, employed in the interim in various policing services, but as in Israel, these troops were apparently never utilized. As summarized by Fletcher (p. 106)

Amenhotep III maintained his country's status as the super-power of its era through the civilized art of diplomacy rather than by force. The troops who were no longer needed for military campaigns were redeployed to guard borders and to police the trade routes and mining areas that created Egypt's great wealth. The latest scholarly research is revealing that the king did not neglect his armed forces.

Amenhotep III seems to have been the first Egyptian king to employ chariotry as a separate section of the army: he used an elite chariot corps called the *maryannu* and appointed his father-in-law, Yuya, lieutenant-commander of chariotry. Horses were becoming more important in military engagements and the first Egyptian mounted soldiers were probably deployed around this time.

As for the foot soldiers mentioned by Fletcher, whose lives were lived out with virtually no military action (save for the few who participated in the solitary campaign beyond the southern border of Egypt in year 5), they consisted entirely of non-Egyptian recruits, largely from Nubia. According to Arielle Kosloff:

Desert mercenaries were hired from Nubia, particularly from Wawat in the north and from the Medjay tribe. These were skilled and hardy fighters and were specifically requested by foreign rulers in the Amarna letters as *Melukha* – “dark-skinned” warriors – when in need of backup from Pharaoh. Within Egypt, particularly Upper Egypt, they served as something of a desert police force (p. 72 in *Amenhotep III, Egypt's Radiant Pharaoh*, Cambridge University Press, 2012).

We should perhaps explain that all requests for Egyptian assistance in the Amarna letters date from the years of Akhenaton, when Egypt was once again militarily active north of the country.

We might conceivably end this segment of our discussion at this point, it being relatively clear that the Egyptian situation agrees favorably with what we expected. But as was the case with the description of Solomon's army, there is need to explain several items related to the horses and chariots being discussed, and certainly need to address the subject raised in our critique of

Solomon's chariot army, namely, whence did Egypt procure its horses and chariots and was it ever an exporter of these commodities? But before doing that, we need to briefly turn our attention to one comment further on in the section of Fletcher's book quoted earlier. The comment is instructive and we need to make note of it in passing. Though it does not relate specifically to our discussion of the army of Amenhotep III, it does help to clarify one troublesome aspect of our Figure 2.

In the course of pointing out that a number of the soldiers who served Amenhotep III were seasoned veterans, having served previous generations of Egyptian kings, Fletcher notes that at least one veteran soldier named Horemheb not only served under Amenhotep III, but also under Amenhotep's father and also his grandfather:

"I followed the good god, lord of the two lands, Aakheperure [Amenhotep II], given life, his beloved son, lord of diadems, Menkheperure [Thutmose IV], given life, his beloved son, lord of the desert, Nebmaatra, son of Ra, Amenhotep, ruler of Thebes, beloved of Amun." (p. 107)

We mention this inscription simply because it accords well with the Figure 2 timeline, where we note that very little time is available in which to insert the 28 year reign of Amenhotep II, the father of Thutmose IV. The reader will note that only 6 years separate the conjectured ca 980 B.C. death of Menkheperre Thutmose III and the 974 B.C. beginning of the reign of his grandson Menkheperure Thutmose IV. Even when we argue, with Egyptologists, that the reign of Amenhotep II overlapped the last years of the reign of Menkheperre and that he also had a brief two year coregency with his son Menkheperure, the Berlin Stele allows him only a 10 year reign, roughly in the time slot 982-972 B.C. This brief reign is in general agreement with the statement of Horemheb. Because the reigns of the two 18th dynasty kings Amenhotep II and Thutmose IV take place in quick succession in our revised chronology, it is perfectly conceivable that Horemheb could have served under all three kings, even if he began his service early in the reign of Amenhotep II and was still serving in the middle of the reign of Amenhotep III. In the traditional history Amenhotep II ruled for 28 years, and some notable Egyptologists argue, based on the monuments, that Thutmose IV ruled for over 32 years. If so, then Horemheb is lying. How do we explain the situation?

The reader is reminded about the words which began this essay. Amenhotep III had no 25th dynasty namesake to confuse the interpretation of monuments which record his actions. Not so with Amenhotep II, nor for that matter with his son Thutmose IV. We have argued exhaustively on pages 152-181 of chapter 6 in our 2nd Volume (*Piankhi the Chameleon*) that most of the monuments which refer to kings by the names Aakheperure and Menkheperure belong to 7th century namesakes. This includes all of the monuments which furnish the high regnal year numbers for the two kings. If the 18th dynasty Aakheperure Amenhotep II ruled Egypt for only 10 years this is not a problem for the Displaced Dynasties chronology. It is a

devastating development for the traditional history, which is but one of the reasons Egyptologists are compelled to discount entirely the testimony of the Berlin Stele.

We leave this matter by quoting only the brief introductory material and related footnote from pages 169-170 of our Volume 2, in a section entitled *Menkheperure Thutmose IV*. Please note that we are not here arguing for a longer reign for the 18th dynasty king who bears that name, only that there did exist a king Menkheperure whose reign lasted that long. But this king lived in the 7th century.

According to the traditional history the 18th dynasty king Amenhotep II was succeeded by a son Menkheperure Thutmose IV whose reign lasted either an abbreviated 8 years or an extended 32 plus years. The longer reign length is supported by such notable scholars as Wentz and Van Siclen, based primarily, though not exclusively, on monuments which suggest that the king celebrated at least one heb seba (30 year) festival.¹ In our opinion there is no getting around the evidence supporting the longer reign length. [Some king named] Menkheperure ruled at least 30 years, probably much longer. Those who argue for the minimum figure are clearly influenced by the anatomical reports related to the mummy of Menkheperure. We will examine those reports shortly.

¹Edward Wentz and Charles Van Siclen III, "A Chronology of the New Kingdom," in *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes* SAOC 39 (1977) 227-230. These scholars suggest a reign length of 33 years for Thutmose IV. In defense of this extended reign they state: "Besides the jubilee evidence in favor of a long reign for Thutmose IV there are some additional bits of information that would indicate that his reign was not a short one. There are statues of Thutmose IV seated, not with his queen as is normal, but with his mother Tiaa. At the time when he acceded to the throne, Thutmose IV was called an inpw, a term applied to young princes and kings who had not yet reached puberty. Yet by the time he died, this pharaoh had produced a rather large family, comprising at least seven sons and twelve daughters. During his years as king, Thutmose IV had three queens, each of whom bore the title Great King's Wife. The Eighteenth Dynasty evidence seems to indicate that a king had only one Great King's Wife at a time, so that these three women must have held the title of principal queen consecutively. Another indication that Thutmose IV's reign was a long one is the large number of Theban tomb chapels that are assigned to his period. No fewer than nineteen tombs can be specifically dated to his reign ..." (*Piankhi the Chameleon*, pp 169-170)

Enough said concerning this matter at this time. The reader is encouraged to read the Volume 2, chapter 6, material referred to. As for the importation of horses and chariots to Egypt, and the possibility that Egypt became an exporter of such, we need quote only a sampling of scholarly opinion on the matter, beginning with one further remark from Arielle Kozloff's *Amenhotep III, Egypt's Radiant Pharaoh*, on the identical page quoted earlier.

Chariot teams – the awesome war engines of antiquity – were a special division of the army. It is astonishing to think that horses and their obvious pendant, the chariot, were completely unknown in Egypt for the first 1,500 years or so of its written history, until the Hyksos invasion. Dynasty 18 pharaohs, however, quickly came up to speed in horsemanship, including breeding, husbandry, training, and driving. *By Amenhotep III's time, Egypt regularly imported fine horses from the Near East* and had also developed breeding programs of its own, which by then were somewhere around their thirtieth or fortieth generation of steeds. Kozloff, *Amenhotep III: Egypt's Radiant Pharaoh*, p. 72 (emphasis added)

Quotes such as this abound in the scholarly literature. Egyptologists are in general agreement that Egypt imported most of its horses, especially quality breeds, and it is counter-intuitive to

think that they had a “buy and sell” mentality and were also involved in the export trade. A similar situation prevailed with respect to chariots:

While the obvious understanding of the water-proofing properties of birch bark and the use of elm in chariot making in Egypt indicate northern influences, the combination of native tamarisk with imported elm in the six-spoked chariot wheel of Amenhotep III suggests manufacture of chariots in Egypt itself – as vividly illustrated in workshop scenes in Theban New Kingdom tombs ... On the other hand, contemporary texts mention the import of timber from the Near East to Egypt, as well as the arrival of fully finished chariots as booty and a part of diplomatic exchange ... When such chariots appear in the Egypt pictorial record, they are usually similar to Egyptian ones.

Taking all the evidence into account, it is clear that the type of chariot used in Egypt is of Near Eastern origin. The transfer of chariot technology – and the keeping of horses – from the Near East to Egypt, not only included woods such as elm and birch (bark), but also skilled craftsmen, horses and their trainers, as well as the relevant technical vocabulary. (Joost Crouwel, pp. 84,85 in “*Studying the Six Chariots from the Tomb of Tutankhamon – an Update*” pp 73-94 in *Chasing Chariots: Proceedings of the First International Chariot Conference [Cairo 2012]*, Andre J. Veldmeijer & Salima Ikram, eds., Sidestone Press, Leiden, 2013)

We need to qualify this quote only slightly. The workshop scenes referred to by Crouwel are likely only repair workshops. Chariots suffer extensive wear and tear, even in non-combat situations, and were certainly in constant need of repair. Importing the necessary woods and skilled craftsmen would of necessity be part of a routine maintenance program for this imported product. From a photo of an automobile service center today we would never conclude that this facility manufactured automobiles. Neither is there justification for concluding that the Egyptian workshops manufactured chariots. To my knowledge, there are no texts that make the claim that chariots were fabricated in Egypt. And there are certainly none that speak of the export of this product, even as gifts in the exercise of diplomacy in relations with other nations.

We leave the matter there. We have demonstrated a remarkable congruity between the nature and actions of the armies of Solomon and Amenhotep III.

One closing remark is in order. Since we are on the topic of chariots, we would be negligent if we failed to mention Egyptian chariots in their relation to the topic we have mentioned repeatedly, namely, the problem of distinguishing between monuments belonging to 18th dynasty kings and their 25th dynasty namesakes. The problem is restricted to the early kings of the 18th dynasty, from Amenhotep I through to Thutmose IV. What we have been unable to do is to suggest a foolproof means of determining to which dynasty we should ascribe monuments bearing the names of these kings. In fact, a possible solution to the problem exists, and it was suggested half a century ago by the Israeli archaeologist Yigael Yadin. And it involves the chariot, though, at the time, Yadin’s suggestion had nothing to do with the dilemma we are talking about. A recent brief essay by James K. Hoffmeier has brought the matter to my attention. It needs to be investigated. We quote from Hoffmeier’s journal article, entitled “*The Evolving Chariot Wheel in the Eighteenth Dynasty*”, JARCE XIII (1976), p 43.

It is generally believed that the horse-drawn chariot was introduced into Egypt by the Hyksos, and that it originated somewhere in the area of Syria-Palestine. Egyptian literary references to chariots occur as early as the reigns of Kamose, the 17th Dynasty king who took the first steps in freeing Egypt from the Hyksos, and Ahmose, the founder of the 18th Dynasty. Pictorial representations, however, do not appear until slightly later in the 18th Dynasty. Two of the earliest scenes are found in the tomb of Rennie of El Kab (possibly dating to the reign of Amenhotep I), and in the tomb of User (reign of Thutmose I). Professor Yigael Yadin maintains that during the earlier part of the 18th Dynasty, the Egyptian chariot was "exactly like the Canaanite chariot:" both were constructed of light flexible wood, with leather straps wrapped around the wood to strengthen it, and both utilized wheels with four spokes. In Yadin's eyes the four-spoked wheel is diagnostic for dating purposes; it is restricted to the early period of the 18th Dynasty. It remained in vogue, he says, until the reign of Thutmose IV, when "the Egyptian chariot begins to shake off its Canaanite influence and undergo considerable change." Yadin believes that the eight-spoked wheel, which is seen on the body of Thutmose IV's chariot, was an experiment by the Egyptian wheelwrights, who, when it proved unsuccessful, settled thereafter for the six-spoked wheel. In short, **"So widespread and meticulous is the delineation of the number of wheel spokes on chariots depicted on Egyptian monuments that they can be used as a criterion for determining whether the monument is earlier or later than 1400 B.C."** [quoting Yigael Yadin, *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands*, I (Toronto, 1963), p. 87] (emphasis added)

Hoffmeier goes on to cite exceptions to Yadin's "rule of thumb", i.e. instances where dignitaries who served 18th dynasty kings, and in some cases the kings themselves, including Thutmose IV and most of his predecessors, are pictured on monuments which picture chariots with both four and six (or sometimes eight) spokes, thus appearing to discredit the methodology. But it is possible that the "exceptions" he cites actually prove that the method works, because the monuments for the kings he mentions possibly originate from both the 18th and 25th dynasty, some preceding and some following the 18th dynasty Thutmose IV. And if the methodology is sound, it might well serve to distinguish between monuments belonging to the 18th and those belonging to the 25th dynasty. The matter needs to be investigated further.

<http://www.michaelsheiser.com/PaleoBabble/HoffmeierObservationsEvolvingChariotWheelinEgypt.pdf>