

Chapter 4 Hittite Synchronisms with the 9th/8th Centuries

Dark Ages & Ghost Cultures

When early historians mistakenly placed the 18th and 19th dynasties of Egypt in the 16th-13th centuries B.C. the ripple effects on the histories of multiple Aegean and Near Eastern civilizations were profound. The Empire kings of Hatti, the Minoan and Mycenaean Greeks, multiple north Syrian confederacies including the north Syrian city states of Carchemish and Aleppo, as well as Ugarit and the cities of Amurru on the eastern Mediterranean coast, were all artificially thrust back in time to a period four to five hundred years before they actually flourished, all because their histories were enmeshed with the reigns of the 18th and 19th dynasty Egyptian kings. And the error did not stop there. The Balkans and a host of European countries north and east of the Black Sea suffered the identical distortion of their ancient history. A gap of around 450 years was created in the archaeological and cultural historical records at literally hundreds of sites in these and other contiguous locations throughout the near and middle east. So-called dark ages, lasting hundreds of years, appear mysteriously in cultures throughout much of this vast geographical area. Israel and Assyria alone (at least as far back as the 10th century) - and to a lesser degree southern Syria - escaped this gross historical distortion, saved by the meticulous and continuous annals maintained by the two key nations, whose histories are linked by the occasional synchronism in the public records.

This distortion of history has not gone unnoticed. On an ad hoc basis archaeologists and social historians have been dealing with it for over a hundred years. Revisionist historians have documented the error exhaustively and have repeatedly identified a faulty Egyptian chronology as its cause.

Nowhere is the error more obvious than in northern Syria, which acts as a buffer state between the Hatti land and Assyria, and was, at various times in the classical Hittite period, part of the extended Hittite empire. The

armies of multiple neo-Assyrian kings of the 9th and 8th centuries frequently visited the area with varying degrees of success, inevitably encountering city states allied with the Hittites, ruled by kings bearing names familiar from the Empire period of the nation.

According to O.R.Gurney, the British scholar who first popularized the Hittite situation to the English speaking world,

in the south-eastern provinces of the Hittite Empire Hittite culture had a strange afterglow which lasted for no less than five centuries. Assyrian records continue to refer to Syria and the Taurus area as the 'Land of Hatti' and speak of kings bearing names like Sapalulme, Mutallu, Katuzili, and Lubarna (cf. Suppiluliumas, Muwatallis, Hattusilis/Kantuzzilis, and Labarna). *The Hittites* 39

From the outset of Hittite studies the possibility has never been entertained that these later occurrences of Hittite names, and the Hieroglyphic Luwian monuments so characteristic of these "land of Hatti" Syrian states, are nothing other than what they appear to be, evidence that the Hittite Empire was alive and well in the 9th/8th centuries. The term "neo-Hittite" was affixed to these "out of place" events and archaeological artifacts, and a theory was developed to explain the phenomenon as a "renaissance" of Hittite culture, an example of what we have termed "ghost cultures" in our division heading. Traditional historians had no other choice, since according to that history the Hittite civilization had ceased to exist around the year 1200 B.C., destroyed in a calamitous physical and social upheaval of unknown cause that brought an end to many other national groups, and caused multiple "peoples of the sea" to migrate elsewhere in the Mediterranean world.

An explanation for the presence of these 9th/8th century "neo-Hittites" has been avidly sought by scholars. The prevailing theory traces their origins to southeastern Anatolia, where it is assumed that a remnant of Hittite culture was preserved following the 1200 B.C. destruction of the Hittite homeland further north. It is further assumed that after a lapse of several hundred years this hypothetical group extended its influence south and east into North Syria where over time it came to dominate the Aramean peoples then living in those regions, leaving for posterity a distinctive art form and multiple inscriptions in hieroglyphic Luwian, a branch of the Hittite language preserved from the Empire days.

According to Gurney

the language and the religion of these "Neo-Hittite" inscriptions are not those of the Hittites of Hattusas, nor are they those of the common people who had inhabited Syria under the Hittite Empire (for they were Hurrians). It seems that Syria must have been overrun by another people coming from one of the Hittite provinces, who had adopted the Hittite civilization. *The Hittites* 40

If Gurney correctly represents the situation, then reason suggests that in Anatolia itself these neo-Hittites should have been the immediate predecessors of the Phrygians, ruled by the legendary Midas, who occupied the ancient Hittite homeland by the middle of the 8th century. But the archaeological record seems to indicate that the Phrygians followed on the heels of the Empire Hittites, not the neo-Hittites. The hypothetical neo-Hittites are conspicuous by their absence throughout Anatolia, where they should in theory be most prominent. So closely do the Phrygians follow the Hittites at multiple sites, that at least in one instance the cultural remains of the Hittites and the Phrygians are intermingled through multiple layers, a situation quite impossible if the two peoples are separated in time by 450 years. According to Peter James in his *Centuries of Darkness* chapter on the Hittites:

Paradoxically, remains of both cultures, supposedly separated in time by several centuries, have actually been found together at one site. This is Gordion, a Hittite settlement before it became the seat of the Midas dynasty. The final publication of the excavations is still awaited, but preliminary reports, together with extensive published analyses of the pottery, tell an intriguing story.

Gordion is generally agreed to have been sacked by the Cimmerians in the early 7th century B.C. From before the destruction three phases of painted Phrygian ware were discerned by the excavators, representing 100 years or so, and covering the period of the great Phrygian kingdom. Soundings taken from the underlying strata of earlier phases produced completely unsuspected results. Most Hittite settlements are sealed with a clear destruction level, separating them from any traces of subsequent occupation. No archaeological relationship between the Hittites and Phrygians had therefore been envisaged. At Gordion, however, there was no such break. Instead, the two cultures appear to have co-existed for a considerable time (*Centuries of Darkness* 139-140).

Even if the Hittite and Phrygian layers had been distinct at Gordion, as they are at other locations in central Anatolia,³⁰ we wonder why the site would have been left uninhabited for four to five hundred years, pending the arrival of the Phrygians in the 8th century. The fall of the Hittite Empire in 1200 B.C. supposedly took place as part of a mass migration of homeless peoples, displaced by some natural catastrophe. Why was the Gordion site left vacant for upwards of 400 years? Why did some neo-Hittite group not move northward, not only to the site of Gordion, but to multiple other Hittite sites which are also assumed to have lain vacant, to fill the vast geographical void created by the demise of the Hittites. The question is all the more pertinent considering the cultural affinity and assumed historical connection between the two groups. The theory makes no sense whatever.

Absolutely no archaeological record of the existence of the hypothetical neo-Hittite peoples exists anywhere in central Anatolia where it is most expected. And this is only the beginning of the problem. In the north Syrian homeland of the neo-Hittites the reverse situation holds. It is the Hittites that are missing from the archaeological record, at least in the time frame where the traditional history would place them. The matter requires a closer examination.

The Neo-Hittites of North Syria

According to Gurney the neo-Hittite cities, mentioned frequently in Assyrian records of the 9th/8th centuries, were in most instances founded only after the demise of the Hittite empire at the end of the 13th century. Thus scholars explain the absence of Hittite artifacts at multiple sites. Only a few cities are cited as exceptions.

The only common factors between the two epochs are Carchemish and the three cities of the Tyanitis (Hittite Tuwanuwa, Tunna, and Hupisna). Aleppo, one of the key-positions of imperial Hatti, appears as Halman and is of less importance

³⁰At Boghazkeuy, ancient Hattusas, the Hittite capital, though a distinct separation exists between the Hittites and their 9th/8th century Phrygian successors, the lack of sedimentation at the separation level has led authorities to surmise that the hiatus between the two inhabitants at the site was very brief.

than the upstart Arpad, its near neighbour to the north. All the other names are new, and many of them were probably new foundations. *The Hittites* 41

Gurney's argument is flawed. Many of the cities mentioned in the Assyrian records are indeed not named in the Hittite annals, but that does not mean they did not exist or were not part of the extended Hittite empire at various stages of its existence. The Hittite annals are primarily concerned with activities in central, northern and western Anatolia and to a lesser extent with Ugarit and the cities of Amurru on the northern Mediterranean coast. Very little attention is given to the situation in the east and south-east - Mitanni, Assyria, or north Syria. In some instances, no doubt, the Assyrians do refer to identical locations mentioned in Hittite documents but by variant names. Regardless, we single out for attention one important instance where continuity is known to exist between the two epochs - Carchemish. For now this one example illustrating the problem must be deemed sufficient.

Carchemish

It is well known that Carchemish was conquered (or reconquered) by Suppiluliumas sometime during his reign³¹, and that one of his sons named Piyasili (Sarri-Kusuh in Hurrian) was installed as king of the city. The Hittites continued to hold Carchemish, and maintain their domination over its assumed Hurrian population, through the balance of the Empire period, for upwards of 150 years. Thereafter the city apparently returned to its roots until (by degrees over several centuries) it was overrun by the neo-Hittites. By the time of the Assyrian kings Ashurnasirpal II (883-859) and Shalmaneser III (858-824) the city is clearly identified as neo-Hittite.

³¹In the traditional history it is considered that this event occurred very late, since it was during the assault on the city that Suppiluliumas received a request from the widow of Tutankhamon to send her one of his sons as a husband. And since for other reasons the death of Suppiluliumas is placed in 1335 B.C., only four years after the death of Tutankhamon, the attack on Carchemish must have taken place in a very narrow time frame at the end of the reign of the Hittite king. But even in the conventional chronology the dates of the Hittite and Egyptian kings are not firmly established, calling this interpretation into question. And the identity of the widowed queen is by no means an established fact. In the revised chronology, assuming that we are dealing with the widow of Tutankhamon, the siege of Carchemish must be dated very early in the reign of Suppiluliumas, since the death of Tutankhamon took place either before or very soon after Suppiluliumas began his kingship.

If that history is correct, the archaeological record at the site should reveal three separate strata (or groups of strata) - a neo-Hittite layer overlying a Hurrian substratum overlying the remnants of a Hittite city. Minimally there should exist clear evidence of two cities, representing the Hittite and neo-Hittite phases of occupation.

On the other hand, if the revised history is correct, and the neo-Hittite confederacies are merely vassal states on the outer fringes of the Hittite Empire, as they appear to be from the language of the Assyrian documents, we expect to find a neo-Hittite city with supposed bronze age artifacts embedded, overlying a layer devoid of any associations with the classical Hittites.

Excavation at Carchemish commenced in earnest in the early decades of the 20th century under Hogarth, assisted by Leonard Woolley et al. The work was all but complete by the beginning of WW11. The archaeologists concentrated on the larger monumental works (palace, city gates, etc.) and only marginally on the city proper. To their surprise they found that the entire corpus of monumental stone sculptures and reliefs remaining at the site, including the "Herald's Wall" and the "Water Gate", was dateable to the neo-Hittite era, showing clear signs of Assyrian influence. The pottery on the site bore unmistakable affinities with that found in the nearby Yunus cemetery, dateable to the 8th/7th century B.C. No trace of the Hittite city was found, even though the excavation in the city proper penetrated the late bronze age level. Either the Hittite city had been leveled and rebuilt, or it had not existed at all. According to Hogarth there existed no construction, no artwork, no inscription at Carchemish which could be dated before the 12th century B.C., and even that early date has been seriously questioned by subsequent generations of Hittite specialists and art-historians, who would argue that the 9th century is a more likely *terminus post quem*.

We are therefore presented with two distinct archaeological anomalies. In Anatolia proper the problem centers on the fact that the Hittite stratum is immediately followed by the Phrygian, with no indication of neo-Hittite occupation. On the other hand in Carchemish, representative of what is found at Malatya and Aleppo and elsewhere, we are confronted with a neo-Hittite layer dateable to the

9th/8th centuries with no apparent Hittite substratum. The only possible solution to both problems is to identify the Hittite and neo-Hittite peoples as contemporaries, precisely the view espoused by (in fact demanded by) the revised chronology.

At Carchemish, this thesis is supported by one additional series of finds by the excavators of the city. Though there was no trace of a Hittite city below the neo-Hittite remains, there was evidence that the Hittites and neo-Hittites *were* contemporaries. We let Peter James summarize some of the evidence from his chapter on "Redating the Hittite Empire". According to James

many artefacts of much earlier date *were* discovered in the Neo-Hittite city. Near the Water Gate was found a stone mace-head bearing a Pharaoh's name, probably Ramesses II. On a pavement which he dated no earlier than the 9th century BC, Woolley identified 'several late Mycenaean sherds and a piece of Cypriot Iron Age ware . . . *These must have come from the Temple Treasury where they had been preserved for many generations.* Excavating the Temple of the Storm God, he discovered a basalt stela which, as well as mentioning a 'Great King', is surmounted by a winged disc, the symbol of imperial power - it was *evidently a relic from the Empire* ... In a tomb securely dated to the 7th century BC, Woolley found a series of small gold figures which bear a striking resemblance to the pantheon of the frieze at Yazilikaya, conventionally dated to the 13th century BC. Hans Guterbock noted that this discovery 'links the Late Hittite period with the time of the Empire ... There is no doubt that both in style and in subjects these figures ... are Hittite in the sense of the Hittite Empire at Boghazkoy.' Yet he wondered: 'How did carvings of the thirteenth century get into a tomb of the seventh? *Woolley himself considered that the jewellery was manufactured during Neo-Hittite times, but in a style which had, somehow, been preserved for 500 years. Guterbock preferred to see them as heirlooms, brought to Carchemish by the Imperial Hittites and 'kept in the treasury in spite of the change in domination', or, alternatively, that they had been carried there by migrating Hieroglyphic Hittites who had joined in the looting of the Late Bronze Age centres when they were sacked by barbarian invaders around 1200 BC.* CD 128-129 (italics and emphasis added)

In quoting James we have italicized the multiple attempts by scholars to rationalize these bits of evidence from Carchemish. If nothing else they illustrate the difficulty of using the archaeological record to convincingly argue a particular thesis. Some ad hoc explanation can always be produced to explain away the most compelling evidence to the contrary.

Let the reader judge the merits of the case thus far presented. To extend our argument further we turn our attention to the Hittite Empire kings themselves, in hopes of fixing their reigns more firmly in the 9th/8th centuries where our revised history has positioned them

Suppiluliumas I and II

Only two kings by the name Suppiluliumas are known to have ruled in the entire 550 year span of Hittite history which, according to the traditional history, lasted from around 1750 B.C. through to the end of the 13th century. Scholars are generally agreed these two kings began and ended the "Empire Period" of the nation, and have assigned them the dates 1375-1335 B.C. and ca 1200 B.C. respectively. In the revised history they have been dated to the years 908-858 B.C. and 765-760 B.C. We wonder if their existence was noted by the inhabitants of Anatolia and north Syria in the 9th and 8th centuries.

Suppiluliumas I

The beginning of his reign. It is widely known that Suppiluliumas I corresponded with an Egyptian king of the late 18th dynasty. At least one Amarna letter (EA 41) purports to originate from him, addressed to an Egyptian king named Huriya, generally understood to be the Hittite rendering of kheperure, one element in the prenomen of all the terminal kings of the 18th dynasty from Akhenaten through Horemheb. If so the name could, in theory, belong to any of these kings. The recipient, if our chronology is correct, could be Ay, Tutankhamon, Smenkhkare or Horemheb.³² Whoever he was, the letter informs us that Suppiluliumas had earlier communicated with his father and that his request at the time, presumably for gold, had been granted. We assume therefore that the

³²Some would eliminate Tutankhamon from the list since the letter extends greeting to the king's wives and sons, but even the boy-king had at least one wife and had already fathered a son who apparently died at birth or soon after. The traditional history would eliminate Horemheb from the list of candidates since they date the Amarna letters in the period from Amenhotep III to Tutankhamon. But as stated earlier, we believe Horemheb may have participated in the Amarna correspondence.

recipient of the letter has just come into power and that Suppiluliumas was at least several years into his kingship. The present letter is a modest request for a few gold and silver statues, plus a piece of lapis lazuli. The messenger who brought the letter was also the bearer of a number of inconsequential greeting gifts for the Egyptian king.

Because of the confused conditions of the times we are unable to definitively name the Egyptian king in question. It may have been Tutankhamon, though we suspect it was Horemheb. *Huriya* is more likely an abbreviated form of *Hera*(-em-heb) than an attempt to approximate the sound of the Egyptian "kheperure". Elsewhere we have conjectured that Horemheb's name was shortened to *Zerah* by Jewish historians. It is conceivable that *Hera*, *Zerah*, and *Huriya* are all approximations of the sound of the name of the Egyptian god *Hera*. Though scholars have insisted that the Amarna letters all date from the reigns of the three kings Amenhotep III, Akhenaten and Tutankhamon, we repeat our earlier suggestion that the Amarna period may have lasted briefly into the reign of Horemheb. It can be argued minimally that Horemheb used Akhetaten/Amarna as a base for governmental correspondence. In our estimation the destruction of the site awaited the reigns of Seti I and his son Ramses II, an opinion already expressed and one that is not without supporting argument.

Though we may never know precisely to whom Suppiluliumas addressed the Amarna letter EA41 we *can* estimate approximately when it was written. We have previously conjectured that Ay, Tutankhamon and Horemheb may all have come to power during the last fifteen years of the tenth century. If we are correct in our theory that Tutankhamon followed Ay, and that he in turn was followed by Horemheb, with or without an interregnum, then Tutankhamon and Horemheb began their kingships somewhere in the time frame 910-897 B.C.. We date the letter of Suppiluliumas somewhere in this range of dates (though we should point out that nothing precludes our lengthening his reign to sixty years and maintaining the chronology established early in the last chapter).

Though the traditional history suggests that the Suppiluliumas letter was written in the last years of this king's forty to fifty year rule, we clearly believe otherwise. It is hard to imagine that the writer of this document,

begging for gold, is a seventy or eighty year old man at the pinnacle of his illustrious reign, head of an empire which includes almost all of ancient Anatolia, extending beyond the Euphrates into the former domains of Mitanni, and including most of northern Syria. If anything, the letter tells us that the reign of Suppiluliumas has just begun. Ten to twenty years in the future he will establish his empire, capture Washuganni and Carchemish and extend his suzerainty over much of north Syria and the Mediterranean coast. In our earlier table of Hittite kings we dated the beginning of the reign of Suppiluliumas to the year 908 B.C., admittedly only an educated guess. The Amarna letter must date several years later.

Fortunately we can be more precise regarding the end of his kingship.

The end of his reign. It is well known that the Assyrian king Shalmanezar III, in the first year of his kingship, thus in 858 B.C., determined to extend his inherited empire into North Syria. His annals give abundant detail of his trans-Euphrates campaign, which began, while he was still east of the great River, with multiple attacks on the cities governed by Ahuni, the "king" of the state of Bit-Adini, a land mass which extended from the Euphrates to the Khabur River. He then crossed the Euphrates and fought a battle against a coalition of states including Ahuni's trans-Euphrates domains and against "neo-Hittite" forces from Carchemish and Hattina, ruled respectively by Sangara and Sapalulme. Successful in this battle he then swept across the Syrian highlands to the Mediterranean, boasting how he washed his weapons in the Sea. The inscription which records his victorious march begins

I am) Shalmanezar, the legitimate king, the king of the world, the king without rival, ... the son of Ashurnasirpal ... (grand) son of Tukulti-Ninurta ... a conqueror from the Upper Sea to the Lower Sea (to wit) the countries Hatti, Luhuti, Adri, Lebanon (Lab-na-na), Que, Tabali, Militene (Me-li-di)d; who has visited the sources of (both) the Tigris and the Euphrates. ANET 276

We should note that Hatti is here not a reference to some small geographical region north of Carchemish, as some scholars seem to suggest based on references to the place name Hattina used elsewhere in the inscription. The most natural reading of the text insists that we view it

as an umbrella term for the entire region of north Syria. This is clearly the meaning later in the inscription when Shalmanezzer boasts

I swept over Hatti, in its full extent, (making it look) like ruin-hills (left) by the flood (thus) I spread the terror-inspiring glare of my rule over Hatti. ANET 277

The Hatti land thus referenced can only refer to the Hittite possessions in North Syria, part of the extended empire of Suppiluliumas. The fact that Sapalulme appears to be associated more directly with the term Hattina (perhaps a denotation of the eastern portion of his empire) in his initial battle with Shalmanezzer, is not difficult to understand. This is where one branch of the Hittite army was likely stationed under his leadership in view of the Assyrian threat. Some troops may have been garrisoned in Carchemish. The Syrian states were ruled by their own regional kings, while remaining vassal states of the Hittite Empire. Collectively these kings were referred to by Shalmanezzer as "kings of the *land of the Hittites*" (^{mat}Hatti). Everything that Shalmanezzer records in his annals concerning them is consistent with our impression that we are dealing here with the Hittite Empire in its initial phase. The Empire period is well underway in the first half of the 9th century B.C.!

Confirmation that we are correct, and that Sapalulme is not a regional king from an area north of Carchemish is found elsewhere in Shalmanezzer's first year inscription. En route to the Mediterranean the Assyrian king crossed the Orontes and again encountered Sapalulme, who was now defending the fortress town of Alimush and is identified as its suzerain. There Sapalulme summoned aid from his dependencies, including assistance from Ahuni, chief of the land of Bit-Adini east of the Euphrates, the same man who had participated earlier in the defense of Carchemish. The domains of Sapalulme clearly extend from Carchemish on the Euphrates to Alimush by the Mediterranean.

From the mountain of Amanus I departed, crossed the Orontes river (A-ra-an-tu) and approached Alimush, the fortress town of Sapalulme from Hattina. To save his life, Sapalulme from Hattina [called for] Ahuni, man of Adini, Sangara from Carchemish, Halanu from Sam'al, Kate from Que, Pihirim from Hilukka, Bur-Anate from Iasbuq, Ada [...] ... Assyria ...[their/his army] I scattered, I stormed and conquered the town ... I carried away as booty ..., his horses, broken to the yoke. I slew with the sword ... During this battle I personally captured Bur-Anate

from [Izbuk]. I con[quered] the great cities (mahazu) of Hattina, I overthrew the ... of the Upper [Sea] of Amurru and of the Western Sea (so that they became like ruin-hills (left by) the flood. ANET 278

Sapalulme (Suppiluliumas) is not mentioned again in Shalmanezzer's extensive annals. When next we read those inscriptions, describing visits to the Euphrates region in Shalmanezzer's second and third years, the Hittite king is ancient history. We assume he died later in 858 B.C., or perhaps early the next year. If so, then he ruled Hatti for close to fifty years (908-858 B.C.). Before moving on to discuss his namesake, who ruled a century later, we make a few observations for the record regarding the first Suppiluliumas.

1) In Shalmanezzer's annals we note the prominence of "Sangara from Carchemish", apparently a close ally of Sapalulme. It is assumed by scholars that this individual is the "king" of Carchemish, though in the reign of Ashurnasirpal, Shalmanezzer's predecessor, this same individual was identified as a "king of Hatti". Shalmanezzer fails to specify his titles. We know from Hittite documents that a brother of Suppiluliuma named Piyasili (in Hurrian - Sarre Kusuh), was appointed "king of Carchemish", perhaps as early as 885 B.C., the date when we assume the Hittites captured Carchemish, and from that base he acted as the major domo of North Syria, in command of the army. His "reign" extended at least to the ninth year of Mursilis II (849 B.C.), when he died. Sangara disappears from the scene around the same time. It is possible, though by no means certain, that Sangara and Sarre Kusuh are one and the same person. In a later section we will have cause to discuss this situation.

2) It is probable that the plague which ravaged the Hittite homeland toward the end of the reign of Suppiluliumas both precipitated Shalmanezzer's tour of conquest and explains its success. Suppiluliuma might already be ill. Sickness has no doubt depleted the strength of the army.

3) By Shalmanezzer's third year (856 B.C.) Suppiluliumas has died and his son Arnuwandas has suffered the identical fate. The reign of Mursilis has begun. We note from Mursilis' annals that in his first year he was beset with revolt on all fronts of his empire. He confirmed the appointment of Sarre Kusuh in Carchemish, but concentrated his effort on recovering the

province of Arzawa in south-western Anatolia. Meanwhile Shalmanezzer continued to visit the Euphrates region in his second, third and fourth years, 857-855, concentrating his energy on defeating Ahuni, ruler of Bit-Adini, whose extensive domains east of the Euphrates River we have mentioned previously. By 855 Ahuni is captured and his land annexed and re-populated by Assyrians. Small wonder that Mursilis is concerned to reconfirm Sarre Kusu and that in his annals he expresses anxiety concerning the "man of Assyria".

4) While there is no mention of Mursilis in Shalmanezzer's annals, there is mention in year one of a "Mutalli from Gurgume", a region in the vicinity of Tubal, about a third of the way from Carchemish toward Hattusas, the Hittite capital. Apparently some of Shalmanezzer's troops journeyed slightly north of the direct route from Carchemish to the Sea, and received "the tribute of Mutalli from Gurgume (to wit): silver, gold, large and small cattle, wine (and) his daughter with her big dowry" (ANET 277) If Mursilis was in his forties when he became king, his son Muwatallis could easily be the king in question, delegated the responsibility of guarding the route to the Hittite homeland. The resemblance of the name is striking. We have already argued that by Mursilis' fourteenth or fifteenth year Muwatallis was likely elevated to kingship to assist his father.

5) The critic might argue against our thesis by noting that Shalmanezzer's father Ashurnasirpal (883-859 B.C.) refers to a "city of Kunulua, the royal residence of Lubarna from Hattina". If Suppiluliuma ruled from 908-858 B.C. (or thereabouts), it might fairly be asked why a king Lubarna was ruling in that same time frame. There are two possible answers to the objection. In the first place the text does not state, nor provide any hint, that this Hittite king was the "great king of Hatti" as opposed to a relative of the king ruling over the specified city. Labarna was the name of the first great king of Hatti, borne by at least one other "great king", Hattusilis I, who used it as an alternative name, this long before the Empire period. Who knows how many Hittite princes bore the same name in generations following. On the other hand, the name may refer to Suppiluliuma himself, possibly as an alternative name, but more likely as a title. It is well known that the title par excellence of the Hittite kings was Tabarna (meaning "great king") and that this name probably derives from the

name of Labarna, the revered first great king of Hatti. It is assumed by scholars that the original Hittite name had a sound intermediate between Tabarna and Labarna, leading to confusion as to how to pronounce it. The initial letter varies in the inscriptions. We assume therefore that the Assyrians merely interpreted the title as a personal name, and that Labarna in the annals is nothing more than the title "great king", used in reference to Suppiluliumas I³³.

Having said that, we move on to the second of the namesake kings.

Suppiluliumas II

In the traditional history Suppiluliumas II ruled for an unspecified number of years around 1200 B.C.. He was probably, though not certainly, the son of Tudhaliyas IV and he apparently replaced his brother Arnuwandas IV on the Hittite throne when this king died. Thus the second of the namesake kings ruled about 135 years after the death of Suppiluliumas I (1375-1335 B.C.). In the revised history we have shortened the time span from the death of the first to the beginning of the reign of the second Suppiluliumas to approximately 90 years, most of the change resulting from our shortening of the reigns of Mursilis II and Muwatallis. We have dated the reign of Suppiluliumas II to the years 765-760 B.C. We could be in error by as much as three or four years. Regardless, his reign must lie in the middle decades of the 8th century. We should seek for information regarding him from those living around that time. Fortunately, record of one of his military campaigns has recently come to light.

³³We know that the annalists of Shalmanezar once made reference to a king Mari of Damascus, mistaking the Semitic honorific title mari ("my lord") for the name of the king. Here Labarna (or Tabarna) may be mistaken for (if not actually) a legitimate alternative name for Suppiluliuma. We quote from Gurney in defense of our suggestion. "The kings of the Old Kingdom style themselves 'Great King, tabarna'. The title 'Great King' belongs to the language of diplomacy and denotes the Hittite king's claim to be one of the great powers of the time, with dominion over lesser kings. Tabarna is probably nothing but the name of the ancient forebear Labarnas in a disguised form. The title is borne only by living monarchs, and it is thought that each reigning king was regarded by the Hittites as the incarnation of the founder of the royal line. The variation in the initial letter would indicate that the original (Hattian?) form of the name contained a peculiar consonant which the Indo-European Hittites were unable to pronounce." Gurney, *The Hittites*, p. 64.

The Incirli Stele. In 1993, during an archaeological survey in the Karamanmarash region of southeastern Turkey, in the village of Incirli, Elizabeth Carter, working for the UCLA archaeological team, discovered an iron age stela very badly preserved.³⁴ Using sophisticated imaging techniques a preliminary transliteration and translation was produced several years later, with work still ongoing. A description of the stela and tentative description of its contents have been published by the translators Bruce Zuckerman and Stephen Kaufman.³⁵

The Incirli Stela contains a lengthy text written on all four sides of the stone in standard Phoenician of the late 8th century BCE. It is a commemorative boundary inscription marking the successful end of a territorial struggle between the kings of Cilicia (Que) and Kummuh and the various allied powers, presumably over the territory where the monument was originally erected. Since it seems clear that the monument was reused much later as a boundary stone with a Greek inscription of the Byzantine period, we cannot necessarily assume that the earlier text should be associated with the specific locale where the stone was discovered in 1993. Still, considering its size and weight, it seems unlikely that it had been moved very far from where it was first erected.

In the first part of the inscription, the subject whose exploits are commemorated in the first person narrative (apparently, King Awarikku of Que, known previously from the famous Karatepe bilingual inscription) recounts two successive battles - an earlier battle serving essentially as a prelude to the conflict that is the main concern of the text. *This earlier battle was instigated by Suppiluliumas of Kummuh against Que and the Danunites.* The inscription provides totally new information about the Luwian city states of this period. Apparently, Que was originally a part of a larger kingdom (of the Danunites) centered at Tabal, for the last known king of Tabal - Wasurmas - was the father of the writer of the Incirli Stele and is described here as king of the Danunites. Tabal was conquered by the infamous Warpalawas (ally of Midas), leaving Que itself as the sole domain of the Danunites. It appears that the first war described in our text involves a recounting of this setback for the Danunites. According to our text, the king commemorated on this stela then killed Warpalawas, prompting the subsequent war described in the second half of the text. (italics & emphasis added)

³⁴See E. Carter, "Report on the the Kahramanmarash Archaeological Survey Projedct from 24/9/93 to 11/11/93." *Arastirma Sanuclari Toplantisi* 12 (1995) 331-341 and "The Kahramanmarash Archaeological Survey Project: A Preliminary Report on the 1994 Season." *Arastirma Sanuclari Toplantisi* 13 (1996) 289-306.

³⁵The only publication known to the author is the UCLA website dedicated to the zinjrli find. The website <http://www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/nelc/stelasite/zuck.html> contains the Zuckerman & Kaufman article.

We make several observations regarding the Incirli stele as interpreted by the two named scholars.

1) The inscription is most reasonably dated to late in the third quarter of the 8th century, thus around the year 735 B.C., based on several criteria. In the first place the translators have determined that the inscription is composed in the "standard Phoenician of the late 8th century", which could suggest a date as late as 700 B.C. Secondly, the king Awarikku, son of Wasurmas, who authored the Incirli stele, is known from the Karatepe inscriptions, which scholars have dated as early as the late 9th century to as late as the second half of the 8th century. The two factors together suggest a date earlier rather than later in the second half of the 8th century.

2) Wasurmas, the father of Awarikku (and thus a generation removed from the stele's author) was apparently the last king of the Danunites at a time when their kingdom extended northward into Tabal. Involved in the downfall of the Tabal area of the kingdom was "the infamous Warpalawas" an ally of a Phrygian king named Midas. This cannot be the "Midas (Mi-ta-a) king of Musku" repelled by the Assyrian king Sargon (722-705 B.C.) during an invasion of the Kasku lands and the regions of Tabal and Cilicia sometime early in his reign.³⁶ It is claimed by scholars that this later Midas ruled approximately from 728-688 B.C. when he died in an invasion by the Cimmerians. This would necessitate dating Awarikku (and thus the Karatepe inscriptions which name him) in the middle of the 7th century, where they clearly do not belong. Besides, the Incirli stele knows nothing of an invasion of Tabal by Sargon; suggesting instead that Warpalawas (and Midas? and Suppiluliumas?) were the invaders. The Midas of the Incirli inscription must be two generations removed from the namesake who ruled in the time of Sargon. He was probably the grandfather of the latter. If we are correct regarding this earlier Midas we should date him around the years 770-750 B.C.

³⁶ANET 284 The relevant text is from an undated inscription in which Sargon describes himself as the one "who exterminated Kasku, all Tabali and Cilicia (Hilakku), who chased away Midas (Mi-ta-a) king of Musku, who defeated Musur (Mu-su-ri) in Rapihu, etc. Elsewhere in an inscription dated to his fifth year (ANET 284) he notes that "Pisiri of Carchemish broke the oath sworn by the great gods and wrote messages to Midas (Mi-ta-a), king of Muski, (full) of hostile plans against Assyria" This later Midas may well be the legendary king whose touch turned profane objects into gold, or he may be his grandson. There is some evidence that the Phrygian kings used the names Midas and Gordion alternatively through much of their history.

3) Confirmation of our opinion concerning Midas can be found in the Hittite archives. In the correspondence belonging to the reign of Arnuwandas IV, the immediate predecessor of Suppiluliumas II, there is record of the activities of a king Mitas (Midas) in north-western Anatolia. We listen to Gurney describe the situation.

But the days of the Hittite Empire were already numbered. Under the next king, Arnuwandas IV, the situation in the west rapidly deteriorated. Madduwattas made common cause with Attarissiyas, and though the Hittite king in a lengthy rescript addresses him as nothing more than a disloyal vassal, we sense an entirely new situation in that area. In particular, we are told that Madduwattas took the whole land of Arzawa. "At the same time another adventurer names Mitas was active in the eastern hills where had formerly been the kingdom of Hayasa; the identity of his name with that of the king of the Mushki of the eighth century B.C. who is usually equated with the Phrygian Midas of Greek tradition, may be no more than *coincidence*, but it is possible that the Mushki (classical Moschi) were already in this region and that Mitas was a dynastic name. *The Hittites* 38-39 (italics added)

Coincidence indeed. Arnuwandas and Mitas, according to the history followed by Gurney, lived at the end of the 13th century. Midas, the Phrygian king driven off by Sargon, lived at the end of the 8th century. The persistence of the name Midas in the identical region of Anatolia for over 500 years is highly unlikely. Besides, evidence is lacking that the Phrygians had even arrived in Anatolia before the 9th century.

With Arnuwandas moved to the years 775-765 B.C. the coincidence disappears entirely, yet another by-product of the errant Egyptian chronology which concerns us in this series. The end of the reign of Arnuwandas lies approximately where we have positioned Wasurmas, the father of Awarikku. It must therefore be the time of the king Midas referred to in the Injirli stele and of the Suppiluliumas who conducted one of the wars which ended the Tubal kingdom of the Danunans. And since, in the revised history, the Hittite king Suppiluliumas II followed Arnuwandas II, and ruled for several years, there should be no doubt that the neo-Hittite and Hittite kings by this name are in fact the same person.

We let Gurney continue his discourse, describing the death of Arnuwandas and the end of the Hittite Empire.

Be that as it may, we know that great mass-movements of population were afoot which the brittle Hittite confederacy was utterly unable to withstand. The edicts of Arnuwandas contain no hint of the approaching doom, and he may not have lived to see the catastrophe. A single document suggests that he was succeeded by his brother, a second Suppiluliumas, but the reign of the latter must have been short. The records of Ramesses III tell how the isles were disturbed and the Hittites with other peoples fled into Syria in a great invasion which, in conjunction with the 'Peoples of the Sea', menaced Egypt ... In Asia Minor, to judge from Homeric legend, the Phrygians soon replaced the Hittites as the dominant power. *The Hittites* 39

It is said by scholars that only two Hittite kings by the name of Suppiluliumas ever lived. They were separated in time by over a century. These same scholars have suggested that the Sapalulme who fought with Shalmanezer III was only a regional neo-Hittite king, though no trace of his kingdom has ever been found and no artifact belonging to him has ever been discovered. It remains to be seen what explanation will be forthcoming for the second neo-Hittite Suppiluliumas, whose reign a century after his namesake is even more problematic. The region of Kummuh from which he launched his attack on the Danunans lies a short distance north-east of the Gurgum region, fully within the territory of the ancient Hittites. It is in the Gurgum region where Mutalli (Muwatallis?) ruled in the days of Shalmanezer III (see above).

It is surely more than coincidence that the reigns of these two neo-Hittite kings by the name Suppiluliumas lie in the identical time frame that we have assigned to their Hittite counterparts in the revised chronology. And how fortunate for our revision that a king Midas is conveniently present at the time of the second Suppiluliumas in both instances.

Other Parallels

Having established that Suppiluliumas I and II lived at the beginning of the 9th and middle of the 8th centuries respectively, we wonder if parallels might be found for those kings intermediate between them. It is unfortunate that we cannot use the established synchronisms between Muwatallis, Hattusilis III and Ramses II to buttress our argument, since they were used to fine tune the positioning of the Hittite Empire in its revised setting. If we are to avoid a circular argument what is needed are

links between the intermediate Hittite kings and the Assyrians. Fortunately there do exist documents which provide such cross references, though the evidence is mitigated somewhat by the fact that the Assyrian names used in the Hittite texts were used by more than one Assyrian king. For the record, however, we cite the evidence.³⁷

At least one document (KBo I 20) makes explicit reference to a king Adad-nirari, though unfortunately the Hittite king is not named. It is attributed to Hattusilis III by scholars, based exclusively on the traditionally accepted dates for Adad-nirari I and Hattusilis III. We assume it was written by Tudhaliyas IV (800-775), who was contemporary with Adad-nirari III (791-782).

Fully three documents have been held to synchronize the Assyrian king Shalmaneser I with the Hittite kings Hattusilis III and Tudhaliyas IV, again based largely on the dates of these kings in the traditional history. Two of the documents in question (KUB XXIII 99; and RS 34.165) do contain the name of a king Tudhaliyas, but the name of Hattusilis is entirely absent from the third (KUB XXIII 88). We assume all three originate from Tudhaliyas IV (800-775) but that the recipient is Shalmaneser IV (781-772).

A single document (KUB XXVI) was written by an unnamed Hittite official (king?) to an Assyrian prince named Tukulti-Ninurta. In addressing Tukulti-Ninurta the sender makes reference to "the king of Assyria your father to whom Urhi-Teshub had (previously) written", a remark that establishes two things: 1) that the sender is most likely Hattusilis III or Tudhaliyas IV, the two kings who followed immediately the reign of Urhi-Teshub, and 2) that the recipient is the son of the former king, and apparently not a king in his own right. We mention the document only because scholars have used it to establish a correspondence between Tudhaliyas IV and Tukulti-Ninurta I, something it definitely does not do. In the revised history the recipient, the prince Tukulti-Ninurta, must have been a son of Shalmaneser III, assuming we

³⁷For a description of the contents of the following Hittite inscriptions we rely entirely on the description provided by Peter James and his colleagues in Appendix 4 of their *Centuries of Darkness*. This author has unfortunately (due to illness) not had opportunity to research these documents first hand. This task accomplished, I hope to return to this section and modify a few statements.

take the term "father" literally.³⁸ The reign of Shalmanezar III (858-824) overlaps the reign of Urhi-Teshub (832-825) in the chronology outlined above.

One Hittite document alone could be considered a problem for the revised history. KUB III 74 is a letter sent from a king Tudhaliyas to a king Tukulti-Ninurta, absent any indication as to which Tudhaliyas wrote the letter or which country the recipient ruled over. The traditional history considers this document as support for their contention that Tudhaliyas IV was a contemporary of the late 13th century Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta I, a stretch considering the lack of specificity in the naming of the key players. The "Centuries of Darkness" authors consider the same document, in combination with KUB XXVI (see above), as support for their thesis that Tudhaliyas IV was a contemporary of the tenth century Assyrian king Tukulti-Ninurta II. Both groups consider that the Tukulti-Ninurta in both KUB III 74 and KUB XXVI are the same person. They may be correct, but the matter is certainly not well established.

If we assume that the two references to Tukulti-Ninurta are to the same person and that this individual is an Assyrian prince/king (an assumption we are by no means obliged to make), there are two scenarios which might account for all the data. Both assume that this dignitary was the son of Shalmanezar III.

The first possibility results from the chaotic state of affairs which prevailed at the end of the reign of Shalmanezar III. It is well known that during the final ten years of his reign this Assyrian king faced increasing opposition at home from within his own family. His ambition to extend his empire abruptly ceased. "After a last attempt to conquer Damascus in 838 B.C. the Assyrian confessed his failure by leaving Syria alone for the rest of his reign" (Roux, *Ancient Iraq*, p. 276). [As a result, both Hatti and Egypt renewed their interest in the area, resulting in the ill fated but famous battle of Kadesh in 835 B.C. between Hattusilis and Ramses II] In the final years of Shalmanezar's reign there erupted a full blown civil war, which extended five years beyond his death. According to the historian Georges Roux:

³⁸The assumption that Shalmanezar would name a son after his grandfather Tukulti-Ninurta II, is entirely reasonable. He boasted of his descent from this king in many of his inscriptions.

The end of Shalmanezzer's long reign was darkened by extremely serious internal disorders. One of his sons, Ashur-danin-apli, revolted and with him twenty-seven cities, including Assur, Nineveh, Erbil and Arrapha (Kirkuk). The old king, who by then hardly left his palace in Nimrud, entrusted another of his sons, Shamshi-Adad, with the task of repressing the revolt, and for four years Assyria was in the throes of civil war. The war was still raging when Shalmanezzer died and Shamshi-Adad V ascended the throne (824). With the new king began a period of Assyrian stagnation which lasted nearly a century. *Ancient Iraq* 277

The Assyrian king lists and the Eponym Canon assume that the reign of Shamshi-Adad began in the year 823, immediately following the death of Shalmanezzer V. But in fact it took this young king at least five years to recover much of the territory lost to his rebellious brother(s). Thus for up to ten years the cities of Assur and Nineveh (and others) were ruled by other sons of Shalmanezzer V, none of whose names appear in the king lists of Assyria. We assume as a possibility, that one of these prince/kings, all sons of Shalmanezzer III, was named Tukulti-Ninurta. It was a common name in Assyria.

A second possibility takes us to the end of the reign of Shamshi Adad V (823-810). When this son of Shalmanezzer III died in 810 B.C. the kingship passed to his son Adad-Nirari, who was still an infant. The Assyrian eponym canon assumes that Adad-Nirari began his kingship immediately. But in fact others ruled in his stead during his infancy. There are conflicting theories as to what transpired over the first five to ten years of his childhood, until the young boy reached maturity. According to some sources Assyria was ruled by the wife of Shamshi-Adad, a queen named Shammuramat. Others claim that much of the governing of the country should be credited to an official named Bel-tartsi-ilu-ma, the dedicant of many inscriptions, whose authority extended over several provinces. Some early scholars identify Shammuramat as the wife of this official. We see no reason why under these circumstances an elderly son of Shalmanezzer III named Tukulti-Ninurta, an uncle of the boy-king, might not have had a hand in governing a portion of the country. If so, we understand why he is omitted from the Assyrian king-lists. We also understand the ambivalence of the Hittite authors in addressing this dignitary.

We admit that these are purely hypothetical constructs. We have no proof that Shalmanezzer had a son named Tukulti-Ninurta, nor that he

acted in a quasi-regal capacity during the civil upheaval which ended his father's reign or during the infancy of his nephew. But barring evidence to the contrary these remain possibilities and they do explain the details of the Hittite correspondence. And they are just two among many hypotheticals. The matter needs to be investigated further.

We have omitted one further important set of synchronisms, those between Tudhaliya IV and the Achaeans and the Trojans of Homeric legend. They deserve a chapter unto themselves.

We have also omitted a detailed year by year comparison between the reigns of the Hittite kings, insofar as they are known, and the reigns of the Assyrian, Syrian and Israelite kings of the 9th and 8th centuries. While such an analysis might prove helpful it would detract at the moment from the broader picture we are attempting to create. Both in the comments above, and in those which immediately follow we are painting with a wide brush, taking the role of the classical underpainter. Let others with more patience and skill add detail to the canvas.

Possible Objections

We have omitted till the last a response to three anticipated objections to our identification of the Hittites and the neo-Hittites. The first relates to the kings of Carchemish and a second to the supposed achilles heel of all revisionist endeavors, the assumed synchronism between the Assyrian king Ashuruballit I and the Hittite king Supilluliumas I. The third, lest some observant reader should raise the issue, concerns the Mitanni. We begin with the Carchemish kings.

Kings and Rulers of Carchemish.

Resulting from the archaeological survey conducted at Carchemish (see above), and augmented by Hittite and Assyrian records which name some of the rulers at Carchemish, scholars have pieced together the following chronology of the "kings" of this city.

Table 9: Kings of Carchemish (Traditional History)

Name	Approximate Dates	Contemporary of ...
Piyasili (Sarre-Kusuh)	1300 B.C.	Mursilis II
Sakhurunuwa [...] -Shurrama		
Ini-Teshub	1220 B.C.	Arnuwandas IV/Suppiluliumas II
Talmi-Teshub	1180 B.C.	Ramses III
Gap in the Hittite records		
Ura Tarhundas		
Suhis I	970 B.C.	
Astuwatimanzas		
Suhis II		
Katuwas	900 B.C.	
Sangara	880-848 B.C.	
Astiruwas	820 B.C.	
Kamanis	790 B.C.	
Pisiri	738-717 B.C.	Tiglath Pilezer & Sargon II

A problem clearly emerges when we lower the dates for the Hittite Empire by approximately 450 years, placing it in the time frame 900-760 B.C. The revised location of the Empire period compels us to revised downward the dates for the "kings" Piyasili, Ini-Teshub and Talmi Teshub by roughly the identical 450 years, placing them in the 9th and 8th centuries, in the same time frame occupied by previously identified rulers of the city. As a result there emerge two distinct series of "kings of Carchemish" for the time span encompassing the reigns of Mursilis II through Suppiluliuma II, and for perhaps as much as twenty years beyond, thus roughly from 856-750 B.C. This new situation is charted below in table 10.

Table 10: Hittite Governors and Native Kings
of Carchemish (Revised History)

Native Rulers	Hittite Appointees (Kings)
Ura Tarhundas	
Suhis I ca 970 B.C.	
Astuwatimanzas	
Suhis II	
Katuwas ca 900 B.C.	
Sangara (885-848?)	Piyasilis (Sarre Kusuh) 885-848?
Sakhuruwa	
Astiruwas	Ini-Teshub
Kamanis " ca 790 B.C.	
Sasturas (vizier)	Talmi-Teshub ca 765 B.C.
	Kuzi-Teshub ca 750 B.C.
Pisiri 738-717 B.C. time of Tiglath Pilezer & Sargon	

It is assumed by some critics, in comments addressed toward other revisionist works, that this dual line of Carchemish "kings" constitutes a major problem for the revisionist. In fact, the situation is precisely what is expected from our knowledge of the political landscape during the ascendancy of the Hittite Empire, while it struggled to maintain its hold on the Hatti lands of north Syria and stave off the growing power of Assyria. Concerning our table 10 we make the following comments:

- 1) It goes without saying that our table differs considerably from that which arises in other revisionist endeavors, since we have lowered the dates for the Hittite Empire by a substantially larger period of time. Thus the details of our explanation differ somewhat from those provided by other authors. There remains, however, a degree of commonality.
- 2) When the authors of "Century of Darkness" were criticized for assuming the existence of two contemporaneous lines of kings of

Carchemish, they pointed out, quite correctly, that the archaeological record supports such a situation. According to Peter James:

The Lion Gate sculptures find their closest parallels in those produced by the 'Suhis dynasty' at Carchemish, dated to the late 10th century B.C. Suhis and his descendants clearly commissioned and inscribed these sculptures, yet their role as rulers of Carchemish remains mysterious. The titles they gave themselves were restricted to the relatively modest tag: 'Lord of the country of Carchemish'. Hovering alongside them, a presence which Hawkins has increasingly noted during his collation of all available Neo-Hittite inscriptions, is another line of kings who seem to claim greater titles. CD 135

It is known from many Hittite historical documents that when the Hittites captured foreign states they often allowed the native rulers to continue ruling, after first establishing treaty relationships with strict sanctions. We know that Suppiluliumas first conquered Carchemish early in his reign, thus early in the 9th century, and immediately assigned his son Piyasili, whose Hurrian name was Sarri Kusuh, as "king of Carchemish". This does not imply that the native ruler of the Carchemish district was deposed. The possible name of this ruler, Sangara, is preserved in the Assyrian records of Ashurnasirpal and Shalmanezar III. There is no contradiction here. We know that Sarri Kusuh functioned primarily as the leader of the Hittite army in North Syria. Carchemish was merely his base of operations. His appointment was later confirmed by his brother Mursilis immediately after Mursilis became king. Immediately after, the army was sent to Carchemish under command of Sarri Kusuh in order to stave off an imminent threat from an unnamed Assyrian king, whom we identify as Shalmanezar III, who in 857 was quelling a revolt in the province of Bit-Adini east of the Euphrates. But Mursilis was threatened on all fronts of his empire. In his third year, 855 B.C., Sarri-Kusuh and the army were summoned back to Hatti to assist in the war on Arzawa in eastern Anatolia. Several years later he and the army were fighting to subdue revolt in Amurru on the Mediterranean coast. In Mursilis' 9th year Sarri-Kusuh died. Under no circumstances can scholars justify their assertion that this Hittite general was the ruler of the city of Carchemish, regulating its daily affairs, even if his title is suggestive of such a function. Therefore if Sangara, mentioned in the inscriptions of Ashurnasirpal and Shalmanezar III, is identified as the hereditary regional king, distinct from Sarri Kusuh, there can be no serious objection by critics. There is no contradiction, though we do

reserve judgement on that explanation. There is a possibility that Sangara is simply another of Sarri Kusuh's names. This suggestion of alternate names may also apply to the other kings.

3) While we are not surprised at the existence of a plurality of kings centered at Carchemish we do question whether the preserved names reflect this situation. We have already suggested that Sangara may have been an alternate name of Sarri-Kusuh. A similar proposal could be made regarding the three other supposed local rulers whose terms in office coincided with those of Hittite appointees. We wonder if Astiruwas, Kamanis, and/or Sasturas are simply alternative names of Ini-Teshub, Talmi-Teshub, and Kuzi-Teshub. The former epithets are perhaps their native names, the latter are clearly Hurrian. If these are Hittite appointees they may also have had Hittite names and possibly variants in the multiple language groups which existed within the Empire. And the dates assigned all of these individuals are merely approximations. Thus the respective pairs of named "kings" may have ruled at precisely the same time. If so the probability that they are one and the same person increases.

4) We notice that the line of rulers of Carchemish in the revised chronology of table 10 extends backward only to the 10th century, agreeing precisely with the archaeological record at the site, which suggests that all of the monumental remains date from the neo-Assyrian period. The traditional 12th century dates for the earliest Hittite "kings of Carchemish" stands in stark contrast to the archaeology of the city. We note, additionally, that the traditional history is compelled to assume a gap of several hundred years, artificially created, in the line of kings of Carchemish. This "dark age at Carchemish" mirrors that which occurs elsewhere in the near east. We know its source.

Ashurballit

Without doubt the argument most frequently used by the traditional history in defense of its 14th-13th century date for the Hittites is the assumed synchronism between Ashurballit I of Assyria, the Hittite king Suppiluliumas I, and the Amarna period of Egypt.

We earlier began our listing of the Assyrian kings with Adad Nirari II (909-889 B.C.), this for two reasons. On the one hand Adad-Nirari is about the earliest of the Assyrian kings whose dates are relatively certain, confirmed by the Assyrian Eponym Canon. On the other hand, our interest at the moment was focused on the Amarna period and later, and the Amarna letters in our estimation dated from the time of Adad-Nirari (or at most a decade or two earlier). But scholars have created an extended list of Assyrian kings going back hundreds of years from the late 10th century, based on a number of "king lists". And according to those lists a king Ashuruballit, the first of that name, ruled Assyria roughly in the time frame 1365-1330 B.C., his reign overlapping that of the Hittite king Suppiluliumas I (1375-1335 B.C.)

In the Amarna archives there exists two letters, EA15 and EA16, that supposedly originate from this king Ashuruballit, thus identifying him as a contemporary of Suppiluliumas I who also authored an Amarna letter. In the opinion of many scholars this supposed synchronism, in and of itself, confirms the placement of the Hittite Empire in the 14th/13th centuries. Clearly one of three responses to this situation must prevail: 1) the association of the Ashuruballit in the Amarna letters with the first Assyrian king bearing this name must be incorrect, or 2) the dating of Ashuruballit I in the accepted Assyrian chronology is incorrect, or 3) our revision is discredited and should be rejected.

Clearly we reject the third possibility. We have established our chronology carefully and in dependence on solid evidence. It is the "facts" in this instance which must be challenged. And while we agree with critics of the extended Assyrian king list that the list is flawed and in need of serious revision, we do not believe that the solution to the problem lies in re-dating Ashuruballit I. This leaves us with but one possibility. The Ashuruballit in the Amarna letters cannot be the Ashuruballit I of the king lists. And clearly, since we have dated the Amarna letters to the last three decades of the 10th century, this Ashuruballit must be a contemporary of either Ashur-dan II (931-909) or Adad-nirari II (909-889). If he was an Assyrian king then he must have ruled over some branch of the Assyrian empire or over a rival kingdom. The matter needs looking into.

We begin our discussion by quoting an extensive summary of the problem from Peter James and the authors of *Centuries of Darkness*, fellow revisionists faced with the same dilemma. In an appendix to their compendium they discuss the issue, discounting the identification with Ashurballit I, and raising the possibility that the name should be identified with some otherwise unattested ruler, essentially the same solution we propose.

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 Assurballit, King of Assyria, one (EA 16) being addressed to Pharaoh Naphuria, the cuneiform version of Neferkheprure, prenomen of Akhenaten. The author of the two letters is assumed to be the Assurballit 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 Assurballit mentions that his father Assur-nadin-ahhe corresponded with Egypt; yet the King List and the available monuments agree in describing Assurballit as the son of Eriba-Adad. In his introduction to the inscriptions of Assurballit I, Luckenbill reviewed a possible explanation:

The word 'father' may here have the meaning 'ancestor', as often in the Assyrian texts, but even so our difficulties are not all cleared up. In the texts given below Assur-uballit does not include Assur-nadin-ahhe among his ancestors, although he carries his line back six generations.

While the El-Amarna letter may well reflect some other relationship (e.g. adoptive) other than direct filiation between Assurballit I and an Assur-nadin-ahhe, this is merely hypothetical, and the possibility remains that the El-Amarna correspondent was not the Assurballit son of Eriba-Adad known from the monuments, but another, as yet unattested ruler. Thus the much vaunted synchronism between Akhenaten and Assurballit I, the main linch-pin between Egyptian and Assyrian Late Bronze Age chronologies, is flawed and must be treated with caution. CD 341

It is claimed by critics of this "unattested ruler" thesis that the theory is indefensible, that there exists no evidence of the existence of multiple rulers within the Assyrian empire. But that is absolutely not the case. The Assyrian kings were continually faced with revolt from within their own ranks, with defections within their own family, with challenges to their authority from officials left in charge of the southern (Babylonian) or western domains. Frequently they faced assassination attempts. While it is true that no other king of Assyria by the name Ashurballit is known from the monuments, or from the king lists, the critic should be careful not to read too much into this evidence. There is one other Assyrian king Ashurballit. He ruled briefly at the end of the neo-Assyrian era in the

late 7th century, and is similarly unknown from the monuments and the king lists. Were it not for a casual reference in the Babylonian Chronicles we would never have known he existed. And there is compelling evidence in the "geography" of the Euphrates region to suggest the reasonableness of the assumption that another Ashurballit may have lived and ruled in that region of the country in the late 10th century. The argument is circuitous but needs to be presented.

The reader needs to be mindful of one fact as we proceed. The map of the near east at the time of the Amarna letters is seriously flawed. Those letters are assumed to originate from the 14th century, and the map of the Euphrates region at that time is based largely information drawn from multiple inscriptions purporting to originate from 18th dynasty kings such as Thutmose III. And we have argued strenuously in our second book that many of the key documents supposedly originating from those 18th dynasty kings actually belong to the 7th century where they shed light on the political landscape of a much later time. In the revised history we argue that the Amarna letters belong to the late 10th century, when the political situation was markedly different than is assumed for a 14th century context. Much of ancient near eastern history will have to be rewritten and the accompanying geography drastically altered, once it is accepted that the 18th dynasty and the Amarna letters belong to the 10th century, and that the peoples and events represented therein followed on the heels of the Aramean migration into the Euphrates region and Syria. This migration supposedly began in the 11th century or earlier, completely revamping the political landscape.

When we examine the political situation that actually existed in the Euphrates region in the 10th century B.C. we see a possible answer to two questions of interest to us. "Why, if the Amarna letters originate from the time of Ashur-dan II and Adad-nirari II, did neither of these two individuals author a letter in the Amarna archives?" And "From what region within Assyria did a ruler named Ashurballit write two letters to an Amarna king?"

Aramean States

We encounter several obstacles when we seek to establish the geopolitical landscape at the bend of the Euphrates during the 10th century B.C. It is known that kings by the name Ashur-resh-ishi II (ca. 970) and Tiglath-pilezer II (ca 965-935) ruled Assyria prior to Ashur-dan II (931-909) and Adad-nirari II (909-889). Unfortunately any relevant inscriptions authored by the first three kings in this sequence have not survived. We are first informed of the state of affairs in the western provinces in a brief inscription of Adad-nirari. The situation improves considerably during the reigns of his successors Ashurnasirpal (889-858) and Shalmaneser III (858-824) where multiple lengthy inscriptions bring us into the full light of an Aramean world, with Aramean cities and Aramean peoples in full control, speaking their own language, even if from time to time they are compelled to pay tribute to Hittite or Assyrian overlords.

From the inscription of Adad-nirari, informed by those of his successors, we can deduce the situation that prevailed under the three kings who preceded him. Hugo Winckler, writing at the beginning of the 20th century, summed it up briefly:

Each of these three kings bore the titles "king of the world, king of Ashur," which henceforth were constantly assumed. *Harran* and *Ashur* are the chief cities of the two parts of the land. But the one part is held entirely by an Aramean population who in the old cities caused the old population the same troubles that the Chaldeans prepared for the Babylonians, and it contained besides a number of Aramean cities whose princes seized every opportunity to strike for independence or *even the reins of government*. Near to Harran there stood an Aramean state, Bit-Adini, a counterpart to the dukedom Edessa during the Crusades, just as the Chaldean Bit-Dakuri existed near Babylon. Others still we shall have to note in the time of Ashur-nasir-pal.³⁹

By the time of Shalmaneser III there were multiple Aramean states lying between Assyria and the Euphrates. Both Shalmaneser and his father Ashurnasirpal spent considerable time attempting to recover these lands for Assyria. On the assumption that they were once part of the Assyrian

³⁹Hugo Winckler, *The History of Babylonia and Assyria* (1911), p. 210.

Empire we do not know precisely how or when they were lost. The 10th century history of the region is essentially lost to us.

Of these Aramean states one in particular stands out from the others. When we documented the encounter between Sapalulme (Suppiluliumas) and Shalmanezar III in the year 858, we noted that Suppiluliumas was allied with Ahuni, "king" of Bit-Adini, a massive region extending from the Euphrates to the Habur east of the Euphrates, with added domains west of the great River. It may or may not have included the city of Harran. The historians Hallo and Simpson explain:

This area, lying between the river Balih and the westernmost part of the Euphrates, was ruled by the Arameo-Hittite Ahuni from his fortress at Til Barsib (modern Tell-Ahmar) on the east bank of the Euphrates. In three successive campaigns (857-855), Shalmanezar chased Ahuni from his capital and renamed it after himself, annexed Bit Adini to Assyria, and captured Ahuni.⁴⁰

This is the same state, with capital at Harran, that apparently dominated these territories in the 10th century and later into the reign of Ashurnasirpal. We know that Ahuni's reign extended back into the reign of Ashurnasirpal (883-859 B.C.), but the rulers of this extensive land mass in the days of Ashur-dan II (931-909) and Adad-nirari II (909-889) are not known. We suspect, though we cannot prove, that at the time of the Amarna letters, the "governor" of the western region later known as Bit-Adini was named Ashuruballit, the state not yet having fallen into Aramean hands. If, as suggested by Winckler, the Aramean rulers who later dominated the region aspired to "the reigns of government", we can readily understand why the Assyrian governors of the region who preceded them might have had the same aspirations. As we explain below, they would likely have been identified as "kings of Assyria" in correspondence with foreign dignitaries.

Though we have suggested the possibility, it is not necessary that we credit Ashuruballit with political ambitions or view his state as a renegade from the Assyrian empire. That would be reading too much into his use of the title "king of Assyria" in a letter to an Egyptian pharaoh. The employment of such titles was rather reckless in the near eastern world of

⁴⁰William Hallo & William Simpson, *The Ancient Near East: A History* (1971) 127

this time. The situation in Egypt is a case in point. We repeatedly noted in the first book of our series that many times multiple kings ruled simultaneously in various regions of ancient Egypt, all claiming the title "king of Upper and Lower Egypt". We even cited one instance where as far south as Meroe the kings Ankhare and Khnemibre employed the identical title, though they ruled hundreds of miles south of Egypt. Clearly the designation "king of Egypt" was a formulaic and conventional epithet rather than a description of reality. And we see in the annals of Ashurnasirpal and Shalmanezar III that multiple kings in north Syria are entitled "king of Hatti", all in the identical time frame, including Sangara who elsewhere is clearly associated only with the city of Carchemish. Shalmanezar several times claimed to have crossed the Euphrates to collect tribute from these "kings of Hatti" (*sharru^{mal}Hatti*). In another context 12 "kings of Hatti" are said to have assisted Hazael of Damascus in his wars with Shalmanezar. There is clearly no intention that the title "king of Hatti" be understood as an all encompassing term, as if the designate were the king of the Hittite Empire. In one instance only, that of Sapalulme, did the title mean precisely that. But in the other cases it implies only that the author was a Hittite or a Hittite representative and that he was a "king" within the Hittite Empire. The use of the title "king of Assyria" by the Amarna king Ashuruballit should be interpreted similarly and not construed as if he ruled over the whole of the country.⁴¹

We can assume therefore, barring evidence to the contrary, that the state of Bit-Adini in the 10th century was ruled by an Assyrian, whether or not a rival to either Ashur-dan II or Adad-nirari II. He was at least the second generation of a family that governed the area.⁴² This assumption can neither be proved nor denied, but considering the state of affairs in the

⁴¹We simply do not know how princes, ruling over various regions of the Assyrian empire, addressed themselves to foreign dignitaries in their correspondence. The Amarna letters are among the few examples of such dialogue in existence. It could well be that there were dozens of "kings of Assyria" governing simultaneously, just as there were multiple "kings of Hatti" in north Syria at any one time. It is inconceivable that Ashurnasirpal and Shalmanezar III would employ the title "king of Hatti" in such a cavalier manner to Hittite regional kings, yet demand that the title "king of Assyria" be employed more strictly.

⁴²Even though Ashuruballit claims that his father Ashur-nadin-ahhe was sent gold by an earlier Egyptian king in response to a request, we need not assume that his father was acting independently, nor that he claimed the title "king of Assyria" (though he probably did). He may simply have been the governor of the Harran region, acting on behalf of the Assyrian king.

region early in the 9th century, it is perfectly reasonable. Furthermore, there is precedent for our suggestion that the rulers of this region self-styled themselves as kings, and thus as "kings of Assyria". Less than seventy years after Shalmanezar retook the region for the Assyrians, in the days of Shalmanezar IV, its governors were acting like "kings" in their own right, this according to the inscriptions of that day.

Even the central provinces maintained only a tenuous loyalty to Assyria, for the various governors ruled in virtual independence of the king at Kalah. One of them, Shamshi-ilu, inscribed his own monuments at Kar-Shalmaneser (Bit Adini) in quasi-royal style, and even after this fortress had to be abandoned he virtually ruled the empire as turtanu (commander-in-chief)⁴³

Even more to the point, another 150 years later still, when the last Assyrian king Sinsharishkun died, in or shortly after the fall of Nineveh, an Assyrian governor of Bit Adini, resident in Harran, proclaimed himself "king of Assyria" (though we assume that he already used the title), and was recognized as such by the Babylonians. That his name was also Ashurballit, the second of the known kings bearing this name, is by no means irrelevant.. Perhaps the naming of this king was guided by some historical memory of events that took place in that region hundreds of years earlier, in the days of Akhenaten.

The Amarna letters themselves give some hint that the author of letters EA15 and EA16 was not the head of the powerful state of Assyria (whether he lived in the 14th century B.C. or later). The Amarna Ashurballit sends as a greeting gift a single chariot, two horses and a lapis lazuli seal. He informs the Egyptian king that he is building a palace, and pleads for "gold, as much as its decoration and its requisites demand". The second letter in particular, concerned entirely with gold, is more the groveling of a minor potentate than an entreaty to an Egyptian king from an equally powerful Assyrian ruler. The letters from Mitanni and Karduniash (Babylon?), supposedly lesser kingdoms than that ruled by Ashurballit I, speak of the giving of daughters in marriage to cement their relationship with Egypt. Nothing of the kind is envisaged for the Amarna king Ashurballit.

⁴³Ibid, p. 131

We leave the matter there. In our opinion Ashurballit, of el-Amarna fame, was "*a* king of Assyria", but not "*the* king of Assyria". Thus the omission of his name from the king lists. His proximity to Syria explains why he, and not Ashur-dan II or Adad-nirari II (909-889) corresponded with the Egyptians. The city of Ashur lay two hundred miles east of Harran, three hundred from the Euphrates and seven hundred from Egypt. The state of Bit-Adini governed by Ashurballit extended to within 350 miles of Egypt, half the distance to Ashur.

We expect that excavations in the area of Harran will one day confirm our opinion that the Ashurballit who authored EA15 & EA16 governed the trans-Euphrates region of the Assyrian empire in the last decades of the 10th century B.C. Regardless, the mere fact that an Assyrian governor/local king has employed the title "king of Assyria" in a solicitous letter to an Egyptian pharaoh should not be considered a linchpin in any chronological scheme, especially one which anchors a sequence of Egyptian dynasties hundreds of years out of place.

The Mitanni

The criticism will surely be raised that we have said very little about the Mitanni. Specifically it may be questioned why this national group, so prominent in the Amarna letters - thus in the time frame 930-900 B.C. in the revised history - and a constant source of concern for the Hittite Empire, is ignored by the Assyrian kings Ashurnasirpal (883-859 B.C.) and Shalmanezer III (858-824 B.C.), whose lands supposedly bordered on Mitanni territory.

The answer is not far off. It is well known from Hittite inscriptions, as well as from several Amarna letters, that Suppiluliumas, early in his career, launched a series of attacks on the Mitanni, then the dominant power in much of north Syria. It is assumed, but not proven, that the Mitanni, from their capital Washuganni about 150 miles north-east of Assur, controlled much of the land mass east of the Euphrates, their southern boundary running just north of Harran, clearly bringing them into conflict with the Assyrians both in the northern and western fringes of the Assyrian empire. In the first phases of a prolonged war the Hittite

king supplanted the Mitanni as the dominant power in North Syria; in the second he laid siege to and conquered Washuganni, driving Tushratta, the Mitanni king, north of the upper reaches of the Euphrates, where the Mitanni, greatly reduced in land area and strength, remained a threat to the Hittites of future generations, but were far from the Assyrian center of influence. There Tushratta was killed in an insurrection led by his son Kurtiwaza, who was in turn quickly supplanted by Suttarna. The fact that Ashurnasirpal and Shalmanezar do not mention the Mitanni is explained from an analysis of their annals. Their battles took them primarily to the west, where they competed with the Arameans (in particular with Ahuni) and the Hittites for control of the lands formerly contested by themselves, the Arameans and the Mitanni. Elsewhere, to the north they engaged in frequent wars with the Nairi lands south of lake Van, and to the north-east less frequently with the inhabitants of the region around Lake Urmia. The Mitanni, living in the remote regions of the north-west, were avoided.

The fact that the siege of Washuganni took place early, rather than late in the career of Suppiluliumas, thus probably in the first decade of the 9th century, is clear from an incident well documented and much discussed by scholars. During the siege of Carchemish (the last holdout in the Hurrian war), apparently dated several years after the fall of Washuganni, Suppiluliumas received an unusual request from Egypt. Goetze describes the event:

While Carchemish was under siege and this second army stood at Amqa, news reached Shuppiluliumash that a pharaoh, whom our source calls Piphururias, had died. His identity has been much discussed, the publication of a new fragment in which the name is given as Niphururiyash finally decides the issue in favour of Tutankhamun, Akhenaten's son-in-law. According to the chronology followed in this work his death occurred c. 1352. A remarkable message from the pharaoh's widow was conveyed to Shuppiluliumash. It deserves to be quoted here in full: "My husband has died, and I have no son. They say about you that you have many sons. You might give me one of your sons, and he might become my husband.. I would not want to take one of my servants. I am loath to make him my husband." This offer was so surprising to the Great King that he called together his noblemen into council and decided first to investigate whether the request was sincere. A high official, Khattusha-zitish was sent to Egypt. During his absence in Egypt, Carchemish was taken by storm more quickly than anyone expected. CAH II Part 2:18

A second letter followed soon after the first, the Egyptian queen complaining "I have not written to any other country, I have written only to you ... He will be my husband and king in the country of Egypt." It is assumed by scholars that the writer of the letter was the widow of king Tutankhamon, who was desperate to find a husband other than Ay. As a result the incident is dated to the last years of the life of Suppiluliumas, since in the traditional history the Hittite king outlived Tutankhamon by only a few years. Thus the capture of Carchemish is dated to the end of the reign of Suppiluliumas, a rather surprising turn of events, since the balance of North Syria was supposedly conquered by the Hittites in the early years of his kingship, at least thirty years before.

We have a better explanation. Carchemish fell around the year 885 B.C., at most five to ten years after the conquest of the balance of North Syria and even less following the siege of Washuganni. Scholars are almost certainly correct that the Egyptian queen is the widow of Tutankhamon, but Ankhesenamun is not recently widowed. Her husband died in his late teens perhaps as much as twenty years before, perhaps longer. She is now in her late thirties, desperate to marry, but not wanting to lend legitimacy to the rule of Horemheb. Besides, Horemheb is by now an old man, now into the 43rd year of his extended "reign". Perhaps she anticipates his death. Thus the letter, which promises more than Ankhesenamun can deliver. The son of Suppiluliumas who was eventually sent was murdered en route to Egypt, probably at the initiative of Horemheb.

By 885 B.C. the Hittites are fully in control of North Syria. Only then, during the reign of Ashurnasirpal, do Assyrian inscriptions multiply and we become informed as to the state of affairs in Mesopotamia. We are not surprised that the Mitanni are no longer on the scene.

Epilogue

We have omitted, by design, the bulk of the supportive argument for our thesis. The excavation of hundreds of sites in the region of Anatolia, north Syria, Greece and the Balkans, et al. reveal a gap of between four and five hundred years in the archaeological and cultural records of the local inhabitants, the Mycenaean late Bronze age of the 13th century

immediately followed by the 9th/8th century iron age without apparent interruption in all locations. We have perused the archaeological records at only two such sites, Gordion and Carchemish. For a more detailed examination of the extent of the problem the reader should read the massive research produced by the *Centuries of Darkness* authors on this subject. Virtually everything written by these scholars lends support to our thesis.

Lest we be accused of circular reasoning we have not depended on the Egyptian synchronisms between Hattusilis and Ramses II in our argument (other than to fine tune our positioning of Hattusilis III). But these synchronisms are in fact confirming aspects of our analysis. All of the argument in our earlier two books and the beginning chapters in the present work, those which placed Ramses II in the years 840-774 B.C., must be understood as supportive of our dating of the Hittites. At no time in that developing argument did we rely on the revised dates for the Hittite Empire. And our placement of the Hittites in the identical time frame as the neo-Hittites depended primarily on Assyrian and Anatolian synchronisms, confirmed by the archaeology of the region. We might well have ignored the Amarna letters (the only link with Egypt that we have used) and still determined that the Hittites belong in the same general time frame as we have placed them, the 9th/8th centuries. Thus the 9th/8th century dating of Ramses II and the 9th/8th century dating of the Empire Hittites who were contemporary with Ramses II, as attested by multiple documents, could have been arrived at independently. The reader can believe, if he/she so chooses, that this is merely coincidence. But there must come a time when coincidences multiply to the extent that we can no longer avoid the obvious conclusion. The archaeological records at hundreds of locations in the near and middle east are not in error; it is the historical assumptions which guide their interpretation that are wrong. The Egyptian 19th dynasty and the Hittite Empire are not coincidentally linked to the 9th/8th centuries, the one by a mass of evidence which lowered the dates of the 22nd through the 26th dynasties by 121 years, then the 20th and 21st dynasties by upwards of 450 years to overlap the 22nd; the other by Assyrian and Anatolian inscriptions which place the two kings called Suppiluliumas and those kings intermediate between them squarely in the midst of the neo-Hittite period. They are linked to the 9th/8th centuries because that is where they belong.