

Egypt with Canaan between the Early Bronze Age and the Persian Conquest.

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A. Introduction

"Canaan" is used here in its broadest sense to include the Levantine coast as far north as Ugarit (modern Latakia), southern Syria, and all of Lebanon and Palestine. Throughout its ancient history, the normal political structure within Canaan was the city-state, an autonomous unit with its own government, based on an agricultural economy. There were scores of such city-states in Canaan, political unity among them being achieved only by military conquest, usually by foreign powers. Some cities became larger and more powerful than others through trade, treaties, or cultural domination, but the essentially independent city-state remained the rule. Egyptian political structure was the opposite. Forced into cooperation by a single water source, Egypt maintained a united state from the Mediterranean south to Aswan, down the narrow corridor of rich agricultural land fertilized annually by the Nile Flood. The deserts to the east and west of the Nile Valley were, like Canaan, foreign territory. Political unity in Egypt collapsed from time to time, but by and large, the united state existed through most of its ancient history.

Cultural, economic, and political contacts were thus between a united Egypt and the individual independent city-states of Canaan. When the time came, around 1550 B.C.E., for Egypt to create an Asiatic empire, it was created swiftly. The city-states of Canaan had little stomach for unity; the very independence they craved made them easy prey to a whole series of conquerors who came from all directions. Before 1550 B.C.E., however, relations between the two regions were largely commercial. Egypt normally had an excess of foodstuffs, which Canaan did not. Egypt also had control of the gold mines of the eastern mountains and of the land and sea routes to the Sudan and Ethiopia whence came ebony, spices, and other luxuries. Canaan supplied raw materials Egypt did not possess and, through the Levantine cities, made possible Egyptian participation in international trade.

The chronology of these relations must be given in general terms until the early 1st millennium B.C.E., when written documents are numerous enough to correlate more than isolated events or rulers. Egyptian chronology, upon which that of Canaan depends, is less certain before 2000 B.C.E. than after. At the beginning of the 3d millennium B.C.E., the margin for error is rather large (Hassan 1980; Shaw 1984) but grows much smaller as one approaches the 2d millennium. The Egyptian chronology adopted here is generally that of Trigger et al. (1983).

B. The Early Bronze Age (ca. 3200–2000 B.C.E.)

Contacts between Egypt and Canaan can be discerned in the Chalcolithic Age but were too few and sporadic to be meaningful (Ben-Tor 1982: 4; Kantor 1965: 6–7). Reliable

evidence begins to appear in the Egyptian Late Predynastic period and 1st Dyn. (ca. 3200–2890 B.C.E.), contemporary to the Canaanite EB I Age. At this time, there was a rather sudden change only recently defined by new excavations.

Egyptian material, mainly pottery, has been found at several EB I–II sites in southern Palestine, and Palestinian pottery of this period has long been known from Egyptian tombs (Ben-Tor 1982: 4–6; Helck 1971: 33). Of special interest is the site of 'En Besor (Gophna 1976), where Egyptian material is more abundant than Canaanite and includes a substantial number of Egyptian Protodynastic cylinder seal impressions (Schulman 1976; 1980). Also new is a series of sites along the northern coast of Sinai, where again Egyptian material is dominant (Oren 1973). Since the Egyptian pottery at both 'En Besor and the Sinai sites includes ordinary household ware, it is generally felt that Egyptians resided there.

The interpretation of this and related material varies between Egyptian domination and control over southern Canaan and northern Sinai and the more moderate claim that this is evidence of trade. The much-discussed theory of an Egyptian invasion of Canaan at the beginning of the 1st Dyn. does not seem likely (literature in Ben-Tor 1982: 9). But some kind of military activity against Asiatics in this period is evidenced by small ivory labels portraying Asiatic prisoners and the entry "smiting the Asiatics" for two 1st Dyn. kings on the Palermo Stone (Helck 1971: 15–16; Drower and Bottéro 1971: 357). The location of this military activity was within the Delta itself (Smith 1967) or anywhere east of the Delta. The word *st.tyw*, "Asiatics," used in these texts may be derived from *St.t*, an old border town of the Delta, so that the term could mean all foreigners beyond Egypt's eastern Delta frontier, not specifically Canaan. At any rate, it is tempting to relate this Egyptian material to the swift growth of the numerous settlements in northern Sinai noted above.

It is difficult to say what products were involved in this early commercial contact. The seal impressions from 'En Besor were used to seal sacks, indicating that Egypt was already exporting grain and other dry products. The Canaanite pottery found in Egypt is of a kind used for transporting liquids, perhaps wine and oil. As for technology, metallurgy must have been brought into Egypt from the metal industry of the Wadi Arabah, active already before the Early Bronze Age (Rothenberg 1972). The long-held view that at least some agricultural techniques were also imported is given support by Conti's study (1978) of Egyptian agricultural terms, many of which are loan-words from Semitic.

The close commercial ties with Palestine during the Protodynastic period apparently ceased before the beginning of the Old Kingdom (ca. 2700–2185 B.C.E.), and, on present evidence, were not resumed during that period (Ward 1963: 20, 25–26; Ben-Tor 1982: 6). The only Old Kingdom contacts with Palestine now suggested are a few military incursions of a temporary nature (Helck 1971: 17–21), and even these may rather have taken place in the eastern Delta or the Sinai coast (Goedicke 1963). This rather surprising situation can be explained by the shift of Egyptian commercial interests during the Old Kingdom to Byblos and southern Sinai, where valuable raw materials could be obtained.

Byblos, already in contact with Egypt before this time, became the focus of Egyptian trade in western Asia from the Old Kingdom on (Helck 1971: 21–24). From here came the coniferous woods of the Lebanese mountains as well as the oils and resins they produced. The wood itself was in great demand as building timber and for making coffins, chests, statues, and the like. The oils and resins were used in mummification, for perfumes, and in medicine. Through Byblos, Egyptian commercial interests spread indirectly to inland Syria and the Aegean world.

The copper and turquoise deposits of southern Sinai provided another source of wealth not available in the Nile Valley. These mines were first worked by colonists from southern Canaan from the Chalcolithic period to EB II times (Amiran, Beit Arie, and Glass 1973) and were then exploited by Egyptian mining expeditions from the early 3d to the mid-6th Dyn. (Gardiner, Peet, and Černý 1955). The primary Egyptian interest in Sinai was turquoise, there being no evidence that they ever worked the copper mines there. They may well have traded for copper ingots with the local inhabitants, who had long experience in that industry, but copper was more readily available in the Eastern Desert both in Egypt and Nubia. The latter may have been exploited as early as the Old Kingdom, but this remains uncertain. The mines of the Wadi Arabah were not exploited by anyone after the Chalcolithic period until the late 2d millennium B.C.E.

Hence, the apparent cessation of contact with Palestine seems largely due to the need for raw materials by a swiftly expanding and wealthier Egyptian economy. Palestine, with far less to offer, could not compete and was thus seemingly ignored. But in spite of the lack of direct evidence, it is difficult to believe that all trade contacts were broken. At the very least, Egyptian grain and other food-stuffs must still have been imported since Palestine was a natural market for such products all through Egyptian history.

By the late Old Kingdom, however, most commercial contacts were terminated for some time, due to far-reaching events that overtook both Egypt and Canaan in the period ca. 2300–2000 B.C.E. This period, traditionally designated EB IV and MB I, is being intensively studied through the wealth of new discoveries in Palestine and Syria (Dever 1970; 1980; Gerstenblith 1983).

In Egypt, the gradual transfer of power from the state to the provincial governors and an increasing economic strain brought on the collapse of the central government (Trigger et al. 1983: 175–77). Symbolic of this decline is the fact that the last datable Old Kingdom inscription in Sinai is ca. 2250 B.C.E. By the end of the 6th Dyn., the disintegration of the Egyptian state was complete. There followed a period of over a century of internal strife and competing dynasties until ca. 2050 B.C.E. when unity was again established under the Middle Kingdom. During this same general period, all the known towns and cities of Palestine were destroyed or abandoned. Urban culture disappeared and was replaced by a kind of modified nomadism for over two centuries. Then, roughly contemporary with the rise of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom, urbanism slowly revived in the early Middle Bronze Age. A similar disruption occurred in coastal Syria, though to a lesser degree. There is some evidence that at least a spo-

radic trade contact was maintained between Byblos and the western Delta (Ward 1971: 49–58).

Until recently, it was generally felt that these events were historically related, the catalyst being an Amorite invasion that brought a new culture to Palestine and coastal Syria and was partially responsible for the fall of the Egyptian Old Kingdom. Both the Egyptian and Canaanite evidence for this hypothesis has been challenged and the whole theory of an Amorite invasion seriously undermined (Dever 1980; Liverani 1973; Ward 1971). The breakdown of urban culture in Canaan is now seen more as a result of climatic change, which brought on a period of desiccation from ca. 2300 to ca. 2000 B.C.E. (Crown 1972). This also affected Egypt, though to a lesser extent (Trigger et al. 1983: 179–83), internal political and economic weakness being the prime causes for the collapse of the Old Kingdom.

C. The Middle Bronze Age (ca. 2000–1550 B.C.E.)

For the period of the Middle Kingdom (ca. 2050–1650 B.C.E.) there is considerable evidence of extensive contacts between Egypt and western Asia, though this is largely restricted to the 12th Dyn., 1991–1785 B.C.E. (Posener 1971; Helck 1971: chaps. 5–10). Both archaeological and textual material of this dynasty attest to Egyptian exploitation of the Sinai mines, a strong cultural and commercial presence at Byblos, and a growing Asiatic population resident in Egypt in various capacities. Egyptian objects, from royal statues to amulets, have been found throughout Canaan, including statuettes and seals of several Egyptian officials. The archaeological documentation is far more extensive than before, and it is evident that Egypt was very much a part of the east Mediterranean world.

But the nature of the role Egypt played eludes us. The evidence, which is extensive and includes datable texts and objects, remains inconclusive. There is still a wide difference of opinion as to whether Egypt actually ruled Canaan during the 12th Dyn. or only had a commercial interest there. The cautious assessment of Kemp (Trigger et al. 1983: 137–47) is perhaps the best approach.

The problem is both chronological and interpretive. The end of the Middle Bronze Age is fixed by the initial military moves of the 18th Dyn. into western Asia around the middle of the 16th century B.C.E. (Weinstein 1981). But the dates for the beginning of this period and the transitions from one archaeological phase to another are still debated. Lacking a generally accepted solution, the position adopted here is that of Dever, Yadin, and others. The key date in the present context—the transition from MB IIA to IIB—occurred ca. 1800 B.C.E., though different scholars propose this date for different reasons. Thus, the MB IIA period, characterized by small unfortified settlements in Palestine and large urban centers in Syria, was contemporary with the 12th Dyn. The MB IIB period, characterized by large fortified towns in Palestine and major Syrian cities such as Ebla and Mari, falls roughly contemporary with the Egyptian 13th Dyn. (ca. 1785–1650 B.C.E.).

Egyptian literary evidence tends to confirm this. The wanderings of the fugitive Sinuhe in Palestine and southern Syria toward the beginning of the 12th Dyn. finds him among seminomadic tribes in regions which were at least

partially sedentary (Posener 1971: 553–54). The Execration Texts, which divide into two collections of the later 12th and early 13th Dyn., are often interpreted as representing political changes in Palestine. The earlier group names only one-third as many Palestinian towns as the later, and this may reflect growing Egyptian trade interests as well as the increasing number of fortified settlements in the late MB IIA and early MB IIB periods (Weinstein 1975: 13). While the import of these texts is still uncertain, they at least prove that Egypt was well aware of events in Palestine and kept rather close track of its northern neighbors.

The interpretive aspect of the problem centers around the statuary and scarabs naming kings of the 12th and 13th Dyn. found in Canaan. There are half a dozen royal monuments, mostly from Syrian sites; half a dozen inscribed private statuettes, mostly from Palestine (Helck 1971: 68); and a little over a dozen scarabs each of kings and officials of these dynasties (Tufnell 1984: pls. 51–53). Very little of this material can be proved to have arrived in western Asia at its time of manufacture: a multiple seal impression of Senwosret I from Gezer (Giveon 1967: 31), possibly scarabs of Senwosret I and II from Ruweisé near Sidon (Tufnell 1984: 152), and three pieces of statuary from Ugarit (Ward 1979). Opinion is divided as to whether all this material should be considered positive evidence of Egyptian control or at least contact during the Middle Kingdom or whether it arrived in Asia at a later date as booty or *objets d'art* (Helck 1976). At present, neither position can be adopted without question. Indeed, far too much has been made of certain of these objects, such as the statuette of the Nomarch Thuthotep found at Megiddo. This, like all other statuary found in Palestine, was discovered in a later archaeological context and is therefore of no use in interpreting foreign relations of the Middle Kingdom.

In spite of modern attempts to defend an Egyptian empire in Canaan at this time, the only hint of military activity is the long known statement of Khusebek that he raided in the district of Shechem in the reign of Senwosret III. The military activity of Nesumontu in the reign of Amenemhêt I is not specifically located but was probably in the desert region east of the Delta (Helck 1971: 42–43). A recently published text (Farak 1980) said to describe Asiatic wars of 12th Dyn. kings is instead a donation stela of the Empire period. Royal annals, the major source for this kind of information, either never existed or have disappeared owing to the dismantling of buildings for later construction. The lack of information on military actions in the north may therefore be due to accidents of preservation.

In attempting to define the relations between the 15th or “Hyksos” Dyn. (ca. 1650–1550 B.C.E.) and the contemporary Canaanite MB IIC Age, one meets similar problems (general survey: Kempinski 1983). There is ample evidence of contact, though the nature of this contact is obscure: was it basically commercial, or was a strong political element involved? Even the origin of the Hyksos rulers is still debated. Some 18th Dyn. texts and the 3d century B.C.E. Egyptian historian Manetho preserve the tradition of a barbaric invasion of Egypt by northerners at the end of the Middle Kingdom, a view maintained by some mod-

ern historians (Helck 1971: 93–94; Giveon 1974; Weinstein 1981: 8–10). However, an alternate view is gaining more general support. The gradual increase in the Asiatic population in the east Delta during the Middle Kingdom created a foreign community of some size. With the weakening of central authority toward the end of the 13th Dyn., these Egyptianized Asiatics usurped political power in the east Delta—as did their 17th Dyn. contemporaries at Thebes—and established the “Hyksos” 15th Dyn. (Van Seters 1966: 121–26; von Beckerath 1964: 123–29; Bietak 1977: cols. 93–94; the 14th and 16th Dyn. never existed). As should be expected, this event was not entirely peaceful, and related groups from southern Palestine may have joined forces with the Asiatics already in Egypt. There is some destruction at Middle Kingdom sites in the eastern Delta, followed by settlements along the Nile fringe with substantial Canaanite MB II Age influence (Bietak 1977: cols. 98–99). In the south, there are hints in contemporary texts of trouble at Thebes (Vernus 1982: 134–35) though this was local and unconnected with events in the Delta.

The geographical extent of 15th Dyn. domination is unknown. Various theories propose anything from an empire stretching from Nubia to Syria to a small east Delta kingdom with vassal states. A contemporary text, if taken literally, places the boundary between the 15th and 17th Dyn. at Cusae, near Assiut. Less sure is the idea that the 15th Dyn. ruled over southern Palestine, a theory supported principally by the numerous scarabs of Hyksos-period kings and officials discovered there (Giveon 1974; Weinstein 1981). These scarabs have a chronological value, but there are many explanations as to why they and hundreds of ordinary ones should find their way to Palestine; they need not be political documents. However, it seems logical that Egyptian rulers of Asiatic origin might find natural allies in Canaan. The character of this alliance remains to be determined.

One factor is significant. Apart from the MB II material along the east Delta fringe, Egyptian culture remained Egyptian and Canaanite culture remained Canaanite. The term “Hyksos” applies only to the 15th Dyn. kings and the contemporary kinglets with Semitic names. There was no “Hyksos people” nor a “Hyksos culture,” even though the word is often used in this manner. The “Hyksos period” means only the time of the 15th Dyn. in Egypt and the MB IIC Age in Canaan; the phrase has no ethnic, political, or cultural connotations. A large amount of Egyptian material has been found in Canaan, in particular the ubiquitous scarab, and Canaanite material other than that from the east Delta sites has been found in Egypt (Kantor 1965: 22–23); all this, however, represents only the normal residue of trade.

The major items said to have been imported into Egypt are the Canaanite fortifications typical of the period, the so-called Tell el-Yahudiyeh pottery style, and the horse and chariot. Though statements are still made to this effect, the theory was effectively challenged over thirty-five years ago (Säve-Söderbergh 1951). It is now generally felt, though not without some opposition, that the “Hyksos fortifications” at Tell el-Yahudiyeh and Heliopolis are temple foundations, the Yahudiyeh pottery was introduced before the 15th Dyn., and the horse and chariot do not appear in Egypt until the very end of this period (Helck

1971: 102; Van Seters 1966: 184; Dever 1985). The only really new element in Egypt at this time is the introduction of Semitic deities, chiefly Baal, who was identified with the Egyptian god Seth (Van Seters 1966: chap. 12). Other than this and their Semitic personal names (Ward 1976), the Hyksos rulers maintained the native Egyptian civilization. It has been proposed that a new political form standard in western Asia, the overlord and vassal, was introduced into Egypt at this time (Van Seters 1966: 162–70). However, hints of this political pattern always appeared in Egypt in times of disunity, so it seems more a natural process, dictated by historical necessity, than one that needed foreign inspiration (see HYKSOS).

It is around this time that many scholars place the biblical Patriarchs, though this problem is still being intensively examined and argued with no consensus of opinion. Three recent works which have analyzed the evidence all conclude that the historical setting of the patriarchal narratives is the 1st millennium B.C.E. rather than the 2d as commonly believed (Redford 1970: 241–43; Thompson 1974: 324–26; Van Seters 1975: 309–12). But this is still not a solution, since this does not place the Patriarchs themselves in a specific historical context, only the postexilic version of their lives.

A third chronological possibility is based on a significant point which seems to have been obscured by the very mass of literature on the OT: Joseph lived to see his great-grandchildren (Gen 50:23), and Moses was the great-grandson of Joseph's brother Levi (Gen 46:11; Num 26:58–59). Hence, Joseph could still have been alive when Moses was born, an event which occurred in the fifth generation after Abraham. Now the Hebrews are said to have been associated with construction at Pithom and Ramesses, which Uphill (1968–69) has plausibly identified with Heliopolis and Pi-Ramesses, the latter a new city in the eastern Delta (modern Tell ed-Dab'a–Qantir) built primarily by Ramesses II (1289–1224 B.C.E.). It would thus appear that Moses lived during the reign of that king and that the lives of the Patriarchs from Abraham to Joseph spanned the 14th century B.C.E. Again, there is no consensus.

Unfortunately, there is not one unequivocal episode, event, or detail in these narratives which proves when the Patriarchs lived, when Joseph served in the Egyptian court, or when Moses led his followers out of Egypt. Nonbiblical sources provide no certain point of reference prior to the period of the divided monarchy. Even Egypt, with which the Joseph and Moses traditions are so intimately connected, is totally mute with regard to the existence of the Hebrews or any event in which they were involved. The earliest clear Egyptian reference to biblical history is the mention of "the land of the Hebrews" in a Demotic papyrus of the mid-1st millennium B.C.E. (Redford 1970: 201). The appearance of "Israelites" on a stela of Merneptah is almost universally accepted as the sole Egyptian reference to earlier biblical events, but this translation of the term involved is debatable.

On the other hand, there is no reason not to accept an underlying historicity in these narratives. Much has been written, for example, concerning the Egyptian background of the Joseph stories (Vergote 1959; Redford 1970; etc.), and it is quite clear that this background is accurate.

The names of Joseph's wife and father-in-law are good Egyptian names. The ring, linen garments, and gold collar given to Joseph when he took office (Gen 41:42) are precisely the gifts bestowed by Egyptian kings on deserving officials, and his approximate Egyptian titulary as Minister of Agriculture can be reconstructed (Ward 1960). That foreigners, even those of low station, could ultimately achieve important positions is confirmed by other documents. Dream omens are well known in Egyptian texts, Joseph's age of 110 when he died is an Egyptian idiom meaning a ripe old age (Gen 50:22), and the embalming and mourning periods of forty and seventy days (Gen 50:3) conform to Egyptian custom. The basic issue, then, is not whether the Patriarchs lived, but when. In spite of decades of intense scholarly endeavor, the question still remains to be answered.

D. The Late Bronze Age (ca. 1550–1200 B.C.E.)

Two new features characterize Egyptian relations with Canaan during the Empire period (1552–1069 B.C.E.): Egypt's political and military domination of the area, and the confrontation with the Hittite and Mitanni Empires. Furthermore, we need to depend less on archaeological material since written records are abundant, including Egyptian royal annals and archives from several Asiatic capitals. While the old commercial ties between Canaan and Egypt continued, the connection is now more a political one, with Canaan of the Late Bronze Age caught between the imperial aspirations of its neighbors.

From the beginning of the 18th Dyn. to the battle of Megiddo (ca. 1468 B.C.E.), Egyptian policy in Canaan was twofold. The initial thrust into Palestine in the mid-16th century was to break the power of the Hyksos allies in that area (Weinstein 1981; Vandersleyen 1971: 30–41), and the succeeding campaigns of Ahmose, Amenhotep I, and Thutmose I in the Byblos area must have been to secure the old center of Asiatic trade (Redford 1979: 274–77). Probing expeditions went down the Orontes Valley and toward the Euphrates, but little territory was actually held. These initial military moves into Syria took place in a period when momentous events were reshaping the historical orientation of that area.

The catalyst was probably the Syrian campaign of the Hittite king Muršiliš I, who, sometime in the 16th century B.C.E., destroyed the important city of Aleppo and went on to sack Babylon as an ally of the Kassites. The latter, tribal groups from the Zagros Mountains, then established their own rule over Mesopotamia which would last over four centuries. This was not the first Hittite incursion into north Syria, but certainly the most decisive (Gurney 1973: 243–51). Internal troubles forced the Hittites off the stage for another century, but the north Syrian kingdom of Yamhad and the 1st Dyn. of Babylon had disappeared. The new political power in north Syria became the Hurrians, a people originating in the Caucasus who had been filtering into the region for centuries. By the 16th century, the Hurrians formed a large population group from east of the Tigris to the Mediterranean. Under the rule of an Indo-Aryan aristocracy, they were a dominant element in the Mitanni Empire (Drower 1973: 417–23). The western border of the latter reached to the upper bend of the

Euphrates; from there to the sea stood the allied kingdom of Mukiš with its capital at Alalah.

The relation between the campaign of Muršiliš I, the subsequent events in north Syria, and the Egyptian move into western Asia is bound up in the long-standing controversy over the chronology of the period. According to the "middle chronology" adopted in the latest edition of *CAH*, the Hittite campaign took place in 1595 B.C.E., contemporary with the Egyptian 15th Dyn. By the "low chronology," Muršiliš' campaign was in 1531 B.C.E., which would place this major disturbance in north Syria at about the time the kings of the early 18th Dyn. were gaining their foothold in the Byblos region (Helck 1971: 111; Redford 1979: 277–79). The latter date is the more attractive but cannot be proved.

The true beginning of the Egyptian Empire in western Asia came with the reign of Thutmose III (1490–1436 B.C.E.). Having finally thrown aside the "regency" of his mother-in-law Hatshepsut, this king led his army northward, defeated a large coalition of Canaanite cities at Megiddo (1468 B.C.E.), and effectively took control of Palestine. This and subsequent campaigns established Egyptian rule in western Asia up to the borders of the Hurrian states of north Syria and the Mitanni Empire. This Egyptian Empire remained more or less intact until the reign of Ramesses III (1184–1153 B.C.E.). Even during the troubled times described in the Amarna letters of the second half of the 14th century B.C.E., when a new Hittite move into Syria fomented rebellion among Egyptian vassals, only the northern provinces were lost. The Egyptian military response was not negligible (Redford 1973a) and Egyptian garrisons were still maintained at important towns (Pintore 1972).

During the Amarna period (1364–1333 B.C.E.), the aggressive policies of the Hittite king Šupiluliumaš brought about the end of the Mitanni Empire and the rise of Hittite sovereignty in northwest Syria. This policy was continued by his successors so that until the mid-13th century the major power with which Egypt had to contend in the north was Hatti (Spalinger 1979b). Much of the Empire was regained by Sety I (1303–1289 B.C.E.) in a series of campaigns which consolidated Egyptian rule once again throughout Palestine and southern Syria. He fought at least one war with the Hittites but did not achieve his goal of dislodging Hittite forces from the key fortress city of Kadesh. This city roughly marked the boundary between the two powers (Faulkner 1975: 218–21; Spalinger 1979a).

The troubles with Hatti came to a head in the 21st year of the reign of Ramesses II (1289–1224 B.C.E.) when, after sixteen years of warfare, the two powers fought their last battle at Kadesh. The result was a draw, and both nations realized there was little use in further hostilities. A long nonaggression and mutual assistance pact was agreed to, and Egypt and Hatti remained allies until the fall of the latter around 1200 B.C.E. (Faulkner 1975: 226–29; Kestemont 1981).

Still, Ramesses II had to subdue revolts among his Palestinian vassals, as did his successor Merneptah (1224–1204 B.C.E.), indicating that the Asiatic provinces were less easy to control than before. This was but symptomatic of a slowly gathering unrest around the east Mediterranean. Both kings had to repel Libyan tribes attempting to force

their way into the western Delta. And at the battle of Kadesh the Egyptian and Hittite armies included mercenaries from the west, the vanguard of a storm which would end both empires and the Late Bronze Age in Canaan.

This was a group of tribes known as the Peoples of the Sea in Egyptian records, though only some were actual seafarers (Sandars 1978). Originating in western Anatolia, the Greek Islands, and perhaps as far away as Sardinia, these tribes moved eastward into the Levant, destroying every state in their path. Their move across Anatolia and the final collapse of the Hittite Empire is described in the archives from Boghazköy. They then moved through Syria and into Palestine and, in the reign of Ramesses III (1184–1153 B.C.E.), they tried but failed to invade Egypt. From Cilicia to Gaza these invaders destroyed the coastal cities, some tribes settling there. The last documents written at Ugarit, actually found in the baking ovens, describe the land and sea war in which that city was engaged just before its fall (Astour 1965). Cyprus fell to these invaders, and one group, the Pelset, settled on the coast of Palestine, thus giving this region its modern name.

Ramesses III, the last Egyptian conqueror, may have had to deal with a successful rebellion in the Asiatic provinces which had occurred just prior to his reign (Goedicke 1979). He made a valiant effort to delay the inevitable by military campaigns in Palestine and by reinforcing or establishing garrisons there. The pressure from the new invaders and the collapse of effective resistance in the north left Egypt as the only major power to contend with the situation. But internal problems had weakened the state so that with the reign of Ramesses III Egypt ceased to be an international power, its Asiatic empire gone (Faulkner 1975: 244–47).

Weinstein (1981: 12–22) has shown that Egyptian administration in the Asiatic provinces differed somewhat after the Amarna Age from what had been before. During the 18th Dyn., it was sufficient to maintain small token garrisons and resident ambassadors in key cities. In the 19th and 20th Dyn., military occupation was much more evident, and Egyptian temples may have been built at various sites. Royal and private monuments of the Rameside age are far more numerous than previously. The reason for this change in policy may have been the rise of Hittite power in the north. The 18th Dyn. had had to contend with the Mitanni Empire and its allies, but this was not a difficult problem to overcome. With the Hittite invasion of north Syria during the Amarna period and constant Hittite interference within the boundaries of Egyptian vassals, a stronger Egyptian presence among those vassals was necessary.

Throughout the Empire period there was an intense commercial and cultural exchange. Foreigners came to Egypt in large numbers in many capacities: merchants, prisoners of war, mercenaries, etc. From the time of Hor-emheb at the end of the 18th Dyn., Egyptian kings often appointed foreigners to high government posts. Children of vassal princes were brought to Egypt to live at court and be educated in Egyptian culture. Temples to foreign deities appeared in Egypt, and a few of these deities gained minor positions in the Egyptian pantheon. A large number of foreign words were borrowed into the Egyptian language, and Egyptian scribes had to learn Akkadian, the interna-

tional language of the time. Translations were made of Canaanite literary works, and there is some Asiatic influence in art and in craft work.

Contacts went the other way too, of course. Egyptian expeditions regularly went to the turquoise mines of Sinai and the copper mines of the Wadi Arabah, now worked again for the first time since the Chalcolithic period (Rothenberg 1972 chap. 3). The craft of ivory carving, a well-developed industry in Canaan, was strongly influenced by Egyptian originals (Kantor 1956) and Canaanite artists may even have studied in Egypt. Numerous Egyptian words were borrowed into the Canaanite languages, and Egyptian influence has been suggested in the Proto-Sinaitic and Byblos syllabic scripts (Lambdin 1952; Albright 1966; Mendenhall 1985).

E. The Iron Age up to the Persian Conquest (ca. 1200–525 B.C.E.)

From the collapse of the Egyptian Empire in Asia ca. 1150 B.C.E. to the fall of Babylon in 539 B.C.E., the precise political relations between Egypt and Canaan are difficult to define. In Canaan itself, the Lebanese maritime cities maintained a semi-independence though they paid tribute to Assyria and Babylonia from the 9th century on. Coastal Philistia under its Indo-European rulers, the Hebrew state in the hill country, and the kingdoms of Edom and Moab in Transjordan represent the new political structure in Palestine. All these states were subject to conquest from the east and, to one degree or another, were absorbed into the Neo-Assyrian Empire (early 9th century to 605 B.C.E.) and the Neo-Babylonian Empire (605–539 B.C.E.). While the Egyptian state was not passive, for much of this period it was internally divided and played a minor political role in Canaan. Egypt itself was subject to invasion by both the eastern empires as well as its powerful new southern neighbor, the kingdom of Napata in Nubia. At those times when Egypt was a united sovereign state, its foreign policy was basically defensive, and there was an increasing dependence on allies among the Greek cities (Trigger et al. 1983: 337–43).

The old ties between Egypt and Byblos seem to have been greatly weakened. Around 1065 B.C.E., the Egyptian official Wenamon went to Byblos to purchase timber and the rude treatment given him by the Byblian ruler is symbolic of a new attitude toward Egypt (Leclant 1968). Datable Egyptian objects of the period are rare at Byblos, the most notable being statues of three 22d Dyn. kings who ruled in the period 950–850 B.C.E., two of which were further inscribed with Phoenician texts by local kings. Whether these statues represent political, cultural, or commercial relations is still debated (Kitchen 1973: 292, 308–9, 324; Redford 1973b: 15–16).

Egyptian ties elsewhere in Canaan were characterized by interference in local affairs rather than direct action. The only successful military campaigns in Canaan were temporary ventures prior to the appearance of the Assyrians on the scene. From then on, the few Egyptian military raids in the north ended mostly in defeat. It is of interest that the sparse Egyptian records are concerned with Philistia and ignore the Hebrew states. Egyptian connections with the latter are noted only in Assyro-Babylonian and

biblical sources, with less trustworthy statements by classical authors.

Egyptian policy toward the Hebrew monarchy vacillated as the situation required. When King David (ca. 1010–970 B.C.E.) conquered Edom, Hadad, the crown prince of that kingdom, sought refuge in Egypt, where he was welcomed and eventually married to a member of the royal family (1 Kgs 11:14–22). This gave Egypt an ally east of the new Hebrew state. Early in the reign of Solomon (970–930 B.C.E.), the Egyptian king Siamon invaded Philistia, sacked Gezer, and gave that city as the dowry of his daughter, whom he married to Solomon (1 Kgs 9:16). Such diplomatic marriages sanctioned treaties between states so that the Hebrew kingdom, now at its strongest, became an Egyptian ally. Toward the end of Solomon's reign, Jeroboam, another fugitive from Hebrew justice, took refuge in the court of Shoshenq I of Egypt (945–924 B.C.E.), the first of the new line of Libyan kings of the 22d Dyn. Like Hadad of Edom, Jeroboam was welcomed and eventually returned to his country to lead a rebellion against Solomon's successor (1 Kgs 11:26–40). This turnabout in Egypt's policy toward Solomon was due to the long militaristic tradition of the Libyans and their desire to help break up the strongest state in Palestine.

In spite of his gesture of friendship to Jeroboam, shortly after the Hebrew monarchy was replaced by the smaller states of Israel and Judah, Shoshenq I embarked on the first major invasion of Canaan in over two centuries (1 Kgs 14:25–26; Kitchen 1973: 294–300). The biblical statement and Shoshenq's own record of this campaign show that his armies went through Philistia, Israel, and Judah. Jerusalem was not taken, as often stated, but paid heavy tribute, including the temple treasury.

During the following two centuries, Egypt was torn by the internal divisions of the 22d to 24th Dyn. and the domination of the kingdom of Napata which placed the Nubian 25th Dyn. on the throne (780–656 B.C.E.). Most of western Asia was absorbed into the Assyrian Empire. Some events of this period—about which Egyptian records are silent—are found in Assyrian and biblical sources. A minor Egyptian campaign into Canaan in 897 B.C.E. was defeated by King Asa of Judah (2 Chr 14:8–14—Eng 14:9–15); a small Egyptian contingent joined the coalition defeated by the Assyrians in 853 at Qarqar; in 726 B.C.E., Hoshea of Israel attempted an alliance with “So, king of Egypt” against Assyria (2 Kgs 17:4; Kitchen 1973: 372–75); and in 701 B.C.E., Egypt and Hezekiah of Judah were again defeated by the Assyrians (Kitchen 1973: 385).

For the next fifty years, Assyria and Napata waged war for control of Egypt (Spalinger 1974). The Assyrians invaded Egypt twice with the intent of crushing Nubian control over Egypt, not to occupy the land themselves. These troubles were the impetus for the rise of a native dynasty, the 26th (663–528 B.C.E.), which ceased sending tribute to Assyria, now more concerned with the growing power of the Babylonians and Medes. Egypt regained a measure of influence over Philistia for a while and allied itself with Assyria against Babylon (Spalinger 1977). In the later 7th century B.C.E., with Assyrian power waning, Egyptian campaigns in the upper Euphrates region were beaten back by Babylonian forces. After the campaign of 610 B.C.E., Necho of Egypt was confronted by Josiah of Judah,

who was enlarging his territory by absorbing the towns of Samaria. At the resulting battle of Megiddo, Josiah was killed (2 Kgs 23:29). Necho's final Euphrates campaign ended in another defeat in 605 B.C.E. at Carchemish (Jeremiah 46; 2 Chr 35:20), which opened the way for Babylonian moves into Canaan. Ezek 29:19–20 and later sources record Babylonian invasions of Egypt, but the one contemporary cuneiform source which notes an encounter between Babylonians and Egyptians is ambiguous as to the location of these hostilities (Spalinger 1977: 237–38). It is possible that the Babylonians were unable to actually invade the Nile Valley.

Two major events effectively ended Egyptian-Canaanite relations at the political level: the disastrous invasions of Canaan by the Babylonians in the earlier 6th century B.C.E., and the subsequent takeover by Persia, which invaded and annexed Egypt in 525 B.C.E. While the Phoenician cities continued to thrive under Persian rule (Elayi 1980), much of Palestine had been laid waste and, save for a brief period in the early 4th century B.C.E., pharaonic Egypt was finished as an independent power.

Throughout the Iron Age, trade and commerce played a major role in the political and military policies of the larger powers. The cities of the Levantine coast were in the geographical center of the sea and land routes which tied the ancient world together commercially from Europe to Persia and Arabia. As kingdoms and empires were formed, the growing demands of these states required more luxury products and raw materials. The empires came into being to protect these trade routes, capture the sources of raw materials, and collect extensive tribute from conquered territories.

Through all these centuries, the coastal cities of Syria and Palestine were the middlemen between East and West. By the 9th century B.C.E., Phoenician fleets opened up the routes to the west, the ultimate goal being the tin mines of Spain and the rich new markets of western Europe. As the focal point in the international trade between East and West, these cities were a rich prize for whatever empire controlled them. Just as important were their merchant fleets and navies and their expertise as shipbuilders and sailors. None of the oriental empires were really seafaring nations. Control of the trade cities thus meant indirect control of the whole Mediterranean trade structure, as well as experienced naval fleets when war at sea was necessary.

Even though Egypt was a weaker state in the Iron Age, it still attempted to maintain some contacts with the Phoenician harbor cities to the extent that the Assyrians forbade the latter to trade with Egypt. At the same time, Assyria, whose policy was to plunder rather than occupy foreign territories, maintained regular trade connections with Egypt. A desert separated Egypt from Assyrian vassals in Canaan, so the Philistine cities and the nomad sheiks of northern Sinai became the channel through which much-desired Egyptian exports—gold, linen, grain, papyrus—flowed into Assyrian hands (Tadmor 1966; Elat 1978).

Egyptian political influence in Canaan may have been sporadic during the Iron Age, but its artistic influence remained strong. This represents both the continuation of artistic influences begun much earlier and new contemporary ones. The ivory-carving tradition, already prominent

in the Late Bronze Age, maintained its Egyptianizing character and was far more widespread (Barnett 1957). Scarabs and seals—imported or copied locally—were still common but with some differences. For example, hard stone was used far more often than previously, and new designs appear: scenes from the Osiris legend on seals made throughout the Mediterranean, and four-winged serpents on a small group of Hebrew seals, both designs of Egyptian inspiration. Such Egyptian or Egyptianizing objects spread from the Levant to Spain via Phoenician trade as well as from as yet unspecified manufacturing centers in Europe (Culican 1968: 50–54). Furthermore, a case can be made for the plundering of Egyptian cemeteries and temples in antiquity with the result that many objects were taken abroad outside the normal channels of trade. Also of Egyptian inspiration are the designs on Phoenician metal bowls, which were likewise a popular item of export to the whole ancient world.

A great deal of study has gone into the search for Egyptian parallels or origins for OT ideas and literary motifs. For example, Psalm 104 is said to be related to the *Amarna sun hymns*. Further parallels with Egyptian thought are claimed for Job, Ecclesiastes, and Canticles. Some aspects of the Hebrew kingship, including the coronation ritual, the position of the king relative to the temple, and the titles of Hebrew court officials are thought to be of Egyptian inspiration (Grieshammer 1972–73 cols. 163–66). However, such parallels are often illusory. Hymns and prayers to different deities may express similar ideas not through cultural borrowing but because of basic religious patterns common to all ancient cultures. And as Redford (1970: 191–92) has observed, one need look no further than Palestine itself for the origin of the titles of court officials of the monarchy. That there are Egyptian terms in the OT indicates nothing more than the fact that Hebrew shared in the general linguistic interchange of the age. The long-held view that Hebrew monotheism was somehow influenced by Egyptian ideas is incorrect since monotheism was never part of Egyptian religious thinking until the advent of Christianity. In short, the Egyptian influence in the OT is not nearly as extensive as has been supposed.

Foreigners had long come to Egypt for various reasons, largely economic, but the foreign population was larger and more varied in the Iron Age. A main reason for this was the use of mercenaries in the Egyptian armed forces. This practice began in the 3d millennium B.C.E. and grew proportionately more pronounced as the army expanded. Libyans, Nubians, and Asiatics, many captured in war, provided the bulk of the mercenary forces, but in the Iron Age, Anatolians, Carians, and Greeks were also hired. Many of these foreigners were garrisoned in national groups within Egypt and, on retirement from active service, settled there permanently (Helck 1980).

Greeks were especially welcome and established a large trading colony at Naukratis in the Delta. When Egypt came under Persian rule, a Jewish military colony was set up on the island of Elephantine, opposite modern Aswan. This colony included a temple to Yahweh, the god of the OT. This growing foreign population, centered in the major cities especially in the Delta, helped set the stage for the cosmopolitan age which followed the taking of Egypt by

Alexander of Macedon. This event brought on the Ptolemaic period, when Egypt once again became a world power, but that is part of a different story.

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