

Economic Aspects of the Egyptian Occupation of Canaan*

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THE question of the economic advantages gained for Egypt by holding the land of Canaan permanently during the Late Bronze Age has until recently been dealt with only in a general way.¹ The isolation of the factors relating exclusively to the problems of the Egyptian permanent occupation of the land of Canaan and the Egyptian impositions on their vassals is so difficult that scholars have usually withheld judgement.² However, Albright expressed the opinion that 'the regular tribute alone must have been a terrific burden'.³ This view was combined with his earlier conception, according to which 'the wealth and culture of southern Canaan decreased rather steadily under foreign misrule, until it reached an extremely low ebb in the thirteenth century'.⁴

* The abbreviations used in this article are as follows: A. Alt, *Kl. Sch.*, I-III — A. Alt: *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, I-III, München, 1953-1959; *ARAB* I-II — D.D. Luckenbill: *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, I-II, Chicago, 1926-1927; *AT* — D.J. Wiseman: *The Alalakh Tablets*, London, 1953; *CAH* — *The Cambridge Ancient History*, revised edition of Vols. I-II, Cambridge, 1971-1975; *EA* — J.A. Knudtzon: *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln*, I-II, Leipzig, 1915; Helck, *Bez.* — W. Helck: *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.*, 2. verbesserte Auflage, Wiesbaden, 1971; *PRU*, III-IV, VI — J. Nougayrol: *Le Palais Royal d'Ugarit*, III-IV, VI, Paris, 1955-1956, 1970; *TT* — The Taanach Tablets; *V.S.* XI — O. Schroeder: *Die Tontafeln von El-Amarna in akkadischer Sprache, Vorderasiatische Schriftendkmäler der königlichen Museen zu Berlin*, XI, Leipzig, 1915.

¹ All the available economic information for the Egyptian relationships with Asia was collected by Helck, *Bez.*, chap. 27. The material in this chapter is varied, belonging to different periods, sources (documents, reliefs, paintings and vessels) and categories (booty, tribute, gifts and commerce).

² A. Alt: Das Stützpunktsystem der Pharaonen an der Phönikischen Küste und im syrischen Binnenland, *Kl. Sch.*, III, pp. 107-140; M. Abdul Kader Mohammad: The Administration of Syro-Palestine during the New Kingdom, *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 56 (1959), pp. 105-137; W. Helck: Die ägyptische Verwaltung in den syrischen Besitzungen, *Mitteilungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft* 92 (1960), pp. 1-13; Helck, *Bez.*, pp. 246-255; Margaret S. Drower: Syria c. 1550-1440 B.C., *CAH* II/1, pp. 467-483; W.F. Albright: The Amarna Letters from Palestine, *CAH*, II/2, pp. 102-116; K.A. Kitchen: Interrelations of Egypt and Syria, in M. Liverani (ed.): *La Siria nel Tardo Bronzo*, Rome, 1969, pp. 80-82; R. de Vaux: *The Early History of Israel*, I, London, 1978, pp. 94-99; M.Y. Sefton: Reconsidering the Egyptian Empire in Palestine during the Amarna Period, *FEQ* 104 (1972), pp. 123-133.

³ Albright (above, n. 2), p. 106.

⁴ W.F. Albright: *The Archaeology of Palestine*, Harmondsworth, 1949, p. 101; cf. idem, *The Biblical Period from Abraham to Ezra*, New York, 1963, p. 25.

In an article published recently, Ahituv reviewed this question.⁵ As a basis for his study he used the written documents available for the whole period of Egyptian rule in Canaan, sorting the material according to the different categories of commodities and estimating the value of each item for Egypt. His conclusions are diametrically opposite to the views held by Albright: 'It is indeed probable that there was no economic interest in the Egyptian conquest of Canaan, and if such an interest existed it was very limited'.⁶

This article will re-examine the economic aspects of the Egyptians' occupation of the Land of Canaan during the Late Bronze Age.

THE PROBLEM OF THE SOURCE MATERIAL

The written sources available for our inquiry are the Amarna letters, several Egyptian royal inscriptions and a handful of administrative and economic texts. No Egyptian royal archive other than that discovered at Amarna has been found. The administrative and economic texts were collected from various places, and cover different reigns and subjects. Thus, it is clear that no comprehensive picture of the type required by the subject of this article can be drawn from them.

The royal inscriptions pose a different problem. Almost all the information included there is connected with booty, while other kinds of income are rarely recorded. However, the booty lists, important as they are for the study of the economy of Canaan in the LB, should not be taken into account in the present discussion. The establishment of a permanent body of government and the imposition of taxes and duties on the conquered population oblige the conqueror to maintain the security of that territory. Military campaigns, whose primary object is to take the maximal amount of booty, are destructive by nature and their aim is the opposite of that of a permanent government. It is my opinion that the mixture of booty and tribute (as in Ahituv's article) cannot contribute to the assessment of the more permanent factors of Egyptian government in Canaan.

The Amarna letters are a very different case, since many aspects essential to the discussion are included there. The duration of the whole archive, the place of many letters within the chronological framework, the origin of most of the dispatches and the relative strength of the city-states mentioned in the tablets are very well known. A combination of all these data together may help in the examination of the problem at hand.

The reigns of Amenhotep III and Akhenaten were devoid of major military campaigns. The lack of booty made it necessary to use peaceful means (commerce, gifts and tribute) in order to bring needed materials to Egypt. This is a clear advantage when one is trying to identify the possible contributions of the vassals to the treasury of their overlord.

⁵ S. Ahituv: Economic Factors in the Egyptian Conquest of Canaan, *IEJ* 28 (1978), pp. 93-105.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

Since the Amarna letters are crucial for the discussion, it is important to appreciate what has remained of the original archive. This unique collection includes letters brought from the previous capital, Thebes, to the new capital Akhetaten (Amarna) when the royal court moved there, but lacks those letters taken from Akhetaten at the time of its abandonment. The number of letters transferred in both cases is unknown, nor do we know what were the criteria for their selection. One might conjecture that only those letters which were necessary for future correspondence were brought to the new capital and taken when the royal court left Amarna.⁷ Also, an unknown part of the archive was totally destroyed when it was discovered and before the value of the tablets was recognized.⁸ It should therefore be kept in mind that our main source for the discussion is only a part of the original archive of Amarna.

The time-span of the archive is important for the discussion below. The archive covers the period from the thirtieth year of Amenhotep III to the third year of Tutankh-Amon, when the city of Amarna was abandoned. The time-span depends on whether there was coregency between Amenhotep III and Akhenaten or not. The maximal period covered by the archive is 28 years (8+17+3) and the minimal is 17 years (8+6+3).

THE ECONOMIC DATA OF THE AMARNA TABLETS

The tribute in the Amarna letters is hopelessly confused with the gifts, and there is no way to distinguish between them. But since vassals' 'gifts' were usually not less obligatory than tribute in the ancient Near East, this is not a real obstacle to the discussion.

The term for tribute in the letters is *biltu*. It appears in the combination *bilat šarri* (EA 288:12; cf. EA 160:44) and *bilat Šamaš* (EA 325:21). The terms for gifts are *tāmartu* (EA 99:12, 19) and *qīštu* (EA 53:51, 100:33, 288:22).

The discussion of the economic data is divided into three main categories. We shall examine the value of the items in terms of 'money' whenever this is possible, using the silver shekel as a standard.

Tributes and Gifts

The deliveries of both kinds will be grouped together by commodities.

⁷ W. Riedel: Das Archiv Amenophis' IV, *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 42 (1939), pp. 145-148; E.F. Campbell: *The Chronology of the Amarna Letters*, Baltimore, 1964, pp. 32-36; N. Na'aman: The Political Disposition and Historical Development of Eretz-Israel According to the Amarna Tablets, Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Tel Aviv University, 1975, pp. 2-3 (Hebrew).

⁸ EA, pp. 1-15; Campbell (above, n. 7).

Silver

EA 287:54 — 5000 shekels are sent from Jerusalem;⁹ EA 313:7-11 — 1400 shekels are sent from southern Palestine; EA 309:21 — 100 shekels are sent from southern Palestine; EA 270 — Milkilu of Gezer is severely requested to pay 2000 shekels; EA 99 — the ruler of Ammiya is ordered to send 20 shekels as a part of the dowry of his daughter.

Copper and Bronze

Bronze was exclusively used for manufacturing tools and vessels. Therefore, whenever a heavy weight is mentioned, even if the Akkadian word is *siparru* ('bronze'), it can only mean 'copper' and not 'bronze'.¹⁰ EA 151:47 — 5 talents of copper are sent from Tyre; EA 69:25-30 — an unspecified amount of copper was taken from Byblos; EA 77:7-8 — Rib-Adda of Byblos is requested to send copper and bronze tools.¹¹ The relationship of the value of silver to that of copper in Egypt at the time of the 18th Dynasty was 1:100.¹² Copper was cheaper in the northern countries, roughly 1:200-400.¹³

Glass

Four rulers, all from southern Palestine, sent raw glass (*ehlipakku*) on the same occasion (EA 314, 323, 327, 331).¹⁴ The ruler of Tyre sent the same mineral (*mekku* — EA 148:5). The weights mentioned in the letters are 30 (EA 323:16), 50 (EA 327:10) and 100 (EA 148:8); but it is not clear whether it designates the shekel unit or not, nor can we estimate the value of these consignments.

Wood

EA 160:14-19 — Aziru of Amurru sent 8 ships loaded with wood; EA 161:55-56 — the same ruler promised to send another transport of wood (and agricultural products as well); EA 151:48 — an unknown kind of wood is sent from Tyre to Egypt.

⁹ Knudtzon did not restore the end of this line. Albright (in *ANET*, p. 488b) read: 'Five thousand [silver (shekels)]'. The traces at the end of the line (see *VS*, XI, No. 163, l. 54) might represent broken KÜ. BAB-BAR signs, though the first sign looks more like a *din* (which however would make no sense in this context).

¹⁰ A.L. Oppenheim: Essay on Overland Trade in the First Millennium B.C., *JCS* 21 (1969), p. 241.

¹¹ For *s/se-en-ni* meaning bronze vessel, see M. Liverani: Le Lettere del Faraone a Rib-Adda, *Oriens Antiquus* 10 (1971), p. 261, n. 45; W. von Soden: *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*, Wiesbaden, 1965, p. 1164b, s.v. *šannu(m)*. It is not clear to me why the passage EA 69:8, 10, 13 was cited in *ibid.*, p. 1048a, s.v. *sinnu* I.

¹² W. Helck: *Wirtschaftsgeschichte des Alten Ägypten im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend v. Chr.*, *Handbuch der Orientalistik*, Leiden/Köln, 1975, p. 270; J.J. Janssen: *Commodity Prices from the Ramessid Period*, Leiden, 1975, pp. 106-107.

¹³ For Nuzi, see B.L. Eichler: *Indenture at Nuzi*, New Haven and London, 1973, p. 15; M. Heltzer: *Goods, Prices and the Organization of the Trade in Ugarit*, Wiesbaden, 1978, pp. 30-31, 77-78.

¹⁴ For the identification of *ehlipakku* as a raw glass, see A.L. Oppenheim: Towards a History of Glass in the Ancient Near East, *JAOs* 93 (1973), pp. 259-266.

Manufactured Goods

EA 266:20-33 — Tagu of Gath-karmel sent a chariot with all its appurtenances;¹⁵ EA 151:48 — Abimlki of Tyre sent a whip to the Pharaoh; EA 168:9-10 — Aziru of Amurru sent vessels (*unūtu*); EA 99 — the ruler of Ammiya is ordered to send chariots and horses (besides silver and slaves) as a dowry to the Pharaoh. All the dispatches mentioned in this category are clearly gifts.¹⁶

Cattle

EA 301:19 — Shubandu of south Palestine sent 500 cattle; EA 242:11 — Biridiya of Megiddo sent 30 cattle. The price of an ox in Egypt at the time of the 18th and 19th Dynasties was about a half *dbn* (=5 shekels) of silver.¹⁷ The price of an ox in the northern countries was 10-20 shekels of silver.¹⁸

Slaves

EA 64:20-23 — Abdi-Ashtarti of south Palestine sent 10 maids of an unknown description;¹⁹ EA 268:15-20 — Milkilu of Gezer sent 46 maidservants, 10 young slaves and 5 *aširūma*;²⁰ EA 287:54-55 — Abdi-Heba of Jerusalem sent *x asiru* and *x+8* caravan escorts; EA 288:16-22 — Abdi-Heba sent 21 maidservants, 10 slaves and 80 *asiru*;²¹ EA 301:20 — Shubandu of southern Palestine sent 20 girls; EA 309:19-24 — a southern Palestinian ruler sent 10 maidservants and 10 slaves on one occasion and *x + 1* on another.²² EA 99 — the ruler of Ammiya is ordered to send 20 slaves as part of the dowry of his daughter to the Pharaoh.

¹⁵ For this passage, see N. Na'aman: *ašitu* (Sg.) and *ašātu* (Pl.) — Strap and Reins. *JCS* 29 (1977), pp. 237-239.

¹⁶ 'Thirty goblet(s of silver(?) and gold' are mentioned in letter EA 219:25, but the tablet is so broken that the context in which the goblets appear remains obscure.

¹⁷ Helck (above, n. 12), pp. 271-272; Janssen (above, n. 12), p. 176.

¹⁸ Heltzer (above, n. 13), pp. 20-21, 74. The average price of an ox at Nuzi was 10 shekels of silver; Eichler (above, n. 13), p. 15.

¹⁹ See the discussions by C. Krahmalkov: Northwest Semitic Glosses in Amarna Letter No. 64:22-23, *JNES* 30 (1971), pp. 140-143; O. Lorez and W. Mayer: Die Glossen *mi-ke-tu* und *ia-pa-aq-ti* in EA 64:22-23, *Ugarit Forschungen* 6 (1974), pp. 493-494.

²⁰ L. 18 of EA 268 reads: 5 LÜ^{meš} TUR (*šuhari*); cf. CAD S pp. 232b-235. The restoration DUMU.[KIN], 'messengers', suggested by A.F. Rainey (*aširu* and *asiru* in Ugarit and the Land of Canaan, *JNES* 26 [1967], p. 299), does not seem likely in this context, and according to the facsimile (*VS*, XI, No. 153) nothing seems to be missing at the end of the line.

²¹ The suggested restoration for 11.16-18 is as follows: (6) [*i-nu-ma PN lūMAŠKIM šarri*] (17) [*klā-ša-ad a-na mu-ḥi-ia la-a [a-nu-ma]*] (18) [*na-ad-na-ti 10 lūIR^{meš} [a-na qīa-[t]i-šū]*], 'When PN, the commissioner of the king, came to me, now did not I hand over to him ten slaves?'. The transport mentioned above in the text is actually a combination of two consecutive consignments from Abdi-Heba to the Pharaoh.

²² A tentative restoration of letter EA 309:19-24, partly based on the facsimile (*VS* XI, No. 174), is as follows: (19) [*ar²-ki ša aš-[pu²-ru²]*] (20) [*x+1 IR^{meš} TUR [meš?]*] (21) [*ū 1 M[E] KÜ.BABBAR[meš]*] (22) [*a-na LUGAL EN-[a]*] (23) [*10 IR^{meš} TUR?*] [*ū*] (24) [*10 mīGEMEmeš[...]*], 'After that I have sent

The price of a maidservant according to an Amarna letter (EA 369) was 40 shekels of silver. This fits well the prices in Egypt²³ and the north Syrian kingdoms in that period.²⁴ Accordingly, the deliveries of slaves and maids were of very high value. In letter EA 369, the Pharaoh sent his envoy to buy 40 maids at their full price. As mentioned above, no major military campaign was conducted in those years and the dispatch of all kinds of slaves seems to have been essential for the Pharaoh.

The group called *aširū(ma)* needs brief consideration. Rainey suggested that they were a kind of military personnel.²⁵ Astour, on the other hand, defined them as merchants organized in groups.²⁶ Without embarking on a detailed discussion, it seems to me that the material from Canaan supports Rainey's suggestion. Thus, in letter No. 5 from Taanach, Amenhotep orders the ruler of Taanach to send him tribute and troops, in which the *asiru* are included.²⁷ It is to be noted that both Milkilu of Gezer and Abdi-Heba of Jerusalem sent identical transports to the Pharaoh, which included slaves, maidservants and *as/širu* (EA 268 and 288). This proves that the *asirū* in the letters of Jerusalem belong to this category, despite Rainey's reservations:²⁸ again, merchants are out of question in both cases. The *aširū(ma)* may well be a kind of warriors, perhaps even bodyguards of the rulers.

Pharaonic Territories and their Products

Alongside the old Canaanite city-states, the Egyptians established a network of garrison cities to administer the territories under their power, probably set up by Thutmes III. Four were situated on the coast, Gaza and Joppa in the south and Ullasa and Šumur in the north; one city (or perhaps two) were located on the major caravan-route linking Mesopotamia and Syria with Palestine and Egypt (Beth-Shean and possibly Yeno'am²⁹); another such city, Kumidi, lay on the major crossroad of the Lebanese

x+1 young slaves and 100 (shekels) of silver to the king, my lord, [I have given(?) 10 [young(?)] slaves and 10 maidservants.' L. 20, the *meš* sign, which was restored at the end of the line, may be redundant. L. 23: the restoration is based on l. 20. L. 24: It seems that the line continues on the edge of l. 25, where the remnant of a *Glossenkeil* is seen on the facsimile. Granted that the restoration is correct, then two consecutive consignments were sent to the Pharaoh, parallel to the two consignments sent in letter EA 288.

²³ Helck (above, n. 12), p. 271.

²⁴ For Ugarit, see I. Mendelsohn: On Slavery in Alalakh, *IEJS* (1955), p. 68; W.F. Albright: Two Letters from Ugarit, *BASOR* 82 (1941), pp. 44-45. For Alalakh, see H. Klengel: Zur Sklaverei in Alalakh, *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 11 (1963), pp. 1-15. It is interesting to note that the average price of a slave at Nuzi was only 30 shekels; Eichler (above, n. 13), p. 16.

²⁵ Rainey (above, n. 20), pp. 296-301.

²⁶ M. Astour: The Merchant Class of Ugarit, *Gesellschaftsklassen im Alien Zweistromland und in den angrenzenden Gebieten* (18. Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale), München, 1972, pp. 15-25.

²⁷ *TT*, 5:4-15. There is no textual justification for Albright's translation [below, n. 36], pp. 23-24, which began a new sentence in l. 8, thus separating the *aširū* from the preceding lines.

²⁸ Rainey (above, n. 20), pp. 299-301.

²⁹ N. Na'aman: Yeno'am, *Tel Aviv* 4 (1977), pp. 168-177.

Beqa'. In all these places (except Kumidi) the city-state rulers were deposed and replaced by Egyptian officials who assumed administration of the city, in cooperation with the local urban institutions (see *EA* 102:22–23³⁰).

The vassal city-state rulers were liable to corvée of different kinds, which they fulfilled in the Egyptian garrison cities and the surrounding territories. They garrisoned the cities (*EA* 60:20–25, 103:13–15, 289:18–20; cf. *EA* 190:4–5, 197:37–39, 253:32–35), defended their walls and gates (*EA* 296:30–33) and guarded special installations (*EA* 294:16–24). They were also liable to repair damages (*EA* 160:26–28, 161:35–40).

The most instructive letters are those relating to the cultivation of the Egyptian territories in the area of the garrison cities. Letter *EA* 365 is the well-known episode of gathering corvée workers for cultivating the fields of Shunem.³¹ It has been suggested that the fields of Shunem were incorporated as a result of the destruction of the city by Lab'ayu.³² However, another solution seems preferable; in the annals of Thutmes III, after the list of booty taken from three Trans-Jordanian cities,³³ appears the following passage:

Now the fields (*3ḥw.t*) were made into arable plots (*ḥw.t*) and assigned to inspectors of the palace... in order to reap their harvest. List of the harvest which his majesty carried off from the Megiddo arable plots (*ḥw.t*): 207,300 [+x] sacks of wheat, apart from what was cut as forage by his majesty's army.³⁴

The first part of the passage is related to the fields of the above-mentioned three cities, which were re-parcelled and assigned to the supervision of the palace's inspectors. The second part is related to the fields in the neighbourhood of Megiddo, using the same

³⁰ The passage is related to the Egyptian garrison-city of Sumur and the official mentioned there was probably Appiha (*EA* 69:25, 29, 100:12, 105:35; cf. *EA* 103:11–15, 106:21–22). I cannot accept the opinion of A. Altman (*ZDPV* 94 [1978], p. 101) that the passage is related to the city of Ambi; Ambi was under the sovereignty of Byblos and as a subordinate town was not directly supervised by an Egyptian official.

³¹ For full bibliography, see A.F. Rainey: *El Amarna Tablets* 359–379. Supplement to J.A. Knudtzon: *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln*², Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1978, pp. 28–31. The crux of the letter is 11, 26–29. The identification of *uru-ia-pu-ki* with Japhia in Galilee (*ibid.*, p. 105; W. Röllig; Japu, *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 5 [1977], p. 260) should, in my opinion, be abandoned. No: only has LB pottery never been found at this site (Z. Kallai: *The Tribes of Israel*, Jerusalem, 1967, pp. 157–158 [Hebrew]), but the place clearly belongs to the nearby city-state of Shim'on. Yapú must doubtless be identified with the Egyptian garrison-city of Joppa, appearing with the same writing in other Amarna letters, where workers were concentrated for the corvée. The second toponym, Nuripta, may well be identified with Nabata, a Second Temple town situated to the east of Caesarea, on the main road leading from Joppa to Shunem (M. Avi-Yonah: *Gazetteer of Roman Palestine* [Qadim 5], Jerusalem, 1976, p. 82). Tentatively, 11, 26–29 of *EA* 365 might be translated as follows: 'They came here from the town of Joppa, from [your(?)] hand(?) (*iš-tu ŠU-[ka?]*) and from the town of Nuripta'; cf. *EA* 245:35: *i-na ŠU-ti-šu*.

³² A. Alt: Neues über Palästina aus dem Archiv Amenophis' IV., *Kl. Sch.*, III, pp. 169–175.

³³ See above, n. 29.

³⁴ J.A. Wilson in *ANET*, p. 238.

Egyptian term, *ḥw.t*, as in the first sentence. The word *ḥw.t* (arable plots), in contrast to *3ḥw.t* (fields), designates the administrative status of the territory belonging to the state.³⁵ Thus, the enormous amount of reaped sacks of grain came from a large area of arable land incorporated by the Pharaoh after the conquest of Megiddo. One may therefore conjecture that the fields, including the area around Shunem, were supervised by the nearby Egyptian garrison-city of Beth-Shean, which was annexed at that time.

Further light on these incorporated territories is gained from letter No. 2 of Taanach.³⁶ The letter was sent by Ahiyam, the ruler of Rehob, a city situated in the Beth-Shean Valley.³⁷ In one section (11, 13–16) he writes: 'Command your towns that they should do their (corvée) work. I am responsible for anyone who stays in the town'.³⁸

The responsibility of the ruler of Rehob for the corvée work of the towns of Taanach is an exact parallel to the responsibility of Biridiya of Megiddo for workers coming to Shunem from Joppa and Nuripta (*EA* 365). It seems that rulers situated in the bordering areas were (in turn?) responsible for the cultivation and harvesting of the Pharaonic fields in the Jezreel Valley, supervising workers originating from other city-states. The Jezreel Valley was in all likelihood crown property at this time, as it was in later periods.³⁹

The territorial scope of the other Egyptian garrison-cities is less clear. Kumidi's position in the Lebanese Beqa' is similar to that of Beth-Shean in the Jezreel Valley. Was the annexation of Kumidi combined with the incorporation of the nearby fertile fields? This might well be an important factor in the foundation of an Egyptian garrison city in the Lebanese Beqa'.

In letter *EA* 60 Abdi-Ashirta of Amurru says: 'And I had harvested the grain of Šumur' (11, 26–27),⁴⁰ Šumur was an Egyptian garrison city and its fields were thus cultivated by the neighbouring vassals.

Of royal granaries (*šunuti*) in the Egyptian garrison city of Joppa we know from letter *EA* 294:22. What grain was brought there? One possibility is that it originated from

³⁵ For *ḥw.t* see A.H. Gardiner: *The Wilbur Papyrus*, II, Commentary, Oxford, 1948, p. 55. I am grateful to Orli Goldwasser for this reference and for discussing with me all the semantic problems relating to the passage of Thutmes III cited above.

³⁶ W.F. Albright: A Prince of Taanach in the Fifteenth Century B.C., *BASOR* 94 (1944), pp. 20–23, with earlier references; A.F. Rainey: Verbal Usages in Taanach Texts, *Israel Oriental Studies* 7 (1977), pp. 33–64.

³⁷ Albright (above, n. 36), p. 23, n. 70.

³⁸ For 1, 16, cf. *EA* 174:8–9 and 363:7–8: *nīnu ibašānu ana māt Amqi*, 'we were in the land of Amqi.'

³⁹ Alt (above, n. 32), pp. 169–175; A. Alt: Galläische Probleme, Hellenistische Städte und Domänen in Galiläa, *Kl. Sch.*, II, pp. 388–391; M. Avi-Yonah: *The Holy Land from the Persian to the Arab Conquest (536 B.C. to A.D. 640): A Historical Geography*, Grand Rapids, 1966, pp. 136–137, 141–142; Z. Kallai in *Enq. Miqr.*, III, cols. 632–634, s.v. 'Emeq Yizra'el.

⁴⁰ The translation of *CAD* (E 340a) is not acceptable since it combines two compound sentences with the same verb.

fields in the territory of vassals. But apart from a single case (*EA* 224), such imposts were always connected with the preparations for an Egyptian military campaign (see below). Another possibility may therefore be suggested: the grain came from incorporated territories located near Joppa. Unfortunately, only late and indirect arguments can be brought in support of this assumption. Joppa is absent from the conquered Canaanite cities in Josh. 12 and is excluded from the territory of Dan (Josh. 19:40–46);⁴¹ this might indicate that Joppa was not annexed by the kingdom of Israel in the tenth century B.C.E. Indeed, according to the annals of Sennacherib, Joppa, with Beth-Dagon, Bnei-braq and Azor, belonged at that time to the kingdom of Ascalon. Ascalon apparently seized the harbour of Joppa with its territory to the east after the collapse of Egyptian rule in southern Palestine and held it until the eighth century B.C.E.⁴² Granted this reconstruction, the territory to the east of Joppa was an integral part of the Egyptian garrison-city.

The city of Gaza poses another problem. There is much textual and archaeological evidence for intensified Egyptian activity in southern Palestine in the time of the 19th and 20th Egyptian Dynasties (see below, p. 185). But the only evidence known to me for the area around Gaza during the 18th Dynasty is a tablet unearthed at Tell el-Hesi (*EA* 333).⁴³ Since the tablet was sent to an Egyptian official (*rabū*), it seems that his seat was at Tell el-Hesi, and that the place may have belonged to the Egyptian centre at Gaza.

Summing up the discussion, it seems to me that Thutmes III annexed not only the above-mentioned six garrison cities (as well as the Trans-Jordanian triad) but also considerable territory in their neighbourhood. The clearest case are the Egyptian lands in the Jezreel Valley, around Beth Shean; the evidence for the other Egyptian garrison cities is more limited or even obscure. The Canaanite vassals performed part of their corvée by cultivating these fields, whose produce was gathered in the cities. Part of the produce might well have been sent to Egypt, while the rest served for the maintenance of the Egyptian troops and administration stationed temporarily or permanently in the country.

Preparations for Egyptian Military Campaigns

Egyptian campaigns to the north were supported by extensive preparations undertaken

⁴¹ Josh. 19:40–46 probably belongs to the period of the United Monarchy; see Z. Kallai-Kleinmann: The Town Lists of Judah, Simeon, Benjamin and Dan, *VT* 8 (1958), pp. 134–160; B. Mazar: The Cities of the Territory of Dan, *IEJ* 10 (1960), pp. 65–77; Y. Aharoni: *The Land of the Bible*, London, 1966, pp. 266–267.

⁴² For the historical continuity between the Egyptians and the Philistines, see A. Alt: Ägyptische Tempel in Palästina und die Landnahme der Philister, *Kl. Sch.*, I, pp. 226–230. See also B. Mazar: The Philistines and the Rise of Israel and Tyre, *Proceedings of the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities* 1 (1965), pp. 5–6.

⁴³ See the detailed discussion by W.F. Albright: A Case of Lèse-Majesté in Pre-Israelite Lachish, with Some Remarks on the Israelite Conquest, *BASOR* 87 (1942), pp. 32–38.

by the vassals in Asia, thus relieving Egypt of the economic burden usually involved in such campaigns. It is assumed that as the commodities needed for these campaigns were collected from Canaanite cities, they formed an additional burden on the vassals of Thutmes III and his successors.

The steps taken by Thutmes III in organizing his campaigns to the north are very well known. He collected food supplies and all the equipment and materials needed for future campaigns in several bases situated along the Phoenician coast.⁴⁴ Thus for example, even the boats designed to cross the Euphrates were prepared in the mountains of Lebanon, near the Phoenician coast.⁴⁵

Thutmes III conducted his campaigns from bases located along the Phoenician coast, and therefore only the maritime bases are mentioned in his inscriptions. The Amarna letters (and letters Nos. 5–6 from Taanach as well) reflect the preparation made in anticipation of an expedition traversing Palestine and southern Syria.⁴⁶ The products mentioned in many of the Amarna letters (bread, grain, beer, wine, olive oil, honey, goats, cattle and straw) are similar to the commodities collected in the port towns in the days of Thutmes III (bread, olive oil, incense, wine, honey and fruit).⁴⁷ The vassals were also obliged to take part in the campaigns. It is reasonable to suggest that, as in many other cases, it was Thutmes III who invented this administrative device; his heirs carried on the same pattern.

COMPARATIVE MATERIAL

In order to evaluate the data collected in the preceding paragraph, we shall bring some comparative material from two other ancient Near Eastern realms.

The tribute paid by Ugarit to the Hittite kingdom was recorded in the treaty of Shup-piluliuma and Niqmaddu.⁴⁸ It consisted of 500 large shekels of gold, goblets of gold amounting to 100 shekels, goblets of silver amounting to 180 shekels, 13 garments of linen, 1300 garments of dark red wool and 1300 garments of light red wool. The tribute paid by Aziru of Amurru to the Hittites is mentioned in the treaty between Murshili II

⁴⁴ Alt (above, n. 2).

⁴⁵ J.A. Wilson in *ANET*, p. 240.

⁴⁶ For this campaign, see A.R. Schulman: Some Observations on the Military Background of the Amarna Period, *Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt* 3 (1964), pp. 51–69; H. Reviv: The Planning of an Egyptian Campaign in Canaan in the Days of Amenhotep IV, *Yediot* 30 (1966), pp. 45–51; Liverani (above, n. 11), pp. 259–260, n. 41; F. Pintore: Transiti di Truppe e Schemi Epistolari nella Siria Egiziana dell'età di El-Amarna, *Oriens Antiquus* 11 (1972), pp. 101–131; idem: La Prassi della Marcia Armata nella Siria Egiziana dell'età di El-Amarna, *Oriens Antiquus* 12 (1973), pp. 299–318. The problems involved with this campaign will be discussed elsewhere, in view of the arguments presented by Liverani and Pintore.

⁴⁷ J.A. Wilson in *ANET*, p. 239b.

⁴⁸ M. Dietrich and O. Loretz: Der Vertrag zwischen Suppiluliuma und Niqmaddu, *Die Welt des Orients* 3 (1966), pp. 206–245.

and Duppi-Teshub: 300 shekels of refined gold.⁴⁹ The rate of gold to silver in the contemporary northern states was 1:4–9.⁵⁰

Other data concerning tribute are known from the Assyrian empire in the first millennium B.C.E. The ruler of Bit Zamani (a north Mesopotamian state) paid Ashurnasirpal II two minas of gold, 13 minas of silver, 1000 sheep and 2000 (measures) of barley.⁵¹

In the days of Shalmaneser III, the north Syrian kingdoms paid the following sums: Patina — 1 talent of silver, 2 talents of dark red wool and 200 logs of cedar; Carchemish — 10 minas of gold, 1 talent of silver and 2 talents of dark red wool; Sam'al — 10 minas of silver, 200 logs of cedar and 1 homer of cedar resin; Kummuh — 20 minas of silver and 300 logs of cedar.⁵²

A partial list of the tribute imposed by Esarhaddon on Egypt after its conquest is also known.⁵³

The annual payment of tribute (*šattišam*, 'yearly') is repeated innumerable times in the Assyrian royal inscriptions; withholding tribute was always considered a sign of rebellion. Therefore it is quite surprising to find a relatively small number of documents recording the payments of tribute, although the royal archives of Assyria have mostly been discovered.⁵⁴ The same is true of the Hittites. It can be said that without the evidence of the royal inscriptions and treaties only a general and somewhat ambiguous picture of the vassals' tributes could have been drawn. This fact will be taken into account when the question of the Egyptian revenues from Canaan is discussed below.

CONCLUSIONS

The discussion so far has shown how complicated is the problem at hand. No clear-cut picture is to be expected under such circumstances, but certain conclusions may be drawn from the evidence.

One of the main objects of a historical discussion is to judge properly the balance of documentation. The Hittite and Assyrian royal archives illustrate how wide is the gap between the amounts of the annual tributes and the fragmentary evidence relating to the payments which was actually found in the daily records. Only the royal inscriptions and

⁴⁹ A. Goetze in *ANET*, p. 203b. For the tribute of Cyprus, see H.G. Güterbock: The Hittite Conquest of Cyprus Reconsidered, *JNES* 26 (1967), pp. 77–78.

⁵⁰ W.F. Leemans: Gold, in *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 3 (1969), pp. 512–513; Heltzer (above, n. 13), pp. 14, 27.

⁵¹ *ARAB* I, para. 475.

⁵² *Ibid.*, para. 601.

⁵³ R. Borger: Die Inschriften Assarhaddons Königs von Assyrien, *A/O*, Beiheft 9, Osnabrück, 1956, p. 114, II:13–19.

⁵⁴ For the material concerning the Assyrian tributes and gifts, see W.J. Martin: Tribut und Tributeleistungen bei den Assyriern, *Studia Orientalia* 8 (1936); J.N. Postgate: *Taxation and Conscriptio in the Assyrian Empire* (*Studia Pohl; Series Maior* 3), Rome, 1974; M. Elat: *Economic Relations in the Lands of the Bible c. 1000–539 B.C.*, Jerusalem, 1977 (Hebrew).

treaties enable us to appreciate the overall amount of the tributes. In Egypt, such information was not included in the royal inscriptions, and only the partial archive from Amarna has been found. The vassals were certainly obliged to pay their tribute on a yearly basis, and an uninterrupted payment of the tribute was always considered an essential sign of loyalty to the Pharaoh (see *EA* 60:19–32, 254:10–15). However, only a relatively small part of the contributions to Egypt were apparently mentioned in those letters. Most of the contributions must have been collected by the Egyptian officials during their excursions in the country without being recorded in the letters. Only on the occasion of writing on other matters were the payments of tributes by the vassals mentioned in order to emphasize their loyalty to the Pharaoh. The conclusion is inevitable: even our main source, the Amarna letters, contains only a small part of the whole set of contributions, and must be used only as a guide to the overall picture.

The sums paid by several south Palestinian vassals are quite remarkable. Jerusalem sent (undoubtedly during a short time) two very valuable consignments of 5000 shekels of silver and scores of different kinds of personnel.⁵⁵ Milkilu of Gezer sent 50 persons of various kinds and was obliged to pay on another occasion 2000 shekels of silver; 1400 shekels of silver were sent by an unknown southern ruler, 100 shekels and 20 slaves by another, 20 maids and 500 cattle by Shubandu and 10 maids by Abdi-Ashtarti. There are also the four deliveries of raw glass from the same area. Several consignments were sent from north Palestine and the Phoenician coast, but there is no record of tribute from the south Syrian and Trans-Jordanian cities.⁵⁶

I have claimed elsewhere that Helck's division of the Egyptian province of Canaan into three administrative districts (Canaan, Amurru and Upi in Helck's terminology)⁵⁷ is not acceptable. I have rather suggested that the Phoenician coast and Palestine (apart from its northern parts) were one administrative unit while southern Syria (including the Bashan and the kingdom of Hazor) were treated separately. This structure was apparently the outcome of the events of the Middle Bronze Age, when southern Palestine and the Phoenician coast were under Egyptian influence (though not necessarily direct rule), while southern Syria and northern Palestine were grouped with the Syro-Mesopotamian West Semitic kingdoms. The latter thus acquired an altogether different administrative and cultural tradition from the other territories of Canaan, and was organized within a separate framework.⁵⁸ The Egyptian policy in the two districts under

⁵⁵ One might express reservations about the high numbers included in letter *EA* 287:53–57, since the caravan was robbed on its way and did not reach Egypt. Thus, it can be argued that Abdi-Heba intentionally exaggerated in order to reduce his future payments (see II. 57–59: 'Let the king, my lord, know that I cannot send a caravan to the king, my lord.')

⁵⁶ Astour (above, n. 26), p. 23, has suggested that a group of 10 *asirūma* were sent to Egypt from one of the kingdoms situated in the land of Amqi (*EA* 173:13–14). But this letter dealt entirely with military operations and its sender was probably an Egyptian official, sending the Pharaoh 10 prisoners of war (*asirū*).

⁵⁷ Helck, *Bez.*, pp. 248–252; cf. Aharoni (above, n. 41), pp. 146–153; R. de Vaux: *Le Pays de Canaan*, *JAOS* 88 (1968), pp. 25–28.

⁵⁸ Na'aman (above, n. 7), pp. 166–172, 227.

their control may have been different; the northern and less effectively controlled areas of Syria were relieved, partially or even totally, from the burden of paying the yearly tribute.

A comparison of the above-mentioned contributions to the tribute paid by the much larger and richer north Mesopotamian and north Syrian states to the Hittites and the Assyrians shows that the Egyptian burden was not light at all. Admittedly, the Amarna letters mixed together tribute and gifts while the Hittite and Assyrian royal inscriptions and treaties mentioned mainly (or even exclusively) tribute. On the other hand, the Amarna contributions were only a portion of the levies imposed by the Egyptians on their vassals. This point should be elaborated: the involvement of Egypt in the affairs of Canaan was more profound than the Hittites' and the Assyrians' involvement in their vassal states. Canaan under Egyptian rule might be described as half-way between an incorporated province and a vassal state, with a balance between the local rulers with their city-states on the one hand and the Egyptian troops and administration with their garrison-cities on the other hand. This difference in the relationships of the empires with their vassal states should be kept in mind when comparing the burden which they imposed.⁵⁹

The nature of the tribute and gifts is also significant. Most of the consignments from Palestine were of silver, cattle and personnel, with extraordinary dispatches of raw glass and a chariot. From the Phoenician coast were sent wood, copper/bronze and special deliveries like raw glass and vessels. It is clear therefore that all those contributions were actually directed to the Egyptian court and not to the Egyptian garrison-cities in Canaan.

Apart from cattle, agricultural products are only sporadically mentioned. Grain and oil appear only once, while wine, honey etc. are absent. But since agricultural land was a part of the Egyptian garrison-cities' territories, the products of that land might have been sent to Egypt. Agricultural products like wine and oil were probably sent from Canaan to Egypt either by commerce or even as tribute, although it is not attested in our letters.⁶⁰

The existence of a network of supply for the Egyptian army embarking on military campaigns to the north, both along inland roads and along the coast, was an important military and economic factor of the Egyptian occupation of the land.

Byblos is an exceptional case. No less than 70 letters pertain to that city; nevertheless, Rib-Adda is only once ordered to send copper and bronze to Egypt (*EA* 77:6-15) and he answers that he has none. On another occasion he gave copper to the

⁵⁹ For the Egyptian point of view, see D.B. Redford: The Taxation System of Solomon, in J.W. Wevers and D.B. Redford (eds.): *Studies on the Ancient Palestinian World*, Toronto, 1972, pp. 149-155.

⁶⁰ For export of grain, oil and wine from Syro-Palestine to Egypt during the Ptolemaic period, see A. Tcherikower: Palestine under the Ptolemies, *Mizraim* 4-5 (1937), pp. 20-23.

Egyptian messenger Appiha (*EA* 69:25-28).⁶¹ On the other hand, Rib-Adda asks in many letters for provisions, stressing his distress. This situation might well explain the lack of contributions from Byblos, and it is significant that his only payment (*EA* 69:25-29) is probably dated just after the death of Abdi-Ashirta of Amurru.⁶² Was the despondent tone of Rib-Adda a device to escape the payment of tribute to Egypt?

There are several signs testifying to the intensification of the Egyptian occupation of Canaan, particularly in southern Palestine, during the time of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th Dynasties in Egypt. Alt was the first to observe this phenomenon, relying mainly on the written sources.⁶³ The new excavations at Aphek, Lachish, Tel Sera', Tel Masos, Deir el-Balah and Timna⁶⁴ support Alt's proposal. This intensification of the Egyptian involvement in Palestine might well have caused the flourishing of the above-mentioned Palestinian sites in the last stage of the LB. Thus, the opinion that there was a collapse of the Canaanite culture in the thirteenth century B.C.E. should be abandoned. The intensified Egyptian activity in the country may well have brought changes in the picture drawn above, which was mainly based on evidence of the fifteenth-fourteenth centuries. However, the discussion which is necessary in order to trace the main lines of the Ramesside pattern of government in Canaan is beyond the scope of this article.

⁶¹ The apparent consignment mentioned in *EA* 126:4-6 is very doubtful and has therefore been excluded from the above discussion.

⁶² Campbell (above, n. 7), pp. 80, 134.

⁶³ A. Alt: Ägyptische Tempel in Palästina und die Landnahme der Philister, *Kl. Sch.*, I, pp. 216-230.

⁶⁴ M. Kochavi: Canaanite Aphek, *Expedition 20* (1978), pp. 12-17; D. Ussishkin: Excavations at Lachish 1973-1977, *Tel Aviv 5* (1978), p. 91; E. Oren and E. Netzer: A Cult-Building in the Excavations of Tel Sera', *Qadmoniot* 6 (1973), pp. 53-56 (Hebrew); Sara Gröll: A Note on the Hieratic Texts from Tel Sera', *Qadmoniot* 6 (1973), pp. 56-57 (Hebrew); E. Oren: Tell esh-Shari'a, *EAEHL*, IV, Jerusalem, 1978, pp. 1065-1066; A. Kempinski: Tel Masos, *Expedition 20* (1978), pp. 35-37; Trude Dothan: *Excavations at the Cemetery of Deir el-Balah* (*Qedem* 10), Jerusalem, 1979; B. Rothenberg: *Timna, Valley of the Biblical Copper Mines*, London, 1972.