

THE HITTITE PROBLEM

By Alan Montgomery

Introduction

During the 19th century, Europeans came across certain monuments at Yazilikaya. Yazilikaya is situated just outside Boghazkoi, the site of ancient Hattusas. Hattusas was the ancient capital of the Hittite Empire. At Yazilikaya are many rock carvings showing important figures of the Hittite world. One such carving represents the assembling of two kings, each holding their royal emblems together with their respective entourages. One is dressed in a tight-fitting dress with a high conical cap and wore a beard. The other is dressed in loose flowing robes with a square-turreted headdress and has no beard. The headdress of the first resembled the well-known Phrygian bonnet and the second resembled a Persian style crown. Two figures next to them held symbols of a new moon and an eclipsed sun. These two were eventually identified as late seventh century kings, Alyattes, the king of Lydia and Cyaxares the king of the Medes. According to Herodotus [Histories I.74] these two kings came to do battle. The eclipse was a sign from heaven - a bad omen for warring nations - so the two were reconciled in a peace treaty due to the urging of the kings of Babylon and Cilicia. This was sealed by the betrothal of the daughter of King Alyattes to the son of Cyaxares. The date of the rock carving was thus set in the late seventh century or the early sixth century.

The Assyrian Connection

The dress of the two figures certainly represents what we know of the royal apparel of the seventh century. In addition, the regal weaponry displayed was a club and battleaxe well known from Assyrian carvings of the same date. Furthermore, these weapons appeared on Assyrian reliefs only as late as the reign of Ashurbanipal (668-632 BC). Nearby, the ruins of Hattusas revealed architecture of the palace area that resembled that of the Northwest Palace of Nineveh built in the early seventh century by Sennacherib, King of Assyria. [Barth, H. pp 128-157]. The dating of these carvings of Yazilikaya prior to the seventh century would appear to be excluded.

The Assyrians also influenced the art of the ancient Hittites. An art expert expressed his opinion after studying the rock carvings at Yazilikaya and Boghazkoi that the Hittite art forms were the result of Assyrian innovations that were introduced into Mesopotamia in the seventh and sixth centuries BC and not before. The most prominent motifs of Hittite art belong to the seventh century and were not present in the art of even the late eighth century BC. [Puchstein, 1890.] This too would seem to dictate the date of the New Hittite Empire to the seventh century and not before.

This opinion was reversed because of the discovery of the archive of the Hittites found at Boghazkoi in 1906 by Winckler. Thousands of Hittite clay tablets were discovered. These tablets were in several languages including Hittite, Nessian and cuneiform Babylonian. As the scholars deciphered these texts they came across a peace treaty with an Egyptian Pharaoh named Ramesses II, a mighty king of the 19th Dynasty. The existence of the treaty was not news. The Egyptologists had found the Egyptian version of the treaty. The two treaties were compared and found to be the same. The treaty could now be firmly dated to the time of Ramesses II of Egypt, the thirteenth century BC, over six hundred years earlier than had been suspected. This discovery touched off a controversy. In the end the secure date of the treaty to the 21st year of Ramesses reign was unavoidable. The Egyptian chronology was fixed to within 25 years by pharaonic lists and confirmed by astronomy. The evidence associating the New Hittite Empire to the seventh century was discounted.

The Hittite annals, however, continue to provide problems rather than solve them. To start, the Hittite annals from the Boghazkoi archives showed many similar features in style and expression to the Assyrian annals of the seventh century. The tablets revealed a state of scientific knowledge that rivalled the Assyrians and Neo-Babylonians. Hymns, literature, mythology and prayers continued the trend in seventh century similarities with their

neighbours. Hittite civil law showed many of the advances that appeared in the era of the Assyrian Empire. This produced some wonderment among Hittitologists, that a civilization of the 14th and 13th century BC had produced, in all that concerns science, law, literature, royal annals, traditions and habits, a culture so closely resembling that of the “Assyrian Empire of the eighth and seventh century BC and the Neo-Babylonian Empire of the seventh and sixth centuries.” [Velikovskiy, I. 1978] Still more puzzling was the disappearance of all this in the century following the fall of the New Hittite Empire and its duplication over the next six hundred years.

Then the Hittitologists found the annals of Mursilis II, recounted in a text entitled the “Deeds of Suppiluliumas”. It revealed a trans-generational struggle of the Hittites of Hattusas against Arzawa and Assuwa in the west and Assyria in the east and Egypt in the south. In his seventh year Mursilis II expected an Egyptian attack and asked his allies to report any movement of the Egyptians in Nuhasse just south of Hittite territory. He promised reinforcements if the Egyptians attacked. In his ninth year Mursilis II records that the Assyrians retook Carchemish, a Hittite stronghold on the Euphrates River. These events were unknown in the thirteenth century. The first mention of Hittite soldiers in the Assyrian annals was the eleventh century under Tiglath-Pileser I. The first capture of Carchemish in Assyrian history was not recorded until Sargon II at the end of the eighth century. The Assyrians lost it and then recaptured it late in the seventh century.

To the historians the taking of Carchemish as well as the apparent alliance of Egypt with Assyria was all new information. No such alliance was apparent in the thirteenth century. The only alliance of Egypt and Assyria is recorded in II Kings 23:29; “While Josiah was king, Pharaoh Necho King of Egypt went up to the Euphrates River to help the king of Assyria.” Pharaoh Necho later fought with King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon at Carchemish. He lost and Nebuchadnezzar advanced and took all Egyptians possessions in southern Levant, including Judah. The pharaoh's help could not prevent the fall of the last vestiges of Assyrian power. The Chaldeans, Babylonians and the Medes finished off Nineveh, Assur and eventually the last outpost, Harran. The participation of the Hittites is not mentioned.

The annals of Mursilis II had another unintended consequence. The rock figures of Yazilikaya were studied and found to have the same cartouches and the same style clothing as those of Mursilis and his successors, including Hattusilis III who had made the treaty with Ramesses II of Egypt. They had to be the same age. Dating Mursilis II to the thirteenth century put the royal robed entourages with the symbols of the solar eclipse in their palms in the same ‘The King James’ version of this verse has “went up against the king of Assyria”. But the King of Lydia with his Phrygian bonnet and the King of the Medes with his Persian tiara were unknown in the thirteenth century.

Hittite Stratigraphy

About the time that the archives of Boghazkoi were discovered, the city of Gordion to the west was excavated. The Phrygian king named Gordias, the father of Midas, had built Gordion. The Phrygians were among the allies of Troy in the Trojan War and were well known to the Greeks. The Greeks preserved a legend of the most famous Phrygian king, King Midas. The legend was that Midas acquired the magic touch so that everything he touched turned to gold. This talent backfired when he touched his daughter and turned her into gold much to his chagrin. The legend aside, the Assyrians also knew of King Midas. In the days of Sargon II, King Midas formed a coalition of Anatolian states and pushed east into the area known today as Cilicia. The Assyrians who called him Mita, King of the Mushki, perceived Midas as a threat.

At Gordion, the German excavators identified a stratum related to the time of King Midas. The east-Greek pottery and terracotta were familiar to the Greek archaeologists and dated the stratum to the eighth century. However, it was pointed out that the site also contained Hittite pictographic hieroglyphics. Since these hieroglyphics were associated with the New Hittite Empire, which ended in the thirteenth century, the date of the stratum was put in doubt. The east-Greek pottery of the Gordion stratum had also been found at Boghazkoi and its chronological significance was also challenged.

After World War II, the Americans under Young continued the excavation of Gordion. The top stratum was clearly identified as belonging to the time of the Persians. The Persians under Cyrus the Great had battled the famous King Croesus of Lydia. He had asked the soothsayers if he ought to attack the Persian king. The soothsayer replied that if he attacked the Persians he would destroy a great kingdom. He attacked only to lose and have his own kingdom destroyed. This was in 548 BC. The third stratum was again identified as belonging to the Phrygians and dated to the eighth century. The Phrygian kingdom came to an end when the Cimmerians had attacked it, in 687 BC. This left the second stratum sandwiched neatly between these two precise dates.

The second stratum turned out to be a conundrum. It contained a copious amount of Hittite pottery and tell tale pictographic hieroglyphics. Young was faced with two obvious problems to explain. First, how had the clayey soil containing the Hittite material found its way to Gordion and formed a four-meter layer all over the Gordion. Young explained that the second stratum had been imported by the Persians and placed over the existing Phrygian layer.

Young states, "For the purposes of dating, the shards or layer of clay are of little use; they are almost entirely Hittite." The pottery was "a deposit already in the clay when it was brought in from elsewhere to be laid down over the surface of the Phrygian city mound. [Young, p. 12] Young's explanation was dubious of several grounds. First, it fails to address why the Persians would want to perform this task. In no other site did any conquering power perform such a feat. It would take an immense amount of manpower to transport such a layer from Hittite territory miles to the east. It has no apparent advantage. Neither the positioning nor size of the deposit makes any particular sense. What earthly purpose could such a procedure accomplish?

Second, the original layer that belonged to the period 687 to 548 BC is missing. Where did it go? Even if the Persians wanted some stratum removed for construction, it would not be entirely missing. There would remain some areas untouched. And where was the pottery and tools of the missing inhabitants? None were found. The excavator could not imagine a circumstance to explain why the Persians removed a layer, only that layer and that entire layer. He therefore concluded that the site had been abandoned. This conclusion is also dubious. When a city is abandoned dust and erosion accumulates a layer containing no artefacts at all and removes some of the soil already present. A layer with no contents mixed by erosion in some places with the previous layer is expected. None was observed at Gordion.

It is almost as if Cyrus the Great had conceived some diabolical plot to confuse further archaeologists. Such an idea is paranoid. One must conclude that either the Persians meticulously removed many thousands of tons of the layer then present and replaced it with a Hittite layer of equal proportions for a purpose not understood or that the whole proposition is the result of poorly framed archaeological theory.

Such a conclusion puts the question of dating the New Hittite Empire back in question. Gordion strata, read in the normal archaeological way, would tell us that the New Hittite Empire rose following the chaos created by the Cimmerians and the fall of King Midas and his Phrygian kingdom. That the Hittites expanded to the west, took over Gordion and held Lydia and Assuwa in check. Then, a century later, the Hittites fell under the power of the Persians. That would again bring back the late seventh early sixth centuries as the time of the New Hittite Empire. This must reflect back on the conclusions reached by the archaeological investigators of Boghazkoi, the site of the Hittite capital Hattusas.

Bittel and Gueterbock excavated the Hittite capital in the 1930's. The top stratum, Level I, they found late Phrygian and post-Phrygian ceramics together with Greek language inscriptions, evidence of the seventh and sixth centuries. There were also Hittite seals. In the next stratum, Level II, they found much Hittite pottery and Hittite seals with pictographic hieroglyphics of the Hittite Empire. This was evidence of the thirteenth century. But there was also east Greek pottery found in the houses of Level II. Among the thirteenth century Hittite items there was pottery, which could not be dated earlier than the eighth/seventh century. The excavators concluded that the houses had been occupied in the eighth/seventh century and that the occupants had kept the old thirteenth century pottery in their homes as

well as seventh century pottery. The excavators dated the strata to the eighth/seventh century but were not clear why Phrygian related people would keep the thirteenth century Hittite heirlooms; or why they kept nothing that could be dated between the thirteenth and the seventh century? [Bittel & Gueterbock]

The confusion at Gordion and Boghazkoi played a role in interpreting the excavations at Alisar. Alisar is a mound situated 50 miles southeast of Boghazkoi. It was active during the Hittite era. In Period IV at Alisar, the excavators found Hittite pictographic seals – the hallmark of the Hittite Empire. They dated Alisar IV to the thirteenth century. This dating was made despite the presence of Late Geometric pottery and Iron Age fibulae or buckles.

Furthermore, these particular buckles were well-advanced buckles not used until the eighth century. It was further pointed out to the excavators that some of the pottery when compared to the pottery of Gordion had close affinities to the Phrygian pottery group and was probably seventh century. The date of this stratum was shifted to the seventh century according to the evidence. The excavators decided that the pictographic Hittite seals belonged to a much later date and their connection to the Hittite Empire was “rather questionable” [Von der Osten]

The dates of the stratum and those following were adjusted four hundred years. This deprived the Hittites of their script and deprived the script of a people who used them. The conclusion could not and did not stand. At first, excavators had tried to separate the Hittite pictographic seals from the east Greek and Phrygian pottery dates. This was awkward. Then, they had tried to connect the Hittite pictographic hieroglyphic seals to the pottery and the fibulae and separate them from the Empire. This was ridiculous. There was no satisfying solution.

Eventually, more and more Hittite sites in Anatolia were excavated. In each case, strata that could not be dated earlier than the eighth century followed the Hittite stratum. This left a hole in the strata between 1200 BC, the end of the Hittite Empire, and 750 BC, the beginning of the Phrygian kingdom. The gap was systematic all over the Hittite territory. The eminent Turkish archaeologist could say in the 1960's that there was a dark age in central and southern Turkey “between 1200 BC and 750 BC in central Asia minor.” [Akurgal, E.1961. *Die Kunst Anatoliens*, Berlin, p. 7] Taken at face value this means the total abandonment of the central plateau of Turkey, that was the Hittite heartland for over 400 years. Neither the Hittites nor their enemies came to inhabit the Hittite land. Such a disappearance cannot be accepted without bringing the basic principles of stratigraphy into doubt. The problem, however, is not the stratigraphy or the archaeologists. The real problem is the unsynchronised state of the archaeological dating system, part of it dated by Greek and Assyrian chronology and part dated to Egyptian chronology, without the two systems being themselves synchronized.

The Neo-Hittite States

Although no trace of the Hittite Empire can be found in central or southern Anatolia after 1200 BC, it was not the end of the Hittite culture. To the east of Hattusas across the mountains lay such cities as Tegarama, Marash and Carchemish and such states as Samal and Commagene. They used the Hittite pictographic script and displayed Hittite style in their monumental art. These cities were not part of the empire but arose independently in the tenth or ninth century. Nevertheless when the Assyrians invaded their collective territory they banded together into a coalition.

The history of these states has been gleaned mostly from the records of the Assyrians. The monumental art of these cities shows increasing Assyrian influence with time but gives every indication of local indigenous city state cultures. This speaks of local autonomy and development rather than centralized control. It is inconsistent with the Hittite Empire with its vassal treaties and international correspondence. In the conventional view these city-states sprang from the Empire whereas history has shown that local autonomous states tend to grow into centralized empires. The other anomaly stems from the fact that the local Hittite city states did not arise until over 300 years after the fall of the Hittite Empire. How then was the Hittite tradition transmitted to the Neo-Hittite states after such a long lapse in the Empire? Why was the tradition not copied from the Hattusas exemplars rather than reverting

to something much more primitive? How is it that the imperial Hittites were so advanced that only in the seventh century was the rest of the world able to catch up to them? And, being that advanced what overcame them?

Carchemish

The largest and strongest of the Neo-Hittite states was Carchemish. It is situated on the big bend in the Euphrates River. South of Carchemish the Euphrates flows southeast to the Persian Gulf. North of Carchemish the Euphrates bends back toward Mount Ararat. Archaeologists anticipated that Carchemish would be continuously occupied. This meant that it would connect the Neo-Hittite states to the Hittite empire. They were disappointed. Woolley excavated Carchemish. In the inner citadel he discovered a tomb containing artefacts reminiscent of the Hittite Empire. The tomb was a cremation burial and it yielded many small but significant objects. These included gold beads, nails with golden heads, lapis lazuli, steatite and ivory. There were also 39 figurines made of gold. Woolley noted the similarity of these figurines to the rock carvings at Yazilikaya, just outside Hattusas. The images of the gods and nobility were almost identical in respect of both clothing and emblems. The chief god wore a long robe, carried a winged disk above its head, and wore a conical headdress, open kilt and a caduceus-like staff. A female figure wore a pleated skirt reaching to her feet.

The soldiers wore short kilts, pointed helmets and boots with curled up toes. The close relationship to the Yazilikaya rock reliefs of the New Hittite Empire was unmistakable. This should have been a triumph for Woolley. It was not. Instead it was a great puzzle and produced a great debate.

The tomb that Woolley had opened was situated definitely in the stratum designated to the late Neo-Assyrian Empire – i.e. it was a seventh century grave. How was Woolley to explain the obvious 13th century look-alikes as artefacts of the seventh century? One could not rewrite centuries of Assyrian history. Could some family have held onto these treasured heirlooms for 600 years and then for some unknown reason buried them with a single relative? Or could there have been a sudden revival of art from the Hittite Empire after 600 long years? Both these ideas seemed strange. The other peculiarity is that the imperial art appears to be closely related to the art of the Neo-Hittite seventh century rather than the earlier Hittite art, such as the Lion Gate at Malatya.

Woolley decided that the items had to be imitations of imperial Hittite art. Gueterbock disagreed, "Two possibilities offer themselves: either the figurines were made before 1200 and handed down as heirlooms until they were deposited in the tomb or they were made in the Late Hittite period but in a style that survived the empire. Sir Leonard (Woolley) seems inclined to favour the second. I would rather prefer the heirloom theory." But Gueterbock had absolutely no evidence connecting the royal family of the empire with that of seventh century Carchemish [Gueterbock, 1954].

Another problem concerns the fortress. The Assyrian King, Shalmaneser III, in the ninth century BC had Assyrian artists depict the fortress of the Carchemish on the bronze gate at Balawat. The fortress walls had triangle shaped tops. These tops are similar to those depicted by Ramesses II in his account of his battle at "Kadesh". Kadesh here is the Semitic term for "holy city or temple". This is the same Ramesses II who made a treaty with the Hittite King Hattusilis III in the 13th Century. But had the fortress's appearance really remained unchanged in 400 years?

Woolley also excavated a wall called Herald's Wall. A relief on this wall again showed a Hittite goddess. This goddess had an elaborate headdress with a crown divided by the vertical grooves and joined halfway up by cross-lines. Comparing this to a sculpture of a Hittite goddess at Yazilikaya, Woolley observed a "striking resemblance" (sic) [Woolley, 1952].

Again Woolley noticed a wall that was part of the latest Hittite structures of Carchemish and at the same time an art style and iconography that was similar to the imperial Hittites of the 13th century. Further along Herald's Wall was King's Gate. The King's Gate sculptures showed clear signs that it was a much later Neo-Hittite style and date. A Wall containing

sculptures of the early imperial style and at the same time sculptures of a later Neo-Hittite style was self-contradictory.

Another feature of the Neo-Hittite cities like Carchemish is its use of Hittite pictographic script. By the end of the Hittite empire, the Hittites had almost stopped the use of these pictographs and had increased their use of cuneiform. They used this in writing in Babylonian, the diplomatic language, but also used Hattili and Neshili languages. The Neo-Hittite states, as they were closer to Mesopotamia were more likely to be influenced by Assyrian or Babylonian cuneiform. However, they showed little sign of converting from pictographs to cuneiform. Again the Neo-Hittites showed reversion to the ancient ways. Or did they precede the modernization shown by the Hittites of Hattusas?

Malatya

In the mountains to the north of Carchemish, lies Malatya. Delaporte excavated Malatya. Delaporte uncovered Hittite monuments similar to those of the imperial Hattusas. He first dated them to the 13th Century; this included the famous Lion Gate. The lion's image has a round face, large feet and a stylised mane represented by long curly lines or spirals. Art historian, Frankfort and Hauffman agreed with Delaporte that the lion belonged to the late stage of the Hittite Empire. Then a problem emerged. As the stratigraphy of Malatya became clearer, it was seen that the stratum of the Lion gate immediately preceded that of the Assyrian levels. The Assyrian levels began late in the 8th century and the Neo Hittite Stratum of the Lion Gate had to be 8th century [Bossert, H. T. *Altanatolian*, 1942, Berlin, p.69].

The evidence from the Neo-Hittite states only illustrate further the problems encountered in Anatolia. At Boghazkoi, the site of Hattusas, strangely placed 7th century pottery emerged in the imperial Hittite stratum. At Alisar, strangely placed 8th/7th century fibulae occurred in the imperial Hittite stratum. At Gordion strangely placed Hittite pottery of the imperial Hittite age appeared above the 7th Century Phrygian stratum. At the Neo-Hittite sites the same correlation with the 8th and 7th century continued to baffle and puzzle archaeologists, who were constantly in two minds and two dates, the 13th and the 8th/7th century.

Conclusion

The problems of the imperial Hittite archaeology and history can be summarized as follows:

1. The New Hittite Empire art of the Anatolia shows signs of Assyrian influence of the 7th and 6th centuries.
2. The Styles of writing used in the annals is similar to the style of 7th century Assyrian kings.
3. Legal proceedings have Assyrian equivalents in the 7th century.
4. Scientific knowledge reflects the world of the Assyrian and Babylonian cultures of the 8th to 6th centuries.
5. Weaponry in the Hittite sculptures reflects the royal weaponry of the 7th century.
6. Pottery of the 7th century occurs in New Hittite Empire strata.
7. Anatolian stratigraphic dates and chronology contradict the historical placement of the Hittite empire.
8. The history contained in the imperial Hittite annals of Mursilis II reflect Assyrian power that is 8th century or later.
9. Hittite sites in Anatolia lack occupation between 1200 and 750 BC.
10. The Neo-Hittite sites do not exhibit characteristics of offspring of an Imperial Hittite influence.

What evidence caused the archaeologists to date the Hittite Empire to the 13th century in complete defiance of all archaeological data and historical data of the annals of Mursilis II?

The sole reason for this date was the treaty signed between Hattusilis III and Ramesses II of the 19th Dynasty of Egypt. Egyptian chronology places Ramesses II firmly in the thirteenth century. This presupposes a complete and unquestionable confidence in Egyptian chronology. Is such confidence justified?

The problems listed above stem from the conventional dating system. The problematic dates are based partly on the Assyrian chronology and partly on the pottery chronology of the Greek archaeologists. Can we be more confident in Egyptian chronology than Assyrian chronology or Greek chronology? For Greek pottery dating archaeologists date certain styles of pottery but they usually agree within 25-50 years. Despite the occasional shifting of some dates, a century of experience has produced results widely accepted among Greek archaeologists. Assyriologists are extremely confident of dates back to 900 BC to within a year. Dates for Assurballit I, circa 1325 BC rarely differ by more than 20 years.

The reason for this is not just the continuous king lists available to Assyriologists. It is also the existence of Limmu listings. It was not the custom of Assyrians to number years rather they named them. Limmus is the term used for the names given each year in Assyria. The reign lengths of the various kings can be verified by counting the number of Limmus given for a king's reign and crosschecked by identifying those Limmu names found on documents that relate to his reign. In addition many kings left inscriptions with their military exploits and their relationship to their forefathers. There is little to suggest any errors in the 14th century above 20 years.

Biblical chronology is some help in verifying Assyrian dates. Although some minor differences in dating appears among scholarly chronologies, the biblical chronology can be reconciled to back to the accession of Tiglath-Pileser III at 745 GAD and most would consider it possible to reconcile biblical chronology back to the reign of Israelite King Ahab and Assyrian King Shalmaneser III who fought each other at the battle of Qarqar in 853 GAD.

There is no hope of moving Assyrian dates to the degree suggested by the problems listed above. Its impact on Babylonian history, biblical history and chronology would be prohibitive.

To fix the problems in Hittite history and archaeology, the events, art and strata that date to the thirteenth century must be moved to the seventh century. This requires that the treaty between Ramesses II and Hattusilis III be moved to the seventh century. Within the context of the Hittite material there is no Hittite chronology to offend and the Assyrian and Greek dates generally agree on this date. Within the Egyptian context this cannot be accomplished simply. Egyptologists are firm about placing Ramesses II in the 13th century. They are certain of their dates within 20 years just as the Assyriologists. There are no reigns of kings or dynasties that can be reduced by 700 years.

In the early years of investigation the Egyptologists did not realize that during the First Intermediate Period and the Second Intermediate Period that the dynasties in Manetho's lists ruled in different regions of Egypt at the same time. Once they realized that these dynasties ruled in parallel, the dates of the dynastic period in Egypt were reduced by 2000 years.

But the days when such mistakes and corrections can produce large shifts are gone. To suppose that paralleling dynasties for 600 years between the 19th Dynasty of the thirteenth century and the 26th Dynasty of the seventh century is realistically impossible. The Assyrians conquered Egypt in the seventh century. Their opponents, the Ethiopians had controlled the Nile delta for the last quarter of the eighth century and the Libyan Dynasties had controlled Egypt for over a century before that. Synchronisms occur in the reigns of the Ethiopian Taharka and King Hezekiah in the Bible and between Ethiopian monarch Shabataka and Assyrian King Sargon II in the last decade of the eighth century.

There is, however, one possible solution to the problem of reducing the date of the 19th Dynasty. That is to substitute it for the 26th Dynasty. This scheme assumes that the

Manetho was confused about the dynastic order. Under this assumption he could have had two independent sources of information for the 26th Dynasty and may have listed the same dynasty twice so that the seventh century dynasty also appeared in the thirteenth century. Failing to recognize that the two sources spoke of the same dynasty, he created two dynasties. Indeed, this was the suggestion of Velikovsky [Velikovsky, 1978.]

Much of Velikovsky's case relied on identifying Necho II or Necos II of the 26th Dynasty as the alter ego of Ramesses II. According to the Bible and Greek historians such as Herodotus, Necho II was a powerful seventh century monarch who fought Nebuchadnezzar, the Neo-Babylonian King of Babylon. At Carchemish the two monarchs faced off and Nebuchadnezzar won and Necho II lost. Velikovsky claimed that a Ramesside inscription entitled "Poem of Pentaur" was an exact account of this battle from the Egyptian point of view. In the Egyptian version the battle takes place at Kadesh. Kadesh is Hebrew for Holy Place or Holy City. Egyptologists assert that this battle took place in southern Syria at Riblah.

Velikovsky demonstrated that Riblah, the modern Tell Nebi-Mend had neither the required topography nor the required towns situated along the route to Kadesh. Kadesh was one of the ancient names for Carchemish. Carchemish did have the required topography and the correctly named towns along the approaching road. Showing that both pharaohs attacked Carchemish was necessary but not sufficient as proof that they were alter egos.

What would have been conclusive is to compare the Egyptian inscriptions of Necho II to those of Ramesses II. Unfortunately, there are none. Though the foreign conquests of a pharaoh of the 13th century BC are known from prolific inscriptions that are found in every part of Egypt, the foreign conquests of a just as mighty seventh century pharaoh are totally unknown in Egypt. Not a single monument or papyrus has shed the slightest light on Necho's military campaigns. This should puzzle Egyptologists.

In contrast the Greeks, the Israelites and the Babylonians all describe the battle that changed the balance of power in their world on their watch. Not only are the inscriptions missing but also the tomb and mummy of Necho II are missing; and not just the tomb of Necho II but the tombs and mummies of all the 26th dynasty pharaohs. Yet not even one tomb or mummy of the thirteenth century 19th Dynasty is missing. This fact alone should have alerted Egyptologists of an error of major proportions.

What might account for this strange duality? Could it be that the two pharaohs are the same person? Are the two dynasties the same dynasty with different names? Are the accounts of Ramesses II the missing accounts of Necho II? Are the stories of Necho II in foreign sources the reason that, except for the Hittites, no mention of the great pharaoh Ramesses II has ever been found? Velikovsky compared the campaigns of Ramesses II and Necho II in sequence.

First, according to both Egyptian and biblical sources, there was a Palestinian Prince who interrupted a march northward at Megiddo. This prince (Josiah) was shot with an arrow and died. The royal successor was captured and taken captive to Riblah and from there to Egypt, never to be heard from again. The record of the Bible concerning Necho II and the inscriptions of Ramesses II agreed in detail [II Kings 23:29-34].

According to Egyptian sources and the Bible three or four years later Pharaoh proceeded northward again to meet his archenemy at Carchemish. The battle was lost and Pharaoh retreated. The enemy captured all the territory between Egypt and Carchemish, including Jerusalem [Jeremiah 46]. Again the record of the Bible concerning Necho II and the story of Ramesses II agreed in detail.

Sixteen years later, Jerusalem was under attack by the Chaldeans and Babylonians. The Egyptian army left Egypt and forced the Chaldeans to break the siege. Yet, they returned quickly to continue the siege [Jer 37:5-11]. It would appear that the Egyptians lost again and had to sue for peace. Historians assume some kind of treaty was signed. Ramesses II, also sixteen years after the battle of Carchemish entered into a treaty with his archenemy, Hattusilis III. Again, within the same interval of time there came about the same circumstances.

Both Ramesses II and Necho II encountered resistance at Megiddo and killed the local prince and took a local prince hostage, fought and lost a battle at Carchemish and made peace with the opposition sixteen years later. Certainly history repeats itself. Coincidences do happen but there are here too many details and coincidences to dismiss these ones. They provide a solid basis to propose that Ramesses II and Necho II are one and the same person.

To further this proposal that Ramesses II and his treaty with Hattusilis and its thirteenth century date must be shown to conflict with archaeological data. Already it has been shown that a thirteenth century Hattusilis III produces a number of significant problems for Hittite stratigraphy and art historians and that apart from this treaty the Hittite Empire can be securely dated to the seventh century without conflict. What then do archaeology and its stratigraphy say about the 19th Dynasty?

Stratigraphy in Egypt plays a smaller role because much of Egypt is on the fringe of the desert with its shifting sands and many of the monuments are carved right into rock faces. Nevertheless some results in Egypt are puzzling. Tell Nebesh lies a few miles from the site of Tanis. A statue and a temple constructed by Ramesses II were discovered there. Pharaoh Amasis made a small addition to it in the sixth century and left his inscription. Amasis also allowed his Cypriot mercenaries to inhabit the town and many of their graves have been uncovered. There were also graves from the time of Ramesses II. One would expect that a town in the rich Nile delta would be populated for a considerable time after Ramesses death and that their graves might also be found. They are not. Nor are there any additions to the temple between the thirteenth century and the sixth. It is a rare temple indeed that in the course of 700 years does not require substantial repairs or the occasional addition. Inscriptions of the pharaoh who did the repairs normally accompany such repairs. The remains left by Ramesses II have had no inscriptions added by the pharaohs of the years 1200 to 600 BC.

During the seventh century Psammetichus, father of Necho II, employed Greek-speaking mercenaries. He gave them the town of Tahpenes or Daphnae to live in. This town was situated near the mouth of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile. The mercenaries' job was to protect the border. Tahpenes is also mentioned in the book of Jeremiah as having a royal palace and pavement [Jer 43:9]. The site of Tahpenes is Tell Defenneh. Petrie, the excavator of Tell Defenneh, found the Greek armour, tools and pottery of the seventh century. Petrie also discovered a temple built in the time of Ramesses II and a statue initialled with Ramesses II cartouche. This was rather unexpected as no material of other dynasties was found nor any artefacts that predated the seventh century [Petrie 1888]. At Tell Maskhuta, the biblical Succoth, the excavator Holladay found the next strata above the Hyksos strata was a stratum with 7th century pottery. Yet, several statues of Ramesses II are known from this location [Kitchen, 2003].

In the Levant, there are also places where artefacts of Ramesses II are found. The most famous perhaps is the Tomb of Ahiiram. The coffin of Ahiiram is inscribed with the words, "The coffin which Ithobaal, son of Ahiiram, King of Gwal (Byblos), made for his father..." The inscription is written in Hebrew script. The date of the Hebrew script was difficult to determine but it is close to the one carved in a water tunnel during the reign of Hezekiah about the end of the eighth century. There was also Cypriot pottery found in the tomb dated to the seventh century by Dussard. But the date of Ahiiram tomb was disputed. As well as 7th century Cypriot ware there was also a 13th vase with a cartouche of Ramesses II.

Furthermore, the style of the coffin was also 13th century. The conflict between the two dates was never satisfactorily resolved. The one assumption that was never tested was the chronological system. If Ramesses II and Hattusilis III were placed in the seventh century the Ahiiram tomb evidence would totally be reconciled.

At Byblos several pieces of stone were discovered with the cartouche of Ramesses II. Other Ramesses carvings were found at the mouth of the Nahr el-Kelb river. A doorway was also found with Ramesses II cartouche. As Byblos was always allied to the Egyptians, this is not surprising. What is surprising is the revelation of one of the archaeologists, Jedijian. She wrote, "The excavators were unable to perceive any stratification of the Iron Age, a period

which must have been a period of great commercial activity. [Jedijian].” Thus the excavators were unable to identify any stratum that could be dated between 1200 – 600 BC. That is, there was no stratum between the end of the 19th Dynasty and the time of Nebuchadnezzar.

At Beth Shan, Ramesses II set up a stele dated to his ninth year. This he set up next to one of his father Seti I. The content of the stele is not so amazing as the context. The excavators found the stele in Stratum V. The pottery of Stratum V was Iron II (900-600 BC). Stratum IV belongs to the Neo-Babylonian and Persian era. Above this stratum III was clearly Hellenistic Greek 4th Century. The excavators having found a thirteenth century stele in Iron II postulated that somebody had “thrown it up” [Rowe, 1930]. That is, somebody removed it from Stratum VII where it belonged chronology-wise and replaced it in Stratum V. No historical accounts supported this view nor did any physical evidence. But without such an assumption the excavators would be forced to challenge the opinion of the Egyptologists and their chronology.

This exposes the crux of the problem. The raw data of archaeology is conformed to Egyptian chronology by adding speculative assumptions that cannot be proven or disproved. This avoids directly challenging Egyptian chronology so that the thirteenth century dating of Ramesses II continues.

At Lachish a similar situation occurred. The excavator, Macalister, found a temple. The temple was rebuilt and repaired during the 18th Dynasty as attested by the scarab of Amenhotep III in the foundation deposit. There was also 19th Dynasty material found at this level but it was mixed in with Israelite pottery of Iron II. This was explained as pottery intruded into the temple level from above by Israelite burials.

At the citadel, the excavators discovered messages written on potsherds. These potsherds came from Iron II pottery. The messages were from a nearby fortress at Azekah. It became obvious that Lachish and Azekah were the last two fortresses holding out against some hostile force. The citadel was also severely burned as well as the city's walls. In Iron II, Lachish suffered two known attacks: one by Sennacherib, King of Assyria and one by Nebuchadnezzar. The excavators determined that this level belonged to the Babylonian destruction, but before the final attack on Jerusalem at the beginning of the sixth century.

Again, the excavators discovered anomalous finds. Among the debris of the citadel and the gatehouse of the city were found scarabs of Ramesses II as well as potsherds from the time of the 18th and 19th Dynasty. The excavators, knowing that the destruction level dated to this sixth century had to explain the presence of 14th/13th century pottery in its ashes. They concluded that the Israelites in their construction of the defences of Lachish had dug so deep that they had dug up this extraneous material from a lower level. Again, the excavators had to find an explanation or challenge the Egyptian chronology. Again, they made an assumption not supported by history or physical evidence but which could neither be proven nor disproved.

At Ugarit, the uppermost stratum is considered 13th/12th century, in the time of Merenptah. The surface level contains the object of various ages, the oldest of which dates to the seventh century. Curtis states its post-19th Dynasty obscurity in these words, "The history of Ugarit really comes to an end in the twelfth century. In the seventh and sixth centuries the highest point in the Tell was inhabited, as is shown by the remains of buildings and a small cemetery of sarcophagi made of large stone slabs, which contain iron spears, bronze brooches and alabaster flasks [Curtis, p. 48]". There were no significant artefacts in between. Both Seti and Ramesses mention Qatna as an important town occupied by Egyptian forces. Yet after the end of the 13th/12th century stratum, Qatna is deserted for 500 years until the seventh century [Pfeiffer].

Alalakh fell into the hands of the Hittites during the reign of Suppiluliumas 1380 - 1340 (GAD). During the twelfth century (GAD) the Hittite Empire fell. Smith in describing the art at twelfth century Alalakh said "Still more interesting are the sculptures belonging to the palace of this period. The lions belong to the earliest stage of the type that lasted in Syria for six centuries and closely resemble those, which guard the tomb of Ahiiram of Byblos [Smith

1946]. Is the six centuries of unchanging sculpture an anomaly of Alalakh or is the date of Ramses II 600 years in error?

Thus at Byblos, Beth Shan, Lachish, Ugarit, Alalakh and Qatna there is not one single stratum that dates from the latter 12th to the 8th century that lies superimposed over a stratum containing artefacts of Seti I or Ramesses II.

Everywhere artefacts of Ramesses II are found in Palestinian and Syrian either the stratum is dated to Iron II or there is a hiatus of at least 500 years in the occupation of the site that follows immediately thereafter. The proposal to shift the Ramesses II and Hattusilis III to the seventh century fails to cause any stratification problems in the Israel, Phoenicia or Syria. In fact, it would close "dark ages" at many sites and resolve conflicts. Such a dating could have been proposed by archaeologists were it not in direct opposition to the assured results of the Egyptian chronologists.

According to Herodotus, the father of Necho II was Psammetichus. He was appointed pharaoh by the Assyrian king, Ashurbanipal, but later revolted against him. Ashurbanipal was forced to acknowledge Egyptian independence because of his problems elsewhere. As a result Psammetichus invaded Israel. He quickly, ran into an army of Scythians. He made peace with the Scythian king by offering him the city of Beth Shan. The Scythian king accepted. After that time it became known as Scythopolis, the city of the Scythians. It was still called Scythopolis by Josephus in the first century A.D. Despite the many military achievements of Psammetichus and Necho II not a single monument in Syria or Palestine has been attributed to either pharaoh. Neither has a single scarab been found there in Iron II strata. By identifying Psammetichus and Necho II of the 26th Dynasty with Seti I and Ramesses II of the 19th Dynasty the Velikovsky scheme provides the missing seventh century monuments and scarabs.

The examination of Egyptian related archaeology and history has produced the following problems:

1. The date of Ramesses II and his treaty with Hattusilis is incompatible with a range of seventh century chronological markers in the Hittite realm.
2. In Egyptian towns known to be inhabited in the seventh and sixth century there are unexplained gaps when no dynasty after the 19th and before the 26th Dynasty leaves any temples, statues or inscriptions.
3. There is a lack of monuments, stele and historical inscriptions or papyri of the seventh century pharaohs of the 26th Dynasty in Egypt and in particular Psammetichus and Necho II and Hophra.
4. The tombs and mummies for all 26th Dynasty pharaohs are missing.
5. In a tomb at Byblos, a thirteenth century style coffin was made and inscribed by a seventh century Phoenician king in seventh century Hebrew script while a Ramesses II cartouche was found imprinted on a piece of Late Bronze pottery.
6. Monuments of Seti I and Ramesses II are found in Iron II strata at Lachish and Beth Shan.
7. There are 600-year occupation gaps in cities with close links to Egypt, such as Byblos, Qatna, and Ugarit.
8. There is a lack of artefacts of the 26th Dynasty in the Iron II strata of Palestine and Syria, which should date to the time of Psammetichus and Necho II.
9. There is no mention of Seti I and Ramesses II in the literature of foreign countries, with the exception of the Hittites who made a treaty with Ramesses II.
10. It is unexplained why the locations, sequences and consequences of the battles Ramesses II and Necho II are coincidental.

The problems found in Hittite land and those found in Egypt are different and yet they are similar. In thirteenth century Hattusas, houses contained seventh century Greek and Phrygian pottery. A thirteenth century vase with Ramesses II cartouche is found in the tomb of Ahiram where there were seventh century script and Cypriot pottery. Many centuries after the end of Hattusas, there developed a new culture that evolved an art similar to that of Hattusas. Many centuries after the end of the 19th Dynasty came a dynasty with amazingly similar historical battles. At Hittite sites the strata dated to 1200 BC is followed by eighth/seventh century strata. In the Levant, Ramesside controlled cities cease to be populated after 1200 BC and are reoccupied only in the seventh/sixth century. At Carchemish, a seventh century tomb contains gold figurines of the 13th century. At Beth Shan and Lachish Iron II strata contains stele and scarabs of the 13th century.

Thus thirteenth century objects appear in seventh century locations and seventh century objects appear in thirteenth century venues. Gaps and dark ages of 500-600 years occur in both realms. This cannot be a coincidence. The problem here cannot be one of bias or incompetence or misunderstanding. The flaw must be something basic and common to both the Hittites and the Egyptians. What they have in common is a chronological system based on Egyptian dates framed by the dynastic order of Manetho, an Egyptian priest of the third century. The real problem is that the Egyptian chronological system is not synchronized with the Assyrian, Greek or Biblical system. So when they come together in the same site or venue there are anomalies. The Egyptians cannot claim that theirs is the right system and all the others false, not at least without appearing arrogant.

To fix the system the Egyptian chronology must be adjusted to agree with Greek and Assyrian chronologies. The date of Ramesses II ought to be determined from the date of Hattusilis III, which is to be based on Assyrian chronology and Greek pottery dates. Then the anomalous dating of artefacts will no longer be anomalous. The gaps and dark ages will close and disappear. The Hittites will have their first millennium origins and Assyrian influences restored. The 26th Dynasty will gain its tombs, mummies, inscriptions and history.

This brings us to the question of Haremhab. Is he to be placed last in the 18th Dynasty as one translator of Manetho does? Or should he be placed first in the 19th Dynasty? Several monuments show Seti and Ramesses II adoring Haremhab and claiming descent from the royal 18th Dynasty monarchs. Armais is the last name on Manetho's list of the 18th Dynasty rulers. This is part of Manetho's confusion. This has likely been the result of Manetho's interpretation of the Abydos List. This is a list of cartouches of the pharaohs. It shows Seti I and Ramesses II adoring their ancestors. These include Haremhab and Amenhotep III, skipping over the last 4 kings of that dynasty. After it proceeds back to the first ruler of the 18th Dynasty, it omits the Second Intermediate Period kings. The omission of the foreign Second Intermediate Period kings lessens the credibility of this monument. Did the Ramessides omit other foreign dynasties?

This Armais of the 18th Dynasty is interpreted as the Haremhab of the Ramesside monuments, although Armais ruled only 4 years and Haremhab ruled at least 12. According to Eusebius the first ruler of the 26th Dynasty was Ammeris the Ethiopian. This is the real Haremhab. Haremhab has been included twice.

Velikovsky pointed to a number of connections between Haremhab and the Ethiopian period. First Haremhab is shown next to the Ethiopian Prince Taharka, who would eventually become Pharaoh Taharka in 690 GAD. His cartouche was associated with the tomb of Petamenophis, an official in the Ethiopian period.

The evidence of the most conclusive kind came from the tomb of Haremhab. The tomb scenes show the career highlights of his life. At one point he is appointed Army Commander-in-chief. The king appointing him is thought to be Tut-Ankh-Amun. But it is not he. The name of the king has been chiselled out. Furthermore, the king is a foreigner. He speaks to Haremhab through a translator. The foreign king sits on horseback. This the Egyptian pharaohs did not do. The artistic style of the drawing of the horse is Assyrian. Just like the art style at Hattusas during the Empire showed signs of Assyrian influence so did the time of Haremhab. Only in the late eighth or early seventh century could such an Assyrian influence be explained.

If the 18th Dynasty immediately preceded Haremhab then a number of major problems appear. How would they rule during an era of known Libyan rule? Libyan rule occurred more than a century before the beginning of the Ethiopian dynasty.

An invasion of Thutmose III into Judah and his subsequent capture of Syria would be an 9th century event and this would put him in conflict not just with the Mitanni but also with the Assyrians. Also Pharaoh Shishak would become a Hyksos pharaoh. However, there is no evidence that the Hyksos near the end of their rule ever invaded Palestine or Syria.

The only association of Haremhab with Amarna is that his tomb contained some Amarna aged pottery. The Mycenaean pottery of a style similar to the Amarna age pottery that was found in Haremhab's tomb was likely stolen from the tombs of Akhetaten, Akhenaten's capital. In Velikovsky's scheme there is a gap between the two dynasties. The advancement of the 18th Dynasty in history is about 480 years. The advancement of the reign of Haremhab is about 630 years leaving about 150 years in between.

Conclusion

The major objection raised by Velikovsky's critics has been the idea of alter egos. The critics have been quick to dismiss this idea as though they were not within legitimate methodology. However, had Velikovsky looked solely at historical and archaeology material to conclude that Ramesses II was a seventh century pharaoh, he would have left himself open to the criticism that there was already a seventh century dynasty and no replacement dynasty was needed.

The placement of Ramesses II in the seventh century requires either that he ruled in parallel with Necho II in a different part of Egypt or that he actually is Necho II. The former is easily refuted. The latter – no matter how improbable – must be true because the former is impossible. Thus the alter ego hypothesis is merely a logical extension of the proposition that Ramesses II is a seventh century pharaoh. If one denies Velikovsky the alter ego methodology, he is really denying that there is any evidence of a seventh century Ramesses II. In which case, it should be easy to explain the evidence cited above.

The fundamental basis of Velikovsky's claims lies in the incongruence of Egyptian and Israelite history. To reconcile these histories was Velikovsky aim. He claimed that this required a shift in the 18th Dynasty of 450-500 years and a shift in the 19th dynasty of 630-660 years. The alter egos proposition is an important one but a secondary one dependent on the historical incongruities he presented.

Other revisionists have offered different models for reconciling Egyptian chronology. The most widely published of these is James (Centuries of Darkness) and Rohl (Pharaohs and Kings). They each have their reasons for dismissing Velikovsky – none of which stand detailed scrutiny. Refuting all these reasons would be a boring and rather tedious process. Rather, let us examine their proposed model based on the results of analysing the Hittite problem.

If they have successfully solved this problem then it is worth a closer look at their debunking of Velikovsky. These results of the Hittite analysis demonstrate the inability of the James and Rohl models to account for all the evidence. They both hold to the integrity of the Manethonian dynastic order and this negates the flexibility they need to explain the Hittite results. Their models conform only to Egyptian data and fail to take Greek or Assyrian chronology into account in several areas, including the Hittites. In other words, unless Assyrian, Egyptian, Greek and Biblical chronologies are synchronized, the revision of history fails.

James

In Centuries of Darkness, James strategic goal is revealed in his chapter on the Hittites. It is a bad misstep. He wants to connect the end of the Empire with the Neo-Hittites states by reducing the chronology 250 years from 1200 to 950 GAD using a newly discovered king.

Compared to his other chapters the methodology and logic are sadly lacking. The proposed chronology is connected somewhat to the Greek dates and thus to the Assyrian dates, but the dates are not fully resolved.

An example is the treatment of the monuments of the dynasty of Suhis. He cites the scholars who dated these monuments earlier than any other and accepts this judgement. This judgement is based on the fact that the Suhis dynasty monuments are closer to the imperial Hittites than any other. So the art historians have tried to bring them as close to the date of the Hittites as possible. James whole thesis is that these dates are flawed. If so the dates of the Suhis monuments are also flawed and there is no point in adjusting the Boghazkoi dates to them. Suhis dates cannot be corrected until after the Hittite dates are corrected. This is a circular flaw, where one bad date influences another, which influences the first. However much his proposal reduces the Dark Age discrepancy it fails to reconcile with Assyrian or any other chronology. Thus it is only a partial solution.

James has no difficulty establishing that the problem is one of stratigraphy and no difficulty assigning the cause to Egyptian chronology. In this he and Velikovsky are in complete agreement. He establishes that the stratigraphic system leaves gaps and "dark ages" between the Late Bronze and Iron Ages. These gaps are in the range of 250-600 years. James' first flaw is that he ignores his own data. The stratigraphic gaps are between 250 to 600 years.

However, the bulk of his gaps are 350 to 500 years. Thus a 250-year advancement of the chronological system still leaves large unexplained stratigraphic gaps.

James' second flaw is that he makes no distinction between a stratigraphic gap and a chronological gap. For example, In the Hittite area of Anatolia there is a stratigraphic gap of 450 years, 1200 – 750 BC. The date 1200 BC represents the orthodox date of the imperial Hittites. However, the case argued above puts the Hittite Empire in the seventh century, a full century after the Phrygian period. The chronological gap is 1200 to 600 GAD, or 600 years. Thus the chronological gap does not end at the stratigraphic gap. James' linear advancement of 250 years of Late Bronze strata does nothing to resolve the problems of the Hittite stratigraphy which is over 600 years in size.

Rohl

Rohl has attacked the problem from an entirely different perspective. He accepted the Manethonian dynastic order and attempted to maximize the compression of Egyptian chronology. He does succeed at synchronizing some events with biblical chronology. He thus at least partially avoids fixing a broken chronological system without matching to a new more reliable chronology. However, closer scrutiny of these synchronisms leaves serious doubts concerning their reality.

Rohl's placement of the Amarna letters in the days of Saul and David is unconvincing. The conflict in Saul's time was Israel versus Philistia. The whole tenure of the Amarna period is intrigue of several mischievous states, mainly Damascus, vying for power under the nose of a stronger Egyptian overlord. The main threat to the overlordship of Egyptian territories is the Hittites. The biblical texts do not mention Egypt or Damascus as major players in the time of Saul and David. Nor is there a mention of any Hittite superpower in the time of Saul, although there is mention of Urriah the Hittite in the acme of David's day. It is a mismatch of Amarna letters to place them in the reign of Saul. David's foes after the Philistines were the Aramaeans. They did not create havoc for him. He handled them very well. The Aramaeans did not harass their neighbours; they had little money left after they had paid tribute to the Israelites. It is a mismatch to place the Amarna letters in the context of David's reign.

The mismatch continues into the next dynasty as Seti I invades Beth Shan and sets up a stele in Beth Shan in the northern area of Israel in the middle of Israel's most powerful times, during the reign of Solomon. While Solomon has everybody building the Temple and his palace, an Egyptian army supposedly invades and establishes a military post in the middle of Israel, which is still there in the days of Ramesses II. And what is the response of King Solomon, the richest and most powerful king of that world at that time to this insufferable

arrogance? We are expected then to believe that Solomon gave neither diplomatic nor military response to this. This is incredible. It never happened.

Rohl speculates that it is Haremhab that offers a marriage alliance with Solomon and takes Gezer as a dowry for the bride. The evidence for this is almost non-existent – a picture of Haremhab as Commander-in-chief invading Palestine under Tutankhamun. And the evidence that Velikovsky adduced to demonstrate that Haremhab was appointed by a foreign king is not mentioned.

Another synchronism is the pharaoh of the Exodus. The Exodus was an unmitigated disaster. In a short period of time they lost their livestock, their crops their stored wealth in the form of jewellery and their elite army corps and their pharaoh. The change in Egyptian economics and power would have been dramatic. According to Rohl the Exodus took place in the reign of Dudimose. We know little of the reign of Dudimose, except that it was short. Many very short-lived pharaohs preceded his reign. His dynasty was not powerful and rich like one would expect of a pharaoh who controlled over 2 million slaves. There is nothing to suggest that a major economic or political disaster befell his reign. Nor is there any legendary material pointing to him as Moses pharaoh. It too is a mismatch to the conditions described in the Bible.

Rohl's choice of Ramesses II as the Shishak seems right at first, although the nickname Sessi does not fit the Biblical name Shishak despite his eloquent pleas to make it so. There is substantive evidence that Ramesses II controlled Israel and even took Jerusalem. However, Ramesses II also made a treaty with Hittites' Hattusilis III.

Rohl must place Hattusilis III in the same reigns as he places Ramesses II – in the 10th century with King Solomon and his son King Rehoboam. Unfortunately, the 10th century in Assyrian history was a time of greatest weakness for Assyria. They could barely defend their homeland. Thus they could not at this time be a threat to attack or take Carchemish as stated in the annals of Mursilis II, Hattusilis III's father. No Assyrian king took Carchemish until Sargon II in the eighth century. Thus where the Egyptian evidence may look good the proposal fails when evidence outside Egypt is taken into account.

Furthermore, Ramesses II as Shishak poses another similar problem: the Hittites themselves are not in evidence during the reign of Solomon in the Bible. According to Rohl, this would be during the reign of Seti I. Seti sets up his stele and establishes a military base at Beth Shan in order to defend Egypt against the Hittite menace. But are the Hittites a menace? Solomon mentions the Hittites only as distant trading partners. They are not an imperial threat. Only later when the Syrians are attacking Samaria, do they appear to be a threat. The Aramaeans are frightened away, thinking that the Israelites have hired the Kings of the Egyptians and the Hittites [II Kings 7:6]. Here at last the Hittites and the Egyptians are mentioned together in the Bible as imperial powers. This happened during the Omride Dynasty, at which time the Amarna letters were first written according to Velikovsky. Rohl's synchronism for Ramesses II is a mismatch. He could have proposed that Ramesses II ruled in the time of the Omrides.

That would have synchronized Biblical history with Israel but then it undermines the connection with the conquest of Judah. Egyptian imperial power, Hittite imperial power, Assyrian imperial power and the capture of Jerusalem only occur in the sixth century, which is where Velikovsky placed him.

Thus the proposed models of the James and Rohl do not match the historical and archaeological evidence as Velikovsky's model does. Velikovsky may have bitten off too much as an outsider but he had the freedom to look at things from a fresh point of view and produce a viable time line for ancient history. The mistakes he has made along the way ought to be corrected but it should also be acknowledged that his errors are not crucial to his original proposal and do not deny his basic position.