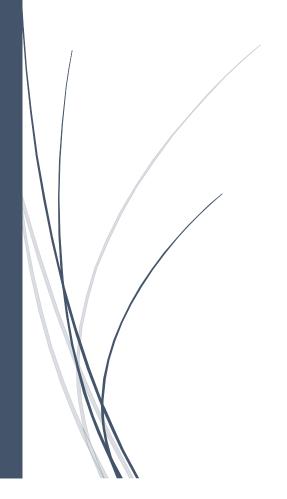
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Archaeology, The Low Chronology Paradigm and the "state of indescribable confusion"

Problems in Dating Biblical Events and Periods



Contents

Archaeology, The Low Chronology Paradigm and the "state of indescribable confusion"	2
Introduction	2
I Low Chronology Paradigm	2
1.0	2
2.0	3
3. 0	4
4.0	4
5. 0	4
II Criticisms of the Low Chronology Paradigm?	5
Sources For Egyptian History	10
III Problems with Archaeology Dating Generally	11
Manetho's Dates	16
Criticism of Consensus Chronology	17
Pseusennes II	19
Siamun	19
Egyptian Chronology as a source of Cross Dating	22
Rihliography	23

Abbreviations:

BDB Brown Driver Briggs
Fau. Fausett Bible and Encyclopedia Dictionary
IEBF Illustrated Encyclopedia of Bible Facts
TNJE The New Jewish Encyclopedia
Str. Strongs
Bibliography and Appendices

Archaeology, The Low Chronology Paradigm and the "state of indescribable confusion"

Introduction

What is the nature and relationship of the *two* classes of data now available for writing a history of ancient Israel; texts and archaeological evidence? This is a question raised by Dever (Dever 1997) and as relevant today as it was when he raised it. This paper seeks to take a short but critical look at the low chronology paradigm of Israel Finkelstein the archaeologist. In this paradigm archaeological data is given priority over the literary sources of contained in the biblical text. In this paper we will review the paradigm and critique it. We will then go on to look at some of the limitations in using archaeological data to reconstruct history. We will do this by reviewing the situation in the dating of Egyptian chronology, through Manetho, a criticism of the consensus and this will set the problem into relief by observing how difficult it is to see which Pharaoh reigned alongside King Solomon using archaeological data even of some of the most reliable kind. We finish with seeing how Egyptian Chronology is sometimes used to date biblical events despite the lack of absolute dates. This gives the scholar pause in being too certain about dating anything in the second millennium BCE and backwards. The paper is in the form of notes so the result will be very limited in application and yet they need to be noted.

I Low Chronology Paradigm

Finkelstein in laying out his alternative paradigm (Kuhn 1962) of chronology lays out what we can call five pillars¹ which underlie his course of action in regard to archaeology and its relationship to the history of Israel and the biblical text. The five pillars are

1.0

The destruction of the present paradigm which has the biblical text as a clear source of historical

¹ Following his terminology regarding the prevailing paradigm.

evidence and guide in reading the archeological evidence. It is at time a secondary source and at other times a primary source. By pointing out the weaknesses of the present paradigm repeatedly, Finkelstein advances its downfall at every opportunity².

2.0

Presenting an alternative hypothesis knowing that in the theory of paradigm shifts (Kuhn 1962) there is always and alternative hypothesis ready to take over from the collapsing paradigm. So here Finkelstein points out in 1996: "In what follows, I wish to discuss the search for the archaeology of the United Monarchy free of any conventional wisdom, text bias, or irrelevant sentimentality. I will try to demonstrate that there is an alternative hypothesis to the prevailing theory, though I will not be able to prove it (nor would any scholar be able to prove the prevailing view; the alternative view is no less appealing and historically sound than the accepted one" (I. Finkelstein, 1996). So Finkelstein makes clear his intention both in the title of the paper and in the paper itself³. The language he uses in approaching the task is the language of science, theory and hypothesis. His low chronology view he claims is unprovable and no better than the present view but seeks to remove the text bias, conventional wisdom and irrelevant sentimentality⁴. He does not tell us what he will replace text bias⁵ with nor which wisdom he intends to use instead of conventional wisdom. In this strategy because Finkelstein will go to an area to reinterpret the archaeological evidence in light of the new paradigm, on the clear understanding that in the world of knowledge there are always many ways to read one set of facts. This is more so in archaeology when the material is dumb, with inscriptions it is a very different but still the method is used by the minimalists. Finkelstein's intention is to show "there is an alternative hypothesis to the prevailing theory" (Finkelstein 1996 p.170). For example Finkelstein critiques what he calls "the pillars" of the present paradigmatic interpretation of the Megiddo four entry gate being assigned to the

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² (I. Finkelstein 2005, 32), (I. Finkelstein 1996, 178) (Finkelstein, Ussisskin and et.al 2007)

³ It is clear then Finkelstein's goal is not historical truth but something that will challenge the prevailing theory

⁴ This sentimentality element may refer to the frustration those who are follow the accepted standards of present day scholarship feel when him and his colleagues will not accept any reading of the archaeological signs except that it agrees with their theory. So we see in the case of Garfinkel

⁵ Perhaps bias towards archeological artifacts and findings

10th century time of Solomon. Finkelstein: "The attribution of the four entry gate" to those days have been challenged: "the Megiddo gates seems to post-date Stratum VA and IVB(Ussishkin 1980). "All three foundations of the archaeology of the United Monarchy has been shown to be far from reliable, undisputed chronological anchors" (I. Finkelstein 1996). This leaves the road open for an alternative paradigm. The principle applied is very simple it is much easier to destroy a building, however solid, than it is to build one, or in one hour you can pull down a building which took six months or even a few years to build.

3.0

Traditional archaeology and biblical exegesis focusing on sites related to the Omride Dynasty, where there are more straightforward clues. These are Samaria and Jezreel. Ashlar evidence which connects Samaria with Megiddo Stratum VA-IVB. These blocks have unique masons' marks (Lamon and Shipton 1939 p.25). They are connected to two palaces one of which one in Megiddo and the other in Samaria and one is dated to the tenth century and the other to the ninth. With Biblical testimony that Samaria was built by Omri and Assyrians texts talking about *bit omri*. Also a destruction layer in Jezreel which was in the Omride compound produced a pottery assemblage identical to Megiddo VA and IVB which was originally dated to 10th century BC (Zimhoni 1997 p38-39). For him in both these cases only down dating is possible.

4.0
Possible Pillar: Mass produced Egyptian amulets from the time of Simamun and Sheshonq I (10th
Century BC) Again dated by the Bible to 926BCE. They appear in Megiddo VIA which was previously dated to 11th century.

5. 0 The down dating of the Philistine pottery by

The down dating of the Philistine pottery bichrome ware from 1100 to 950 BCE and redating the tenth century strata (Megiddo VA/IVB, Gezer IX-VIII, and Hazor X-XI). Finkelstein moves on to seek some

anchors for Iron II chronology. He decides to do it with pottery. The upper anchor was Ramses III activity in Canaan. The presence of locally made Monochrome ware (Mycenean IIIc;1b family) represents the initial phase. In addition he adds the Medinet Habu inscription and the Harris Papyri I. He sees evidence of the Egyptian domination in southern Canaan until Ramses VI and that the Monochrome pottery should be dated to 1135-1100 or later and that that the local bichrome that developed from it should be dated when from 1100 or so unto the ca 950 BCE. This was opposed to the Alt Albright paradigm that Philistines were settled in southern Palestine by Ramses III in his forts that dated it to 1175-1150. The upper date then is Ramses III and the lower date for early Iron age chronology is in the late eight century with the invasion by Sennacherib in 701BCE. He sees the problem as to how to fill the 450 year gap. There is a problem because the Mesha stone was found on the surface at Dibon, the fragment of the Stela of Shoshenq from Megiddo was retrieved from a dump and the fragment from stele at Dan were reused in a later strata (I. Finkelstein 1996, 180). He points to the possibility of the Shoshenq campaign which he dates to 926BC⁶ but understands that it is not certain which destruction layers could be assigned to it.

II Criticisms of the Low Chronology Paradigm

Garfinkel (Garfinkel 2011) serious criticism on the minimalist position argues they were overly subjective in their attempts at reclassifying biblical historiography to biblical fiction, hence removing its authority as a primary or even secondary source: After minmalists had concluded David was a fiction, the Tel Dan inscription dropped into the field of battle like a bolt of lightning out of a clear blue sky striking the minimalist position at the foundation, even at the place of their assumptions that David was literary. Garfinkel(2011) describes what happened next:

The minimalists reacted in panic, leading to a number of suggestions that now seem ridiculous. The Hebrew *bytdwd* should be read not as the House of David, but as a place name... in parallel to the

⁶ Basing his dating on biblical evidence

well-known place name Ash*dod*. Other minimalist suggestions included 'House of Uncle', 'House of Kettle', and 'House of Beloved'. Nowadays arguments like these can be classified as displaying 'paradigm collapse trauma' that is literary compilations of groundless arguments masquerading as scientific writing through footnotes, references, and publication in professional journal. The Tel Dan Inscription ended the first phase of the debate regarding the historicity of the Hebrew Bible (Garfinkel 2011)

However although it looked like panic it was actually the process needed to maintain the alternative paradigm which they are seeking to impose on the discipline biblical archaeology. Dever (1997) also picked up on the unreasonableness of some of Low chronology paradigms suggestions regarding the four entry gate at Megiddo that is reassigning from the 10th to the 9th century thus removing another monumental building from Solomon's repetoire and Solomon's cities. "What are the grounds, for separating the four entry gateway, reassigning it to Strata IVA, and positing as absolute date in the 9th century BCE? Ussishkin's stratigraphic arguments are intriguing, but certainly unconvincing, since they are based entirely on the excavation and recording of the Chicago excavators, open to almost any reinterpretation one may propose" (Dever 1997). That is of course the point to propose an alternative view in line with the paradigm they are trying to impose. Dever saw clearly this strategy in the case of Wightman a colleague of Finkelstein "Wightman's arguments, as far as I can see, rest entirely on the baseless caricature of "biblical archaeology" and those he think espouse it"⁷ (Dever 1997, 236). Here Dever clearly points out one purpose behind the alternative paradigm for Wightman, to remove the influence of the Bible where possible. In looking at the situation regarding the reclassifying of the four entry gateway by Ussishkin and Herzog Dever notes that after their

"re-dating scheme, they are left with a city of Solomon (Herzog Str. VA, Ussishkin's str. IVB)

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⁷ Although Finkelstein refers approvingly to Wightman's summary of the history of research of the tenth century he also dismisses his attempts to lower the date of Megiddo in light of the results of Samaria because the "stratigraphy in Samaria and the relationship between the architecture and the pottery are chaotic, and the pottery that had been published was so little it could not give a sound conclusion (I. Finkelstein 1996, 179)

that has monumental architecture such as palaces 1723 and 6000; a building (1482) for "royal administrative officers" or "scribes" and elite residences (building 2163) and clear evidence of social stratification. yet this city is like no other "royal cities" in that it has no city walls (Yadin's eastern casemate they think is simply a row of houses), and only a simple gate...Such theoretical reconstructions are what I meant above in speaking of violating the rule of common sense...The revisionists' scenario may be possible, given Megiddo's notorious stratigraphy, but does it make sense? Are there any empirical data to support such radical re-workings of Megiddo? I suggest not. (Dever 1997, 237)

Dever thinks that it does not make sense.

Although it is understandable that with the intention of forcing a paradigm shift you must move strategically in planning your progress this can lead to problematic use of data. For example whereas Finkelstein may have high level critical methodology when he deals with archaeological sites and is able to find the loop holes and so expose the weaknesses he does not necessarily give a better alternative and he knows it (I. Finkelstein 1996). The point made by Dever regarding the unique royal city with no walls needs to be paid heed to. The second thing is if one is driven by a vision so that when you cannot see the way forward you simply say "There are methodological issues', and then when finding you can see the way to critique the other paradigm you do that, you are not seeking historical truth but just to follow an agenda. Your work can be seen as propaganda and not research, this danger also lies in the fact that so many of the reassessments of sites are done by Finkelstein and Ussishkin, and other the in low chronology school.

This must also cause irritation in professional archaeologists who know that if there results point to the 10th century for a monumental structure it is likely the Tel Aviv school will be unlikely to ever accept the professional competence of the archaeologists and will look for any stray pottery sherds from the wrong period that got between the rocks, or to reinterpret a the building one just assessed. This problem is seen in the case of E Mazar. She dated cup marks to the Chalcolithic period.

Finkelstein and team concluded "it is not the only possibility" (Finkelstein, Ussisskin and et.al 2007, 147). It is the case that there is never only one possibility. She dated the "brown earth accumulation" to between the Chalcolithic and Middle bronze-age, the alternative hypothesis for Finkelstein was "The latter argument holds only if the 'brown earth accumulation' indeed represents an accumulation of in situ activity rather than a fill, or make up construction" thus for Finkelstein "The 'brown earth' accumulation' seems to be too thin for accumulation of several centuries...it could have been brought here from another location" (Finkelstein, Ussisskin and et.al 2007, 147).

With this kind of systematic peer pressure Finkelstein asserts "The reader should also pay attention to the most illuminating fact that all desertions are from the traditional to the low chronology. Dever has now prepared the ground for his own desertion "caution is indicated at the moment; but one should allow the possibility of slightly lower 10th-9th centuries BCE dates'. (I. Finkelstein 2005). This is of course the language of war and Finkelstein is indeed a revolutionary at war with the prevailing theory helped by his flexibility with principles. In 1996 Finkelstein criticized Yadin, Guy and others for using the Bible texts to illuminate their results and as historical evidence. However problematically nine years later Finkelstein began to lean on the Bible text in a more robust way than they did. The difference being that he appears to have not been critical enough and did not cite from which text he was referring to (I. Finkelstein 2005, 37). For example he cites the Tel Dan Stele as reflecting the situation with Jehu and the destruction of Ahab, he cites but one biblical scholar as authority. This appears to be a double standard and can only lead to the alternative paradigm having a short life.

Other criticisms include Mazar's density of strata criticism "too many strata are left in northern Israel for a relatively short period of time until the Assyrian take over in 732 BCE" (A. Mazar 1997). The fact that the low chronology paradigm possibly dates the Megiddo four entry gate to the 9th century still leaves two monumental gates in Hazor and Gezer pointing to a Solomonic period beyond the .

The results from Finkelstein's low chronology paradigm are used by the minimalist schools in

Sheffield and Copenhagen bolster their attempts to force a paradigm shift in the world of biblical studies.

The Copenhagen School of Lemeche and the Sheffield school of Davies aim at a paradigm shift⁸ in the relationship between Palestinian archaeology and the Bible. This element of their agenda was sensed if not expressed by Dever.

Even if we allow for the oversimplification and rhethoric typical of the 'revisionist' school style of discourse, there is a challenge here that must be met, especially since all "revisionists" make some sort of appeal to archaeology, however inept. As I shall argue, it is not only the archaeological assemblage of the 10th-9th centuries BCE and its absolute date that is at issue here, but also, and fundamentally, a historiographical issue that is now urgent in both biblical studies and archaeology. That is: What is the nature and relationship of the *two* classes of data now available for writing a history of ancient Israel; texts and archaeological evidence. (Dever 1997, 217)

The two fronts which the low chronology alliance have decided to use to attack the present paradigm of biblical historical archaeology are both from the higher level of the text and the lower realm of the land and material. The Sheffield School and the Copenhagen school take aim at the texts and the Tel Aviv School take aim from the land, in terms of our metaphor we have the air force in Copenhagen and

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⁸ The term paradigm in this context is used in relation to the theory of Thomas S. Kuhn in his The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, although archaeology and history of the bible are not strictly speaking sciences they use regularly scientific nomenclature. The one who I have seen who used the term paradigm regard to the agenda of the minimalists is Yosef Garfinkel who sees very clearly what Finkelstein and company are doing (Garfinkel 2011). Garfinkel and fellow archaeologists are getting very frustrated and the repeated attempts of the minimalist school to reread the conclusions of their fellow archaeologists. So much so that he expressed the point in one of his papers regarding Khribet Qeiyafa, that if it were not to be dated to Iron Age II the term Iron Age had no meaning anymore. This frustration will be felt by any archaeologist who does not go along with the Low Chronology Paradigm because Finkelstein appears to use his paradigm either to cast doubt on their findings by referring to such things as uncertain provenance rereading the stratum as a fill, that is removing it from having a voice etc. as is the case with Eilat Mizar and the finding of King David's palace (Finkelstein, Ussisskin and et.al 2007). Indeed he accuses his opponents of using the Bible to make decisions and this will be described as text bias (I. Finkelstein 1996, 178) but then he himself will use the Bible uncritically in building alternative paradigm (I. Finkelstein 2005, 38)

Sheffield and the ground forces in Tel Aviv⁹. Lemeche makes their intentions very clear:

That is the issue we have today: namely, the question of whether the Bible in its stories is talking about history and the past at all. Our argument is not that the Bible exaggerates the exploits of David, nor is it that Solomon was never as rich as the Bible makes him out to be. We are not dealing with issues of skepticism here. Rather, we are trying to say that the Bible's stories of Saul, David and Solomon are not about history at all. (Lemche and Thompson 1994,

Yosef Garfinkel has also picked up clearly on the intent of the schools, to bring a paradigm shift and his plays with the idea in his BAR articles (Garfinkel 2011). In short the minimalist and the Low Chronology paradigm are still in the realm of hypothesis, they are breaking but have not broken the consensus and Solomon still has enough monumental buildings to make him a worthy son in law for any Pharaoh.

III Sources For Egyptian History

The sources we have for Egyptian history include Herodotus (c. 450BC), the *Histories*¹⁰. The Septuagint¹¹, Manetho priest and scribe from Heliopolis preserved in Eusebius, wrote *Aegyptica*¹², to Ptolemy Philadelphius (285-247). In this document he described the history of Egypt going back to gods and demigods and going back tens of thousands of years. The god Horus then gave the throne to Menes, the first man in Manethos mythological-historical system. Regarding this work Breasted notes "The value of the work was slight, as it was built up on folk-tales and popular traditions of early kings." (Breasted 1909, 10) Africanus and Synkallos, Erastosphenes(275-194BC), Diodorus of Sicily books 15

⁹ This metaphor is reflected perhaps in the title of Ussishkin's latest contribution to the BAR Kadesh-Barnea in the bible and on the ground.

¹⁰ Mentions Sesostris as the most famous warrior, empire building Pharaoh

¹¹ Mention Chalamak having a war with David who Faulstich suggests is Shalmaneser II

¹² A history of 30 dynasties, 113 generations, 36, 525 years. He contradicted Herodotus in many places.

and 16(80BC – 20BC) and Josephus, *Antiquities* and *Contra Apion*. In addition we have the king lists from the monuments. These are from Abydos, Sakkara, the Turin Canon and the Palermo stone. In addition we have the many artifacts and paintings depicting Egyptian history from temples and tombs and the pottery and wares from imports from such places and Mycenae.

These sources present many problematic issues with regard to dating and accuracy. Shaw notes that although Manetho's skeleton is simple and durable it is straining to contain "the many new chronological trends and currents that can be perceived outside the simple passing of the throne from one group of individuals to another" (Shaw 2000, 1). Spalinger (Spalinger 2001) notes that Manetho's system was the "Classical era's understanding of Nile Valley history and remains the basis of ours" (Spalinger 2001, 265).

IV Problems with Archaeology Dating Generally

The limitations of dating archaeologically are well known to biblical scholars from the experience of its 150 year history. As Wiseman has noted "Archaeology is not an exact science. Therefore its results may undergo subjective selection and interpretation, through methodology and excavation techniques are basically agreed upon among scholars of various nationalities. However, the factual evidence produced may be limited in that only a fraction of antiquity has survived or been recovered" (Wiseman 1979, 310). Two of the biggest problems in archaeology affect scholars in trying to date events. The first is interpretation of the non-literary finds. We see in the disputes of the past that the meaning of whole excavated sites have been complete reinterpreted after review or interpreted completely differently in the first place by different scholars reading the sites according to their own preconceived ideas. The second is dating. Sites have been dated and re-dated by later scholars or even the same scholars (W. Albright 1961)¹³. A third problem which has arisen and remains today is the definitions and terminology used to describe periods. It is not even certain that if one is using absolute dates that the problems are removed Albright notes regarding absolute dates "Petrie's date in the fourteenth

¹³ Rowley contrasts the date setting of Mcalister old and new

century for the general introduction of iron into Palestine is based on his erroneous absolute dates" (W. Albright 1949, 110). He also bemoaned the state of the subject of archaeology in the first two decades of the twentieth century, admittedly in its infancy and noted that one scholar did a good job in warning biblical scholars of the dangers of archaeology. "When the writer first arrived in Palestine at the end of 1919, the subject was in such a complete state of chaos that it seemed hopeless to a neophyte" (W. Albright 1961, 1). One of the key problems for Albright was chronology, and hence of course dating "Bliss and the earlier Macalister contradicted the chronology of the later Macalister so sharply that in most matters of direct interest to the Old Testament student they were actually in head on collision" (W. Albright 1961, 1). The differences in dating were not minor either. "Watzinger's chronology conflicted with Macalisrter's and Mackenzies, often by as much as 500 years or more" (W. Albright 1961, 1). If we compare the size of this difference to the narrative based chronologies of Eusebius and Ussher, we find the difference in archaeology on this point were much larger. For example even the difference between modern archaeologies exodus of 1200's and the Bible narratives 1460's or 1490's are only 200 years or so. Josephus has 612 years between the exodus and the first temple foundation, whereas the writer of MT 480 years and the LXX, Lucianic has 440 years. Differing then by up to 172 years. Albright then considered that in the early 20th century Driver did well to warn students "against the dangers of 'archeology'. He also argues that by his time of writing the situation had much improved. "But many Biblical scholars of today seem to think that the situation has not changed since 1909 or 1919. They are sadly mistaken, and their error is now handicapping the progress of Old Testament research by perpetuating innumerable hypotheses and assumptions which cannot stand for a minute in light of contemporary archeology" (W. Albright 1961, ibid). Indeed he expresses a sense of the academic consensus that then prevailed "The chronology of Palestinian pottery has now been so completely fixed by a combination of stratigraphic and typological research that the differences between competent scholars over most periods have become very minor indeed" (W. Albright 1961, 2). However he makes two comments which are a matter of concern in our task. The difference he refers to

as little include dating pottery to a hundred years differences. This for example could mean Solomon's father in law might be someone from the middle to the end of the 22nd dynasty for example Osorkon II or someone from the beginning of the 21st dynasty for example Smendes I. The other matter of concern is the lack of unity regarding absolute dates. ""There is still a difference of opinion with respect to the absolute chronology earlier times, but very little with regard to relative chronology" (W. Albright 1961, 2). He expresses the hope that radiocarbon dating would reduce these differences even further (ibid.).

In another study Albright testifies that the discipline of archaeology in its early days was a mess based on the excavations at Gezer the city Solomon is said to have fortified "The chronological situation in the Iron Age was badly confused by the excavators of Gezer and Jericho" (W. Albright 1949, 110-111), But he adds the other problem we mentioned above, the terminology problem "and more recently it has been obscured by conflicting nomenclature" (ibid p.111). Albright explains one of the sources of Macalister's widely differing datings. "Macalister was led to depress the date of Iron I by trying to fill an unrecognized occupational gap of several centuries at Gezer, and Watzinger was misled by Sellin's identification of the great battered wall of Middle Bronze with a wall alleged to have been built by Hiel the Bethelite in the ninth century. BC"(ibid p.111). Hence we see the first issues raised above, misinterpretation of data according to the presuppositions of the scholar, one was led erroneously and the other "misled". Albright witnessed the state of the situation back then ""the archaeological chronology of Palestine was in a state of indescribable confusion when the author began digging at Gibeah of Saul (Tell el Ful) in 1922" (W. Albright 1949, 111). However he thought things had improved and "the dating of sufficiently characteristic groups of homogenous pottery from the Iron Age, between the twelfth and the seventh centuries, is now fixed to within narrow limits (W. Albright 1949, 111). However with the pottery chronology relatively healthy the terminology problem arose. In 1922 some official terminology was introduced to analyze the Iron Age. Early Iron referred to 1200 -900 and Middle Iron to 600 to 100. Albright began to use the terminology but others did not so that in the end "the Megiddo excavators were employing 'Early Iron II' to designate the period between 1050

and 900 while the writer was using the same distinctive term for the whole period from c. 900 BC to c.600 BC. "This confusion could lead only to chaos unless the use of centuries were substituted for periods" (W. Albright 1949). Albright then rejected the use of early, middle and late Iron and instituted Iron I(10-12th C., II(9th-beginning of 6th C. and III (550 BC – 350 BC).

The present consensus among archaeologists holds that Israel entered the land in the late bronze age/early iron age. The interaction between Egypt and Canaan is well documented in this period. For example a jar handle was found in at Tel Gezer in field VI NE (Gilmour and K. 2012, 2) which has the seal of Pharoah Seti II. Gilmour and Kitchen date the reign of Seti II to the very end of the late bronze age, 1220-1196. This is the date when most scholars date the beginning of the early Iron age (Gilmour and K. 2012, 4). But to this dating Gilmour et.al introduce two uncertainties. They note that their chronology is "the generally accepted one" supported by Mazar (A. Mazar 1990) (Gilmour and K. 2012, 4) but refer two other options of dating, that of Ussishkin (1985) who wants to move the transition from late bronze age to early Iron age to the middle of the 12th century that is to c1150 BC (D. Ussishkin 1985). If this were the case it would move the beginning from 19th Dynasty Seti II to the 20th dynasty Ramesses III (c1155-1149). That is a five pharaoh jump. If such uncertainty were applied to our identification of Solomon's father in law we would move from the suggested Osorkon the Elder to the 22nd dynasty Osorkon I son of Sheshonq. The other scholars who sought to lower the date of the transition was Finkelstein and Piasetzky (Finkelstein and Piasetsky 2009)

Only two 19th dynasty rulers follow Sety II and then the 20th dynasty arose. Setnakts son Ramses III saw the settling of the Sea peoples in on the south coast of Canaan in the eighth year of his reign about 1175 BC. The Sea peoples include the Philistine who were a part of the picture in the time of the king David. Preceding the rise in power of King David in Canaan we see declining of the Egyptian Empire as it withdrew from Canaan until there is very little mention of it in the reign of David. Hence the shrinking of the power of Egypt gave room to the increasing power of house of David and hence to the possible desirability of an alliance between the two powers in the time of the Zenith of the house of

David power when the house of Smedis was ruling from Tanis (near Canaan) during the 21st dynasty. This late bronze-age period lead to what Gilmour and Kitchen call "the collapse of Canaanite civilization (Gilmour and K. 2012, 5n 6)".

Noth (1958) dates Solomon's death to the year from autumn 926-925BC. He notes "His death is the earliest event in the history of Israel which it is possible to date precisely, with the possible error of merely a few years. For the death of Solomon marks the beginning of the uninterrupted chronological sequence of the history of the kings of Judah and Israel which the author of the deuteronomistic history was able to draw from official annals of the two kingdoms available to him in the 'Chronicles of the Kings of Judah' or 'of Israel', which he used as sources." (Noth, The History of Israel 1958, 225). Noth then lays out the method for establishing the absolute chronology. First the chronological notes of the writer supply the duration of the reigns of the kings, and then synchronizes between Israel and Judah. "The firm system of relative chronology of the reigns of Judah and Israel which was arrived at in this way may be linked up by various historical points of contact with the chronology of the Neo Assyrian empire which may in turn be fixed absolutely by means of astronomical calculation" (Noth, The History of Israel 1958, 225). Noth then argues that David and Solomon's forty years are probably round figures giving David and Solomon the first three quarters of the tenth century (Noth, The History of Israel 1958)¹⁴. Margolis and Marx given Solomon the dates 973-933 BCE (Margolis and Marx 1947). They date the Exodus at 1220BC under Pharaoh Merneptah (1225-1215). Ramses III is dated c1198-1167.

V Manetho's Dates

The main sources of the Egyptian Chronology are the writings of the Egyptian priest Manetho from third century BCE, King lists and monuments. The work of Manetho is only known through the writings of ancient historians Josephus Flavius, Sextus Julius Africanus and the Church Father

¹⁴ Cf. Begrich (Begrich 1929) (Albright 1945)

Eusebius. (Long 2006, 22) (Gardiner 1961, 429). There are also the writings of Herodotus and Diodorus but the information from Manetho is considered more reliable (Gardiner 1961, 46). The Manetho list lists each Pharaoh and his years on the throne. They are split into 31 dynasties. But of these sources Gardiner notes "Manetho undertook a chronicle of the Egyptian kings of which, apart from edited abstracts preserved by the Jewish Historian Josephus ",there remains only garbled abridgment in the works of Christian Chronographers Sextus Julius Africanus (early 3rd cent.) and Eusebius (early 4th. Cent, AD). Gardiner goes on to note something very important for our study "In the forms in which the book has reached us there are inaccuracies of the most glaring kind, there finding there climax in Dyn. XVIII, where the names and true sequence are now known from indisputable monumental sources. Africanus and Eusebius often do not agree; for example Africanus assigns nine kings to Dyn.XXII, while Eusebius has only three" (Gardiner 1961, 46).

The 21st and 22nd dynasties of Egypt ruled from Tanis west of Solomon's famous Etzion Geber or modern Eilat. The 21st dynasty consisted of seven or eight rulers depending on which source you read. These are (1) Smendes I, (2) Amenemnisu, (3) Psusennes I, (4) Amenemope, (5) Osorkon the elder, (6) Siamun, (7) Psusennes II (Clayton 1994. p172)15. However Shaw (2000) omits number two on our list. He also gives them dates.

VI Criticism of Consensus Chronology

One problem with this system is that it was not the system which the ancient Egyptians to whom it refers used (Spalinger 2001, 2), and for the more ancient period Manetho is not the main source of Egyptian history. Spalinger (2001) notes one of the major problems with Manetho being a late source is that "the text is mainly preserved in excerpts drawn up by later chronographers; what is preserved is a mere summation of a relatively detailed work in which a few specific events associated with the

15 Clayton P. (1994) Chonricle of the Pharoahs. (London: Thames and Hudson)

¹⁶ This honour is given to the Palermo stone.

pharaohs are recorded" (Spalinger 2001, 265). There also are additional problems coming from textual corruption. Another serious problem arises when Manetho is dealing with period of disunity. He "presents a very confused arrangement of dynasties" (Spalinger 2001, 265)¹⁷. These periods impact on our quest to find the father in law of Solomon because according to the traditional chronology Solomon married a daughter from a period from one of these periods which are the intermediate periods (Spalinger 2001, 265). However the system used here for labelling Egyptian history "are purely modern schematic terms and must not be considered to reflect ancient usage"(ibid. p265). Spalinger gives a number of illustrations of chronological problem with Manetho which have the tendency to reduce the length of time of the Egyptian chronology by dozens if not hundreds of years because dynasties which have been read as succeeding one another are found to be contemporary with one another. Thus what Spalinger considers the probable progress of the second intermediate period with different dynasties arising in different parts of Egypt with the intent to over throw off the Hyksos dynasty, "is barely reflected in the standard native Egyptian accounts" (ibid 266). "Manetho was confused over his dynasties 12 and 14". One helpful source of evidence in reconstructing Egyptian chronology has been the Turin Canon prepared in the 19th dynasty (ibid 266). It contained a detailed papyrus of pharaoh's and their reigns. However even this canon tends to shorten Egyptian history because it "appears to connect all of the rulers of dynasty 12 with those of dynasty 17" (ibid 266). A similar situation to this arises in Third Intermediate Period where Shortland illustrates overlapping dynasties with four different dynasties (Shortland 2005, 51). He makes the pertinent point "Reading, Manetho one is left with the impression that Egyptian history was neatly linear-king following after king, dynasty following after dynasty" (Shortland 2005, 50). Since this impression is understood to be inaccurate Shortland warns us "Manetho's kings lists must therefore be treated with great caution" (Shortland 2005, 50). It seems that

¹⁷ This confusion reminds of the confusion witnessed by Albright (1949) and Cowley (1961) in the early 20th century dating methods of archeology.

the tendency to lengthen the history of the dynasties of Egypt that Shortland (2005) notes has had its detractors from the beginning of modern scientific work on Egypt's history.

Velikovsky (1952) and Sweeny (2006) suggest the Pharaoh would be Thutmose I Faulstich (1990) says Solomon married the daughter of Osorkon I (dynasty 22) ¹⁸.

Whilst Rohl (1995) in his Pharaoh's and Kings A Biblical Quest argued that Solomon married the daughter of Haremhab (dynasty 18/19). He argued that the only absolute date for Egyptian history was 664 BC when Assyiran Asshurbunipal sacked Thebes. For him before this date there are only relative dates which means going through all the evidences of the monuments and Manetho and trying to compare kings with kings and with the various literary and non-literary sources to assign a new set of dates to Egyptian history. He points out that the accepted chronology claims to have another absolute date, that of Pharaoh Shishak who invaded Judah and Jerusalem in about 925 BC. The accepted chronology connects the raid of Solomon's temple by Shishak (1 Kings 14:25-26) (2 Chron 12:2-9) with the Pharaoh Shoshenk I the 21 dynasty raid of Israel (ANET 1958, 187). The date of the raid is usually set at around 925 BC (K. Kitchen 2003, 33). Although Kitchen (2003) who accepts the Petrie based chronology says "There is no reason whatever to doubt the identity of the Hebrew "Shushaq" with the very well-known pharaoh Shosheng I, founder of the Twenty-Second Dynasty, of Libyan origin, whose reign is closely datable to circa 945-924" (K. Kitchen 2003, 33), Rohl does doubt it. He also challenges the interpretation of two other sources used for dating. The Ebers Payrus and the Papyrus Leiden. He challenges the interpretation of the Ebers Papyrus which refers to the rising of the star Sirius and is used in the accepted chronology to date Amenhotep I's ninth year to between 1547 and 1517

¹⁸ Strangely enough Sibert (2009) shows a picture of the torso of Osorkon I dated to ca 900B.C. And was found in Byblos. It has Phoenician writing on it which is believed to have been added later. There is a debate as to why this Egyptian image was placed in the Lebanese coastal city and as to when the Aramaic writing was inscribed on it. The statue has a form of wig that was popular in the Amarna period and so there is a discussion as to if Osorkon I had taken over a figure from Horemheb's time by putting his name cartouche on the chest, the position of the cartouche is very unusual on a royal statue, or whether he just imitated the style (Siebert 2009, 284).(Siebert, E. The statue is now in the Louvre, AO9502.

Pseusennes II

On the reference to the marriage in 1 Kings 3:1 Mowinckel (1935) makes the following comment "Comprehensive judgement on Solomon's rule of the Deuteronomic redactor....1a If this was himself the main ruler and not one or another small king in the delta, it was probably Psusennes II in Tanis around 980 B.C." (Mowinckel 1935. p.313¹⁹) Psusennes is a part of the third intermediate period. Ellis (1968)²⁰ agrees also reservedly with Mowinckel's (1935) position. He believes Psusennes II is probably the Pharaoh and is assigned to the 21st dynasty and considered one of the weak Pharaohs. Geographically this would make sense because Tanis was on the border of Israel. Ellicot (1971) Affirms that the 21st dynasty was according to Egyptian records weak, divided and ruling from Tanis (Ellicot ²¹1971. p.285).

Siamun

Murphy-O'connor notes "At the death of David in 965B.C, the Israelites had become a force to reckon with in the politics of the region. The succession was not without problems (1 Kings 1-2), and Pharaoh Siamun attempted to capitalize on Solomon's inexperience and challenges. He gravely underestimated the capacity of the new king and to extricate himself had to give his daughter in marriage to Solomon; her dowry was the city of Gezer" (Murphy-O'Connor ibid. p.185).

Murphy O'Connor makes the observation that "No other foreigner ever married a Pharaoh's daughter".(1980. p.185). It is partly this misperception that gave rise to the speculations of Gadallah (1996), that Solomon was an Egyptian Pharaoh and the Dtr of Kings and the Chronicler are concealing his true identity (Gadallah 1996. p175). Although that custom may have been understood to be true in the time of Amenhotep III, the exclusivity of the Egyptian marriages may have changed after Amenhotep III and it may be that he was just putting off the Babylonians by referring to that restriction.

¹⁹ This is my translation for he wrote in Norwegian.

²⁰ Ellis, P. (1968) -2 Kings Jerome Biblical Commentary, p. 184

²¹ Ellicott, C.J. (1971) Ellicot's Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids Michigan: Zondervan)

This conclusion is based on two observations. Amenhotep III went against Egyptian tradition when he married the Nubian Tiye, daughter of Yuya and Thuya (Simon 1988)²² as his chief wife (Clayton 1994, 114) (Simon 1988, 57). "Thus a Nubian commoner became Great Royal Spouse, and her children heirs to the throne with fully royal and fully divine inheritances" (Simon 1988, 57)²³. Secondly the Dtr relates the story of Solomon's opponents one of whom married an Egyptian princess. Hadad was of the royal seed of Edom. He fled in the time of David when Joab was killing all the male seed in Edom (1 King 11:19). He got to Egypt as a child. He was given a house and land. He is given and Egyptian princess, sister to the wife of Pharaoh as wife. The Pharaoh's name is not given but his wife's name was Tahpenes²⁴ the queen .Clayton(1994) comments "Now [under Siamun], however there was an evident change in the Egyptian view of diplomatic marriages. Where, hitherto, there had been a stream of foreign princesses coming to the Egyptian court, the process was slightly reversed, with Egyptian princesses 'marrying out'. One princess married Hadad, the crown prince of the kingdom of Edom" (Clayton ibid. p.181).

The standard reference work for the period in Egypt when Siamun reigned is Kitchen's *The Third Intermediate Period*. He places pharaoh Shoshenk I (22nd Dyn. First Pharoah) as Shiskak. In this scenario Hadad of Edom (1 Kings 11:14-22) marries the sister of the wife of Siamun, Tahpenes²⁵. Regarding these foreign relations in the reign of Amenemope and Osochor the first two rulers of this dynasty, "from Egyptian sources, nothing is known" (K. A. Kitchen 1986, 273), and for Kitchen this is not surprising "when the King's themselves are so ill attested" (K. A. Kitchen 1986, 273). The son of Hadad and his Egyptian princess, גובת, grows up in Egypt among Pharaoh's sons²⁶. Hence it is he who became the refuge for Jeroboam son of Nebat and who gave Jeroboam the biggest sister of his

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²² Gadallah maintains that Tiye was an Israelite (1996. p 178)

²³ If Gadallah (1996) is correct in asserting that Tiye was an Israelite then the next 3 Pharoahs, Akhenaten, Smenkhare and Tutankhamun to the 3rd generation were Israelites on their mother side, an interesting thought.

²⁴ The name Tahpenes is not given in Egytpian records (Ahlström 1994, 505) (K. A. Kitchen 1986).

²⁵ The meaning of this name in Egyptian is undecided. It may mean "wife of the key", which Kitchen's considers the most attractive option. However Albright and others consider it a proper name. For Bibliography see Kitchen (K. A. Kitchen 1986, 274).

²⁶ This probably started at three years old (K. A. Kitchen 1986, 274 n.184).

wife Thelemekina to wife. In this scenario Pharaoh Siamun becomes the Pharaoh who burns Gezer (Dever 1997)²⁷. However even with Kitchen's thorough 525 page study on the very issue we are dealing with there is a lack of evidence which leaves room open for radically varying reconstructions based on variations of the ideas of Velikovsky(1952), Rohl (1995). The problem in Kitchen's words is a chronological one. "Neither the 20th nor the 21st Dynasty can so far offer us any information from which one may calculate their approximate dates B.C. However immediately following the 21st dynasty, the founder of the next line, Shoshenq I, can be closely dated by a synchronism with the Hebrew monarchy, whose dates in turn are closely fixed with reference to Assyrian chronology" (K. A. Kitchen 1986, 72). In other words the whole dating of the third intermediate period hangs on the identification of Shishak (LXX-Sosakim).

Many of Kitchen's arguments and dating are based on what I would call reasonable estimates or deductions based on the data available. For example we do not know how old Hadad was when he escaped to Egypt, therefore Kitchen will suggest reasonable ages, not just for when he leaves Edom but for when he marries. This ages can mean Hadad is connected with one ruler and then the next. But all of the numbers in these reasonings are not historical but suppositions (K. A. Kitchen 1986, 273). They could be completely wrong. In other words lack of evidence however good the method does not remove the uncertainties. The fact that so much hangs on Shishak's identification with Shoshenq I and this is the only absolute in a period covering 3 dynasties is a serious limitation. It also leaves the chronology of this whole period vulnerable and the archaeological and Egyptological revisionists have taken and are taking full advantage of the Shoshenq I link. Both the low chronology people as Finkelstein (Dever 1997) and radical revisionist have taken aim at this link (Rohl 1995, 370ff)

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²⁷ Dever notes that there is an archaeologically attested raid on Gezer in the early tenth century BCE to which Solomon and Siamun are dated (Dever 1997, 241). He also notes there were raids previously by Tutmosis III and Merneptah and afterwards by Shoshenq I.

VII Egyptian Chronology as a source of Cross Dating

The accepted Egyptian chronology based on Petrie's dating has become a source of absolute dating for archaeological work in other fields in a process which is called cross dating. For example Yadin (Y. Yadin 1975) notes its influence on his dating of Mycenean III ceramic "Due to an interesting coincidence, its appearance in any dig serves as evidence – nearly the only firm testimony available to us- for absolute dating of strata to the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries. The reason for this extremely fortunate phenomenon is that a great quantity of this type of pottery was discovered in the short-lived city of el-Amarna [in Egypt]...Obviously the artifacts discovered there are of tremendous importance because they can be absolutely dated to the reign of Amenophis IV(1364-47); and the fact that a certain type of Mycenean III pottery was discovered at el-Amarna makes it a sure peg for absolute chronology throughout the near east". From this statement of Yadin it seems Petrie won the day against Torr (1896) his detractor. Petrie laid out his ideas on Tel el Amarna and the Aegean pottery found there in his book Tel El Amarna. Torr reviewed the book in Classical Review (Vol 8 p 320ff) .Regarding this review Torr notes "Mr Petrie's assertions went far beyond the facts. And I also pointed out that what was described there as 'this earlier style of Aegean Pottery' had been described in Mr Petrie's former works as the later style that followed the period of geometric ornament; and the pottery that was there assigned to the Dynasty XVIII at the beginning of the fourteenth century B. C. had been assigned in Mr Petries former works to Dynasty XX at the beginning of the 11th century" (Torr, Memphis and Mycenae 1897, 74).

The problem with the foundations of Egyptian chronology have lead a number of scholars to seek a revision of it.

Conclusion

We have observed that differences of centuries in dating archaeological evidence plagued archaeology

in its early years. We have also seen that the problem persists even until the present in the low chronology debate, we see this in the example of E Mazar, and I Finkelstein and the Davidic Palace in Jerusalem. In light of this it would appear that archaeology is not yet ready to replace the biblical literary evidence and indeed the new paradigm in being founded on such subjective foundations will indeed not last long if indeed it ever succeeded in displacing the evidence rich primary and secondary sources of the Bible.

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