Who is Meddling in Egypt’s Affairs?  
The Identity of the Asiatics in the Elephantine Stele of Sethnakhte and the Historicity of the Medinet Habu Asiatic War Reliefs

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Historical Background

In the fifth regnal year of Ramesses II, the Egyptians fought against the Hittites at Kadesh on the Orontes. In Ramesses’ twenty-first year, a peace treaty was signed between the two adversaries. The border was fixed in Middle Syria, while Kadesh remained a Hittite possession. Damascus stayed in Egyptian hands, as was recently confirmed with the finding and publication of a stele dating to Ramesses II’s fifty-sixth regnal year, found at Kesweh, 2.5 km south of Damascus.1 Merenptah continued peaceful relations with Hatti, as can be deduced from the grain shipment delivered there during his reign.2 However, Merenptah’s successors—Amenmesse, Sethy II, Siptah, and Tawosret—did not succeed in maintaining political stability with Egypt’s neighbors and even lost control of vast territories in Nubia, Libya, and probably the Levant.3 Political stability in Egypt also deteriorated during this time, and the throne was contested more than once. The years prior to Sethnakhte’s reign were designated in Papyrus Harris as “empty years.”4 Even though a propagandistic flavor cannot be denied, this designation was probably based on a kernel of truth.

Sethnakhte’s Reign

A new era commenced with the ascent of Sethnakhte to the throne. A stele of Sethnakhte, found at Elephantine in 1971, adds to our knowledge of the political reality in Egypt during the transfer between the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties.5 Sethnakhte was a usurper and probably not even a descendent of the royal family.6 The resistance to his kingship was quelled only in his second regnal year, in the second month of Shemu, day 10 (Elephantine Stele 1.15). From the stele, it is not clear who his opponents were; they are simply mentioned in the third-person masculine plural (1.9, 10, 12?, 14, 16). It is not clear if the female pharaoh Tawosret, last ruler of the Nineteenth Dynasty, was Sethnakhte’s opponent, or if the text refers to her followers after her demise. Papyrus Harris I states that Egypt was in chaos during the “empty years,” and that without central government, Egypt was controlled by local rulers.8 Sethnakhte’s Stele also describes a period in which Egypt was drowning, a pale image of itself.9 Sethnakhte’s Egyptian enemies could not face his strength alone and searched for aid (1.11: whṣ nḥt.w),10 which was found outside Egypt. The adjective nḥt.w usually designates Pharaoh’s victory, strength, and might;”11 as a noun, it sometimes designates elite troops.12 In the description of the Battle of Kadesh between Ramesses II and the Hittite king Muwatalli, the forces which the Hittite king brought to his aid were designated as hired nḥt.w warriors.13 Ramesses II also was aided in the battle of Kadesh by Shardinu troops deemed nḥt.w.14 In the “Silver Peace Treaty” signed Between Ramesses II and Hattusili III, King of Hatti in Ramesses’ twenty-first year, the two respective kings were obliged to come to the aid (nḥt.w) of the other in case of need, or could send troops in case they did not want to come in person.15 It seems that nḥt.w troops could come to aid the Egyptians or their adversaries and were a clashing force that could be com-

It is the purpose of this article to address the identity of the auxiliary Asiatic troops mentioned in the Elephantine Stele of Sethnakhte, founder of the Twentieth Dynasty. The identity of these auxiliaries will help to illuminate the political relations between Egypt and the Levant in the first quarter of the twelfth century BCE. Furthermore, it is claimed that the royal texts, reliefs, and topographical lists of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu dealing with campaigning in Northern Syria—usually regarded as mere copies of earlier kings’ exploits—are genuine and shed light on a campaign Ramesses III conducted against Amurnu and Hittite cities before his fifth regnal year, probably extending to the Euphrates. It may be that both Sethnakhte and Ramesses III were referring to the same Asiatic enemies.
posed of local warriors, mercenaries, vassals, or allies who came to the king’s support. The fact that the nh.t.w troops were supposed to receive payment (11.10–11) does not prove that they were mercenaries; allies were sometimes encouraged to lend help in exchange for payment.14 It is also possible that it was claimed the enemy paid his auxiliary troops for propagandistic purposes, in order to portray the enemy as weak.17

Sethnakhte’s external enemies were asked by his Egyptian opponents to invade Egypt and come to their aid. In line 12, traces of the word tšš were detected by Seidlmayer. This term is usually reserved for enemy forces trying to trespass Egypt’s borders and frontier.18 From the description, it becomes clear that the invading forces initially succeeded in entering Egypt and joining Sethnakhte’s opposition: “He stretched out his arms to uproot and remove (fd) from Egypt those who transgressed (iti t)].19 it” (1.8). The enemies retreated to a place that did not survive in the text20 but must be outside Egypt. The gold, silver, and other valuables, which were already given by Sethnakhte’s conquerors, were le€ed behind (w3h) on Egyptian soil and captured by Sethnakhte (11.10–11).

The transgressors are described as nn n stty.w “These Asians.”21 The demonstrative plural pronoun nn n preceding the noun stty.w hints that they might have been mentioned before in the text or that they are known to the reader. The noun stty.w describes a population from a vast area to the northeast of Egypt. The territory’s borders are the Sinai desert in the south; western Anatolia is included in the north, as can be deduced from the description of the Hittite coalition in the Battle of Kadesh as stty.w.22 There is no indication that this designation was used for the Aegean or for territories east of the Euphrates until the first millennium.23

It is possible to enumerate the political and ethnic unities that were situated in this area and could, theoretically, be identified with the stty.w in the Sethnakhte Stele: the Kingdom of Hatti and its dependents in inner and coastal Syria; the city-states of Canaan, including the coastal Northern city states of Phoenicia;24 and nomadic elements in Transjordan and Canaan, i.e., Shasu (including the ethnicon “Israel,”25 mentioned in the Merenptah Stele), ‘Apiru, and possibly Arameans.26

The inclusion of the Philistines in this list should be considered. First of all, it is not clear if the Philistines already arrived in Canaan as early as the years preceding the reign of Sethnakhte.27 Secondly, the Philistines were evidently not Asiatic in origin. However, they are designated as ²twm (nomads dwelling northeast of Egypt) in the war descriptions from Ramesses III’s eighth regnal year.28 According to the inscriptions of Ramesses III, he conquered their lands and added their frontiers to Egypt.29 In the Southern Rhetorical Stele from Medinet Habu, dating to Ramesses III’s twelfth regnal year, Egypt has defeated (dh) the land of the Philistines (št Prst).30 If these descriptions are not mere imprecise boasts and exaggerations, the land of the Philistines lay not far from Egyptian territory.

The possibilities for identifying the Asians in the Sethnakhte Stele are numerous, but for every identification many objections can be raised. However, it may be possible to identify the Asians in the Sethnakhte Stele with the help of the inscriptions of Ramesses III from Medinet Habu.

**The War of Ramesses III Against Amurru**

1. **The Texts**

The inscription dating to Ramesses III’s fifth regnal year describes what is commonly designated as Ramesses’ first Libyan war. However, there are several other episodes dated to that year. A description of a war north of Egypt has similar features as the naval war and land battle against the Sea Peoples in the eighth regnal year and might relate to those events.31 However, the first concrete events in the Year 5 account describe events in Amurru:

The Chief (“he of”) Amurru is (but) ashes, his seed is no (more), all his people are taken captive, scattered and ‘brought low’. Every survivor from his land comes in praise to behold the great Sun of Egypt over them. The loneliness of the Sun-disk is before them,—the two Re’s that emerge and shine forth over the earth—the Sun of Egypt and the one which is in the sky. They say: “Exalted be Re! Our land is perished (but) we are in the land of life, with the darkness dispelled—even by) the King of S. & N. Egypt . . . The Asiatic and Libyan (Tjehenu) foes (“fallen ones”) are seized, who had been ruining Nile-land’s condition. The land lay wasted, utterly destroyed, since kings (had been), and they had persecuted the gods like everyone (else); (ni hr.w stty.w ThnW w Hn y r s’t’ s’ yb T-nri jk p t m skbm nry.sn w Td.s.n tpr.w m lw nb). There was no hero to take them (on), since they (= the Egyptians) are weak.32 Now there was a youth (jHwsw) like a griffon, a commander shrewd as Melty (= Thoth), (whose) words [are . . . .]. His soldiery (= infantry) are stentorians (“heavy”) in voice, they [are] like bulls, ready (to fight myriads(??)] on the battlefield. His horses are like falcons, (when) they see sparrows [. . . .]. And they roar like lions, ‘stirred up’ and angry. The chariot-warriors are as powerful as lightning-flashes (“Resheps”) and they look on ten-thousands as (mere) droplets. His strength is before them like Monru’s and the fame (“name”) and terror of him scourch up the plains and hill-countries.33

In the South Rhetorical Stele of Ramesses III from Medinet Habu, dated to the pharaoh’s twelfth regnal year, it is stated:

Listen to me, (O) entire land, all citizens, both young and old of Nile-land! I am the son of the
valiant, offspring of [a favoured one], (being) strong of arm, and mighty in strength as King of Both Lands of Egypt. I have brought low the plains and hill countries that have transgressed my frontier, since I was established as king upon the throne of Atum. No land survived to aggrandize themselves before me, (while) I am established like a bull in front of them, sharp-horned. I caused to retreat the Asiatics who had trodden Egypt . . . . worn out through dread of me.15

Both texts describe events of foreign transgression against the borders of Egypt; the text from Year 5 explicitly names the Asiatics and the Tjehenu Libyans, while the text from Year 12 is vague. According to the text from Year 5, these misdeeds continued for several years since the days of kingship, hinting at an interlude when there was no king—comparable to the empty years mentioned in Papyrus Harris I.16 In the text from Year 12, the time of the trespassing could be understood as occurring in the time of Ramesses III, although the phrase "since I was [established] as king" could refer to the expulsion of the Asiatics. A clear connection can be drawn between the text of Ramesses III’s Year 5 battle and the Sethnakhte Stele. In both texts, the enemy is described as a small bird being chased by the falcon (cf. ES1.10).17 The mention of the role of the chariotry in both texts is also significant (1.17). Does this mean that (at least) two pitched battles against Asiatics were fought in Egypt in a short time span in the days of Sethnakhte and the early reign of Ramesses III?

2. The Time of the Defeat of the Transgressors

In his seminal work about terms of Egyptian royal propaganda, Grimal has highlighted the instances where the term hwn occurs, as in the description of Ramesses III in his war inscription of Year 5 (see above). This term hints at Ramesses III’s young age at the time of battle and might even suggest that he was not yet king at the time.18 In this case, the punishment of the Amurrite who harmed Egypt occurred during the reign of Sethnakhte. However, this conclusion should be accepted very cautiously, for two reasons. First, the context in which the term hwn occurs is damaged and cannot be restored with certainty; second, in the Southern Rhetorical Stele from Year 12, Ramesses III is described as having overthrown the plain and hill-countries that transgressed his frontier since (dr) he was ‘established (smnt?) upon the throne of Atum (i.e., after he became king).19

These operations are described as occurring before the war of Year 8 against the Sea Peoples and against the Libyans, so if they occurred during the reign of Ramesses III (and not Sethnakhte), they happened early on. Note, however, the emphasis Ramesses III bestowed upon his father in the Southern Rhetorical Stele from Year 12: “son of the valiant, offspring of a […]” 20 Pointing to Sethnakhte’s bravery (and his importance for Ramesses III’s legitimacy) might hint at a connection between Ramesses III’s achievements and those of his father.

It is commonly accepted that it was the Sea Peoples who destroyed Amurru,21 an assumption based on the inscriptions of Ramesses III’s war against the Sea Peoples in his eighth regnal year:

(As for) the foreign countries, they made a conspiracy in their isles. Removed and scattered in battle, were the lands at one time. No land could stand against (“before”) their arms, beginning from Hatti-Qode, Carchemish, Arzawa and Alasia, cut off (all) at [once] in one [place]. A camp was ‘pitched’ in one place, within Amurru; they devastated its people and its land was like what had never existed.22

The kingdoms of Hatti, Qode, Arzawa, Carchemish, and Alasia tried to oppose the Sea-People’s advance to no avail, and the conquest of Amurru resulted. The Sea Peoples came, established their camp in Amurru, and devastated (fh) the people and their country. However, from the description of Ramesses III’s war in his fifth regnal year (see above), it can be deduced that Amurru was destroyed prior to the advance of the Sea Peoples by the Egyptians as a punitive action against their leader and the land of Amurru for having transgressed Egypt’s borders, destroyed it, and persecuted the gods as well as all the people.23

3. The War Reliefs Depicting the Siege of Towns in Amurru and Northern Syria

The punitive campaign against a city in Amurru was also depicted on the walls of Ramesses III’s mortuary temple at Medinet Habu.24

The reliability of the war reliefs of Ramesses III against Amurru—like his other stereotypic war depictions against the Nubians25 and against Asiatic and Hittite cities—has been seriously doubted. It is generally claimed that these are pale anachronistic copies of the war reliefs decorating the Ramessum or the mortuary temple of Merenptah.26 Even the reliability of the unique war reliefs and written descriptions of Ramesses III’s wars against the Libyans27 and Sea Peoples has been doubted.28 In the following, I will argue that it is possible that the war inscriptions (with their many literary clichés) and the stereotypic reliefs at Medinet Habu portraying wars against Asians and Hittite towns are authentic and describe actual events.

While comparing the war reliefs of Ramesses III with those remaining from his Ramesside predecessors (mainly Ramesses II and Merenptah), it becomes clear that there are no exact original reliefs to copy from—none are even similar in composition, division of registers, or even scene details.29 The scenes in the different temples differ in the details of the heavily fortified town and the fierce resistance of the defenders upon the walls.30 Furthermore, in the roughly seventy years preceding the events
described by Ramesses III, no wars were conducted against Amurru. There was no reason to reintroduce a relatively minor foe, who was not hostile for so many years, to the walls of the temple. Surely, fiercer and more relevant could have been chosen to decorate the temple walls.

Amurru is mentioned in the royal inscriptions of Ramesses II only in passing in the description of the march of the Egyptian forces, the arrival of the Na’aruna relief force\(^{41}\) and in the epigraphs describing the conquest of Dapur,\(^{43}\) which is not mentioned in the inscriptions of Ramesses III. Amurru is totally absent from the topographical lists of Ramesses II and from the lists of Egypt’s enemies in the royal inscriptions of Ramesses II. Amurru was a loyal vassal of the Hittites in those days and probably remained loyal until Hatti’s last days, during the reign of Mahaza, Amurru’s last attested ruler.\(^{13}\)

It seems that the reliefs and the textual references of the war against Amurru in the Medinet Habu mortuary temple are unique to Ramesses III, and thus should be regarded as authentic and describing an actual event that took place under that pharaoh’s auspice.\(^{44}\)

Several other reliefs of Ramesses III depict assaults on unidentified Asiatic towns\(^{17}\) and on Tunip, which does not appear at all in the remaining reliefs of Ramesses II or his predecessors. When Tunip is mentioned in written texts of the days of Ramesses II and its location described,\(^{46}\) it is placed in the land of Naharina,\(^{17}\) while in the inscriptions of Ramesses III it is located in Hatti,\(^{48}\) even though the defenders are depicted as Asiaties. Furthermore, the depictions of both Egyptian soldiers felling trees and what seems to be a ditch surrounding the town are unique, occurring nowhere else among the many surviving Egyptian war reliefs.\(^{19}\)

**Ramesses III and the Hittites**

Before discussing the appearance of Hatti in the Medinet Habu temple inscriptions and reliefs, a chronological remark is needed. The exact absolute date for the destruction of Hatti and the Levantine kingdoms is not known. The last dated evidence for the existence of Hatti derives from a mention of a grain shipment by Merenptah to Hatti and should be dated to 1213–1203 BCE. In the eighth regnal year of Ramesses III, some thirty years later,\(^{49}\) in the description of the advance of the Sea Peoples toward Egypt, Hatti is already desolated\(^{50}\) (but so is Carchemish, which has clearly survived the onslaught of the Sea Peoples).\(^{46}\) Singer dates the destruction of Hatti to the first decade of the twelfth century BCE.\(^{41}\) Other scholars, however, date the fall of Hatti to the early years of Ramesses III.\(^{44}\) No exact regnal years are known for the last kings of the Hittite empire, Arnuwanda III and Šuppiluliuma II, nor is it known if Šuppiluliuma II had a son who ascended the throne, or how many years he may have reigned.\(^{41}\) Thus, for the moment, it is impossible to precisely date the fall of the Hittite empire or to assess its role, if any, in the Levant during the reign of Ramesses III.

In the reliefs at Medinet Habu, assaults on two Hittite towns are depicted. The epigraph names one of these towns i-r-t,\(^{51}\) commonly identified with Arzawa in Western Anatolia.\(^{69}\) However, the name of this city is written with the t’ sign rather than t-w signs, as is the usual orthography.\(^{68}\) Neither Ramesses II nor Ramesses III or any other pharaoh reached Western Anatolia in a military campaign, let alone conquered it.\(^{69}\) No Ramesside relief shows the conquest of Arzawa, nor is there any remaining relief with similar motifs (such as the king drawing an additional arrow from his quiver after having shot at his enemies, or the casting down of doors and bricks from the top of the wall against the assaulting Egyptian troops).\(^{70}\) Furthermore, the separate kingdom of Arzawa no longer existed in the days of Ramesses III, and late occurrences of Arzawa are either in a general geographical sense (referring to the Arzawa lands) or an ethnocultural one.\(^{71}\) Thus, i-r-t should probably not be identified with Arzawa even though the enemy is depicted as Hittite. It is better to search for a city in Syria under Hittite influence (possibly Ullassa?).\(^{72}\) And again, this relief is original and not copied from earlier examples, and thus may depict a historical event.\(^{73}\)

The particular scene of presenting prisoners before the god Amun\(^{44}\) is original to Ramesses III. Among the prisoners, it is possible to identify with certainty Libyans, Shasu, Asiaties, Hittites, and Philistines. This combination of captives does not appear in any of the remaining decorations of previous kings, and correlates with the king’s inscriptions.

Even in the inscriptions of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, a hostile attitude toward Hatti can be detected.\(^{73}\) This is generally explained as anachronistic, reflecting the period of enmity during the days of Ramesses II. However, Ramesses signed the “silver” peace treaty between Egypt and Hatti and twice married daughters of Hittite kings. Even Merenptah kept the peace with Hatti, as can be deduced from the sending of Egyptian shipments of grain to Hatti’s aid\(^{73}\) and from the description of Hatti as appeased (htp.w) on the “Israel Stele” of Merenptah.\(^{77}\)

The front faces of the bases of the Osiride statue pillars in the first court symbolically show Ramesses III holding his enemies captive. The captive rulers are Nubian, Philistine, Meshwesh (a Libyan tribe), from Kdi, and from [Hat].\(^{44}\) Except for Kdi, which is not mentioned in another historical inscription of Ramesses III as a campaign target, all the ethnic and geographic entities are known from his historical inscriptions.\(^{79}\)

The long list of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu is an interesting topographical blend. The first sixty-nine Asiatic names do not seem to appear in any other known list (toponyms 1–69). A few of these toponyms can be identified with certainty, such as Ptor/Pitru on the Euphrates\(^{60}\) (3), Alepo (6), Emar\(^{44}\) (24), and Carchemish\(^{44}\) (29).\(^{41}\) Astour attempted to locate many of the unidentified places in upper Mesopotamia, from Ptor eastward to beyond the Tigris.\(^{84}\) However, there is no apparent geographical order in Astour’s reconstruction. The toponyms he locates in different parts of Mesopotamia are insignificant places. Moreover, the toponyms he identifies

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**References**

1. Astour's reconstruction, 24, 29.
2. The lists of Egypt's enemies in the royal inscriptions of Ramesses II are not complete.
3. Singer, 41.
4. The toponyms he locates in different parts of Mesopotamia are insignificant places.
5. Moreover, the toponyms he identifies
as geographical neighbors do not appear adjacently on the list, while toponyms that are listed adjacently are located by Astour in opposing ends of the vast territory between the Euphrates and the Zagros, intermingled with toponyms in northern Syria. Last but not least, Astour’s suggested etymology for these toponyms is far from certain. The continuation of the list (GN 71–110) includes toponyms in central Syria and the Bekaa valley—such as Hermel (south of Kadesh, 70), Riblah (71), k-r-m-y-m (74), and Shabduna (south of Kadesh, 75)—that derive from a list of Ramesses II at Karnak. Some of the toponyms appear in the topographical lists of Thutmose III from Northern Syria, and others are still unidentified (111–122). Helck argued that this part of the list was copied from a list of Thutmose I, but there is no proof for this assumption either; no existing topographical list of Thutmose I has yet been found. It seems this list consists of place names in Lebanon and central and northern Syria up to the Euphrates, and that it is possible that a great number of them are original to Ramesses III (however, important towns such as Tunip, Kadesh, and Amurru are conspicuously absent). Even if lists will be found that appear to be the original vonlage of the place names 1–69, the fact that they were chosen by Ramesses III makes a unique statement. Ramesses III did not include place names from Anatolia, east of the Euphrates, or the Aegeans, even though he knew those places; it seems that he omitted from the list places that were not within his reach.

On the right façade of the Pavilion (“High Tower”) of Medinet Habu a relief scene of king slaying enemies before Amun-Ra-Harakhte can be seen. The list includes Hatti, Amurru, Sekel, Sherden, Sha[su?/Shekelesh], Teresh, and P(eleset). The names Sekel, Sherden, Shekelesh, Teresh, and Peleset are known from Ramesses III’s descriptions of his wars against the Sea Peoples. A war against the Shasu of Se’ir is known from Papyrus Harris I. Amurru was also a target of Egyptian activity according to the inscriptions of Year 5. Should we regard Hatti alone as a fictive toponym in this list?

Scholars often treat the mentions of Hatti in the inscriptions of Ramesses III as mere copies of the inscriptions of Ramesses II. However, the other geographical names mentioned alongside Hatti in the inscriptions of Ramesses III are generally absent from the lists of Ramesses II; in those cases where partial names appear, their order is different and is supplemented by additional names that do not appear on Ramesses III’s lists. The stereotyped phraseology describing Hatti’s fate also differs between Ramesses II and Ramesses III. Where texts have clearly been copied by the scribes of Ramesses III from an original text of Ramesses II, the copyist at Medinet Habu changed the specific details referring to relations with Hatti in the days of Ramesses II (the arrival of the Hittite princess with her dowry) to vague ideological and rhetorical phrases referring to the subjugation of all foreign countries and the bringing of all sons and daughters of foreign rulers to Egypt. As can be seen from this example, the scribes of Ramesses III did not copy texts unconsciously and did not claim that specific facts happened, although it is known that they did not occur in Ramesses III’s days!

From checking these several aspects of originality and copying of the historical texts and reliefs of Ramesses III at Medinet Habu, it becomes clear that the reliefs as well as the text may be stereotypic in their outlines, motives, phraseology, etc., but are original in their context and are not copies from any known earlier source. The historical written records and war scenes should thus be regarded as authentic depictions of historical reality in the days of Ramesses III.

It seems one has to conclude that Ramesses III indeed sacked Amurru as a punitive campaign for its involvement in Egypt’s interior affairs. Ramesses apparently also campaigned against other city-states in Syria that might have taken part in the offensive against the rise of Sethnakhte and the Twentieth Dynasty. Relations with Hatti also deteriorated during the decades from the reign of Merenptah until the early reign of Ramesses III. It is not clear if the Hittite empire still existed, but it is clear that cities regarded as being (previously?) within the Hittite sphere of influence were also attacked. In this case, it may be that Ramesses III campaigned against the Kingdom of Carchemish, which inherited the southeastern part of the Hittite Empire after its demise. Ramesses III was portrayed as the destroyer of Hittite cities in his war reliefs, and the rhetoric in his texts was clearly hostile toward Hatti.

Given the aforementioned Egyptian texts and reliefs of Sethnakhte and Ramesses III, it seems that political relations between Egypt and Hatti, Amurru, and Northern Syria during the transition between the Nineteenth and the Twentieth Dynasties ought to be viewed in a different light.

Notes


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10. Seidlmayer, 381 (ag and ah).


12. Galán, 63–64.


15. Elmar Edel, Der Vertrag Zwischen Ramses II Von Ägypten und Hattusili III Von Hatti (Wissenschaftlich Veröffentlichung der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft 95; Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1997), 31 § 6a. In the Akkadian text, the paragraph concerning Rameses’ obligation to come to aid the Hittite king is purposely omitted.

16. Cf. the rebellion of Inaros in 462 BCE. See Diodorus Siculus XI, 71, 72; Thucydides I, 104; Ctesias, Persica, 32.


19. Seidlmayer, 379 (u).


23. KRI II 35.1.97.


26. In KRI V 38:1, Ramesses III causes the Asiatics (sttwy) to turn back, although the Sea Peoples are not yet mentioned in this paragraph and the equation need not be made. In KRI V 41:13, the foes (earlier in the text mentioned as a confederation of Sea Peoples) are called “twy, “Asiatics.” However, in no instance are
the Sea Peoples explicitly called Asians, and the term may be understood generally.

30. KRI V 41:6.

32. KRI V, 2:5:ff.
33. KRI V, 19; cf. Peden, 17: "when they (the Asians?) rebelled."
35. KRI V, 73:2–73:5. After this episode, the defeat of the Sea Peoples is described (the list of Sea Peoples is similar to that in the Year 8 war description), and then only is the defeat of the Libyans mentioned.
36. In the Year 5 description, only Peleshet and Tjeker are mentioned.
38. Cf. the instances cited by Nicholas-C. Grimal, *Les termes de la propagande royale égyptienne: de la XIXe dynastie à la conquête d'Alexandre* (Études sur la propagande royale égyptienne 4 Mémoires de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres 6, Paris, 1986): 88–100, notes 244, 245, 586. For the term hwn in the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, see Angelika Lohwasser, "Der 'weise Alte,'" in Monika R. M. Hasitzka (ed.), *Das Alte Ägypten und seine Nachbarn. Festschrift zum 65 Geburtstag von Helmut Satzinger* (Kremser wissenschaftliche Reihe; Krems, 2003): 113–114. In these examples, the king can be a hwn of twenty (Taharqa) or forty-one years (Irikeamanote), but before his accession to kingship. See, however, KRI V, 76: the Northern Rhetorical Stele 1.3, where Rameses III says ink nswt m Hwnw, "I am/was king as a young man," showing that the noun Hwnw can refer to the king or at after his accession.
40. KRI V, 73:4.
43. Contra Safronov, 115, n. 25.
45. Kenneth A. Kitchen, "Historical Observations on Ramesside Nubia," *Ägypten und Kush* (Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des alten Orient 13; Berlin, 1977): 224. Comparing the Nubian war reliefs of Rameses III with those of Rameses II, one comes to the conclusion that they are both stereotypic and general and do not portray specific events with recognizable details. However, the details of reliefs of both rulers differ in (1) the number of registers of Nubian enemies (for Rameses II, two registers at Beit el Wali, one wide register at Beit el Wali’s south wall, and two registers at Derr, as opposed to three registers of Nubians for Ramesses III at Medinet Habu), (2) the placement of the Egyptian cavalry (behind the king for Ramesses II; contrast with the Egyptian chariots placed in the register beneath the king in the relief of Rameses III), (3) the countryside scenery with fruit trees of Nubia, present in Rameses II’s reliefs but not those of Rameses III, (4) the blue crown of Rameses II, as opposed to the wig in the relief of Ramesses III, and (5) the Philistine warriors depicted only in the reliefs of Ramesses III. For the reliefs of both kings, see Heinz; Ramesses II: 252, 257, 258, 261 (Beit el Wali), 265 (Derr West); Ramesses III: 298 (Medinet Habu). Cf. David O’Connor, "The Location of Irem," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 73 (1987): 132–133. Furthermore, the Nubian campaigns, which were depicted by the artists of Rameses II, were in temples far away from Medinet Habu, and thus were not easily accessible for an artist decorating the mortuary temple of Ramesses III, who may have wanted to make for himself an easier life and copy war scenes from a nearby temple. The texts of Ramesses III also suggests that military actions were carried out against Nubia, as can also be deduced from the lack of archaeological finds in upper Nubia from the days of Merenptah to Ramesses III and their renewed existence in the days of Ramesses III. See Karola Zibelius-Chen, "Das nachkoloniale Nubien: Politische Fragen der Entstehung des kurschitisichen Reiches," in Rolf Gundlach (ed.), *Der Sudan in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart* (Nordostafrikanisch-westafrikanische Studien, vol. 1; Frankfurt am Main, 1996), 197–199. Cf. the Ramesside archaeological remains, conveniently listed by Irmgard. Hein, *Die Ramessidische Bautätigkeit in Nubien* (Göttinger Orientforschungen 22; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1991), 143–144; 177: map 7. Add to these finds the remains of a cartouche on a block from Kerma, possibly mentioning "nh-[n]-R" [stp-n-Imn] (Siptah). See Charles Bonnet, Dominique Valbelle, and Mohammed S. El-Din M. Ahmed, "Les sanctuaires de Kerma du nouvel empire à l’époque Méroïtique," *Comptes Rendus de l’Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres* (Juillet–Octobre 2000): 114.
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50. Heinz, 316 L.17. For the heavy but different fortifications of Dapur and hr[n][b] in Kili in the days of Ramesses II, see 274, VIII.11, 12, IX.1.


54. It is more than possible that Ramesses III’s authority reached the southern borders of Amurrum. For a statue of Ramesses III at Byblos, see James Weinstein, “The Collapse of the Egyptian Empire in the Southern Levant,” in William A. Ward and Martha S. Joukowsky (eds.), The Crisis Years: The Twelfth Century B.C. From Beyond the Danube to the Tigris (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall Hunt, 1992), 142; KRI V 256:15.

55. For the ingenuous suggestion to identify one of the Asiatic towns with Kadesh, see Étienne Drioton and Jacques Vander, Les peuples de l’Orient Méditerranéen II: L’Égypte (Paris, 1962): 438. Cf. KRI V, 88: 12 ff, where the motifs of being alone on the battlefield against a coalition seem reminiscent of Ramesses II Kadesh war inscriptions.

56. In the battle of Kadesh, the Hittite king is said to be in Aleppo, north of Tunip (without geographical connection to an empire). See Kitchen, RITA II, 15, 16.11. 39, 57.


58. KRI V, 78:15; see Edgerton and Wilson, 96, n. 172. For the possible location of Tunip at Tell el-‘Asharneh, see Goren, Finkelstein, and Na‘aman, 116–122.

59. Heinz, 313, 1.32.

60. 1179 BCE, according to Erik Hornung, Rolf Krauss, and David A. Warburton, Ancient Egyptian Chronology (Handbook of Oriental Studies 38; Leiden–Boston: Brill 2006), 212, 493; Kenneth A. Kitchen, “Methods of Humanities and Sciences for Absolute Chronology,” in The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium B.C. (Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Denkschriften der Gesamtaakademie XIX; Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2000), 42, 49; 1175/1174, according to Jurgen von Beckerath, Chronologie des Pharaonischn Ägypten (Münchener Ägyptologische Studien 46: Mainz am Rhein, 1997), 106. However, two chronological points from the Egyptian perspective should be taken into account. First is the recent proposal to shorten the length of the reign of Horemheb to fifteen years; see Jacobus Van Dijk, “New Evidence on the Length of the Reign of Horemheb,” Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt 44 (2008). Furthermore, Sethnakhte’s reign lasted at least into his fourth regnal year according to the newly discovered stele of Bakenkhons, high priest of Sethnakhte; see Mansour Boraik, “Stela of Bakenkhonsu, High Priest of Amun-Re,” Memnonia 18 (2007): 119–126.

61. KRI V 39:16; Peden, 29.


65. Horst Klengel, Geschichte des Hethitischen Reiches (Handbuch der Orientalistik 14; Leiden, 1999), 305, n. 677, 309.

66. Edgerton and Wilson, 94–95.

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68. Simmons, *Handbook for the Study of Egyptian Topographical Lists Relating to Western Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 1937), 165, list XXVII 88 (Ramesses III), 168. Note that in this occurrence, i-r-ti is not listed together with the great superpowers of the day, and that here also is the only occurrence in topographical lists where the alleged 'Arzawa is written with the sign $\text{i}$. 

69. Note the question raised by A.H. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961), 288: "Is it possible that Ramses III reached Arzawa?" 

70. Heinz, 314, I,33. 


72. However, the orthography is a bit different; cf. Simmons, 197. 

73. Cf. Peter W. Haider "vom Nil zum Mäander: Die Beziehungen Zwischen dem Pharaonenhof und dem Königreich Arzawa in Westkleinasien," in Peter Scherrer, Hans Tauber, and Hilke Thür (eds.), *Steine und Wege: Festschrift für Diete Knibbe zum 65 Geburtstag* (Österreichisches archäologisches Institut: Wien, 1999), 215–216; this suggests i-r-ti is a northern city with people who originally came from Arzawa. Cf. the personal name i-\text{r-t}i-w-2-j2. 


75. Cf. also the text and relief of Ramesses III trampling Hatti in Nineteenth Dynasty Karnak, Precinct of Amun. 

76. Simmons, 157, 165 (list XXVII); Helck 1962, 251–252. 

77. Place names 76, 79, 80, 107, 109. 


79. Simmons, 176 emends name 5 as \[k-\text{r-t}\]. 


81. From several topographical names in Syria from the days of Thutmose III (suggested by Redford to belong to Amenhotep I), see Donald Redford, "A Gate Inscription from Karnak and Egyptian Involvement in Western Asia During the Early 18th Dynasty," *JAOS* 99 (1979): 270–287. It seems such a list existed, since its southern counterpart has been identified and published by Helen K. Jacquet-Gordon, "Frames of a Topographical List Dating to the Reign of Tuthmosis I," *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 81 Supplement Bulletin du Centenaire (1981): 41–46 

82. For several topographical lists in Syria from the days of Thutmose III I (suggested by Redford to belong to Amenhotep I), see Donald Redford, "A Gate Inscription from Karnak and Egyptian Involvement in Western Asia During the Early 18th Dynasty," *JAOS* 99 (1979): 270–287. It seems such a list existed, since its southern counterpart has been identified and published by Helen K. Jacquet-Gordon, "Frames of a Topographical List Dating to the Reign of Tuthmosis I," *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 81 Supplement Bulletin du Centenaire (1981): 41–46 

83. See n. 2 above.

84. Simmons, 176 emends name 5 as \[\text{k}-\text{r-t}\]. 

85. See Simmons, 176 emends name 5 as \[\text{k}-\text{r-t}\]. 

86. Simmons, 176 emends name 5 as \[\text{k}-\text{r-t}\]. 

87. Place names 76, 79, 80, 107, 109. 

88. For several topographical names in Syria from the days of Thutmose III (suggested by Redford to belong to Amenhotep I), see Donald Redford, "A Gate Inscription from Karnak and Egyptian Involvement in Western Asia During the Early 18th Dynasty," *JAOS* 99 (1979): 270–287. It seems such a list existed, since its southern counterpart has been identified and published by Helen K. Jacquet-Gordon, "Frames of a Topographical List Dating to the Reign of Tuthmosis I," *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 81 Supplement Bulletin du Centenaire (1981): 41–46 

89. For several topographical names in Syria from the days of Thutmose III (suggested by Redford to belong to Amenhotep I), see Donald Redford, "A Gate Inscription from Karnak and Egyptian Involvement in Western Asia During the Early 18th Dynasty," *JAOS* 99 (1979): 270–287. It seems such a list existed, since its southern counterpart has been identified and published by Helen K. Jacquet-Gordon, "Frames of a Topographical List Dating to the Reign of Tuthmosis I," *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 81 Supplement Bulletin du Centenaire (1981): 41–46 


93. For several topographical names in Syria from the days of Thutmose III (suggested by Redford to belong to Amenhotep I), see Donald Redford, "A Gate Inscription from Karnak and Egyptian Involvement in Western Asia During the Early 18th Dynasty," *JAOS* 99 (1979): 270–287. It seems such a list existed, since its southern counterpart has been identified and published by Helen K. Jacquet-Gordon, "Frames of a Topographical List Dating to the Reign of Tuthmosis I," *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 81 Supplement Bulletin du Centenaire (1981): 41–46 

94. Simmons, 176 emends name 5 as \[\text{k}-\text{r-t}\]. 

95. See Simmons, 176 emends name 5 as \[\text{k}-\text{r-t}\]. 

96. Simmons, 9, 85, 176 (list XXXI).


98. See Simmons, 176 emends name 5 as \[\text{k}-\text{r-t}\]. 

99. In Ramesses II’s inscriptions, Hatti almost always appears alongside Arzawa, Qode, and Naharina, and sometimes as the extreme opposite kingdom of Kush. See Kitchen, *RITA* II, 2, 4, 30, 33, 54, 59, 111. 

100. From several topographical names in Syria from the days of Thutmose III (suggested by Redford to belong to Amenhotep I), see Donald Redford, "A Gate Inscription from Karnak and Egyptian Involvement in Western Asia During the Early 18th Dynasty," *JAOS* 99 (1979): 270–287. It seems such a list existed, since its southern counterpart has been identified and published by Helen K. Jacquet-Gordon, "Frames of a Topographical List Dating to the Reign of Tuthmosis I," *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 81 Supplement Bulletin du Centenaire (1981): 41–46 

101. From several topographical names in Syria from the days of Thutmose III (suggested by Redford to belong to Amenhotep I), see Donald Redford, "A Gate Inscription from Karnak and Egyptian Involvement in Western Asia During the Early 18th Dynasty," *JAOS* 99 (1979): 270–287. It seems such a list existed, since its southern counterpart has been identified and published by Helen K. Jacquet-Gordon, "Frames of a Topographical List Dating to the Reign of Tuthmosis I," *Bulletin de l’Institut Français d’Archéologie Orientale* 81 Supplement Bulletin du Centenaire (1981): 41–46

For the terminology used by Ramesses III, see Edgerton and Wilson, 95–96 (not even mentioning Hatti by its name):

147: [The wretched chief of Hat]ti, [whom his Majesty slew] (KRI V 102:12): 149: Words by Amon-Re-Harakhte: “... My hand is with [thee], that thou mayest overthrow the land of Hatti.”


102. Tunip, Kadesh (?), and note the mention of the Fenekhu lands in KRI V 93:8.