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Toward Pinpointing the Timing of the Egyptian Abandonment of Avaris During the Middle of the 18th Dynasty

Douglas Petrovich
University of Toronto

Abstract

The Austrian archaeological team led by Manfred Bietak that excavated the palatial district at Avaris (Tell el-Dab'a) has produced some significant results for illuminating Lower Egypt's history during the 15th and 18th Dynasties. While Bietak's subsequent publications primarily have focused on the exquisite Minoan wall paintings and the site's likely association with Peru-nefer, much less attention has centered on the timing of the mid-18th-Dynasty abandonment that Bietak says occurred "after Amenhotep II," and was followed by an occupational gap. Did the abandonment occur during the reign of Amenhotep II, at the end of his reign, or during the reign of Thutmose IV? The present work will seek to bring together all of the relevant data—from the archaeological evidence at the site, the epigraphical record, and corroborative evidence from Theban tomb paintings—in an attempt to determine more precisely the timing of the mid-18th-Dynasty abandonment of the site.

Introduction

The ongoing excavations at Tell el-Dab'a by the Austrian Archaeological Institute of Cairo, under the direction of Manfred Bietak until Irene Forstner-Müller succeeded him in 2010, have produced a significant number of important finds. While these excavations include findings from the 12th, 13th, 17th, and 18th Dynasties, the focus here will be on the 18th Dynasty only. The corpus of publications by this team is quite voluminous, with Bietak's attention having focused primarily on major issues such as the spectacular Minoan fresco paintings and the identification of Tell el-Dab'a as Peru-nefer. Bietak has demonstrated not only that the frescoes' motifs leave no doubt that Minoan master-painters were behind these exquisite works of art, but he has shown that the use of specifically Minoan royal motifs in a palace in the Nile Delta indicates encounters on the highest level between the courts of Knossos and Egypt.[1]

Bietak also proved conclusively that Peru-nefer—the famous naval base of Thutmose III that was depicted on the walls of Theban tombs, such as that of Rekhmire (TT 100),[2] and was described on Papyrus BM 10056 as the site where *Keftiu* (i.e. Cretan) ships were docked in its harbor—is the very site of Avaris.[3] Traditionally, many have advanced Memphis as the site where Peru-nefer was located, and David Jeffreys has presented one of the most recent expressions of doubt about Bietak's relocation of Peru-nefer from Memphis to Avaris.[4] However, Bietak successfully rebutted most of the doubts presented by Jeffreys, in addition to adding many of his own compelling arguments in support of Avaris as the proper location.[5]

If this does not represent enough major issues that Bietak has addressed with vigor, he also has been busy attempting to resolve the chronological discrepancies related to the conflict between ^{14}C data and the historical chronology of the 18th Dynasty. This caused him to suggest that perhaps a systemic failure in the Mediterranean's ^{14}C evaluation might exist, or that maybe the absorption of ^{14}C was different—for environmental reasons—in the 15th century BC and before.[6] Such consuming tasks have prevented Bietak from being able to solve every lesser issue that has arisen as a result of all that his team has uncovered in Avaris's palatial district.

In a spirit of admiration and appreciation for the diverse and profound contributions that the Austrian team has made, the present study will focus on a much smaller matter, which has received only limited attention: the timing of the abandonment of Avaris that occurred during the middle of the 18th Dynasty. According to Bietak, it was *after* the reign of Amenhotep II that the site was abandoned.[7] Elsewhere, however, Bietak states that "[t]he palace precinct . . . was in use from the early reign of Tuthmosis III until the reign of Amenophis II, perhaps even until the end of this king's reign."[8] This leaves open the possibility that the Egyptians abandoned Avaris *during* Amenhotep II's reign. Thus Bietak is not consistent in his identification of when the site

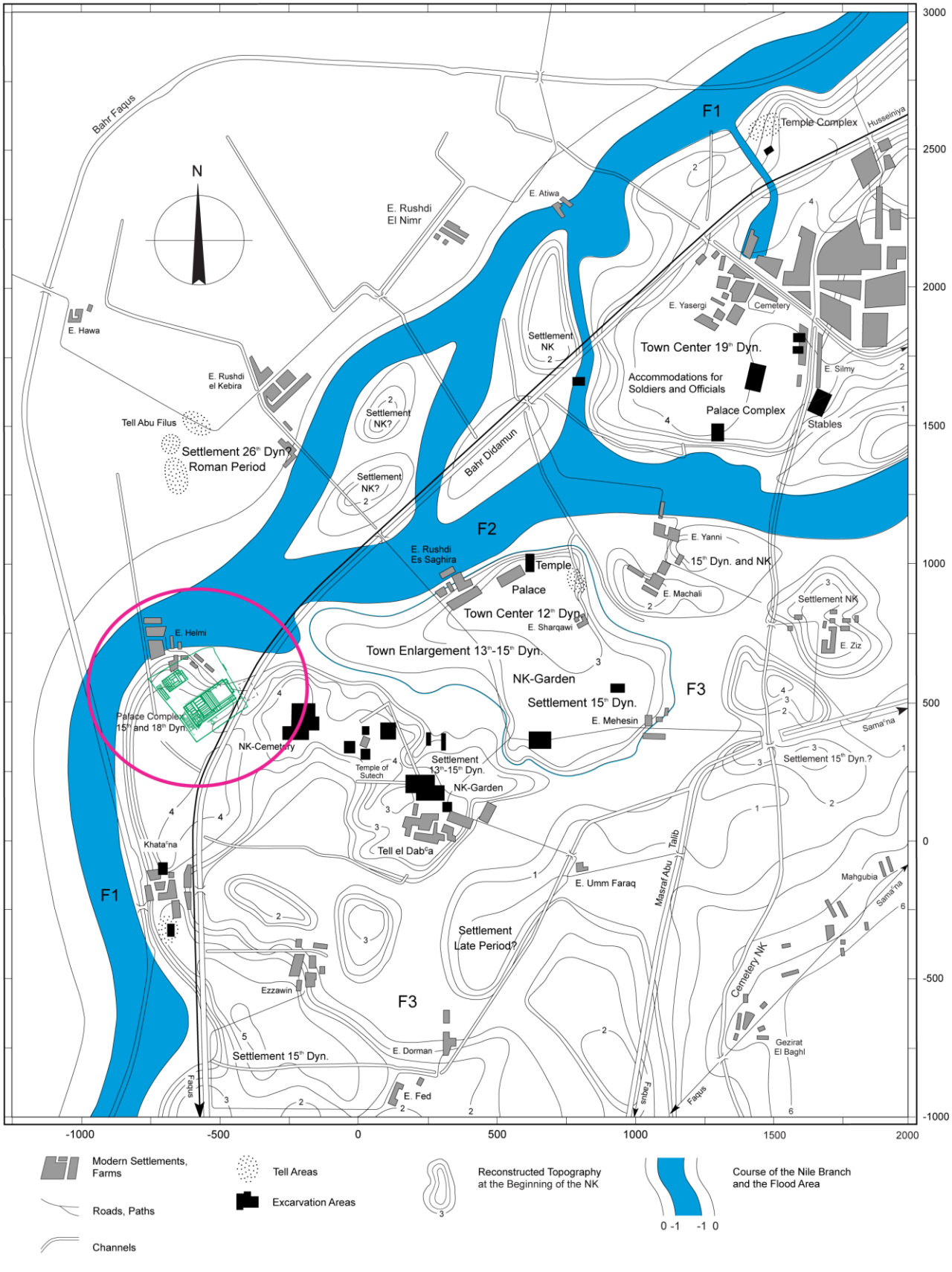

Figure 1: Avaris and Pi-Ramesse. Courtesy Joint Archives of the Austrian Academy and the Austrian Archaeological Institute

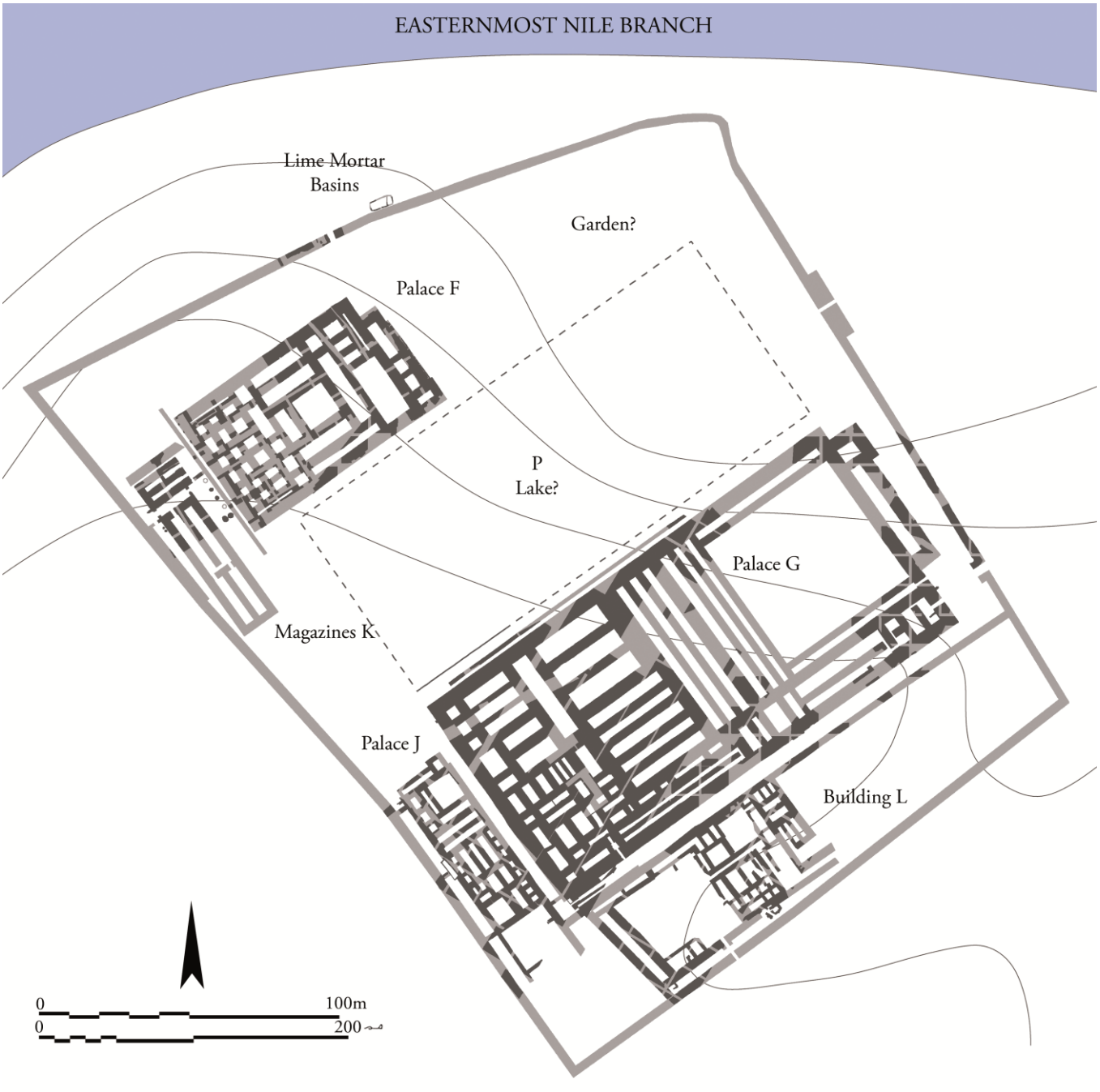

Figure 2: Palatial District at Avaris. Courtesy Joint Archives of the Austrian Academy and the Austrian Archaeological Institute

was abandoned, at times suggesting that it may have taken place during the reign of Amenhotep II, at other times implying that it occurred at the transitional moment when Thutmose IV took the throne, and elsewhere stating that it happened during the reign of Thutmose IV.

Are there any historical events during one of these three timeframes that signal the kind of internal upheaval that would lead to the abandonment of Egypt's massive military fortress and naval base,[9] and its most vital city in Lower Egypt, at this time of Egypt's greatest imperialistic expansion?[10] What is the best time to suggest for the hour of Avaris's curious abandonment? Thus the goal of the present work is to determine whether Avaris was abandoned during the reign of Amenhotep II, at the transition between his reign and that of Thutmose IV, or during the reign of Thutmose IV. Relevant data for the resolution of this dilemma will be gathered from the archaeological evidence at Tell el-Dab'a, the epigraphical record preserved throughout Egypt, and corroborative evidence from Theban tomb paintings that have a bearing on this matter.

Distinctives of the Palatial District at Avaris

Avaris served as the capital city under the foreign rule of the 15th-Dynasty Hyksos in Lower Egypt.[11] During the Hyksos'

occupation, Avaris developed into one of the largest sites in both Egypt and the ancient Near East, with pivotal importance as one of the Eastern Mediterranean's vital trading centers.[12] In time, the native Egyptians of the 17th Dynasty, who were centered at Thebes, began to challenge the Hyksos for control over the Nile Valley outside of Upper Egypt. Kamose drove the Hyksos out of Middle Egypt, but he failed in his attempt to expel them from Avaris via siege. His brother Ahmose must have resumed the struggle against the Hyksos by Year 11 of their king, Khamudi, a conflict that lasted for several years and eventually led to the capture of Memphis.[13] Ahmose later entered Heliopolis, then bypassed Avaris and proceeded to Sile, the frontier fort on the edge of the Sinai. His strategy was designed to sever the Hyksos' support from Asia, and then to blockade the capital. When Avaris finally capitulated, the remaining Hyksos were driven out of Egypt and retreated to Sharuhen, on the southeastern coast of Canaan, near Gaza.[14]

The Second Stele of Kamose attests to Avaris as a harbor town during the Hyksos period, and since shrine-door inscriptions in Moscow's Pushkin Museum reveal that Avaris also was a harbor town during the Ramesside period,[15] it is only natural to assume that it served as a harbor between these periods. All that was missing to confirm this was monumental installations from the 18th Dynasty, which will be discussed shortly.[16] The 15th-Dynasty Hyksos were the first to build a palatial precinct at Avaris, and they did so on the edge of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile. This precinct consisted of gardens, a massive defensive wall with bastions,[17] a monumental casemate building, and a mansion with mudbrick pavements. The Hyksos' citadel must have been constructed toward the end of the Hyksos' occupation at Avaris (Phase D/2), as Cypriot Bichrome Ware—which only appears at the end of the Middle Bronze Age (*ca.* 2100–1550 BC)—was found in sand dumps deposited in order to raise the level of the land for construction projects in the palatial precinct. The early-18th-Dynasty palatial precinct was built partially on the same ground as that of the Hyksos, although the native Egyptians' precinct was oriented differently and was expanded beyond the limits of the palatial district of the Hyksos.[18]

The Egyptian conquest of Avaris was followed by a rebuilding and reoccupation of the city soon after Ahmose had liberated the Nile Valley completely (see especially pink circle in Figure 1). Two strata existed at Avaris before the reign of Thutmose III, Egypt's great conqueror. The phase immediately after the Hyksos occupation, D/1.2 (= Stratum e/1.2), featured a large enclosure wall that was used until the reign of Amenhotep II, a palace with a large paved hall, and at least 30 circular granary silos. The 5.25-meter (in diameter) silos, which could store an enormous quantity of grain and foodstuffs, were rebuilt up to four times and could feed a considerable number of people. The next phase, D/1.1 (= Stratum e/1.1), most distinctively featured pit graves without any offerings, which were cut into earlier phases and consisted of single or multiple burials of people lying face down on their chests or in haphazard positions. The majority of these burials contained the remains of young men from 18–25 years of age, with some having been ritually executed.[19]

Sometime after Thutmose III came to the throne, which corresponds to the outset of Phase C/3 (= Stratum d) and probably a time early in his coregency with Hatshepsut,[20] construction at the palatial district exploded to proportions never seen before at Avaris, which corresponds well with his post-coregency foreign conquests and amassing of wealth.[21] Palaces F and G were built in parallel,[22] separated by a massive rectangular lake, although Palace G was considerably larger in size (see Figure 2). A third palace (J) was built immediately to the southwest of Palace G,[23] but during the subsequent Phase C/2 (= Stratum c), Palace J was dismantled and gave way to a large workshop (W2) with administrative offices and magazines. Other workshops were constructed in the palatial district during Phase C/2, with pumice having been found in all of them,[24] which through chemical analysis was found to have derived from the Thera/Santorini volcanic eruption of the middle of the 2nd Millennium BC.[25] In workshop W1 (Figure 3), Bietak's team found two lumps of arrowheads with a total of over 140 Aegean arrow-tips of bronze, which demonstrates that the workshops were used for the production of weapons for military purposes and explains the presence of the large quantity of pumice,[26] which in antiquity was used as an abrasive to polish items made of bronze.

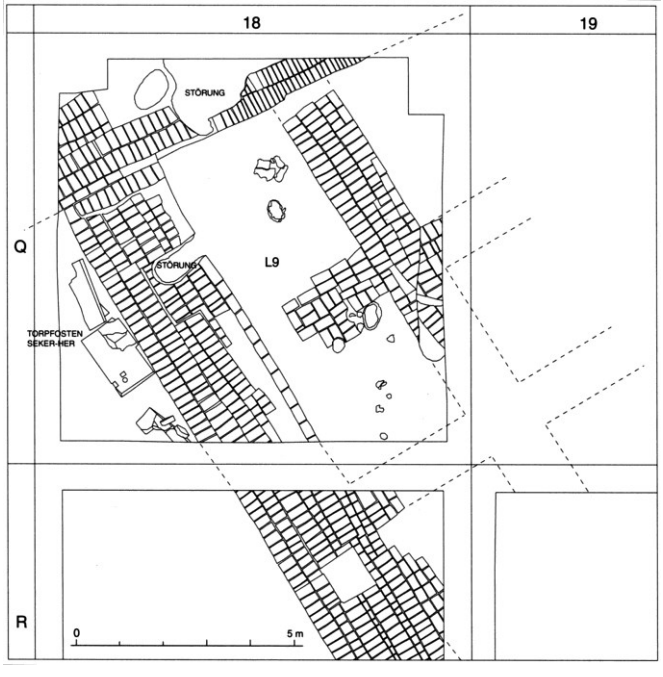

Figure 3: Plan of Workshop W1. Courtesy Joint Archives of the Austrian Academy and the Austrian Archaeological Institute

The dating of the palatial compound is based on ceramic evidence that stretches from the reign of Thutmose I through Amenhotep II, with the most activity attributed to the reign of Thutmose III.[27] A mysterious occupational hiatus then occurred, an abandonment of the palatial district that Bietak attributes to a time after Amenhotep II (see greyed area in Figure 4). The site was reoccupied during the Amarna Age, and at some point during this

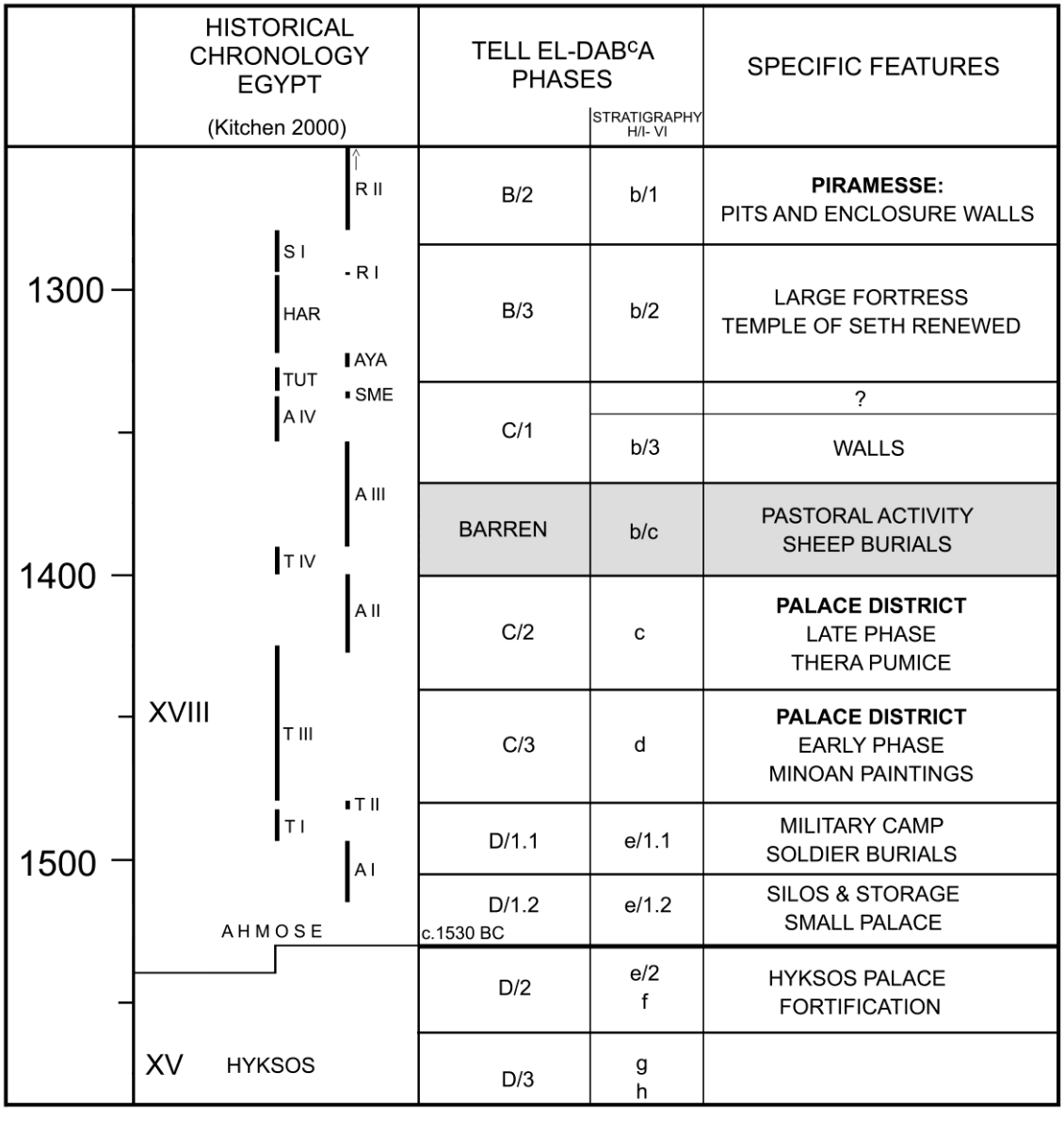

Figure 4: Tell el-Dab'a Phasing Scheme. Courtesy Joint Archives of the Austrian Academy and the Austrian Archaeological Institute

era or just afterwards, Palaces F & G were torn down, probably to rob material for other building projects such as the first phase of construction on the late-18th-Dynasty fortress that was first built during or immediately after the Amarna Age. This new fortress was constructed to the south of the Thutmoside palaces, which must have served as quarries, and Horemheb later enlarged it substantially to the northeast, most likely to make the harbor basin more secure.[28]

Geomagnetic surveys conducted by the Austrian Institute revealed undeniable signs of a harbor basin of about 450 m^2 at Avaris, with a canal connected to the Pelusiac branch of the Nile. A second harbor was located by Palace F/II of the 15th Dynasty.[29] The identification of these basins as harbors was proven through sediment-analysis by two paleogeographers who specialize in the study of ancient harbors. Harbor 1 must have been teeming with activity, because it had an access canal from—and a separate outlet back to—the Nile. This harbor, located due east from the palatial precinct, could have accommodated scores of ships. Dating the harbors is difficult, but Harbor 1 seems to have been in use already during the reign of Horemheb, as its northern edge is parallel to a fortification wall of his time. Since Harbor 2 was situated alongside a Hyksos palace, it likely dates to the 15th Dynasty. These harbors, which remained in use until the reign of the final king of the 18th Dynasty, are among the strongest evidence validating Ezbet Helmi as the site of Peru-nefer, Egypt's vital naval base.[30]

Before proceeding to the question of when the site was abandoned, one more detail must be added. A large number of animal burials was found in the palatial precinct, dating to a time during or after the abandonment. Bietak variously dates the burials to the Barren Phase (Stratum b/3) or during the first phase

of construction of the late-18th-Dynasty fortress (Phase C/1, = Stratum b/3, which immediately followed the Barren Phase).[31] The burials include a few dogs and cattle, but the majority consisted of sheep and goats, with more than 30 such burials found in the limited excavations of 200 m north to south in Areas H/III and H/VI.[32] Some of these sheep and goats were adults, but most of them died in their first year of life. In Bietak's writings, he consistently refers to the way in which all of these animals, dogs included, "were buried with great care."[33] Bietak concluded that the sheep and goats were tended by shepherds who inhabited the site during the time of the occupational gap, but their exact identity will be discussed subsequently.

He also reported that some remains of human graves without any offerings were found, which dynamic is similar to the pit-grave burials from the earlier Phase D/1.1, but he was not sure whether these later burials belonged to the shepherds. Since the shepherds had only sheep and goats, Bietak theorized that they could have been nomads whose subsistence depended on these animals alone. He further thought that if the shepherds were nomads, they most likely were from the Sinai or farther away, though he offered no reason for why they would have come to the deserted site of Avaris.[34]

Another possibility Bietak presented is that the herders may have been *mnmn.t*-shepherds, who as early as the time of Akhenaten were assigned to large institutional herds of the Delta. These herders oversaw varying types of animals, including pigs, cattle, and geese, as well as small livestock (sheep and goats). The Egyptians often employed Libyan cattle herders and took advantage of the skills of the inhabitants of the eastern and western deserts, hiring them to tend their flocks. There is some evidence that Asiatics, who were responsible for introducing sheep and wool to Egypt during the Middle Kingdom, still were employed as shepherds during the New Kingdom. Thus these shepherds at Avaris may have been hired herdsmen.[35]

View #1: Avaris Abandoned during Thutmose IV's Reign

While Bietak did state that the mid-18th-Dynasty abandonment of Avaris occurred *after* the reign of Amenhotep II, nowhere did he assert explicitly that the abandonment took place *during* the reign of Thutmose IV. Whether Bietak intentionally implied the possibility of an abandonment during the course of this pharaoh's reign or not, this possibility nonetheless should be considered. From the available evidence, the possibility certainly exists that the abandonment of Avaris transpired while Thutmose IV was sitting on the throne.

One point that Bietak makes, however, could be interpreted as an indication that the abandonment occurred during the reign of Thutmose IV. He mentions that the date of the animal burials can be established as sometime after Amenhotep II's reign and before the latter part of Amenhotep III's reign, which is when the Amarna Age began. As he says, "This leaves a time span of the reign of Tuthmose IV and part of the reign of Amenophis III."[36] Elsewhere Bietak notes, "It is probable that during the first phase of the late 18th Dynasty fortress, before the constructions of Horemheb, shepherds *used the Tuthmoside ruins* as a refuge and buried sheep and goats there."[37] Therefore, Bietak leaves open the possibility that the abandonment and the animal burials took place during the reign of Thutmose IV.

However, there are problems with suggesting that Avaris was abandoned during the reign of Thutmose IV. First, as already mentioned, the ceramic evidence throughout the entire palatial district extends into the reign of Amenhotep II, but does not reach beyond it. Moreover, the ceramic evidence connected to the animal burials, which subsequently will be discussed at greater length, predates the reign of Thutmose IV. Second, the scarab evidence from the Stratum d-c workshops, which produced weapons such as the bronze arrowheads, clearly restricts these occupational phases to the reigns of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II.[38] A complete absence of scarab evidence for Thutmose IV makes it unlikely that Avaris was inhabited during his reign. It would be highly unusual for a palatial city with three spectacular palaces and a multi-structure production facility for supplying the army with munitions to have no attestation to its king.

View #2: Avaris Abandoned at the End of Amenhotep II's Reign

Another distinct possibility is that Avaris was abandoned when Amenhotep II died and ceded the throne to his son, Thutmose IV.[39] Bietak's chronological phasing chart shows that the Stratum-b/c "Barren" phase began at the conclusion of Amenhotep II's reign and at the outset of Thutmose IV's reign.[40] Since transitional events often occur at major transitional points in time, such as the change to a new monarch, perhaps this is when Avaris was deserted. Bietak suggests that one such transitional phase that may have caused the site's abandonment and fall into ruin was a reversal in Egyptian foreign policy. While the pharaohs before Thutmose IV were intensively involved in warfare in Asia, he began the trend of arranged political marriages.[41] These marriages to Mitannian princesses cemented Egypt's relationship with Mitanni.[42] The question that must be asked, however, is whether this reversal in Egyptian foreign policy transpired during the reign of Thutmose IV, or perhaps during the reign of Amenhotep II.

Amarna Letter EA 29, sent from King Tushratta of Mitanni to Amenhotep IV, describes a diplomatic union between Thutmose IV and a daughter of Artatama I, an earlier predecessor of Tushratta. Thutmose IV allegedly requested seven times before the Mitannian king was willing to send a daughter to seal the arrangement, whether the excessive pleading is deemed actual or fictional.[43] This trend of Egyptian political marriages continued into the reign of Amenhotep III, who reportedly requested of King Shuttarna II six times before being granted a wife.[44] Clearly Bietak is correct that a noticeable diminishing in military campaigning transpired. Amarna Letter EA 109 reveals that by the middle of the 14th century BC, Egypt no longer struck fear into the Canaanite rulers: "Previously, at the mere sight of an Egyptian, the kings of Canaan would flee be[fore him, but] now the sons of

'Abdi-Aširta make men from Egypt prowl about [*like do*]*gs*."[45]

Vandersleyen remarks that this relative military inertness lasted until Horemheb came to power,[46] and certainly this would coincide with the evidence from Avaris. Under Horemheb, a huge fortress was constructed in the same location as the earlier Thutmoside palace, which required a complete leveling of the ground, leaving no visible trace of the earlier walls.[47] Yet if, in fact, a complete reversal of foreign policy—from aggressive conquering and exploitation to docile peace-seeking and alliance-making marriages—is at work behind the abandonment of Egypt's naval headquarters, it leaves unanswered why another complete reversal transpired under Horemheb. Thus great doubt exists regarding the supposition that Thutmose IV or Amenhotep III consciously decided to pursue such a policy of peacekeeping in the first place.

The truth is that no such reversal in foreign policy originated during the reign of Thutmose IV. His military exploits are attested in both the southern and the northern Levant. In Canaan, he led a punitive campaign against Gezer. The highlight of his Asiatic campaigning, however, was in Syria. The best-known inscription describing military activity during his reign is the statue-dedication text from Karnak, which refers to the "first victorious campaign" of Thutmose IV, the same phrase that Amenhotep II used in the Memphis, Amada, and Elephantine Stelae of his first Asiatic campaign (Year 3), which was launched to quell a rebellion that began immediately after the death of Thutmose III. The laconic text of Thutmose IV reads in part, "from the plunder of his majesty from [////]na, defeated from his first victorious campaign."[48]

This inscription probably refers to a localized victory over either Qatna, near Tunip, or Sidon, along the Phoenician coast. Qatna is not attested during Thutmose IV's reign, but the king was known to have been present there on at least one occasion, which is known from Amarna Letter EA 85.[49] His grandfather, Thutmose III, had seized the city during an Asiatic campaign.[50] Sidon (*Zi-du-na*) may be an even stronger possibility for the conquered site, given not only that Thutmose IV was known to have traveled there, but that in Amarna Letter EA 85, King Rib-Hadda of Byblos told Amenhotep III that "since your father's return from Sidon, from that time the lands have been joined to the Habiru."[51] This statement certainly could be referring to a conquest of Sidon, which was followed by the Sidonians' transfer of allegiance to the Habiru.

While Qatna and Sidon are the strongest possibilities for the restoration of the incomplete place-name, the northern Levant remains the likely area for the main campaign that Thutmose IV launched. A scene in the tomb of the standard-bearer Nebamun (TT 90) records his promotion in Year 6 of Thutmose IV and portrays the chiefs of Naharin (Mitanni) before pharaoh in his kiosk.[52] Asiatic captives also appear in this scene, which asserts Egypt's propagandized superiority over Mitanni, whether actual or fabricated. Certainly this not only dates the Asiatic campaign, which was followed in Year 7 by an expedition to repel Nubian insurgence against the regular transporting of gold from Egypt's south, but it prefigures the alliance he would form with Mitanni.[53] His tour of Naharin seems to confirm the division of Syro-Canaan, with the Mitannians taking northern Syria and the Egyptians obtaining the southern Levant.[54]

Even if the attestation of limited imperialistic military campaigning during the reign of Thutmose IV is not persuasive enough to disprove fully the notion of a reversal in foreign policy at the transfer of regnal power from Amenhotep II to Thutmose IV, a case can be made that Amenhotep II himself must have been the one to have affected the shift toward treaties with Mitanni and substantially-limited imperialization. According to the Memphis Stele, the second and final "victorious campaign" of Amenhotep II dates to his Year 9, which followed his "first victorious campaign" of Year 3.[55] The Karnak Stele provides a partial duplication of the text in the Memphis Stele, but its inferior state of preservation prevents it from revealing a date for either of these campaigns.

The Year-3 campaign was launched soon after Thutmose III's death, which occurred exactly 2⅓ years into the coregency with his son,[56] in order to quell a major rebellion, the undisputed epicenter of which was the coastal cities of Syria. Canaan also seems to have rebelled, and hence the young pharaoh proceeded by land through Canaan, into lower Syria, and across the Orontes River, probably the site of a battle where he put an end to the revolt.[57]

This campaign was a major one, especially considering the elaborate post-victory celebration, the gruesome post-campaign executions of seven Syrian chiefs at Thebes, and the erecting of the Elephantine Stele in Year 4.[58] Moreover, the Egyptians had passed so far up the western Levant on this campaign that they apparently reached the border of Mitannian territory. Aharoni even infers an unsuccessful Egyptian invasion of Mitanni, based on the statement, "The arrival of his majesty by going upstream to Ni[y] (in the northern Orontes Valley)."[59] The fact that the Egyptians encountered a Mitannian spy in the Sharon Plain during the return trip makes Aharoni's conclusion quite probable.[60]

The Year-9 campaign of Amenhotep II will be discussed more in the subsequent section, but the remainder of his reign included no further military campaigns. Bryan refers to this as "the peace in Asia after year 9," and even contends "that there might have been a treaty between Amenhotep II and the Mitanni[an] king" at some point after his early campaigning ended.[61] Amenhotep II is known to have sat on the throne into his Year 26, as this year-date is inscribed along with the king's praenomen on a wine juglet from the king's Theban funerary temple.[62] Redford, using questionable logic, asserts that since the juglet was found in the king's funerary temple, Year 26 represents the end of Amenhotep II's reign.[63] Wente and Van Siclen dispute this assertion, though, showing evidence for the long-term storage of wine and the active functioning of Egyptian mortuary temples long before the deaths of the pharaohs for whom they were built.[64]

Many scholars have postulated that Amenhotep II reigned beyond 30 years because he observed a regnal jubilee, or *sed* festival, though certainly caution must be exercised before automatically assigning a 30-year reign to every pharaoh who celebrated one.[65] More conclusive than the *sed*-festival evidence is that from an obelisk of Thutmose IV now at the Lateran Palace in Rome, which was erected a full 35 years after the death of Thutmose III, to whom it was dedicated. Wente and Van Siclen suggest that the 35

years marks the length of the interceding reign of Amenhotep II minus the coregency with his father, which is known to be 2⅓ years.[66] If their argumentation is correct, Amenhotep II reigned exactly 37⅓ years, making him 55 years of age at the time of his death.

Whether Amenhotep II ruled for 25+ years, 37+ years, or some number in between, the point is that from Year 9 until that time, an extended time of military non-activity transpired, which comprised the balance of his reign. While Thutmose IV engaged in at least one Asiatic campaign and one punitive expedition there, it was Amenhotep II who demonstrated a much longer period of non-imperialistic passivity, if indeed it can be called peace. Moreover, Redford suggests that Amenhotep II was the first pharaoh who signed a formal peace treaty with Mitanni, though not until after Year 10.[67] All of this summarily contradicts the assertion that Thutmose IV and Amenhotep III enacted a reversal in foreign policy. The change in Egypt's foreign policy transpired during Amenhotep II's reign, the majority of which featured utter inactivity in Asia. Therefore, the view that Avaris was abandoned at the end of Amenhotep II's reign has no merit. If the abandonment of Avaris was due to a change in foreign policy, as Bietak suggests, then it must have transpired while Amenhotep II was sitting on the throne.

View #3: Avaris Abandoned during Amenhotep II's Reign

The third and final view for the timing of the mid-18th-Dynasty abandonment of Avaris is that it took place during the reign of Amenhotep II. Bietak allows for this view in one of his most recent publications, where he states that "[t]he palace precinct . . . was in use from the early reign of Tuthmosis III until the reign of Amenophis II, perhaps even until the end of this king's reign."[68] The obvious implication from Bietak's statement is that the precinct may have gone out of use before Amenhotep II's reign ended. There are several lines of evidence that both support this view and avoid the pitfalls of the two previous views. Each line of supporting evidence will be treated independently, with the final conclusion to follow.

Evidence from the Site of Avaris

One of the most compelling reasons to believe that Avaris was abandoned during the reign of Amenhotep II is the archaeological evidence that supports it. Whereas the two previous views cannot account for the complete dearth of ceramic and scarab evidence beyond the reign of Amenhotep II, both in the palatial district and throughout the entire site, this view is strengthened by the lack of material evidence extending past his reign. Even if Thutmose IV had abandoned the vital Egyptian naval base at Peru-nefer on the day of his inauguration, one would be left to explain why he would turn around and launch an Asiatic campaign several years later without the naval support that this important site would have provided, especially given the truism that armies cannot operate effectively in the Syrian littoral without fleets that control the adjacent Mediterranean Sea.[69] Thutmose IV's Year-6 campaign must not have involved Peru-nefer, because if the facilities there had been available to him, he undoubtedly would have exploited them during the campaign, and he would have relied on the ships stationed there.

More tangible archaeological evidence in support of an abandonment during Amenhotep II's reign exists in the form of pottery related to the animal burials that Bietak dates to the period of the hiatus. Bietak's team found that the pits used for the burials of the sheep, goats, cattle, and dogs were dug into the ruins of the palatial compound in use during Strata d and c.[70] Many of the pits were sunk into the core of the foundations of the Thutmoside walls. Yet the positions of the pits were oriented to the palaces' walls, which thus influenced their placement, meaning that the walls still were visible on the surface when the burials occurred. This in turn means either that the palaces stood erect and intact during the burials, or that the burials occurred after the abandonment and before Horemheb razed the walls.[71]

The fill in the burial pits contained only a few potsherds, probably demonstrating the brief nature with which the burials were performed.[72] However, all of these potsherds date *exclusively* to the Thutmoside period (Strata d–c, Phases C/3–C/2), as "[n]ot a single sherd from the Amarna or Ramesside periods was found" in any of the burial pits.[73] Curiously, it is at this point that Bietak concludes, "The date of the burials can therefore be established as sometime after Amenophis II and before the later part of the reign of Amenophis III and the Amarna period. . . . This leaves a time span of the reign of Thutmose IV and part of the reign of Amenophis III."[74]

However, it must be asked why Bietak would date the animal burials to sometime *after* the reign of Amenhotep II, namely to the reign of Thutmose IV or Amenhotep III, when in fact he himself affirms that the entirety of the pottery associated with the burials dates to the strata that were occupied *during* the reigns of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II. It seems clear that the burials date to the reign of Amenhotep II, given that his reign—undeniably the latter of the two—is attested all throughout the palatial precinct. These carefully but quickly performed animal burials support an abandonment of the site during the reign of Amenhotep II. Therefore, all of the datable, archaeological evidence points to an abandonment under Amenhotep II.

Evidence from Texts and Inscriptions of the 18th Dynasty

There also is a great deal of circumstantial evidence from Egyptian texts that weighs heavily in the argument over when Avaris was vacated, some of which derives from the stelae erected by Amenhotep II that were mentioned already. Before fully turning to the evidence from his stelae that highlights a stark contrast between his two Asiatic campaigns and presenting reasons to connect the site's abandonment to his Year-9 campaign, a bit more must be said about inscriptional evidence and the equation of Avaris with Peru-nefer.

While Bietak has demonstrate that Avaris is the elusive Peru-nefer, which it must have been renamed after the expulsion of the Hyksos, to date there is no onsite, inscriptional evidence to confirm this association. Yet even without such inscriptional confirmation, the association is quite secure, even if not totally secure. Adding to the argument, Kamose's Second Stele boasts of having destroyed hundreds of ships at Avaris, which requires extensive harbor-space, such as that found at Ezbet Helmi,[75] which is even more reason to equate Avaris with Peru-nefer. In addition, there is no mention of Peru-nefer in the Egyptian texts that were written *after* the reign of Amenhotep II, at least not until the Amarna Age,[76] giving far more credence to the site's having been abandoned *during* Amenhotep II's reign. This presents a strong correlation between the archaeological and the inscriptional evidence.

Another vital correlation relates to the mention of Peru-nefer on the Karnak Stele as the final site where, on Amenhotep II's first campaign, he and the Egyptian army stopped before returning to their final destination of Memphis. Breasted misread the text here, as it should be rendered as follows: ". . . [Month ?, Season 3,] Day 27: His majesty went out from Peru-nefer, proceeding to Memphis."[77] Bietak contends that George Daressy and Labib Habachi identified Peru-nefer with Avaris/Piramesse "based on the Karnak and Memphis stelae of Amenhotep II, who describes proceeding to Memphis, after his arrival at Perunefer."[78] More recently, Helck's translation of 1961 states, "Auszug Seiner Majestät aus *Prw-nfr* und Ziehen in Frieden nach Memphis mit der Beute."[79]

Thus the reading of Peru-nefer on the Karnak Stele, as accepted here, has a long and distinguished following, despite the oversight of Breasted, who failed to read the hieroglyphs correctly here in the text. Moreover, the Memphis Stele also mentions Peru-nefer, though only in its prologue, which features a representation with an accompanying text in the stele's upper field: "Rede des *ʾImn-Rᶜ ḥry-ỉb prw-nfr*," meaning, "An address by Amun-Re, who resides in Peru-nefer."[80] Therefore, the site of Peru-nefer is tied together to Amenhotep II's Asiatic campaigns all the more securely, which implies that they are connected to the Delta's great naval base.

There are two more reasons why Avaris should be equated with Peru-nefer. First, Avaris is located directly along the Ways of Horus, the main international highway in antiquity that connected Egypt's Nile Valley to Canaan and the rest of the Near East.[81] Pharaohs routinely marched along this highway when taking troops into Asia on military excursions. Second, the harbors of most ancient delta-sites that provide access to seafaring vessels are located 5–50 km upstream. Memphis, however, is positioned over 160 km upstream from the Mediterranean Sea.[82] Thus Memphis is not a realistic candidate for Egypt's Peru-nefer.

Another contribution from the stelae of Amenhotep II relates to profound differences in the two Asiatic campaigns that he launched. As was established already, Amenhotep II launched his first campaign in Year 3, as the death of Thutmose III led to a massive revolt in his Levantine territories. Yet his second campaign, dated to Year 9, had no easily deduced purpose. Aharoni erroneously thought that a gap of only two years spanned the campaigns, believing that the second one was launched in order to complete the failures of the first one.[83] Since there was no Year-7 campaign, as wrongly restored on the Memphis Stele by the Ramesside craftsmen, the gap was actually one of six years, thus refuting Aharoni's position. Of even greater weight, the failure of this pharaoh's first campaign would have resulted in another campaign directed principally into Syria, and directly against Mitanni, not simply a brief raid into southern Canaan that accomplished little more than the acquisition of slaves and booty.

His first campaign advanced as far as the Mitannian border in northern Syria, while the second campaign went no further than the Jezreel Valley and the Sea of Galilee, in Canaan.[84] Der Manuelian admitted that the campaign of Year 9 achieved no such wide geographical range.[85] Thus the scope of his second campaign paled in comparison to that of the first. In contrast to the *regress* in Amenhotep II's two campaigns, his father Thutmose III continually marched further and further into Asia during his 17 campaigns, until he advanced as far as the Euphrates River in Year 33,[86] even crossing it in pursuit of attacking enemies, as the Gebel Barkal Stele describes.[87] Not only, then, is it essential to ask why the great reduction in the number of Amenhotep II's Asiatic campaigns, but why the trend of his campaigns to go from more expansive to less expansive, rather than the opposite. As Aharoni correctly noted, "Already in the days of Amenhotep II, the son of Thutmose III, cracks began to appear in the structure of the Egyptian Empire."[88] In fact, further contrasts in Amenhotep II's campaigns amplify this even more.

One such contrast revolves around the season when each campaign was launched. Der Manuelian notes this about the first campaign: "Hardly one to break with the blossoming military tradition of the early New Kingdom, Amenophis set out in April . . ., the preferred season for embarking on such ventures."[89] This comment reflects the regularity of Egyptian kings' launching of campaigns in spring. In stark contrast, the date of the second campaign was Month 3, Season 1, Day 25, meaning a launching in November.[90] Wilson and Vandersleyen both refer to this as an unusual season for military campaigns,[91] because during the colder rainy season most monarchs remained within their borders and dealt with internal affairs or planned for springtime campaigns. Amenhotep II's decision to lead an attack force into Canaan in November was highly unorthodox, so obviously the question arises as to why he would launch a wintertime campaign.

The answer may be related to the contrast between what Amenhotep II acquired during his second campaign, and what he and his father acquired during all of their other Asiatic campaigns prior to it. In addition to the comparatively limited scope of the second campaign, what separates it from their previous Asiatic campaigns is the nature of the plunder that these two pharaohs confiscated. According to the Memphis Stele, the Egyptians captured 127 rulers of Retenu, 179 rulers' brothers, 3,600 Apiru, 15,200 living Shasu, 36,300 Kharu, 15,070 living Nagasu, and 30,652 of their dependents, for a total of 89,600 people, and likewise their possessions.[92] Regarding the "89,600" total prisoners, the sum is actually 101,128 when the numbers are

added.[93] The error may be a mere mistake in addition, as the individual numbers are probably more reliable than the recorded sum, so the tally of 101,128 is preferable. It also should be noted that the Egyptians confiscated 1,082 chariots, along with 13,500 weapons.

After Amenhotep II's first campaign, he returned to Egypt with only 2,214 captives. On the Asiatic campaigns of Thutmose III, he sometimes recorded figures for captives taken, while at other times he offered no such figures. During the times that he did record the number of captives taken—which includes his first (5,903), sixth (217), and seventh (494) campaigns—he acquired only 6,614 prisoners. When these last four campaigns are totaled together, the number of captives amounts to 8,828 prisoners taken, for an average of 2,207 prisoners per campaign. When this average is compared to the second campaign of Amenhotep II, the four campaigns average less than 2.2% of the prisoners taken during Amenhotep II's Year-9 campaign. Put another way, Amenhotep II's second campaign yielded 46 times more prisoners than all of those other campaigns combined. How does one account for this enormous disparity?

Combined with the launching in November and the complete and mysterious lack of subsequent Asiatic campaigns after Year 9, the oddity in the total number of prisoners taken during Amenhotep II's second campaign betrays gravely critical circumstances in Year 9. Redford's commentary regarding this latter campaign is that it reveals how Amenhotep II may have been unable to maintain effective control over the middle and lower basin of the Orontes.[94] Looking at the big picture, Vandersleyen correctly critiques Amenhotep II's reign as unsuccessful, a time of decline, with a few exploits abroad, a few preserved memorials, and *an almost complete absence of sources* after the 9th year of his reign.[95]

In contrast to this, the inscriptions from the early years of his reign focus on two interests: his love for Giza, and his responsibilities at Peru-nefer.[96] Moreover, Amenhotep II's Year-9 campaign was the last to pit Egypt against Mitanni or exert effort in the Asiatic theater during his reign. The subsequent years of his reign featured neither Egypt's engagement in war nor a significant change in the political climate. Nevertheless, the wheels still came off of the Egyptian war-machine, and the event to which this effect is tied is the enigmatic, second campaign of Amenhotep II. This makes all the more sense if the abandonment of Peru-nefer is tied to his last campaign, whether the nature of the military and political crisis can be identified or not.

Yet there is more to the Year-9 campaign of Amenhotep II that may have a direct bearing on the timing of the Egyptians' unannounced desertion of Avaris. The 18th Dynasty's warrior-pharaoh tradition came into full bloom during the reign of Thutmose III, with the full patronage of the state incorporated in Amun-Re, the king of the gods.[97] Thutmose III and Amenhotep II ascribed the success of their military conquests to Amun-Re,[98] whose gigantic images dominate pylons and surfaces of walls that recount the names of the regions whose tribute the kings returned to Karnak.[99] In *The Annals of Thutmose III* at Karnak, he began by commanding for his victories to be established on a monument in the temple, which "his majesty had made for his father Amon." His Year-23 campaign had a prologue in which Thutmose III allegedly was appointed "to extend the frontiers of Egypt, according to the command of his father Amun-Re, the [valiant] and victorious."[100] This coincides with Amenhotep II's declaration that Peru-nefer, as the launching point for the Asiatic campaigns, is the city in which Amun-Re resides. He also stated that his "father, Amun-Re—as the magical protection of his own flesh—was protecting the ruler" (Amenhotep II) while he was campaigning in Asia.[101]

This connection between these two imperialistic pharaohs and Amun-Re is all the more critical when considering that a major religious crisis took place during the reign of Amenhotep II, which may have affected both the images of Amun throughout Egypt and the high priesthood of Amun. According to an inscription on a pink granite royal stele of Amenhotep II known as the Western Karnak Stele, "His majesty has commanded for his nobles—the officials of the royal court [. . .] [the courtiers] who enter into [the palace] [. . .] the servants [of] the good god—to destroy all of the images of the gods, their bodies [. . .] Amu[n]-Re."[102] Garry Shaw bemoans that the destroying of the images of the gods has not been explained satisfactorily.[103] Helck notes that the reading of the verb *ḥḥ* ("destroy, dismantle, crumble") seems certain, but that the precise meaning of the command is unclear, since the word normally means "dissolve, destroy."[104] What both Egyptologists fail to explain candidly is that it would seem impossible for a pharaoh to issue a decree for his courtiers to destroy the statues of Egyptian gods that were in the temples, since the establishment of statues in the temples was a common practice during the dynastic period.[105]

However, Amenhotep II issued exactly such a decree, one that seemed to focus on Amun-Re, who both resided at Avaris/Peru-nefer and led Amenhotep II and his father to victorious campaigns into Asia, at least until the virtually inexplicable campaign of Year 9, which was followed by a complete lack of subsequent campaigns and a reign that heretofore went almost completely unattested in Egypt. The question that is begged by the astounding decree on the Western Karnak Stele is whether any signs of the commanded destruction or its effects appear in Egypt. Regarding the smashing of the images of the gods' *bodies*, it would be exceedingly difficult to find remnants of this in the archaeological record, given that the smashed statues of the gods would not have been preserved for posterity. Perhaps it would be better to look for secondary signs of a religious crisis in the high priesthood of Amun at Thebes, Egypt's religious capital during the 18th Dynasty.

The reign of Thutmose III saw three (first) high priests in office: Menkheperraseneb I, Menkheperraseneb II, and Amenemhet. Amenemhet served as high priest of Amun at the end of the reign of Thutmose III, and possibly into the reign of Amenhotep II, based on stylistic considerations related to the cenotaph at Silsila and his Theban tomb (TT 97).[106] He would not have served long in his office, given that he was only a *wob*-priest at the already-advanced age of 54. Probably quite early in the reign of Amenhotep II, Amenemhet was succeeded by Mery, who was buried in TT 95.[107] No tombs of Mery's successors have been located, and no high priest of Amun appears on record again until the reign of Amenhotep III, when Ptahmose served as vizier and

(first) high priest of Amun. There is no monument to associate Ptahmose with the reign of Thutmose IV, whether as high priest or vizier.[108]

Thus during the reign of Amenhotep II, one high priest probably died quite early in his reign, while this high priest's replacement might not have had a successor. No high priest of Amun is known under Thutmose IV, and this abnormality fits with no known Theban tombs for any high priest after Mery. Helck has argued strongly that Thutmose IV openly broke with the Amun clergy,[109] and that a crisis existed in the cult of Amun during this pharaoh's reign.[110] Amenhotep III reversed this trend with the presence of strong Theban cults and an excessive amount of political influence for the Theban priesthood, which included the strengthening of power for the priesthood of Amun-Re, for whom he erected buildings at Karnak.[111]

This entire picture would fit well with a crisis in at least the cult of Amun-Re during the reign of Amenhotep II, especially one occurring fairly early in his long reign, such as the time of his enigmatic, Year-9 campaign. Since these imperialistic pharaohs uniquely connected Amun-Re to the success of their Asiatic campaigning during this era, a religious crisis centered on this deity easily could have spawned if the Egyptian army had experienced some form of decimation. Clearly no such military devastation seems to have been recorded, which would be expected, but the perplexing abandonment of their naval base through which these campaigns were launched may be a distinct indicator both of a military and a religious crisis in Egypt.

The likelihood is great that a nationwide campaign to exterminate someone or something has precedent during Amenhotep II's reign. It is well known that at some indeterminable time after Hatshepsut's death, a serious attempt was made to obliterate all record of her from history.[112] Many inscribed cartouches with her name were erased, while her busts were smashed or broken into pieces, perhaps by gangs of workmen dispatched throughout Egypt. In some cases, the culprits carefully and completely hacked out the silhouette of her image from carvings, often leaving a distinct, Hatshepsut-shaped lacuna in the middle of a scene.[113]

Most Egyptologists consider that this massive effort to destroy all record of Hatshepsut's existence was launched by Thutmose III,[114] with a predictable motive: out of sexist pride, he attempted to eliminate every trace of this dreaded female pharaoh's rule, intending to rewrite Egyptian history to portray a smooth succession of male rulers from Thutmose I to himself.[115] Yet was Thutmose III the actual perpetrator? Did he seethe with hatred and resentment toward his former co-ruler before viciously attacking all remnants of her? Are uncorroborated accusations of ancient sexism indeed justifiable? The theory that Thutmose III was the culprit behind this vicious crime is severely weakened by several factors.

(1) If Thutmose III did deface her image, it would be inconsistent with how he otherwise related to her memory. A scene on the dismantled Chapelle Rouge at Djeser-Djeseru portrays Hatshepsut and identifies her as "The Good God, Lady of the Two Lands, Daughter of Ra, Hatshepsut."[116] Thutmose III, who is pictured as steering his barque toward Deir el-Bahri, actually completed the Chapelle Rouge, added the topmost register of decorations in his own name, then claimed the shrine as his own. Also, Hatshepsut's name is still preserved in her Monthu temple at Armant, which Thutmose III enlarged. His preservation of her handiwork and further construction on her building projects would be extremely unlikely if he did despise Hatshepsut so greatly. Furthermore, Thutmose III planned the construction of his own temple to Amun, called Djeser-Akhet, which was to be built at Deir el-Bahri, directly south of Djeser-Djeseru. Since Hatshepsut greatly expanded Deir el-Bahri, including the construction of massive terraces and her own temple next to the one that Thutmose III subsequently built, this project is inexplicable if he felt such overwhelming, sexist hatred toward her.[117]

(2) If Thutmose III was the culprit, he waited at least 20 years after she left office before desecrating her image. He could not have accomplished the feat before his Year 42, a full 20 years after Hatshepsut left office. Thutmose III's construction projects at Karnak—which include the hall of *The Annals of Thutmose III*, whose texts were written no earlier than Year 42—inadvertently concealed a few inscriptions and illustrations related to Hatshepsut. The scenes were in place by Year 42, yet show no signs whatsoever of any desecration. Conversely, those parts of the scenes that were unprotected by his post-Year-42 construction *were* defaced during the anti-Hatshepsut campaign. Roth considers it doubtful that Thutmose III would wait until he was into his sole rule for over 20 years before initiating a campaign to fulfill a personal vendetta.[118] Tyldesley adds, "While it is possible to imagine and even empathize with Thutmose III indulging in a sudden whim of hatred against his stepmother immediately after her death, it is far harder to imagine him overcome by such a whim some 20 years later."[119]

(3) If Thutmose III was the culprit, he must have had sufficient motive to attempt to prevent her from living eternally. According to Egyptian religion, removing the name or image of a deceased person was a direct assault on his/her spirit. For a person to live forever in the Field of Reeds, one's body, image, or name must survive on earth. If all memory of the person were lost or destroyed, the spirit too would perish, initiating the much-dreaded "second death," a total obliteration from which there could be no return. This act against Hatshepsut was an attempt to "condemn her to oblivion – a fate worse than death for an Egyptian."[120] Thus the extermination of Hatshepsut's image from the earth was a drastic step: the removal of her spirit from its perpetual existence in the afterlife.[121] Such reprisal seems far too severe to fit the motive of mere sexism, especially after a period of stewing that lasted 20+ years before taking action.

(4) If Thutmose III was the culprit, why were there also attacks against the name and monuments of Senenmut, the powerful chief advisor of Hatshepsut who disappeared from record between Year 16 and Year 20 of Hatshepsut's reign? Occasionally his name was violated while his image remained intact, but some of his statues were smashed and literally thrown out of temples.[122] This attack upon her *male* chief-advisor's image hardly can be justified if

Thutmose III was motivated purely by anti-feministic hatred toward Hatshepsut.

Many of Senenmut's monuments were attacked following his death, when an attempt was made to delete him from memory by erasing both his name and his image. Originally it was assumed that these defacements were carried out soon after Senenmut's demise, either by Hatshepsut or Thutmose III, but realization has grown that the attacks against Senenmut's monuments may have been a minor part of a wider plan of defacement, aimed either at the memory of Hatshepsut or at the god Amun, who was linked particularly with Senenmut.[123]

Egyptologists long have believed that Amenhotep II participated as a perpetrator in the desecration of the images of Hatshepsut, and conceivably those of Senenmut along with hers.[124] Bryan suggested that "Amenhotep II himself completed the desecration of the female king's monuments," adding that "when [he] had finished his programme of erasures on the monuments of Hatshepsut at Karnak, he was able to concentrate on preparations for the royal jubilee at this temple."[125] However, another strong possibility, especially considering the evidence from the Hall of Annals at Karnak, is that Amenhotep II initiated the *damnatio memoriae* against Hatshepsut, possibly in conjunction with the same campaign waged against Senenmut.

To date, there is no clearly discernible motive from Egyptian inscriptions or records that would implicate him, but he becomes the most likely candidate if Thutmose III is absolved of committing the crime, especially since the movement of time and the likelihood of motive are inversely proportional. At any rate, even if Amenhotep II was only one of the monarchs responsible for this nationwide campaign, certainly it demonstrates lucid precedent for perpetuating a national effort to act ruthlessly out of strong conviction, proving in effect that his proclamation to destroy images of Egyptian gods is nothing to be ignored or rationalized away as merely fictional propaganda. This pharaoh carried out his agenda with great zeal. Therefore, a major crisis within the Egyptian military that led to his abandonment of their naval base at Avaris realistically could have provoked a decree to destroy statues of Egyptian gods, just as this pharaoh led a crusade to eliminate the images of Hatshepsut that were erected throughout Egypt.

Evidence from Theban Tomb Paintings

Additional circumstantial evidence for suggesting that the Egyptians' abandonment of Avaris transpired during the reign of Amenhotep II comes from depictions on the walls of tombs at Thebes. The first form of supportive evidence from the tombs relates to the presence or absence of *Keftiu* depicted during various pharaonic reigns. Panagiotopoulos has shown that private Theban tombs depicting representations of Aegeans can be regarded as reliable historical sources.[126] The joint reign of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III is the time when delegations of *Keftiu* first appear in the Theban tombs.[127] More specifically, the first representations of *Keftiu* delegations in Egypt go back to the tombs of Senenmut (TT 71),[128] who was mentioned above;[129] Useramun (TT 131),[130] who served as vizier under Thutmose II and the aforementioned coregents, and is depicted as receiving tribute and produce from both *Keftiu* and Syrians; and to Intef (TT 155),[131] who served as the great herald of the king and is depicted inspecting revenue presented by *Keftiu* and other foreigners, such as Syrians.

Representations of *Keftiu* continued to appear on tombs of the officials who lived into the sole reign of Thutmose III, including Menkheperraseneb I, the first high priest of Amun, who was mentioned earlier. The pictures in his tomb (TT 86) present *Keftiu*, Hittite, and other dignitaries bringing statues of bulls, vases with bull-heads on them, and lapis-lazuli.[132] Several tombs from officials who lived both in the latter part of Thutmose III's reign and in the early part of Amenhotep II's reign also depict *Keftiu* people.[133] Rekhmire (TT 100), who may have succeeded Useramun as the vizier of the south, served in his office under both kings. His tomb depicts him inspecting Nubians and Puntites who were delivering animals such as baboons and monkeys, while Syrians offer chariots and horses, and *Keftiu* present decorative vases.[134] Amenemhab (TT 85) served under both kings as lieutenant-commander of soldiers. In one register, he stands in front of a storehouse of Amenhotep II, while on another wall he follows Amenhotep II with a bouquet. On a third wall, Thutmose III stands in a kiosk, with Amenemhab standing in front of him and *Keftiu* and men of upper Retenu (= Syria) appearing on succeeding registers.[135]

In a sudden drop-off in the representations of Aegeans or Cretans, no other Theban tomb depicts *Keftiu* until late in the reign of Amenhotep III, with the tomb of Amenmose (TT 89), the steward in the southern city and seal bearer of Upper Egypt.[136] On his tributary wall, Amenmose depicts Nubians, Syrians, and *Keftiu* bringing their goods in order to present them to the enthroned king.[137] Thus in a dramatic synchronization with the stratified archaeological phasing at Avaris, the Theban tombs bear no examples whatsoever of *Keftiu* delegates during the early part of Amenhotep III's reign and the entire reign of his predecessor, Thutmose IV.

Moreover, in equally dramatic fashion, the lack of any mention of the *Keftiu* people in the Theban tombs, or any other tombs throughout Egypt, synchronizes well with the thesis of the present work, given that no examples whatsoever of *Keftiu* people are found in *any* tombs dating to the sole reign of Amenhotep II, and that this provides additional evidence of the profound change in foreign policy that transpired during the period of his sole reign. Thus the evidence from the Theban tombs strongly suggests that Peru-nefer's ports were inactive during the sole rule of Amenhotep II, throughout the entire reign of Thutmose IV, and during the pre-Amarna phase of the reign of Amenhotep III. If Peru-nefer's ports were indeed inactive during these periods of time, the abandonment of Avaris logically would have occurred beforehand.

The second form of supportive evidence from the Theban tombs relates to the biography of a contemporary of Amenhotep II, who ascended to the post of chief steward in Peru-nefer. Kenamun (TT 93),[138] the son of Amenhotep the chief steward (TT 73),[139] enjoyed a special relationship with Amenhotep II.

Kenamun's mother, Amenemopet, had been a nurse for Amenhotep II, and TT 93 depicts her with the future king as a young boy on her lap. As the result of the formative role that she played, her son—called the foster-brother of the king—had a close friendship growing up with the heir to the throne. Nonetheless, hard work and excellence brought him rewards and promotion. He probably began his military career as a standard-bearer (*ṯȝy sryt*), which was not a particularly low rank, as he could command troops and levy men for expeditions. After proving himself in that position, he rose to the rank of troop commander (*ḫry pḏt*), which was a high military position, above standard-bearer and below general.[140]

On a *shabti*-coffin from Abydos that provides autobiographical details of Kenamun's early career,[141] soon after the text states that he was appointed as a standard-bearer, Kenamun praised Amenhotep II for building many *Keftiu*-boats for him.[142] Clearly this statement ties Kenamun's appointment to the early years of Amenhotep II's reign, when Peru-nefer still engaged in reciprocal maritime activity with Crete and the Aegean. After the text of the *shabti* goes on to describe how Kenamun was in Amenhotep II's retinue while campaigning in Retenu (= Syria), connoting his becoming a standard-bearer before Year 3, he explains how—while alone with the king in the latter's chariot—he was appointed as "chief in his (the king's) entire land."[143] Undoubtedly this appointment was issued while on the Asiatic campaign of Year 3.

Shaw equates this appointment over all offices, as detailed on Shabti K1042, to Kenamun's selection as the new royal steward of the king, as described on the outer wall of his tomb at Thebes.[144] In that text, the king announced that he desired to appoint a high steward in Peru-nefer, and after describing the positive characteristics that this man must possess, he commanded that Kenamun be made chief steward of the king in Peru-nefer.[145] If Shaw is correct, then Kenamun's appointment to this post at Peru-nefer not only occurred in conjunction with Amenhotep II's first Asiatic campaign, but most likely the appointment came immediately after the army returned to Avaris/Peru-nefer from their successful quelling of the uprising in the Levant during Year 3, as the Memphis Stele describes.

Given that all of the subsequent and numerous offices that Kenamun held after this one—as listed in Shabti K1042—are of a non-military nature, his biography reflects Egypt's possession of Avaris between Amenhotep II's campaigns of Year 3 and Year 9. The fact that Kenamun served in no other military capacity subsequent to being chief steward at Peru-nefer fits well with the supposition that a military crisis occurred near Amenhotep II's Year 9, and the fact that Kenamun served in a myriad of non-military offices after his post at Peru-nefer affirms the plausibility that Avaris/Peru-nefer was abandoned at about this time,[146] since he does not appear to have held his post there for a long period of time. The evidence from Theban tombs thus complements the archaeological and inscriptional evidence to weigh heavily in support of the view that Avaris was abandoned while Amenhotep II sat on the throne, and early in his reign.

Conclusion

The Thutmoside site of Peru-nefer, previously called Avaris under the Hyksos' regime, acted as the gateway between Egypt and Asia almost uninterruptedly from before the middle of the second millennium BC until nearly the end of the millennium. The site was instrumental for controlling foreign trade, launching and supporting military operations, defending the heartland of the Nile Valley, and preserving an important part of Egypt's religious heritage.

Once the native Egyptians eradicated the foreign invaders who had dominated their landscape for over a century, they quickly moved to rebuild the destroyed city and establish it as a storehouse, eventually to be utilized as a military garrison with weapon-making facilities. Peru-nefer/Avaris became the most vital cog in the unprecedented military campaigning under the reigns of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II. Yet during the height of Egypt's enterprise and glory, her naval base was abandoned mysteriously, and her imperialistic machinery ground to a halt. Egypt suddenly sought to make treaties rather than seize whatever she desired.

Neither the site nor Egyptian annals provide an explicit answer as to why Avaris/Peru-nefer was abandoned. Even years of excavation at the site have not answered this vital question, as Bietak himself states that "[t]he reasons for this are very unclear."[147] However, the present study only has sought to address the question of the timing of the abandonment, as to whether it was deserted during Amenhotep II's reign, at the close of his reign, or during the reign of his successor, Thutmose IV. While currently there is not enough evidence available to verify the exact year or the set of events that led to the Egyptians' vacating of the site, there is enough direct and circumstantial evidence available to choose which option among the three possibilities presented here is the correct one.

The first task was examining the view that Avaris was abandoned sometime during the reign of Thutmose IV. Since Bietak mentioned that shepherds of the late-18th-Dynasty-fortress phase used the Thutmoside ruins in the palatial district as a refuge, and that the burials of a large number of animals—mostly young sheep and goats—occurred after the reign of Amenhotep II, this view has to be considered seriously. However, this view was left wanting, given that no traces of material culture from the reign of Thutmose IV, either from scarab or ceramic evidence, were found anywhere on the site, whether in the palatial precinct or elsewhere.

The second task was examining the view that Avaris was abandoned at the very end of Amenhotep II's reign, upon his death. This view is based on Bietak's suggestion that perhaps the abandonment of the site is connected directly to a change in the Egyptian monarchy's foreign policy, which—under the reign of Thutmose IV, and Amenhotep III after him—shifted radically from aggressive imperialistic expansion under the two previous pharaohs to making diplomatic marriages with foreign powers, in order to secure peace treaties and maintain political alliances. The new trend lasted until Horemheb's reign, which was characterized by a return to a policy of far more aggression in Egypt's dealings

with her neighbors in the southern Levant.

This view is weakened by the fact that Horemheb never attempted any imperialistic efforts that came close to those of Thutmose III or Amenhotep II's first campaign, and that Egyptian records reveal that there was no such reversal in foreign policy under Thutmose IV or Amenhotep III. Thutmose IV campaigned in both the southern and northern Levant, especially in Syria, where he obtained captives, so there was no switch in Egypt's foreign policy toward non-aggression or peace under Thutmose IV. Moreover, it was seen that after Amenhotep II's second Asiatic campaign of Year 9, the balance of this pharaoh's reign was characterized by a complete lack of imperialization and military excursions into Asia, from all available evidence.

More than one author has suggested that a treaty with Mitanni already might have been in place during *Amenhotep II's* reign. Whether this is true or not, the significantly diminished role of military activity in Asia actually dates to Amenhotep II's reign. In light of this, the notion of a sudden shift in foreign policy at the outset of Thutmose IV's reign is entirely implausible, so the view that Avaris was abandoned immediately after the reign of Amenhotep II is critically flawed. With no evidence left to support this view, one must reject the idea that Egypt abandoned Avaris when Thutmose IV ascended to the throne.

The third task was examining the view that Avaris was abandoned during the reign of Amenhotep II. This view garners support from three lines of evidence: (1) archaeological evidence from the site of Avaris, (2) textual and inscriptional evidence dating to the time of the 18th Dynasty, and (3) circumstantial evidence derived from paintings on the walls of Theban tombs belonging to important figures in Egyptian society at the time.

The first form of archaeological evidence from the site that supports this view is the absence of any artifactual remnant of material culture that dates to the reign of Thutmose IV, whether from scarabs, pottery, or any other datable item. Another form of archaeological evidence from Avaris that supports this view is the presence of pottery that derives from the animal burials that date no earlier than the end of the Thutmoside period (Strata d and c), yet not as late as the time of the destruction of the palaces' walls. Though the amount of pottery associated with the burials is small, it is significant that *all* of the potsherds date to the Thutmoside period, meaning the reigns of Thutmose III and Amenhotep II (Phases C/3–C/2).

The first form of inscriptional evidence that supports this view is information gleaned from the Memphis Stele, which attests to an enigmatic, wintertime campaign that went a fraction of the way into the Levant, when contrasted with his first Asiatic campaign, and on which Amenhotep II acquired 46 times more prisoners than on all of the previous Asiatic campaigns that were documented with slave-counts during his reign and that of Thutmose III, combined. When considering this plus the lack of any subsequent campaigns launched by Amenhotep II and the unprecedented peace treaties with Mitanni, Egypt's bitter rival, the inscriptional evidence points to a military and political crisis that may have resulted in Egypt's abandonment of her naval base at Avaris/Peru-nefer and the leaving behind of weapons *in situ* in Avaris's workshops.

More inscriptional evidence that may attest directly to the Year-9 crisis is Amenhotep II's commissioning of a decree for his courtiers to destroy all of the images of the gods, singling out Amun-Re in particular. Given that Thutmose III and Amenhotep II expressly ascribed praise to Amun-Re for military victories on their Asiatic campaigns, and that Amenhotep II originated and/or perpetuated the desecration of Hatshepsut's images throughout Egypt, there is plenty of reason to hypothesize that this religious crisis—and subsequent decree to destroy all of the "bodies" of Egyptian deities throughout the land—may have been intricately bound to the military and political turmoil of his Year 9. Moreover, a potential interruption in the high priesthood of Amun during this time also may attest to this "perfect storm" of events. Therefore, a religious crisis focused on Amun-Re at this time may have been initiated by Amenhotep II as a result of a devastating loss in battle, which coincided with the abandonment of their principal naval base from which military operations into Asia were launched, and led to an unavoidable shift in foreign policy.

Finally, evidence from Theban tombs that supports this view exists in the form of consistent depictions of Cretan/*Keftiu* delegations and dignitaries throughout the reign of Thutmose III, and into his coregency with Amenhotep II, then not again until late in the reign of Amenhotep III, which—perhaps not coincidentally—is the very time in which reoccupation of Avaris/Peru-nefer transpired after the long and unusual occupational gap. Since no examples of *Keftiu* people are found in tombs dating to the sole reign of Amenhotep II, this is important circumstantial evidence attesting not only to the stoppage of operations at Peru-nefer's ports sometime during his sole rule, but quite likely to the abandonment of Avaris at the same time.

The title of the present article purposefully was prefaced with the word *toward*, because currently there is no way of pinpointing conclusively the exact moment of Avaris's abandonment during the middle of the 18th Dynasty. However, the available evidence indicates that the vacating of the site is understood best to have occurred *during* the reign of Amenhotep II, rather than at the end of his reign or during the reign of Thutmose IV. Moreover, the historical evidence from Amenhotep II's reign points to the events of Year 9 as providing the key to unraveling the mysteries surrounding both the odd change in Egypt's political and military direction and the desertion of Egypt's vital naval base at the height of her imperialism. Perhaps in time, enlightening evidence from the reign of Amenhotep II will surface so that the upheaval in the military, political, and religious spheres can be connected to whatever historical events led to the reversal in Egypt's foreign policy and desertion of her naval base at the height of her glory.

Editorial Note

The preceding article was peer reviewed, as all *JAEI* articles, and recommended for publication by the scholars who performed the review. As with all articles, however, its arguments stand or fall on their own merits. Importantly, the conclusion of this article regarding the timing of the abandonment of the important site of Avaris differs somewhat from that reached by the site's excavator, M. Bietak. Professor Beitak has read the article and has kindly agreed to try to write up his own thoughts regarding this interpretation in a separate note which we hope to publish in a forthcoming issue of the journal.

Notes

1 Manfred Bietak, "Minoan Artists at the Court of Avaris (Tell el-Dab'a)," in Joan A. Aruz et al. (eds.), *Beyond Babylon: Art, Trade, and Diplomacy in the Second Millennium B.C.* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2008), 131. Evidence of these paintings mainly consists of thousands of fragments of lime plaster with the paint still visible, most of which were collected and dumped from the access ramp to Palace F, while others were dumped outside of Palace G. The lime plaster was highly compressed by pounding and mixing with crushed murex shells, as was the custom at Knossos and Thera. The technique of the paintings, applied on damp lime plaster in fresco style, was typically Aegean. The color conventions were purely Minoan, such as blue for grey, and blue for green. The wall paintings depict scenes such as leaping and grappling bulls, large cats chasing ungulates or pouncing on prey, hunting scenes, and heraldic griffins (idem, "Tell el-Dab'a in the Nile Valley," in *Beyond Babylon*, 112; idem, "Minoan Artists," 131; idem, "The Palatial Precinct at the Nile Branch (Area H)," www.auaris.at/html/ez_helmi_en.html, accessed Sept. 13, 2012).

2 Friederike Kampp, *Die Thebanische Nekropole*, vol. 1 (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1996), 370–372; Bertha Porter and Rosalind L. B. Moss, *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts, Reliefs, and Paintings*, vol. 1: *The Theban Necropolis*, second ed. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1960), 206–214. Rekhmire served as vizier under Thutmose III and Amenhotep II, and the paintings in his tomb depict foreign gift-bearers that include Nubians, Puntites, Syrians, and *Keftiu* (Sarah Graff, "Depictions of Foreign Emissaries in the Theban Tombs," in *Beyond Babylon*, 260).

3 Bietak, "Tell el-Dab'a in the Nile Valley," 112. The Minoan wall paintings from Phases C/3 and C/2 at Avaris connect this palatial site to the one where the Cretans/*Keftiu* moored their ships, according to BM 10056. The attribution of Avaris as Peru-nefer subsequently will be discussed in greater detail. For a detailed argument that favors identifying the *Keftiu* with ancient Cypriots, see John Strange, *Caphtor/Keftiu: A New Investigation* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 184.

4 David Jeffreys, "Perunefer: at Memphis or Avaris?" *Egyptian Archaeology* 28 (2006): 36–37.

5 Manfred Bietak, "Perunefer: The Principal New Kingdom Naval Base," *Egyptian Archaeology* 34 (2009): 16; idem, "The Aftermath of the Hyksos in Avaris," in Rakefet Sela-Sheffy and Gideon Toury (eds.), *Culture Contacts and the Making of Cultures: Papers in Homage to Itamar Even-Zohar* (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Unit of Culture Research, 2011), 26–32.

6 Manfred Bietak and Felix Höflmayer, "Introduction: High and Low Chronology," in Manfred Bietak and Ernst Czerny (eds.), *The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium B.C. III: Proceedings of the SCIEM 2000 – 2nd EuroConference: Vienna, 28th of May – 1st of June 2003* (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007), 20.

7 Bietak, "Tell el-Dab'a in the Nile Valley," 112.

8 Bietak, "Aftermath of the Hyksos," 25.

9 Manfred Bietak, "Ein Tuthmosidischer Palastbezirk im alten Auaris," *Sokar* 12 (2006): 56.

10 Historians refer to Thutmose III as having initiated *the most sustained policy* of conquest and expansion throughout ancient Egypt's entire history (Eric H. Cline and David O'Connor, "Preface," in Eric H. Cline and David O'Connor [eds.], *Thutmose III: A New Biography* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006], v).

11 The 15th Dynasty, which began near the middle of the 17th century BC, represents the Egyptians' first exposure to foreign leadership. A progressive and extensive fragmentation of political power in Egypt assisted in paving the way for this gradual takeover. The reason for the designation "Hyksos" is that the Turin Royal Canon, which specifies their occupation as lasting for 108 years, designates them as *Hq#-X#swt*, with "Hyksos" left as a Greek garbling of the Egyptian term for "rulers of foreign lands." Defining the precise geographical origins of the Hyksos is difficult, though the archaeological material suggests that interaction between Egypt and Canaan was extensive at this time. Based on their western Asiatic names, the genealogical origins of the Hyksos unmistakably revert back to Amorite kingship of the Middle Bronze Age (*ca.* 2100–1550 BC) in Canaan. The Hyksos drove the weakened 13th Dynasty back to their original homeland, extended their influence throughout the Delta and Middle Egypt, and eventually erected monumental construction at Gebelein, just south of Thebes. The destruction level over the last Middle Kingdom city at Thebes either is to be attributed to the Hyksos or the Nubians, with whom the Hyksos had developed friendly relations during their southward expansion (Donald Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992], 107, 112–114; Amélie Kuhrt, *The Ancient Near East c. 3000–330 BC*, vol. 1 [New York: Routledge, 1997], 179).

12 Bietak, "Aftermath of the Hyksos," 20.

13 These events must have occurred by Year 11 of Khamudi,

Apapi's successor, given that the verso of the Rhind Mathematical Papyrus dates the Egyptian entry into Heliopolis to that year (Thomas Schneider, "The Relative Chronology of the Middle Kingdom and the Hyksos Period (Dyns. 12–17)," in Erik Hornung et al. [eds.], *Ancient Egyptian Chronology* [Leiden: Brill, 2006], 194–195). For a translation of the verso of the papyrus, see Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 128. While there is no certainty that the regnal date cannot apply to Ahmose, the southern (i.e. native Egyptian) king is called "he of the south," leading Schneider, Redford, and Spalinger to conclude that Hyksos regnal years are in view (Anthony Spalinger, "The Rhind Mathematical Papyrus as a Historical Document," in H. Altenmüller and D. Wildung (eds.), *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur*, vol. 17 [Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1990], 335). Their conclusion appears to be a sound one.

14 Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 128–129. Redford asserted in 1992 that Avaris was committed to a fiery destruction. To date, however, evidence at Avaris has revealed no evidence of a destruction, except for some doubtful traces around the late-Hyksos palace on the edge of the Nile (Bietak, "Aftermath of the Hyksos" 21). According to the autobiography of Ahmose, son of Ibana, the native Egyptians besieged Sharuhen for three years, then captured the city (Kurt Sethe, *Urkunden der 18. Dynastie*, vol. 4. [Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1955], 4), which as of yet has not been identified conclusively. Redford contends that Sharuhen was destroyed (Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 129), but confirmation of his conclusion can come only when the site's location is secure. Bietak goes on to doubt that the Hyksos fully abandoned Avaris (Bietak, "Aftermath of the Hyksos" 23–35), but to do so he is forced to disregard ancient historians' claims to the contrary.

15 For more on the Second Stele of Kamose, see Labib Habachi, *The Second Stele of Kamose and His Struggle against the Hyksos Ruler and His Capital* (Glückstadt: J. J. Augustin, 1972), 31–32; for more on the shrine-door inscriptions, see Bernard Bruyère, *Rapport sur les fouilles de Deir el-Medineh (1934–1935)* (Cairo: Imprimerie de l'Institut français d'archéologie orientale, 1939), 22.

16 Manfred Bietak, "The Tuthmoside Stronghold of Perunefer," *Egyptian Archaeology* 26 (2005): 13, 17.

17 Bietak, "Tuthmosidischer Palastbezirk," 56.

18 Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html.

19 Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html; idem, "Tell el-Dab'a in the Nile Valley," 111. Only a few women and infants were among those buried in these graves.

20 Bietak, "Tuthmoside Stronghold of Perunefer," 14.

21 Thutmose III led a total of 17 campaigns into Asia, some of which were merely punitive. His primary enemy was Mitanni, with whom he competed for preeminent power in the Fertile Crescent. Thutmose III slowly worked his way further north into and through Syria, then further to the east until he reached the Euphrates River. No other pharaoh in Egyptian history could boast of nearly the same illustrious imperialistic exploits as could he.

22 The spatial function of Palace F follows the plan of the large houses (Type B) at Kahun and South Abydos of the 12th Dynasty (Bietak, "Tuthmosidischer Palastbezirk," 58). For the large houses at Kahun, see Barry J. Kemp, *Ancient Egypt: Anatomy of a Civilization*, second ed. (London: Routledge, 2006), 211–235, with depictions on 212 and 214; for the large houses at Abydos South, see Josef Wegner, "Tradition and Innovation: The Middle Kingdom," in Willeke Wendrich (ed.), *Egyptian Archaeology* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 135–139, with a depiction on 136.

23 Palace J featured a similar but simplified spatial arrangement, with a ramp and landing, a vestibule, and two rows of the throne room and private rooms (Bietak, "Tuthmosidischer Palastbezirk," 58).

24 Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html. Pumice is a vesicular, volcanic rock with a predominantly glassy matrix and is formed mostly by explosive eruptions of viscous magma. Since pumice is a highly vesicular structure, it has a low specific mass, allowing it to float on water and be transported over large distances by marine currents and wind. This accounts for its presence in large quantities at Avaris after the Thera eruption, which thus predates the Egyptian abandonment during or after Amenhotep II's reign. Because of pumice's physical properties, it has been used as an abrasive since antiquity (C. Peltz *et al.*, "INAA of Aegaean Pumices for the Classification of Archaeological Findings," *Journal of Radioanalytical and Nuclear Chemistry* 242/2 [1999]: 361), in order to polish both sculptures, bronze objects, and other items (Georg Steinhauser, "Pumice as a Time Witness," www.tuwien.ac.at/aktuelles/news_detail/article/4959/, accessed Sept. 13, 2012).

25 The samples from Tell el-Dab'a Series L, as part of a study conducted by researchers from UCLA and Vienna's Technical University, plot quite clearly in the fields of Santorini Bo (Minoan Tuff), Bu (Lower pumice), and Cape Riva (Heinz Huber, Max Bichler, and Andreas Musilek, "Identification of Pumice and Volcanic Ash from Archaeological Sites in the Eastern Mediterranean Region Using Chemical Fingerprinting," *Ägypten und Levante* 13 [2004]: 87).

26 Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html.

27 Manfred Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds in the Eastern Nile Delta in the New Kingdom," in Aren M. Maeir and Pierre de Miroschedji (eds.), *I will Speak the Riddles of Ancient Times: Archaeological and Historical Studies in Honor of Amihai Mazar on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2006), 123.

28 Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html.

29 Bietak, "Tell el-Dab'a in the Nile Valley," 112. Memphis was active as a harbor for seafaring ships only from July through October, since navigation in the Delta would have come to a near standstill from January to June, as a result of water reduction to about 1/5 of the usual level. Therefore, Memphis would not have been a feasible naval base for the Egyptians' year-round operations, prompting Bietak to state conclusively that Peru-nefer "never could have been situated at Memphis, as nearly all Egyptologists believe." Strategically, moreover, having the nation's major harbor situated over 160 km upstream would delay any immediate

naval action needed and would inhibit the Egyptians' need to defend the easternmost river-mouth against enemies' incursions from the sea (Bietak, "Perunefer: Naval Base," 17). Since the construction of the Aswan Dam, the Egyptian Nile has been transformed radically due to human engineering, making for current navigational conditions that do not remotely replicate those encountered before 1902 or in antiquity (John P. Cooper, "Nile Navigation: Towing All Day, Punting for Hours," *Egyptian Archaeology* 41 [2012]: 27).

30 Bietak, "Perunefer: Naval Base," 15–16.

31 For the former dating, Bietak writes, "The date of the burials can therefore be established as sometime after Amenophis II and before the later part of the reign of Amenophis III and the Amarna period" (Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 123); for the latter dating, he writes, "It is probable that, during the first phase of the late 18th Dynasty fortress, before the constructions of Horemheb, shepherds used the Tuthmoside ruins as a refuge and buried sheep and goats there" (idem, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html.

32 In 2001, the Austrian team stated that *all* of the sheep and goats died in the first year of life (Manfred Bietak, Josef Dorner, and Peter Jánosi, "Ausgrabungen in dem Palastbezirk von Avaris Vorbericht Tell el-Dabᶜa/ᶜEzbet Helmi 1993–2000," *Ägypten und Levante* 11 [2001]: 45), but subsequent excavations uncovered the burials of some adults, such as the case when a ewe died while giving birth, with the lamb stuck halfway outside of the womb (Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 131).

33 Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html; idem, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 130–132.

34 Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 131–132.

35 Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 132.

36 Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 123.

37 Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html. Emphasis added.

38 Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html.

39 The death of Amenhotep II left a number of princes of adult age vying for the throne, with Thutmose IV emerging as the successful candidate (Ronald J. Leprohon, "The Royal Titulary in the 18th Dynasty: Change and Continuity," *Journal of Egyptian History* 3/1 [2010]: 27). There is no historical basis for determining the date of Thutmose IV's accession, other than Josephus's figure of 8 months that suggests the end of month 2 or beginning of month 3 of Akhet (Erik Hornung, "The New Kingdom," in *Ancient Egyptian Chronology*, 203).

40 [1]Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html.

41 Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 128.

42 James M. Weinstein, "Egypt and the Levant in the Reign of Amenhotep III," in David O'Connor and Eric H. Cline (eds.), *Amenhotep III: Perspectives on His Reign* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001), 226.

43 William L. Moran, ed. and trans., *The Amarna Letters* (Baltimore/London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 93. Bryan sees these repeated requests as a literary embellishment that need not be taken literally; however, she adds no compelling reason as to why a literal rendering is unwarranted (Betsy M. Bryan, "Antecedents to Amenhotep III," in *Amenhotep III: Perspectives*, 52). Therefore, her conclusion should be evaluated cautiously.

44 Betsy M. Bryan, *The Reign of Thutmose IV* (Baltimore/London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 118. Amenhotep III later added a second Mitannian princess as a wife (William K. Simpson, "Egypt," in William K. Simpson and William W. Hallo [eds.], *The Ancient Near East: A History*, second ed. [Fort Worth: Harcourt Brace College Publishers, 1998], 262).

45 Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 183 (with a modified translation of Redford's, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 160). Redford associates this Amarna-Age saying with the situation in Canaan back in Thutmose III's day.

46 Claude Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte et la vallée du Nil*, vol. 2: *De la fin de l'Ancien Empire à la fin du Nouvel Empire* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1995), 333.

47 Bietak, *et al.*, "Ausgrabungen in dem Palastbezirk," 101–102; Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 125, 129.

48 Bryan, "Antecedents to Amenhotep III," 53, 54.

49 Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 157.

50 The taking of Qatna is described in *The Annals of Thutmose III* in Karnak, dating to his illustrious campaign of Year 33, which included the erecting of a stele at the Euphrates River in honor of Thutmose I (John A. Wilson, "Egyptian Historical Texts," in James B. Pritchard [ed.], *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1950], 239).

51 Moran, *The Amarna Letters*, 157.

52 Kampp, *DTN I*, 348–349; *PM I*, 183–185. For a description of this scene, see *PM I*, 184.

53 Bryan, "Antecedents to Amenhotep III," 53–54, 56.

54 Nicolas Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, trans. Ian Shaw (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 219.

55 *Urk. IV*, 1305. A dispute exists over the number of Amenhotep II's Asiatic campaigns, with some vying for two campaigns and others committed to three campaigns. The reason for this dispute is that the Memphis Stele lists campaigns in Year 7 and Year 9. In contrast, the Amada and Elephantine Stelae also refer to a "first victorious campaign," but they both date it to Year 3, not Year 7. A careful resolution of the problem will not be undertaken here, suffice it to say that Vandersleyen undoubtedly is correct that the most logical solution is this: 1) there was only one "first campaign," not two, as some have theorized; 2) the presence of a Year-7 date on the Memphis Stele is the result of damage to the date on the stele followed by its inaccurate restoration by Ramesside craftsmen who mistakenly restored a "7" for a "3" (Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, 324–325). The plausibility of Vandersleyen's conclusion is supported by Wilson's claim of ignorant restoration under the 19th Dynasty for the word "Orontes" on the Karnak Stele (Wilson, in *ANET*, 245), and by der Manuelian's note that the Karnak Stele suffered from Atenist agents who censored its text, followed by subsequent pharaonic restorations that are questionable in many places (Peter der Manuelian, *Studies in the Reign of Amenophis II* [Hildesheim:

Gerstenberg Verlag, 1987], 56).

[56] Peter der Manuelian, "The End of the Reign and the Accession of Amenhotep II," in *Thutmose III: A New Biography*, 422; Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 217. Amenhotep II was 18 years of age when he ascended the throne, according to the Sphinx Stele (*Urk. IV*, 1279). Leprohon translates, "Now His Majesty appeared as king, as a fine youth (*Hwn*) who was well developed, having sturdily (*m Qnt*) completed 18 years upon his thighs" (Leprohon, "Royal Titulary," 26).

[57] James H. Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt*, vol. 2: *The Eighteenth Dynasty* (Urbana/Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 304; Der Manuelian, *Reign of Amenophis II*, 45–68; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 163; and Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 218. Breasted conjectured the date on the Karnak Stele to be Year 2, though Redford contended much later that it is impossible now to tell whether the date on the Karnak Stele matches that on one of the other stelae (Donald Redford, "The Coregency of Tuthmosis III and Amenophis II," *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* 51 [1965]: 119). Breasted apparently thought this because he believed that the Amada Stele—which was erected in Nubia, to Egypt's south—describes a campaign that was fought prior to the events described on the Karnak Stele. However, Breasted did not have the Memphis Stele at his disposal, which ties together the activities listed on both the Karnak and Amada Stelae, given that 1) the Memphis Stele and the Amada Stele both designate a "first victorious campaign," and 2) the Memphis Stele and the Karnak Stele describe many of the same events. Had Breasted known this, he likely would have followed the Amada Stele's "Year 3" to correct the date on the Karnak Stele (Wilson, in *ANET*, 245; Breasted, *Ancient Records*, 305). Wilson collated the Memphis and Karnak Stelae together in *ANET*.

[58] Wilson, in *ANET*, 248; Redford, "Coregency of Tuthmosis III and Amenophis II," 119.

[59] Yohanan Aharoni and Michael Avi-Yonah, *The Macmillan Bible Atlas*, revised ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1977), 34. The translation of the Egyptian text is that of the present writer (cf. Memphis Stele in *Urk. IV*, 1303). For a recent translation of the Memphis Stele, see James K. Hoffmeier, "The Memphis and Karnak Stelae of Amenhotep II," in William W. Hallo and K. Lawson Younger, Jr. (eds.), *The Context of Scripture*, vol. 2: *Monumental Inscriptions from the Biblical World* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 19–23.

[60] *Urk. IV*, 1304.

[61] Bryan, "Antecedents to Amenhotep III," 36, 52.

[62] Der Manuelian, *Reign of Amenophis II*, 42.

[63] Redford asserts that since pottery jars are relatively porous, the wine within them was consumed not long after the bottling process, and since mortuary complexes were fully stocked with wine only after a king's (imminent) death, the Year-26 wine-juglet was produced at the end of Amenhotep II's life, and the mortuary temple probably was under construction until the king's death and the stocking of the wine (Donald Redford, "On the Chronology of the Egyptian Eighteenth Dynasty," *JNES* 25/2 [1966]: 119).

[64] Edward F. Wente and Charles C. Van Siclen III, "A Chronology of the New Kingdom," in Janet H. Johnson and Edward F. Wente (eds.), *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes, January 12, 1977* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 228.

[65] Der Manuelian, *Reign of Amenophis II*, 43.

[66] Wente and Van Siclen III, "Chronology of the New Kingdom," 227–228.

[67] Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 164.

[68] Bietak, "Aftermath of the Hyksos," 25.

[69] Gregory P. Gilbert, *Ancient Egyptian Sea Power and the Origin of Maritime Forces* (Australia: Sea Power Centre, 2008), 88–89. Gilbert further notes that by the time of Thutmose III, the Egyptians had both a long-established overland trade route across the Sinai and a mature maritime trading relationship with the coastal cities of the Levant, especially Byblos. Thutmose III's first Asiatic campaign commenced with a long and grueling march through the Sinai and Canaan, and the next three land-based campaigns only attempted to consolidate Levantine holdings. However, stabilization of the region was elusive, as Mitanni continued to subvert Egyptian involvement in Syria, for which Thutmose III would learn that sea power was the only answer for lasting control. His fifth to eighth campaigns are classic examples of expeditionary operations with necessary naval support, as he was able to project his power by sending his troops ashore at strategic positions. Fighting remained land-based, but it depended on the free use of the sea routes along the coastline of the Levant, with Byblos and other ports serving as major staging points and supply depots.

[70] See the phasing chart in Bietak, *et al.*, "Ausgrabungen in dem Palastbezirk," 31.

[71] Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 123; idem, *et al.*, "Ausgrabungen in dem Palastbezirk," 45.

[72] The excavators even note that "a long time span should not be assumed" for the duration of these burials (Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 130).

[73] Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 123.

[74] Bietak, "Nomads or *mnmn.t*-Shepherds," 123. Bietak is careful to credit David Aston, one of his colleagues, for the data related to the pottery from the animal burials.

[75] Bietak, "Perunefer: Naval Base," 16.

[76] Bietak, "Tell el-Dab'a in the Nile Valley," 112.

[77] Wilson, in *ANET*, 246; Breasted, *Ancient Records*, 309. The translation presented here is a modification of that of Wilson and Breasted. The crucial difference is reading *pr[w] nfr Hr* for their *pr nfr [n] Hr*, "house of the Beautiful-of-Face" (i.e. Ptah). However, Breasted does note that *Hr* can be taken as a preposition introducing the infinitive. The present writer follows those who consider Breasted to have failed to perceive Peru-nefer here. For *Hr* + infinitive denoting imperfective, ongoing action with progressive aspect, see J. F. Borghouts, *Egyptian: An Introduction to the Writing and Language of the Middle Kingdom*, vol. 1: *Grammar, Syntax and Indexes* (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2010), 158.

[78] Bietak, "Tuthmoside Stronghold of Perunefer," 13. Technically, only the Karnak Stele describes the proceeding

of the army from Peru-nefer to Memphis. The Memphis Stele, however, singularly precedes this portion of the text by stating that the victorious Egyptian army had left for Egypt already, thus after the military campaign but before the return trip to Memphis: "The departing of his majesty for the land of Egypt" (*Urk. IV*, 1305).

79 *Urk. IV*, 41.

80 *Urk. IV*, 1300. The city-determinative immediately follows the hieroglyphs of *prw-nfr*, and thus there is no doubt that a topographical site is being mentioned.

81 The Ways of Horus, normally written *W#wt Hr*, was utilized as a military road during the New Kingdom. This road passed through Tjaru, Egypt's frontier town at Sinai, and continued to Gaza. A series of 23 known military outposts dotted the road's path between these two sites, and a post-1967-War survey across the northern Sinai revealed hundreds of lesser sites, including many small campsites. The international highway that continued from the Ways of Horus into and through Canaan is known as the Great Trunk Road, which Thutmose III utilized when he met the rebellious Syro-Canaanite coalition at Megiddo early in his Year 23. Archaeological evidence has revealed that the Ways of Horus was a militarized zone established to protect Egyptian economic interests and to provide stopping points for Egyptian expeditions that needed respites along the way (James K. Hoffmeier, *Israel in Egypt* [New York: Oxford University Press, 1996], 70, 183, 184).

82 Bietak, "Aftermath of the Hyksos," 29, 31.

83 Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *Macmillan Bible Atlas*, 34.

84 *Urk. IV*, 1308; Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *Macmillan Bible Atlas*, 34.

85 Der Manuelian, *Reign of Amenophis II*, 68.

86 While Thutmose III did not campaign again in Asia after Year 33, even though he ruled into Year 54, one should not be tempted to believe that this pharaoh abandoned his Asiatic holdings during the latter years of his reign. Thutmose III declared in the Gebel Barkal Stele, which dates to Year 47, that his "northern boundary is at the ends of Asia" (line 8, as translated by der Manuelian, "The Accession of Amenhotep II," 414), which confirms his stranglehold on the western Levant.

87 Hoffmeier, "The Gebel Barkal Stela of Thutmose III," in *COS II*, 15.

88 Aharoni and Avi-Yonah, *Macmillan Bible Atlas*, 34.

89 Der Manuelian, *Reign of Amenophis II*, 59.

90 *Urk. IV*, 1305.

91 Wilson, in *ANET*, 246; Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, 328. The first season (#Xt) is known as "Inundation," which reflects the flooding from the rising of the Nile that would deposit moisture and silt for the benefit of fertility.

92 *Urk. IV*, 1308–1309; Wilson, in *ANET*, 247; Hoffmeier, "Memphis and Karnak Stelae," in *COS II*, 22.

93 Wilson laments that even though two of the figures offer questionable readings, no clear alternatives will supply the total listed on the stele (Wilson, in *ANET*, 247). Although Wilson does not elaborate on the dilemma, the "questionable readings" most likely refer to the 36,300 Kharu and the 30,652 dependents of the Nagasu; yet since this part of the stele shows no sign of damage or repair, there is no reason to doubt these numbers.

94 Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 164.

95 Vandersleyen, *L'Egypte*, 341.

96 Der Manuelian, "The Accession of Amenhotep II," 423.

97 Der Manuelian, "The Accession of Amenhotep II," 413. The Gebel Barkal Stele, which was erected long after Thutmose III's Asiatic campaigns had been completed, not only describes these campaigns with lofty praise, but beneath the lunette it depicts the king's presentation of offerings placed before (erased) figures of Amun-Re.

98 Bryan, "Antecedents to Amenhotep III," 30. In Thutmose III's Gebal Barkal Stele, for example, he refers to Amun-Re when he says this about his Nubian and Asiatic conquests: "I have seized the southerners by command of his *ka* and the northerners according to his guidance" (line 2, as translated by der Manuelian, "The Accession of Amenhotep II," 414).

99 This includes areas at Karnak such as the walls of two halls behind Pylon 6, the scene of Thutmose III's smiting of foreigners on Pylon 7, and others.

100 Wilson, in *ANET*, 235.

101 *Urk. IV*, 1307.

102 Garry J. Shaw, *Royal Authority in Egypt's Eighteenth Dynasty*, BAR International Series 1822 (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2008), 58. Shaw's transliteration of the text on the stele was followed here, but the translation is that of the present writer. The "good god" is a reference to the king. This stele originally referred to a specific year, but unfortunately all that remains of the date is a reference to "Day 11 of Amenhotep II."

103 Shaw, *Royal Authority*, 58.

104 *Urk. IV*, 43. The definitions for the verb *fX* are from Leonard H. Lesko, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian*, vol. 1, second ed. (Fall River: Fall River Modern Printing Co., 2002), 165.

105 Teeter, *Religion and Ritual.*, 92.

106 Kampp, *DTN I*, 364–367; *PM I*, 203–204.

107 Kampp, *DTN I*, 358–360; *PM I*, 195–197.

108 Bryan, *Reign of Thutmose IV*, 267–268.

109 *Urk. IV*, 1975.

110 Wolfgang Helck, *Politische Gegensätze im alten Ägypten: Ein Versuch von Wolfgang Helck* (Hildesheim: Gerstenberg Verlag, 1986), 53–56.

111 Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 225.

112 Ann Macy Roth, "Erasing a Reign," in Catharine H. Roehrig et al. (eds.), *Hatshepsut: From Queen to Pharaoh* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2005), 277–281.

113 Joyce Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut: The Female Pharaoh* (London: Viking Adult, 1996), 79. A slightly different approach was taken at Deir el-Bahri, where none of Hatshepsut's statues was altered to represent another person, and almost all of her names in inscriptions on the statues were left intact. The normal alterations and erasures commonly occurred only on the reliefs (Arnold, "The Destruction of the Statues of Hatshepsut from Deir el-Bahri," in *Hatshepsut: From Queen to Pharaoh*, 270). Perhaps this somewhat more tempered approach at Deir el-Bahri is due to the locals' reverence for Hatshepsut, due to her extensive building operations at this important complex of mortuary temples.

[114] One may be tempted to pin the blame on later Amarna-Age revolutionaries who desecrated images of the gods and particularly unleashed their vengeance upon Amun. However, these Atenists are unlikely candidates for a number of reasons. First, they were essentially five generations removed from Hatshepsut, leaving no logical motive available. Second, feminine personal pronouns referring to Hatshepsut were erased, which cannot be explained by a crusade focused on eliminating deities from Egyptian life, especially when there are no theophoric names in an Egyptian personal pronoun. Third, often times the divine names Ra and Amun were spared when the culprits erased Hatshepsut's cartouches, while Amun received the brunt of the Atenists' attacks (Roth, Erasing a Reign, 277).

[115] Simpson, "Egypt," 259, 261; Redford, *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel*, 156; Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 216.

[116] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 219.

[117] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 219–220; Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 216.

[118] Roth, "Erasing a Reign," 281.

[119] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 220, 224–225.

[120] Grimal, *History of Ancient Egypt*, 216.

[121] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 216.

[122] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 206, 222.

[123] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 208.

[124] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 224.

[125] Betsy M. Bryan, "The Eighteenth Dynasty Before the Amarna Period," in Ian Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 241, 243.

[126] Diamantis Panagiotopoulos, "Keftiu in Context: Theban Tomb-Paintings as a Historical Source," *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* 20 (2001): 263.

[127] Bietak, "Tuthmosidischer Palastbezirk," 59; idem, "*Bronze Age Paintings in the Levant: Chronological and Cultural Considerations*," in *Synchronisation of Civilisations*, 273, 275.

[128] Bietak, "Tuthmoside Stronghold of Perunefer," 16–17; Kampp, *DTN I*, 298–302; *PM I*, 139–142.

[129] Tyldesley, *Hatchepsut*, 177, 206.

[130] Kampp, *DTN I*, 419–422; *PM I*, 245–247.

131Kampp, *DTN I*, 441–443; *PM I*, 263–265.

132Kampp, *DTN I*, 338–340; *PM I*, 175–177.

[133] Panagiotopoulos, "Keftiu in Context," 265.

[134] Kampp, *DTN I*, 370–372; *PM I*, 206–214.

[135] Kampp, *DTN I*, 336–338; *PM I*, 170–175.

[136] Kampp, *DTN I*, 344–348; *PM I*, 181–183.

[137] Roberta L. Shaw, "The Tomb of Amenmose: Almost Done," *Royal Ontario Museum Archaeological Newsletter* 3/18 (2006): 3.

[138] Kampp, *DTN I*, 352–356; *PM I*, 190–194.

[139] Kampp, *DTN I*, 306–307; *PM I*, 143–144. Confirmation of the father-son relationship is found not only in the naming of Amenhotep's wife as Amenemopet on an inscription in his tomb, but also in his being listed in Shabti K1042 as the father of Kenamun (Shaw, *Royal Authority*, 15). The names of both parents were almost completely destroyed under a *damnatio memoriae*, whether this occurred during the reign of Amenhotep II or later.

[140] Shaw, *Royal Authority*, 14–15.

[141] For the publication of Shabti K1042, see Frauke Pumpenmeier, *Eine Gunstgabe von seiten des Königs: Ein extrasepulkrales Schabtidepot Qen-Amuns in Abydos* (Heidelberg: Heidelberger Orientverlag, 1998), 5–27.

[142] Pumpenmeier, *Eine Gunstgabe*, 16–17 (column 9); Shaw, *Royal Authority*, 13.

[143] Shaw, *Royal Authority*, 13. The text of Shabti 1042 goes on to list many other offices that Kenamun received, seemingly after his military career had ended. This includes overseer of the cattle, fan-bearer, great one of the (king's) house, chief of the cattle of the king, overseer of the cattle of Upper and Lower Egypt, and first herald of the king in all places. None of these offices is related to a military function, which is interesting for a man who began his career as a high-ranking soldier, and then commanded Egypt's key naval base. A *shabti* from Zawiyet Abu Mesallam does list two military offices that Kenamun subsequently held: fortress commander (*imy-r# Xtmt*) and overseer of all northern foreign countries (*imy-r# X#swt nbt mHty*), but most likely these offices were connected to his role as chief steward in Peru-nefer until Amenhotep II's Year-9 campaign, thus when Egypt continued to campaign in the northern foreign countries of the Levant (Shaw, *Royal Authority*, 15).

[144] Shaw, *Royal Authority*, 14; *PM I*, 192.

[145] *Urk. IV*, 1385–1386; Norman de Garis Davies, *The Tomb of Ken-Amun at Thebes* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1930), 18.

[146] One possible argument against the abandonment of Peru-nefer in Amenhotep II's Year 9 relates to the lunar dating of Papyrus Leningrad 1116A. Though no specific king is mentioned on the papyrus, the paleography, the mention of Peru-nefer, and the personal name *o#-Xpr-<ro>-r-nHH* have led most scholars to attribute it to Amenhotep II's reign. The papyrus often is pinpointed to Amenhotep II's Year 18, 19, or 20—since in line 19 the text mentions an allotment on Month 2 of *Smw*, Day 30 "from the grain of year 18," and since grain was issued for a *psDntyw* celebration in year 19—possibly indicating that the papyrus dates to his Year 19. This would require that Peru-nefer was a functioning city as late as Year 19 of Amenhotep II. However, too many variables render Leningrad 1116A undependable for establishing a lunar date for Amenhotep II. The pharaoh is not specifically named, and the year is only inferred, not stated, as a lacuna mars the date. For these reasons, this papyrus is rejected as unreliable for establishing a lunar date for the reign of Amenhotep II (der Manuelian, "The Accession of Amenhotep II," 418–419). Furthermore, it provides no support for Peru-nefer's occupation in his Year 19.

[147] Bietak, "Palatial Precinct," www.auaris.at/html/cz_helmi_en.html.