

**MOSES SON OF AKHENATEN? A STUDY OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND TEXTUAL
PERSPECTIVES**

by

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Figure 1.1 Upper part of a colossal statue of Akhenaten from Karnak (Kemp 2012:97) depicted in a painting by Jayne Vine (2014).

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this study to my father **William George Gooding**, who imparted upon me a love for Biblical texts. The Hebrew Bible given to me some time ago has not been out of arm's length for the past three years.

Sigmund Freud: whose work I have followed in not only my psychology degrees but also his account of *Moses and Monotheism*. Despite being controversial and audacious with his claim that Moses was not a Hebrew but an Egyptian Freud continued his argument and published his three essays. In his opinion, 'Yahweh lost his own characteristics and grew more and more to resemble the old god of Moses, the Aten'. This caused Freud's controversial views to be challenged by the establishment and dismissed after his publication in 1939.

A genius named **Rosalind Franklin** 'whose clear X-ray photographs in May 1952 established for the first time and unequivocally the helical structure of DNA' which made her the heroine of the DNA revolution. Her ground-breaking work has changed the scientific world and the conclusions reached from DNA testing on the 18th Dynasty royal mummies are included in this study.

A 'view from within'

by Jayne Vine, Luxor Temple September 2007

I feel the coarse sand beneath my feet, as I slowly wander through the ancient temple allowing my mind to wander back through time and space visualising the activities 4000 years back.

Passing the sacred lake, the priests clothed in the purity of white.

The scarab glistening in the sun, purification rituals infuse the air, aromas from the land of Punt. Seated in the inner sanctum, hands touch the heated pillars.

The golden energy from the Aten flowing and energising the body, hearing the distant chants of the priests.

The clouds of colour float across consciousness, drifting upwards allowing negativity to drift away, becoming one with pure white light, the third eye senses the oneness of it all.

I am one with creation, one with the universe.

DECLARATION

I declare that **MOSES SON OF AKHENATEN? A STUDY OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND TEXTUAL PERSPECTIVES** is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references and that this work has not been submitted before for any other degree at any other institution.

.....

.....

Full names

Date

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

At many times during the course of this research I have felt lost and alone, abandoned in a desert surrounded by conflicting stories. I have battled to make sense of the inconsistencies presented. This dissertation has been immensely challenging, bringing two monolithic characters together and hypothesising such a close familial bond has been an enormous challenge. Swimming against the tide of mainstream academic thought has left me feeling intimidated. I soon realised I was not alone in my thinking as several noteworthy scholars have challenged the historicity of the Biblical texts. My mystical experience several years ago in a courtyard in the temple of Luxor in Egypt left me feeling ungrounded for quite some time thereafter. This experience was my motivator to learn more about the mysteries of Egypt.

It is with a great deal of gratitude that I wish to thank **Professor Fanie Vermaak** for encouraging me to enrol in a course in Semitics at UNISA, a decision that has been life changing. The several magical trips led by Professor Vermaak through the Middle East opened my eyes to a world previously unknown to me. I met wonderful people in Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Iran and got to know my fellow travellers who will remain close friends for life.

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ABSTRACT

MOSES SON OF AKHENATEN? A STUDY OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND TEXTUAL PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

The search for a ‘historical Moses’ is one which has been debated for several centuries. In spite of copious archaeological finds in Egypt and other parts of the ancient Near East, no material remains have been found to substantiate the Exodus story. Mythological stories from the ancient Near East bear striking similarities to the Moses narrative found in the Hebrew Bible. The inconsistencies found in the Hebrew Bible further hamper the attempt to find a historical Moses, instead Moses is found only in tradition. Taking these issues into consideration, other possibilities need to be investigated. This dissertation places Moses growing up in the court of Akhenaten an 18th Dynasty Egyptian Pharaoh in the middle of the 14th century BCE. The study investigates the possibility of Moses as a son of Akhenaten with Nefertiti as a stepmother, his own biological mother, a Mitannian princess, having died giving birth to Moses. Several similarities between Akhenaten and Moses are discussed throughout the study. The study moves into the 21st century with the groundbreaking discovery of DNA, which provides new conclusions which before were only debated.

Keywords

Akhenaten; archaeology; Amarna; Aten; Atenism; chronology; DNA; El; Exodus; god; gods; history vs memory; Mitanni; monotheism; Moses; Pharaoh; polytheism; prophet; solar- worship; syncretism; Yahweh; Yahwism.

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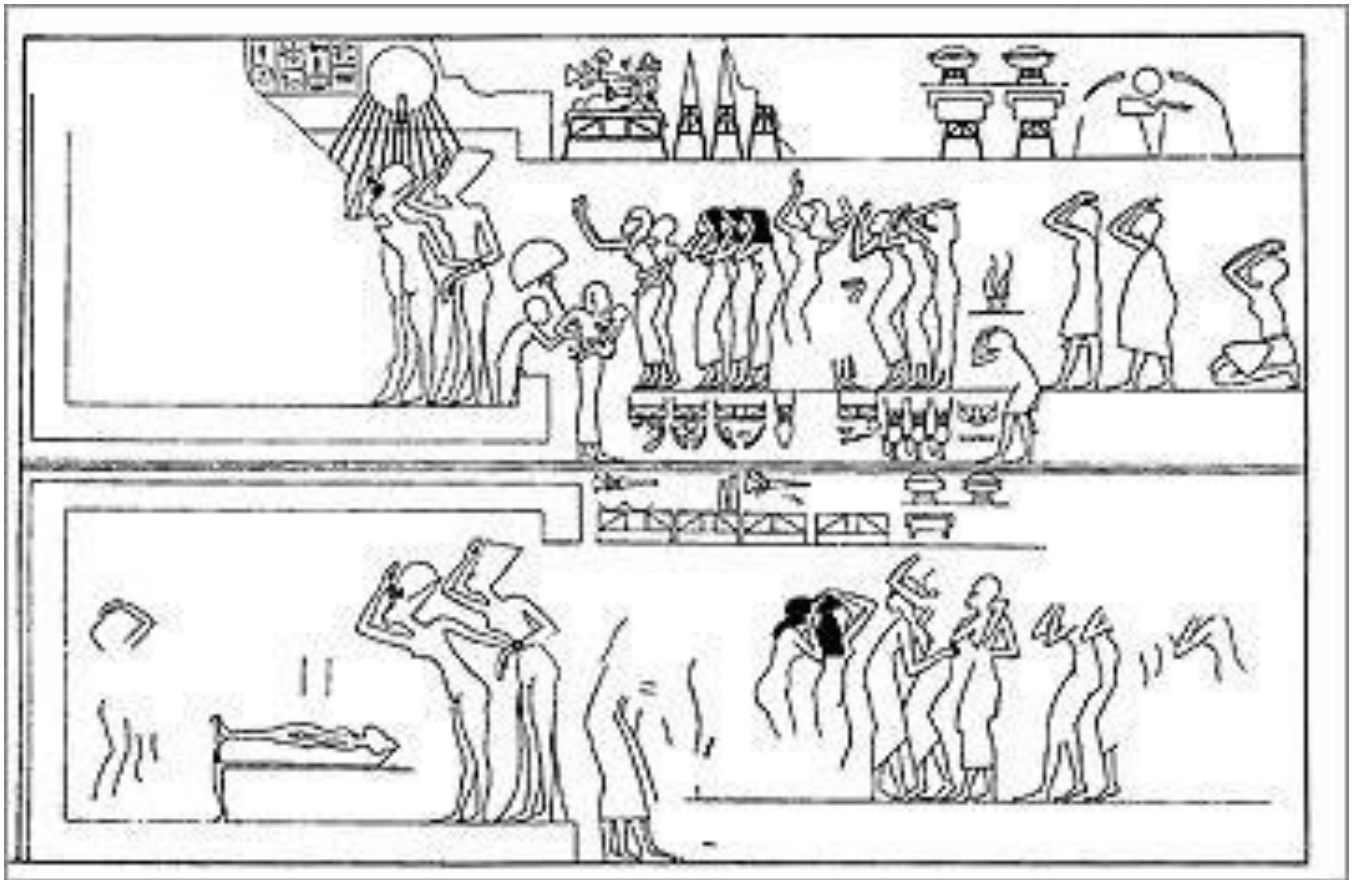


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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Akhenaten and Moses were legendary founders of religious traditions. Both proclaimed and initiated a new aniconic¹ god. This new god was not created by human hands. This god was invisible to all but 'divine communication' was reserved for Akhenaten and Moses respectively. This study shall attempt to investigate the possible familial connection between the two, Akhenaten and Moses.

Assmann (1997:209) states that 'Egypt is the womb from which the chosen people emerged but the umbilical cord was cut once and for all by the Mosaic distinction.' Freud argues that 'the man Moses, the liberator and law-giver of the Jewish people, was not a Jew but an Egyptian' (1974:17). This study will look at the possibility of Moses being an Egyptian and a son of the Egyptian Pharaoh Akhenaten. The Biblical narrative does not provide names or dates of the Egyptian household where Moses was raised from infancy as a royal prince. According to the Biblical narrative, Moses' parents were Amram and Jochebed (Exodus 6:20). Moses' parents were both from the 'house of Levi' (Exodus 2:1). This term, according to Van Seters (1994:26), is genealogical and is a tribal affiliation and therefore it is problematic as it could only have been developed in this sense in the exilic period (587 BCE) (Bimson, Kane, Paterson & Wiseman 1985:92).

According to the Biblical narrative Moses was born in Egypt at a time when the proto- Israelites were enslaved and when the Egyptian pharaoh ordered the Israelite midwives to kill the male babies: 'When you deliver the Hebrew women, and you see them on the birth stool; if it is a son, you are to kill him' (Exodus 1:16) (Scherman 1996:134-5). Shifrah (Jochebed) and Puah (Miriam), the mother and sister of Moses were, according to the sages, midwives at that time (Scherman 1996:136).

The narrative in Exodus continues with Moses being placed in a wicker basket by his mother in order to hide the infant from the pharaoh's cruel order: 'She could not hide him any longer, so she took for him a wicker basket and smeared it with clay and pitch; she placed the child into it and placed it among the reeds at the bank of the river' (Exodus 2:3).

¹Aniconic: not shaped in human or animal form (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv 'Aniconic').

The story continues with the infant being drawn from the water by the pharaoh's daughter. The passage in the Biblical narrative (Exodus 2:10) refers to Moses becoming the princess' son but the princess is not named although Josephus (*AJ* 2.225) (*AJ* Abbreviation for Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*) states that the king had a daughter named Thermuthis. On opening the basket, she found the crying child and took pity on him saying 'This is one of the Hebrew boys' (Exodus 2:6). It is stated in the Biblical narrative that the daughter of pharaoh said to the child's mother, a Hebrew woman (a Semite), 'Take this boy and nurse him for me, and I will give you pay' (Exodus 2:8-9). The mother did so and 'the boy grew up and she brought him to the daughter of pharaoh and he was a son to her' (Exodus 2:9). The princess raised the child in an Egyptian royal household. Unfortunately, the Hebrew Bible does not tell us which royal household.

A story from Egyptian mythology states that 'Horus, the child is produced by Isis (from the water) and Nephthys nourishes him on land' (Massey 2007:515). Even though Hoffmeier (1997:138) and Redford (1967:208-228) reject the connection of the Horus myth with Moses' birth story on the basis of a dissimilarity of detail, there exist similarities with the Moses story narratives in the ancient Near East. The birth story of Sargon of Agade (2340-2284 BCE), one of the most famous 'world conquerors' (Kuhrt 1995:5-6) and the Biblical birth story of Moses bear striking similarities. According to Kuhrt (1995:5-6), Freud uses these stories 'to point out that such themes are pervasive and not peculiar to Judaism'. Gray (1969:55) also emphasises the coincidences between these narratives:

My mother an enitum [female devotee bride of the god] conceived me; in secret she bore me, she set me in a basket of rushes, with bitumen she sealed my lid, she cast me into the river, which rose not over me.

Freud was of the opinion that many prominent civilised nations glorified their heroes. Concepts such as divine conception, dangers at birth, prophecy, rescue and ultimately greatness and fame attribute the heroes with super human qualities (Freud 1974:11). Coats (1999:27) indicated that the birth story follows similar sequencing to the Sumerian-Akkadian texts which are called *ana ittišu* ('a child is found'), delivered to a wet nurse, weaned and returned to its owner and finally adopted. Michalowski (1995:2287) was of the opinion that myths and literary forms were copied down to the end of Mesopotamian culture, finding their way into the literature of the Jews in the diaspora. Hoffmeier (1997:136) referred to Redford's study on the 'exposed child' motif from the ancient Near East. Redford concluded that the tales have similarities but are not true parallels. On the other hand, Lewis (1980:99-107) believed the exposed-child motif influenced the writer of the Moses' birth story despite seeing significant differences between the two stories. The above examples imply that the Moses

narrative was a borrowed theme from Egypt or Babylonia and the Moses ‘tradition’ was kept alive by word of mouth. Hoffmeier (1997:ii) refers to the historical minimalists who are a new generation of sceptics who have challenged the historicity of the patriarchal narratives of Genesis and sojourn-Exodus and Joshua’s conquest of the land of Canaan. Hoffmeier (1997:x) alludes to the glaring weakness of much of the literature that has questioned the historicity of the Biblical records, he feels that it has lacked serious investigation of Egyptian historical and archaeological material. The Pentateuch or the Torah, are books attributed to Moses and are known as the ‘Books of Moses’ (Kruger, Lubbe & Steyn 2002:157). In the opinion of Kruger et al (2002:157), the books have had canonical status since the fifth century BCE when they were reintroduced by Ezra in public readings in Jerusalem.²

In the Biblical narrative, it is further stated that ‘she [the pharaoh’s daughter] called his name Moses: and she said, “... because I drew him out of the water”’ (Exodus 2:10, my insertion). The name Moses, ‘mosheh’ in Hebrew, was given to the infant by the Egyptian princess who rescued the child from the river (Freud 1974:7). Freud discusses the popular interpretations of the name as ‘he who was drawn out of the water’, and argues that ‘it is absurd to attribute to an Egyptian princess a derivation of the name from the Hebrew’. He infers that the water out of which the child was drawn ‘was most probably not the water of the Nile’ (Freud 1974:8). I am in agreement with Freud that the waters were most probably not the Nile River (see Figure 1.3). Rank (2004:58) alludes to a newborn hero placed in the chest which symbolises the womb and the water symbolises birth. To my mind, it is possible that the waters referred to are the ‘amniotic waters’ and that the meaning was actually that the infant is ‘drawn from’ the birth canal (Moses’ birth will be discussed in Chapter Four 4.3).

²After King Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon, the Jews were allowed to return home after a fifty year exile. Ezra, the scribe, and Nehemiah, the new governor of Judah, returned to Jerusalem. Together they rebuilt Jerusalem and Ezra reinstated the Torah in a public reading (Kruger et al 2002:142)



Figure 1.3: Nile River, Egypt. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).

Freud was convinced that the name Moses came from the Egyptian word ‘mose’ meaning ‘child’ (1974:18). Freud substantiated his argument that Moses was an Egyptian name, not Hebrew. He was surprised that the scholar Breasted omitted to mention the analogous theophorous names of the Egyptian kings’ list such as Ahmose, Thutmosis and Ra-mose (1934:8). Osman, on the other hand, argued that, in order to agree with the explanation given by the Biblical editor, the name should have been Moshui—‘one who has been drawn out’ (1990:65). According to the Ta’anach, ‘she gave him the Egyptian name Monios’ which means that ‘he was drawn from the water’. Moses/Moshe is the Hebrew translation of that word (Ibn Ezra) (Scherman 1996:136). Josephus states that water is called by the Egyptians ‘mōu’ the true name signifies ‘one saved out of the water’ (Ap 1.286).

It is not clear in which Egyptian household Moses was raised neither is it clear which pharaoh or which princess is referred to in the Biblical narrative. There are many more uncertainties surrounding this narrative such as the dating, the chronology, and the lack of evidence from Egyptian texts to corroborate this story. Josephus, writing in the first century AD (Ap 1.28-32) (Ap Abbreviation for Josephus’ *Against Apion*), alludes to the care the Egyptians took in their record keeping, a task which was undertaken by the Egyptian priests. This careful record keeping raises further questions. If this is the case, why, then, is Moses not mentioned in Egyptian texts? Perhaps he is, but under a different name. Could it be Thutmosis?

Moses is according to the Biblical narrative also well-known for introducing monotheism (Yahwism) to his people. Extra-Biblical texts may provide light on an historical Moses. Assmann stated that ‘the historian who came closest to a construction of Moses’ religion as monotheistic and as a pronounced counter-religion was Strabo’. Assmann added that Strabo perceived Moses to be an Egyptian priest who became dissatisfied with the Egyptian religion, founded a new religion and emigrated to Palestine [sic] with his followers (Assmann 1997:38). Similarly, Apion, an Egyptian historian from the first century, stated that Moses was an Egyptian priest from Heliopolis who led the Jews out of Egypt and built open temples, conforming to Egyptian tradition (Assmann 1997:38). Smith (2002:29) was of the opinion that solar language for Yahweh during the proto-Israelite period was limited but, nonetheless, in the Hebrew Bible ‘it represents a significant aspect of Israelite religion during the period of the monarchy’ (solar language will be discussed in Chapter Six).

The theme of Moses in memory and Akhenaten (the Egyptian pharaoh from the New Kingdom era, ca 1358-1340 BCE) in history is pervasive. Akhenaten’s monolatric worship of light and the sun cult of Heliopolis show similarities with Moses’ Yahwism. Moses taught his followers that Yahwism was ‘a religion that remains true to the traditions of his native country’ (Assmann 1997:38). Assmann (1997:38) explained that Akhenaten’s ideology was an alternative religion, different from other Egyptian cults and Freud (1974:22) noted that Akhenaten ‘introduced something new, which, for the first time, converted the doctrine of a universal god into monotheism—the factor of exclusiveness.’ Assmann (1997:2) added that ‘Moses is a figure of memory but not of history, while Akhenaten is a figure of history but not of memory.’

Scholars have agonised over the time period of the Exodus, desperately searching for the material evidence of the group of people who departed from Egypt and settled in the land of Canaan, modern Israel. Could it be that they are looking in the wrong place and wrong time period in history?

A possible familial relationship between the three characters, Akhenaten, Akhenaten’s Mitannian (Syrian) secondary wife Tadukhepa (Kiya), and Moses, cannot be established by excluding certain extended family members in the argument. Throughout the study, references have been made to Queen Tiyi mother of Akhenaten; Amenhotep III (Amenophis III), king, and father to Akhenaten; Nefertiti, believed to be principal wife of Akhenaten; Smenkhare, brother of Akhenaten and another son of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiy; Meritaten and Meketaten, two of the six daughters of Akhenaten and Nefertiti; Tutankhamun, believed to be son of Akhenaten; Ay, a maternal grandfather of Tutankhamun and Tushratta, king of Mitanni and father to Tadukhepa (Kiya), a secondary wife of Akhenaten.

The following crucial issues in the current debate have provided the background to this study: advancements in the study of DNA, particularly for genetic fingerprinting, assist in the identification of individuals and their relationships; the DNA results from the 18th Dynasty mummies may provide accurate dating of the mummies; DNA might also help with determining relationships within the royal family and the behaviour (genetic disposition) indicated in the texts. This has been confirmed for Akhenaten by the epigraphy and, for Moses, the Biblical texts.

1.1.1 Chronology and dating problems

No name is mentioned in the Biblical narrative as to the identity of the pharaoh of Egypt at the time of the Exodus. The only clue is found in (Exodus 1:8): ‘Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.’

Every few years, Biblical scholars have convincing new theories about the pharaoh who reigned during the Exodus. Up to now, these have included: Ramesses II, Merneptah, Thutmosis III, Hatshepsut, Tutankhamun, Akhenaten, yet there is still not a definitive answer. Dever is of the opinion that nowhere in Egyptian literature, in history, or in the archaeological records, is there a reference or artifacts to indicate that the ‘proto-Israelites’ were ever in Egypt (1997:70). In (Exodus 14:2), a place named as Pi –hahi’–roth is mentioned between Migdol and the sea. This is a part of the Israelites’ itinerary during the Exodus from Egypt. Hoffmeier refers to the Papyrus Anastasi³ which alludes to a town named Pi-Hathor once speculated to be behind the Biblical toponym. This theory has since been rejected as the Egyptian roots of the name are not convincing (1997:170).

Dever questions the historical context of the Biblical narrative and wonders why Ramesses II, such a pivotal actor in the drama of the Exodus, would have been omitted from the Hebrew Bible (1997:69). There appears to be little evidence to corroborate the Exodus narrative, perhaps there is some indirect evidence from Egypt (cf. 4.10.2). Hoffmeier is of the opinion that a major problem for investigating the geography of the exodus is the general lack of knowledge of the archaeological history of the northeastern Delta (1997:177). One archaeological find that has evidence of the Exodus, would change current thinking.

³ The Anastasi Papyri are a collection of Egyptian documents from various sources, some of the papyri date to the Ramessid era and contain hymns to the god Amon and other accounts from that period in history (Bunson 1999:22). Papyrus Anastasi I contains a mathematical problem which calculates the number of bricks required to build a ramp. This Hoffmeier feels is relevant to the Exodus narratives as prisoners of war in the 18th dynasty were engaged in brick-making works (1997:114). Pe (r)- Atum of Papyrus Anastasi 6, a temple in the Wadi Tumilat admirably fits the Biblical usage of Pithom mentioned in the Hebrew Bible in Exodus 1:11 (Hoffmeier 1997:120).

This study looks at characters from Imperial Egypt during the time of the New Kingdom dated 1552/1550-1069 BCE (conventional dating) (Kuhrt 1995:185).

According to James (1991:195), the 18th Dynasty dating would commence around 1300 BCE and end around 1050 BCE, approximately 250 years later than conventional dating (see dates quoted above by Kuhrt). James (1991:3) challenged the dating of current chronology. He was of the opinion that a revision from conventional dates to alternative dates would solve problems of the so called 'dark ages'. James stated that the study of Egyptian chronology 'seems to have become so ossified that it cannot question its fundamental assumptions, accepted more for familiarity than for any basis in fact' (1991:259).

James (1991:258) placed the middle of the 18th Dynasty to ca. 1100-1050 BCE. He saw similarities between Pharaoh Akhenaten's (conventional dating 14th century BCE) *Hymn to the Aten* and King David's (10th century BCE)⁴ *Psalm 104* (1991:4). James (1991:387) discussed 'selective publishing' concerning two tests performed by the British Museum on reeds and dom-palm nut kernels from the tomb of Tutankhamun:

The results, c. 846 bc and c. 899 bc ... were never formally published. Their existence came to light only when they were "leaked" by Mr Bruce Mainwaring, co-ordinator of a radiocarbon project conducted by the University of Pennsylvania in conjunction with the British Museum.

If the results were calibrated, the results would be two centuries too young for conventional chronology, but would fit the time frame as suggested by James (1991:387) considering the tomb had been sealed since Tutankhamun's internment.⁵

⁴ The dating for the Davidic period is similarly problematic.

⁵ I contacted Dr Sharon Zuckerman from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem regarding the problem of dating. With regards to conventional dating, this places the Pharaoh Akhenaten in the 14th century BCE 1352-1336 BCE and the alternative dates for this period, as suggested by James's model, to 1050 BCE, approximately 250 years later. She replied: 'As for James's chronology, it does not stand the test of any archaeological or historical evidence that we have, and we have a lot of information on 2nd millennium interconnections and chronological synchronisms. Neither Hazor nor any other site show any plausible evidence for this chronology' (Zuckerman 2011). On the other hand James Hoffmeier (1993:6), professor of Archaeology and Old Testament Studies, states 'the authors have drawn attention to serious problems that cannot be ignored... the book forces us to think, and thus is an important contribution to reconstructing the past'.

The time period for Akhenaten's rule is a matter of some debate, although he is most likely to have reigned from approximately 1353-1336 BCE (Tyldesley 1998:9). The time period of the Exodus has proved to be problematic as very little archaeological material evidence of the group of people who departed from Egypt and settled in the land of Canaan, modern Israel, has been found.

The kingdom of Mitanni requires further research regarding new settlements. The royal diplomatic marriages between Egypt and Mitanni would have provided a strong bond between the two countries. The maternal bloodline and influence from the women of Mitanni, I believe, has not been sufficiently investigated. Extra-Biblical texts such as those found in Apion, Strabo, Hecateus, Philo, Manetho and Josephus suggest alternative names for a Moses-like character and that possibly a rather small departure of loyal followers made up the Exodus, which may have been following a new monotheistic ideology, in the direction of Mitanni or Cush/(Ethiopia)/Sudan or Midian.

1.1.1.1. Chronological table of 18th Dynasty kings

Table 1 illustrates the chronological table of the 18th Dynasty kings (Murnane 1995: xiii).

Table 1: Chronological Table of 18th Dynasty kings

<i>Dynasty 18</i>	ca. 1539-1292
Amosis	ca. 1539-1514
Amenhotep I	ca. 1514-1493
Thutmosis I	ca. 1493-1483
Thutmosis II	ca. 1483-1479
Thutmosis III	ca. 1479-1425
Hatshepsut	ca. 1472-1458
Amenhotep II	ca. 1426-1400
Thutmosis IV	ca. 1400-1390
Amenhotep III	ca. 1390-1353
Amenhotep IV/Akhenaten	ca. 1353-1336
Nefernefruaten (Nefertiti)	ca. 1336-1333
Smenkhare	ca. 1333-1332
Tutankhamun	ca. 1332-1322
Ay	ca. 1322-1319
Horemheb	ca. 1319-1292

1.1.1.2. The Dating of Moses

Ancient authors and some contemporary views	Pharaoh at the time of the Exodus	Moses (13 th century BCE)
Manetho's <i>History of Egypt</i> (3 rd century BCE) (Römer 2012:67).	Egyptian king Amenophis wanted to purify Egypt from all lepers and sick people (Römer 2012:69).	Moses as Osarsiph, a leprous priest from Heliopolis who headed a colony and gave it laws. Osarsiph formed an alliance with the Hyksos from Jerusalem; they fought against the Egyptian king who fled to Ethiopia for thirteen years (Römer 2012:70). Osarsiph assumed the name Moses (Assmann 1997:33).
Hecateus of Abdera (4 th century BCE) fragments of his work preserved in Diodorus Siculus' Library (Römer 2012:68).		A disease struck Egypt which prompted the Egyptians to expel foreigners from the country (Römer 2012:70). Amongst them being Moses, the founder of Jerusalem. Hecateus does not mention leprosy (Römer 2012:70). 'Aliens expelled' under Kadmo and Danaos who colonised Greece and under Moses who colonised Palestine (Assmann 1997:34).
Josephus (1 st century BCE) (Römer 2012:68).		Josephus (<i>AJ</i> 2.238-256) (<i>AJ</i> – Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews) offers an account of Moses in an Ethiopian Campaign. Tradition constructed Moses as a Jewish Sesostris (Römer 2012:74). A tradition about Moses marrying an Ethiopian princess (Römer 2012:75).
Eusebius (4 th century CE) (Römer 2012:68).		In Eusebius's <i>Vita Constantini</i> Eusebius admitted that the Biblical account of the Exodus story may be tainted with myth (Hollerich 1989:444).
Apion was born in upper Egypt, he studied in Alexandria (<i>Ap</i> 2. 29).		Exodus was an event of Egyptian rather than Jewish occurrence. Moses is seen as an Egyptian priest from Heliopolis (Assmann 1997:38). 110 thousand fugitives left Egypt and the Exodus took place 752-749BCE. Apion stated the Alexandrian Jews came from Syria. The Jews erected prayer houses open to the air facing eastwards, set up pillars instead of obelisks (<i>Ap</i> 2.4-10) (<i>Ap</i> abbreviation for Josephus' Against Apion).
Artapanus, (3 rd century BCE), an historian of Jewish origin, wrote a (lost) book called <i>On the Jews</i> (Assmann 1997:36).		Presents Moses as an excellent commander leading an Ethiopian campaign (Römer 2012:72). Artapanus stated that Moses introduced circumcision to Ethiopia (Römer 2012:74). Artapanus identified Hermes– Thoth with Moses (Römer 2012:74) and a tradition about the winged snakes of the desert and the ibises which repel them. Biblical tradition shares the tradition of winged serpents (Numbers 21) (Römer 2012:74).

Ancient authors and some contemporary views	Pharaoh at the time of the Exodus	Moses (13 th century BCE)
Persian Period (525 BCE)		Oral tradition about Moses' military defeats and his marriage to an Ethiopian princess (Römer 2012:75). This theme may have originated from the Jews living in Elephantine, the military colony in Egypt (Römer 2012:75). Attempts have been made to identify Cush with Biblical Madian (Römer 2012:75).
Strabo (64 BCE- 23AD)		Moses was an Egyptian priest who broke from traditions, founded a monotheistic religion. This new religion was without image. Moses immigrated to Palestine with his followers (Assmann 1997:38).
Koran		Arabic form of the name Moses is Mūsā and he is named more often than any other Biblical figure in the Koran (Ehrlich 2012:102).
Biblical account:Old Testament Biblical account:New Testament	In Exodus 1:8, it is stated 'Now there arose up a king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph'. This comment is the only clue provided to readers as to the identity of the pharaoh at the time of the Exodus.	In Exodus 4:6-7, a tradition describes Moses as a man affected with leprosy (Römer 2012:70). The New Testament provides an early Jewish account of Moses, which can be found in Acts 15:1. Romans 9:15; Luke 2:22; Matthew 19:7-8; John 8:5.
Diodorus Siculus (Greek historian born in Sicily) 60-30 BCE	Josephus (<i>Ap</i> 1.305-307) mentions an older Bocchoris (8 th century BCE) as king at the time of the Exodus.	Circumcision was introduced to Ethiopia by a character named Sesostris (Römer 2012:74). Sesostris is described as a fine strategist who waged war against Ethiopia (Römer 2012:74).
Chaeremon (1 st half of first century BCE) a tutor to Nero.	King Amenophis sought refuge in Nubia. Later his son Ramesses reconquered Egypt and, according to Chaeremon, drove the 'Jews' into Syria (Assmann 1997:35).	Moses (Tisithen) and Joseph (Peteseph) leaders of 250,000 expelled lepers from Egypt (Assmann 1997:35).
Tacitus (560- 117 AD)	King Bocchoris, the king of Egypt at that time	A leader by the name of Moses institutes a new religion which is monotheistic and aniconic (Assmann 1997:37).
Lysimachus, Alexandrian writer of uncertain date.	King Bocchoris king of Egypt at the time of the Exodus	Moses advised people to take a straight track until they reached inhabitable country. They reached Judaea and built a city called Hierosolyma (Jerusalem).
Marsilo Ficino (Renaissance writer)		Moses is seen as Hermes Trismegistus (Assmann 1997:36).
Eduard Meyer (1905), Rolf Krauss, Donald B. Redford/ Assmann (1997:20)	Moses seen as Akhenaten by all preceding scholars.	

Ancient authors and some contemporary views	Pharaoh at the time of the Exodus	Moses (13 th century BCE)
James Henry Breasted		Breasted (1934:368) noticed the similarities between the Hebrew Bible's Psalm 104 attributed to King David and Akhenaten's hymn to the Aten. Breasted states when the Hebrew prophet caught the splendour of this vision and rose to a higher level, he was standing on the Egyptian's shoulders (1934:364). In morals, religion and social thinking, the Hebrews built their lives on Egyptian foundations (Breasted 1934:384). Moral ideas that came through the Hebrews appeared for the first time in the Tell el Amarna letters (1400 BCE). That is from a time far older than any surviving Hebrew literature. The cuneiform letters disclose the Hebrew nomads drifting into Palestine then under Egyptian sovereignty and entering military service (Breasted 1934:349)
Sigmund Freud (1974) <i>Moses and Monotheism</i> , three essays	'... if Moses was an Egyptian and if he communicated his own religion to the Jews, it must have been Akhenaten's, the Aten religion' (Freud 1974:24). I suggest that Freud is referring to Moses growing up in Akhenaten's royal house.	Moses, an Egyptian aristocratic prince or priest, a prominent man from the royal house (Freud 1974:28). Freud suggests Moses was a governor of the frontier province Goshen (1974:28). Exodus from Egypt between 1358 -130 BCE (Freud 1974:29).
Ahmed Osman (1990) <i>Moses and Akhenaten</i>	'Moses is to be regarded as the Pharaoh Akhenaten' (Osman 1990:3).	

Figure 1.4: Possible identities for Moses reflect different time periods

1.1.2 Implications of the latest DNA results

Recent genetic results published in the *Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA)* (Hawass et al 2010) have been used to identify royal mummies belonging to the New Kingdom era (1550-1070 BCE). For the purpose of this dissertation, the results of KV55 and KV35YL were examined. The KV55 mummy is believed to be that of Akhenaten, a pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty in Egypt, and KV35YL known as the younger lady.⁶ Hawass, former Minister of state for archaeology in Egypt and long term government antiquities official (2010:34-50), hinted at the possibility that the remains were of Smenkhare, another pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty who was believed to be

⁶ According to DNA tests, the mummy KV35YL known as the younger lady is both the full sister of the KV55 mummy and the mother of his child, Tutankhamun. Akhenaten married Nefertiti and Kiya, however neither of these women were said to be his sisters. The younger lady might be one of the daughters of Amenhotep III and Tiye which would then make Akhenaten her brother (Hawass 2010:41).

Akhenaten's brother. The conclusions from the DNA results have met with some criticism in the scientific field. One such criticism came from Eline D. Lorenzen (PhD, Center for GeoGenetics, Natural History Museum, Denmark). Lorenzen questioned 'the reliability of the genetic data presented' and the problem of contamination in human ancient DNA⁷ research being an obstacle (Lorenzen & Willerslev 2010:2471).

It is not clear what the exact relationship between Akhenaten, pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty (1358-1340 BCE) (Aldred 1988:II) and Smenkhare (Ankhkeprure) was (Bunson 1999:249). Smenkhare, a possible co-regent of Akhenaten, might have been an older brother of Tutankhamun, or, as Silverman, Wegner and Wegner (2006:161) suggest, Smenkhare might even have been Akhenaten's father 'perhaps ruling independently'. Smenkhare, another pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty, was also believed to be a brother to Akhenaten.

Tyldesley (2003:155) stated that tomb KV55 (tomb no 55 in the Valley of the Kings) was discovered by Theodore Davis in the expedition to Egypt during the 1906-7 season. The mummy's identity appears to have baffled scholars since its first discovery (Reeves 2001:82). The age of the corpse became a contentious issue. The corpse was initially believed to be the body of a young man and therefore it was not identified as Akhenaten who achieved much during his reign. Derry believed that the corpse could be identified as Akhenaten's 'shadowy successor Smenkhare' (Reeves 2001:82). Douglas Derry, an anatomist, re-examined the body of Tomb 55 a short time after Davis (Reeves 2001:82). Reeves (2001:81) stated that the medic was of the 'mistaken opinion' that the body was that of a woman.

Hawass, Gad, Ismail, Khairat, Fathalla, Hasan, Ahmed, Elleithy, Ball, Gaballah, Wasef, Fateen, Amer, Gostner, Selim, Zink and Pusch (2010:638) reported that 'the KV55 mummy and KV35YL were identified as the parents of Tutankhamun'. Hawass et al (2010:641) stated that 'KV55 male and KV35YL [were] his sibling parents' (Tutankhamun's sibling parents). Hawass et al (2010:641) concluded by saying that 'putative breasts in Tutankhamun and his father, Akhenaten (KV55), cannot be determined, because KV55 is a mummified skeleton and Tutankhamun lacks the frontal part of the chest wall'. This comment clearly refers to Hawass et al's claim that the KV55 mummy is the mummy of Akhenaten. Hawass (2010:34-50) further discussed the identity of KV55 and

⁷ Deoxyribonucleic acid or DNA and results from KV55. Have the results proved conclusively to be Akhenaten or possibly Smenkhare? 'Chromosomes and genes consist primarily of chemical substance known as Deoxyribonucleic acid or DNA' (Louv et al 1998:104).

alluded to the possibility that ‘since we know so little about Smenkhare, he cannot be completely ruled out’. These statements from Hawass are contradictory and it seems then that the identity of the KV55 mummy is still a debatable point. The recent findings have been disputed by many scientists (cf. 2.3.1) in the field of human genetics.

For such a high profile pharaoh and a revolutionary character, little is known about the finer details surrounding the death of Akhenaten as Reeves (2001:173) pointed out, ‘during these final years we know virtually nothing’.

1.1.3 Archaeological evidence from Amarna

1.1.3.1. Epigraphical detail from Amarna Wall F Room Alpha

Figure 1.2 depicts the birth of a baby. This scene, carved onto a wall in a royal tomb at Amarna, was the source of my interest in the identity of the infant. The identity of this baby is subject to speculation.⁸ What is clear is that the infant’s mother (most probably Kiya) died giving birth to a royal child. The scene depicts the body of a young woman lying on a bier. Akhenaten and Nefertiti and others in the royal court are mourning the loss of the mother of the baby. The infant is being cradled by a young woman ‘while an attendant holds an open fan, symbol of royalty over the baby’ (Tyldesley 1998:162). This epigraphical detail (see Fig.1.2) is found in Room *Alpha*, Wall F, in the Royal tomb at Amarna where the death of Kiya is depicted (Tyldesley 2003:155). Kiya was a lesser ranked wife of Akhenaten (Bunson 1999:139). Tyldesley (2003:129) is of the opinion that Kiya was Gilukhepa or Tadukhepa, a princess from Mitanni. Kiya was ‘wife and greatly beloved of the king of upper and lower Egypt living on Truth, Lord of the two lands Neferkheperure Waenre, the perfect child of the living Aten who shall live forever’ (Tyldesley 2003:129).

Tyldesley pointed out that Kiya ‘was allowed to officiate alongside Akhenaten and surprisingly alone’ (2003:129). According to Tyldesley (2003:130), Akhenaten fathered two sons by Tadukhepa (Kiya) but she seems to disappear off the pages of history by year 12 of Akhenaten’s reign. An attempt has been made to establish the relationship between the baby and Akhenaten. Could Kiya have provided an heir for Akhenaten? Could the infant depicted on the wall of the Amarna tomb be a son, perhaps even Moses? The texts indicate that Akhenaten had sons. These texts have been referred to later in the study. This dissertation also applied the principles of psychoanalysis to the profiles of Akhenaten and a possible son such as Moses.

⁸ Recent results from DNA indicate that a genetic link could be established with KV55 (Akhenaten or Smenkhare) and the boy king Tutankhamun. The results state that Tutankhamun’s parents were siblings.

I am of the opinion that Kiya, Akhenaten's secondary wife, passed away after giving birth to a son. Is it possible that somebody like Moses was born into this royal household and that one of the princesses, perhaps a half sister, Meritaten, one of six daughters born to Akhenaten and Nefertiti (Akhenaten's primary wife), is depicted cradling the infant?

The relief Room *Alpha*, wall F (Martin 1989:38) has been identified by many scholars as a scene representing the death of Meketaten, a daughter of Nefertiti and Akhenaten. However, Martin (1989:39) suggested that 'it cannot be automatically assumed, as has been the case hitherto, that she is Meketaten'. Martin discussed the problem of the text that might have identified the deceased as having been destroyed completely. He was of the opinion that it is strange to suggest that it is Meketaten dying as a similar scene is depicted on wall A, room *Gamma*, the burial place of Meketaten. The possibility of this being a 'duplicate' scene is superfluous as it is not even adjacent to the burial chamber. Martin (1989:40) proposed that the scene depicts the birth of Tutankhamun. Martin stated: 'I suggest without being able to prove it, that the child depicted is Tutankhamen ... mother of the child could have been lady Kiya.' Martin's suggestion becomes problematic as the new results from DNA tests reveal that Tutankhamun was born to sibling parents.

1.1.3.2. The Amarna Letters

The Amarna letters, unearthed by a peasant woman in Amarna in 1887, have proved to be an invaluable tool for scholars of the Amarna period (Reeves 2001:10). Reeves (2001:11) stated that the Amarna letters (clay lumps written in Akkadian cuneiform script dated to the 14th century BCE) are one of Egypt's greatest archaeological treasures that provide 'a unique diplomatic archive' between foreign rulers and Egyptian pharaohs at that time. The Egyptian pharaohs, to whom the letters were addressed, were Amenophis III (Amenhotep), his son Akhenaten and Tutankhamun, another pharaoh of the 18th Dynasty (Reeves 2001:11). The Amarna letters provide information regarding diplomatic correspondence between Egypt and Mitanni. Thirteen letters in the Amarna archive were sent by King Tushratta of Mitanni to Amenophis III, Tiye (Amenophis III's principal wife and mother of Akhenaten), and Akhenaten (Kuhrt 1995:293). Kuhrt stated that some of these texts were sent to accompany Tushratta's daughter, Tadukhepa who, according to Kuhrt (1995:293), was married to Amenophis III. Tyldesley (1998:42) pointed out that 'Tadukhepa had been sent to marry the ailing Amenhotep III but the marriage was almost certainly unconsummated as her arrival coincided with the death of her elderly bridegroom'. Tyldesley (1998:42) suggested that Tadukhepa was married to Akhenaten (Amenhotep IV).

Very important for the purpose of this investigation is that *Amarna Letter EA 28*, edited and translated by William L. Moran, mentions sons. It states ‘[f]or your household, for Teye [sic], your mother, the mistress of Egypt, for Tadu-Heba, my daughter, your wife, for the rest of your wives, for your sons ... ’ (Moran 1992:90). The words from this letter, written by King Tushratta, king of Mitanni (believed to be father of Tadukhepa [Kiya]), clearly mention sons. Is it possible that Tadukhepa might have given birth to a second son, and that this son might have been the Biblical Moses? The identity of the infant depicted in Figure 1.2 is debatable. This information confirms the possibility that Princess Tadukhepa (Kiya) could have died while giving birth to the infant Moses. According to Isabella Brega (1998:29), the 13th century BCE was the epic period of Moses but precise dating of Moses has been a contentious issue amongst scholars, therefore incorrect dating of the time in which Moses lived is a possibility, and, up to this point, we still do not have any archaeological evidence to support previous assumptions (see Figure 1.4).

1.1.3.3. Boundary stelae at Amarna

Narratives inscribed in stone from the boundary stelae at Amarna (Akhet-Aten), Akhenaten’s capital city, provided historical content and insight into Akhenaten’s mental processing.

The mental processing of Moses has been examined in the Biblical texts as there is no archaeological evidence to examine. The psychoanalysis of abnormal behavioural patterns manifested by the characters Moses and Akhenaten have been scrutinised (cf. 1.1.4 below). This psychoanalysis has been done in order to determine the possibility of a hereditary factor based on many similarities both in behaviour and ideology (the God gene). Apparently, there is very little textual evidence regarding the character of Princess Tadukhepa (Kiya).

Chronology during the so called ‘dark ages’⁹ appears to have highlighted problems with dating during the Amarna period, the time frame of Akhenaten.

⁹ A revolutionary suggestion that the existing chronologies for a crucial phase in human history are not correct and history should be rewritten. After the collapse of the Bronze Age civilizations of the Hittites, the Egyptians at the time of the New Kingdom and the Mycenaeans, a ‘dark age’ ensued and, after some centuries, the new worlds of ancient Greece, Rome and the Etruscans emerged (Renfrew foreword to James 1991:xiv).

1.1.4 Psychology of the pharaoh and the prophet

The study also investigates the genetic implications of heredity as a causal factor in abnormal behaviour.¹⁰ This shows that there is a possible genetic link between the Pharaoh Akhenaten and the Prophet Moses. Scientists believe that the human genome, comprising all genetic material, can reveal a proclivity to develop mental disorders (Sue, Sue & Sue 2010:40). Armed with this information, I have analysed the characters of both Moses and Akhenaten whom, I believe, were closely related. This is based on their similar ideologies regarding monotheism and behavioral patterns displayed. There exists a probability that Moses might have been a son of Akhenaten but this will be difficult to prove.¹¹ Based on Akhenaten's behaviour, information of which is acquired from epigraphical detail and Moses' behaviour (from Biblical texts), the profiles of the characters Akhenaten and Moses have been analysed.

I include this section on mental disorders as I have found in my study of Moses and Akhenaten that strange behavioural patterns were recorded with both protagonists.

Studying the texts from the boundary stele at Amarna has led to a deeper understanding of the Pharaoh Akhenaten. Fifteen boundary stelae demarcated the site at Akhet-Aten (El-Amarna). These rock cut stelae are a recording of the reign of Akhenaten. The narratives provide insight into the pharaoh's character (Reeves 2001:107). According to these narratives Akhenaten communicated directly with the Aten his god, who provided the instructions for the building of Akhet-aten (Amarna). Akhenaten and the Aten were in a direct dialogue. Might these instructions from the Aten have been auditory hallucinations? Auditory hallucinations (voices) are sensory perceptions that are not directly

¹⁰ Psychology studies the human psyche, behaviour and mental processes. This diverse field has roots in biology, medicine, philosophy, religion, and history' <http://forum.wordreference.com/showthread.pht?>

¹¹ I have cited a few examples regarding similarity in behaviour. In 2014 when patients present with problems such as seeing or hearing things that are not actually present, they are carefully diagnosed by psychologists or psychiatrists according to the APA (*American Psychiatric Association 2000*) Diagnostic Classification DSM-IV TR criteria. A diagnosis of schizophrenic disorder includes symptoms such as delusions, auditory hallucinations, or marked disturbances in thinking, affect or speech (Sue & Sue & Sue 2010:359).

I have worked as a therapist in a psychiatric ward doing my psychology internship. I interacted on a daily basis with those suffering from various mental health disorders, people diagnosed with schizophrenia, mood disorders, major depressive disorders, substance related disorders and anxiety disorders. Having talked to people with full blown psychotic episodes which resulted in hospitalisation, I became aware of the struggle within that many with mental disorders face. Elyn Saks in her book *The center cannot hold: My journey through madness* (2007) describes her mental illness as a 'slow fog' that became thicker over time (Sue, Sue & Sue 2010:359). Her struggle with the disorder eventually led her to her interest in mental health and law; she completed a degree in law, psychology and psychiatry and she is an associate dean and professor at the University of California.

attributable to environmental stimuli but they appear real to the individual experiencing them and are considered psychotic symptoms or the voices are seen as ‘self talk’ (Sue, Sue, & Sue 2010:364). Divine communication from the Aten determined the site where the city of Akhet-Aten was to be built: ‘[i] found it abandoned.... It is the Aten, my father, who advised me concerning it, saying: Behold, fill Akhetaten with provisions—a storehouse for everything’ (Reeves 2001:109).

Similarly, divine communication¹² between Yahweh and Moses determined the site of the Promised Land:

And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, command the children of Israel, and say unto them, when ye come into the land of Canaan; this is the land that shall fall unto you for an inheritance, even the land of Canaan with the coasts thereof (Numbers 34:1-3).

Temple reliefs depict Akhenaten and his family ‘adored by a grovelling populace’ however Reeves stated that ‘people are kept in check by large numbers of troops with batons’ (Reeves 2001:163). Reeves stated that probably in year 10, a persecution was directed against the god Amun and his consort Mut—an order to destroy all divine statues and names and images of these gods. Theban gods were under attack and all hieroglyphic plural forms for ‘gods’ were destroyed. Moses appeared to instil a similar fear into his followers by not tolerating any god, aside from Yahweh. ‘And Israel joined himself unto Ba’al-pe’or: and the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel (Num 25:3). The controversial Dawkins (2006:278) states that ‘the rival god Baal seems to have been a perennially seductivr tempter to wayward worship’.

‘And the Lord said unto Moses, take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the Lord against the sun, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel’ (Num 25:4). Apparently it was Moses’ fierce anger. The persecution of the Egyptians under Akhenaten raised real fears amongst his people. Archaeological records provide evidence to suggest that even personal items that had hints of names of the previous gods were excised (Reeves 2001:154). Paranoia gripped the country and, according to Reeves, the streets were filled with Akhenaten’s soldiers and informers instilling fear into the population (Reeves 2001:154).

¹² Very few similarities are indicated, this is not the main purpose of the study, many more similarities and differences could be shown if a comprehensive psychological analysis was undertaken.

A letter from Tushratta, the King of Mitanni, is quoted in Reeves and it appears that the difficult character of Akhenaten is revealed by the King of Mitanni and his desperation to establish a rapport with Akhenaten. After the successful relationship that the king previously had with Akhenaten's father, it was later proved that Akhenaten became a problematic 'brother' (Reeves 2001:85).

Tyldesley discussed the relationship that developed between the two leaders as less than brotherly and Tushratta's letters to Akhenaten were not answered (Tyldesley 1998:45). She stated that Akhenaten 'was indifferent to the fate of both Tushratta and his country'. The lack of empathy and an unwillingness to identify with the feelings and needs of others was depicted by Akhenaten and his political dealings with Tushratta.

Akhenaten's 'Great Hymn to the Aten' displayed his great talent for eloquence and poetry. Rush quoted in Barlow and Durand (2005:222) stated that 'talents for eloquence, poetry, music and painting and uncommon ingenuity in several of the mechanical arts are often evolved in this state of madness'.

A limestone relief recovered from the ruins of Amarna reflects a chariot driven by a monkey. This satirical symbolism, aimed as a mockery towards the king, indicated the disillusionment felt by the populace. Reeves asked the question: 'Had the pharaoh finally gone mad?' (2001:174). If this satirical symbolism has been interpreted correctly, I believe that the symbolism shows that Akhenaten had lost respect amongst his people.

1.1.5 Sudden departures

As mentioned above, virtually nothing is known about the end of the reign of Akhenaten and the possibility remains that the KV55 mummy belongs to Smenkhare and not Akhenaten. Akhenaten introduced 'politico-religious beliefs that would ... change the face of the ancient world' (Reeves 2001:89). This radical new ideology appeared to incite animosity and loathing amongst the priests of Thebes as their god Amun's role was usurped in favour of the Aten, the god preferred by Akhenaten. Thebes, at the time of the New Kingdom, was an important cult centre for the god Amun (Bunson 1999:262). Akhenaten's new reforms appeared to have provoked the Amun priesthood. Tyldesley (1998:73) argued that Akhenaten 'had radically simplified Egypt's polytheistic religion by abolishing most of the established pantheon, replacing a multitude of deities with one god, the Aten'. Reeves

stated that the wording on the boundary stele in Akhet-Aten, the modern site of Amarna, indicated the motivation for Akhenaten to take the provocation from the priesthood seriously (2001:111). The boundary stele were cut from rock and used to demarcate the greater limits of Amarna (Akhet-Aten) (Reeves 2001:14). Akhenaten's choice to relocate the capital from Thebes to Akhet-Aten might have been a life saving decision.

Akhenaten was well aware of the extant text and the fate of the unfortunate Pharaoh Ammenemes I (1991-1962 BCE) who had been killed, according to Manetho, at the hands of 'his own eunuchs' (Reeves 2001:106). Regicide was common practice in royal courts and was therefore a possible reason for instilling fear into the young pharaoh. Reeves asked the question whether society had scoffed at Akhenaten's revolutionary beliefs and he had taken offence, or whether there had been something far more serious, perhaps a challenge to the pharaoh's authority from the priesthood of Amun (Reeves 2001:111). Akhenaten's brother, the young prince Thutmosis, died unexpectedly whilst still a child. Thutmosis was heir to the throne of Egypt. After his untimely death, Akhenaten became next in line to rule after Amenophis III stepped down (Reeves 2001:75). According to Reeves, the unexpected death of Thutmosis was a cruel turn of fate and it had never been expected for Amenophis IV (Akhenaten) to rule Egypt but rather his brother Thutmosis (2001:62).

Archaeologists proposed that, after the death of Akhenaten, Nefertiti ruled alone as Ankhkheperure Smenkhare, prior to the reign of Tutankhamun. This would resolve the problem of the sudden appearance of Smenkhare and the disappearance of Nefertiti (Tyldesley 2003:155). Reeves stated that 'Akhenaten adopts an obscure co-ruler, Nefernefruaten/Smenkhare, to share his throne' (Reeves 2001:8). Scholarly debate is divided regarding the co-regency between Akhenaten and Smenkhare. Silverman et al (2006:161) discussed the lack of clarity as to who directly succeeded Akhenaten and noted that as many as four years could have elapsed before Tutankhamun came to the throne in 1332 BCE.

As discussed above, it is unclear exactly how Akhenaten was related to Smenkhare. Scholars' opinions are divided. Smenkhare was an apparent co-regent and older brother of Tutankhamun, or perhaps Smenkhare was a father to Tutankhamun and might have ruled separately for a short time. Nefertiti, Akhenaten's wife, is another possibility. The confusion arises over the use of the throne name Ankhkheperure. Both Nefertiti and Smenkhare used the personal name Nefernefruaten, hence it is not surprising that ambiguity exists as to the individual(s) who ruled as king from 1336 to

1332 BCE (Silverman et al 2006:161). Did Smenkhare and Nefertiti perhaps rule together? Nefertiti's daughter, Meritaten, was supposedly married to Smenkhare, hence Nefertiti was Smenkhare's mother-in-law as he was married to Meritaten (a daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti). Perhaps Smenkhare and Meritaten were the parents of Tutankhamun and Smenkhare and Nefertiti were the pharaohs at the time of the Exodus when Akhenaten might have abandoned Egypt, possibly with his son Moses and followers of the Aten religion. If Biblical tradition is accurate, perhaps Smenkhare is the pharaoh 'who knew not Joseph' and died in pursuit of Moses and his followers (see Chapter Four 4.10 for an account of Moses' sudden departure). Could Akhenaten have been the victim of an ignominious end? Many theories have been proposed regarding the final days of Akhenaten and,- scholarly opinions are divided:- thrown to the dogs (Gardiner 1961:235), never buried in his tomb (Osman 1990:137), buried at Thebes (Weigall 1922:237), 'Akhenaten died in circumstances that are wholly obscure' (Aldred 1988:290). The catastrophes which are mentioned in the Exodus story may have impacted on ancient Egypt (Stiebing 1989:101). The volcanic eruption of Thera and the Exodus events may also have been a reason for sudden departures, and later the plagues which can be related to a series of natural phenomena (cf. 4.9 and 4.10).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study will attempt to answer the questions: Is there a possibility that the characters Akhenaten, Moses and Tadukhepa were related in any way? What is the probability of the existence of a relationship between these characters? Akhenaten and Moses bore striking similarities in their behaviour, personalities, and religious ideology. Is there a probability that their relationship was one of father and son? Reeves alludes to the possibility of Nefertiti, Akhenaten's primary wife, being a 'treacherous queen' (2001:177). Could there have been power struggles within the Royal Court? What happened to the body of Akhenaten? Who is the baby prince Kiya (Tadukhepa) is giving birth to?

Is there a possibility that a character such as the Biblical Moses has a Hittite, Mitannian or Ethiopian connection? Reeves stated the probability that Kiya (Tadukhepa) gave birth to 'Tutankhamun—the king's only son' (2001:161). Tyldesley was of the opinion that Kiya gave Akhenaten two sons (2003:130). The question is: who were these sons?

Up to this stage, no archaeological material has been found which name Moses. Assmann (1997:2) was of the opinion that 'Moses is a figure of memory but not of history, while Akhenaten is a

figure of history but not of memory'. It is not clear in which Egyptian household Moses was raised neither is the identity of the princess who saved the infant from the waters. The reason for the multitude of stories across the Near East and Mediterranean of casting a child into the waters may reflect an ancient practice of committing an unwanted child, in much the same way as a baby would be left at an orphanage today (Hoffmeier 1997:138). This paucity of material from Egypt which mentions Moses may be problematic, considering that Josephus (*Ap* 1.28-32) alluded to the care in which the Egyptian priests kept chronicles, one wonders why then is this the case?

The identity of the infant depicted (see Figure 1.2) of this dissertation is debatable, as suggested above. The Princess Tadukhepa could have died while giving birth to the infant Moses. According to Isabella Brega (1998:29), the 13th century BCE was the epic period of Moses. Precise dating of the character has been a contentious issue amongst scholars, therefore incorrect dating of the time in which a character such as Moses could have lived is a possibility. Up to this point in history, there is still no archaeological evidence to support previous assumptions.

As stated above, no name is mentioned in Biblical narrative as to the identity of the pharaoh of the Exodus. Our only clue is 'he knew not Joseph.' Gaps exist in the present body of knowledge regarding the identity of the mummy in KV55 and the identity of the parents of Tutankhamun. The remains of Akhenaten might be buried beyond the borders of Egypt and his body might never be found. The remains held in KV55 could be those of Smenkhare.

Another area of concern is the possibility of faulty research methodology such as claims of the DNA being contaminated and other scientific concerns regarding the verification of the remains of KV55. If the remains are Smenkhare's as alluded to by Dr Hawass (2010:34-50) as stated above, then where are the remains of Akhenaten? Could Akhenaten have left Egypt as a result of his new theology which earned him many enemies? What caused Akhenaten's sudden departure both from Thebes and Amarna? Did Akhenaten flee Egypt as a result of his radical religious reforms? What drove Akhenaten from Thebes to Middle Egypt? Perhaps Akhenaten left in fear of his life, the same reason as Ammenemes I, founder of the 12th Dynasty dated to the New Kingdom who had been fearful of plotting within the court.¹³ Might Akhenaten have escaped from Egypt with his 'son' Moses and loyal followers of the sun cult in another direction, like Cush or Mitanni, and

¹³ The 'Teaching of Ammenemes I' is one of the two literary texts reported from Amarna and Akhenaten would have wanted to avoid his fate, according to Reeves (Reeves 2001:107). Ammenemes I was a victim of murder at the hands of his own eunuchs, a tradition recorded by Manetho (Reeves 2001:107).

died outside Egypt? If the mummy KV55 is that of Smenkhare, a brother of Akhenaten, and KV55 does not belong to Akhenaten, then what happened to Akhenaten's mortal remains? As suggested by extra- Biblical sources such as Manetho, were Osarsiph and Moses the same person who was somehow connected to Ethiopia?

Is the mummy of KV55 definitely Akhenaten (this probability has been concluded by current research)? If not, has the mummy of Akhenaten ever been found? I am of the opinion that gaps exist regarding the demise of Akhenaten. The possible problem of faulty research methodology, DNA contamination and other concerns mentioned above should be taken into consideration before KV55 may be given a positive identification (cf. 1.1.1).

1.3 HYPOTHESIS

'Qualitative researchers ... understand plausible rival hypotheses as events to be understood, not variables to be explained' (Terre Blanche, Durrheim & Painter 1999:91). This research is a multidisciplinary study based on a multiple variable hypothesis, specifically aimed at establishing or attempting to establish a familial relationship between the three principal characters, namely, Akhenaten, Tadukhepa and Moses. DNA, archaeology, epigraphy, chronology, religion, behavioural similarities and psychoanalysis are the constructs investigated to ascertain the possibility of a familial relationship. Providing information on this multidisciplinary study, DNA results of KV55, chronology, archaeological information from the rock cut tombs at Amarna, the boundary stele at Amarna, cuneiform letters found at Amarna and information from the Biblical text, allows a greater understanding of the context at the time of the protagonists Moses (as depicted in the Biblical narrative), Akhenaten as well as Tadukhepa.

It is mere speculation to assume that Akhenaten and the Mitannian Tadukhepa were Moses' parents but further archaeological and epigraphical finds might reveal this hypothesis to be true.

1.4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this dissertation is an attempt to establish a genealogical link between the characters Akhenaten, Moses and possibly Tadukhepa (Kiya).

The main aim of the study is to investigate the possibility of a familial relationship and royal lineage

between Akhenaten and Moses and the nature of the apparent close connection, perhaps even blood links, between the royal families of Mitanni and Egypt. It was my objective to investigate not only the marital but also the possible biological relationship that existed between Akhenaten and members of the royal family of the kingdom of Mitanni. The nature of the apparent close connection between Mitanni and Egypt has been reviewed. It is also to explore the possible link with the kingdom of Mitanni, the Hurrians and the Hittites and their possible impact on Akhenaten's religion of the Aten. Egypt, under the reign of Akhenaten, was a superpower but not the only superpower in the ancient Near East at the time. Another aim has been to examine the similarities between Akhenaten's Atenism and Moses' Yahwism.

My objective is further to investigate and research the genealogy of Akhenaten and Moses. Akhenaten's genealogical search has been based on Egyptian historical records and, in the case of Moses, Biblical and extra-Biblical texts.

This study also investigates the fact that Akhenaten fathered a child from one of his siblings which raises many questions. I have not found any research discussing Akhenaten's relationship or marriage to a sister but this is a possibility. Was Nefertiti Akhenaten's sister? Did she give birth to a son or sons?

I have also explored the *epigraphic depiction* from the walls of the rock cut tomb at Amarna reflecting the death of a woman in childbirth (see Figure 1.2). Epigraphical detail is plentiful depicting Akhenaten's daughters but this is not the case with his sons. Redford stated that 'a new light, however, has been thrown on the Amenophis-Tutankhamun relationship by the twelve architrave blocks from a temple of Ay at Karnak'. An inscription on one of these blocks, the venerable 'god's father', refers to Tutankhamun as the son of Amenophis III.

Redford argued that, unless this situation is differently interpreted, Tutankhamun 'was in the anomalous position of having two fathers!' (Redford 1959:34).¹⁴

¹⁴ If the remains of KV55 belong to Smenkhare (this possibility has been alluded to by Dr Hawass) as stated above, then where are the remains of Akhenaten? Have they ever been found? Could he have left Egypt as a result of his new ideology thus earning him many enemies? Another research question will be based on Akhenaten's *sudden departure* both from Thebes and Amarna. Might Akhenaten have escaped from Egypt with a son, might this 'son' have been Moses and died outside Egypt?

The objective has been to further pay attention to available archaeological evidence from Amarna, more specifically, the letter from King Tushratta (EA 28) (El-Amarna). The wording of this Amarna letter bears testimony to Akhenaten's sons. It is evident Tushratta was a contemporary living at the time of Akhenaten and that Tadukhepa (Tushratta's daughter Tadu-Heba) was married to Akhenaten ('your wife') and the letter clearly makes reference to 'sons'. Why has archaeology not revealed any evidence of these sons while we have endless depictions of Akhenaten's daughters? Was Akhenaten keeping them hidden from the populace in order to protect them? According to Tyldesley (1998:29), Akhenaten was believed to have a brother, prince Thutmosis (who died in childhood), hence a strong possibility exists that Akhenaten would have named a son after his brother Thutmosis (Moses).

This study, furthermore, raises the problems relating to chronology and dating. New scientific advances of the 21st century would include radiocarbon dating using dendrochronology and the use of DNA sampling.¹⁵

Renfrew (in James' foreword 1991:xiv) was of the opinion that the very shaky nature of the dating, the whole chronological framework, upon which our current interpretations rest ... the existing chronology for that crucial phase in human history are in error by several centuries.

Renfrew (in James' foreword 1991:xiv) contends that this chronological confusion could affect the history of Egypt during the New Kingdom. As a result of previous confusion of dating and chronological problems, there is a possibility that Moses and Akhenaten were contemporaries. Tyldesley (1998:9) discussed the precise calendar date for the rule of Akhenaten and this met with some debate amongst scholars.

My objective was furthermore to examine the *behaviour* displayed by Akhenaten and Moses (very little is known about the character of Tadukhepa). This has been done by reviewing archaeology such as epigraphical detail, boundary stela and certain Amarna letters. Biblical narratives have provided clues to attempt an analysis of the character of Moses.

¹⁵ Dendrochronology is the study of chronology by means of annual growth rings in timber (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv 'dendrochronology'). These above scientific methods are highlighting problems with current chronology. Colin Renfrew, Professor of Archaeology at Cambridge University in the foreword to Peter James's book, *Centuries of darkness*, discusses a crucial phase in human history (1991:xiv). This crucial phase follows 'the decline of the great Bronze Age civilizations and the onset of the "Dark Ages"'.

The challenge has been to visit the works of current scholars in the field of Egyptology and revisit some of the more influential early scholars, historians and archaeologists and attempt to ‘reveal’ the socio-political context at the time that the works were researched and published.

1.5 LITERARY REVIEW

A numerous selection of books¹⁶ and journal articles have been consulted in order to cover the most relevant and important literature on the thematic constructs such as chronology and DNA and debates such as history vs memory and Atenism vs Yahwism. For information on Akhenaten, I have referred to archaeological discoveries and epigraphical detail. To some scholars Moses is a figure of memory not of history, I have consulted Biblical and extra- Biblical texts, returning to the extra-Biblical textual sources written at the same time as the formulation of the Bible. The works of Philo, Josephus, classical Greek authors such as Apion, Herodotus, Lysimachus and Manetho and the Graeco-Jewish authors such as Artapanus have been sourced. Contemporary authors such as Feldman, Van Seters, Assmann, Freud and Osman have provided further reference material.

1.5.1 Primary sources and archaeological evidence

Primary textual sources such as the Hebrew Bible (King James Version), specifically the Torah (Pentateuch), as they relate to Moses’ life, have been reviewed. The archaeological finds from Ugarit provided a source of material for parallels with those of the Hebrew Bible (Walker 1990:55). The material from Kuntillet ‘Ajrud has raised debate amongst scholars and therefore these interpretations have been considered. Dever (1982:37, 40) was of the opinion that Biblical scholars have neglected this material and that there exists a growing body of archaeological evidence which illustrates popular religion in ancient Israel. Dever (1982:40) further stated that this aspect has forced a reconsideration of traditional notions regarding ‘normative Yahwism’. New views on the subject have been reviewed.

Primary sources such as the Merneptah Stele which first names Israel, Biblical and extra- Biblical texts such as the Amarna letters, royal tomb walls and massive boundary stelae at Amarna, the Hermopolis reliefs and *talatat* blocks have been used to inform this study. In addition, similarities between the significance of Ben-Ben stones and *massebot* have been investigated.

¹⁶ Both Akhenaten and Moses are subjects of inquiry for speculative discourse in popular culture, examples from some popular contemporary literature are included in the study, the work of Karen Armstrong, Baigent, Leigh & Lincoln, Farrington; Kersten & Dawkins have been referred to at times.

Scholars of the 21st century must rely on the interpretations and conclusions of past scholars in the field of archaeology. These transcriptions, transliterations and sometimes subjective interpretations become the source for history. The literal translation of Moran's *The Amarna letters* (1992) set the scene for social and political history of Syria and Palestine in the 14th century BCE and contributed to an understanding of Akhenaten's world. The archive, comprising clay tablets written in cuneiform, provided material evidence of correspondence between Egyptian pharaohs, specifically Amenophis III, from his thirtieth year, and Akhenaten, and extends through to Tutankhamun's first year. This communication was between vassals and other kings in the region.

1.5.2 Secondary sources

As this was an interdisciplinary study, a wide variety of literature has been surveyed in relation to the different themes discussed. I have not found any book or journal article which suggests that Moses is a possible 'son' of Akhenaten, however there are several authors who suggest some kind of relationship may have existed between the two characters.

In my introduction, I referred to the birth story of Moses as quoted from the Hebrew Bible. Gray in *Near Eastern mythology* (1969) and the 20th century psychoanalyst, Freud *Moses and monotheism* (1974), alluded to the similarity of Moses' birth to that of Sargon of Akkad. Kuhrt's *The ancient Near East* (1995) felt that Freud used the birth story to indicate that these themes are not peculiar to Judaism. Sigmund Freud was the first scholar to identify a relationship between the Pharaoh Akhenaten and the Biblical Moses in *Moses and monotheism*, originally published in 1937 in German as *Der mann Moses und die monotheistische religion*. The work was revolutionary at the time of its publication. Freud speculated that Moses was not Jewish, but was born into an Egyptian royal family and was influenced by the teachings of Akhenaten, an Egyptian monotheist. Bernstein's *Freud and the legacy of Moses* (1998) stated that Freud's arguments were so manifestly outrageous that commentators tended to focus on the search for Freud's hidden or unconscious motives. Ahmed Osman continued the connection and, in his book, *Moses and Akhenaten: The secret history of Egypt at the time of the Exodus* (1990), speculated that Akhenaten and Moses were actually the same person. In *Moses the Egyptian* Assmann (1997:2) was of the opinion that 'Moses is a figure of memory but not of history, while Akhenaten is a figure of history but not of memory'. Freud, Osman and Assmann speculated the possibility of a relationship between Akhenaten and Moses. Hoffmeier's *The Evidence for the authenticity of the Exodus tradition* (1997) discussed the

advent of archaeology and the deciphering of cuneiform inscriptions from Mesopotamia and Egyptian hieroglyphics which brought the Western world into direct contact with the world of the Bible.

The problem of *chronology* has been reviewed in Chapter One using the work of James. In the opening page of James' *Centuries of darkness* (1991), a number of credible academics voiced their concerns regarding the problem of dating. My aim has been to acknowledge these concerns and consider the possibility that the problem of chronology needs to be addressed by new scholars in the field of Biblical Archaeology. It seems not all scholars concede with James' opinions.

James (1991) discussed the polarised extremes of Biblical Archaeology by saying that 'the field has always attracted a devout breed of archaeologist happy to dig with a trowel in one hand and a Bible in the other'. James was concerned that these excavators have not been objective with their finds (1991:162). Stiebing's *Out of the desert?* (1989:34) acknowledges the problems of correlating archaeological sites with places from ancient texts not always being a sure thing, sometimes those recoding history are biased and propagandistic which then raises questions concerning reliability of written accounts.

DNA provides an exciting new tool in terms of answering questions which were unanswerable before. Dr Dean Hamer in *The God gene* (2004) challenged our views on spirituality. A pre-eminent geneticist, Hamer explained how faith is hardwired into our genes, an aspect that, although controversial, may be a possibility. Hamer discussed the work of Sir Francis Galton who studied heritability of behaviour as early as the 19th century. Galton was the first scientist to produce a study on the efficacy of prayer and belief. Hamer and Copeland provided interesting results from their research on aspects of personality in *Living with our genes* (1999). Acknowledging that Hamer and Copeland's work may be controversial, criticism from scientific quarters in the field of DNA have been taken into account.

The long-awaited results of DNA taken from the remains of eleven royal mummies dating from the New Kingdom era, 1550-1070 BCE, published by Hawass in National Geographic in his article *King Tut's Family secrets* (2010) have provided genetic relationships amongst the 18th dynasty family members. This study has examined the possible biological relationships shown by these DNA results and the furore the results have caused amongst scientists in the field of human genetics. Of special interest for this study were the results of KV55 and KV35YL.

The KV55 mummy is believed to belong to Pharaoh Akhenaten. These remains were originally found in 1907 in the Valley of the Kings as stated in Reeves' *Akhenaten, Egypt's false prophet* (2001:80) discussion of the ageing Akhenaten and the body in tomb KV55. A number of questions were raised by Lorenzen & Willerslev in *King Tutankhamun's family and demise* (2010) as to the conclusions reached by Hawass and his team. From the initial discovery of 'The tomb of Queen Tiye' or 'Tomb 55', controversy has surrounded the identity of the remains of the occupant found in the tomb. Arthur Weigall who supervised Davis's initial diggings in 1905 (Reeves 2001:80), assumed the body to be the remains of Amenophis IV-Akhenaten (Reeves 2001:82). Reeves stated that a medic was of the 'mistaken opinion' that the body was that of a woman (2001:81).

Montserrat's *Akhenaten history, fantasy and ancient Egypt* (2000) discussed the decayed remains of a mummy found in the Valley of the Kings in tomb 55 (usually abbreviated as KV55). According to Montserrat (2000:27), the individual's age at death was one of the central questions for early scholars. In *Ancestry and pathology in King Tutankhamun's family* Hawass et al (2010) introduce a new approach to molecular and medical Egyptology, answering several questions that before were unanswerable.

This study has also employed a psychological approach. A biopsychosocial model provided a framework to analyse the personalities of Moses and Akhenaten as it looks at genetic, psychiatric, and environmental life stressors. It has been established that characteristics can be inherited from parents from information carried in their genes known as genetic determinants in *Human development* (Louw, Van Ede & Louw 1998:17).

Geoffrey Thorndike Martin's fieldwork in Egypt has been reviewed. Martin's records in *The royal tomb at el-Amarna* (1989) provided invaluable detail of the 'heretic king' (Akhenaten). The decorations of rooms *Alpha* and *Gamma* were discovered virtually intact in contrast to the rest of the tomb which suffered degradations, specifically the tomb of Akhenaten, no doubt at the hands of those who set out to destroy his memory and that of Atenism. For the purpose of my research, I have reviewed Martin's comments regarding room *Alpha* which represents the death of Meketaten after having given birth to a child.

William L. Moran's devotion to the translation of the Amarna letters and published in his mammoth work *The Amarna letters* (1992), makes him a leader in the field. A letter, EA 28, written

by King Tushratta of Mitanni sends wishes to Akhenaten's sons yet no archaeological evidence of these sons has been discovered, aside from this correspondence even though there are epigraphic depictions of daughters. In contrast, Akhenaten and his brothers were depicted as children with their parents Tiye and Amenophis III (Amenhotep III). In *Texts from the Amarna period* (1995) Murnane provided an invaluable wide-ranging collection of documents translated into English covering the reign of Akhenaten in the 14th century BCE.

Kemp's latest publication *The city of Akhenaten and Nefertiti* (2012) provides new evidence of what life was actually like for many citizens living in Amarna. The simultaneous death of many of Amarna's inhabitants suggest the possibility of a plague, a noteworthy aspect for this study Kemp also expressed confidence that the advances in analytical techniques can extract DNA from ancient bones.

In *The Akhenaten temple project* (1988) Redford has pieced together 'talatat blocks' with the aid of computer graphics, the results of which provide a clear picture of the lives of Nefertiti and Akhenaten prior to the couple's move to Amarna. Kuhrt (1995) has been consulted throughout the study providing historical development at the time of Akhenaten. *Nefertiti: Unlocking the mystery surrounding Egypt's most famous and beautiful queen* (Tyldesley 1998) paints a historical picture of the daily life of Nefertiti and her husband Akhenaten.

The Hebrew Bible (KJV) was the primary source of information for the life and religion of Moses. In *The dawn of conscience* (1934) Breasted discusses the advance of man towards a new vision of character and social idealism, and the development of the ancient civilisation of the Hebrews as a demonstration of developing human life. In *Philo's portrayal of Moses in the context of ancient Judaism* Feldman (2007) employed the study of Philo's *De Vita Mosis* which was written, according to Goodenough in *Philo's exposition of the law and his de Vita Mosis* (1933:109-125) 'to serve as the first presentation of the Jewish point of view to be given to a gentile who showed genuine interest in the Jews'. Feldman illuminated similarities between Philo's writings and rabbinic literature. Philo's *De Vita Mosis* was a counterattack of the Hellenistic culture which exposed defects in Moses' life and character. In Thackeray's translation of Josephus' *Against Apion I* (1930), Josephus criticised the works of historians and their versions of Jewish history, such as Manetho (who named Moses as Osarsiph), Chaeromon and Apion (who stated that the Jews originally came from Syria).

The Biblical corpus of the Yahwist from Exodus through to Numbers forms the basis of Van Seters' work, *The Life of Moses* (1994) which has been used throughout this study. Debate by various Biblical scholars has been taken from *The Hebrew Bible and ancient Israel* (published by Mohr Siebeck 2012) which is a new journal focusing on recent literature on the topic of Moses.

It appears that views of the personality of Akhenaten are divided. Montserrat *Akhenaten history, fantasy and ancient Egypt* (2000) alluded to professional Egyptologists seldom writing accounts of Akhenaten with any neutrality. Collins et al in *Research in the social sciences* (2000) agreed and said that the selection of data and interpretation are linked to the ethical issues of subjectivity and personal bias. Montserrat quoted from *Akhenaten, King of Egypt* (Aldred 1988) and Donald Redford's *Akhenaten, the heretic King* (1984). These biographies of the pharaoh expose the opposing viewpoints of the authors. Redford admitted that he disliked the pharaoh and Aldred admired the king (Montserrat 2000:13). Montserrat discussed the 'contradictory biographies' as being part of a process by which a historical figure can become 'mythologised' as in the case of Akhenaten. He referred to Murnane's *Texts from the Amarna period in Egypt* (1995) as an 'invaluable source of history' as it is entirely based on written documentation (Montserrat 2000:14), as Terre Blanche et al (1999:90) say: 'credible research produces findings that are convincing and believable'. But Murray (cited in Montserrat 2000:12) disagreed by saying 'in the case of Akhenaten the facts do not bear the construction often put on them'.

Montserrat has suggested that historians who write about a world far removed from their own can be tempted to compare other periods in history to their own because these analogies smooth over the difference between the ancient and the modern world, making readers think that it is possible to understand Akhenaten and his reign with a minimum of cultural adjustment (Montserrat 2000:12).

As cited in the article *The Rediscovery of Akhenaten and his place in Religion*, Hornung (1992) refers to Lepsius¹⁷ who considered the possibility that 'foreign influence' could be responsible for the pharaoh's revolutionary beliefs. Neither of the above scholars went into any detail regarding exactly who could have influenced the radical new ideology of the pharaoh. In *The Ancient Near East* (1995) Kuhrt alludes to the 'Hurrianisation' of the Levant and the leaders of Mitanni, a powerful state who referred to their subjects as Hurrians. Nefertiti, the wife of Akhenaten, could

¹⁷ Richard Lepsius arrived at Amarna with the expedition financed by King Friedrich Wilhelm IV on 19 September 1843. Lepsius published *Ueber den erstern ägyptischen Gotterkreis und seine geschichtlich- mythologische Entstehung* (1951) which covered his research at Amarna (Hornung 1992:44).

have been part of the harem which Akhenaten had inherited from his father. In *Nefertiti* Tyldesley (1998) suggests that one of these princesses could have been transformed into Nefertiti. Perhaps the most obvious candidate for the role of consort must have been Princess Tadukhepa, daughter of Tushratta of Mitanni.

Kuhrt in *The Ancient Near East* (1995) suggested that the king, as god, as centre of activity, overrode all other representation in importance (1995:200). Akhenaten was believed to have birthed 'Atenism'. Possibly Akhenaten's worship of the Solar Cult was an idea imported from other parts of the Ancient Near East, perhaps Persia, with the influence of Zoroastrianism and the belief in Ahura Mazda. The back of the 'ceremonial chair' pictured in *Akhenaton & Tutankhamun: Revolution & Restoration* Silverman et al (2006) that belonged to Tutankhamun bears a symbol of the winged sun disk. The similarity between that and the symbolism for Ahura Mazda, who was 'a god of heaven' in *Peoples of Old Testament Times* Wiseman (1999), is striking. Wiseman (1999:329) states that Ahura Mazda was a god of heaven and a number of Elephantine documents referred to the God of the Jews as the 'God of Heaven'. In *The early history of God* (2002) Smith discussed the solar imagery for Yahweh that was 'developed during the period of the monarchy, perhaps through the influence of monarchic religious ideology'. The idea of a 'collective unconsciousness' was a term originally used by the psychoanalyst Carl Jung. This term is defined by Barlow and Durand in *Abnormal psychology: An integrative approach* (2005) as a wisdom accumulated by society and culture over the millennia that is stored deep in individual memories and passed down from generation to generation.

I believe this psychodynamic concept theorises that nothing happens in a vacuum regarding belief systems. We are greatly influenced by other cultures and religions. Diffusion is the resounding result.

The works of Daiches, *Moses man in the wilderness* (1975) and Dawkins (2006) *The god delusion*, provided valuable arguments regarding the character of Moses and his strange behaviour. Might this behaviour have been inherited? Who might have influenced Moses and his monotheistic ideology?

The publication *Understanding abnormal behaviour* (Sue, Sue & Sue 2010) provided an invaluable tool in understanding the human psyche and behavioural patterns as manifested (often abnormal behaviour) by the characters Moses and Akhenaten.

In the publication, *Akhenaten & Tutankhamun: Revolution & restoration* (2006), it is stated that records from these times do not provide clear information as to exactly who succeeded Akhenaten. Nefertiti, Akhenaten's queen, could have been a possible ruler or, as discussed previously, Smenkhare. Scholars believe there is ambiguity regarding the kingship between 1336-1332 BCE as to which individual (s) ruled Egypt (Silverman et al 2006:161). Reeves (2001) alluded to the sudden disappearance of Akhenaten.

1.6 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

1.6.1 Research approach

The approach to the research in the study will be to implement a qualitative orientation. The research will explore literature for a deeper understanding of the texts. As this is a historical and archaeological study, translations from archives will be consulted, some found online. Openness to what emerges would be optimum. The research will be an exploration of the texts in an attempt to have a deeper understanding of the experiences of the protagonists.

This is a qualitative research, a descriptive research, and synchronical research of the 18th Dynasty Pharaoh Akhenaten, the prophet Moses and Tadukhepa, a princess from Mitanni. As an exploration of current and past knowledge, my approach to the research has been multidisciplinary. I have used a psychological framework to analyse the personalities of Moses and Akhenaten. The Amarna letters provided primary archaeological evidence, specifically the correspondence between Princess Tadukhepa's father, King Tushratta of Mitanni, and Akhenaten (her husband).

Qualitative research produces descriptive data (Taylor & Bogdan 1984:5). The researcher develops concepts, insights and understanding from patterns in the data. The qualitative researcher looks at settings and people holistically. Qualitative research refers to research that focuses on qualities of human behaviour, as well as the holistic nature of social behaviour (Mouton & Marais 1988:1). The researcher does not seek 'truth' or 'morality' but rather a detailed understanding of perspectives.

As this is a *multidisciplinary study*, information from the fields of archaeology, human genetics, literature and psychology will be included.

This investigation involved an *archaeological approach*, relying heavily on relevant archaeological and epigraphical information available. It explored early epigraphic studies such as the inscriptions on the boundary stelae demarcating Amarna/Akhet-Aten. This study also included a *literary approach* in exploring Biblical and extra-Biblical texts as well as accessing current knowledge in the field.

By referring to primary sources and ancient texts such as the Hebrew Bible, stylised art of the Amarna period, Amarna letters and epigraphical details from the tombs and boundary stelae at Amarna, clues were provided regarding the dramatic behavioural patterns of Akhenaten and Moses.

1.6.2 The structure of the dissertation

The chronological problems scholars face in correctly dating the protagonists have been discussed in this chapter and the chapter includes a table graphically depicting different versions of the Exodus dating and a Moses- type character. The possibility that the science of DNA might offer a solution to the problem of dating will be reviewed in Chapter Two.

Chapter Two: Genetics and DNA

This chapter focuses on the world of molecular biology. Akhenaten was described by Breasted as a ‘god intoxicated man’ (1934:279). Recent research by Hamer inquired into human behaviour and spirituality and suggested that faith is hardwired into our genes. Moses’ ‘conversations with god’ exist only in cultural memory. Despite no archaeological evidence for Moses, Hamer suggested that Jews have sustained not only their genetic heritage but also their religious traditions. The DNA sequences can, according to Hamer, be dated back approximately 3000 years ago to the time of the Exodus. Although no material evidence of Moses has been found, however, Exodus 28:1 stated: ‘... and take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priests’ office, *even* Aaron, Nadab, and Abi’hu, Ele-a’zar and Ith’amar, Aaron’s sons.’

Hamer stated that god’s instructions were accurately followed. The lineage of the priesthood of Moses’s brother Aaron has been checked by modern DNA testing. The Jewish priestly class of the *cohanim* have followed Biblical instruction, indicating that the ancient priestly tradition has been

followed from one generation to the next, and reflects in the DNA of those tested for Hamer's research (as in the Lemba). Kemp (2012:229) is of the opinion that the advances in analytical techniques, and the growing confidence 'with which ancient DNA can be extracted and studied, make it likely that we are on the threshold of a much better understanding of the health of the time.'

Kemp's latest work in the field at Amarna revealed that as many as 3000 people were buried at Amarna. Many graves contained more than one individual, indicating a high incidence of death at the same time, possibly victims of an epidemic. Could this be evidence of a plague that caused a sudden exodus from Amarna?

Implications of latest DNA research have been reviewed specifically for the mummies KV55 and KV35YL. The problem regarding the possible contamination of skeletal remains during testing has been a matter of concern for many experts in the field of human genetics. The misidentification of the mummy KV55 has been investigated. These results are newly published and appear to be controversial. This chapter reviews views of scientists based on conclusions reached about the possible genetic links of the characters. Does KV55 belong to Akhenaten or Smenkhare?

Chapter Three: Akhenaten: From Pharaoh to Prophet

Since the first discovery by the Jesuit Claude Sicard in 1714, and later the 'rediscovery' in the 18th and 19th centuries, Akhenaten has captivated the attention of scholars. This chapter focuses on the life of Akhenaten based on the interpretation of material finds. Akhenaten's testimony in stone traces his life from the remains of his childhood home known as the Malqata palace to his royal tombs at Amarna. In spite of a copious amount of excavated material, Akhenaten remains an enigmatic character and authors have opposing views of his life and death. Akhenaten's ancestry and lineage are included in the discussion as they provide a background to the persona.

Chapter Four: Moses: From Prince to Prophet

Debates about the 'historical Moses' have been held by scholars in the 19th and 20th centuries and, as Otto (2012) stated, the upshot is that Moses is a literary but not a historical figure. Stories from his birth through to his demise have lacked historical foundation and most are flawed. In spite of these

problems, Moses lies seated in ‘cultural memory’ (Assmann 1997). This chapter covers the life of Moses and considers which Egyptian royal house adopted Moses. Was he born at the palace of Amarna in the presence of Akhenaten and Nefertiti and did his mother die giving birth as depicted in Figure 1.2 of this dissertation? This epigraphical relief, found on a tomb wall in Amarna, Room *Alpha*, Wall F, depicts a woman who has died giving birth to a child. Special attention has been paid to the different possibilities of interpreting this relief. For example, Martin (1989:40) is of the opinion that this might be Kiya’s (Tadukhepa) death after the birth of Tutankhamun. The possibility that this infant might be Moses (as mentioned above) was explored. This chapter investigated the diplomatic marriages between the royal houses of the kingdom of Mitanni (modern day Syria) and Egypt, specifically during the reigns of Akhenaten and his father, Amenhotep III. The royal marriage between Amenhotep III and Tushratta, King of Mitanni to his daughter Tadukhepa (Kiya) has been reviewed. The Amarna letters from Tushratta were addressed to Akhenaten. Of special interest is the letter from Tushratta enquiring after Akhenaten’s health and that of his daughter Tadukhepa and the reference to Akhenaten’s sons (EA 28).

The powerful genetic relationship, as a result of the royal marriages between the royal family of Mitanni and the royal family of Egypt, it seems has not been investigated sufficiently. The Amarna letters provided evidence that Queen Tiye was Akhenaten’s mother. Tadukhepa, we assume (according to Tushratta’s letter), was Akhenaten’s wife. Textual evidence from the Hebrew Bible has been utilised to examine the personality of the character Moses.

Chapter Five: Akhenaten’s Atenism a sole, solar or syncretistic monotheism?

Chapter Five looks at the development of Egyptian ideology from Cosmotheism to Solar to the sole God, the Aten. I have investigated the radical theological changes during the Amarna period. Who might have influenced Akhenaten? Assmann (1997:210) was of the opinion that the Amarna religion ‘has to be counted among the revolutionary forms of monotheism ... but the rejected tradition is never mentioned in texts’. Assmann discussed the primal scene of ‘idolatry’ and the story of the golden calf which was specifically an Egyptian image of Apis. This symbolic image has been discussed. Perhaps the kingdom of Mitanni that provided royal princesses and the influence from the Hurrians, the Hittites, the Persians or those close to Akhenaten from his direct family, namely, his mother Tiye, Moses or Tadukhepa affected Akhenaten? Unless further evidence is found from the Amarna period, we may never know the answers to these questions, however, scholars will continue to speculate what caused the shift from polytheism to monotheism. New evidence has shown that other gods continued to be worshipped at Amarna, as Kemp (2012:235) reveals.

Chapter Six: Moses and Yahwism a sole, solar or syncretistic monotheism?

According to Assmann (1997:211), there is a striking contrast between the Amarna religion and Moses' construction of a monotheistic 'rejected other'. This chapter provides a background to the origin of the Israelite religion, looking for aspects of solar veneration. Yahweh was revealed to Moses and Moses alone. The story came to us from Biblical texts without any material evidence to substantiate the texts. Moses introduced circumcision, an Egyptian ritual, to his people. His wife Zipporah, whose origins might be Ethiopian, saved her husband from god's divine wrath by circumcising their son. This 'initiation of circumcision', from that moment on, became a symbolic pact with God. Extra-Biblical tradition in Ethiopia suggested that it was Moses who introduced the practice to Ethiopia.

Ugarit tablets have given commentators a better understanding of the Canaanite gods El and Baal who were worshipped in the north as opposed to the storm god Yahweh who was worshipped in the south. As the marginal groups merged to become the nation of Israel, it would make sense that their gods syncretised into one. Scholars' interpretations from the excavations at Ta'anach and Khirbet Ajrud have been discussed.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

This chapter has synthesised the main themes from each chapter. Archaeology might, one day, reveal new findings and prove that, indeed, Moses was a historical figure and not just 'cultural memory' as proposed by Assmann. I propose that Moses was a figure of history and perhaps even one of the 'sons' mentioned by King Tushratta of Mitanni in his correspondence with Akhenaten. I propose that Moses might have been named after Prince Thutmosis, Akhenaten's brother, who died as a child, perhaps a victim of regicide. Akhenaten may have chosen to keep his sons well hidden as a result of this. Thutmosis was the heir to Amenophis III, Akhenaten's father's throne, but instead, Akhenaten became king.

This project hopes to provide information to suggest that the characters of Akhenaten, Tadukhepa/Kiya and Moses might have had a familial relationship. An attempt to review some of the strange behaviour manifested by the characters Akhenaten and Moses show similarities in their personalities. Perhaps even the 'God gene', which Hamer refers to, was possessed by both. Perhaps a genetic predisposition to abnormal behaviour can be concluded. Akhenaten's sudden departure from Thebes, early in his reign and his sudden departure off the pages of history during his 17th regnal year from his city of the Aten—Akhet-Aten, confirms Akhenaten's impulsive nature.

Did Akhenaten, driven by his paranoiac impulsivity, driven by an existential fear, his life threatened once again, leave Thebes? Did his survival instinct drive him to escape Egypt with or to his 'son' Moses, taking with him loyal followers such as Pinchas, to Mitanni, his maternal ancestral home or to Ethiopia? As Freud (1974:23) states 'Akhenaten's end remains veiled in obscurity'.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE DISSERTATION

Although the concept of a historical Moses and the Exodus is a contentious academic debate, for the purpose of this study, I chose to compare the Biblical narratives to information that was available from Egypt. The texts from the Hebrew Bible (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), the Talmud and the 'oral Torah' are the only direct sources of information available for the Moses narrative. Although the Pentateuch may be dated long after the events, it probably still contains traditions about the proto-Israelites and thus reflects some historical truths. It should, nevertheless, be used with great circumspection.

It appears that the life and death of both characters is surrounded by mystery. For a scholar of ancient Egypt, it is difficult to sieve through the copious amounts of literature based on the life of the Pharaoh Akhenaten, the Biblical Moses and Tadukhepa and to get a clear picture as to their true identities. It has been difficult to establish a familial relationship between the characters and an understanding of the context of their era as history is dependent on the historian's subjectivity. This is not an exegesis of the Hebrew Bible, however, as Moses is a Biblical character and his story is derived from a strong oral tradition and past memory, references from Biblical passages have been made, as no other source for Moses exists at this time.

I feared my own bias corrupting the study and I have attempted to alleviate ambiguities by presenting scholars and historians who were respected at the time of their research, while striving to understand the socio-political and, in many cases, psychological basis for their conclusions.

Because there are multiple ways to spell transliterated words, I have used one spelling for names in this study except where they are used in a quotation which will reflect the actual spelling that the author of that quotation has used.

CHAPTER TWO: AKHENATEN & MOSES: GENETICS, DNA & THE Y CHROMOSOME

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Genetics, DNA and the world of molecular biology can answer many questions that were unanswerable before. The previous chapter discussed the problems of dating and chronology. DNA might prove to be a more accurate tool in terms of accurately dating organic material. The theme of this chapter will focus on genetics and DNA. The term ‘genetics’ is described as a system of storage of genetic information in the chromosomes (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv ‘genetics’). DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is the complex chemical substance which is found in chromosomes and genes and is the basis of heredity (Louw et al 1998:104).

The following chapters will provide archaeological, anthropological and genealogical evidence to suggest Akhenaten and his family were bonded by kinship but now genetics and DNA are able to provide a new source of evidence for the assessment of Akhenaten and other royal family members. One of the objectives of this chapter is to ascertain if the mummy found in KV55 can be positively identified as that of Akhenaten or Smenkhkare. It will investigate whether the results from the Tutankhamun family project reveal other genetic connections within the royal family. These new genetic results will piece together a human story of what might have happened at the end of the Amarna period and, as stated in the opening paragraph of this chapter, possibly provide answers to questions that were unanswerable before. This chapter will review the theories of Dr Dean Hamer regarding the argument that both behaviour and spirituality are passed on through our genes. Hamer identifies a specific spirituality gene, VMAT2 that he refers to as the ‘God gene’ (2004:6). Dr Hamer proposes that DNA carries historical information connecting organisms to biological ancestors. By using DNA as a historical record, Hamer (2004:182) explores one particular religious tradition, that of Judaism. Might Akhenaten and Moses have inherited the same genetic makeup? Did Akhenaten and Moses inherit their spiritual ideas from their environment or their genes? Both Akhenaten and Moses encountered the singular God in an intimate manner and were initiators of a new ideology. As a result of their mystical experiences, the course of religious history would be changed forever. The latest results published in *National Geographic* on the royal mummies of the 18th Dynasty, will be reviewed in greater detail in this chapter, specifically, the results of KV55.

The discovery of DNA,¹⁸ as hereditary material, provides the mechanism for evolution (Stewart 1997:204). The objective of Hawass and his team's study of the royal mummies were to determine the familial relationships amongst eleven royal mummies of the New Kingdom. This research was undertaken by the American Medical Association, with the results of the research published in JAMA (Hawass et al 2010:638). This discovered a 'genetic fingerprinting' from five generations of Tutankhamun's immediate lineage. The results of Hawass and his teams research will be discussed in further detail in this chapter (Hawass et al 2010:638).

The latest evidence from Akhenaten's Amarna will be scrutinised.

2.1.1 Background to the study of Genetics and DNA

Since Mendel's¹⁹ first breakthrough in the study of heredity, the conclusions of which are known today as the Mendelian Laws of Heredity, advances in science have been rapid (Jordaan & Jordaan 1984:94). The results of Mendel's breeding experiments with pea plants showed that inheritance is controlled by unit factors (Brown 2002:3). These unit factors are entities which geneticists today call genes (Brown 2002:3). It has been established that these hereditary attributes are passed from parent to offspring in an equal manner by both parents (Jordaan & Jordaan 1984:94) and that 'genes are the real carriers of genetic information' (Jordaan & Jordaan 1984:95). Hereditary entities even smaller than a gene, namely DNA²⁰ molecules, were discovered by two scientists in 1953 (see footnote 7) (Jordaan & Jordaan 1984:95). DNA is found mainly in the nucleus of a cell as it forms an important part of all chromosomes (Jordaan & Jordaan 1984:99).

A gene is defined as a section of DNA containing biological information (Brown 2002:10). 'Genes manifest themselves in heredity by directing the synthesis of proteins' (Reber, Allen & Reber 2009:31). Rapoport (2003:316) states that it would be nearly impossible to name a scientific discovery in the last century, except for Einstein's theory of relativity, that had as much impact as that of the discovery of the structure of the DNA molecule.²¹

¹⁸ Francis Crick, James Watson and Maurice Wilkins shared the Nobel Prize in 1962 for their discovery of the structure of DNA, one of the seminal discoveries of the 20th century. It would have been just for them to credit the work of Rosalind Franklin and credit her for her 'famous X-ray photograph' of the DNA molecule which helped unlock the secret of the human gene (Rapoport 2003:328).

¹⁹ Johan Gregor Mendel (1822-1884), an Austrian scientist/priest whose experimental work became the basis of modern hereditary theory (Funk & Wagnalls 1979:172).

²⁰ DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) (Stewart 1997:204). Deoxyribonucleic acid is one of the two forms of nucleic acid in living cells, the genetic material for viruses and cellular life forms (Brown 2002:3).

²¹ At the King's College in London, Maurice Wilkins and Rosalind Franklin worked on the structure of DNA. Historical

2.1.2 Hamer's 'God gene' theory

If this 'God gene' is heritable, could Akhenaten have had a genetic predisposition to the same spiritual ideas as his father, Amenhotep III? Could Akhenaten have passed this on to his son or sons? Did Akhenaten and Moses inherit their spiritual ideas from their environment or from their genes, specifically the 'God gene'?

In *The God Gene* (2004), Dr Dean Hamer²² discusses spiritual instincts and whether or not there is a biological basis for spirituality that is such a powerful and universal force (2004:1- 2, 6). Hamer is of the opinion that spiritual behaviours 'are highly deliberate and culturally learned activities'. He argues that spirituality is hardwired into our genes and is, in fact, an instinct (2004:6). Hamer (2004:7) contends that spirituality is not a simple instinct such as blinking, but is rather a genetically hardwired, biological pattern of response. Spirituality, he believes, is a state of consciousness interwoven not only with social but also with cultural and historical threads. He proposes that people have a genetic predisposition for spiritual belief which is shaped by personal experience and cultural environment (2004:8). In Hamer's theory, the genes influence the brain's capability for various types of consciousness thus becoming the basis for spiritual experience. Hamer believes that the environment plays as an important part as do genetics (Hamer 2004:8). Spirituality, in its broader meaning, is more than a belief in a particular god and he bases this statement on the numerous interviews he has had with spiritual people including those who do not believe in a deity at all (Hamer 2004:9).

credit for the discovery of the structure of DNA was given to James Watson and Francis Crick (Rapoport 2003:317). Rosalind Franklin should have shared the enormous public recognition received by Watson and Crick after April 25 1953 when the *Nature* articles were published (Rapoport 2003:317). Rosalind Franklin's revolutionary X-ray photograph of the DNA molecule which illuminated the helical structure of DNA for James Watson, leading to an "understanding of the genetic code and how it is used to make proteins ... one of the biggest breakthroughs in modern biology" (Rapoport 2003:317). On the 16 April 1958, at the age of 37, Franklin died of cancer. Watson, Crick and Wilkinson won the Nobel Prize for physiology/medicine four years later (Rapoport 2003:327). The fact that Franklin was not posthumously included in the award for the Nobel Prize is a gross injustice.

²² Dr Dean Hamer is a geneticist and the author of several books, including *The Science of Desire*, and *Living with Our Genes*. He is also the author of more than one hundred articles for popular and academic science journals. Dr Hamer received his Ph.D. from Harvard University and is the recipient of several awards including the Arians Kappers Award for Neurobiology (Hamer 2004:iii).

Hamer's five arguments explain his theory and emphasise the importance of environment and the strong genetic links played by genes in spirituality. According to Breasted (1934:292) Akhenaten was a 'god intoxicated man' as high priest of Heliopolis and he called himself 'great seer' (Breasted 1934:279). Manetho, in Josephus (*Ap* I.237-242) identifies Moses as Osarsiph, a high priest of Heliopolis. Both Manetho and Josephus identify the king of Egypt at that time as being Amenophis IV (Akhenaten) (*Ap* I.232-250). Akhenaten's genealogical links will be discussed in Chapter Three: From Pharaoh to Prophet.

2.1.2.1 Hamer's Fivefold way

Hamer (2004:9) utilises new research methods that have been developed in molecular genetics and neurobiology. He uses five arguments to present his theory, summarised briefly below.

2.1.2.1.1 Measurement

Hamer uses the scale of 'self transcendence'. This scale²³ was developed by Robert Cloninger who studied the biological and social origins of personality (Hamer 2004:9). Hamer (2004:10) defends the concept of 'self transcendence' described as 'flaky' because, in his opinion, it passes the tests for a solid psychological trait. In the West, self transcendence is regarded as faith while in the East, it is regarded as a search for enlightenment.

2.1.2.1.2 Heritability

Hamer questions whether spirituality is inherited based on studies of identical twins (exact same genes) compared to fraternal twins (who are genetically similar to ordinary siblings). According to Hamer, scientists show that spirituality, measured on the self-transcendence scale, is significantly inheritable and has a strong genetic link (Hamer 2004:10-11) but he also agrees that the role of the environment, unique life events and upbringing also have an important affect on a trait or behaviour (Hamer 2004:11). In Chapter Five, I will provide examples of Akhenaten's grandfather's, father's and mother's spirituality. A strong genetic link is 'significantly inheritable', according to Hamer (2004:10-11). Spirituality and environmental factors might have contributed to Akhenaten's radical shift in ideology but we do not have this information for Moses. If my hypothesis is true, the strong genetic link regarding the inheritance of spirituality might have been passed on to Moses if Moses was the 'son' of Akhenaten.

²³ A scale is a psychological testing instrument which has items or tasks arranged along some dimension e.g. *intelligence* scales or *attitude* scales (Reber et al 2009:702-703).

DNA might also help with determining relationships within the royal family and the behaviour (genetic disposition) displayed as indicated in the texts. This will be confirmed, for Akhenaten, by the epigraphy and, for Moses, the Biblical texts.

2.1.2.1.3 Identifying a specific gene

Molecular biology reveals an important discovery of a specific individual gene which is associated with the self transcendence scale of spirituality. ‘This “God gene” codes for a monoamine transporter—a protein that controls the amount of crucial brain signalling chemicals’ (Hamer 2004:11). Hamer (2004:11) points out that the same brain chemicals can be triggered by the use of certain drugs which can bring about mystical-like experiences. Hamer (2004:73) identifies the gene VMAT2 as a ‘God gene’.

Hamer has been criticised by colleagues in the scientific world. Carl Zimmer, in his review on Hamer’s book, published in *Scientific American* (2004) states:

whatever you want to call it, this is a frustrating book. The role that genes play in religion is a fascinating question that’s ripe for the asking ... but he is a long way from providing an answer.

Zimmer further states that the ‘God gene’ theory is problematic because it is based on only one unpublished, unreplicated study. Zimmer is of the opinion that Hamer’s work would have been fascinating and enlightening if it had been written ten years from now and the link between VMAT2 and self transcendence had been repeated and confirmed by others in the scientific field (2004).

2.1.2.1.4 Brain mechanism

The monoamines controlled by the ‘God gene’, identified by Hamer (2004:11), have many different functions in the brain. These chemicals appear to influence spirituality by altering consciousness (our reality, self awareness, our universe, including thoughts, memories and perceptions). Hamer (2004:12) describes mystical experiences and uses an example of Saul’s conversion on the road to Damascus as a major alteration in perception (see the mystical experiences of Akhenaten covered in Chapter Five). There is evidence to support the importance of monoamines in affecting consciousness. This can be seen in brain-scanning techniques (Hamer 2004:12).

2.1.2.1.5 Selective advantage

Hamer's (2004:12) reasoning also covers the important role that 'God genes' play in the human behavioural characteristic of spirituality. He argues that the important role of the 'God gene' is to provide humans with an innate sense of optimism that influences the 'will' to continue living and procreating despite death being inevitable.

2.1.2.2 Genes and behaviour

Both Akhenaten and Moses displayed behaviour deemed 'out of the ordinary'. A biological explanation of normal and abnormal behaviour shares certain assumptions. These assumptions are temperaments, ways of dealing with stress and physical features. These features are embedded in the genetic material of cells (Sue, Sue & Sue 2010:36). 'Molecular genetics is creating a momentum that will push genetic research even more rapidly into the mainstream of psychology' (Plomin 1997:85). Hamer has been a pioneer in identifying specific genes responsible for personality traits (Plomin 1997:85).

2.2 MUMMIFICATION

Whatever the ancient Egyptians' reasons were for mummification, the well preserved corpses of the ancient mummies have provided the material for modern DNA research. Without the process of mummification we would not have the soft tissue required to extract DNA which aids in dating, establishing disease, causes of death and genetic relationships. The results of new research might require the rewriting of history. In order to explain how this occurs, a brief background on the mummification process will follow.

The term 'mummy' is from a Persian word meaning pitch or bitumen. During the New Kingdom, this substance was used in the embalming process (Bunson 1999:174).

The funerary rites of mummification developed as a result of the importance the ancient Egyptians placed on the survival of the physical body in order to be reborn into the afterlife (Gahlin 2001:135). Marshall (2014:54) has a different opinion and believes this is not the case but rather that the fast decomposition of dead bodies in the heat of Egypt was the motivation to look for artificial ways of preserving the dead.

Natron, *net-jeryt*, was a natural resource used for the preservation of the body. This substance was found in abundance in the Natron Valley which was situated near modern Cairo. It is a mixture of sodium bicarbonate and sodium carbonate or sodium chloride. It absorbs moisture and has antiseptic properties (Bunson 1999:174).

Starting with the head of the corpse, the priests would wash and purify the bodies. The brain was often removed by inserting hooks into the nose and removing the matter (Bunson 1999:174). The skull was then packed with linens, spices and Nile mud. The mouth was covered with resinous paste and the eyes were covered with linen pads placed on each eyeball (Bunson 1999:174). Mummies have shown evidence of surgical care taken when removing the heart and internal organs (Bunson 1999:175) as this formed part of the priests' mortuary rituals.

Because the desert is gentle in its preservation, Romer (1981:11) believes, based on a chemist's observation, that had the embalmers just placed their dead in the sand, the corpses would have been better preserved than following these intricate procedures (Bunson 1999:174). Be it the intricate knowledge of the embalmers or the desert sands, the remains of the corpses have survived long enough for modern scientists to extract the necessary DNA for scientific study.

2.2.1 Egyptian mummies and Paleopathology

The work of Aidan Cockburn²⁴ on Egyptian mummies provides a background to and acknowledges the scientific work first conducted on mummies. This scientific work will be discussed, including the two day symposium that was held at the Wayne State University School of Medicine in Detroit titled 'Death and Disease in Ancient Egypt' (Roberts, Powell & Buikstra 2012:34). Cockburn and his team dissected an Egyptian mummy, PUM II,²⁵ and the entire autopsy was filmed by a Japanese film crew (Roberts, Powell & Buikstra 2012:35).

Paleopathology is the study of ancient diseases and is considered a subfield (Buikstra, 1977; Buikstra & Beck 2006) of physical anthropology (Buikstra & Roberts 2012:xi). Without the formation of Paleopathology as a formal discipline, archaeologists would be unable to gain the knowledge from skeletal remains that provide evidence of the cause of death in ancient populations.

²⁴ Dr Aidan Cockburn's (1912-1981) publication *Mummies, disease and ancient cultures* (1998) became his most recognised work. Dr Cockburn was internationally recognised as an expert on mummies. He published articles on public health, infectious diseases, zoology and paleopathology (Roberts, Powell & Buikstra, cited in Buikstra & Roberts 2012:35).

²⁵ The mummy of PUM II was of unknown provenance. The mummy was unwrapped by Cockburn and his team on 1 February 1973 (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:151).

Cockburn was a research associate in the department of Anthropology of the Smithsonian Institute. Between September and October 1971, he made an exploratory trip to Egypt funded by the American Research Centre in Egypt but the change in Egyptian politics at that time forced him to work on mummies that were already in the USA. Cockburn studied tissues and other organic remains of well dated Egyptian mummies and concluded that mummy tissue offered a detailed range of information about human diseases (Cockburn 1973:470-471).

Cockburn conducted his first mummy autopsy on an Egyptian body in the Detroit Institute of Arts. He was assisted by his wife, Eve Cockburn. This autopsy, performed prior to his trip to Egypt, was to be the first of many autopsies on Egyptian mummies (Roberts, Powell & Buikstra, cited in Buikstra and Roberts 2012:34).

An autopsy of the mummy, PUM II, occupied the first day of a symposium titled 'Death and disease in ancient Egypt' sponsored by three institutions: the Division of Physiology, School of Medicine, Wayne State University, the Division of Physical Anthropology, Smithsonian Institute and the Department of Ancient Art, Detroit Institute of Arts (Roberts, Powell & Buikstra, cited in Buikstra & Roberts 2012:34).

Cockburn arranged an international group of experts to participate in this event. Amongst the participants was Eugen Strouhal, an Egyptologist from the Napistrek Museum in Prague (Roberts, Powell and Buikstra, cited in Buikstra & Roberts 2012:34-35). Strouhal was later to become part of the team of experts who worked on the eleven royal mummies of the King Tutankhamun project. Strouhal was not in agreement that KV55 held the remains of Akhenaten because the body is that of a man too young to be Akhenaten (2010:97-112).

The dissection and observation on PUM II culminated in the publication of a third book by Cockburn, *Mummies, disease and ancient cultures* (1998) (Roberts, Powell and Buikstra, cited in Buikstra and Roberts 2012:34-35).

One of the consequences of the symposium arranged by Cockburn was the formation of the Paleopathology Club, founded in 1973. The Paleopathology Club soon developed into the Paleopathology Association which consists of pathologists, physiologists, orthopaedists, physical anthropologists, Egyptologists, archaeologists and historians. These professionals were all interested in the study of health and disease found in past human populations (Buikstra and Roberts 2012:34-35).

In the Biblical narrative (Exodus 7:7-10), the plagues of blood, frogs, lice, flies, cattle, boils, locusts, darkness and death are described. Has archaeology revealed any evidence of these plagues? Kemp's latest finds at Amarna are discussed (cf. 2.4) providing evidence of an epidemic at the time of Akhenaten. This epidemic may have contributed to the sudden exodus from Amarna.

2.2.2 Methods used in mummy research

The aspect of respect and integrity for what was once the human remains of mighty pharaohs and their families left me wondering if there are any parts left on the body of the unfortunate KV55 which have not been scrutinised, prodded and discussed. This section covers the methods used in forensic medicine.

The protocol for the study of mummies requires a practitioner of forensic medicine who can double as a historian (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:143). Respect for the integrity of the mummy (cf. 2.2.3 on ethics) is paramount as mummies are limited and irreplaceable (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:143). The clinical observation supplies details such as appearance, colour and state of preservation. All these aspects provide essential information as to techniques used during the mummification process (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:143).

In 1897, the first X-ray of the entirety of a mummy was conducted by Dr Bloch of Vienna. Later, concerns were raised regarding the possible damage to the bodies by X-rays (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:137). In 1907, the Egyptologist, M. Murray undertook the first scientific study of mummies with an interdisciplinary team comprising anatomists, chemists and textile specialists (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:137). In 1910, MA Ruffer developed a technique for the rehydration of mummies. This enabled an anatomopathological, histological and parasitological study of mummified remains (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:137). In 1926, the first X-ray of a mummy conducted in France was done at the Musée Guimet. At the time, journalists were astounded that the X-ray technique had not been used on the mummy of Tutankhamun,²⁶ which had recently been discovered and they were particularly interested in the feasibility of the procedure (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:137).

Dunand & Lichtenberg (2006:143) and Kaufmann & Rühli (2010:611) provide other methods which are used for the study of mummies.²⁷ Kaufmann & Rühli (2010:611) believe that new methods, such

²⁶ On the 1 November 1921, Howard Carter discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun. This was under the patronage of the Fifth Earl of Carnarvon (Oakes 2001:104).

²⁷ These methods include photography, which provides an objective record of initial findings, and drawings which are helpful as they record certain details that are difficult to photograph (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:143). Radiography and

as DNA analysis, will likely revolutionise the field of mummy research. They say that individual markers of disease, tracing family relationships such as family inbreeding in royal families or unexpected ethnic relationships are being detected with these new methods.

2.2.3 Ethical issues and ‘moral dilemma’ in ancient mummy research

Kaufmann & Rühli, in their article, ‘Without “informed consent”? Ethics and ancient mummy research’ (2010), express concerns regarding the moral dilemma of mummy research. Their concerns focus on stakeholders, a particular researcher or the scientific community in general and the likely descendants of the mummy or any future generation. Kaufmann & Rühli (2010:608) are of the opinion that the sustainability of mummy research is dependent on ethical orientation. They believe this can only be given and settled in an interdisciplinary approach such as the one they present in their article. These include an attempt to advance the ethical debate in ancient mummy research²⁸ by conducting a stakeholder analysis. This analysis will show pro- and contra-arguments for the various interest groups involved (which may be the mummy itself, descendants and researchers). They believe that this approach will identify interest groups, judge those interests according to moral relevance and validate the legitimacy and the economic purpose of the research. Kaufmann & Rühli (2010:609) do not propose recommendations but rather wish to instigate a discussion about how ethics can be integrated into the research agenda. Their main concerns and foci are on the moral issues arising from conflicts of interests amongst parties involved. The stakeholders include relevant individuals who may have an interest that might be politically, economically or morally driven. The importance of ethics would provide practical advice and build accountability. There are four categories that Kaufmann & Rühli (2010:609- 610) identify that should be taken into account prior to mummy research being embarked upon. They are: religion and culture,²⁹ law and

medical imaging techniques are the methods used most often for the study of mummies in museums. This is done by setting up a radiology lab at the site with portable equipment. Radiology provides morphological information and is entirely non-invasive (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:144). Endoscopy is the use of medical fibro scopes which enable the exploration of the natural and artificial cavities of the mummified bodies. Endoscopy can identify the remains of abdominal organs which were not removed by the embalmers at the time of mummification (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:144). The modern technology of Electron Microscopy enables the researcher to push the bounds of traditional microscopy to study extremely small structures. Researchers have already applied it to mummies to study human tissues and pathogenic agents (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:144). Carbon 14 (C) dating is seldom used (Dunand & Lichtenberg 2006:144) because it is a highly imprecise method due to the large range of dates it furnishes. However, it can be put to use, in particular, for mummies of the later period of Egyptian history. This method can complement the classic methods of dating which include the mummification process itself and the objects that accompany the mummies, especially ceramics.

²⁸ Kaufmann and Rühli (2010:609) define the term ‘mummy’ as human remains with various degrees of soft tissue preservation.

²⁹ In terms of ancient Egyptian cultural beliefs, it was paramount to be remembered after death. This research is therefore able to retain memory of the individual and inform the public about his/her socio-cultural roots. On the negative side, the

guidelines,³⁰ information and progress of knowledge³¹ and individualism and the right of integrity³². These four identified aspects should be given the respect due when researching ancient human remains. A prime example of the concerns raised by Kaufmann & Rühli could be applied to the tests undertaken on Tutankhamun:

... bearing in mind the extensive damage caused by the rough and careless handling of the mummy, it seems improbable that such a painstaking and illogical repair attempt should have been carried out on a toe (Gad, Kasr Al Ainy, Pusch & Selim 2010:2474).

In my view, these ethical and moral issues must be given due consideration.

2.3 KING TUTANKHAMUN ‘FAMILY PROJECT’

From September 2007 to October 2009, eleven royal mummies from the 18th Dynasty in Egypt (circa 1550-1295 BCE) underwent anthropological, radiological and genetic investigations which were part of the King Tutankhamun Family Project (Hawass 2010:638). Results from the DNA analysis were published in the Journal of American Medical Association in February 2010 which states that

genetics can provide a powerful tool for enhancing our understanding of Egyptian history especially when combined with radiological studies of the mummies and insights gleaned from the archaeological record (Hawass 2010:38).

According to Hawass (2010:36), the samples the geneticists extracted were from deep within the bone tissue of the mummies thus alleviating contamination from the DNA of previous archaeologists or priests who performed the mummification processes.

Kemp (2012:306) refers to the work done by Dr Zahi Hawass and his team regarding the results from DNA testing on King Tutankhamun and his family which provide evidence to identify the body in KV55 as that belonging to Akhenaten. Strouhal (2010:97-112) does not share the same opinion and believes that the identity of KV55 has not yet been identified.

peace of the deceased which is a ‘great and protectable good’, not only in ancient cultures but also in present culture, is disturbed (Kaufmann & Rühli 2010:609)

³⁰ The code of conduct of the International Council of Museums encourages research on museum specimens. In terms of this conduct, it specifies that research on mummies is for the benefit of the advancement of science even though there is no clear research or ‘good clinical practice’ guidelines. Guidelines in the future will address the personal rights of the dead. The diagnostic validity and invasiveness of the methods will be addressed (Kaufmann & Rühli 2010:609).

³¹ Kaufmann & Rühli (2010:609) make the point that mummy remains are of great importance as there are no substitutes for these samples that have presented opportunities for significant scientific contributions. These mummies also provide information such as the culture of the homeland and the life of the mummies which contribute to the advancement of knowledge (2010:609).

³² Research on ancient mummies must consider aspects of individualism and the right to integrity. Investigation methods are sometimes invasive and destroy tissue. Individualism can be supported when the research results put aside false speculations about the cause of death (Kaufmann & Rühli 2010:609-610).

2.3.1 Published results from royal mummies

2.3.1.1. *Tomb KV55 Akhenaten or Smenkhare?*

The remnants of the mummy (described as ‘pathetic bones’ by Romer 1989:214) found in tomb KV55 in the Valley of the Kings, are believed to be the remains of Akhenaten (see 1.1.2). However, some scholars (cf. 2.3.1.2) remain unconvinced including Kemp. In his latest publication, Kemp (2012:15) states that he believes that Smenkhare, Akhenaten’s successor (and possibly his son), is a stronger candidate for the person buried in tomb KV55 rather than Akhenaten himself. Nevertheless, the possibility still exists that the badly decomposed mummy found in the tomb KV55 in the Valley of the Kings is the body of Akhenaten who reigned from 1348-1331 BCE.

Since KV55³³ was first uncovered, controversy has surrounded the tomb and its occupant. A history of the debacle begins in 1907 when Theodore M. Davis discovered the tomb in the Valley of the Kings. Fifteen years later, on the other side of the path (almost opposite) the tomb of Tutankhamun was discovered (Aldred 1988:195). The first excavators of tomb KV55³⁴ were described by Aldred as managing to ‘conduct one of the worst pieces of excavation experience on record in the Valley’. All, according to Aldred (1988:195-196), were guilty of ambiguities in their accounts of the discovery but Edward Ayrton’s account is seen as the most trustworthy. The account states the tomb was completely sealed by a wall made of drystone and intact at the moment of discovery. Rough blocks of limestone coated with cement formed another obstruction which originally blocked the tomb. An impression from an oval seal upon which a depiction of a jackal couchant over nine pinioned captives was stamped upon the hard cement (Aldred 1988:196). A similar tomb sealing was used on the walled up doorway leading to the tomb of Tutankhamun (Aldred 1988:196). Four years later, Arthur Weigall stated that the seal on the entrance to KV55 was sealed with the seal of Tutankhamun, a fragment of which was found and thus used to substantiate his claim (Aldred 1988:196). The undecorated walls of the tomb KV55 were plastered, and a second chamber was in the early process of hewing. Found inside the tomb were four canopic jars, a handsome coffin which resembled Tutankhamun’s second coffin, the split lid of the coffin (as a result of a fall from the decayed wooden lion-headed bier thus exposing the occupant of the coffin) (Aldred 1988:197).³⁵ Signs of deliberate destruction to the coffin were evident, the names on the coffin

³³ KV55 is now catalogued as Tomb No.55 in the Valley of the Kings (Aldred 1988:195).

³⁴ Theodore M. Davis, an American lawyer and amateur Egyptologist, Joseph Lindon Smith an American painter, his wife Corinna, Edward Ayrton (Davis’ archaeologist), Harold Jones an artist and Arthur Weigall representing the Antiquities Service were the first to uncover KV55 in 1907 (Aldred 1988:195).

³⁵ Small objects including four ‘magic bricks’, faience vessels, boxes, amulets, a base of a wooden statue, statuettes,

were cut out, the gold portrait mask ripped off and names within the cartouches excised (Aldred 1988:198), (Gardiner 1961:234). Figures and names were hacked out of the gold-covered shrine (Aldred 1988:198). This desecration was not the work of thieves as gold-work was left behind and the tomb had been sealed with new drystone blocking. Aside from one or two oversights, there was nothing which could identify the owner of the tomb (Aldred 1988:198). Both Davis and Weigall were at the initial discovery, yet they had opposing views regarding the occupant of KV55. Davis believed that this was the tomb of Queen Tiye while Arthur Weigall, on the other hand, believed the bones inside the coffin were those of Akhenaten and his burial was hastily removed from Amarna when the city was abandoned and taken to Thebes for reinterment (Aldred 1988:199). Gardiner (1961:234) stated that the prominence of the name upon the coffin seemed to be a clear indication that the occupant was Akhenaten, this view was disputed by Daressy in 1916 who stated the owner of the coffin was a woman, and the coffin was later adapted to receive the remains of a king. Reeves (2001:83) states that Weigall's analysis of the archaeology was very sound and a review of the evidence confirms Weigall's view that the body in Tomb 55 ought to be Akhenaten. Unless the anatomists change their minds yet again we are finally able to move forward, in which case Akhenaten is found Reeves (2001:83). Reeves (2001:81) alludes to the uneven publication of the discovery and the long standing belief amongst anatomists that the occupant of KV55 was that of a relatively young man have impeded a full understanding of the burial. Consensus as to the identity of the occupant was not reached despite involving medical experts.³⁶ In 1957, Alan Gardiner reopened the case in a further attempt to positively identify KV55 and published a new study of the texts on the restored coffin. He also reached the conclusion that the buried mummy in tomb KV55 was that of Akhenaten (Aldred 1988:201) but Professor Fairman was not convinced. Fairman believed that the identity of the mummy was that of Smenkhare (Aldred 1988:201). In Aldred's opinion, the coffin had been designed for a woman and he suggests that it was for Meritaten, a daughter of Nefertiti and Akhenaten (Aldred 1988:201).

model boomerangs in faience and ritual implements used for funerary purposes were found inside KV55. Other items included a vase inscribed with the name of Amenophis III and another with the names of Queen Tiye and Amenophis III, a fragment of wood also bore the names of Amenophis III and Queen Tiye. A stone amulet bore the name of Queen Tiye and fragments of clay seals impressed with the cartouche of Tutankhamun were found inside KV55 (Aldred 1988:197).

³⁶ The services of a local European physician based at Luxor and a prominent American obstetrician examined the body whilst it was still in the coffin. Both surgeons agreed that it was the pelvis of a woman. The remains were later re-examined by eminent experts who concluded that the pelvis belonged to a male. Elliot Smith, a Professor of Anatomy in the Cairo School for Medicine, asserted that the bones were those of a young male aged between twenty-three and twenty-five and stated that they belonged to Akhenaten. This result angered Davis who had published an account of his find of 1907 titled *The tomb of Queen Tiye*. The debate was not yet over as several Egyptologists could not agree to the findings that the body belonged to Akhenaten (Aldred 1988:199-200).

The coffin was adapted for the person found buried in it (Aldred 1988:201) but Aldred and Fairman held disparate views as to the identity of the occupant of the coffin. Aldred (1988:201) believed it was Akhenaten but it is apparent that the debate remains unresolved as Tyldesley states that only ‘one thing’ is clear in the confusion surrounding the owner of the tomb which is that the sealings on KV55 confirmed that the last name on the drystone wall of the tomb belonged to Tutankhamun. The assumption was then made that it was Tutankhamun who was responsible for the re-burial of the mummy in the Valley of the Kings (Tyldesley 1998:157).

2.3.1.2. Results from the mummy found in the coffin in tomb KV55

I include the debate amongst scholars (see below) regarding the identity of the body found in KV55 to show the problems surrounding the positive identification of the remains of KV55 since its first discovery. The possibility exists that the body of Akhenaten has never been found and also that ‘expert opinion’ is often flawed. The occupant of the coffin found by Davis in tomb KV55 continues to raise speculation (see discussion 2.3.1.1) amongst scholars mainly because of the failure to keep proper records at the time of initial excavation (Tyldesley 1998:154). The lack of positive identification (either Akhenaten or Smenkhare) of the skeleton found ‘merely added to the confusion’ (Tyldesley 1998:157). The concerns around the identity of KV55, first a woman, then a male, followed by a debate regarding the identity of the male have been raised by, amongst others, Osman (1990:230), Tyldesley (1998:154) and Aldred (1988:199). The main contentions are the age of the skeleton at the time of death which was first assumed to be 25 or 26 years (Osman 1990:232). Initially the skeleton was believed to be that of a woman but the fact that no flesh was found on the mummy added to the difficulties in its identification (Osman 1990:232). The mummy was identified as Akhenaten (Khouniatonou) by Grafton Elliot Smith, professor of Anatomy at the Cairo Medical School (Osman 1990:232). As suggested by Burrige (1996:127-128), Akhenaten’s artistic representations³⁷ fit the inherited order of Marfan’s syndrome.

Based on anatomical evidence in harmony with historical data, the mummy is believed to exhibit Froehlich’s syndrome³⁸ and a slight degree of hydrocephalus (water on the brain) often associated with disease (Osman 1990:233-234). Professor of Anatomy at the Faculty of Medicine at Cairo

³⁷ Akhenaten chose to be portrayed in art in a new way with a long neck, arms, hands and feet pronounced, collarbones, short torso, pot belly, heavy thighs and poor muscle tone, according Burrige (1996:127). Marfan’s Syndrome is caused by a single autosomal dominant gene causing profound changes throughout the body, such as a long face, an elongated skull, and a jutting chin, eyes slit-like, protruding ears, wide pelvic girdle and tall stature (Burrige 1996:127).

³⁸ Froehlich’s syndrome is an endocrine disorder, which leads to obesity and an androgynous form, hindering sexual maturation. This did not appear to be the case with Akhenaten as he fathered six daughters with his wife Nefertiti (Burrige 1996:127).

University, DE Derry, rejected Elliot Smith's conclusions. A re-examination of the bones was instituted and Derry then concluded that the bones belonged to a man with a maximum age of 24 years (Osman 1990:234). The skull of Tutankhamun, when unwrapped, resembled the skull of KV55 in that both shapes were unusual (Osman 1990:235). Engelbach, a student of Derry, argued for the identity of KV55 being that of Smenkhare, concluding that Smenkhare and Tutankhamun were brothers (Osman 1990:235). An examination of the remains under Professor RG Harrison at the University of Liverpool concluded that the remains were those of Smenkhare and that he died in his twentieth year and no evidence of hydrocephalus³⁹ was found (Osman 1990:237-238). It seems apparent that many theories have been proposed, only to be disputed at a later stage.

From 2007 to 2009, the remains of the mummy found in KV55 were subjected to detailed anthropological, radiological and genetic studies. The results disprove many of the previous contentions and, according to Hawass et al (2010:638-647), the KV55 mummy (male) and the KV35YL (Nefertiti), 18th Dynasty queen or princess, were identified as the parents of Tutankhamun. No signs of gynecomastia and craniosynostosis or Marfan syndrome (as suggested by Burridge above) were found. A new computer tomography investigation revealed that the mummy in KV55, previously thought to be in his 20s when he died, lived to be much older, between 35 and 45 years. KV55 has an index of 81.0 indicating brachycephaly⁴⁰. KV55 displayed malformations of a cleft palate and scoliosis.⁴¹ Osteoma in the maxillary sinus, femoral osseous collapse, or bone fibroma, were the only pathologies and diseases found. Several unique anthropological features are shared by the two mummies, KV55 and KV62. The blood group of both individuals is identical.

According to Hawass (2010:41), 'DNA now confirms the mummy to be a son of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiye—known to be the parents of Akhenaten—and the father of King Tut'. Also, Hawass speculated that 'since we know so little about Smenkhare, he cannot be completely ruled out' (2010:38). The KV55 mummy revealed degeneration in the spine and osteoarthritis in the knees and legs (Hawass 2010:38). Letters written by medical experts to the senior Editor of the American Medical Association express criticism at the results and conclusions of Hawass and his team. The critics (Hawass et al 2010:638) are: Eline D. Lorenzen, PhD, Center for Geo Genetics, Denmark

³⁹ Hydrocephalus is an abnormal accumulation of cerebrospinal fluid within the ventricles causing pressure to the brain (Reber et al 2009:358).

⁴⁰ Brachycephaly is described as having a disproportionately short head (Reber et al 2009:108).

⁴¹ Scoliosis is an abnormal lateral curvature of the spine, and usually consists of two curves in the opposite direction (Reber et al 2009:710).

and Eske Willerslev, DSc from the Center for Geo Genetics, focus their concerns on the issue of contamination in ancient human DNA research. Another concern is the lack of reported quality control measures which could result in incorrect allele identification, leading to errors in paternity testing. They question the reliability and validity of the genetic data (Lorenzen & Willerslev 2010:2471).

Brenda J. Baker PhD, School of Human Evolution and Social Change, Arizona State University, addresses the issue of the age of the skeletal remains of KV55. Baker alludes to the age of 35 to 46 years as purported by Dr Hawass and his colleagues. Baker's concerns focus on the prior studies and conclusions by Sir Grafton Elliot-Smith who estimated an age of 25 to 26 years old. Re-examination by Ronald Harrison and Ahmed el Batrawi concluded an age of 20 years at death. Baker states that prior studies that refute an older age were dismissed and no substantiation for an older age as stated by Hawass and colleagues are provided (Baker 2010:2471-2).

James G. Gamble, MD, PhD, Stanford University, Department of Orthopaedic Surgery, disagrees with Hawass and his colleagues, concluding that Tutankhamun had a left club foot. Gamble (2010:2472) suggests that Tutankhamun walked with a stick to relieve the pressure on the diseased metatarsal heads which show chronic pathology.

Irwin M. Braverman, MD Department of Dermatology, Yale Medical School and Philip A. Mackowiak, MD, MBA Veterans Affairs Medical Centre, Baltimore, question the claims made by Hawass and his colleagues regarding the possible inherited disorders amongst the 11 royal mummies examined. Braverman & Mackowiak (2010:2472-2473) state that the claims are inconsistent. Hawass and his team explain that 'these skulls are visibly abnormally elongated, having the "family head" of the 18th Dynasty.' Braverman & Mackowiak are of the opinion that the three-dimensional CT scans of Tutankhamun and Akhenaten's skull made by Hawass and his team indicate 'absent to poorly developed interdigitated cranial sagittal sutures consistent with premature fusion seen in craniosynostosis'. Braverman and Mackowiak propose that the study does not exclude the possibility that elongated heads and gynecomastia might be due to a genetic disorder analogous with Antley-Bixler syndrome.

Christian Timmann MD and Christian G. Meyer MD, Department of Molecular Medicine, Hamburg, are not convinced that the disease pattern of *Plasmodium falciparum* malaria suggested

by Hawass and his team was the primary cause of Tutankhamun's early death. They suggest that Tutankhamun, living in an endemic area, would have been semi-immune to malaria at his suggested age of 18 to 19 years. The translucent bone areas in the metatarsals of Tutankhamun's left foot are compatible with sickle cell disease (SCD). Timmann and Meyer state that 'the SCD gene *HbS* may appear homozygously or in combined heterozygosity with β -thalassemia mutations causing disease' (2010:2473).

Strouhal (2010:97-112) states that the age of the body remains an obstacle as the body of KV55 is too young to be Akhenaten. The above concerns raised by medical experts have been addressed by some of the original team responsible for the ancestry and pathology testing, namely, Yehia Z. Gad MD, Ancient DNA Laboratory, Egyptian Museum; Ashraf Selim MD, Department of Radiology, Cairo; Kasr Al Ainy, Faculty of Medicine, Cairo and Carsten M. Pusch, PhD, Institute of Human Genetics, Tubingen, Germany (Timmann & Meyer 2010:2473-2475).

In reply to the issues raised above by Eline Lorenzen and Eske Willerslev (2010:2471), Dr Baker (Timmann & Meyer 2010:2473-74) replies to Drs Lorenzen and Willerslev's saying that their concerns regarding insufficient contamination, prevention and quality control measures, were incorrect. Authentic and adequately preserved DNA can be obtained from Egyptian mummy tissue. In order to substantiate authenticity, all accepted criteria for ancient DNA authentication were strictly adhered to throughout the process. Contamination from people handling the mummies was carefully monitored. The subsets of data were replicated independently by a separate group of personnel confirming the authenticity of the results.

Addressing the concerns raised by Dr Baker regarding the age of the KV55 mummy, new CT technology ruled out the younger age suggested by Dr Baker. The concerns raised by Dr Gamble regarding the diagnosis of the left clubfoot have been disputed by the original team as the images to which Dr Gamble refers are not sufficient. The team is of the opinion that the missing middle phalanx is hypophalangism. The team raises concerns regarding the extensive damage which might have been caused by rough and careless handling of the mummy. Answering Drs Braverman and Mackowiak, the hypothesis of Antley-Bixler syndrome was refuted. The team refer to Miller in his publication *Did Akhenaten have the Antley-Bixler syndrome?* (2009).⁴² The

⁴² Antley-Bixler syndrome (ABS) is a rare syndrome with cynostosis of cranial sutures (Chun, Siegel-Bartelt, Chitayat, Phillips & Ray (1998:219-224). In 1975, Antley and Bixler described a child with unusual features such as deformed ears and nose, elongated hands, and feet, and multiple ligamentous contractures of digits (Antley & Bixler 1975:397-

possibility of SCD as the origin of the osteopathologic lesions found on the mummy of Tutankhamun have been of interest to the team, an aspect which they are currently investigating.

The kinship determination reveals that ‘KV35EL, who we know is Tiye, mother of Akhenaten and grandmother of Tutankhamun, and the KV55 mummy ... is most probably Akhenaten, father of Tutankhamun’ (Hawass et al 2010:644). In my opinion the words ‘most probably’ are not convincing enough to determine whether the skeleton is definitely that of Akhenaten. In a recent (27 October 2014) private communication with Dr Joyce Tyldesley, I asked her if scientists are able to correctly date the mummy found in KV55, can we be sure whether the mummy belonged to Akhenaten or Smenkhare? In response she stated:

I don't think that anyone has used DNA to date the KV55 mummy. We can do that fairly accurately by examining the style of the tomb contents, and by considering the fact that the tomb seems to have been sealed at the same time as Tutankhamen's tomb. It seems to be an Amarna cache tomb, filled with items retrieved from the royal cemetery.

Regarding the accuracy of DNA, Tyldesley (2014) states that

my own view is that the technique is not as secure and reliable as some experts believe ... In my view, we can rely on anatomical comparisons and tooth eruption to state that the mummy is male, approximately 20 years of age, and closely related to Tutankhamen. In my view, this makes him Tutankhamen's brother or half brother: I would personally, without a doubt, state that the mummy is Smenkhare. But I know that not everyone would agree with me.

The problem is, if KV55 is the mummy of Smenkhare, a brother of Akhenaten, and KV55 does not belong to Akhenaten, then what happened to Akhenaten's body? Could Akhenaten have left Egypt with a son (or to seek refuge with a son) perhaps this ‘son’ was Moses and loyal followers of the sun cult in another direction and ended his days in Cush (Ethiopia)⁴³ or Nubia⁴⁴, or Midia or Mitanni (Syria)? Whilst we do not have the body of Moses, we do have modern samples of DNA from members of the *cohanim* family believed to be the family of Moses (Hamer 2004:181) (see 2.5).

401).

⁴³ Sir EA Wallis Budge quotes Queen Sheba in a conversation with Solomon “... from this moment I will not worship the sun, but will worship the creator of the sun, the God of Israel...” (Wallis Budge 1932:29). This indicates that solar worship in Ethiopia continued as late as the time of Solomon. Farrington asks the question whether Solomon really existed. According to Ethiopian legend, he fathered a child with the Queen of Sheba. This child became the first king of Ethiopia. Archaeologists are working in Marib in Yemen in an attempt to identify the remains of a site with the Queen of Sheba (Farrington 2003:37). In 1 Kings 10:12, it is said Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba ‘all her desire’. Could that have been a child or the Ark of the Covenant which some people believe is in Ethiopia? (Farrington 2003:37).

⁴⁴ There may have been officials in Nubia/Cush/Ethiopia who sympathised with Akhenaten. Akhenaten's successors were quick to demolish his temples, Akhenaten did not act like this, and the many temples belonging to the reign of Akhenaten's predecessors have survived. One such temple belongs to the temple of the god Horus (a form of the sun god), Lord of Buhen in Nubia. It is suggested that the temple of Horus at Buhen functioned throughout the reign of Akhenaten. The images of Amun were removed and new shrines built to the Aten. The temple ruins at Buhen record a violent attack by the Viceroy of Kush on behalf of Akhenaten (Kemp 2012:27).

2.3.1.3. Results from tomb KV62 /KV21 (Tutankhamun)

The autopsy on the mummy began in November 1925 by the anatomist Douglas Derry and was supervised by Howard Carter. It was suggested at the time that the king had died from the plague or from cardiovascular failure as a consequence of Marfan's syndrome. Another suggestion, first mooted in 1968, suggests he may have been murdered (Reeves 2001:188).

According to Hawass et al's (2010) investigation, Tutankhamun died circa 1394 BCE. He was 19 years old and in the ninth year of his reign. RG Harrison, Professor of Anatomy at Liverpool University, was the first to suggest that Tutankhamun might have been murdered (Reeves 2001:188) because of a density at the base of Tutankhamun's skull which, he believed, represented a haemorrhage beneath the membranes (Reeves 2001:188) but the CT⁴⁵ scans done in 2005 revealed that King Tutankhamun had not died from a blow to the head but that the hole at the back of his skull was made at the time of the mummification process (Hawass 2010:34).

The 130 walking sticks which were found in the tomb of Tutankhamun bear testimony to the impediments suffered by the young pharaoh whilst alive (Hawass et al 2010:645). In the CT images of the mummy, it was discovered that Tutankhamun's left foot was clubbed with one toe missing a bone and had bones in a part of the foot destroyed by necrosis (tissue death) (Hawass 2010:38). This bone disease would certainly be responsible for the crippled pharaoh being depicted always as seated (Hawass 2010:39).

Other possible causes of death, such as a parasite called *Plasmodium falciparum* (malaria), which was found in his DNA, needed investigation. Tutankhamun had contracted malaria several times and Hawass (2010:39) suggested that, because the immune system of the pharaoh was weak, he was vulnerable to complications from an unhealed fracture of his leg. According to Hawass (2010:39), Tutankhamun's mother and father were full brother and sister. He therefore suggests that genetic defects from this incestuous relationship, including a partial cleft palate, may have compromised the boy's health.

In the tomb of Tutankhamun, two mummified foetuses were found, possibly belonging to Tutankhamun and his wife Ankhesenpaaten. They were KV62 foetus 1, a five month gestation daughter and KV62 foetus 2, a seven month gestation daughter. Inbreeding causes genetic defects

⁴⁵ CT scans (computerised axial tomography) reveal the structures of the brain (Sternberg 1999:42).

and often foetuses are not brought to full term (Hawass 2010:39).

The results of the two female mummies from tomb KV21 have not yet been published (Hawass 2010:39). The tomb of KV21A may possibly have held the remains of Tutankhamun's wife, Ankhesenpaaten, the daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti (Hawass 2010:39).

2.3.1.4. Results from tomb KV46 (Tuyu & Yuya)

The tomb was discovered by J Quibell and T Davis in 1905. The mummies found in this tomb have been stored in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Yuya, a male between fifty and sixty years of age, has been identified as the grandfather or great-grandfather of Tutankhamun and as the father of Queen Tiye. Marfan's syndrome cannot be supported in the mummy of Yuya (Hawass et al 2010:642). Tuyu, a female of between fifty and sixty years has been identified as the grandmother or great-grandmother of Tutankhamun and the mother of Queen Tiye (Hawass et al 2010:640).

The genetic identification and typing of plasmodial DNA showed that Yuya and Tuyu must have had *malaria tropica*, the most severe form of malaria (Hawass et al 2010:646). Although both these mummies presented with malaria, it is not known exactly what the cause of death may have been (Hawass et al 2010:646).

2.3.1.5. Results from tomb KV35: Amenophis III and two unidentified females

2.3.1.5.1 Amenophis III

Amenhotep/Amenophis III was discovered in 1898 in the tomb of his grandfather, Amenhotep II (KV35 circa 1388-1351 BCE) found in the west Valley of the Kings (Romer 1981:274). Hawass (2010:40) confirmed that the body of Amenhotep III was found in 1898 hidden along with other royals in KV35, the tomb of his grandfather Amenhotep II. Aldred (1988:106) suggests that the mummy might have been incorrectly identified by officials who rewrapped the mummy in 1057 BCE and wrote his prenomen 'Nebma're' (Amenophis III).

According to Aldred (1988:106), the mummy appeared to be advanced in years, not less than 50 years old at the time of his death, but had been hacked to pieces in order to steal the amuletic jewellery.⁴⁶ His remains were stored in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo and labelled KV35. They form

⁴⁶ This study has revealed the fact that, of the 232 individuals whose bones were found in el-Amarna since 2006, 70 per cent

part of the royal 18th Dynasty mummies whose DNA has been investigated and the results revealed in the *Journal of Medical Association* (Hawass et al 2010:640). Reeves (2001:58) states that death for Amenophis III (KV35), identified as the father of Akhenaten (Hawass 2010:40), was far from becoming (presumably a hideous corpse).

a) Two unidentified females in KV35

Two unidentified females were discovered in the tomb of Amenhotep II (KV35) during the season of 1898. According to Hawass, the bodies lay unwrapped on the floor of a side chamber. They were hidden by priests at the end of the New Kingdom, around 1000 BCE.

b) KV35EL—Queen Tiyi

In 1898, Loret⁴⁷ discovered tomb KV35 in one of the side chambers of the tomb of Amenhotep II in the Valley of the Kings. Inside were three naked, unlabelled mummies without coffins—later to be classified and identified as ‘the elder lady’, ‘the younger lady’ and ‘a Prince’ (Tyldesley 1998:175).

The skulls of the three corpses were pierced with a hole and the breast of each one was opened. One of these corpses, an old lady, which he described as ‘majestic’, was later revealed to be the mummy of Queen Tiyi, mother of Akhenaten. The sample of hair taken from the mummy proved to be the same as that preserved in a miniature coffin found in the tomb of Tutankhamun (Römer 1981:162).

An American orthodontist and mummy specialist, James E. Harris, examined the beautiful ‘elder lady’ and concluded that the corpse was similar in form to Tuyu (Akhenaten’s maternal grandmother) on the underlying foundation of skull shape and hair analyses. Reeves is of the opinion that further scientific analysis might clarify the matter (2001:58-59). Aldred (1988:105) rejects the hair analysis as proving conclusively that the mummy is Tiyi, and the process of identifying family relationships

had died prior to the age of thirty five. It was not only commoners whose deaths occurred at a young age, the royal family were equally affected. The death of Tutankhamun is one such case (Kemp 2012:228).

⁴⁷ Victor Loret, a director of the *Service* and a pupil of Gaston Maspero, arrived in Egypt in 1881. By 1898, he was familiar with the Valley of the Kings. He studied the blank areas on maps of the valley which would later reveal royal tombs, previously unknown. He discovered tomb KV35, and the tombs of most of the important New Kingdom pharaohs such as Thutmose IV, Amenhotep III, Ramesses III, Amenhotep II (Queen Tiyi found in this tomb) and Thutmose III. Many of the cache of royal mummies were placed into KV35 where funerary objects such as a slaughtered bull, statues of kings, vases, alabaster, sticks and staves for practical and ritual purposes were unearthed (Römer 1981:156-163).

on the basis of skull measurements is, in his opinion, uncertain. At the time of Reeves' publication, the scientific analysis on what was believed to be the remains of Queen Tiye had not yet been performed.

Hawass (2010:37) describes the so-called 'elder lady' (KV35EL) as 'lovely even in death with long reddish hair falling across her shoulders'. Hawass states that comparing the DNA of the elder lady with that from the mummies of Tiye's parents (both definitively identified), confirms the identity of the elder lady as that of Tiye:

Based on the Y-chromosomal information on the amount of autosomal half-allele sharing and family trio likelihood calculation, the most plausible 5-generation pedigree was constructed.

KV35EL was identified as the grandmother of Tutankhamun (Hawass et al 2010:641). KV35YL, the younger lady, 25-35 years old, was identified as the mother of Tutankhamun. KV55 and KV35YL are the sibling parents of Tutankhamun. There is a probability that KV35YL can be identified as Nefertiti or an 18th Dynasty queen or princess but questions remain regarding her positive identification (Hawass et al 2010:640).

c) KV35YL Nefertiti or 18th Dynasty princess

The identification of the elderly lady as Tiye and the younger lady appear to be contentious issues (Tyldesley 1998:176). The younger lady was first believed to be a man (as stated by Dr Zahi Hawass of the Egyptian Supreme Council of Antiquities) but was later identified as Nefertiti based on the results of DNA testing:

this mummy known as KV35YL known as the 'Younger Lady', is both the full sister of the KV55 mummy—probably Akhenaten—and the mother of his child, Tutankhamun (Hawass 2010:41).

In my opinion these statements are contradictory.

2.4 BONES PROVIDE NEW EVIDENCE OF LIFE AT AMARNA

As stated by Kemp (2012:229), the advances in analytical techniques and the growing confidence with which ancient DNA can be extracted and studied, make it likely that we are on the threshold of a much better understanding of the physical conditions of the past. In order to explain these physical conditions, Kemp (2012:229) uses the example of Tutankhamun who was sickly and died young. From the DNA of Tutankhamun, it has been shown that malaria was the cause of his death. Kemp (2012:228) is of the opinion that Tutankhamun's health and longevity was representative of the time.

Kemp (2012:227) and his team reveal finds at Amarna:

Since 2006 a new source of evidence has become available for assessing what life was like at Amarna: the bones of the people themselves, excavated from a cemetery that lies in a desert valley.

Kemp alludes to the abnormally high incidence of death among young people which is consistent with patterns of death in populations known to have been victims of epidemics. These graves in the Amarna cemetery, dug into a bank of sand, often contained more than one individual. Kemp (2012:229) says that this suggests the likelihood of rapid burial after death. Of the 232 individuals recovered by excavation from Amarna, 70 per cent died before the age of 35. Based on the title of this dissertation, “Moses son of Akhenaten?

Archaeological and textual perspectives”, the archaeological evidence of a plague immediately springs to mind. This plague may provide the reason for a sudden departure from Amarna. This find could reveal the first archaeological proof of the Biblical narratives. In the Hebrew Bible (Exodus 6-11) the plagues brought upon the Egyptians by God are discussed. Perhaps Moses was not purely in memory, but also in archaeology? The deaths of Tiye, Meketaten, Nefertiti, Kiya, Meritaten and Neferneferure and, no doubt, the deaths of others in the royal family, might have been as a result of some kind of a pestilence in the Levant at that time (Aldred 1988:289).

Based on the advances in science, history may be revisited with a fresh eye on subjects that, for some, appear to have been exhausted, revealing new conclusions.

2.5 THE Y CHROMOSOME AND THE DNA OF MOSES’ PEOPLE

The Israelites are referred to in the Hebrew Bible as Moses’ people, as stated in (Exodus 2:11) ‘and it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren.’ In Acts 7:23 there is a further reference to the Hebrews/Israelites being Moses’ people.

‘Today, Jewish males can be divided into three castes; Cohanim (the paternally inherited priesthood), Leviim (non-Cohen members of the paternally defined priestly tribe of Levi), and Israelites (all non- Cohen and non-Levite Jews)’ (Thomas et al 2000:2).

The Y⁴⁸ chromosome becomes most useful when studying paternal lineages. Hamer describes it as a genetic surname that is useful when reconstructing population history (2004:182). The Y chromosome is used in tracing the lineage of the *cohanim* (2004:182).

Hamer (2004:180), in the opening to Chapter Ten titled *The DNA of the Jews*, quotes William James⁴⁹ who states: ‘Truth for us is simply a collective name for verification processes’.

God instructed Moses (Exodus 28:1) that his brother Aaron⁵⁰ and his sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar would be set aside to become priests and minister to God (Hamer 2004:181). The priesthood of Aaron and his descendants became the priestly caste known as the *cohanim* (see footnote 50 for results of scientific testing on the *cohanim* sample). DNA carries historical information (Hamer 2004:181) and provides information about people’s immediate lineage and that of their biological ancestors (Hamer 2004:182). Hamer states that DNA, for historical purposes, ‘can be used as molecular markers for an individual genetic heritage’. This information has aided tracing the migrations of the original Israelites (Hamer 2004:182). Aaron’s DNA and the *cohanim* lineage of priesthood from father to son were tested. A Jewish scientist, Neil Bradman, living in Great Britain and Michael Hammer,⁵¹ an American scientist (not to be confused with Dr Dean Hamer, author of *The God Gene* [2004]), collected samples from *cohanim* and other Jews.⁵² The presence

⁴⁸ The Y DNA tends to be the genealogist’s tool of choice because it is handed down from father to son (Brown 2002:1634). Michael Hammer, a geneticist from the University of Arizona, studied the Y DNA from Jews to validate the legend of the *cohanim* (Brown 2002:1634). Fathers pass down Y chromosome (Y DNA) and mothers mitochondrial DNA (mt DNA) (Brown 2002:1634).

⁴⁹ William James (1842-1910), an American psychologist and philosopher (Reber et al 2009:897).

⁵⁰ Aaron first appears in the Biblical narrative as ‘Aaron the Levite’ who went to meet his brother Moses when Moses returned from Egypt after his theophany at the burning bush. Aaron was eloquent and became Moses’ spokesman to the Israelites and to the Pharaoh (Ex 4:14). Aaron later became high priest, his sons become priests. The priesthood in Israel became known as ‘the sons of Aaron’. Only the descendants of Aaron were *cohanim* (New Bible Dictionary 1990 sv ‘burning bush’). The *leviim* or Levites are non-*cohen* members of the paternally defined priestly tribe of the Levi (Le Roux 2003:64). God awarded ‘the sons of Aaron’ the priesthood, ‘the priesthood is passed on through the Y- chromosome and there is no legitimate way in which a non-priest can become a priest’ (Le Roux 2003:64).

⁵¹ Hammer, Redd, Wood, Bonner, Jarjanzi, Karafet, Santachiara-Benerecetti, Oppenheim, Jobling, Jenkins, Ostrer & Bonn -Tamir (2000:6769-6774) discuss the complex history of the migration of the Jews in their study *Jewish and middle eastern non-Jewish populations share a pool of Y- chromosome biallelic haplotypes*. The DNA samples were taken from 1371 males from 29 populations. Samples from Ashkenazim, Roman Jews, North African Jews, Moroccans, Libyans, Tunisian, Algerian, Near Eastern Jews, Iraqis, Iranians, Kurdish Jews, Yemenite Jews and Ethiopian Jews. Non-Jewish samples include Middle Eastern samples from Palestinians, Syrians, Lebanese, Israeli Druze and Saudi Arabians. The rest of the sample were composed of men from Europe, Great Britain, Turkey and the Lemba people (see 2.5.1) (Hammer et al 2000:6770).

⁵² Samples were collected from 68 *cohanim* and 120 lay Jews from Israel, Britain and North America. Initial results showed a pattern that was missing from the *cohanim*. David Goldstein, a British scientist and Michael Hammer, an American scientist, conducted a new study that included 306 unrelated men, 119 lay Jews, 106 *cohanim*, and 81 Levites. Half of all those studied were Ashkenazi and the other half were Sephardic. The Ashkenazim are a group of Jews from the northern parts of Europe who spoke Yiddish. More than 70 per cent of Jews are Ashkenazim (Kruger et al 2002:147). The name Sephardic derives from the term for Spain and consists of Jews from Spain, Turkey, Palestine and Syria. Their dialect was Spanish/Hebrew called Ladina and their worshipping contained a mystical element (Kruger et al

of this pattern was most often found in the *cohanim* (Hamer 2004:188). According to Hamer, all Jews claim to be Abraham's descendants. The results of scientific studies on genetic patterns claim that the Jews were most similar to Middle Eastern Arabs. Hamer states that 'non-Jewish men from Lebanon, Syria and Palestine had virtually the same mix of Y Chromosomes as did the various populations that were surveyed'. If one was given nothing more than the DNA sample, it would be impossible to differentiate between a typical Jew and a typical Arab (2004:190). What is significant, according to Hamer, is that 'the first Arabs and Jews had the same Y chromosome DNA—a genetic resemblance that survives to this day' (2004:190).

Despite the Falasha⁵³ people of Ethiopia claiming descendency from one of the 'ten lost tribes' of Israel, DNA has not been able to substantiate this claim (Hamer 2004:192). Le Roux states that the Falasha are nevertheless recognised as authentic Jews by the Rabbinat of Israel (2003:19). The Falashas are Ethiopian Jews who claim to be descendants of Jews who came to Ethiopia with Menelik I, the alleged son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (Lucotte & Smets 1999:989-993). The language they speak is Amharic, a Semitic language (Lucotte & Smets 1999:989-993). The Lemba people, specifically the priestly family of the Lemba (Le Roux 2003:63-67) on the other hand, are linked genetically to the ancient Israelites – the descendents of Aaron (Thomas et al 2000:674-686).

2.5.1 The Lemba

Hamer states 'the Lemba people carry the genetic signature of the Jewish Cohanim' (2004:193). Le Roux describes the Lemba people as perhaps being the only people in Southern Africa who have specific oral traditions which states that they originally came by boat to Africa (2003:24). Le Roux states 'ancestors of the Lemba were Jewish craftsmen and traders from Yemen (600 CE and later)' this reflects an oral tradition, the genetic results are also consistent with the oral tradition that only males came by boat to Africa and later had to take local wives'(2003:63). Parfitt (2002:212) comments on the traditions of the Lemba who follow laws of purity and severe food taboos, eating only meat which has been ritually slaughtered by a Lemba. It is not only the traditions which link the Lemba to the Jews, the genetic work conducted on the Lemba people have suggested that the Lemba have ancestry linking them to the Jews (Parfitt 2002:214). Hamer (2004:193) states that 53

2002:147). The scientists made a significant find that there was a distinctive Cohen genetic signature and named the DNA pattern CMH (Cohen Modal Haplotype). 'The distinctive pattern predominantly found among members of the Jewish priesthood, *cohanim*, is called the Cohen Modal Haplotype (CMH)' (Le Roux 2003:65).

⁵³ Le Roux (2003:18) states that the word *Falasha* is derived from an ancient Ethiopian term meaning 'exile' or 'stranger'. The Falasha are linked to the Israelites, not through a genetic link, but rather through a form of Judaism that they practice (2003:19).

per cent of the Lemba's hereditary priestly cast carries the DNA signature, the same high percentage is found in the *cohanim* of Israel. One of the Lemba clan carries the same Y-chromosome as the Y-chromosome DNA of Aaron, Nadab and Abihu (Hamer 2004:193).⁵⁴ The Y chromosome type is termed the Cohen Modal Haplotype (CMH) which is known to be characteristic of the paternally inherited Jewish priesthood (Thomas et al 2000 674-686). Whilst the Y chromosome is a distinctive genetic marker of Aaron's descendents, it does not yet confirm the historicity of Moses – at this stage, it does however say something about the existence of ancient Israelites from Moses' time.

2.6 CONCLUSION

The analysis of DNA from human archaeological remains becomes a powerful tool for reconstructing ancient events in history (Fu, Xie, Xu, Li, Zhang, Zhou & Zhu 2009:23-29). The primary focus of the above discussion has been an attempt to analyse and synthesise the results from the scientific study of the 18th Dynasty royal mummies with what is revealed in the archaeological texts. Genetic and family relationships have been established based on the evidence provided above (see discussion in 2.3). It was found that Tutankhamun's mother and father were full brother and sister. This poses another question: where in the texts does it indicate that Akhenaten/Smenkhare were brothers to Nefertiti (believed to be KV35YL) or, for that matter, Nefertiti was Tutankhamun's mother? KV35YL proved to be the daughter of Amenhotep III and Tiye, thus a sister to Akhenaten. Tutankhamun was conceived from the union of (Akhenaten/Smenkhare?) and his full sister (Hawass 2010:38). There is no evidence that either Nefertiti or Kiya were Akhenaten's sisters, so which sister bore Akhenaten a child? Hawass states that we may never know (2010:38). This aspect is of importance as it would provide an identity to the mother of Akhenaten's sons.

As indicated above (cf. 2.3.1.2) I asked Dr Joyce Tyldesley (private communication, 2014) if the mummies have provided information regarding dating. In her reply she stated: 'I don't think that anyone has used DNA to date the KV55 mummy. We can do that fairly accurately by examining the style of the tomb contents' (2014).

⁵⁴ In Numbers 25:7, Aaron's son (grandson?) bears the name Phinehas which means 'Nubian' or 'dark one', according to Bennett (1971:497). According to Meyer (1905:651), Pinchas is the name of the priestly family of Shiloh where the Ark was stationed prior to its removal to Jerusalem. Phinehas was an Egyptian name, according to Meyer (1905:651).

The essence of *ka*⁵⁵ has long escaped these unfortunate mummies and they have become objects of intense scrutiny since their first discovery.⁵⁶ The promise of an eternal afterlife, so valued by the ancient Egyptians, has instead become one of man-handling. The rough treatment afforded to the mummy of Tutankhamun is one such example (see discussion in 2.2.3).

Stakeholders cannot escape poor, unethical methodology in mummy research. Ethics must be considered to avoid a ‘moral dilemma’ in future research as suggested by Kaufmann & Rühli (see discussion in 2.2.3). The fact that contamination is a major obstacle in human ancient DNA research might possibly impact on the reliability of the findings (Gad et al 2010:2471). Despite 21st century scientific interventions regarding the identity of KV55, questions remain and scholars continue to speculate on the findings. The words ‘most probably’ discussed in section 2.3.1.2 are not convincing enough to determine whether the skeleton is that of Akhenaten, instead, it still ‘most probably’ awaits discovery.

In the opinion of Baigent, Leigh & Lincoln ‘all Biblical scholarship entails speculation as does theology’ (2005:18). The latest archaeological findings by Kemp in Amarna indicate an abnormally high incidence of death in young people which ‘is consistent with patterns of death in populations known to have been victims of epidemics’ (Kemp 2012:228). There are a significant number of graves containing more than one individual and very rapid burials after death (Kemp 2012:228-229). In my opinion, this is evidence of a plague which may be evidence of the Biblical plague synonymous with the protagonist Moses. Is KV55 Smenkhare or Akhenaten? From the above discussion, it is clear that many experts are not as optimistic as the conclusion made by Hawass and his team.

The possibility exists that the body of Akhenaten has never been found, and as seen in the discussion above, ‘expert opinion’ is often flawed and contradictory and there is not conclusive evidence to determine KV55’s true identity.

In concluding this chapter, it is suggested that the doubts and scepticism of experts relating to the positive identification of Akhenaten should be given attention. Clearly, some scholars, discussed above, are not convinced that the remains of KV55 are those of Akhenaten. But, if the remains of

⁵⁵ According to Bunson (1991:130), *ka* is an Egyptian term for spiritual essence which existed alongside human form, yet maintained individuality. The *ka* was an astral being and considered the guiding force for all human life.

⁵⁶ On an ethical note, our hunger for knowledge and immediate gratification has left these surviving remnants of what was once human life, removed from their earthly eternal homes and encased in glass as objects of endless observation and scientific testing. This is an ethical dilemma as discussed above.

KV55 are not those of Akhenaten, where and when did Akhenaten die?⁵⁷ Might Akhenaten have left Amarna impulsively taking with him over 20,000 Egyptians, as he had once done when departing Thebes to build a new city Amarna on an empty stretch of desert beside the Nile (Kemp 2012:17)? As Kemp states, Akhenaten was obliged to make choices implementing his vision (2012:19). Did he make a choice to leave Amarna with a son or 'sons' (as referred to by Tushratta, his father-in-law) who may have inherited Akhenaten's 'God gene' and continued to implement his vision?

I suggested that archaeologists are looking in the wrong area for evidence of an exodus. The DNA extracted from the Lemba clan offers scientific proof that the priestly family of the Lemba carries a Y chromosome type termed the Cohen Modal Haplotype. Tracing the Ychromosome of the *cohanim* priestly class indicates the survival not only of a traditional culture but also a DNA link to a people who travelled as far south as the tip of Africa, perhaps via South Arabia or Ethiopia (Cush/Midia). The Y-chromosome provides conclusive evidence which links Middle Eastern men to a small group of Lemba living in South Africa and Zimbabwe. The Cohen Modal Haplotype is a distinctive genetic marker of the descendents of Aaron, but it does not confirm the historicity of a person such as Moses yet – although it does say something about the existence of ancient Israelites from the time of Biblical Moses.

⁵⁷ At the time that this chapter was being written, a press announcement was made on the 28 April 2014 regarding a new tomb found in the Valley of the Kings. In an article written in *Live Science*, Editor Megan Gannon said that 'archaeologists have discovered the final resting place of at least 50 royal Egyptians — including princes, princesses and infants while excavating a trashed tomb in the Valley of the Kings'. Inside the tomb, dozens of mummies have been unearthed. What is of interest for this dissertation is that most of the mummies were related to two pharaohs, Thutmosis IV and Amenhotep III (Akhenaten's grandfather). Further results from this tomb might throw light on many aspects which still remain vague for scholars of this period of Egyptian history. <http://www.livescience.com/45186-mummies-unearthed-egypts-valley-of-the-kings.html>

CHAPTER THREE: AKHENATEN: FROM PHARAOH TO PROPHET

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the life of Akhenaten based on archaeological evidence, his rediscovery, and scholars' interpretations of the epigraphical detail, as we attempt to gain more perspective into a world inscribed in stone over three thousand years ago. The archaeologist excavates ancient cities in an attempt to reconstruct a past culture and way of life as accurately as possible (Scheepers 1987:1). Akhenaten re-emerges into the light. Historical aspects will be the theme for this chapter which provides archaeological evidence to reinforce the idea that Akhenaten was indeed 'a figure exclusively of history and not of memory' (Assmann 1997:23). The archaeology provides clues to Akhenaten's ancestry and lineage, illuminating the environment which moulded the young pharaoh. The Amarna letters will be reviewed with the purpose of providing the context of Egypt and its vassals and friends at that time. The problems of current chronology raised by Peter James (see Chapter One) will be addressed.⁵⁸ The *talatat* blocks found at Karnak and Amarna, unique to the reign of Akhenaten, and the important work of Redford and his team with *The Akhenaten Temple Project* will be reviewed. *The Royal Tomb at El-'Amarna*, Martin's study of the rock tombs at Amarna and the reliefs on the walls of the tombs will be investigated in this chapter. Murnane's invaluable *Texts from the Amarna Period in Egypt* (1995) which include the translations of Akhenaten's own proclamations for his new city, Amarna, and his motivation for leaving Thebes will provide an insight into Akhenaten's personality. The wine jar seal found at Malqata palace appears to be the earliest indication of the young Akhenaten.⁵⁹

The archaeologist and Egyptologist, Barry Kemp, has worked at the site of Amarna for over thirty-five years.⁶⁰ In his latest publication, Kemp sums up his views by saying that 'the more one seeks to make sense of the past, the more one has to imagine' (2012:19). The American anthropologist, Leslie A. White agrees by saying that 'the absence of facts gives the imagination free reign' (Reeves 2001:9). As these two scholars explain, the imagination plays a key role in the interpretation of

⁵⁸ Renfrew (cited in James 1991:xv) suggests that historical chronology for ancient Egypt should be set 150 years earlier than it currently is.

⁵⁹ Another chance discovery in the Theban West Bank came a year later in the spring of 1888. George Daressy, assistant to Gaston Maspero, uncovered the palace of Malqata, once occupied by the family of Amenophis III and his son Akhenaten (Reeves 2001:70).

⁶⁰ Scientific and archaeological excavations have been carried out at Amarna since 1977 under Barry Kemp and his team who have been excavating on behalf of the Egyptian Exploration Society (Gahlin 2001:129). The Supreme Council of Antiquities, known as the Ministry of Antiquities since 2011, is responsible for the annual renewable agreement to excavate at the site of Amarna (Kemp 2012:9).

archaeological evidence. One then attempts to make sense of the past supported by the opinions of previous scholars, aided by the scientific study of archaeology which is continually advancing techniques such as the use of radiocarbon dating, dendrochronology and the wonders of DNA, among other sources. Piecing archaeological information together, may give a clearer picture of events. The ancient texts used in this chapter illuminate aspects of the customs and culture of those family members closest to Akhenaten. It reveals who shaped and influenced the young pharaoh, specifically pertaining to the development of his new monotheistic ideology, that, according to Gahlin (2001:130), ‘elevated one god to the unique position of sole deity, and instituted measures to eliminate all other deities’. Hornung (1992:49) believes that the new religion (see discussion in Chapter Five) of the Aten stood and fell with Akhenaten, its founder, because ‘he left no son to continue his role of pharaoh’. Archaeological evidence however suggests that Akhenaten fathered ‘sons’. The king of Mitanni, Tushratta, wrote a letter to Akhenaten (Naphureya) the king of Egypt. The contents of this Amarna letter, EA 29, reviewed Mitannian-Egyptian relations and also enquires after Akhenaten’s ‘sons’ in the plural form (Moran 1992:92). Was Akhenaten’s radical shift in ideology passed on to his sons?

The European interest in Egypt had commenced in the 17th century for religious reasons, according to Oakes (2001:16).⁶¹

3.2 AKHENATEN’S: TESTIMONY IN STONE

‘Without the past to set the stage, the present remains but an empty scene’ (Knapp 1988:1).

Prior to the rediscovery of the world of Akhenaten in the 18th and 19th centuries, the ‘present’ was indeed an empty scene, with no knowledge of this enigmatic king. The early historians and archaeologists interpreted their finds and released publications which were often disputed at a later stage as archaeological⁶² excavations produced new evidence and new interpretations (Knapp 1988:3). According to Hornung (1992:47), ‘[d]ocumentation concerning Akhenaten is enriched almost every year’. Hornung’s statement still holds true twenty years later. Barry Kemp’s latest publication (2012)

⁶¹ It was Egypt’s association with Christianity that encouraged these early visitors. The Jesuit, Claude Sicard, noted one of the massive boundary stelae in 1714, which was used to demarcate Amarna (Reeves 2001:14). Years later, Edme Jomard, a surveyor from Napoleon Bonaparte’s expedition to Egypt, 1798-1799, remarked after visiting the site ‘I was surprised to see so great a mass of ruins’ (Reeves 2001:15). A map and a survey of the site of Amarna were completed by the engineers, attached to Napoleon’s Egyptian expedition. However, this expedition was unaware of the significance of the ruins (Reeves 2001:15). Akhenaten’s ‘lost city’ hinted at by Sicard, had been found.

⁶² *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1976, sv ‘archaeology’) defines the term ‘archaeology’ as a ‘study of human antiquities, especially of the prehistoric period and usually by excavation’.

is a definitive account of Amarna, it provides three decades of research and excavation, Kemp was invited to write the book at the initiative of Colin Renfrew, Kemp lectures to enthusiastic audiences on the subject of Akhenaten's Amarna which is still popular today (Kemp 2012:10).

3.2.1 The Amarna letters



Figure 3.1: Qatna, ancient Bronze Age site in Syria. Amarna letters bear testimony to correspondence between the two Kingdoms of Syria and Egypt. (Photograph taken by Jayne Vine, Dec 2009).

3.2.1.1. *The discovery of the tablets (EA)*

The lumps of clay unearthed by a peasant woman in 1887 on the east bank of the Nile River gave her, not a moment of joy, but rather a moment of disappointment (Reeves 2001:11). This find was not the gold she was hoping for but, rather, disintegrating tablets of dried clay inscribed with strange markings (Reeves 2001:11). The woman sold her 'worthless' find for 10 piastres (Reeves 2001:11). The countless clay tablets, removed one by one from their subterranean home had, for over three thousand years, been submerged in the earth of Egypt (Reeves 2001:11). What she unearthed that day proved to be one of the most valuable archaeological discoveries in history (Reeves 2001:11). It was an archive of international correspondence between certain Egyptian rulers of the 18th Dynasty, namely, Amenophis III, Amenophis IV/Akhenaten, Smenkhare and Tutankhamun. The

chance discovery was made at the site of Amarna, the city which was founded by the pharaoh Akhenaten (Reeves 2001:8- 11). The clay tablets had been written in cuneiform script (*cuneus*, Latin for wedge) and inscribed with a stylus cut from a reed (Walker 1990:17).

Reeves (2001:11) states that the clay tablets were discovered by a peasant woman in Amarna while Moran⁶³ (1992:xiii) alludes to a conflicting account of the discovery, that ‘natives came upon clay tablets with some writing on them and began clandestine diggings’. Both scholars agree that the year of the discovery was 1887 and that the tablets were found at Amarna, the site of Akhet-Aten, the city of Akhenaten. The tablets were thus named the ‘Amarna Tablets’ (Moran 1992:xiii) and were given the acronym EA.⁶⁴

Understandably, the site drew huge attention and the news of the discovery spread rapidly. Of the more than 300 tablets unearthed, many ended up with dealers and private collectors. Unluckily for the Egyptian authorities, they were unable to unearth any more tablets, however, Sir Flinders Petrie,⁶⁵ was fortunate to unearth another 22 fragments between 1891 and 1892. These fragments became part of the Ashmolean Museum’s collection in Oxford (Moran 1992:xiv).

Moran was faced with the task of translating the texts into English. They had previously been translated into French and originally published in 1987 as *Les Lettres d’El Amarna*. Moran (1992:ix) states that:

[t]hey may, therefore, be read as a kind of preface to biblical history, and it is for this reason above all, that they have been, and continue to be, the subject of the most diligent inquiry and reflection.

3.2.1.2. *The Amarna archive*

According to Moran (1992:xv), the archive comprised a total of 382 tablets,⁶⁶ mostly letters of correspondence received from vassals and some written in Egypt. The nature of the tablets differed; there were marriage negotiations, inventories, affairs of state, and myths and epics from

⁶³ William L. Moran edited and translated the entire corpus of *The Amarna Letters* from 1973 to 1974 (Moran 1992:ix).

⁶⁴ The term EA simply refers to *El Amarna* and the numbering of the letters in *VAB Vorderasiatische Bibliothek* published by J. A. Knudtzon (Moran 1992:xiv).

⁶⁵ Sir Flinders Petrie, a pioneer of modern archaeological methods in Egypt, was the first Professor of Egyptology at University College, London (Oakes 2001:30).

⁶⁶ The tablets were collected (sometimes confiscated) and placed into museums in Britain, Cairo, France, America, Palestine and Istanbul and some remained in the ownership of private collectors (Moran 1992:xiii). Moran refers to the important work of the Norwegian Assyriologist, J.A. Knudtzon, who painstakingly made a study of the texture of clay and palaeography of the tablets. Through this study, he was able, in most instances to accurately determine provenance (Moran 1992:xvi).

Mesopotamia. Walker alludes to the first known reference to the kingdom of Mitanni that appears in a letter from Amenophis III (1417–1379 BCE) (Walker 1990:54). This letter, part of the archive found in Amarna, provided information about the Hurrian language which was previously unknown. Walker says that scholars often refer to Hurrians as Mitannians (Walker 1990:54). Akhenaten was linked to the Mitannian people on both his maternal and paternal side (chart of family tree in 3.4). King Tushratta of Mitanni was believed to be the father-in law of Akhenaten, as Akhenaten was married to Kiya/Tadukhepa (Moran 1992:86).

3.2.1.3. *The language of the tablets*

The tablets were inscribed with cuneiform Akkadian,⁶⁷ a language of ancient Babylonia and the *lingua franca* of the Near Eastern Late Bronze Age (James 1991:117). This ‘cuneiform culture’ existed in the ancient Near East during most of the second millennium BCE and these letters provide evidence of social and political history at that time (Moran 1992:ix). Moran (1992:xix) states that the predominant language of the Amarna tablets was Babylonian with Hurrian, Assyrian and Hittite being the exceptions. The letters found at Amarna originating in Mitanni, Hatti, Ugarit, Qatna (see Figure 3.1) and Amurru were written in Hurro-Akkadian. Moran warns the reader to be aware that translations cannot reflect the names and the diversity of language and writing, but one must be aware of these limitations ‘and the distance of the several dialects from the normative language of Babylonia’ (Moran 1992:xxii).

Of particular interest for this dissertation are the letters from Mitanni (EA 17, 19-23, 25-30). These letters indicate the relationship between Egypt and Mitanni and the bonds from royal marriages which would naturally result in loyalty and blood ties (Moran 1992:xxi).

3.2.1.4. *International correspondence*

The tablets set the scene politically thus providing context to the Amarna period.

Moran is of the opinion that the term ‘brotherhood’ was one which was used by the rulers at that time. The term unified the rulers as this bond was one of love and friendship and this close alliance saw the rulers exchanging gifts in order to maintain these politically important unions. The following

⁶⁷ Akkadian is one of the Semitic languages, together with Arabic, Hebrew and Aramaic. It has three dialects: Old Akkadian, Babylonian and Assyrian; so by definition anything written in Babylonian or Assyrian can equally be said to be written in Akkadian’ (Walker 1990:26).

passage taken from EA 9:7-10 indicates the relationship and the context at the time. The letter was written by Burra-Buriyaš to the king of Egypt Nibhurrereya (Tutankhamun's prenomen) (Moran 1992:383) 'From the time my ancestors and your ancestors made a mutual declaration of friendship, they sent beautiful greeting gifts to each other, and refused no request for anything beautiful' (Moran 1992:xxiv).

Kuhrt (1995:194) points out that the negotiations between the kingdom of Mitanni and Egypt were probably as a result of the expansion of the Hittite empire. The marriage of the daughter of the Mitannian King Artatama to Thutmosis IV, paternal grandfather of Akhenaten, would have been seen as securing a successful alliance between the countries. Prior to this, Egypt and Mitanni had been divided by bloody wars. The trend was therefore set for further marriages with both Amenophis III and Akhenaten marrying Mitannian princesses. Moran (1992:xxv) suggests that in the 'case of marriage the economic value was considerable, even staggering.'

3.2.1.5. *Vassal correspondence*

'The correspondence reflects the Egyptian administration of its territories in Syria and Palestine' (Moran 1992:xxvi). The Amarna letters were written at a time when these territories in Syria and Palestine were ruled by Egyptian officials (Moran 1992:xxvi). These officials were members of the Egyptian military (Moran 1992:xxvi). Under these officials were the native local rulers referred to as *ḥazannu* or 'mayors', 'rulers' *awilu* or 'kings' *šarru* (Moran 1992:xxvi-xxvii). These subordinate vassals fell under the rule of the Egyptian king. There is evidence of letters written by the pharaoh to his vassals (Moran 1992:xxvii). Moran is of the opinion that the main purpose of the kings' writings was the acquisition of personnel, goods, securing obedience to their orders and suppliers for their troops (1992:xxvii). It must be assumed, based on the discovery of the Amarna tablets, that the king was residing at Amarna.

Moran states that, at the time the Amarna letters were written, Egyptian territory was separated into two or three provinces (1992:xxvi). An Egyptian official, normally a member of the military, controlled each province (Moran 1992:xxvi). One of the Egyptian officials was based at Gaza, which controlled most of Palestine, another at Kumidu who administered from Qades in southern Syria to Hazor in Northern Palestine (Moran 1992:xxvii). The Damascene and Northern Transjordan all fell under Egyptian administration (Moran 1992:xxvi-xxvii).

These letters of communication are, in most cases, of a political nature. The content of these vassal letters reflect tensions in the North, specifically, concerns regarding the resurgence and potential threat of the Hittites in the region. In the south, the vassal correspondence refers to tensions amongst city states and some letters describe the preparations by the vassals for a campaign to confront those responsible before the arrival of Egyptian troops (Moran 1992:xxxiii).

3.2.1.6. Vassal correspondence and the *Hapiru*

In letter EA 88 of the Amarna correspondence, the full name ‘*Apiru*’ is written out in a letter sent to the pharaoh by Rib-Hadda, the king of Byblos. The letter is an urgent request for military aid from the Egyptians (Moran 1992:160). Wiseman (1999:5) points out that there are further references to the *Hapiru* in letters EA 286-90 that provide clear evidence of the rebellious nature of the *Habiru* (also written as ‘*Apiru*’) people⁶⁸ the Hapiru/‘Apiru).

Could these prisoners have built Amarna? Excavations from cemeteries in Amarna suggest that many people died from injuries such as blows and compression fractures of the spine indicating the bearing of heavy loads. In some cases, there is clear evidence to suggest a gruesome practice of stabbing through the shoulder as a possible form of punishment (Kemp 2012:227). Tubb makes reference to the *Habiru*/Hebrew connection as seeming quite secure. *Habiru* were indeed present in the Egyptian Delta in significant numbers during the Amarna period. These people ‘having been presumably rounded up and taken prisoner during the Amarna period’ (Tubb 1998:81).

Wiseman, in his concluding argument, claims that the *Hapiru* of cuneiform texts, the ‘*prw* of Egypt and the ‘*prm* of Ugarit can be identified with the Hebrews of the Bible but warns the reader that these conclusions are tentative (1999:23) (this connection might be a link between Moses and his people).

⁶⁸ Wiseman (1999:8-9) questions whether the *Hapiru* constituted a Hurrian element because many of the *Hapiru* have Hurrian names. He later states that the connection between the Hurrians and the *Hapiru* are proven, however, on the stela of Amenophis II, the Hurrians and the *Hapiru* are mentioned separately (1999:18). Wiseman states that in the region of Upper Khabur at Tell Brak, the personal name of *Hapiram* appears (1999:18). Wiseman argues that the Akkadian *i* of the second syllable disappears in Hebrew West Semitic and Abiram becomes Abram (1999:20). Wiseman suggests that the *Hapiru* might have been Indo-European aristocracy who lived among the Hurrian population both in Mitanni and in the Canaan of the Amarna letters (Wiseman 1999:18). During the Amarna period, the king of Jerusalem was a Hurrian. This king wrote out the name of *Hapiru* in full and avoided the use of the disapproving term SA.GAZ (Wiseman 1999:18). In the Amarna letters, the pharaohs Amenophis III and Amenophis IV mentioned rebels called ‘*Habiru*’ or ‘*Hapiru*’. At the time, the Egyptians were fighting the ‘*prw* and taking them as prisoners. Wiseman (1999:4) states that at least nine Egyptian texts that mention the ‘*prw* are known.

The words inscribed in clay by the vassals and international correspondence paint a clear picture of the political context at the time of the Amarna period, and, to a certain degree, provide a frame of reference for the various authors. Wiseman's connection between the *Hapiru*, the Mitannians and the Hurrians is of particular importance for this study as Biblical texts refer to Moses being a Hebrew and Akhenaten is linked by blood to the royal family of Mitanni. Akhenaten's genealogical links to the Mitannian royal family will be discussed later in this chapter (see 3.13).

3.2.1.7. Vassal correspondence and the Mitanni

EA 24, known as the 'Mitanni letter', discusses marriage and friendship. It is a letter written by Tushratta of Mitanni to Akhenaten and is the only document in the Amarna archive written in Hurrian (Moran 1992:71). This Hurrian letter provides archaeological evidence to suggest that someone at the Egyptian court was able to understand the Hurrian language.

3.2.1.8. The chronology of the Amarna letters

Moran states that the chronology of the Amarna letters has puzzled scholars and that definitive solutions for the correct and absolute dating continue to elude them (1992:xxxiv). Moran suggests that the archive begins during the time of Amenophis III, extending no later than Tutankhamun's first year. This is generally believed to be at the time when the court at Akhet-Aten was abandoned and returned to Thebes (1992:xxxiv).

The large archive of diplomatic correspondence found at Amarna provides synchronisms between Egypt, Babylonia, and the Hittites during the late Bronze Age (James 1991:308). Assurballit, the Assyrian king, appears to be a contemporary of the Pharaoh Akhenaten, however, James (1991:308) questions the reliability of the Egyptian 'kings list' as a chronological source and suggests that the synchronism can be maintained with a 'revised scheme' placing these rulers at the end of the 12th century BCE rather than the 14th century BCE as is now the case. Klinger, Hornung, Krauss & Warburton (2006:313) suggest that it is only with the 14th century letters of Ashshur-Uballit I to Amenhotep IV that a 'real synchronism can be won from the Amarna letters' (Klinger et al 2006:313). Letters from Ashshur-Uballit I to Akhenaten are sent at the start of Ashshur-Uballit I reign (1353 BCE) thereafter a gap of several centuries between the two powers existed (Klinger et al 2006:314). Could this be the 'dark age'⁶⁹ referred to by James? James is of the same opinion as

⁶⁹ Professor Colin Renfrew (a professor of Archaeology at Cambridge) cited in Peter James's foreword to *Centuries of*

Klinger et al that there are only two points at which Assyrian or Babylonian history correspond with Egyptian or Hittite sources. One point places Akhenaten and Ashshur-Uballit I as contemporaries (as discussed above) and the other places a Tukulti-Ninurta (Assyrian) as contemporary with a King Tudhaliya IV (Hittite). The synchronisms are not entirely satisfactory, however, because of a discrepancy which regards the name of Ashshur-Uballit I's father. This information differs from that given in the Amarna letters and the Assyrian king list (James 1991:306).⁷⁰

Kuhrt alludes to the problems of dating the Hittite kings as there is no 'kings list' and only approximate chronology, thus the reliance on establishing correlations with material outside of Anatolia (1995:229). Suppiluliumas I is given a date of 1370-1330 BCE (or 1344-1322 BCE) (Kuhrt 1995:229). Egyptian, Assyrian and Babylonian rulers are the links used however, there are limitations on chronology, in Kuhrt's opinion (1995:229). There remain divided opinions regarding the time period of the accession of Suppiluliumas I to the Hittite throne. Some scholars place Suppiluliumas I on the throne ca 1380 BCE, while others favour ca 1343 BCE (Kuhrt 1995:229).

Moran (1992:xxxviii) questions the evidence of the six year war waged by Suppiluliumas I against the Hurrians (Mitanni) in Syria. The evidence of a six year war waged by Suppiluliumas against Syria is problematic (Moran 1992:xxxviii). One reading of the evidence dates an early stage of the war which is simultaneous with the death of Tutankhamun (Moran 1992:xxxviii). This is problematic as this would be long after the abandonment of Amarna (Moran 1992:xxxviii). Albright, cited in Moran, suggests that the *Hurri* war is almost certainly reflected in the Amarna letters. Albright suggests that if the *Hurri* war is reflected in the Amarna letters, then it 'postulates confusion in the Hittite tradition' (Moran 1992:xxxviii). Other more probable readings are possible. Krauss, in Moran (1992:xxxix), suggests the dead king was Amemphis IV/Akhenaten. Wilhelm and Boese (1987:100) are of the opinion that the dead king is Smenkhare. The confusion appears to be the name and identity of the deceased king of Egypt at the time of the six year war who could have been either Nibḥurureya (Tutankhamun), Napḥurureya (Amenophis IV) or A(na)huruiya (Smenkhare) (in Moran 1992:xxxviii). Moran states that 'absolute dates of kings reigning in the Amarna period cannot be fixed with certainty'. The following dates reflect most recent studies and date Amenophis IV (Akhenaten) to 1350-1334 (1352-1336) and Smenkhare to 1336-1332 (1335-

darkness claims that James's disquieting book draws attention to the very shaky nature of dating. New scientific methods which include radiocarbon dating suggest that historical Egyptian chronology might need to be reset (James 1991:xv).

⁷⁰ In EA 16 Ashshur-Uballit I mentions that his father Assur-nadin-ahhe corresponded with Egypt, however the monuments describe Ashshur-Uballit I as being the son of Eriba-Adad, James warns the researcher that the Late Bronze Age chronologies are flawed and are to be treated with caution (James 1991:340).

1332) (1992:xxxix). Klinger believes that if the Hurija transcription in EA 41 which was written by an unidentified pharaoh, can be reliably identified, scholars will have a clearer picture regarding the period of Hittite history and should sources reveal any new findings regarding the Dahamunza affair,⁷¹ a clearer picture would emerge thus providing a correlation between the Egyptian and Hittite chronology (2006:319).

3.2.1.9. Amarna correspondence to and from Akhenaten

There are innumerable letters from various kings in the international correspondence. What are of particular interest in the Amarna corpus are the letters with Hurrian influence (Moran 1992:xxi). The Hurrian link indicates that members of the Egyptian court were able to communicate with the king of Mitanni in the language of Hurrian (EA 24) (Moran 1992:71). Correspondence from Mitanni and Qatna, letters addressed to Amenhotep III, Akhenaten and Queen Tiye (EA 26) (Moran 1992:84) are among those that have been found (Moran 1992:xxv).

One such letter (EA 27) written by King Tushratta to Akhenaten⁷² states the following:

[Say to Naphurreya, the king of Egi] pt, my brother, my son-in law,
Whom [I love and who love me: Thus T]uṣratta, Great King, the king
of Mi[tani, your father-in-law, who loves you, your brother]. For me all goes well.
For you m[ay all go well. For Teye, your mother, for] your [house]hold, may all go
[well, For Tadu-Ḥeba, [m]y daug[hter, your
wife, for the rest of your wives], for [your] sons, [for] your... (Moran 1992:86).

The above text provides ample evidence that Tushratta, a contemporary of Akhenaten, sent salutations to members of the Egyptian royal family and specifically mentions 'sons' in the plural and names his daughter Tadu-Ḥeba (Moran 1992:86).

⁷¹ Dahamunzu' was a queen of Egypt who wrote a letter to Suppiluliumas, the Hittite king, requesting the following: '[m]y husband died. A son I have not. But to you, they say, the sons are many. If you were to give me a son of yours, he would become my husband. Never shall I pick out a servant of mine and make him my husband! ... I am afraid!' (Reeves 2001:175). The Hittite king was suspicious. However, after deliberation, his son Zennanza was duly dispatched, only to be assassinated en route to Egypt (Reeves 2001:176). Scholars investigated the possible identity of this queen as no Egyptian queen on record was named 'Dahamunzu'. They concluded that the name was a Hittite vocalisation of an Egyptian title: *ta hemet nesu*, 'the king's wife'. The question remained, which king? One possibility was Ankhesenamun, the wife of Tutankhamun, another possibility was Nefertiti (John R. Harris argued that Dahamunzu was Nefertiti), the widow of Akhenaten (Reeves 2001:176). Understandably, with the murder of the Hittite king's son, a backlash would take its natural course. 'If Dahamunzu's actions provoked the anti-foreigner backlash one might expect, the fate of Egypt's alien population not improbably provided an important strand to the biblical tradition of Exodus' (Reeves 2001:174-177). As retaliation for the death of Prince Zennanza, the Hittites, under Suppiluliumas, attacked one of the Egyptian garrisons, taking Egyptians as prisoners. It was these prisoners who carried with them the plague that was to afflict the land of the Hittites for many years (Aldred 1988:298).

⁷² Naphurriya/Namḥurya prenomen of Amenophis IV (Akhenaten) (Moran 1992:383).

3.2.2 The Malqata palace

The name 'el-Malqata' is a modern Arabic term which translates as 'the place where things are picked up' (Reeves 2001:70-71). The Malqata palace was once a rambling complex of buildings that extended over 80 acres and was situated on the west bank of the Nile River (Tyldesley 1998:7). It was built by Amenophis III, Akhenaten's father (Aldred 1988:148). The king's palace⁷³ at Malqata appears to have been connected to the Sed-festivals⁷⁴ (Reeves 2001:71) as evidenced by hundreds of dated labels from jars that were found in the rubble at Malqata (Aldred 1988:163). A wine-jar seal, labelled 'the estate of the King's son Amenhotep', unearthed at the palace of Malqata, appears to be the only mention of the 'young' Akhenaten (Tyldesley 1998:37).

3.2.3 The '*talatat*' blocks of Karnak and later Amarna

The Arabic word '*talatat*' is a modern term derived from the word 'three' as each *talatat* block is three hand-spans long (Kemp 2012:60). Kemp identified the quarry of Gebel el- Silsila (south of Luxor) that provided the sandstone blocks for the buildings embarked upon by Akhenaten early in his reign (2012:60). Kemp (2012:60) is of the opinion that Akhenaten wished to overshadow the temple of Amun-Ra at Karnak (Thebes) with his own buildings.

The mass of ruined monuments, detritus, dilapidated pylons, would have made it difficult for visitors to Karnak to notice any remaining vestiges of Akhenaten's 'disk worshippers'⁷⁵ (Aldred 1988:71). Fortunately, Richard Lepsius who headed the Prussian Epigraphic Expedition in 1842 and was the foremost Egyptologist of his day copied scenes and inscriptions of reliefs in the northern and southern tombs at Amarna (Aldred 1988:20). Lepsius and Prisse d'Avennes noted loose blocks lying on the ground on the south side of the great temple of Amun at Karnak (Aldred 1988:71). It was established by Lepsius that reliefs on the sandstone blocks resembled the masonry of Amenophis III (Aldred 1988:71). It was later concluded that the sandstone blocks were erected by Akhenaten at Karnak prior to his move to Amarna (Aldred 1988:71). Hornung (1992:44) acknowledges Lepsius and Wilkinson for their work at Amarna, their early work at the site contributed to our knowledge of the Amarna period. The work of Lepsius at Amarna enables scholars to have a greater understanding of

⁷³ The palace was a chance discovery by George Daressy in the spring of 1888. Daressy uncovered rooms with wall decorations. According to Reeves (2001:70), the city was abandoned over three thousand years ago, yet Amenophis III's palace complex continues to yield archaeological finds.

⁷⁴ The *heb sed*, or royal jubilee festival, was a ritual confirming the king's right to rule and renewing his royal powers (Oakes 2001:82).

⁷⁵ Akhenaten's choice of worship was the simplest manifestation of the sun – the disc of the sun itself (Gahlin 2001:130). Aldred (1988:71) refers to the followers of the Aten as 'Disk Worshippers'.

the site (Aldred 1988:20).⁷⁶ What these loose blocks revealed was the sun-god Re-Herakhte alongside the figure of the king. The king's prenomen,⁷⁷ was Neferkheperurē. The same prenomen, Neferkheperurē (Akhenaten), appeared at Amarna, but his nomen was different. It was Amenophis with an epithet 'Divine Ruler of Thebes'. This would distinguish him from his predecessor, Amenophis III. It was for this reason that he was called, in this guise, Amenophis IV (Aldred 1988:71).

The reliefs carved on large sandstone blocks were lacking the distortions found on the Amarna monuments. Lepsius drew the conclusion that these reliefs came from buildings which had been erected by Amenophis IV/Akhenaten at Karnak during his early rule (Aldred 1988:71). The loose blocks found on the south side of the Great Temple of Amun at Karnak were decorated with representations of the sun-god Rē-Herakhte (Aldred 1988:71). The figure of the king alongside the sun-god bore the name Neferkheperurē, the same name as that used by Akhenaten at Amarna (Aldred 1988:71). These blocks were in the traditional style of his father's reign and must have been erected prior to Amenophis IV changing his name to Akhenaten (Aldred 1988:71). Later, through the painstaking work of the Canadian Egyptologist Donald B. Redford and Ray Winfield Smith, an American diplomat, all the 'talatat' from Karnak were photographed to scale. The relief scenes were then reconstructed. The project became known as the 'Akhenaten Temple Project' (Redford 1988:54). Redford explains that the 'talatat' were quarried and decorated by Akhenaten and their provenance was from dismantled structures at Thebes (Redford 1988:54).

Kemp describes the 'talatat' blocks as a standard, smallish size; the material used characterising the reign of Akhenaten (2012:302). Thousands of 'talatat' blocks were pieced together aided by computer technology and this has provided further knowledge of Amenophis IV and his queen Nefertiti's reign in Karnak in Thebes (Kemp 2012:302). A reconstruction, using 283 'talatat' blocks, has been built into a museum in Luxor (Thebes) (Aldred 1998:82). Redford's reconstructions of the 'talatat' depict relief scenes from the temple *Rwd-mnw* - showing Asiatic foreigners (Redford 1988:xiii). Other depictions include sun-discs, identifying texts, Akhenaten and Nefertiti's chariots

⁷⁶ Richard Lepsius and his team copied scenes and inscriptions and took paper squeezes of reliefs in the northern and southern tombs. These records which are housed in the Berlin museum have proved to be invaluable. In many instances they are the only evidence of what once appeared on the walls of the tombs (Aldred 1988:20). John Gardner Wilkinson discovered the rock tombs of Akhenaten's officials in 1824 (Hornung 1992:43).

⁷⁷ The titles of the royal names, comprised five elements, denoting their connections to the gods, royal names included *Horus name*, *Nebti name*, *Golden Horus name*, *Nisut-bit name* which was prefaced by two words meaning king: Lord of the South, *Bit*, and Lord of the North *Nisut*. This name, which is considered a king's *prenomen*, was the name given to the king at his coronation. The *prenomen* or first Cartouche name is the most frequently used. In inscriptions, the appearance of the *prenomen* alone indicates which king is meant. *Son of Re' name* is the king's actual birth name, denoting his inclusion in a royal line (Bunson 1999:230).

being followed by a platoon of fan or sunshade bearers (Redford 1988:2). The 'Upper Egyptian Heliopolis' erected by Akhenaten, saw a series of temples in honour of the Aten which were dismantled and became fill material for the construction work of later pharaohs (Reeves 2001:92). *Talatat* blocks were later used in the small Aten temple at Amarna. These blocks would have floated downstream on boats from the quarry at Gebel-el Silsila (Kemp 2012:60).

Aldred (1998:262) identified a structure, given the name of *Gempaaten*, ('The Aten is found'), being the earliest temple erected to the god Aten. Reeves (2001:95) agrees that this was the first monument commissioned by the king, perhaps in regnal year 2. Another temple called *Rudmenu*, ('Enduring in monuments of the Aten forever'), was, according to Aldred (1988:82), the name of a temple which also existed in Amarna, and part of the great temple of *Gempaaten* ('The Aten is found') (Reeves 2001:95).

Hutbenben (Mansion of the Ben-ben stone)⁷⁸ was part of the larger structure, the *Gempaaten*, the mansion of the Ben-ben which housed an aspect of the Ben-ben stone, an ancient fetish originating from the sun cult in Heliopolis⁷⁹ (Aldred 1988:83). There is evidence that this temple existed at Amarna, unlike that of the *Teni-menu*, 'Exalted is the Monument of the Aten forever', where no reference to this building has been found amongst the ruins of Amarna (Aldred 1988:83). The temple of *Gempaaten* housed the fragmented royal colossi first discovered in 1925 by Henri Chevre (Reeves 2001:95). According to Aldred, workmen, by chance, uncovered a row of fallen sandstone colossi bearing the name of Amenophis IV and, in the following year, Henri Chevre, chief inspector of Antiquities at Karnak, dug the area. Whoever lays claim to the initial discovery is immaterial, as nothing could detract from the enormity of this find (Aldred 1988:84).

The unearthing of the statues of this enigmatic pharaoh raised endless commentary amongst Egyptologists. They were called: 'frankly hideous', 'grotesque', 'appalling', 'expressionistic', 'vital', 'daring', 'compelling' and 'a true grandeur, an expression of an interior life made up of suffering and disillusionment more than joy' (Aldred 1988:84). Kemp says that many modern writers seem not to like Akhenaten and explains that 'Akhenaten belonged, however, within a culture for which

⁷⁸ The Ben-ben stone might have been a conical stone of meteoric origin (Aldred 1988:265). This is reminiscent of the Kaaba, a cube shaped building which covers a black stone probably a meteorite, which fell to earth, landing where the present site of Mecca was founded. This site is of huge religious significance to the religion of Islam as it was seen as coming from heaven. Traditionally, the Kaaba was built by Adam and later Abraham. Allah was one of the gods of the Kaaba (Kruger, Lubbe & Steyn 2002:221).

⁷⁹ Heliopolis, referred to as 'On' in the Bible (see discussion 6.5.1), was spiritually and politically powerful during the Old Kingdom. It was the early cult centre for the god Ré in his form as Atum (Bunson 1999:110).

judgements of this kind might not be appropriate'. Kemp is of the opinion that the evidence for an interpretation of Akhenaten's reign is not consistent and very little evidence exists that is specific enough to make a judgement (2012:23).

3.2.4 The tomb of Ramose (No. 55)

Ramose was the vizier and mayor of Thebes and a member of the royal family (Aldred 1988:89)⁸⁰ at the time of Amenophis III's rule. The tomb of Ramose was in the process of being decorated at the time of Akhenaten's father's (Amenophis III's) death. This was the cause of a sudden change of style to the tomb of Ramose which accompanied the accession to the rule of Akhenaten (Reeves 2001:98-99). According to Reeves, the depictions on the walls of the tomb serve as an example of the stylistic changes introduced by the young pharaoh (Reeves 2001:98). Akhenaten is depicted on the wall of a Theban tomb and described by Reeves (2001:98) as in a 'staid, formalistic manner of his father's later years'. Aldred describes the scene as one carved in the 'classic style of the preceding reign' (2001:90). This tomb shows the changes that Akhenaten introduced that became part of the iconography of later tombs (Aldred 1988:90).

On the other side of the central doorway, another relief is carved, this time, 'in the revolutionary style' (Reeves 2001:98). In this relief, Akhenaten is depicted with his wife Nefertiti and the first appearance of the icon (the solar disc), which would take on such importance later, was found in the tombs of prominent individuals at Amarna (Aldred 1988:90). Aldred's words (1988:166) sum up the early changes: 'Into this milieu was born the prince Amenophis, who was destined to change the direction and character of the culture he had inherited'.

In the study of Akhenaten, the tomb of Ramose provides evidence for the early change in artistic style, featuring a young Akhenaten in a classic manner and in the revolutionary style which became so popular later. There is evidence in this tomb to suggest that Amenophis III and Akhenaten might have shared a co-regency (Aldred 1988:178).

⁸⁰ The term Vizier, called a *djat* or *tjat* in ancient Egypt, were normally kinsmen of the king or members of the royal family, the prime minister of the nation, invariably entrusted with court affairs (Bunson 1999:276).

3.2.5 Albastron, Akhet-Aten, el-Amarna, Amarna rediscovered, emerging from the sands of time

Kemp mentions that, for Akhenaten, the land chosen in the desert was seen as a sacred home for the worship of the Aten (2012:302). Thebes may have been unworthy for Akhenaten's new god and the move to Amarna was one of impulsivity, according to Reeves (2001:103).⁸¹ This sacred territory was named by Akhenaten himself as 'the Horizon of the Sun's disc' (or Akhet-Aten)⁸² (Kemp 2012:17). Kemp believes that as many as 20,000 Egyptians, possibly twice that number, followed their king through an empty stretch of desert adjacent to the Nile River⁸³ (2012:17), (cf. the similarities with the Exodus from the time of Moses in Exodus 14. See Chapter Four). For it was here on this virgin piece of land, with no previous religious associations that the pharaoh realised his vision for a new city, one which would be dedicated to his beloved Aten (Gahlin 2001:128). According to Gahlin (2001:129), the site is known today as Tell el-Amarna⁸⁴ a name given by the nineteenth-century European visitors to the area.

3.2.5.1. Rediscovery of Akhet-Aten, early excavations and interpretations

Prior to 1887, the ruins were long forgotten. In 1714, Claude Sicard, a Jesuit traveler, became aware of the huge boundary stelae demarcating el-Amarna's limits (Reeves 2001:14). History owes a great debt to the French who, under the leadership of Napoleon Bonaparte, led an expedition to Egypt from 1798-1799. This large expedition was part of the Suez Canal project and with it came a team of 139 scholars, part of the cultural component of the group, whose role was to record aspects of this ancient civilization (Reeves 2001:14).⁸⁵ When the site of Amarna was rediscovered by chance in 1887, the unearthing of the clay tablets would later prove to place it on the world stage.

⁸¹ A few years after Amenophis III's death Akhenaten decided to abandon Memphis, the administrative capital and Thebes the religious capital, the Pharaoh's new domain would be his new city devoted entirely to the new deity Aten (Reeves 2001:103).

⁸² An inscription found on a chair belonging to Nakhy a necropolis worker, the inscription reads: Akhetaten 'horizon of the Aten' (Reeves 2001:103).

⁸³ Kemp is of the opinion that the motives for Akhenaten's move are debatable. It is at Amarna where Akhenaten puts his vision into practice. Akhenaten initiated a change in how the nation's god would be worshipped (Kemp 2012:17). Kemp alludes to the thousands of people who uprooted and migrated to Amarna, yet there are no written records stating how these people viewed their experience (2012:41). Not long after Akhenaten's ascension to the throne, he abandoned his allegiance to Amon and changed his name from Amenhotep IV to Akhenaten, his wife Nefertiti was renamed Nefer-Nefru-Aten 'Beautiful is the beauty of Aten'. The couple abandoned Thebes to begin their new city in the desert called Amarna (Bunson 1999:11).

⁸⁴ Gahlin believes the name is a misnomer as the site is not on a 'tell' which is the Arabic for 'mound' caused by successive buildings and settlements over thousands of years. The site of Akhet-Aten was instead built on virgin soil (Gahlin 2001:129). The name of Tell-el-Amarna/Amarna was derived from the names of the modern village of el-Amariya, and an Arab tribe called the Beni-Amran. After Akhenaten's death, the abandoned city was left uninhabited, eventually covered by the sands of time until its rediscovery in the nineteenth century (Kemp 2012:17).

⁸⁵ The publication *Description de l'Égypte* was an official record of the scientific mission undertaken by the French in 1798-1799 (Reeves 2001:14).

The excavations of Amarna were undertaken by the English Egyptologist John Gardner Wilkinson who, with the help of James Burton, surveyed the 'city' in 1824 and again in 1826 (Reeves 2001:15). Kemp is of the opinion that the use of the word 'city' is nowhere to be found in existing texts of Amarna (Kemp 2012:155).

As a result of the publication of Wilkinson and Burton's work, Egyptology became a very popular subject in the West (Reeves 2001:16). Aldred (1988:16) states that these publications had a profound influence on the understanding of ancient Egypt in Victorian times. According to Wilkinson, 'Albastron' was the name given to the site by Roman authors, probably derived from Alabaster, as the quarry of Hatnub, a source of creamy, translucent stone called Alabaster, is close to el-Amarna (Reeves 2001:16).⁸⁶ Aldred is of the opinion that the two explorers identified the site as 'Albastronopolis' because they were, at that time, unaware of the name 'Amarna' as Champollion's⁸⁷ work and the deciphering of the texts on the Rosetta stone were still in their early stages (Aldred 1988:16).

In 1833, the Scottish copyist, Robert Hay, led a team to Amarna and removed sand drifts from the tombs, enabling them to make, in Aldred's words, 'exquisite copies of scenes' (1988:17). The original drawings are to be found in the British Library. Aldred also alludes to the work of Nestor L'Hôte whose manuscripts and drawings are to be found in the Bibliothèque National in Paris. The allure and appeal of these unusual compositions, continued to fascinate because the subject matter was unlike anything ever seen before (Aldred 1988:16-17).

Depictions on private tomb walls were funerary scenes prior to Akhenaten's radical changes (Aldred 1988:18). The new scenes depict the royal family exclusively, the king, his queen, and his infant daughters (but not his sons) engaged in domestic scenes, displaying intimacy towards each other and towards their children (Aldred 1988:18). What is of interest as Aldred points out is the absence of 'funerary ambience'. The scenes display what appears to be 'ecstatic excitement' from the populace for the benefit of the royal couple (Aldred 1988:18).

Latest archaeological evidence from Amarna suggests that life at Amarna showed a darker side.

⁸⁶ According to Tyldesley (2003:181), John Gardner Wilkinson was under the mistaken impression in 1823 that he was exploring Albastronopolis. He became the first Egyptologist to visit the tombs at Amarna.

⁸⁷ Prior to Jean Francois Champollion le Jeune's (1790-1832) deciphering of hieroglyphs, ancient texts which were inscribed on black granite, known as the Rosetta Stone, were unintelligible (Gahlin 2001:241).

Kemp (2012:227) discusses evidence of the bones of people excavated as recently as 2006, showing signs of injuries and compression of their spines from the bearing of heavy loads. Clearly life was not ecstatic for everyone.

Richard Lepsius⁸⁸ worked at Amarna in 1843 and again in 1845. His work identified kings of the 18th Dynasty, and the king's persecution of the former gods. He also observed the destruction of the royal couple's names (Reeves 2001:17). Lepsius (1852:39) concluded that 'Bech-en-Aten' was not a woman⁸⁹ as he had previously believed.

It was Manetho⁹⁰ who initiated this suggestion (Hornung 1992:3). Lepsius deliberated the reason for Akhenaten's revolution and concluded that there was a possibility of foreign influences behind Akhenaten's radical shift in ideology (Hornung 1992:44). Scholars remained perplexed and questions were raised regarding the strange portrayal of the king in stone, for example, with a deformed head, a long nose, thick lips, long neck, feminine physique and heavy breasts (Aldred 1988:18).

3.2.5.2. *From 18th Dynasty stone inscriptions to scholarly interpretations*

Georg Weber was the first author of a universal history of the Pharaoh Akhenaten and his significance that was published in Leipzig in 1857 (Hornung 1992:44). Hornung (1992:45) states that the work of Lepsius inspired not only Weber, but others such as Duncker (1863) and Brugsch (1877). Brugsch referred to the 'reforms' of Akhenaten, seeing him as a priest of Ré. Brugsch discusses the importance of the pharaoh's mother Tiye, believing that she influenced the religious ideology of the young pharaoh regarding the 'doctrine of the one god of light'. Brugsch sees Akhenaten as an 'enlightened monarch' (Brugsch 1877:419-421). Further research continued by European scholars such as Maspero⁹¹ found that Akhenaten might have been castrated⁹² during his

⁸⁸ Richard Lepsius was sent to Egypt by the Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm IV. He would later publish documentation records, *Denkmaler aus Aegypten und Aethiopie*, which was extensive documentation on the monuments and the topography at el-Amarna (Reeves 2001:16).

⁸⁹ The feminine appearance of Akhenaten's representations had led several scholars to identify Akhenaten as a woman. Champollion also noted this aspect (Hornung 1992:3) Lepsius communicated his first results in a letter to Alexander von Humboldt (Berlin 1852).

⁹⁰ Manetho, an Egyptian priest, wrote his *Aegyptiaca* in Greek having being commissioned by Ptolemy II (285- 246 BC) (Gahlin 2001:73).

⁹¹ Maspero's *Histoire ancienne des Peuples de l'Orient* translated from French into German. Gaston Maspero was the director of the Egyptian Antiquities service in Egypt in 1881. His assistant was Emile Brugsch (Oakes 2001:108, 132)

⁹² A 'sexless colossus', one of a series excavated by Henri Chevier at Karnak in and after 1925, indicates an absence of genitalia, the old assumption was that this was a depiction of Akhenaten, this theory has now been discarded and the sculptures are thought to instead represent Nefertiti (Reeves 2001:165).

father, Amenophis III's Nubian war (Hornung 1992:45). Meyer⁹³ provided the reader with a detailed account of Amarna history (Hornung 1992:45). The first biography of the 'heretic king' was written by Arthur Weigall⁹⁴ (Hornung 1992:45). Reeves (2001:195) discusses the work of Geoffrey Martin,⁹⁵ a British archaeologist whose two volumes covered the works of the important discovery by locals of the royal tomb of Amarna in 1881/1882 (Hornung 1992:45).

On account of the archaeological discovery of the 380 clay tablets in 1887, leading to Knudtzon's publication in 1915, Petrie carried out the first excavations at the site of el-Amarna in 1891-2 (Hornung 1992:45). Petrie was able to confirm through the careful examination of the hieratic⁹⁶ documents that Amenophis IV and Akhenaten were indeed the same person. Petrie concluded that Akhenaten had died in his eighteenth regnal year (Aldred 1988:110). Breasted⁹⁷ analysed the hymns to the sun-god in the Amarna tombs, these hymns in praise of the sun-god offer us a glimpse into the new world of thought (1934:281). He refers to Akhenaten as the world's 'earliest monotheist, and the first prophet of internationalism—the most remarkable figure of the ancient world before the Hebrews' (Breasted 1934:292). The mammoth work of Norman de Garis Davies,⁹⁸ that began in 1901, carefully and accurately recorded the iconographic material from the Rock tombs of el-Amarna, providing scholars with a basis for research (Reeves 2001:22). Theodore Davis discovered Tomb 55 in the Valley of the Kings in 1907 which prompted Arthur Weigall's first biography of Akhenaten in 1910 (Hornung 1992:46). The discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb in 1922 prompted a new interest in Akhenaten. Thomas Mann made him a hero in his *Joseph* romance (1931) (1992:46). Aldred's biography (1988) stressed Akhenaten's pathology, Sigmund Freud,⁹⁹ (1939) described Akhenaten as the mentor of Moses (Hornung 1992:46). In the words of Freud (1974:60): 'Among those in Akhenaten's *entourage* there was a man who was perhaps called Thutmosis ... a convinced adherent of the Aten religion ... The precepts which this man Moses

⁹³ Eduard Meyer's *Geschichte des Altertums* published in 1884 provides an itemised account of Amarna history (Hornung 1992:45).

⁹⁴ Arthur Weigall represented the Antiquities Service. He was part of the team that uncovered the tomb KV55 (Aldred 1988:195). Weigall published *The Life and Times of Akhenaton Pharaoh of Egypt* (Hornung 1992:45).

⁹⁵ Professor Geoffrey. T. Martin from Leiden University published 2 volumes, *The Royal Tomb at El-Amarna, I- II*, from 1974-1989 (Reeves 2001:195).

⁹⁶ Hieratic is a cursive form of hieroglyphs, simplified and rounded and done with a reed pen rather than a chisel on stone. Towards the end of the New Kingdom, the religious texts were prepared and written on papyri (Bunson 1999:143).

⁹⁷ James Henry Breasted, an American Egyptologist who was influenced by Petrie, later published *De Hymnis in Solem sub Rege Amenophide IV conceptis* (Hornung 1992:45).

⁹⁸ Norman de Garis Davies was the surveyor of the Egypt Exploration Fund founded in Britain in 1882 (Aldred 1988:22). This was later to become the Egyptian Exploration Society. Davies produced six volumes called *The Rock Tombs of El-Amarna* (1903-08). Davies' work has provided a basis of research for scholars of antiquity (Reeves 2001:22).

⁹⁹ Sigmund Freud, Jewish father of psychoanalysis, published *Moses and Monotheism* in 1939. Freud died six months after publication (Osman 1990:6-8). According to Bernstein, the outrageous nature of Freud's study resulted in commentators focusing on aspects of his hidden and unconscious motives (1998:ix).

gave to his Jews may have been harsher than those of his teacher Akhenaten’.

Eberhard Otto (1953) viewed Akhenaten as ‘particularly unpolitical and egocentric man ugly and sickly’ (cited in Hornung 1992:47).

Redford¹⁰⁰ (1984), made an assumption that Akhenaten was a destroyer rather than a creator (Hornung 1992:47), ‘a champion of a universal, celestial power who demanded universal submission’ (Tyldesley 1998:89). Osman (1990:13) suggests Moses and Akhenaten might have been the same person. He is of the opinion that Akhenaten fled from power to the Sinai in year 17 as traces of the worship of the Aten can be found. Assmann (1997:23) discusses the ‘new solar theology’ of Akhenaten and states that, unlike Moses, Akhenaten was a figure of history and not of memory, establishing a ‘monotheistic worship of a new god of light whom he called “Aton”’. Kemp (2012:21) suggests that Akhenaten was able to develop his ideas at a time when the world could tolerate inconsistencies of thought which is not the case today. Had Akhenaten been successful, an Atenist religion might have developed and therefore, Kemp says, ‘it is not unreasonable to see Akhenaten as a prophet’ (2012:21). It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to acknowledge valued opinions of all the scholars but it is clear from the above that scholars see Akhenaten and his contribution to history in many varied lights. Interpretations vary according to the context of the time in which they were written. The religion of Akhenaten and the similarities to the tradition of Moses will be covered in greater depth in Chapter Five.

3.2.5.3. *Boundary stelae surrounding el-Amarna reveal Akhenaten’s personal testimony*

Boundary stelae provide a personal testimony to the motivation and mind set of Akhenaten (Kemp 2012:32). First discovered by Sicard in 1714, these massive stelae demarcated el-Amarna’s boundaries (Reeves 2001:14) as the inscriptions say:

Behold Aten! The Aten wishes to have [something] made for him as a monument with an eternal and ever lasting name. Now it is the Aten, my father, who advised me concerning it, nor had any people in the entire land ever advised me concerning it to tell me [a plan] for making Akhet-Aten in this distant place. It was the Aten, my father, who advised me concerning it, so that it could be made for him as Akhet-Aten (Murnane 1995:75).

From the above statement, it is apparent that the words inscribed onto the boundary stelae clearly indicate that the Aten provided divine inspiration for the choice of settlement for Akhenaten and

¹⁰⁰ Donald B. Redford, biographer of Akhenaten, wrote *Monotheism of a Heretic* (Hornung 1992:47).

his followers. This advice was given to him alone. The tract of sacred land with cliffs and escarpments provided a natural perimeter, with the boundary stelae marking the intervals cut into the hills (Kemp 2012:50). The boundary stelae designated the site of what would become Akhet-aten, a virgin site with no previous religious associations (Gahlin 2001:128). The first set of boundary stelae were dated to the king's fifth year, the second set to his sixth year. These stelae were painted with bright colours and were visible from a great distance. Many had pathways leading up to them. The words inscribed into the rock give a clearer understanding of the pharaoh's vision and beliefs by defining who he was (Kemp 2012:32-33). The foundation decree of the city, carved on two stelae, Stela X and Stela M, located in the north and south of the city, were the first boundary stelae carved at the site (Murnane 1995:73). There were sixteen boundary stelae in total and each had its own proclamation and carved figures (Aldred 1988:44). The stelae provide insights into the events and motivations leading to the pharaoh's sudden exodus¹⁰¹ from Thebes and his revolution in ideology (Murnane 1995:73). There are three tablets transcribed from his earlier proclamations and his first daughter, Meritaten, is documented in Stela K (Murnane 1995:78).

Akhenaten's later proclamation was carved exactly a year later, in his sixth regnal year, into the south eastern corner of Akhet-Aten. This later decree would define the dimensions of the city (Murnane 1995:84), the royal visit to the city, and mark the extensive agricultural lands for the cult of the Aten (Kemp 2012:114).

The insights and motivation for leaving Thebes follows this and is inscribed as part of the 'early proclamation':

it was worse than those which I heard in regnal year 4; it was worse than [those] which I heard in regnal year 3; it was worse than those which I heard [in regnal year 2; it was] worse [than those which I heard in regnal year 1]; it was worse [than] those which (King) [NEBMAAT] RE heard; [it was worse than those which] (King) [OKHEPRURE (?) heard]; it was worse [than] those which (King) MENKHEPERRE heard; [(and) it was] worse [that]those heard by any kings who had (ever) assumed the White Crown (Murnane 1995:78).

¹⁰¹ Kemp (2012:272) gives an approximate figure of between 20,000 and 50,000 of the population of el-Amarna who followed Akhenaten from Thebes to this empty stretch of desert, never to return (Kemp 2012:17).

Akhenaten provides hints regarding the possible reasons for his departure from Thebes. It is not clear what the circumstances were in regnal years 4, 5, 2, and 1 and what it was that ‘those’ kings mentioned in the text ‘heard’ that warranted such a drastic decision.

The boundary stelae ‘designated the eastern desert mountain of Akhetaten as the special domain of the Aten’ (Kemp 2012:160). Kemp sees the possibility of a parallel landscape called the ‘holy land’¹⁰² found in Abydos, 200 kilometres upstream from Amarna (2012:160). Fortunately, the founding decrees for the sacred place of Akhet-Aten have escaped defacement. Although weathered, hieroglyphs still define this as the sacred home of the Aten (Kemp 2012:302).

3.3 ANTHROPOLOGY AND GENEALOGY

An exploration of anthropology,¹⁰³ and genealogy,¹⁰⁴ will be the focus of this section. By reviewing concepts from these disciplines, an attempt will be made to gain insight into the character of Akhenaten because ‘disciplines develop questions of their own’ (Assmann 1997:6). Social relationships are at the heart of anthropology, just as they are at the heart of life and we exist in a web of social relationships that shape who we are (Delaney & Kaspin 2011:155).

3.3.1 Ancestry and kinship

In anthropological terms, our ‘kin’¹⁰⁵ are the people to whom we are related biologically, by *consanguinity* (common blood) or *affinity* (marriage). We call these people our ‘relatives’ (Delaney & Kaspin 2011:169). Morgan¹⁰⁶ also believed in a natural system by reflecting on the

¹⁰² Kemp (2012:160) discusses the possibility of a similar site specifically called the ‘Holy Land’ found at Abydos as being a large tract of flattish desert surrounded by cliffs cut by wadis. The sanctuary was the eastern mountain with the tomb close to the cliffs with topography similar to Amarna. This was built for Seti I fifty years after Akhenaten’s death. Traditionally, the ‘Holy Land’ had at its centre Syro-Palestine and its neighbouring countries, a definite geographical and historical setting which is set out in the message from God to mankind in the Bible (Bimson et al 1985:5). Both Moses and Akhenaten experienced divine intervention in terms of sacred landscapes or settlement lands. Moses had the ‘Holy Land’ or the ‘Promised Land’ and, for Akhenaten’s Aten, the special place was the desert, the ‘eastern mountain’, the place of sunrise and the mountains at the back possibly providing, as Kemp suggests, a natural sanctuary (Kemp 2012:94).

¹⁰³ Anthropology is the study of mankind’s societies and customs and the study of structure and evolution of man (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv ‘anthropology’). Kuklick (cited in Nanda & Warms 2011:382) states that the first use of the word *anthropologist* was seen in print in 1805 in *The Edinburgh Review*.

¹⁰⁴ The term ‘genealogy’ is defined as the tracing of a family descent, an investigation of pedigrees, which traces a line of development from earlier forms (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv ‘genealogy’).

¹⁰⁵ ‘Kinship’ is defined as a blood relationship or alliance in character (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv ‘kinship’).

¹⁰⁶ Lewis Henry Morgan, considered to be the founding father of kinship studies, made an in-depth study into kinship systems. He divided the systems into *classificatory* and *descriptive* systems. It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to investigate each system, however, suffice to note the importance of Morgan’s evolutionary model of kinship and cultures in the development of society. He published *Systems of Consanguinity and affinity of the human family* in 1870 and

'streams of blood' that flow from one generation to the next, and of the distinctiveness of these several streams, while describing that around every person there is a circle or group of kindred and the person is the centre or the *Ego* (1870:10-11). Learning more about members of Akhenaten's immediate kin, ancestry and genealogy will lead to a better understanding of who may have influenced this enigmatic pharaoh.

3.3.2 Customs and culture

Aspects of the customs and culture of the Mitannians could have been introduced to the Egyptian royal household through royal marriages between the Egyptian pharaohs and the royal princesses from Mitanni. A Mitannian princess was sent as a gift to Thutmose IV by Artatama I king of Mitanni, sealing the peace treaty between Egypt and Mitanni. This was the first of many Mitannian princesses who were sent to the Egyptian court (Reeves 2001:44). This is called *enculturation*.¹⁰⁷ As Akhenaten is connected by *consanguinity* to the Mitannian royal family, these Mitannian relationships will be explored in this chapter. An investigation will be made into the lineage¹⁰⁸ of Akhenaten through his maternal line in order to determine if the Mitannian¹⁰⁹ customs, cultures or beliefs may have influenced the Pharaoh Akhenaten (see 3.8.2). The 'blood link' between the Mitannians and the Egyptian royal household will be examined. Akhenaten's patrilineal¹¹⁰ line will be explored, specifically his ancestral connections to the Hurrian¹¹¹ people and their customs because, according to Nanda and Warms (2011:2), culture includes ideas that are learned rather than genetically transmitted.

Ancient Society in 1877. Marx and Engels adopted his theories in *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* ([1884] 1972) (in Delaney & Kaspin 2011:172).

¹⁰⁷ Enculturation is the process of learning to be a member of a particular cultural group (Nanda & Warms 2011:75).

¹⁰⁸ Lineage is a term used to describe the lineal descent, ancestry or pedigree of a person (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv 'lineage'). Many anthropologists believe that lineages are the foundations of social organisation (Delaney & Kaspin 2011:173). According to Nanda and Warms (2011:173), the term 'lineage' is defined as a group of kin whose members trace descent down from a known common ancestor.

¹⁰⁹ References to the Mitannian people are made in Chapter Two that discusses the Amarna archive in detail and the correspondence between Tushratta, king of Mitanni, and the 18th Dynasty kings. Mitanni lay north of the Egyptian-controlled areas of the Levant. Mitanni was a powerful kingdom on a par with Egypt. Tushratta, king of Mitanni, wrote letters in the Hurrian and Akkadian language to Akhenaten (Kuhrt 1995:283).

¹¹⁰ Patrilineal of or based on (kinship with) father or descent through male line (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv 'patrilineal'). According to Nanda and Warms (2011:391), patrilineal descent is a rule that affiliates a person to kin of both sexes though males only. Patrilineage, according to Nanda and Warms (2011:391) is a lineage formed by descent in the male line.

¹¹¹ The first recognition of the Hurrian language occurred with the discovery in 1887 of an Amarna letter sent by Tushratta, king of Mitanni, to Egypt (Tushratta had written other letters in Akkadian). Linguistic sources are all that exist for the Hurrians and there are no artefacts or buildings that can be defined as Hurrian. Much of the evidence for the Hurrians is personal names which are not enough to establish a cultural identity and not reliable enough to establish a social reality (Kuhrt 1995:284).

3.3.3 Oral Tradition

According to Nanda and Warmus (2011:292), sacred narratives have sacred power in themselves and are powerful ways of communicating religious ideas. These stories are told usually by members of a group. Redford, in his article *Ancient Egyptian Literature: An overview* (1995), states that, in ancient Egypt, the vast majority of the population were illiterate and pieces were composed and delivered orally (Redford 1995:2223). Redford is of the opinion that the structure of Egyptian literature and vocabulary betray their origin and transmission within a living word-of-mouth tradition (1995:2224). Redford states that in hymns, poems, and narratives, a great enjoyment of wordplay, alliteration and mnemonic devices can be detected (1995:2224). Popular oral transmission existed side by side with the strong scribal tradition of court and temple (Redford 1995:2224). This oral tradition, according to Redford (1995:2224), operated in popular folklore, the content of which covered the mightiness of the king, the power of the god, the reputation of the deceased after death, prescriptions of the cult or events that occurred at large, all we have today is what's left in written form. The ancient Egyptians found their context within the cult; temples employed male and female singers to perform hymns, the subject of which covered lamentations over Osiris, prayers to Isis, hymns to Amun-Re, Ré, the sun hymn of Akhenaten and the great didactic paeon to Ptah (Redford 1995:2237) because 'though grounded in oral composition, Egyptian literature was always tied to the scribe' (Redford 1995:2238).

'Oral traditions' are defined by Le Roux as 'material which includes all songs, recitations, prayers, sayings, praises and any historical or cultural statements from the past, transmitted from one generation to the other' (2003:210). Freud warns of the discrepancies between the written record and oral transmission because omissions or changes in the written record may have been preserved in tradition as a supplement but also as a contradiction to historical writing. The possibilities of numerous alterations and changes from one generation to another might alter the trustworthiness of the narratives (Freud 1974:68-69). In the case of Moses, we have a written narrative and many references right through the Bible. Aside from the many Old Testament references to Moses an early Jewish source is the New Testament with all its references to the person Moses. This is also one way the Jewish people kept the traditions alive. In the case with Akhenaten there is an abundance of texts inscribed in stone.

3.4 AKHENATEN'S ANCESTRY AND LINEAGE

The term 'lineage' refers to a group of kin whose members can trace their descent from a common ancestor. Amosis founded the 18th Dynasty (Kuhrt 1995:188). His lineage is described by Aldred (1988:170) who states that 'the line of inheritance was by the eldest son of the king by a God's Wife who was a descendent of Ahmose-Nefertari, the chief queen of Amosis,¹¹² founder of the dynasty.'¹¹³

3.4.1 Eighteenth Dynasty king's lists

The king lists from the later 18th Dynasty purged the rulers who had become 'non-persons in the eyes of their successors'. The 'cleansing' was undertaken on royal and private monuments (Murnane 1995:241). Murnane (1995:241) refers to this as a *damnation memoriae* (damnation of memory) which is the removal of the name and image of a dead person from a monument or building (Tyldesley 1998:179).

The names of Akhenaten, Smenkhare, Nefernefruat, Tutankhamun and Ay were obliterated from monuments (Murnane 1995:241). The memory of the Amarna age was officially oppressed. Kings' lists covering this period reflect Horemheb as the immediate successor to Amenhotep III (Murnane 1995:241-242). Fortunately, some records have survived in the archives which would explain Manetho's inclusion of the above-named pharaohs in his account of Egyptian history written in the third century BCE (Murnane 1995:242). The Abydos kings' list, a long list of kings carved on to the wall in the Temple of Seti I,¹¹⁴ at Abydos omits the heretic pharaohs Akhenaten and Tutankhamun. Both Akhenaten and Tutankhamun were erased from history with no offerings of incense offered to the departed kings (Temple 2011:233).

¹¹² Amosis, the brother and successor of Kamose, cleared the Hyksos from Middle Egypt. Amosis completed their expulsion in 1567 BCE and achieved the conquest of Nubia which was most vital for Egyptian trade. With his reign, Manetho begins the 18th Dynasty, a period of 'unprecedented magnificence' (Wiseman 1999:88). In the third century BCE, Ptolemy I commissioned Manetho, a high priest of the sun god in Heliopolis, to write a history of Egypt. The king list was preserved in copies made by the Jewish historian Josephus (Aldred 1988:9).

¹¹³ *Dynasteia* was Manetho's Greek word for the grouping of kings with a common origin or other unifying features (Temple 2011:234). According to Temple, the ancient Egyptians did not necessarily distinguish themselves in this way, it was a concept first introduced by Manetho. Temple warns readers that these 'dynasties' may be largely artificial (Temple 2011:235).

¹¹⁴ Seti I became the second king of the 19th Dynasty (Temple 2011:233).

3.5 AKHENATEN'S GRANDPARENTS

3.5.1 Thutmosis (Thutmose) IV: Akhenaten's paternal grandfather

3.5.1.1. Title

King of Upper and Lower Egypt MENKHEPRURE, Son of Re, THUTMOSIS IV given life like Re forever continually (Murnane 1995:218).

The above text is inscribed on the wooden handle of an instrument used for astronomical sightings that is housed in the Oriental Museum in Chicago. The instrument is inscribed with texts dating to Thutmosis IV (1400-1390 BCE). This piece was restored by Tutankhamun, a descendent of Thutmosis IV and provides genealogical information, however, it does not provide the exact connection between the two pharaohs (Murnane 1995:217).

3.5.1.2. Thutmosis IV's calling

Thutmosis IV ruled Egypt from 1400-1390 BCE. In a dream, the supreme god of lower Egypt Rē-Herakhte appeared to Thutmosis IV promising him the crown of Egypt. In order for this to happen, his task was to clear away the sands covering the giant image of the sphinx at Giza (Aldred 1988:142). The monumental 'dream stela'¹¹⁵ of Thutmosis IV is set up between the paws of the great sphinx at Giza (Reeves 2001:47).

Thutmosis IV also erected a great obelisk¹¹⁶ to honour Rē-Herakhte the sun god of Heliopolis. The obelisk was erected at Thebes (Aldred 1988:142).

A large scarab¹¹⁷ housed in the British Museum (Reeves 2001:49) that dates to the reign of Thutmosis IV, also depicts worship of the solar deity. The scarab celebrates the reception of Mitannian tribute after a campaign by Thutmosis IV in the northern regions or it may also mark the arrival of a Mitannian princess (Reeves 2001:50). The name of the Aten 'as an independent manifestation of solar divinity' is inscribed on the scarab (Reeves 2001:49). Reeves says that '[i]ts real significance for us lies in the international context in which we find the name of the

¹¹⁵ Reeves is of the opinion that the 'dream stela' represents the confirmation of an oracle for a succession that is possibly disputed. This technique is one which had been used before to legitimise the reign of Tuthmosis III and Hatshepsut. Reeves states that the 'dream stela' reveals the identity of the future king's sponsor and the guiding hand behind Tuthmosis IV's candidacy, in this case, the Heliopolitan priesthood (2001:47-48).

¹¹⁶ The great obelisk originally planned by Thutmosis III now stands at St Johns Lateran in Rome (Aldred 1988:142).

¹¹⁷ A scarab with an inscription referring to the god Aten is housed in the British Museum. It has been authenticated in laboratory texts and believed to be genuine, however, the provenance is unknown. It is dated to the reign of Tuthmosis IV (Bannister & Plenderleith 1936:3-6).

newly independent Aten for the first time invoked' (2001:50). The Aten is spoken of as a god of battles who makes his pharaoh mighty (Aldred 1988:142). This, according to Aldred, is the first notable and new universal aspect of the sun being brought to the fore during the reign of Thutmose IV. The supreme position of the Aten would later be achieved under his grandson, Akhenaten (Aldred 1988:143). Reeves recognises the accession of Thutmose IV as being a decisive moment in Egyptian history, heralding kingly interest in the solar cult of Giza and at Re's cult centre in Heliopolis (Reeves 2001:48) (see aspects of Aten worship in Chapter Six).

3.5.1.3. The duration of the reign

The length of Thutmose IV's reign appears controversial. Josephus from Manetho credited him with a reign of nine years, eight months. This view was challenged by medical evidence presented by Alexandria-Michigan¹¹⁸ team that put his age at death to be 35 to 40 years old

(Aldred 1988:143). The evidence of a second jubilee celebrated by the pharaoh has allowed scholars from the Oriental Institute in Chicago to challenge the length of the pharaoh's reign. The scholars suggest he ruled for 32 to 33 years (Aldred 1988:143). Aldred points out that few monuments have survived after year eight of Thutmose IV's reign. Aldred believes Manetho's opinion is correct in reporting that the length of Thutmose IV's reign was nine years and eight months (1988:143). Aldred raises doubts regarding the correct identification of mummies from antiquity (1988:143). According to Osman (1990:160), it was during the time of Thutmose IV that Yuya (Akhenaten's maternal grandfather) became associated with the royal family suggesting that it was at this time that the Aten was worshipped. Osman (1990:124) is of the opinion that Yuya is the same character as the Biblical Joseph.

3.5.1.4. The mummy of Thutmose IV

Discovered in the Valley of the Kings in 1898 in the tomb of Amenhotep II (KV35), the mummy of Thutmose IV was recovered by Loret (Reeves 2001:58). His actual tomb was found by Howard Carter in January 1903 (Romer 1981:186). Romer describes the tomb as being well made but sadly devastated by tomb robbers. It contained broken objects and thousands of fragments, a

¹¹⁸ In the 1970s, a team of specialists from the Universities of Alexandria and Michigan collaborated with the Antiquities Organization of Egypt to do surveys on the royal mummies of the pharaohs of the New Kingdom. The team used advanced techniques and radiographic equipment to produce more accurate X-rays of the royal mummies (Aldred 1988:95).

fine wooden sculpture of a cow's head painted in yellow, a slaughtered bull, jars of oils and, in the side chamber of the tomb, a mummy of a boy, probably Prince Amenemhet, which leant up against the chamber wall (Romer 1981:187). Despite the tomb of Thutmose IV being pillaged and robbed and only fragmentary remains of the contents of the tomb being left, Romer is of the opinion it is one of the greatest treasures in the valley. Romer alludes to the possibility of the disturbance of the original burial having occurred during the heresy period (1981:190-191).

3.5.2 Queen Mutemwia: Akhenaten's paternal grandmother (Mitannian)

3.5.2.1. Title and lineage

The title, 'the King's Chief wife MUTEMWIA' is found above scene 1 at Luxor temple that depicts King Amenophis III's divine birth, the detail of which is inscribed on the wall of the Luxor Temple (Murnane 1995:22). The Amarna letter EA 24 refers to Assutemiwuya (perhaps this is a reference to Mutemwia as the names are similar). In this Amarna letter, Tushratta,¹¹⁹ mentions his grandfather Artatama sending his daughter to Egypt. This happened after much persuasion by the Egyptian King Thutmose IV. Eventually, after the seventh request, Artatama succumbed to Thutmose IV's requests and sent his daughter to Egypt (Moran 1992:63). There is further reference to Mutemwia appearing in the Amarna letter EA 29:16 (Moran 1992:93). Tushratta discusses the love the kingdoms share, 'How [the kings of H̄anigalbat and Egi]pt [love (one another)]', in Amarna letter EA 29 119-135 (Moran 1992:95). Tyldesley is of the opinion that Mutemwia used the non-specific title of 'heiress', never claiming to be the daughter of a king (Tyldesley 1998:19). Aldred suggests Queen Mutemwia might possibly have been the sister of Yuya (Aldred 1988:220).

The primary source for the depiction of the ritual of King Amenhotep III's divine birth is recorded on the walls of the Luxor Temple (Murnane 1995:22). The depiction on the temple walls contains fifteen scenes from the divine conception through to the birth of the king (Murnane 1995:22-27). The ritual depicts the god Amun-Re (Lord of Heaven) facing Thutmose IV, the mortal father of Amenhotep III (Akhenaten's father) ordering Amun to go to the mansion of the Prince in Karnak which is in heaven, the great dwelling place. The god appears in the form of Thutmose IV and impregnates Mutemwia (Murnane 1995:22). Scene five depicts Amun-Re standing before the ram-headed god, Khnum, who speaks from his inner sanctuary: 'I have given you all life and

¹¹⁹ Tushratta is the Hurrian king and king of Mitanni (Moran 1992:384). This letter was written to King Immureya (prenomen of Amenophis III), the Egyptian king. It is a letter about love and friendship between the two countries (Moran 1992:71). EA 24 is the only letter in the Amarna archive written in the Hurrian language (Moran 1992:xix).

dominion ... my beloved son, [O child of] Amun-Re ... Make him and his Ka with this body ... it is the image of this son whom I have begotten' (Murnane 1995:23).¹²⁰ Aldred discusses the god Amun enacting the part of Thutmose IV and Queen Mutemwia, led by Isis and Khnum,¹²¹ to the birth chamber (Aldred 1988:150). The western wall found in the 'Southern Sanctuary' (an ancient name for Luxor) depicts in detail Queen Mutemwia's divine birth of her son Amenhotep III (Aldred 1988:149- 150). Aldred points out that the 'god's wife of Amun' in the dynastic succession was of profound importance in securing the throne for her sons. This was indeed the case for Amenophis I, Amenophis II, and Thutmose IV. Queen Mutemwia appears to have claimed the position of 'god's wife' with the representation of the god Amun in the birth room (Aldred 1988:141).

Osman believes that evidence from the stela of Thutmose IV found at Serabit El-Khadim in Sinai points to the queen as having a residence and harem in Zarw. Neby was mayor of Zarw and 'Royal messenger in all countries, Steward of the harem of the Royal wife' (1990:222). Osman makes the point that Pi-Ramesses/Avaris was situated in the fourteenth Egyptian nome. This is also the case for Qantir/Tell el-Dab'a and Zarw. He states that all scholars accept Zarw as capital of that nome (Osman 1990:226). O'Connor 2008:112 states the foreign variant of Seth was adopted by the kings of the 19th Dynasty as the god from whom they claimed their lineage. It was under Seti I that they rebuilt and laid the foundations of Piramese (the city of Ramesses) in nearby Qantir. At Tell el-Dab'a (Avaris), on the site of the former Hyksos palace, the building of a huge military compound was undertaken during the 18th Dynasty (Aruz et al 2008:111). The surrender of Avaris ended the Hyksos domination in Egypt during the time of Ahmose I which heralded the start of the 18th Dynasty (Bunson 1999:39). According to Biblical tradition, it was the store cities of Pithom and Raamses that were built by the Israelites (Exodus 1:11).

¹²⁰ The doctrine of the Trinity and the three *hypostases*, a father, a son and a holy spirit, not three gods but rather one, a metaphysical speculation, one substance three persons (Kruger et al 2002:190). When reading the composition of the king's divine birth, I was reminded of the biblical concepts of the Immaculate Conception and the trinity.

¹²¹ In the ritual of the divine birth of the king, Scene VI depicts the anthropomorphic deity Khnum modelling the bodies of the young king and his *ka* on the potter's wheel, while Hathor gives them life (Murnane 1995:23). This reminds me of the following biblical verse 'And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul' (Genesis 2:7) as the biblical Moses is accredited with the book of Genesis. According to Gahlin, the *ka* was thought to come into being at the birth of an individual and, on dying, one was thought to join the *ka*. The *ka* was linked with the physical body and this was regarded as the vessel for the *ka* after death (Gahlin 2001:143).

After the death of her young husband Thutmose IV, Queen Mutemwia ruled as regent during the first few years of her son Amenhotep III's reign (Tyldesley 1998:13). According to Aldred, the mummy of Queen Mutemwia has not yet been found (Aldred 1988:106).

3.5.3 Yuya: Akhenaten's maternal grandfather

3.5.3.1. *Marriage scarab - first mention of the name of Yuya*

The text from the 'Marriage scarab'¹²² reads: 'Nebmaatre; son of Re, Amenophis—ruler of Thebes, who gives life; and the great royal wife Tiye, may she live. The name of her father is Yuya, the name of her mother Tjuyu' (Reeves 2001:54).

Prior to the discovery of the mummy of Yuya, found in a non-royal tomb in the Valley of the Kings in 1905, the above inscription was the only reference to Yuya (Reeves 2001:54).

3.5.3.2. *Master of the Horse and Deputy of the King*

Yuya is described by Osman as 'Master of the Horse and Deputy of the King' in the chariotry, to both Thutmose IV and his son Amenhotep III. Osman comments further that, despite Yuya not being of royal blood, he was buried in the Valley of the Kings (1990:53). Osman is of the opinion that Yuya was Joseph, the Israelite mentioned in the Hebrew Bible Genesis 37-40, who arrived as a slave during the reign of Amenhotep II and, after imprisonment, was appointed as vizier to Thutmose IV. Osman believes Tiye was a daughter of Yuya/Joseph (1990:53).

3.5.3.3 *Yuya's foreign features*

Aldred (1988:96) describes Yuya as having strange physiognomy. He could derive from the mummy found that he was tall, with wavy white hair, a prominent beaky nose and thick fleshy lips. He was accredited with foreign origin based on his unusual physiognomy. Elliot Smith (cited in Aldred) states that Yuya's physiognomy was not commonly encountered in Egypt (1988:221).

¹²² Many examples of these 'Marriage scarabs' dating to Amenophis III's reign have been found, dispersed throughout his dominions (Aldred 1988:146). Scarabs were popular amongst the Egyptians as protective charms. They possessed a powerful solar imagery in their own right. The beetle lays its eggs into a ball of dung which it rolls along the ground with its legs in a motion reminiscent of the sun's journey across the sky. The hatching of the eggs represented new life springing forth from the darkness (Reeves 2001:49). According to Reeves (2001:54), a notable feature of the reign of Amenophis III was the issuance of commemorative scarabs. In the second year of Amenophis III's reign, the 'marriage scarab' was issued. This scarab marked the occasion of Amenophis III's marriage to Tiye (Reeves 2001:54). The scarabs were in the form of the *scarabeus sacer* beetle (Bunson 1991:234). Scarabs bearing the names of Amenophis III and Tiye have been found in burial, palatial and ritual contexts (Aruz et al 2008:389).

Amarna adults' height measured from bones are an average of 164 cm (5ft 4in) for men and 154 cm (5ft) for women (Kemp 2012:202). Yuya's height was 166 cm which was considered taller than average (Hawass et al 2010:642). The mummy of Yuya in KV46 was selected as one of the Royal mummies under investigation to determine familial relationships with Tutankhamun (Hawass et al 2010:640). Osman (1990:23) makes the assumption that Akhenaten, Smenkhare, Tutankhamun and Aye were descendants of the Biblical Joseph, the patriarch, and that Joseph and Yuya were the same person. As mentioned above (see 3.5.3.2) Osman identifies Yuya as vizier to Thutmose IV (Akhenaten's grandfather) and links Yuya to him as Akhenaten's maternal grandfather (Osman 1990:32).

Aldred agrees that Yuya may have inherited Asiatic blood as he was commander of the chariotry (Aldred 1988:219). He suggests Yuya might have been related to the kings Thutmose IV and Amenophis II as he was an influential member of the royal entourage and was 'given' his wife, the court lady, Tuyu (Aldred 1988:219). Reeves (2001:57) suggests Yuya's origins were those of a high ranking Syrian (Mitannian) *maryannu* (chariot warrior).

The *maryannu*¹²³ were an aristocracy of chariot-using warriors who were dedicated to the service of the leaders (Aldred 1988:123). Treaties between warring parties were often cemented by royal marriages such as princesses from Mitanni marrying Thutmose IV, Amenophis III and Akhenaten (Aldred 1988:122).

3.5.4 Tuyu: Akhenaten's maternal grandmother

Tuyu, 'Superior of the Harim of Amun', apparently held a similar position in the harem of the deity Min in Akhmin (Aldred 1988:146). Aldred is of the opinion that Tuyu probably held an important position in the hierarchy of Amun at Thebes under the 'god's wife' (1988:146). There is a possibility that Tuyu might have descended from Queen Ahmose- Nefertari who was clearly an important member of the court (Aldred 1988:146). Tuyu and her husband Yuya were discovered in tomb KV46 in the Valley of the Kings in February 1904 (Romer 1981:200). There was no doubt as to the identity of the pair—they were parents of Queen Tiye who was the chief wife of Amenophis III. Amenophis/Amenhotep III and Queen Tiye were Akhenaten's parents (Aldred 1988:96). The

¹²³ *Maryannu*, a word found in Ugaritic texts, were feudal lords and chariot-fighters. They possessed large domains. Because chariotry was expensive, the horse, chariot and iron became distinctive in the military equipment of Indo-Europeans and these traces became a strong influence in the kingdom of Mitanni (Wiseman 1999:312). The names of the Mitannian kings appear to be an Indo-Iranian elite or warrior aristocracy dominating a Hurrian subject population (Kuhrt 1995:296).

mummies of Tuyu and Yuya would later form part of the Royal 18th Dynasty mummies under genetic investigation studies (Hawass et al 2010:638). Genetics and DNA will be covered in Chapter Four.

3.6 AKHENATEN'S MATERNAL UNCLES

Akhenaten's uncles may have been role models or exerted influence on Akhenaten in terms of his religious ideology.

3.6.1 Anen: Akhenaten's maternal uncle and priest of Heliopolis

The inscription, 'Son to Yuya and Tuya, brother to Queen Tiyi' (mother of Akhenaten), is found on Tuyu's (Akhenaten's maternal grandmother) coffin naming Anen as her son who held a high position in the priesthood of Amun at Thebes (Aldred 1988:220).

A brother to Queen Tiyi, Anen's name is included on the sarcophagus of Tuyu (Tiyi's mother) (Tyldesley 1998:20). Anen was a man of some standing, who served as an official of Ré at Karnak and a second prophet of Amun at Thebes (Tyldesley 1998:20). Aldred alludes to Anen as being the second of the four prophets of Amun and the greatest of seers, or high priests, in the temple of Ré-Atum. Despite the prominence of Anen, Aldred (1988:220) makes no reference to his kinship with the royal family. The dearth of information on Akhenaten's early years leads Osman to suggest that he might have had training and education in the city of Heliopolis (Biblical On)¹²⁴ because many elements of Akhenaten's new religion had their origin in solar worship (Osman 1990:121). Anen, a high priest of Ré, and uncle to Akhenaten (Queen Tiyi's brother) would have been a perfect candidate to provide mentorship and spiritual education in Akhenaten's early years and Zarw would have been a safe place to keep and conceal the young Akhenaten (Osman 1990:121).

3.6.2 Ay: Akhenaten's second maternal uncle

The inscription below is found on the walls of Tutankhamun's tomb:

The Good God, Lord of the two Lands, Lord who Performs the Ritual, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, <KHEPER> KHEP-RURE, Son of the GOD'S FATHER AY.

¹²⁴ For Apion, the Exodus is an event of Egyptian rather than Jewish history. He declared Moses to be a priest from Heliopolis (Assmann 1997:37-38). Bunson makes reference to Heliopolis as the On of the Bible, a city which was spiritually and politically powerful. Heliopolis was known as the primeval mound (Bunson 1999:110).

It refers to Ay as the funerary priest who performs the ritual of the ‘opening of the mouth’ ceremony¹²⁵ (Murnane 1995:224). Murnane is of the opinion that the mention of the ‘god’s father Ay’ might have been designed by Ay to establish Ay’s legal claim to Tutankhamun’s inheritance (1995:224).¹²⁶

Circumstantial evidence suggests Ay was a second brother to Queen Tiye (Tyldesley 1998:20). Osman identifies Ay as the second son of the patriarch Joseph (Yuya)¹²⁷ and that it is Ay, Moses’ uncle, who warns Moses about the plot against his life, resulting in Moses (Akhenaten) fleeing to the Sinai (Osman 1990:63). At the time of Akhenaten, Ay was ‘Master of the Horse’ (Aldred 1988:131) and ‘Priest Ay’¹²⁸ might have been accredited for the thinking behind the Aten heresy (Aldred 1988:221). Ay controlled access to the boy King Tutankhamun and exercised affairs of the state. He was believed to be the guiding hand behind the reconciliation with the god Amun (Reeves 2001:185). It was under Ay’s influence that Tutankhamun restored normality in what seemed to be a most turbulent time in the royal court (Reeves 2001:185). Reeves speculates that Ay may have been Nefertiti’s father stating that Nefertiti’s last ditch attempt at holding on to power might have compromised her father Ay (2001:185). Reeves continues his argument by suggesting that Nefertiti’s actions, by requesting a Hittite prince to marry Ankhesenamun (Nefertiti’s daughter or Nefertiti herself as widow of Akhenaten) after the death of Tutankhamun, was a political error and refers to her as a ‘treacherous queen’ (2001:176).¹²⁹ Ay was elevated to the throne of Egypt after the sudden death of the boy King Tutankhamun. Ay had become accustomed to being the power behind the throne and Reeves is of the opinion that Ay had much to gain by the death of Tutankhamun (Reeves 2001:186). A faience ring housed in the Berlin Museum¹³⁰ associates Ay’s name as King ‘KHEPERKHEPRURE’ with another name, that of the widow of Tutankhamun, ‘ANKHESENAMUN’. Murnane suggests this association might have been encouraged by Ay himself to settle the quarrel with the Hittite empire after the Zannanza affair (Murnane 1995:224).

¹²⁵ The ‘opening of the mouth’ ceremony was the last rite performed prior to the entombment of the mummy. Instruments were held up to the mouth and nose of the statue, the purpose being to ignite the senses in order to breathe life into the vessels for the *kas* (Gahlin 2001:54).

¹²⁶ Could Ay have been Tutankhamun’s biological father? This is a consideration as many different options are provided in the claim to paternity as discussed above.

¹²⁷ Osman (1990:2) bases his argument on the Biblical passage found in (Genesis 45:8) which states Joseph, identified as Yuya by Osman, reveals his identity to his brothers: ‘so now it *was* not you *that* sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout the land of Egypt’.

¹²⁸ There is no indication in the Biblical narrative that Joseph was a priest.

¹²⁹ The identity of the queen in question is debatable and depends on who ‘Dahamunzu’ was. This name was the vocalisation of an Egyptian title *ta hemet nesu*, ‘the king’s wife’. The debate is over which king, Akhenaten or Tutankhamun (Reeves 2001:176).

¹³⁰ The Berlin Museum confirmed in correspondence that the ring was purchased from the trade in 1973 but that the provenance was, at this stage, unknown.

There was a late claim during Ay's reign following the death of Tutankhamun that Ay was Tutankhamun's father. Perhaps, as Murnane (1995:219) suggests, it was meant to assert nothing more than his seniority and advisory position. The inscription on the architraves of the temple reads:

He [=Ay] made, as his monument for his son, the Good God, [Lord of] the Two Lands, [Lord] who performs the ritual, king of Upper and Lower Egypt [NEBKHEPRURE]

This inscription was added by King Ay to the architraves of Tutankhamun's 'Temple of NEBKHEPRURE in Thebes' (Murnane 1995:219). Ay reigned for four years between 1339 and 1335 BCE and his tomb was only half complete, showing signs of a hasty burial. The previous tomb made for him at el-Amarna some twenty years previously was described as a masterpiece of Amarna art (Romer 1981:56). In an attempt at total obliteration, Ay's name was chiselled from the tomb walls. Apparently he was a victim of the political and religious disturbances which occurred in Egypt during the later years of the dynasty (Romer 1981:56).



Figure 3.2: 'The Colossi of Memnon', statues of Akhenaten's parents, Amenhotep III and his wife Queen Tiye, Luxor Thebes, Egypt. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).

3.7 AMENOPHIS III (AMENHOTEP III)—AKHENATEN'S FATHER

3.7.1 Title, lineage and depiction of divine birth

The king of Upper and Lower Egypt, NEBMAATRE; the Son of Re, AMENHOTEP III, given life forever (Murnane 1995:23-25).

These words are inscribed into the rock and depicted on scene XIII above the infant king. Nebmaatre was the throne name of Akhenaten's father, Amenhotep III (see Figure 3.2) (ca.1390-1353 BCE) (Murnane 1995:282).

On the walls of the Luxor temple, a series of carved reliefs are found. The reliefs record the divine conception and divine birth of the future king Amenophis III—a divine child of Amun. The royal mother Mutemwia (a Mitannian princess) is impregnated by the god Amun (Reeves 2001:53). Depictions of Amenophis III's divine birth¹³¹ is met with jubilation by two fecundity (fertility) figures that carry the infant king (Murnane1995:25). Reeves (2001:53) notes the renewed emphasis of the god Amun at the time of Amenophis III's birth, despite the continued growth of Heliopolitan influence.

According to Bunson (1991:18), Amenophis III, the son of Thutmose IV and Queen Mutemwia/Mutemwiya (Akhenaten's Mitannian paternal grandmother), ruled at a peaceful and prosperous period in Egyptian history. Thutmose IV had established a good diplomatic relationship with the kingdom of Mitanni in Syria by marrying Mutemwia, a Mitannian princess and daughter of King Artatama I of Mitanni (Tyldesley1998:12).

3.7.2 Amenophis III—Marriages and reign

These words are inscribed on the 'Marriage scarab' (see 3.5.3.1).

Nebmaatre; son of Re, Amenophis—ruler of Thebes, who gives life; and the great royal wife Tiye may she live (Reeves 2001:54).

Aldred (1988:146) is of the opinion that, at the time of Amenophis III's marriage to Tiye, the king was not yet a teenager and his bride was even younger. The king could not have been older than nine years at the time of his marriage. Aldred states that the family of Tiye were influential, perhaps related to Amenophis III himself (1988:146).

¹³¹ Rank (in Freud 1974:10) makes the point that the history of the birth and early life of national heroes come to be invested with 'phantastic features'. Many investigators have noted this fact. I am reminded of the theme of the 'Immaculate Conception' found in biblical text and the impregnation of Mary by the Holy Ghost (Matthew 1:20). In the case of Queen Mutemwia, it is the god Amun, 'having changed into the shape [of her husband, while] she [was] exulting (?) [...] a great [...] which all people desire, and Amun went to impregnate her' (Murnane 1995:22).

Amenophis III married Queen Tiyi, a commoner's daughter of Yuia (Yuya), the Hurrian,¹³² Master of the Horse at Thebes (Bunson 1999:18). According to Wiseman (1999:224), the Mitannian kings Suttarna and his successor Tushratta gave their daughters in marriage to Amenophis III and his son Amenhotep IV (Akhenaten). Amenophis III married Gilukhipa,¹³³ a princess of Mitanni in his tenth regnal year, and later married her niece Tadukhepa, another Mitannian princess.¹³⁴

The king of Babylon, Kadashman-Enlil's words to Amenophis III: 'Here you are asking for my daughter in marriage, but my sister whom my father gave you was [already] there with you, and no one has seen her [so as to know] if now she is alive or if she is dead' (Moran 1992:1). The pharaoh complains to the Babylonian king asking for a dignitary to come to Egypt to identify the missing princess. The text is found on Amarna letter EA 1 (Moran 1992:1). Amenophis III appears to have been married several times; these marriages were, according to Aldred (1988:124), seen as diplomatic alliances.

3.7.3 Amenophis III and queen Tiyi's children

Queen Tiyi (see Figure 3.2) bore Amenophis III six principal children: Prince Thutmose, Akhenaten, Sitamun, Henuttaneb, Isis and Nebetah (Reeves 2001:61).

According to Reeves (2001:75), Amenophis III's son, and intended heir, prince Thutmose,¹³⁵ died unexpectedly. It appears Amenophis III was grooming prince Thutmose for his position as king. There is very little archaeological evidence to verify the existence of prince Thutmose. A statue housed at the Louvre Museum in Paris, depicts the prince (cf. 3.9.1) (Tyldesley 1998:39). The inscription on the statue identifies the prince as 'the King's Son, the Sem-Priest Thutmose' (Tyldesley 1998:39).

¹³² Bunson (1999:18) suggests that the nationality of Yuya was that of a Hurrian. There is a possibility that, after five centuries of *Hapiru* (the Hebrews of the Bible can be identified with the *Hapiru* of cuneiform texts) wanderings, the common origin would have been a military Hurrian aristocracy. These are fringe groups of the 2nd millennium BCE in relation to the major states. Their status as foreigners or refugees became more marked prior to becoming assimilated (Wiseman 1999:20-21).

¹³³ Gilukhepa, the daughter of Suttarna (father of Tushratta, king of Mitanni), arrived at the Egyptian court with a retinue of three hundred and seventeen women (Tyldesley 1998:28).

¹³⁴ Tadukhepa, daughter of Tushratta, king of Mitanni, would later arrive as part of a new marriage alliance between the two countries (Aldred 1988:152). It appears that the royal marriage alliances between the Syrian kingdom and Egypt existed as early as Tuthmosis III. A tomb found in the Theban cliffs belonged to three minor Syrian wives, Menhet, Menwi and Merti (Reeves 2001:60).

¹³⁵ Crown Prince Tuthmosis 'recognised as the heir of Amenophis III' (Aldred 1988:259).

While there is very little evidence of the young prince Thutmosis, there is virtually no evidence of the childhood of his brother, Akhenaten (Tyldesley 1998:37).¹³⁶ As mentioned above, New Kingdom children led sheltered lives and sons were particularly well hidden (Tyldesley 1998:38). Amenhotep III erected Malkata, a pleasure palace on the western shore of the Nile (as mentioned in the previous chapter, it is at Malkata that the first mention of his son Akhenaten is made). Malkata yielded a wine-jar seal labelled ‘the estate of the king’s true son Amenhotep’ (Tyldesley 1998:37).

The ritual scenes on the doorjambs and columns found at the Luxor Temple alternate between Tutankhamun and Amenophis III as the celebrants. This conveyed the impression that the two were collaborating in the decoration of the hall. Murnane states that theirs was a public relationship. Texts found inside the colonnade suggest the possibility of Amenophis III fathering Tutankhamun (Murnane 1995:216). The text on the Great Colonnade, North Wall at Luxor temple reads:

The following label, attached to Tutankhamun as he issues from the palace, describes him as renewing the monument of his father, the king of Upper and Lower Egypt NEBMAATRE (Murnane 1995:216).

Murnane (1995:216) alludes to the dispute over the term ‘father’. Does Tutankhamun claim Amenophis III as father literally or metaphorically or as an ‘ancestor’?

On the tomb wall of Huya,¹³⁷ the young Beketaten, daughter of Queen Tiye and Amenophis III appears. The scene depicts Queen Tiye sitting alongside her daughter Beketaten. The inscription reads ‘King’s Daughter Beketaten’ (Tyldesley 1998:137). Both Beketaten and Queen Tiye sit before Amenophis III. Tyldesley alludes to the problematic lack of dating of this epigraphical evidence. Based on the name of the girl, which includes the ‘Aten’ element, it is possible that the child was born after the start of Akhenaten’s rule. This suggests that either Amenophis III was dead at the time of her conception or Amenophis III was alive at the time of his son’s reign in Amarna (Tyldesley 1998:138). Tyldesley refers to Velivovsky’s claim that Beketaten was the daughter of Akhenaten and Queen Tiye but Tyldesley is of the opinion that this claim is groundless (1998:138). Aldred alludes to Beketaten as Queen Tiye’s ‘little companion in her widowhood’ (Aldred 1998:182). Kemp describes Beketaten as Queen Tiye’s daughter, referring to the same banqueting and feasting scene discussed above which is to be found on the tomb wall of Huya at Amarna (2012:145).

¹³⁶ One wonders was it after the unexpected death of the young crown Prince Thutmosis that male heirs were omitted from New Kingdom art, suggesting their potential vulnerability as the threat of regicide loomed large? Both Thutmosis II and Thutmosis IV had inherited the thrones after the death of their older brothers. This might have been as a result of the high infant and mortality rate (Tyldesley 1998:39).

¹³⁷ Huya, steward of the king’s mother Tiye (Kemp 2012:119).

3.7.3.1. Tutankhamun and Smenkhare

Aldred identifies queen Tiye as the mother of both Tutankhamun and Smenkhare. He bases his decision on deducing that Akhenaten's crowning took place three years after the birth of Smenkhare. He adds to his argument the close facial features and the lock of hair belonging to queen Tiye found in the tomb of Tutankhamun which would suggest a close relationship (Aldred 1988:293). Tutankhamun claimed on a statue he completed for the temple of Sulb that Amenophis III was his father (Aldred 1988:293). (The paternity results from DNA sampling were covered in Chapter Two). Scholars' views differ on the identity of Tutankhamun's mother: some scholars reject Tiye mothering these two boys, basing their objection on her age (Aldred 1988:293-294). Osman (1990:54) bases his hypothesis on Moses and Akhenaten being the same person, suggesting Queen Tiye is the mother of both. As mentioned above, Reeves (2001:61) is of the opinion that Tiye bore six children. Reeves suggests these children were fathered by Amenophis III. Reeves does not mention Smenkhare, Tutankhamun or Beketaten. Reeves suggests that Kiya was probably the mother of Tutankhamun (2001:179). Kemp (2012:14) suggests Tutankhamun might have been a son of Akhenaten. Osman believes it was likely that Tutankhamun was the son of Akhenaten and Nefertiti (Osman 1990:146).

Are we then to assume Queen Tiye bore nine or even ten children? Perhaps she raised children whose mothers might have died in childbirth such as Kiya and Meketaten.

It appears that scholars do not agree on Tutankhamun's parentage. The DNA results might clarify this debate (see Chapter Two).

3.7.4 Amenophis III: Co-regency and military achievement

Aldred (1988:174) suggests that, on the subject of co-regency, two courts operating simultaneously might have proved successful. Aldred claims the archaeologists Pendlebury¹³⁸ and Fairman allude to Amenophis III possibly residing at Amarna during the reign of Akhenaten. Pendlebury and Fairman base their conclusion on fragments of pottery dating to years 28 and 30 (1951:152-157). This could only point to the reign of Amenophis III, the only king to have ruled for so long at this time. This

¹³⁸ John Pendlebury, a British archaeologist, directed the final excavation for the British Egypt Exploration Society in 1936. After that date, the Egyptian government issued new rules relating to the division of funds for excavations upon which the British work depended (Reeves 2001:25).

conclusion was refuted by Redford¹³⁹ who argues that the correspondence from Tushratta to Akhenaten dated to 'year 2' discusses the demise of Amenophis III, some scholars have restored it as 'year 12', Redford concludes that the co-regency would have begun in year 28 of Amenophis III, year 12 of Akhenaten (1959:34-37).

Redford argue about the importance of the cult of the dead ancestors.¹⁴⁰ The houses of Thutmosis I, Amenophis II and Thutmosis IV are mentioned at Amarna, yet the possibility of them ever residing at Amarna could not be claimed by anyone (Aldred 1988:174). Redford cites another example of ancestral piety on the walls of the tomb of Kheruef. Here, an erased figure of Akhenaten is seen making an offering to his mother and father. Redford (cited in Aldred 1988:174-175), explains that the royal pair could be in the represented form of a statue offering a substitute for the living person when his presence in the flesh was not practicable. Reeves (2001:76) alludes to the scene on the third pylon at Karnak which depicts Amenophis III and a second erased king which might be the figure of Amenophis IV (Akhenaten). Osman (1990:199) is of the opinion that Amenophis III remained a partner in the co-regency until the day he died. Recent finds at Amarna do not appear to throw any further light on the co-regency debate. A stela depicting Amenophis III and his wife Queen Tiye, a shrine built of stone found in Panehsy's city house and a chapel in the garden of this high priest might reveal the priest's act of loyalty to a regime that was trying to change old ideas. It appears no further evidence is found at Amarna on the subject of co-regency with Akhenaten (Kemp 2012:231-232, 244).

Bunson suggests that Amenophis III either fought, or commanded a military campaign in Nubia. An inscription was made to recall this punitive expedition (Bunson 1999:18).

3.7.5 Religion and association with the solar disc

A life-size statue of Amenophis III was discovered in 1989. The statue was found buried in a pit at the west side of the 'sun court', in front of his temple at Luxor. The monument is seen to be a precursor for the Amarna period. The king describes himself in association with the 'Aten' (Murnane 1995:19).

¹³⁹ Donald Redford, from the University of Toronto, took over the directorship of the Akhenaten Temple Project in 1972 (Aldred 1988:82).

¹⁴⁰ Kemp refers to 'ancestors to be'. Modern accounts of ancient Egypt make reference to the deceased people who were figured on offering slabs, tomb walls or represented on statues. Individuals could also claim a key attribute of being 'deceased' whilst still alive. Kemp explains that people saw themselves in a positive light as 'ancestors to be'. In Amarna, Kemp alludes to examples of people represented in their houses as statues. Kemp (2012:245-247) states that had Amarna continued to be occupied, these honoured figures would have died and their heirs would probably have left the decorations out of respect for their dead.

During the reign of Amenophis III, approximately 4 million people benefitted from a strong economy and wealth. Amongst those was the priesthood of Amen-Ré that was already in receipt of a good income which was received from numerous assets (Tyldesley 1998:15). This income was further supplemented by offerings from the royal palace and the priesthood was entitled to a large share of foreign tribute (Tyldesley 1998:15). Egypt benefitted from this economic abundance with improvements to temples (Tyldesley 1998:16). These temples served to glorify the existing gods such as Heliopolis (temple of Thoth), Elephantine (temple of Khnum) and Sakkara (the Serapeum).¹⁴¹

A temple at Memphis (the northern capital) was dedicated to the god Ptah and to Amenophis III himself. At Thebes, the Karnak complex was upgraded, magnificent decorated pylons and a gateway were built by Amenophis III to face the river. A huge scarab beetle atop a plinth observed the daily purification rituals alongside the sacred lake (Tyldesley 1998:16). Vast amounts of electrum, gold, bronze, copper, lapis lazuli and turquoise were used to decorate the temples (Tyldesley 1998:17).

Prior to Amenophis III's improvements, the temple at Luxor looked in poor condition. Amenophis III raised the standard to a complex of splendour merging his own identity with the god Amun (Tyldesley 1998:17). This vast abundance and extravagance sets the scene that would have been witnessed by the young Akhenaten and his siblings. A significant aspect was the building of the shrine at Thebes to the new god Aten. This was a palace called the 'Splendour of Aten' and a pleasure boat reflecting the name 'Aten'. Wiseman (1999:90) suggests that there is evidence that alludes to the worship of Aten as early as Thutmose IV (Akhenaten's grandfather). Murnane (1995:20-21) has a number of references to the Aten from the time of Amenophis III. Aside from the lake and a commemorative scarab with the royal barge named 'Aten is dazzling', the statuette of the standard bearer Kamose reads 'Nebmaatre, the Dazzling Aten'. The canopic jars of court ladies are inscribed 'the house of Dazzling Aten the great'. Other references to the Aten appear in the Tomb of Neferssekheru. Jackal statues found in a mortuary temple in West Thebes are inscribed on the base with the following words: 'The image of Re, with a dazzling face, appearing like Aten' (Murnane 1995:21). A cartouche found at Luxor temple names Amenophis III as *'NEBMAATRE THE*

*DAZZLING ATEN'*¹⁴² (Murnane 1995:20-21). Further references to Amenophis III the king and his

¹⁴¹ The original vaults for the bodies of the Apis bulls date to the New Kingdom. They were incorporated into a cultic complex. These granite, basalt or limestone sarcophagi held the remains of the bull (Bunson 1999:242).

¹⁴² The image of the dazzling face, a theme also found in the biblical text, when the children of Israel saw Moses, the

affiliation to the Aten,¹⁴³ exist in Luxor temple and Karnak temple and in the temple of Montu (Murnane 1995:21).

3.8 AKHENATEN'S MOTHER (AMENOPHIS III'S CHIEF WIFE)

3.8.1 Title and lineage of Queen Tiyi

‘AMENHOTEP III, given life; (and) the King's Chief Wife Tiyi, may she live’

The above is an inscription translated by Murnane (1995:20). The inscription's provenance comes from the 'lake' commemorative scarab. The scarab commemorates the making of a lake for the King's chief wife, Tiyi. The dimensions of 3700 cubits in length, 700 cubits in width are included on the commemorative scarab. The name of her town, Djarukha, also appears on the scarab (Murnane 1995:20)

Osman makes the point that the location of the lake¹⁴⁴ is crucial in order to substantiate the place of birth of Moses (see Chapter Four) and Akhenaten. He is of the opinion that this area could have provided the background for the book of Exodus. He believes Djarukha (Zarw- kha) was the same place as Zarw, the frontier fortified city and main outpost on the Asiatic frontier (Osman 1990:108). The Israelites settled at Goshen in the Eastern Delta, close to the known position of Zarw (Osman 1990:107). Osman argues that Yuya, Queen Tiyi's father, is the patriarch Joseph, who brought the tribe of Israel from Canaan to dwell in Egypt (1990:108) (see 3.5.3 scholars differ on the origin of Yuya). The 'marriage scarab' provides important archaeological details, namely, the names of the parents of Tiyi. Tiyi was the daughter of Yuya and his wife Tuyu (Akhenaten's maternal grandparents). Reeves makes the point that Yuya and Tuyu could not have been ordinary commoners, but rather members of influence in Egypt (2001:54). The couple owned estates in Akhmim 160 kilometres north of Thebes (Reeves 2001:54). Tyldesley agrees with Reeves's opinion. Tyldesley states that Yuya and Tuyu were members of a wealthy and educated non-royal dynasty (1998:19). Aldred (1988:220) suggests Yuya may have been a brother to Queen Mutemwia,¹⁴⁵ the mother of Amenophis III (for Queen Tiyi's children, see 3.9).

skin of his face shone (Exodus 34:30).

¹⁴³ There seems to be sufficient material to suggest the veneration and importance of Aten from the rule of Amenhotep III. This was prior to the reign of Akhenaten, concluding that the worship of the Aten was not initiated by Akhenaten, but rather by his father which might explain the matter of co-regency—father and son holding similar views.

¹⁴⁴ These pleasure lakes must have remained popular. The plan of the Maru-Aten sun temple at Amarna, built by Akhenaten, depicts an adjoining shallow lake (Kemp 2012:58). The pleasure lake ordered by Amenhotep III for his wife Tiyi might have been at Malkata, now known as Birket-Habu. The dimensions were 2 kilometres by 1 kilometre. This was believed to be the lake referred to by Amenophis III even though the size does not tally (Tyldesley 1998:30-31).

¹⁴⁵ Considering Aldred's suggestion, this would have made Yuya, Akhenaten's maternal grandfather, a Mitannian. Queen

3.8.2 Queen Tiyi's influence

Weigall (1922:43-43) states that

Queen Tiyi possessed the ability to impress the claims of new thought upon her husband's mind, and gradually to turn his eyes, and those of the court away from the sombre worship of Amon [sic] into the direction of the brilliant cult of the sun.

Weigall wrote this at a time when the monuments of Nefertiti had not been recovered, perhaps leading to a distortion of exactly where the power behind the thrones lay (Weigall 1922:42-43). Tiyi would become the first queen to wear the cow horns of Hathor and the sun disc which made up part of her formal head-dress (Tyldesley 1998:24). The queen was worshipped in her own right as the solar goddess Hathor (Reeves 2001:59). Aldred describes Tiyi as a woman of immense power and influence (1988:96), yet according to Reeves, despite her power and influence, she accepted many other wives in the king's harem, including her own daughters (Reeves 2001:60). Reeves is of the opinion that Tiyi was held in the same esteem as her husband, Amenophis III. Reeves questions this powerful position considering the policy change since Hatshepsut's disastrous usurpation of power.¹⁴⁶ He argues that Tiyi's power on the throne was influenced by Yuya and his family (Reeves 2001:59). According to Tyldesley, Tiyi had her own Amarna sunshade,¹⁴⁷ and most likely her own Amarna home, however no evidence suggests she permanently lived there (Tyldesley 1998:135). Kemp (2012:119) states that, although a sun-temple has not yet been identified on the ground, several buildings called 'sunshades' can now be identified—all belonging to royal women.

The palace at Medinet-el Gurob on the edge of the Faiyum, yielded the yew head of Queen Tiyi depicted as an elderly woman. Some artefacts found at the site suggest Medinet-el Gurob might have been a cult centre for the worship of her deceased husband, Amenhotep III (Tyldesley 1998:136-137).

Mutemwia was the daughter of King Artatama, a Mitannian king. The marriage of King Artatama's daughter to Thutmose IV (Amenhotep III's father) appeared to consolidate the kingdoms of Egypt and Mitanni that were previously at war (Kuhrt 1995:194). Akhenaten, therefore, had Mitannian links on both his maternal and paternal lineage.

¹⁴⁶ Hatshepsut (Bunson 1999:108) (1473-1458 BCE) was, according to Reeves (2001:33) greedy for power and at the death of Thutmose II, Hatshepsut adopted the title of Pharaoh. The designated child-heir Thutmose III should have ruled Egypt despite his young age because he was in line to rule Egypt (Reeves 2001:33).

¹⁴⁷ Walled garden sun-temples ('sun shades' a term used in ancient times). These sun-temples were built out on the desert plain (Kemp 2012:53-54).



Figure 3.3: Valley of the Kings, Luxor, Egypt: Home to Tomb KV55. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).

3.8.3 Queen Tiyi's final years

The Amarna letters reveal that Queen Tiyi outlived her husband (Aldred 1988:181).

During the archaeological season of 1907, Weigall, Ayrton and Davis first entered the burial chamber of KV55 in the Valley of the Kings (see Figure 3.3). Weigall identified the panels with the hieroglyphs of Queen Tiyi (Romer 1981:213). In 1907, Davis published *The tomb of Queen Tiyi (The Tomb of Iouiya and Touiyou)*. He believed that the mummy contained in the tomb was that of Queen Tiyi (Romer 1981:213, 217) but there was contention as to the ownership of the tomb (Osman 1990:144). The results of DNA testing on the mummy believed to be Queen Tiyi will be covered in Chapter Four.

3.9 AKHENATEN'S SIBLINGS

3.9.1 Prince Thutmose II: Akhenaten's deceased brother

... Tuthmose, the chosen heir who predeceased his father (Kemp 2012:41).

The words, 'the King's son, the *Sem*-Priest Thutmose' are found inscribed on a statuette now housed in the Louvre Museum in Paris. This is the only known image of the young heir apparent to the throne of Egypt. Tyldesley describes the king's son, Prince Thutmose II, dressed in a kilt, a side lock and panther skin depicting the role of a priest (Kemp 2012:41). He predeceased his father Amenophis III. He is lying prostrate before the god Ptah (Tyldesley 1998:39). Prince

Thutmosis was the eldest son of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiyi and heir to the throne of Egypt, a governor of Memphis and high priest of the god Ptah. His responsibilities included the burial of the sacred Apis bull in which Ptah was incarnate. Thutmosis is shown in fragmentary relief¹⁴⁸ assisting his father Amenophis III in the state funeral of the Apis bull. The Apis bull had died during the reign of Amenophis III (Aldred 1988:259).

The full and final titular of Thutmosis, ‘Crown Prince, Overseer of the Priests of Upper and Lower Egypt, High Priest of Ptah in Memphis and *Sem*—Priest of Ptah’, was found on the sarcophagus of his pet cat which was named Ta-miu (Tyldesley 1998:39). Thutmosis was only a few years old at the time of his death (Aldred 1988:259). Reeves (2001:62) is of the opinion that the death of Thutmosis was an unexpected and cruel turn of fate. According to Osman (1990:118), Akhenaten’s brother would have inherited the throne but he died in infancy. Osman’s view of the untimely death of the heir to the throne of Egypt was that it ‘seems more likely that the disappearance of Thutmosis was not the result of natural causes’ (1990:61). Neither the mummy nor the tomb of the Prince has been found. It is likely that he was buried in Sakkara, given his links to Memphis, as suggested by Tyldesley (1998:30). As a result of Thutmosis’s early death, Akhenaten was next in line.

3.9.2 Smenkhare: Akhenaten’s brother, son or neither?

3.9.2.1. Title

Aldred (1988:293-294) identifies Tiyi as mother of both Tutankhamun and Smenkhare.

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, ANKHKHEPRURE, Son of Re, SMENKHARE, HOLY-OF-MANIFESTATIONS, given life like Re (Murnane 1995:209).

This above inscription appears on a calcite jar which was found in the tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings. The dated docket found on a wine jar at Amarna reads:

Regnal year 1, Wine of the House of SMENKHARE HOLY- OF- MANIFESTATIONS [of] the western river.
The chief of the basin (= master vintner) Sakaia (Murnane 1995:209).

¹⁴⁸ There is a depiction of the young boy on the reliefs found in the Serapeum at Memphis. It is not known how the young prince met his fate. As he was first in line to rule Egypt, he could have been murdered. Was it as a result of his demise that later reliefs have omitted depictions of young sons? One is reminded of the deaths of the first born sons in biblical tradition (Exodus 11:5). In Murnane’s index of private individuals (1995:287), a Thutmosis is listed, but it is not clear who this Thutmosis was.

Prince Smenkhare's coronation occurred in the fifteenth regnal year when he became co-regent with Akhenaten (Aldred 1988:287). King Smenkhare's throne name, Ankhkheprure, was virtually identical to his predecessor's throne name, Ankhkheprure (Nefertiti), while his personal name was 'Smenkhare Holy-of-Manifestations' (Murnane 1995:209).

3.9.2.2. Smenkhare's marriage to Meretaten – a daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti

King's Chief Wife MER<ET>ATEN, may she live forever continually (Murnane 1995:209).

The above inscription appears on the North wall on the East side of the tomb of Meryre II at Amarna (Murnane 1995:209). Meritaten was the eldest daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti. Meritaten was married to Smenkhare. Murnane refers to Smenkhare as Akhenaten's son-in-law (1995:209) while Osman is of the opinion Smenkhare and Akhenaten were full brothers (1990:146).

3.9.2.3. Co-regency Smenkhare and Akhenaten?

Osman argues that Akhenaten and Smenkhare ruled together as kings and a graffito found in the tomb of Pere, dated to the year three, provides evidence that, at this time, Smenkhare was the sole ruler. Osman believes that Smenkhare became co-regent in year fifteen of Akhenaten's reign and that, after the fall of Akhenaten, Smenkhare ruled Egypt on his own for a few months. Osman states that there is plenty of evidence suggesting Smenkhare's kingship at Amarna. Smenkhare's name appears on many small objects enclosed within a cartouche, as well as on the tomb wall of Meryre II, high priest of the Aten (1990:68).

Tutankhamun followed Smenkhare on the throne of Egypt, Smenkhare ruled after the fall from power of Akhenaten (Osman 1990:69).



Figure 3.4: Tutankhamun and his wife Ankhesenamun. Temple of Luxor. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).

3.9.3 King Tutankhamun: Akhenaten's brother, son or neither?

3.9.3.1. Title and parentage debate

Although the phrase 'The King's son, of his loins, Tutankhuaten' (see Figure 3.4) is mentioned in the Hermopolite *talatat*, Aldred (1988:287) states that the identity of Tutankhamun's parentage is not known for certain. Kemp (2012:14) mentions the 'probability' of Tutankhamun being a son of Akhenaten. Reeves identifies the 'King's bodily son' as Tutankhamun stating that 'his origins are as obscure as those of any other among the Amarna crew'. Reeves suggests that Tadukhepa (Kiya) was probably the mother of Tutankhamun (2001:179). He bases this on a stray text found along with others from Hermopolis where Tadukhepa (Kiya) is mentioned. Kemp also credits Tadukhepa (Kiya), based on weak evidence, as being mother to Tutankhamun (Kemp 2012:15).

Aldred believes that Amenophis III and Queen Tiye were the parents of Tutankhamun. He bases his decision on the close resemblance of their facial features. Aldred argues that Smenkhare was a king prior to Tutankhamun. He bases this hypothesis on Smenkhare being unable to succeed on the throne in preference to a royal son, even if Tutankhamun was a mere boy at the time. Aldred believes that the lock of Queen Tiye's hair found in Tutankhamun's tomb provides evidence to suggest the queen was, indeed, Tutankhamun's mother (Aldred 1988:293).

Osman (1990:146) is not convinced and asks the question why Tutankhamun would have lived at Amarna with Queen Nefertiti if he were the son of Queen Tiye who lived in Thebes?¹⁴⁹

Lord of the two lands, NEBKHEPRURE, Lord of crowns, TUTANKHATEN, given life everlastingly (Murnane 1995:211).

The above inscription, which uses Tutankhamun's 'Ateist' personal name, was found on a modest monument (only the top part of this monument is preserved) but Murnane does not provide provenance for the exact location (Murnane 1995:211). According to Murnane, the time of this inscription would have been in the earlier part of Tutankhamun's reign (1995:211). Osman notes that wine docketts dating from year ten of his reign have been found and therefore concludes that Tutankhamun could have died early in the year as he reigned for nine complete years (Osman 1990:69).

An unbroken limestone block found near Amarna bears inscriptions calling both Tutankhamun and Ankhesenpaaten 'beloved children of the king' (Hawass 2010:37).¹⁵⁰ Tutankhamun died and was buried in the Valley of the Kings. The burial must have taken place between the end of February and early March 1323 BCE (Reeves 2001:186). Reeves bases this decision on the remains of the dried plants from which the date of flowering can be ascertained (Reeves 2001:186).¹⁵¹ His tomb remained miraculously undisturbed until 1922 when KV62 was discovered by Howard Carter (Reeves 2001:188).¹⁵² The results of genetic testing and DNA will be covered in a separate chapter.

¹⁴⁹ In my opinion it could have been for safety reasons given the very real threat of regicide.

¹⁵⁰ Hawass (2010:37) mentions that not all scholars are convinced by this argument and Hawass has always favoured Akhenaten as Tutankhamun's father.

¹⁵¹ The historian Peter James considers a case of selective publishing. This concerns the results of testing on reeds and dom-palm nut kernels. These organic items were found in the tomb of Tutankhamun. James questions why the results were never published. The material is dated to 846BCE and 899BCE, two centuries too young for current chronology (James 1992:387).

¹⁵² Howard Carter, a British archaeologist, discovered the tomb of Tutankhamun on the 23 November 1922. He describes the find: 'I was struck dumb with amazement, and when Lord Carnarvon, unable to stand the suspense any longer, inquired anxiously, 'Can you see anything?' it was all I could do to get out the words, 'Yes. Wonderful things!' (Oakes 2001:104).

3.9.4 Sitamun

The eldest daughter of Amenhotep III and Queen Tiyi, Sitamun appeared to be a familial name as the daughter of Nefertari and ‘the god’s wife’, in the reign of Amenophis II, was thus named (Aldred 1988:141). Reeves suggests that Sitamun not only functioned as queen towards the end of her father’s reign but might have given birth to the enigmatic Beketaten (2001:79; cf. 4.2.4.3).

It has been suggested by Hayes (1990:241) that the remains of queen Tiyi and her daughter Sitamun were interred in the Thebes’ tomb of Amenhotep III. Two suites of chambers opening off Amenhotep III’s sepulchral hall are believed, by Hayes, to have been provided for the burials of Tiyi and her daughter Sitamun (Hayes 1990:241). Tyldesley believes that this is unlikely suggesting instead that they might have been buried at Amarna (1998:174). Eventually, Sitamun received the accolade ‘Great King’s wife’ (Tyldesley 1998:29) as she married her father Amenhotep III (Tyldesley 1998:29). Reeves states that such marriages were far from Egyptian norms and father-daughter relationships are, in the words of Reeves, ‘rarely attested’ (2001:161). Confusingly, Osman refers to Sitamun as the sister of Amenhotep III whom he married in order to inherit the throne. However Amenhotep III failed to make his ‘Great royal wife’ queen (Osman 1990:29).

3.9.5 Henut-Taneb, Isis and Nebetah

The three sisters of Akhenaten, Henut-Taneb, Isis and Nebetah, may have become great royal wives as their names are found on royal cartouches, but little else is to be found in the texts (Tyldesley 1998:29).

3.9.6 Beketaten: Akhenaten’s sister, or daughter?

The King’s bodily daughter, his beloved, Beketaten (Murnane 1995:131).

The above scene, reflecting the royal family banqueting, is depicted on the south wall, east side, in the tomb of Huya at Amarna. In this scene, Queen Tiyi sits with her daughter Beketaten (Murnane 1995:131). Based on the argument of Aldred and Tyldesley which suggests Amenhotep III as being deceased at the time of Beketaten’s conception, it is possible that the child might have been the daughter of Akhenaten and adopted by Queen Tiyi (perhaps even the daughter of Kiya). Murnane refers to Kiya and her daughter having their names and titles usurped by Nefertiti’s

daughters (Murnane 1995:92). Tyldesley makes the point that, as neither the name of a father nor a mother is mentioned in the texts regarding Beketaten, she seems to spring from nowhere (1998:138). She (1998:38) refers to Beketaten as ephemeral (1998:187) and suggests that Beketaten, in this scene, is as old as thirteen or fourteen and might have been adopted by her grandmother, Queen Tiyi.



Figure 3.5: Seated statue of Akhenaten in yellow stone, an earlier depiction of the Pharaoh, Louvre Museum Paris. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2013).

3.10 AKHENATEN KING OF EGYPT

3.10.1 Title

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, NEFERKHEPRURE-WAENRE, bodily son of Re, AMENHOTEP IV, long in his lifetime

The provenance of the above title and inscription is to be found on the stele of Amenhotep IV, cut into the north cliff of the sandstone quarry, located on the east bank at Gebel Silsila.¹⁵³ This large tablet at Gebel Silsila commemorates the preparations of what was possibly the first major building project found at Karnak (Murnane 1995:29).¹⁵⁴

‘Waenre’, was the first cartouche name used by Akhenaten (Kemp 2012:29).¹⁵⁵ Neither the name of Akhenaten nor his chief wife, Queen Nefertiti, appeared on an official kings’ list. Akhenaten’s name was changed from the nomen Amenophis (Amenhotep), ‘Divine ruler of Thebes’ to ‘Ruler of Thebes’ (Aldred 1988:20-21). Lepsius (1853:27) states ‘Amenophis, contained the name of Ammon [Amun], he changed it into Bech-en-aten [Akhenaten], “Worshipper of the Sun’s disk”.’

Akhenaten became pharaoh after the death of the intended heir, Thutmosis,¹⁵⁶ (Kemp 2012:14). Akhenaten was initially crowned as Amenhotep IV (see Figure 3.5 for an earlier depiction of the Pharaoh and Figure 1.1 as he was depicted later) but changed his name to Akhenaten from Amen to Aten (Kemp 2012:14). Tyldesley (1998:38) alludes to Amenhotep’s ‘hidden childhood’ as being intentional since New Kingdom royal children led sheltered lives. Redford (cited in Tyldesley 1998:198) indicates that Akhenaten was kept in the background suggesting he might have had a congenital ailment making him hideous to behold (Tyldesley 1998:198). Burrige (1996:127-128) suggests that Akhenaten’s artistic representations fit the inherited disorder of Marfan’s syndrome¹⁵⁷ but the results of DNA taken from what is believed to be the mummy of Akhenaten,

¹⁵³ Gebel Silsila is the name given to the rocky gorge between Kom Ombo and Edfu. Gebel Silsila East contains the quarries which were exploited during the New Kingdom. Akhenaten quarried stone here for an obelisk to be erected in his temple of the sun at Karnak. The worship of Amun by Akhenaten at Gebel Silsila is recorded (Bayfield c2002-14) <http://egyptsites.wordpress.com/2010/09/01/gebel-silsila/>

¹⁵⁴ William J. Murnane translated material from the Amarna period. The primary source of this material was from public monuments which were commissioned by royalty and private individuals during the Amarna period (Murnane 1995:15).

¹⁵⁵ The term ‘cartouche’ or *Shenu*, ‘that which encircles’, was the original term used. The modern term designates an ellipse which is found in reliefs, paintings, sculpture and papyri encircling certain royal names of Egyptian kings, used since the 4th Dynasty (Bunson 1999:51).

¹⁵⁶ Prince Thutmosis was recognised as the heir of Amenophis III (Aldred 1988:259).

¹⁵⁷ Alwyn L. Burrige put forward the possibility that Akhenaten suffered from a rare genetic disorder called ‘Marfan Syndrome’ (Reeves 2001:151), an inherited disorder. Some of the symptoms are a long face, elongated skull, jutting chin, eyes slit-like, protruding ears, tall stature and elongated extremities. According to Burrige (1996:127), many of these symptoms might explain apparent deformities, frailties and early death in the royal house of the 18th Dynasty of Egypt.

dispute this theory (see Chapter Two on genetics and DNA).

Tyldesley is of the opinion that Akhenaten was surrounded by unusually prominent women— his grandmother Mutemwia, his mother Tiyi and three of his four sisters (1998:79). Despite the ‘voluminous records’ from the Amarna period, very few shed light on the man himself leading Murnane (1995:12) to make the comment that ‘the individual remains hidden behind the cleverly crafted persona.’

3.10.2 Akhenaten’s persona and behaviour

Aldred alludes to the chief servitor of the Aten who hailed Akhenaten as ‘the good ruler who loves mankind’ (1988:8). If this statement is true, why then would the memory of Akhenaten be erased by his people so soon after his reign? Akhenaten’s character and conduct has aroused the suspicion that Akhenaten did not win his people’s attachment (Aldred 1988:8), perhaps Akhenaten was impaired by seizures, emotional instability, or profound retardation (Burridge 1996:127). In Amarna letter EA 26, Tushratta asks Tiyi about the gold statues sent to him by Akhenaten (Moran 1992:84) ‘w]hy have they been a source of such distress to your son that he has not given them to me?’

3.10.2.1. Adoration and tribute

The epigraphical details are our only indicators of Akhenaten’s personality. The act of ‘kissing the earth’ became a common scene, specifically under the rule of Akhenaten at both Karnak and Amarna (Redford 1988:15). Four different poses of adoration of Akhenaten by foreigners in the Egyptian military are depicted. These scenes depict arms extended in adoration, kneeling, crouching, kissing the earth and lying flat on the belly. The scenes were found on *talatat* blocks from the ninth pylon at Karnak. These blocks are currently being stored at Karnak in the first and second storehouses (Redford 1988:15).

Another scene found on *talatat* blocks at Karnak depicts Canaanites and Nubians with their arms outstretched in adoration of Akhenaten (Redford 1988:14). Scenes in temples at Karnak depict Asiatic princes and Mesopotamian princes with their arms extended, palms outward in the act of adoration towards Akhenaten (Redford 1988:13). At Luxor temple, a column of text has been restored on

This theory has since been disputed as a result of the findings from the DNA taken from mummies of the 18th Dynasty (Hawass et al 2010:642). Genetics and DNA were covered in Chapter Two.

talatat block (plate 7:1): '[Giving praise] to the Good God, by the chiefs [of every foreign land]' (Redford 1988:14). The text on *talatat* block (plate 10:1) reads: '[the chiefs of all remote foreign lands [are come] [bearing] all [good things], that they might live.' Alongside the text, two foreigners are depicted, one Asiatic and one Nubian (Redford 1988:17). *Talatat* block (Plate 10:1) depicts bound Canaanites with their arms pinioned behind their backs. These captives are found as decorative motives and depicted on the walls at Luxor (Redford 1988:17).

The theme of pharaoh's adulation was not a new theme in Egypt. Akhenaten was the absolute leader; in him lay all the power and his ideology became the state religion (Kemp 2012:231).

3.10.2.2. Sudden departure: The Exodus from Thebes and move to Amarna

On the walls of the boundary stelae at Amarna (cf. 3.2.5.3), the text inscribed into the stelae gives clues to Akhenaten's motivation for his sudden move to Amarna. Reeves is of the opinion that Akhenaten was dominated by the paranoia of an Amunist conspiracy (2001:193).

What motivated approximately 20 000 to 30 000 Egyptians to follow Akhenaten to an empty stretch of desert alongside the Nile? Kemp suggests it might have been the new concepts of the divine offered by Akhenaten. Concepts such as the life-giving power of God which was seen by all, shining in the light of the sun disc (Kemp 2012:17). Kemp refers to Akhenaten as the Aten's unique earthly agent (2012:17). The sudden departure from Thebes showed impulsivity to Akhenaten's character, he may have repeated this impulsivity and suddenly departed Amarna.

3.10.2.3. Conversations with the Aten — divine inspiration and exclusivity

Akhenaten was directed to the site of Amarna by 'divine inspiration' in his fifth regnal year (Aldred 1988:15). That Akhenaten's relationship with the Aten was exclusive and unique is revealed in the 'Hymn to the Aten' (the hymn will be covered in detail in Chapter Five). An extract from the hymn to the sun reads: 'I am your son, who is effective for you and raises up your name' (Murnane 1995:158). Perhaps it was Queen Tiye who influenced her son Akhenaten to become absorbed with the cult of the sun as suggested by Weigall (1922:43). Freud states Akhenaten could display what could be the earliest example of an Oedipus complex¹⁵⁸ (Tyldesley 2003:5). Bernstein negates this

¹⁵⁸ An unconscious desire to possess the opposite-sexed parent, an intensified hatred of the father, and insubordination to him, the father is seen to be responsible as well for his failure in life and conflicts with the external world (Freud 1974:79-80). Freud saw the Oedipus complex as the nuclear complex of all psychoneuroses (Reber, Allen & Reber 2009:526).

and states that Freud neglects the role of powerful women in Akhenaten's life and that 'it is the patriarchal development in religion that is Freud's dominant concern' (1998:37). (I suggest that this is the Y-chromosome discussed in Chapter Two—the 'God gene'). Depictions on temple walls were exclusively concerned with actions of the royal family (Aldred 1988:15). Reeves is of the opinion that 17 years of dictatorial rule would leave the people of Amarna filled with revulsion and loathing (2001:193).

3.10.2.4. Akhenaten's new image

Akhenaten's exaggerated physiognomy, expressed through the huge colossal statues found at Karnak, must have left his contemporaries in a state of confusion as this was a radical departure from previous imagery (Kemp 2012:30). Akhenaten changed the iconography of royal figures to a new style, with deformed-looking heads, long noses, thick lips and feminine physiques. These depictions awaited early visitors to the site of Amarna (Aldred 1988:18).

Mania is defined by Reber et al (2009:443) as a mood disorder which is characterised by a variety of symptoms which include elation, extreme motor activity, impulsiveness and excessive rapid thought, an obsessive preoccupation with a particular activity and a compulsive need to act in some deviant fashion such as megalomania. Akhenaten's promotion as sole intermediary with the Aten might reflect a side to his character that seems to be flawed-megalomania (Kemp 2012:23). But, as Kemp (2012:25) states, in trying to understand Akhenaten we are 'investigating the nature of the imagination.'

Perhaps Akhenaten was traumatised by experiences in his youth, afraid of the real threat of regicide because his own brother Prince Thutmosis may have been a victim of regicide. It could possibly have been the death of the first born Prince Thutmosis who was destined to be king, making Akhenaten pharaoh by default. This early experience might have motivated his later behaviour.¹⁵⁹

3.10.3 Archaeology and life at Amarna

New discoveries in the field at Amarna indicate that Akhenaten's people experienced immense hardship. Three thousand, or maybe more, people were buried behind the rock tombs at Amarna.

¹⁵⁹ A 'traumatic neurosis' means that time has passed between the event and the first appearance of the symptoms (Freud 1974:67).

Of the skeletal remains that have been studied, signs of inadequate nutrition in childhood, injuries to the skeleton and early death have been ascertained (Kemp 2012:227). There are also injuries received as a result of blows to the body and compression fractures to the spine which may have been caused by carrying heavy loads. Kemp (2012:227-228) also describes death through punishment, whereby men had been spread- eagled on the floor and stabbed through their shoulders, piercing the muscle. High incidences of early death amongst people under 35 have been found suggesting epidemics at the time of the Amarna period. Kemp suggests a drop in living standards may have faced those who moved to Amarna which were ‘... severe enough to leave those who survived to the end of the Amarna period only too happy to move away when it was possible to do so’ (2012:229).



Figure 3.6: An early depiction of Akhenaten and Nefertiti, Louvre Museum, Paris. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2013).

3.11 AKHENATEN'S WIVES

3.11.1 Nefertiti

3.11.1.1. *Nefertiti's title and origins*

... the King's Chief Wife, NEFERE-NEFRUATEN-NEFERTITI, may she live forever continually.

The above text names the protagonist on the border around the scene. The inscription was found inscribed on a private cult stela which was dedicated to the royal family. These stela served as icons for the cult of the royal family in the homes of officials at Ahket-Aten (Amarna) (Murnane 1995:86-87).

Nefertiti's famous bust,¹⁶⁰ discovered on the 6th December 1912 together with a smashed bust of Akhenaten, is housed in the Berlin Museum (Reeves 2001:24).

Reeves says that Nefertiti's parentage remains a mystery (2001:88). Reeves first alludes to Nefertiti as possibly being Tadukhepa, a daughter of Tushratta of Mitanni, however, this argument is contested by Tyldesley. Tyldesley could not find any references to Nefertiti's parents in any inscriptions or documents (Tyldesley 1998:40). Nefertiti had her own Egyptian wet nurse therefore Reeves argues that, based on present evidence, in all probability, Nefertiti was Egyptian born and bred (Reeves 2001:88). Tombs at Amarna, namely, Panehsy and Maya, have inscriptions that allude to Nefertiti having a 'queen's sister' named Mutnedjmet however Reeves states that this reading has been contested (Reeves 2001:88). The wife of the god's father, Ay, was Nefertiti's nurse raising the possibility that she was related to Ay's family (Kemp 2012:14). Osman suggests she was Amenhotep III's daughter from a wife other than Tiye and that Nefertiti grew up with Akhenaten as a half brother (Osman 1990:181). Osman is of the opinion that Nefertiti stood possibly for Miriam, the Biblical character, and Aaron, the son of the wet-nurse Tiye (Ay's wife). Osman states that Aaron is simply a 'feeding brother' to Moses (Osman 1990:182).

¹⁶⁰ The archaeologist is described by Reeves as 'cocky little Ludwig Borchardt'. The Deutsche Orient- Gesellschaft (DOG) excavated Amarna in the early twentieth century. Borchardt's men discovered the mud- brick villa of the king's sculptor, Thutmose, and 20 prototype plaster casts not only of Akhenaten but of his entire court. Amongst these is the famous bust of Nefertiti, a work described by Reeves as 'beyond compare' (2001:24). The Egyptian Government were outraged that the piece left Egypt illegally; the return of the bust to Egypt was once contemplated but vetoed by Hitler himself owing to Nefertiti's flawless 'Aryan' looks (Reeves 2001:22-24).

3.11.1.2. *From Queen to Co-regent*

Reeves discusses Nefertiti's new enhanced status from queen to co-regent and a new throne name, Nefernefruaten. Some suggest this 'new' king might be Nefertiti in disguise—a theory proposed first by Henri Gauthier in 1912 (Reeves 2001:170). Reeves suggests that Dahamunzu, 'the King's wife', was not Ankhesanum but rather Nefertiti, as widow of Akhenaten, requesting a foreign king from the Hittites. Reeves is of the opinion this anti-foreigner backlash 'provided an important strand to the Biblical tradition of the Exodus' (Reeves 2001:176-177). Nefertiti may or may not have been buried at Thebes, Medinet el Gurob or Amarna. Kemp speculates the possibility of a rift in the royal family and suggests that Nefertiti might have ruled at Memphis (2012:14). A small gold scarab recovered from the Uluburun¹⁶¹ shipwreck is the only extant gold specimen attested with the name of Akhenaten's wife Nefernefruaten Nefertiti (Aruz et al 2008:358). Archaeology at Amarna reveals the destruction of images of Akhenaten and Nefertiti; fine statues in stone reduced to rubble, however, this was not the case for the image of the Aten which generally remained untouched (Kemp 2012:25). Reeves is of the opinion that Nefertiti's power continued while assuming the name Ankheprure (Reeves 2001:177). Faïence ring bezels were found by Petrie at Amarna. These rings provide proof, according to Reeves (2001:171), that Akhenaten's co-regent was not a man but rather a woman. Inscriptions on the rings have the junior pharaoh's prenomen 'ANKHKHEPRURE' but written with a feminine 't' and elaborated with an epithet expressing dependence on the king. These rings were prepared for the regnal year 12 coronation (Reeves 2001:171).

3.11.1.3. *The last seen of the Queen*

Little is known of Nefertiti's later years. The evidence that exists depicts the great durbar which was held in Amarna in the middle of regnal year 12 where she is present with all her six daughters. These scenes are depicted in the tombs of Huya and Meryre II.¹⁶² After this, there is a scene of her mourning over the biers of her second daughter Meketaten who died giving birth and the last depiction of the queen is her mourning over another royal personage (Aldred 1988:225-226).

¹⁶¹ The scarab provides a *terminus post quem* for the date of the Uluburun ship wreck as post Amarna phase of late 18th Dynasty at the end of the 14th century BCE (Aruz et al 2008:358). Approximately nine kilometres southeast of *Kas* in Southern Turkey, a sponge diver first discovered the Uluburun shipwreck in 1982. The shipwreck contained ingots of copper, tin, gold, silver, metal vessels, Cypriot pottery, beads, textiles, spices murex, ivory, wood, resin, spices and condiments. The raw materials found have provided insight into Late Bronze Age trade in the Mediterranean. Artefacts from the shipwreck have allowed archaeologists to propose a rough date of 1300 BCE (Pulak in Aruz et al 2008:294-296).

¹⁶² Huya, the chief official of the household of Queen Tiye and Meryre II the steward (Kemp 2012:42, 43).

Campbell (1964:57) is of the opinion that Nefertiti was the dominant figure beside her husband Akhenaten and this was eclipsed after her twelfth year which is the last time that the royal family was shown as a unified family. Campbell suggests Nefertiti's disappearance does not reflect her death, but rather banishment, as there is evidence to suggest that she continued to live in Amarna (1964:57). Reeves on the other hand believes that it was not Nefertiti who fell from grace but rather Kiya, Akhenaten's 'other' woman, and that, with the disappearance of her rival Kiya, Nefertiti's influence at court increased (Reeves 2001:170). According to Murnane, buildings dedicated to Kiya and her daughter were usurped by Nefertiti's daughters (Murnane 1995:91). According to Reeves, Henri Gauthier first proposed the idea that the new 'king' might have been Nefertiti in disguise (2001:170). An increasing number of Egyptologists, such as Gauthier (mentioned above) and John R. Harris (1973:15-16), who re-examined the evidence in 1973 and concurred with Gauthier, acknowledge the 'disappearance' of Nefertiti, not as a result of death or banishment, but rather a change of name (Reeves 2001:170-171).

A limestone statue of a middle-aged Nefertiti was found in the workshop of Thutmose in Amarna. The statue depicts the queen in a close fitting cap-crown which was favoured during the co-regency with her husband Akhenaten (Reeves 2001:177).

3.11.2 Kiya (Tadukhepa), Akhenaten's secondary Queen

3.11.2.1. Title and origin

The wife and great beloved of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, who lives on Maat, NEFERKHEP-RURE-WAENRE, the beautiful child of the living Aten who shall live forever continually 'Kiya'.

The above inscription appears on a calcite vase which is now housed in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (Murnane 1995:90). Kiya might be identified as Tadukhepa, daughter of the Mitannian King Tushratta (Helck 1984:159-60).

3.11.2.2. Tadukhepa/Kiya's children

Aldred suggests that Tadukhepa (Kiya) enjoyed the special favours of the king as a result of the possibility of bearing a daughter or sons (1988:287). She bore the king a daughter and circumstantial evidence suggests she also bore the king sons (see 3.9.3.1) (Tyldesley 1998:130). Aldred states that Tadukhepa had exceptional privileges (1988:287). Kiya not only had her own sunshade but officiated alongside Akhenaten. Splendid funerary furniture, a sunshade temple in the

Maru-Aten,¹⁶³ and chapels were built for her cult near the great temple at Amarna. The term 'sunshade' found on stonework at Maru-Aten reflected the name of Akhenaten and Nefertiti's daughter Meritaten. This had been carved over an earlier female royal name, and Kemp suggests that Kiya or Nefertiti might have destroyed the earlier inscription (2012:119). Jealousy might be the cause of the actions of Nefertiti's daughters with the destruction of Kiya's names which appeared in several small buildings found in Amarna (Murnane 1995:91). These buildings were dedicated to Kiya and her daughter in the latter part of Akhenaten's reign (Murnane 1995:91). Murnane (1995:9) discusses the tensions between Nefertiti's daughters and Akhenaten's other consort, 'the wife and greatly beloved', Kiya. Harris (1974:25-30) suggests that Kiya trumped her competition Nefertiti by producing a male heir. Kiya has been accredited as the mother of Tutankhamun but this is based on weak evidence (Kemp 2012:14). Gabolde (2011:2) proposes that Beketaten who was depicted in the tomb of the noble 'Huya' at Amarna (later to be adopted by queen Tiye) was the daughter of Akhenaten and the disgraced Kiya (see Figures 3.8 and 3.9).

Tadukhepa/Kiya, the secondary wife of Akhenaten (Aldred 1988:286) has left several traces of her existence. The above inscription bears testimony to the favour she received from Akhenaten. Tushratta of Mitanni refers to Tadukhepa as his daughter and Yuni as his wife (Murnane 1995:99). The Amarna letter EA 24, written in Hurrian, lists the dowry gifts sent to Amenhotep III by Tushratta which accompanied his daughter, Tadukhepa (Kuhrt 1995:293). Tadukhepa had been sent to Egypt to marry the ailing Amenhotep III, but Tyldesley (1998:42) is of the opinion the marriage might not have been consummated as her arrival occurred at the same time as the death of the elderly king. Tyldesley (1998:42) suggests that Tadukhepa first married the ageing Amenhotep III, then later married Akhenaten. Tyldesley (1998:42) is of the opinion that the marriage was not consummated as her arrival from Mitanni coincided with the death of Amenhotep III.

3.11.2.3. *Tadukhepa/Kiya's final years*

By year twelve, Kiya had vanished (Tyldesley 1998:130). Murnane suggests the scene in the royal tomb depicting the death of the owner of the tomb following the birth of a royal son might be that of Kiya (see Figure 1.2). Murnane (1995:92) admits that evidence identifying the child's mother as Akhenaten's 'other wife' is slender. The royal coffin found in the tomb KV55 was originally made for a woman of the royal house but the coffin was altered for the burial of a king. The cartouches naming

¹⁶³ Walled garden sun-temples ('sunshades' was the ancient term) were built out on the desert plain. One such temple was named *Maru-Aten*, a garden with an oasis and water garden (Kemp 2012:53-54).

the mummy had all been systematically cut out; only oval holes remained (Aldred 1988:202). After a careful study of the texts of the Amarna period, the name on the bronze uraeus adorning the coffin was eventually identified as ‘The Royal Favourite Kiya’ (Aldred 1988:203).

3.12 AKHENATEN’S CHILDREN



Figure 3.7: A daughter of Akhenaten. The Louvre Museum. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2013).

3.12.1 Meretaten

3.11.2.1. *Title*

King’s bodily daughter, his beloved, Meretaten, born to the King’s Chief Wife NEFERTITI

This inscription of the title of Meretaten appears on the walls at the Aten temples in Karnak. Other members of the royal family are depicted (Murnane 1995:37).

According to Tyldesley, Meretaten was born in Thebes in year one of Akhenaten’s reign (1998:52). She was the eldest daughter and the pet name, Mayati, was given to her (Aldred 1988:187). Archaeology reveals letters from Burnaburiash II of Babylon sent to Akhenaten referring to ‘your daughter Mayati’ (Aldred 1988:287). The title ‘King’s daughter’ appears on the stonework of a few royal buildings at Amarna, namely, Maru-Aten and the North palace. Meretaten acted as Akhenaten’s consort in the later part of his reign (Kemp 2012:14) and was referred to as the mistress of Akhenaten’s household (Kemp 2012:15).

3.12.2 Meketaten

3.11.2.1. Title

[King's] bodily daughter, his beloved], Meketaten, born to [the King's Chief Wife] NEFERNEFRUATEN-NEFERTITI] may she live forever continually.

This inscription appears on the wall of the Aten temple in Karnak (Murnane 1995:38).

3.11.2.2. Room Alpha: Scene of birth and death

Meketaten, the second child born around year two of Akhenaten's reign (Aldred 1988:26), died giving birth. We know this from the royal tombs at Amarna. In Room *Alpha* a scene of birth and death is depicted and the burial place is in Room *gamma* (Martin 1989:38). We are left to presume that the wine-jars reveal wine from Meketaten's estate imported into Amarna but this ceases after year eleven (Aldred 1988:225). Nefertiti was still alive to mourn her daughter Meketaten. Nefertiti is depicted in epigraphical detail on Room *Alpha*, Wall F at Amarna. She is seen standing alongside her husband Akhenaten in a gesture of mourning (Martin 1989:38). Meketaten would have been at child bearing age, concluding this event could not have happened prior to year thirteen. According to Aldred, this is the last we see of Nefertiti (see 3.11.1.3) (1988:226).

3.12.3 Ankhesenpaaten

3.12.3.1 Title

[King's] bodily [daughter] his beloved, Ankhesenpaaten, born [to the King's Chief Wife] NEFERNEFRUATEN-NEFERTITI, may she live forever continually.

The above inscription appears on the walls of the Aten temple at Karnak (Murnane 1995:38). Ankhesenpaaten was born to Nefertiti in Thebes before Akhenaten's seventh regnal year (Tyldesley 1998:52). She was the third daughter of Akhenaten and Nefertiti (Murnane 1995:278). Ankhesenpaaten bore a daughter of the same name whilst living at Amarna (Murnane 1995:278).

Ankhesenpaaten appears with her older sisters on Boundary stela A at Amarna. She is seen on a fragment of a wall painting in the fifth regnal year of her father, Akhenaten, rattling a sistrum¹⁶⁴ (Aldred 1988:276). Aldred is of the opinion that, based on obligations within the divine circle, Akhenaten fathered at least two daughters from his own daughters, Meritaten and Ankhesenpaaten.

¹⁶⁴ A sistrum, otherwise called a SESES or (*shesheset*), a name used by the ancient Egyptians. The sistrum was a musical instrument popular in the cult of Hathor. The instrument was used in religious processions (Bunson 1999:248).

The daughters were then given the names of their mothers but with an additional title of *ta-sherit* meaning junior. According to Aldred, it was only royal daughters produced by Ankhesenpaaten and not sons (1988:287).

3.12.3.2 Ankhesenpaaten's marriage to Tutankhamun

Ankhesenpaaten later married Tutankhamun, changing her name to 'Ankhesenamun' when she became queen of Egypt (Murnane 1995:278). The two stillborn children that were found in the tomb alongside their father, Tutankhamun, are believed to have been delivered by Ankhesenamun (Aldred 1988:298).

3.12.3.3 Ankhesenamun's marriage to Ay (Moses' uncle?)

Queen Ankhesenamun, despite her wish to marry a prince from Hatti, was left with no choice but to marry her grandfather Ay (Aldred 1988:298). Ay secured the throne as a result of marrying the royal heiress (Aldred 1988:298). Aldred claims that Ay was father-in-law of a king. Aldred deduces that Akhenaten was this king. Aldred suggests that Ay's daughter might have been Nefertiti (see 3.11.1.1) (1988:221). A blue faience finger ring is enough evidence to suggest that the marriage did occur as her name, along with that of Ay, is engraved upon the bezel (Aldred 1988:298).

3.12.4 Nefernefruaten junior, Nefernefrure and Setenpenre

King's bodily daughter, his beloved Nefernefruaten Junior (Murnane 1995:162).

King's bodily daughter, his beloved Nefernefrure (Murnane 1995:162).

King's bodily daughter, his beloved Setenpenre (Murnane 1995:162).

The above inscriptions were found on the east wall of the main chamber at Meryre II's tomb at Amarna (Murnane 1995:162). Kemp notes that, other than in the list of names of the three daughters born at Amarna, they do not appear in further historical record (2012:14). All three younger daughters of Akhenaten were born at Amarna (Tyldesley 1998:52).

Although Kemp (2012:14) does not give specific sources, he documents six children, all girls, born to Akhenaten and Nefertiti. On the east wall of the main chamber in Meryre II's tomb, Akhenaten is depicted with his wife Nefertiti followed by their six daughters receiving tribute of foreign lands (Murnane 1995:162) (cf. 3.11.1.3) (see Figures 3.7 and 3.8 for depictions of Akhenaten's daughters).



Figure 3.8: Two of Ahenaten's daughters (no names given). Louvre Museum, Paris. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2013).

3.13 TUSHRATTA: AKHENATEN'S FATHER-IN-LAW (MITANNIAN)

3.13.1 The land of Mitanni and Hurrian culture

The land of Mitanni was referred to by the Hittites as the land of the Hurrians, Hanigalbat by the Assyrians, Hittites and Babylonians and Nahrina by the Egyptians (Aruz et al 2008:194).

Tushratta, a king of Mitanni,¹⁶⁵ whose official language was Hurrian,¹⁶⁶ composed many long letters to the Egyptian pharaohs, namely, Amenhotep III, and his son, Akhenaten. Fortunately, some of the correspondence was found in the archives of Amarna (Wiseman 1999:223). Wiseman says that '[i]f the Mitannian capital city of Wassukkani is ever located and excavated, we may discover Hurrian civilization in its purest form' (Wiseman 1999:222).¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁵ Around 1490 BCE, a first mention of the Dynasty of Mitannian kings ruling continuously at Washshukanni in Upper Mesopotamia appears. These kings ruled until 1370 BCE when their kingdom was finally destroyed by the Hittite King Suppiluliuma I (Wiseman 1999:223). These Mitannian rulers corresponded with the Egyptian pharaohs as equals (Wiseman 1999:223).

¹⁶⁶ Tushratta's name is non-Hurrian, as were the other rulers of Mitanni, instead they had Indo-Aryan type royal names such as Paratarna, Sausatar, Artatama, Suttarna and Tushratta (Wiseman 1999:223). Authorities on the ancient languages of India have recognised these royal names (Wiseman 1999:223). Evans (in Aruz et al 2008:194) agrees with Wiseman that the Mitannian rulers bear Indo-European names. The gods of the later Indian Vedas such as Mitra and Varuna were worshipped as minor deities.

¹⁶⁷ In the recent publication *Beyond Babylon* published in 2008, the authors discuss the Mitannian material culture. This culture is known primarily through excavations at the sites of Nuzi and Alalakh. In recent years, the increase in archaeological activity in Syria has revealed several Mitannian sites, however, the principal Mitannian royal city of Washshukanni has not yet been identified. I am of the opinion that when the site is positively identified, excavations will illuminate the Amarna period providing many answers to questions about that period. As I have shown in this study, the Mitannian royal family is deeply connected to the Egyptian royal family by blood ties and the texts reveal correspondence received by the Mitannian kings. According to Aruz et al (2008:194-195), the site of Washshukanni might

Wiseman sees a possible connection between the *Hapiru* and the Hurrians:¹⁶⁸

The Hebrews of the Bible ... can be identified with the *Hapiru* of the cuneiform texts and the 'prw' of Egypt. This 'class' seems to be linked with the Hurrians following their movements without being identified with them (Wiseman 1999:23).

The *Hapiru* were neither foes nor allies of the Hurrians. Tubb (1998:81) sees a strong relationship between the *Hapiru* of the Amarna letters and the Biblical Hebrews. Tubb is of the opinion that the *Hapiru* cannot be seen as an ethnolinguistic term (specifying a particular people) but rather as a more general term for dispossessed people of varying backgrounds (1998:81). Kuhrt refers to the development of the Hurrian state of Mitanni and the 'Hurrianisation' of the Levant and northern Mesopotamia. The Hurrian culture has to be added to the complex cultures of the region (Kuhrt 1995:288).

Gernot Wilhelm (1983:96-113) was responsible for the translation of EA 24. EA24 known as the 'Mitannian letter' may be obscure in parts of the text (Moran 1992:71). Moran (1992:71) notes that this is an important document as it is the only letter in the Amarna archive which is written in the Hurrian language. The significance of including the Hurrian connection in the above passage is to illustrate Tushratta's Hurrian roots and his connections to the Egyptian royal family. EA 24 indicates that there were people in the Egyptian court who could read this language.

3.13.2 The royal princesses from Mitanni

As early as the 14th century BCE, diplomatic marriages between Mitannian princesses and Egyptian pharaohs were seen as part of peace negotiations between the two countries (Aruz et al 2008:194). In Amarna letter EA 24, Tushratta refers to his sister, his aunt, and his daughter all being married to Egyptian pharaohs (Moran 1992:67). This suggests that a close familial bond might have existed between the two kingdoms and Tushratta would have known whether or not Akhenaten had sons.

be Tell Fakhariyah. Excavations started there in 2006 might prove one day to be the lost capital from where Tushratta and other Mitannian kings ruled.

¹⁶⁸ The Hebrew of the Bible, *ib r (iyy) im*, could be identified with the *Hapiru* of cuneiform texts. Israelites are conscious of a common condition with them particularly in relation to the Philistines and the Egyptians, not as an ethnic link but rather a geographical one (Wiseman 1999:24). Despite inheriting common customs dating from the patriarchal period, Israelites do not identify with them (Wiseman 1999:24). According to Osman (1990:246), the word for Hebrew is 'Ibri, which is believed to be related to the Hebrew proposition 'ibr' meaning 'across'. Osman refers to the Amarna letters referring to people called the *Khabiru* (sometimes referred to as SA-Gaz). These people were causing trouble in the Egyptian territories. Lemche (in Hoffmeier 1997:26) is also of the opinion that the Israelites were derived from the *hbiru* and sees them as refugees from another part of Canaan.

3.13.3. Tadukhepa: Daughter of Tushratta

Tushratta was the father of Tadukhepa (see 3.11.2.1) (Kiya, as suggested above, might be the same person). Amarna letter EA 27 a letter from Tushratta's to Akhenaten/Naphurreya it reads:

[Say to Naphurreya, the king of Egypt ... my son-in law, whom [I love and who loves me: ... For me all goes well ... For Tadu-Ḥeba, [m]y daug[hter, your wife... for [your] sons (Moran 1992:87).

3.13.4 Tushratta's reference to Akhenaten's sons

In EA 27 (as seen above), Tushratta refers to 'sons' in the plural form. The Amarna letter EA 27 reveals Tushratta was indeed a close family member. He therefore would have known whether or not Akhenaten had fathered sons. He was possibly revealing what was hidden from those outside the royal family.

EA 24 describes close ties of friendship between Egypt and Mitanni by saying '... and we, between us, are one, the Hurrian land and the land of Egypt' (Moran 1992:65).

3.13.5 Tushratta's murder

Tushratta ended his days as a victim of murder at the hands of his son (Kuhrt 1995:296) and Naharin (Mitanni) was wiped from the map of Western Asia (Aldred 1988:282). This meant that Tadukhepa lost her father and Akhenaten lost his father-in law.

The conquest by a Hittite ruler, Suppiluliumas (1344-1322 BCE), of the Mitannian heartland and the sacking of Washukanni, was seen as a decisive victory for the Hittites. After this, Mitanni became a buffer region for the Hittites (Evans 2008:195). Tushratta was murdered by one of his sons and another son fled to the Hittite king Suppiluliumas for protection (Kuhrt 1995:296).

3.14 CHART OF FAMILY TREE

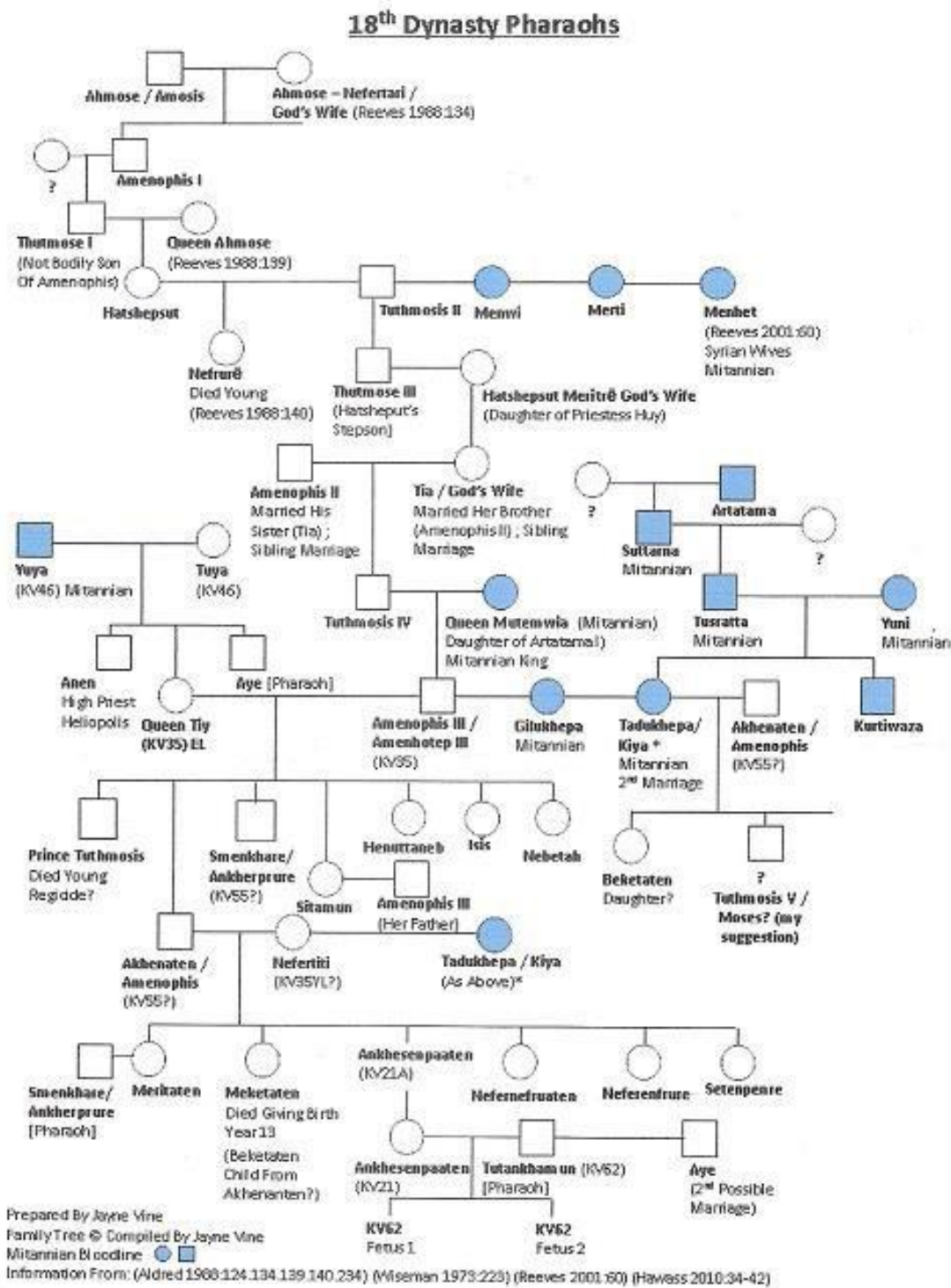


Figure 3.9: Family tree of 18th Dynasty pharaohs. Compiled by Jayne Vine. February 2013.

3.15 AKHENATEN'S 'VICEROY OF KUSH'

The 'Buhen stela' describes in detail the king's son of Kush assembling an army in order to defeat the enemies of the foreign country of Ikatya. The king referred to is Akhenaten (Waenre) and the son is clearly named as Thutmose (Murnane 1995:101-102). The inscription on the 'Buhen Stela' describes a war in Nubia¹⁶⁹ and there is a name inscribed on it which reads: 'the King's Son of Kush, the overseer of the [southern] countries [Thutmose, said]' ... After a gap of uncertain length: [Fear of you is in the]ir [hearts]' (Murnane 1995:102). Exactly who this king's son of Kush is, is debatable. A campaign was fought in the foreign country of Ikatya which even invaded the lands of the Nilotic Nubians. This news was brought to Akhenaten in Akhet-Aten (Amarna) (Murnane 1995:101). Reisner (1920:34) alludes to a certain Dhutmose (1370-1358) under the reign of Akhenaten. Morkot concurs with Reisner (2003:248) identifying as viceroy under Akhenaten 'the Nubian army led by the viceroy campaigned against Ikatya, in the Eastern Delta' (2003:xxiii). The statuette from Gebel Barkal great Temple states 'Hereditary prince, toparch, (many signs missing), overseer of the borderlands of His Majesty, fan-bearer on the king's right'. The name of Dhutmose, a viceroy of Ethiopia, stands under the name of Amenophis IV (Akhenaten). 'Tuthmose – King's son of Kush [overseer of the Gold land] of Amun, overseer of Masons (?)' (Reisner 1920:73-88). The identity of the text raised some argument as to the correct identification and I believe that this requires further study. Might this Dhutmose be a son of Akhenaten? This is of significance for the purpose of this study.

3.16 THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF AKHENATEN

3.16.1 The Royal Tombs at Amarna

Let a tomb be made for me in the orient mountain [of Akhet-Aten], and let my burial be made in it (Murnane 1995:77-78).

Akhenaten was specific regarding his choice of final resting place. The above words were found inscribed on the boundary stelae as part of the 'earlier proclamation' (Murnane 1995:73). Akhenaten continued his rhetoric, expressing his wishes that the burials of Nefertiti and Meritaten were to be included in Akhet-Aten, irrespective of where they died. These were his written wishes:

¹⁶⁹ Murnane identifies Kush as a term designating southern Nubia, but which often is used to refer to the lands south of Egypt (1995:281).

If the King's Chief Wife NEFERTITI-may she live!- should die in any town of the downstream, the south, the west, or the orient, in these millions [of years, let her be brought (back) so that] she [may be buried in Akhet-Aten. (And) if the King's Daughter Meritaten dies] in any town of the downstream, the south, the west, or the orient in these millions of years, let her be brought (back) so that [she] may be buried in Akhet-Aten (Murnane 1995:78).

Kemp suggests that, according to the boundary stela, the same tomb belonging to Akhenaten contained the burial chamber for either his daughter, Meketaten, or Nefertiti, his wife (Kemp 2012:37). The discovery of three more rock tombs suggests the possibility of Akhenaten envisaging a new Valley of Kings and that one of the tombs might have been assigned to the Mnevis Bull¹⁷⁰ (Kemp 2012:37) (see Chapter Five). Aldred is of the same opinion, suggesting that the tomb with elaborate architecture may have been designed for the Mnevis Bull, the sacred animal of the sun cult of Heliopolis (Aldred 1988:43). Aldred also states that one of these unfinished tombs was designed for a sovereign or heir apparent¹⁷¹ (1988:43). The workforce of workmen and craftsmen moved from Thebes to el-Amarna to undertake the mammoth task of building these tombs and built a small settlement for themselves known as the 'stone village'¹⁷² (Kemp 2012:190). Kemp provides information which will illuminate the opening text quoted in Murnane by providing further details of Akhenaten's chosen burial site. The tomb of Akhenaten was built into a rock in the eastern mountain in a narrow side valley leading from a *wadi*¹⁷³ (Kemp 2012:37). Perhaps it was this remote location that had prevented an earlier discovery. The royal *wadi* is described by Aldred (1988:28) as a 'savage place'. Local villagers had been pillaging the royal tombs some time before it had come to the attention of scholars.¹⁷⁴ The omission of depictions of the Otherworld painted inside the tomb of Akhenaten indicate the rejection of a mythical narrative. Eternity, for Akhenaten, was nothing more than greeting the Aten (Kemp 2012:255) (see Chapter Five). Tomb scenes that missed total desecration are the usual offerings and ceremonies to the Aten. The royal family officiated in all the scenes (Aldred 1988:30). In Figure 1.1, a scene of mourning is

¹⁷⁰ Apis or Mnevis bull was a sacred bull associated with ceremonies dating to the 1st Dynasty (2900 BCE). The remains were embalmed and placed in the Serapeum (Bunson 1999:27).

¹⁷¹ The aspect of an heir apparent needs further investigation. Was this tomb for a son, Smenkhare, Tutankhamun, or somebody else?

¹⁷² An inhabitant of the Amarna village had the title 'servant of the place [of truth]'. This was a title which was borne by men from Deir el-Medina (Thebes). Kemp suggests that Akhenaten brought in a labour force that had worked at the Valley of the Kings in Thebes. These men stayed at the workmen's village and the 'stone village'. They were subjected to enforced separation from the rest of Amarna and policed by a group called the Medjay (Kemp 2012:190).

¹⁷³ Bunson describes a *wadi* as an Arabic term for a gully or dry riverbed (1999:278).

¹⁷⁴ Revd WJ Loftie, an English clergyman, acquired items of gold jewellery in Egypt in 1882. These items were reputed to have come from the tomb and were later sold to a dealer in London. Two finger rings belonging to Nefertiti are to be seen in the Royal Museum of Edinburgh (Aldred 1988:27).

portrayed in room *Alpha*.¹⁷⁵ What is of particular interest for this study is a depiction of the king and queen mourning the death of a woman, perhaps a queen or princess, who passed away giving birth to a child. The woman is lying on a bier and in the scene is a nursemaid carrying a newborn infant. Also in the scene are mourners, recognised by their body language, a number of princesses, some plastered over (perhaps deceased), a fan-bearer, indicating the infant is of high rank and a vizier, indicating the high importance of a royal birth (Aldred 1988:30-31). Martin (1989:38) states that all commentators have identified this scene to represent the death of Meketaten but Martin suggests that this may not be correct as the figure of the mother and the text have been destroyed. The occasion should have been a joyful one, instead it turned tragic. Martin speculates that the child born was Tutankhamun and the mother of the child was Kiya¹⁷⁶ (1989:40). Martin bases his speculation on a very similar scene portrayed on a tomb wall of the *Gamma* Room where the same protagonists are found: deceased mother, mourners, king and queen and personal attendants of the princess. Here the translated inscription reads:

King's daughter, of his body, his beloved Meketa[ten], born of the [Gr]eat [Royal Wife Neferiti], may she live for ever and eternally

Martin suggests that Bouriant,¹⁷⁷ had mistakenly assigned this same text to the tomb of *Alpha* (Martin 1989:43). Sayce (1890:195)¹⁷⁸ said that 'the tomb and mummy of Amenôphis IV, the 'Heretic King' of Egyptian history, have been found at Tel-el-Amarna.' Sayce (1890:195) discusses the previous objects found in the tomb along with fragments of the mummy being offered for sale and bronze rings and bracelets of solid gold coming on to the antiquities market. The blame for this indispensable loss for archaeological science lying firmly in the hands of the Amarna *fellahin* (villagers or farmers) and the Ekhnâin dealers. Martin believes that Akhenaten was buried in the large pillared hall of the tomb, as there were pink and grey granite fragments which belonged to his sarcophagus. Princess Meketaten's sarcophagus met the same fate as that of her father's. Her death was illustrated in chamber *Gamma* of the royal tombs and discussed above. According to Martin, enough evidence suggests that the fragments found were indeed from the sarcophagus which belonged to the king. He bases his assumption on the figures of Nefertiti carved around the king's sarcophagus (Aldred 1988:42). Osman (1990:137) challenges many of Martin's conclusions by

¹⁷⁵ The French mission designated the chambers as *Alpha*, *Beta* and *Gamma* (Aldred 1988:30).

¹⁷⁶ New evidence suggests that the parents of Tutankhamun were brother and sister. This aspect will be investigated later in Chapter Two covering genetics and DNA. Martin suggested the identity might possibly be Tutankhamun, however, due to the uncertainties of the birth date of Meketaten, this question was left open for future research (Martin 1989:45).

¹⁷⁷ Urban Bouriant, director of the *Mission Archéologique Française* recorded the inscriptions and reliefs in all the rooms, apart from the royal burial chamber as this was too mutilated (Osman 1990:136).

¹⁷⁸ A.H. Sayce letter from Egypt sent to *The Academy*, dated (Feb 26 1890).

saying that the sarcophagi fragments of pink, grey and white granite are too small to reconstruct two sarcophagi. Perhaps one sarcophagus could be reconstructed but this would have been too large for Meketaten.

Osman agrees that the sarcophagus with Nefertiti shown in place of the four protecting goddesses can safely be attributed to the sarcophagus of Akhenaten. Osman indicates that the huge size of Akhenaten's sarcophagus would have been the outermost of a series of coffins (it was customary at this time to enclose the mummies in three coffins) yet the remains of other coffins have not been found (Osman 1990:140). Evidence suggests that the enemies of Akhenaten smashed everything in the tomb, however, what was left of the remains did not supply sufficient evidence to indicate the burials of both Akhenaten and his daughter (Osman 1990:137-141). The dump alongside the tomb yielded further fragments of the sarcophagi and broken *ushabti*¹⁷⁹ figures and part of Akhenaten's alabaster canopic chest¹⁸⁰ but no fragments of the actual canopic jars. Osman believes that Meketaten was buried in the tomb during the reign of her father Akhenaten, but was moved once el-Amarna was abandoned in about year 4 of Tutankhamun's reign. Osman questions why they would move the mummy of Meketaten but not that of Akhenaten. Pendlebury (1931:123-4)¹⁸¹ made the following observation:

In view ... of the demonstration that the so-called body of Akhenaten found in the cache of Tiye at Thebes is in reality not his at all ... it was imperative to try to collect all the evidence as to whether Akhenaten was ever buried at el-Amarna, and, if so, whether in the Royal Tomb or elsewhere.

Osman (1990:139) states that most Egyptologists accepted the conclusion that Akhenaten could not have been buried in his tomb at Amarna. Pendlebury (1931:123-4) remarked that the only actual date found in the tomb was the year 6, and questions exactly what evidence Martin used to reach the conclusion that Akhenaten was buried in the Royal tomb in year 17. Martin (1989:21) is of the opinion pillared hall E was singled out at the hands of the post-Amarna iconoclasts as it contained the body of Akhenaten. Gardiner (1957:19) believed that Akhenaten had never been buried at all, but rather torn to pieces and thrown to the dogs. Weigall (1922:237) suggested that the body of Akhenaten was taken in its coffin to Thebes and placed in a tomb with queen Tiye.

¹⁷⁹ Also known as *shawabti* or *ushabti* these are mummy-form figurines inscribed with magical spells for agricultural work in the underworld. Their role is to work for the deceased (Millmore 2007:189).

¹⁸⁰ Canopic jars are containers used in funerary rituals. These jars are closed with stoppers resembling the particular patron of the dead. The stomach was protected by *Duamutef* in the form of a jackal, *Hapi* a baboon head was the protector of the lungs and the intestines by *Qebehsennuf* represented by a hawk's head. The jars were kept detached from the mummified corpse (Bunson 1999:51).

¹⁸¹ A concession to excavate the site of el-Amarna was regained by the British Egypt Exploration Society from 1921 until 1936. John Pendlebury was one of the directors excavating in the 1930s (Gahlin 2001:129).

Seventeen years was the highest regnal year attained by Akhenaten ‘when presumably he died’(Aldred 1988:57). This evidence is provided by six inscribed shards from wine jars (Aldred 1988:57). Petrie concluded that Akhenaten had died in his eighteenth regnal year (Aldred 1988:110). Osman discusses the concern regarding the absence of bitumen and resin in the canopic chest and the absence of the canopic jars which would have contained the viscera and residue of bitumen, none of which have ever been found (Osman 1990:140). Osman quotes Martin’s conclusion: ‘There can no longer be any room for doubt that Akhenaten was buried there [in the Royal Tomb]’. But Osman rejects Martin’s conclusion because he thinks that Martin was over-confident in his conclusion thus providing a misleading account (1990:142).

3.16.2 The royal tomb in the Valley of the Kings—Tomb KV55

The panels of hieroglyphs on Tomb KV55 read ‘Queen Tiyi wife of Amenhotep III, mother of Akhenaten, daughter of Yuya and Tuya’. The archaeologists, Ayrton, Weigall and Davis¹⁸² first read these words as they descended down the sloping corridor to the semi-lit chamber in January 1907 (Romer 1981:213). They had discovered the burial chamber of Tomb KV55 but the identity of the occupant of the tomb would later spark a debate proving to be contentious (in many ways, still unsettled). Inside the tomb lay a golden coffin completely covered with inlays of glass and semi-precious stones. The coffin was badly damaged by floodwaters over time and had slipped from the damaged wooden shelf, revealing a mummy. This, Davis believed, was the mummy of Queen Tiyi (Romer 1981:212). A month after the discovery of the tomb probably at the instruction of Maspero, the contents were cleared out including, the ‘pathetic bones of the mummy’ (Romer 1989:214). Jones¹⁸³ continued to copy inscriptions and reliefs despite the continual interruptions from eager visitors to the tomb (Römer 1989:214).

Osman (1990:231-2) describes the condition of the tomb and enumerates the contents found in the Tomb 55: Numerous fragments of small clay seals with cartouche Neb-khepre-re (Tutankhamun); a seal in the form of a jackal above nine foreign prisoners (the same style of seal used to close Tutankhamun’s tomb); deterioration as a result of rain dripping through a crack in the rock; the remains of a mummy initially believed to be that of Queen Tiyi, or possibly Akhenaten, or Semenkhare (co-regent); magical bricks of Akhenaten, essential for his burial; the remains of a

¹⁸² Theodore M. Davis, a wealthy American lawyer and amateur archaeologist, sponsored the excavation employing Arthur Ayrton the British archaeologist to supervise at the dig (Osman 1990:144).

¹⁸³ The Welshman, Harold Jones, copied the inscriptions and reliefs of the wooden shrines found inside the tomb (Romer 1981:212).

large inscribed wooden, gilded shrine dedicated by Pharaoh Akhenaten to his mother Queen Tiyi; small objects with the names of Tiyi and Amenhotep III; a coffin with inscriptions of the titles and cartouches of Akhenaten and a rotted mummy inside the coffin leaving only a skeleton and four canopic jars (Osman 1990:231-2).

The records and descriptions of the excavators of Tomb KV55 are ‘slipshod and incomplete.’ Recollections are vague, they do not correlate and, according to Aldred (1988:195), they provide faulty evidence. Aldred (1988:198) addresses his concerns stating that a number of questions have been raised over the past few years which excavators and scholars have attempted to answer. The following chapters on genealogy and DNA will be investigating past controversy and current consensus on the subject of the remains of Tomb KV55.

3.17 CONCLUSION

The aim of this chapter has been to search for material in the inscribed texts that relate to events at that time in order to seek a relationship between Moses as ‘son’ of Akhenaten. The Amarna archive provides a primary source of information. The letters to Akhenaten from Tushratta, the king of Mitanni, mentioning ‘sons’ have been of interest. Tushratta, refers to himself as the father-in-law of Akhenaten, Tushratta’s reference to the sons of Akhenaten raises questions to the identity of the boys. The death of a woman in childbirth depicted in the royal tomb at Amarna raises further questions regarding her identity. Could this woman have been Kiya and the child Tutankhamun (or perhaps another son) as suggested by Martin, or a secondary wife of Akhenaten as discussed above? Perhaps hidden from public gaze, this may have been the case with Akhenaten’s sons. There is so little material from Akhenaten’s childhood. The only mention of the young Akhenaten is a label on the wine-jar seal unearthed at Malqata (see 3.2.2). Perhaps ‘sons’ were protected.

Prior to Sicard’s first discovery of the boundary stelae in the 18th century (Reeves 2001:107), the Western world was oblivious to this revolutionary pharaoh while those living in Egypt and the ancient Near East would have been privy to ‘oral tradition’ (Assmann 1997:29). Assmann discusses the brilliant historical reconstruction by Eduard Meyer from Manetho’s *Aigyptiaka* referring to, what Meyer suggests, could only be Akhenaten and his monotheistic revolution. This has survived in Egyptian oral tradition and originated from the story about the lepers and the Jews.¹⁸⁴ Assmann aims to identify possible traces of the ‘Amarna experience’ within the Egyptian tradition, but not the actual historical event (1997:29).

Akhenaten was hailed as a propagator of a monotheistic religion (see Chapter Five for a discussion on Akhenaten’s religion) that excluded other gods (Aldred 1988:306). The decision to elevate the Aten to supreme deity was his and his alone but this is open to challenge. This chapter has given a number of examples of worship of the Aten from the reign of Amenophis III (Akhenaten’s father) (see 3.7.5). The evidence of the scarab suggests an affiliation to the Aten as early as Thutmose IV (Akhenaten’s paternal grandfather). In many ways, Akhenaten’s rule can be seen as an extension of his father’s reign. Aldred (1988:306) bases this on the absolutism of both kings and the fact that both chose wives who were incarnations of goddesses.

¹⁸⁴ Assmann (1997:5) refers to the story about Moses as a rebellious Egyptian priest who made himself the leader of a colony of lepers, as discussed originally by the Egyptian priest Manetho who wrote an Egyptian history under Ptolemy II, as belonging to the tradition of Akhenaten and not Moses. These ‘traumatic memories’ came to be fixed on the Jews.

Archaeological evidence, in the form of written texts, has revealed that members within Akhenaten's direct family were extremely powerful, holding key positions and making important decisions. Akhenaten's uncle Anen (brother of queen Tiye, Akhenaten's mother) was held in high standing in the priesthood of Amun at Thebes. The cult of Amun held power and money and therefore Reeves is of the opinion that Akhenaten was dominated by an Amunite conspiracy. Perhaps this was a reason to abandon Thebes (Reeves 2001:193).

Akhenaten was clearly perturbed by events in Thebes prior to his departure. Akhenaten's words, inscribed on the boundary stelae bear testimony to dreadful events but he is not specific as to the exact cause of his distress. Was it the Amun priesthood or perhaps, closer to home, his own maternal uncle Anen, conspiring with his brother Ay? (cf. 3.6.2).

Akhenaten's lineage has provided information. This information includes members in his immediate family who may have influenced his spirituality, as well as the established links to the Mitannian/Hurrian (perhaps *Hapiru*) royal family.

Both Moses and Akhenaten experienced divine intervention in terms of sacred landscapes or settlement lands. Moses had the 'Holy Land' or the 'Promised Land' and, for Akhenaten's Aten, the special place was the desert, the 'eastern mountain', the place of sunrise and the mountains at the back possibly providing, as Kemp suggests, a natural sanctuary (Kemp 2012:94).

One of the Amarna letters (among several) written by Tushratta (Akhenaten's father-in-law). Tushratta's letter to Akhenaten indicates the close ties that existed between the countries at that time. The letter (EA 27) from Tushratta enquiring after Akhenaten's sons provides textual material indicating Akhenaten was the father to sons. The above research has revealed the number of foreign royalty within the Egyptian dynasties, particularly from the Mitannians. In Amarna letter EA 24, Tushratta refers to his sister, his aunt and his daughter who were all married to Egyptian royalty—this indicates that the links ran very deep between the two kingdoms (Moran 1992:67). There are suggestions that Akhenaten's grandfather Yuya (Joseph, as suggested by Osman) might have been the brother of Mutemwia, another Mitannian. An enculturation between the cultures of Egypt and Mitanni would undoubtedly have taken place.

Weigall (1922:42) believed that Queen Tiyi was the power behind two thrones, first her husband's and later her son Akhenaten's. According to Weigall (1922:42-43), it was Queen Tiyi who was blamed for Akhenaten's all-consuming absorption in the sun cult. Freud classifies Akhenaten as one of the earliest examples of an Oedipus complex (Tyldesley 1998:6).

What was the trauma Akhenaten might have experienced in his youth? It could possibly have been the death of the first born Prince Thutmose who was destined to be king, making Akhenaten pharaoh by default. This early experience might have motivated his later behaviour.

Although Reeves (2001:9) says 'Akhenaten stands alone', this statement could be challenged because Akhenaten could also be seen as a product of the environment in which he grew up as discussed above. The new style adopted by the pharaoh might be seen as an intense introspection and preoccupation with the shape and functions of his own body (Kemp 2012:31). On the other hand, by depicting himself in these huge statues, Akhenaten certainly lacked a congruency that covered a tiny man lurking inside his own psyche. In order to understand Akhenaten, according to Kemp, we are investigating our own imaginations (2012:25).

There are problems with the chronology and dating of the sudden abandonment of the site of Amarna. Kemp suggests, as discussed above, that as many as 20 000 people followed Akhenaten from Thebes to Amarna at the start of his reign. Could the same have happened at the end of his reign? The end of the Amarna age appears to be shrouded in mystery. The texts do not offer much clarity.

The three additional rock tombs built by Akhenaten raise questions about who Akhenaten had in mind to be buried there. The Dahamunzu affair, mentioned above, was ultimately a cause for the transference of a plague to Hittite territories. Of particular interest are the comments made by Wiseman regarding the relationship between the Hurrians and the '*Apiru*. Amarna letters written in Hurrian were part of the Amarna archive suggesting that the Amarna pharaohs were indeed fluent in the language. Who may have spoken Hurrian at the court, might it have been Yuya (Osman's Joseph), or Akhenaten, Moses, the Mitannian Kiya, or Akhenaten's mother Tiyi? The exact relationship between Akhenaten's 'viceroy of Kush' who campaigned in Ikiya and Akhenaten is of particular significance for the purpose of this study, might this 'hereditary prince' (see 3.15) be Dhutmose/Thutmose and bring us closer to Moses, extra-biblical texts refer to Moses campaigning in Ethiopia (see Chapter Four).

The archaeological finds of the 18th and 19th centuries initiated a revival in the antiquities market. The abundance of material found has provided information for interpretation, often without consensus. It is apparent that Akhenaten's body lay buried for centuries while his memory remained in the 'collective unconscious'.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁵ This is my suggestion. This is a psychological term, first used by Jung, a student of Freud. Jung thought that the 'collective unconscious' related to the "sympathy of all things" and is common to all (Jung 1995:160).

CHAPTER FOUR: MOSES FROM PRINCE TO PROPHET

4.1 INTRODUCTION: MOSES IN MEMORY

This chapter will review the life of Moses, based on written tradition and historians' interpretations since we have no archaeological evidence for Moses. This will not be a Biblical exegesis but as the Bible¹⁸⁶ is the only primary source of information, the Bible will be quoted throughout the study. Some extra-Biblical sources contemporaneous with the canonisation of the Torah will be reviewed. The title of this dissertation proposes a familial relationship between the two protagonists – it suggests that Moses was a son of Akhenaten. The previous chapters have provided archaeological evidence to confirm that Akhenaten, who lived around 1355 BCE (Kemp 2012:304), was indeed a figure of history. Archaeological evidence found in the Amarna archive from Tushratta, a king of Mitanni and Akhenaten's father-in-law (see Chapter Two), indicated Akhenaten was the father of 'sons' in the plural. No definitive evidence has been found up to this point to identify these sons. In what follows the possibility of a close relationship proposed by several scholars will be further explored. There is a possibility of a son of Akhenaten who was the viceroy in Ethiopia/Kush, this was mentioned in conclusion of the previous chapter. We also have no archaeological material for Moses.

Ehrlich's¹⁸⁷ article provides the current state of Moses scholarship (2012:93). In this article, Ehrlich cites the work of Eckhart Otto's *Mose*. Otto¹⁸⁸ discusses the search for the historical Moses in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the upshot being the discovery of Moses as a literary figure rather than a historical figure (2012:94). Otto continues to speculate that the historical Moses was somehow involved in the introduction of the worship of the desert god Yahweh and Moses may be retrieved through the 'traditions' which surround him (Ehrlich 2012:94). One such tradition would be found in the work of Philo,¹⁸⁹ the subject of which is portrayed in Feldman's publication in 2007.

¹⁸⁶ As stated by Van Seters (1994:ix) the technical aspects of the Bible can be confusing for the uninitiated in Biblical Studies and inconsistencies exist. According to Van Seters, the terms Yahwist (J), Elohist (E), and Priestly writer (P) represent both the hypothetical authors within the Pentateuch and the literary works. The combined J and E sources (JE) are sometimes viewed as the work of an author or editor. The Jehovist, D reflects the Deuteronomistic source only and not an author (Van Seters 1994:ix). The sixth century BCE was the time that the biography of the Yahwist was recorded (Van Seters 1994:2). Van Seters states that the second half of the Yahwist's work is written as a biography of Moses from his birth in Exodus 2 and continues on to his death in Deuteronomy 34 (1994:2).

¹⁸⁷ Carl S. Ehrlich is a Professor of the Hebrew Bible and which is based at York University in Ontario, Canada (2012:110).

¹⁸⁸ See E. Otto, "*Mose und das Gesetz: Die Mose-Figur als Gegenentwurf Politischer Theologie zur Neuassyrischen Königsideologie im 7. Jh. v. Chr.*" (in Ehrlich 2012:94).

¹⁸⁹ Philo wrote a biography of Moses in *De Vita Mosis* (Feldman 2007:xii), the work was written in the first half of the century CE. Philo counterattacked the Hellenistic culture which as Feldman points out 'marginalised Judaism' by exposing the defects in Moses's life (Feldman 2007:cover).

Feldman (2007:xi) describes Moses as an enigmatic figure of the Bible who was brought up in the palace of an Egyptian pharaoh, yet strangely, nothing is heard of his Israelite education.

As stated many times above, Jan Assmann¹⁹⁰ is of the opinion that Moses is a figure not of history but rather of memory and that outside the 'tradition', there is no earthly evidence of Moses (1997:2). Akhenaten instituted a monotheistic religion in the 14th century BCE but immediately after his death, he was forgotten and no 'tradition' for Akhenaten was generated (Assmann 1997:2). Assmann labels a distinction between true and false in religion as the 'Mosaic distinction' because 'tradition' ascribes this to Moses (1997:1). Memory, Assmann notes, is all that counts in the sphere of cultural distinctions and construction thus the justification of the 'Mosaic distinction' and not the 'Akhenaten distinction'—Akhenaten having been forgotten (1997:2) (the concept of Assmann's 'Mosaic distinction' will be discussed further in Chapter Six). Assmann (1997:11) investigates 'memory' from the times of Akhenaten up to the 20th century and he has created a vertical line of memory. Assmann (1997:12) hints at the possibility of a historical Moses:

... quite independent of the possibility that there may be excellent evidence [and I think indeed, there is, but that is another story] that Moses, if there ever existed a historical figure of that name, was indeed an Egyptian.

Freud wonders whether Moses, the founder of the Jewish religion, was a historical personage or a creature of legend. Freud explains that the only information about Moses exists in the sacred books of the Jewish people and their traditions recorded into writing (1974:7). Freud speculates that Moses was a prominent, aristocratic man, perhaps even a member of the royal house and was in contact with Akhenaten (1974:28). After the death of Akhenaten, the more energetic Moses found a new people and a new religion and Freud suggests that Moses might have been a governor of the frontier province of Goshen¹⁹¹ (1974:28), or a prince of the royal house, a provincial governor and a priest. Freud is not without his critics. Freud's study on Moses has offended many scholars and commentators. One such scholar is Bernstein (1998:2) who claims that many have read Freud's book on Moses and seen it as a self-expression of Freud's Jewish 'self-hatred'.

¹⁹⁰ Jan Assmann is a professor of Egyptology at the University of Heidelberg (Assmann 1997:2).

¹⁹¹ The land of Goshen is the name of an area where Jacob's family settled in Egypt. It was Joseph who suggested this area as it was near the capital where Joseph served the Pharaoh (Genesis 45:10). According to Hoffmeier (1997:121) Goshen is an area within Egypt, Kersten argues that the land of Goshen has not been located beyond all doubt. Kersten suggests it is somewhere in the Nile Delta (1986:49).

As Thomas Römer (2012) points out, the present state of Pentateuchal¹⁹² research shows that a number of texts point to the Persian period. This development, Römer states, makes some extra-Biblical accounts about Moses contemporaneous with that of the canonisation of the Torah. The implication is that these extra-Biblical accounts may contain traditions as old as those which became part of the official story of Moses in the Hebrew Bible. Römer is of the opinion that authors such as Hecateus of Abdera, Manetho, Artapanus and Josephus are enjoying a comeback in Biblical scholarship (2012:67). Römer's article *Tracking Some 'Censored' Moses Traditions Inside and Outside the Hebrew Bible* (2012:64) deals with extra-Biblical Moses traditions which have their provenance in Hellenistic times. Some of these accounts will be reviewed in this chapter.

The account of Flavius Josephus (*JA* 2.269ff) mentions an account of Moses being a provincial governor and priest. This account is found in 'tradition' and is aside from the Biblical account (Freud 1974:29). Osman¹⁹³ proposes Akhenaten and Moses shared the same identity they were indeed the same person (1990:3). Mark Rose (2002:27) criticises Osman calling him an 'amateur historian' who makes 'wild claims'. Rose bases this on the sudden decision of the Egyptian government in 2002 to stop the Egyptian-Japanese team from taking tissue samples from the mummy of Tutankhamun. The reason for this pointed to concerns that some scholars may misinterpret the results to further claims that Akhenaten was the Biblical Moses. Rose refers to Ahmed Osman's work *Moses: Pharaoh of Egypt* where he claims that Osman sees as a far-fetched link between Akhenaten and Moses being identified as the same person and that 'such creative interpretations might make the government skittish' (Rose 2002:26-27).

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to do justice to the wealth of literature on the topic of Moses (Ehrlich 2012:110). Dating Moses to a definite time period is problematic. The researcher wonders why there is a dearth of material evidence to confirm Moses' existence outside of tradition, especially in light of the abundance of archaeological material found in Egypt identifying members from Egyptian royalty. Assmann (1997:150) refers to Freud's article 'Moses: An Egyptian' (the first draft of this book was completed in the summer of 1934 (Freud 1974:3) and Freud's note of resignation on completion:

¹⁹² The Pentateuch is the first five books of the Bible, also called the Torah: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy (Armstrong 2007:239).

¹⁹³ Ahmed Osman an Egyptian born historian enrolled at the Egypt Exploration Society in London, and spent six years studying Egyptian history, mastering hieroglyphics learning Hebrew and studying the Bible (1990:3).

An objective proof for the exact date of Moses' life and the Exodus from Egypt was not to be found. Therefore, the publication of all further conclusions that could be drawn from the fact that he was an Egyptian has to stop.

On the cover of Feldman's 2007 study he illuminates parallels and differences between Philo's writing and rabbinic literature. Philo's¹⁹⁴ portrayal in the context of ancient Judaism provides a most comprehensive study of Moses and this will be used as source material from the context of a Hellenistic Jew writing around 25-30 CE (Feldman 2007:ii).

John Van Seters states the Yahwist becomes an 'antiquarian historian concerned with reconstructing the origins of Israel' Van Seters 1994 study covers the life of Moses from Exodus-Numbers (1994:ix, x).

4.2 GENEALOGY OF MOSES

Supernatural predictions of conception and birth of heroes was not an uncommon theme in the ancient Near East. One such prediction involved the prophecy of the pharaoh of Egypt. Josephus refers to one of the sacred scribes who accurately announced to the king that there would be born to the Israelites one who would abase the sovereignty of the Egyptians and exalt the Israelites, he would surpass all men in virtue and win everlasting renown (*AJ* 2.202-206). Meyer (1906:46) made a statement that the pharaoh had been warned in a prophetic dream that a son born to his daughter would bring danger to him and his kingdom. Thereafter, the child was exposed in the Nile after his birth. He was rescued by Jewish people and then brought up as their child. Rank (1909:80) argues that this version was for 'nationalist motives', the legend would then have been given the modified form. Freud argues that, if Moses was not of royal birth, the legend could not label him a hero, on the other hand, if he was left as a Jewish child, it had done nothing to raise his social standing (1974:14). One of the families is the real one,¹⁹⁵ where Moses was born and grew up, another version is fabricated by the myth. Freud is of the opinion that Moses was an Egyptian probably from an aristocratic family whom the legend designed to turn into a Jew (Freud 1974:15).

¹⁹⁴ Philo a Hellenistic Jew of Alexandria merged Greek philosophy with Jewish history and theology, thereafter producing a corpus of Jewish Hellenistic literature. Philo's *Life of Moses* was probably written between 25 and 30 CE (Steyn 2013:1). The Moses narrative becomes embedded with the space of Alexandrian Egypt and the time of the Roman Emperor Tiberius (14-37CE) (Steyn 2013:1).

¹⁹⁵ Freud argues that as a rule the humble family is seen as the real one and the aristocratic family the fabricated one. In the case of Moses it is different, the deviation of the legend of Moses from others Freud believes can be traced back to a special feature of its history. Normally the hero rises from his humble beginnings, in the story of Moses he descends down the level of the Children of Israel (Freud 1974:15).

The Biblical narrative in Exodus (2:2) it states: ‘and the woman conceived and bare a son: and when she saw him that he *was* a goodly *child*, she hid him three months.’

4.2.1 ‘A man from the house of Levi’: Moses’ father Amram

The following is a verse taken from Exodus 2:1 which introduces the reader to the tribal name of the family of Moses: ‘... and there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to wife a daughter of Levi.’

The parents of Moses are known only from their tribal affiliation and the child is not named at birth, but only receives his name later through adoption at the end of the episode (Van Seters 1994:26). Van Seters (1994:26) explains that

the ‘house of Levi’ in the meaning of ‘tribe of Levi’ was probably chosen as the best way to represent the transition between the time of the Patriarchs and the rise of the nation.

Van Seters (1994:26) sees the statement of ‘house of Levi’ as problematic and not easy to interpret. The term ‘house’ (*byt*) can be used together with Israel, Jacob, Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, or Issachar and it regularly means a political or geographical entity. Van Seters sees the term as genealogical and believes that it developed during the exilic¹⁹⁶ period (1994:26).

Josephus (*AJ* 2.216) states that Amram, Moses’ father, predicted that ‘a son that will be born to him who will be remembered as long as the universe shall endure and not only among Hebrew men but also among foreigners.’¹⁹⁷

4.2.2 ‘Took to wife, a daughter of Levi’, Moses’ mother Jochebed

The Bible introduces the mother of Moses in the book of Exodus (2:1) ‘... and there went a man of the house of Levi, and took to *wife* a daughter of Levi.’ Later in the Biblical account, in Exodus 6:20, it is related that Amram married his father’s sister Jochebed and that she bore him Aaron and Moses.

Feldman (1992:301) gives an account from the Talmudic tradition (bSoṭ 12a, *Exod R* 1.20) that Jochebed, Moses’ mother, gave birth to Moses without any pain (1992:301). Josephus (*AJ* 2.217-218),

¹⁹⁶ In 604-562 BCE the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar II destroyed the temple in Jerusalem. The king of Judah and his followers were deported to Babylon. This was then called the Babylonian Exile (Kuhrt 1995:418).

¹⁹⁷ Amram’s dream is an amplification of the Biblical narrative and is mentioned in the oldest Rabbinic commentary on Exodus known as *Mechilta* (Thackeray 1930:257).

similarly states that Jochebed gave birth ‘with gentleness’ and without any violent throes. Josephus sought to minimise miraculous details so excludes the rabbinic tradition which states (b BB 120a, *Exod R* 1.19) that Jochebed was 130 years old when she gave birth to Moses, and ‘that the marks of youth came back to her, her flesh was again smooth, the wrinkles were straightened out, and her beauty returned’ (Feldman 1992:301).

4.2.3 Moses’ siblings

The opening verse of Exodus 2:1 refers to the marriage of the parents of Moses, and immediately thereafter the conception and birth of Moses. There is no mention made of siblings yet, in Exodus 2:4, the reader is introduced to Miriam, an older sister. In Exodus 4:14, the LORD asked Moses: ‘Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother?’ As alluded to previously, Van Seters (1994:25-26) discusses the problem of unity in the texts and the piece written to ‘fit’ the particular settings. Van Seters (1994:25-26) raises concerns¹⁹⁸ regarding the absence of Moses’ parent’s names and the lack of a name given to Moses’ at birth.

4.2.3.1 Aaron, the brother of Moses and high priest

In the Biblical account in Exodus 28:1, it is stated: ‘and take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office’. This selection of Aaron (see 2.5) as high priest was an issue raised by Korah,¹⁹⁹ (Numbers 16:3) as a case of nepotism. Philo (*Mos* 2.142-143, cited in Feldman 2007:140) states that Moses chose Aaron based on his merits. Josephus (*AJ* 3.190) takes pains to defend Moses’ choice of Aaron as high priest despite the later blots on Aaron’s record. Aaron participated in the creation of a golden calf and criticised Moses for marrying an Ethiopian woman (Numbers 12:1). Andrews is of the opinion that Aaron’s supervision in the construction of the golden calf whilst Moses was on Mount Sinai signalled the beginning of a conflict between the Aaronite priesthood of Ba’al and the tribe of Levi (1999:86).

¹⁹⁸ Van Seters states that scholars have identified a problem of unity within the birth story. In the opening verses of Exodus 2:1-10 verses 1-2 read as if Moses is an only child, and later in v. 4 an older sister is introduced, suggesting separate sources for the narrative (1994:25). Van Seters states it is quite unusual for the names of the persons involved in the story to remain anonymous, Moses only receives his name through adoption at the end of the episode (1994:26).

¹⁹⁹ Feldman (2007:172) refers to the challenge to Moses’ leadership by Korah, a cousin of Moses. Philo mentions Korah only once (*Fug.*145). Korah asks Moses why he has elevated himself above all others since all are equal and holy before God (Numbers 16:3).

4.2.3.2 *Miriam, the sister of Moses*

In Exodus 2:4 it is stated: ‘and his sister stood afar off, to wit what would be done to him’.

Josephus (*AJ* 2.226) mentions Miriam as the girl who suggested to the Egyptian princess that Moses would not accept the breast of the Egyptian women who were brought to feed him. Miriam suggested the infant might accept the breast of someone from his own nation (Feldman 2007:45). Philo (*Mos* I.16, cited in Feldman 2007:45) suggested that a Hebrew woman could become a foster mother as she had recently given birth to a child.

Both Philo and Josephus were troubled as to how the Egyptian princess would not have known that the woman brought to her was Moses’ mother, Jochebed (Feldman 2007:45). In (Exodus 15:20-21), Miriam is identified as a prophetess, a sister of Aaron, and leading choirs of women singing thanksgiving after the Egyptians’ demise in the Sea of Reeds. Osman (1990:20) recounts an incident where both Aaron and Miriam criticise Moses for taking a second wife who is a Kushite (Nubian or Ethiopian woman). As a result of Miriam’s criticism, the Lord was so enraged that he smite Miriam with leprosy (Num 12:10). Van Seters (1994:239) is also convinced that the true cause of the dispute was Moses’ interracial marriage. Moses’ intervention however led to the cure of the disease and Miriam was disgraced for seven days thereafter (Van Seters 1994:239).

4.3 MOSES’ BIRTH, NAME AND ADOPTION

Apparently of significance for the purpose of this study is that the child Moses is not named at birth and Moses only received his name through adoption at the end of the episode. Van Seters is of the opinion that this feature is deliberate and not a feature of ancient tradition. Van Seters further states that, aside from oral tradition, some scenes may be the author’s own invention or folklore in circulation at that time. The rescue of a foundling is a common motif and the author may have used this theme for Moses (1994:26-28).

4.3.1 **The location of Moses’ birth**

In Osman’s opinion, Moses and Akhenaten were the same person (1990:106). Following Osman’s argument, Moses would have been born in one of the Eastern Delta cities mentioned in both the

Egyptian sources and the Old Testament.²⁰⁰ Osman (1990:106) names the following Delta cities:

- Avaris, the Old Hyksos capital which was dated two centuries prior to the protagonists;
- Zarw-kha, the city of Queen Tiyi (mother to Akhenaten/Moses according to Osman) which was mentioned in the pleasure lake scarab from year 11 of Amenhotep III, Tiyi's husband;
- Zarw or Zalw (Sile of the Greeks) which is mentioned in texts dating from the 18th Dynasty;
- The city of Pi-Ramesses that provided residence to pharaohs of the 19th and 20th dynasties;
- Ramesses which was believed to have been built by Israelite forced labour and identified as the place from where the Exodus began.

Osman (1990:106) is of the opinion that Pi-Ramesses occupies the same site of the former Hyksos capital, Avaris, and states that this is the same city as Ramesses which was built by the harsh labour of the Israelites.

Osman (1990:106) argues that Queen Tiyi's city, Zarw, is the same location as Pi-Ramesses/Avaris. The pleasure scarab²⁰¹ reveals that Queen Tiyi's royal residence was her city, Zarw-kha, which, according to Osman, was within the walls of Zarw (1990:107). Zarw is close by to the original Israelite settlement in the Eastern Delta named as Goshen (Osman 1990:107). In the Biblical account in Genesis (45:10) reference is made to the land of Goshen, land given to the Hebrews by the Pharaoh at the time of Joseph. Osman states that no evidence has been found to suggest the Israelites settled anywhere else in Egypt (Osman 1990:106-107). Goshen is further equated with 'the Land of Rameses' in (Genesis 47:11) Hoffmeier (1997:121).²⁰² Osman argues that, after the fall of the Amarna kings, Horemheb, the king who succeeded the Amarna kings, deprived the Israelites of the special position that they held at Goshen and instead turned the city into a prison (1990:108). Osman argues that the father of Queen Tiyi was Yuya, the patriarch Joseph²⁰³

²⁰⁰ In the Biblical account found in Genesis (47:11) Joseph placed his father and his brethren in the land of Ramesses as Pharaoh had commanded. There are various Biblical references which suggest a royal residence was located nearby.

²⁰¹ According to Osman (1990:107) a copy of a scarab is kept in the Vatican. On the copy, the names of Yuya and Tuya are inscribed. This indicates that Yuya and Tuya, Akhenaten's grandparents, were alive at the time of the opening of the lake.

²⁰² Hoffmeier observes that it is curious that Biblical writers from the 6th century such as Jeremiah and Ezekiel do not refer to the name Goshen, Jeremiah actually travelled to Egypt after 586 BCE (1997:121). The absence of Goshen in clearly dated first-millennium texts undermines the argument that the name of Goshen in the exodus narratives is indicative of a date in the seventh or sixth centuries (Hoffmeier 1997:121).

²⁰³ The discovery of a tomb in a villa garden at Tell el-Daba on the eastern Nile Delta should, according to Farrington, not be understated. Farrington argues that there is strong evidence to suggest a 'Joseph-type official' whose grave was entered and the body removed. The discovery of the tomb was made by Manfred Bietek in the mid 1980s. The grave was the largest found in a small cemetery. The grave, dated to the 12th Dynasty, contained a limestone statue of a seated official. The hieroglyph for a foreigner was held against the right shoulder of the statue. The sarcophagus was made from limestone and, despite this man being a foreigner, he was buried according to Egyptian customs. The facial features of

(Osman 1990:108). The precise location of Zarw is known but over six sites in the Eastern Delta have been named as Pi- Ramesses/Avaris (Osman 1990:109). Owing to the lack of archaeological evidence found at the sites, a seventh site, Qantir/Tel el-Dab'a, has been investigated as the site of Pi- Ramesses/Avaris. Osman argues that the mass of evidence that exists for Pi- Ramesses/Avaris and Zarw makes it likely that they are all the same site.

4.3.1.1. *Similarity to the birth story of Sargon of Akkad*

A Babylonian text describes the secret birth and exposure in a reed-basket of Sargon of Agade. Sargon was later to become one of the most famous of 'world conquerors'. This story closely resembles the story of Moses (Kuhrt 1995:5-6). Sargon claims to have been the son of an *enitum*²⁰⁴ At the time of Sargon (2242-2186BCE), the title of *enitum* was considered to be sacrosanct. These female devotees were forbidden to have intercourse with ordinary laymen (Gray 1969:55). Gray (1969:55) recalls the secret birth of Sargon and suggests this tradition may have had an influence on Moses' origin:

My mother, an *enitum*, conceived me; in secret she bore me,
She set me in a basket of rushes, with bitumen she sealed my lid, She cast
me into the river, which rose not over me,
The river bore me up and carried me to Akki, the drawer of water. Akki,
the drawer of water, lifted me out as he dipped his bucket. Akki, the
drawer of water took me as his son and reared me, Akki, the drawer of
water, appointed me as his gardener.
While I was a gardener, Ishtar granted me her love, And for
four and... years I exercised kingship,
The black-headed people I ruled, I governed.

The theme of a secret birth and rescue of a leader may occur in quasi-historical or historiographical works (Van Seters 1994:29). The scholar Coats (1988:45)²⁰⁵ regards the tale of the midwives and the birth of Moses as originally two distinct traditions derived from oral tradition. Van Seters sees Coats' explanation as problematic for, if the genocide²⁰⁶ theme is a necessary part of the birth story, how can it be redactional?²⁰⁷ (Van Seters 1994:24-25).

the statue had been smashed. Farrington mentions two theories for the desecration, one being that it was smashed at the time of robbery of the tomb, the other is that it was attacked after the Hyksos came to power (1663 BCE). At this time, Israelites were suffering intense levels of oppression in Egypt. Farrington (2003:24-25) states that the body was that of Joseph and robbers were fulfilling an oath to return the bones of Joseph to Canaan as recorded in Genesis. Farrington states that scholars are divided on their dating of Joseph, some placing him during the 19th century BCE and others the 17th century BCE (2003:25).

²⁰⁴ The term *enitum* denotes the bride of the god, for whom the king or chief-priest officiated in the fertility rites of the sacred marriage (Gray 1969:55).

²⁰⁵ Van Seters acknowledges George W. Coats who he says has been a prolific writer on the Moses tradition (1994:xii).

²⁰⁶ The calling of a pharaoh to commit genocide. There is no mention as to which pharaoh said the following: 'And Pharaoh charged all his people, saying, every son that is born ye shall cast into the river, and every daughter ye shall save alive' (Exodus 1:22).

²⁰⁷ Redact, to put into literary form, redaction, preparing or being prepared for publication, revision, editing (*The Concise*

In Cyrus's²⁰⁸ (see Figure 6.8) rise to power in Herodotus (Bk. I, 95ff.), once again, the theme of the rescue of a foundling is used (Van Seters 1994:29). Within the birth story of Moses, a problem of unity has been identified. The opening verses refer to Moses as an only child yet, in a later verse, an older sister is introduced. Van Seters is of the opinion that, on careful scrutiny, the introduction in the Biblical account of Moses' birth Exodus (2:1-2) '...reads like the typical beginning of an account of an important person's career' this he adds is a 'contrived literary piece created for this particular setting' (1994:26). Van Seters sees the lack of names incorporated into the texts being problematic and a deliberate omission. It is only the name of Moses that is mentioned (1994:26). Van Seters (1994:27) shares the same opinion as Kuhrt (1995:5-6) (discussed above) that, in the case of Moses' birth, the author built on models from the literature, in this case, the Sargon legend.

Otto Rank (1909:1) believes the story of Moses' childhood follows closely on the archetypal pattern of the 'birth of a hero'. He shows that a child of noble or even royal birth is abandoned frequently in a chest floating in a river then found and raised by a family of low standing. In the case of Moses, there is a 'narrative inversion'. The abandoning family is low class and the finding and raising of the child is a royal family. Rank believes the motive is clear: to glorify the hero. Freud's explanation (1974:15) for this 'narrative inversion' (Assmann 1997:150) is that the story served, not to glorify a hero, but rather to "Judify" an Egyptian.

The use of two midwives is problematic because it is an inappropriate way of controlling a large population (Van Seters 1994:28). The size of the Hebrew population, which is described as a threat to the Egyptians, does not fit with the use of only two midwives (Van Seters 1994:29). The genocide theme disappears after the birth story. Van Seters is of the opinion that there is no reason to believe that a story about the birth of Moses ever existed independent of what follows in Exodus (1994:29).

4.3.1.2. *Similarity to the genocide of males in Edom*

Van Seters (1994:32) sees many parallels in the life of Moses to that of Hadad the Edomite. In Hadad's story, there is a general genocide of all males in Edom. Hadad escaped as a child. This, Van Seters suggests, might be a reason for linking the genocide theme with that of Moses' birth.

Oxford Dictionary 1976, sv 'redact').

²⁰⁸ Cyrus the Great of Persia, after his conquest of Babylon in 539 BCE, decreed that the Israelite exiles should be allowed to return home to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem (Kuhrt 1995:418). (The researcher adds it is not surprising then that Cyrus was seen in such a favourable light and that the Israelites based the birth of their own hero, Moses, on the same theme as that of Cyrus the Great).

Cohen (1993:10-11, cited in Feldman 2007:38) raises the question why would the Egyptians, after enslaving the Israelites, seek to decrease their population? As a slave owner, the supreme interest would be to increase the number of their slaves. If the pharaoh was interested in decreasing the number of Israelites, Cohen suggests, it would have been more effective if he had done away with the females. Cohen thinks it was strange that, after the account of only one child, nothing more was heard of the pharaoh's decree. On the contrary, the centre of attention was the pharaoh's desire for the Israelites to remain in Egypt (Feldman 2007:38).

According to Philo's version (*Mos* I.35-36) the Israelites were enslaved²⁰⁹ due to the cruelty of the pharaoh. Philo feels that the king should rather have granted hospitality to these strangers and suppliants. Josephus (*AJ* 2.201) describes the Egyptians as a voluptuous, lazy people.

It was the pharaoh's fear that the Israelites would increase in numbers. Pharaoh's concern was based on the enemies of the Egyptians joining the Israelites and leaving the land. Philo's version (*Mos* 1.8, cited in Feldman 2007:38) sees pharaoh's fear of the takeover of his country. This viewpoint is shared by anti-Jewish writers such as Manetho,²¹⁰ Chaeromon, Lysimachus, and Apion²¹¹ (Feldman 2007:39).

Josephus (*Ap* I.228, I.290, I.306, II.20) states that the Israelites were actually expelled from Egypt. Because Josephus omits all mention of the increase in the numbers of the Israelites, Feldman states that Josephus might have been sensitive to the tremendous increase in the number of Jews during the first century BCE and the first century CE and the implications of this (Feldman 2007:39).

According to Biblical accounts and Philo (*Mos* 1.8, cited in Feldman 2007:39) the reasons for pharaoh's command to kill all Israelite males was to prevent the Israelites from becoming so

²⁰⁹ Recent excavations reflect as many as three thousand people buried in the desert valley behind the southern group of rock tombs outside Amarna. Some evidence from those bodies that have been excavated suggests compression fractures of the spine obtained from bearing heavy loads and some with injuries coming from blows. The evidence suggests that both young and old were affected (Kemp 2012:227) The researcher feels that this archaeological evidence should be noted in view of a statement made by Philo regarding the inhumane treatment meted out to the Israelites by the Egyptians: 'They died one after the other, as though they were the victims of a pestilence, to be flung unburied outside the borders by their masters, who did not allow the survivors even to collect dust to throw upon the corpses or even shed tears for their kinsfolk' (Philo *Mos*.I.39, cited in Feldman 2007:53). Kemp alludes to the graves in the Amarna cemetery packed close together which indicated that they had died at the same time and that there was a very rapid burial after death (2012:228,229).

²¹⁰ Manetho was an Egyptian born priest and historian working during the Ptolemaic period (Hooker 1990:128). Manetho, a Graeco-Egyptian priest of the 2nd century BCE, recorded a history of Egypt back to its first kings (James 1991:7).

²¹¹ Apion lived in Alexandria in the first half of the first century CE. He was known to be part of the anti-Jewish delegation to the Emperor Gaius Caligula (Feldman 2007:1).

numerous. In the Biblical accounts and in Philo's account, the pharaoh was fearful of the growing numbers of the Israelites (Exodus 1:10). Josephus argued that the pharaoh's reasoning was to prevent the birth of the great Moses (*AJ* 2.215) (Feldman 2007:39):

- In Exodus 1:15 it states that the midwives appointed by pharaoh to enforce male children's slaughter, were two Hebrews named Shifrah and Puah (Feldman 2007:39).
- Josephus (*AJ* 2.206) does not provide names but identifies the midwives as Egyptians (Feldman 2007:39). Josephus was troubled as to how two Egyptian midwives could control such a huge amount of Israelites as stated in Exodus 12:37 which gives a number of 600,000 adult men who left Egypt. How could pharaoh entrust Hebrew women with such a cruel decree against their own people? (Feldman 2007:39).
- Philo in his account is untroubled by such numbers and provides the names of the two midwives (Feldman 2007:39).
- The rabbinic tradition claims that Israelite women bore as many as six, twelve, sixty or seventy children at one time (Feldman 2007:40).
- Philo focuses on one child and that is Moses (Feldman 2007:40).

4.3.2 Name of Moses

A number of scholars appear to have different views on the etymology of the name Moses (cf.1.1). Freud questions the origin of the name Moses, which is 'Mosheh' in Hebrew. Exodus provides the answer; the Egyptian princess who rescued the infant named him Moses 'because [she] drew him out of the water' (Freud 1974:7-8). In explaining the etymology of the name Moses, Ezekiel refers to Exodus 2:10 which derived the name from the Hebrew word 'drew', i.e., from the water (cf.1.1). Philo (*Mos* 1.17) has an Egyptian etymology and felt it was unlikely that an Egyptian princess would call her child by a name derived from Hebrew. She called him Moses 'because [she] drew him out of the water' (Feldman 2007:46). In the opinion of Philo, the name has an Egyptian etymology and remarked that the princess called him Moses 'for *Mōu* is the Egyptian word for water' (Feldman 2007:46).

Josephus (*Ap* 1.286) refutes Manetho's assertion that Moses' name was Osarsiph and has the same opinion as Philo (*Mos* 1.17) that Moses' name derives from the association with water 'water is called by the Egyptians *μωvν*.' (Feldman 2007:46).

Pseudo-Philo (9.16, cited in Feldman 2007:46) was of the opinion that Moses' mother gave him the name of Melchiel.

Freud also argues that it is absurd to attribute to an Egyptian princess a name which is derived from Hebrew. Freud believed rather that the name Moses is derived from Egyptian vocabulary. Freud (1974:8) quotes Breasted (1934):

It is important to notice that his name, Moses, was Egyptian. It is simply the Egyptian word 'mose' meaning 'child', and is an abridgement of a fuller form of such names as 'Amen-mose' meaning 'Amon-a-child' or 'Ptah-mose' meaning 'Ptah-a-child', these forms themselves being likewise abbreviations for the complete form 'Amon-(has-given) -a-child' or 'Ptah-(has-given)-a-child'.

The researcher is of the opinion that the significance of the name indicates that Moses was 'drawn' from the amniotic waters and not from the waters of the Nile River.

4.3.3 Adoption into Egyptian royalty

In the rabbinic tradition (b Sot 12b, *ExodR* 1.25, cited in Feldman 1992:302), it declares that pharaoh's daughter, Thermuthis, handed the infant Moses to Egyptian women but he would not take their breasts. Exodus 2:7 declares that pharaoh's daughter took pity on the baby and recognised immediately that the child was a Hebrew (Feldman 1992:302). In the Midrash²¹² it is stated that it is Moses who takes the crown from the pharaoh's head and places it on his own (Feldman 1992:305). Josephus (*AJ* 2.232) was well aware that such an aggressive attitude would not find favour amongst his readers, thus in Josephus' version, the pharaoh's daughter takes the initiative of bringing the infant Moses to him as she seeks to adopt the child as her apparent. It is the pharaoh who placed the crown upon the head of Moses (Feldman 1992:305).

4.3.3.1 Similarity to Hadad and his adoption

Hadad, the Edomite, was rescued from a massacre ordered by King David²¹³ whilst en route from Midian to Egypt where he was received by the Royal family of Egypt (1 Kings 11:14-22) and given a wife by pharaoh from the royal family. The royal wife produced a son who is then brought up in pharaoh's household (Van Seters 1994:32).

²¹² The meaning of the word *Midrash* means 'searching out' or 'rooting out'. It is a collection of explanatory texts which include myths, stories, parables in which the inner meaning of the biblical text is explored (Kruger, Lubbe & Steyn 2002:158).

²¹³ The United Monarchy of Israel begins with the kings of Israel, Saul, David and Solomon. The beginning of David's reign is normally accepted as being around or before 1000 BCE (Kuhrt 1995:440).

Van Seters (1994:33) is of the opinion that aspects of Moses' life such as his escape from genocide, his flight from Midian and his eventual return, are modelled on that of Hadad the Edomite.²¹⁴ After escaping to Egypt under the rule of David, Hadad returned later under the rule of Solomon.

4.4 ROYAL EGYPTIAN HOUSEHOLD

The scholarly debate over the identity of the pharaoh at the time that Moses was raised in a royal Egyptian household has caused endless speculation. From a historical viewpoint, the dating of the Biblical record is problematic as the Bible does not provide names or dateable events (Farrington 2003:131).

4.4.1 Moses, heir and prince of Egypt?

Philo (*Mos* 1.32, cited in Feldman 2007:52) refers to Moses being called 'the young king'. Josephus (*AJ* 2.232) shares the same opinion as Philo that Moses was expected to succeed his grandfather as king.

Osman's theory is based on Moses being the same person as Akhenaten. In Osman's argument, Moses would have been the son of Queen Tiya and Amenhotep III which would make Thutmose IV Moses' grandfather (Osman 1990:54). Osman refers to Queen Tiya as an Israelite and Osman states that Joseph, the patriarch, would be the same person as Yuya who, according to Osman's argument, arrived in Egypt as a slave during the reign of Amenhotep III. In Osman's theory, Tiya's name was suppressed centuries later by Biblical authors in order to conceal the historical link between the royal house of Egypt and the tribe of Israel. This link, according to Osman (1990:54) would show that Moses, the greatest leader, was of Egyptian-Israelite origin. Osman refers to the Koran which claims that Moses' mother was the queen and pharaoh's wife. Osman (1990:54) finds it strange that the holy books have different opinions on the issue.

²¹⁴ King David reduced Moab ('sons of Seth' Numbers 24:17) (Wiseman 1999:229) and Edom to vassalhood (Wiseman 1999:230,234). Hadad was the crown-prince of Edom, the son of the king who was presumably killed. In the biblical story related in I Kings (11:17), Hadad escaped as an exile to Egypt. Hadad later returned to Edom with an Egyptian wife, a sister of the Egyptian Pharaoh's wife I Kings (11:19).

4.4.2 Moses as prince under Pharaoh Ramesses II?

Malamat (1997:17) once accepted the opportune time for the Exodus around 1273 BCE at the time of Ramesses II, Malamat has however lowered the date of a 'punctual' Exodus to the late 13th century BCE and the early years of the 12th century. Moses was dated to 13th century BCE, according to Farrington (2003:131). Farrington acknowledges the problem of dating and is of the opinion that, if this dating is correct, Moses would have been a prince of the royal court under Ramesses I (1295-1294 BCE), Seti I (1294-1279 BCE) or perhaps Ramesses II (1279-1213 BCE) (Farrington 2003:131).

4.4.3 Pharaoh Chenephres

A Pharaoh Chenephres is mentioned by Artapanus (*ap. Eus. PE 9.27.7-11*). Artapanus states that Chenephres harboured jealousy of Moses. Artapanus argues that Chenephres sent Moses as a general to fight the Ethiopians, hoping that Moses would die. The reverse occurs and, after ten years of fighting and winning all battles, Moses returned to Egypt victorious and found the city of Hermes in Heliopolis. Perhaps the name Hermes was given to Moses at that time (Feldman 2007:64-65). Chenephres died of a disease similar to leprosy-elephantiasis (Feldman 2007:75). Artapanus stated that Chenephres contracted the disease as a result of ordering the Jews to be clothed with linen in order to be marked and harassed (Feldman 2007:75). Manetho stated the reason for the Jews expulsion from Egypt was that they had contracted leprosy (Feldman 2007:75).

4.4.4 Osarsiph/Moses—found in Greek and Latin Texts

Assmann refers to the following extraordinary story which re-enters the literary tradition of Egypt with Akhenaten in the guise of Osarsiph/Moses (1997:33).

Eduard Meyer (1904:92-95) was able to show that the memory of Akhenaten had survived in Egyptian oral tradition. Meyer alluded to a story about lepers and Jews which was originally preserved in Manetho's *Aigyptiaka*. Meyer is of the opinion that this could only refer to Akhenaten and his monotheistic revolution (1904:92-95). Meyer's hypothesis, which Assmann refers to as a 'brilliant reconstruction', was substantiated by Rolf Krauss and Donald Redford (1970:11-51). Assmann (1997:29) searched for traces of this story in Egyptian tradition and was able to reach the same conclusion as Krauss, Meyer & Redford. Raymond Weill rejected Meyer's explanation of the tradition as being too monocausal, rather advocating a 'multidimensional' explanation (1918:95-145).

Assmann is of the opinion that both Weill and Meyer are right in their explanations (1997:29). Assmann alludes to Manetho and others who integrated ‘many’ different historical experiences. One of these experiences is the expulsion of the Hyksos²¹⁵ from Egypt in the 16th century BCE. Assmann identifies only one episode in Egyptian history that corresponds to ‘purely religious confrontation’ and this was during the Amarna period. Assmann hypothesises that the Amarna account ‘retrospectively’ shaped the memory of the Hyksos invasion in the minds of the redactors. Assmann accepts Weill’s criticism and honours Meyer’s important insight. Assmann (1997:31) believes that trauma can serve as a ‘stabiliser of memory’ across a millennium.

The Egyptian priest Manetho’s version was written in the first half of the 3rd century BCE (cited in Assmann 1997:31-33) and it states:

- King Amenophis wanted to see the gods.
- A sage with the same name, Amenophis son of Hapu, would grant this request providing the king cleared the land of lepers.
- The request was granted, the lepers and priests were sent into quarries in the Eastern desert.
- Amenophis the sage then predicted divine punishment for inhuman treatment of the sick who will receive help from outside of Egypt and conquer Egypt and rule for thirteen years.
- The sage Amenophis feared for his life and, after writing down his predictions, he committed suicide.
- The lepers settled in Avaris, the capital city of the Hyksos.
- Osarsiph a Heliopolitan priest was chosen as their leader.
- Osarsiph made laws for this settlement, the laws proscribe everything which is forbidden in Egypt and forbids everything which is prescribed in Egypt. Assmann (1997:31) refers to this principle as ‘normative inversion’.
- The first commandment was not to worship the gods of Egypt, and not to ‘spare’ the sacred animals.
- Not to abstain from Egyptian forbidden food (Assmann 1997:31).

²¹⁵ The name Hyksos was applied by Manetho to various Asiatic groups who had entered Egypt in the later part of the Middle Kingdom and in the Second intermediate period (1640-1532 BCE). These Asiatics raced on horse drawn chariots to establish a tyranny in the land (Bunson 1999:119). Bunson (1999:119) alludes to the introduction of slavery increasing the Asiatic population as an institution during the Middle Kingdom (2040- 1730 BCE (Kuhrt 1995:124). It was at the time of the Second Intermediate period that the Asiatics gained control of the Eastern Delta. According to Bunson (1999:119) Thebes was the only place that stood resolute against their expansion. Avaris a site in the Eastern Delta became their capital (Bunson 1999:119).

- The second commandment was not to abstain from associating with outsiders (Assmann 1997:31). Assmann is of the opinion that this second commandment identified the Jews²¹⁶ rather than the Amarna religion (1997:31). Assmann believes the second commandment only entered the tradition after the Egyptians had encountered Jews. Assmann suggests this might have happened as early as the 6th century when refugees from Judah came to Egypt and Jewish mercenaries settled in colonies such as at Elephantine²¹⁷ (1997:32). Assmann further suggests that Amarna religion showed an ‘enclave culture’²¹⁸ using as an example the many boundary stela placed by Akhenaten marking the boundaries of Amarna (1997:32).
- Osarsiph, as leader of the leper colony, invited the Hyksos to join a revolt against Egypt (Assmann 1997:32).
- King Amenophis having remembered the sage Amenophis’ prediction, declined to fight (Assmann 1997:32).
- The lepers and Hyksos ruled Egypt as predicted (Assmann 1997:33).
- Osarsiph took the name ‘Moses’ (Assmann 1997:33).
- Finally King Amenophis and his grandson Ramesses returned from Nubia and drove out the lepers and their allies, the Hyksos (Assmann 1997:33).

Funkenstein (1993:36) states that the Egyptian priest Manetho does not turn the Bible on its head, instead Manetho records an orally transmitted legend.

4.4.5 Scholars identifying Moses

- Artapanus (cited in Römer 2012:74) refers to Moses as Hermes-Thoth.
- A tradition referred to by Josephus and Artapanus construct Moses as a Jewish [sic] Sesostris, confronting the hostility of the Egyptian court, fighting a war in Ethiopia, and returning from his campaign with a wife (Römer 2012:74).
- Philo identifies Moses by race as a Chaldean (Feldman 2007:35).

²¹⁶ At this stage they were not identified as Jews but rather as Israelites or Hebrews.

²¹⁷ Elephantine is an island at the northern end of the first cataract of the Nile near Aswan (Bunson 1999:84). Evidence from the Achaemenid period (Persians) in 525 revealed that Egypt was conquered by the Persians and became a province of the Achaemenid empire until c 400 (Kuhrt 1995:124). This Persian evidence shows that a Jewish garrison was established at Elephantine from the reign of Psammetichus I, a client-king of the Assyrians who ruled Sais (modern Sael-Haga in the Western Delta) in 664 (Kuhrt 1995:643). The Saite period was the 26th Dynasty of Egypt and the start of the ‘late period’ in Egypt (664-525) (Kuhrt 1995:636). In the 26th Dynasty, the capital of Egypt was in the city Sais (Bunson 1999:233).

²¹⁸ Assmann refers to the term ‘enclave culture’, a term coined by Mary Douglas. This is the culture of a threatened minority that develops a multitude of purity laws in order not to be swallowed up by the majority culture. Assmann believes that Mary Douglas has shown that Judaism is a classic case of such an ‘enclave culture’ (in Assmann 1997:32).

- The Armenian version of Eusebius states that Achencheres (Akhenaten) is the Egyptian pharaoh at the time ‘when Moses became the leader of the Jews [sic] in their Exodus’ (Osman 1990:28 my insertion).
- Syncellus states that it was in the time of the first king of the 18th Dynasty Ahmosis that Moses led the Exodus (Osman 1990:28).
- Moses as a priest of Heliopolis Biblical (On) called Osarsiph (Osman 1990:29) (see section 5.5.4).

4.5 EGYPTIAN EDUCATION

In the Biblical text found in Acts 7:22, it is stated: ‘... and Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds’.

4.5.1 Initiated into the Heliopolitan cult: Moses, as Osarsiph

Assmann (1997:38), states Apion sees the Exodus as an event of Egyptian history and not Jewish history. Apion declares Moses to be an Egyptian priest from Heliopolis (Assmann 1997:38). Assmann (1997:34) states that the Egyptian historian Manetho names the hero of his story Osarsiph but that other versions of a similar story refer to the protagonist as Moses.

4.5.1.1. *Heliopolis as Biblical On*

Heliopolis was the Biblical ‘On’ referred to in the Bible (Gen 41:45) (Bunson 1999:110) (see sections 5.2 and 5.7). According to Redpath (1903:296), the Greek name Heliopolis is as old as Herodotus. This was the centre of sun worship in Egypt (1903:296) (see section 5.2).

Kyle (1913:155) states that very little is known concerning the ancient city of On (Egyptian Annu, Heliopolis) however its reputation spread in the early history of dynastic Egypt. As early as the 5th Dynasty (2494-2345 BCE), sun temples were dedicated to the sun god Ré. Obelisks were thought to be solar symbols and connected to the cult of the sun god at Heliopolis (Gahlin 2001:114). A lintel found at Heliopolis records the ancestry of a family through thirteen generations of priests. The family had been resident in Heliopolis and had held the office of cult priest of Re-Atum (Leahy & Leahy 1986:143). McNamara (1940:474) believes that the ‘modern’ archaeology and anthropology leads to the conclusion that monotheism was the original religion of Memphis. In Heliopolis, the earliest of all universities, there was a small section of priests who believed in monotheism. This,

McNamara speculates, was knowledge the priests acquired from Joseph who married a daughter of a priest of On. McNamara (1940:474) suggests that ‘Akhenaton’s [sic] mother was a Syrian and she may have taught monotheism to her illustrious son’.

4.5.1.2. *Moses as Heliopolitan priest*

Breasted was amongst the first to recognise Akhenaten’s religion for its contribution to the history of religion and the development of Biblical monotheism (in Assmann 1997:152).

Breasted (1959:321) states that

it is evident that the new faith drew its inspiration from Heliopolis ... the king assuming the office of High Priest of Aton called himself ‘Great seer,’ the title of the High Priest of Heliopolis ...

Apion (see footnote 120) treated the Exodus as Egyptian rather than Jewish history, declaring Moses to be a priest from Heliopolis (in Assmann 1997:37). In Apion’s opinion, the Jews were taught a tradition based on Moses’ native country (Assmann 1997:37). Apion cites as his examples the open temples facing east, the same direction as the temples were orientated in Heliopolis (Assmann 1997:37). Moses erected pillars instead of the obelisks which were found at Heliopolis. Assmann states that the tradition which Apion attributes to Moses is very special and ‘the sun cult of Heliopolis is the closest traditional analogy with what Akhenaten taught in the form of a monolatric worship of light’ (Assmann 1997:39). Moses is described as Osarsiph (see Chapter Four). According to Witt (1971:89), the priests at Heliopolis were known as great seers. Moses was, according to Biblical legend, a sage of Heliopolis with his ‘staff of Isis’.²¹⁹ Witt (1971:207) states that Moses founded Thoth’s city and consecrated the ibis, the creature which destroyed creatures harmful to mankind.

4.5.2 Founder of the ‘Israelite’ mystery cult

Goodenough’s (1969:96) contention that Moses was the ‘true initiate’, a central figure in a Jewish [sic] mystery cult which was known to Philo.²²⁰ Philo uses common terms from the Greek mysteries such as perfection, initiation, illumination (Sandmel, cited in Feldman 2007:257).²²¹

²¹⁹ Strabo 17, 813: *FRA* 163,14 (cited in Witt 1971:290).

²²⁰ Goodenough argued that in the Greek speaking world in Egypt, Judaism had been transformed into a mystery even long before the time of Philo (Petuchowski 1981:141). In a review by Rabbi Abram Simon of Edwin Goodenough’s *By Light, Light—the Mystic Gospel of Hellenistic Judaism* (1935), Simon comments that Goodenough has traversed the entire field of Hellenistic Jewish literature. Simon states that Goodenough draws a distinction between Philo and Josephus’ attitudes towards the Second Commandment, saying that in Philo’s day there was a greater tolerance allowing pictorial representation of God, this was prohibited at the time of Josephus (Simon 1936:452).

²²¹ Goodenough claims that the Hellenistic mysteries were not anthropomorphic cults, the myths of Osiris, Isis and the Orphic

These thought patterns were borrowed from the Hellenistic environment, according to Goodenough (1969:6). ‘The true essence of Judaism, appears in the mystery of Judaism, which is by no means the religion of the Jews in general’ (Goodenough 1969:230). Belkin describes Philo as the most complicated Jewish thinker of the Hellenistic world (1938:279). Josephus comments on the mysteries ‘practices which, under the name of mysteries and rites of initiation, other nations are unable to observe for but a few days, we maintain with delight and unflinching determination all our lives’ (*Ap* 2. 187).

4.5.3 Moses as high priest

For the ‘mystery’ the hero and hierophant of the greatest importance was Moses (Goodenough 1969:181). According to Philo (*Mos* 2.5, cited in Feldman 2007:287), Moses was king and supervised divine matters which would automatically make him high priest. Considering the Hellenistic context in which Philo wrote his works, the kings generally acted as both high priest and king (Feldman 2007:287).

4.5.4 The ability to interpret sacred writings

Assmann (1997:103) cites Francis Bacon who refers to hieroglyphs as natural signs or ‘real characters’ that do not refer to sounds but rather to things. Umberto Eco (cited in Assmann 1997:103) states that the system of writing of the ancient Egyptians was held to be as original and natural as Adam’s language translating God’s creatures into words. In his 1741 study on the interpretation of Egyptian hieroglyphs, William Warburton based his argument on two different, though related, historical investigations of the subject (Assmann 1997:104). One study was that of the mystery cults and the other study was that of the origin of writing, specifically that of hieroglyphic writing. Warburton (in Assmann 1997:104) argues that the Egyptians invented hieroglyphs to, in the words of Cudworth, ‘express the mysteries of their religion and theology, so that they might be concealed from the prophane [sic] vulgar’. Hieroglyphic writing linked popular beliefs and esoteric wisdom (Assmann 1997:104-5). Hieroglyphs were, in the words of Assmann, the ‘veil’ which the Egyptians wrapped around their tradition (Assmann 1997:105). Kersten (1986:45) states that Moses was accredited as a great magician, even amongst the ancient Greeks. In the Hebrew Bible it is stated in Acts (7:22) ‘and Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and he was mighty in words and deeds’ an indication Moses would have been proficient in the interpretation of sacred texts.

cult were a symbol of metaphysical truth (in Belkin 1938:279).

4.6 MURDER AND EXILE

The enthronement of a new king in Egypt (Exodus 1:8) changed the circumstances for the sons of Israel, this new Pharaoh was threatened by the fruitfulness of the Israelites as seen in the Biblical passage (Exodus 1:9). The Pharaoh afflicted the growing Israelite population with burdens of labor, the Israelites were set the task of building the treasure cities of Pithom and Raam'ses (Exodus 1:11). On witnessing the beating of a Hebrew, Moses killed an Egyptian overseer and buried him in the sand (Exodus 2:11).

In Exodus 2:15 it is stated:

... now when the pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses. But Moses fled from the face of pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Mid'i-an: and he sat down by a well.

Römer (2012:75) states that many scholars have attempted to identify Cush (Ethiopia) with Midian. Osman (1990:179) identifies the *Shasu* people as a Bedouin tribe and identifies the Shasu with the Midianites of the Bible. Midian is believed to be in Sinai and, according to the Bible account, it was here that Moses fled to avoid execution at the hands of the pharaoh after murdering and burying the Egyptian in the sand (Osman 1990:15).

According to Van Seters (1994:29), there has been a longstanding tradition behind the above Biblical text found in Exodus 2:15. Van Seters (1994:30) questions this opinion and suggests that nothing can be proven either way to demonstrate the Yahwist's compositional method at work. Van Seters (1994:30) is of the opinion that the Yahwist is able to create scenes and narratives without any prior tradition to guide him. In Exodus 2:16-17, it is recorded that Moses, having recently arrived in Midian, offers assistance to Jethro's daughters by berating shepherds who were harassing the girls beside a well (Feldman 2007:69). On account of Moses' beneficent deed, he is invited by the Midianite priest Jethro to marry his daughter Zipporah (Feldman 2007:70).

4.6.1 Jethro/Riguel, the Midianite priest

Jethro who worshipped Yahweh, identified in (Exodus 2:16) as priest of Midian, becomes Moses' father-in-law after Moses' marriage to Jethro's daughter, Zipporah. Ezekiel, author of *The Exodus*, written in the 2nd century BCE (cited in Feldman 2007:68), presents Jethro as interpreter of Moses' dream (Ezekiel *ap.* Eusebius, *Pr. Ev.*9.29.4). This is seen as remarkable, according to Jacobson (1983:37-38) as nowhere in the Bible do we find a non-Jew interpreting the dreams of a Jew, but

rather the reverse, as seen with the interpretation of the dreams of pharaoh and Nebuchadnezzar. Jethro says that Moses will see past, present and future. This role of interpreter and ruler is reminiscent of Hasmonean priest rulers such as Simon and John Hyrcanus (Feldman 2007:67-69). It is apparent that scholarly views regarding Jethro are divided. The scholars Demetrius, Artapanus, Ezekiel (the tragedian) and Josephus elevated Reu'el (Jethro). Philo, on the other hand, denigrated Jethro while some in the rabbinic tradition were divided. Writers in the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha ignored him. Artapanus, the historian, refers to Jethro as the chief of the region and the Biblical text in (Exodus 2:16) refers to Jethro as the 'priest of Midian'. Ezekiel, the author of the tragedy *The Exodus*, referred to Jethro as a priest, a ruler and a general (Feldman 2007:68). Jethro interprets Moses' dream. The interpretation sees Moses leading and judging mankind. Moses will have the ability to see past, present and future. This role of interpreter raises Jethro's abilities, an aspect presented by Ezekiel, author of the Book of Exodus written in the 2nd century AD (Feldman 2007:68).

Witt (1971:94) states that the Jewish patriarchs, Joseph and Moses, belonged to a priestly order in Egypt and explains that these patriarchs were ascribed with the gift of clairvoyance.

Moses, in the opinion of Philo, was transformed into a prophet during his time in Midian. Moses became a shepherd for Jethro which prepared him for leadership (Feldman 2007:71).

4.6.2 Reflection, contemplation and search for enlightenment in Midian

The Biblical account of Moses' time in Midian appears to be a long interlude of seclusion. This view is not shared by Philo who states that Moses' time spent in Midian was rather a time of philosophy and contemplation. Philo (*Mos* I.60) believed Moses learnt important life lessons from his father-in-law, Jethro (Feldman 2007:73). By taking charge of Jethro's sheep, Moses learnt the lesson of leadership. Philo believed shepherding was a preliminary exercise in preparation for kingship as kings are called shepherds of their people (*Mos* I.61, cited in Feldman 2007:73). Philo's view of the perfect king is one who can seek truth and not base it on others' opinions (Feldman 2007:73). Philo believed that Moses possessed qualities such as self motivation, honesty and eagerness (*Mos* I.63). Philo continues his praise for Moses stating that Moses toiled at solving the doctrines of philosophy, his goal being the search for truth (*Mos* I.48) (Feldman 2007:74).

Artapanus refers to 'Raguel' (Jethro) who wished for Moses to return from exile by waging a war against the Egyptians. Moses, according to Artapanus, regarded the Egyptians as his own people and would not join in this war (Feldman 2007:75).

4.6.2.1 *The burning bush and conversations with God*

Moses, whilst attending to the flocks of his father-in-law, Reu'el (Jethro), was approached by God (Feldman 2007:76). In Exodus 3:3 it states that 'the Lord appeared to him in a bush that seemed to be burning but not consumed by the flames' (see Figure 4.1). That Moses was accredited as a great magician has been attested to by many including ancient Greek writers (Kersten 1986:45). Jens Juergens (cited in Kersten 1986:46) states that Egyptian priests had the capability of making gunpowder and used fireworks and primitive flares. In Flinders Petrie's *Researches in Sinai*, (1906), Flinders Petrie (1906:51) states that mining at Wadi Maghareh revealed copper smelting, as a great quantity of copper slag, scraps from smelting, pieces of charcoal were found. Kersten (1986:46) claimed that Moses wielded authority over Egyptian temples and the royal mines in the Sinai which included the sulphur mine at Gnefru. Kersten is of the opinion that Moses could have called forth 'devouring fire' owing to his technical priestly training which included working with sulphur, saltpetre and charcoal (1986:47).



Figure 4.1: The 'Burning bush' at St Catherine's Monastery, Sinai. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).

4.6.3 Josephus and the Kushite war

Josephus (*AJ* 2.238-256, cited in Römer 2012:73) discusses an account from a common oral tradition, which comprised the following themes:

- Moses waging a war against the Ethiopians
- Moses using Ibises to fight snakes in the wilderness
- Travels to Ethiopia and the marriage to an Ethiopian princess.

Both Artapanus and Josephus mention Moses going to war against Ethiopia (Römer 2012:74). Herodotus (*Hist* 2.102-110), Siculus (1.53-57) and Strabo, (*Geographica* 16.4, 4.) refer to this legend (Römer 2012:74). The legend from the Persian era names the protagonist Sesostris (Moses) (Römer 2012:73). This legend offers parallels to the tradition used by Artapanus and Josephus (Römer 2012:73-74).

4.6.4 Moses in Ethiopia

According to Römer, stories at the end of the book of Numbers reflect a tradition of Moses as a conqueror (Römer 2012:72). This tradition also appears in Hecateus and Artapanus. Artapanus introduces Moses as an excellent commander who leads an Ethiopian campaign (Römer 2012:72).

Osman (1990:23) is of the opinion that Moses, after fleeing from Egypt, made his way to Ethiopia and not Midian in Sinai. Osman bases his version on the Talmud story (Osman 1990:23). According to the Talmud, Moses then befriended the king of Ethiopia and, after the king's death, Moses became king and leader of Ethiopia (Osman 1990:23).

4.7 MARRIAGES AND CHILDREN

Feldman (2007:xi) alludes to Moses marrying twice, first to a non-Israelite woman, Zipporah, a Midianite whom he later apparently divorced to marry an Ethiopian woman.

4.7.1 Zipporah, the Midianite wife

Was Zipporah a Cushite (Ethiopian) widow? A tradition exists about Moses being married to an Ethiopian princess as related in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*. As Römer (2012:75) points out, the note in Numbers 12:1 must bear some relation because it says that 'Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman whom he had married; he had indeed married a Cushite woman'. Römer (2012:75) states that many scholars have attempted to identify the Cushite woman with Zipporah.

4.7.2 Adonith, the Ethiopian wife

The Talmudic story states that, after Moses fled from Egypt, he made his way to Ethiopia, befriending the Ethiopian ruler. After the death of the king, Moses was appointed their new king and leader. The Talmud states that Moses was made king 'in the hundred and fifty- seventh year after Israel went down into Egypt' (Osman 1990:23). The name of the widow of the king of Ethiopia who later became wife of Moses, is given as Adonith (Aten-it), a name derived from the Aten according to Osman (1990:32).

4.7.3 Gershom, Moses' son

Moses became a guest in the home of Reu'el (Jethro), a Midianite priest. Moses later married Reu'el's daughter, Zipporah and she bore Moses a son named Gershom (Osman 1990:15).

4.7.4 Eliezer, Moses' son

Feldman (2007:210) makes the point that both the Bible and the rabbinic tradition are silent about the qualities of the two sons of Moses and that Eliezer is only mentioned fleetingly.

4.8 MOSES RETURNS TO EGYPT– MAGIC AND MIRACLES

Van Seters (1994:64) argues that the texts which surround the incident are problematic leading to diverse scholarly opinion regarding Moses' call by God to return to Egypt²²². The revelation (Exodus 4:19) of the death of 'those who seek your life' could be reason enough (Van Seters 1994:64).

Moses intended to rescue the Israelites from bondage in Egypt (Exodus 3:11). Moses had to exercise trust in God, this would be accompanied by the promise from God of a sign not an instant miracle. Jean-Michel De Tarragon (1995:2075) states that it is difficult to distinguish between miraculous powers and magic acts. This applies to the activities of Moses in the court of the pharaoh. De Tarragon (1995:2075) is of the opinion that the powers granted to Moses were for the express purpose of legitimising the word of the prophet, hence they 'were not magic in the pejorative sense, because they were accomplished in conformity with the orders of God.' De Tarragon argues that what makes us relate to these deeds as magic is the parallel made in Exodus with the actions of the 'wise men and sorcerers ... the magicians of Egypt' (1995:2076). Osman (1990:179) is of the opinion that the magic performed by Moses explains that Biblical stories were relating political challenges for power in a mythological way and the plagues were natural seasonal events that occurred annually. In the Biblical account Moses returned to Egypt with his wife and sons (Exodus 4:20) after being assured that all the men were dead who sought his life (Exodus 4:19). God promised Moses the assistance of his brother Aaron to assist with Moses' lack of eloquency (Exodus 4:10). Moses and Aaron gathered all the elders of the children of Israel (Exodus 4:29) and performed

²²² Both the story of Hadad the Edomite and that of Moses have close parallels (Van Seters 1994:32). The possibility of both sources using the same model, but in different ways, can be seen in the following examples: In the Biblical account in 1 Kings 11: 21-22 '... Hadad returns to Edom.' Hadad is motivated to return after the death of David and Joab. Hadad requests the pharaoh to allow his return. In Exodus 4:18, Moses requests Jethro to allow him to go and '... return unto my brethren which are in Egypt...' In Exodus 4:19, God tells Moses that 'all the men are dead which sought his life'. Pearson in his *Greek Historians of the West* (cited in Van Seters 1994:34) makes the point that, in the absence of an older myth, early historians would 'invent' accounts of what most 'likely' happened.

the signs (Exodus 4:30), these signs were used to demonstrate to the Israelites that Moses had been called by God.

4.8.1 Miracles

4.8.1.1. *The rod and the snake*

God provided signs to Moses, it is stated in (Exodus 4:3) that God provided Moses with a sign of a miracle by transforming his rod into a snake. Later, in the first encounter with Pharaoh the Pharaoh demanded a miracle (Exodus 7:9). The Pharaoh displayed contempt towards Moses, Aaron and God (Exodus 5:1).

In Exodus 7:10-11, the following is stated: ‘... and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent.’²²³

‘The rod can appear to us as an object endowed with magic power ...’ (De Tarragon in Sasson 1995:2076). De Tarragon (1995:2077) refers to the incident of the bronze serpent which was made by Moses and cured people from poisonous snake bites quoted in Numbers 21:4-9 which means that Moses was attributed with magical apotropaic practices to heal snake bites. De Tarragon argues that all oriental societies feared snakes, and, irrespective of the dominating religion, magic was the key to mastering this fear (De Tarragon 1995:2077).

Witt (1971:188) refers to the martyr Stephen who bore witness to Simon, the founder of Gnosticism.²²⁴ Stephen granted that Moses had been ‘learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians’ and exerted power in words and deeds (Witt 1971:188). Witt (1971:188) refers to a Jewish source

²²³ The *Sed* festival was an ancient Egyptian royal festival beginning as early as pre-dynastic times and remaining popular throughout Egypt’s history. This festival was a symbolic renewal of the king’s physical and magical powers. The festival became a substitute for the death of the king, this allowed the king a foretaste of his rule in the afterlife, the king ran, danced and jumped to demonstrate his rejuvenation (Bunson 1999:238). These festivals were celebrated by the Egyptian pharaohs to rejuvenate the power of the pharaohs (Osman 1990:178). At this time, it was customary to take part in rituals and Osman (1990:178) refers to the ‘serpent rod’ and the ‘hand’ ritual, both of which were performed by Moses.

²²⁴ In December 1945, a red earthenware jar was unearthed by a peasant near the village of Nag Hammadi in Egypt. The jar contained thirteen papyrus scrolls bound in leather. Part of the codex was purchased by the CG Jung foundation and contained the famous Gospel of Thomas. In 1952, the Egyptian government nationalised the remainder and these later became known as the ‘Nag Hammadi collection’. In 1961, a team of experts assembled and translated the entire corpus of material. Scholars have learnt that most of this material is dated to 150 AD and that one of them includes material that is older than the Gospels of the New Testament (Baigent, Leigh & Lincoln 2005:417). Gnosticism was an early form of Christianity defined by Armstrong (2007:234) as emphasising the importance of gnosis, a redeeming ‘knowledge’. Gnosticism could be described as an esoteric tradition (Baigent et al 2005:160).

who discussed the miraculous rod of Moses which had awed priests ‘beyond Memphis’. The rod was reported to be held sacred in all Egyptian temples dedicated to Isis. Kersten (1986:44) states that magicians in both Israel and India knew how to put a snake into a catatonic trance in order to display the reptile as stiff as a rod or staff. The reptile was then transformed back into its original state. This feat is still performed by Indian fakirs. A coiled serpent wand was found in a tomb in western Thebes under the Ramasseum (Gahlin 2001:203). Magic rods have survived from Middle Kingdom and Second Intermediate periods to the present time (2055-1550 BCE). These rods were probably used to ‘turn their power into a protective rather than a malignant force’ (Gahlin 2001:203).

4.8.1.2. *Leprous hand*

In the Biblical account in Exodus (4:6) ‘...behold, his hand was leprous as snow’. Manetho (*AP* 1.279, cited in Feldman 1992:309) makes the statement that Moses is marred by leprosy and that he was expelled from Egypt as a result of this infliction. Lysimachus (*AP* 1.305-311) states that the ancestors of the Jews were lepers and diseased people who had to be banished from Egypt for these reasons (Feldman 1992:310). This view is shared by Nicarchus in the 1st century CE, Ptolemy Chennos in the 2nd century CE, and Helledius in the 4th century CE. These scholars (cited in Feldman 1992:309) all talk about the dull-white leprosy upon the body of Moses.

Josephus was sensitive to these charges. This is clear from his account (Exodus 4:6) in which God tells Moses to help convince the Israelites that he had indeed appeared to him. Moses placed his hand into his bosom, thereupon his hand became leprous. When he placed his hand back into his bosom and took it out again, it was restored. In Josephus’ account (*AJ* 2.273), there is no mention of leprosy instead, when he drew forth his hand it ‘was white of colour resembling chalk’.

In both the accounts cited in Feldman (1992:310), Philo’s version avoids the mention of leprosy. The Septuagint refers to Moses’ hand becoming as ‘white as snow’ and Philo (*De Vita Mosis* 1.14.79) asserts Moses’ hand is ‘whiter than snow’.

4.8.1.3. *Water into blood*

The narrative in (Exodus 7:17) alludes to a miracle in which water was turned into blood, however Pharaoh paid no attention to this miracle as his own sorcerers were capable of performing the same magic (Exodus 7:11). In (Exodus 7:20-23) it states: ‘... and all the waters that were in the

river were turned to blood.’ There is no explanation given in the Bible providing a reason for the plagues beginning with water. Philo was apparently troubled by God telling Moses to strike the water in the river with his staff which would then turn to blood. Philo tries to explain things rationally, believing that the Egyptians paid special homage to the water (Feldman 2007:91). Osman (1990:178) is of the opinion that, during the season of inundation, the waters of the Nile turn a reddish colour. In both the accounts of Josephus (*AJ* 2.295) and Philo (*Mos* 1.144), the river turns to blood for the Egyptians but, for the Israelites, it remains sweet (Feldman 2007:92). Noegel (1996:51) in his article *Moses and Magic*, is of the opinion that the Nile turning to blood has analogies in Egyptian literature.

Noegel (1996:51) cites the Tale of Ipuwer²²⁵ which describes the chaos in Egyptian order during the First Intermediate period (2181-2040BCE). Velikovsky (1957:60) alludes to the *Papyrus Ipuwer* and the writings of Ipuwer, an Egyptian who, being an eye witness of a catastrophe, states his lament on papyrus: ‘the river is blood’. This corresponds with the words in the book of (Exodus 7:20) referred to above. Noegel (1996:51) states that the Israelites regarded blood as the carrier of an individual’s life whereas the Egyptians viewed the Nile as the bringer of life.

Noegel (1996:51) states that the impact of the plague on the Nile River, being the Egyptians’ only source of water, would be devastating. Crocodiles could be driven from the water and the ability of the magicians to perform purification and protection rites would come to an end (Noegel 1996:51).

4.9 PLAGUES

There is a possibility that the plagues described in Exodus can be related to a series of natural phenomena which occurred in ancient Egypt. Dr Iain Stewart, a geologist, refers to the drying climate which was threatening empires with extinction (2005:171). Stewart states that, for some scientists, this extinction was dated around 1200 BCE. Stewart is of the opinion that Egypt escaped the catastrophe and was even able to send grain to famine stricken areas. Libyan nomads sought water in Egyptian settled lands (Stewart 2005:171). According to Stewart (2005:171), scientific debates have not reached a consensus as to the cause of this regional catastrophe. Scientists have suggested changes, possibly in the nature of warfare, and others have suggested natural causes

²²⁵ The *Admonitions of Ipuwer* addresses an unidentified king with vivid images of invading tribesmen from the desert. The text was a pessimistic view of Egyptian society at that time. The text had been copied by 19th Dynasty scribes and was discovered in the Papyrus Leiden 344 (Bunson 1999:4).

such as climatic changes or earthquakes (Stewart 2005:198). David Pyle (1989:90 cited in the preface to James 1991:xx), a volcanologist, wrote the following regarding the Thera eruption: ‘Direct radiocarbon dating has so far yielded a large scatter of dates that can, at present, be interpreted according to one’s prejudice’.

4.9.1 Cataclysmic eruption

As seen above, scientists have not reached consensus as to the exact date of the Thera eruption. Some say it happened around 1628 BCE and others argue for a later date of 1500 BCE (Stewart 2005:198). Stiebing (1989:102) argues for a date of around 1450 BCE, Thera’s eruption can explain many of the “miracles” of the Exodus story. The volcanic eruption on the island of Thera, one of Greece’s Cycladic islands, was a cataclysmic eruption. The force of the blast would have triggered tsunamis and left the sea filled with floating pumice (Stewart 2005:198). As Stewart suggests, the ash from the Thera eruption could be traced as far as the Nile Valley in Egypt (Stewart 2005:198). Huge clouds of pumice were blasted into the atmosphere, dumping ash fifty metres high (Stewart 2005:198). The water supplies might have become toxic from the high fluorine content, causing the loss of livestock and farmers (Stewart 2005:200-201). The ‘dry fogs’ are as a result of the ‘plumes of fine volcanic aerosols’ which block out sunshine and disrupt weather systems (Stewart 2005:202). As a result of this volcanic activity, widespread crop failures can be seen (2005:202). Stewart states that, after the detrimental effects of crop failures, widespread famine, epidemics and pandemics of plague follow (2005:202). The effects of this volcanic ‘dry fog’ can be seen from one to five years after the eruptions (Stewart 2005:202). Stewart argues that ancient societies blamed disasters on the sins or weaknesses of the leaders and, in the case of Egypt, the pharaohs took the blame (2005:171). ‘As a final point, it is necessary to emphasize that such a major natural catastrophe as the volcanic explosion under consideration would have seriously affected a wide range of civilizations around the eastern mediterranean; it would have remained in people’s memories for a long time’ (Ritner & Moeller 2014:19).²²⁶ With the above scientific explanation and the effects of volcanic eruption in mind, the researcher refers to the following Biblical accounts as the Biblical texts are the only source we have for the plagues.

²²⁶ The 2014 article titled the *Ahmose ‘Tempest Stela’, Thera and Comparative Chronology* dates the Thera eruption to the same time period as Ahmose who witnessed the event and recorded it on the ‘Tempest Stela’ at Karnak. These new results date Ahmose’s reign to commence at either 1566 or 1570 BCE twenty to thirty years of uncertainty still remain in the exact dating Ritner & Moeller (2014:17).

4.9.2 The Ten Plagues

The plague of blood in the Biblical account found in (Exodus 7:21): ‘... and the fish that was in the river died; and the river stank, and the Egyptians could not drink of the water of the river; and there was blood throughout all the land of Egypt’.

The plague of frogs in the Biblical account found in (Exodus 8:6): ‘... and Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Egypt’.

The plague of lice in the Biblical account in (Exodus 8:17): ‘... and smite the dust of the land, that it may become lice throughout all the land of Egypt’.

The plague of flies in the Biblical account in (Exodus 8:21): ‘... I will send swarms of flies upon thee, and upon thy servants, and upon thy people, and unto thy houses’.

The plague on the cattle in the Biblical account in (Exodus 9:6) : ‘...and all the cattle of Egypt died: but of the cattle of the children of Israel died not one’.

The plague of boils in the Biblical account in (Exodus 9:9): ‘... and shall be a boil breaking forth with blains upon man ...’.

The plague of hail in the Biblical account found in (Exodus 9:18): ‘Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as hath not been in Egypt since the foundation thereof even until now’.

The plague of locusts in the Biblical account in (Exodus 10:4): ‘... tomorrow will I bring the locusts into thy coast’.

The plague of darkness in the Biblical account found in (Exodus 10:21): ‘... there may be darkness over the land of Egypt even darkness which may be felt’ and in Exodus 10:22: ‘... there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days’.

The death of the firstborn in the final plague found in the Biblical text (Exodus 11:21): ‘... and all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die’.

The narrative in (Exodus 12:31) alludes to the permission given by the Pharaoh to depart from Egypt.

Velikovsky (1957:69) refers to the rabbinical sources which describe the calamity of darkness cited in Ginzberg, *Legends*, II, 360:²²⁷ ‘On the fourth, fifth, and sixth days, the darkness was so dense that they [the people of Egypt] could not stir from their place.’ Rabbinical tradition contradicts Biblical narrative and instead states that the majority of Israelites perished leaving only a few to leave Egypt. Ginzberg (1909:IV, *Legends* II), states that amongst the Israelites there were many wicked men who refused to leave Egypt, those that were spared to leave were but a fraction of the original population. Josephus (*AJ* 2.305-310) stated: ‘their eyes were blinded by it and their breath choked’. Philo, being a Hellenistic scientist, discussed the hail, relating it to the peculiarities of the climate of Egypt. Philo (*Mos* I. II8-II9) alludes to the suddenness and unexpectedness of the hail storm and sees it as ‘divine wrath’ (Feldman 2007:96). Philo alludes to the ‘wonder’ that it was only the Egyptians who were affected despite the Israelites being in the same place at that time. Josephus (*AJ* 2.304) states that hail was unknown to the climate of Egypt, yet hail larger than that known to the dwellers of northern, polar regions descended and beat on the crops. Artapanus, in his writings, omits the account of the death of first born infants (Feldman 2007:105). Philo does not question God’s actions at the annihilation of the first born because God’s actions are not to be scrutinised by humans (Feldman 2007:107).

According to Velikovsky (1957:63), ‘*barad*’ is translated as ‘hail’ and is a term for meteorites. This term is used in the Book of Joshua. Midrashic and Talmudic sources allude to the stones as being hot and not a hail of ice (The Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Berakhot 54b, cited in Velikovsky 1957:63). An Egyptian account of Ipuwer, refers to falling stones and fire which made the cattle flee and, in a day, fields turned to wastelands (Papyrus Ipuwer 9:2-3) (Velikovsky 1957:64). Velikovsky (1957:67) refers to the Israelites wandering in the desert and their references of fire springing from the earth.

²²⁷ *The Legends of the Jews* Volume 2 (1909) by Louis Ginzberg was written from rabbinic literature and oral sources. Ginzberg arranged the Haggada into chronological order and wrote four volumes of Jewish legends and stories. <http://www.sacred-texts.com/jud/loj/>

Zohar (ii, 38a-38b) in the Midrash states that the last night in Egypt was as bright as the moon on the day of the summer solstice (Velikovsky 1957:75). Papyrus Ipuwer 10:2 states ‘men flee ... tents are what they make like the dwellers of the hills’ (Velikovsky 1957:75). The Biblical account relayed in (Exodus 14:21-22) makes mention of the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire that the Israelites followed ‘[h]e took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.’

4.10 SUDDEN DEPARTURES—SEA CROSSING AND EXODUS

The Israelites left Egypt in haste taking their bread before it was leavened in Exodus (12:34).²²⁸ Assmann (1997:35-36) relays a variant of the Moses tradition which can be found in Pompeius Trogus’ *Historicae Philippicae*. Moses appears in this version as the son of Joseph. It also states that when Moses departed from Egypt, he secretly took sacred objects belonging to the Egyptians. The Egyptians attempted to recover these stolen objects but ultimately had to return home as a result of ‘the storms’. Pompeius believed that the cult Moses founded in Jerusalem was based on these ‘sacra’. According to Feldman (2007:110), an aspect that was of concern for Jewish commentators was the following passage cited in Exodus (3:21-22): ‘... and when you go, you shall not go empty ... thus you shall despoil the Egyptians’. Artapanus states that the Israelites acquired drinking vessels, clothing and numerous other treasures (Feldman 2007:111).

In Exodus (12:37-38), a hurried flight from Egypt is described. Those leaving are a ‘mixed multitude’ of non-Israelites together with the Israelites (Velivosky 1957:75). According to the Egyptian Ipuwer (cited in Velivosky 1957:75), ‘men flee ... tents are what they make like the dwellers of hills’. Hecateus (*ap.* Diodorus 40.3.3.1-2) states that it was not merely the Jews who were expelled but also ‘many strangers of all sorts dwelling in their midst and practicing different rites of religion and sacrifice’ (Feldman 2007:108). Hecateus states that the Jews were blamed for inflicting the Egyptians with a pestilence (*ap.* Diodorus 40.3.3.1-2) (Feldman 2007:108). Artapanus makes no mention of Israelites being afflicted with leprosy instead states that, after the Egyptians experienced calamities, they were released (Feldman 2007:109).

God led the Israelites via the Red Sea *yam sup* (Stiebing 1989:19) the north-eastern part of the Red sea (see Figure 4.2: The Gulf of Aqaba). The Egyptian forces were drowned by the returning sea which

²²⁸ The story of the Exodus is recalled and celebrated every year in the Jewish observance of Passover (Stiebing 1989:17).

stood like a wall (Exodus 14:21-29). This miracle at the Sea has been seen as a result of a Thera *tsunami* (tidal wave) (Stiebing 1989:105).



Figure 4.2: Port of Nuweiba, Egypt. Believed to be where the Israelites crossed to Saudi Arabia/Jordan on the Aqaba Gulf. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).

The Port of Nuweiba in Egypt is the place believed to be where the Israelites crossed to Saudi Arabia/Jordan on the Aqaba Gulfport according to Dr Papaioannou who wrote *The Monastery of St. Catherine* (publication not dated and purchased at St Catherine's monastery by researcher), a road from Sinai to Jerusalem via Beersheba, known as the Way of Shur, has been utilised from as early as the 16th century BCE (Papaioannou [sa]:5). Originally built by the Egyptian pharaohs to conquer Canaan and Syria (Papaioannou [sa]:5), the passage has been used by Hyksos, Assyrians, Persians, Greeks, Arabs and Turks on their way to conquer the valleys of the Nile (Papaioannou [sa]:5). Papaioannou ([sa]:6) states that the children of Israel crossed the Sinai in the 13th century BCE en route to Canaan, the Promised Land. The Hebrew Bible relays the account of the sea crossing at the time of the exodus, in Exodus 26-31. In the account in Exodus 14:27, it states: '... and the Lord said unto Moses, stretch out thine hand over the sea that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen'.

Freud (1974:33) said:

No historian can regard the Biblical account of Moses and the Exodus as anything other than a pious piece of imaginative fiction, which has recast a remote tradition for the benefit of its own tendentious purposes.

Bernstein is critical of Freud's subjective selection of passages in the Bible that Freud claims are either historical or are distortions (Bernstein 1998:14-15).

For the Israelites, '[t]he crossing of the sea signalled the end of the sojourn in Egypt' (Hoffmeier 1997:214). Hoffmeier (1997:199) alludes to the problem of identifying the specific location of the Reed Sea. Translations from the Old Testament refer to the body of water being called 'the sea', the 'Red Sea' and 'Sea of Reeds'. Velikovsky (1957:79) states that the name *Jam Suf* is another name for the Sea of Passage because *suf, sufa* in Hebrew means hurricane. In Exodus (14:21), it is stated that the Lord used a strong east wind which was responsible for the parting of the waters (Hoffmeier 1997:204).

The account in the Biblical narrative in (Exodus 12:37) states: 'and the children of Israel journeyed from Ram'eses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot *that were* men, beside children'. Farrington (2003:27) is of the opinion that it is inconceivable that a large group of some six hundred thousand men, women and children led by Moses, could have slipped past the string of Egyptian defensive forts without notice.

Farrington (2003:27) suggests the possibility of an exodus occurring later as archaeology says the entire region of Canaan was largely unoccupied. This aspect contrasts with the Biblical accounts of kingdoms and cities.²²⁹ The lack of archaeological evidence to substantiate an exodus into the Sinai has been raised by several scholars, as the examples above refer.

4.10.1 Earliest non-Biblical account of Exodus: Expulsion or colonisation of Greece?

Römer (2012:70) is of the opinion that Hecateus (4th century BCE) (considered to be the main source for Manetho), relates that a disease struck Egypt which prompted the Egyptians to expel the foreigners from the country. Hecateus states that amongst those was Moses who founded

²²⁹ In the search for the historical reality behind the Biblical passages of the conquest narratives, Stiebing suggests that only the Deuteronomistic history should be focussed on, as later traditions in works such as Ezra and Chronicles could be based on the writings in Deuteronomy (1989:26). The conquest traditions found in Psalms are compositions that may also be difficult to date. Stiebing's historical reconstruction aims to do justice to the physical remains of archaeology (1989:36). Rulers who are named in the conquest accounts of the Israelites such as the Amorite king Sihon, Eglon of Moab or Jabin of Hazor are not mentioned in king's lists, annals or other ancient sources (1989:39). The conquest accounts found in Joshua and Judges are stumbling blocks for those who support the historical accuracy of fifteenth-thirteenth century BCE dates in Palestine and the fifteenth century BCE dates for the Exodus (Stiebing 1989:55).

Jerusalem. Hecateus does not make mention of Moses and leprosy (see 4.8.1.2) but mentions the theme of the expulsion of Moses with the theme of disease (Römer 2012:70).

As Römer has eluded to in the introduction to this chapter, certain authors such as Hecateus of Abdera, Manetho, Artapanus and Josephus are enjoying a comeback in Biblical scholarship (2012:67). The accounts of three authors of these authors will be reviewed.

4.10.1.1 Hecateus of Abdera's version 4th century BCE

Hecateus of Abdera provided the earliest non-Biblical account of the Exodus (Assmann 1997:34).²³⁰ Hecateus came to Egypt around 320 BCE and his version of the Exodus (cited in Assmann 1997:34) states:

- A plague was ravaging Egypt.
- This plague was interpreted as 'divine punishment' by the Egyptians.
- The reason for this 'divine punishment' from the gods was as a result of the Egyptians allowing aliens with their rites and customs to be introduced to Egypt.
- The aliens were then expelled.
- Some of the aliens left under the leadership of Kadmos and Danaos who then colonised Greece. Martin Bernal (Assmann 1997:225) builds his theories about the Egyptian derivation of Greek culture based on the above passage identifying Kadmos and Danaos as colonisers of Greece. Assmann states that Bernal does not seem to be aware of the legendary character of this tradition. Bernal states Kadmos the Phoenician had introduced letters to Greece before the Trojan war, before 1200 BCE (2012:408).
- The other group of aliens leave under the leadership of Moses, who then colonises Palestine (Assmann 1997:34).
- Hecateus states that Moses forbade divine images 'because God does not own a human shape. Rather, heaven alone who encompasses the earth is God and Lord of all, and he cannot be depicted in images' (Assmann 1997:34).
- Moses' new religion is aniconic, cosmic monotheism (Assmann 1997:34).

²³⁰ Hecateus of Abdera was a Hellenistic intellectual who lived in Alexandria in the 4th century BCE (Assmann 1997:34), Josephus describes Hecateus of Abdera as a highly competent man of affairs, who writes about the Jews and their regard for their laws (Ap I.181.185; I.190). *Aigyptiaka*, excerpts in Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, 40.3 = *Didorus of Sicily*, ed. And trans. F.R. Walton, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.; Harvard UP, 1967), 281.

4.10.1.2 Lysimachus' version 2nd century BCE

Lysimachus of Alexandria, who wrote a scathing account of the Exodus, begins with a story of a famine. His account from Josephus (*Ap. I.* 300-309) states:

- During the reign of King Bocchoris, famine was rife in the land.
- The king sent to consult the oracle who ordered the king to cleanse the temples of the impure and impious people (this was a reference to the Jews who sought refuge from leprosy and other diseases).
- The King Bocchoris gave orders to drown the lepers and to expel the others into the desert.
- These outcasts gathered around one named Moses who led them out of the country.
- Moses gave instructions to destroy every temple and altar of the gods.

Assmann (1997:35) argues that these motifs occur over and over again. The first motif is termed 'amixia' (exclusivity) and the other motif is 'asebeia' (impiety or atheism).

4.10.1.3 Chaeremon's version first half of the first century BCE

Chaeremon, an Egyptian priest who lived in Alexandria and, after 49AD, in Rome, as the tutor to Nero, (Assmann 1997:35). Josephus (*Ap. I.* 283-294) provides Chaeremon's version which states :

- The goddess Isis appeared to King Amenophis in a dream. She reproached him as a result of his destruction of her temples in times of war.
- The priest Phritibantes advised the king to appease the goddess by purging Egypt of its lepers.
- The King Amenophis gathered 250,000 lepers and expelled them from Egypt.
- The names of the leaders of the lepers were Moses (Egyptian Tisithen) and Joseph (Egyptian Peteseeph).
- In Pelesium, the lepers were joined by 380,000 people who had been refused permission to leave Egypt (Assmann (1997:35) states that this is the first intrusion of a Biblical motif into the story).
- The united forces of lepers and emigrants conquered Egypt and compelled the king to seek refuge in Nubia.
- The king's son and successor, Ramesses, succeeded in reconquering Egypt and driving the 'Jews' into Syria.

4.10.1.4 Manetho's version 3rd century BCE

As stated previously (see Chapter One), Manetho was an Egyptian priest who wrote a history of Egypt under Ptolemy II in the first half of the third century (Assmann 1997:30). In Manetho's version, it is stated that 'according to Manetho (*ap. Ap.* 2.16) the dating of the Exodus occurred during the reign of Tethmosis (Feldman 2007:9).

4.10.1.5 Leader—Moses a priest expelled for leprosy?

Pompeius Trogus' version of the Moses tradition (cited in Assmann 1997:35-36) sees the reason for the Exodus as much the same as the other sources as being an epidemic:

But when the Egyptians had been exposed to the scab and to a skin infection, and had been warned by an oracle, they expelled [Moses] together with the sick people beyond the confines of Egypt lest the disease should spread to a greater number of people (Assmann 1997:36).

4.10.2 Archaeological evidence for the Exodus

None of the Egyptian sources substantiates the Exodus narrative (Malamat 1997:15). Neither the date of the Exodus nor the duration of Israel's sojourn in Egypt can now be ascertained with any confidence. 'The *historical* uncertainty arises from the nature of our sources and of the events reported' (Halpern 1992:89). However Halpern argues that behind the Exodus story events can be termed historical in scale (1992:90). There is a choice of dates for the Exodus in the Biblical account (Halpern 1992:90). In the Biblical narrative in (I Kings 6:1) Solomon's temple was built 480 years after the Exodus around 1450 BCE in the reign of Thutmosis III (Halpern 1992:90). The store cities of Ramses and Pithom mentioned in the Biblical narrative in Exodus (1:11) were built by Ramesses II dated to 13th century BCE, dates for Ramesses II are given as 1304-1238 BCE high; 1290-1224 BCE Middle and 1279- 1213 BCE low chronology (Halpern 1992:90). The Pharaoh of the Exodus in Exodus (14:28) who drowned seems to be Merneptah, son of Ramesses II (Halpern 1992:90). Merneptah already knew of an 'Israel' living in Asia in the fifth year of Merneptah's reign around 1230 BCE, the hieroglyphic inscription found on the Merneptah Stele alludes to 'Israel'. Halpern argues 'Israel cannot have left in the first year of Merneptah, wandered in the wilderness for 40 years before turning up in Canaan in his fifth year' (1992:90). Halpern suggests that either 'one must divorce the Exodus from the conquest ... or one must remove the reference to the store cities' for an accurate account (1992:90).

There is no direct extra-biblical source on the Exodus, however there are several *indirect* sources (Malamat 1997:18). *Papyrus Leiden 348* is a decree from an official of Ramesses II concerning his new capital of Pi-Ramesses, it declares ‘distribute grain rations to the soldiers and to the ‘Apiru who transport stones to the great pylon of Ramesses’ (Malamat 1997:18) (see 6.3.1 for a discussion on the ‘Apiru). The *Merneptah Stele* of the fifth year of Merneptah has little or nothing to do with the Exodus (Malamat 1997:19), it only attests to the presence of a group designated ‘Israel’ towards the end of the 13th century. ‘Israel’ was originally an indigenous people (Hoffmeier 2015:258). A possible connection between the Biblical tradition and the Egyptian sources is found in (Exodus 13:17) and states ‘...when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not *through* the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near’ (Malamat 1997:19). The Egyptians constructed a military road along the coast of the northern Sinai, and ‘the way of the Philistines’ was fortified with a network of strongholds under Pharaoh Seti I in the 13th century BCE (Malamat 1997:19). In (Exodus 14:3) it states ‘for Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, they *are* entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in’ because of this Egyptian view the Israelites were forced to make a detour and venture into the desert of the Sinai (Malamat 1997:19). The *Papyrus Anastasi* (see footnote 3) reveals the tight control of Egyptian authorities, no one could enter or leave Egypt without a special permit (Malamat 1997:19). Anastasi VI illustrates the passage of an entire tribe coming from Edom during a drought (Malamat 1997:19). Anastasi Papyrus V dated to the end of the 13th century reports the escape of slaves from Pi-Ramesses the royal residence (Malamat 1997:20). The fugitives fled into the Sinai wilderness by way of a fortified border (Malamat 1997:21). The places named in the Papyrus Anastasi V are Tjeku, and Migdol. Malamat notes the parallel features with the Exodus narrative, the escape of slaves from Ramesses, Egyptian military forces pursuing, the name of Tjeku, most probably Biblical Sukkoth (Exodus 12:37), which was the second stop on the Exodus route, the name Migdol (Exodus 14:2) and the flight taking place at midnight (Malamat 1997:22). The *Elephantine Stele* named after the place of its provenance Elephantine is dated to the 12th century BCE, the Stele recounts events in Egypt where Asiatics were driven out of Egypt by a faction of Egyptians after being bribed with silver, gold and copper by another faction of Egyptians. The Stele has an interesting tradition within the Biblical Exodus story, likening the Israelites to the Asiatics as both were given silver, gold and copper as stated in (Exodus 3:22) (Malamat 1997:22). *Papyrus Harris I* portrays desolate conditions prior to the reign of Ramesses III. The leader of Asiatic intruders at that time was someone by the name of Irsu, some scholars have suggested this Irsu might be Biblical Moses (Malamat 1997:24).

Although an Israelite exodus is not mentioned in sources from Egypt, there are a number of analogies, perhaps beginning from the time of the Hyksos. These analogues are more concentrated around 1200 BCE suggestive of a Biblical event (Malamat 1997:24).

‘While it is unlikely that the ‘Exodus’ occurred on the scale presented in the Hebrew Bible, the ‘Exodus-Sinai’ tradition, as well as the earlier Israelite tradition of the descent of Israel (Jacob) into Egypt in a time of famine, reflect a clear knowledge of conditions in Egypt and may, in fact, preserve some historical memories’ (Russell 2009:24).

4.10.2.1. *Archaeological evidence on the conquest narrative*

Archaeologists in the first half of the 20th century found destruction levels in tell after tell which they thought they could identify with the Israelite conquest of Canaan (Shanks 1992:5). Shanks argues that these series of destructions in Canaan can no longer be rationally identified as a result of the Israelite conquest (1992:5). Archaeological methodology has improved and the dating of levels can be done more securely, archaeology can no longer support the conquest model of Israel’s emergence in Canaan (Shanks 1992:5). The Merneptah stele (see 4.10.2)²³¹ depicts a people named Israel living in Canaan by 1207 BCE (Finkelstein & Silberman 2001:101). Finkelstein & Silberman state that, despite the doubts raised about the historical accuracy of the Exodus, few historians and archaeologists have doubted that the Israelites were an immigrant people entering into Canaan from the outside (2001:101). Based on material remains,²³² scholars can identify a difference between the Canaanites and the Israelites (Finkelstein & Silberman 2001:101). This is, according to Finkelstein and Silberman (2001:101), a mass movement of displaced desert dwellers who invaded the settled land and settled down. Ben-Tor and Zuckerman offer a different interpretation to Finkelstein on the final destruction of the Canaanite kingdom of Hazor, which, Finkelstein suggests, was destroyed only once (Finkelstein 2005:345). Ben-Tor and Zuckerman

²³¹ The Merneptah stele at Karnak depicts the Pharaoh Merneptah’s victory over a people Israel. Frank Yurco identified battle reliefs of the Egyptian Pharaoh Merneptah. Yurco (cited in Rainey 2008:54) identified Israel as a group of Canaanite dressed warriors. Rainey argues that the Israelites are shown on another panel amongst depictions of captured *shasu* nomads. This, says Rainey, indicates that the Israelites originated not from the Canaanite cities but rather from the nomadic steppe lands east of the Jordan River (Rainey 2008:54).

²³² According to Finkelstein & Silberman (2001:101) immediately above the destruction layers at Late Bronze Age Canaanite cities, haphazardly dug pits and coarse pottery which were found have been interpreted by scholars as temporary tent encampments of ‘semi nomads’. Finkelstein & Silberman (2001:101) are of the opinion that scholars noted a pattern which indicated the mass movement of displaced desert dwellers invading the settled land, then settling down and gradually developing a sedentary way of life. The monumental buildings, luxury goods and fine ceramic ware uncovered in the Canaanite cities suggest that the arriving Israelites were of a far lower level of civilisation suggest Finkelstein and Silberman (2001:102).

offer another interpretation, one which allows for differential destruction, only one fierce destruction campaign, then a final destruction of the Late Bronze Age city followed by total abandonment (2008:1-6). Ben-Tor and Zuckerman (2008:2) state ‘there is nothing wrong in changing one’s mind, provided such a change is based on evidence ... evidence has so far not been presented.’ Ben-Tor and Zuckerman (2008:2) state ‘[w]e do not know the answer to any of these questions ... all we can do is speculate’.

Ben-Tor (see Figure 6.7) and Zuckerman (2008:2) disagree with Finkelstein and Silberman on certain key issues, such as exactly who was responsible for the destruction of Hazor and identifying Hazor as an Israelite settlement based on pottery found. An Egyptian offering table discovered in the destruction layer of the monumental building in Area M at Hazor dated to as late as the 3rd decade of Ramesses II’s reign (1240-35 BCE) might help with Chronology.²³³

4.11 MOSES’ LEADERSHIP IN THE WILDERNESS

In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they unto the wilderness of Si’nai (Exodus 19:1).

In the Biblical account found in Exodus 3:11, Moses asks: ‘Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?’ In Exodus 4:10-17, Moses raises his concerns regarding his lack of speech and eloquence. Philo (*Mos* I.84) sees this as a sense of Moses’ modesty and that God approved or ‘accepted’ this modesty (Feldman 2007:82). The modesty alluded to above appears to be but one of many qualities displayed in the period of Moses’ leadership in the wilderness. Feldman (2007:122) states that even non-Jewish writers, who are normally vicious in their anti-Semitic attacks, are respectful of Moses’ long sojourn in the wilderness. Moses leadership was tested (Feldman 2007:123). Hecateus (*ap. Diodorius* 40, 3.4) suggests that ‘Moses introduced an intolerant mode of life’ (Feldman 2007:123). Josephus sees Moses as the ‘best of generals’ leading the Israelites (Josephus *Ap* 2.154-158).

²³³ Ben-Tor and Zuckerman (2008:2) state that Finkelstein has overlooked this item which has a bearing on the issue of chronology. This object is an indication that Hazor was still viable as a city in the middle to second half of the 13th century, a time that Finkelstein agrees the Late Bronze city existed.

4.11.1 Marah

When the Israelites journeyed into the wilderness 'of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water' (Exodus 15:22). The waters of Marah were bitter.

Philo (*Mos* I. 182) describes the incident. The adults and children are desperate for water. In (Exodus 15:25), God provides a tree which makes the bitter water sweet. Philo rationalises this miracle by stating that the tree had been formed by nature for this very virtue (*Mos* I.185).

4.11.2 Manna

In (Exodus 16:3) it states '...for ye hath brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger'. Philo's account (*Mos* I.191-92) states that, not only were the Israelites hungry, they were also despondent about the future and accused Moses of filling their ears with empty hopes (Feldman 2007:125). Philo (*Mos* I.196) portrays Moses in a good light by stating that Moses forgave them, understanding that a multitude is, by nature, insecure (Feldman 2007:126). In (Exodus 16:4), God promises that food will be sent from heaven: '...behold I will rain bread from heaven for you'. In Philo's account (*Mos* I.200-1) the Israelites ask what the rain is (Feldman 2007:126). Artapanus (*ap. Eus. PE* 9.27.37) describes the food given to the Israelites as the colour of snow and like rolled millet in texture (Feldman 2007:127). Velikovsky (1957:137) is of the opinion that the exegetes have attempted to explain the phenomenon of manna. Josephus (*AJ* 3.26ff) talks of dew which resembles snowfalls in the desert and provides substance for desert dwellers. This 'corn of heaven' could be ground between stones and baked in pans (Velikovsky 1957:137). In the Talmud Tractate Yoma (75a, cited in Velikovsky 1957:138), the clouds brought the heavenly bread. This heavenly bread is called honey (*madhu*) in the *Rig-Veda* while the Greeks called it ambrosia. Manna, like ambrosia, can be compared with honey and morning dew (Velikovsky 1957:140). Josephus, Arab tribes and the Greek Church state that the tamarisk found in the desert of Sinai sheds its seeds at certain times of the year (Velikovsky 1957:137). The relevance to the discussion on Manna is revealed in Moses' own words '...this *is* the thing which the Lord commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt' in (Exodus 16:32).

4.11.2.1. *Water from the rock*

‘And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin ... and pitched in Reph’idim and *there was* no water for the people to drink’ in (Exodus 17:1). In (Exodus 17:6) ‘...I will stand before thee upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, so that the people may drink’. Flinders Petrie (1906:248) states that at the wady Feirán there is plenty of clear sparkling water from the rock. Flinders Petrie (1906:207) is of the opinion that the battle with the Amalekites (cf.4.11.3) would have been to defend the good water supply of the wady Feirán a fertile oasis in the desert of Sinai.

4.11.3 Amalekites defeat

‘Then came Am’alek, and fought with Israel in Reph’idim’ in (Exodus 17:8). The Amalekites were a nomadic tribe in norther Sinai and the Negev (Negev 1972:22). Philo (*Mos* I. 214) stated that the Israelites were expecting to find a peaceful life in the land where they hoped to settle (Feldman 2007:128). Philo makes no mention of the Amalekites instead he states that the country was occupied by Phoenicians (*Mos* I. 214) (Feldman 2007:129). In both Philo and Josephus’ accounts, it is Moses who plays a role in the fight against the Amalekites (Feldman 2007:129). Philo (*Mos* I. 216) states that Moses performs a customary ritual²³⁴ which is similar to that of Roman soldiers prior to battle (Feldman 2007:129). However, this aspect is disputed by Fowler (1911:96, 215-216, cited in Feldman 2007:407) who states that no such ritual appears in Biblical or rabbinical Judaism. Philo justifies the slaughter of the Amalekites in the desert (Feldman 2007:131). According to Josephus (*AJ* 3.60), Moses predicted the annihilation of the Amalekites (Deuteronomy 25:17).

4.12 MOSES THE LAW GIVER

‘And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Si’nai (Exodus 19:11).

²³⁴ The Biblical text states that Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of a hill taking with him his rod and ‘Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed:and when he let down his hand, Am’alek prevailed’ (Exodus 17:11).

4.12.1 Mount Horeb (Sinai)

‘And mount Si’nai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly’ (Exodus 19:18).

Papaioannou ([sa]:6) states that, after fifty days from their departure from Egypt, the Israelites reached the sacred Mount Horeb and it was here where they received God’s law. Biblical Mount Horeb/Sinai is situated in a moonscape of granite mountains with high peaks and ridges (Papaioannou [sa]:5).

A view held by Bimson et al (1985:32) is that the location of Mount Sinai has not conclusively been established. The tradition which associates Mount Sinai with the south Sinai Peninsula cannot be traced back before the second century AD (Bimson et al 1985:32). Jebel Helal in north Sinai or an unspecified peak east of the gulf of Aqaba have been suggested (Bimson et al 1985:32). Farrington states that the agreement made by God with the Hebrews occurred at Gebel Mûsa or Mount of Moses/Sinai (2003:28). Mount Sinai rises to 7500 feet. Fourth to sixth century tradition states that Mount Horeb is in the vicinity of St Catherine’s monastery built by the Emperor Justinian²³⁵ (Farrington 2003:29). Gebel’ Arribeh, Gebel Harun, Horeb, Gebel Mûsa, Mount Sinai, Mount Katherine all lie close to St Catherine’s monastery (Farrington 2003:29).

²³⁵ In the 6th century, the Emperor Justinian (527-565) ordered the building of a great walled monastery which would encompass the earlier edifices of St Helena. The monastery is found in the heart of the Sinai desert and has stood for 1400 years. The monks from the monastery were offered the protection from Justinian’s soldiers. Both St Helena and Justinian dedicated the church and the monastery to the mother of God. Despite the Virgin Mary conceiving the ‘fire of deity’, she was not burned, remaining forever a virgin. The burning bush was burned by fire but not consumed by it (Papaioannou [sa]:8).

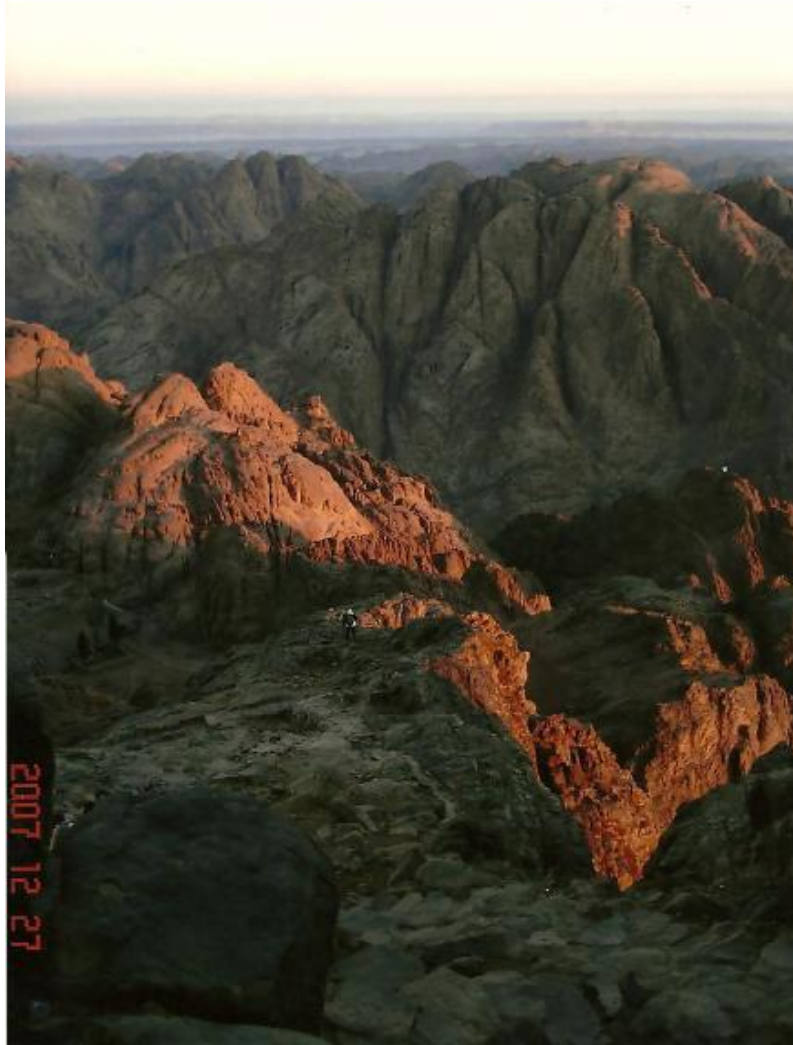


Figure 4.3: Mount Horeb at dawn, Sinai Egypt. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).

4.12.2 God's revelation on the Mountain of God or Moses own creation?

In the Biblical account in (Exodus 19:19), it is stated: '...Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice'.

The historian Apion (*ap. Ap. 2.25*) recorded that Moses ascended a mountain called Sinai. He remained concealed for forty days, descended and gave the Jews their laws. Apion is of the opinion that Moses claimed the laws were of divine origin. Apion stated it was actually Moses himself who had composed them. Apion suggests that Moses was a plagiarist utilising instead the work of doctrines from Egyptian predecessors, even suggesting the works of Akhenaten who, at that time, was despised and rejected (Feldman 2007:138). Stern (16.2.38-39.762, cited in Feldman 2007:138)

identifies Strabo's indications of the criticism of the revelations of Minos and Lycurgus.²³⁶ In the Samaritan tradition (*Molad*, p. 65, 11. 2-12), the miracles associated with the divine revelation are emphasised (Feldman 2007:138). Diodorus (I.94.I-2), writing in the 1st century BCE, praises Moses as a lawgiver (Feldman 2007:261). However Diodorus was criticised at that time for claiming that Moses' laws were his own creation and not divinely communicated (Feldman 2007:261).

4.12.3 The Ten Commandments, Ark of the Covenant and 'shining face'

Behind the traditional notion of Moses receiving the law at Sinai, there must indeed be some sort of genuine historical memory, but unfortunately it has not been accessible to either the archaeologist or the text scholar (Shanks 1991:31). In the Biblical account in (Exodus 20:1) it states 'I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage'. The Ten Commandments are listed in the Biblical narrative in (Exodus 20:3-17). The Ten Commandments were tablets of stone inscribed with laws which covered aspects of daily life. Moses was presented with these laws whilst conversing with God atop Mount Sinai (Farrington 2003:28). The tablets of stone were housed in a chest made from acacia wood decorated with gold. This chest known as the ark was carried by Hebrew people as they travelled. The ark was taken to Jerusalem by King David. David's son Solomon built a temple to house the ark. The Ark of the Covenant disappeared when the temple in Jerusalem was destroyed at the time of the Babylonian exile (Farrington 2003:28). That Moses had come in contact with the deity could be seen in his shining face²³⁷ (Exodus 34:29-35) (Van Seters 1994:345).

Up to this point in history the ark has never been found (Farrington 2003:28). Its whereabouts in Ethiopia,²³⁸ have been suggested, unsuccessful expeditions have been mounted to search for the ark but to no avail (Farrington 2003:28). Tudor Parfitt in *The Lost Ark of the Covenant* (2008) discusses the oral traditions of the Lemba which according to the traditions of the Lemba people refer to *ngoma lungundu* which is the Biblical Ark made by Moses. Le Roux discusses the traditions which surround the Ark and the remembrance of a cultic object which was of great significance for the

²³⁶ Minos of Crete, Lycurgus of Sparta, Zarathustra of the Persians and Zalmoxis of the Cretans' were all claimed by Diodorus to be the greatest lawgivers in antiquity (Feldman 2007:261).

²³⁷ The controversial theory of Prof Benny Shannon, from the Hebrew University theorises that Moses was hallucinating when he received the Commandments. He bases his theory on the psychedelic substances found in the acacia bush which grow in the region. These drugs blur the senses and cause skin and eyes to shine. The drugs can allow the user to experience deep spiritual and religious encounters. <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-525993/Moses/-high-hallucinogenic-drug-received-Ten-Commandments-claims-academic.html>

²³⁸ The supposed journey taken by the Lemba people from Israel to the south, follows from Israel across the desert to the Yemen, via Ethiopia to Mozambique and Zimbabwe and, finally, South Africa (Le Roux 2003:x).

sojourn of the Israelites through the desert (2003:136).²³⁹ Le Roux suggests that the notion of the Ark might have been taken from the Canaanites (2003:136). The Egyptians might have influenced this custom. A painted carved relief from the Osiris temple in Abydos depicts a sacred barque and a statue shrine used during pilgrimage and annual pageants to commemorate the god's death and resurrection (Oakes 2001:152) the Biblical narrative in (Exodus 25:10) provides a detailed description of the Ark (see Figure 6.1 shows a depiction of an Egyptian solar barque, closely resembling the ark of the covenant).

4.12.3.1. *Law codes*

The very first law code in history was known as the Shulgi²⁴⁰ law code. This compilation of the first law code was a most important contribution to world civilization. The code consisted of a selection of legal provisions causistically formulated between a prologue and an epilogue. All subsequent ancient Near Eastern law codes, including those attributed to Lipit- Ishtar of Isin, Hammurabi of Babylon²⁴¹ and Moses of the Hebrews, were structured around this law code. The extant articles deal with capital crimes, laws of marriage, sex offences, false testimonies, laws of slavery and bodily injuries. However, the most characteristic feature of the Shulgi Law code is that it limits corporal punishment to a small number of grave offences such as homicide and robbery. The law code lacks the principle of talion (Klein 1995:854), 'the punishment fits the crime'. Shulgi's law code states:

- If a man commits murder, that man is to be killed.
- If a man commits robbery, that man shall be killed.
- If a man uses force against the wife of a young man while she is still a virgin, and deflowers her, that male shall be killed.

²³⁹ According to Le Roux (2003), the Lemba today identify themselves as Jews or Israelites. Their oral traditions state they came by boat to Africa (2003:24). Their claim to Israelite heritage has been backed by science. Parfitt collected DNA samples from the Lemba people. Hamer (2004:193) describes the results being remarkable as ten per cent of the Lemba men had 'the tell-tale pattern of nine DNA variations that constitute the CMH' (Cohen modal haplotype) (Hamer 2004:188). This figure reflects that for lay Jews living in Europe and the Middle East. 'The Lemba carry a genetic signature of the Jewish Cohanim' (Hamer 2004:193).

²⁴⁰ The promulgator of the law code was named Shulgi, he was the second ruler of the 3rd Dynasty of Ur (2094- 2047 BCE), and this law code is preserved in Old Babylonian copies from Ur, Nippur and Sippar (Kuhrt 1995:64). According to Jacob Klein (1995:854) Shulgi of Ur king of a Neo-Sumerian empire was remembered as one of the most enlightened kings of the ancient world.

²⁴¹ Hammurabi a king of Babylon whose accession to the throne was dated to (1792 BCE) was most celebrated for his law-code. The Stele found by French excavators in Susa had been pillaged by the Elamite kings in the 13th century. The stone stele depicts Hammurabi standing before the sun god Shamash illuminating all. Below the figure of the king the laws are inscribed. The stele is inscribed with prescriptive laws and provides a wealth of information on old Babylonian society (Kuhrt 1995:111-112)

- If the wife of a young man follows a man [and] sleeps in his lap, that woman shall be killed by the man (her husband); that male shall be set free.
- If a man divorces his legitimate wife, he shall pay [her] one mina of silver.
- If a man had accused a wife of a young man of fornication, but the ordeal had proved her innocent, the one who accused her shall pay one third mina of silver.
- If a man broke the bones of a[nother] man with a club while [deliberately] beating him, he shall pay one mina of silver.
- If the female slave of a man, presuming herself to be equal of her mistress, has cursed her, she shall scour her mouth with one quart of salt.
- If a man comes forward as a witness [in a law suit] and turns out to be a perjurer, he shall pay fifteen shekels of silver.

The above partly preserved religious and ethical principles on which Shulgi's laws are based seemed to have provided a prototype for later redactors as alluded to by Klein (Sasson 1995:854). Some of the above laws closely resemble the Ten Commandments listed in (Exodus 20:1-10). Based on this discussion, the researcher is of the opinion that Moses did not adhere to the law codes he was said to have propagated. 'No, Moses was not a great moral for modern moralists' (Dawkins 2006:278).

4.12.4 Moses' Persona and attributes

Moses is attributed with several characteristics in the Biblical account, moral virtues and faults. He is portrayed as a mediator (Number 21:7), with a personal relationship with God in (Exodus 33:9) (cf. 3.10.2.3 Akhenaten's exclusive relationship with the Aten). In (Numbers 12:3), it is stated: 'Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.' Is the Biblical account accurate in its statement? On the virtues of Moses, one rabbinic view describes Moses as sinless and proof that 'there is death without sin and suffering without iniquity' (*b. Shab.* 55b, cited in Feldman 2007:237).

Dawkins is vociferous with his attack on Moses (2006:279) and states that modern morality 'does not come from the Bible'. 'God's maniacal jealousy' against any alternative gods is seen throughout the Old Testament which, according to Dawkins (2006:279), motivates the Ten Commandments and drives peoples from their homelands. Moses was regarded as the great lawgiver (Kersten 1986:47) but, as Kersten has suggested, the Ten Commandments are a codified

summary of laws which were in force amongst the people of the Near East and India long before the time of Moses. Kersten (1986:47) suggests that law codes were based on the millennia-old Indian *Rig Veda*.

As this is a multidisciplinary study one of the factors I am investigating is the genetic implications of heredity as a causal factor in behaviour. Might Moses have displayed similar attributes to Akhenaten? (cf. 1.1.4; 2.1.2.1.2 and 2.1.2.2) and 3.10.2 for Akhenaten's persona and behaviour.

4.12.4.1. *The Golden calf – Thou shalt have no other gods before me*

The Biblical account found in Exodus 32:4 states: '... and he received them at their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool, after he had made it a molten calf'. Aaron, Moses' brother, at the request of the Israelites, had moulded a golden molten calf for worship. The Israelites had grown impatient waiting for Moses. Moses displayed his maniacal fury on returning from the Mountain of God. Thousands of Hebrew perished after worshipping the golden calf as relayed in the Biblical account in (Exodus 32:28), yet no Late Bronze Age graves, burial tumuli or evidence of Israelite encampments have been found in the area around Mount Sinai, (Perevolsky & Finkelstein 1985:26-41). The incident, described in (Exodus 32:27), '... put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man, his companion, and every man his neighbour'. According to (Exodus 32:28), three thousand men fell.

Idolatry, from a Biblical viewpoint, is the greatest sin and both Josephus and Philo choose to omit this incident from their writings (Feldman 2007:140). Josephus, in his *Antiquities of the Jews*, omits the account of the golden calf, as the incident reflects badly on the Israelites portraying them as a fickle people, shows Moses as a hot-tempered leader and displays the high priest, Aaron's, disgraceful conduct at initiating this worship (Feldman 2007:141). Philo uses the Greek word for 'bull' ταυρος when describing the incident of the Israelite worship. This worship of the bull was of utmost importance for the Egyptians (Feldman 2007:141). The Levites were chosen as temple attendants helping in religious services, according to Philo, after their display of loyalty in fighting idolatry and upholding the worship of the sole god (Feldman 2007:142).

Warburton (1744:387-491) exposed an influential interpretation of Egyptian hieroglyphics. Warburton states that idolatry was an outgrowth of hieroglyphic writing and thinking. It was specifically an

Egyptian phenomenon because Egypt was the only civilization that retained the pictorial character of its writing (Assmann 1997:111-112). Euterpe hinted that Herodotus claimed that the Egyptians erected the first altars, images and temples to the Gods and carved figures on to stone (Assmann 1997:112). Warburton describes different stages in the development of idolatry, firstly, that the figures of animals are just signs representing gods or deified kings. The second stage sees the worship of these figures on their own instead of being 'read'. This stage, according to Warburton's theory, was reached at the time of Moses. The image was worshipped by the Hebrews who made the golden calf as a substitute for Moses, believing him to be dead. 'Idolitis' was seen as the final stage where the Egyptians worshipped the beasts themselves. Initiated priests were privy to these secrets and the representations of the deified mortals were represented in the form of animals which, according to Warburton, became the perfect concealment of the gods (Assmann 1997:112). The significance of the bull in Egyptian worship will be discussed in Chapter Five (see 5.8 'Apis' and the cult of the bull).

4.12.4.2. *Murder: 'Thou shalt not kill'*

And it came to pass in those days, where Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens: and he spied on an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew, one of his brethren (Exodus 2:11).

And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that *there was* no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand (Exodus 2:12).

The above Biblical texts state that Moses saw an Egyptian man strike a Hebrew man. The Bible does not provide reasons for the action. Moses, seeing that no one was looking, struck down the Egyptian and hid the body in the sand (Feldman 2007:62). The first Hellenistic Jewish historian was Demetrius who lived in the 3rd century BCE, his version of the above incident is close to that in the Septuagint (LXX)²⁴² (Feldman 2007:62).

Josephus and Pseudo Philo omit the episode in their account, perhaps because they were embarrassed by the fact that Moses, the great leader of the Israelites and a great lawgiver, was not congruent to his words cast in stone, but was actually a murderer who lacked respect for the judicial procedure of Egypt (Feldman 2007:62). An impulsive slaying by Moses of the Egyptian overseer is best overlooked. In the accounts of Jubilees (47:10-12), Acts (7:24) and Midrashic accounts, the

²⁴² The Septuagint, a translation of Jewish scriptures into Greek, was accredited to the work of seventy translators (Armstrong 2007:49). Allegro states that the history of the translation was done at the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt (285-246 BCE). Jewish scholars, six scholars from each tribe of the twelve tribes of Israel, were commissioned and had been brought to Alexandria (Allegro 1956:62).

incident is blamed on the Egyptian (Feldman 2007:62). Artapanus defends Moses and surmises that Moses slays a certain Chanethothes who had been assigned by the jealous pharaoh to kill Moses (Feldman 2007:62). Philo paints a picture of the Egyptian overseers as ‘exceedingly harsh and ferocious in savageness differing nothing from venomous and carnivorous animals, wild beasts in human shapes’ (Feldman 2007:62). Perhaps Philo’s assumptions were true. Possibly Egyptian overseers were indeed violently cruel as archaeological evidence of cruelty in Amarna exists. Acts 7:23-24 identifies the Israelites as being oppressed by the Egyptians. This is the same as the account in the Biblical text (Feldman 2007:63). Ezekiel (*ap. Eus. PE* 9.28.3, cited in Feldman 2007:63) states that Moses rescued his Israelite brother, but Ezekiel does not provide Moses’ provocation in his rendition. Feldman (1992:79) refers to the erudite scholar, Jacobson (Feldman 2007:63), who wrote a careful edition of Ezekiel (*The Exagoge of Ezekiel*, 1983). Jacobson (1983:17) finds it strange why Ezekiel would denigrate his hero, suggesting that the reason might have been the identity of the audience to whom Ezekiel was writing, whether they were Jewish or non-Jewish, Ezekiel was considering both Jews and pagans in the opinion of Jacobson (1983:18):

And when he went out the second day, behold two men of the Hebrews strove together: and he said to him that did the wrong, Wherefore smitest thou thy fellow? (Exodus 2:13).

Moses witnesses Hebrews’ fighting. Moses berates the wicked one, but the incident does not speak well of the Hebrews, or that one of the Hebrews informed the pharaoh (Feldman 2007:64). According to Ezekiel (*ap. Eus. PE* 9.28.3, cited in Feldman 2007:64) there is no indication that the two men are Hebrews. A ‘Jewish’ audience, familiar with Biblical texts, would see them as ‘Jews’ whereas they could be regarded as Egyptians by an Egyptian audience (Jacobson 1983:79-80). Jacobson (1983:15) argues that the portrait of Moses in the *Exagoge* of Ezekiel does not appear totally with the grandiose view of Moses held by the Samaritans. The Bible refers to the one as wicked, but, in Ezekiel’s version, he states that one was weaker than the other. Ezekiel suggests the weaker one informed the pharaoh. Both Philo and Josephus choose to ignore the incident in their accounts (Feldman 2007:64). According to Philo (*Mos* I.46), it is pharaoh’s advisers who ‘poured myriads of slanders into the open ears of Moses’ adoptive grandfather, the pharaoh, so as to make him fear that Moses would seek to usurp the rule’ (Feldman 2007:64). The Biblical account in Exodus 2:15 states that Moses fled to Midian once the pharaoh had become aware of Moses’ transgression by murdering the Egyptian.

4.12.4.3. Stoning: 'Thou shalt not kill'

... and while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day (Numbers 15:32).

... and the Lord said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp (Numbers 15:35).

... And all the congregation brought him without the camp, and stoned him with stones, and he died; as the Lord commanded Moses (Numbers 15:36).

Dawkins (2006:281) is vociferous in his attack on certain morals from scripture and cites the above verses found in Biblical texts as one such example. Dawkins is of the opinion that we should not get our morals from scripture as 'if we did, we would strictly observe the sabbath and think it just and proper to execute anybody who chose not to' (Dawkins 2006:283). Opinions about Moses differ in Philo (*Mos* 2.43, cited in Feldman 2007:15) 'the laws of the Jews are shown to be desirable and precious in the eyes of *all*, ordinary citizens and rulers alike'.

4.12.4.4. Wars

Römer (2012:72) is of the opinion that Moses is portrayed in the Hebrew Bible in a demilitarised stance. Instead, the military conquests become the work of Joshua (Römer 2012:72). However there are some military traditions appearing in the book of 'the Wars of Yahweh' mentioned in (Numbers 21:14) which contained Moses' military record.

The tradition appears also in Hecateus and Artapanus. Both present Moses as an excellent commander leading an Ethiopian campaign (Römer 2012:72) (see 4.6.3 Josephus and the Kushite war and 4.6.4 Moses leading an Ethiopian campaign).

Artapanus (*ap. Eus. PE* 9.27.7-11) introduces the character Chenephres who is the pharaoh against Moses. This pharaoh then appoints Moses as a general against the Ethiopians in the hope that Moses will be killed. Apparently, the war lasts for ten years and Moses emerges triumphant, winning every battle. Moses and his followers then found the city in Heliopolis calling it 'The city of Hermes' (Feldman 2007:64-65).²⁴³

²⁴³ The researcher finds this entry as most interesting and suggests the similarity to the account of a king's son of Kush and an overseer of the southern countries assembling an army to defeat the enemies of the foreign country of Ikatya. The king's son of Kush and overseer of the southern countries is named as Thutmosis (the researcher is suggesting that this character might be the son of Akhenaten and named Thutmosis and further suggests and speculates that this is the Biblical Moses) (Murnane 1995:103). Another factor of interest is the founding of the city in Heliopolis (On, in the Bible). 'The city of Hermes', the city of Heliopolis (refer to Chapter Six) has important religious connotations for the

Artapanus alludes to the name Hermes as being a name that Moses was called (*ap. Eus. PE 9.27.6*, cited in Feldman 2007:65).

Dawkins (2006:278), in his scathing account of Moses, refers to the genocide of the unfortunate Midianites in their own country. The Moabites meet a similar fate (Dawkins 2006:278). Dawkins (2006:278) refers to the Biblical account in (Numbers 25:4): ‘... take all the heads of the people, and hang them up before the LORD against the sun, that the fierce anger of the LORD may be turned away from Israel’.

4.13 PROMISED LAND

... then Moses went up from the plains of Moab unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, that is over against Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan (Deuteronomy 34:1)

Farrington states that Moses was believed to be one of the few men who had conversed directly with God and that this occurred on Mount Nebo (Jabal Naba). Mount Nebo is in Moab, a region belonging to the Moabite tribe in Biblical times (Farrington 2003:116). Moses surveyed the Promised Land before his death (2003:116).

In Deuteronomy 34:1-7, the Bible mentions five landmarks in relation to the site of Moses’ burial. The landmarks that are named are: the Plains of Moab, Mount Nebo (in the Abarim Mountains), the peak of Mount Pisgah, Beth-Peor and Heshbon. Kersten (1986:50) offers an alternative explanation to the locality of the Biblical sites. Kersten suggests that should it be possible to find the places that are mentioned in the texts, the true location of the Promised Land would then become clear. Kersten is of the opinion that *Beth-peor*’s literal meaning is ‘place that opens out’, a valley that opens onto a plain. Kersten identifies a place in Kashmir India called *Behat-poor*. Behat is a Farsi (Persian) name. Kersten continues his argument by identifying the Biblical Heshbon as the small village of Hasba or Hasbal. Thomas Mann is of the opinion that the concluding passage featured in the Pentateuch which depicts the death of Moses is seen by Mann as ‘one of the most moving scenes’. Moses’ solitary climb to the top of Mount Nebo and his review of the land which he has been forbidden to enter by God presents a heart-rending climax for the great story of redemption which begins on the Nile (Mann 1979:481).

ancient Egyptians and the worship of Atum. It was an early cult centre for the god Ré in his form as Atum (Bunson 1999:110).



Figure 4.4: View of the land promised to Moses. A painting by Jayne Vine courtesy of the Gracepoint Methodist Church. Nov 2012.

4.14 DEATH OF MOSES

In the Biblical account in Deuteronomy 31:16, God tells Moses that he is to die: ‘... and the Lord said unto Moses, Behold, thou shall sleep with thy fathers’. ‘So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord’ Deuteronomy (34:5). ‘And Moses *was* a hundred and twenty years old when he died: his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated’ Deuteronomy (34:7).

4.14.1 Josephus and his account of the death of Moses

Josephus in his account (*AJ* 4.315) states that Moses announces to the Israelites his impending death. In Josephus’s version (*AJ* 4.316-318), Moses expresses thanks to God, Josephus states that Moses is reduced to tears when he witnesses the lamentation of the people (*AJ* 4.322). Josephus (*AJ* 4.323-326) states that the Israelites as a group follow Moses to the place where he disappears, hence they are witness to the fact that he died (Feldman 2007:229).

4.14.2 Philo's description

Philo (*Sacr* 8) states that Moses died at the command of God. Philo made no reference to the Biblical statement in Deuteronomy 34:6 which states that no one knows Moses' burial place 'to this day'. Feldman states that this account implies that the account of Moses' death was written after he had died. This factor possibly confirms the present day critics of the Bible that hold that the Pentateuch was not of divine authorship (Feldman 2007:227).

4.14.3 Rabbinic account

Feldman (2007:230) states that in the rabbinic tradition (cited in *Sifre Deut.* 305), Moses attempts to avoid his impending death and awaits permission from God to enter the Holy Land. The rabbis even wondered why Moses, who had conversed face-to-face with God, should have to die (Feldman 2007:230). Deuteronomy 34:5 confirms the fact that Moses did die. Feldman (2007:230) states that on the seventh day of Adar,²⁴⁴ when Moses was decreed to die, Moses wrote the thirteen scrolls of the Torah and that it was at this time that God showed Moses the entire land of Israel and taught Moses the history of the land from creation to judgment. Both paradise and hell were shown to Moses (Feldman 2007:230). The Biblical narrative describes in detail the lands the Lord showed Moses '...the land of Gil'e-ad, unto Dan, and all Naph'tali, and the land of E'phra-im, and Manas'she, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zo'ar in (Deuteronomy 34:1-3).

The rabbinic account continues with Moses meeting the Messiah in heaven and witnessing God building a temple in heaven. One tradition (Feldman 2007:232) states that God had decreed that all descendants of Adam must die. God took the soul of Moses by kissing him on the mouth (Feldman 2007:230). The Midrash (*Leqah Tov, Berakah I02*) states that the site of the death of Moses was not revealed for fear of it becoming a sanctuary where sacrifices would be offered (Feldman 2007:231). Rabbi Nehemiah's view is that the last eight verses of (Deuteronomy's 34:5-12) account of Moses' death and burial were written by Joshua (Feldman 2007:231).

²⁴⁴ Adar is the month of February / March in the Jewish calendar (Kruger et al 2002:168).

4.14.4 Samaritan description

In the Samaritan tradition (*Memar* 5.3, cited in Feldman 2007:231) it is stated that Moses died without realising he was going to die. It is stated that he entered a cloud and was lifted up as light.

The Samaritan *Memar* 4.12 states that when Moses died, he was gathered with the angels, with whom he had dwelled on Mount Sinai ... together with the five books of the Torah and the five letters of the name of God (Feldman 2007:232).

4.15 MOSES RECORDED IN ISLAM

F. Eißler (cited in Ehrlich 2012:101) refers to Moses' importance in the scriptural foundations in the Koran (Qur'ān). Moses is found in the Arabic form of his name, Mūsā. That Moses' name is mentioned more times than any other Biblical figure, highlights his importance. Moses is seen as a prophet who communicated directly with God. Eißler (Ehrlich 2012:141-142) makes use of verses in the Koran which deal with Moses who 'distinguishes himself from Muhammad as the recipient of divine revelation' (Ehrlich 2012:102). Moses is seen as the greatest of all prophets prior to Muhammad. Eißler refers to the changes in Moses' attitude towards the Israelites later in the Koranic passages when Moses is eventually 'islamified' (Ehrlich 2012:171-178). This change could be seen as Muhammad's attitude towards the Jewish community changing and becoming increasingly negative (Ehrlich 2012:102). Ehrlich points to the analogies between Moses and Muhammad; both are leaders of a small group of faithful against a powerful unfaithful and both prophets triumph in the end (Ehrlich 2012:101).

4.16 CONCLUSION

I am of the opinion that the above discussion has highlighted the problems of chronology. The marriage of archaeology and textual evidence appears problematic and considerable gaps exist in the texts. The argument proposed by Von Rad that the Pentateuch was essentially a 'series of short, credo-like recitations of early Israelite history, [which] developed in the framework of cult practices of the time of the Judges' has been seen to be a stimulating and influential approach according to Kuhrt (1995:423). That perhaps Moses was not the vehicle of the Pentateuch's transmission or divine authorship, might confirm some present day Bible criticism (Feldman 2007:227). Römer (2012:76) emphasises the new state of Pentateuchal research of the Torah which allows for a modified investigation into the Biblical traditions that can be partially retrieved from extra-Biblical sources of the Hellenistic period and is of the opinion this new interest in 'oral tradition' can contribute to a better understanding of the complexity of the Torah.

The traditions from Artapanus, Hecateus of Abdera, Manetho and Josephus 'are enjoying somewhat of a comeback in Biblical scholarship' Römer (2012:67). Artapanus' account of Moses leading an Egyptian campaign in Ethiopia is of interest. Moses' campaign, his Cushite wife and the tradition surrounding the Ark of the Covenant in Ethiopia, begs the question by the researcher that if archaeology has not provided evidence for an exodus, perhaps are archaeologists looking in the wrong place?

Kersten (1986:45) is of the opinion it is not possible to form a consistent picture of Moses as a historical person therefore the tradition has left many questions unanswered. Despite the concerns raised by Kersten, he believes that Moses was a genuine historical figure (1986:45). The importance of Moses lies in the historical evaluation given to him rather than the facts.

Van Seters (1994:26) raises concerns around Moses' genealogy 'for the father to be without a minimal genealogy is unprecedented'. The discussion above has reviewed several authors who have proposed a familial relationship between Moses and Akhenaten (as Moses has been given several identities and several different periods are suggested for the dating of the exodus). The concern raised by Van Seters (1994:26) regarding the Biblical genealogy of Moses, raises further questions. If the Biblical genealogy is incorrect, who then were Moses' parents?

The lack of historical evidence for the character Moses and the Exodus has provided a breeding ground for scholarly speculation. Accounts of history are constantly modified, depending on the context and times in which they are written. That the Babylonian environment played an important part in the work of Biblical narrative, is apparent. Van Seters (1994:3) alludes to the work of the so-called 'Yahwist' a Judean scholar in exile in Babylon. The Babylonian environment must have impacted on the written record, examples of which are the birth narrative, glorified heroes and Mesopotamian law codes alluded to above. Van Seters (1994:3) suggests a similarity to the form of Near Eastern historiography; the Neo-Babylonian inscriptions see the king as leader of his people. Moses was a leader of his people; this is what made him different to other prophets who distanced themselves from their followers. As Stewart noted, experts argue over the exact date of the cataclysmic eruption on the island of Thera, the eruption would undoubtedly have brought devastation to the region. The ten plagues referred to in the Biblical account might have been a natural result of this disaster and were recorded in rabbinic tradition. Evidence of a plague which ravaged the region at the time of Akhenaten has been alluded to in the chapter on DNA and this might add to the argument for correct dating of the Moses narrative.

The title of the dissertation is a tantalising suggestion but, without archaeological finds, it must remain speculative. Scholarly speculation might change with time if and when archaeology reveals further material. Without evidence, only ‘tradition of Moses’ remains but is this tradition reliable enough? In my opinion the tradition is flawed with several contradictions.

CHAPTER FIVE: AKHENATEN'S ATENISM, A SOLE, SOLAR OR SYNCRETISTIC MONOTHEISM?



Figure 5.1: Sun disk between horns of Apis Bull, The Louvre Paris. (Photograph by Jayne Vine Dec 2013).

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The relevance of this chapter is an attempt to gain a better understanding of Akhenaten's ideology. Had an Atenist religion²⁴⁵ survived, Akhenaten would be seen as a prophet (Kemp 2012:21) because Kemp (2012:32) believed that 'Akhenaten acted like a man with a vision'. The theme of this

²⁴⁵ The word 'religion' is a creation of the Hellenistic period and Kemp is of the opinion that the use of the word, when applied to ancient Egypt, is mischievous (2012:21). Kemp believes that the world of Akhenaten was more tolerant to 'inconsistency of thought to an extent that it is uncomfortable in the modern world' (2012:21).

chapter will focus on the evolution and development of ‘Atenism’, tracing early cosmogenic²⁴⁶ myths in Egypt with their pantheon of gods. It ultimately evolved into Akhenaten’s worship of his sole creator god, the solar disc Aten²⁴⁷ myths were “invented” in order to give an extra, sacred dimension to previously existing rituals’ (Van Dijk 1995:1698). The king, and a small group of high officials who later developed into a professional priesthood, were the only ones who had knowledge of the myths (Van Dijk 1995:1697).²⁴⁸ Van Dijk (1995:1699) defines myth as

a statement that seeks to explain social reality and human existence in symbolic terms by referring to a world outside the human world and to events that happen in a time outside human time but that makes the present situation meaningful and acceptable and provides a perspective on the future.

Mondriaan (2010:105) is of the opinion that myth may be a meaningful element in the political organisation of a society. Assmann (1997:25) describes the monotheistic²⁴⁹ revolution of Akhenaten as: ‘not only the first but also the most radical and violent eruption of a counter-religion in the history of humankind’.

Akhenaten established a new capital at Amarna to honour the Aten (Bunson 1999:38) yet within twenty years after his death, the site of Amarna was abandoned (Kemp 2012:21). Archaeology reveals that Akhenaten’s name and that of his wife, Nefertiti, were destroyed yet, despite this, the images of Aten with its extended rays were generally untouched (Kemp 2012:23). The restoration inscription²⁵⁰ of Tutankhamun confirms the circumstances at the end of the reign of Akhenaten. The decree carved on a large red granite stela was found in the great Hypostyle Hall at Karnak in 1905. The stela describes the measures the young king took to restore the previous orthodox cults which had been destroyed during the reign of Akhenaten (Murnane 1995:212).

²⁴⁶ Cosmogony, the creation myths, according to Bunson (1999:57), assumed political and religious significance in each era.

²⁴⁷ Aten was the solar disk deity which shone upon the Nile River. When Akhenaten became pharaoh in Thebes, he decreed the Aten ‘the true religion of the land’ (Bunson 1999:38).

²⁴⁸ ‘That which is told’, the common word for tale or story in Egyptian language, is *sdwt*. Any story or ‘truth’ is not an essential element of *sdwt* and this term is never applied to myths (Van Dijk 1995:1698). Van Dijk (1995:1698) alludes to the absence of myths from early written documentation, suggesting the knowledge of myths was restricted to those directly involved in the state’s cult and were transmitted orally. The use of the word *št* means secret or mystery and the same word is used to describe the cult image of the god in the innermost sanctuary of the temple (Van Dijk 1995:1698). Van Dijk alludes to only one text in which *sdwt*, is used, an autobiographical text from a high official from the middle of the 18th Dynasty which states ‘I saw to the making of many monuments in the Temple of Amun in Karnak, the making of the sacred river-bark Userhat- Amun and the covering of it with gold, [making it] like the rising of Re, like what is told about (*sdwt*) the Day-bark in the sky’ (Van Dijk 1995:1698).

²⁴⁹ Redford (1996:1) alleges monotheism, polytheism and henotheism are all constructs of the Judeo-Christian tradition and are very different from ancient humankind’s mind-set.

²⁵⁰ The restoration stela of Tutankhamun gives an account of how Tutankhamun was going to stabilise government and restore the temples after the Amarna period (Bunson 1999:268).

The inscription (in Murnane 1995:213) reads:

When his person appeared as king, the temples and the cities of the gods and goddesses, starting from Elephantine [as far] as the Delta marshes ... were fallen into decay and their shrines were fallen into ruin, having become mere mounds overgrown with grass ... the land was in rack and ruin. The gods were ignoring this land: ... if one prayed to a god, to ask something for him, he did not come at all; and if one beseeched any goddess in the same way she did not come at all ...

Tutankhamun (in Murnane 1995:213) describes the restoration of the god Amun and the reintroduction of the former gods by saying:

... seeking benefactions for his father Amun and fashioning his noble image out of genuine electrum ... he fashioned his father Amun to be upon thirteen carrying poles ... he fashioned Ptah South-of-his-Wall ... his person made monuments for the gods ... surpassing what had been done since the time of the ancestors: he installed lay priests and higher clergy....

Tutankhamun's account reveals dire circumstances at the closure of Akhenaten's reign and the necessity to restore order by reinstating the importance of former gods, goddesses and reinstating the role of Amun. Kemp refers to Tutankhamun's restoration stela and provides evidence that does not match up to the statement in Tutankhamun's restoration stela. Kemp (2012:27) is of the opinion that Tutankhamun's decree of restoration looks to be 'tendentious, even malicious', a piece of 'black propaganda' (2012:24). Kemp (2012:27) bases his statements on the fact that many temples belonging to Akhenaten's predecessors have survived. One such example is the temple of the god Horus, Lord of Buhen, in Nubia. This temple was built by Thutmose and Hatshepsut over a century before Akhenaten. The temple was built for its god, a local form of Horus²⁵¹ the sun-god, and was left untouched along with other references in hieroglyphs of the goddesses Satis and Anukis (2012:27). Kemp (2012:27) strives to make the point that archaeological evidence from Amarna indicates that many names and figures of gods were left untouched. Kemp's (2012:27) views are in stark contrast to those of Reeves (2001:154) who states

...since there was only one true deity, the Aten, the plural hieroglyphic group for 'gods' was similarly excised ... this campaign was no academic exercise, but a true persecution which generated a real and tangible fear among the Egyptian people.

Kemp proposes that, once the temples of Egypt and Nubia were cleansed of Amun references, they were left unabated. In many instances, new shrines to the Aten were built (2012:27). Perhaps it was only the image of the man-shaped god Amun-Ra that instilled the wrath of Akhenaten. As Akhenaten's god was aniconic, it might have been that Akhenaten wanted all the adulation.

Chapter Two shows what could possibly be the first physical evidence of the plague. Kemp alludes

²⁵¹ Horus was one of the oldest gods of the nation. Horus was depicted in the form of a falcon or a hawk. He was a solar deity worshipped throughout Egypt, but the forms traditions and rituals honouring the god varied (Bunson 1999:116).

to graves in the Amarna cemetery containing more than one individual, suggesting instant burial after death (Kemp 2012:228). Chapter Four mentions the plagues at the time of Moses. From the Amarna archive, an Amarna letter sent from the king of Alašiya (Cyprus) to an Amarna king refers to the hand of Nergal.²⁵² The inscription on the tablet says: ‘...behold, the hand of Nergal is now in my country; he has slain all the men in my country’ (Moran 1992:107). Further textual evidence of a plague during the Amarna period is recorded on the tablet of Amarna letter EA 11 from Burnaburiyas, the king of Karaduniyas (Babylon) (Moran 1992:21). It refers to the mourning after the death from plague of Akhenaten’s fathers’ wife (Moran 1992:21). Hecateus (who provides the earliest non-Biblical account of the Exodus) discusses the plague which ravaged Egypt and states that the Egyptians interpreted plague as divine punishment for the presence of aliens²⁵³ who practice foreign rites and customs (Assmann 1997:34). The plague that ravaged Egypt and the Near East during the Amarna period (perhaps the effects of a natural geological cause possibly a result of the Thera eruption, as I have suggested in Chapter Four) must have had a deep psychological impact for people living at that time. Assmann (1997:26), in attempting to reconstruct the frames of experience for the average Egyptian, identifies the Amarna period as a time of horror, destruction, divine absence of the gods and a time of disease.

The above examples provide context for conditions in the Near East at the time of Akhenaten. Stability and order needed to be restored in Egypt. I am of the opinion that it is not surprising then that Tutankhamun chose to revert back to a polytheistic form of worship in a desperate attempt to halt the chaos. Akhenaten, not ‘his Aten’, took the blame as Akhenaten’s images were desecrated and destroyed.

This chapter will be a study of the evolution of Egyptian ideology discussing the early creation myths, emphasising the importance of several deities evolving to the singular role of the solar cult of Atenism or perhaps syncretising aspects of other gods.

These systems of creation applied to all eras of Egypt’s development. They were found in Heliopolis, Hermopolos, Memphis and Thebes and the cosmogonies furnished Egypt with a

²⁵² Gray (1969:23) describes Nergal as a sinister deity from the Mesopotamian pantheon. Nergal is a god of mass destruction by war or plague. The weapons used by Nergal are heat, lightening and plague indicative of his function as a solar deity. The Amarna tablet from the king of Alašiya appears to describe a plague as suggested by Kemp (2012:228).

²⁵³ Assmann (1997:28) states that the Asiatics became victims of the concept of religious otherness as they were Egypt’s traditional enemies. The ‘dislocated Amarna experiences’ were projected onto the Hyksos and their god Baal (Egyptian Seth).

framework for spiritual evolution (Bunson 1991:57). From the formation of the Egyptian state (3100 BCE), Egypt was divided into nomes, each nome had its own cult centre where the priesthood served the needs of the local deity (Gahlin 2001:51).

The creation myths are based on the principle of order being established out of chaos (Gahlin 2001:52). The primordial waters represent the chaos of the world at the time of creation and out of this chaos emerges order seen in the fertility of the land and the heat of the sun. Gahlin notes the high regard that the Egyptians placed on the concept of order (2001:53). The need for order can be seen in the intricately documented ritual procedures. The annual inundation of the Nile, an aspect beyond the control of the Egyptians, is seldom depicted, rather the landscapes depict the orderly flow of the river (Gahlin 2001:53). All the creation myths discuss the fertility of the land and the heat of the sun (Gahlin 2001:52).

Myths are the stories which a group, society or culture live by thus they play an important role in the formation of ethnic identities (Assmann 1997:15). The creation myths play an important role in 'cultural memory' (Assmann 1997:15) and reconstructing Egypt's past. This past may help to understand Akhenaten's reality in the 14th century BCE. The world, for the ancient Egyptian, was made meaningful²⁵⁴ by the use of myths. A background to the religious centres of Heliopolis (Biblical On), Memphis (Biblical Noph, modern Mit Rahina), Hermopolis (modern el-Ashmuniein) and Thebes (Van Dijk 2006:1699) will be explored. These myths were of particular comfort to the Egyptians in times of distress (Van Dijk 1995:1708). Each theology impacts on the other, adding to its insights rather than replacing different theologies that have been viewed as competing with each other, but this goes against the Egyptian tendency (Van Dijk 2006:1699). Egyptian religion then shows a progression.

²⁵⁴ Myth explains the complementary aspects of life such as male and female, order and confusion conflict and resolution, fertility, life and death (Van Dijk 1995:1708).

5.2 HELIOPOLITAN *ENNEAD*

The Heliopolitan *ennead*²⁵⁵ from Heliopolis²⁵⁶ otherwise known as *Iunu* or *Iunet Mehet*, the ‘Pillar’ or the ‘Northern Pillar’ was called this by the Egyptians since ancient times (it is now situated in a suburb of modern Cairo) (Bunson 1991:110). Heliopolis was the Biblical ‘On’ referred to in the Bible (Genesis 41:45) (Bunson 1991:110). The priests who served the god Ré were reputed to be learned and politically important (Bunson 1991:110) (see Chapter Six section 6.5.2). Apion refers to Moses as Osarsiph, a Heliopolitan priest (in Chapter Three, Anen, Akhenaten’s uncle, is referred to as a priest of Heliopolis). The pantheon which evolved from the cult centre of Heliopolis and its religious traditions was known as the *ennead* (Bunson 1991:110). It was an extended family of gods, nine in total, who received worship at Heliopolis (Gahlin 2001:20).

The role of the god Ré, in the form of the Atum, was worshipped in a temple there called “Atum the Complete One” denoting the self creation of Ré (Bunson 1999:110).

5.2.1 The creation myth or cosmogony of Heliopolis

The myth of Heliopolis²⁵⁷ describes the chaos of the Primordial Ocean in which lay all the germs of all things existing before creation. The myth describes the creation of the following gods:

5.2.1.1. *Nun*

Nun is referred to as ‘father of the gods’. This was, according to Viaud (1959:11), an intellectual concept as Nun had neither temples nor worshippers. From the darkness, endless, lifeless water personified as Nun, there emerged a mound of fertile silt²⁵⁸ (Gahlin 2001:51).

²⁵⁵ The *Ennead* (Greek for a group of nine) (Gahlin 2001:51).

²⁵⁶ Very few archaeological discoveries have been made at Heliopolis, once famed for its learning and religion. Those that have been made are a single obelisk taken from the temple of Senwosret I (1971-1926 BCE), a stela commemorating the offerings of Thutmose III (1479-1425 BCE) and a stela dating to Ramesses II (1290-1224 BCE) (Bunson 1999:110).

²⁵⁷ According to Bunson (1999:57), the records from the cosmogenic tenets from Heliopolis are scant and are found in the pyramid texts which are the oldest religious literature in ancient Egypt. These inscriptions are found on the walls of pyramids of the 5th and 6th dynasties (2465-2150 BCE) (Bunson 1999:213). The pyramid texts comprised magical spells, incantations, religious beliefs and myths. Their origins are accredited to the priests of Heliopolis (Bunson 1999:213).

²⁵⁸ Primeval mounds might have been borrowed from the natural environment as the floodwaters of the Nile subside to reveal fertile mounds of silt (Gahlin 2001:57).

5.2.1.2. *Atum -Ra*

Atum emerged from the fertile silt as a solar creator god and masturbated or sneezed out the deities Shu, Tefnut, Geb, Nut, Osiris, Isis, Seth and Nephtys (Gahlin 2001:51). Atum was a local god of Heliopolis who was represented by his sacred animal in the form of a bull Merwer (Greek Mnevis)²⁵⁹ (Viaud 1959:11). Atum was identified with the great sun god Ra. The priests taught that, within Nun, the primordial ocean, lived a formless spirit. This spirit contained the ‘sum of all existence’ (Viaud 1959:11). The name of this spirit was Atum, later manifesting as Atum-Ra²⁶⁰ from which was drawn all gods, men and living things (Viaud 1959:11). He was personified in the rising and setting sun (Viaud 1959:11). The cult of both Ra and Atum spread throughout Egypt. Atum was considered to be the ancestor of the human race represented by the wearing of the double crown of the pharaohs (Viaud 1959:11).

5.2.1.3. *Shu*

Shu was the god of air, personified as air and sunlight. His name meant ‘he who rises up’ and his role was to bring the sun to life each morning and to protect it against Apophis, the serpent demon of the netherworld (Gahlin 2001:44). In his human form, he was depicted with an ostrich feather attached to his head (Gahlin 2001:45). In many depictions, he is seen standing between his offspring, Geb and Nut, supporting them. A headrest found in the tomb of Tutankhamun depicts Shu supporting the head of a sleeper rather than his children, Geb and Nut (Gahlin 2001:45). An ostrich feather is the ideogram of his name (Viaud 1959:13).

5.2.1.4. *Tefnut*

Tefnut was a goddess of the dew and rain. She was a twin sister to Shu, the god of air. Tefnut had a solar character, she was worshipped in the form of a lioness or of a woman with the head of a lioness. The Greeks identified her as Artemis (Viaud 1959:13).

²⁵⁹ This reminds me of the episode of the golden calf in Exodus 32:1 which states ‘...the people gathered themselves together unto Aaron, and said unto him, Up, make us gods, which shall go before us’. Several verses in the biblical account refer to Aaron as a priest, for example, in Exodus 28:1 ‘...that he may minister unto me in the priest’s office *even* Aaron.’ The episode of the golden calf in Exodus 32:4 alludes to the importance of the cult of the bull, as Aaron was the first high priest of the Israelites, and they had shortly left Egypt. The researcher is suggesting that perhaps Aaron was Anen, Akhenaten’s uncle, a Heliopolitan priest (see Chapter Three).

²⁶⁰ Atum Ré, a god considered to be the oldest god in ancient Egypt, depicted in some eras as a man, wearing the double crown of Egypt and holding the royal sceptre and Ankh (the symbol of eternal life in Egypt (Bunson 1999:23, 38).

Tefnut identified with Shu and both received the new born sun as it broke free. Shu and Tefnut gave birth to Geb (Bunson 1999:57).

5.2.1.5. *Geb*

Geb is seen as the earth-god and physical foundation of the world. He is depicted as a man.²⁶¹ Some depictions show Geb's head surmounted by a goose, an ideogram of his name (Viaud 1959:13). In some eras of Egyptian history, Geb's depiction of the goose signifies his laying of the cosmic egg of creation (Viaud 1959:13).

5.2.1.6. *Nut*

Nut is seen as an Egyptian goddess of the sky. Nut assumed the role of wife and sister to Geb (Bunson 1999:193). Nut birthed Osiris, Seth, Isis and Nephtys. Nut's imagery depicts her stretched over the horizon. She wears stars and celestial lights. In some depictions she is the cow that Ré mounts at the moment of creation (Bunson 1999:193).

5.2.1.7. *Isis*

Isis (Greek Aset, Eset) was a beloved goddess of ancient Egypt (Bunson 1999:126). Isis, along with her husband Osiris, civilised Egypt, teaching agricultural techniques and medicine. Isis is a great mother goddess and mother of Horus. She is depicted with a throne headdress, protecting the living and the dead. Isis was revered for her magical powers (Bunson 1999:99). In many eras, Isis was depicted as wearing a large headdress of cows' horns on either side of the sun disk (Bunson 1999:126).

5.2.1.8. *Osiris*

Osiris,²⁶² a god of nature embodied the spirit of vegetation, dying with the harvest and rebirthing with the grain sprouts. Later in Egyptian history, Osiris became god of the dead. Osiris was ranked first in the pantheon of Egyptian gods (Viaud 1959:16). Osiris took Isis as his queen and initiated the first temples and sculptured the first images. Osiris' first son was Geb. Osiris gave his

²⁶¹ Gahlin (2001:57) notes that Geb the earth-god is a male deity whilst most other cultures depict earth as a female deity.

²⁶² One of Akhenaten's reforms was the abolishment of Osiris and the Osirian netherworld but not with the immortality of the 'soul' or *ba* (Assmann 1997:254).

people just laws and spread civilisation throughout the world, ultimately becoming a victim of a plot at the hands of his brother Seth (Viaud 1959:16).

5.2.1.9. *Nephtys*

The goddess Nephtys was a patroness of the dead, a sister and wife of Seth. Nephtys accompanied Isis in Osirian traditions (Bunson 1999:100).

5.2.1.10. *Seth*

Greeks referred to Seth as Typhon. Seth was a brother to Osiris, later becoming identified with the incarnation of evil. The son of Geb and Nut, Plutarch, states that Seth tore himself from the womb of his mother as he was rough and wild. He was depicted with white skin and red hair and the Egyptians compared him to the pelt of an ass. Seth's jealousy of Osiris led him to trick and murder Osiris (Viaud 1959:19). Viaud (1959:20) suggests that the rivalry between the brother gods might have actually reflected historical events.²⁶³

5.2.2 The Sun Cult of Heliopolis

The cult of Ré at Heliopolis rose to a leader in Egyptian state religion. Gahlin (2001:175) discusses the squat 'standing stone' pointed at its apex, referred to as *benben* which was taken from the verb *weben* meaning 'to rise'. The capstone at the top of the pyramids was known as the *benbenet*. The most sacred of all *benbens* was erected at Heliopolis. It has been suggested that this *benben* represented the primordial mound which emerged from the watery chaos of Nun when creation began (Gahlin 2001:176). The rays of the rising sun would have hit the point at the very top of the obelisk. The Egyptians incorporated a more tapering version of the *benben* into the designs of their tombs. The sacred stones are today referred to as obelisks (Gahlin 2001:175-176). I will discuss the role of sacred stones, *asherim*, and sacred poles, *maššēbôt*, below.

Breasted states that, at Heliopolis, the sun-god appeared as an aged man heading towards the west and as a winged beetle rising in the east (1959:10).

²⁶³ The Hyksos dominated Egypt in the later part of the Middle Kingdom (1640-1532 BCE) (Bunson 1999:119). Manetho refers to these Asiatics as *Hikau-Khoswet*, *Amu*, *A'am* or *Setetyu*. The Hyksos worshipped Seth as their great warrior god Sutekh, building a capital for him in Avaris in the eastern Delta. In the 22nd Dynasty, Seth the assassin of Osiris began to undergo punishment for his crime as statues of Seth were destroyed (Bunson 1999:119).

5.3 HERMOPOLIS OGDOD

Hermopolis²⁶⁴ is to be found in Middle Egypt on the west bank of the Nile, situated close to the modern town of Mallawi (Gahlin 2001:56). Hermopolis was another great religious centre (Viaud 1959:10). The decree of Hermopolis was based upon the Ogdoad (Octet) who were responsible for the golden age before man settled in the Nile Valley (Bunson 1999:57). Hermopolis was ancient Khnum (Gahlin 2001:56). Ramesses II (1290-1224 BCE) built a temple in Hermopolis utilising materials taken from the destroyed city of Akhenaten/Amarna (Bunson 1999:113). This suggests former gods rising to prominence after the destruction of Akhenaten's temple at the end of the Amarna period.

5.3.1 The creation myth or cosmogony of Hermopolis

In the cosmogony of Hermopolis, the appearance of a cosmic egg, laid by either a celestial goose or ibis, was included (Bunson 1999:57). The primeval mounds which appeared from the waters took on a great significance in temple lore as the gods first appeared on these primeval mounds (Bunson 1999:57). The Hermopolitan cosmogony focused on the rising of the sun and the inundation of the Nile River (Bunson 1999:57).

5.3.1.1. *Thoth and the Ogdoad*

In Hermopolis, the god Thoth (Greek Hermes), was worshipped and Hermopolis was Thoth's chief cult centre (Gahlin 2001:56). Bunson (1999:195) states that the eight gods which formed parts of the Ogdoad were first mentioned during the time of the Middle Kingdom (2055-1650 BCE) (Gahlin 2001:52). The gods were believed to be the first creatures which emerged from the watery chaos after creation. The eight gods of the Ogdoad comprised four couples, four males and four females (Gahlin 2001:50). The males were depicted with frog's heads and the female divinities depicted as serpents (Bunson 1999:195). The four male- female pairs were Amon and Amaunet, Nun and Naunet, Heh and Hehet, Kaku and Kauket (Bunson 1999:195). The role of these gods was to ensure the daily rising of the sun and to ensure that the Nile flowed (Bunson 1999:195). *Nun* was seen as water, *Huh* represented eternity, *kuk* represented darkness, and *Amon* represented air (Bunson 1999:57). The numbers four and eight were magically significant numbers and these elements were necessary for creation to take place (Gahlin 2001:50).

²⁶⁴ Ogdoad meaning eight gods (Bunson 1999:195).

A version of creation at Hermopolis describes a primeval mound of earth called the 'Isle of Flame' which rises from the primordial water. The god Thoth, in the form of an ibis, places a cosmic egg upon the mound and the cosmic egg cracks to allow the rising of the sun (Gahlin 2001:51).

Another version of the creation myth at Hermopolis describes a lotus flower (personified as the deity Nefertem) which floats upon the primordial waters. The flower petals open to allow the sun to rise from the bloom (Gahlin 2001:51).²⁶⁵

5.4 MEMPHITE CREATION STORY

The ancient city of Memphis *Men-nefer* lies about fifteen miles from modern Cairo in the vicinity of the modern village of *Mit Rahina* (Gahlin 2001:52). Memphis was founded at the beginning of the 1st Dynasty (3100 BCE) as the administrative capital of Egypt (Gahlin 2001:52). The language on the text was initially dated to the Old Kingdom (2686-2181 BCE), however it has been suggested the language is from a later period, possibly the Ramasside period (1100BCE) (Gahlin 2001:52).

5.4.1 The creation myth of Memphis

A rectangular slab of black granite upon which the Memphite creation myth is inscribed is housed in the British Museum. The 25th Dynasty King Shabaqo (716-702 BCE) commissioned the work for a temple to house the god Ptah at Memphis. The original work written on papyrus or leather was disintegrating with the text becoming illegible (Gahlin 2001:52).

5.4.1.1 *Ptah (Creator of the entire world)*

Ptah was regarded as a creator god from as early as the Old Kingdom and later in the Middle Kingdom. Evidence of this has been found in the coffin texts and the later Ramasside texts (1200BCE) (Gahlin 2001:52). Ptah's responsibilities were seen as fashioning the sun and the gods and seeing to the ripening of the crops (Gahlin 2001:52).

The Memphite priests distanced themselves from devising myths relying on solar energy but rather

²⁶⁵ A wooden carving of Tutankhamun's head, which was found in his tomb, is now housed in the Cairo Museum. This carving depicts the young king as the sun-god rising from the petals of a lotus flower (Gahlin 2001:85).

devised a more metaphysical role surrounding Ptah. The priests explained that their myth was based upon the concepts of *heka* (magic or divine energy), *hu* (divine utterance) and *sia* (divine knowledge) (Gahlin 2001:52).

5.5 THEBAN COSMOGONY

The Theban cosmogony, according to Bunson (1999:58), only came into being during the period of the New Kingdom (1550-1070 BCE).

5.5.1 Amon

A creation story was required by the priests of Amon to provide their god with rank and privilege thus raising Amon's status above all other gods in Egypt (Bunson 1999:58). The priests used the original concept of Amon as the air divinity of Hermopolis (see 5.3.1.1). Viaud (1959:29) notes that Thebes and the god Amon took on an important role from the time of the first king of the 12th Dynasty, King Amenemhat (meaning 'Amon leads'). The 18th Dynasty kings, Thutmose and Amenhotep, named themselves 'sons of Amon' proclaiming Thebes the capital of Egypt and Amon the great divinity of the entire country (Viaud 1959:29). Anthropomorphic²⁶⁶ images of Amon represent the god with the head of a ram with curled horns. A goose, another sacred animal, was also used to represent Amon. At Karnak,²⁶⁷ the depiction of the ram was seen as the living incarnation of the god Amon at the helm, providing patronage to the most powerful pharaohs, acknowledging the pharaohs as his sons and leading them to victory over their enemies (Viaud 1959:29). Amon created himself in Thebes (Bunson 1999:58) and other gods became manifestations of him. He was identified with Ptah, the lotus, and the Ogdoad (see 5.3.1.1). Amon became Tatenen, the primordial mound of Memphis. Osiris became absorbed into the Theban cult, claiming the god was born in the New Kingdom (Bunson 1999:58). The same fate met Ra, the old sun god,

²⁶⁶ Anthropomorphism—Attribution of human form of a personality to god or animal (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv 'anthropomorphism').

²⁶⁷ Karnak is described by Bunson (1999:133) as the largest, most remarkable religious complex ever built. It comprises 250 acres of temples, chapels, obelisks, columns and statues. The sphinxes at Karnak are ram-headed. At one time, the rows of sphinxes joined the temple of Luxor further to the south. The ruined temple of the god Amon contained architectural innovations which were designed to boost the strength of the stone and the monumental aspects of Karnak. Work was carried out over a 2000 year period. Each generation of pharaoh would add to the gigantic complex. For the purposes of this dissertation, the additions by Akhenaten and his predecessors are worthy of mention. The oldest part of Karnak describes the 'annals' of Thutmose III's military campaigns and a chapel dedicated to Amon depicts flora and fauna which were seen in campaigns fought in Syria and Palestine. These depictions are called the 'Botanical garden'. Lesser shrines were built and dedicated to the gods Ptah, Osiris, Khons and other deities. Horemhab, the last 18th Dynasty pharaoh, utilised materials from Akhenaten's now destroyed temple. Bunson states that 'Karnak represents faith on a monumental scale' (1999:134).

as he was identified with Amon becoming Amon-Ra (Viaud 1959:29). Ra-Harakhte, according to Viaud (1959:29), had always had his own distinct cult, becoming favoured under the reign of Amenhotep/Amenophis III (Akhenaten's father). Viaud (1959:29) suggests that this favour was encouraged by the priests of Heliopolis who were undoubtedly jealous of the immense fortune and omnipotence Amon was receiving from the priests of Thebes. Gahlin notes the rise of the cult of Amon as the centre of Amon's cult became significantly powerful (2001:56).

The local gods merged into five local sun gods identified on a single list found in the pyramid texts (Breasted 1959:43).

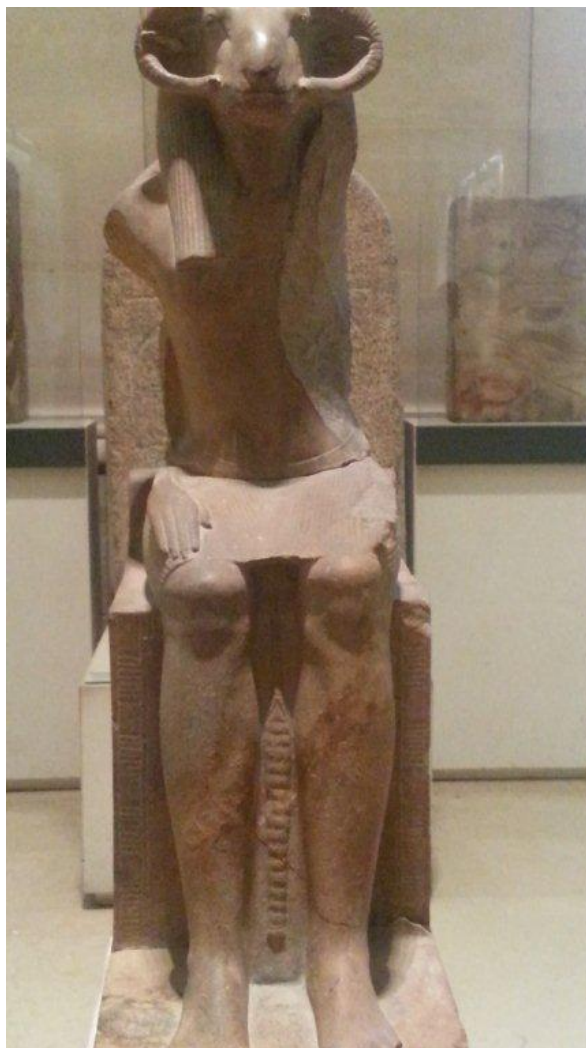


Figure 5.2: Seated depiction of the god Amon Ra, desecrated by agents of Akhenaten, Louvre Museum, Paris. (Photograph by Jayne Vine Dec 2013).

5.6 AKHENATEN'S RADICAL, RELIGIOUS REVOLUTION

As noted by Gahlin (2001:56) in the above discussion, the god Amon, considered to be the supreme creator god at Thebes, had risen in the ranks. This was as a result of the centre of the cult growing in wealth and importance gained from tribute and booty from campaigns in Syria-Palestine (Gahlin 2001:14). Gahlin (2001:56) identifies the importance of the priesthood at Thebes with Amon receiving the bulk of this new wealth and it's High Priest becoming all powerful. At Thebes, the priesthood surpassed the power of the king (see section 5.7 on the role of the king as high priest).

With the above factors taking place in Egypt during the early part of the reign of Akhenaten, it is not surprising then that Akhenaten instituted drastic reforms. The words of Akhenaten himself, inscribed upon the boundary stele at Amarna (also see Figure 5.2), provide context and his emotional state to justify his move from Thebes:

it was worse than those which I heard in regnal year 4; it was worse than [those] which I heard in regnal year 3; it was worse than those which I heard [in regnal year 2; it was] worse [than those which I heard in regnal year 1]; it was worse [than] those which (King) [NEBMAAT] RE Heard; [it was worse than those which] (KING) [OKHEPRURE (?) heard]; it was worse [than] those which (King) MENKHEPERRE heard; [(and) it was] worse [than] those heard by any kings who had (ever) Assumed the White Crown (Murnane 1995:78).

We really do not know exactly what Akhenaten was referring to with his words 'worse than' but we can hypothesise. Perhaps the reason for the king's distress was the power the priesthood of Amon was gaining. Breasted is of the opinion that Akhenaten was determined to make Aten the sole god and to annihilate Amon. Akhenaten changed his name from Amenhotep, 'Amon rests' to 'Ikhnaton', 'Aton is satisfied' (Breasted 1959:321-322). Gahlin is of the same opinion as Breasted that Akhenaten attempted to abolish the traditional polytheistic religion. Gahlin (2001:114) is one of many scholars who hold the theory that Akhenaten abolished and destroyed temples and other cults (Breasted 1959:322; Reeves 2001:154; Murnane 1995:212). Kemp, who has worked at the site of Amarna for over thirty five years, does not hold the same views regarding the destruction of temples and gods. In Kemp's words, 'many temples belonging to the reigns of Akhenaten's predecessors have survived' (2012:27).



Figure 5.3: Winged sun disk, Louvre Museum. (Photograph by Jayne Vine Dec 2013).

5.6.1 Akhenaten's sole cult of the Aten

Aldred (1988:239) states that the Aten was known from as early as the 12th Dynasty when Ammenemes I is referred to as dying and flying to reunite with Aten, the divine flesh who mingled with him and begot him. This story is relayed in *The story of Sinuhe*.²⁶⁸ There are more references to Aten through the reign of Akhenaten's father, Amenophis III (Aldred 1988:239) who states that this new concept of Ré is more than that of a sun god because 'he is the universe who has assimilated all the other gods in his being.'

Kemp believes that, by using the term 'polytheists', contemporary scholars are simplifying a subtle, sophisticated view of how the Egyptians viewed their world (2012:27). Kemp is of the opinion that the aim of Akhenaten's sole cult of the Aten was to:

- purify the cult of the sun.
- leave no mythology for the worship of the Aten.
- establish a sacred home for the Aten.
- instruct the Egyptian people on righteous conduct.

²⁶⁸ The *story of Sinuhe* is a tale of adventure dated to the Middle Kingdom (12th Dynasty) it was discovered in a Berlin Papyrus. Sinuhe is a retainer of Senwosret I (1971-1926 BCE) at the time of the murder of his father Amenemhet I, Sinuhe who is fearful for his life leaves Egypt. He fights against a giant, visits the court of Palestine and Syria finally returning to Egypt where he is received by a forgiving Pharaoh.

The Aten overshadowed all the gods at Amarna, however, Kemp discusses a quiet colonisation of other deities. Archaeology at Amarna reveals around twenty-three private chapels, one for every three houses (there are seventy-two houses). These chapels were designed like temples with a single central axis and alongside them were small roofed spaces with brick benches supporting the small objects of veneration. The goddess Isis, a god named Shed, prayers to the Aten and an image of Hathor which depicted her in the form of a cow, were found. These chapels, according to Kemp (2012:235-237), were not decorated in the style of Amarna. One chapel contained a prayer to Amun-Ra. Kemp argues that a superficial explanation of the chapels suggests that some of the chapels were built after the death of Akhenaten but Kemp disagrees with this view and argues that the chapels formed an integral part of the layout (2012:237). Aside from an authoritative and bureaucratic administration, premature death, accidents and illness never being far away, protective deities may have provided comfort to the community (Kemp 2012:237).

5.6.2 The new cult of the ‘Aten’ and the sun disc

Akhenaten has been the subject of several books, many dealing with his new ‘religion’. Archaeological evidence on the ground at Amarna appears to dispute the idea that Akhenaten would not allow affiliation to other gods aside from the Aten.

As Akhenaten was the creator of his city, his images were found in stone buildings and the rock tombs of officials, but Kemp states that these images formed part of the city that would not have been accessed by all those living at Amarna (2012:231). Archaeology has not produced evidence to suggest that his statues were in the streets of Amarna. The great palace which housed the huge halls and statue encircled hallways were hidden from view by a great mud brick wall (Kemp 2012:231). Akhenaten and his family worshipped the god which took the form of a sun-disk with rays ending in human hands. Archaeology from Amarna has revealed that inscriptions of short prayers inscribed in stone which framed doorways of the houses, depictions of the house owner kneeling before a cartouche of the Aten and the royal family, reveal the cult of the Aten (Kemp 2012:231). A shrine built of stone resembling a small Amarna temple was found in the house of the high priest Panehsy (Kemp 2012:231). Some large houses contained small chapels which stood on their own or in a garden (Kemp 2012:231). An example of private interest in the cult of the Aten can be seen in the chapel of a north suburb house at Amarna belonging to Hatiay, an overseer of works. There is even evidence of a small scale *benben* stone (Kemp 2012:231). The garden shrines showed allegiance to the king or perhaps they were marks of status. Not all houses had these shrines so the

owners were not obliged to possess them (Kemp 2012:231). Depictions on the walls of rock tombs show the owners praying to Aten, Akhenaten and Nefertiti (Kemp 2012:231). The unguent preparer Ramose speaks of the Aten as ‘an intimate inner voice’ (Kemp 2012:231). A depiction of an ibis-headed human figure, indicating the god Thoth, was found in the home of the sculptor Thutmosis who was famed for his work of the bust of Nefertiti (Kemp 2012:234). A seated statue of a scribe beneath the image of the god Thoth (depicted as a baboon) indicates that the owners of the statues did not suppress their affiliation to other gods (Kemp 2012:235).

5.6.3 Temple worship: Open air solar shrines

Oakes (2001:143) suggests that the court of King Amenhotep III (Akhenaten’s father) at Luxor could possibly be a precursor of the open air temples found at Amarna. The court at Luxor is surrounded on three sides by a double row of columns topped with papyrus-bud capitals.

Akhenaten moved away from the designs of the traditional Egyptian temples. His temples at Amarna were open to the sun (Oakes 2001:147). The destruction of Akhenaten’s city after his death and the removal of the building blocks from his temples would have made it difficult for scholars to reconstruct these images. Fortunately, scenes that are depicted on tomb walls, specifically the tomb wall of Panhesy, provide examples of temple scenes (Oakes 2001:147).

Panhesy, chief servitor of the Aten in Akhenaten (tomb No 6) reveals very few columns and those that are shown support an open colonnade. This, according to Kemp, agrees with the archaeological evidence of excavated plans which indicates that the temples were open to the sky (2012:96). Epigraphical detail provides images of offering tables piled high with food, an abundance of meat, poultry, vegetables, bread, bouquets of flowers and bowls of incense. A large offering table provides the focus of attention at the back of the temple while other smaller offering tables are depicted (Kemp 2012:96). Flagpoles of streamers are depicted and statues of the royal couple, Akhenaten and Nefertiti, present food and drink to the Aten (Kemp 2012:96). Their daughters shake metal rattles (sistras). Men in groups clap, sing, and chant and seated male musicians perform. Groups of women sing and clap. Kemp (2012:96) suggests that the small groups of people presented in the scenes are those privy to observing the royal family at worship. Kemp suggests that sufficient space for crowds in front of the long temple or succession of courtyards or small Aten temples, existed. Kemp (2012:105) alludes to the width of the doorways between the pylons as being exceedingly wide, suggesting that they could not be closed off by wooden pivoting doorways.

This could mean that much of the temple was open to inspection from the outside, however, the rear part of the sanctuary was closed off by overlapping walls.

Kemp questions and offers two contrasting images of Akhenaten and the cult of the Aten:

- Was Akhenaten exclusive keeping his population away from his direct presence and the interiors of his temples?
- Or was Akhenaten inclusive? Did Akhenaten keep at a distance but head a ‘portion ‘of his people who only entered the temples at times of celebration and food distribution (Kemp 2012:105)?

In answering these questions, Kemp suggests that the absence of traditional cycles of celebratory festivals to the gods which once would have been part of the lives of those people that followed Akhenaten to ‘an arid, rootless curiously disease ridden building site’ could be seen as a credit to Akhenaten’s popularity, an aspect that, according to Kemp (2012:105), many people who study Amarna choose not to accept.

5.6.3.1 *The temples*

In the words of Akhenaten, which are inscribed on the boundary stele demarcating Amarna, Akhenaten states:

I myself am the one who should make offerings to the Aten, my father, in the House of Aten in Akhet-Aten ... Now as my father, HOR-ATEN, lives [...] on [earth] and similarly in [heaven] (Murnane 1995:79).

At Akhet-Aten in this place shall I make the Mansion of Aten for the Aten, my father (Murnane 1995:77).²⁶⁹

Kemp (2012:84) questions Akhenaten’s motives for building two temples and the nuanced meanings of ‘house’ from ‘mansion’ fail to provide an answer. Kemp suggests that the role of the ‘Mansion of the Aten’ might have been an equivalent to the royal mortuary temples at Thebes as it points to Akhenaten’s tomb (2012:84).

²⁶⁹ Assmann gives credit to Sigmund Freud’s description of monotheism as a ‘religion of the father’ applying to Atenism. Assmann points out that the name of Akhenaten’s god (Yati) sounded very much like the Egyptian word for ‘my father’ (yat-i). Akhenaten enacted his monotheism as a coregency between himself and the sun god. Akhenaten’s religion could be seen as a father-religion (Assmann 1997:255).

Kemp states that Akhenaten's idea for two temples at Amarna was in the king's mind from the outset but no reasons are provided. Kemp suggests that there were three temples at Amarna, the Great Aten Temple made up of the Long Temple and the sanctuary, and another being the small Aten Temple (2012:84-85).

5.6.3.1.1 The Great Aten Temple or 'House of the Aten' or 'Mansion of the benben'.

Egyptians manufactured *benben* stones often in the form of an obelisk (Kemp 2012:82). A round topped outline shape depicted on a hieroglyph from Amarna replaced the obelisk. A seated statue of Akhenaten alongside this stela is found in the tomb of the high priest Meryre (Kemp 2012:83). Akhenaten's Great Temple at Amarna measured 229x730m (750 x 2,400ft). Initially built from mud brick,²⁷⁰ later from stone, only two parts were completed, the 'House of Rejoicing' and the *Gem Aten* ('Aten is found') (Oakes 2001:147). Kemp refers to the archaeological site of the great Aten Temple as being wrecked, suffering as a result of its close proximity to the cemetery of a modern village which covers a large part of it (Kemp 2012:87).

The gateway between the pylons would have been wide enough to take chariots and processions but probably too wide to be closed off with doors (Kemp 2012:87-89). The foundations reveal a stone building on the north side. This would have been closed off for privacy and security, perhaps even a treasury, but its real function, Kemp states, is not known (2012:89).

5.6.3.1.2 The Long Temple or Gem-pa-Aten, 'The finding of the Aten'

The Long Temple comprised a main front entrance with deep columned porches, thereafter a wide gap that fell upon the temple axis (Kemp 2012:85) and a bright pathway leading to a roofless interior (Kemp 2012:85). Blocks from columns estimate the columns to be 8.5m (28ft) high (Kemp 2012:85). Large columns forming an open colonnade were placed in front of the temple. The Long Temple had a string of courts open to the sky (Kemp 2012:91). A second colonnade separated the third and fourth courts (Kemp 2012:91). Epigraphical and archaeological detail are congruent showing the culmination of the temple to be a table, legs and open sides heaped with offerings with a second table shown behind it (Kemp 2012:91). The gypsum foundations indicate the presence of 791 rectangles upon which were tables or benches which once held heaped offerings of food and incense to the sun. Kemp suggests this excess might be a symptom of Akhenaten's obsession (Kemp 2012:92).

²⁷⁰ Stewart is of the opinion that one of the most remarkable mud cities was Amarna. This, Stewart states, is a spectacular example of the transience of mud brick architecture. The city was founded, built, occupied, abandoned and destroyed in a single generation. Houses, villas and palaces were quickly constructed out of the

5.6.3.1.3 The Sanctuary

Kemp describes aspects of the sanctuary and includes certain architectural details. Kemp suggests that its relative remoteness and other ancillary structures suggest a separate cult place (2012:93). This was a second major stone building within the Great Aten Temple, rectangular in shape (Kemp 2012:93). The Sanctuary stood within its own wall of brick, 60cm (23.6in) thick with a height of 2m (6.6ft) (Kemp 2012:93). The shape and size of the sanctuary resembled the small Aten temple which was 30x47m (98x154ft) (Kemp 2012:93). Perhaps the sanctuary represented the eastern mountain as the stone wings are a simplified rendering of the desert cliffs which turn from the horizon to the river (Kemp 2012:94). In front stood the surviving stone foundations of tall masts for streamers (Kemp 2012:94).

5.6.3.1.4 The Small Aten Temple

The Small Aten Temple is one of the two main temples within a mud brick enclosure wall which measured 192x111m (630x364ft). There was no evidence to suggest any decoration on the wall (Kemp 2012:87). The external appearance of the small Aten Temple might have had crenellated battlements around the top of the walls (other New Kingdom sites depict this detail, made to look like fortresses) (Kemp 2012:86). The enclosure was divided equally into three parts. On the sides, large mud-brick pylons would have had tall wooden masts with colored streamers tied to the top (Kemp 2012:87). 106 mud-brick offering tables were contained in the first two courts (Kemp 2012:87). A third court contained a monumental stone sanctuary (Kemp 2012:87) and the columns were in the shape of a papyrus bud (Kemp 2012:86-87).

5.6.4 Syncretistic monotheism

Kuhrt (1995:200) is of the opinion that the Aten cult is a culmination of a process which had begun early in the 18th Dynasty. The sun-god Ré had ‘absorbed many features of other deities’ developing into a form of ‘syncretistic monotheism’²⁷¹ with aspects of other gods regarded as Ré’s diverse bodies such as Amun-Re and Re-Harakhty. Kuhrt refers to the sun-disk (Aten) in the physical form of the sun and many aspects of Ré which were associated with the all powerful, divine characteristics of the king.

²⁷¹ The doctrine of monotheism which states there is only one god (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv ‘monotheism’).

5.6.5 Akhenaten and the Mnevis bull

The decree of Akhenaten inscribed on the boundary stele of Amarna provide evidence to suggest that the Apis bull (Mnevis bull) continued to play an important role at Amarna. The words of Akhenaten himself suggest this: ‘And let a cemetery [be made] for the Mnevis Bull in the orient mountain of Akhet-Aten, so that he may [be buried] in it’ (see Figure 5.1). Kemp states there is no evidence of a tomb for the Mnevis bull at Amarna and no evidence to suggest that the sacred bull was ever brought to Amarna (2012:38). Kemp surmises that one of the unfinished tombs in the Royal Valley site might have for the Mnevis bull but there is nothing to identify these tombs at Amarna (Kemp 2012:38).

5.6.6 Akhenaten and serpent images found at Amarna

Amarna has yielded numerous examples of clay figurines of cobras²⁷² that have been fired and those that are unfired. One of the examples is a cobra standing on a flat base with a tiny offering stand attached to its front and another where the cobra rears from a shallow pottery bowl. Kemp suggests the bowl would have contained water for magical usage, divining being a possibility (Kemp 2012:239). Smith (1952:97) alleges that Moses carried a magic staff which was also a serpent. Moses revered the healing power of the shining bronze image of the serpent divinity. The symbol, Uraeus, was the symbol of the Egyptian king (Smith 1952:97). These clay serpent figurines provide evidence from Amarna which suggests possible ritual significance at the time of Akhenaten (Kemp 2012:239).

²⁷² Egyptians feared the snake, much of the Egyptian magic was concerned with anti-doting snake bite, and one of the special favours of Thoth was protection against this injury states Smith (1952:13).



Figure 5.4: Hathor Ivory Stopper, Hazor Israel. (Photograph by Jayne Vine Summer 2011).

5.6.7 Hathor iconography at Amarna

As Kemp (2012:235) suggests, a colonisation of minor deities took place as people populated the city of Amarna. Whether Akhenaten was troubled by this, Kemp states, is impossible to tell. Hathor,²⁷³ in the form of a cow, depicted on a painted wooden image, was found at Amarna in one of the small private chapels beside the walled workmen's village. The sun's disk, supported on cow's horns, identify what was probably a statue of Hathor (Kemp 2012:236) (Figures 5.4 and 5.5).

²⁷³ The ancient Egyptian goddess Hathor was revered throughout Egyptian history. Hathor was depicted with cow's ears. As mother of Ré, she carried the sun between her horns (Bunson 1999:107).



Figure 5.5: Depiction of Hathor, Louvre Museum. (Photograph by Nicole Vine Jan 2014).

The earlier proclamation on the boundary stela at Amarna was inscribed with the following words: ‘On this day, when One was in Akhet-[Aten], his person [appeared] on the great chariot of electrum – just like Aten, when he rises in his horizon and fills the land with the love’ (Murnane 1995:74). The vehicle discovered by Howard Carter in the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922 closely resembles the royal chariot of electrum upon which Akhenaten was depicted in several reliefs (Reeves 2001:109).²⁷⁴ A cylinder seal from Amarna EA 22 alludes to the gifts from Tushratta, the Mitannian king. These gifts include beautiful horses which run swiftly and a chariot covering of bronze. These gifts accompanied Tadukhepa when she was given to Nimmureya, Akhenaten’s father, as a wife and who was later to become Akhenaten’s wife, Kiya (Moran 1992:57; Benzel 2008:159) (see 6.5.6 Yahweh and the chariots of the sun).

²⁷⁴ The patera bowl depicting a hunting scene, found at Ugarit depicts a man in a chariot who is hunting, the light chariot is of a type invented in the Syro-Anatolian region during the second millennium BCE (Margueron 2009:243). Horses were introduced into the Near East in the second millennium BCE and were for the privileged in society (Margueron 2009:243). Akhenaten’s grandfather Yuya (discussed in Chapter Three) was Commander of the Chariotry he was: ‘... skilled in the government of horses since the incorporation of chariot forces into the Egyptian armies from the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty’ (Aldred 1988:96). As alluded to by Benzel (2008:155) a defining moment in the history of the horse came with the advent of the chariot. Both the Hittites and the Mitanni have been credited with this event.

5.7 HELIOPOLIS—COSMOLOGICAL SYSTEM TAUGHT TO PRIESTS

According to Gahlin, the prototype for the true pyramid could have been the squat standing stone known as the *benben*. This *benben* stone formed the focal point at Heliopolis (2001:176). Obelisks were thought to be solar symbols and connected to the cult of the sun god at Heliopolis (Gahlin 2001:176). The sun cult of Ré at Heliopolis rose to dominate Egyptian state religion from the time of the Old Kingdom (2686-2181 BCE) (Gahlin 2001:176). From as early as the 4th Dynasty (2566-2558 BCE) in the reign of Djedefre, one of the king's five names was introduced in the epithet 'Son of Re' (Gahlin 2001:43). Aldred provides an earlier example. The sun-religion had been closely identified with that of Egyptian kingship from as early as King Djoser at the inception of the 3rd Dynasty (1988:237).

As stated in 5.2, the sun god Ré, in the form of Atum, was worshipped at Heliopolis in a temple called 'Atum the Complete One' (Bunson 1995:110). Aldred is of the opinion that the strengths of these beliefs owed much to the intelligentsia of Egypt who were the priesthood of the sun-cult of Heliopolis (1988:237). The king was chosen as high priest of every cult in Egypt and his role was to perform the daily rituals (Gahlin 2001:114). Logistically, this would have been a problem and the king would have delegated this highly esteemed role by appointment (Gahlin 2001:114). Gahlin states that it was only the king who was worthy of standing opposite the deity, thus, in Gahlin's opinion, the reliefs on temple walls are misleading as most of the priests had little contact with the cult statue (Gahlin 2001:111). At Heliopolis, the Heliopolitan priests saw the sun god as the highest god and creator of all. Akhenaten proclaimed him to be the one and only god (Assmann 1997:153).

5.7.1 Akhenaten as Heliopolitan priest

Assmann (1997:152) states that Sigmund Freud traced the origins of Akhenaten's revolutionary ideas back to Heliopolis and its ancient cult of the sun god. This idea was mooted by James Henry Breasted who was amongst the first to recognise Akhenaten's religion for its contribution to the history of religion and the development of Biblical monotheism (Assmann 1997:152). Breasted (1959:321) states that 'it is evident that the new faith drew its inspiration from Heliopolis ... the king assuming the office of High Priest of Aton called himself 'Great seer', the title of the High Priest of Heliopolis'.

The pharaoh was the physical son of the sun god from an earthly mother (Breasted 1959:15).²⁷⁵ Akhenaten, Assmann states, inherited the Heliopolitan concept of a universal god and, in the opinion of Assmann, ‘turned a local cult into a general religion and gave it the character of an intolerant monotheism’ (1997:153). Kemp’s findings at Amarna indicate that other gods might have been tolerated (see 5.6.2 and 5.6.7).

The concept of Maat originated in Heliopolis (Breasted 1934:299).²⁷⁶ Breasted (1934:299) states that Maat was fully accepted by Akhenaten to the extent that Akhenaten appended to the official form of his royal name the words ‘living on truth’ (Maat). Akhenaten became the ‘official representative and supporter of the great moral and national order conceived by the Solar priests at Heliopolis’ (Breasted 1934:299).

The role of the high priests at Amarna were undertaken by Panehsy ‘Chief Servitor of the Aten in the house of Aten in Akhet-Aten’ who owned an official residence outside the great Aten Temple and Meryre ‘Chief of Seers of the Aten in the House of Aten in Akhet-Aten’ (Kemp 2012:95). Bennett (1971:495) wonders if the ‘Cushite’ *Pa-Nehesi* who was amongst King David’s entourage centuries later, may not have reflected generations of an African (military) presence among the Israelites. Is it possible that Akhenaten’s Panehsy may have been recruited from Kush (Cush/Nubia) during the Amarna period? The high priests Panehsy’s gratitude to Akhenaten is reflected in Panehsy’s statement how the king ‘caused me to be powerful when I had been poor’ (Kemp 2012:44). In the tomb of Panehsy at Amarna (No 6), the words inscribed upon the wall state that

the ruler who made me from among humankind, who caused me to mingle with his favorites, who caused every eye to know me when you distinguished me from the hindermost, who caused me to be powerful when I had been poor. All of my kindred [acquire] property, now that I have become a favourite of the one who makes it. My town comes to me at every season now that I am promoted on account of it (Murnane 1995:171)

The above account of Panehsy, first servant of Aten at Amarna, provides a human story from a ‘favourite’ of Akhenaten.

²⁷⁵ Breasted suggests that the state theology saw the king as the bodily son and earthly representation of Ré who would journey at death to sojourn with his father and to be his father’s successor in the sky as he had been on earth (1934:74).

²⁷⁶ Maat can be defined as justice, truth, righteousness, personified as a goddess and daughter of the sun-god (Breasted 1934:299).

5.7.2 Akhenaten's Great Hymn to the Aten and Psalm 104

Assmann (1997:191) questions how Sigmund Freud could have overlooked parts of Akhenaten's hymn to the Aten finding its way into Psalm 104, an aspect which was noted by Arthur Weigall and James Henry Breasted and an aspect which might have added to Freud's argument discussed above.

Breasted describes Akhenaten as a 'God-intoxicated man' (1959:334). No study on Akhenaten could exclude Akhenaten's words on the wall of the tomb of Ay at Amarna where the Great Hymn to the Aten is inscribed. These words bear testimony to Breasted's description of Akhenaten. A brief synopsis of parts of the Great Hymn follow:

Beautifully you appear from the horizon of heaven, O living Aten who imitates life— For you are risen from the eastern horizon and have filled every land with your beauty; For you are fair, great, dazzling and high over every land,

And your rays enclose the lands to the limit of all you have made;

For you are Re, having reached their limit and subdued them <for> your beloved son; For although you are far away, your rays are upon the earth and you are perceived. When your movements vanish and you set in the western horizon,

The land is in darkness, in the manner of death.

(People), thy lie in bedchambers, heads covered up, and one eye does not see its fellow...every lion is out of its den, all creeping things bite.

Darkness gathers, the land is silent...The one who made them is set in his horizon. But the land grows bright when you are risen from the horizon, Shining in the orb (=Aten) in the daytime, you push back the darkness and give forth your rays ... O sole god, without another beside him! ... when you have gone nobody can exist. You create their faces so that you might not see [your] self [as] the only (thing) you made (Murnane 1995:115).

It was Breasted (1934:368) who first called attention to the similarity between Psalm 104 and the sun-hymn of Akhenaten. Breasted states that the hymn of Akhenaten reveals the source of the Hebrew Psalmists' 'gracious recognition of the goodness of God in the maintenance of his creatures' (1934:368):

Psalm 104:11

They give drink to every beast of the hill:

The wild asses quench their thirst. By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, *which* sings among the branches.

Psalm 104:20-22

Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep *forth*. The young lions roar after their prey, and seek their meat from God. The sun ariseth, they gather themselves together, and lay them down in their dens.

Psalm 104:29

... thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to the dust.

Breasted wonders whether the hymn of Akhenaten may have had an effect on the development of Hebrew monotheism (1934:369).

Akhenaten's hymn might have influenced Psalm 104 from the Hebrew Bible. Echoes from Amarna can be seen in this Psalm which suggests a cultural syncretism with Amarna. Izre'el (1995:2411-2419) mentions that there are several examples in the Hebrew Bible which indicate an Egyptian origin. Izre'el cites EA 166 from Aziru and Psalm 27:8.

Uehlinger (1990:499-526), after careful deliberation, arrives at the conclusion that a direct dependence of Psalm 104 on Akhenaten's hymn is not possible. Uehlinger suggests that Akhenaten's text might be reliant on Canaanite models (Assmann 1997:262). Scholars, who debate this point all think a dependence on Psalm 104 on Akhenaten's hymn to the Aten is a possibility (Assmann 1997:262). Hoffmeier suggests that there is no philosophical reason to suggest some influence from Egypt on Psalm 104, and further suggests that the gap between the 14th century BCE Aten hymn and the 9th-7th century BCE Hebrew psalm remains a mystery (2015:255). Considering the possible connection between the Hebrews and the 'Apiru, and the Amarna text EA 286 which accuses Akhenaten of loving these 'Apiru, it might have been the 'Apiru who took with them Akhenaten's hymn to the Aten to Canaan.

5.8 'APIS' AND THE CULT OF THE BULL

The sacred bull Apis formed part of the theophany²⁷⁷ of the Ptah-Sokar-Osiris cult at Memphis (see 5.4). A record found on the Palermo Stone²⁷⁸ provides an account of a festival which honours the Apis Bull, the ceremonies of 'The Running of Apis' are dated to the first Dynasty (2900 BCE)

²⁷⁷ Theophanies were serpent or animal images which were chosen by the ancient Egyptians to represent various deities. The virtues of the animals, such as strength or appearance, were attributed to the gods that they represented. Apis bulls were dressed in ornate golden robes and paraded in the ceremonies for the god Ptah (Bunson 1999:27).

²⁷⁸ The largest piece of the Palermo Stone (diorite) is housed in Palermo, hence the name. A second piece is housed in the Egyptian Museum and a small section in the University College of London (Bunson 1999:200). Only fragments remain of the Palermo Stone. It was once a record of all the important events of every year of the reign of each king of the first five dynasties (Oakes 2001:194). The Palermo Stone was inscribed on both sides giving details of kings from pre-dynastic and early dynastic periods of the Old Kingdom (Bunson 1999:200). The Palermo Stone provided the height of the Nile for every year as the king needed to be warned of poor harvests. It was thus an important tool for predicting water levels (Oakes 2001:194).

(Bunson 1999:27). Specific markings upon the bull were essential before the bull could be chosen as the sacred bull of Apis. The marking of a white triangle or a white crescent upon the bull's forehead was a prerequisite in order to be accepted by the gods (Bunson 1999:27). When the bull of Apis passed away, an immediate search for a replacement bull with the required markings would be sought (Bunson 1999:27). Akhenaten's father, Amenophis III, was responsible for the burial of the sacred bull of Apis which happened to die during his reign (Aldred 1988:259).

5.8.1 The Serapeum

The Apis bull was regarded as the living representation of the Memphite creator god Ptah, and, after death, was represented as Osiris (Oakes 2001:92). The lifespan of the sacred bull was around fifteen years. After death, the bull was mummified in an embalming house at Memphis then buried in a huge granite sarcophagus in the underground galleries of the Serapeum (Oakes 2001:92).²⁷⁹

5.9 THE 'WINGED DISK' SOLAR EMBLEM IN THE ANCIENT NEAR EAST

Breasted alleges that the flight of the falcon, possibly seen as a comrade to the sun, had initiated a belief amongst the Nile peasants that the sun must be a falcon, taking his daily flight across the heavens (1959:9). The sun-disk with the outspread wings of the falcon became the commonest symbol of Egyptian religion (Breasted 1959:9). This symbol can be seen in many examples throughout the ancient Near East (see the Royal schion of Malachi 5.7.2).

5.9.1 Emblem of Asshur

The god Asshur, the god of a city state by the same name, was depicted with iconography of other deities (Smith 2002:10). Asshur rides the winged disk with his bow drawn and aimed at his enemies (Smith 2002:152). A late Assyrian cylinder seal (990-600 BCE) depicts a floating female. She supports a winged disk above her which was the emblem of the god Asshur (Guirand 1959:61).

²⁷⁹ The Serapeum was first discovered by Richard Pococke in 1738 and later rediscovered by Auguste Mariette in 1851. The sarcophagi weighed as much as 80 tons and measured 4m (13ft) in length, 2m (6ft6in) in width and 3.3m (11ft) in height. Twenty four sarcophagi were found by Mariette; all had been robbed except one as the lid was so firmly fixed. Mariette blasted the lid off. Inside he found a solid gold statue of a bull which is now housed in the Louvre in Paris. The bronze statues of Apis can be described as holding the sun disc between their horns in between which is the uraeus (Oakes 2001:92)

5.9.2 Shamash—the sun god

From the time of Hammurabi, around 1700 BCE, the sun god, Shamash, ‘the Bright one’, was venerated. It was called *Uttu* by the Sumerians (Gray 1969:20). He was worshipped at Larsa and Sippar as the enemy of darkness and all that darkness symbolised (Gray 1969:20). Shamash was the sun with healing in his wings, dispelling disease and oppressing the vindicator (Gray 1969:20). In Mesopotamian cosmology, the sun undertook a similar nightly journey through the underworld (Gray 1969:21). In the prologue to Hammurabi’s law code and on the sculpture at the top of the code, Hammurabi stands before Shamash being the great god of justice depicted as a winged sun disk (Gray 1969:21).

5.9.3 Tutankhamun’s ceremonial chair

The symbol of Akhenaten’s god, the emblem of a winged sun-disk with sun rays terminating in human hands was found on the back of a chair in the tomb of Tutankhamun (Breasted 1934: Fig 16).

5.9.4 Ahura Mazda god of the Achaemenid kings

A relief at Persopolis depicts the god of the Achaemenid kings of Persia. The winged disk was the symbol of the god Ahura Mazda (4th century BCE; see Figure 5.6) (Masson-Oursel & Morin 1959:311).

5.10 CONCLUSION

The theme of this chapter focuses on the evolution and development of Akhenaten’s Atenism, tracing early creation myths and the dominant gods venerated in their own cult centres. It appears that the veneration of the sun was as a result of the importance of the priesthood of the sun-cult of Heliopolis. The reputation of these wise men was celebrated beyond the borders of Egypt. The role of Aten assumed importance from as early as the 12th Dynasty.

Was Akhenaten's emphasis on a sole, solar god or was the Aten a syncretistic monotheistic god? In attempting to answer this question, I shall refer to Aldred (1988:239) (cf. 5.6.1):

the new concept of Rē is that he is more than a sun-god. He is the Universe who has assimilated all the other gods into his being. He is the 'sole god who has made himself for eternity'.

Kemp's latest work in the field at Amarna suggests Tutankhamun's restoration stela is 'tendentious' and negative propaganda because the evidence on the ground does not indicate Akhenaten had destroyed temples. Many were left untouched and it was only the name of Amon which faced Akhenaten's wrath.

The striking similarities of Psalm 104 (monarchy period) and Akhenaten's great hymn to the Aten (14th century BCE) raises further questions. How did Akhenaten's words find their way into the Hebrew Bible?

From as early as the pyramid age, the process of absorbing other gods had begun, as suggested by Breasted. That this process continued is likely, aspects of many gods coalescing to form one. I am of the opinion that Akhenaten's religion developed over three generations (as seen in Chapter Three on Akhenaten's genealogy). The importance of the worship of the Sun emerged with Thutmose IV and was passed on to his son Amenophis III, then to Akhenaten. After the religion was abolished at the end of the Amarna period, it continued with Akhenaten's son, another Thutmose (perhaps viceroy of Kush/Moses). It later re-emerged in Syria-Palestine in the form of Moses' god Yahweh, coalescing and syncretising aspects of the sun-god and the earth-god and aspects of many other gods. Perhaps as Assmann suggests, an Egyptian Moses needs reassessment. This can be done by revisiting extra-Biblical sources for a possible shift in perceptions. This will be done in the following chapter. This chapter focused on Akhenaten's Atenism which

has frequently been interpreted as the world's first monotheistic religion with Akhenaten himself being the inspiration for Moses, and the Aten the forerunner of the Jewish-Christian-Islamic god (Tyldesley 1998:90).

Did Akhenaten's worship of the sole god, the Aten, disappear along with Akhenaten? Manetho and other extra-Biblical writers discussed proposed that Moses was a priest from Heliopolis. Akhenaten's Atenism evolved from Heliopolis as suggested by Breasted, therefore there may be other similarities between Moses and Akhenaten.

In Chapter Six, the theme of Moses' Yahwism will be discussed.

CHAPTER SIX: MOSES' YAHWISM, A SOLE, SOLAR CULT OR A SYNCRETISTIC MONOTHEISM?



Figure 6.1: A Solar Barque resembling the Ark of the Covenant, Temple of Kom Ombo Egypt. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The theme and focus of this chapter is to identify some key factors in the origin of Moses' Yahwism. Yahwism was attributed to the legendary prophet Moses, an Israelite and the first to be confronted by Yahweh²⁸⁰ (Mondriaan 2010:227). The title of this dissertation, 'Moses son of Akhenaten? Archaeological and textual perspectives' suggests that Moses could have grown up in the court of Akhenaten and that there might be a possibility that Akhenaten's worship of the solar disc, which was venerated from as early as Amenhotep III, could have had an impact on the young Moses who may have inherited the so-called 'God gene', as suggested in Chapter Two.

Moses was born in Egypt (Exodus 2:2) raised and educated in a royal Egyptian household (Exodus 2:10) and, as such, would have been exposed to the rituals of Egyptian cultic worship. The Bible does not provide details of the name of the Pharaoh or the daughter who raised Moses (see 4.10.2). Perhaps he was raised in Akhenaten's court in Amarna and the princess who raised him may have been a daughter of Nefertiti Akhenaten's primary wife (see 3.11.1) or Kiya (3.11.2) Akhenaten's Mitannian wife. If this is the case Moses may have been influenced by Akhenaten's ideology which placed the God Aten above all others (see 5.6.2). The Biblical narrative states after murdering an Egyptian (Exodus 2:12) Moses fled from the Pharaoh (Exodus 2:15). Moses fled to the land of Midian (Exodus 2:15) where he met Zipporah (Exodus 2:16). Zipporah introduced Moses to her father Jethro (Exodus 2:18) a priest of Midian (Exodus 3:1). Moses married Zipporah (Exodus 2:21) and she bore him a son Gershom (Exodus 2:22). In the desert of Midian, Moses was called by God (Exodus 3:1). The angel of the Lord (Exodus 3:2) appeared before Moses in a flame of fire. It was the call from God of ancestral Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Exodus 3:6). The Lord spoke directly to Moses stating 'here *am* I' Exodus (3:4). The rise of the Israelite religion of Yahwism is one of complexity. The archaeological evidence indicates that not only gods, goddesses and solar images were venerated, but that Yahweh may have had a consort (see section 6.4.1.2 on Asherah).

²⁸⁰ The New Bible Dictionary defines the Hebrew word Yahweh (the word is usually translated 'the Lord'). The original Hebrew text was not vocalised; in time the 'tetragrammaton' YHWH was considered to sacred to pronounce. Strictly speaking, Yahweh is the only 'name' of God (1990 sv 'Yahweh'). The Jewish community on Elephantine island provides correspondence written in Aramaic between the Jewish community in Egypt and the Jewish community in Jerusalem during the Persian period (5th century BCE). Yahweh was worshipped on Elephantine Island as *Yaho* but there were also a number of other deities who seem to be Jewish, and which have aspects of Yahweh in their names. Kyle McCarter suggests that the other deities were aspects of Yahweh, rather than syncretistic deities from other religions (1992:1-9).

The temple of Amon at Soleb in the Sudan provides the first mention of Yahweh (Kuhrt 1995:188) dated to the time of Amenhotep (Amenophis) III, Akhenaten's father (see Chapter Three). This archaeological evidence indicates that the 18th Dynasty pharaohs would have been aware of the worship of Yahweh. A small temple at Soleb sees the king Amenhotep III worshipping a cult statue of himself (Kuhrt 1995:188). The temple at Soleb provides evidence for both Amenhotep III (Akhenaten's father) (see 3.7) and the first reference to Yahweh. A number of royal inscriptions have been found in Nubia. These finds demonstrate how tightly this region was controlled by Egypt (Kuhrt 1995:188).

Akhenaten's monotheistic worship of the sole creator god, the Aten, failed in Egypt (see Chapter Five). Might it have survived in the monotheistic form attributed to Moses? (see 6.2.2).

I have pointed out the chronological problems in Chapter One and the different time periods for the Exodus suggested by several scholars, both ancient and modern. Only a few have been chosen as the field is exhaustive. Among them, Chaeremon's version suggests Joseph and Moses being contemporaries and Witt (1971:21) who suggests that Akhenaten's monotheistic austerity gave a flickering hope that polytheism would be swept away and the temples closed forever. This was not the case as the priest craft struck at heresy as soon as Akhenaten was dead and the Egyptian pantheon continued as it had done prior to Akhenaten's new policy (Witt 1971:21). Witt states that the deification of the Bull Apis at Memphis emanated from none other than Moses (1971:33)²⁸¹ and Kemp alludes to Akhenaten having been linked or even identified with the Biblical Moses (2012:23). Breasted (1959:xvii) suggests a link between the religion of Akhenaten and Moses and states that 'the religious development in Egypt is analogous to that of the Hebrews is a fact of confirmative value not without interest to students of Comparative Religion and of the Old Testament'. This chapter searches for possible links between Akhenaten's aniconic (see footnote 1) solar god, the Aten, and Moses' aniconic god, Yahweh.²⁸² Were both celestial gods? Tacitus (cited in Assmann 1997:37) states that

²⁸¹ A Christian tradition held that, in Moses' absence, the Jews made the golden calf in the likeness of Apis (Pseudo-Clement, *Recognit.* I, 35; Mythographus Vaticanus I, 79-*FRA* 565, I; 638, 30, cited in Witt 1971:288). Strabo (16,760: *FRA* 154,19, cited in Witt 1971:288) states that Moses was an 'Egyptian priest' who propounded a monotheism devoid of theriolatry at Mount Casius.

²⁸² Hecateus stated that Moses forbade the making of divine images 'because God does not own a human shape. Rather, heaven alone who encompasses the earth is God and lord of all, and he cannot be depicted in images' (Assmann 1997:34).

Moses initiates a religion which is the opposite of all other religions (*novos ritus contrariosque ceteris mortabilis indidit*).

Tacitus, Hecateus and Strabo summarise the concept of Moses' god as a monotheistic and aniconic god by saying:

The Egyptians worship many animals and monstrous images; the Jews conceive of one god, and that with the mind only: they regard those who make representations of god in man's image from perishable materials as impious; that supreme and eternal being is incapable to them of representation and is without end (Assmann 1997:37).

I am of the opinion that these Hellenistic authors would have been unaware of Akhenaten as, at that time they were writing, Amarna remained hidden beneath the sands only to be revealed in 1887 as Assmann (1997:28) states:

Every trace of the Amarna period had been eradicated, there was never any tradition or recollection of this event and its cultural expression until the nineteenth century, when the archaeological traces of this period were discovered and interpreted by modern Egyptology.

Foster (1995:1754) is of the opinion that Akhenaten's *The hymn to the Aten* (see section 5.7.2) is the most remarkable document, not only of ancient Egypt but of the entire ancient world. Foster (1995:1754) believes that this was the first time a poet or theologian expressed the concept of one God. These strands of thought from earlier hymns to the sun-god Ré were gathered together to compose a hymn of striking beauty (Foster 1995:1754). While Atenism did not outlast the death of Akhenaten, the idea of monotheism continued. Foster also suggests the possibility of a connection between Akhenaten and Moses (1995:1760):

Most scholars who regard Moses as a historical figure place him at the Egyptian court during the thirteenth century and the Exodus sometime during the reign of Ramesses (Ramses) II (circa 1279-1213) or his son Merneptah (circa 1213-1204). There is no evidence from Egypt that this is so. Connections between the two figures are an intriguing possibility ...

Characteristics attributed to Yahweh in the Biblical narrative include the storm god (Exodus 9:18), thunder (Exodus 9:23) and earthquake, smoke and fire (Exodus 19:18). Jones (1980) mentions the still disputed opinion that monotheism was born from the collapse of the Egyptian faith. The solar aspects of Atenism might possibly have influenced the Yahwism of the early Israelites. Smith (2002) states that, despite solar language for Yahweh being limited, it does however represent a significant aspect of Israelite religion at the time of the monarchy (2002:29).

6.2 OSTENSIBLE REASONS FOR THE EXODUS

6.2.1 The Plague or plagues?

What was the reason for the Exodus? Were there social, economic or religious reasons behind the departure of a large group of people from Egypt led by Moses? We are left to speculate as there exists very little (see Chapter Four 4.10.2) archaeological evidence to substantiate the claims that either 250,000 people left Egypt, according to the account of Chaeremon²⁸³ (*Ap* I.290) or that it was 80,000 lepers who left Egypt, according to Manetho (as cited in Josephus *Ap* I.234) or 600,000 people according to the Biblical narrative in Exodus (12:37). There are large discrepancies between the accounts of Chaeremon and Manetho (*Ap* I.293) so who were the ‘mixed multitudes’ referred to in the Biblical account in Exodus 12:38? Who did they worship and where did they go? Chaeremon’s account suggests the group of afflicted persons (lepers and cripples) joined a group of 380,000 people at Pelusium, who had been left there by Amenophis, as he had refused them permission to cross the Egyptian frontier.²⁸⁴ Those afflicted joined with the body of 380,000 exiles and they marched upon Egypt while Amenophis fled to Ethiopia (*Ap* 1.289-294). But this story is flawed, according to Josephus. Josephus criticises both Manetho’s and Chaeremon’s account of history and states that ‘the mendacity of both writers is, I think, self evident’ (*Ap* I.289-294) because ‘they invent according to their fancy’ (*Ap* I.289-294).

Chapter Two (see 2.4) shows what could possibly be the first physical evidence of a plague, perhaps as a result of the ten plagues in the Biblical account (see 4.9.2). Kemp alludes to graves in the Amarna cemetery containing more than one individual suggesting instant burial after death (2012:228). Chapter Four discusses the narrative of the plagues (see 4.9.2) at the time of Moses which is featured in the Hebrew Bible (Exodus 10-12). From the Amarna archive, an Amarna letter sent from the king of Alašiya (Cyprus) to an Amarna king refers to the hand of Nergal.²⁸⁵ The inscription on the tablet says: ‘... behold, the hand of Nergal is now in my country; he has slain all the men in my country ...’ (Moran 1992:107). Further textual evidence of a plague during the Amarna period is recorded on the tablet of Amarna letter EA 11 from Burnaburiyas, the king of

²⁸³ Chaeremon of Alexandria, a stoic, philosopher, librarian and tutor to Nero in the 1st century AD (Thackeray 1930:279).

²⁸⁴ An alliance was concluded with the exiles and Amenophis’ (Egyptian Pharaoh) border guards. The two groups, under the leadership of Moses (Tisiten) and Joseph (Peteseeph), marched upon Egypt whereupon Amenophis fled to Ethiopia leaving behind his pregnant wife who later gave birth to Ramesses, the pharaoh who later would drive the Jews [sic] to Syria (*Ap* I. 289-294).

²⁸⁵ Gray (1969:23) describes Nergal as a sinister deity from the Mesopotamian pantheon. Nergal is a god of mass destruction by war or plague. The weapons used by Nergal are heat, lightening and plague indicative of his function as a solar deity. The Amarna tablet from the king of Alašiya appears to describe a plague as suggested by Kemp (2012:228).

Karadunias (Babylon), who refers to the mourning after the death from plague of Akhenaten's father's wife (Moran 1992:21). Hecateus²⁸⁶ provides the earliest non-Biblical account of the Exodus. He discusses the plague which ravaged Egypt and states that the Egyptians interpreted plague as divine punishment for the presence of 'aliens' and allowing their foreign rites and customs (Assmann 1997:34).²⁸⁷

The plague that ravaged Egypt and the Near East during the Amarna period²⁸⁸ must have had a deep psychological impact for people living at that time, perhaps this plague was in some way related to the ten plagues from the Biblical account. Assmann (1997:26), in attempting to reconstruct the frames of experience for the average Egyptian, identifies the Amarna period as a time of horror, destruction, divine absence of the gods and a time of disease. Stewart (2005:14-15) suggests that natural phenomena give birth to myths that allow humans to make sense of otherwise inexplicable events:

A mountain suddenly shakes and spews up masses of ash and steam way up into the sky and a fiery runny substance that flows down the slope burning all it touches—so the god who lives there must be angry. That rumbling noise we've heard for days must have been his hungry belly—we should have fed him but we didn't and now he's punishing us. We must propitiate him. Cue for sacrifice.

The evidence of plague has been provided in the Amarna records EA 35 (Moran 1992:107) 'suggesting the hand of Nergal' was responsible. Hittite records provide written evidence and Kemp's latest finds at Amarna provide what could be the physical evidence.

I speculate that the social, economic, religious and geological conditions at the end of the Amarna period provided reasons for a 'mixed multitude' to depart Egypt in search of a better quality of life.

6.2.2 Continuation of Akhenaten's religion?

This study has discussed the unsettled state of affairs in Egypt with Akhenaten's reforms proving extremely unpopular. As shown, KV55 might not have been the remains of Akhenaten, instead those of his brother Smenkhare. This would raise the question of why there is no evidence of

²⁸⁶ Hecateus from Abdera (on the coast of Thrace) was a Hellenistic intellectual who lived in Alexandria, Egypt in 320 BCE. He was the author of the earliest non-biblical account of the Exodus (Assmann 1997:34).

²⁸⁷ The 'aliens' referred to are the Asiatics who became victims of the concept of religious otherness as they were Egypt's traditional enemies. The 'dislocated Amarna experiences' were projected onto the Hyksos and their god Baal Egyptian Seth (Assmann 1997:28).

²⁸⁸ Perhaps the effects of a natural geological event such as the Thera eruption as I have suggested in Chapter Four see 4.9.1.

funerary texts or tomb decoration for Akhenaten. I suggest that the reason for this is Akhenaten's sudden departure from Amarna taking with him loyal followers of the Aten faith (the same loyal followers and their families who followed him from Thebes to Amarna). Hoffmeier concedes 'Egypt was clearly not prepared to give up its gods for the One, and officials like Meryre and Panehsy, and high officials Ay and Horemheb, must have realized that they were swimming against the current and so abandoned Aten opting instead for Amun-Re and traditional religion' (2015:264).²⁸⁹ Egyptian falcon-headed Solar divinity Horus with the sun-disk on its head is found as imagery in the palace of the Hebrew kings at Samaria (Breasted 1934: Figure 8). The sun-god Horus is depicted as a sun disc with wings, this imagery is found later throughout Hebrew iconography (see 6.5). Egyptian *yhw3* linguistically corresponds to Hebrew YHWH, this Hoffmeier says leads some scholars to think that it points to a geographical territory where a cult for *Yahwa* existed in the 14th century BCE (2015:263). See discussion on the similarities of Psalm 104 and Akhenaten's *hymn to the Aten* (cf.5.7.2).

6.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF YAHWISM

The extract from the Biblical account found in Habbakuk provides the origins of Yahweh. The Biblical account of Habakkuk (3:3, 7) states:

A god came from Teman, a Holy one from Mount Paran. His 'splendor' covered the sky, His 'praise' filled the earth. ... The tents of Cushan quivered, The curtains of the land of Midian shook.

6.3.1 Yahweh and Sudan (Kush)

Further south between the fifth and the sixth cataracts the land of Nubia is located. The land is divided into two sections, 'Lower Nubia' the region between the first to the second cataract and 'Upper Nubia' a region reaching into the Sudan. Lower Nubia was at times called by the Egyptians as 'Wawat' and Upper Nubia was known frequently as 'Kush' (Kuhrt 1995:121).²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹ The temple of the God Horus, Lord of Buhen, built before Akhenaten during the time of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, its god is a local form of Horus (and thus a form of the sun-god) was left untouched by Akhenaten (Kemp 2012:27). The name of Amun-Ra had been removed by agents of Akhenaten, another significant find from the temple ruins at Buhen are the fragmentary texts made by the Viceroy of Kush on behalf of Akhenaten. The text records a violent attack upon the raiding Nubians from the eastern desert (Kemp 2012:27).

²⁹⁰ The Lower Nubian population group known as the Medjay were a kind of police regiment used by the Egyptians (Kuhrt 1995:121). Tomb No 9 at Amarna belonged to Mahu 'Chief of the Medjay of Akhetaten' employed as desert police (Kemp 2012:156). The depictions on the walls of his tomb show running policeman sometimes armed with sticks, one depiction shows three manacled prisoners with the words: 'the officials will hear [the case] of the people who join those of the desert' this statement provides the objective of the policing (Kemp 2012:156). Mahu reported to high officials which included the vizier (Kemp 2012:156). There are written records of people who were employed as slaves, or ordinary people for building, quarrying, agricultural work or soldiering absconded from servitude they were hunted (Kemp 2012:157).

Biblical 'Cush' lay south of Egypt, references to the term Cush probably refer to Lower and Upper Nubia, directly south of Egypt, its northern limit lay at the first cataract of the Nile and its southern boundary at the sixth cataract (Zondervan 2006:1519). Zondervan states that Cush is not to be equated with modern Ethiopia (2006:1519).

Nubia provided access to areas which with exotic goods, Kuhrt is of the opinion it is not surprising then that Egyptian kings found it necessary to install the 'King' son of Kush' who acted as viceroy, in effect he was the ruler of Nubia (2000:330). The 'Viceroy of Kush' (see 3.15) saw to the administration in the New Kingdom for annexed territories of Nubia in the far south, modern Sudan (Kemp 2012:133). Redpath (1903:292) alludes to Ethiopia (Cush) as the country of the 'burnt faced people'. The 'inhabitants of the wilderness' are represented as Ethiopians²⁹¹ in Psalms 72:9 and Psalms 74:14 (Redpath 1903:292).

6.3.1.1. *Temple of Soleb*

Giveon refers to the excavations in the temple of Soleb (Sudan) (see 6.3.1) dating to the time of Amenophis III (Akhenaten's father), one of the Soleb inscriptions mentions *Yahweh* together with the names of the cities *twrbir* and *smt* (1964:415-516). The series of geographical names were copied in a temple at Amarah-West during the time of Ramesses II (1290-1224 BCE), this temple was close by to the temple of Amon in Soleb (Giveon 1964:415).²⁹² 'The proximity of Seir and *yhw3* in the Soleb and 'Amrah geographical lists supports the theory that Yahweh may have had his origin in the area of the northeastern Sinai or southern Arabia' this area is home to the Kenites who are associated with Jethro Moses' in-laws (Hoffmeier 2015:263). *S'rr* is Biblical Seir mentioned in Deuteronomy (1:1) (Giveon 1964:415).

6.3.2 Moses' exposure to the Midianites/The Kenites

Mondriaan argues that 'a Moses-type figure had acquired knowledge about Yahweh through the Midianites and Kenites' (2010:3). Yahweh was known to the Kenites and the Midianites from an early period (Mondriaan 2010:3). In the Hebrew Bible, reference is made to Jethro, the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law (Exodus 18:1). Mondriaan suggests that the Kenites may have been a clan of the Midianites and that the Kenites may have dwelt in the Edomite mountain fortress Sela

²⁹¹ Apuleius of Madauros suggests the Ethiopians and Egyptians were both the 'chosen people' (cited in Assmann 1997:227).

²⁹² The Ramesside copy enables the restoration of the toponyms which disappeared in the epigraphical detail at Soleb *pyspys, rbn, s'rr* (Giveon 1964: 415).

which has been identified with the Nabatean rock city of Petra (see Figure 6.2) (Mondriaan 2010:320). Cornelius P Tiele proposed, as early as (1872:559), that Yahweh was a god of the desert who was venerated prior to the Israelites. In (Judges 1:16), it is stated: ‘... and the children of the Kenite, Moses’ father-in-law, went up out of the city of palm trees ...which *lieth* in the south of Arad’ (cf. 6.3, 6.11).²⁹³ According to Mondriaan (2010:320, 223), the Kenites were identified as metal workers or smiths and

that a semblance of *Ya*-veneration in various areas of the ancient Near East is possible ... a *Ya*-type deity may have been venerated by numerous peoples.

According to Van der Toorn (1995:2047), Kenites, Edomites and Midianites were Yahweh’s first worshippers.

²⁹³ The archaeological excavations in 1962-3 at Tell ‘Arad conducted by Y Aharoni and Mrs Ruth Amiran yielded material which has provided a more complete understanding of the Negeb. The initial Israelite settlement can be dated to approximately the tenth century BCE. Six fortresses are ascribed to the Israelite period built one on top of the other between the tenth century and the destruction of the Kingdom of Judah. The most important find of the second season was a sanctuary dating from the first quarter of the first millennium BCE. Incense altars flanked the cella. The plans of this sanctuary conform to temples of the Late Bronze and early Iron Age. Aharoni suggested that Arad could be identified with Tell el-Milh. The Hebrew Bible refers to a King of Arad. In the Hebrew Bible, Numbers (33:40) states: ‘...the king of Arad the Canaanite which dwelt in the Negeb in the land of Canaan, heard of the coming of the children of Israel’ (Mazar 1965:297-303). Mazar suggests that as neither a town called Arad nor its destruction is mentioned in the Biblical narrative, it might be Hormah, an important town mentioned as early as Amenemhat III Egyptian Execration texts of the 18th or 19th century BCE (Mazar 1965:298).

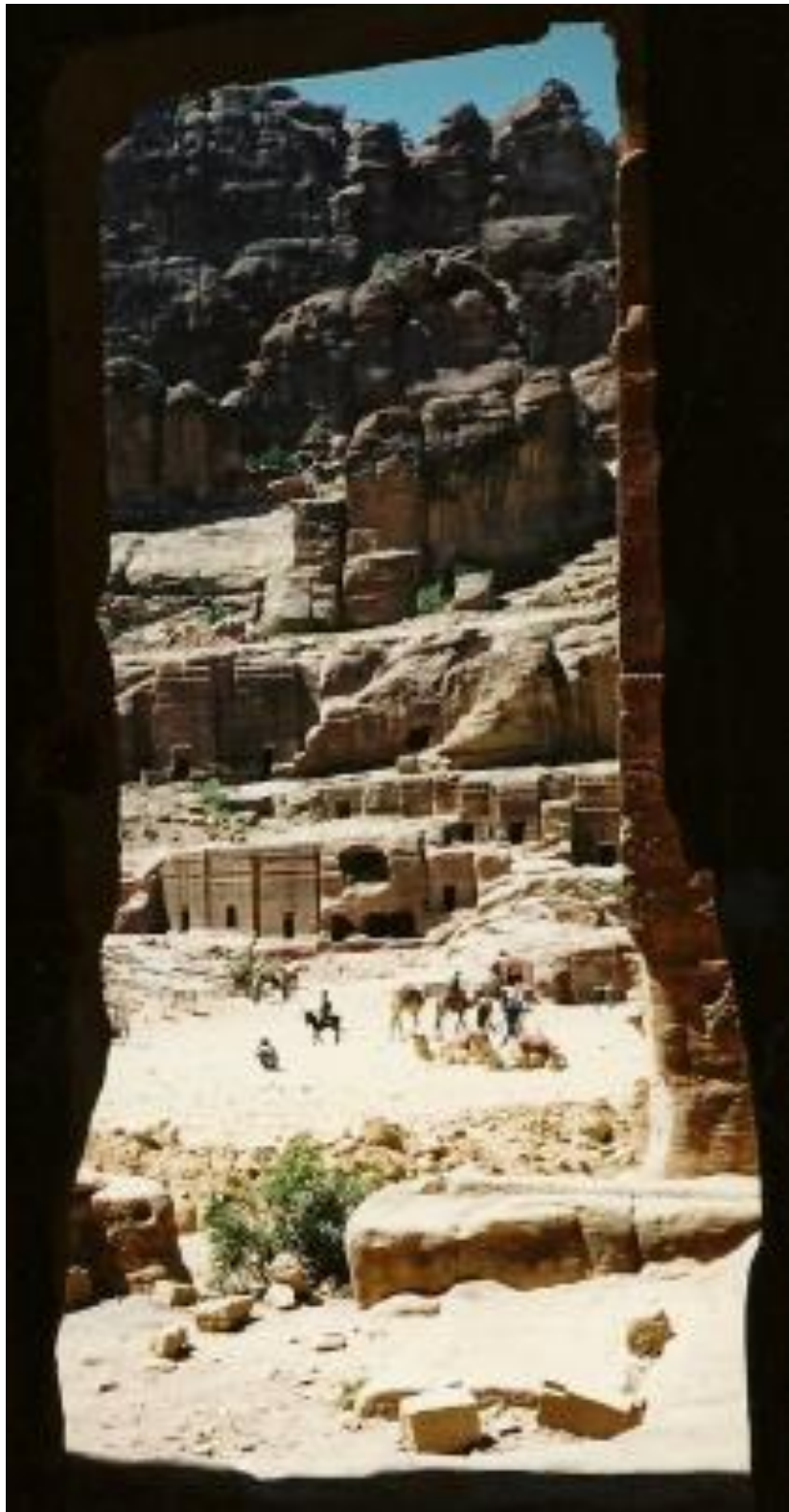


Figure 6.2: Petra (Biblical Sela) Edomite mountain fortress. Petra, Jordan. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).



Figure 6.3: Holy of Holies, Arad. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Summer 2011).

6.3.2.1. *Jethro's influence*

In the Biblical narrative Jethro dispenses excellent advice to Moses on administration and judicial matters Exodus (18:17-23). 'Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee' Exodus (20:19). Moses persuaded Jethro's son in Judges (1:16) 'Hobab the Kenite' to join the Israelites and it this Biblical example which provides evidence for Jethro's Kenite descent (see 6.3.2) (see 4.6.1 for discussion on Jethro).

6.3.2.2. *Yahweh from the south*

In the Biblical narrative Judges (5:4) it states 'Lord, when thou wentest out of Se'ir, when thou marchedst out of the field of Edom, the earth trembled, and the heavens dropped'. Smith (2002:33) states that Yahweh was originally a warrior god from Sinai/Paran/Edom/Teiman (Teman). 'God came from Teman, and the Holy One from mount Paran, Selah' Habakkuk (3:3). According to

Smith (2002:33), Yahweh entered into the Israelite highland region due to trade with Edom/Midian as a literary vestige of the original assimilation of Yahweh, the southern warrior-god, into the larger highland pantheism which was headed by El. Over time, the two gods El and Yahweh were identified, Yahweh and Baal co-existed and later competed as warrior gods (Smith 2002:33).

Deuteronomy (1:6-10) reveals a deity residing in a mountain or volcano: ‘The LORD our God spake unto us in Horeb, saying, Ye have dwelt long enough in this mount’. Smith²⁹⁴ states that the name was regarded as too terrible to be pronounced. Virtually every aspect of YHWH is widely debated, the exact pronunciation of YHWH, remains uncertain, but many today favour ‘Yahweh’ (Zondervan 2006:89). ‘Yahweh’ originally translated from the Tetragrammaton.²⁹⁵ The conclusion regarding the pronunciation is based upon theophoric names such as (“YHWH [*Jeho*] judges [*shapat*]”) and (“my Lord [*adoni*] is YHWH [*jah*]”) (Zondervan 2005:89). Smith is of the opinion that Yahweh was originally a spirit of an active crater. The imagery of a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night guided the Israelites in the thunder and lightning (1952:98). The Israelites spoke of Yahweh coming from Jethro’s mountain in Sinai (Jethro’s mountain was in the land of the Midianites, east of the Gulf of Akaba). This mountain may or may not be Mount Sinai. The Pentateuchal writers call it Horeb at times and at other times Sinai (Smith 1952:99). The Bedouins²⁹⁶ refer to Mount Sinai as being sacred to the moon god Sin hence the name Sinai (Smith 1952:99). Hoffmeier (1997:226) cites Redford who stated that a particular group of Shasu (Bedouin) who lived in Sinai and the Negev were the forebears of the Israelites. The god Sin was favoured by the people of the desert providing nocturnal light. Sin was the father of the gods and the god of wisdom. Sin was symbolised by a conical stone surmounted by a gilded crescent and the ritual of human sacrifice was attested to him (Smith 1952:99). The cult of Sin predated the Exodus by a thousand years, according to Smith, and his worship continued at Mount Sinai as late as the Christian era. The ruins at Serabit al-Khadem²⁹⁷ in the Sinai attest to ashes from burnt offerings and phallic beliefs (Smith 1952:99). A small statue²⁹⁸ inscribed with letters is recognised

²⁹⁴ Homer Smith (not to be confused with Mark Smith) is a professor of Physiology at New York University College of Medicine. Thomas Mann on the cover of Homer Smith’s *Man and his gods* describes Smith’s work as ‘a work of merit, instructing the reader’ (Smith 1952: Cover).

²⁹⁵ Tetragrammaton is a word made of four (tetra) letters, esp. Hebrew name of God written in four letters (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv ‘tetragrammaton’).

²⁹⁶ *prw/habiru* are listed alongside other ethnic groups such as Hurru, Retenu and the Shasu suggesting that the Egyptians might have viewed the *habiru* as a distinguishable ethnic group (Hoffmeier 1997:124).

²⁹⁷ Serabit el-Khadem was excavated by Petrie in 1905 on behalf of the British School of Archaeology in Egypt. The excavators yielded a high place, a series of temples which replaced the high place, and an Egyptian shrine. The Egyptian shrine consisted of a cave to Hathor, within the temenos caves dedicated to the moon-god Thoth. From the 12th Dynasty, mining of turquoise began and lasted intermittently until the 21st Dynasty (Negev 1972:284).

²⁹⁸ A sandstone sphinx with Proto-Sinaitic alphabetic inscriptions carved on its base is dated to 1700 BCE, carved by

to be the earliest Semitic alphabetic script (Negev 1972:284-285).

Smith (1952:99) is of the opinion that the Israelites carried with them Sin's commandments which were an altar to burn incense on, horns for ceremonial blood offerings and a tabernacle to worship the god and carry out the ritual of burnt offering.

It is at Sinai where Yahweh descended with fire and smoke and earthquake to provide Moses with instructions about the Sabbath, altars of unhewn stone, blood and burnt offering rituals, feasts of harvests and first fruits, sacrifices of the first born and sacred law which later became the foundation of Israel (Smith 1952:99).

The moon god Sin was chiefly venerated in the civilisation of southern Arabia, Ur. Sin's chief cult centre was in Haran (literally meaning caravan), in southern Mesopotamia where the mother of the last King Nabona'id of Babylon²⁹⁹ (556-539 BCE) was a priestess of the moon-god. Palmyra, the great caravan city, gave high priority to the worship of the moon (Gray 1969:21). Mondriaan suggests that the lunar god or deity, aside from being an illuminator of the night, was regarded as a fertility god, reflected in the bull (2010:219). The bull's horns or horns of the new moon symbolised the cycle of nature (Mondriaan 2010:219). Haran was the cult centre of Nanna/Sin (Mondriaan 2010:219). It is possible that the veneration of the moon god Sin both in the Sinai and in Babylon suggests that this practice of veneration continued in the ceremony of *kiddush levanah*, a blessing and sanctification of the moon which Jews still practice to this day. The ceremony is undertaken between the third and the fifteenth day of the Jewish month depending on the day the moon is 'reborn' (Zaklikowski [sa]:1). A site known as Jethro Cairns has recently been uncovered in Northern Israel. Archaeologist Ido Wachtel from the Hebrew University in Jerusalem states that the 5000 year-old wall pays tribute to Sin, an ancient moon god also known as Nanna. A crescent shaped structure, 500 feet long, located 18 miles from Bet Yareh (house of the moon god) is named after Jethro (Hebrew *Yitro*) (Kloosterman 2014).

miners at the turquoise mines at Serabit al-Khadim in Sinai (Healey 1998:211).

²⁹⁹ After the destruction of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem in 586 BCE by the soldiers of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, the Hebrews who survived the fall of Jerusalem were scattered (Kruger et al 2002:142). Historians refer to these people as Judeans or Jews. Many were taken by their captors to Babylon. During the Babylonian exile, certain theological changes occurred. Yahweh had been the local deity worshipped in the temple in Jerusalem. The prophet Ezekiel stated that God could be worshipped not only in Jerusalem but Babylon too as God was not spatially restricted (Kruger et al 2002:142).



Figure 6.4: Depiction of Moon on rock at Haran. Sacred to the Moon god Sin. Upper Mesopotamia, (modern Turkey). (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2009).

6.3.2.3. *The burning bush experience*

The mystery of God was revealed to Moses in the wilderness of Horeb, Moses met God as fire in the bush (see 4.6.2.1) (Exodus 3:2). The bush burnt but was not consumed indicating God is independent of the environment in which he wills to make himself known (Douglas et al 1990:427). Moses was afraid to look at God ‘her *am* I’ (Exodus 3:4). The revelation in the bush provides a background of the divine presence revealed to Moses (Exodus 3:12), and an implementation of the covenant with the fathers (Exodus 3:24; 3:6; 6:5) (Douglas et al 1990:154).

6.3.3 Yahweh and the Shasu

As stated above (see section 6.3.1) Giveon (1964:415-416) states that, for the first time since Amenophis III (Akhenaten’s father), the toponym *Yahweh* has been discovered in the temple of Amon Soleb (Sudan).³⁰⁰ Yahweh is mentioned with cities named *twrbir* and *smt* and given the epithet ‘land of the Shosu’ (Giveon 1964:415-416). Ward (1972:39) suggests that the epithet ‘Smiter of the Shasu’ found in Nubia may indicate that the term *shasu* was used throughout the 18th

³⁰⁰ The book of Judges (5:4-5) states: ‘Yahweh, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the field of Edom, the earth shook, yes the skies poured, yes, the clouds streamed with water. The mountains flowed before Yahweh, the one of Sinai, before Yahweh, the god of Israel’. The small temple at Soleb shows Akhenaten’s father worshipping a cult-statue of himself (Kuhrt 1995:188).

Dynasty³⁰¹ to refer to Nubians as well as Asiatics.³⁰² The term *shasu* is often found in Egyptian texts and Late Bronze Age inscriptions and may indeed have had something to do with the early Israelites, not linguistically, but socially (Rainey 2008:53). The *shasu* were nomads who lived in symbiosis with sedentary populations. They were prone to violence in times of distress, according to Rainey (2008:53). The *shasu* are also known from the Amarna letters that use the Akkadian language. An Akkadian form applied to the pastoralist is *sutu*³⁰³ (Rainey 2008:53-54). According to Rainey, the *shasu* originated in the steppes east of Jordan and their nomadic character is similar to the Biblical descriptions of Israelite wanderings (2008:53).

6.3.4 Moses in Sinai

In the Biblical narrative (Exodus 19:1) it states: ‘in the third month, when the children Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Si’nai’.

6.3.4.1. Horeb (Sinai) experience and covenant

According to the Biblical narrative the covenant was formed with Moses as a mediator at Sinai (see 4.12.1) after the Israelites had been saved by God from their Egyptian bondage. A sacrifice was made to God which sealed the oath (Exodus 24:4-7) (Douglas et al 1990:241).

6.3.4.2. Covenantal Laws

The Ten Commandments Exodus (20:1-17) (cf. 4.12.3) and the ‘Book of the Covenant’ Exodus (20:20-22-23:33) which is the oldest extant codification of Israelite law, comprising cultic regulations, judgements and statutes (New Bible Dictionary 1990 sv ‘Covenant’). A cultic regulation which forbids the making of gods of silver and gold is discussed in the Biblical narrative Exodus (20:22). Exodus (20:24-26) forbids the manufacture of hewn stones. The Judgements Exodus (21:1-22:17) cover civil and criminal cases, and show affinities with other ancient law-codes of the Near East (cf. 4.12.3.1). The statutes constitute the remaining part of the code which

³⁰¹ The Shasu are depicted in the Amarna reliefs, drawn from tombs at Amarna. Givon accepts the difficulties of identifying the Shasu. They are depicted with head-bands holding back shoulder length hair, beards and tasselled kilts, the same as the reliefs from the tomb of Horemheb at Memphis (Ward 1972:46-47). It is suggested that they were mercenaries, but it is not conclusive that they are Shasu as the Amarna ‘Shasu wore head-bands found on a number of other foreigners clearly labelled other than Shasu (Ward 1972:47). Givon suggests the Shasu changed their head-bands to head-cloths at the beginning of the 19th Dynasty (Ward 1972:47).

³⁰² Ward (1972:35-60) refers to a series of texts found in Nubia, ‘smiter of the šs3w’, Givon suggests the meaning is ‘antelope’ where Goedicke prefers it to mean Shasu.

³⁰³ Rainey states the Akkadian form of the term *sutu* applying to pastoralist appear to be Egyptian mercenaries in the Lebanese Beqa near Damascus (2008:54).

have the form of directions given by God through one of his spokesmen (Douglas et al 1990:244).

6.3.4.2.1 Circumcision as symbol of Covenant– influence from Egypt?

In Joshua (5:2) it is stated that all those who came out of Egypt were circumcised. In the Biblical account of circumcision (Genesis 17:10) it is stated ‘every man child among you shall be circumcised’. The divine covenant is set out first as a set of promises personal, national and spiritual (Douglas et al 1990:209). The relationship of circumcision to foregoing promise shows that the rite signifies the gracious movements of God to man (Douglas et al 1990:210). According to the Biblical account infant circumcision was an Israelite custom not derived from Egyptian practice (Douglas et al 1990:210). In Freud’s opinion (1974:27) no other people in the eastern Mediterranean practised this custom.

According to Freud (1974:26), Moses did not only give the Jews a new religion, but, it can be stated with equal certainty, that he introduced the custom of circumcision to them.

The rabbis (*Midi. Exod. Rab.19, b.Bat.120a, b.Sot.12a*) (cited in Feldman 2007:41) say that when Moses came out of his mothers’ womb, he was already circumcised. Freud (1974:60) refers to a man who was called ‘Tuthmosis’ [sic]. This man, according to Freud, was of high rank and a confirmed adherent of the ‘Aten’ religion. Freud describes this man as being passionate and energetic. For this man, the death of Akhenaten meant the end of all his expectations and he would remain an outlaw or renegade if he stayed on in Egypt. Freud states that ‘Tuthmosis’ [sic] turned to a Semitic tribe that he had met whilst a governor of a frontier province. ‘Tuthmosis’ [sic] chose these Semitic people to be his followers, making them ‘holy’ with the mark of circumcision. He gave them laws and introduced the doctrines of Akhenaten’s Aten religion (Freud 1974:60).

Bernstein (1998:12) says that Freud did not state which religion these Jewish Semites living in Egypt were practicing before ‘Tuthmosis’ [sic] chose them for his monotheistic religion. Yerushalmi (1991:3) states that Moses gave the Semites ‘an even more spiritualized, imageless form of monotheistic religion and, in order to set them apart, introduced the Egyptian custom of circumcision’.

Freud states that ‘it may be supposed that Moses, being an Egyptian, was circumcised’ (23:9- 30, cited in Bernstein 1998:13) and that Moses wished to make his followers into a ‘holy nation’ as stated in

the Biblical text. Bernstein (1998:13) criticises Freud for making selective use of the Bible and Freud's denigration and dismissing of the traditional interpretation of circumcision as a sign of a covenant between God and the Jewish people. This covenant existed from the time of Abraham and Bernstein wonders what the criterion was for Freud's selection of certain features of the Biblical account as reliable indicators while, at other times, he perceived them as distortions (Bernstein 1998:13-15).

In Egypt, circumcision was not performed at birth but during adolescence (Bunson 1999:53) and evidence of this common practice is portrayed on tomb walls. One such example is to be found on the tomb wall of Ankhmahor at Saqqara which depicts the scene of a young boy of about ten or twelve being circumcised (Gahlin 2001:209). The man performing this ritual circumcision is identified as a *ka*-priest (Gahlin 2001:209). Further evidence, now in the Oriental Institute in Chicago, is found on an inscription on a stela from Naga ed-Deir (Gahlin 2001:209). This inscription claims that the owner was circumcised along with 120 others (Gahlin 2001:209). The term *ka*-priest may have been a title for elite men of various occupations or official positions who performed these ritual circumcisions in Egypt (Gahlin 2001:209). Artapanus (*Praep.* 9.27, 3) claimed that Moses introduced circumcision to Ethiopia (Römer 2012:74). Moses' wife, a Midianite, saved her husband from God's wrath by performing a circumcision on their son (Freud 23:26-7). Breasted (1934:353) states that Moses 'enjoined' his countrymen to adopt the practice of circumcision, a ritual practiced for 3000 years or more. Bodies exhumed from prehistoric cemeteries bear testimony to this practice. Breasted states that Hebrew tradition attributed this rite to Moses (1934:353). Moses was consciously drawing upon his knowledge of Egyptian religion by introducing circumcision to the Israelites (Breasted 1934:353).

6.3.4.3 *Golden calf*

'The golden calf was Israel's first foray into syncretism, the combining of faith in the one true god with pagan traditions' (Zondervan 2006:143).

The bull is also known as the Canaanite Ba'al and was accepted by the Northern Israel tribes as a symbol of Yahweh. Jeroboam's 'golden calves' at Dan and Bethel are one such example (Mondriaan 2010:64-65).

Exodus (32:1) states ‘Rise up, make for us gods that will go before us, for this man Moses who brought us up from the land of Egypt—we do not know what became of him!’ The idolatrous³⁰⁴ worship of the bull in the golden calf episode relayed above is seen as a sin by both Josephus and Philo who omitted this subject in their writings (Feldman 2007:140). The worship of a bullock was, according to Velikovsky, first introduced by Aaron at the foot of Mount Sinai (1957:180). The cult of Apis originated in Egypt at the time of the Hyksos under King Aseth and the bull calf was worshipped and called Apis (Velikovsky 1957:180).

Eakin (1965:409) is of the opinion that the conflict between the Canaanite and the Israelites regarding worship prior to the exile was divided and that one of these people worshipped Yahweh while the other worshipped Baal is not to be denied, although it is valid to question whether this was an exclusive worship on either side.

Eakin believes that the ‘wilderness calf’ should be further investigated to determine a possible relationship to or influence by Baalism (1965:409). The Yahweh-Baal ideological confrontation occurred prior to the conquest as estimated by Eakin (1965:408). Eakin argues that the syncretism of Yahwism and Baalism in Canaan has traditionally been understood as a movement involving only a minority of Israelites. Bright (2000:178) observes that ‘others, no doubt, accommodated the worship of Yahweh to that of Ba’al, and even began to confuse the two’ (see section 5.6.5 and the cult of the Apis bull).

³⁰⁴ Idols were first made from copper which was the earliest form of metalwork. The earliest copper statue was made during the 2nd Dynasty. A surviving example is a lifestyle example of King Pepi I from the 6th Dynasty. In the Middle Kingdom, the Egyptians used bronze (an alloy of copper and tin) instead of copper. Bronze became popular and was used extensively from the 18th Dynasty. With the New Kingdom’s imperialism, bronze, gold and silver were acquired by trade. The Egyptians used the ‘lost wax’ technique modelling a figure in a quartz based substance followed by a thin layer of beeswax. Fine details were modelled in beeswax, followed by damp clay that set into a mould. On heating, the melted wax would run out of holes which were bored into the mould. The molten metal replaced the lost wax. The mould was then broken to reveal the figure which required filing and polishing (Harris 1997:152).

6.3.4.3.1 The Hyksos, their cult of Baal, and the Exodus from Egypt

The Hyksos³⁰⁵ were adherents of the cult of Baal, who, according to Assmann, was already a familiar figure for Egyptians (1997:24). Assmann explains that, being ‘polytheistic’,³⁰⁶ the Egyptians would not consider conversion as an option (Assmann 1997:24). Assmann is of the opinion that the ‘monotheistic revolution’ of Akhenaten later in the 14th century BCE was the first ‘conflict’ recorded in history between two religions (1997:24). The Hyksos coined pre-nomens as the ‘sons of the sun-god’. The Hyksos worshipped Re of Heliopolis and Seth (Sutekh) of Avaris. Avaris became their chief seat of power from 1700 BCE. From the centre of Avaris, they eventually took the ancient capital of Memphis thereafter they took the entire Lower Egypt (Aldred 1988:118). The Hyksos King Apophis practiced a ‘monolatric’ religion which worshipped the god Seth (Assmann 1997:28). As the Amarna period was eradicated after Akhenaten’s death (it only re-emerged in the 19th century when archaeological traces of this period were discovered), it only survived in the form of ‘traumatic memory’ (Assmann 1997:28). Assmann is of the opinion that these ‘traumatic’ reminiscences were mistakenly reflected on to the Hyksos and their god Baal who was equated with the Egyptian god Seth. Assmann (1997:28) states that this process of distortion and religious otherness turned the god Seth into a devil and an Asiatic. Assmann substantiated the historical reconstruction of Eduard Meyer who demonstrated that a story about lepers and Jews which was preserved in Manetho’s *Aigyptiaka* was a story referring to Akhenaten’s monotheistic revolution

³⁰⁵ Manetho referred to them as Hyksos or ‘shepherd kings’, Hikau Khasut. ‘Rulers of desert uplands’ was the name given to the chiefs of these nomads (Aldred 1988:117). Aldred is of the opinion that the name Hyksos has stubbornly clung to the entire people who were Semitic Bedouin when initially the name only referred to their rulers (1988:117). Aldred (1988:117) describes the falling of Egypt into the hands of a line of Asiatic princes as a ‘great watershed’ in Egyptian history’. Manetho (cited in Aldred 1988:117) likens this period to the ‘irruption of a conquering horde’. A painting at Beni Hasan features a trading party of men, woman and children depicted wearing leather buskins and long coats of many colours (Aldred 1988:117). This traffic continued well into the 18th Dynasty, children were given Egyptian names and ‘vanished into society’ (Aldred 1988:117). These Semitic rulers wrote their names in hieroglyphs and assumed Egyptian names (Aldred 1988:118). Aldred states that these foreigners accounted for a number of changes in religious ideas and provided innovations in material culture which, Aldred suggests, impacted on the ethnic composition of the governing classes (1988:118). About 240 kilometres (149 miles) south of Cairo in the village of Beni Hasan, a wall painting was discovered in the tomb of Khnumhotep, a provincial governor dating to the 19th century. A text in hieroglyphs identifies those in the mural as ‘The scribe of royal documents, Neferhotep’, ‘The overseer of hunters, Khety’, ‘The ruler of a foreign land, Ibsha’, ‘The arrival, bringing eye make up of 37 Asiatics’, a label which refers to the entire scene. The inscription refers to the scene depicting Asiatic traders on a visit to Egypt around 1890 BCE. ‘Asiatics of Shut’ is inscribed on the docket of the scribe. Shut in Asia is unknown hence it is unclear exactly where these visitors stemmed from (Scheffler 2000:32-33). Scheffler states that the Beni Hasan mural should not be linked to a single biblical event, but can be seen as a realistic portrayal of Semitic people as seen by Egyptians (2000:33).

Aldred (1988:117) refers to the story of biblical Joseph (Genesis 37-50) which reflects a similar story of how many Asiatics arrived in Egypt. Asiatics entered the delta through the northeast frontier of Egyptian fortresses during the 12th Dynasty as merchants, cooks, brewers and seamstresses. Some, according to Aldred (1988:117), were sold into slavery, traded for silver and coins in exchange for food and shelter.

³⁰⁶ Polytheism is defined as the belief in or worship of many gods or more than one god (*The Concise Oxford Dictionary* 1976, sv ‘polytheism’). The ‘polytheistic religions’ distinguished deities by shape, name and function thus overcoming the ethnocentricity of tribal religions (Assmann 1997:3).

(Assmann 1997:29). Reminiscences of Akhenaten had survived in Egyptian ‘oral tradition’ (Assmann 1997:29). Assmann searched for traces that the Amarna experience had left within Egyptian tradition and states that Manetho’s story is the only trace of the Amarna experience advocating instead a multidimensional explanation.

Seth was seen as the mythical murderer of Osiris³⁰⁷ first associated with the Persians then the Jews (Assmann 1997:43). A papyrus text written in Egyptian demotic during the Roman period alludes to the Jews as law breakers who were expelled from Egypt by the wrath of Isis. This negative imagery attached to the Jews, Assmann states, came from memory, not experience (1997:43). Assmann argues that the Egyptian encounter with the Jews had already taken place, seen as the ‘sacrilegious Asiatic as the religious enemy’ (Assmann 1997:43). Plutarch describes Seth as rough, wild, with white skin and red hair,³⁰⁸ an abomination to the Egyptians who compared him to the pelt of an ass³⁰⁹ (Viaud 1959:19). Plutarch (1970:418)³¹⁰ sees Seth as the ancestors of the Jews.³¹¹

Goldwasser (2006:130) explained that ‘the offense of the Hyksos is not that they worshipped Seth, but that the Hyksos ruler did not worship any other gods in the entire land except Seth ... the Amarna king and the Hyksos king may have showed a religious otherness’.

³⁰⁷ Seth’s jealousy of his brother Osiris led Seth to murder and seize the throne (Viaud 1959:19). Viaud (1959:20) states that Seth, in Osirian myth, was seen as the eternal adversary, personifying the arid desert, drought and darkness in opposition to the fertility of the earth and life bringing water and light. Breasted states that there is no trace in the Egyptian sources which relay Plutarch’s story of how the doomed Osiris was lured by Seth and his followers instead the oldest source, the Pyramid text, indicates assassination (Breasted 1959:25).

³⁰⁸ According to Greek writers, red hair was common amongst Thracians. I contacted the Wits Centre of Human Genetics who provided me with a link (author unknown) of the origins of red hair. The author of the article states that she believes the origin of the R1-b haplogroup originates in the Middle East. The origin of the Hyksos still appears to be debated.

³⁰⁹ Seth is associated with the donkey in Egyptian mythology (Assmann 1997:34).

³¹⁰ An article posted by Radl (2013) states that Plutarch is one of the best known and widely read classical authors, providing knowledge of classical figures and civilizations. Radl sees Plutarch as using anti-Jewish humour to portray history, specifically, the case of a man named Caecilius, a freed slave, said to be given to ‘Jewish practices’. Cicero’s intervention in a court case where a man named Verres is equated to a ‘pig’ thus indicating Plutarch is making a mockery of Jewish practices.

³¹¹ Assmann refers to the ‘Mosaic distinction’ which he ascribes to Moses. He calls this distinction one between true and false in religion. We cannot be sure Moses ever lived, Assmann states, as there are no traces of his earthly existence outside of tradition. Akhenaten instituted a monotheistic religion which died immediately after his death. Memory is all that counts. The true god being invisible, images are automatically ‘other’ gods. The Jews represented idolatry as an aberration of madness, the Egyptians associated and identified the Jews with a highly contagious disfiguring epidemic originating with Manetho’s history seeing Moses as a rebellious Egyptian priest making himself the leader of a leper colony. This then became a mutual loathing of Jews and Egyptians, ultimately becoming a fight against anti-Semitism. The most outspoken destroyer of this Mosaic distinction was Sigmund Freud who asked the question of ‘how the Jew came to attract undying hatred’. Assmann presents in Moses, the Egyptian, a contribution to a historical analysis of anti-Semitism (Assmann 1997:1-5).

6.3.4.3.2 Interpretation of the Biblical text in the Ta'anach

If the sin of the Golden calf was one of mass idol worship, the entire affair is incomprehensible, both from the standpoint of Aaron, who fashioned it and Israel, which demanded and worshiped it. Indeed, the consensus of commentators agrees on an entirely different interpretation (Scherman, Blinder, Gold & Zlotowitz 1996:216).

Thinking that their leader was dead, the people felt they needed a tangible presence to take the place of Moses as an intermediary and not a denial of God. The people were under the impression that they had a right to design their own tabernacle but the Israelites could not custom tailor their religion. The tabernacles specifications are based on divine mysteries. Moses was dismissed from his high position, the sin of the golden calf was not forgotten and Moses, after praying on behalf of his people for forty days, led his people in repentance. Nevertheless, the residue of that sin remains with the Jews according to Sherman, Blinder, Gold and Zlotowitz (1996:216) (see The Golden Calf in 6.3.4.3).

6.3.4.3.3 Bronze bull in Israelite 'high place'

The bronze figurine of a young bull found on the summit of a high ridge in northern Samaria was located on the remains of an ancient cult site (Mazar 1983:1-9). The figurine has been dated to the time of the Judges (1200 BCE) (Mazar 1983:1-9). This was the time when the Israelite tribes started settling permanently in the land of Israel. Mazar concluded that the bronze figurine of the young bull was probably used in a religious ritual at the time of the Judges in the land assigned to Manasseh (Mazar 1983:2). The structural remains of a cult site included a wall built of stones that had once enclosed an elliptical area about 70 feet in diameter. Pottery was found at the site (Mazar 1983:3). The open-air (see section 6.5.5) cult site comprised a massive *massebah* (standing stone) or it might have been an altar (Mazar 1983:3). A fragment of bronze presumed to be a mirror of Egyptian type was found in front of the altar (Mazar 1983:3). The bull figurine is the largest bull figurine ever found in Israel or the Levant (Mazar 1983:3). A similar bronze bull was found at Canaanite Hazor (Dever 2005:136).



Figure 6.5: Bronze bull, Hazor Museum, Hazor, Israel. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Summer 2011).

6.3.4.4 *Nehustan (bronze serpent in the desert—Egyptian influence?)*

And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass that everyone that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live (Numbers 21:8-9).

Moses revered the healing power of the shining bronze image of the serpent divinity. Golding (2013:114) suggests that ‘the serpent cult was entrenched in Canaanite culture, and that linking Moses to it made it more acceptable to the Israelite culture’.

The Egyptian goddess called *Weret Hekau*, meaning ‘Great of magic’, took the form of a cobra, and it is possible that the snake-shaped wands were used by those who were skilled in magic. Uraeus, the symbol of the Egyptian king, was the name of the rearing cobra which was worn on the front of royal headdresses. A wooden female figurine found in a tomb in Thebes holds metal snake wands (Gahlin 2001:191) and Mondrian (2010:325) refers to the Hathor Temple in Timnah (Jos 15:10) where a copper snake with a gilded head was found.

6.3.5 The Ḥapiru (‘Apiru) Hebrews

A letter from the mayor Abdi-Heba of Jerusalem (EA 286) to Akhenaten (Moran 1992:124) contains the sentence: ‘Why do you love the ‘Apiru but hate the mayors?’ I suggest that this sentence may speak volumes in terms of Akhenaten’s allegiance. Who were these ‘Apiru (*ḥabiru*)? Hoffmeier (1997:124) states that those who wish to identify the troublesome *ḥabiru*³¹² with the Hebrews

³¹² According to Rainey the term *ḥabiru* / ‘Apiru means dusty or dirty (2008:55).

would find the military exploits of Joshua³¹³ (Joshua 11-16) occurring in the same general area in the middle of the 14th century. Hoffmeier alludes to more recent studies that identify the *ḥabiru* as groups of refugees who lived out of the reach of the urban settled areas and preyed upon such states (1997:124). Hoffmeier notes that a few scholars, specifically Lemche, have reconsidered the association of the Hebrews and the *ḥabiru*. Lemche believes the Israelites were *ḥabiru* (Hoffmeier 1997:124). Rainey vehemently disagrees and says there is absolutely no relationship between the *ḥabiru* who are well documented in Egyptian and Near Eastern inscriptions and the Hebrews of the Bible (2008:52). Rainey argues that the word is sometimes used as a synonym for mutineer or pauper (2008:53). The *ḥabiru* are variously described as slaves or servants or as members of bands who attack and plunder especially in times of disintegrating rule (Rainey 2008:53). In some circumstances, they were recruited as mercenaries and given lands and estates as benefice (Rainey 2008:53). Rainey states that the *ḥabiru* are never mentioned as pastoralists, as are the Hebrews (2008:53). There is no linguistic relationship between *ḥabiru* and Hebrew (*‘ivri*) in the opinion of Rainey (2008:53). The term *ḥabiru* was not used to describe a single ethnic group but rather an array of disenfranchised social groups inhabiting the fringes of society and whose individual personal names are not from a single linguistic group (Rainey 2008:52).

³¹³ A view put forward by Yadin that Canaanite Hazor was torched by Joshua and never recovered caused a bias in interpretation of finds. Finkelstein (2005:345) argues for a simpler solution, one that the entire city was destroyed by conflagration and, after a short time, occupation was resumed. Hazor is Ḥasura mentioned in the Amarna letters. In Amarna letter EA 148, Abi-Milki writes to Akhenaten stating that the king of Hasura has abandoned his house and has aligned himself with the *‘Apiru*. ‘May the king be concerned about the *palace attendants*. These are treacherous fellows’ (Moran 1992:235).

6.4 YAHWEH AND THE CANAANITE DEITIES



Figure 6.6: Site of Ugarit (Ras Shamra), Syria. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2009).

The understanding of Yahweh has been shaped by the study of Canaanite deities which were inspired largely by the discovery of ancient texts in the Levant, specifically the Ugarit tablets (Smith 2002:1). The name Yahweh does not occur in Ebla, Ugarit or Emar (Van der Toorn 1995:2047). According to Smith (1995:2034), who stated that early Israel knew El, Baal, and Yahweh, the new national god, the divine council and perhaps the cult of a goddess. In the Iron Age (1200 BCE; Kuhrt 2000:9) in the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem it contained images of Baal and Asherah, referred to as ‘vessels’ (2 Kings 23:4), Tammuz, Nehustan and the sun-god (Ezekiel 8:14-16) (Van der Toorn 1995:2051).

6.4.1 The Ugarit tablets

Aside from the gods El, Asherah, Baal and Anat, several others were considered part of the Canaanite pantheon. However El was considered head of the pantheon (Wiseman 1999:45). The cuneiform tablets found at Ras Shamra (Ugarit) provide evidence of an already ancient tradition of mythological material which continued as late as the works of Philo of Byblos (Delaporte 1959:75). The mythology was based on the elements and natural phenomena and the divinities became human

in their shape and were arranged in hierarchies (Delaporte 1959:75). Wiseman (1999:45) states that all the gods and goddesses are personifications of natural powers and objects. In the estimation of Cyrus Gordon,³¹⁴ the most important find of the twentieth century has been the archaeological discovery of the Ugaritic tablets. Gordon (1995:2784) states that

Ugaritic language and literature, including its poetic structures, were taken over by the Hebrews, who built upon a ready-made medium for expressing their original contributions. The Hebrew Bible turns out to be a new message in an old language and in old literary forms that the Hebrews found awaiting them when they entered Canaan as the Bronze Age was giving way to the Iron Age, circa 1200 BCE.

Mondriaan is of the opinion that, prior to the discovery of the Ugaritic texts, the Hebrew Bible was the leading authority on the Canaanite religion (2010:48). Kuhrt agrees that some of the texts provide strikingly close parallels to poetry of the Old Testament (1995:303).

Ugarit³¹⁵ (modern-day Ras Shamra) is situated on the Syrian coastline. The site has been excavated since 1929 by a French archaeological team (Knapp 1988:188). Because of its important geographic location, it provides a stage for cultural convergence and contact between various peoples (Jamous 2009:45). Both the name Ugarit and the name *nqmd mlk 'ugrt*, Niqmaddu, king of Ugarit, are referred to in the Amarna letters (Jamous 2009:45). The texts from Ugarit illuminate aspects of history, society and culture of Canaanite states in the period of 1400-1200 BCE (Kuhrt 1995:303). Kuhrt (1995:303) states that the personal names found in the archives suggest a Canaanite and Hurrian population. The cuneiform³¹⁶ scripts dating to the 14th century BCE provided an unexpected new variety of cuneiform. This script had thirty-two signs, a vertical word divider and was alphabetic (Walker 1990:55). The language deciphered from the scripts proved to relate to Hebrew (Walker 1990:55). The mythological texts concerned the god Baal and his entourage and this provided a source of material for parallels with the Hebrew Bible (Walker 1990:55).

³¹⁴ Cyrus Herzl Gordon, Professor Emeritus at New York University, received his doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania in 1930. He worked in the Near East as a field archaeologist for the American School of Oriental Research (1931-1935) participating in excavations which include Tell Beit Mirsim, Tell Billa, Tepe Gawra, Moab and Edom (1995:2779).

³¹⁵ Ugarit was discovered by a farmer, Mahmud Menalla, whilst ploughing his fields. The excavations began in 1929 with Claude Schaeffer leading the team of French and Syrian excavators (Jamous 2009:45). Three palaces have been unearthed at Ugarit, the Royal Palace, the North Palace and the Small Palace (Jamous 2009:45). Excavations of archaeological levels date from level V dated to 8000-6000BCE through to level I 1600-1180 BCE (Jamous 2009:45).

³¹⁶ The use of the medium of clay as opposed to hide, wood or papyrus has preserved the written Ugaritic script. These tablets provide insight into life in a Canaanite city (Kuhrt 1995:303). Over one thousand tablets in Ugaritic have been found. Many have the order of the alphabet upon which both teacher and students wrote their ABC (Walker 1990:56). These tablets were almost identical with the traditional order of the Hebrew and Phoenician alphabets. The contemporary linear alphabetic scripts were the inspiration for the Ugaritic system (Walker 1990:56). Apart from an early date, the Ugaritic alphabet was a cuneiform alphabet like Akkadian but the signs were different and the forms of the letters appear to have followed a linear alphabet of the Proto-Canaanite/Proto-Sinaitic inscriptions (Healey 1990:215-216).

‘Ugaritic ritual texts reveal the religion and cultic practices of the Levant, previously only known from Old Testament polemics attacking and distorting them’(Kuhrt 1995:304).

In some instances, the texts from Ugarit attack those of the Old Testament (Kuhrt 1995:304) because ‘Biblical scholarship assumed that the Israelite tribes were confronted with an alien and evil culture’ (Mondrian 2010:48). The gods Baal, Asherah and Shemesh were considered foreign gods and were out of bounds for Judah and Israel (Handy 1993:157-159).

Chapter Four alludes to the earthquake at Thera that occurred before the ‘traditional dating’ of the Exodus (6:1). The earthquake would have caused considerable damage to the region. At Ugarit, around the middle of the fourteenth century, a stratum of burnt ashes and distorted masonry provided Schaeffer with evidence to conclude that this was proof of an earthquake followed by fire at the time of the Exodus in Albright’s review (1946:318). Leonard Woolley (1952:57-60) critiques the work of Schaeffer and states that

unfortunately Schaeffer bases on it a theory to the effect that the earthquake is that mentioned in a letter written by Abi-milki of Tyre to Pharaoh between 1370 and 1360 (say 1365) and is therefore exactly dated.

Woolley states that Abi-milki does not mention an earthquake rather that fire had burnt half the city of Ugarit and it no longer existed. At Beit Mirsim ‘an irregular and partial layer of ashes’ were dated by Albright to be between 1450 and 1350 BCE. Aside from this find, Albright alludes to further indications of the great earthquake which laid Ugarit in ruins between 1365 and 1360 BCE (1946:318). Albright states this earthquake is reported in the Amarna tablets (1946:318).

Woolley argues that

no one is entitled to dispute Schaeffer’s record of the facts he has observed at Ugarit, but the records of other archaeologists are equally valid and they do not accord with these far reaching theories (1952:57-60).

According to Mondriaan (2010:48), the majority of the Ugarit texts are of a mythological character, furnishing new information on the religion of Syria and Canaan in the first half of the second millennium BCE.

6.4.1.1. *El*

Mondriaan (2010:173) explains that the meaning of the word *El*, 'el, 'il (*u*), is God/god. While the original god of Israel was El, the name of Israel is not a Yahwist name with the divine element of Yahweh but rather contains the element *ēl*. In Genesis 49:24-25, El epithets are presented separate to the mention of Yahweh (Smith 2002:32). In Deuteronomy 32:8-9, 'elyôn (El) is cast as a son of Yahweh (Smith 2002:32). El was regarded as head of the pantheon that governed Canaan, made the rivers flow into the ocean, ensured fertility and lived at the shore where rivers flowed into the sea. His titles included 'Bull' and 'Bull-El' and, in some cases, he was represented by an animal (Delaporte 1959:75). Albright's review of Claude Schaeffer's *La huitieme campagne de fouilles a Ras Shamra-Ugarit* (1946) refers to the eighth campaign (archaeological season) of Schaeffer at Ugarit. From Stratum I, a serpentine stele bears an Egyptianised representation of the god El seated on a throne with his feet on a footstool. Before him is a worshipper who wears a high conical tiara. El was a cosmic deity, creator of heaven and earth (Margueron 2009:248). A gold patera provenance Ugarit dates to the Late Bronze Age (1500-1400 BCE). The patera was found close to the abode of Baal at Ugarit (Margueron 2009:243). It depicts an unusual scene which is explained by Ugaritic mythology and religion. The depictions of major gods in the form of bovines depict the god El as an adult bull, Baal as a young bull and the goddess Anat as cows (Margueron 2009:243). The king on the patera is depicted killing animals associated with deities. The king is the hunter and the gods are the game. In the royal cult, the sacrifice of bovines was reserved for the gods Baal and El (Margueron 2009:243).

A bronze/gold statue overlaid with gold foil dating to the 14th century BCE was found buried below a house in the Ville Sud in Ugarit. Margueron (2009:247) suggests that this deity is El, the principal god of Ugarit. It appears that horns were once attached to the headdress indicating divinity and the right hand is raised.³¹⁷ The Egyptian influence is shown by the tall crown often worn by Osiris (Margueron 2009:247).

In 1981 a statue of a seated deity (14th century BCE) was found in the Temple of the Rhytons at Ugarit with his feet resting on a low stool, conveying an impression of majesty and weariness. This type of statue is identified as El or Baal. Remains of the building attest to rituals being conducted there and include a relief depicting a king praying beneath a sun disc (Margueron 2009:248).

³¹⁷ The 'right hand' is a Mesopotamian metaphor moulded by an Egyptian notion of 'strong hand' and is recalled in the Hebrew Bible in Exodus 15:6 "Your right hand, O Lord, is majestic in strength; your right hand, O Lord, shatters the enemy" (Izre'el 1995:2416).

Margueron states that similar sanctuaries have been found at Lachish³¹⁸ and Enkomi³¹⁹ (2009:248). According to Wiseman (1999:45), Hadad is affiliated to El and Dagan, the corn-god in Ugaritic writing.

6.4.1.2. *Asherah*

El's female counterpart in the Ras Shamra myths is Asherah, the mother goddess who was an active participant in the fertility cult concerning Baal's conflict with sterility (Gray 1969:72). Handy (1993:158) states that Asherah is depicted at Ugarit as queen mother of the gods and not as 'mother goddess' which, he believes, is an overused way of dealing with female deities from the ancient world. The goddess is depicted between two animals and is represented as the tree of life which is called *Ashera/Athirat* and on whom animals depend upon for sustenance (Gray 1969:74).

In the Old Testament, Asherah is referred to as the 'queen of heaven' (Jeremiah 7:18); also as an image (1 Kings 15:13) which could be 'cut down' (Exodus 34:13). Dever (1982:37) states that the term Asherah is used more than 40 times in the Hebrew Bible and he is of the opinion that the earliest editors of the Masoretic Texts and later Jewish and Christian commentators have minimised the 'shadowy Asherah of the Old Canaanite fertility cults'. Instead, most of the references have been interpreted as signifying 'sacred tree'. Dever believes that the passages which clearly identify the worship of the goddess Asherah are largely ignored (1982:37).

The Ugarit texts have shown that the Canaanite religion dominated the milieu in which ancient Israel emerged (Dever 1982:37). The fertility aspects of the 'mother goddess' which centred on the divine pair, El-Asherah and Baal-Anat, according to Dever, had a lasting impact on the development and religious practice in Phoenicia and Israel (1982:37). Archaeological discoveries have provided extra-Biblical confirmation of a restricted cult of the chief fertility goddess Asherah-Anat, consort to Yahweh, in ancient Israel (Dever 1982:7). Scholars have proposed Asherah to be a goddess, a holy place, a sacred tree, a pole, a grove of trees and a board game³²⁰ but 'whatever an Asherah is, Yahweh had one!'

(Lemaire 1984:1).

³¹⁸ The city of Lachish in Israel is situated 42km south-west of Jerusalem. Lachish was one of the most important cities of the biblical era. Letters from Lachish were found in the archives at Amarna (Scheepers 2000:42).

³¹⁹ Enkomi, on Cyprus dated to the Late Bronze Age (14th -13th century BCE) (Cluzan 2009:341).

³²⁰ Vermaak suggests that game boards, the *asherahs*, were made of baked clay or ivory, comprising fifty-eight holes (2001:53-54). Vermaak suggests a cultic significance, possibly related to fertility and the cult of the mother goddess (2001:53-54). According to Finkel (2009:151), the first extant examples of the game of fifty-eight holes originated in Egypt. One such example is found in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York dating to the Middle Kingdom (181-1802 BCE).

6.4.1.2.1 The archaeological finds from Kuntillet 'Ajrud (Horvat Temen)

The excavations led by Ze'ev Meshel³²¹ in 1975-76 of an 8th century BCE Israelite caravanserai in the Eastern Sinai have yielded significant finds. Dever (1982:37) is of the opinion that Biblical scholars have paid little attention to the material. Since Dever's article, there have been several scholarly articles on the archaeological finds at Kuntillet 'Ajrud. Hershel Shanks' latest publication (2012) deals with the persisting uncertainties of Kuntillet 'Ajrud.

The Israel Museum exhibition and catalogue list the following which have been found at the site: numerous dedicatory and blessing formulae inscribed in plaster, pottery vessels, votive offerings found in the plastered sanctuary and a large storage jar (Pithos 1) which, Dever believes, is of crucial significance for 'Ajrud as the inscription on the jar is well preserved and reads: 'I bless you by Yahweh Shamron and by his Asherah'. A second pithos reads: 'Yahweh Teman and his Asherah'. Also found at the site are wall inscriptions which contain formulae invoking Yahweh and Baal. These ancient Hebrew inscriptions testify to an 8th century BCE Israelite sanctuary and to its syncretistic character (Dever 1982:38).

This site reveals references to Baal, El, Yahweh and the goddess Asherah. Dever believes that few scholars are willing to accede to 'his Asherah' and they pass this off as a shrine or symbol dedicated to the goddess (Dever 1982:38). A portrait of a female figure is depicted immediately below the inscription 'Yahweh's Asherah' (Dever 1982:38). Dever proposes that Asherah is 'enthroned'. He bases his conclusion on the garments she is wearing, a long quilted tasselled skirt, a collar and bare breasts. Similar clothing is illustrated on Canaanite fertility goddesses. One specifically from Ugarit which portrays Asherah has a nearly identical dress (Dever 1982:38).

Yahweh's Asherah has a distinctive coiffure which shows long curls or ringlets. This is very similar to the description of queen Tiyi, Akhenaten's mother. Her mummy has long hair with distinctive ringlets (see Aldred 1988:104) suggesting this hair style was in vogue for royalty and depictions of goddesses. Tiyi's family were of Mitannian origin and the queen, according to Reeves (2001:59), was worshipped in her own right as the solar goddess Hathor. Archaeological evidence suggests that the

³²¹ From the first excavation by Meshel in 1975, the weather at Kintillet 'Ajrud has been problematic. The wind blowing down tents, the sun and dust blinding the archaeologists, making excavation difficult. This was also the case in three further seasons. The finds, though, made up for the bad weather. Two Pithoi painted with deities, humans, animals and symbols were unearthed. Three of the inscriptions on the Pithoi refer to Yahweh and his *asherah*. Shanks states that Asherah was a chief deity and consort to El, yet sometimes referred to in masculine form as *asherim*. The feminine plural *asherot* referred to cultic standing stones (matzevot), his *asherah* might then be a sacred pole that is depicted on the other side of Pithos B (2012:1).

worship of Hathor continued at Amarna, another indication that it was not only the Aten that was worshipped.

A poem which belongs in the corpus of archaic Hebrew poetry which, Kyle McCarter (1991:2-3) states, is of special importance for the reconstruction of Israelite history, was found at Kuntillet 'Ajrud. It was written in Phoenician script rather than Hebrew, but the language is Hebrew according to Kyle McCarter (1991:3). The poem was written in ink on plaster and written on the wall of a building. The site is dated to the 9th century BCE but the poem belongs to a corpus of archaic Hebrew poetry. Kyle McCarter estimates that the poem, though it survives only from a text of the 9th century, is probably dated to a composition from 1200-1000 BCE (1991:3). The poem begins '[w]hen El shone forth...'. This Hebrew verb refers to the rising of the sun (Kyle McCarter 1991:3). Shanks (2012) believes that everything about the site of Kuntillet 'Ajrud has been difficult to interpret including the interpretation of *asherah*³²² which has raised debate amongst scholars. One of the few

³²² Asherah was one of the chief female deities in the Canaanite pantheon and consort of the god El. On Pithos A (1), the inscription appears 'Yahweh of Shomron' and on Pithos B (2) 'I have blessed you by Yhwh of Teman and his *asherah* ... may he bless you and may he keep you, and may He be with my lord [forever?]'. The text echoes priestly blessings from the Hebrew Bible found in Numbers 6:24 (Shanks 2012:5). Each figure on the Pithoi was identifiable as Bes, a collective name for a group of Egyptian deities (Shanks 2012:3). Whether they comprised two males or one male and one female has been an issue of debate. Yahweh of Teman on Pithos B and on a piece of plaster which had fallen onto the floor might indicate where Yahweh hailed from, in the same way as Baal is mentioned as Baal of Hazor, or Baal of Hermon (2012:6). Pithos B features a procession of worshippers with raised arms, all figures facing left (might they be worshipping the sun?). The building in which the drawings and inscriptions were found is, as Shanks states, 'in itself a conundrum'. A variety of suggestions have been made for the use of the structure which include a caravanserai, an inn, a rest stop, a fortified trading post, a pilgrimage site, a shrine, a cult centre, a religious school, or a retreat for priests but there is no agreement (2012:8). The consistent use of the theophoric element 'yo' rather than 'yahu' at Kuntillet indicates that it was an Israelite site not a Judahite site whose theophoric element was yhw written 'Yahu' (Shanks 2012:8). Fragments of linen found at the site suggest that priests might have lived there as linen clothing was prescribed as in Ezekiel (44:17-18). Shanks suggests it was a religious site yet no altar, shovels, incense, offerings, sacrifices, idols, bamah or high place were found (Shanks 2012:7). The second building, however, has a platform which might be a high place (2012:7). Keel and Uehlinger (1998:240-241) see the Bes and Beset figures as 'apotropaic daemons'. They state that there is no evidence for a connection between Yahweh and Bes and no evidence for Beset and Asherah. Bes figures normally have human or lion-like heads or faces but this is not the case at Kuntillet 'Ajrud. Here the depictions are bovine heads (1998:217-218). There is no evidence to identify the cult of Asherah convincingly as the female lyre-player depicted on the Pithos. There is no other motif placed opposite the female lyre-player to convincingly place her as Asherah (Keel & Uehlinger 1998:240-241). Keel and Uehlinger mention several inscriptions on the walls of the 'caravanserai' [sic] which mention Baal and Yahweh. They suggest that Kuntillet 'Ajrud must be looked at in a wider context. Because of their fragmentary nature, the texts that mention Baal and El are to be treated with caution (Keel & Uehlinger 1998:245). The finds from Kuntillet 'Ajrud were turned over to Egypt in 1994 as part of an Israel-Egypt peace treaty and have not been heard of since. Shanks states that Hawass's office reported a break-in on the 3rd February 2011 at an archaeological storage facility at Qantara (west bank of the Suez Canal). Later, on the 3rd March 2011, the Egyptian press reported 30 truckloads of antiquities had been moved to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo for safekeeping which included Sinai artifacts that were retrieved from Israel following the

things that is clear is that the site has been dated to about 800 BCE (Shanks 2012:3-5). Lemaire (1984:6) suggests that the rabbinic commentary translates *asherah* as a grove. Lemaire thinks of *asherah* as a sacred tree or a group of trees, and some commentators suggest the term applied to a pole or a wooden stature of the goddess Asherah (Lemaire 1984:6). In Hezekiah's religious reforms described in 2 Kings 18:4, the *asherah* were cut down (Lemaire 1984:6). In Amos 7:9,3,14 and Hosea 10:8, it seems the altars were condemned as was the *asherah* (Deuteronomy 16:21-22). Lemaire suggests that the objects were becoming sacred possibly rivalling the importance of Yahweh (1984:8).

6.4.1.2.2 Stones as pillars

Scott (1939:143) questions the reason why pillars were placed in front of Solomon's temple. Scott cites several examples, two stones at the entrance to the temple in Shechem, temples at Khorsabad with pillar bases on either side of their thresholds and twin pillars at Heliopolis in Egypt. Hollis's suggestion (cited in Scott 1939:144) of the solar elements in the plan of Solomon's temple suggest cultic significance. Scott describes Boaz as a disguise of Baal (1939:146). Gressmann (cited in Scott 1939:146) notes that, in Babylonia, it was customary to give pillars a whole sentence as a name, such as 'Ellil' 'facing the sunrise' named by the King Gudea at Lagash. Scott (1939:146) cites 2 Kings 11:14 '... and the king stood by a pillar'. He suggests the pillar had some special significance for the Covenant and might have represented the deity as witness to the ceremony.

Smith alleges that, like the *asherah*, the 'high places' were not specific to Israelite society rather they signified a more extensive cultural reality (2002:161). Child sacrifice might have been a function of these 'high places'. Psalm 106:34-38 attributes child sacrifice to Baal Peor and Jeremiah 7:31 says:

and they have built the high places of Tophet, which *is* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire: which I commanded *them* not, neither came it into my heart.

Jeremiah denies *mlk* sacrifice was offered in the name of Yahweh. Smith argues that these denials may suggest that sacrifice in Yahweh's name may have occurred (Smith 2002:171).

signing of the Egypt-Israel peace treaty (Shanks 2012:9).

6.4.1.3. *Baal*

A smiting deity dated to the 14th century BCE is one of many found at Ugarit. This example is today housed in the National Museum in Damascus, Syria. The god is believed to represent the young weather god Baal. The stance suggests that its imagery was borrowed from Egyptian images of triumphant kings atop or astride fallen enemies. The deity, 12.5cm in height with its right arm raised, is made from bronze and gold (Margueron 2009:246). Another statue found at Ugarit in the shape of a bull symbolised the animal Baal (Margueron 2009:150).

Smith refers to Baal's meteorological manifestations at Ugarit as expressions of his martial power (2002:79). Yet, Smith (2002:79) states, the Hebrew Bible is silent regarding Baal's martial power as there is no Biblical text that confirms Baal's status as a warrior. Baal at Ras Shamra was god of the atmosphere, clouds and tempest. His voice was in the clouds, he wielded the thunderbolt and rain and assumed the traits of Sutekh a type of god created by Egyptians after 1350 BCE (Delaporte 1959:75). 'Lord of Earth' is the name given to Baal at Ugarit and Wiseman (1999:44) states that Phoenician sources named him 'Lord of heaven'.

6.4.1.4. *Anat*

The goddess who is associated with Baal is Anat who is not mentioned in the Hebrew Bible (Mondriaan 2010:189). She is a goddess of love and war; she both abets Baal in his conflicts and vindicates him when he succumbs (Gray 1969:74). This could be seen as the role of woman with the critical seasons of transition being life-death-rebirth in popular religion or when the order of the gods is in eclipse. Gray cites as examples the weeping³²³ of the woman in Jerusalem in the Biblical passage of Ezekiel 8:14 or the lamentations of the maidens of Israel (1969:74).³²⁴ Delaporte (1959:76) states that Anat's role was to perpetuate the life of the gods as constant sacrifice preserved the life of the gods.

Anat was introduced by the Hyksos into Egypt. She was honoured at Avaris (Tel el-daba) where she was consort to Baal and Sutekh (Seth) at Avaris (Delaporte 1959:76).

³²³ Tammuz was the dying and rising god of vegetation sought by Inanna or Ishtar in the underworld during his season of recession. This theme of the fertility goddess searching for the dying and rising god of vegetation is a popular motif in Egypt and the Levant and includes Anat searching for the dead god Baal in Canaan and Isis searching for Horus in Egypt (Gray 1969:22).

³²⁴ In the Hebrew Bible, Ezekiel 8:14 makes mention of the god Tammuz. Gray (1969:22) refers to Tammuz as the dying and rising god of vegetation, who the goddesses Inanna or Ishtar seek in the underworld in his season of recession.



Figure 6.7: Left: William Dever, American Near Eastern Archaeologist. Right: Professor Amnon Ben-Tor, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Summer 2011).

6.4.1.5. *Massebot and Asherim*

Sacred stones were erected on or near the summit of a hill. Any megalith monument became known as a ‘high place’ (Smith 1952:101). The single *Massebah* (to set up) (plural *massebot*) (Negev 1972:127) was conical in shape and was especially revered, found ‘on every high hill and under every green tree’ (Smith 1952:102). The shapes of the *menhir* were conical and were accompanied by *asherim* (Smith 1952:102).

The excavation at Gezer³²⁵ under the Palestinian exploration fund from 1902 to 1909 under the direction of RAS Macalister yielded the famous ‘high place’ (Negev 1972:126). Ten enormous stone standing stela 2.7 metres high (9ft) (*Massebot*) and cuneiform tablets from the Amarna period were excavated (1972:126). The site has been excavated several times since the first season. Amongst the finds were ten letters which were written to the pharaohs from three different kings from Gezer (Negev 1972:127).

³²⁵ The mound of Gezer is situated on the last ridge of the Judean foothills, 7 miles south east of Ramla. It guards the junction of the Via Maris (Negev 1972:125).



Figure 6.8: Standing stones (Massebot), Hazor Israel. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Summer 2011).

6.5 YAHWEH AND THE CULT OF THE SUN

Smith states that solar imagery is limited in the Biblical account (2002:148) (see section 6.5.7). In Psalm 84:11, it is stated: ‘for the Lord God *is* a sun and shield’. In this Biblical reference, Yahweh is referred to as the sun. Kyle McCarter (1991:3) concurs with Smith that sometimes solar imagery is applied to the God of Israel and that scholars have given this aspect too little attention. Taylor’s answers the question of his article entitled *Was Yahweh worshiped as the sun?* by arguing that some Israelites considered the sun to be a symbol or icon of Israel’s god Yahweh (1994:53). Taylor provides evidence for this sun worship from two fairly recent archaeological finds, one being the inscriptions on the pithois found at Kuntillet ‘Ajrud and the other from the cult stand at Taanach. Taylor states that Israel conceived of Yahweh non-anthropomorphically and in an abstract way (1994:55): ‘Yahweh was also symbolically represented—at least occasionally by the sun’.

6.5.1 Temple worship facing east—open air solar shrines

Apion³²⁶ declares that Moses was an Egyptian priest from Heliopolis who led the Israelites out of his native country and built them temples without roofs orientated to the east (Assmann 1997:38). Because the temple in Jerusalem is orientated to the east, this has led to speculation of the solar character of Yahweh (Smith 2002:149). One such scholar is Hollis's publication *The sun-cult and the temple in Jerusalem* (1933) (Smith 2002:149).

Akhenaten moved away from the designs of the traditional Egyptian temples. His temples at Amarna were open to the sun (Oakes 2001:147). Tomb 6, of Panhesy, 'chief servitor of the Aten in Akhenaten', reveals very few columns and those that are shown support an open colonnade. This, according to Kemp (2012:96), agrees with the archaeological evidence of excavated plans which indicate that the temples were open to the sky. Smith (2002:150) provides a Biblical example found in Ezekiel 8:16 which criticises solar worship in the temple in Jerusalem and states: 'about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.' That this form of worship was unacceptable is alluded to in Joshua's reforms found in 2 Kings 23:5:

... and he put down the idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense to Ba'al, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the planets, and to all the host of heaven.

Smith (2002:150) believes that these Biblical passages provide evidence regarding temple practice at the time of the Judean monarchy. The Biblical term *bamah* (1 Kings 14:23) is translated as 'high place'. The exact meaning of the term is still open to debate but, according to Mazar, all agree that the *bamah* is an open cult place of some sort. The 'high place' excavated on the summit of a hill in northern Samaria might be related to the 'altars' of the patriarchal narratives (Mazar 1983:6). Mazar speculates whether it was Baal or Yahweh who was worshipped at this cult site in Samaria (1983:6). It is a possibility the Egyptian open air solar shrines may have influenced the Canaanites and 'proto Israelites'. Egyptian links with Canaanite Hazor is attested to in the Amarna letters EA 227 'The happy king of Hazor' is a message from the king of Ḫasuru (Moran 1992:288) (see Figure 6.8).

³²⁶ Apion, an Egyptian historian (Feldman 2007:522) based in Alexandria, is described as being one of the most important figures of the intellectual scene in the first half of the 1st century CE (Feldman 2007:1).

6.5.2 Yahweh and the chariots of the sun (2Kings 23:11)

‘Above the back of the Taanach horse rests a blazing sun’. In this statement, Taylor (1994:58) refers to the abolishing of an ancient Yahwistic tradition by King Josiah of Judah. This is confirmed by 2 Kings 23:11:

He [Josiah] removed the horses that the kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun, at the entrance of the house of the Lord ... and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire.

This example indicates that, though the sun cult was not accepted, it was existent or King Josiah would not have had the need to abolish the ritual. Taylor suggests that this cultic procession of horses and chariots of the sun was attributed to the kings of Judah, suggesting an old rite (1994:58). Taylor cites the Taanach cult stand (see section 6.5.5) which depicts the Israelite context, chariotry, a horse, the sun and the location of the temple. A small terracotta figurine found at Hazor might be a bull (as first thought) or, more commonly identified, a horse.³²⁷ The cult stand dates to the 10th century BCE (Taylor 1994:58). Tier three on the

Taanach cult stand has an empty space. Taylor suggests that this empty space is an intentional omission representing the new Israelite concept of the abstract deity, Yahweh, represented on Tier 1 of the stand by the sun, the symbol for Yahweh (1994:58). Horses with disks have been linked to the ‘chariots of the sun’ (Psalms 68:1; Habbakuk 3:8.15) (Cornelius 2007:31). Cornelius (2007:31) refers to a 7th century item from Cave 1 in Jerusalem which, Dame Kenyon suggested, was a sun disk between the ears of the horse, connecting it with the horses of the sun in the temple of Jerusalem. This suggests there might have still have been a strong presence of the Egyptian solar cult in the time of the monarchy.

³²⁷ In order to understand the cultic significance of Tier 1, the correct identification of the animal on Tier 1 is important. The animal has been identified as a bull, a symbol of Baal or Yahweh. The input from two zoological experts has confirmed the view that the animal is a horse, thus an association with Yahweh but not with Baal. The animal was depicted without a mane as are numerous figurines from the Iron Age and a 7th century BCE horse (Taylor 1994:58). Taylor puts forward Hestrin’s argument which suggested that the cult stand represented the deities Asherah and Baal. Hestrin identified the figure on Tier 1 as a bull, the absence of horns, Hestrin states, are because it is a young bull. Hestrin rejects the animal as being a horse as it has no mane. Taylor argues if it is a horse, then it cannot be identified with Baal and, in the opinion of zoological experts, it is a horse (Taylor 1994:57).

6.5.3 Solar language and monarchy

The title of ‘the sun’ for the kings from Amarna and Ugarit are attested to in the Amarna letters of the Late Bronze Age (1600-1200 BCE) (Smith 2002:153). Smith (2002:153) refers to the Mesopotamian rulers, Ur-Nammu, Amar-Sin, Limit Ishtar, Hammurabi and Zimri-lin who were all compared to the sun god mentioned by Labat in *Le caractère religieux de la royauté assyro-babylonienne* (1939).

Amarna letter EA 147 states ‘behold I have sent (a message) to the Sun, the father of the king, my lord, “When shall I see the face of the king, my lord?”’ (Moran 1992:233). Psalm 42:3 says: ‘When shall I come and behold the face of god?’ (Smith 2002:154). Both Ugaritic and Amarna letters suggest that, during the Late Bronze Age, New Kingdom Egypt was the source of this theology which later spread to the Levant (Smith 2002:154). Smith (2002:154) provides another example of the sun being identified with the king found inscribed on an Amarna letter EA 155: ‘the king is the eternal sun’.

6.5.4 Solar references and Biblical texts

The association between Yahweh and the sun, described as a ‘solar character’ at times serving as an icon for Yahweh. Meyers in a review (1995:719) says that ‘sun-worship is not an extra-Israelite idolatrous phenomenon but rather an intrinsic feature of Yahwism that the Deuteronomists ultimately rejected’.

The following Biblical examples refers to the Lord in solar terms: ‘For the LORD God is a sun and shield’ (Psalm 84:11), ‘in them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun’ (Psalm 19:4), ‘and the sun stood still, and the moon stayed’ (Joshua 10:13), ‘He sent darkness and made it dark’ (Psalm 105:28). ‘For the Lord God *is* a sun and shield’ (Psalm 84:11).



Figure 6.9: Canaanite shrine at Hazor, Israel. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Summer 2011).

6.5.5 Cult stand from Taanach

Hestrin (1987:220) assumes that, during Egyptian rule in Syria-Palestine, the Hathor cult penetrated the region and that she was identified with the Canaanite goddess Asherah. Hathor's attributes, one of which was the tree, were adopted in representations of the Canaanite goddess in Egypt (Hestrin 1987:220). A cultic stand from the site of Taanach³²⁸ may point to the devotion of Asherah in the early monarchy (Smith 2002:52). This cultic stand is dated to the 10th century and its provenance has been argued. JG Taylor argues for an Israelite provenance and Tigay (1986:92-93) argues for a Canaanite provenance (Smith 2002:53). The Taanach stand is layered on four levels. There is a depiction of a naked female figure with each of her hands resting on lion/lionesses' heads which stand on either side of her (Smith 2002:53). Smith suggests that the female figure could be identified with Anat, Asherah or Astarte and that the iconography with the lion in Egypt and the cult at this time might help to identify her (2002:53). The opening on the following 'register' is flanked

³²⁸ Taanach is a Canaanite town at the southern end of the Jezreel Valley that is mentioned in the Amarna letters. The king of Taanach appears in the king list comprising 31 kings who were vanquished by Joshua (Josh 12:21), yet, as Negev (1972:303) points out, other passages indicate that Taanach was not conquered by the Israelites (Joshua 17:11-12).

by sphinxes, with bodies of lions, birds' wings and a female head. The next layer depicts a sacred tree with curling branches sprouting from the trunk (Smith 2002:53). Two ibexes standing on their hind feet face the tree in the centre and alongside them are two lions. Smith explains that the sacred tree is an *Asherah* named after the goddess. At the top of the register, a bovine or young bull without horns is depicted. The bovine is thought to be a representation of Baal or Yahweh in 10th century Taanach (Smith 2002:53). At the very top of the register, a solar disk, the symbol of the sun, appears. This cult stand indicates that Yahweh or Baal or a goddess and devotion to the Asherah is indicated (Smith 2002:53). In Syria, Phoenicia and Palestine, a stylised tree between two animals facing each other was seen to be a common motif of religious significance. This motif appears in Palestine, in Taanach, Megiddo, Lachish and other sites (Hestrin 1987:214). Dever suggests the panel which depicts two lions wearing a Hathor (Egyptian) headdress of Qudshu/Asherah,³²⁹ known as the 'lion lady', can be seen as a common theme (1982:40). The 12th century BCE el-Khader arrowheads read 'servant of the lion lady' *'abd labi't (u)* a name comparable to the King Abdashirta of the Amarna period indicating 'Servant of Asherah' (Dever 1982:40). Dever argues that the syncretism that can be documented by archaeology provides a balanced and realistic picture of the religion practiced in ancient Israel (1982:40). In Hestrin's opinion, there is no doubt that the Biblical Asherah is a continuation of the Late Bronze Age goddess (1987:221). Akhenaten's mother, Tiyi, was the first Egyptian queen to adopt Hathor's cow horns and sun disk in her formal headdress (Tyldesley 2003:24). Tyldesley states that both Wallis Budge and Petrie were of the firm belief that Tiyi, with her fair complexion and blue eyes, had all the characteristics of women living in North-Eastern Syria today (Tyldesley 2003:21).³³⁰

6.5.6 Royal scion in the book of Malachi

Smith (2002:156) states that the royal iconography of the winged sun disk compares with the description of the royal scion which is featured in the Hebrew Bible in the book of Malachi 4:2 'the sun of righteousness will appear with healing in his wings'. The use of solar imagery for the monarch continued into the post-exilic period, according to Smith (2002:156). The concept of 'healing in his wings' is rooted in the royal idea that the monarch provides subjects with well-being (Smith

³²⁹ Dever states that the 'lion lady' was an old epithet of a fused Canaanite fertility goddess Aherah-Anat-Athart which was adopted into New Kingdom Egypt where she was identified as Hathor or Qudshu. The archaeological evidence confirms this as plaques depict both the Egyptian and Canaanite names (1982:39).

³³⁰ A wooden head recovered from Gurob (Medinet el-Gurob on the edge of the Faiyum [Dever 2005:135]) depicts Tiyi as black. The head is carved from a dark wood. The well preserved mummies of Yuya and Thuya (see Chapter Three), parents of Tiyi, do not show a central African appearance as assigned to Tiyi (Tyldesley 2003:21).

2002:156). This verse from Malachi paints a picture of Israel's future saviour and the effects he would have on Israel (Smith 2002:156).

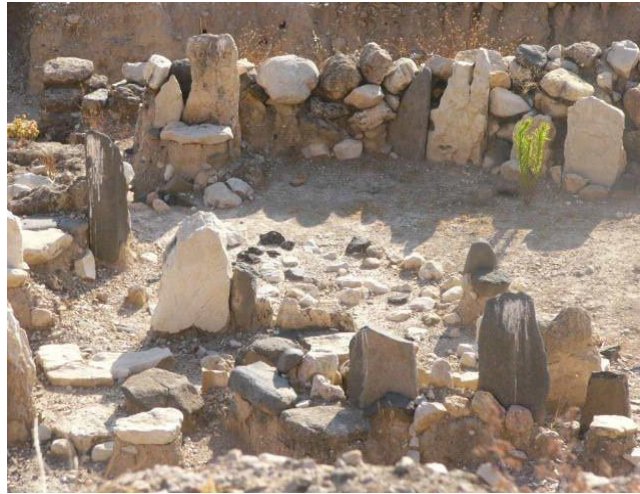


Figure 6.10: Cultic Massebot, Hazor Israel (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Summer 2011).



Figure 6.11: Site of Arad, Tel Arad, Israel. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Summer 2011)



Figure 6.12: Memorial tombstone of Moses at Mount Nebo in Jordan. (Photograph by Jayne Vine, Dec 2007).

6.6 CONCLUSION

The theme of this chapter is the discussion of the rise of Moses's Yahwism. It questions whether Yahweh's nature was a sole, solar cult or a syncretistic monotheism. In answering this question, I suggest that all three apply because 'the development toward monotheism in Israel involved complex processes of convergence and differentiation of deities' (Smith 2002:200). The finds from Ugarit have served to illuminate many of the Biblical narratives as, prior to the excavations at Ugarit, our only source of knowledge was the Hebrew Bible. The cuneiform texts at Ugarit portrayed the lives of the gods El, his consort Asherah, Baal, Anat and others. While many 'selective' characteristics were attributed to Yahweh, several negative characteristics were omitted such as drunken carouser and a sexual partner (revealed in Ugaritic texts). Evidence from the field suggests that scholars do not all agree on interpretation of archaeological finds. The finds at Taanach, Kuntillet 'Ajrud and Hazor have aroused debate amongst scholars. Whilst there may not be many texts relating to Yahweh's solar aspects, nonetheless, they do exist and, as Kyle McCarter suggests (see section 6.5), they should be given more attention. Taylor's discussion on Yahweh and the sun indicate the close relationship that Yahweh had with the sun. As Meyers points out, the association can be described as a 'solar character'. Perhaps scholarly attention may find more material to suggest synchronism. The toponym Yahweh found in the temple of Amon at Soleb (Sudan) dates to as early as Akhenaten's father, Amenophis III, indicating Yahweh's early veneration in Edom. Akhenaten's Atenism and Moses' Yahwism may show syncretism and perhaps the answers lie in Ethiopia or Sudan. What is clear from this chapter is that syncretism not only occurs with the movements of the ancient Near Eastern peoples but with the worship of their gods. As Kenites, Midianites, Cushites, Egyptians, Syrians and many other peoples merge into one nation, so too does the Northern god El merge with the Southern god Yahweh. As Smith (2002:198) says:

Monolatry grew out of an early, limited Israelite polytheism ... the process of differentiation and eventual displacement of Baal from Israel's national cult distinguished Israel's religion from the religion of its neighbors.

Mondriaan suggests that an integration of deities from different pantheons, inevitably influencing one another, and consequently adopting attributes from each other, result in a syncretism (2010:208) [possibly in the same way as the Egyptian sun God Ré] (see section 5.6.4):

The pre-exilic Israelite nation practised a syncretistic-type religion that included the God Yahweh, while a strict Yahweh alone monotheism was subsequently observed in post-exilic times (Mondriaan 2010:10).

I think that the social, economic and religious conditions at the end of the Amarna period provided the reasons for the movement of a 'mixed multitude'. Why do you love the 'Apiru but hate the mayors? I suggest that this sentence may speak volumes in terms of Akhenaten's allegiance. Exactly who these 'Apiru were that Akhenaten loved is not clear. The syncretism of Yahwism and Baalism prior to the exile in Canaan has traditionally been understood as a movement involving only the minority of Israelites as suggested by Eakin. Kyle McCarter suggests that it is too simplistic to say that there is a Canaanite religion, there is monotheism and then syncretism, rather a whole set of religious ideas which we need to describe (1991:8).

Zondervan suggests the golden calf is Israel's first foray into syncretism, this combining of faith in the one true God with the pagan traditions of Canaanite Baal and the Egyptian Apis cult which worshipped the bull and calf (2006:143).

In spite of an abundance of material evidence and scholarly interpretation, I am of the same opinion as Miller (2000:1) that the origins of the worship of Yahweh are shrouded in mystery.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This discussion has explored two monumental characters, one historical, one possibly mythological, both displaying notable similarities. The title, *Moses 'son' of Akhenaten? A study of archaeology and textual perspectives*, clearly states the hypothesis, the main aim of which has been to identify possible familial links between the characters Moses and Akhenaten. The title suggests a relationship that sees Moses as the 'son' of Akhenaten. The motivation for this research was to explore the possibility of finding a relationship between Moses by looking for connections between the figures Akhenaten, a historical figure, and Moses, a figure of memory (according to many). Foster (1995:1760) describes the relationship as an 'intriguing possibility'. I further propose that Moses' mother was the Syrian Princess Tadukhepa (Kiya) of Mitanni.

In this multidisciplinary study, I have mainly used the fields of science, archaeology, genealogy and psychology as tools to investigate and evaluate the 'intriguing possibility' of Moses being a son of Akhenaten. The themes covered incorporate chronology, DNA, history vs. possible memory, and religion. Biblical scholarship has been used to investigate, not only the importance of the Persian period, but also the extra-Biblical sources of the Hellenistic period to study the formation of the Torah (Römer 2012:67). Traditions from extra-Biblical sources may be as old as the narrative of Moses relayed in the Hebrew Bible. These traditions, many of which were not included in the Biblical narrative, may be just as important as those which were included. Following the tradition of an ancient historian, Apion, who believed that the Jews were of Syrian extraction, has assisted my argument. Josephus refers to Apion's shocking charges against the Jewish residents of Alexandria, as stated by Apion: "[t]hey came," he says "from Syria and settled by a sea without a harbour, close beside the spot where the waves break on the beach" (Ap I.31-36).

Moving to the scientific age of the 21st century, DNA studies (discussed in Chapter Two) have been used to identify Jews as a genetically identifiable group. The results of the studies show that modern Jews were most similar to Middle Eastern men from Lebanon, Syria and Palestine (Hamer 2004:190). As discussed in Chapter Two, the DNA results offer concrete evidence of a *cohanim* genetic signature, an indicator of an ancient tradition carried over by the *cohanim* priests from father to son from between 2100 and 3250 years ago (Hamer 2004:189). The Y chromosome indicates that the *cohanim* priests can trace their ancestry back to Aaron (Moses' brother). The family tree

which I drew up for Akhenaten's biological family indicates many Syrian (Mitannian) blood links (see Figure 3.10).

7.2 MOSES 'SON' OF AKHENATEN, 'DRAWN FROM' THE 'AMNIOTIC WATERS' OF A SYRIAN, PRINCESS TADUKHEPA, A SEMITE

I propose that the waters Moses was 'drawn from', as described in the Biblical account in Exodus 2, were not the waters of the Nile River, but rather the 'amniotic waters' of the birth canal of a Syrian princess (see 1.1 & 3.11.2). The Amarna letters have provided a primary source of information for this proposal. Amarna letter EA 28 (Moran 1992:90) from Tushratta of Mitanni provides evidence which states that his daughter, Princess Tadukhepa (Kiya), married Akhenaten who is referred to as a son-in-law. Some correspondence between Tushratta, the king of Mitanni and the Egyptian royal court was written in Hurrian, an indication that the texts were understood by someone in the royal court in Egypt. Amarna letter EA 24 (Moran 1992:63) is one such example. Tadukhepa (Kiya) was favoured by Akhenaten as indicated by the many monuments named after her. That she was the victim of jealousy at the hands of Akhenaten's daughter from Nefertiti is indicated in the defacing of her name. One such instance (Kemp 2012:119) occurred when Akhenaten's daughter Meretaten's name was carved over an earlier name which was either Nefertiti or Tadukhepa (Kiya). Princess Tadukhepa arrived as a virgin from Mitanni in Syria. She was destined to marry Akhenaten's ailing father Amenhotep III but his untimely death resulted in the princess instead consummating a marriage with Akhenaten, thus becoming a minor secondary wife (Nefertiti being his primary wife). Scholars have suggested that the attack on the memory of Tadukhepa (Kiya) and her daughter (perhaps named Thermouthis) were as a result of her elevated status in the royal court (Tyldesley 2003:129). There is archaeological evidence of damage to her monuments at Amarna (see discussion in 3.11.2). It has been suggested that she produced a male heir.

The royal marriages between the Mitannian royal family and that of the Egyptian royal family had existed for several generations (see discussion in 3.13). Martin (1989:39) discusses the problem of the missing text on the walls of a royal tomb. The text would have served to positively identify both the mother and the baby born into the royal family at Amarna (cf. Figure 1.1). The child's mother died giving birth. Martin suggests the infant born might depict the birth of Tutankhamun and that Tadukhepa was the deceased mother. New results from DNA (see Chapter Two) conclude that Tutankhamun's parents were siblings in which case Martin's proposal may be partly correct in identifying Tadukhepa as the deceased. As Akhenaten is identified as the father of Tutankhamun

by Martin in his study, this raises new questions as to the identity of the mother. The mother of the infant may indeed have been Tadukhepa but the identity of the baby is not clear. I have not found any evidence to suggest Tadukhepa was a sister to Akhenaten. Tadukhepa (Kiya), a daughter of Tushratta, may have been a cousin to Akhenaten as Tushratta's sister was Tiya, Akhenaten's mother. This would make Tadukhepa Akhenaten's cousin, in my opinion.

The debate over the DNA from KV55 discussed in Chapter Two is inconclusive. KV55 may be Akhenaten or Smenkhare. The DNA taken from the mummy found in KV55 shows that he was Tutankhamun's father. Tutankhamun's parents were siblings but it is not clear whether Nefertiti was Akhenaten's sister and wife. It is also unclear whether Nefertiti had a son. So who exactly was Tutankhamun's mother? Possibly one of Akhenaten's sisters, Sitamen, Henut Taneb, Isis or Nebetah? The other possibility points to KV55 being Smenkhare who might have been a son of Tiya and Amenhotep III, making him Akhenaten's brother. The research confirms that Akhenaten had sons, a claim which I have alluded to throughout this discussion. Exactly who the sons were is problematic because there are no depictions of the boys or texts naming them. Outside sources provide the clues and the letters from vassals and kings, part of the cache found at Amarna, allude to Akhenaten's sons. Evidence from Tushratta of Mitanni Syria in Amarna letter EA 28 says '... for Tadu- Ḫeba, my daughter your wife, for the rest of your wives, for your *sons* ...'(my italics). EA 35 from the king of Alašiya, king of Cyprus says '... for your household, your wives, your *sons*...' and EA 41 from the great king of Hatti, Suppiluliumas says '... for your [wives], your *sons*...'.
sons...'.

The diplomatic correspondence (Moran 1992:xxv) between the kingdoms indicated the alliances of brotherhood, friendship and knowledge of circumstances in the Egyptian royal house. These friendships and alliances were often made stronger by marriages and an exchange of goods. Aside from the large dowries that accompanied these young royal princesses to Egypt, several palace attendants would stay on in Egypt. Undoubtedly they would continue the worship of their own gods. Amarna letter EA 23 describes the visit of goddess Sauska from Ninevah sent by Tushratta of Mitanni. This infusion of cultures would undoubtedly have an effect on both Mitannian and Egyptian religion.

I suggest that the epigraphical detail depicted in the royal tomb at Amarna may depict the birth of Moses, born from Tadukhepa (Kiya), a Syrian princess from Mitanni who died giving birth to

Akhenaten's son. It is furthermore possible that he was called Thutmosis, later to become a viceroy and 'son of Kush' (cf. 3.15).

7.3 PRIMARY EVIDENCE ANSWERS GOALS OF RESEARCH

Many plausible suggestions and debates have been put forward by scholars with regards to the dating of Moses and the Exodus from Egypt yet there is still no material evidence to substantiate a historical Moses (except what we get from the Biblical and extra-biblical sources). These chronological problems were discussed in Chapter One. I drew up a table which cited a few possibilities but the field is too exhaustive to cover all the different dates and names provided by scholars. The fact that there is no specific material evidence for the Exodus further complicates the issue of dating.

Akhenaten's name and that of other 18th Dynasty pharaohs, Nefernefruaten, Smenkhare, Tutankhamun and Ay were 'purged' from the king's lists in the later New Kingdom. The Amarna age was suppressed as discussed in Chapter Three. Hence the scholars, who recorded 'history' in later periods, including Hellenistic authors and Biblical authors in the Persian period, were oblivious to Akhenaten's radical reforms. This changed in 1887 with the discovery of the cuneiform texts at Amarna.

These chronological problems covered in Chapter One, provide different dates and time periods for a Moses type character and his exodus from Egypt. James's argument was also referred to (see discussion Chapter One).

Keeping in mind these chronological problems and my hypothesis that the dating of the Exodus would be at the end of the Amarna period, I communicated with two experts in the field of ancient Near Eastern Studies, Dr Sharon Zuckerman from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Dr Joyce Tyldesley, in an attempt to clarify these issues. Dr Zuckerman stated:

As for James's chronology, it does not stand the test of any archaeological or historical evidence that we have, and we have a lot of information on 2nd millennium interconnections and chronological synchronisms. Neither Hazor nor any other site shows any plausible evidence for this chronology (2011).

I asked Dr Joyce Tyldesley if DNA taken from mummies could provide an accurate dating. She replied that, to her knowledge, DNA taken from mummies has not been used for dating purposes. So

it seems an exact chronology for an exodus at the penultimate period of the Amarna age with Akhenaten and Moses as leaders cannot be ascertained with conviction.

The recent results published from the DNA taken from the 18th Dynasty mummies (see Chapter Two) provided the initial motivation for my research. I have referred to the KV55 mummy extensively in my study. The mummy, believed to be that of either Akhenaten or Smenkhare, has raised endless debate and experts have taken opposing positions as to the identity of the mummy so it is not certain whether the body belonged to Smenkhare or Akhenaten. As doubts remain regarding KV55's identity, Akhenaten's death continues to be shrouded in mystery. There is no definitive primary evidence of his burial artefacts and no epigraphical detail recording his death, rather, mystery surrounds his disappearance from the pages of Amarna history (discussed in Chapter Three). The DNA taken from the mummies has, however, been able to provide evidence of the biological relationships between them.

Primary evidence from Amarna uncovered in 2006 reveals bones of the people of that time. From the time of their deaths in the middle of the 14th century, these bones have remained in the desert sands of Amarna to be unearthed approximately 3300 years later. The picture painted of Utopia at Amarna seems to lack congruency as the bones reveal a darker side as suggested by Kemp (2012:227). Out of over 3000 bodies found, 200 people have been studied so far. The bones reflect injuries from blows, fractures of the spine from bearing heavy loads, evidence of torture and evidence of epidemics as young bodies are buried together. Could this be evidence of the hardships endured by the Hebrews? Perhaps the Biblical redactors are recounting a story relayed from an oral tradition which depicted the hardships of life at Amarna and not the storage cities of Pithom and Raamses. Could this be the story of oppression and the forced labour at the hands of a new pharaoh discussed in Exodus 1:11? The hiatus of approximately 600 years between the actual events and the recording into the Biblical account may suggest that some of the facts are not accurate. Kemp's findings at Amarna may be the 'kernel of historical truth' which Freud (1974:16) wished to bring to light in his study on *Moses and Monotheism*. Kemp's findings of bones in 2006 provide a new source of evidence, and, in my mind, this new evidence speaks volumes. Not only does the evidence show early death, possibly from torture, but the evidence shows that heavy loads were carried by the victims and it is also clear that the high incidence of death of young people at Amarna suggests an epidemic. These are all aspects reflected in the Exodus story provided in the Biblical account.

The plagues described in Exodus 7-12 and referred to in the above discussion might now have material evidence from Amarna to substantiate the Biblical texts. Material evidence suggests that a plague was spread by Egyptian prisoners of war to other parts of the ancient Near East. Archaeological evidence from Hittite sources provides proof of this plague (see discussion in Chapter Four). The plague might have been as a result of the consequences of natural geological disasters discussed in Chapter Four. The primary evidence from Kemp's bone studies from Amarna might be the archaeological evidence which scholars have been searching for and may provide details of the presence of the Hebrews in Egypt and reasons for a 'historical Exodus' from Egypt.

The debate and opposing positions of scholars identifying the 'Apiru with the Hebrews of the Biblical account, or perhaps the Shasu, have been discussed in Chapter Six. Irrespective of the true identity of these 'Apiru, the textual evidence indicates that they caused problems for the mayors and vassals in Canaan. Several Amarna letters bear evidence to the desperate pleas from Rib-Hadda, a mayor of Gubla, for assistance with troops (EA 126) (Moran 1992:205) or any other form of assistance but his requests were all ignored. These letters provide context to conditions during Akhenaten's reign. Akhenaten's *laissez-faire* attitude to the plight of his vassals is apparent by his choice not to answer several pleas for help. Perhaps these 'Apiru were loved by Akhenaten as Rib-Hadda suggests. Utilising material evidence, had Akhenaten lived in 2014, his behaviour would be questioned (see discussion in Chapter Three). He might have been diagnosed as bi-polar based on evidence from the texts, letters from Rib-Hadda and his own father-in-law, Tushratta. His testimony in stone on the boundary stela at Amarna provides evidence for Akhenaten's suspicion, paranoia and impulsivity. Akhenaten's testimony in stone with the hymn to the Aten, which may or may not have influenced Psalm 104 in the Hebrew Bible, shows an extremely gifted writer in tune with nature.

It appears that mindsets shift depending on natural phenomena and social conditions. It is understandable then that an event such as an earthquake, the consequence of which might have been a plague, would have had an enormous impact on the ideologies of the populace at that time. As discussed above, Amarna letters refer to the possibility of an earthquake and this aspect is further verified by Schaeffer's conclusion after leading the excavations at Ugarit. He suggests that evidence exists of an earthquake at the same time period as Amarna. His view has met with opposition as discussed above. Velikovsky's rendition of a natural disaster, as discussed in the previous chapter, further adds to the argument of a natural disaster at the time of the Exodus in the Biblical texts.

By connecting the characters Akhenaten and Moses via the theme of religion and the protagonists' religious ideologies, it seems possible to believe that Manetho and other extra-Biblical writers discussed above proposed that Moses was a priest from Heliopolis and that Akhenaten's Atenism also evolved from Heliopolis (Biblical On). As suggested by Breasted, there are other similarities which include the fact that both were born and raised in Egypt, both were teachers of a truth (or their truth from their direct conversations with god), both opposed the visual use of icons, both opposed idolatry, both were named as priests and initiates in Egyptian magic and wisdom, both had open air temples facing east, both venerated the sun, neither used anthropomorphic images to depict their gods, both worshipped an abstract form of their gods, both venerated the cult of the bull, both made use of sacred stones, obelisks or *massebot* for cultic worship and both of their gods were believed to be jealous gods although evidence from Amarna indicates that other gods might have continued to receive veneration such as Hathor and Thoth.

Cultic objects such as pottery serpents and figurines of Thoth have been found at Amarna. The Taanach cult stand attributed to the worship of Yahweh indicates not only solar worship, but other familiar images such as horses and bulls. Hathor/Asherah figurines indicate they were still venerated up to the 8th century BCE. The finds of Kuntillet 'Ajrud feature Asherah (Qudshu [Hathor]/Astarte) as consort to Yahweh, further evidence of polytheism or perhaps syncretism. Yahweh embodies both male and female attributes, both El and Asherah (male and female) (Smith 2002:200). I think the same applies to Akhenaten whose androgynous depictions clearly show both male and female aspects. From as early as the pyramid age, the process of absorbing other gods had begun as suggested by Breasted. That this process continued is likely, aspects of many gods coalescing to form one. Perhaps, as Assmann suggests, an Egyptian Moses needs reassessment. This can be done by revisiting extra-Biblical sources for a possible shift in perceptions. I am of the opinion that Akhenaten's religion developed over three generations (as seen in the chapter on Akhenaten's genealogy). The worship of the sun emerged with Thutmose IV which may have been an inherited 'God gene' which was passed on to his son Amenophis III, then on to Akhenaten. After the abandonment of Amarna, the tradition re-emerged with Akhenaten's son, Thutmose (possibly Moses), perhaps initially in Ethiopia or Sudan. The Egyptian Aten's solar aspects later merged with the solar aspects of Yahweh as many of the mixed multitudes may have moved from the south spreading this ideology through to Syro-Palestine (see discussion on the rise of Yahweh in Chapter Six). Hoffmeier (2015:264) points out Akhenaten's monotheistic religion lacked a committed group of disciples. Yahweh may have had his origins in the North Eastern Sinai. Akhenaten's father's temple in Soleb

reveals the name Yahweh, Akhenaten's followers may indeed have become disciples of a merged Aten/Yahweh worship.

The texts reveal that social and political conditions during the Amarna period were not as perfect as Akhenaten may have wished for. An exodus from Amarna at this time may have been a reality, perhaps an impulsive decision and one which Akhenaten may have made. It was apparent that Akhenaten was impulsive from his sudden departure from Thebes and he might have done the same from Amarna in the direction of Kush with his proposed 'son of Kush', the Viceroy of Kush, Thutmosis (see Chapter Three) and Nefertiti, the Pharaoh Nefernefruaten (See Chapter Three). I suggest Akhenaten's son was given a theomorphic name, formed with the name of the god Thoth (cult statues were found at Amarna [Kemp 2012:235]) and a familial name after his grandfather Thutmosis IV (Moses) (cf. 1.1.3 for Freud's suggestion about a man named Thutmosis).

7.4 THE BIBLICAL LAND OF CUSH (ETHIOPIA)

In light of the several extra-Biblical authors who discussed a Moses type figure being linked with Ethiopia, these connections may be of interest. Ethiopia may be the key to answering questions thus unlocking several problems covered in this discussion.

As discussed in section 6.3.4, Apuleius of Madauros suggests the Ethiopians and Egyptians were both the 'chosen people' (cited in Assmann 1997:227). A relief on the wall of a temple of Amon in Soleb (Sudan) is the first mention of the god Yahweh of Edom (Giveon 1964:415-416) (see 6.3.3). This temple is dated to Amenophis III, Akhenaten's father. I suggest that, in all probability, both Akhenaten and his sons would have been aware of the god Yahweh. Perhaps it was Amenophis III who introduced his son Akhenaten and his grandson Thutmosis (Moses) to the god Yahweh with his storm/warrior/solar/earthquake attributes.

There are several references which draw Ethiopia into the Biblical and extra-Biblical accounts that relate to Moses. In Chapter Six (see discussion on circumcision 6.3.4.2.1) Artapanus (*Praep.* 9.27, 3) claimed that Moses introduced circumcision to Ethiopia (Römer 2012:74), the discussion in Chapter Four covers the tradition regarding Moses and his Ethiopian wife, the Biblical text in Numbers 12:1 allude to Moses and the Cushite woman and the tradition of Moses being married to an Ethiopian princess which is related in Josephus' *Jewish Antiquities*. Römer (2012:75) states that many scholars have attempted to identify the Cushite woman with Zipporah.

Bennett (1971:495) suggests the 'Cushite' was *Pa-Nehesi* who may have been part of the entourage of King David. This, he argues, may reflect an African military presence amongst the Israelites. I concur with Bennett in the identification of the name as possibly being 'Cushite'. I wonder if Akhenaten's high priest Panehsy may have been recruited from Kush/Cush/Nubia during the Amarna period (see primary evidence from Amarna in the tomb of Panehsy at Amarna in the discussion in 5.7.1). It appears that Panehsy came from an impoverished background and rose in the ranks to become a high priest at Amarna. This is further evidence to suggest that Akhenaten may have had support in Ethiopia. Römer states that many scholars have attempted to identify Cush (Ethiopia) with Midian (2012:75). Chapter Two refers to the Ethiopian people, the Falasha. In spite of these Ethiopian Jews laying claim to descendency of one of the ten lost tribes, up to now their DNA cannot substantiate this claim (Hamer 2004:192). However this is not the case with the Lemba people whose priestly class are linked genetically to the Jewish people, inheriting their position through the male line (Le Roux 2003:64).

Numbers 25:7 not only refers to a plague that killed 24,000 people but refers to Aaron's grandson who bore the name Phinehas which means 'Nubian' or 'dark one' (Bennett 1971:497). This instance reminds me of the high priest Panehsy who was 'Chief Servitor of the Aten in the House of Aten in Akhetaten' (Kemp 2012:95). According to Meyer (1905:651), Pinchas was the name of the priestly family of Shiloh where the Ark of the Covenant was stationed prior to its removal to Jerusalem. Phinehas was an Egyptian name, according to Meyer (1905:651). I suggest that archaeologists are looking in the wrong area for evidence of a small exodus, perhaps from Amarna heading towards Ethiopia or the Sudan. The temples in the Sudan and Nubia may reveal further archaeological material in time to come. The DNA extracted from the Lemba clan offers scientific proof. Tracing the Y-chromosome of the *cohanim* priestly class indicates the survival, not only of a traditional culture, but also a DNA link to a people who travelled as far south as the tip of Africa (much later), perhaps via South Arabia or Ethiopia (Cush/Midia). The Y-chromosome provides conclusive evidence which links Middle Eastern men to a small group of Lemba living in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

Sigmund Freud talks of the confusion of centuries of contradictions which baffle efforts 'to bring to light the kernel of historical truth that lies behind them' (Freud 1974:16). Cyrus Gordon (1995:2788) stated: 'I wanted the freedom to go wherever the facts might lead, regardless of consensus, I was by nature a loner in quest of the truth'. Perhaps the 'truth' lies in Ethiopia and

further studies in Ethiopia may prove this to be true and provide archaeological evidence for the 'mixed multitude' that departed from Egypt.

This study has been one of enormous complexity, however, my aim to establish some connections between Akhenaten and Moses has, I believe, been accomplished. It is my opinion that Akhenaten may indeed have fulfilled the role of parent to Moses, perhaps this Moses may have been Thutmosis a hereditary son.

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