

A CONSIDERATION OF THE IDENTITY OF THE PHARAOH OF GENESIS 47

JAMES R. BATTENFIELD, TH.M.*

INTRODUCTION

The problem of this paper may be phrased in the question, who was the pharaoh of Genesis 47? In a day when questions of this kind on biblical chronology find no consensus of agreement among scholars, a problem such as this seems incapable of solution.¹ Certainly the possible dates given for Joseph cover a wide range. Among the main views, Erich Zehren has found Joseph in the person of Irsu the Syrian, who lived about 1200 B.C.² C. H. Gordon argued for a Ramesside date.³ H. H. Rowley affirmed that he connects the life of Jacob (and Joseph) with the Amarna age.⁴ Yet the majority of experts today assign Joseph to the time of the Hyksos.⁵ This last view is perhaps the most secure, since inscriptional evidence is almost totally lacking for the Hyksos period in Egypt's history.⁶ Could Joseph, however, have lived before the Hyksos domination? Some scholars are of this opinion. Gleason Archer,⁷ Merrill Unger,⁸ and John Rea,⁹ among others, would place Joseph in Egypt's Middle Kingdom period. J. Barton Payne,¹⁰ John Whitcomb,¹¹ and Leon

*Th.M. degree from Talbot Theological Seminary and now instructor in Old Testament and Hebrew at Grace Theological Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana.

1. Cf. Carl E. DeVries, "The Bearing of Current Egyptian Studies on the Old Testament," *New Perspectives on the Old Testament*, ed. by J. Barton Payne (Waco, Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1970), pp. 25-28.
2. Erich Zehren, *The Crescent and the Bull*, trans. by James Cleugh (New York: Hawthorn Books, Inc., 1962), p. 350.
3. Cyrus H. Gordon, *The Ancient Near East* (3rd edition, revised; New York: W. W. Norton and Company, Inc., 1965), pp. 139-41.
4. H. H. Rowley, *From Joseph to Joshua* (in *The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy*, 1948. Reprinted. London: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 113.
5. E. g., William F. Albright, *Yahweh and the Gods of Canaan* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969), pp. 153-54.
6. *Idem.*, *The Biblical Period from Abraham to Ezra* (revised and expanded; New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, Inc., 1963), p. 11.
7. Gleason L. Archer, Jr., *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), p. 205.
8. Merrill F. Unger, *Archaeology and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1964), p. 134.
9. John Rea, "The Time of the Oppression and the Exodus," *Grace Journal*, 2/1:7, Winter, 1961.
10. J. Barton Payne, *An Outline of Hebrew History* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1954), p. 47.
11. John C. Whitcomb, Jr., "Old Testament Patriarchs and Judges" (chronological chart, Chicago: Moody Press, 1968), explanatory sheet.

Wood¹² have stated that the coming of Jacob to Egypt should fall in the reign of Sesostriis III, or *ca.* 1875 B.C. I am in agreement with this last view, yet no matter what view one espouses for Joseph, several assumptions must first be made clear.

ASSUMPTIONS

Support for such a synchronism may be found in the familiar passages which give chronological notations. If one takes Thiele's 931 B.C. date for the dividing of the Monarchy,¹³ and adds the forty years of Solomon's reign (I Kings 11:42), he arrives at 971 B.C. I Kings 6:1, often claimed, yet still without proof, to be an editorial addition,¹⁴ gives 480 years as the time from Solomon's fourth year (967/66) to the Exodus, which would result in an Exodus date of *ca.* 1446/45 B.C. The 430 years of Exodus 12:40 are then added to this date, resulting in *ca.* 1875 B.C. for the beginning of the Egyptian sojourn. This, then, is the thesis of this paper: If the dates 1878-1843 B.C. are reasonable for Sesostriis III, then 1875 B.C. falls in his reign, and Sesostriis III should be the pharaoh of Genesis 47.

Among the verses just mentioned, certainly scholars are not agreed on how to understand Exodus 12:40-41. In defense of the accuracy of this passage as it reads in the Masoretic Text, the words of Keil and Delitzsch are still pertinent:

The sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt lasted 430 years. This number is not critically doubtful, nor are the 430 years to be reduced to 215 by an arbitrary interpolation, such as we find in the LXX. . . . This chronological statement, the genuineness of which is placed beyond all doubt by *Onkelos*, the *Syriac*, *Vulgate*, and other versions, is not only in harmony with the prediction in Gen. xv. 13, where the round number 400 is employed in prophetic style, but may be reconciled with the different genealogical lists, if we only bear in mind that the genealogies do not always contain a complete enumeration of all the separate links, but very frequently intermediate links of little historical importance are omitted, as we have already seen in the genealogy of Moses and Aaron ([Exod.] chap. vi. 18-20).¹⁵

Other passages bear on this problem. One of these is Galatians 3:17, a verse which I seek to harmonize with Exodus 12:40. The 430 years of Galatians 3:17 stretch from the ratification of the covenant to Jacob

12. Leon Wood, *A Survey of Israel's History* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1970), p. 114.
13. Edwin R. Thiele, *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings* (revised edition; Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), p. 52.
14. James A. Montgomery and Henry Snyder Gehman, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Kings* (in *The International Critical Commentary*. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1960), p. 144.
15. C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *The Pentateuch* (Vol. II of *Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament*, trans. by James Martin. Reprinted. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), p. 30.

(Gen. 46:1-4) just before he entered Egypt, until the Exodus of 1445 B.C.¹⁶ The 430 years I take most literally.

Genesis 15:13, 16 bear strongly on the problem of Joseph. I hold the 400 years of this passage to be literal years of literal affliction in Egypt. The time is from *ca.* 1845 B.C. to 1445 B.C. In a recent issue of *Bibliotheca Sacra*, Harold Hoehner has objected to those who say that the 400 years here constitute a rounded number.¹⁷ In contrast to those who have held my position before me, I will propose a possible *terminus a quo* for the 400 years later in this paper.

I assume also that Acts 7:6 refers to the same period of actual affliction as indicated in Genesis 15:13, 16. Concerning Acts 13:19, 20, Jack Riggs suggests that the 450 years involved include the Egyptian bondage of 400 years, the 40 years in the wilderness and some seven years for the conquest of Canaan.¹⁸ This would add up to 447 years, or about 450 years. However, I am indebted to Gleason Archer for what I consider to be the best handling of this passage which includes a textual problem. The earliest reading (found in Nestle's text, with a different alignment of the verses) states:

(19) And when he [Joshua] had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he gave them their land for an inheritance, (20) for about four hundred and fifty years: and after these things [*i.e.*, after the division of the land] he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.

Archer observed: "Apparently Paul had in mind the 480-year figure of I Kings 6:1, and then subtracted thirty years from the founding of the temple to approximate the era of Samuel."¹⁹ So Acts 13:19, 20 is actually irrelevant to the present discussion.

One final assumption is necessary. Egyptologists themselves are not absolutely agreed on the chronology of the Twelfth Dynasty in Egypt. The *Cambridge Ancient History* and Sir Alan Gardiner are essentially agreed, however, on *ca.* 1991-1786 B.C.,²⁰ and this will serve my purpose here. It is possible to be more specific with regard to Sesostri III himself, as Hayes points out:

For the fixing in time of the Egyptian Middle Kingdom and the periods preceding it the key date is the seventh year of the reign of King Sesostri III of the Twelfth Dynasty. In this year a heliacal rising of the star Sothis (our Sirius) was recorded on 16. viii of the 365-day civil calendar, a fact which, thanks to the regular displace-

16. Jack R. Riggs, "The Length of Israel's Sojourn in Egypt," *Grace Journal*, 12/1:28, Winter, 1971.

17. Harold W. Hoehner, "The Duration of the Egyptian Bondage," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, 126/504:312, October-December, 1969.

18. Riggs, "The Length of Israel's Sojourn in Egypt," p. 29.

19. Archer, *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction*, p. 213.

20. I. E. S. Edwards, *et al.*, eds., *The Cambridge Ancient History* (3rd edition, revised; Cambridge: University Press, 1971), I, 2, 996; Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (reprinted; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. 439.

ment of this calendar in relation to the true astronomical year, allows the year in question to be placed between 1876 and 1864 B.C., with every probability favouring 1872 B.C.²¹

From this it would seem that one is on rather stable chronological ground in the reign of Sesostri III, since Hayes uses this 1872 date as a starting-point for dating the beginning of the entire Middle Kingdom at 2133 B.C.

These are my assumptions concerning the biblical chronology. It is upon this foundation that I now wish to build, with a discussion of Sesostri III as the possible pharaoh of Genesis 47.

ARGUMENTS FOR THE SESOSTRI III VIEW

The Twelfth Dynasty in Egypt until 1878 B.C.

It must be remembered that the reign of Sesostri III follows rather closely upon the state of Syro-Egyptian affairs as reflected in the famous Story of Sinuhe.²² The situation is one of broad Egyptian control in Syria and Palestine. It would seem that Egypt did not have to put down any major threats to her national security during this period. Sinuhe himself was a military commander as an exile in Syria, showing that inter-tribal warfare was most common among the Asiatics themselves.²³ In my opinion, the Story of Sinuhe paints a rather believable background for the life of Jacob and his sons, particularly with regard to the stories of Genesis 34, 37 and 39.

The Reign of Sesostri III

Now we come to the reign of Sesostri III himself. The Stela of *Khusobk (Sebek-khu)* furnishes the only information of a campaign in Syria by any Twelfth Dynasty pharaoh. Hayes believes that the battle was very minor, and evidently the Egyptian rear guard was attacked by Asiatics from Shechem. The pharaoh involved was definitely Sesostri III.²⁴ The time, all-important here, was at least *after* the first of Sesostri's Nubian campaigns.²⁵ If the 1875 B.C. date is correct, it is noteworthy that it is not until Sesostri's eighth year,²⁶ *ca.* 1870 B.C., that he dredged around the rapids at Aswan cataract, signalling his preparation for an invasion of Nubia. Campaigns against Nubia took place in years 8, 10, 16

21. William C. Hayes, *Chronology: I. Egypt—to the End of the Twentieth Dynasty* (in chap. VI of *The Cambridge Ancient History*. 3rd edition, revised; Cambridge: University Press, 1970), I, 1, 173-74.
22. John A. Wilson (trans.), "The Story of Si-nuhe" (in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, James B. Pritchard, editor. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 18-22.
23. *Ibid.*, "Sinuhe," lines 100 ff.
24. William C. Hayes, *The Middle Kingdom in Egypt* (in *The Cambridge Ancient History*. 3rd edition, revised; Cambridge: University Press, 1971), I, 2, 508.
25. James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Records of Egypt* (reprinted; New York: Russell and Russell, Inc., 1962), I, 303 (section 678).
26. *Ibid.*; Hayes, *The Middle Kingdom in Egypt*, pp. 506-7.

and 19 of the king's reign.²⁷ Here is the point: one would not expect a king to go to war during a famine year.²⁸ The seven-year famine of Genesis 47 was *ca.* 1877-70 B.C., according to my present reckoning. The settling of Jacob's family in Goshen took place before Sesostris' first Nubian campaign, in my opinion.

His capital. The capital of this pharaoh's day was at *It-towy* (Lisht).²⁹ Gardiner has remarked that in "The Instruction for King Merikare" (Pap. Petersburg 1116A, recto, 71, 102) the term *hnmw* meant the old Memphitic Residence.³⁰ Hayes says that *hnmw* was used similarly from Amenemhet I on in the Middle Kingdom to indicate the royal Residence at *It-towy*, "and is not during this period employed for any other town."³¹ Even in the late Thirteenth Dynasty the Residence was still at *It-towy*.³²

In order to meet the conditions implied in the Joseph story, the location of the capital must be neither too near nor too far from Goshen. *It-towy* is not far from the Delta, and yet far enough to harmonize with the well-known aversion that the Egyptians had for shepherds (Gen. 46:34).

Was there a secondary capital in the Delta? There was royal interest in the delta region, and, according to Van Seters, Sesostris III himself had a secondary capital there, perhaps at *Khata'na-Qantir*.³³ It is true that *Khata'na* was favored by the kings of the Middle Kingdom. The site then suffered a decline after the Hyksos period but was revived during the Nineteenth Dynasty. Relevant to this study are the words of Uphill:

The evidence for the Twelfth Dynasty town is much more certain than that relating to the Old Kingdom. A gateway of king Amenemhat I later renewed by Senwosret III was found at Tell Qirgafa in a mound about two hundred meters northwest of *Khata'na*, which itself lies about three kilometers southwest of *Qantir*. This doorway is described by Senwosret as being in the *djadja(t)* of Amenemhat, a word often translated as a "columned" or "audience hall." A Middle Kingdom residence on this spot may thus be indicated; Amenemhat certainly seems to have built a temple nearby. At Tell ed-Daba'a to the east in another mound statues of queen Sobnofru have been discovered. . . .³⁴

27. Jean Vercoutter, "Egypt in the Middle Kingdom," *The Near East: The Early Civilizations*, Jean Bottero, et al., editors (New York: Delacorte Press, 1967), p. 376.

28. On this type of reasoning, cf. Donald B. Redford, "The Hyksos Invasion in History and Tradition," *Orientalia*, 39:23, n. 2., 1970.

29. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, p. 127.

30. William C. Hayes, "Notes on the Government of Egypt in the Late Middle Kingdom," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 12:35, January, 1953, citing Gardiner, *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, 1:28, n. 8.

31. *Ibid.*

32. *Ibid.*, p. 34.

33. John Van Seters, *The Hyksos A New Investigation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 93.

34. E. P. Uphill, "Pithom and Raameses: Their Location and Significance," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies*, 27:313, October, 1968.

The span of time from Amenemhet I to Queen Sobnofru (Sebeknofru³⁵) involves the whole Middle Kingdom period. This shows pharaonic interest in the delta to the end of the Twelfth Dynasty and covers the time of Joseph nicely. One may agree with Van Seters' reconstruction when he says:

...The evidence seems to indicate that the Eastern nome, and Khata'na in particular, steadily grew in political importance in the late Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties. In the light of Senowsret III's administrative reform—still effective in the Thirteenth Dynasty—this new political significance of Khata'na could only be as a secondary capital for the bureaus of the Northern *w'rt*.³⁶

Joseph gathered grain all over Egypt and put it in local repositories (Gen. 41:48, 49). However, that there was an Egyptian granary in the Delta at the time of Sesostris III hardly needs justification. Certainly one would expect the fertile region to be the country's "breadbasket" at any time. It will be remembered that Goshen

...is in the triangle formed by Wadi Tumilat, the isthmus, and the edge of the cultivated land beginning at Pi-Soped (now called Saft el-Henneh), and extending to Tjaru near Kantarah.³⁷

This is important, because Genesis 46:29 states that Joseph prepared his chariot to go up to meet his father Jacob on Jacob's arrival in Goshen. Chariots were not employed in long journeys; in Egypt a boat was used for such purposes.³⁸ If Joseph and Sesostris III were dwelling at *Khata'na-Qantir*, however, on the very edge of the Goshen triangle, a brief chariot ride would have been most appropriate. Joseph also told his brothers that they would be near (*qarob*) him when they came to reside in Goshen (Gen. 45:10). This also dictates that Joseph's base of operations was in the north.

Sesostris III's administrative reform. The major point of my presentation that needs to be acknowledged as bearing on the problem of Joseph is the administrative reform of Sesostris III.

The fact of this governmental change has long been known among historians. Eduard Meyer in his *Geschichte des Altertums* was aware of the reform.³⁹ W. C. Hayes knew of Sesostris' action as he indicated in 1953 in *The Scepter of Egypt*.⁴⁰ More recently, speaking of the reign of this king, Hayes said:

His reign was distinguished by two achievements of major impor-

35. Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, p. 439.

36. Van Seters, *The Hyksos*, pp. 95-96.

37. Pierre Montet, *Egypt and the Bible*, trans. by Leslie R. Keylock (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), p. 8.

38. *Ibid.*

39. Hayes, "Notes . . .," p. 31, n. 6, citing Eduard Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertums*, Band I, 2, section 285.

40. William C. Hayes, *The Scepter of Egypt* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1953), I, 196.

tance, not only to his own time, but also to the future history of his country.

Under Ammenemies I and his successors the nomarchs of Upper and Middle Egypt... had regained much of the power and independence enjoyed by the "feudal lords" of Heracleopolitan times and had once more begun to vie with kings in wealth and display...

The situation evidently proved intolerable to the autocratic nature of the third Sesostris, and some time during the latter half of his reign he appears to have shorn the provincial nobles of their traditional rights and privileges and reduced them to the status of political nonentities. How this was achieved is not known; but in the reign of Sesostris III the series of great provincial tombs came to an end, and no more is heard of the "Great Chiefs" of the nomes and their local courts. Instead, the provinces of Lower Egypt, Middle Egypt, and Upper Egypt were administered from the Residence city by three departments (*waret*) of the central government, known, respectively, as the Northern *Waret*, the *Waret* of the South, and the *Waret* of the Head of the South. Each of these departments was headed by an official called a Reporter who numbered among his assistants a Second Reporter, a Council or Court (*djadjat*), *wartu*-officers, and staffs of scribes. Like the departments of justice, agriculture, labour, and the treasury, those charged with the administration of the three main geographical divisions of the country were under the over-all direction of the office of the vizier.⁴¹

Even though the fact of the reform is known, its cause remains a mystery to scholars. Quite recently, Vercoutter stated:

... One of the first official acts of Khakaure-Sen-Wosret III was to abolish the very office of the nomarch. We do not know his reasons. Had the princes tried to revolt on his accession? Or was it simply that the new king's authoritarian character could no longer support the independence of his nobles? Our sources tell us nothing. We only know that from about 1860 B.C., toward the middle of the reign, the texts speak no more of nomarchs...⁴²

Could it be that the cause of Sesostris' reform is to be found in Genesis 47:20? That text reads: "So Joseph bought all the land of Egypt for Pharaoh, for every Egyptian sold his field, because the famine was severe upon them. Thus the land became Pharaoh's" (N.A.S.B.).

The statements of Hayes and Vercoutter amount to the fact that feudalism, which had begun in the Old Kingdom in Upper Egypt, came to an end in the reign of Sesostris III.⁴³ Redford recently stated that

41. *Idem.*, *The Middle Kingdom in Egypt*, pp. 505-6.

42. Vercoutter, "Egypt in the Middle Kingdom," pp. 373-74; cf. Etienne Drioton and J. Vandier, *Les Peuples de l'Orient méditerranéen. II. L'Égypte* (3rd edition; Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1952), p. 253.

43. Cf. Wolfgang Schenkel, "Zum Feudalismus der ersten Zwischenzeit Agyptens," *Orientalia*, 33:263, 1964: "Wie Eduard Meyer in seiner Geschichte des Altertums entworfen und vor allem Kees weiter ausgearbeitet hat, entstand im Laufe des AR in Oberagypten eine Feudalherrschaft, die in der "Herakleopolitenzeit" ihre Blüte erreichte, unter anderem Vorzeichen im Beginn der 12. Dynastie fortlebte und schliesslich zur Zeit Sesostris' III. ihr Ende fand.

feudalism was not reinstated until the time of the Hyksos.⁴⁴ If the present hypothesis that Genesis 47:20 marks a cessation of feudalism is correct, it would seem that Joseph could not have lived 215 years later in Fifteenth Dynasty, Hyksos-dominated Egypt, because at that time (1674-1570)⁴⁵ feudalism was being reinstated and not abolished.

The End of the Twelfth Dynasty

Following Sesostri III the Egyptian king list reads as follows: Amenemhet III (1842-1797); Amenemhet IV (1798-1790); and Queen Sobkneferu (1789-1786).⁴⁶ Perhaps it is from this period of decline that a further supposition may be made concerning the Joseph story and its sequel. In Genesis 15:13, 14 God said to Abraham:

Know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, where they will be enslaved and oppressed four hundred years. But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward they will come out with many possessions (N.A.S.B.).

This prediction of Israel's affliction may be compared chronologically with the status of a group of Asiatic slaves held in Egypt. Posener indicated that it is apparently from the reign of Amenemhet III that references to Asiatic slaves begin.⁴⁷ Albright discussed these names in 1954. Examples of Semitic names are: 'Aqba' and 'Aqabtu' or 'Aqbatu', names very similar to Ya'aqob, "Jacob."⁴⁸ No one knows the precise moment when one of these slaves who was also a descendant of Jacob became enslaved, and the Egyptian affliction began. But the four hundred years of Genesis 15:13, 16 may be reckoned from ca. 1845 B.C., at the very close of Sesostri's reign, just before his son Amenemhet III succeeded him, to ca. 1445 B.C., i.e., the early date for the Exodus.

CONCLUSION

Implications for the Joseph Story

Jacob answered Pharaoh's questioning about his age by giving the answer that he was 130 years old (Gen. 47:9). To be 130 at this point, 1875 B.C., Jacob would have had to be born in 2005 B.C. It is known from Genesis 41:46 that Joseph was thirty when he was exalted in Pharaoh's court; seven good years have passed (Gen. 41:47-53) along with two years of the predicted famine (Gen. 45:6, 11). This made Joseph 39 in 1875, so Joseph was born in 1914 B.C., during the reign of

44. Redford, "The Hyksos Invasion . . ." p. 18.

45. William C. Hayes, *Egypt: From the Death of Ammenemes III to Seqenenre II* (fasc. 6 in the revised *Cambridge Ancient History*, Vol. II, Chap. II. Cambridge: University Press, 1965), pp. 15ff.

46. Edwards, *The Cambridge Ancient History*, I, 2, 996.

47. Georges Posener, "Les Asiatiques in Egypte sous les XII^e et XIII^e dynasties," *Syria*, 34:146, 1957; cf. William C. Hayes, editor, *A Papyrus of the Late Middle Kingdom in the Brooklyn Museum [Papyrus Brooklyn 35.1446]* (Brooklyn, New York: The Brooklyn Museum, 1955), pp. 87ff.

48. William F. Albright, "Northwest Semitic Names in a List of Egyptian Slaves from the Eighteenth Century B.C.," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 74:231, 1954.

Amenemhet II (1927-1894). Joseph was 17 (Gen. 37:2) when in 1897 B.C. he was sold to the caravaners, shortly before the end of the reign of Amenemhet II. Potiphar (Gen. 37, 39) was in this king's service, according to the present reckoning. Time passed with the coming of Joseph into Potiphar's favor, with the notations in Genesis 39:7, 10, 21, with the period of the butler and baker story in chapter forty, and with the "two years" of 41:1. So the events covering Genesis 37:36-41:1 were at the minimum three years and very probably nearer a maximum thirteen. According to my understanding of Genesis 41:46 Joseph was exalted by Sesostris II at age thirty in 1884 B.C. It is essential to the Joseph story that the same pharaoh that dreamed the famine dreams should be the pharaoh that rewarded Joseph's interpreting those same dreams; otherwise, violence is done to the narrative. It is likely, then, that the years in Potiphar's confidence exceeded those spent in prison, and that Joseph was imprisoned in the reign of Sesostris II and exalted by the same monarch. Although much could be said concerning the distinctive Egyptian customs in Genesis 41, *et passim*, these matters are considered so well known as not to deserve special comment.

SUMMARY

Piecing together the strands of evidence, I offer the following summary in support of the Sesostris III hypothesis: (1) biblical chronological references are allowed to stand without emendation; (2) Egyptian chronology does not render such a possibility inadmissible; (3) the locations of the Residence at *It-towy* and the capital of the Northern *waret* at *Khata'na-Qantir* satisfy the geographical situation implied in such verses as Genesis 45:10 and 46:29; (4) the presence of the primary Egyptian granary in the Delta fits the Joseph story; (5) the Egyptian aversion to shepherds (Gen. 46:34), *i.e.*, the distance from *It-towy* to Goshen, harmonizes with biblical notations; (6) no foreign wars took Sesostris from his court until after the famine was over; (7) the famine itself is given proper credence in this view. Sesostris III bought out the landed nomarchs not because of some sort of social revolution, but because of an economic disaster, a severe food shortage.

As I have pointed out, everyone must make assumptions on vexed problems such as this one. If the events of Genesis 47 did occur about 1875 B.C., a credible Egyptian *Sitz im Leben* for the Joseph story is most feasible.