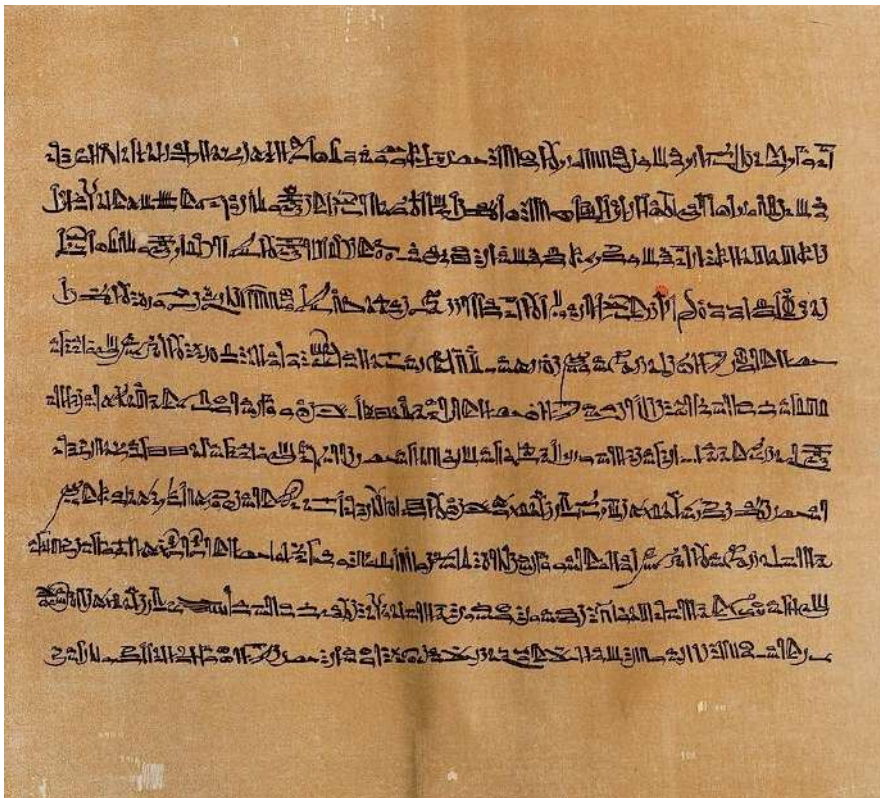


Short History of Palestine

By Tanya Cariina Newbury-Smith, PhD

The earliest records of 'Palestine' come from Egypt in the time of Ramses III (1184-1153 BC), in the (c. 1152 BCE) *Papyrus Harris I*, also named the *Great Harris Papyrus*. There are 1,500 lines of hieroglyphic text in the tomb, found near Mediate Habu on the Nile near Luxor. The people referred to are PLST (Palestinians, pronounced 'peleset') in the hieroglyphic texts: "I extended all the boundaries of Egypt; I overthrew those who invaded them from their lands. I slew the Denyen in their isles, the Thekel and the Peleset (Pw-r-s-ty) were made ashes." (Papyrus Harris I Pl. LXXVI, British Museum EA 9999)



Papyrus Harris I Pl. LXXVI, British Museum EA 9999

There is another hieroglyphic recording of Palestinians in the

Mortuary Temple of Ramesses III, dated to 1150 BCE, also in the Medinat Habu Temple. Again, this refers to the Peleset (PLST) as the people who fought Ramesses III. (Bruyère 1929-1930)



Medinat Habu Temple, Luxor, Egypt

The Merneptah Stele, an inscription by the pharaoh Merneptah (1213 –1203 BCE) referred to the Canaanites (Palestinians) and tribe of Israel both, in the text referring to a battle campaign in Canaan.



Merneptah Stele, Egyptian Museum Cairo

These predate any mentioned of any biblical *Kingdom* of Saul/Israel, written at the earliest recording of the Bible circa 1020 BCE.

The Assyrians (c. 800 BCE) referred to the region as Palashtu or Pilistu. In the 5th century BCE, Herodotus wrote 'The Histories about Palaistine', which included the Judaeen mountains and the Jordan Rift Valley, as forming part of the 5th Persian satrapy.



1250 CE Map of Palestine

A century later Aristotle referred to Palestine. Later Romans referred the area as part of Syria Palaestina. This is how it has historically appeared on maps.



1600 CE Map of Palestine

The Hebrew name of Palestine, translated as *Philistia* in English, is used more than 250 times in the Bible.



1612 Map of Palestine

On the other hand, Israel does not appear on any map for the land area until a political map from the 1920s.

There is a straight contiguous line from the Ramses III's reference to the land of the PLST (Palestine) people to the Palestine of today.



1745 Map of Palestine

Babylon conquered the lands in 597 BCE. By 538 BCE, the lands were conquered by the Persians, then Seleucids, then Romans, then the Muslim Caliphate, then the Ayyubid Sultanate, then the Mamluk Sultanate, then the Ottoman Empire who ruled Palestine from 1516-1917.



1851 Map of Palestine

After the Muslims conquered Palestine in 636 CE — with the exception of a short interval of the reign of the Crusaders (1099-1187 CE) — it was ruled by the aforementioned Muslim dynasties until after the First World War. After WW1, a distinct country of Palestine re-appeared.



1864 Map of Palestine

For administration purposes the Ottomans divided Palestine into different Eyalet or Sanjak (i.e., regions) but the term Palestine was still very much a collective for its component areas.



1902 Map of Political Divisions of Palestine



1920 British Survey of Palestine, Times Atlas