

Simultaneously with the appearance of Israel in history, the Egyptians were engaged in an ongoing conflict with the Sea Peoples. This designation refers to a number of Indo-European peoples from the Aegean world who began to make their presence known in Egypt and the Levant by land and by sea. The most significant Sea Peoples for our purposes is the Plst in the Egyptian record (Egypt had no vowels). They are called Peleset with the addition of the e vowel. To Israel, they were the pelistim, in Aramaic, the Palshtin, and in Assyrian the Palashtu. Herodotus in Book III 91 refers to the region as Palestine Syria probably drawing on the Aramaic version since Aramaic was then the lingua franca. The word Palestine with the plst root derives from these people who were not Arab and not Semitic.

The people known as Arabs first appear in the archaeological record in the Middle Kingdom Egyptian story of Sinuhe as "people of the east" in the Syrian/Arabian desert. When they became involved in the geopolitics and international trade of the 9th and 8th centuries in the conflicts among the Assyrians, Aramaeans, and Israel they were referred to as Arabs in both the biblical and Assyrian records. In 716 BCE, Sargon II following the conquest of Israel and deportations of the Israelites also deports Arabs. They are forcibly relocated to Samaria near modern Nablus, the first known instance of Arab people permanently living in the land of Canaan.

Their first appearance in history was over a century earlier in

853 BCE. At that time a major coalition of the willing was created among the West Semitic peoples to stop an invasion from the east by Assyria. According to the battle inscription, the Arabs engaged the Assyrians with a force of 1000 camels. It has been suggested that the Arab claim to fame was their use of camels which led to the Arabs being regarded as a superb police and guard force which also could provide swift transport when needed, such as in retreat. It also helped give them control of the trade route to the spices of Sheba in modern Yemen, a route that Assyrians sought to control. The Arabs choose to ally with their partners in trade, Ahab's Israel, the leading provider of chariots to the coalition. It is quite possible that the partnership began in the time of Ahab's father, Omri, and that the prevalence of Arab names with the "mr" root may be an offshoot of the friendship and respect among the two peoples then.

Thus there once was a time when Arabs and Israel were allies and Israel was part of the Semitic world around it as brother, cousin, and husband to its many peoples, when the image of Isaac and Ishmael standing together as one matched the historical record of 853 BCE. One prays that we won't have to wait another 2861 years for these peoples to be allies and part of the same family once again.

Note: This abstract will be published in the fall issue of Israel Horizon. A full-length version will be published in the proceedings of the conference.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS: The American Revolution in the Hudson Valley – June 27-July 1 • The Greater Capital Region Teacherhostel – July 7-11 • The Hudson River: The Rivertown Experience – July 21-25 • Forts of the Empire State – August 3-7 • The Ride of Sybil Ludington, Mahopac – September 13 • The American Revolution Symposium, Garrison – September 27 • Integrating Local History into the 4-11th Grade Curriculum, Manhattanville College, Purchase, NY – October 21 • Supermarket Aisle Archaeology and the Bible, Harvard University – November 23

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The Battle of Saratoga: A British Perspective

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The morning of May 31, 2008 a group of teachers and lifelong learners gathered in the Saratoga Springs Visitors Center. As new participants in a Teacherhostel™ sponsored by the Institute for History, Archaeology, and Education, we had no idea what to expect. Our two days of intense study of the Battle of Saratoga proved to be both informative and entertaining, providing us with a new perspective on a battle that we've been teaching about for years.

First on the morning's agenda was Ray Raymond, a Gilder Lehrman Fellow and former British diplomat, from SUNY and The United States Military Academy. He spoke on the failure of the British strategy and planning which led to Burgoyne's defeat. Professor Raymond captured our attention with his engaging presentation style and charming British accent. In his hour long presentation, we gained a new perspective on how the British lost Saratoga and a snapshot of the unique personalities of the various people engaged in the battle including Benedict Arnold.

This was followed by a presentation

from Leslie Potter a descendent of John Freeman of Freeman's Farm from the battlefield and an attorney who works with historic sites. Potter presented a unique court hearing in which she refuted Burgoyne's rationale for the British defeat. Potter's research into the history of Burgoyne and his writings was extensive. We had the opportunity to learn more from her in a post-dinner presentation on Patroonships and land grants in Saratoga County.

After a morning of educational presentations, we saw the battle come to life by walking the grounds of the Saratoga Battlefield. With Joe Craig, an incredibly knowledgeable tour



Artwork depicts grounds of the Saratoga Battlefield

guide from the National Park Service, we visited the Neilson Farm and Bemis Heights. A sudden storm cut short our tour while providing us with a first-hand experience of the condi-



tions when Burgoyne retreated.

Our battlefield trip concluded with a visit from a Revolutionary re-enactor who portrayed a British surgeon. We learned the process of becoming a re-enactor, the research involved in accurate portrayal of the time period, and the cost involved in travel, costuming and weaponry.

A lovely dinner at Panza's Restaurant concluded our day. According to a veteran of the IHARE Teacherhostels™, "You are always well fed." We found that to be very true as the weekend progressed

We resumed the next morning in Saratoga Springs to hear Ray Raymond speak on "Saratoga and Britain's Strategic Dilemma." According to Ray's presentation, the Battle of Saratoga was not only the most important battle of the Revolutionary War, but also of the entire late 18th century. It transformed the conflict from a civil war fought on land to a world war fought at sea for which Britain was unprepared. Saratoga forced the British to re-order their priorities and to withdraw forces to protect their interests in the Caribbean, thereby paving the way for the American victory.

This was followed by a walking tour of Saratoga Springs's Congress Park where we learned about the rich history of Saratoga.

We went from there to lunch at Randy's, in Schuylerville and then we made a quick trip to the Victory Monument and the Schuyler House. Unfortunately, we did not get to thoroughly explore these two sites before we embarked on a paddleboat cruise of the Champlain Canal and Hudson River. The canal cruise was a pleasant way to end the weekend and provided a river perspective of Bemis Heights and the site of Burgoyne's surrender. Time on the boat also enabled us to share ideas about how we would incor-



Spit and Spat Congress Park

porate what we had learned into our instruction.

As participants in the American Dream Project a Teaching American History Grant through OCM BOCES and SUNY Cortland, we have spent a year studying the American Revolution. We have heard many lectures from experts on the era and spent a weekend touring historic Philadelphia. We will culminate our experience with an intensive week-long course at SUNY Cortland in July. As a requirement of our grant we will be creating a video story about the Revolutionary War. Our experience at the Teacherhostel™ gave us critical information that will serve to enhance our final project.

Our weekend experience at the IHARE Teacherhostel™ was enjoyable and educational and provided us with many new contacts in the realm of history education. We enjoyed our interaction with fellow teachers from throughout New York and New England as well as the life-long learners we met. The quality of the speakers and program were clearly exceptional. We look forward to participating in future Teacherhostels™ under the excellent leadership of Dr. Peter Feinman.

Note: This article will be published in Social Studies Dockets in the 2008/2009 school year.



Schuyler House

Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Pathways to Peace

March 28-29-2008 Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT

When Israel and the Arabs Were Allies Peter Feinman

Yasser Arafat used to claim that he was the descendant of Canaanites. He also would declare himself to be the descendant of Jebusites. By the term "Canaanite," Arafat meant the biblical land of Canaan. As it turns out, the term has been discovered archaeologically primarily from the second millennium BCE to refer essentially to the same land as meant by both the Bible and Arafat. There is no indication that Arafat actually knew the term "Canaan" had been archaeologically verified but apparently in this instance, unlike with the Solomonic Temple, Arafat was willing to accept the biblical account as accurate.

There is no archaeological reference to the term "Jebusite." This designation only exists in the Bible. It refers to inhabitants in the city of Jerusalem prior to the conquest by David. By contrast, the archaeological record, primarily from Egyptian Execration Texts and the Amarna Letters from the Middle Kingdom and the Amarna Age suggests that the name Jerusalem was known and used centuries before David. Here Arafat was willing to vouch for the biblical record without any supporting archaeological evidence.

The reasons for his willingness to accept the biblical terms in these two instances should be obvious. Arafat was playing a game of one-upmanship on Israel. In effect he was saying, "I see your Book of Joshua claims of conquest and predate you. We were in the land first." Ironically, in Lebanon, the exact opposite scenario prevails. In Lebanon, Christians are the descendants of the ancient Phoenicians while Moslems are the descendants of the Arabs who arrived with Islam. So in Lebanon the Moslems are not the descendants of Canaanites from the Bronze Age (2000-1200 BCE) but of the late arriving Arabs in the 7th century CE while in Palestine the Moslems are descendants of the of the Bronze Age Canaanites even though there is no mention of the Arabs in Bronze Age in the archaeological record, no facts on the ground to support the claim! These examples reveal how the past is manipulated to suit the political agenda in the present and the need not to be ignorant of that past if one is to effectively respond.

Let's examine three words from the archaeological record and see what they indicate about the actual history in the region: Israel, Palestine, and Arabs. The term "Israel" first appears in the archaeological record in the time of Pharaoh Merneptah (1212-1202), the son who finally succeeded his long-lived and more famous father, Ramses II (1279-1212). In a stele or inscribed rock monument at his mortuary temple in Thebes, Merneptah claimed in his "Victory Hymn" to have "destroyed the seed of Israel." Ignoring exactly what he meant by that reference, a geographical analysis of the entire hymn suggests that Israel lived in the hill-country known today as the West Bank. Archaeological surveys confirm that at precisely this time hundreds of new settlements were formed in this area. The stele was discovered in 1896 and people to this very day remain remarkably ignorant of it.

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