

# Councils of War

## — From the 2nd Intermediate Period till the End of Thutmose III Reign —

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### 1 Introduction

Among the many wars which depicted (by scenes), and documented (by military texts) at ancient Egyptian history, some of them had combined “council of war,” which was held by the king “Pharaoh” and his councilors to take an essential and a hard decision to begin the war, or choose military tactic.

The main event at these councils is the dialogue between the king and his councilors, which reflects that the king had the ideal solution and astute strategic plans.

This role of the councilors of the council of war was considered, and the king was listening carefully to their advice.<sup>1</sup>

The pattern is basically that the king makes a decision against the doubts and uncertainties of his councilors and demonstrates his superior judgment by the ensuing success.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is known from Old kingdom that the king had his special courtiers and advisors. So there is the common image of the king sitting in his palace, often in the “djadw” the audience hall, speaks to his counselors or friends about something serious or sometimes for fun.

<sup>2</sup> H. Goedicke, *The Quarrel of Apophis and Seqenenre*, Chicago, 1986, p.1.

## 2 Several Kinds of Councils were Being at Ancient Egyptian History

### 2.1 Political Council, 4th Dyn. (Old Kingdom)

At Westcar Papyrus<sup>3</sup> (= Berlin Papyrus 3033), we find like an political council at the form of “entertaining council,” which was held by the king Khufu (Cheops)<sup>4</sup>. It consists of a cycle of tales within a single framing tale concerning king Khufu and the birth of the kings who are to succeed his line. The episode begins when the king one day felt with boredom, so he went around every chamber of his palace to find something for himself to entertain.<sup>5</sup>

And the teachings for Merikare emphasis the king's need for loyal council: “Great is the great man whose great ones are great; brave is the king who possesses an entourage; a noble man is wealthy in great ones.”<sup>6</sup> Although this does not state that the king created his decrees with the help of his courtiers it certainly shows the importance of courtiers to the king. Notably it acknowledges the king's need for others.<sup>7</sup>

At Middle Kingdom literary Texts, some of it are describing the King residing in his palace, waiting to be diverted by some wise men (for example the Berlin leather Roll of Senusert I ).<sup>8</sup>

### 2.2 Religious Council, 13th Dyn (Middle Kingdom)

Like the council of the king Nefer-hotep I , when he held his council at his audience hall at his palace, in order to prepare his sacred visiting journey to the temple of god Osiris at Abydos.<sup>9</sup>

## 3 Council of war

The first witness of these kinds of councils was dating to the 11th Dynasty (Middle Kingdom), at the reign of king Montu-Hotep II<sup>10</sup>, when the king summoned his military commanders to take an essential urgent decision.

After that some of war councils were holding at ancient Egyptian history, that the research

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<sup>3</sup> H. Jenni, “Der Papyrus Westcar,” *SAK* 25, 1998, pp. 113-141.

<sup>4</sup> Second king of the 4th Dynasty.

<sup>5</sup> A. M. Blackman, *The story of King Kheops and the Magicians*, London, 1988, pp. 1-17.

<sup>6</sup> J. F. Quack, *Studien zur lehre für Merikare*, Wiesbaden, 1992, p. 30.

<sup>7</sup> G. J. Shaw, *Royal authority in Egypt's 18th Dynasty*, Oxford, 2008, p. 75.

<sup>8</sup> A. de Buck, “The Building Inscription of the Berlin Leather Roll,” *Studia Aegyptiaca* 1, Rome, 1938, pp. 48-57.

<sup>9</sup> G. Callender, “The Middle Kingdom Renaissance,” in I. Shaw (ed.), *Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford, 2003, p. 179.

<sup>10</sup> Mohsen Negm, “Council of War of King Montu-hotep (neb-hepet-Re?),” unpublished research.

chooses the important ones of them.

### 3.1 The Councils of War at the Second Intermediate Period

At that period, the country was invaded by foreign people, the Hyksos (or the Asiatics), and Egypt was divided into parts. The Hyksos predominated the Delta region until middle Egypt (Asyut province), at the other side, the governors of Thebes controlled from Asyut till Elephantine (Aswan now), and the Nubia was ruled by the governor of Kush. The scene was set for war between Theban kings and Hyksos, the first engagement occurred during the reign of Seqenenre Taa (the southern governor of the time of Ippy (Apophis) king of Hyksos).

#### 3.1.1 The Quarrel between Seqenenre and Apophis

Among the most famous literary stories of the Second Intermediate Period, “the quarrel of Seqenenre and Apophis”.

A tale from Ramesside times texts, which was written some centuries after the events, and moreover it is fragmentary. It was documented at the Papyrus Sallier 1, which also includes a copy of the Teaching of King Amenemhat I.<sup>11</sup>

The opening section of the text is relatively well preserved. It describes the background for the order/message sending by Apophis to Seqenenre.<sup>12</sup>

It came to pass that the land of Egypt was in misery, as there was no Lord, l.p.h., (functioning) <as> a (proper) king of the time. It happened that King Seknenre, l.p.h., was (but) Ruler, l.p.h., of the Southern City, and misery was in the city of the Asiatics, while Prince Apophis, l.p.h., was in Avaris, and the entire land paid tribute to him, delivering their taxes in full as well as bringing all good produce of Egypt.<sup>13</sup>

#### 3.1.2 Apophis Intention and the Council of War

At this point the text is interrupted by a lacuna (gaps) which extends, save for a few isolated words, to the end of the first page of the papyrus. The loss amounts to rather more than half of the

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<sup>11</sup> E. A. W. Budge, *Facsimiles of Egyptian Hieratic Papyri in the British Museum*, Second Series, London, 1923, pl. LIII-LV; A. H. Gardiner, “Late Egyptian Stories,” *Bibliotheca Aegyptiaca* 1, Bruxelles, 1932. pp. 85-89.

<sup>12</sup> H. Goedicke, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> W. K. Simpson, *The Literature of Ancient Egypt*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., New Haven & London, 2003, pp. 69-70.

passage already translated, and would have obscured the purport of the tale very seriously but for the fact that a consultation between king Apophis and his councilors was clearly here narrated, the contents of which are repeated almost verbatim in the sequel, but it can be established, even though details in the wording have to remain unsettled.

And many days after this, King [Apophis, l.p.h], had [the high official]s of his [palace] summoned, [and he proposed to them that a messenger should be] sent [to the Prince of the Southern City with] a complaint [... concerning the] river, [but he was unable to compose it himself. Thereupon his] scribes and wise men [...] and high officials [said, “O so]vereign.<sup>14</sup>

Comment:

The paragraph of the text uses the introductory:

“And many days after this....” Marking a different setting in time.

Here Apophis want to send a warning message to Seqenenre<sup>e</sup> may be after knowing the military equipments at Thebes, so after the idea was kept in his mind, he made a council at his palace contained his wise men and excellent scribes, according to Goedicke, it is tempting to conjecture that it is part of Apophis' scheme to send a message to Seqenenre to which there is no foreseeable reply. The stunned silence of Seqenenre's courtiers mention later would agree with a such thesis.<sup>15</sup> As for the message, we can notice among the few preserved words from this paragraph are [*smi n mdi*] “reply to a statement”, without context, it is emphasized that the message sent was the product of Apophis's scribes, suggesting his inability to make his own decisions, an episode well paralleled in the “Königsnovelle,” but the usual form that the king makes a decision after his councilors have been unable to promulgated a solution was not find here.<sup>16</sup>

After that, the tale informed us about reaching Apophis' messenger to Thebes, and he had been taken to Seqenenre's presence, then Seqenenre asked him: “Why were you sent to the southern city, that you reach me? These travels were for what?” After that the messenger delivered his message:

“[our lord, demand that there be a withdrawal from the] lagoon of hippopotamuses [which is in the east (sector) of the City because] they don't let [sleep come to us either in the daytime or at ni]ght, [for the noise of them is <in> our ears.” And King Apophis, l.p.h., answered them saying, “I shall send a message] to the Prince of the [Southern Ci] ty [...] command [...that we may assess the power of the

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<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 70.

<sup>15</sup> H. Goedicke, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>16</sup> B. Gunn and Alan H. Gardiner, “New Renderings of Egyptian Texts: The Expulsion of the Hyksos,” *JEA* 5, 1918, p. 41.

god who is] / with him as protector. He does not rely upon any god that is in the [entire land] except Amon-Re, King of the Gods.”

The messenger then / answered him, “It is King Apophis, l.p.h., who has sent <me> to you in order to say, ‘Let there be a w[ithdrawal] from the lagoon of hippopotamuses which is in the east (sector) of the City, because they don’t let sleep come to me either in the daytime or at night,’ for the noise of them is <in> his ears.”<sup>17</sup>

### 3.1.3 Seqenenre’s Reaction

The message of Apophis stunned Seqenenre, who instantly realized its grave political meaning, and then he ordered to provide the needs for the messenger consisting of all good things, after that; he told the messenger to go and tell his lord that he will do all which he had said, it seems that Seqenenre tries to appease the Hyksos king by assuring him of his loyalty.<sup>18</sup>

### 3.1.4 Seqenenre’s Council

So the Prince of the Southern City had his high officials summoned, as well as every ranking soldier of his, and he repeated to them every issue concerning which King Apophis, l.p.h., had sent to him. Then they were uniformly silent for a long while, being unable to answer him, be it good or bad.<sup>19</sup>

#### Comment:

We find here at this tale, the second council which held by Seqenenre and his officials and army commander, to know their answer and decision about this hard position, but unless they support Seqenenre situation, they (as written at the papyrus) were silent in unison in great bewilderment. Not were they able to answer him “good!” or “bad!”, but unfortunately the end of the story is not preserved, but probably related some victory of Seknenre, the hero of the tale.

At last we can make comparison between Apophis’ council and Seqenenre’ to observe the assimilations and differentiations, that the twice councils were hold at the king’s palace, but there are differentiation about the members of the twice councils, as for Apophis’ council contained wise men and scribes, the Seqenenre’s council consisted of the officials and high military ranking, that the role of the first council to create literary message, but the role of the second to make a destiny decision.

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<sup>17</sup> W. K. Simpson, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-71.

<sup>18</sup> T. Säve-Söderbergh, “The Hyksos Rule in Egypt,” *JEA* 37, 1951, p. 67.

<sup>19</sup> W. K. Simpson, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

### 3.2 Kamose

At the time of Kamose, the scene was set for war at the two sides, the northern (against Asiaticus) and the southern (against the Kushite), we have royal documents related to these events. Kamose had two stelae, originally set up in the temple of Amun at Karnak. One is completely preserved; of the other only the beginning has survived, augmented by an ancient copy made in cursive handwriting on a scribal board some two centuries later.<sup>20</sup>

The scribal board was first to become known as Carnarvon Tablet No. I “belong to a pair of hieratic writing-boards found among loose debris of pottery and fragmentary mummies on a ledge near the entrance to a plundered tomb in the Birabi, not far from the mouth of the Deir el Bahari valley.”<sup>21</sup>

The research is concerning with only Kamose first stele and its hieratic copy of Carnarvon Tablet No.1.

#### 3.2.1 Kamose Council

King's order to hold a counsel:

His Majesty spoke in his palace to the council of grandees who were in his suite...<sup>22</sup>

Comment:

Kamose commanded to hold a council of war at his palace, this council “*ndwt-r*” may be consisted of high officials, including army leaders, and naval men, were present. There is a simple sequence of policies.<sup>23</sup> This word “*ndwt-r*” was not used neither at Apophis’ council nor Seqenenre’s council, so the searcher suggests that the council of Kamose here was determined and consists of particular important persons, and this case was not existed at the two latter examples.

The dialogue:

Kamose speak:

“I should like to know what purpose serves my strength, when one prince is in Avaris and another is in Kush, and I sit united with an ‘A’ amu and a Negro—each man holding his slice of the Black Land—who share the land with me. I do not pass him (??) as far as Memphis, the water (?) of Egypt. Behold, he holds (?) Shmun, and no man rests, being wasted (?) through servitude (?) of the

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<sup>20</sup> H. Goedicke, *Studies about Kamose and Ahmose*, Baltimore, 1995, p. 31.

<sup>21</sup> Alan H. Gardiner, “The Defeat of the Hyksos by Kamōse: the Carnarvon Tablet, No. I,” *JEA* 3, 1916, p. 95.

<sup>22</sup> B. Gunn and Alan H. Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>23</sup> A. J. Spalinger, *War in ancient Egypt*, Oxford, 2005, p. 2.

Setyu.<sup>24</sup> I will grapple with him, that I may cleave open his belly.”<sup>25</sup>

Comment:

Here we have a complete dialogue between the Kamose and his councilors, that we missed this kind of speech either at Apophis or Seqenenre’s council, at first Kamose began to speak to inform his councilors about the council purpose.

Here Kamose’s reflections concern a particular political problem in Egypt and have no “nationalistic” aspirations.<sup>26</sup> That Asiatic sovereign controlled the north until Ashmunein, and other (the Kushite sovereign) seized Kush at Nuba, and he was sitting amongst without a real power.

From this speech, we can confirmed the political situation in the Nile Valley which was described, it is divided into three main spheres, one comprising “Kush,” another is in Avaris, and the third is denoted as Kmt “Egypt” which covered Upper Egypt.

His Council answers:

Then spoke the great men of his council.<sup>27</sup>

“Behold, the ‘A’amu have [advanced (?)] as far as Cusae, they have pulled out (?) their tongues all together. We are secure in the possession of our Black Land. Elephantine is strong, and the middle part (??) is with us as far as Cusae. The finest (?) of their fields are ploughed for us. Our cattle are in the papyrus marshes. The spelt is sent (?) to our swine. Our cattle are not taken away.....on account of it. He holds the land of the ‘A’amu, and we hold the Black Land. Then [whoever (??)] comes and lands (?) and acts (?) [against(?)] us, then do we act against him.”<sup>28</sup>

Comment:

Here the councilors of Kamose respond to their master, trying to assuage their lord’s concern, by saying a good opinion of the Asiatics and the conditions are not completely bad, that the finest of their land were brought, plowing is done for them, cattle are in the papyrus marshes....etc.), but at last and before finishing their speech, they add a promise to act against anyone planning to attack. It seemed that the statement carries little conviction and was primarily to humor Kamose in his political worry.<sup>29</sup>

Kamose reaction & decision:

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<sup>24</sup> Alan H. Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>26</sup> H. Goedicke, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

<sup>27</sup> Alan H. Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 103.

<sup>29</sup> H. Goedicke, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

Now they were displeasing in the heart of His Majesty:—“As for your counsels..... these ‘A’amu, who.....[Behold, I will fight (?) with the ‘A’amu, until (?) good fortune comes. If .....with weeping. The entire land [shall acclaim me (?) the victorious ruler (?)] within Thebes, Kamose, who protects Egypt.”<sup>30</sup>

Comment:

Here Kamose is displeased over their pacifistic approach and haughtily rejects their words, so he at first admonition his military councilors, and decided to fight the Asiatic, that he sees himself as a victorious king and protector of Egypt. Suddenly the narrative opens, and from then on the first person is employed. At this point the text presents an account if spoken by Kamose himself.<sup>31</sup>

We can observe here a real “Königsnovelle” scheme, that Kamose was the exact champion, and his decision was the strongest to protect Egypt from the enemies, so he (Kamose) not any person else, was the beginner of this hard mission of liberation, so we find the author of this tale stress the unique role of Kamose by using Kamose’s oath to fight the Asiatic.

“I sailed down as a champion to overthrow the ‘A’amu by the command of Amun, just of counsels, my army being valiant in front of me like a fiery blast.”<sup>32</sup>

Comment:

Here Kamose sailed by the Nile northwards to Nefrusi at middle Egypt to fight the Asiatic, the specific type of warfare is barely presented in detail. On the contrary, we first hear of the siege at Nefrusi that seem to have taken place without any immediate opposition.

### 3.3 Royal Council at the 18th Dynasty

The literary form of depicting the king summoned his councilors had been continued, as though the scribes of the beginning of the New kingdom were still following the standard pattern of the Middle Kingdom and the Second Intermediate Period.

Spalinger<sup>33</sup> see that the scene which depicted the king with his counsel, begin with: 1) King Appearance, followed by 2) Sitting, and 3) Discussion, as based on Middle Kingdom description of this theme.

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<sup>30</sup> Alan H. Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

<sup>31</sup> A. J. Spalinger, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>32</sup> Alan H. Gardiner, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

<sup>33</sup> A. J. Spalinger, *Aspects of the Military Documents of the Ancient Egyptians*, London, 1982, p. 105.



### 3.3.1 Battle of Megiddo

One of the most famous literary forms was the report of the successful campaign against foreign lands; the ancient Egyptians used a war council between the king and his generals and advisors to stress the importance of the king and his decision.

The details of the battle of Megiddo are mentioned, in whole or in part, in at least eight additional sources over and above the daybook experts. In the earliest account the composing scribes are impressed by three things: the initiative of the king in leading the way, the seizure of richly adorned chariots, and the submission of the chiefs.<sup>34</sup>

We know that the great king Thutmose III, at his first year ruled alone (the 22 year) begin an imperial military project at Asia Minor, proceeding to Megiddo castle. The first Campaign of Megiddo was in Thutmose III's estimation the most significant military exercise in his life.

This battle was inscribed its events in details at specific place at holy precinct of Amon-Re at Karnak temples, which known as The Annals of Thutmose III, on the walls surrounding the Braque shrine of Amon at the temple of Karnak. This type of military account has been the subject of studies undertaken by Grapow and Noth.<sup>35</sup> In these daybook reports are performed dramatically by the scribes, who employed a common lexicon within a fixed arrangement,<sup>36</sup> and were charged with recording the King's movements and activities each day, whether he was on campaign or not.<sup>37</sup>

### 3.3.2 Council of War

After 19th days on the march, the Egyptian army arrived at Yehem, where it encamped and rested for the anticipated crossing of Carmel Mountains. The name of the town (Yehem), coming from the root meaning to watch or protect, indicates its strategic location protecting the opening to Wadi Ara and the Aruna road running over the mountains to Megiddo.<sup>38</sup>

Thutmose III is depicted as holding a council of war with his generals (army commanders) in preparation for an advance on the city of Megiddo where a large of enemy forces had been existed. Here Thutmose continues the developed character of the royal figure as military leader.

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<sup>34</sup> D. B. Redford, "The Northern Wars of Thutmose III," in E. H. Cline and D. O'Connor (eds.), *Thutmose III, A New Biography*, Michigan, 2006, p. 331.

<sup>35</sup> H. Grapow, *Studien zu den Annalen Thutmosis des Dritten und zu ihnen verwandten historischen Berichten des Neuen Reiches*, Berlin 1949; M. North, "Die Annalen Thutmosis III, als Geschichtsquelle," *ZDPV* 66, 1943, pp. 156-174.

<sup>36</sup> A. J. Spalinger, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

<sup>37</sup> G. J. Shaw, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>38</sup> R. A. Gabriel, *Thutmose III, the Military Biography of Egypt's Greatest Warrior King*, Washington, 2008, p. 93.

According to de Buck<sup>39</sup> the dialogue between Thutmose III and generals at Aruna should not be a genuine account, even though there may have been a historical basis for such a scene. That the king must be depicted as a victorious king, especially on the march and in battle.

The purpose of holding this military counsel, that there were two possible and safer routes leading to the castle of Megiddo, one called (Taanach) is 8 km to the southern east and the other Djefity is 5 km to the northern west, and there is a third route which is leading also to Megiddo through the mountain but it is narrow and dangerous.<sup>40</sup>

The sentence in col. 19 until the col. 49 was some notice of a council of war within the daybook entry for that day; but the exact verbatim statements would not have been recorded.

## Part 1

### The Dating:

Year 23, 1st month of Summer, day 16, at the town of Yehem.<sup>41</sup>

Here the diary is not told the date of arrival the city of Yehem, there is no specification whence the advance started that day, only its aim. The goal is specified as Yehem which has been identified with Yemma on the northern foothills of the Carmel ridge.<sup>42</sup>

## Part 2

### King speech

[His Majesty] ordered a consultation with his victorious army, saying thus: "Yon [wretched] foe of Kadesh has come and entered into Megiddo, and he is [there] at this moment, for he has gathered to himself the chieftains of [all] the countries [which were] subject to Egypt, and (from) as far away as Naharin . . . Syrians, Kode-folk, their horses, their soldiers, [and their people], for he says—so it is reported—"I will stand to [fight with His Majesty here] in Megiddo". Tell ye me [what is in your hearts]."<sup>43</sup>

### Comment

This is a typical daybook report which describes the conference of Thutmose with his army commanders; clearly, this was an important day in the campaign, as an important command in order to discuss the best route to take to Megiddo.

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<sup>39</sup> A. de Buck, *Het Typische en het Individuelle bij de Egyptenaren*, Leiden, 1929, p. 17.

<sup>40</sup> F. Maruejol, *Thoutmosis III, et la coregence avec Hatchepsout*, Paris, 2007.

<sup>41</sup> *Urk. IV*, 649.; R. O. Faulkner, "The Battle of Megiddo," *JEA* 28, 1942, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>43</sup> *Urk. IV*, 649.; R. O. Faulkner, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Here like Kamose's council, the king began the speech to his councilors, but Borrowing freely from the "Königsnovelle" tradition, the "Annals" omit bombastic phraseology, and without the angry dialect which characterized Kamose speech, Thutmose speech was quite and based on informatics reports.

It is interesting to note that the crucial question of the crossing is not decided by Thutmose, but that it is the topic of war council.

The scene begin with directly conference (ndjw<sup>t</sup>-ra)<sup>44</sup> of the king Thutmose III and his army commanders, we notice that within the genre of tomb biography a number of terms refer to interaction between the king and his courtiers in regard to discussion and decision making. ndjw<sup>t</sup>-ra 'consultation' is often found when the king is consulting the god as an oracle<sup>45</sup>; However it was used here to describe interaction between the king and his officials.<sup>46</sup> It lacks the famous introduction of the king's counsel (the Sitting of the King) before discussion, so Spalinger<sup>47</sup> see, unlike the bland speeches in the "Königsnovelle" texts, the scribe used a summary of the enemy's plans and depicted the king inquires into the opinions of his army leaders, but without details concerning "how the king is in possession of specific information whereabouts of his enemy."

Now the composition of the enemy force has been discussed and recognized as presented by Thutmose III to be made up of rebel chiefs in addition to mercenaries of different background, the second point brought up by Thutmose III in the military council for the reaction of some of his military following is the local for the battle, that the "chief of Qadesh" had made the choice to fight at Megiddo, since this would be his right as the challenged one according to the rules of war. He put it in the form of a reported pronouncement, considering the fact that Thutmose III is actually surprising his opponent in a rather strung-out condition, and not at all ready to fight, makes one wonder if the choice of the place of the battle had not actually been made by Thutmose III, but he concealed this from his troops.<sup>48</sup>

### Part 3 Reply of the Commander

And they said unto His Majesty: 'How can one go [upon] this road which is so narrow? It [is reported] that the enemy are standing yonder [outside, and that they have] become numerous; will not horse have to go behind [horse, and the soldiers] and the people likewise? Shall our vanguard be fighting while the [rearguard] is standing yonder in 'Aruna unable to fight? Now here are two roads; behold, one road is . . . our [lord], f and he will come out at Taanach; and behold, the other is at the north

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<sup>44</sup> The term might literally be rendered as "questioning the opinion," H. Goedicke, *The Battle of Megiddo*, p. 27.

<sup>45</sup> *Urk. IV*, 833-834.

<sup>46</sup> G. J. Shaw, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>47</sup> A. J. Spalinger, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

<sup>48</sup> H. Goedicke, *The Battle of Megiddo*, Baltimore, 2000, p. 32.

side of Djefiti, and we will come out at the north of Megiddo. Let our victorious lord proceed upon whichever of [them] seems best to him; but do not let us go upon yon difficult road.<sup>49</sup>

Comment:

We notice here that the Thutmose army commanders expressed their opinion about the difficulties of choosing Aruna road which (according the text) was not suitable to march the army with its equipment, and the enemies there are stationed on [the outside] and they have gotten numerous, so they enumerated their excuses which seemed to be logically acceptable. But Thutmose had a different vision.

Thutmose III decision

Then [there were brought in (?)] dispatches [concerning yon wretched foe, and there was further discussion (?)] on the subject of [that] plan of which they had previously spoken. What was said in the royal tent: 'as I [live], as Re<sup>c</sup> loves me, as my father Amun favours me, as my nostrils are refreshed with life and strength, I will proceed on this 'Aruna road. Let him of you who so desires go on these roads of which ye speak, and let him of you who so desires come in the train of My Majesty, for behold, they will say, namely the foes whom Re<sup>c</sup> detests, "Has His Majesty gone upon another road because he is afraid of us?" they will say'. And they said unto His Majesty: 'May thy father Amun, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands, who dwells in Karnak, perform [thy desire]! Lo, we are in the train of Thy Majesty wheresoever [Thy Majesty] goest, for a servant ever follows [his] master.'<sup>50</sup>

Comment:

Clearly, the Yehem stop was the venue for not only the council of war, but also for the instruction and final disposition of the line of march; only after Aruna would such a deployment have been necessary. The textual embellishment seeks to lay stress on the king's courage and solicitude for his army.<sup>51</sup>

It seemed that this paragraph is concerning with arrival of additional reports about the place of the enemy, so Thutmose III wished to make like a strategic session to choose safety place to begin the battle.

After that we find Thutmose take his decision as he choose Aruna road, so he take an oath like Kamose before(see pp.7,8)for the same reasons which the scribe wished to the courage of his lord . Here the king played the main actor and presented as a person with human traits, a hero and decision maker,

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<sup>49</sup> *Urk. IV*, 649-650.; R. O. Faulkner, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>50</sup> R. O. Faulkner, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

<sup>51</sup> D. B. Redford, *The Wars in Syria and Palestine of Thutmose III*, Leiden, 2003, p. 22.

with specific focus on his deeds, and the success which he creates, however, he exceeds all humans in his abilities.<sup>52</sup>

### 3.3.3 Date and Time of the Conference

According to Spalinger studies<sup>53</sup> concerning the text, he suggests:

- a. *Urk.IV* 649.3: The arrival at Yhm : Day 16.
- b. *Urk.IV* 649.4: The Conference (ndjwtr) with his commanders at Yhm; no immediate decision: day 17.
- c. *Urk.IV* 650.15: The arrival of the messengers (with different news than in *Urk.IV* 649.17ff.) and the king's fateful decision: day 17.
- d. The arrival at Aruna: day 18.

Of these three routes Thutmose III suggested the third narrow route, so his Generals were not accepted his choice, because the narrowness route will dangerously extend the Egyptian line of march, with “horse behind horse, and soldier behind soldier” with the result the Egyptian army advance to become in fighting without his rear. But Thutmose was insisted to proceed upon the dangerous road to take the enemies by surprise, while the other two routes are likely to reveal the Egyptian army movements well before beginning of the battle.<sup>54</sup>

However, he adds, his generals are free to take their forces along the safer route, while the king leads his share of the army along the dangerous route to surprise and victory.

At last they agree to follow him proceeding the narrow dangerous road.

### Comment

The scribe used a summary of the enemy's plans and depicted the King inquires into the opinions of his army leaders, and this is quite different from the case of Kamose's counsel, it seemed to be hostile conference, that Kamose announced his intentions but was met with disappointed, the result Kamose became very angry and reprimanded his counsel. But here the conference of Thutmose was to be decided upon next military strategy, so it was quiet whether on the side of the king or that of his commanders.

Analyze of the three councils: The differences between Kamose and Thutmose councils, Kamose

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<sup>52</sup> G. J. Shaw, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

<sup>53</sup> A. J. Spalinger, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>54</sup> E. H. Cline and D. O'Connor, *Thutmose III, A New Biography*, Michigan, 2008, p. 2.

called together his “great men”, meaning the nobles who were in the suite of their monarch. The ensuing report is therefore not concerned with an actual battle but instead with the opening salvos in a possible war.

The King recommended an aggressive policy and the courtiers responded by offering a passive one.<sup>55</sup>

Kamose, though displeased, preserved with his nationalistic war plans. Whereas we may contrast this account with that of Thutmose purely on the basis of the discussion and the retort of Kamose, it must be kept in mind that the second was not yet on the march. In the later case we witness the actual strategy to be taken in a war. In the Megiddo account, the image of Thutmose III is a fair and even-handed one. The King does not falter. He neither shows cowardice nor acts as a martinet. It is assumed from the onset that Thutmose is an effective warrior.<sup>56</sup>

The conference in the Megiddo report avoided the strategic objective but instead concentrated upon tactics of marching and the road to take.

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<sup>55</sup> A. J. Spalinger, *War in Ancient Egypt*, Oxford, 2005, p. 102.

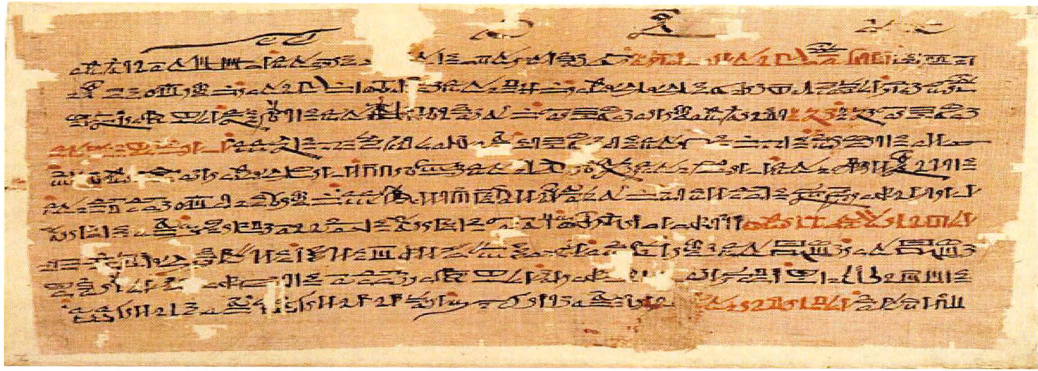
<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 101.

Council of War—From the 2nd Intermediate Period till the End of Thutmose III Reign—

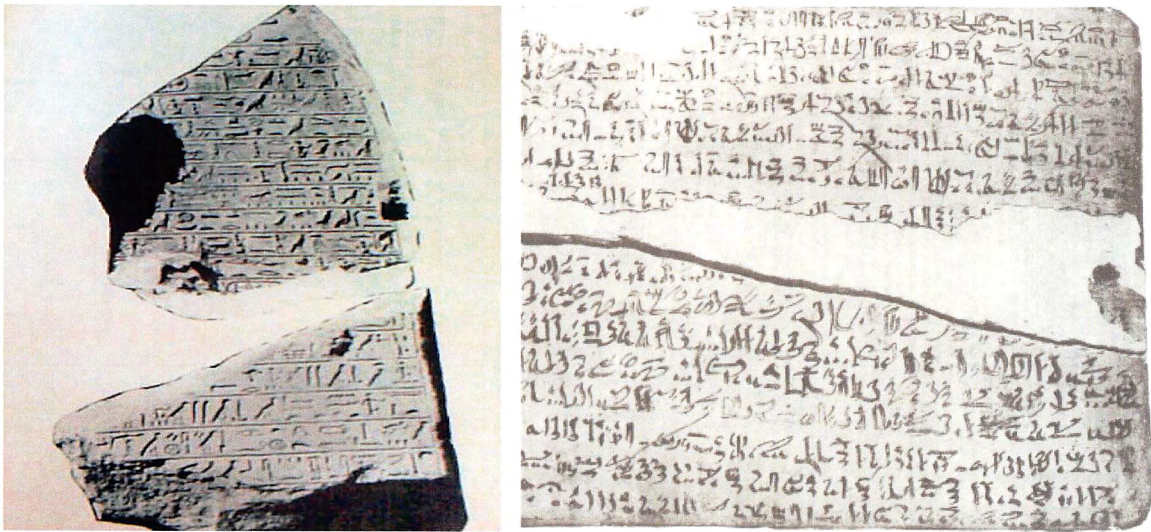
	Dialogue	Place of council	Members of council	Maker of decision	<i>Königs nouvelle</i>	Reason of council	Result of council	Council documented on
Council of Apophis	Short	Palace	Scribes & wise men	Scribes & wise men	Not typified	Make a political fraud	Sending a threatened message	p. Salliet 1
Council of Seqenenre	Short	Palace	Officials & ranking soldiers	?	Not typified	Answer the threatend message	?	p. Salliet 1
Council of Kamose	Long	Palace	" <i>ndjwrt</i> " officials	Kamose	typified	Kamose will	Begin liberation war	Kamose 1 <sup>st</sup> Stela & writing-board
Council of Thutmose	Long	Army camp	Army commander	Thutmose III	Nearly typified	Choose a road	Crossing Aruna	Hall of Annals



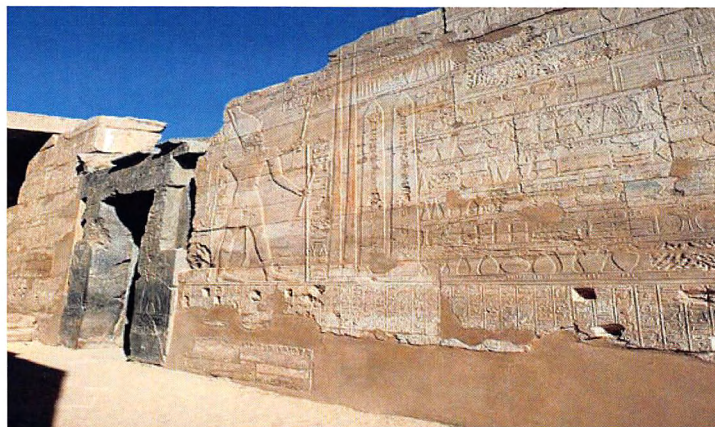
Figures



(Figure 1: p. Sallier 1 – British museum)



A B  
(Figure 2 A: Kamose first stele, B: Carnarvon Tablet no.1)



(Figure 3: Hall of Annals of Thutmose III – Karnak temple)



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