Bill Murnane always showed a clear, incisive grasp of the various epigraphic and historical matters that he dealt with; in his published works, he left an invaluable deposit of useful studies and observations that will long be of service to us all. I have happy memories of our rare meetings long since. I hope that this brief tribute may be found fitting.

Introduction

Lists of foreign place-names (so-called topographical lists) have long been recognized as a potential resource for historical, geographical and archaeological purposes in the study of Syria-Palestine in the Late Bronze age, and less usefully (in southern lists) for the Nile Valley and adjoining terrain south of Egypt proper (from Aswan). However, the varying types (and hence, equally variable nature) of such lists is not well understood by most people attempting to use them, and this matter is deserving of clearer definition for the general benefit of all who wish to utilize such lists in their studies. Non-egyptologists in particular need to know that one cannot pick names indiscriminately out of these lists, to use as instant history-pegs for the study of any given place in the Near East or NE Africa.

Classification

A. Types of Record: Physically Defined. These lists were included in several different types of context.

1. In Triumph-Scenes. From the 1st Dynasty to Roman times, the most persistent icon of pharonic victory was that of the victorious king, striding forward with weapon upraised to bring it down on the heads of hapless, defeated foes half-kneeling confusedly before him. In New-Kingdom times, opposite the king, there stood a welcoming deity who (in Ramesside times) might hold forth the scimitar-sword of victory. He (or else a lesser deity) also held the ends of cords that ran along and bound the hands and heads of rows of foes behind the deity/ies and below the entire scene; each foe was but a head upon a vertical oval containing the appropriate place-name, with bound arms and hands hanging down behind. A rhetorical superscription runs along over the main full-width rows of names. On the twin towers of pylon-gateways, it was normal to feature northern foes (Syria-Palestine and beyond) and southern foes (Nubia and southward) and their lists respectively on one tower each (e.g., Tuthmosis III, Pylons VI, VII, Karnak), especially if the gateway faced east/west, so that a northerners’ triumph-scene could be placed on the north tower, and a southerners’ scene on the matching south tower. It became standard Ramesside practice also to have two different introductory triumphal texts, one for each of the two matching scenes. One was created by using the triumph-hymn of Amenophis III from his memorial temple, plus a linking text, plus the triumph-hymn of Tuthmosis III at Karnak. The other was a fresh composition on related themes. But in some pairs of scenes (e.g., those of Sethos I and Ramesses II flanking the north and south side-doorways of the great hall at Karnak), even though northern wars were the cause of celebration, some southern names were also included in the lists, as a reflex of Pharaoh’s claim to universal dominion. Special cases of single triumphal reliefs are two by Merenptah (one, now destroyed) north of Pylon VII, and the unique one by Shoshenq I adjoining the Bubastite Gate, all three at Karnak. Triumphant scenes, however, were not the sole context for these lists as the following will show.

2. Similar Scenes & Lists in Lunettes of Major Stelae. On major stelae, such as those of the “Blessing of Ptah” of Ramesses II and III, a full triumph-scene occupies the uppermost part of the stela, along with name-ovals (as described
by inspection of the contents, and with the aid of such identifications with known places as are beyond doubt.

Not all relate to wars, it should be emphasized. We may distinguish the following types:

1. **Encyclopedic.** Such lists can be long, and cover all manner of distant places that Egypt’s rulers knew about, even if contact might be more tenuous than real (e.g., as remote as Uruk in southern Babylonia); such lists are not limited to places under Egyptian control, but serve to illustrate the concept that Egypt’s gods held universal rule, and the pharaoh was their deputy as potentially lord of “all lands,” pantocrator.

2. **Regional Lists.** (a) Limited to either Nubia and the south, or to Western Asia and northern environs. (b) Mainly one region or the other, but including names from other regions, out of a sense of universalism, or to fill up the number of names required by the layout on the wall, base, or whatever.

3. **Lesser Lists.** (a) Abregés of longer listings; (b) ‘heraldic’, often limited to traditional names (e.g., Nine Bows) or to major entities beyond Egypt.

**Exemplification**

**A. African/Southern Lists.** We turn first to the lists for southern lands, because they show very clearly most phenomena found also in the more heavily used (and abused) lists for northern lands. For the New Kingdom, our ‘foundation documents’ are the three copies of basically 116 names (conventionally listed as “1-117,” with [accidentally!] no No. 6), plus a supplementary list of 152 additional names (“118-269”), left to us at Karnak by Tuthmosis III (mid-15th-century BC) on Pylons VI and VII in Karnak temple in Thebes. These great lists include seven regions over which the Egyptian Empire actually ruled (e.g., Kush, names Nos. 1-10, Wawat, 24-47), or sought to control, but incompletely (e.g., Irem, 11-23, Libya, 88-116), or probably notionally (e.g., Medja, 78-85, Kenset, 86-87; desert zones), or simply traded with, they being independent throughout (e.g., Punt, 48-77). Once Egypt’s rule was firmly established along the Nile from the 1st to the 4th Cataract under Tuthmosis I and III, incorporating Wawat and Kush, subsequent wars were limited to the crushing of local revolts every two or three decades, or to attempts to cow marginal powers such as Irem, or fend off attacks from such quarters. As a