

BRIDGING THE SECOND INTERMEDIATE PERIOD

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The political history of ancient Egypt is above all the history of its kings. The Ptolemaic historian Manetho distinguished 30 ruling dynasties, and the archaeological research of the last two centuries has firmly established that most of these kings were closely related to their predecessors and successors, by descent or by marriage. Research into the genealogy of the kings and the leading families of the time is one of the key techniques for establishing Egyptian chronology on a firm basis. Though there are many questions which are still unanswered, it is now possible to outline genealogical networks which link the royal families from the rise of the New Kingdom under the 18th dynasty, in the 16th century BC, to the Persian conquest a thousand years later. It has even been proposed that descents exist from Ramses II which may eventually be traceable over the whole period. Since it is increasingly likely that both his senior queens were descended from the 18th dynasty, such descents, if they exist, may be traceable at least as far back as Thutmosis I.

When we explore the origins of the 18th dynasty to see if this network can be extended further back, we quickly run into difficulties. Thutmosis I was preceded by Amenhotep I and the latter's father Ahmes I, who founded the 18th dynasty by reuniting Egypt, but his relationship to them is not known. It is also agreed that the three preceding kings in Upper Egypt were Kamose, Seqenenre¹ Ta'o (II) and Senakhtenre Ta'o-o (I) ("Ta'o the Elder"), but the family relationships of these kings are not clear. But the picture presented in the Egyptological literature for the succession of kings in the period immediately before Senakhtenre is one of utter confusion, since every scholar who has studied the matter has come to a different conclusion. For this reason there has until now been no attempt to determine their genealogy, and it has been widely assumed that the kings of this period were mostly unrelated to each other. In this paper, I report the results of my own investigations into the period, which suggest that this assumption is wrong, and that the ancestry of the 18th dynasty pharaohs is traceable for at least 150 years before the accession of Ahmes I, and possibly further.

1. The Second Intermediate Period

Even though the details are obscure, the overall structure of Egyptian history at this time is fairly clear. Egypt was divided into at least two kingdoms. Upper Egypt was ruled from Thebes by a group of kings we call the 17th dynasty – a dynasty that eventually gave rise to Ahmes I and his immediate family. Lower Egypt was ruled from Avaris by a dynasty of Asiatic kings – the Hyksos of the 15th dynasty. Many subsidiary Hyksos chiefs, constituting the 16th dynasty of Manetho, ruled parts of the country under the suzerainty of the kings in Avaris, while at least one native Egyptian principality in the Delta is covered under the heading of the 14th dynasty.

¹ Egyptian kings were known by up to five names. The most common are the so-called prenomen and nomen. The prenomen is an official reign-title, while the nomen is usually the king's personal name. A similar custom persists in Japan, where the emperor Akihito is entitled the Heisei emperor. Ordinal numbers have been assigned to the nomens of the kings by modern scholars, reflecting common western practice. However, in the Second Intermediate Period the order of rule is often so uncertain that it would be quite misleading to follow this usage in this paper – for example, kings Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf and Sekhemre-shedtwi Sebekemsaf are frequently numbered Sebekemsaf I and Sebekemsaf II, although it now appears they reigned in the opposite order. For this reason, I have used either both names or the prenomen alone in this paper to distinguish a king of the Second Intermediate Period from his namesakes. However, for those readers who are familiar with the conventional ordinal system, I have also given the ordinal numbers assigned by the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* on first introduction of such kings. It should also be noted that the same name could be used by both men and women.

Later Egyptian tradition held that this breakup was precipitated by a Hyksos invasion, spreading fire and sword throughout the land. The picture emerging through modern archaeology is less dramatic. Although it is clear that at times there was considerable warfare, the process was on the whole more gradual. Considerable Asiatic settlement can be traced for some time before the collapse of central Egyptian authority, and the establishment of a breakaway Egyptian kingdom in the Delta almost certainly preceded the emergence of the Hyksos as a unified political force. Moreover, the evidence suggests that the 15th dynasty emerged after a period of chaos rather than being the instigator of it, and, at least in its later days, was considerably Egyptianised.

It is generally agreed that the 17th dynasty Theban kings were direct successors of a sequence of kings of a united Egypt who we call the 13th dynasty. This dynasty is a considerable enigma. The preceding dynasty – the 12th – is a model of dynastic order, with son succeeding father in regular succession for nearly 200 years, usually after a period of co-regency. In the 13th dynasty, by contrast, some 50 kings appear to have succeeded each other over a period of about 130 years, often leaving little or no trace of their existence. Were it not for the survival of large fragments of a single kinglist – the so-called Royal Canon of Turin – we would have great difficulty in determining the order of succession. Even with this list to guide us there are many problems that remain. Yet, despite the apparent instability at the top, life and government appears to have continued in an orderly and peaceful fashion for most of the 13th dynasty, and only for the last few decades of its existence is it clear that Egyptian society was gripped by a serious crisis.

The interval from the end of the 12th dynasty to the expulsion of the Hyksos under Ahmes I is known to modern historians as the Second Intermediate Period. Given the confused and fragmentary nature of the surviving record, and, in its latter half, of Egyptian society, it appears at first sight to be a quixotic task to try to find a genealogical bridge that will take us from the early New Kingdom back to the time of the 12th dynasty. However, on closer examination such a goal is not so far out of reach as might be thought.

2. The 17th Dynasty Succession

In the early 19th century, the grave goods of several Theban kings and queens of this period were found in the cemetery under the cliffs of the Dra‘ Abu’l-Naga, on the south side of the entrance to the Valley of the Kings. These included the coffins of four kings – Sekhemre-wepmaet Inyotef-o (VI), Sekhemre-heruhirmaet Inyotef (VII), Nubkheperre Inyotef (V) and Wadjkheperre Kamose – and their contents. The first two coffins were found together, though whether in a tomb or a secondary pit is unclear. Also found were the coffin of a queen Ahhotep containing items naming Kamose and Ahmes; the heart scarab of a king Sebekemsaf (allegedly on the chest of the mummy of Nubkheperre); the pyramidion of Sekhemre-wepmaet; the canopic chests of Sekhemre-wepmaet, a king Sebekemsaf, and a queen Mentuhotep, wife of a king Sekhemre-mentawii Djehuti; and the coffin of queen Mentuhotep (subsequently lost) which gave her parentage as daughter of a vizier Senebhanef and a hereditary princess Sebekhotep. The coffin of Sekhemre-wepmaet was inscribed as a gift from his brother “king Inyotef” and the pyramidion of his tomb originally gave the names of his parents, who were clearly a king and queen. Later, in the famous cache of tomb DB320, a number of other remains were found from this period, most dramatically the mummy of Seqenenre Ta’o, who had clearly been hacked to death.

In 1902, Percy Newberry reported that tomb robbers in Edfu had discovered the tomb of a

queen Sebekemsaf, wife of Nubkheperre Inyotef. An 18th dynasty stele from Edfu erected by a certain Iuf records the restoration of the tomb of a queen Sebekemsaf by queen Ahhotep, the mother of Ahmes I; in this stele queen Sebekemsaf is called a king's daughter and king's sister. However, another, more contemporary stele found in Edfu in 1922 names a queen Sebekemsaf who was not the daughter of a king, although her mother is named as a king's daughter. Accordingly, the genealogy given by the Iuf stele has generally been dismissed because of its relatively late date.

Further information comes from the Abbott papyrus, which records an investigation into the robbery of royal tombs in the Dra' Abu'l-Naga cemetery in the late 20th dynasty. From this papyrus, we know that the tomb of king Sekhemre-shedtawi Sebekemsaf and his wife queen Nubkhas were robbed and their coffins and mummies destroyed in ancient times. The Ramessid inspectors recorded an inspection of the tombs of Amenhotep I, Nubkheperre Inyotef, Sekhemre-wepmaet Inyotef-o, Sekhemre-shedtawi Sebekemsaf (II), Seqenenre Ta'o, Seqenenre [*sic* Senakhtenre] Ta'o-o and Wadjkheperre Kamose. All but the tomb of Sebekemsaf were found intact, although the mummies of Amenhotep I, Seqenenre Ta'o and Kamose were all subsequently moved elsewhere, since they were found outside their original tombs by modern archaeologists. The original tombs of Seqenenre Ta'o, Senakhtenre Ta'o-o and Kamose have never been located in modern times, and the locations of none of these tombs are known with certainty today, although Daniel Polz of UCLA believes he has recently rediscovered the tomb of Amenhotep I.

When reviewing this evidence in 1924, Herbert Winlock proposed two other kings as members of this group: Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf (I), and Sekhemre-wahkhau Rahotep.

Since the Abbott papyrus reported the thorough destruction of the coffins of Sekhemre-shedtawi Sebekemsaf, it seemed unlikely to Winlock that his canopic chest and heart scarab would have survived, hence these items must belong to another king Sebekemsaf, and only Sekhemre-wadjkhau is known. However, this king built extensively at the temple of Medamud, near Karnak, which also saw work by early 13th dynasty pharaohs, and so many other archaeologists regarded him as an early 13th dynasty king who was (somewhat unaccountably) missing from the relatively intact portion of the Turin Canon which covers this period.

Winlock included Rahotep because he was apparently the subject of a New Kingdom ghost story which located his tomb in or near the Dra' Abu'l-Naga cemetery. Although it is now believed that the king named in the ghost story was the 11th dynasty king Mentuhotep II, Winlock's position was strengthened in a 1947 study when he was able to restore a stele of Rahotep to include the name of a queen [Sebek]emsaf, whom he identified with the wife of Nubkheperre Inyotef, and hence most likely as Rahotep's mother.

A significant problem with reconstructing the succession order for these kings is that none of them are directly named in the surviving fragments of the Turin kinglist. This difficulty was resolved in 1942 by Hanns Stock, who pointed out that Sekhemre-shedtawi ("The image of Re who has saved Egypt") could be identified with Sekhemre-shedwast ("The image of Re who has saved Thebes"), named at the ninth line of column XI, on the assumption that the list was compiled in Memphis, which did not recognise Sekhemre-shedtawi as king. This name is the last of 9 names in this column which are wholly or partly preserved, along with, in many cases, their reign-lengths. After him come 5 entries, which in turn are followed by a line apparently summarising a total number of years for these 5 kings; thereafter come two kings "User...re" who

have not been identified. The content of the Turin kinglist which covers this dynasty is shown in Figure 1.

Position	Name Entry	Reign Length
XI.1	Sekhemre.....	3 years
XI.2	Sekhemre.....	16 years
XI.3	Sekhemre-se.....	1 year
XI.4	Se'ankh(?).....re	1 year
XI.5	Nebiriaure	2(?)8/9 years
XI.6	Nebiriaure	[X] months(?)
XI.7	Semenenre	[lost]
XI.8	Seuserenre	12 years <i>Wsf</i> [X] days
XI.9	Sekhemre-shedwast	[lost]
XI.10re	[lost]
XI.11	[lost]	[lost]
XI.12re	[lost]
XI.13	[lost]	[lost]
XI.14	[lost]	[lost]
XI.155 kings.....	[lost]
XI.16	User.....re	[lost]
XI.17	User.....	[lost]

Figure 1: The 17th Dynasty in the Turin Kinglist

Virtually nothing is known of any of the kings in this list whose names were more-or-less completely preserved. King Se'ankh(?)...re is usually, though not universally, identified with king Se'ankhenre Mentuhotep (VII), first known from a pair of sphinxes found at Edfu. One king Nebiriau is known to have the prenomen Sewadjenre, from the so-called Cairo Juridical Stele, which is dated to his first year (and, incidentally, shows that these kings are listed by their nomen rather than their prenomen, as is usual). This prenomen, which is quite unusual, was also found in Thebes on a statue of Ptolemaic date, along with the names of the late 17th dynasty princes Ahmes and Binpu and the (common) prenomen Neferkare. On this rather shaky basis the prenomen of the second Nebiriau is tentatively completed as Neferkare.

The Cairo Juridical Stele allows us to set an approximate date for these kings relative to the late 13th dynasty. This stele describes the background to a legal transaction which took place in the first year of Sewadjenre Nebiriau, and refers to a charter issued in the first year of king Merhetepre Sebekhotep (VI) two generations earlier; thus the stele separates these two kings by somewhere between 40 and 60 years. Merhetepre is a late 13th dynasty king, who is named in column VII of the Turin list. Therefore, we can now date the start of the 17th dynasty to about 1670/1650 BC.

Given such a cornucopia of obscure names and a famine of facts about them, it is not surprising that there has been no consensus on the 17th dynasty kinglist. Winlock attempted to complete it on the hypothesis that the tomb inspection order of the Abbott papyrus indirectly reflected the order of rule of the kings, but was forced to make several exceptions to this principle. Stock, having identified the relevant fragment of the Turin kinglist, attempted to

complete it based on the assumption that the “summary line” marked the end of the dynasty – although the two “User...re” kings immediately following correspond to no known 18th dynasty king. However, by now 15 kings had to be assigned places, and only 14 are available in this column. Stock resolved this problem by arguing that Kamose was “really” an 18th dynasty king. Then in 1965 Jürgen von Beckerath published what remains the definitive study of the period. He noted Winlock’s interpretation of the Rahotep stele and agreed that Nubkheperre Inyotef should therefore precede Rahotep. Since he accepted Stock’s placement of Rahotep, at the head of column XI, this meant that Nubkheperre must be named at the bottom of the preceding column, which allowed room to be made for Kamose before the “summary” line. At the same time, William Hayes published a reconstruction in the *Cambridge Ancient History* which was considerably at variance with von Beckerath’s, but this was largely based on older scholarship, and von Beckerath’s solution has been more generally followed.

In 1991 Aidan Dodson pointed out that von Beckerath’s reconstruction conflicted with the stylistic evidence of the coffins and the canopic chests, which required that the three Inyotefs belonged together, along with the Sebekemsaf of the canopic chest. Reinforcing Winlock’s 1924 argument that this canopic belonged to Sekhemre-wadjkhau, Dodson placed all four kings after Sekhemre-shedtwawi, which had the effect of forcing the Ta’os and Kamose to some point after the two kings “User....re.” Dodson argued that the problematical “summary” was in fact a heading; the identities of the “User...re” kings were left open.

The most significant discovery made since von Beckerath’s study was by the Russian scholar Oleg Berlev, who proved in 1965 that a stele fragment held in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow could be completed by a fragment held by University College London. The completed inscription showed that a prince Ameny, son of a queen Ha-ankhes, had married the princess Sebekemhab, daughter of Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf and queen Nubemhat. In 1976, Berlev further showed that a prince Ameny, presumably the same man, had received a ceremonial bow from king Rahotep, and completed the queen named in the Rahotep stele as [Sebek]emsaf-Ha[ankhes]. This result confirmed the succession order Sekhemre-wadjkhau Rahotep / Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf which Stock had deduced in 1942, and thus apparently supported their placement at the head of column XI.

The other evidence found in recent years may be briefly described. The name of king Seuserenre was completed in 1985, as Bebi-ankh, by a stele discovered at Gebel Zeit on the shores of the Red Sea. In 1987, Pascal Vernus extended the genealogy of queen Sebekemsaf of Edfu by identifying her parents and her siblings. In 1989 Vernus pointed out, in a study of a stele which most probably belonged to Se’ankhenre Mentuhotep, a number of epigraphic peculiarities that related it closely to a stele of king Sekhemre-Se’ankhtawi Neferhotep (III) which he had published in 1982. In 1992, Stephen Quirke and Richard Parker identified the wife and eldest son of Se’ankhenre Mentuhotep, from a coffin fragment in the British Museum. In 1993, John and Deborah Darnell published a fragment of a door lintel which named a king Inyotef together with a king Sebekemsaf. Although neither is explicitly distinguished from their namesakes, nor is the relationship between them specified, the unusual spelling of Inyotef is that used ubiquitously by Nubkheperre, so the inscription appears to confirm an association between him and a Sebekemsaf.

In attempting to understand and resolve for myself the reasoning and the problems behind the reconstructions of Winlock, Hayes, Stock, von Beckerath and Dodson, I eventually determined

that the key issue was the proper placement and dating of Nubkheperre Inyotef. There is more contemporary information available about this king than any other of the dynasty, until its very end. As well as his coffin and canopic equipment, the name of his wife, and his apparent associations with Sekhemre-wepmaet and a king Sebekemsaf, we possess the negative evidence that he was clearly not named in the first nine entries of column XI of the Turin king-list. We also possess a decree issued in his third year naming a certain Minemhat as mayor of Coptos. A jewellery box naming (probably) this same man was found in 1863 in the tomb of one Aq-Hor, which also contained a throwing stick naming prince Thuyu, “king’s son” of a king Ta’o. Finally, we possess a scarab of Nubkheperre’s that was found in the excavations of Mirgissa in Nubia in a context that was clearly contemporary with the early Hyksos period.

Various scholars have argued individual pieces of this evidence as supporting either a position near the start of the dynasty for Nubkheperre, as von Beckerath believed, or a position only shortly before the two kings Ta’o at the end of the dynasty, as most earlier scholars had held and as Dodson has more recently revived. However, no scholar has attempted to survey all the evidence in a focussed study. When one places it all together, it turns out to be possible to use it to estimate maximum and minimum distances in time between Nubkheperre Inyotef and two relatively fixed points: the accession dates of Ahmes I and Merhetepre Sebekhotep of the 13th dynasty. Nubkheperre must lie at a point where these two timelines overlap, as in Figure 2.

The two base dates are tied in turn to the overall historical chronologies of the New Kingdom and Middle Kingdom respectively. Although both of these chronologies are subjects of academic warfare, they are relatively independent of each other, and in fact the evidence for Nubkheperre is a test case for the mutual consistency of the various New Kingdom and Middle Kingdom schemes. The combination of chronologies which provides a best fit for all the evidence for Nubkheperre requires a low date for the accession of Ahmes I – 1539 BC – and a date for Merhetepre Sebekhotep in the region of 1700-1690 BC, which derives from a middle or high date for the end of Middle Kingdom. The result, not unexpectedly, placed Nubkheperre shortly after Sekhemre-shedtau Sebekemsaf, at about 1600 BC. The surprise was that this didn’t make him late in the dynasty. Instead, there is a hitherto unsuspected gap of up to 40 years between him and the kings who have long been known to end the dynasty.

Dodson had already argued on art-historical grounds that Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf belonged after Nubkheperre, and Berlev had shown that wherever Sebekemsaf went Rahotep must precede him. Thus they are strong candidates to fill this gap.

Winlock’s earlier arguments concerning the appearance of queen Sebekemsaf on the Rahotep stele would also appear to place Rahotep after Nubkheperre. However, Winlock had assumed that there was only one queen Sebekemsaf, the wife of Nubkheperre, and Berlev’s reconstruction of prince Amen’s genealogy results in two, one the wife of Rahotep, the other the wife of Nubkheperre. As we have seen, two genealogies for a queen Sebekemsaf have long been known, but that of the Iuf stele has generally been dismissed. It seems more reasonable to suppose that there were in fact two queens Sebekemsaf, and that the Iuf stele genealogy belongs to one of them. Although this removes the coupling between Rahotep and Nubkheperre through a single queen Sebekemsaf that was seen by Winlock, it makes no difference to the placement of Rahotep. The association recorded by Iuf between queen Ahhotep and a queen Sebekemsaf strongly suggests that this Sebekemsaf belongs in the generation before Ahhotep, and this is precisely where we have placed Rahotep on other grounds.

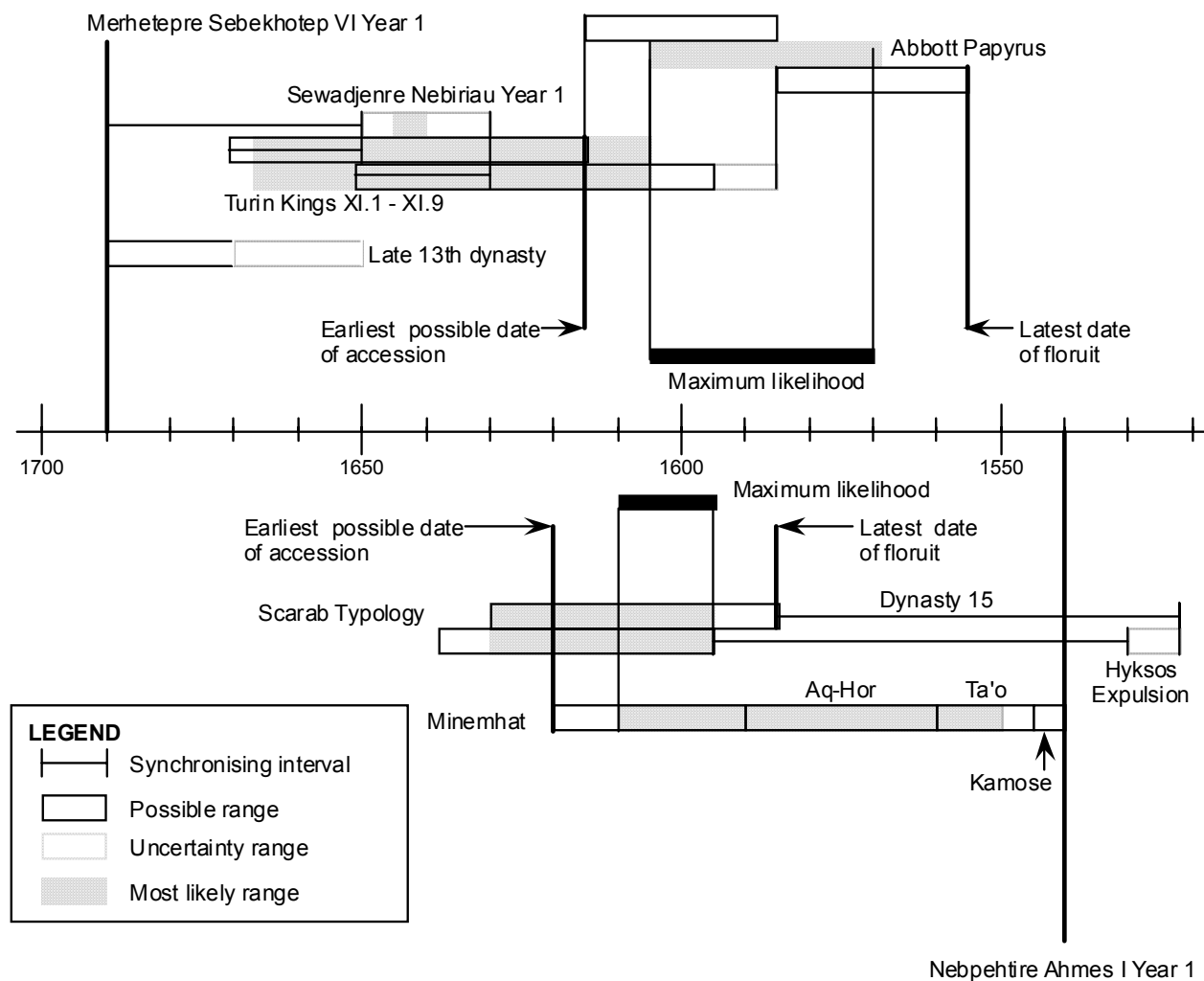


Figure 2: Timelines for Nubkheperre Inyotef

If Rahotep and Sekhemre-wadjkhau are to be moved from the head of column XI to a point immediately after the Inyotefs, the two positions at the head of the column become vacant. Stock had filled these positions, and the third, by considering the set of 6 kings with prenoms of the form Sekhemre-[X] which had been identified by Winlock as 17th dynasty kings, and eliminating those for whom there was evidence that conflicted with the surviving information in the Turin papyrus, notably reign-lengths. While this method of elimination is logically sound, it only works if the starting set has been correctly selected. However, not only is there reason to doubt Winlock's criteria for including some of these kings in the 17th dynasty, but also there are other kings of the period with prenoms of this form who cannot be securely placed elsewhere in the Turin list. At least one of these was not even known to Stock.

I therefore repeated Stock's analysis, but started with all 14 known kings of the period whose prenoms had the form Sekhemre-[X]. This reanalysis resulted in two likely reconstructions of

the first three entries of the kinglist:

- Sekhemre-wahkhau Rahotep, Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf, Sekhemre-se'ankhtawi Neferhotep
- Sekhemre-sementawi Djehuti, Sekhemre-seusertawi Sebekhotep (VIII), Sekhemre-se'ankhtawi Neferhotep

We have already seen arguments to place Rahotep and Sebekemsaf elsewhere, and the absence of Djehuti from the first reconstruction is somewhat troubling. His wife was buried at Thebes, which makes him a strong candidate for membership of the dynasty, the style of her coffin and his canopic chest places him in the late 13th or early 17th dynasty on art-historical grounds, and both her name and her genealogy can be associated with the late 13th dynasty. The second reconstruction, however, resolves these problems. Further, king Sebekhotep can independently be dated to approximately this period since his one surviving inscription records a record flood at the end of a civil year, which, as is well known, precessed against the solar year by one day every four years. The similarity of prenomen in this reconstruction is also very striking, and tends to confirm its correctness.

There remain two problems to be resolved in the emerging reconstruction.

Having filled the 5 positions after XI.9 in the Turin list with the three Inyotefs, Rahotep and Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf, we are forced, as Dodson recognised, to place the two Ta'os and Kamose after line XI.17, following the summary or header line of 5 kings. But on this reconstruction the kings "User...re" must be Theban kings. Although the "re" element makes the names appear to be prenomen there are no unplaced kings of the period who have prenomen of this form. However, the kings whose nomen was Nebiriau are listed as "Nebiriaure" – that is, their nomens were dressed up to look like prenomen. If we suppose that something similar happened here, then there is one king who certainly could be placed here – Seneferibre Senusert (written "Usertsen" – Senusert IV), known from a colossal statue found in the temple of Karnak. The other "User...re" could well then be an ephemeral namesake.

Secondly, it remains unclear how to interpret the "summary" of 5 kings. Dodson argued that it was a header introducing 5 kings, but comparison with headers and summaries in other parts of the Turin kinglist shows that it is in fact most likely to be a summary of preceding kings. Since the number 5 does not point to any clear breakpoint in the list, von Beckerath suggested that the "5" is an error for "15." Since there are only 14 kings before the summary, this suggests that we are still missing one king. In the entries following "Sekhemre-shedwast" there are two breaks between fragments of the papyrus where it is possible to insert an extra line. Therefore, one likely candidate is king Sekhemre-neferkhau Wepwawetemsaf, who is not known from Thebes but who left stelae at Abydos that date him to this period. His prenomen clearly echoes those of Sekhemre-wahkhau Rahotep and Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf, who we have placed precisely in this part of the list.

This solution does not fully explain the "summary" since it is not placed at the end of the dynasty. However, it appears that the source for the Turin kinglist was arranged in groups of roughly 16 lines. It is possible that this "summary" represents a total for a column in the original source list rather than an actual dynastic break.

Position	Name Entry	Reign Length
XI.1	Sekhemre-sementawi Djehuti	3 years
XI.2	Sekhemre-seusertawi Sebekhotep	16 years
XI.3	Sekhemre-se'ankhtawi Neferhotep	1 year
XI.4	Se'ankhenre Mentohotep	1 year
XI.5	Sewadjenre Nebiriau	2(?)8/9 years
XI.6	Neferkare?? Nebiriau	[X] months(?)
XI.7	Semenenre [X]	[lost]
XI.8	Seuserenre Bebi-ankh	12 years <i>Wsf</i> [X] days
XI.9	Sekhemre-shedtawi Sebekemsaf	[lost]
XI.10	Sekhemre-wepmaet Inyotef-o	[lost]
XI.11	Sekhemre-herihirmaet Inyotef	months
XI.11(a)	Nubkheperre Inyotef	3+ years
XI.12	Sekhemre-wahkhau Rahotep	[lost]
XI.13	Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf	7+ years
XI.14	Sekhemre-neferkhau Wepwawetemsaf	[lost]
XI.15	Total of 15 kings	[lost]
XI.16	Senefibre Senusert	[lost]
XI.17	[X] Senusert?	[lost]
XI.18?	Senakhtenre Ta'o-o	[lost]
XI.19?	Seqenenre Ta'o	c10-15 years
XI.20?	Wadjkheperre Kamose	3+ years

Figure 3: Provisional Reconstruction of Turin Kinglist For the 17th Dynasty

Accordingly, I ended up with the 17th dynasty kinglist shown in Figure 3. This list still must be regarded as provisional. There may be other kings: Ward has identified scarabs of a king Djeserkheperre, one of which was found together with a scarab of Nubkheperre Inyotef at Mirgissa; a rough graffito at Medamud on the back of a block of Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf names a king “Mes”; a king Seheqaenre Se'ankhtah is known from a stele found at Gebelein, south of Thebes, and he may be the same man as king Rahotep's chancellor Se'ankhtah. But the historical reconstruction it suggests is quite plausible. The surviving records of the earliest kings in this list suggest a time of conflict, when the Theban state was fighting for its life. Nubkheperre Inyotef and Rahotep, however, were clearly able to control organised garrisons in Coptos, and Sekhemre-wadjkhau was able to engage in building activities at Medamud, suggesting a period of slowly increasing security and economic revival. This period coincides with the height of the Hyksos control of the north, which the excavations at Avaris have revealed also as a period of prosperity. So far as we can tell, hostilities between the two states did not become serious until the reign of Seqenenre Ta'o; thus the kings of the preceding generation may well have lived in peaceful coexistence with the Hyksos.

3. The 17th Dynasty Genealogy

The kinglist of Figure 3 shows some quite striking grouping patterns. The first three kings share very similar prenoms (Sekhemre-se[X]tawi), as do two of the Inyotefs (Sekhemre-[X]maet), their three successors (Sekhemre-[X]khau), and the two Ta'os (Se[X]enre). The classically 13th-dynasty nomens of kings Sebekhotep, Neferhotep and Mentuhotep form an alliterative sequence that is quite unusual. We have groups of two kings Nebiriau, three kings Inyotef, two kings Ta'o, and possibly two kings Senusert. The name Sebekemsaf recurs repeatedly, as kings bracketing the Inyotefs and as the wives of two kings of this period.

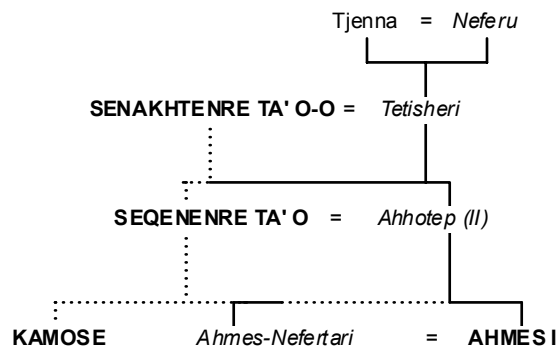


Figure 4: Standard Reconstruction of Late 17th Dynasty Genealogy

Before attempting to explain these curious phenomena, we will review the conventional genealogy of the later 17th dynasty, shown in Figure 4. This is based on the following facts.

Ahmes I tells us he was the son of a queen Ahhotep and the grandson of queen Tetisheri, and thus the son and grandson of two earlier kings. His father was also a son of Tetisheri, but she was described on her mummy bandages as the daughter of commoners, the judge Tjenna and his wife Neferu. Ahmes' three immediate predecessors are known – Kamose, Seqenenre Ta'o and Senakhtenre Ta'o-o. It is also known that Seqenenre Ta'o married a queen Ahhotep, that he gave all his known children (at least 1 son and 6 daughters) names of the form Ahmes-[X], and that he was the father of at least one king. On this basis, Seqenenre Ta'o is generally accepted as the father of Ahmes, though the question is complicated by the existence of the mummies of two queens Ahhotep from this period. From this starting point, Kamose is usually assumed to be an elder brother of Ahmes, and Senakhtenre Ta'o-o the husband of Tetisheri and father of Seqenenre Ta'o and his wife. Since Tetisheri was a commoner her husband is assumed also to have been one, and hence the founder of a new dynastic family.

There is no proof for the position of either Kamose or Senakhtenre Ta'o-o in this genealogy, and the belief that Tetisheri's husband brought a new family to the throne is pure assumption. The position of Kamose has been strongly questioned in the last few years, partly on the grounds that all of the many known children of Seqenenre Ta'o have names of the form Ahmes-[X], and partly on the difficulties of making the chronology work given the apparently youthful age at death of Seqenenre's mummy. All other solutions based on patrilineal succession are open to the same objections, or worse, but there are nevertheless good indications that he was of the same family as Seqenenre. One is left with the conclusion that Kamose must have been a collateral heir to Seqenenre, such as a brother, nephew or cousin. Although the assumed position of

Senakhtenre Ta'o-o has not been similarly challenged by other scholars, I believe that it is also strongly open to question: since Sekhemre-wepmaet Inyotef-o ("Inyotef the Elder") was certainly brother to at least one other king Inyotef, the analogy suggests that the same is almost certainly true for Senakhtenre Ta'o-o ("Ta'o the Elder") and Sequenre Ta'o.

But in this case Senakhtenre Ta'o-o cannot have been the first member of his family to be king, for his putative mother, Tetisheri, certainly married a king. Therefore, it is possible to extend the ancestry back to include at least one more 17th dynasty king. Until now, it has not been possible to determine who he might be. However, given the kinglist reconstructed above, I arrived at the following reconstruction of the genealogy of the middle part of the dynasty.

The veneration recorded by Ahmes' mother queen Ahhotep to a queen Sebekemsaf on the Iuf stele is most likely explained by the hypothesis that Ahhotep's mother queen Tetisheri was a secondary wife of Sebekemsaf's husband, and as we have seen he was probably king Rahotep. Since we have also seen that queen Sebekemsaf was a king's daughter and king's sister, it is quite likely that she was also Rahotep's sister. However, since Rahotep's son prince Ameny married the daughter of Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf, these two kings were of the same generation and queen Sebekemsaf may have been the sister instead of king Sebekemsaf – or, most likely, all three were siblings. Queen Sebekemsaf was also a king's daughter, and hence her brother(s) were also king's sons. Their father, from the kinglist, was probably one of the three Inyotefs, and in view of his relative prominence the most likely candidate is Nubkheperre Inyotef.

The relationship of Nubkheperre Inyotef to the other kings Inyotef, if any, has always been a matter of dispute, even among those scholars who have accepted they were contemporaries. We know that Nubkheperre spelled his nomen in an unusual way, and on the coffin of Sekhemre-wepmaet, which records that it is a gift from king Inyotef, this is the spelling used. The coffins of the two kings are also very similar, and were it not for the existence of a third king Inyotef there would be no doubt that Sekhemre-wepmaet and Nubkheperre were brothers. However, the makeshift coffin of Sekhemre-heruhirmaet was found together with that of Sekhemre-wepmaet, possibly even in the original tomb, and on this coffin the name of the king was originally written according to Nubkheperre's spelling before being altered to the more conventional one.

In my view, the most likely solution to this problem is that Sekhemre-wepmaet was succeeded by Sekhemre-heruhirmaet, who died before Sekhemre-wepmaet's tomb was completed, and that Nubkheperre buried them both. Under this scenario, Sekhemre-wepmaet and Nubkheperre were the named brothers and Sekhemre-heruhirmaet is most likely to be brother to both. But we know that Sekhemre-wepmaet was the son of a king, so we can extend the genealogy back a further generation. From the reconstructed king list, the best candidate for his father is Sekhemre-shedtawi Sebekemsaf; von Beckerath noted that his wife's name, Nubkhas, is short enough to fit into the space available for the name of Sekhemre-wepmaet's mother on his pyramidion.

There are no direct genealogical hints on the ancestry of Sekhemre-shedtawi Sebekemsaf. In the Turin kinglist, his entry is preceded by a so-called *Wsf* entry of some days. *Wsf* entries occur at several points in the kinglist, and their exact significance is debated, but the most likely meaning appears to be that they represent a period of time where the throne was either vacant or was held by one or more kings usually regarded as illegitimate in later tradition. Thus, it would appear that Sekhemre-shedtawi Sebekemsaf came to power through an abnormal event, such as a

coup against the heir of Seuserenre, his immediate predecessor.

There is one last linkage to examine. Nubkheperre Inyotef's wife, queen Sebekemsaf, was the maternal granddaughter of a king. We can estimate his *floruit* as being 40-60 years before hers, which makes him most likely one of the kings between Sekhemre-seusertawi Sebekhotep and Sewadjenre Nebiriau, inclusive. While any of these are possible, only one of these kings – Se'ankhenre Mentuhotep – is known to be connected with Sebekemsaf's home city of Edfu. Accordingly, he is provisionally proposed as the best candidate.

With this provisional genealogy in place, we may now return to the kinglist and consider the significance of the onomastic patterns we have noted in its light. We note that the two Ta'os were probably brothers, at least two if not all three Inyotefs were brothers, and quite possibly at least two or all three of the kings Sekhemre-[X]khau were brothers. Sibling homonymy or near-homonymy is very characteristic of Egyptian families of this period, and many other examples can be adduced (e.g. the children of Seqenenre Ta'o, all called Ahmes-[X]). Thus, we may propose that the kings Nebiriau, "User...re" and three out of the first four kings of the dynasty were also brothers. In my view it is more likely that kings Sebekhotep, Neferhotep and Mentuhotep were brothers. As von Beckerath has noted, since Djehuti's wife was queen Mentuhotep, it is reasonable to believe that king Mentuhotep was her son.

It appears then that the 17th dynasty was in large part, if not in its entirety, a dynasty which operated according to a lateral or fratrilineal succession system. Such systems are found worldwide – other examples include the kings of Elam, the Kushite kings who became the 25th Egyptian dynasty, the later kings of the Hsiung-nu (Huns), the Aztecs, the later Ottomans, and the modern Hashemites of Jordan and the Sa'udis of Saudi Arabia. In at least some of these cases, this system was adopted as a deliberate political act, in order to contain conflict within the ruling family. We may suppose that this was also the case here. There is an example of three brothers – Khaneferre Neferhotep (I), Menwadjre Si-Hathor and Khasekhemre Sebekhotep (IV) – succeeding each other in the mid 13th dynasty, and, if we have correctly identified homonymous siblings in the 17th dynasty, then the late 13th dynasty kings Djedhetepre Dudimose (I) and Djedneferre Dudimose (II) may also have been brothers.

Judging by the genealogy we have reconstructed so far, each generation of this dynasty consisted in principle of a set of brothers whose father was one of the kings of the previous generation – either the last of that generation or, more likely, the king with the most mature sons. Thus, we may propose that the Nebiriaus were sons of Sekhemre-seusertawi Sebekhotep, and that the kings "User...re" (Senusert?) were sons of Rahotep or Sekhemre-wadjkhau Sebekemsaf – displaced by the Ta'os, who were half-brothers or cousins. Although we do not yet know the nomen of king Semenenre, we might extend the principle to suppose that he and Seuserenre Bebi-ankh were brothers and sons of Sewadjenre Nebiriau.

This type of system is subject to conflict between different descendant lines as the dynasty matures. The accession of the Ta'os appears to be one example, and there is probably one other case. Since Sekhemre-shedtau Sebekemsaf appears to have come to the throne abnormally, and since he not only revived the "Sekhemre-[X]tawi" prenomen but represented himself as a saviour of Egypt, we may infer that he represented a completely different branch of the family to his immediate predecessors, and that his choice of prenomen was intended to emphasize his links to an earlier generation. Chronologically, he could be a son of Sekhemre-se'ankhtawi Neferhotep or Se'ankhenre Mentuhotep, succeeding in late middle age.

Thus, from the kinglist reconstructed above, the genealogical indications available, and the theory of a fratrilineal succession system, it is possible to propose a reasonable reconstruction of a dynastic genealogy for the 17th dynasty, even though it is quite speculative in places. It is quite possible that descent lines exist that link Sekhemre-mentawibre Djehuti, who reigned c1670 BC, with Ahmes I and Amenhotep I of the early 18th dynasty.

It remains to connect this genealogy to Thutmose I.

The connection between Thutmose I and the founders of the dynasty, is nowhere stated, and research into the matter has tended to weaken or destroy earlier hypotheses rather than to resolve them. Initially, he was thought to be the son of Amenhotep I by a secondary queen, but further research revealed that both Ahmes I and Amenhotep I had succeeded as minors, while Thutmose I was old enough to have had a son leading the army in his fourth year. Opinion then moved to the view that he was a commoner who had succeeded to the throne through his marriage to queen Ahmes, held to be the sister of Amenhotep I. However, since queen Ahmes is never called a king's daughter (as she should be on this theory) it was then decided that she must be the sister of Thutmose I himself, which leaves him with no known connection. On the other hand, his name and that of his wife are clearly taken from the previous royal family, and he acceded with the support of Ahmes I's queen Ahmes-Nefertari, who died in his fifth year.

Since it appears certain that Thutmose I was not a king's son, I considered the possibility that he might be a grandson of an earlier king. On chronological grounds, the most likely candidate is Seqenenre Ta'o, and on this hypothesis we can suppose that his father had a name of the form Ahmes-[X]. Now, there is a mysterious prince Ahmes-Sapair who is associated with Ahmes-Nefertari and Amenhotep I, and in at least one case appears to act as the heir of Amenhotep I. The only objection to making him the link between Thutmose I and the earlier kings is that the mummy of a young boy found in the DB320 cache was labelled as that of Sapair. But, since there is considerable evidence that many of these mummies are mislabelled, it seems reasonable to suppose that this mummy is also mislabelled.

A provisional genealogy for the 17th dynasty reflecting this analysis is shown in Figure 5.

4. The 13th Dynasty

It is generally believed that the transition between the 13th and 17th dynasties represents a move by the remnants of the central Egyptian government from the Middle Kingdom capital of Itj-Tawi to Thebes, in the face of the chaos resulting from the loss of central control over the whole country. The ancestry of the wife of the first 17th dynasty king, queen Mentuhotep, emphasises that the elite of the early 17th dynasty had their roots in the late 13th dynasty. Her mother Sebekhotep was a hereditary princess. Her father Senebhanef was a vizier who was, in all probability, the son of the vizier Yauebi, vizier to the 13th dynasty pharaoh Wahibre Yauebi.

The 13th dynasty consisted of about 50 kings and lasted for 130-150 years. The list is partly known from columns VI and VII of the Turin kinglist. Three distinct phases may be identified.

The first 20 kings reigned for approximately 50 years – that is, each king reigned on average for 2.5 years. Very little is known of the kings of this period, but there are some indications that several of them were interrelated.

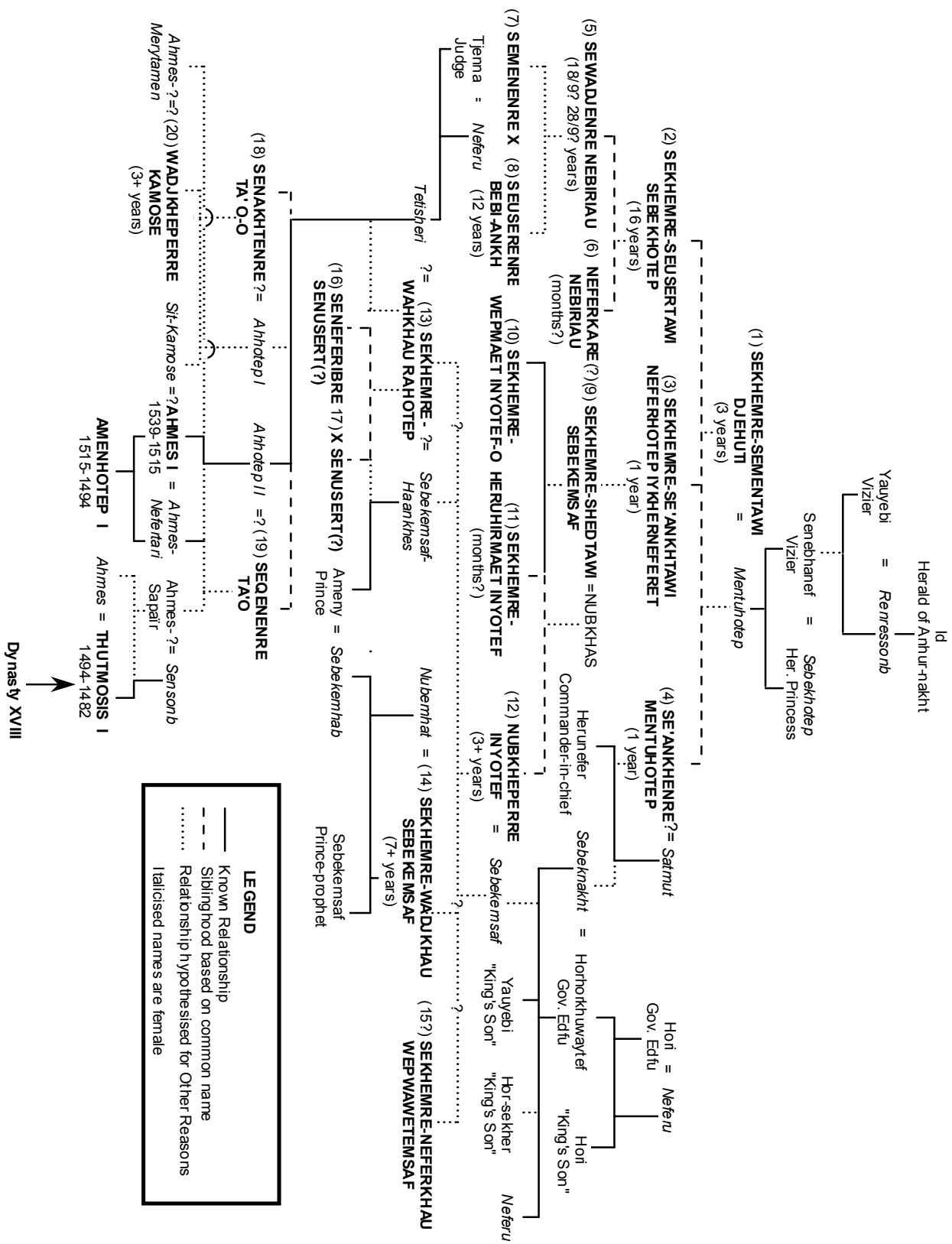


Figure 5: Provisional Genealogy for the 17th Dynasty

We possess several scarabs of a queen Nubhetepti, who was both a king's wife and mother of a king Sebekhotep. It is usually supposed that she was connected with a princess Nubhetepti-khered (Nubhetepti "the Child"), who was the daughter of king Auihre Hor (I). Since the mothers of three Sebekhotep kings are known, and two others are almost certainly not of royal origin, there are only two candidates: Sekhemre-khutawi Amenemhat-Sebekhotep (II) and Merhetepre Sebekhotep (VI). Because of the probable association with Auihre Hor, Merhetepre is too late; hence Sekhemre-khutawi is the favoured candidate, making him the son of his predecessor Sedjefkare Kai-Amenemhat (VII). Sekhemre-khutawi is also almost certainly the king whose visit to Thebes is recorded in the papyrus Bulaq 18; if so, then we also know the names of his wife (Ay) and no less than 9 sisters. Such a large number of sisters suggests that the king may have been quite young. Further, Berlev has argued that queen Ay was indirectly related to the family of the vizier Ankhu, which can be traced over four generations.

In the Turin kinglist, several of the kings of this first group are given nomens with multiple components (e.g.: Amenemhat-Sebekhotep, Ameny-Inyotef-Amenemhat, Ameny-Qemau). Kim Ryholt has argued that these names represent compressed genealogies, and has identified several such genealogies in this group of kings, although some of these are open to question. The first of these appears with the second king of the dynasty, Sekhemkare Amenemhat-Sonbef. If Ryholt is correct, this links a king Sonbef to an Amenemhat of the late 12th dynasty, probably Amenemhat III; the same king may later have taken Amenemhat as his official nomen (as Amenemhat V). Quite possibly, the first phase of the dynasty was a period when power shifted between various cadet branches of the 12th dynasty, punctuated by an occasional military reign; a pattern similar, say, to the collapse of the Sassanian dynasty in Iran in the early 7th century AD. The last king of this phase, Sekhemre-sewadjetawi Sebekhotep (III), has extensively documented his family, which clearly has no relationship either to previous kings or to his successors.

In the second phase of the dynasty we have a group of 6 kings over a period of roughly 60 years. Many of these kings have relatively long reigns, and they are, at least at first, fairly well documented. The first four kings all came from a single family, which remained in power for at least 22 years and is also relatively well-known. The first three were the brothers Neferhotep, Si-Hathor and Sebekhotep, who may have inspired the adoption of this system by the 17th dynasty as we have seen above. Khahetepre Sebekhotep (V) is generally believed to be the son of the youngest brother, Khaneferre Sebekhotep. Following these kings come two kings - Wahibre Yauebi and Merneferre Ay – who had reigns of 10 and 23 years respectively. Despite this, they are quite unknown, but their reign lengths argue for the persistence of a certain stability in the kingship.

The remaining 20 or so kings, starting with Merhetepre Sebekhotep, reigned for somewhere between 20 and 40 years (most likely less than 30). At this point, the Turin papyrus becomes very fragmentary, so the exact order of succession is hard to trace. After Merneferre Ay, the only documentary evidence found is from upper Egypt. It appears that the government moved to Thebes at some time in this period, rather than on the accession of king Djehuti, although there are also some signs of royal residence in Edfu. Several of these kings are only documented from work on the 11th dynasty temple at Deir al-Bâhri, while a leading official of one king – Sewahenre Senebmiu – was buried at Thebes.

Very little is known of the families of these kings. We know the names of two sons of Merkaure Sebekhotep (VII), and it has been suggested that one of these (Sebekhotep) may be

identified with a namesake whose son, Hor-Sekher, was a leading official under a king Dudimose. The question is complicated by the fact that at this time the title “king’s son” was awarded to close associates of the king who were not literally the sons of kings. However, “king’s daughters” appear to be literally that, and there are several king’s daughters of the period whose fathers are unknown.

When we turn from the genealogies of the kings to those of the leading officials, this discouraging picture brightens considerably. Anthony Spalinger has constructed a genealogy of interconnected families spanning 8 generations. This genealogy is based on inscriptions in the tombs of two governors of El-Kâb south of Thebes, the Cairo Juridical Stele, which is concerned with the transfer of title to this governorship, and Louvre stele C13, which gives the family of a queen Nubkhas. The first members of this genealogy – the father and uncle of queen Nubkhas – were officials of Khasekhemre Neferhotep and Khaneferre Sebekhotep. We know, from the tomb of Rensonb of El-Kâb, that Khonsu, the daughter of queen Nubkhas, married a vizier Ay. The Cairo Juridical Stele showed that the family of this vizier were governors of El-Kâb from before the reign of Merhetepre Sebekhotep till after the reign of Sewadjenre Nebiriau. That is, this genealogy bridges the period of the collapse of the 13th dynasty and the rise of the 17th.

Members of this group of families are known to have married into the families of up to three ruling kings. Nubkhas, daughter of Dedusebek-Bebi, scribe to the vizier under Khaneferre Sebekhotep, married an unnamed king. Her daughter Khonsu married Ay, who was vizier in the first year of Merhetepre Sebekhotep; a granddaughter of this marriage married the later governor Rensonb. However, the descendants of Ay who are listed in the Cairo Juridical Stele as governors of El-Kâb were products of his marriage to a second princess, the king’s daughter Reditenes. Finally, Rensonb is connected to another queen, Sensonb.

The nature of this last connection has long been unclear, owing to a misreading of the relevant portion of the inscription on Rensonb’s tomb. However, a recent re-examination by Klaus Baer has shown that Sensonb was most likely an ancestress of Rensonb’s unnamed wife. This places her as a younger contemporary of the official Dedusebek-Bebi and his brother Nubankh, or in the next generation, which means she is almost certainly to be identified with Sensonb, wife of Khasekhemre Neferhotep.

The fathers of Ay’s two wives, Khonsu and Reditenes, must also be identified with kings of this period, but it is not stated which ones they are. Spalinger showed the Nubkhas, the mother of Khonsu, most likely married either Khahetepre Sebekhotep or Wahibre Yauebi. Although he favoured the latter, he was unable finally to distinguish between the two possibilities. Until now, however, no one has attempted to identify the father of Reditenes.

I have recently studied this issue. A careful analysis of the lists of governors of El-Kâb given in the Cairo Juridical Stele and the tomb of Sebeknakht II of El-Kâb, combined with information about other viziers of the day, allows us to estimate that Ay’s marriage to Reditenes occurred between about 18 and 25 years before year 1 of Merhetepre Sebekhotep, while his marriage to Khonsu is unlikely to have taken place much more than 30 years before this date. It appears that Ay’s charter for the governorship of El-Kâb, which he issued in Merhetepre’s year 1, was intended to establish the descendants of Reditenes to the exclusion of those of Khonsu, even though Ay’s son Sebekmose, son of Khonsu, had already been governor. Such an action bespeaks a political necessity arising from the accession of the new king. Most likely, then, Reditenes was related to Merhetepre, while Khonsu was not. We can now arrive at the solution.

Khonsu was daughter of Wahibre Yaueybi, while Reditenes was daughter of Merneferre Ay and probably the sister of Merhetepre Sebekhotep.

Research into the 13th dynasty continues. It is clear that this group of kings, unlike the 17th, could not have formed a single family. Nevertheless, the framework of official genealogies has already netted most of the kings of the best known phase of the dynasty. No doubt in time it can be extended to include more, most likely through a linking up of the genealogies of the viziers of the period. The available information is summarised in Figures 6 and 7.

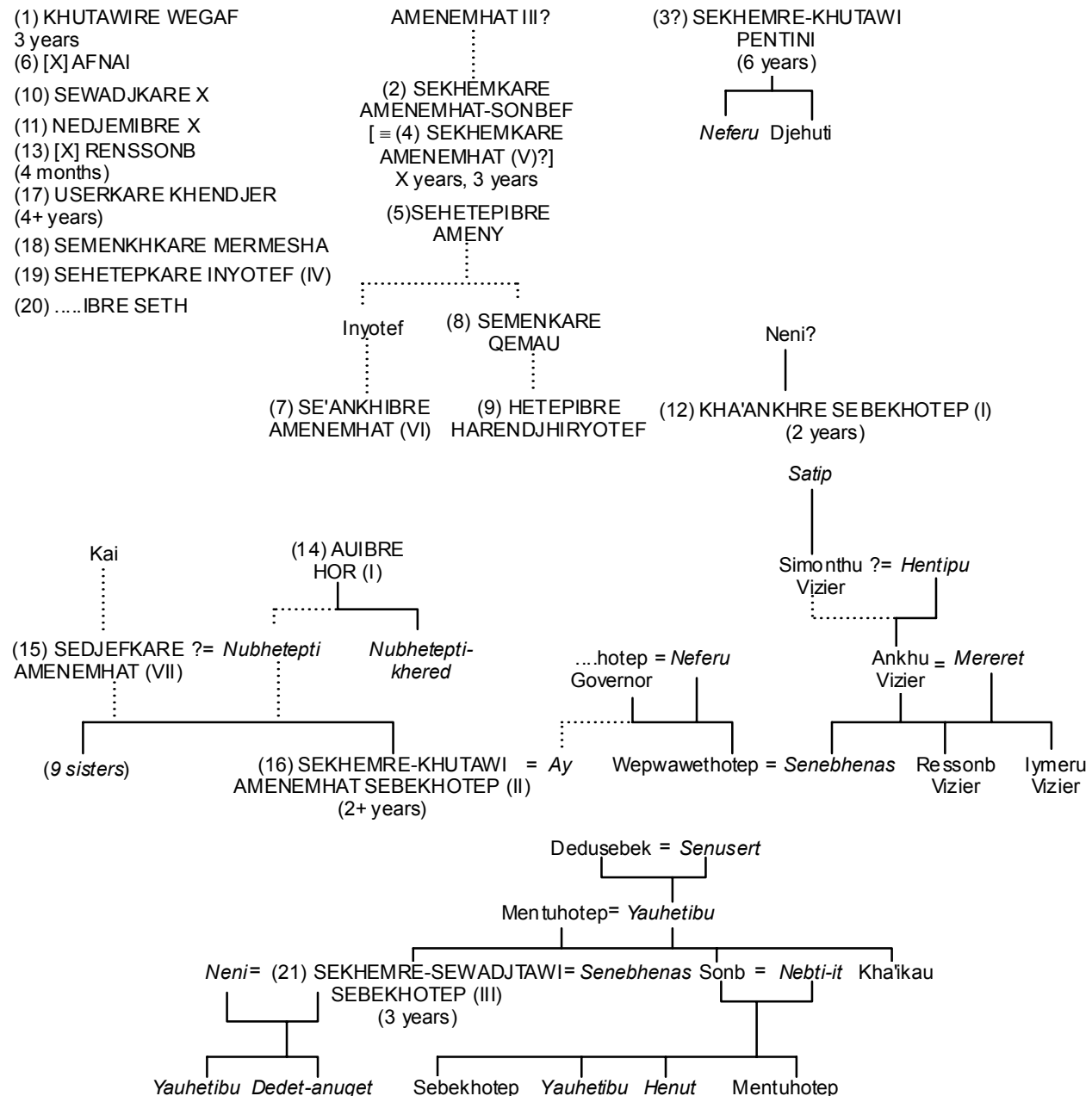


Figure 6: The Early 13th Dynasty

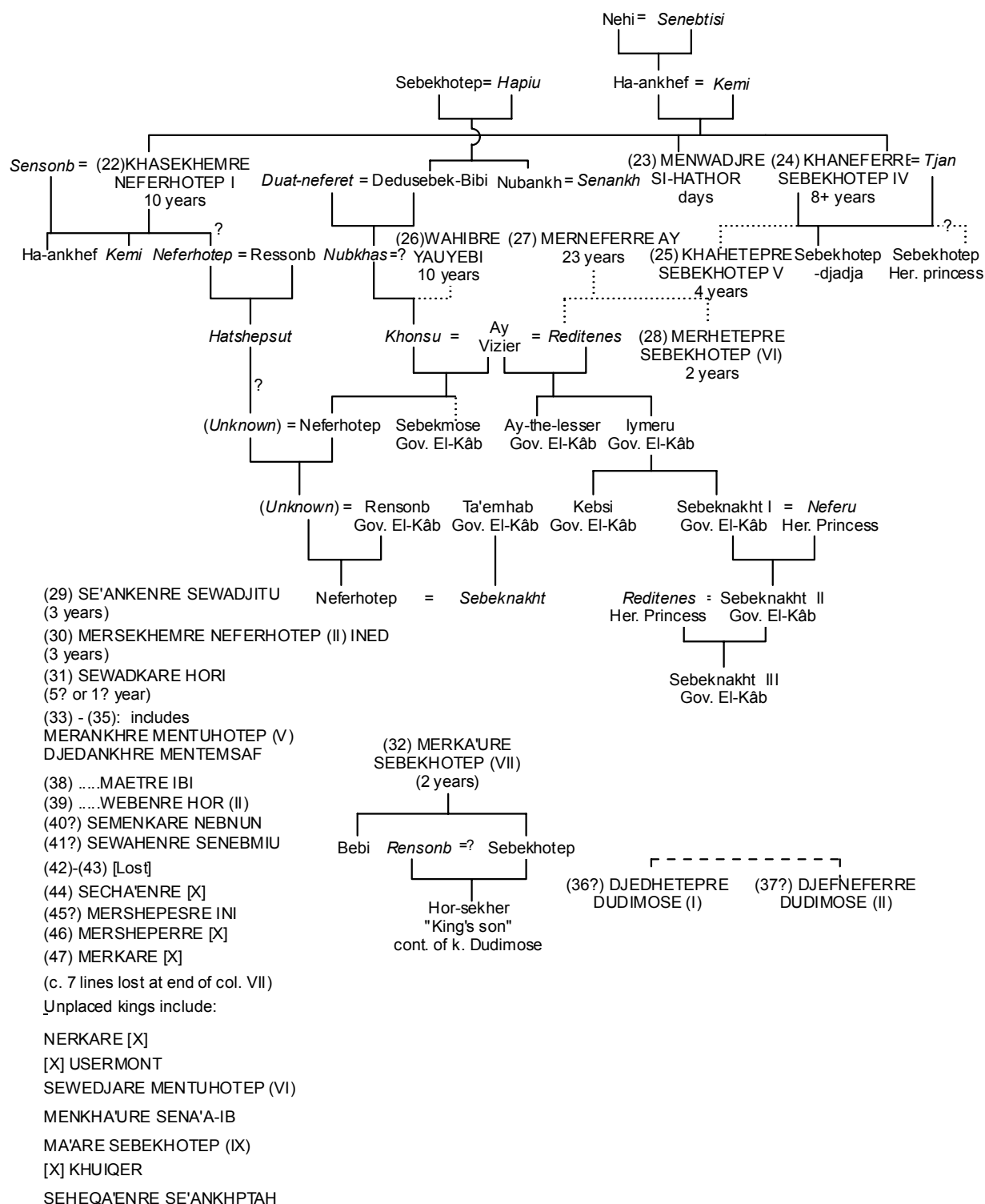


Figure 7: The Middle and Late 13th Dynasty

5. Some Speculations

We have, then, a plausible reconstruction of the 17th dynasty and a genealogy of some 13th dynasty officials which is linked with up to seven 13th dynasty kings. The earliest members of this genealogy must have lived at the very end of the 12th dynasty. Is it possible to link these two genealogies and establish a bridge that will carry us from the Middle Kingdom to the New Kingdom? I offer the following speculations.

The most likely point of connection between these genealogies is the hereditary princess Sebekhotep, mother of queen Mentuhotep. We may estimate her dates, very roughly, by dead reckoning backwards from the reign of her son-in-law king Djehuti, combined with what we know of the career of her husband, the vizier Senebhanef. Labib Habachi has identified him with the Controller of the Hall Senebhanef, who was son of the vizier Yaueybi. In a study of this latter vizier, Habachi established that he was most probably vizier in the reign of Wahibre Yaueybi; his son Senebhanef was therefore probably vizier in the reign of Merneferre Ay, but no later, since the vizier in year 1 of Merhetepre Sebekhotep was Ay. Thus, Senebhanef had died by this date.

From the Cairo Juridical Stele and our study of the 17th dynasty, we know that Djehuti reigned 20-40 years after Merhetepre Sebekhotep. Queen Mentuhotep died at some point in his 3 year reign, and if our hypothetical 17th dynasty genealogy is correct then her sons were certainly adults at this time. It seems reasonable then to suppose that the marriage of the future queen Mentuhotep most probably occurred in the last decade of the reign of king Ay, when her father was vizier. Accordingly, the marriage of her mother should occur some 20 years or more earlier. This places the marriage of princess Sebekhotep near the start of the reign of Wahibre Yaueybi or possibly in the reign of his predecessor Khahetepre Sebekhotep. At this time she was probably in her late teens, so we may estimate that she was born in the reign of king Khasekhemre Neferhotep.

Nothing is known of the parentage of this princess, and the title of hereditary princess does not necessarily imply royal parentage or descent. However, there are certainly examples, such as the king's daughter Reditenes, where a woman known from one source to be a king's daughter is named in others only as a hereditary princess. If we suppose that this was true for the princess Sebekhotep, then she would be a daughter of one of the two brother kings Khasekhemre and Khaneferre. Since the name "Sebekhotep" occurs repeatedly on Khaneferre's side of the family, he seems the better choice; we may suppose that she was born before his ascent to the throne.

To the extent that this argument has any merit at all, it may be extended to propose two other connections. Two of the later governors of El-Kâb (Sebeknakht I and Sebeknakht II) married the hereditary princesses Neferu and Reditenes respectively. If either or both of these princesses were also king's daughters, they would most likely be daughters or sisters of the kings who were their husbands' contemporaries. Almost certainly, these are kings Sewadjenre Nebiriau and Seuserenre Bebi-ankh respectively. Some slight support for this argument can be seen in the fact that this line of governors probably ceased to rule El-Kâb with Sebeknakht II's son Sebeknakht III, who left no known tomb. The next two governors Ta'emhab and Rensonb claim no relationship to the previous line. This change of line may be associated with the accession of Sekhemre-shedtau Sebekemsaf at about this time. As we have seen, this appears to have been an abnormal succession. The fortunes of close supporters of the previous kings, such as the Sebeknakhts of El-Kâb, would almost certainly have been affected by it.

The suggested linkage through princess Sebekhotep formally completes the goal: Khaneferre Sebekhotep's paternal grandparents are known, and they were almost certainly born before the end of the 12th dynasty. However, such a solution is not fully satisfactory. As we have seen, there is some evidence to suggest that at least some of the early 13th dynasty kings were descended from the 12th dynasty. Is it possible to propose a descent from the 12th dynasty kings that can reach the 17th dynasty through the brother kings Neferhotep and Sebekhotep?

The following argument, admittedly far-fetched, suggests that it may be possible.

One of the best known pieces of Egyptian literature is the so-called Westcar Papyrus, which is cast in the form of a series of stories told to the 4th dynasty pharaoh Cheops by his sons. The surviving papyrus is of early Hyksos date, and it is generally believed that the stories themselves were composed somewhat earlier. The most recent study of this papyrus by Hans Goedicke has emphasised that the Westcar stories are not a simple set of tales but are subtly designed to convey a political message, and were most probably aimed at the elite. In this interpretation, the last story represents the intended message of the sequence.

The story of most interest to us here is the last, in which Cheops is told that after the reigns of his sons and grandsons the throne will pass to the three sons of a priestess Redjdjedet, wife of a priest of Re. It has long been recognised that this corresponds to the rise of the 5th dynasty. However, as knowledge of that dynasty has emerged from the Czech excavations at Abusir, it has become clear that the allegory is far from exact. The analog of Redjdjedet should be Khentkaues, daughter or grand-daughter of Cheop's grandson Mycerinus, who was probably the mother of two and possibly three 5th dynasty kings, but she was also the wife of a king. Moreover, the three brother kings apparently named in the Westcar papyrus (Userkaf, Sahure and Niuserre-Kakai) do not appear to have been brothers in actual fact.

If we assume that the Westcar papyrus was intended to justify contemporary events by invoking analogies from the distant past, then the three sons of Redjdjedet should represent three brothers of non-royal parents who ruled Egypt in the 13th dynasty. This exactly describes the situation of the brothers Neferhotep, Si-Hathor and Sebekhotep. The Westcar papyrus, then, probably represents propaganda for a new form of government, such as a troika of the three brothers, or even for the introduction of fratrilineal succession, which we have argued above finally took root in the 17th dynasty.

The question that arises is: how far was the 5th dynasty precedent altered to match 13th dynasty conditions? If we pursue the analogy further, we may propose to identify "Cheops" with the great 12th-dynasty king Amenemhat III, who died some 60 years – three generations – before the three brothers. As we have seen, it is arguable that some kings in the early 13th dynasty claimed descent from the 12th, which would make them correspond to the sons and grandsons of Cheops. The educated audience of the Westcar papyrus were undoubtedly aware, at least in outline, of the circumstances that brought the 5th dynasty to power, and this must have included some awareness that Khentkaues was descended from the 4th. No such claim is made for Redjdjedet in the extant portion of the Westcar papyrus, nor is any known for Kemi, the mother of the three 13th dynasty kings. Yet, since the historical Khentkaues was from the 4th dynasty family, may we perhaps suppose by analogy that Kemi was a descendant of Amenemhat III?

If both these speculations are valid, then we have a completed bridge across the Second Intermediate period that looks something like Figure 8.

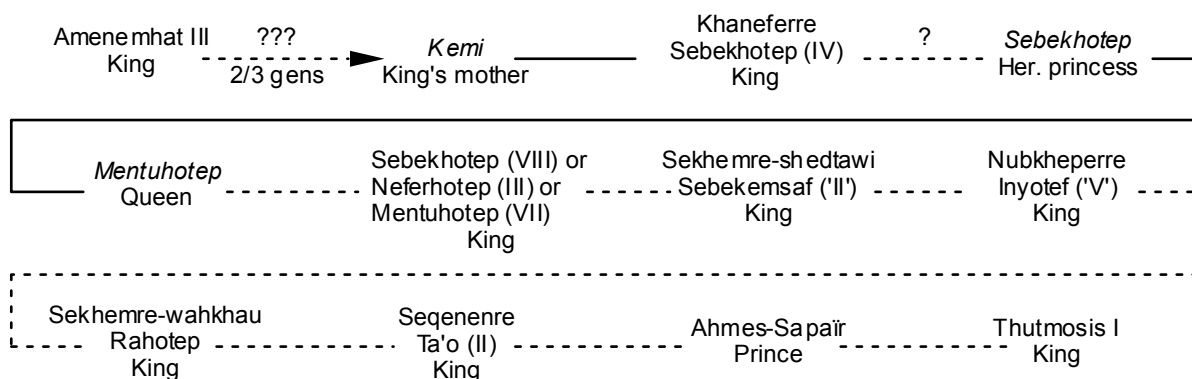


Figure 8: A Speculative Descent from Amenemhat III to Thutmose I

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The arguments outlined here for the 17th dynasty succession and genealogy, and for the ancestries of Thutmose I and princess Reditenes, are given in detail in a series of notes in the discussion journal *Göttinger Miszellen*. To date, four out of a total of six notes have appeared in alternate issues, starting in issue 141 (1994). These notes also contain detailed references for all points of the reconstructions outlined in this paper. The speculations of the last section appear here for the first time.

Where possible, preference is given here to studies in English. So far as I know, there is no satisfactory account of this period available in any language in the popular Egyptological literature. The material is mostly in specialist journals, monographs and festschriften, to be found in large university libraries. Although much key material is written in English, at least as much again is written in French or German. There are also significant papers in Russian, Italian and Arabic. The entries in the following work are a good starting point (many are in English):

W. Helck et al.: "Lexikon der Ägyptologie" Wiesbaden 1975-1987.

Previous reconstructions of the 17th dynasty may be found in the following works. Von Beckerath's book is one which no serious scholar of the period can afford to neglect. The interpretations in Hayes' article and Winlock's book are seriously outdated and should be used with care.

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W. C. Hayes: "Egypt from the Death of Ammenemes III to Seqenenre II" *Cambridge Ancient History* 2nd Edn, vol II ch 2, Cambridge 1965

H. Stock: "Studien zur Geschichte und Archäologie der 13. bis 17. Dynastie Ägyptens" Glückstadt 1942

H. E. Winlock: "The Rise and Fall of the Middle Kingdom in Thebes" New York 1947

The following books give good background to the standard model of 18th dynasty origins:

D. B. Redford: "History and Chronology of the Eighteenth Dynasty of Egypt: Seven Studies" Toronto 1967

J. E. Harris & E. F. Wente (eds): "An X-Ray Atlas of the Royal Mummies" Chicago 1980

For the Turin kinglist, the following works are essential. A new edition is badly needed.

G. Farina: "Il Papiro dei Re Restaurato" Rome 1938

A. H. Gardiner: "The Royal Canon of Turin" Oxford 1959 (repr 1987)

W. Helck: "Anmerkungen zum Turiner Königspapyrus" Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur 19 (1992) p152

J. Málek: "The Original Version of the Royal Canon of Turin" Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 68 (1982) p93

D. B. Redford: "Pharaonic King-Lists, Annals and Day-Books" SSEA Publication IV, Mississauga 1986

The chronological issues surrounding the period are summarised in the following papers. Franke's paper is useful as a detailed comparison of two alternatives, although I believe his conclusions are incorrect. The reader is warned against the radical chronological revisions proposed in P. James et. al. "Centuries of Darkness" (London, 1991). While well-written and superficially plausible, the presentation is selective and misleading, and the case is highly flawed.

D. Franke: "Zur Chronologie des Mittleren Reiches (12.-18. Dynastie), Teil II: Die sogenannte 'Zweite Zwischenzeit' Altägyptens" Orientalia 57 (1988) p245

K. A. Kitchen: "The Basics of Egyptian Chronology in Relation to the Bronze Age" in: P. Åström (ed.) "High, Middle or Low? Part 1", Gothenburg 1987, p37

W. A. Ward: "The Present Status of Egyptian Chronology" Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research 288 (1992) p53

For the Dra' Abu'l-Naga discoveries, the best account is still the highly readable paper published by Winlock in 1924. His later book repeats this material, with additional interpretations which do not now seem well-founded.

H. E. Winlock: "The Tombs of the Kings of the Seventeenth Dynasty at Thebes" Journal of Egyptian Archaeology 10 (1924) p217

A. M. Dodson: "The Canopic Equipment of the Kings of Egypt" London/New York 1994

For other relevant 17th dynasty source material, consult:

- J. Baines: "The Inundation Stela of Sebekhotpe VIII" *Acta Orientalia* 36 (1974) p39 [Stele of Sekhemre-seusertawi Sebekhotep]
- G. Castel & G. Soukassian: "Dépôt de stèles dans la Sanctuaire du nouvel empire au Gebel Zeit" *Bulletin de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale* 85 (1985) p285 [Stele of Seuserenre Bebi-ankh]
- P. Lacau: "Une stèle juridique de Karnak" *Supplément aux Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, Cahier n° 13* (1959) [Cairo Juridical stele of Sewadjenre Nebiriau]
- L. Habachi: "The Family of the Vizier Ibi^c and his Place Among the Viziers of the Thirteenth Dynasty" *Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur* 11 (1984) p113 [Family of Queen Mentuhotep]
- A. Mariette: "Monument Divers recueillis en Égypte et en Nubie" Paris 1889 [Tomb of Aq-Hor]
- P. E. Newberry: "The Parentage of Queen Aahetep" *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* 24 (1902) p285 [Jewellery of queen Sebekemsaf]
- R. Parker & S. G. Quirke: "The Coffin of Prince Herunefer and the Early History of the *Book of the Dead*" in A. B. Lloyd (ed.) "Studies in Pharaonic Religion and Society" London 1992, p37 [Family of Se'ankhenre Mentuhotep]
- H. M. Stewart: "Egyptian Stelae, Reliefs and Paintings from the Petrie Collection: Part II" Warminster 1979 [Stele of king Rahotep (n° 78), stele of prince Amenhy (n° 79)].
- O. Tufnell: "Studies on Scarab Seals Volume II" Warminster 1984 [Scarabs of Nubkheperre Inyotef]
- P. Vernus: "A propos de la fluctuation *p/f*" in J. Osing & G. Dreyer (ed.): "Form und Maß, Beiträge zur Literatur, Sprache und Kunst des alten Ägypten", Wiesbaden 1987, p450 [Family of queen Sebekemsaf]
- "La stèle du pharaon *Mntw-htpi* à Karnak: un nouveau témoignage sur la situation politique et militaire au début de la D.P.I." *Revue d'Égyptologie* 40 (1989) p161 [Stele of Se'ankhenre Mentuhotep]
- "La stèle du roi Sekhemsankhtaouyré Neferhotep Iykhernofert et la domination Hyksôs (stèle Caire JE 59635)" *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 68 (1982) p129 [Stele of Sekhemre-se'ankhtawi Neferhotep]

For the Thirteenth Dynasty material presented here, the following papers should be consulted in addition to von Beckerath's book and entries in the *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*. The princess Reditenes is covered in a forthcoming note by the author in *Göttinger Miszellen*.

- L. Habachi: "New Light on the Neferhotep I Family, as Revealed by their Inscriptions in the Cataract Area" in: W. K. Simpson & W. M. Davis (eds.) "Studies in Ancient Egypt, the Aegean, and the Sudan" Boston 1981, p77
- S. G. Quirke: "Royal Power in the 13th Dynasty" in: *idem* (ed.) "Middle Kingdom Studies" New Malden 1991, p123
- K. S. B. Ryholt: "A Reconsideration of some Royal Nomens of the Thirteenth Dynasty" *Göttinger Miszellen* 119 (1990) p101

A. J. Spalinger: "Remarks on the Family of Queen *H'.s-nbw* and the Problem of Kingship in Dynasty XIII" *Revue d'Égyptologie* 32 (1980), p95

For the Westcar Papyrus, and material relevant to assessing its relationship to the 5th dynasty:

H. Altenmüller: "Die Stellung der Königsmutter Chentkaus beim Übergang von der 4. zur 5. Dynastie" *Chronique d'Égypte* 45 (1970) p223

H. Goedicke: "Thoughts about the Papyrus Westcar" *Zeitschrift für Ägyptische Sprache und Altertumskunde* 120 (1993) p23

W. K. Simpson (ed.): "The Literature of Ancient Egypt" New Haven/London 1972

M. Verner: "Forgotten Pharaohs, Lost Pyramids: Abusir" Prague 1994