

Observations on the Turin Papyrus

Edward Hincks

THE
FRAGMENTS
OF THE
HIERATIC PAPYRUS
AT
TURIN:

CONTAINING THE
NAMES OF EGYPTIAN KINGS,

WITH THE
Hieratic Inscription at the Mark.

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Abstract

An updated description of the Turin royal papyrus by Hincks, presented in Wilkinson's 1851 book.

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Sources

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Observations on the Turin Papyrus

by Dr. E. Hincks

“THE following observations contain the substance of three papers which were read before the Royal Society of Literature, on the 12th March and the 28th May 1846, and the 9th November 1848 ; with such corrections as I have been led to make by subsequent investigations. They contain my views as to the arrangement of the fragments and the chronological system of the author of the papyrus, in September 1851.

“The first point to be settled is the length of a column of the writing. I have ascertained this as follows. In fragment 61 are portions of two columns, numbered V and VI. The first line in VI signifies “making up eighteen kings”. Though the figure in the unit’s place is incomplete, enough of it remains to prove that it was an “eight”. Opposite to the fourth line of this part of column VI, we have, in column V, “181 (years)”, which is evidently the conclusion of the line, containing the summation of a dynasty. The next line in column V terminates with “(he passed – years in) his reign”, as the sentence should evidently be completed. This is probably the line of which the beginning is the second line in fragment 46; though it is possible that the first line in that fragment, of which only the portion of a red character remains, may contain the name of the first king, and not the summation. In both cases equally we have twenty-two lines in column VI. On the most probable supposition, there are nine lines containing kings’ names before the first in fragment 61, four lines in that fragment down to the summation, and nine opposite the names of the nine kings in fragment 46, and 47, which joins it. On the other supposition, there are eight lines with kings’ names above fragment 61, and ten after its fourth line.

“In order to ascertain the length of the writing in this column, I measured the interval between the top of the first line, on the left hand side of fragment 61, and the bottom of the line containing the first reign after the summation, on the right hand side. It is 2.75 inches [7 cm]. To this, the space occupied by seventeen lines must be added. The eight lines in fragments 46, and 47, are by measurement 4.25 inches [11 cm]. At the top of column VI, six lines in fragment 59 are by measurement 3.5 inches [9 cm]; and I allow the half of this for the other three, giving 12.25 inches [31 cm] for the column.

“In corroboration of this, I observe that in the column numbered IV there are 21 names of kings, followed by a summation. These 22 lines occupy by measurement 12.25 inches [31 cm], the same as before, and they appear to compose an entire column. It is evident that there was nothing more at the top ; and it is not likely that a new dynasty would be commenced at the

very bottom of a column.

“Again, it appears by this summation that there were sixty-seven kings enumerated to the end of column IV ; or 46 to the end of column III. Now, in fragment 1, the names of Menes and Athothis, the first two kings, occupy the twelfth and thirteenth lines, leaving eleven lines of prefatory matter. We should thus have $46+11$, or 57 lines, exclusive of summations and headings, in the three columns. The summations could not be less than four; and there were probably some extra lines. We may thus assume, that the average length of these columns exceeded, but did not much exceed, twenty lines.

I regard it then as a settled point, that the length of a column of writing was about $12\frac{1}{4}$ inches, which would be filled by about 21 or 22 lines. We can not suppose that the number of lines should be less than 20, and it is not likely that it exceeded 23.

I now proceed to consider the dynasties of kings at the commencement of the papyrus. It appears to me quite obvious, that the author first set down the same six dynasties as Manetho did; and also that he assigned to them the same period of 1497 years that Manetho (according to Africanus) did. He, however, divided it differently between the different dynasties. Their durations were, according to

Manetho (Afr.)	$253 + 302 + 214 + 277 + 248 + 203.$
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The papyrus	$263 + 302 + 219 + 284 + 248 + 181.$
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The sums of the first, third, and sixth dynasties are given by the papyrus: 263 and 284 are the sums of the separate reigns III the first and fourth dynasties, as given by Africanus. It seems evident that Africanus, having by incorrectly adding up these two sums, and by a mistake of five years in his third dynasty, lost twenty-two years, added them to the true number of the sixth dynasty, in order to make up the total of the first six dynasties which he found in his author.

The number of the kings in the first five dynasties, as given in the papyrus, is 67. There are three statements from Manetho to be compared with this. According to Africanus, the number of kings are $8+9+9+8+9=43$. According to Eusebius, $8+9+8+17+31=73$. According to Castor, $8+8+9+17+21=63$. The papyrus gives 11 for the first, 21 for the fifth, and 16 or 17 for the fourth. Supplying the numbers which the papyrus does not determine from the Greek and Latin authorities, we have $11+9+9+17+21=67$.

That the first dynasty contained 11 reigns in the papyrus, I infer from the following data. From the top of the first to the top of the fourteenth line, in fragment 1, is 7.7 inches. Now, if we deduct from 12.25, the length of a column, .3, the average breadth of a line of writing, we have 11.95 for the sum of the intervals. As $7.7: 11.95::13:20.2$; whence there were 20 intervals in the first column, or 21 lines. Of these the first 11 contain prefatory matter, leaving 10 kings' names. Now fragment 17 contains the conclusion of the summation of this dynasty,—263; and it is

the second line of the second column, as found by the correspondence of the fibres, which connects it with fragment 18, the top of the third column. The first dynasty had then one king in the second column, and ten in the first.

The columns to which the fragments 1, 17, and 18, respectively belong, I will call A, B, and C, to prevent confusion between the columns of my arrangement and that of the existing arrangement. Fragment 17 is the only fragment now placed in column II, which belongs to B. Most, if not all of the others belong to a part of the papyrus which precedes A, and which refers to the reigns of the gods. Fragments 2-7 appear to belong to A, though I cannot determine in what part of it they fit in.

Column B, according to the preceding estimate of the reigns in the dynasties, contained only 16 names of kings; 1 in the first, 9 in the second, and 6 in the third dynasties. Two lines would be occupied with summations; and if there were headings to both the second and third dynasty there would be only 20 lines in B, a less number than in any other column. It is possible, however, that there were no more. It is a full inch to the bottom of the second line, which would give an interval of about .7; while in fragments 75 and 85, which appear to belong to this column, the intervals are fully .6. An average interval of 6.4 would leave room for no more than 20 columns. It is possible, however, that fragment 44, which is evidently out of place where it stands, may belong to column B, coming in before the third dynasty.

The last three reigns of the third dynasty are mentioned in the first three lines of column C, fragment 18. The second name, Σήφορος, is easy to be identified. The former part of the name is the element *χυφι*, or *chyvi*, which concludes the hieroglyphic compound. His reign was, according to the papyrus, 31 years, 8 months, and 4 days; and his life 34 years. His successor's, whose name is lost, was 27 years, 2 months, and 1 day. Africanus gives 30 and 26 years for these reigns, losing three years. In the sixth reign of the dynasty he was still further astray in the opposite direction, making it 42 years, while the papyrus only allows 8 years, 3 months. The fourth line of the fragment contains the summation of the third dynasty, of which the two last figures (19) are in perfect preservation. It is of course to be completed to 219. Africanus and Castor give 214, and Eusebius only 198.

The fifth line of fragment 18 contains the name of Soris, who is said to have reigned 19 years, 3 months. Another Soris follows, the length of whose reign is lost. Africanus gives 29 years to Soris, which may have included the reigns of both the kings of that name. No dependence can be placed on Africanus's numbers in this dynasty, as he reduces 17 reigns to 9. The column appears to have contained 22 lines, containing 3 kings' names of the third dynasty, 17 of the fourth, and 2 summations.

I conjectured, in my former paper, that the second line of fragment 30 contained the number of years in the life of Soris I; being a continuation of the fifth line of fragment 18. This, however, is proved to be impossible, by the writing on the reverse, as well as by the forms of the fragments, which would not admit the junction which I suggested. The fragments were

examined at Turin, with a view to ascertain if there could be any mistake; and the forms, as they stand in the present copy, and in that published by Lepsius, are found to be accurately drawn. I must therefore suppose that fragment 23 is placed nearly in its proper position. It should be moved about a third of an inch downward. The fragment of a character which it contains must be a part of a "nine"; the remainder of which, the number which preceded it, and the conclusion of the word "life", are lost. Fragment 30 should be under fragment 23, but at some distance from it. It contains the number of years in the lives of several kings in this dynasty, but it is uncertain of which. I do not think that any of the fragments 19-22 can belong to this column. Those marked 24-29 may; and some of them probably do.

As to the fragments 31-34, which stand as col. IV, I can have no hesitation in adopting the existing arrangement, and calling them column D: they contain 21 kings of the fifth dynasty, and a summation. Of the following fragments, 35-42, I can form no satisfactory judgment: 44 and 45 appear out of their places; but 43, 46, and 47, belong to column E, and contain the former parts of the lines in it: the two last contain the beginnings of the 10 last lines; and fragment 43 contains the beginnings of lines 7-10, as I infer from the following consideration. Fragment 59 contains the conclusions of the first 6 lines in column E, and the commencements of the first 6 in column F; the fifth line contains a reign which exceeded 90 years, — the units are lost; the following line contains a reign of 1 year 1 month. We know, from Manetho, that this remarkable conjunction of reigns immediately preceded that of Queen Nitocris; and her name occurs in the first line of fragment 43. Whatever be the proper position of fragments 48-56, it is clear that they are one and all of them misplaced. Fragment 61, like fragment 59, contains portions of columns E and F. Its first line contains the summation of a dynasty of 18 kings, which followed the sixth dynasty of Manetho; and this, as we have already seen, was probably the tenth line of column E. It is between two lines of column E; and it is doubtful which of these is the tenth in that column. I rather think, however, that it was the upper one. If so, there would be, in column E, 13 kings of the sixth dynasty, the summation of that dynasty, and 9 kings of the next dynasty, the second of whom reigned 6 years. Fragments 61-63 contain 7 kings of the dynasty after this; and there were probably 4 more: so that col. F would contain 9 kings of the dynasty after the sixth, its summation (18 kings), a heading of the following dynasty, and 11 kings of the next, occupying 22 lines in all.

Of the position of fragments 57, 58, 65, 66, 68-71, I can say nothing. Fragments 64 and 67 are certainly to be connected together, and are at the bottom of the column next before that marked VII; but they are not in the same as that which I call F. They contain the eight last lines of column G, which are a summation of a dynasty, 243 years, a heading, and six kings of a dynasty which is obviously the twelfth of Manetho. Before these lines there would be room for fourteen kings, who, with the eleven at the foot of column F, would constitute a dynasty of twenty-five, or two dynasties of twenty four, which, we shall presently see, is more probable. I cannot attempt to adjust the dynasties between the sixth and twelfth to what we have in any of the copies of Manetho.

The twelfth dynasty consisted of eight kings, six of whom were named in the column which I have called G; the next column, H, at the top of which is fragment 72, contains the two last sovereigns of this dynasty, with the summation, 213 years, 1 month, 15 days: the lengths of the two last reigns are distinctly given, —9 years, 3 months, 27 days ; and 3 years, 10 months, 24 days. The last alone is correctly given by Africanus, who calls it four years. A strange mistake has been made by some French writers as to the length of the last reign but one. They have imagined that the nine was a fifty. It is certainly very ill-formed; but there can be no doubt that it was intended for a “nine”, running below the line, while the “fifty” is always above it. See the “fifty” in fragment 85, line three, and that on the back of fragment 45; and see how “59” is formed at the back of fragment 46.

It is here the place to consider the chronological system of the author of the papyrus. Reverting to fragment 1, I find in the fourth line the number 330, which may well be supposed to be the number of kings in the whole papyrus, more especially as it is the precise number of kings which Herodotus says that the Egyptian priests had in a book. In the next line we have, apparently, “10 dynasties of them”; and in the following line, “19 periods, 11 years, 4 months, and (above) 20 days”,—which seems to be the time of their united reigns. This is explained by a statement in the next line, “the 19 periods are 2280 years”, giving 120 years for one of the periods spoken of. The latter part of this number of years is mutilated; but the 2000 is perfect, and there are evident traces of the 80. No other multiple of 19 will answer to the portions of lines that are preserved. We may, then, conclude, that the author of the papyrus reckoned 2291 years as that of the 330 kings. Now if these be the same 330, of whom a list was shewn to Herodotus, the last of them was Moeris, the king who constructed the lake in the Fayoum ; and we know that this was nearly the last king in the twelfth dynasty of Manetho. We should thus have 2291 years from Menes to the end of that dynasty which lasted 213 years, and which Manetho called the twelfth, but which, it would seem, the author of the papyrus reckoned only the tenth. Let us now see how this number agrees with the sum of the dynasties. I have already mentioned that both Manetho and the author of the papyrus reckoned 1497 years in the first six dynasties. If we add to this, 213 for the so-called twelfth, and 243 for the preceding one, we have 1953 for eight dynasties, leaving 338 for the remaining two. In this there is not the slightest improbability: the three dynasties between the sixth and the so-called twelfth would last 581 years; and the reigns included in them would be forty-two, or, on an average, fourteen years to a reign. The reigns in the fourth dynasty average less than seventeen; those in the fifth, less than twelve; and those in the sixth, less than fourteen. Those in these three dynasties together are, on an average, just fourteen.

It appears, then, that the whole period of 2291 years, which the author of the papyrus assigned to the 330 kings, was, in fact, occupied by ten dynasties consisting of about 130 kings, and ending with the dynasty at the close of which lived the king who constructed the artificial lake. If we believe Herodotus, the 330 kings ended with this king. The conclusion seems inevitable, that the other kings, who occupied the remainder of the papyrus, and

who were in number about 200, were, in the judgment of the author of the papyrus himself, contemporary with these ten leading dynasties. It is not necessary to deny the existence of these kings; they, no doubt, lived, and were acknowledged as kings,—all of them probably assuming the title of “king of Upper and Lower Egypt”; but wherever their place of abode was,—in Heracleopolis, Ethiopia, or elsewhere,—they did not reign in either Thebes or Memphis; and even the Egyptian chronologers did not reckon their reigns as distinct from those of the principal dynasties. Among these contemporary kings we must include all who follow the so-called twelfth dynasty in the papyrus, and, by necessary consequence, all the kings who are figured on the right hand of the chamber of kings brought from Karnac.

A statement has been preserved, to which I am now inclined to attach more credit than I did formerly, that the Egyptians reckoned all the dynasties from Menes to Ochus as occupying 3555 years. If from this number we subtract 2291, which the Egyptians reckoned from Menes to the end of the twelfth dynasty, we have 1264 from the end of the twelfth dynasty to Ochus, or to 3-40 13.0. This would place the twelfth dynasty between the limits 1817 and 1604 BC.; and I am disposed to accept these dates as the genuine Egyptian computation. Nor indeed do I see much reason to question their correctness. Between the end of the twelfth dynasty and the beginning of the eighteenth, I suppose that an interval may have existed in which certain kings reigned who appear in the lower line on the left hand side of the Karnac chamber, and in the Gournou tomb. This interval was, however, short; and its admission is a very different thing from admitting the pretended “middle kingdom” of the German and French school, the existence of which appears to me to be disproved by the papyrus.

With respect to the 2291 years, the case is different from what it is with respect to the 1264. I admit the former to be the genuine Egyptian computation; but I believe it to be altogether erroneous, from the circumstance that the Egyptians considered all the dynasties who at any time ruled at either Thebes or Memphis, to be successive; whereas, in fact, many of these were cotemporary. One case of cotemporary dynasties among the first ten in the papyrus, appears to me most clearly established. The duration of the first and second exceeds that of the third and fourth by sixty-two years, the exact reign attributed to Menes. I infer that the third and fourth reigned at Memphis, while the first and second reigned in Upper Egypt, the kingdom of Menes being divided immediately after his death. This inference is confirmed by a very remarkable fact. The ring of Athothis in Upper Egypt has the same length assigned to it as the two first reigns of the third dynasty: this would be the case, if, on the death of Menes, another son had reigned at Memphis, whom Athothis succeeded, so as to be, for the latter part of his reign, sovereign of the entire country. Athothis ‘and Tosorthrus would thus be the same individual. And this seems fully confirmed by what is said of them. Eusebius notes respecting Athothis, “he built the palace in Memphis, practised medicine, and composed anatomical books”; and concerning Tosorthrus,—“he was called by the Egyptians, Esculapius, on account of his skill in medicine: he also invented building with cut stone, and attended to writing.”

There is no evidence of any other dynasties being cotemporary, so strong as this; nor would

I venture to point out which are likely to have been so. The fact, however, being established, that two whole dynasties, lasting 503 years, were contemporary with others, it is fair to presume that a similar reduction ought to be made in other instances.

In plate III we have the tops of three columns connected together. They may be called H, I, and J, and exhibit the largest connected portion to be found in the whole papyrus. Fragments 72, 72A, 81, and 97, are certainly in their proper positions with respect to one another. 74 is misplaced, and 73 should be removed to the left, so as to be nearer 72A by about a quarter of an inch. Fragment 72 contains 13 lines, occupying 6.8 inches; below this are at present arranged four fragments, 76-79, which are connected. To the relative position of these four but one objection can be made: the interval between 76 and 77 is too great by about .4 inch, as appears from several known words, which begin in the former and end in the latter. These united fragments contain 14 lines, extending over 7.5 inches. If this could be immediately connected with the portion of fragment 72, under which it is placed, we should have 27 lines and 14.3 inches, in addition to about .2, the interval between the top of line 14 and the bottom of line 13. It appears, however, that one line at least must come in between these fragments; and I understand that the two kings preceding the first in column I, are known to be different from those at the foot of fragment 79. We should thus have at least 30 lines in the column, which is far too great. It is, therefore, necessary to transfer fragments 76-79 to column I, which has, in the upper fragment, 8 lines, extending over 4.2 inches. By placing the united fragments under it, with a slight interval containing one line, we should have 23 lines in the column, and about 12.25 inches, the standard length. This correction is a very important one, and it appears to me absolutely necessary.

On the remainder of the papyrus, I do not feel able to throw any light

