

About the Twelfth Dynasty of Egypt

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ÜBER
DIE ZWÖLFTE
ÄGYPTISCHE KÖNIGSDYNASTIE.
VON
R. LEPSIUS.

GELESEN IN DER KÖNIGLICHEN AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN AM 3. JANUAR 1852

MIT DREI TAFELN.

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Abstract

Extract of the text pertaining to the Royal Turin Canon, from Lepsius essay "About the Twelfth Dynasty".

English translation of the German original.

Source

Lepsius, Karl Richard. 1853. *Über die zwölfte Aegyptische Königsdynastie*. Berlin: Wilhelm Hertz. 16-19.

About the Twelfth Dynasty of Egypt

(Read before the Royal Academy of Sciences in Berlin on January 5th, 1852)

Aside from the tablet of Abydos and the chamber of Karnak, there is, as has been indicated above, a third monument, which must necessarily be drawn here for comparison. It would in itself answer the question raised here in the safest and most complete way, if it had not been so very fragmented.

I refer to the important papyrus in the Turin collection, which, when complete, contained a hieratic summary of all the kings from the mythological dynasties of gods and the first historical dynasty of Menes to the beginning of the New Kingdom. In these earliest annals, preserved from the Egyptian or any other literature, all the kings were listed individually by their throne name, and sometimes by their two shield names; the division of the various dynasties was indicated by special headings with red initials, indicating the number of kings in each dynasty. Each king's name is followed by his reign in years, months, and days. Added after each dynasty, the total length of its existence. Finally, there were even larger sections, ending with the total time, which had elapsed since the beginning of the empire under Menes; At least the later repeated mention of Menes, the first historical king of Egypt, cannot be interpreted differently.

This most remarkable literary memorial was erected in 1824 by Champollion in the collection of the Lord recently bought by the King of Sardinia and unpacked in Champollion's presence at Turin. Drovetti discovered. The first news of it was communicated in the *Bulletin Universel des sciences*¹ from a letter from Champollion dated 6th November. He found the remnants of these priceless royal eels beneath a large pile of papyrus fragments that had been bundled up as garbage and put aside. From this he assembled the principal fragments and took a copy of them on individual sheets.

In 1826, during his visit to Turin, Seyffarth completed the compilation of Champollion by giving with the greatest care all the fragments which he could still discover in the newly searched pile for the outward appearance of the individual pieces, especially the thread of the papyrus arranged and then glued on a transparent paper. In this way he found twelve columns, each of which originally contained 26 to 30 lines and not much fewer royal names. The large gaps would perhaps reduce the whole to 11 columns, but certainly not below that;

¹ VII. Section, *Sciences histor.* No. 11. Nov. 1824. Art No, 292, See Champollion, *2^e lettre au Duc de Blacas*. Turin 1826. p. 43.

and the number of all kings could scarcely be less than 250, of which 200 have yet left traces. The reverse side of the papyrus was also described and contained, in six columns, twice as large, fragments of bills which have nothing to do with the lists of kings. On this page there is often the name of King Ramses-Miamun, after which the writing of this second text in the 19th Manethonic dynasty wants to be set. This would not hinder the assumption that the other text, which, as far as it is received, did not contain a single royal name of the New Kingdom, was written earlier. Nevertheless, for other reasons I am not likely to have written it earlier than in the nineteenth dynasty, that is, in the fifteenth or fourteenth century BC.

In December 1835, I also made an exact copy of both sides of all fragments in the order followed by Seyffarth, and giving the outline of each individual piece. But as the publication seemed more desirable than a mere copy, in February, 1841, with the most generous permission of the Director, Barucchi, I took a meticulous drawing, likewise from both sides of the papyrus. I have this drawing in 1842 in my "Auswahl Egypt. 3-6, but without, however, adding to the reverse the fragments of scripture which are not connected with the lists of kings, it was quite necessary that Seyffarth's arrangement of the fragments, though neither as a whole nor in detail, make corrections which are in part unavoidable. Because of the present local context of the original fragments, which is not likely to be changed again for reasons of material preservation, the same arrangement must naturally also follow my figuring of the individual fragments.² "In recent years, this important document is manifold Whereupon I shall enter into more detail elsewhere,³ and it is to be wondered what we can learn from these royal annals for the further knowledge of our royal family.

Towards the end of the sixth column we find here the name of the first name added from Benihasan in the list of Abydos, and in the two uppermost lines of the seventh column the last two kings of our family.⁴ With them completes a dynasty; the next line contains the number of their kings and the sum of their years of reign. From this we deduce that the dynasty contained 8 kings; The monuments attest to us just as much, although the last name in Abydos is missing. In Karnak it appears in its place, and in the vicinity of the labyrinth pyramid I have found the same name locally connected to the same predecessors. Now the connection is interrupted between the beginning of the seventh and the end of the sixth column of the papyrus. But since the name of the first Amenemhe belongs to our other sources, to which he had been assigned by Seyffarth, who at that time knew nothing

² The polemic, which has been led by some scholars against the position of individual fragments in my Publication, thus addresses only this present factual arrangement of the original, not the very different position which, in my opinion, originally occupied the pieces.

³ Since this was written, a new publication by Sir Gardner Wilkinson has been published: *The Fragment of the Hieratic Papyrus at Turin*, London 1851. The accuracy of my publication is hereby expressly attested, and is apparent from the comparison; but here are the also the inscriptions of the back of the fragments of papyrus, which I also have in exact detail, without including them in my "Auswahl." In any case, for the purpose of ordering the lists of kings, the new reconstruction is a substantial gain, especially in connection with the most careful remarks of the text.

⁴ See Plate II, 2.

of the true royal succession, there can be no doubt that the external indications for this position of the fragment are quite complete have guided correctly. Similarly, the fragment added to Amenemhe and his successor does not add the names, but the lines and a part of the government figures of the missing four kings.⁵ This also speaks for itself for the right arrangement. This is further confirmed by the fact that the back inscriptions of the fragments in question also fit very well in the topography of the whole posterior surface. We can not help keeping the Seyffarth arrangement for the only correct one in this lot of the document.

⁵ Between fragments a and b, Wilkinson particularly notes: *Same fibres*.