

# Manetho's Twelfth Dynasty and the Standard Chronology<sup>1</sup>

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*Abstract: With regard to Twelfth Dynasty chronology, the standard chronology developed by Edgerton and Parker has come under substantial attack by advocates of a shorter dynasty with a somewhat later starting date. In this paper I will argue that Manetho's Twelfth Dynasty chronology derived from accurate Egyptian chronological records and that his original uncorrupted account of this dynasty coincided precisely with the standard chronology, suggesting that the standard chronology is the accurate chronology for the Twelfth Dynasty.*

The Twelfth Dynasty chronology stands as one of the two main pillars supporting current assessments of Egyptian dynastic dating prior to the first millennium B.C. Archaeology provides us with a significant amount of data that enables us to establish a fairly accurate list of Twelfth Dynasty kings and the year dates in which they reigned. The evidence includes an all-important Sothic date for the seventh year of the reign of Senwosre III, a series of lunar calendar dates that indicate certain kings reached a certain year in their reign, a series of double-dated markers for coregencies that appear to connect a particular year for one coregent with that of a particular year for the other, and several monumental markers and writings that refer to particular years in the reigns of various kings. In addition, we have the ancient evidence of the Turin Canon, which is partially damaged in this portion of the list, and the Manetho accounts preserved in the writings of Africanus and Eusebius.

Despite the substantial amount of evidence, Egyptologists still debate over how to interpret and analyze the data under examination. Disagreements arise over what year the Sothic date fell on, the nature and interpretation of the lunar calendar dates, whether the evidence for all of the double-dated coregencies has been established with certainty, whether or not certain coregencies even existed, and the large discrepancies between the highest known year markers for various kings and the corresponding figures in the Turin Canon.

While the disputes allow for several alternative chronologies, we can divide the disputants into two broad categories, advocates of a high chronology beginning in 1991 and lasting about 206 years and advocates of a low chronology beginning at a later date and lasting fewer years. A third significantly smaller grouping encompasses those who challenge the evidence for the existence of certain co-regencies, and who, therefore, propose a somewhat longer Twelfth Dynasty than either of the main groups of advocates.

## ISSUES IN DISPUTE

Table 1 shows three of the principle proposals for Twelfth Dynasty chronology. For comparison, I have also included the Turin Canon Chronology and the highest known year-marks for each king from the archaeological record. The analysis below shows that the existence of four pharaohs named Amenemhe and three pharaohs named Senwosre contributed substantially to the confusion among Manetho's redactors in the transmission of his historical accounts.

Richard Parker's chronology corresponds to the high or "standard" chronology. The Beckerath and Krauss columns show two different low chronologies. The main difference between the latter two concerns the Sothic date for Senwosre's seventh year. Beckerath and most Egyptologists accept that the Sothic observation took place in the north near Memphis and Beckerath's date of 1866 falls within the generally accepted range for such date.<sup>2</sup> Krauss, holding to a distinct minority position, has long argued for a Sothic

dating based on observations at Elephantine, in the far south, which results in a significantly later date for the Sothic correlation. Krauss would place the Sothic date for Senwosre III at about 1830.

**Table 1. Alternative Chronologies of the Twelfth Dynasty**

King name	Parker <sup>1</sup>	Beckerath <sup>2</sup>	Krauss <sup>3</sup>	Turin Canon <sup>4</sup>	Highest Year Mark <sup>4</sup>
Amenemhe I	1991-1962	1976-1947	1938-1908	[X] <sup>9</sup>	30
Senwosre I	1971-1928	1956-1911/10	1918-1875	45	44
Amenemhe II	1929-1895	1914-1879/76	1876-1842	10 + or 30 + [X]	35
Senwosre II	1897-1879	1882-1872	1844-1837	19	6
Senwosre III	1878-1843	1872-1853/52	1836-1818	30 + [X]	19/30/33/39 <sup>5</sup>
Amenemhe III	1842-1797	1853-1806/05	1818-1770	40 + [X]	45
Amenemhe IV	1798-1790	1807/06-1798/97	1770-1760	9 yrs, 3 mos., 27 dys	6
Sebeknofru	1789-1786	1798/97-1794/93	1760-1756	3 yrs, 10 mos. 24 dys.	
Duration in years	206	183	183	213 yrs, 1 mo. 16 dys. <sup>6</sup>	

### THE HIGH (OR STANDARD) CHRONOLOGY

For many years, the high chronology has been referred to as the “standard chronology” and had been widely accepted by Egyptologists as rock solid. This is the chronology that you usually find in almost any general history of Egypt. In recent years, proponents of a low chronology have mounted a substantial challenge to the high (standard) chronology, to the point that one scholar has recently written, “the standard chronology for the Twelfth Dynasty has largely been abandoned.”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Richard A. Parker, *The Calendars of Ancient Egypt*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, No. 26, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950), 69.

<sup>2</sup> Jürgen von Beckerath, *Chronologie Des Pharaonischen Ägypten*, MAS 46 (Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern 1997), 134.

<sup>3</sup> Rolf Kraus, Sothis und Mondaten. Hilderscheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge 20 (Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim, 1985), 207ff. <sup>4</sup> Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1961), 438.

<sup>4</sup> Gardiner, 438.

<sup>5</sup> These are alternative high-year marks based on different evidentiary interpretations.

<sup>6</sup> Duration given in Turin Canon. There appear to be months and days belonging to earlier kings that don't appear or aren't preserved in the earlier king reigns.

The chief architects of the standard chronology were William F. Edgerton and Richard A. Parker. Edgerton calculated that the Sothic date for the seventh year of Senwosre III fell between 1876 and 1864<sup>4</sup>, and did a study of the various lunar dates and other data to set forth the proposed chronology.<sup>55</sup>

Parker refined Edgerton's studies, re-analyzed the lunar data, and fine-tuned the Sothic date.<sup>6</sup> According to his calculations the Sothic date fell in 1872.<sup>7</sup> In addition, he argued that an analysis of the lunar data showed that there were two unidentified kings who each had a lunar date attached to sometime after a thirtieth year of reign and a third king whose ninth year fell in 1790.<sup>8</sup> Based on context and supplemented by the Turin Canon chronology, Parker identified the two long-reigning kings as Senwosre III and Amenemhe III, and the king with a ninth year in 1790 as Amenemhe IV.<sup>9</sup>

The high chronology starts the Twelfth Dynasty in 1991 and ends it at about 1786. Among proponents of the high chronology there was a minor quibble over whether Senwosre III ruled 36 years or up to 39 years.<sup>10</sup> As noted below, that issue may now be moot, with 39 years as the correct duration.

### **THE LOW CHRONOLOGY**

Parker's identifications are an essential element of the standard chronology but proponents of the low chronology challenge many of his conclusions. A chief dissenter, Jürgen von Beckerath, who has written extensively on the chronology of Egyptian kings, dates the start of the dynasty to 1976, places the Sothic year at 1866, and ends the dynasty at about 1794, shortening the duration by about 23 years.<sup>11</sup> Krauss has the same general chronological outline as Beckerath but dates the Sothic year to about 1830, making his corresponding dates about 35 years later than Beckerath.<sup>12</sup> A 1988 study by Franke provides a full analysis of the various changes proposed by advocates of the low chronology.<sup>13</sup>

### **THE TURIN CANON**

In the Turin Canon, the "tens" entry for Amenemhe I is damaged and should be either "10" or "20".<sup>14</sup> The entries for Amenemhe II, Senwosre III, and Amenemhe III, are all damaged in the "ones" entry and could each be an entry from 1 to 9.<sup>15</sup> The Turin Canon also indicates that the source used by the Canon's author had a lacuna of seven years between the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties.<sup>16</sup> Some Egyptologists believe that the last king of the Eleventh Dynasty may have served during this seven-year period.<sup>17</sup> Note that the Turin Canon gives the Twelfth Dynasty a duration of 213 years, seven years longer than the standard chronology. These extra seven years may have been the result of incorporating that seven-year lacuna into the dynastic total. It is also possible that the Turin Canon failed to allow for some of the coregencies in allocating the lengths of reign, which would have led to a slightly longer duration in the sum line. The damaged nature of the entries makes it impossible to determine which, if either, is the case.

### **COREGENCY ISSUES**

Among the chief pieces of evidence in reconstructing Twelfth Dynasty chronology are a group of three inscriptions containing what most Egyptologists, including advocates of both the high and low chronologies, readily accept as confirmation of particular coregencies of a specific length. Of these, perhaps the most important is the stela of Antef, which contains at the top a reference to a Year 30 in the reign of Amenemhe I and a Year 10 in the reign of Senwosre I. This has been routinely interpreted as evidence of a ten year co-regency between these two kings and forms an integral part of most Twelfth Dynasty chronologies.

Some scholars, however, have rejected this analysis, arguing that the two references to particular years in the reigns of these two kings refer to two separate and distinct events rather than one event occurring during the coregency. Claude Obsomer has argued that various data from a variety of sources makes it impossible for there to have been a 10-year coregency between Amenemhe I and Senwosre I.<sup>18</sup> Robert Delia, somewhat more cautiously, has argued that “One can only state that the stele *may* note a coregency, while the *certainty* that it lasted 10 years has to be abandoned. (Emphasis added.)<sup>19</sup> William Murnane challenged Delia’s argument but in doing so it became clear that the issue revolves around complicated philological issues as to how to interpret various words and phrases in the context of alternative usages and how to explain formulaic expressions that don’t conform to the traditional wordings.<sup>20</sup>

Similar difficulties plague the other two inscriptions containing double dates that may denote coregencies. The Stele of Wepwaweto (Leyden V.4) contains references to a Year 44 for Senwosre I and a Year 2 for Amenemhe II, suggesting at least a 2-year coregency.<sup>21</sup> The third item is the Stele of Hapu from Aswan, which contains references to a Year 35 for Amenemhe II and a Year 3 for Senwosre II.<sup>22</sup> As with the Stele of Antef, Delia argued that the two dates don’t necessarily refer to one event occurring in the particular years of two coregents but could refer to two consecutive events, one in the cited year of the first monarch and the other in the cited year of the second monarch.<sup>23</sup>

In this particular study of Manetho’s Twelfth Dynasty, the coregencies suggested by the above double-dated inscriptions play a key role in reconciling the erroneous transmissions of Manetho’s chronology with the archaeological record. In the arguments that follow we will see that when we take cognizance of the coregencies indicated by the three double-dated inscriptions we can reconcile the Manetho account precisely with the standard chronology. This will necessarily contradict the arguments of Obsomer, who argues against the existence of a 10-year coregency between Amenemhe I and Senwosre I, but will provide the certainty that Delia finds missing from the three double-dated inscriptions.

There is one other coregency that comes into play in our analysis, a 3-year coregency between Senwosre III and Amenemhe III. Murnane notes that opinion is divided over the existence of any coregency between these two kings and no double-date exists for them.<sup>24</sup> Among the advocates of the high chronology, the existence of a coregency between the two depends upon whether Senwosre III served for 36 years or longer. Anything over 36 years would be considered part of a coregency. Below, we will look at evidence that this pharaoh ruled into his 39th year, indicating a 3-year coregency with Amenemhe III.

### **The Length of Senwosre III’s Reign**

One of the chief differences between the high and low chronologies concerns the length of reign for Senwosre III. The Turin Canon says he ruled for 30 + years. The entry is damaged, leaving a potential of 31-39 years. This fit Parker’s calculation of the lunar dates that required this king to serve more than thirty years. But many Egyptologists have challenged the reliability of the Turin Canon in this regard.

The Canon gives Senwosre II a reign of 19 years and Senwosre III a reign in excess of 30 years. But, as W. K. Simpson pointed out, the textual sources make reference to no year higher than 8 for the former and 19 for the latter.<sup>25</sup> Even advocates of the high chronology recognize the problem posed by the lack of a reference to Senwosre’s 19th year. Edgerton makes note of it in his own analysis of the dynastic chronology.<sup>26</sup> The lack of higher regnal year references in the record, however, doesn’t necessarily mean that these kings didn’t have longer reigns, but does offer some evidence that the Turin Canon may not by itself be a reliable guide to the full lengths of reign for the Twelfth Dynasty pharaohs..

The reduction of Senwosre III’s reign to just 19 years requires some additional challenge to Parker’s lunar date correlations, and low chronology proponents offer an alternative analysis of the data. The low chronology lunar analysis rejects Parker’s conclusion that Senwosre III ruled more than 30 years. The chief issue that distinguishes their studies concerns the nature of the lunar calendar used for the lunar date entries. Parker argued that the calendar in use was an observational calendar rather than a schematic

calendar that would have to be adjusted at the end of the year cycle.<sup>27</sup> Beckerath and others appear to argue for the schematic calendar and draw a different set of correlations between the lunar data and the reigns of the kings than does Parker. The arguments are quite complex and technical and cannot be easily summarized. One should examine the actual works for a fuller explanation of the disagreements.

The debate over the highest known year mark for Senwosre III has taken a number of twists and turns, fluctuating between the Year-19 datum and the Turin Canon's proposed 30 + X years. Gardiner, who adopted Parker's chronology, accepted some evidence suggesting that there was a Year-33 mark for Senwosre III<sup>28</sup> but Edgerton has said that such an interpretation was questionable<sup>29</sup> and the low chronology proponents have rejected it.

Recently, another piece of evidence came to the fore, strongly indicating that Senwosre III reached a Year-30, but the king's name isn't mentioned in the writing, and the argument is based on the context of the find, which obviously leaves the conclusion open to debate.<sup>30</sup>

Another recent find refers to a king's Year-39 and the context indicates that it could be either Senwosre III or Amenemhe III,<sup>31</sup> his successor, although the context again seems to support a finding that it belongs to Senwosre III.<sup>32</sup>

Those proponents of a low chronology who accept that the Year-39 belongs to Senwosre III now argue that there must have been a long coregency between Senwosre III and Amenemhe III.<sup>33</sup> The existence of a lengthy coregency between the two kings is also subject to debate and proponents of the high chronology and many advocates of the low chronology reject the idea. If, however, the Year-30 and Year-39 markers belong to Amenemhe III, then no adjustment is necessary by either side.

Table 2 shows the standard chronology modified to reflect the increase in Senwosre III's reign from 36 to 39 years. It also shows the chronological scheme of the coregencies.

**Table 2. The Standard Chronology of the Twelfth Dynasty as modified by increasing Senwosre III's reign to 39 years**

King Name	Dates	Total length of reign	Coregency with successor	Total years before coregency
Amenemhe I	1991-1962	30	10	20
Senwosre I	1971-1928	44	2	42
Amenemhe II	1929-1895	35	3	32
Senwosre II	1897-1879	19		19
Senwosre III	1878-1840*	39	3*	36
Amenemhe III	1842-1797	46	2	44
Amenemhe IV	1798-1786	13		9
Sebeknofru	1785-1782	9		4
To Amenemhe II		62		
To Amenemhe III		149		
Total years		206		

\* Assumes 39 year reign for Senwosre III.

## Amenemhe IV

Subsequent to Parker's calculations, evidence of a Year-13 for Amenemhe IV came to the fore. Parker acknowledged the finding, and, while indicating that it might extend the duration of the Twelfth Dynasty by four more years beyond the nine already allotted to this king, he indicated that the extension would not affect his prior analysis.<sup>34</sup> William Murnane had also taken notice of this find in his study of Egyptian coregencies and indicated that there was a legitimate issue as to whether or not these additional four years should belong to a period of a coregency.<sup>35</sup> Subsequently, Prof. Murnane advised me in a private conversation that opinion had shifted on the Year-13 marker and that the general view now held that the Year-13 marker belonged to Amenemhe III. Therefore, no revisions based on a longer reign for Amenemhe IV were required.

### OBSERVATIONS ON MANETHO'S TWELFTH DYNASTY

Table 3 sets forth the Manetho chronology for the Twelfth Dynasty as preserved in Africanus and Eusebius. The two Manetho lists have some peculiarities that we should take note of before proceeding to a comparison between the Manetho chronology and the archaeological record.

**Table 3 . Manetho's Twelfth Dynasty: Africanus and Eusebius Versions\***

Manetho's King Names	Africanus	Eusebius
1. Ammenemes	16	16
2. Sesonchosis	46	46
3. Ammanemes	38	38
4. Sesostris	48	48
5. Lachares (or Lamares)	8	8
6. Ameres	8	No more kings named
7. Ammenemes	8	A sum of 42 years for successors is
8. Scemiophris	4	given
Recorded Total for Kings 2-8	160	245**
Actual Total for Kings 2-8	160	182
Actual Total for Kings 1-8	176	198

\*Adapted from *Manetho*, 63-71.

\*\* Figure given in the Eusebius text as the dynastic total.

Both Manetho lists separate the first king of the Twelfth Dynasty from the rest of the dynasty, placing him in between the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties. In addition, they both give him a reign of 16 years, when his total reign encompassed 30 years and he served at least 20 years as sole ruler. In Table 3 I have separated out Manetho's first king from the others as a reminder of the Manetho structure.

This displacement of Amenemhe I may be due to the fact that both Africanus and Eusebius say that the first book of Manetho's history ended after the reign of Ammenemes (i.e., Amenemhe I), and that Manetho began his second book with the kings they identify as the members of the Twelfth Dynasty. So it

is possible that this division reflects a simple editing error caused by running out of space at the end of Manetho's Book One.

On the other hand, it reminds us that the Turin Canon, written almost a millennium earlier, also exhibited some confusion about events between these same two dynasties, indicating a lacuna of seven years. This may reflect some difficulties as early as the New Kingdom with the available Egyptian chronological source materials for the Twelfth Dynasty.

Another confusing aspect of Manetho's king-list is the claim in both Africanus and Eusebius that Ammanemes, the third king in the sequence<sup>36</sup>, was murdered by his eunuchs. In fact, it was Amenemhe I, the first king of the dynasty, who was murdered. Since Amenemhe I's father and son were both named Senwosre (although the father never served as king) Donald Redford has speculated that the source materials must have had an introductory account of Amenemhe I and his father Senwosre, followed by an account of the dynastic kings beginning with Amenemhe I, which caused a transmitting scribe to confuse the two separate references to Amenemhe as referring to two separate individuals.<sup>37</sup>

Another major difficulty with the two lists is that Manetho's Sesostris, presumably corresponding to Senwosre II based on the sequence of the rulers, has a 48-year reign whereas the actual Senwosre II had no more than about 19 years in office. This has led many scholars to assume that Manetho's Sesostris actually combines together the reigns of Senwosre II and Senwosre III.<sup>38</sup> If this is the case, and we shall see below that it is, this leaves us with the additional problem of one too many pharaohs in Manetho's Twelfth Dynasty. Dividing Sesostris's reign into two separate kingships gives us nine Manetho kings when there should only be eight.

The next king in Manetho's sequence is Lachares (or Lamares) in Africanus and Lamaris in Eusebius, who should correspond to either Senwosre III or Amenemhe III, but this king has only an 8-year reign whereas Senwosre III ruled for 39 years (or 19 years in the low chronology) and Amenemhe III had a 46-year reign.

The Eusebius list presents some additional problems. Unlike Africanus, he omits the names of the last three kings but gives them a collective reign of 42 years, about 15 years too few. And, if we add up all of the entries in the Eusebius list the total duration is 198 years, but Eusebius enters 245 years as the sum. He gives no explanation for this 47-year discrepancy.

The Africanus list also has a summation problem. He gives the Twelfth Dynasty a length of reign of 160 years, which is the sum for the seven kings directly listed in his Twelfth

Dynasty roster but which omits the 16 years assigned to Ammenemes, the first king, who was placed in between the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties. The recorded durations in the Manetho lists and the actual durations for all the kings accounted for in both Manetho lists appear at the bottom of Table 3.

Manetho's redactors also preserved some of his historical data with regard to some of the kings in this dynasty. We have already above noted the reference to the assassination of Amenemhe I. This was one of the most famous pharaohs in Egyptian history and it is not surprising that Manetho included this information in his history. Less well known, though, were some other claims that strongly suggest that Manetho had access to early Egyptian accounts of this dynasty.

The Manetho sources tell us that the last ruler of the dynasty was a female and the sister of her predecessor. Gardiner says that the archaeological evidence confirms this claim.<sup>39</sup> In addition, Manetho attributed to Sesostris's successor, who should be Amenemhe III, the building of "the labyrinth . . . as his own tomb." Waddell notes that Manetho has correctly attributed this monument to Amenemhe III.<sup>40</sup> Clearly, Manetho had good reference material for the Twelfth Dynasty, and, as we shall see below, accurate chronological information.

## **Amenemhe I and Senwosre I**

The first two kings of the Twelfth Dynasty, Amenemhe I and Senwosre I, served 30 and 44 years respectively, but if the inscription from the stele of Antef does indicate that Senwosre I's 10th year began in Amenemhe I's 30th year and if the inscription from the stele of Wepwaweto (Leyden V. 4) does indicate that Amenemhe II's second year began in Senwosre I's 44th year, then we can say that there were 62 years from the start of Amenemhe I's reign to the start of Amenemhe II's reign.

For Amenemhe I the Turin Canon has a damaged entry where the "tens" figure should appear for the length of reign. The original entry was either 19 or 29, either of which would closely correspond to the actual record of 20 or 30 years, depending upon whether or not the entry for this first king included his full reign or only up to the start of a 10-year coregency. For Senwosre I the Turin Canon has an entry of 45 years, the last year of which is otherwise undocumented in the archaeological record.

Both Manetho lists give the first two kings lengths of reign of 16 and 46 years. The first king's reign is four years too short if we count up to the start of the proposed 10-year coregency, and the second king's reign is four years too long if we count to the start of his proposed coregency with Amenemhe II. When we add the two lengths of reign together, we get a total of 62 years, precisely the number of years ruled by the first two kings in the standard chronology prior to the start of Amenemhe II's proposed coregency.

Manetho's figures indicate that four years belonging to Amenemhe I were for some reason transferred to the reign of Senwosre I, and if we transfer them back to the first king we have respective reigns of 20 and 42, ending just before the start of the coregency between Senwosre I and Amenemhe II. Why this four-year misallocation occurred we will probably never know, but further below I will set forth what I believe to be a reasonable hypothesis as to how the error came about. The important point, though, is that Manetho agrees with the archaeological record for the combined lengths of reign for the first two kings, if we assume the validity of the 10-year coregency at the beginning of Senwosre I's reign and the coregency beginning in Year 43 of his reign.

## **Amenemhe II, Senwosre II, and Senwosre III**

This brings us to Manetho's problematic arrangement for the next three kings, Amenemhe II, Senwosre II, and Senwosre III. On the surface, Manetho's corresponding entries appear to be, respectively, 38 years for Ammanemes, 48 for Sesostris, and 8 for Lachares. As we will see shortly, this sequence is in error and Manetho's Sesostris actually combines together the reigns of Senwosre II and Senwosre III. This introduces a subsidiary problem of an extra king in Manetho's list, which problem we will resolve below.

In the standard chronology, Amenemhe II has a 35-year reign and Senwosre II has a 19-year reign, but they share a 3-year coregency. In addition, Senwosre III has a reign of 39 years but he begins a coregency in Year 37. If we sum up the years from the beginning of Amenemhe II to the end of the independent reign of Senwosre III in Year 36, and account for the 3-year coregency between the first two kings in the sequence, we have a total duration of 87 years to the end of Senwosre III's solo reign.

The Turin Canon has damaged entries for the third and fifth kings (Amenemhe II and Senwosre III.) The first of these entries appears to be  $30 + X$  years, where  $X$  can be any number from 1 to 9, and the other appears to have the same damaged formula. The entry for the fourth king, Senwosre II, is 19 years, which figure is used in the standard chronology. The nature of the damage is such that we don't know if the coregencies of these three kings were accounted for or the full length of reign was given for each of the kings.

Returning to Manetho, add together his length of reign for the third king and Sesostris. The total is 86 years, only 1 year shorter than the standard chronology for kings 3-5, a difference that can be accounted for



by a rounding error. This is an almost incontrovertible clue that Sesostris's reign did indeed combine together that of Senwosre II and Senwosre III.

Though his overall duration adds up to the right number of years and clearly provides chronological consistency between the standard chronology and the Manetho chronology down through the first five kings of the dynasty, a period of 148-149 years,

Manetho's actual lengths of reign for the relevant kings seem to be inconsistent with the correct durations. Let's see if we can fine-tune his chronology a little further.

Amenemhe II had a total duration of 35 years but 3 of those years overlapped his co-regent, Senwosre II. The combined reign of Senwosre II and Senwosre III (through Year 36) should be 55 years. But if we assume that initially the Manetho list credited Amenemhe II with his full length of reign, then Sesostris should have combined just the two independent portions of the reigns of Senwosre II and Senwosre III, a sum of 52 years. Also, we noted that the Manetho total was 1 year less than the standard chronology total.

Factoring in this 1-year difference we would expect the Manetho figures to be 35 years for his Ammanemes and 51 years (in the standard chronology) for his Sesostris. Instead, we have 38 years and 48 years. Since the first figure is 3 years too many and the second figure is 3 years too few, we have an indication that 3 years were wrongly transferred from Sesostris to his predecessor. That this figure corresponds to the number of years in the coregency strongly suggests that Manetho's redactors may have made an error in accounting for the coregency.

Manetho's original text, or his source, must have given Amenemhe II credit for ruling during the 3-year coregency and then subtracted that total from Senwosre II. The redactors of Manetho wrongfully believed that Senwosre II and Senwosre III were the same person and counted him as a single king, counting the two reigns as if they were different parts of the same reign. This should have resulted, as noted above, in the 35-51 split. But the Manetho text probably went on to note that there was a 3-year coregency between Amenemhe II and Senwosre II.

The redactors, not aware that the 3-year coregency had already been accounted for by shortening the reign of Senwosre II by 3 years, and wanting to credit the apparent 3 year coregency to Amenemhe II, simply transferred an extra 3 years from the Senwosre II-Senwosre III total (combined under the collective name of Sesostris) to Amenemhe II's reign, changing the 35-51 split to a 38-48 split.

## MANETHO AND THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD SO FAR

We have now reviewed the most significant portion of the Twelfth Dynasty chronology about which the major disputes revolve. The evidence seems to show that if we accept the co-regencies indicated in the three double-dated inscriptions, and the 39-year length of reign for Senwosre III, the Manetho chronology appears to precisely parallel the high chronology and Turin Canon. Let's review what we have learned.

**1. The Combined Duration of Amenemhe I and Senwosre I:** If there was a 10-year coregency between these two kings and a coregency beginning in Year 43 of Senwosre I, as suggested by the double-dated inscriptions, then the combined length of reign for the first two kings of the dynasty to the start of the coregency with the third king is precisely 62 years in the high chronology (as well as the low chronology). This is the same duration we get in Manetho. The only flaw in the arrangement is that 4 years belonging to Amenemhe I have been transferred to Senwosre I.

### **2. The Combined Duration of Amenemhe II through Senwosre III**

If we accept that Amenemhe II and Senwosre II shared a 3-year coregency, per the Stele of Hapu, and that Senwosre III ruled independently until his 36th year, per the high chronology and the Year-39 marker, then

the combined duration from the start of Amenemhe II's reign to the start of Amenemhe III's reign would be 87 years.<sup>41</sup> Manetho's third and fourth kings, Ammanemes and Sesostris, ruled 38 and 48 years respectively, for a total of 86 years, one year short of the total for the three kings in the normal sequence. Our analysis showed that Manetho's Sesostris encompassed the reigns of Senwosre II and Senwosre III but that 3 years belonging to the combined total was mistakenly transferred to Ammanemes, his third king in the sequence. Thus for the correspondence in durations for these three kings, Manetho is off from the high chronology by only 1 year, a difference that can be explained by a rounding-off error.

### **3. The Combined Duration for Amenemhe I through Senwosre III**

In The high chronology, the first five kings have a total duration of 149 years. The corresponding group in Manetho has a duration of 148 years. As this is the group of kings among whom all the major chronological disputes fall we find Manetho in perfect agreement with the high chronology durations, and implicitly the coregency structure, and with only minor differences in lengths of reign due solely to two minor shifts of years from one king to another.

In one case, a redactor mistakenly transferred 4 years from Amenemhe I to Senwosre I (see below for more discussion.) And in another, a redactor misread information about a 3-year coregency and mistakenly transferred 3 years from Senwosre II to Amenemhe II, and then combined the reigns of Senwosre II and Senwosre III as if they were a single person.

As the high chronology does not draw upon Manetho for its data, it is extraordinary that the fit between the two is so close. The alignment between Manetho's chronology and the high chronology has too many points of correspondence to be dismissed as mere coincidence. Clearly Manetho must have had access to accurate records of Twelfth Dynasty chronology. The correlations also implicitly validate the Turin Canon's assigned lengths of reign. Still, there are some difficulties remaining with Manetho's Twelfth Dynasty Chronology, and we shall now take up those matters.

#### **After Senwosre III**

Unfortunately, following the end of Sesostris's reign, the redactors badly garbled Manetho's chronology for the last three kings in this dynasty. Nevertheless, as there is little dispute over the chronology of these last three kings, such errors do not undermine our conclusions about the validity of the standard chronology.

The successor to Sesostris should be Amenemhe III, who had a full reign of 46 years and a reign of 44 years before beginning a 2-year coregency with Amenemhe IV. Both Manetho sources identify the successor to Sesostris as Lachares (or Lamares or Lamarinis) and give him a reign of 8 years, far too short to correspond to the actual reign of Amenemhe III. In addition, Africanus lists three additional kings after Lachares, serving respectively, 8, 8 and 4 years. The last reign, at least on the surface, seems to be a good fit with the Turin Canon, which gives the last king of the dynasty a reign of 4 years. Manetho's next to last king, Ammenemes, has a reign of 8 years, which also looks reasonably close to the Turin Canon's 9 years for Amenemhe IV. This leaves two kings, Lachares and Ameres, each serving 8 years. If we treat these two separate reigns as two separate portions of the reign of Amenemhe III, giving us a total of 16 years, though still far too few years for that king it would leave us with only one king out of eight with an unexplained inaccurate duration.

Nevertheless, I would like to propose an alternative analysis of Africanus's last four reigns. First, however, we need to take account of Eusebius's treatment of the same post-Sesostris period. As with Africanus, Eusebius names Lamarinis (= Lachares) as Sesostris's successor. Then he says that Lamarinis's successors ruled 42 years but does not say how many successors there were or what their names were. Where Africanus has a total of 28 years ruled after Sesostris, Eusebius has a total of 50 years. The correct figure should be 57 years. It is after Lachares that the two Manetho sources diverge, and the nature of the divergence suggests a pattern.

The last three Africanus kings, following Lachares, have a collective reign of 20 years (= 8 + 8 + 4) while the collective sum given by Eusebius for an undefined number-of successors to Lachares is 42 years. Curiously, these two different sets of reigns correspond precisely to the reigns of Amenemhe I and Senwosre I, if we accept the routinely accepted coregencies associated with these two kings. Amenemhe I served 20 years before the start of his coregency, and Senwosre I served 42 years before the start of his coregency with his successor.

This should remind us that the two Manetho sources initially showed some confusion over who served as the first pharaoh. Both of them placed Amenemhe I in between the Eleventh and Twelfth Dynasties and both confused Amenemhe II with Amenemhe I when they identified the former instead of the latter as the victim of an assassination. The Eusebius version of the list suggests that the confusion originates around lines of summation. He doesn't identify the kings by name and just gives a collective sum of 42 years. This is followed by an erroneous total of 245 years for the dynasty when his actual total is 198 years.

In order to resolve these apparent inconsistencies between the two Manetho lists and the archaeological record we must recall that Manetho's history appeared in a longer narrative form from which redactors attempted to extract pieces of data in order to establish an Egyptian chronology. We have already seen how the redactors apparently misread the information about Amenemhe I and his father Senwosre (who did not rule as king), causing them to identify Amenemhe II as the victim of assassination rather than Amenemhe I.

Consequently, I suggest that there was a long narrative history about Amenemhe I and his family, including material about both the father and the son, each of whom were named Senwosre. Within that narrative Manetho noted that particular events in the various lives of the parties happened after a certain number of years in the course of the kings' reigns. Following the list of kings in the dynasty, Manetho must have had a reference to the different periods of time in the lives of the first two kings of the dynasty, which was in turn followed by a line of summation for the entire dynasty.

Different redactors interpreted the Manetho text differently. Already confused by the numerous number of kings with similar names, and by the identity of the first king of the dynasty, these redactors passed on alternative accounts of Manetho's Twelfth Dynasty. The Africanus source must have gone through at least two evolutions before reaching its present version. One reactor must have taken the summary data for Amenemhe I—apparently consisting of three time periods of 8 years, 8 years, and 4 years, respectively—and attached it to the end of the dynasty, followed by a line of summation for the dynasty. A subsequent redactor must have confused the summary data for the first king with the lengths of reign to be assigned to the last kings of the dynasty and substituted the summary data for the original data.

The Eusebius source, however, identified the first king with Senwosre I rather than Amenemhe I, and, making the same sort of editing error as the Africanus redactor, placed the sum for Senwosre I's 42 years at the end of the dynasty. If I am correct, this would indicate that Amenemhe I's reign had been subdivided into three portions: 8 years, 8 years and 4 years. The confusion over the identity of the first king might then explain how this last 4-year chunk of his reign may have been mistakenly assigned to Senwosre I. The text may have ambiguously assigned that period of four years to "the first king", without necessarily mentioning his name. As Amenemhe was placed outside the Twelfth Dynasty by Manetho or his redactors, those 4 years may have been assigned to the king appearing in the first position of the Twelfth Dynasty, Senwosre I.

### **The Reign of Lachares**

This still leaves us with the problem of Lachares' reign, which should correspond to Amenemhe III but has far too few years. In addition, assuming that Africanus's last three kings corresponded to the last three kings of the dynasty, even though he might have assigned the wrong lengths of reign to them, Lachares appears to be an extra king, a ninth entry in a dynasty that has only eight kings.

One very likely solution is that this 8-year reign of Lachares corresponds to the 7-year lacuna mentioned in the Turin Canon. As the Manetho total for the first five kings was one year short, possibly due to a

rounding off error, the beneficiary of the rounding off may have been the 7-year lacuna, which therefore acquired an extra year in its description. In transmission, the description of the lacuna may have erroneously been corrupted into a king's name and "Lachares" may be a corruption of the original Egyptian term.<sup>42</sup> In any event, the different forms of the name in transmission show some form of corruption in the transmission process. Another possibility is that Lachares preserves a piece of Amenemhe III's reign that got separated from the remainder of his term, with the balance lost in transmission. However, I have another proposal that I think makes for a better explanation.

In the standard chronology, Amenemhe II had a 2-year coregency with his predecessor, Senwosre I, and a 3-year coregency with his successor, Senwosre II. In addition, Senwosre III had a 3-year coregency with his successor. That indicates 8 years of coregency belonging to kings named either Amenemhe or Senwosre. (The earlier 10-year coregency between Amenemhe I and Senwosre I had been ignored by the Manetho sources, and Amenemhe I, placed outside of the dynasty, was only given credit for the independent part of his reign.) I suggest that these 8 years of coregency were wrongly double-counted as being portions of a single reign mistakenly assigned to a pharaoh and counted as a separate reign. This separate and nonexistent pharaoh became confused with either Senwosre III or Amenemhe III, and was placed in sequence after Sesostris.

### THE DYNASTIC SUM LINES

We have one last piece of Manetho's Twelfth Dynasty puzzle to put in place, the matter of his dynastic sum lines. Africanus gives the Twelfth Dynasty a total duration of 160 years. That is true only if you don't count Amenemhe I, who is placed outside the Twelfth Dynasty. Counting him in the total gives a duration of 176 years. This total duration, of course, is incorrect due to the errors following Sesostris's reign. Eusebius gives the dynasty a total of 245 years, although if we add up the lengths of reign given, the sum is only 198 years, a 47-year difference. The error seems to be one in which he somehow incorporated into his dynastic total a portion of another dynasty, as he obviously did in his account of the Fifth Dynasty, which erroneously included almost all of the Sixth Dynasty. The immediate question here is: What dynastic figure did he incorporate into his larger total?

To answer the question fully would be beyond the scope of this paper and first requires that we examine the chronology of the Second Intermediate Period, a matter I have considered elsewhere.<sup>43</sup> To summarize my view, I believe that Eusebius (or more likely one of the sources in the course of transmission) counted the period of time from after Senwosre III, perhaps the dynasty's most famous king, down to some politically significant event in the course of the Thirteenth Dynasty, and added that piece of the Thirteenth Dynasty to the Twelfth Dynasty total.

### Summary

The evidence presented shows that, once we make allowance for minor errors in misallocating small periods of time to the wrong king, Manetho's Twelfth Dynasty chronology precisely tracks that of the standard chronology, at least for the reigns of the first five kings, which is the period under dispute between the advocates of the high and low chronologies. The fit is so tight that it cannot be dismissed as a simple coincidence. We must conclude that Manetho built his Twelfth Dynasty on the basis of Egyptian records that provided the same chronological information that forms the basis of the standard chronology, and that the standard chronology is the correct chronology for the Twelfth Dynasty. The Twelfth Dynasty began in 1791 and ended in 1786.

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> All references to Manetho's writings in the following paper are from the Loeb Classical Library edition of Manetho, edited by W.G. Waddell. As this paper covers only Manetho's writings on the Twelfth Dynasty, which appear in pages

63-73 of *Manetho*, I have omitted all endnote citations to Manetho, and refer you directly to those pages for further reference. However, I cite Waddel's own comments in the endnotes where appropriate. I have also followed Gardiner's naming convention for the kings of the Twelfth Dynasty.

<sup>2</sup> William F. Edgerton, "Chronology of the Twelfth Dynasty", *JNES 1* (1942), 309. Edgerton gives the range as 1876-1864.

<sup>3</sup> Josef W. Wegner "The Nature and Chronology of the Senwosret-Amenemhet III Regnal Succession: Some Considerations Based on New Evidence from the Mortuary Temple of Senwosret III at Abydos" *JNES 55* (October 1996, Number 4), 249.

<sup>4</sup> Edgerton, 309.

<sup>5</sup> Edgerton, 309.

<sup>6</sup> Richard A. Parker, *The Calendars of Ancient Egypt*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, No. 26, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950).

<sup>7</sup> See Parker, *Calendars*, 63-69.

<sup>8</sup> See Parker, *Calendars*, 63-69.

<sup>9</sup> See Parker, *Calendars*, 63-69.

<sup>10</sup> Wegner, 263.

<sup>11</sup> Jürgen von Beckerath, *Chronologie Des Pharaonischen Ägypten*, *MAS 46* (Mainz am Rhein: von Zabern 1997), 132-134.

<sup>12</sup> Rolf Kraus, Sothis und Mondaten. Hilderscheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge 20 (Pelizaeus-Museum, Hildesheim, 1985), 207ff.

<sup>13</sup> Detlef Franke, "Zur Chronologie des Mittleren Reiches (12.-18. Dynastie) Teil I: Die 12. Dynastie," *Orientalia n.s.*, 57 (1988): 113-38.

<sup>14</sup> Alan Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1961), 439.

<sup>15</sup> Gardiner, 439.

<sup>16</sup> Gardiner, 124.

<sup>17</sup> Gardiner, 125.

<sup>18</sup> Claude Obsomer, "La date de Nésou-Montou (Louvre C1)", *RdE 44* (1993), 103-140; and *Sésostris Ier. Étude chronologique et historique du règne*, Bruxelles, Connaissance de l'Égypte Ancienne, 1995 = Étude 5.

<sup>19</sup> Robrt D. Delia, "A New Look at Some Old dates: A Re-examination of Twelfth Dynasty Double Dated Inscriptions," *BES 15*-28.

<sup>20</sup> William J. Murnane, "In Defense of Middle Kingdom Double Dates," *BES 3* (1981). Delia responded to Murnane's arguments in "Doubts about Double Dates and coregencies," *BES 4* (1982)".

<sup>21</sup> William J. Murnane, *Ancient Egyptian Coregencies*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations, No. 40, (Chicago: Oriental Institute 1977), 5.

<sup>22</sup> Murnane, *Ancient Egyptian Coregencies*, 7.

<sup>23</sup> Delia, *BES 1*, 15-28.

<sup>24</sup> Murnane, *Ancient Egyptian Coregencies*, 7-11.

<sup>25</sup> W. K. Simpson, "Studies in the Middle Kingdom I-II," *JARCE 2* (1963):62; idem, Sesostris II," in *Lexicon der Ägyptologie (LÄ)*, Vol. 5, cols. 899-903; idem "A Tomb Chapel Relief of the Reign of Amenemhet III and Some Observations on the Length of Reign of Sesostris III," *Chronique d'Égypte (CdE)* 47 (1972): 45 ff. This citation to Simpson is taken from that given in Wegner, n.5.

<sup>26</sup> Edgerton, 310.

<sup>27</sup> Parker, *Calendars*, 67.

<sup>28</sup> Gardiner, 439.

<sup>29</sup> Edgerton, 310-311.

<sup>30</sup> Wegner, 264-265.

<sup>31</sup> Wegner, 251-261.

<sup>32</sup> Wegner, 251-261. Wegner is a proponent of the Low Chronology but attributes the Year-39 to Senwosre III and proposes a long coregency. The pages cited here provide a good summary of the data and arguments relevant to this issue.

<sup>33</sup> Wegner, 267-268.

<sup>34</sup> Richard A. Parker, "The Sothic Dating of the Twelfth and Eighteenth Dynasties", in *Studies in Honor of George R. Hughes*, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization, No. 39, (Chicago: The Oriental Institute, 1977), 188-189.

<sup>35</sup> Murnane, *SAOC 40*, 26.

<sup>36</sup> Note the slight variation in the Manetho sources in spelling the names of the first and third kings.

<sup>37</sup> Donald B. Redford, *Pharaonic King-Lists, Annals and Day Books*, SSEA Vol. IV, (Mississauga: Benben Publications, 1986), 239.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Gardiner, 439.

<sup>39</sup> Gardiner, 141.

<sup>40</sup> Waddel, 69, n.4.

<sup>41</sup> 32 years for Amenemhe II to the start of his coregency with Senwosre II, 19 years for Senwosre II, 36 Years for Senwosre III to start of his coregency with Amenemhe III. Total equals 87 years.

<sup>42</sup> Although I am not prepared to make the connection, “lacuna” is a Latin word and perhaps it became slightly corrupted into “lachares” as the text went through Latin-speaking Christian writers.

<sup>43</sup> Gary Greenberg, “Manetho Rehabilitated: A New Analysis of His Second Intermediate Period” in *Discussions in Egyptology* 25, (1993).