II. 10 THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE THIRD INTERMEDIATE PERIOD: DYNS. 22–24

Karl Jansen-Winkeln

The prevailing conditions and patterns of rule during Dyns. 22–23 were basically similar to the state of Egypt during Dyn. 21. UE—with the important centers Thebes and Herakleopolis—was administered by a military governor who was simultaneously the High Priest of Amun; LE was directly governed by the king with residences in Memphis and Tanis (and in Bubastis as well, since Osorkon I). With the aid of their sons, the first kings of Dyn. 22 maintained their rule over the entire country. However, since the reign of Osorkon II at the latest, they gradually lost out to the powers of decentralisation, when (due to a divided inheritance?) clearly defined and separate spheres of power and local potentates appeared, particularly in LE.¹ In the same fashion, the separation of UE and LE remains tangible under Libyan rule.²

The most important chronological sources for UE are the records of the Nile levels,³ the annals of the priests at Karnak,⁴ the “Chronicle of Prince Osorkon”,⁵ and the statues (and other objects) belonging to dignitaries from certain families which permit detailed and extensive genealogies;⁶ for LE, we only have the donation stelae⁷ and the stelae from the Serapeum.⁸ Altogether, there are relatively few actual dates

¹ It is not clear whether this regionalisation only came into existence at this time, or whether it existed earlier, i.e., already perhaps in Dyn. 21, but only became clear in the sources at this time (the most important sources are the donation stelae, and these only become abundant from later Dyn. 22, being totally absent in Dyn. 21). It is probable that there were at least incipient developments in this direction, which became more strongly expressed later.
² In fact, this division led to different cursive scripts used in the administration: the “anormal” hieratic in UE, and “Demotic” in LE.
⁴ PM II, 108; G. Legrain, RT 22 (1900), 51–63; Kruchten, Annales.
⁵ PM II, 35–36; Reliefs III, pl. 16–22; Caminos, Chronicle.
⁶ Cf. TIP, §§ 157–205; Bierbrier, LNK, passim.
⁷ See Meeks, Donations.
⁸ See CSSM; PM III, 780ff.
surviving from this period. As a rule—in contrast to the NK\(^9\)—we lack a continuous series (or even relatively complete chain) of dates for any given sovereign, and thus by no means can we confidently suggest that the highest known date for any reign reflects its actual length. Given this paucity of dates, the chronology of this era is imprecise and uncertain in many respects.

The actual means of dating was presumably the same as that of the NK,\(^{10}\) as is suggested by the dates from one Serapeum stela.\(^{11}\) These affirm that an apis bull, born in year 28 of Shoshenq III, was introduced on 1/II/Akhet of the same year: if the year began on 1/I/Akhet, the Apis would have been a month old at the most—and this is highly unlikely.\(^{12}\) Furthermore, his predecessor was buried in the same year,\(^{13}\) and there are generally several months between the burial of the previous Apis and the introduction of the new one.\(^{14}\) It follows that the regnal year still began with the accession of the king; unfortunately, there are no surviving accession dates for the TIP.

1. The Rulers of Unified Egypt of Early Dyn. 22

According to Manetho, following Africanus, Dyn. 22 consisted of 9 kings from Bubastis who ruled for 120 years: Sesonchis (21 years), Osorthon (15), three others (25), Takelotis (13) and three more (42).\(^{15}\) The family tree in the Serapeum stela of Pasenhor from year 37 of Shoshenq V (\(\#-hpr-R\))\(^{16}\) includes a reference to a King Osorkon who ruled six generations earlier, whose father, grandfather and great-grandfather were kings named Takelot, Osorkon und Shoshenq, while their forefathers were not kings, but rather Libyan princes. The non-royal origins of the earliest named king, Shoshenq, the exact correspondence of the names of the kings with those listed by Manetho for

\(^{9}\) Cf. KRI, VIII, 70–84.

\(^{10}\) Thus also Beckerath, Chronologie, 10. It is a priori probable that the MK concept of “predating” was among the anachronisms introduced during Dyns. 25–26.

\(^{11}\) Louvre SIM 3697, cf. CSSM, 21–22; pl. VIII (no. 22). R. Krauss drew my attention to the importance of these dates.

\(^{12}\) Cf. E. Winter, Der Apiskult im Alten Ägypten (Mainz, 1983), 18.

\(^{13}\) Stela Louvre SIM 3749, CSSM 19–20; pl. VII (no. 21).


\(^{15}\) According to Eusebius only 3 kings in 49 years, namely Sesonchosis (21), Osorthon (15) und Takelotis (13).

\(^{16}\) Louvre SIM 2846, cf. CSSM 30–31; pl. X (no. 31).