

Dating the Beginning of the 22nd Dynasty

A criticism of the New Chronology from Carl Jansen-Winkel

The equation of the biblical Shishak (1 Kings 14:25-26 and 2 Chronicle 12:2-9) with Shoshenk I has been accepted since the very beginning of Egyptology. It represents one of the most important synchronisms between Egyptian and ancient Near Eastern history. The rejection of this connection is one of the anchor points of the New Chronology. But this, in my opinion, cannot be justified.

(a) The phonetic analogy is perfect. The name Shoshenk was written contemporarily (but also later on) either as *Shshnk* or as *Shshk*. The latter corresponds exactly to the Hebrew Shishak; in Hebrew, the Egyptian *sh* was generally represented by Shin/Sin.¹ Moreover there is no other known Egyptian king, whose name has even a vague phonetic resemblance with Shishak.²

(b) Shoshenk I campaigned against Israel and Judah: this is a demonstrable fact. Rohl has objected to the connection of this campaign with that of Shishak,³ with arguments that on the surface appear to be convincing. According to the Egyptian evidence (Shoshenk's city-list) this campaign was primarily directed against Israel and not against Judah, whereas the Old Testament only mentions it as being against Judah and Jerusalem. In addition, a military offensive by Shishak against his ally Jeroboam would hardly have been expected. And yet this contradiction is incapable of shattering the connection between these two event records. It may be beyond doubt surmised from the contemporary Egyptian record of the campaign (which is obviously based on topographical data and not upon lists handed down over generations⁴) that the defeated cities were predominantly situated in Israel and not in Judah – but the Old Testament does not necessarily state that the campaign was mainly against Judah. As Martin Noth recognised long ago,⁵ the note concerning Shishak's campaign only serves as background information and does not mention anything about the significance and aims of the campaign.⁶ The alleged contradiction, that Shishak attacked his ally Jeroboam who had taken refuge in Egypt, is no cogent argument. Whatever aim Shishak may have intended with his military action (demonstration of power, marauding raid, or even lasting subjugation), he hardly would have considered Jeroboam as an ally of equal status. If he did indeed grant him refuge, then Shishak surely did so with the political calculation that a disunited and weakened neighbour was better than a united and strong one. After he had attained that goal, he would not necessarily have had such great scruples about his former protégé. It is also possible that Jeroboam, after claiming the throne,

did not act as the Egyptian king had expected. Nothing is known about their mutual relationship.

(c) In the somewhat more detailed account of Shishak's campaign found in 2 Chronicle 12:2-9 there is mention of the composition of the Egyptian army. First *Lubim* (Egy. *Rbw*) are described, and then *Sukkiyim* (Egy. *Tjk[tn]*). Both of these designations are for Libyan military contingents.⁷ This is exactly what would be expected from a Libyan king such as Shoshenk. But this would be surprising in the case of a New Kingdom pharaoh.

(d) The identification of Shishak with Shoshenk I is also appropriate from general chronological considerations. Because of New Kingdom synchronisms with other Near Eastern civilisations⁸ and the attested reign lengths of the New Kingdom and 21st Dynasty rulers, the reign of Shoshenk I must fall in the 10th century BC, and this, of course, corresponds to the calculated time for Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

To support his New Chronology, David Rohl draws (amongst others) on the Genealogy of Khnemibre from the Wadi Hammamat and on the Genealogy of the High Priests of Memphis (in Berlin). Both genealogies apparently make it clear that Ramesses II lived in the 10th century and not in the 13th. This demonstration, according to my understanding, is flawed.

First, it is striking and rather strange that Rohl estimates the average length of a generation at twenty years.⁹ This is certainly too low. The average age of marriage of a man,¹⁰ for biological and social reasons, must have been about 18-20 years.¹¹ Second, one cannot assume that a long pedigree consists only of firstborn sons. Such a lineage could also have included several elder brothers and sisters. Thirdly, it can be expected that, in a long genealogy, at least one of its members differs in age significantly from the average. For example, if only one of the ancestors became a father at fifty years of age, the average age of the genealogy immediately shifts upwards. One has to estimate the average duration of a generation at least 25 years of age.¹²

The 22-generation-long Genealogy of Khnemibre, carved on the rocks at Wadi Hammamat in the 26th year of Darius I,¹³ mentions a vizier and architect, 14 generations before Khnemibre called Haremsaf. At the head of the ancestral line, 8 generations before Haremsaf, is the famous vizier and architect Rahotep, who served under Ramesses II. David Rohl identifies Haremsaf with Shoshenk I's architect, known from the cliff stela of Gebel

es-Silsila¹⁴ (however there he is not called a vizier). Rohl calculates 20 years for each generation and comes to the conclusion that Shoshenk I really reigned in the late 9th century BC and Ramesses II in the 10th.¹⁵ Apart from the incorrect duration calculated for the generations, it would be best to simply leave this genealogy aside.¹⁶

Because they reach so far back into the past, long genealogies tend to be prone to mistakes. In this specific case, it should be taken into consideration that the author (in the middle of the desert) had no written documents to base his writings upon.¹⁷ This shows especially in the fact that the eldest members of the list carry anachronistic titles¹⁸ or even anachronistic names.¹⁹

The four-fold repetition Nes[shu]tefnut – Taienhebu (over 8 generations) is doubtful; a mistake could easily have been made here.

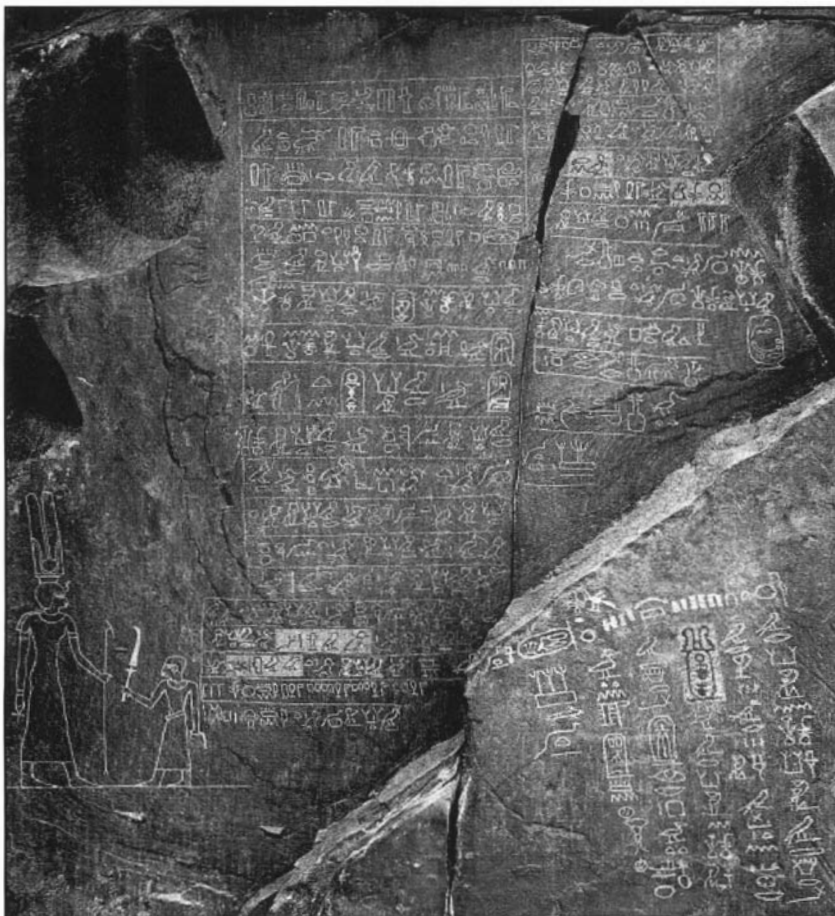
All ancestors of Khnemibre who are further away from him than the first five generations bear the title of vizier and architect. This is hardly believable. An uninterrupted sequence in the highest official position, throughout 18 generations and despite all political upheavals, would be unheard of. Moreover, with the exception of Rahotep, the head of the ancestral line, none of these viziers can be backed up by other sources.

A genealogical list like this of such greatly extended

proportions cannot be used as a reliable medium for chronological verification. It is possibly based on oral tradition and almost certainly on the author's memory. Its purpose was to connect the author with a prominent family of the past. It is possible that a few of his ancestors were indeed viziers – perhaps even Rahotep and the others named as such – but, on the whole, this genealogy is unreliable in its detail.

The Berlin Genealogy of the High Priests of Memphis on Berlin block 23673²⁰ is, according to David Rohl, a reliable source for chronological calculation.²¹ He claims that it shows a maximum of 3 generations between the end of the reign of Ramesses II and that of Amenemnisu of the 21st Dynasty, some 60 years according to Rohl's average generation length. Both of these points can be contradicted.

According to Borchardt's description of the stone,²² there is nothing missing in the upper left area. This would exclude the existence of the 16th column of figures and their descriptions, a possibility that Rohl completely accepts. The gap between Ramesses II and Amenemnisu would then be established as being 2 generations long. Yet this is not possible, even if 20 or 25 years are applied for a generation. When the reign years²³ from Merenptah to Ramesses XI are added together, the result is well



Genealogy of the Royal Architects

1. **Khnemibre** – 496 BC
2. Ahmose-saneit
3. Ankh-Psamtek
4. Wahibre-teni
5. Nestefnut
6. Tjaenhebyu
7. Nestefnut
8. Tja(en)hebyu
9. Nestefnut
10. Tja(en)hebyu
11. Nestefnut
12. Tja(en)hebyu
13. Haremsaf
14. Mermer (?)
15. **Haremsaf** – temp. Shoshenk I?
16. Amunherpamesha
17. Pepy
18. [name lost]
19. May
20. Nefermenu
21. Wedjakhons
22. Bakenkhons
23. **Rahotep** – temp. Ramesses II

The Genealogy of the Royal Architects spanning twenty-three generations from the Persian Period back to the early 19th Dynasty.

	16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1
I		Amn	Akh	Ps	Ps			Sh								
II			T III		A III	A III			H	St I	St I	R II	R II	R II	R II	R II
III				Iby	Aken						Srk	Ap	Ah I		A I	
IV				M II							Am I	S I	Am II	S III	S III	

The Memphite Genealogy (Berlin Staatliche Museen) consists of four rows of sixteen officials attached to the Ptah temple in Memphis. The 'genealogy' therefore stretches back sixty-four 'generations' from the late 22nd Dynasty to the 11th Dynasty. The question is whether the Memphite Genealogy can be considered reliable for the last twenty generations which cover Dynasties 19 to 22?

over 120 years (Smenendes' reign not included). The genealogy must be incorrect here.²⁴

Amenemhat I is given as no less than seven generations later than Mentuhotep II, in disagreement with the internal chronology of the 11th and 12th Dynasties.

Four High Priests of Memphis are listed for Rameses II, only one of which (Neferrhenpet) is supported by other sources. Four additional HPMs (not mentioned in the Berlin Genealogy) are known from these documents, including the long office of Khaemwaset.²⁵

From Amenhotep's III time, two HPMs are named, both of them only known from this source. Again from other documents, no less than five further HPMs are attested during this reign. For the 11 years of Seti I, Berlin 23673 mentions two HPMs, also only known from here. In fact, two differently-named high priests are known for Seti's reign.

In other words, only a few of the New Kingdom HPMs mentioned in this list are confirmed by other sources and a great number of high priests known from well-documented periods do not appear in the Berlin Genealogy.

The original intent of this genealogy was not historical accuracy but rather to establish an impressive list of ancestors. Some parts are definitively wrong, some are doubtful. This source is therefore not useful for chronological calculations.

The Genealogy of Basa (Chicago OIM 10729) seems far more appropriate.²⁶ The owner of this statue, a priest of Hathor from Dendera, listed no less than 25 generations of his paternal ancestors – all of them priests of

Hathor in Dendera and thus only of local importance. Nevertheless, eighteen generations before him, a very well known figure appears – Nebwenen(ef),²⁷ the High Priest of Amun who was called into service by an oracle during the coronation year of Rameses II.²⁸ If the average length of a generation is evaluated at 25 years (as I have argued), then the time of HPA Nebwenenef would be around 450 years before the recording of the genealogy.

According to the traditional chronology – with Rameses II coming to power in the first quarter of the 13th century – the genealogy should thus be dated to around 830 BC. Like many such monuments dated to the later period of pharaonic history, the statue upon which the genealogy is carved is difficult to date. Its style indicates that it was definitely sculpted before the beginning of the 25th Dynasty,²⁹ which means at any rate before 700 BC; this matches perfectly with the chronological analysis of the genealogy. Yet, had Rameses II come to power around the middle of the 10th century (as Rohl proposes),³⁰ then the statue – by calculating 25 years for the average length of a generation – would have to be dated to the Persian period, c. 490 BC. Should 20 years be calculated (as Rohl argues), then the statue would be dated to the 26th Dynasty, c. 580 BC. Both of these dates are completely unacceptable.

It is noteworthy that the statue genealogy of Basa, in contrast to that of the architect Khnemibre and of the Berlin Genealogy, gives a much more reliable and realistic impression. It is nowhere claimed that all of the forefathers listed had been in supreme office and, with the

exception of the historically attested Nebwenen(ef), all the generations held regionally important positions. It contains nothing anachronistic or contradictory to the known facts.

One of the fundamental pillars of the New Chronology is that the 21st and 22nd Dynasty overlap or at least run parallel to each other to a greater extent. Yet this is contradicted by genealogical information (backed up by other genealogical sources) which mostly derives from a not too distant past. The lineage of the Nesperamun family is here of primary importance (see Figure 3 on p. 28).³¹ From the members of this family, Nespaneferhor (i) was initiated as priest in the 2nd year of Akheperre-setepenre (i.e. Osochor = Osorkon the Elder³²), and his son Hor (ii) in the 17th year of Siamun.³³ It seems likely that, on their appointment as ‘God’s-Fathers’, they were still relatively young. The equation of these persons, initiated as priests, with those carrying the same names in the genealogy on the statue Cairo CG 42221 is confirmed by their primary titles. The same is true for TT 68³⁴ (with 3 generations). These two chronologically determined persons are connected on CG 42221 with



Statue OIM 10729 (Chicago Museum) of Basa. The genealogy spans eighteen generations from Ramesses II down to sometime in the late 22nd/23rd Dynasty. This end date is determined on stylistic grounds.

The Genealogy of Basa

1. Djedheriuefankh (II)
2. Basa (III)
3. Nespakhered (II)
4. Basa (II)
5. Djedheriuefankh (I)
6. Basa (I)
7. Nespakhered (I)
8. Penpen
9. Neskaf(ay)a
10. Amenemopet
11. Paanhermaat
12. Wadjeferwy
13. Panehes
14. Amenshedef
15. Paennunebuteref
16. Sihathor (II)
17. Huy
18. Sematawy (II)
19. **Nebwenen[ef]**
20. Sematawy (I)
21. Sienhathor
22. Amenhotep
23. Sihathor (I)
24. Nefer
25. Ded

the family of Djedthutefankh (i/a) through the grandchild Hor (ii). Because of this, they are also related to the royal family of the 22nd Dynasty (the wife of Hor (iii) being a grandchild of a pharaoh Shoshenk). Thus Hor (ii), who was initiated as priest in the 17th year of Siamun, belongs roughly to the same generation as this particular Shoshenk. Nespaneferhor (i) (Hor ii’s father), who was appointed as priest in the second year of Osochor’s reign, belongs to the same generation as Nesipakashuty (ii). According to the latter’s titles, we may assume that he was a participant in the burials of Neskhons and HPA Pinudjem, and was involved in the reburials of the coffins of Ramesses I, Seti I and Ramesses II.³⁵ At that point, he was undoubtedly an important official. This in turn fits perfectly with the fact that Nespaneferhor, of the same generation as Nesipakashuty, was appointed priest in the 2nd year of Osochor.

Without doubt, the pharaoh Shoshenk-meriamun can be identified with Shoshenk I: according to the monuments of the Nesperamun family, he was seven to eight generations earlier than Osorkon B (i.e. the later King Osorkon III). Comparing this to the genealogy of the royal family, we find six generations between Shoshenk I and Osorkon III (Shoshenk I – Osorkon I – Takelot I – Osorkon II – Nimlot C – Takelot II – Osorkon III). The difference of one or two generations is explained

by the fact that Osorkon III only became king after officiating for more than 30 years as High Priest of Amun and then ruled for a further 28 years. Thus the time gap between Shoshenk I and Osorkon III represents seven to eight generations.

Both Nespaneferhor (i) (appointed in the 2nd year of Osochor) and Nesipakashuty (ii) (active in an important position in the 5th and 10th years of Siamun) belong to the same generation as the pharaoh Siamun, whose reign fell just a generation before Shoshenk I. Nevertheless, this does not mean that Siamun was Shoshenk I's immediate predecessor: Psusennes II ruled in the time between the two pharaohs. And yet the two royal lines are connected: Psusennes II was Osorkon I's father-in-law – the same Osorkon who was Shoshenk I's son and heir.³⁶ Psusennes II would thus belong to the same generation as Shoshenk I. The whole construction becomes more coherent, by the fact that Pharaoh Osochor (Osorkon the Elder – in whose 2nd year Nespaneferhor (i) was appointed) was Shoshenk I's uncle.³⁷

The connection between the founder of the 22nd Dynasty, Shoshenk I, and the end of the 21st Dynasty is therefore absolutely certain. Only an overlap of a very short time span for the two dynasties can be considered.³⁸

Notes and References

1. Cf. J. E. Hoch: *Semitic Words in Egyptian Texts of the New Kingdom and the Third Intermediate Period* (Princeton, 1994), p. 436. The Assyrian form *Susinku* does not however mean 'that the "obvious similarity" between the names Shoshenk and Shishak may be more apparent than real' (D. Rohl: *A Test of Time* (London, 1995), p. 157), but rather is only one further example of the quite common Middle and New Assyrian substitution of *s* for *sh* (as well as the other way around), cf. W. von Soden: 'Grundriss der akkadischen Grammatik' in *Analecta Orientalia* 33/47 (1969), 30d; H. Ranke: *Keilschriftliches Material zur altägyptischen Vokalisation* (1910), p. 92. The form *Shusanku* is also attested, cf. W. Struve: *ZAS* 66 (1927), p. 66.
2. D. Rohl, *op. cit.* [1], pp. 156-63, proposes the nickname *Ssi* (rarely attested for Ramesses II) as the name corresponding to Shishak. Yet, chronology aside, this is really no solution. First, the Hebrew letter which usually corresponds to the Egyptian *s* is *samech* and not *shin/sin* (J. Vergote: *Bulletin de la Société d'Égyptologie de Genève* 4 (1980), p. 92). Second, the letter *k* has no corresponding letter in *Ssi*. As an explanation, P. van der Veen has suggested that *Ssi* was reinterpreted as *Shshk* because of the Hebrew name *Shashak*. He understands this name as meaning 'the one who assaults' (from *shkk*), but the Greek versions of this name (Koehler/Baumgartner: *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament* (1990), p. 1536) makes this interpretation rather doubtful. Due to phonetic dissimilarities, a connection between *Ssi* and *Shshk* seems improbable.
3. D. Rohl, *op. cit.* [1], pp. 120-27.
4. K. A. Kitchen: *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt* (3rd edition, Warminster, 1995), p. 432, n. 49.
5. M. Noth in *ZDP-V* 61 (1938), pp. 278-80.
6. M. Noth, *op. cit.* [5], p. 280: 'The only thing that may be derived from the Old Testament is the simple fact that Pharaoh Susak (Shoshenk) undertook a campaign into Palestine in the 5th year after the death of Solomon. The Old Testament says nothing about the final outcome of the campaign.'
7. On the subject of the *Tjk(tn)* see W. Spiegelberg: *Ägyptologische Randglossen zum Alten Testament* (Strassburg, 1904), pp. 30-31; A. H. Gardiner: *The Wilbour Papyrus*, II (Oxford, 1948), p. 81, n. 1; R. A. Caminos: *Late Egyptian Miscellanies* (Oxford, 1954), p. 177.
8. J. von Beckerath: 'Chronologie des Ägyptischen Neuen Reiches' in *Hildesheimer Ägyptologische Beiträge* 39 (1994), pp. 17-30.
9. D. Rohl, *op. cit.* [1], pp. 139-40 & 379. The average length of a king's

- reign used in calculations there is irrelevant to the problem.
10. The longer genealogies passed down to us mention only the male line.
 11. The average age of marriage is surely not too high – even if seen in connection to the average life expectancy. Rohl's assertion, *op. cit.* [1], p. 415, n. 1 of ch. 6, based on Roman cemeteries in Egypt as well as burials in Tell ed-Daba, that the average life expectancy (not counting child death) was only approximately 30 years, is most definitely wrong. At Tell ed-Daba, during the 13th and 14th Dynasties, it would have been about 34 years of age (for males). Even then, the information is derived from a population which was poor in health, whilst living in a city with a port only increased the chances of contracting imported diseases (M. Bietak: *Avaris* (London, 1996), pp. 35-36).
 12. M. Bierbrier: *The Late New Kingdom in Egypt* (Warminster, 1975), pp. 112-13. Most probably, 25 years is set rather too low rather than too high. In European history 30 years is ascribed to the average length of a generation (A. von Brandt: *Werkzeug des Historikers* (Stuttgart, 1983), p. 41).
 13. J. Couyat & P. Montet: 'Les inscriptions hiéroglyphiques et hiératiques du Ouâdi Hammâmât' in *Mémoires publiés par les membres de l'Institut Français de l'Archéologie Orientale* 34 (1912), pp. 68-69, nr. 93/92; pl. XXII; G. Posener: 'La première domination perse en Egypte' in *Bibliothèque d'étude* 11 (1936), pp. 98-105.
 14. R. A. Caminos: 'Gebel es-Silsila No. 100' in *JEA* 38 (1952), pp. 46-61; pl. X-XIII
 15. D. Rohl, *op. cit.* [1], pp. 140-43.
 16. H. Brunner in: *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* I, p. 16; D. Wildung: 'Die Rolle ägyptischer Könige im Bewusstsein ihrer Nachwelt' in *Münchener Ägyptologische Studien* 17 (1969), pp. 83-84: 'Having mentioned his real ancestors, he soon resorts to fictional ancestors whom he describes first as architects and then later as viziers. This point is so distant in time for the reader of the inscription that he is no longer able to verify the accuracy of the information.'
 17. It is not known upon which sort of documents the longer genealogies base themselves in their extensive indications of titles.
 18. A. Weil: *Die Veziere des Pharaonenreiches* (Strassburg, 1908), p. 62.
 19. G. Posener, *op. cit.* [13], p. 104 (n).
 20. Published by L. Borchardt: *Die Mittel zur zeitlichen Festlegung von Punkten der ägyptischen Geschichte und ihre Anwendung* (Cairo, 1935), pp. 96-112, pl. 2/2a; cf. finally P. Pamminger in *Cd'E* 69 (1994), pp. 11-23.
 21. D. Rohl, *op. cit.* [1], pp. 381-84.
 22. L. Borchardt, *op. cit.* [20], p. 97.
 23. K. A. Kitchen: *Ramesside Inscriptions*, vol. VIII (Oxford, 1990), pp. 73-84.
 24. See also K. A. Kitchen, *op. cit.* [4], p. 153. An alternative explanation would be that the Berlin Genealogy only names the priests who belonged to the family of the donor and that it simply excludes anyone not related to him. This would mean that *sa* does not mean 'son' in every instance but to some extent also 'descendant'. In that case, this genealogy would be even more unsuitable for chronological calculations.
 25. *Lexikon der Ägyptologie* II, pp. 1260-61.
 26. R. K. Ritner: Chapter 15 in *For His Ka: Essays Offered in Memory of Klaus Baer, Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilisation* 55 (1994), pp. 205-26.
 27. On the form of that name, see R. K. Ritner, *op. cit.* [26], p. 219 (DD).
 28. K. Sethe: 'Die Berufung eines Hohenpriesters des Amon unter Ramses II' in *ZAS* 44, 1907, pp. 30-35.
 29. R. K. Ritner, *op. cit.* [26], p. 208, for easy stylistic recognition of block-statues of the 22nd and 23rd Dynasty; K. Bosse: 'Die menschliche Figur in der Rundplastik der ägyptischen Spätzeit von der XXII. bis zur XXX. Dynastie' in *Ägyptologische Forschungen* 1, 1936, p. 26.
 30. D. Rohl, *op. cit.* [1], p. 141.
 31. K. A. Kitchen, *op. cit.* [4], p. 202. The sources are presented for each person separately.
 32. E. Young: 'Some Notes on the Chronology and Genealogy of the Twenty-First Dynasty' in *JARCE* 2 (1963), pp. 99-101.
 33. S. J.-M. Kruchten: 'Les annales des prêtres de Karnak (XXI-XXIII^{mes} dynasties) et autres textes contemporains relatifs l'initiation des prêtres d'Amon' in *Orientalia Louvaniensis Analecta* 32 (1989), pl. 2.
 34. J. Černý: 'Usurpation d'une Tombe à Thèbes' in *ASAE* 40 (1940), p. 238.
 35. G. Maspero: 'Les momies royales de Deir el-Bahari' in *MMAF* 1 (Paris, 1889), pp. 520-3; pp. 551ff.
 36. K. A. Kitchen, *op. cit.* [4], p. 49.
 37. J. Yoyotte: 'Osorkon, fils de Mehtyoukhé' in *BSFE* 77/78 (1977), pp. 39-54.
 38. As A. Dodson proposed in 'Psusennes II' in *Rd'É* 38 (1987), pp. 49-54.