

The Place of Dynasty VI and of the Exodus in Egyptian History: Further Comments

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Abstract

Pottery and archaeological stratigraphy in no way contradict a partial overlap of Dynasty 6 and Dynasty 12 in Egyptian history. This is a necessary reply to the paper by Robert M. Porter (2022) on the placement of the Exodus in Egyptian history.

Keywords: reset, Assyrian King List, Mari, Byblos archaeology, Dynasty 6

Preliminary Comments

A recent paper by Robert M. Porter (2022) demands a reasonable reply. Porter says that “Pottery and stratigraphy show that it is impossible to run Dynasty 6 of the Old Kingdom in parallel with Dynasty 12” in Egyptian history. His statement implies assumptions that I believe will not stand up to critical examination, and I wish to show the reason for my claim.

But first, let me state my position on the place of the Sixth Dynasty, for I feel that it has not been sufficiently stated in previous papers, and may be mixed up with other interpretations in those papers. I will then reply to the major criticisms produced by Porter (2022), and then outline a clear dated discussion, placing the Sixth Dynasty where it fits according to all the archaeological evidence.

I will contend that:

- (1) The Sixth (VI) Dynasty began before the start of the Middle Kingdom, which started with Mentuhotep II of the Eleventh Dynasty,
- (2) It began in parallel with the end of the Fifth Dynasty (kings Djedkare, Isesi, and Unas),
- (3) At about the start of the reign of Merenre I (or the last years of Pepi I) it came under the hegemony of the Eleventh Dynasty, and
- (4) Early in the reign of Pepi II the Twelfth Dynasty came to power and overshadowed the reign of Pepi II and the few ephemeral kings that followed, the Sixth Dynasty ending somewhere in the reign of possibly Sesostri II.

Now Porter (2022) presented two examples to substantiate his position with respect to the Sixth Dynasty. Firstly, he takes us to Bubastis, where a necropolis of the Sixth Dynasty has a palace of the Twelfth Dynasty cut partly into it, apparently nothing to indicate a “First Intermediate Period.” This palace is clearly of the later Twelfth Dynasty, at the earliest

starting possibly with Amenemhet II, the third king of that dynasty, and at least 75 years into the Twelfth Dynasty. A glance at my list of contentions above will clearly show that this palace could have been built while the later part of the Sixth Dynasty was still in place. Moreover, the main kings associated with this palace were the last two major kings of the Twelfth Dynasty, Sesostri III and Amenemhet III, which in the discussion to follow, I will show that they reigned after the end of Dynasty 6.

Secondly, Porter (2022) takes us to the Island of Elephantine in Upper Egypt, which had obviously been affected over the years by the Sixth, Eleventh, and Twelfth Dynasties. But most specifically, Porter takes us to a shrine that was dedicated to a nomarch of the First Upper Egyptian nome, known as Pepinakht and also called Heqaib, where a cult of Heqaib was installed. There were found at least four layers to this shrine, the earlier ones clearly not able to be associated with Heqaib. The latest one—Sanctuary 1—was built by a nomarch of First nome called Sarenput I. He clearly built it, and most likely appears to have set up the cult of Heqaib. He served, as far as details enable us to ascertain, from the tenth year of Sesostri I (the second king of the Twelfth Dynasty), until around the thirtieth year. But Heqaib himself, now remembered in the Sanctuary, lived and served during Pepi II’s reign and had functions also associated with Pepi I’s and Merenre I’s pyramids.

Now Porter (2022) quotes Sarenput I, who found the earlier sanctuary “much ruined...all its chambers were full of rubble.” Then Porter tells us that “it had been neglected *for some lengthy time*” (emphasis mine), and “Thus we have a Dynasty 6 governor remembered *much later* in Dynasty 12” (emphasis mine). However, rubble can accumulate in a day, a week, a month, a year, and even 10–20

years is no problem within my outline of contentions above. So, “rubble” here does not justify the claim of a “lengthy time,” especially as we know that conflict was occurring with Nubia during this period.

One of the problems here is the assumption that a long period of time passed during the unproven and mythical First Intermediate Period before the cult of Heqaib was installed. Yet its start cannot be traced back before Sarenput I’s time. (That also includes inscriptions by Intef III, concerning his building, which does not necessarily apply to Sanctuary 1.)

It will be my claim, then, as I outline the place of the dynasty, that Heqaib could not be much more than one generation before Sarenput I. In the discussion that follows, I will take a much wider approach to the elucidation of the Dynasty than is usually taken and establish a “close-to” absolute chronology for it.

The Place of the VIth Dynasty—Introduction

Significant differences of opinion occur about the place of the Sixth Dynasty of Egypt, and how it relates to the Bible record. This is not just of academic interest, for a wide difference occurs between authors as to whether the Sixth Dynasty relates to the Exodus.

It has become obvious to me that just using the details of Egypt and Israel appears to leave us still in a vague place. It is thus necessary to cast our net to a wider geography to be able to solve the problem. Necessary details then will be required from Assyrian and Babylonian records, as well as the archaeology of the Phoenician city of Byblos. But basic and fundamental is the Bible chronology, and herein lies the first stumbling block to many for arriving at a correct correlation.

The Bible Timeline Relevant to this Discussion

In this discussion I will date the Flood at c.2300B.C. and the Exodus at 1446B.C., on a straight reading of the Masoretic text. These figures assume the correctness of the sojourn of Israel *in* Egypt for 215 years. This is the first controversy among Bible chronologers, for many assert that the figure is 430 years. The subject has thus often reached emotional proportions in some advocates, sometimes because some well-respected teachers have held that view, and so it is seen as a “slight” on those teachers. That is not necessarily so, as none of us hold all the truth.

However, this time period is fundamental to the question here being approached, so that a resolution is needed. The key to this is Paul’s discussion in Galatians chapter 3. Here Paul reminds us of the promise to Abraham, and it is clear by comparison of Galatians 3:8 with Genesis 12:2–3 that this statement refers to that Genesis passage just before Abram had entered the promised land, in his seventy-fifth year

(v. 4). And Galatians 3 does not reference the nation of Israel in the pertinent discussion.

It is also clear that the 430 years referred to in Galatians 3:16–17 takes us from that promise to the year of the Exodus, and the giving of the Law at Sinai. It does not refer primarily to Israel. It leaves us with an unequivocal statement that from Abram’s seventy-fifth year until the Exodus from Egypt was 430 years. Then, from the Old Testament details, it is clear that it allows only 215 years for the Egyptian sojourn.

The 430-year claim has historically been built on English translation problems, not on original manuscripts, and the words in Exodus 12:40 (KJV) “who were in Egypt” is a descriptive and identifier of the people, *not* a chronological statement. But sadly, it has been so erroneously translated in later editions, for example, in the New International Version (NIV) “Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt was 430 years,” as though it is a statement of chronology.

Most of the ancient authors and manuscripts, including Paul and his near contemporary Josephus (a priest who was well acquainted with biblical manuscripts), as well as the Septuagint and Samaritan texts (both historical documents, regardless as to how one sees them in terms of inspiration) are all clear on this timeline, specifically giving only 215 years to the Egyptian sojourn.

Moreover, the other difficult passage is Genesis 15:13–16, which is rarely fully appreciated. Here God is referring to “the *Seed*,” and that is Isaac (and his descendants), who was born 25 years after Abram entered the Promised land. I have dealt extensively with this elsewhere (Osgood 2020).

The results of these dates, on which the following discussion rests, is that from the Flood to the Exodus was a mere c.854 years. And into those years must be fitted the landing of the Ark, the migration of Noah’s descendants to the Mesopotamian plain, a period of time living in that plain, the Dispersion at Babel, the time taken for the migration of families from Babel, and then the foundations of the nations, including Egypt. Then in Egypt there is a significant pre-dynastic period, followed by twelve complete dynasties. This author believes that the Twelfth Dynasty is the one relevant to the sojourn and Exodus.

Furthermore, from the dispersion (which appears to be c.100 years after the Flood), to the Exodus is then c.754 years. Abraham was born c.1950B.C., that is, approximately 350 years after the Flood, and only 250 years after Babel. Abraham then went into an Egypt that had already been in existence for only 250 years+75 years (his age at the time)=315 years. This is an absolute maximum after its pre-dynastic foundation, and Egyptian records allow the possibility that over 100 years had passed from the

beginning of the 1st Dynasty to that moment. Then the Exodus occurred 430 years later=745 years after the Egyptian Nation's pre-dynastic foundation.

By comparison, the secular chronology for this period in Egypt (from the First Dynasty to the end of the Twelfth Dynasty) covers c.1,150 years, plus whatever time is placed on the pre-dynastic period. It should then be obvious that we have a problem, namely, 745 years in the biblical chronology compared to 1,150 years in the secular chronology.

In this discussion I will hold that the Bible's chronology is basis for the story of the world's history and must be the instrument by which the historical and archaeological records are judged, not the reverse, which is most often the case, even among many who use the label "biblical archaeologist." The failure to take that approach is the first reason for the present confusion. Moreover, if the Bible's historical record cannot be trusted, then neither is there any guarantee that its assumed promises and covenants have any validity at all. The cost of any failure of its history is catastrophic.

The Secular Chronology

The presently held secular chronology rests on the assumption that the Egyptian chronology of the sequential king lists is basically the timeline of ancient history to the extent of its given details. The first problem here is that chronology has only been soundly verified back to 690 B.C., after which the researcher enters many a confused problem. The second problem is that there has been a basic assumption that the king lists reflect ongoing history sequentially, a detail that is clearly at odds with the method of ancient historical recording.

As Olga Tufnell (1984, 155) points out:

There is one point about the composition of the Turin Canon—indeed all ancient king-lists—which needs emphasizing since it plays a significant role in the present chapter. Dynasties or other groupings of kings are usually listed as if in a single chronological sequence so that exterior controls are required in order to define contemporary, competing or overlapping dynasties. Precisely this situation is evident in the Turin Canon in both the First and Second Intermediate Periods.

The third problem has been an insistence that this non-established chronology is the guide to other national chronologies, and if a difference exists, it is assumed those national chronologies have to give way to the Egyptian interpretation/timeline.

This secular chronology is ever present in the mind of ancient historians, and I am convinced that even among revisionists there is an intimidating sense of the superiority of that chronology, which colours their thinking.

To the Assyrian Chronology For a Reset and Realignment

The two most secure chronological records of the ancient past are the Bible and the Assyrian records, and the latter itself is stabilised by the Bible record. The Assyrian King List (AKL) and the Assyrian Annals give us a record that reaches deeply back into the past. However, too often authors have assumed that the earlier periods are legendary, and therefore are often not taken at face value. On the contrary, I have found that these documents can be taken very much as real history, with, of course, the caveat that mistakes in transmission can always occur.

Here I am suggesting that to get a reliable time frame for the period in Egyptian history that we are dealing with, we need to stabilise the timeline by recourse to these two Assyrian documents, which then will allow us to synchronise different geographical areas. Now many will claim that this will not help us with the specifics of Egyptian history. However, I will endeavour to show that such is not the case, as it will in fact give us a solid base.

The later AKL deals with a dynastic line of kings that is reasonably unbroken back to 1415 B.C. (the start of the reign of Puzur-Ashur III), when the then-ruling Amorite Dynasty was overthrown by this line of kings, as claimed by Esarhaddon (Luckenbill 1968, 576). Furthermore, correlations of the Annals demand that Puzur-Ashur III is the same person as Puzur Sin, the stated overthrewer (Grayson 1972, 173–177). Thus, this eliminates an assumed "major chronological gap after Ishme-Dagan I" that is placed there artificially to force the Assyrian chronology to conform to the unproven secular Egyptian timeline. This then allows us to date the beginning of that Amorite line to 1488 B.C., the beginning of the reign of Shamshi-Adad I, father of Ishme-Dagan I.

Shamshi-Adad then claims to be seven generations from the overthrow of the Akkad Dynasty (Grayson 1972, 140). The generations given to kings XXXII through to XXXVIII on the AKL places us in the reign of Ilu-shuma whose records claim "freedom of the Akkadians he established" (Grayson 1972, 37).

Moreover, we have a very full record of the yearly eponyms back to Ilu-shuma (he himself being missing). With a generous suggestion of a reign of perhaps as much as 40 years for that king, we can then place the fall of Akkad sometime after c. 1700 B.C. (a few years either side is possible and relevant to later conclusions). This is in contrast to the secular date placed at c. 2200 B.C., 500 years earlier.

However, it is significant that Shamshi-Adad starts that count of seven generations back from the moment he captured Narrugum. That was his twenty-ninth year of reign, so his own reign is counted as one of those generations. Moreover, the number

of eponyms that we have confirms the lengths of the reigns of those kings.

If we then take the 29 years of Shamshi-Adad and add the 126 years that passed from the end of Erishum I reign, add the 40 years of that reign, and add say at least ten years back into the reign of Ilu-shuma (whose length we simply do not know, it could be a few years more), then we arrive at 205 years for the fall of Akkad prior to Shamshi-Adad's Narrugum conquest. Add that to the year of the conquest of Narrugum (that is, 1459 B.C.), we arrive at 1664 B.C. as close to the time of the fall of Akkad. This is the date which will be used here, bearing in mind the slight uncertainty mentioned above regarding the years of Ilu-shuma.

Now the importance of this is that we can now use this date to arrive at the time of contemporary people relevant to the Egyptian history, viz. Hammurabi of Babylon, and Zimri-Lim of Mari. It also allows us to follow a line through Byblos to Egypt, now with reasonably and realistically firm dates. I have argued elsewhere (Osgood 2020, 37) that these two later kings were contemporary with Moses, and not with Abraham, as currently held in the conventional secular chronology.

Shamshi-Adad I died in 1455 B.C., by the above reckoning, in the fourth year of the Eshnunna king Ibal-pi-el II. This latter king then reigned 13 years followed by his son Syilli-Sin, in whose third year fought Hammurabi (who was in his twenty-ninth year) at Razama (the second battle). This allows us to date Hammurabi at 1468–1426 B.C., and Zimri-Lim at 1449–1433 B.C. We can then see that the Exodus (1446 B.C.) falls during Zimri-Lim's reign (the Israelite conquest in the reign of Assyrian Puzur-Ashur III).

The only other important date which will later become relevant is the years 12 to 14 of Naram-Sin of Akkad when he attacked and spent time in the Lebanon area (his total reign being 37 years). This allows an approximate date for that event of $1664 + 25$ (Shar-kali-sharri) $+ 25$ (residual years from year 12 of Naram-Sin) = c. years 1714–1712 B.C. This date now becomes highly significant as we look at the synchronism of Egypt and Byblos, for as will be argued, Naram-Sin almost certainly conquered Byblos during those years, and it is just after the start of the twelfth Dynasty by the criteria accepted here.

Enter Mari, Byblos, and Canaan Just Prior to the Israelite Conquest

Byblos was a city of particular importance to Egypt and there is much evidence of their interaction. A king of Byblos called Yantin 'ammu (Yantin) is able to be correlated with both Neferhotep I of Egypt (Thirteenth Dynasty), whom he outlived (Albright

1964), and Zimri-Lim of Mari, Hammurabi of Babylon, and Siwe-palar-hapak of Elam (Malamat 1971). Moreover, there is a record of Zimri-Lim sending a large shipment of tin to a king of Canaan called "Ibni Hadad of Hazor" (Malamat 1971), the name Ibni being the same as Jabin. We are thus reminded of Jabin of Hazor, "the head of all those kingdoms" (Joshua 11:10), who later fought Joshua. He would have been glad to receive a large shipment of tin to make bronze weapons. This moment can be placed in the early years of Zimri-Lim's reign, corresponding to soon after Israel had reached the Negev, 1445 B.C., and first clashed with Canaanites (the king of Arad in Numbers 21:1; 14:45).

A further correlation occurs in the twenty-ninth year of Samsu-iluna of Babylon, son of Hammurabi, when he fought with two kings in the west (most likely from the Khabur region). The name of one was Mut-CUSHANA. It should then be remembered that just a few years after this (and certainly consistent with that man's possible years of rule), that the newly established Israel was attacked by a CUSHAN-rishathaim from the Khabur region (Aram-Naharaim). The second part of Cushan's name is most likely a biblical descriptor, that is "double iniquity" (Judges 3:8–11), so there is every chance that this is the same person. The archaeological horizon here is MB IIA, the Albright nomenclature, and a descriptor of the last period of the Middle Kingdom of Egypt. This was when Khabur pottery appeared in the Holy Land, just a small time after the archaeological horizon in the Levant of Hammurabi and Zimri-Lim. This then puts Byblos "front and centre" in the correlation of the Egyptian Dynasties.

In the following discussion I will outline the archaeology of Byblos relevant to our discussion, and draw heavily upon the excellent correlation of the excavations presented by Saghieh (1983):

- Earliest occupation, the lowest level—period L.
- Followed by four consecutive periods, namely, periods K I, K II, K III, K IV. The end of K IV coincided with a great destruction after which a "new and vigorous culture appears at Byblos" (Saghieh 1983, 131).
- Then two further consecutive periods, namely, periods J I, J II. This came to an end with "signs of destruction and great disturbances" (Saghieh 1983, 132).
- Followed by a new cultural period, namely, period H, which correlates with the times of Yantin 'ammu. Saghieh (1983) confidently correlates this to an Amorite takeover, but places this separate from, and earlier than, the Middle Bronze 1 (MB1) of Palestine (Kenyon) (MBIIa Albright) by three-quarters to a full century.

I have dated the MB1 (Kenyon) period in Palestine to 1379B.C., the beginning of Cushan-Rishathaim's conquest, and the beginning of Amorite Shamshi-Adad I to 1488B.C. (Osgood 2020, 146). The correlation of the Byblos and Amorite kings with their Egyptian contemporaries fits close to the same time. These conclusions make sense.

However, the MB1 Palestine (Kenyon) was preceded by the settlement in Palestine of the Early Bronze-Middle Bronze (EB-MB—Kenyon) by 30 years (Osgood 2020), following its nomadic precedent (the wilderness wandering). The start of the EB-MB period (in Palestine) I correlate to 1406B.C., the Israelite invasion of Palestine.

The destruction at Byblos after K IV led to a new period J I, which Saghieh (1983) correlates to *Late Akkad* and Ur III. The Late Akkad strongly speaks of the rule of Naram-Sin who attacked this region. Naram-Sin attacked Amarnum in his twelfth year (and possibly Ebla at the same time), then attacked the Amanus and Lebanon, reaching “the upper sea.” It is then more likely than not that the destruction at Byblos at the end of K IV was due to Naram-Sin and therefore dated to 1714—1712B.C. He also invaded Cilicia and the Anatolian Plateau.

Then the following J I and J II periods would cover the late part of Naram-Sin's reign as well as that of his son Shar-kali-sharri, followed by the Ur III kings for 84 years. Byblos was then taken over by the Amorites, sometime after the beginning of the Isin period in Babylon, close to the same time as the rise of the Amorite dynasty in Mari and the Amorite dynasty of Ashur (Assyria). No exact figure can be given to the moment of this takeover, but a little after c.1600B.C. would not be far out. J I–J II then would cover a period of about 110 years, ending with the destruction level, followed by period H—the Amorites. Note here that I am ruling out any linear period of control of Mesopotamia by the Guti, which is usually inserted on the fall of Akkad by the conventional reckoning. The Ur III period followed straight after Akkad and may even slightly have overlapped its end (I have discussed this in detail in a coming paper on early Assyria).

The rise of the Amorites in Mesopotamia generally can be said to have been influenced by the great famine of Joseph's day, which began in Egypt in 1663B.C., and would exhibit, in Mesopotamia, the nomads coming in from the desert. It likely corresponds to the famine conditions lasting up to the days of Ur III king Ib-bi-Sin in his eleventh year, although famine conditions in that region are evident from around the fall of Akkad through to the time of Ib-bi-Sin (Neumann and Parpola 1987, 177; Weiss et al 1993).

Egypt's Twelfth and Thirteenth Dynasties

I have argued elsewhere (Osgood 2020, 153–190), in agreement with Courville (1971), that the Twelfth Dynasty was the Dynasty of Israel's sojourn, and the collapse and Exodus occurred in the early Thirteenth Dynasty. No other collapse period in Egypt remotely resembles that event. Joseph's famine on this revision then is the famine that lasted for many years starting in Sesostri's twenty-fifth year (1663B.C.). It was prepared for in advance as mentioned under vizier Mentuhotep in Sesostri's eighteenth year, 7 years before (Grajetzki 2006, 42). This famine was also mentioned by the Upper Egyptian official/nomarch Ameny, known to be a contemporary, a famine which he also claimed to have prepared for in advance.

The beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty then is 30+25 years before 1663=1718B.C. And the Eleventh Dynasty added to this, from the thirty-ninth year of Mentuhotep II (30 years) is 1748B.C., that is, the start of the Middle Kingdom, just before the start of the Twelfth Dynasty.

It will then be seen that the attacks of Naram-Sin of Akkad in the west were just at the start of the Twelfth Dynasty of Egypt, c.4–6 years into the reign of Amenemhet I. Furthermore, the takeover of Byblos by the Amorites occurred about 110 years later, which would correspond to during the reign of Sesostri II. Such is of interest, because the first king recognised by the Amorite kings of Byblos is Amenemhet III, two kings later, and a contemporary with Abishemu of period H at Byblos, who according to Albright (1964) died before him.

There is not much evidence of direct connection apparent with Egypt between the destruction of the K IV period (late Akkad) and the next takeover by the Amorites, but such would not be surprising. As the centre of action was to the east with Akkad and Ur III, it would also be expected that, following the years of famine and settlement of a new people, some time would elapse before serious diplomatic relations would begin again.

Now on this revision the Twelfth Dynasty would cover much of Early Bronze III (EB III), and early start of Middle Bronze (MB, particularly MB IIA), these periods in Egypt represented by an existing culture superimposed on by invigorated dynasties of the Eleventh and Twelfth. This has been acknowledged by scholars before (Easton 1976, 165). This fact is important, because a failure to realise this has resulted in arguments over the period of Israel's conquest. Separate but contemporary dynasties in Egypt could well vary in their separate artifactual culture, with such cultural aspects being at least partly contemporary. As will become evident, the Twelfth Dynasty arrived after the start of the Sixth Dynasty, but showing some significant parallel rule, though almost certainly presenting some differences in cultural artefacts.

K IV, The Relevant Period

However, let us turn our attention to Byblos K IV and its end at the hands, most likely, of Naram-Sin. Saghieh’s (1983) outline of the K periods (prior to that conquest) are as follows:

- K I—Saghieh (1983) clearly ties the beginning of this period to the reign of King Djet and Den of the First Dynasty (and the latter part of EB 1 Palestine). She sees it lasting until the end of that Dynasty. Djet (Zet), also known as Uadji, or Uenephes, claimed to have built a pyramid at Saqqara, and had a famine and plague during his reign. I have identified him as the pharaoh with whom Abraham conflicted (Genesis 12:10–20) (Osgood 2016, 21–22). Some scholars reason that Den (Zemti), son of Uadji and Merneith, (not mentioned by Egyptian Priest Manetho), reigned as a co-regent to his father (and mother).
- K II—Saghieh (1983) identified this period as a continuation of K I, but she ties its beginning to the reign of Qa’a of Dynasty 1, the last king of that dynasty.
- K III—A locally produced fire occurred at the end of K II, and K III then begins. But it is clearly a continued occupation. An Egyptianized temple is built, and Saghieh (1983) links this period with Dynasties 3 and 4 through pottery analysis.
- K IV—A general rebuilding occurs here, including a major temple (Baalat-Gebal). Ceramic evidence identifies this period with Dynasties 5 and 6.

During period K IV, the kings’ names of Dynasty 5—Sahure, Kakai, Nyuserre, and Unas—were found, and many stone objects traceable to Dynasties 5 and 6. But alabaster objects were also found dated to Mycerinus (Greek form of Menkaure—Dynasty 4), and to Phiops I and Phiops II (Dynasty 6). The name of Mycerinus (Dynasty 4) was found eight times, in several levels, as well as Unas, Sahure, and Nyuserre (all Dynasty 5 related), then Teti, Phiops I (most frequently), and Nemtyemsaf I (Merenre I), and some of Phiops II (all Dynasty 6). The contacts appear to cease in J I and J II.

One factor common to all these kings is their association with the city of Memphis, or the nearby Heliopolis. I am here rejecting the claim of the origin of Dynasty 5 from Elephantine, though some of its

kings may have ruled there for a time. The evidence is on the side of Heliopolis. These cities are obvious ones for an easy journey along the coast to Byblos.

It is clear that the destruction at Byblos of K IV took place somewhere close to the early years of Pepi II. He started as a minor, supposedly aged six, so he would be at least in his second decade for the amount of contact known to be at Byblos. Pepi II is the last Pharaoh whose name can be referred to the period K IV. The year identified in this discussion is likely 1712B.C. (earliest 1714B.C.). Such would also place this moment contemporary with Amenemhet I, remembering also that Amenemhet was earlier the vizier during the late Dynasty 11 kings.

This dating of 1712B.C. is six years into the reign of Amenemhet I. This would allow us to suggest that Mentuhotep II (30 years before) took control of the north, including Memphis, during the reign of Merenre I (or the very last years of Pepi I), allowing about 20 years of Pepi II’s reign into Twelfth Dynasty to 1712B.C. Clearly with our present information a more exact placement is not possible.

A nomarch of the first southern (Upper Egyptian) nome, named Pepinakht, and then known as Heqaib, served under Pepi II. He claimed the titles:

- “Tenant landholder and scribe of the Phyle of Pyramid Men-ankh-Neferkare,” namely, Pepi II.
- “Mayor of the Pyramid Men-nefer-Pepi,” that is, Pepi I.
- “Leader of the Phyle of the Pyramid Kha-nefer-Merenre,” that is, Merenre I.

A mortuary cult was set up by nomarchs following after Heqaib. Scholars following the conventional chronology assume they were distant nomarchs, possible relatives, but such is not necessarily so. The first of these was Sarenput I, who served under Sesostris I. He is first recognised in the tenth year of that sovereign and appears to be the first to develop the cult of Heqaib. The fact that he had to clear some rubble does not give us the right to claim a 200-year gap, that could just as easily occur with events within a decade before. And according to the close chronology outlined above (and illustrated in fig. 1), Pepi II would now have reigned for 50 years to that nomarch’s beginning and 70 years to his end. So, the previous generation, here Pepinakht, would have

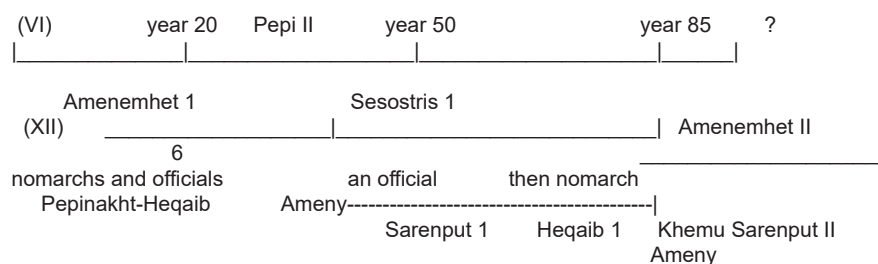


Fig. 1. Proposed lie of Sixteenth Dynasty (top) against Seventh Dynasty (middle), with officials and nomarchs (lower).

died before Pepi II's fiftieth year of reign. However, Pepi's Pyramid had most likely already been built at that stage, to which he claimed being the "Tenant landholder, etc."

However, an Ameny served, possibly on the death of Heqaib I, son of Sarenput I, which may have been before Sesostri's forty-third year=Amenemhet II's first year. His filiation is uncertain, but he was appointed by the king. He left an inscription in the forty-third year of Sesostri I, as did another named Ameny mentioned by Courville (1971) also inscribed in the forty-third year of Sesostri I. He mentioned the famine that he had prepared for and then fed his people about 27 years before (Courville 1971, vol. 1, 134). This would be the same famine we have identified starting in year 25 of Sesostri I. The two are then almost certainly the same person.

The above details, viz. the end of the K IV period at Byblos which witnessed the name of Pepi II, then the fall of K IV during Amenemhet I's fourth to sixth year, suggests that Sarenput I (serving from tenth year of Sesostri I) was of the first generation after Pepinakht-Heqaib. Furthermore, we know that he served at least for 20 years during Sesostri I's reign, thus at least to year 30 (Sesostri I reigned 45 years). The positive evidence available allows that he was the first to develop the cult of Heqaib, evident at Elephantine, and such would therefore be soon after Heqaib's death.

Sarenput I's son Heqaib I served under Sesostri I and Amenemhet II, but it appears that Ameny was appointed on the death of Heqaib I. Then came Sarenput I's son-in-law Khemu (Amenemhet II), followed by his son (and wife Satethotep, daughter of Sarenput I), named Sarenput II. Thus, Heqaib I served under Amenemhet II, Sesostri II (year four) to Amenemhet III (year eight). This was followed by three generations of the family under Sesostri III then Amenemhet III, viz. Heqaib II (said to be a son of a Chunes and Sahathor, but married to Gaut-Anuket, the daughter of Sarenput II), then Heqaib-ankh, Heqaib III, followed by Ameny-seneb.

The point of this is to illustrate that the above chronology fits the facts associated with these nomarchs and the mortuary cult, during the time of Dynasties 6 and 12 and excludes the mythical First Intermediate Period (FIP) (see fig. 1).

How long then was it from the beginning of the K I period until the end of the K IV period? That is, how long was it from the reign of Uadji (Djet) until the attack on Byblos by Naram-Sin, c. 1712 B.C.?

By this revision, from just before Abraham's journey to Egypt in 1875 B.C., it would be approximately 165–170 years—that is, about a decade into the beginning of the Twelfth Dynasty. We know that the famine of Joseph's day occurred 215 years after the promise to Abraham (Genesis 12:4), which matches

the above dates for the famine in Sesostri I's reign starting in his twenty-fifth year, which is 49 years after year six of Amenemhet I, the latter around the years correlating to end of period K IV at Byblos. Admittedly here, this is only a close approximation.

This then makes complete nonsense of the sequential interpretation of the Egyptian king lists and demands parallelism. It also completely eliminates the assumed First Intermediate period (FIP). This latter conclusion would dismay conventionalists, but the FIP is assumed largely on the basis of negative evidence, and an assumed sequential interpretation of the king-lists.

The Twelfth Dynasty of Egypt, then, equates in time from late Akkad, and then covers Ur III and the Isin-Larsa period up to the reign of Hammurabi of Babylon. It is represented at Byblos by periods J I, J II, then H. But period K IV is the period here related to the Sixth Dynasty of Egypt. However, I believe it is significant that this period witnesses kings of Dynasties late 4, 5, and 6, which in view of the short length of time involved suggests that these three dynasties bore a close relationship to each other, and to the beginning of the Middle Kingdom.

The following is, I believe, a reasonable explanation of the time period, bearing the known details in mind.

We start with Menkaure (Greek Mycerinus—Dynasty 4) who is said by Egyptian priest Manetho to have reigned a total of 63 years. The Turin Canon only gives us $x+8$ years for his reign. Here Courville (1971) has suggested that a figure of 29 years in the Sothis list is explainable on the usurpation of the kingdom, while Menkaure was still ruling, by his second cousin Userkaf (Dynasty 5), followed by Sahure, then Kakai (Neferirkare), but outliving these three by eight to nine years followed by son Shepseskaf for seven years.

Neferirkare with consort Khenthaus II (mother of two kings), begat Neferefre who then reigned two years. Neferefre begat Djedkare with Khenthaus III (mother of a king), but Neferefre's brother Niuserre took the throne reigning in parallel first from the minority of his nephew Djedkare, who then outlasted Niuserre for about a decade.

However, the evidence available suggests that Teti of Dynasty 6 began his reign in Memphis most likely on the death of Niuserre, followed by his son Pepi I before the arrival of the Middle Kingdom under Mentuhotep II. This is correlated by the service of an official called Nikau-isesi who served during the reign of both Djedkare and Unis but died in eleventh year of Teti (the latter measured against a yearly cattle count) (Kanawati 2001), and apparently Nikau-isesi only lived to about 50 years.

This gives us a timeline from the reign of Menkaure through Shepseskaf and the residual

reign of Niuserre, then Teti and Pepi I, all of whose names are found at Byblos related reasonably to the K IV period. This allows a far better alignment with the biblical details (fig. 2).

Pepi I is given a reign by Manetho of 53 years, and Turin gives 20 years, but the archaeological details allow a minimum of 37 years on the known basis of cattle counts—18 by year 30, and 25 known, which if yearly at this stage would give us a reign of 37 years. If that is close to the true figure, then we would be able contract the beginning of Dynasty 6 by close to another 16 years.

Now a parallelism is suggested by the rise of the Eleventh Dynasty of Mentuhotep II, who by his thirty-ninth year had taken control of administrations at Elephantine, Asyat/Thinis, Heracleopolis, and Memphis/Heliopolis. Evidence suggests that he had even made an incursion into southern Palestine. But as Simpson (1963, 56–57) has suggested, he had taken control of “an already prosperous northern kingdom,” not the picture suggested by the assumed First Intermediate Period. In fact, there is reason, then, to suggest that Mentuhotep II took control of areas still under the control of other dynasties, and in Memphis of an already established Dynasty 6.

It is here that the arrangement by Courville (1971) is worth further consideration, for he suggested that Mycerinus/Menkaure was still reigning when his second cousin (or nephew) Userkaf took control in Mycerinus’ twenty-ninth year. And then further family took control of the kingdom, so Userkaf+Sahure+Neferirkare all died before Mycerinus, who then reigned another eight to nine years and was recorded as Menkauhor, and possibly Thampthis (in Manetho), with some association with Heliopolis. He was also listed as Menkauhor in the Fifth Dynasty (Abydos and Sakkara King lists, and eight years in the Turin Canon), and as Mencheres (nine years in Manetho), but Menkaure in the Fourth Dynasty (Abydos and Sakkara King lists, and Turin Canon—18 years), and Mencheres 63 years in Manetho.

The question could be asked is whether the claimed $x+8$ years in the Turin Canon, and the other

figures with eight and nine years associated with the Fifth Dynasty listing, as well as the Fourth Dynasty’s Thampthis, do not all refer to the same historical period, as suggested above. The Turin Canon has been recently reread as giving the reign of Menkaure as “ $x+8$ years” and may thus confirm the above suggestion of usurpation of the Fifth Dynasty and Menkaure outliving the first three pharaohs of the Fifth Dynasty.

The Africanus version (of Manetho) of the Fourth Dynasty records Mencheres then Ratoises, Bicheris, Sebercheres, then Thampthis. This has meant little to scholars, but perhaps here we have a garbled account of this usurpation with Ratoises representing Userkaf, and Bicheris being Sahure under a somewhat distorted Hellenised Golden Horus name “Bik nub netjerwy.” Sebercheres almost certainly was Shepseskaf, but possibly at a time of coregency with Menkaure. However, he was also contemporary with Neferirkare and so the nine years of “Thampthis,” representing the last few years of Menkaure.

On the death of Mycerinus, then that of Shepseskaf, Teti of the Sixth Dynasty then began his reign in Memphis (most likely on the death of Niuserre). His early Dynasty was soon to be overshadowed by the early Middle Kingdom, but left in place to administer the region, and thus a semi-autonomy.

Moreover, other evidence ties Phiops I (Sixth Dynasty) also to a close relationship in time, perhaps not necessarily contemporaneity to Amenemhet I (Twelfth Dynasty), for Reisner, as quoted by Sir Alan Gardiner (1966, 136), found a fort-like building, apparently built by Amenemhet I. However, that building also contained artefacts naming Phiops I (Gardiner 1966, 136). The reason for the presence of the artefacts is uncertain, but close, and not necessarily exact, contemporaneity has to be one possibility.

Likewise, Henry Fischer (1968, 39) excavating at Kerma found a wall with artefacts described as “numerous fragments of jars” of “Pepy I, Merenre, Pepy II, Amenemhet I and Sesostris I.” The reason for this association was not ultimately

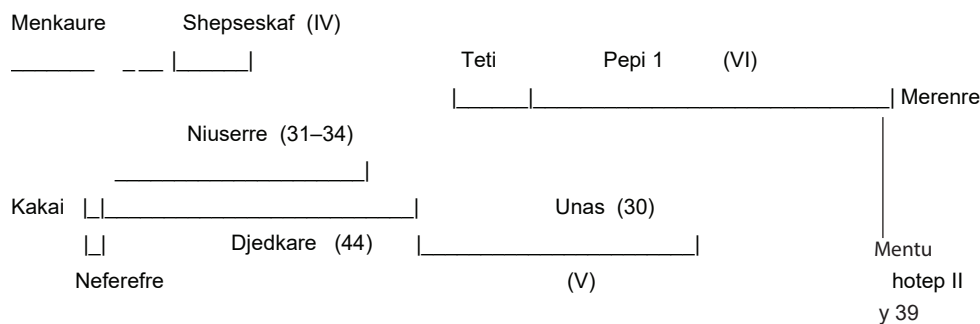


Fig. 2. Proposed arrangement of late Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Dynasties.

determined, but some degree of contemporaneity surely must be considered. Let us remember that in the conventional chronology the Sixth and Twelfth Dynasties are separated by close to 200 years. We should also bear in mind that Amenemhet I was earlier a vizier under the Eleventh Dynasty.

Edwards (1961, 220) points out the great similarity of the Fifth, Sixth, and Twelfth Dynasty pyramids, yet in the conventional chronology they are separated by nearly 200 years and between them is Mentuhotep II (Dynasty 11) with a very different funerary structure. He states:

The greater part of the original plan of Sesostris I's complex has been established, and the extent to which its Mortuary Temple was copied from the Mortuary Temples of the VIth Dynasty, as illustrated by that of Pepi II, is clearly evident.

Contemporaneity would suggest the possibility that Sesostris I's and Pepi II's pyramids may well have been built close to the same time, and even the possibility of the same "architect" and overseer. Is it possible that Joseph could feature here? While many would see these as coincidental, the many associations of the Sixth Dynasty with the early Twelfth Dynasty demands reassessment. That also includes the fact that the cult of Heqaib (Sixth Dynasty) saw its main observance in the Twelfth Dynasty.

Thus far, we can see that the early period of the Sixth Dynasty then preceded, to some extent, the Middle Kingdom (for the reigns of Teti and Pepi I), which then began to overlap its early years. But the length of the Sixth Dynasty is estimated to be in excess of 160 years, 181 in the Turin Canon, and 203 by Manetho. When addition is made and the concurrent 12 years of Nitocris are excluded, as well as the excess years created by the non-accession system of reigns, the addition still seems to be a few years in excess of 180 years as suggested by the Turin Canon. It then is inconceivable to believe that the long reign of Phiops II (Pepi II) did not overlap a considerable portion of the first part of Dynasty 12.

Conclusion

My conclusion is that Dynasty 6 began before the Middle Kingdom and was then under the hegemony of the Middle Kingdom, perhaps until somewhat before the reign of Sesostris III. It is therefore reasonable to believe that the Sixth Dynasty was past history by the time of the Exodus.

When did the Middle Kingdom begin to overlap the Sixth Dynasty? It was most likely around the time of Merenre I (and latest years of Pepi I), as well as the early years of Pepi II. Pepi II's name has been found in period KIV at Byblos, but it is highly likely that the largest portion of Pepi II's reign was during the early years of Dynasty 12, and overlapped the

reigns of Amenemhet I, Sesostris I, and a portion of the early years of Amenemhet II.

Appendix A—Queen "Nitocris"

Scepticism has surrounded the existence of this queen, but there is some evidence of her existence, although some doubt must be placed on much of the legendary details. On the other hand, she has also been claimed to be the last ruler of Dynasty 6.

Newberry (1943, 51–54) has, I believe, given a solid argument that this queen is the hereditary princess Neith, daughter of Pepi I and Ankhesenpepi I:

Eldest King's Daughter of Meryre of the Mennefer pyramid" (that is, Pepi I).

Hereditary Princess....of Merenre of the Kha'nefer pyramid" (Merenre).

Hereditary Princess, King's wife of Neferkare of the Men'ankh pyramid" (that is, Pepi II).

So, she was the daughter of Pepi I, sister and wife of Merenre I, and then also sister (? , more likely the aunt) and wife of Pepi II. She ruled for 12 years after Merenre's death, during the minority of Pepi II. She may also have been the mother of Merenre (Nemymsaef II), who ruled only one year after Pepi II, most likely because he was already aged after the long reign of his father Pepi II.

T 4:7 Nitokerty of the Turin Canon, Netjerkare of Abydos, and called Nitocris by Manetho, has been recently identified as a king called Netjerkare Siptah, and may be another son of Pepy II and Neith. Newberry (1943) has alternately claimed that the space for the one called in legend "Nitocris" (Neith) is mentioned only in the Abydos list as Menkare (no. 41). However, she should not be confused with Ankhesenpepi II, the wife of Pepi I who is:

King's wife of pyramid of Pepi I.

King's wife of pyramid of Merenre.

King's mother of pyramid of Pepi II.

This would suggest that the following kings with ephemeral reigns were probably sons of sons of other queens of Pepi II, of which there were six, for we know that Kakare Ibi was buried in a separate pyramid in the complex of Pepi II.

Menkare is no. 41 in Abydos, but in no other lists (Newberry 1943, 54), but implied by the missing name in Turin 4:8.

The question may be asked, why is she listed late in the list (table 1)? Possibly because as wife of Pepi II during his minority, and possibly mother of Merenre (Antyemsaf II), she is placed after the related male heirs, but her reign was well before the end of Pepi II's reign.

Appendix B—The Kings of the 6th Dynasty

The following additional kings of 6th Dynasty can now be suggested (see table 1):

Table 1. List of the Kings of the Sixth Dynasty.

| Manetho | Turin | Abydos | Sakkara |
|-------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Othoes | Teti | 34 Teti | Teti |
| | Userkare | 35 Userkare | — |
| Phios | Piopi Meryre | 36 Meryre | Piopi (1) |
| Methasuphis | Merenre | 37 Merenre | Merenre |
| Phiops | Neferkare | 38 Neferkare | Neferkare = Pepi II |
| Methasuphis | Merenre Antyemsaf | 39 Merenre Antyemzaef | |
| Nitocris | T 4:7 Nitokerty | 40 Netjerkare (Netjerkare Siptah) | |
| | T 4:8 — | 41 Menkare *** | |
| | T 4:9 Neferka (child) | 42 Neferkare | |
| | T 4:10 Nufe (? Nefersahor) | 43 Neferkare neby | |
| | T 4:11 Kakare Ibi | | |
| | T 4:12 — | | |
| | T 4:13 — | | |
| Totals | | | |
| 6 | 13 | 10 | 5 |

- Turin 4:9 Neferka the child, Abydos no.42 Neferkare, also known as Ankh Djed Neferkare, son of Pepy II and Ankhesenpepi IV, and the same as Abydos no.51 Neferkare pepysonb (Seneferre Ankh Pepi), and Neferkare Khered Seneb (=Neferkare child healthy), reigning one year (Baker 2008; von Becherath 1999; Ryholt 2000).
- Turin 4:10 Nufe, same as Abydos no. 43 Neferkare Neby, is also Djed Ankh Neferkare, son of Merenre I and Ankhesenpepi II, so the brother (? younger) of Pepy II and equated with Neferkamin anu (Seneferka anu) no. 52 Abydos, reigning two years, one month, one day (von Becherath 1984, 59, 187; Ryholt 2000,).
- Turin 4:11 Kakare Ibi, same as Abydos 53, Kakaure, pyramid northeast of Shespseskaf, near causeway of pyramid of Pepy II, and similar to pyramids of his queens, reigning four years and two months.
- Turin 4:12 and Turin 4:13 unknown, but a case may be made, following the above orders, that these may be Abydos Neferkaure and Neferkauhor respectably, and all of these sons of Pepy II (except for Turin 4:10).
- Dynasty 8, listed in the Abydos King list, then logically covers a number of kings associated with and related to Pepi II, forming sub-administrations during and after his reign.

Table 1 provides a full list of the kings of the Sixth Dynasty from the various available sources. Their total reigns given in Turin Canon is 181 years, and by Manetho is 203 years.

Appendix C—Other Possible Conclusions

These discussions demand extra conclusions:

- (1) Four hundred and thirty years for Israel in Egypt is inconsistent with a straight reading of the original scriptural documents and should be rejected from the correlation.
- (2) The First Intermediate Period is a myth, created by the modern sequential interpretation of the king lists, mainly by the absence of evidence.
- (3) Parallelisms were a regular feature of Egyptian history and were so from the very start of their history.
- (4) Dynasty 6 overlapped the last years of Djedkare isesi, and Unas of the Fifth Dynasty.
- (5) The Fourth Dynasty came to power in Memphis as the dominant administration, while the Fifth Dynasty arose during the later years of Mycerinus, and in Memphis giving way to the Sixth Dynasty after the death of Mycerinus, then son Shespseskaf.
- (6) The Second (following the First at Thinis) and Ninth–Tenth Dynasties (Heracleopolis) should then be seen as parallel in different centres in Egypt, and with few exceptions subservient to this period, thus being less consequential to the historian.

Caveat—An additional 30+ years may well be needed as suggested by the mentioned uncertainty of the reign of Assyrian Ilu-shuma, and the details surrounding him. My recent study of the contemporary Isin-Larsa period would suggest such. But the basic claims would remain; namely, that there was NO First Intermediate Period, and there was a small overlap of the end of Dynasty 6 with the Middle Kingdom, though the overlap would be less.

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