

Chapter 19

Reconstructing the Royal Annals - Menes to Neferkare

All that exists of the Royal Annals are seven fragments from a large stone slab, which originally had a complete chronology of the early kings incised on the recto and verso. Because of the smaller size and much greater number of annual compartments on the recto side, this discussion is divided into chapters 19 and 20 for the recto, and chapter 21 for the verso.

Chapter 19: Menes to Neferkare

Chapter 20: Neferkasokar to Menkaure

Chapter 21: Menkaure to Shepseskare

Chapters 19 and 20 derive from the Royal Annals and the Turin Canon—the latter from Menes (Turin Canon section 3:11) to Menkaure (section 4.15)—and correspond to the 1st–4th Dynasties. Similarly, chapter 21, after completing the reign of Menkaure on the verso, deals with the first four kings of the early period of the 5th Dynasty (Userkaf, Sahure, Neferirkare Kakai, and Shepseskare Isesi). The latter period of the 5th Dynasty (from Neferefre to Unas) was reconstructed in chapter 16.

Pre-Menes

The surviving portion of register one on the Palermo Stone contains “the names and determinatives of predynastic kings” wearing the red crown of Lower Egypt (Figure 19.1, right).¹ The Cairo 1 fragment shows only the determinatives, the names above them having been lost (Figure 19.1, left).

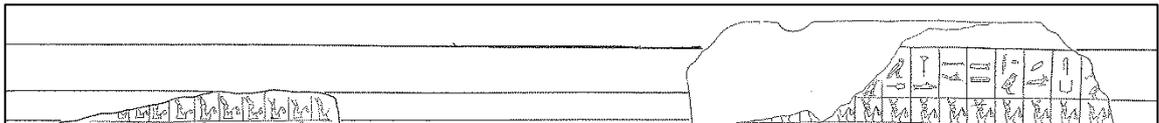


Figure 19.1: The Cairo 1 fragment (left) and register one of the Palermo Stone (right).

Register one has no chronological value in determining the years of the kings.

Menes

Menes is listed as the first king in the Turin Canon (section 3.11) but his regnal years are lost. He is called Meni in the Abydos King-list (AbKL; cartouche no. 1). His name and reign are not on the existing annals. As seen in the reconstruction in Figure 18.3 (page 260) register two of the annals begins at the right-hand edge with the reign of

¹ T.A.H. Wilkinson, *Royal Annals of Ancient Egypt: The Palermo Stone and its Associated Fragments* (London and New York: Kegan Paul, 2000) 85.

Aha. The end of Aha's reign appears in the Palermo Stone in the second compartment followed by the next king, Djer, whose titulary is given in Cairo 1 (Figure 19.2).²

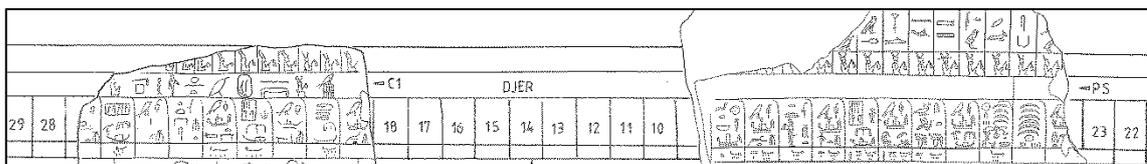


Figure 19.2: Note the Djer titulary on Cairo 1 (C1) and the line marking the end of Aha's reign (and commencing Djer's) on the Palermo Stone (PS).

The sequence of succession has been attested as Narmer, Aha, Djer, Djeter (known as "Serpent"), Den, Adjib, Semerkhet, and Qa'a.³

The absence of Menes' name at archeological sites combined with the attestation of Narmer's name in association with the unification of Upper and Lower Egypt has caused most scholars to identify Menes with Narmer.⁴ Seidlmayer has opted for Aha on the basis of "an ivory label from Naqada which shows the royal Horus-name Aha (the pharaoh Hor-Aha) next to a building within which is the royal *nebty*-name *mn*, generally taken to be Menes."⁵

Aha precedes Djer at the beginning of register two of the annals. If Menes (being different from Aha), was recorded in the annals, it most probably was in register one in a piece that is now missing. The discovery of a label at Umm el-Qa'ab, citing one of Narmer's years, makes his inclusion in the annals a possibility.⁶ Narmer may be Menes' Horus name, Menes being his *nebty* name.⁷ There are no contemporary records of the length of Menes' reign. Manetho's copyists report Menes as the first king of the 1st Dynasty but with differing regnal years; Africanus has 62 years, Eusebius has 60 years, and the Armenian has 30 years.⁸ These display obvious corruption. Whether any of these years can be considered to belong to Menes of the Turin Canon must await further clarification. I have discussed Manetho's records earlier in Summary 3 of chapter 16 (pages 244-245) and will comment further at the end of chapter 21 (pages 324-325).

Aha and Djer

Aha is the second king in the Turin Canon (3.12) where only the letters It[...] of his *nebty* name remain.⁹ He is referred to as Teti in the AbKL (no. 2), but he is known by his Horus name Hor-Aha in contemporary documents.

The first two compartments on the right edge of Palermo Stone in register two are understood by scholars to be the last two compartments of Aha's reign because the next compartment belongs to his successor, Djer, who has his titulary on Cairo 1. The

² In the Turin Canon Iti (Djer) has been given two lines (3.13 and 3.14) instead of the one line given to other kings. We will use this numbering format throughout this chapter. The next chapter begins with column four of the Turin Canon.

³ K. Kahl, "Dynasties 0-2," *AEC* (2006) 96-97.

⁴ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, 72, 187.

⁵ S. Seidlmayer, *The Rise of the State to the Second Dynasty*, quoted in *Egypt: The World of the Pharaohs*, 2004 (translated from German, 2010), cited at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Menes>. Wikipedia frequently supplies general information with references and extensive bibliographies for the Egyptian kings of the dynasties covered in this book. Generally, the uncertainties of identity, regnal dates, and lengths of reign, which this book aims to examine and reconstruct, are acknowledged.

⁶ Kahl, "Dynasties 0-2," 101.

⁷ "Hor-Aha," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hor-Aha>

⁸ *Manetho*, 26-33.

⁹ "Hor-Aha."

preceding two compartments must belong to Aha's reign.¹⁰ The first of the two compartments is damaged on the right side but shows part of the signs for the "following of Horus" (*šms-Hr*). See Figure 19.3.

According to Wilkinson, "The 'following of Horus' is most likely to have been a journey undertaken by the king or his officials at regular intervals for the purpose of tax collection."¹¹ In the examples that survive in the Royal Annals, this "following of Horus" took place every second year, but it is not present for the reigns of all of the kings. Horus is signified by a falcon.



Figure 19.3: The repeated Horus sign shown on alternate years.

The "following of Horus" is significant in Djer's reign because there are *two* compartments before the next "following of Horus" in the reign of Djer. The first compartment records the number of six months and seven days, which presumably is the length of Aha's final year before he died,¹² and the second compartment gives 4 months and 13 days, which is presumably the length of Djer's accession year. The two numbers only add up to 10 months and 20 days being 1 month and 10 days short of a year. The two compartments are separated by a change-of-reign sign (a vertical marker going up to the previous register; see Figure 19.3). One early commentator, Gustave Jéquier, suggested that the compartments were firstly engraved with the *rnpt* markers for each year and then incised with text. There was not sufficient space to record the material for one year in a single compartment, so two were used. A vertical line was added to show a change of reign, but the curve of the *rnpt* marker was unable to be erased.¹³

The conundrum of whether one or two years was intended by the two compartments appears to be resolved by the "following of Horus" sign, which falls every *second* year. Since neither compartment on either side of the change of reign marker has a "following of Horus" sign, the two compartments must represent one year. The two "length of days" compartments on either side of the change-of-reign marker represents one year. This is the conclusion reached by most scholars,¹⁴ and is the view taken here.

It is not clear why the two numbers do not add up to one year as expected. It could be a scribal mistake for an original 5 months and 23 days, or the numbers were not completed due to lack of space, or perhaps there was a short period between the death of Aha before Djer came to the throne, which was not reckoned to either king's reign.¹⁵

Placement of the Palermo Stone in the Royal Annals

The question now is how many compartments originally existed in the gap between the right edge of the annals and the right edge of Palermo Stone in register two? The answer would provide the number of Aha's missing years. To find the number of

¹⁰ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, 90.

¹¹ Ibid., 90-91 citing, idem, *Early Dynastic Egypt* (Routledge: London and New York, 1999) 220-21; see also 67.

¹² Ibid., 89-90.

¹³ G. Jéquier, "De l'intervalle entre deux règnes sous l'ancien empire," *BIFAO* 5 (1906) 59.

¹⁴ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, 94.

¹⁵ Ibid., 92-93.

years, it was first necessary to reconstruct the years of the kings in registers three, four, five, and six. Then positioning the number of years in the registers on the verso, attempting to make the absent parts of uniform size with the existing parts, and allocating them proportionally to the right and left sides of Cairo 1 and the Palermo Stone. After trialing various numbers of compartments on the recto and verso (and keeping the edges even), and taking into account the suggested 639 years the Turin Canon allocates from Menes to the end of Shepseskare's reign (before Neferefre), it appeared the space from the right edge of the annals to the right edge of the Palermo Stone spanned 23 years/compartments in register two. These 23 years/compartments added to the one year, six months, and seven days for Aha on the Palermo Stone indicate a reign of 24½ years. Working backward from the 24th compartment with the "following of Horus" sign, the second compartment would also have the sign, which is what would be expected, as it would fall in Aha's second year.

Cairo 5 Fragment (No. 18220)

Another of the annals' fragments is relevant to Aha's reign. The small Cairo 5 fragment is roughly square in shape measuring 9 cm by 9 cm¹⁶ reconstructed by de Cenival, and shown in Claggett Vol. I, fig. I. 40 (renumbered here as Figure 19.4).

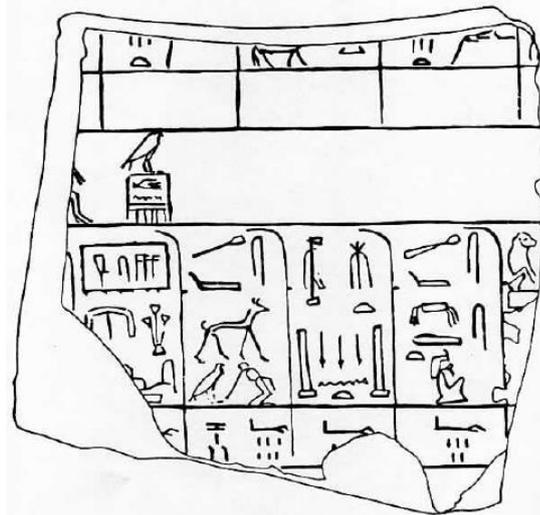


Figure 19.4: The Cairo 5 fragment.

Parts of two registers remain with the upper showing just the lowest parts of three compartments and a vestige of a compartment on either side. The Nile height band takes up most of what remains of the upper register but there are no measurements engraved, which suggests that they did not begin until the reign of Djer, Aha's successor. These compartments can be attributed to Aha's reign because beneath them on the left side of Cairo 5 in the titulary band of register three the Horus name of Den appears in a *serekh*.¹⁷ This is the beginning of his titulary. Further to the left, after the gap between Cairo 5 and the Palermo Stone, the last signs of his titulary appear on the Palermo Stone: those of his mother Merit-neith.¹⁸ See Figure 19.5. Her name confirms that Cairo 5 and the Palermo Stone are from the same part of the annals. Since we can position Cairo 5 to

¹⁶ Ibid., 18.

¹⁷ A *serekh* is a rectangular enclosure representing the niched or gated façade of a palace surmounted by (usually) the Horus falcon, indicating that the text enclosed is a royal name. The *serekh* was the earliest convention used to set apart the royal name in ancient Egyptian iconography, predating the later and better-known cartouche by four dynasties and 500–700 years (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serekh>).

¹⁸ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, 103-05; Kahl, *Inscriptional Evidence*, 97.

the right of Palermo Stone in register three because of Den's titulary, the register above must refer to Aha's reign, also to the right of the Palermo Stone.

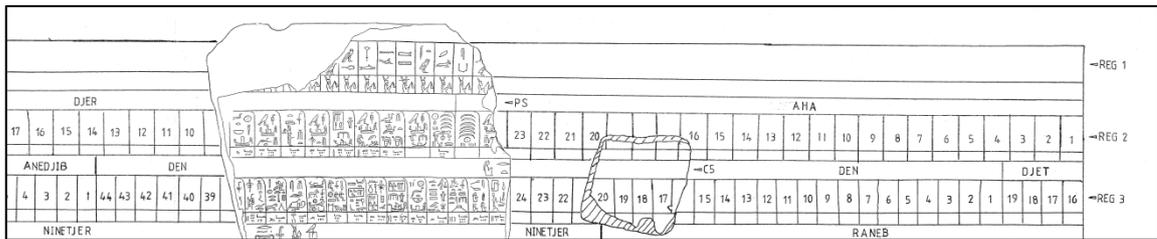


Figure 19.5: Placement of Cairo 5 in relation to the Palermo Stone. C5 = Cairo 5; PS = Palermo Stone; REG = register.

Den's titulary is helpful in positioning his years since titularies are presumed to be incised *above the middle compartments of each king's reign*. When Den's regnal years have been ascertained and positioned, the upper register of Cairo 5 showing the damaged compartments of Aha's reign can be assigned regnal years.

Den's last compartment on Cairo 5 has the sign of a *Sed*-festival (see Figure 19.6) and 10 compartments further on in the Palermo Stone there is another sign of a *Sed*-festival.¹⁹ It is well known that in the New Kingdom a first *Sed*-festival was held in a king's 30th year, whereas here it appears to have been held in Den's 20th year—assuming there was none earlier than this.



Figure 19.6: Sign for a *Sed* festival, which partly remains on Cairo 5, and also on the Palermo Stone (shown above).

Reckoning on a 30-year *Sed*-festival in the sixth compartment on the Palermo Stone in Den's reign (see Figure 19.7), and working backward, Cairo 5 comprises (for its four main surviving compartments) Den's 17th to 20th years. This is consistent with his titulary spanning approximately six compartments, his 20th to 25th years. His middle compartment is his 22nd year, which, if coming in the middle of his reign, gives Den a reign of about 44 years (Figure 19.7).

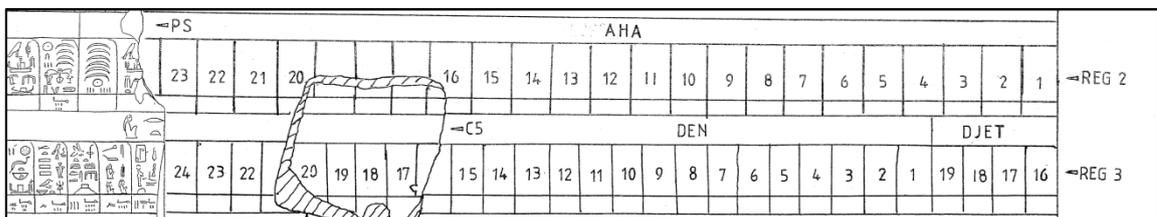


Figure 19.7: The first part of Den's reign. C5 = Cairo 5; PS = Palermo Stone; REG = register.

The 17th to 20th years of Den's reign shown on Cairo 5 in register three correspond to Aha's 17th to 19th years in register two as shown in Figure 19.7. Since Aha's partial 24th year falls on the right edge of the Palermo Stone in register two, there are four and a half years in the gap between Cairo 5 and the Palermo Stone. In register three, in Den's reign with its slightly narrower compartments and with Cairo 5 projecting further to the left and the Palermo Stone further to the right, there are also four years

¹⁹ The 20th year compartment on Cairo 5 and in year 30 of the Palermo Stone appear the same.

However, the number of years is estimated by the compartments between Djer's 46th and last year in register two, and the first year of Den, Djet's successor in register three.

This brings into question the number of compartments between Cairo 1 and the left edge of the annals. In my reconstruction (Figure 18.3 on pages 258-259) this needs to be established in conjunction with Sneferu's compartments in registers five, six, and seven, detailed in chapter 20; a significant interlock in reconstructing the annals. And, without prejudging its reliability, the Turin Canon's overall allocation of 639 years to the entire period covered by the Annals, both recto and verso, presents a tentative hypothesis that should be tested by the evidence for individual reigns as far as they may be known, and by the inscriptional evidence engraved in the stone of the annals still extant for examination.

Once the compartments for Sneferu's reign had been determined, it was then a matter of aligning the left edge of the annals based on the width of the individual compartments in each register. The resulting allocation is somewhat confirmatory because the compartments in each register are of different sizes, yet the final compartments all align with each other at the left edge as though that was their original position. A different allocation would not have had this result.

As noted above, in register three, the sixth compartment of the Palermo Stone records a *Sed*-festival. This was attributed to the 30th year of Den's reign. Working backward 30 years brings us to the first year of his reign, which is located in the fifth compartment from the right edge of the Annals. It is preceded by the last year of Djet's reign, which begins in register two after the 46th year of Djer. Djet's reign occupies 15 compartments in register two on the left edge of the annals and four on the right edge in register three before Den's reign begins. This allocates 19 years to Djet's reign.

Den

Djet's successor, Den, is referred to as Semti in the Turin Canon (section 3.16) and as Septi in the AbKL (no. 5).

As noted above, Den has a *Sed*-festival recorded for his 20th year in Cairo 5,²² and for his 30th year in the Palermo Stone. Confirmation of Den celebrating at least one *Sed*-festival is found on a label from Tomb T at Umm el-Qaab. A second occasion of a *Sed*-festival has also been found in Tomb T on a limestone vessel fragment in the southwest annex to Den's tomb, which may belong to Den, though this is not confirmed.²³ The years that these *Sed*-festivals refer to is not stated. They may refer to his 20th and 30th years. We know from Den's compartments in the Palermo Stone that he reigned at least 38 years—his 38th year being the last partial compartment on the left edge. This number of years can be extended to 44 (finishing in the gap between the Palermo Stone and Cairo 1) because the middle of his titulary falls above his 22nd year (in the gap to the left of Cairo 5, though it begins at the left edge of Cairo 5 as shown in Figure 19.4), thought to be positioned in the middle years of his reign.

Anedjib

The sixth king in the Turin Canon is called Merbiapen (section 3.17). The Turin Canon gives his lifespan as 74 years. He is called Meribap in the AbKL (no. 6) and he is the first king on the Saqqara Tablet where he is named Merbapen (no. 1). He is

²² Wilkinson attributes this compartment to Den's 22nd year, which would make the titulary span only four compartments, which is clearly too short, although elsewhere he reckons on about seven compartments for a titulary's length (*Royal Annals*, 78, 202-3). This mistake is copied in "Den (pharaoh)," [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Den_\(pharaoh\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Den_(pharaoh))

²³ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, 107-8; Kahl, "Dynasties 0-2," 100 and n. 52.

otherwise known as Anedjib or Andjib.²⁴ After the 44th year of Den, six more compartments remain in the gap between the Palermo Stone and Cairo 1, with the bottom left half of the sixth compartment surviving on the right edge of Cairo 1 (see Figure 19.9).

ANEDJIB						DEN					
6	5	4	3	2	1	44	43	42	41	40	39

Figure 19.9: Anedjib's reign between Palermo Stone (right) and Cairo 1 (left).

Then Cairo 1 has a further compartment divided by a change-of-reign vertical line, indicating that half a year should be attributed to Anedjib and half a year to Anedjib's successor, Semerkhet. The latter's titulary occupies the space of about seven compartments above the register in Cairo 1.

A *Sed*-festival is attributed to Anedjib on inscriptions on stone vessels from Gallery H of the Step Pyramid at Saqqara; Tombs X, Q, and U at Umm el-Qaab; and Tomb S 2446 at Saqqara.²⁵ However, it is not possible that 20 or 30 years can come between the reigns of Den and Semerkhet. There is no change-of-reign in the compartments for Den's reign on Palermo Stone that might have indicated another ruler had succeeded him.

The first compartment to which Anedjib might be attributed is the one to the left of the damaged edge of the Palermo Stone, giving him—at the most—12½ years before Semerkhet's reign began. But due to the positioning of Den's titulary, this is not convincing. Thus, it seems that Anedjib had a brief reign and did not celebrate his own *Sed*-festival.

A short reign for Anedjib has been explained as follows: "Recent investigations suggest that every object showing the Hebsed and Adjib's name together were removed from king Den's tomb. It would seem that Adjib had simply erased and replaced Den's name with his own."²⁶ Anedjib may have been quite old when he came to the throne because of the long reign of his father, Den, which would have diminished his own reign, and he may have come to a violent end.²⁷ Another source reports that some stone vessels at Abydos show that "an attempt was made to erase Anedjib's name, and in one case replace it with the name of his successor, Semerkhet. Perhaps it suggests a dynastic dispute."²⁸

On the other hand, Anedjib's reign is well-attested²⁹ possibly indicating a long reign. It has been suggested that he may have been co-regent with his father and celebrated a *Sed*-festival soon after Den died.³⁰ This is not implausible. But the fact remains that all that can be attributed to Anedjib from information gleaned from the Annals is six and a half years of sole reign.

²⁴ Kahl, "Dynasties 0-2," 98; "Anedjib," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anedjib>

²⁵ Ibid., 100 n. 53.

²⁶ "Anedjib," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anedjib>

²⁷ Ibid., citing N. Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt* (London and New York: Blackwell, 1994) 53, 54; and W. Helck, *Untersuchungen zur Thinitenzeit* (ÄA 45, 1987) 124, 160-62, 212-14.

²⁸ A. Boddy-Evans, "Anedjib,"

<http://africanhistory.about.com/od/Pharaohs/a/Anedjib-First-Dynasty-Pharaoh.htm>

²⁹ "Anedjib," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anedjib>

³⁰ J. Dunn, "Anedjib, the 5th Ruler of Egypt's 1st Dynasty,"

<http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/anedjib.htm>, citing Grimal, *A History of Ancient Egypt*, 53-54.

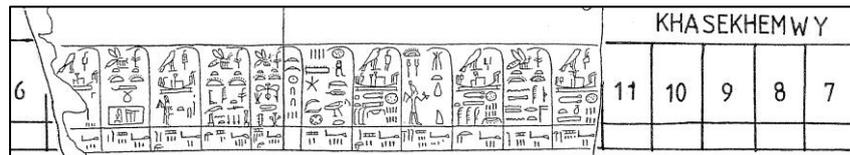


Figure 19.11: The Palermo Stone relating to the reign of Khasekhemwy.

The “following of Horus” are in his 12th, 14th, and 16th years, these being numbered by the mention in them of the sixth, seventh, and eighth census counts. Khasekhemwy’s 18th year comprises only “2 months and 23 days” and is sectioned off from the accession year of Netjerikhet by a change-of-reign divider. This change-of-year compartment does not have a “following of Horus,” though one might be expected. However, that the usual sequence for the “following of Horus” was employed is confirmed in the third compartment of Netjerikhet’s reign where the “following of Horus” appears again and is present also for his fifth year, which equates to the last broken compartment on the left side of the Palermo Stone. Wilkinson thinks that the “following of Horus” was probably not written in the king’s first compartment because the events of his accession and coronation take up the small space provided.³⁵

By analogy, returning to the first year of Qa’a’s reign (see Figure 19.10), it does not need to show a “following of Horus” sign. On this basis, I have attributed a year to both the final year of Semerkhet and the first year Qa’a. Semerkhet can be attributed eight and a half regnal years (the half-year coming from the beginning of his reign in the compartment shared with Anedjib).

A problem in register three in Cairo 1 is that the compartments *in this register* (and not in the previous two registers) are *slightly wider than the compartments in the Palermo Stone for the reign of Den*. Space for 10 compartments *in Cairo 1*, is occupied by about 11 compartments in the Palermo Stone, raising questions whether they derive from the same original. Other extant fragments raised similar thoughts.

To retain the same number of compartments in register three as would be given by the Palermo Stone, an extra compartment must be added to the years before the edge of the annals. The sequence in register four is assured because the “following of Horus” compartments are shown in the Palermo Stone (in the reign of Ninetjer), and by working backward, the right edge should have a “non-following of Horus” compartment. Once the missing compartment/year is inserted in register three, the sequence is retained in having a “following of Horus” in every second year. This alternating sequence is a distinctive feature of both the Palermo Stone and Cairo 1, as we have seen.

In order to introduce this amendment into my annals chart, I have elected to divide the second year of Qa’a, the first compartment off the left edge of Cairo 1 in register three, into two halves, assigning them a year each; that is, to Qa’a’s second and third years. (This is shown by a dashed line in Figure 19.12).

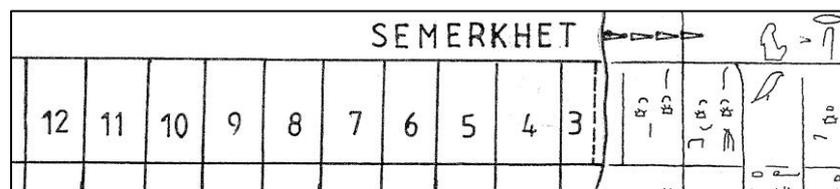


Figure 19.12: Reconstructing Qa’a’s early years on the left edge of Cairo 1.

³⁵ Ibid., 136.

This adjustment will mean that the left edge of the annals for register three will align with the registers above and below it; while still assuming a regular width for all the other compartments across the register.

Qa'a, Hotepsekhemwy, and Raneb

Qa'a is known as [Ke]behu in the Turin Canon and given a lifespan of 63 years (section 3.19). He is called Qebah in the AbKL (no. 8) and Qebahu in the Saqqara Tablet (no. 2). As discussed above, his first year is represented by the last complete compartment on the left edge of Cairo 1 recto in register three (see Figure 19.12). Wilkinson notes that "The events recorded for Qa'a's first year are the usual ceremonies associated with accession and coronation: the 'appearance of the dual king', the ritual 'unification of Upper and Lower Egypt' and 'circumambulating the wall (at Memphis)."³⁶

The *rnpt* sign dividing Qa'a's first and second year can be seen on the extreme left edge of register three in Cairo 1. Nothing further is known of the events of Qa'a's reign from the annals. However, a *Sed*-festival is recorded on two stone vessels from Tomb Q at el-Qaab, another on a stone vessel from the Step Pyramid of Djoser I outside galleries H and B, and on a fourth stone vessel held in a private Swiss collection.

Qa'a's second *Sed*-festival is also attested by markings on stone vessels. One was found on a vessel at the Step Pyramid at Saqqara, outside galleries H and B, and another found likewise at gallery B. A third, also on a stone vessel, is held in a private Swiss collection.³⁷ Assuming that the second *Sed*-festival, if not the first—bearing in mind that Den celebrated a *Sed*-festival in his 20th year—was the occasion of the king's 30th year, Qa'a can be attributed *at least 30 years*. If his first *Sed*-festival was held on his 30th year, then his second may have been three or four years later as was the custom in the New Kingdom.

Qa'a appears to have had a long reign, upwards of 30 years; therefore, I am ascribing to him 36 years, though his actual years are unknown. The regnal years of his two successors, Hotepsekhemwy and Raneb, are not known either, but on the basis of other scholars' reconstruction of the annals they assign to them 39 years,³⁸ whereas I assign to them 37 (see Figure 18.3). The 36 years of Qa'a and the 37 years of the two following reigns amount to 73 years, which is the number of compartments coming before Ninetjer, the next king, whose years *are* known and who can be positioned accurately on the annals.

Qa'a was buried by his successor, Hotepsekhemwy, at Umm el-Qa'ab,³⁹ the necropolis of the early dynastic kings, formerly known as Abydos. Egyptologists close off the 1st Dynasty with the reign of Qa'a because this is where Manetho's eighth king, Bieneches, assumed to be Qa'a, ends the dynasty. But there is no break in the Turin Canon between Qa'a (section 3.19) and Hotepsekhemwy (section 3.20).

Hotepsekhemwy, Raneb, and Ninetjer

Hotepsekhemwy is known as Baw-[netjer] in the Turin Canon with a lifespan of 95 years (section 3.20), Bedjau in the AbKL (no. 9), and Baunetjer in the Saqqara Tablet (no. 3). Kahl notes that the succession of Hotepsekhemwy, Raneb, and Ninetjer is secure—this sequence being seen on the shoulder of a statue of a kneeling man (CG 1;

³⁶ Ibid., 201.

³⁷ Kahl, "Dynasties 0-2," 99 n. 43, 100 and n. 54.

³⁸ "Hotepsekhemwy," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hotepsekhemwy>; "Raneb," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raneb>

³⁹ Kahl, "Dynasties 0-2," 199, 102.

Doc. 18),⁴⁰ and on a number of stone vessels.⁴¹ However, between Hotepsekhemwy and Ninetjer, the Turin Canon names a king [Ka]ka[w] (section 3.21), listed as Kakau by the AbKL (no. 10) and the Saqqara Tablet (no. 4). Since only one king comes between Hotepsekhemwy and Ninetjer in the respective lists, Kakau and Raneb must be the same person, Raneb being his Horus name, and Kakau, presumably, his *nebtj* name. It is possible that Raneb was also known as Nub-nefer as two inscriptions on stone vessels associate this name with a building that is also associated with Ninetjer's golden Horus name, Ren, as given on the Palermo Stone in register four.⁴² This is consistent with Raneb/Nubnefer being the predecessor of Ninetjer.

On the other hand, Jochem Kahl has proposed that Raneb was the Horus name of another king known as Weneg because he claims that the name Weneg was *written over* by the name of Ninetjer in an inscription from Tomb P at Umm el-Qa'ab in the British Museum Egyptian Archeology (BM EA) collection 35556, thus Ninetjer's predecessor must have been Weneg.⁴³ Weneg is not mentioned in the Turin Canon, but a line for the name of a lost king and his regnal years with only "54" preserved being his lifespan appears *after* the name of Ninetjer (section 3.22) and into this slot in the AbKL appears the name Wadjnas (no. 12) whose Horus name was presumably Weneg. He is called Wadjilas in the Saqqara Tablet (no. 6). It appears that Weneg/Wadjnas came *after* Ninetjer not before. Kahl's theory is still undergoing debate because the inscription on the vessel is badly damaged.⁴⁴

The regnal years of Hotepsekhemwy and Raneb are not known, but because Raneb has fewer records than Hotepsekhemwy it is surmised that he had a shorter reign.⁴⁵ The Egyptologist Nabil Swelim points out that there is no record of Hotepsekhemwy having celebrated a *Sed*-festival,⁴⁶ but the absence of evidence does not mean it did not happen. We are unable to define the regnal years of Hotepsekhemwy and Raneb. Therefore, I attribute to Qa'a 36 years, and the remaining years to be distributed to Hotepsekhemwy and Raneb before the reign of Ninetjer begins. Hotepsekhemwy's reign begins nine compartments from the left edge of register three of the annals, and continues with his and Raneb's from the right edge of register four for a total of 37 compartments between them; without—in the absence of evidence—suggesting how the 37 years were divided between them.

Ninetjer

Ninetjer is known as Banetjer and given a lifespan of 95 years in the Turin Canon (section 3.22). He is known as Banetjer in the AbKL (no. 11) and in the Saqqara Tablet (no. 5). Ninetjer's reign begins five and half compartments to the right of the Palermo Stone in register four. These compartments and the following 14 compartments that survive in the Palermo Stone can be identified with his reign because his titulary begins above the fourth compartment from the *left* edge of the Palermo Stone above his 20th year. See Figure 19.13.

⁴⁰ CG = Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire (Cairo Museum).

⁴¹ Ibid., 102.

⁴² Ibid., 103-4.

⁴³ Ibid., 103 and fig. II. 2.1.

⁴⁴ "Weneg (pharaoh)," [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weneg_\(pharaoh\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weneg_(pharaoh)); "Raneb,"

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raneb>

⁴⁵ "Raneb."

⁴⁶ N.M.A. Swelim, *Some Problems on the History of the Third Dynasty* (Archaeological and Historical Studies 7; Alexandria: Archaeological Society, 1983) 67-77; cited in <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hotepsekhemwy>

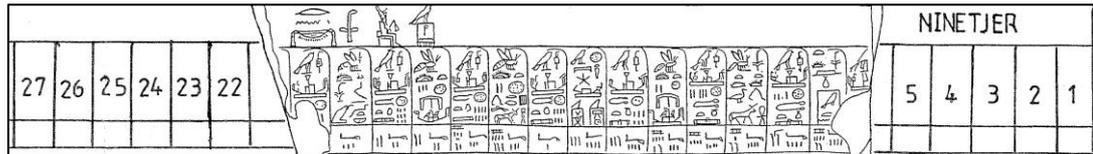


Figure 19.13: Part of Ninetjer's reign and titulary recorded on the Palermo Stone.

Ninetjer is the king's Horus name, written in a *serekh* at the beginning of the titulary. It is followed by a figure of the enthroned king.⁴⁷ The years of Ninetjer's reign on the Palermo Stone can be numbered because the third compartment on the stone refers to "the fourth occasion of the census" indicating his eighth year. A census count is repeated for every second compartment; thus, the last compartment on the left edge, which is now damaged, would have had the "10th occasion of the census" (part of which can still be seen) indicating his 20th regnal year.⁴⁸ The "following of Horus" (*šms-Hr*) also appears in every second compartment, accompanying the census counts in the king's even-numbered years. It is not clear what these census counts refer to, though in register five they refer to "gold and fields."⁴⁹ A *rnpt* sign appears as the last visible stroke at the left edge of the Palermo Stone indicating the beginning of the 21st compartment. Records of a *Sed*-festival are attributed to Ninetjer, and also a 17th census count, the highest known from his reign, which, on biennial reckoning, refers to his 34th year.⁵⁰

Ninetjer's titulary begins above his 17th year, and if covering seven compartments would end in his 23rd year indicating that Ninetjer's middle compartment was his 21st year, it implies a reign of about 42 years. In Figure 19.14, the gap between the Palermo Stone (right) and the right edge of Cairo 1 (left fragment) accounts for 16 compartments (21–36), so Ninetjer's 42nd year falls in the sixth compartment of Cairo 1 where we might expect to see a change-of-reign.

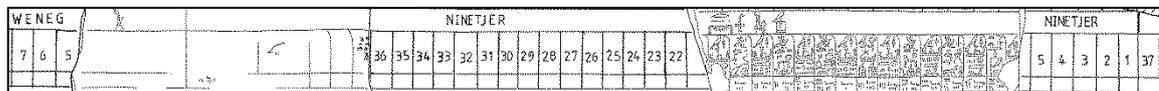


Figure 19.14: Ninetjer's reign, ending on Cairo 1, now obliterated.

But there is no indication that a change-of-reign fell in this year—or one on either side of it.⁵¹ The next change-of-reign falls in the ninth compartment from the right edge (still visible on Cairo 1 despite almost other markings of the original now being illegible or absent), which indicates that Ninetjer reigned about 44½ years—the last compartment being shared with his successor.

Degreef's transcription assigns 3 months and (what appears to be) 11 days to the final part of Ninetjer's reign,⁵² and the same partitioning is shown also in I.E.S. Edwards' transcription (dated to Cairo 1948) also supplied by Wilkinson.⁵³ The length of Ninetjer's reign, if comprising 44½ years, infers that his mid-reign compartment would

⁴⁷ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, 119.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 121. The Wikipedia article illustrating Ninetjer's 15 compartments on Palermo Stone incorrectly assigns Ninetjer's *odd*-numbered years to the census counts and to the "following of Horus," so that it has the fourth count in the ninth year instead of the eighth. As a consequence, it numbers his years 7-21 instead of 6-20. "Ninetjer," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ninetjer>

⁴⁹ Ibid., 120.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 120; Kahl, "Dynasties 0-2," 107 nn. 105, 106, and 107.

⁵¹ Ibid., 203.

⁵² <http://www.catchpenny.org/toth/Palermo/c1rectoc.htm>

⁵³ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, fig. 4.

have been his 22nd year, not his 21st. However, this might be due to the compartments being very narrow, and the titulary may have spanned eight compartments—not seven—which would make his mid-reign compartment his 22nd year, giving Ninetjer a reign of about 44 years.

Wilkinson notes the presence of a Seth animal (a canine-like creature) incised in the second and third compartments of register four on the right edge of Cairo 1.⁵⁴ These are shown in Edwards' transcription supplied by Wilkinson,⁵⁵ but are not seen in Wilkinson's own transcription. In my reconstruction, the two compartments correspond to Ninetjer's 38th and 39th years. Seth is usually associated with a king called Peribsen, believed to have reigned in Upper Egypt when the country divided after the reign of Weneg.⁵⁶ However, Wilkinson says, "There is no reason why royal patronage of the cult of Seth should not have occurred in the latter part of Ninetjer's reign."⁵⁷ He observes that the *serekh* in the titulary of Ninetjer's successor is surmounted by a four-legged animal that has been substituted for the usual Horus falcon. The only king known to have done this was Peribsen.⁵⁸ However, Peribsen is not mentioned in the Turin Canon, AbKL, and the Saqqara Tablet. As discussed above, it seems that Ninetjer's successor was Weneg.

On the other hand, referring to Weneg and Sened, Wilkinson writes: "It is perfectly possible that one or both adopted a Seth name rather than the more usual Horus name."⁵⁹ That being so, it is the beginning of Weneg's titulary that appears after Ninetjer's reign on the left side of register four in Cairo 1.

It seems probable, based on the archeological evidence, that Ninetjer divided Egypt into two states, with Peribsen followed by Sekhemib ruling over Upper Egypt while Weneg and his successors ruled Lower Egypt. The country was again unified under Khasekhemy at the end of the 4th Dynasty.⁶⁰

Wilkinson also observes that Ninetjer's successor had a short reign, and Peribsen would not have had time to construct his tomb and funerary complex at Abydos.⁶¹

Weneg

Weneg's name is lost in the Turin Canon at section 3.23 after the name of Ninetjer (section 3.22) and before the name of Sened (section 3.24), but a Wadjnas, believed to be Weneg, is named in the AbKL (no. 12) and a Wadjilas in the Saqqara Tablet after Ninetjer (Banetjer) (no. 6), coming before Sened/j in both lists. These records indicate that Weneg/Wadjnas succeeded Ninetjer.

A change-of-reign marker falls in what *appears* to be the ninth compartment of Cairo 1 in register four, and indicates the end of Ninetjer's reign. As noted above, I have assigned 44½ years to Ninetjer. The remaining half-year should then be assigned to Weneg's accession year. It is followed by space for about four compartments with the beginning of a fifth on the left edge of Cairo 1. The width is based on compartments two and three of Ninetjer's reign in Cairo 1—the remainder not being legible. However, my reconstruction is based on the space given to the original Palermo Stone compartments that would have been incised for Ninetjer's last years and Weneg's first year, but now

⁵⁴ Ibid., 204.

⁵⁵ Ibid., fig. 4.

⁵⁶ For Peribsen see Kahl, "Dynasties 0-2," 105. For Weneg see "Weneg (pharaoh),"

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weneg_\(pharaoh\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weneg_(pharaoh))

⁵⁷ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, 203.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 74.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 3-5; "Sekhim-Perenmaat," <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sekhemib-Perenmaat>

⁶¹ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, 74.

are only represented in Cairo 1 assumed from a different original. In the original of the Palermo Stone, the space for each compartment would have been slightly narrower. This causes uncertainty as to where the change-of-reign marker fell. Was it further to the left or to the right? Did Ninetjer reign 44 or 45 years, or a fraction thereof?

Wilkinson affords Weneg 12 years on the basis of two years before and two years after the titulary to which he gives the space of eight compartments.⁶² This infers that Weneg's titulary began in the *third* compartment from the change-of-reign marker. But since I have attributed to Ninetjer a reign ending with six months, Weneg has six months before his first full year. This gives him two and a half years before his titulary began. If the titulary occupied eight compartments, this scenario gives 12½ years to Weneg.

In I.E.S. Edwards' transcription, he places the *serekh* of the four-legged Seth animal in the *second full* compartment (not third), coming one and a half compartments after the change-of-reign marker.⁶³ Since the existing titularies begin with a *serekh*, it is analogous to insert the *serekh* (not shown in Wilkinson's transcription), into the second full compartment. The effect is that it shortens Weneg's reign by one or two years since there are now only one and a half compartments before the titulary, and one or two after it. However, Edwards has assumed the width of the compartments as they fall in Cairo 1, not as they fall in the Palermo Stone. This raises the uncertainty as to whether, in the Palermo Stone, the compartments would have corresponded to the second or third year before the titulary began; that is, whether Ninetjer reigned 44 or 45 years.

Another uncertainty is whether we can confidently define the length of a king's reign merely on the length of his titulary and the number of compartments before or after it. The titulary of Semerkhet—the only titulary to cover an entire reign now extant on the Annals—is *not precisely set* in the middle of his reign, with more space to the left (end of reign) than to the right. Thus the amount of space given before a titulary need not be the same as that after it. But the titulary is often the only means we have of making an approximation of the length of reign, especially when the Turin Canon has lost the regnal years of its kings. With these uncertainties in mind, I have taken the middle ground and attributed 44½ years to Ninetjer, and 12½ years to Weneg.

Sened

Sened is named in the Turin Canon but his regnal years are lost. He lived to the age of 70 (section 3.24). He comes after the “unknown king” identified as Weneg above. In the AbKL, after Weneg is Sendi (no. 13) and in the Saqqara Tablet he is Senedj (no. 7). On the previous scenario, Sened ruled over Lower Egypt while Peribsen was king of Upper Egypt. This may be implicit in an inscription on a false door found on a mastaba tomb belonging to the high priest Shery at Saqqara, giving Shery's title as “overseer of all wab-priests of king Peribsen in the necropolis of king Senedj...”⁶⁴

Sened's length of reign is unknown. But the attestation of his funeral cult surviving into the 4th Dynasty,⁶⁵ and possibly into the 18th Dynasty, suggests he was not an ephemeral ruler. His years and those of his successor, Aaka, whose regnal years are also not known, will be combined to give a total length of their reigns, since the reign of Neferkarsokar, Aaka's successor, can be assigned a definite place in the annals.

⁶² Ibid., 203.

⁶³ Ibid., fig. 4.

⁶⁴ Kahl, “Dynasties 0-2,” 104, and n. 83 citing an inscription from the tomb of Shery, Saqqara B 3; A. Mariette, *Les mastabas de l'ancien empire* (Paris, 1889) 92-93 cited in “Senedj,” <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Senedj>

⁶⁵ Ibid., 104-5; Vendel, “Sened”, at <http://www.nemo.nu/ibisportal/Oegyptintro/2egypt/2main.htm>

Aaka/Neferkar/Neferkare

Aaka succeeded Sened according to the Turin Canon (section 3.25). At this point the AbKL leaves out three kings: Aaka, Neferkasokar, and “Hudjefa.” The latter word refers to a king whose name was lost to the copyist. The Saqqara Tablet follows Senedj with Neferkare (no. 8) and Neferkasokar (no. 9). Kim Ryholt attributes the change of name from Neferkare to Aaka in the Turin Canon to damage, the scribe having omitted the initial part of the cartouche (section 3.25).⁶⁶

It is thought by some scholars that the three names have been omitted from the AbKL because the names of Aaka and Neferkasokar have only been found in the region of Memphis, and other kings were ruling in the south,⁶⁷ possibly including Peribsen.⁶⁸ This does not explain why neither the kings of Upper *nor* Lower Egypt are mentioned in the AbKL between Sened and Khasekhemwy (Djadjay in AbKL).

The number of combined regnal years for Sened and Neferkare/Aaka can be estimated by the number of compartments from the end of Weneg’s reign in register four to the left edge of the annals (42 compartments) and from the beginning of the right edge of the annals in register five before Neferkasokar’s first year (six compartments), totalling 48 years.

Locating Neferkare’s Reign vis-à-vis Neferkasokar

According to the Turin Canon, Neferkasokar reigned eight years and three months (plus days missing) (section 4.1), and his successor, “Hudjefa,” reigned one year, eight months, and four days (section 4.2) before Khasekhemwy began his reign (section 4.3). See Figure 18.3. Khasekhemwy can be positioned on the annals because his 12th year appears on the right edge of the Palermo Stone (see Figure 19.15) where it refers to the “sixth occasion of the census”.⁶⁹

NETJERIKHET (DJOSER I)											KHA SEKHEM WY									
16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	[Hieroglyphs]					11	10	9	8	7

Figure 19.15: Khasekhemwy’s reign.

The combined years to the right of the Palermo Stone for Khasekhemwy, “Hudjefa,” and Neferkasokar amount to 21 years (11 for Khasekhemwy, 1¼ for “Hudjefa,” 8¼ for Neferkasokar). This leaves just 6 years for the final part of Neferkare/Aaka’s’s reign at the right edge of the annals in register five.

In register four, back to the end of Weneg’s reign, there are 42 compartments, which makes 48 in all for the combined reigns of Sened and Neferkare/Aaka. A lengthy reign for Sened might be implied by the evidence that his reign was still being commemorated in the 4th Dynasty (some 150 years later),⁷⁰ and for Neferkare/Aaka who is attested as late as the 6th Dynasty, among other rulers.⁷¹

Aaka’s reign is the last to be noted at the end of column three in the Turin Canon (section 3.25). We proceed with the kings of column four in the next chapter.

⁶⁶ K. Ryholt, “The Turin King-List,” *Ä und L* 14 (2004) 148.

⁶⁷ O. Vendel, “Neferkare,” in *The Early Dynastic period: Dynasties 1-2* at <http://www.nemo.nu/ibisportal/0egyptintro/2egypt/2main.htm>

⁶⁸ Kahl, “Dynasties 0-2,” 105 and n. 87. See also, “Seth-Peribsen,” at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seth-Peribsen>

⁶⁹ Wilkinson, *Royal Annals*, 131.

⁷⁰ Kahl, “Dynasties 0-2,” 104 and n. 83.

⁷¹ Vendel, “Neferkare,” 18.