Chapter 31

Redating the 19th Dynasty

The 18th Dynasty came to an end with Horemheb’s death in his 27th regnal year, which was dated at the end of II prt or after I šmw 9 in 1404 BCE. The kings of the 19th Dynasty with the known lunar or Sothic anchor points are shown in Table 31.1.

Table 31.1: 19th Dynasty kings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ruler</th>
<th>Regnal years*</th>
<th>Dates BCE</th>
<th>Lunar or Sothic anchor points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ramesses I</td>
<td>None known</td>
<td>None known</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seti I</td>
<td>None known</td>
<td>None known</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramesses II</td>
<td>Yr 34 Feast of Ptah full moon on IV šmw 25 in 1356; Yr 41 Heliacal rising of Sothis I 3ḫt 22 in 1349; Yr 52 new moon II prt 27 in ship’s log, 1338</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merenptah</td>
<td>Yr [4] Heliacal rising of Sothis on I 3ḫt 29 at Thebes in 1321 (calendar of Upper Egypt)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenmesses</td>
<td>1314 New Sothic cycle commences at Memphis on I 3ḫt 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seti II</td>
<td>Yr 2 Epiphi feast days on IV šmw 1–2 with new moon on IV šmw 2 in 1311; Yr 6 Beautiful Feast of the Valley, river crossing on II šmw 25 with new moon on II šmw 20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siptah</td>
<td>Yr 6 DB feast, full moon on III šmw 8 in 1299</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twosre</td>
<td>“Yr 7” DB feast, full moon on II šmw 28 in 1298</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = most months approximate; DB = Deir el-Bahari.

Horemheb died childless and appointed Paramesse (or Paramessu) his vizier. He was an aged man of high military standing, who had both a son and a grandson, to succeed him. Paramesse came from the region of Avaris, east of the Nile Delta, the area occupied by the Hyksos before their expulsion by Ahmose at the beginning of the 18th Dynasty. Paramesse is now known as Ramesses I, the grandfather of the famous Ramesses II.\(^1\) While there are no lunar or Sothic dates preserved that allow the specific dating of Ramesses I and his son Seti I, the accession of Ramesses II can be dated by a new moon that was observed on II prt 27 of Ramesses II’s 52nd year.

Time-frame for the Reigns of Ramesses I and Seti I

As noted earlier, and repeated below, Casperson’s tables provide the exact date for the new moon on II prt 27 of Ramesses II’s 52nd year in 1338 equivalent to 17 January, giving an accession in 1390 BCE. Therefore, from the beginning of Ramesses I’s reign in 1404 to the accession of Ramesses II in 1390, there are just 14 years to distribute between Ramesses I and Seti I.

Ramesses I would have become king in 1404 BCE when Horemheb died. Ramesses I’s only certain date is II prt 20 in his second year found on stela Louvre C 57 from Buhen (Wadi Halfa) where he gives orders from Memphis for the provision of

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\(^1\) P. Tyson, “The Mummy who would be King: Who was Rameses I?”
endowments for the temple of Ptah within the fortress at Buhen. On the other hand, Seti I has numerous attestations for years 1–11, with only year 10 unaccounted for, and no year 12. The remaining three years can then be applied to Ramesses I.

**Seti I’s Accession indicates the end of Ramesses I’s Reign**

Of several suggestions for the accession date of Seti I, Wolfgang Helck proposed III šmw 24 based on the date of a water-borne processional festival celebrated by Seti I (from O. Gardiner 11), which appears to refer to activities celebrating the anniversary of an accession. Murnane analyzed palace accounts at Memphis and identified a period of III šmw 18 to IV šmw 17 when the accession might have occurred, favoring the festival date of IV šmw 2. Redford used pRollin 1889 to suggest IV šmw 23 as the accession date or between II šmw 30 and I ḫt 2. Scholars now cite III šmw 24 as the accession date, though this is not certain. This date, or one near it, gains support from the accession date of Ramesses II, which is understood to be III šmw 27 and equates to 28 June in 1390 BCE. If Seti I’s accession date was III šmw 24, and he died on III šmw 26, this would take him two days into his 12th year, and would credit him with a reign of 11 full years. Alternatively, an accession on IV šmw 2 ends his reign just five days before the full 11 years.

The highest attested date for the reign of Seti I is IV šmw 12 or 13 of year 11 found on a fragmentary stela from Gebel Barkal. This date has to precede III šmw 27 when Ramesses II began to reign. Therefore, Seti I’s 11th year started on or before IV šmw 12/13, which gives us another indication of the date for his accession—sometime in III or IV šmw.

On this evidence, Ramesses I had a third and final year of about three months. The situation can be demonstrated by Casperson’s table (Table 31.2).

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10 Hornung, “New Kingdom,” 211.
Table 31.2: Ramesses I’s final year (his third) and Seti I’s accession in −1401 (new moon listing for −1401)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian Yr</th>
<th>Gregorian Mo D</th>
<th>Egyptian Yr Mo D</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>−1401</td>
<td>5 31 −1401</td>
<td>5 18 1380</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12:13</td>
<td>5:22 237 5:21 116 5:21 38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If Ramesses I’s accession took place in II prt or in I šmw of −1403, his third year comprised at least 3–4 months because the accession of Seti I started on or before IV šmw 13, possibly III šmw 24 or IV šmw 2 in −1401

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian Yr</th>
<th>Gregorian Mo D</th>
<th>Egyptian Yr Mo D</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>−1401</td>
<td>6 30 −1401</td>
<td>6 17 1380</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1:15</td>
<td>5:11 180 5:11 90 5:11 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1401</td>
<td>7 29 −1401</td>
<td>7 16 1380</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16:19</td>
<td>5:14 241 5:15 147 5:15 56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week; ToD = time of day.

Therefore, from the death of Horemheb and the accession of Ramesses I in II prt or I šmw of 1404 BCE to Seti I’s accession, I speculate that Ramesses I had a reign of perhaps two years and three months in the period 1404–1401 BCE. The difficulty of dealing with partial years without precise data must be acknowledged.

The mummy of Ramesses I was transported up the Nile to Thebes and was placed in an unfinished coffin in tomb KV 16. When the tomb was discovered in 1817 by Giovanni Belzoni, the mummy was missing. Its whereabouts was unknown until a mummy, on display in Canada in the Niagara Falls Museum from about 1860, was sold to Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1999. Various computed tomography scans and x-rays, and the family resemblance, led to its probable identification as the mummy of Ramesses I. It was returned to the Cairo Museum on 24 October 2003.11

The 11 years that have been attributed to Seti I on the basis of his regnal year attestations, are supported by other evidence from his reign. Ramesses II “was able to complete the two obelisks and four seated colossi from Luxor within the first years of his reign.”12 Then the Aswan quarries were opened in his ninth year, and he ordered the production of many obelisks and colossi. Yet, when he died, most of these were not complete, suggesting that he did not reign long past his 10th year.

The changeover from Seti I’s reign to Ramesses II’s accession in 1390 BCE can be demonstrated from Casperson’s table (Table 31.3) in which III šmw 27 falls 11 days after the new moon on 11 16, thus the accession date equates to 28 June in −1389 (1390 BCE).

Table 31.3: Seti I’s 11th year in −1390 and Ramesses II’s accession −1389 (new moon listing from −1390 to −1389)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian Yr</th>
<th>Gregorian Mo D</th>
<th>Egyptian Yr Mo D</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>−1390</td>
<td>6 28 −1390</td>
<td>6 16 1391</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5:01</td>
<td>5:12 242 5:12 85 5:11 −24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seti I’s 11th year started on or before IV šmw 13, possibly III šmw 24 or IV šmw 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian Yr</th>
<th>Gregorian Mo D</th>
<th>Egyptian Yr Mo D</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>−1390</td>
<td>7 27 −1390</td>
<td>7 15 1391</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14:04</td>
<td>5:14 298 5:14 144 5:14 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1390</td>
<td>8 26 −1390</td>
<td>8 14 1392</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1:58</td>
<td>5:29 200 5:29 88 5:30 −18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1390</td>
<td>9 24 −1390</td>
<td>9 12 1392</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17:11</td>
<td>5:50 252 5:50 148 5:51 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1390</td>
<td>12 23 −1390</td>
<td>12 11 1392</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2:12</td>
<td>6:48 177 6:48 89 6:48 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1389</td>
<td>1 21 −1389</td>
<td>1 9 1392</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19:48</td>
<td>6:46 258 6:46 151 6:46 64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1389</td>
<td>2 20 −1389</td>
<td>2 8 1392</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10:42</td>
<td>6:32 218 6:31 106 6:30 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1389</td>
<td>3 21 −1389</td>
<td>3 9 1392</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>22:33</td>
<td>6:11 355 6:10 149 6:10 46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ramesse II

Seti I was succeeded by his son Ramesses II, a man presumed to be about 25 years old. He was to become the most famous and long-lived pharaoh of all time, known as “Ramesses the Great.” Once enthroned, he transferred his residence from Thebes to the Delta region of Egypt—the home of his grandfather, Ramesses I, where he built the grand city of Pi-Ramesses, now identified by archaeologists as the city of Ramses mentioned in the Bible, built by Israelite slaves (Exod 1:11). Its foundations now lie under several feet of farmland. Ramesses’ building works extended from the Delta in the north to Nubia in the far south on a scale no other king had ever wrought. His monuments, statues, and buildings are found all over Egypt.\(^{13}\)

His favorite queen was Nefertari, and another, Istnofret. He had at least eight wives—his seventh and eighth being Hittite princesses.\(^{14}\) He is thought to have sired over 110 children; 48–55 sons and 40–53 daughters.\(^{15}\) In his 30th year, he celebrated his first sed-festival at Pi-Ramesses, and thereafter every three to four years until his death.\(^{16}\) Finally, he died aged about 90 years old, and was buried in tomb KV7 in the Valley of the Kings.

In the 15th year of Smendes (first king of the 21st Dynasty), Ramesses II’s mummy was moved to the tomb of his father Seti I, according to a docket found on his coffin in 1881 where it had subsequently been deposited in the great cache of royal mummies at Deir el-Bahari. In 1976 his mummy was flown to Paris for a great exhibition and to be treated for deterioration.\(^{17}\) It now resides in Cairo’s Egyptian Museum. A huge complex of over 150 underground corridors and chambers was built in the Valley of the Kings to entomb the mummies of some of Ramesses’ many sons, which was rediscovered in 1988 by Kent Weeks, head of the Theban Mapping Project. It was announced in 1995 and found to be the largest tomb in the Valley.\(^{18}\)

A specific text giving Ramesses II’s date of accession is not known, but the date has been discussed by various scholars and the consensus is that he became king on III šmw 27.\(^{19}\)

There are several dates synchronized to new moons in Ramesses II’s reign. I start with the most famous, which will set the Julian dates for the lesser-known Egyptian lunar dates.


14 Ibid., 148-49.

http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/ramesses2ssons.htm

16 Kitchen, *Pharaoh Triumphant*, 178-82.


New Moon Date in Ramesses II’s 52nd Year

Possibly the most well-known new moon date in Egyptian history is that from the reign of Ramesses II, dated on a ship’s log at Pi-Ramesses occurring on II prt 27 of his 52nd year. Casperson’s article, published in 1988, demonstrated the facts shown in Table 31.4.

Table 31.4: Ramesses II dates tested by Casperson

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accession year (BCE)</th>
<th>His 52nd year</th>
<th>New Moon date on his 52nd year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1304</td>
<td>−1252 (1253 BCE)</td>
<td>II prt 28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1301</td>
<td>−1249 (1250 BCE)</td>
<td>II prt 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1290</td>
<td>−1238 (1239 BCE)</td>
<td>II prt 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1276</td>
<td>−1224 (1225 BCE)</td>
<td>II prt 26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

None of these dates fall on II prt 27. The current consensus (Table 31.5) places Ramesses II’s accession in 1279 based on a date of II prt 28 in −1227 (1228 BCE), but the date of the new moon is incorrect by a day, with a table supplied by Casperson (Table 31.6).

Table 31.5: Ramesses II current consensus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accession year (BCE)</th>
<th>His 52nd year</th>
<th>New Moon date on his 52nd year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1279</td>
<td>−1227 (1228 BCE)</td>
<td>II prt 28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 31.6: Scholars’ new Moon date on II prt 28 in Ramesses II’s 52nd year in −1227 (new moon listing from −1227 to −1226)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1227</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>−1227</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The new moon falls on II prt 28 not II prt 27

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Mo</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Mo</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>28</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>6:40</th>
<th>6:57</th>
<th>237</th>
<th>6:58</th>
<th>107</th>
<th>6:58</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>−1226</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>−1226</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1555</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19:00</td>
<td>6:57</td>
<td>325</td>
<td>6:56</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>6:56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To reconcile the dates, scholars assume that a marginally visible crescent was missed the previous day by the Egyptian observer, thus giving the new moon date one day too early. On the other hand, Casperson supplied me with a table for an accession in 1390. As shown in Table 31.7, it gives the exact new moon date of II prt 27 for the year −1337 (1338 BCE).

Table 31.7: Tetley’s reconstructed chronology for Ramesses II

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accession year (BCE)</th>
<th>His 52nd year</th>
<th>New Moon date on his 52nd year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1390 BCE</td>
<td>−1337 (1338 BCE)</td>
<td>II prt 27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The new moon fell the day before conjunction on II prt 28. No mistakes need to be assumed to match the new moon date to this year (Table 31.8).


Table 31.8: Ramesses II’s 52nd year; new moon on II prt 27 in −1337 (new moon listing from −1338 to −1337)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1338</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>−1338</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The new moon falls on II prt 27 as given on the ship’s log

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Mo</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Mo</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Yr</th>
<th>Mo</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>−2</th>
<th>−1</th>
<th>0</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>−1337</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>−1337</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1444</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1:41</td>
<td>6:59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1337</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>−1337</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1444</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13:24</td>
<td>6:43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week; ToD = time of day.

Scholars currently propose the date of 1279 BCE as Ramesses II’s most likely accession year. And, because they reckon (correctly) on 200 years between the accession of Thutmose III and Ramesses II, they give Thutmose III an (incorrect) accession in 1479. However, further dates can be attributed to the reign of Ramesses II with an accession date of 1390 BCE.

Medinet Habu Calendar Dates

A number of festival dates are attributed to the reign of Ramesses III (not II) in the surviving portion of the Medinet Habu calendar, but unfortunately the regnal years are not given. After the heading and festival date, each list gives an annotation of all the offerings. List 19 is headed, “Coronation Festival of the King,” which applies to Ramesses III and his accession dated to I šmw 26, which appears to fall on a feast of Amun. However, not all lists belong to the reign of Ramesses III.

Lists 59–67: Feasts in the Reign of Ramesses II, Not Ramesses III

I focus attention on Lists 59–67 in order to discuss List 63, which has a feast dated to a new moon—the name and date of the festival being in doubt.

List 59 is the “Festival of the Navigation of Anubis” and is dated to II prt 1. List 60 is attributed to a “Feast of Lifting up the Sky.” These are held in the second month of winter, II prt. The first day on II prt 29, the second on II prt 30, and the third on III prt 1. These days are paralleled by List 61, the “Feast of Entering the Sky,” but held in the third month of winter. The first day was held on III prt 29, the second on III prt 30, and the third on IV prt 1. List 62 is the “Feast of Chewing Onions for Bast” held on IV prt 4. In List 63, a festival has an unclear name but has been assigned [Sok][ar] and attributed to IV prt 1. The record of the feast says, “It is the new moon which brings it; offerings for Amon-Re with his ennead in this day of festival.” The day of the new moon is uncertain because the sequential order should give a date after IV prt 4, not on IV prt 1. Spalinger notes, “There is no evidence, however, for any Sokar feast at this time in the civil year. I suspect that the original day is inaccurate. Day one in IV prt does not fit the order of the calendar.”

The feast of List 63 must then date from some day after IV prt 4 and before the next listed feast, on List 64, which refers to “The Festival of Renenutet” held on I šmw 1. The correct numerical order is maintained by List 65, which refers to “The Feast of

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24 El-Sabban, Temple Festival Calendars, 84.
25 Ibid., 125.
27 El-Sabban, Temple Festival Calendars, 123-25.
28 Spalinger, “Egyptian Festival Dating,” 393 n. 81.
Clothing Anubis,” held on I šmw 10. List 63 is applied to the fourth month of winter, which, in the calendar of Upper Egypt, is known as rkh nds and translated as “little burning.” The “k” noted in the feast name can thus stand for rkh of rkh nds. The day date is faulty but needs to come after the fourth day of IV prt in List 62. The partial number includes the number 1, so the date may be 11 onwards, depending on how many digits have been lost. We can solve the year of the new moon in List 63 by dating a new moon in List 66.

List 66 applies to “The Processional Festival of Min” dated to I šmw 11. It reads, “The day of Min’s procession to the terrace when the new moon is in the morning; offerings for Amon and the portable image of Wosermatre Meriamon, in this day.”

This is followed by List 67 called “The Processional Feast of Amon.” It reads, “First month of summer, the new moon’s festival of Amon-Re, in his first festival of the 1st month of summer, when this god goes out on the 4th occasion of the new moon’s festival; offerings for Amon-Re, lord of the thrones of both lands, chief of Karnak temple with his Ennead [nine deities] in this day of festival.”

If the Min procession was on I šmw 11, then the first day of the lunar month fell on the 12th (List 66), and the fourth lunar day on the 15th (List 67).

According to Casperson’s tables there is no new moon date on I šmw 11 or 12 in the reign of Ramesses III. The closest date is in his 23rd year when conjunction fell on I šmw 11, indicating a new moon the previous day on the 10th, whereas the new moon following the feast of Min ought to have fallen on the 12th. On the other hand, Ramesses II has dates for a new moon on I šmw 12 in his sixth year in 1384 BCE, I šmw 13 in his 31st year in 1358, and I šmw 12 in his 36th year in 1334.

Parker points out that, “It is well known that Ramses III’s calendar is a copy of Ramses II’s.” Spalinger supports Parker’s observation. Referring to the feast of Min, which occurred on the day before psḏntyw at the end of the ninth month of the civil year, Spalinger writes: “In the reign of Ramesses II it must have been on day 11 of I šmw, and also very early in the king’s reign that the days before psḏntyw occurred.” In this case, the early date for the sixth year of Ramesses II in 1384 BCE would be the probable date assuming that Ramesses III had his name substituted for that of Ramesses II when the copying was done from the original text.

See Casperson’s table showing the 12th day of I šmw, remembering the feast was held one day before the new moon (Table 31.9).

Table 31.9: Feast of Min on I šmw 11 in Ramesses II’s sixth year in –1383 (new moon listing for –1383)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–1383</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>–1383</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–1383</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>–1383</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–1383</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>–1383</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week; ToD = time of day.

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29 El-Sabban, Temple Festival Calendars, 126-27.
31 El-Sabban, Temple Festival Calendars, 128-29; Spalinger, “Egyptian Festival Dating,” 292.
32 As seen in Casperson’s tables for these dates; the latter is not supplied here.
33 Parker, Calendars, 40 §204.
34 Spalinger, “Egyptian Festival Dating,” 386.
If the feast of Min (List 66) can be dated to Ramesses II’s sixth year, then the prior Lists 63–65 may also refer to Ramesses II’s reign. List 64 refers to the “Festival of Renenutet” held on 1 šmw 1, and List 65 refers to the “Feast of Clothing Anubis” held on 1 šmw 10. These also appear to be referring to the same year as that of the feast of Min referring to day 11 for the day prior to the new moon. It infers that List 63 also refers to the same year, the sixth year of Ramesses II. If so, we should find a date in IV prt that has a new moon with a number 1 in it. In Table 31.9, we see that a new moon fell on IV prt 12, from which we may assume that the original figure had one 10-sign and two digits.

From this analysis, we can attribute List 63 to the feast of rkh nḏs, held in the fourth month of prt on day 12 when it “is the new moon which brings it in” and assign it to the sixth year of Ramesses II, the same year for the feast of Min in List 66.

List 67, the last feast listed, is called the “Processional Feast of Amun.” It was held in 1 šmw, in the new moon’s festival” when the god goes out on the fourth occasion of the new moon’s festival.” This is assumed to be a reference to the fourth day after the new moon on 1 šmw 12 following the feast of Min (List 66), therefore, on the 16th day of the month, also in Ramesses II’s sixth year.

Further Feast Days

Ramesses II has two holiday dates ascribed to his reign. A visitor’s graffito on a pyramid at Saqqara is dated to the 34th year of Ramesses II on IV šmw 24 with the words “day of the feast of Ptah-south-of-his-wall.” This is presumed to refer to a feast day on a public holiday. L. Borchardt earlier suggested this might be the day of a full moon. Taking up his suggestion, we apply Casperson’s full moon table (Table 31.10) to the date of Ramesses II’s 34th year in 1356 BCE (−1355).

Table 31.10: Feast of Ptah on IV šmw 24 in Ramesses II’s 34th year in −1355 (full moon listing for −1355)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>Time of Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo D D</td>
<td>Yr Mo D</td>
<td>Yr Mo D</td>
<td>Full moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1355</td>
<td>6 16</td>
<td>−1355 6 4</td>
<td>1426 11 24</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1355</td>
<td>7 16</td>
<td>−1355 7 4</td>
<td>1426 12 24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1355</td>
<td>8 14</td>
<td>−1355 8 2</td>
<td>1426 1 18 7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week.

A full moon fell on IV šmw 24 in −1355 (1356 BCE), which upholds Borchardt’s suggestion and concurs with my proposed dates for Ramesses II’s reign.

A second visitor’s graffito, also found at Saqqara, records two officials from Memphis, a treasury-scribe and a vizier’s scribe, enjoying a stroll on II prt 25 in the 47th year of Ramesses II. A holiday date is suggested because these officials are not at work. Some think it might also be a full moon date, as was the previous date. Casperson’s table (Table 31.11) gives the date for Ramesses 47th year in −1341 (1342 BCE).

35 Schmidt, Ramesses II, 45.
Table 31.11: Ramesses II’s 47th year in −1341 (full moon listing from −1342 to −1341)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>Time of Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1342</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>−1342</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1341</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>−1341</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1341</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>−1341</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week.

The full moon day on the graffito is a day later than indicated by the table. No claim is made that the graffito writer thought it was a full moon, or whether the stroll of the Memphite officials merely coincided with the day before the full moon. So the full moon date is immaterial to elucidate the reference. From these somewhat speculative lunar dates, we come to a Sothic date.

Sothic Date in Ramesses II’s 41st Year

Petrie refers to a heliacal rising of Sothis on the 22nd day of Thoth in the 41st year of Ramesses II. He references his source to a stela in the temple of Amenhotep III at El Kab. The temple is located about 80 km south of Thebes on the eastern bank of the Nile. By “Thoth” Petrie means the first month in the civil calendar, assuming a single calendar for both Upper and Lower Egypt. Thoth was the first month in the calendar of Lower Egypt and the second month in the calendar of Upper Egypt. He understood Thoth to be the first month of inundation, the date being I $\text{3\text{t}}$ 22. Probably the month name was not given, but originally designated as “1st month of inundation” or $\text{3\text{t}}$ (as we find in other contexts).

Ramesses II’s 41st year is 1349 BCE in my chronology. According to Casperson’s table (Table 31.12) the date of 12 23, that is, IV $\text{smw}$ 23, converts to I $\text{3\text{t}}$ 23 in the calendar of Upper Egypt by which Sothic cycles from Thebes were dated. I $\text{3\text{t}}$ 22, being the day before I $\text{3\text{t}}$ 23, equates to 12 July. This agrees with the HELIAC program, which gives the Sothic rising on 11 or 12 July in 1349 BCE at Thebes.

Table 31.12: Ramesses II’s 41st year; heliacal rising of Sothis at Thebes on I $\text{3\text{t}}$ 22 in −1348 (new moon listing for −1348)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1348</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>−1348</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1348</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>−1348</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1348</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>−1348</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week; ToD = time of day.

Petrie was able to state the date of a heliacal rising in Ramesses II’s 41st year (which he incorrectly gave as 1234!) inferring that he had seen an attestation to that effect.

The Year of Ramesses II’s Death

Ramesses II is credited with a reign of 66 years and 2 months as recorded by Josephus passed down from Manetho. A tax docket found at Gurob gives Ramesses II’s highest known date of I $\text{3\text{t}}$ 18 in his 67th year, followed closely by a year one dated

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to either II 3ḫt 19 or, because it is badly damaged, I 3ḫt 19. However, the reign of Merenptah, Ramesses’ son and successor, is proposed to have begun between I 3ḫt 19 and II 3ḫt 13 seen in Cairo ostracon CG 25504, which rules out the damaged date of II 3ḫt 19.

Ramesses II’s accession set on 28 June 1390 BCE, and his death 66 years and 2 months later, brings his death to the year 1323 BCE (−1322), between the dates of I 3ḫt 19 and II 3ḫt 3–13, approximately early August to beginning of September (Table 31.13).

Table 31.13: Death of Ramesses II and accession of Merenptah in −1323 (new moon listing for −1323)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo D</td>
<td>Yr Mo D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo D</td>
<td>–2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1323</td>
<td>7 7 6</td>
<td>−1323 6 25</td>
<td>1458</td>
<td>12 23</td>
<td>2 1325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ramesses II died and Merenptah succeeded him between I 3ḫt 19 and II 3ḫt 13.

Ramesses II and the Hittite Kings

In his early years, Ramesses II fought with the king of Hatti, Mutawallis, and later Hattusilis III, over the Hittite-held city of Kadesh on the Orontes in Northern Syria. The Hittites, on the other hand, sought to drive further south into Egyptian-held territory. With the growing menace of Assyria, in Ramesses II’s 21st year, he and Hattusilis III concluded a peace treaty promising non-aggression and support. According to my chronology, the treaty dates to 1369 BCE not the conventional 1259. The Assyrian and Hittite chronologies have to be adjusted and updated to bring them into alignment with Egypt and Israel.

Estimated Period of Ramesses II’s Death and Merenptah’s Accession

Scholars understand that Ramesses II’s first 12 sons predeceased him because his successor was his 13th son, Merenptah or Merneptah, son of Ramesses’ wife Istnofret. Merenptah was probably aged in his 60s when his long-lived father died.

The Cairo ostracon CG 25504 gives Merenptah’s accession as sometime from I 3ḫt 19 to II 3ḫt 13. On the basis of a Theban graffito giving the date of II 3ḫt 2 year one of Merenptah, the date has been narrowed down by Peden to II 3ḫt 3–13, on the assumption that the transmission of the news took several days to reach Thebes. According to Kitchen, based on two inscriptions from Medinet Habu and Deir el-Bahari, the regnal years changed between I 3ḫt 29 and III 3ḫt 1, within which the previous dates fall.

Ramesses II’s 67th year began on III šmw 27 = 11 June in 1324 BCE (−1323), which, if his death and Merenptah’s accession fell around II 3ḫt 3–13, allows him another two months as his length of reign indicates. Any of the dates proposed above

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44 Hattusilis III was also contemporary with Kadressman-Turgu, King of Karduniash (Babylon).
coming after I 3ḫt 29 and before II 3ḫt 7 qualify for Merenptah’s accession, and it seems probable that the interval of II 3ḫt 3–13 proposed above by scholars would include the actual date. Consequently, the accession of Merenptah implies that Ramesses II did not die until sometime in II 3ḫt 3–13 of his 67th regnal year giving him a reign of 66 years and 2 months, the years 1390–1324 BCE.

Kitchen notes a West-Theban graffito No. 862, which dates a great inundation of the Nile to III 3ḫt 3 in Merenptah’s first regnal year.\(^{47}\) In Casperson’s table above (Table 31.13), Merenptah’s first year begins approximately mid-August in −1323. The date of the inundation corresponds to 20 September, approximately two months after the heliacal rising of Sothis on 18 July, and in the middle of the season of 3ḫt, thus appropriately dated in the chronology.

**Heliacal Rising of Sothis in 2nd Year of Merenptah?**

Petrie refers to a date for a heliacal rising of Sothis on Thoth 29 (I 3ḫt 29) in the second year of Merenptah, which he references to Medinet Habu.\(^{48}\)

Ramesses II’s 41st year with the heliacal rising on I 3ḫt 22 concurs with Ramesses II’s 52nd year dating a new moon on II ṣṃw 27 to 1338 BCE. However, there is a discrepancy in the date of the heliacal rising of Sothis in 1349 and I 3ḫt 29 in the second year of Merenptah in 1323, there being 26 years between them when from I 3ḫt 22 to I 3ḫt 29 there are actually 28 years through which Sothis has to move. On the above dates, Merenptah’s second year fell in 1323, whereas I 3ḫt 29 dates to 1321. It seems that the date of I 3ḫt 29 applies to Merenptah’s fourth year not his second, and the reason for the apparently correct dates in the reign of Ramesses II and the apparently incorrect year referenced by Petrie is unresolved.

The accession of Merenptah upon the death of Ramesses II was 1324 BCE. It is reported that the highest attested date for Merenptah is IV ṣṃw 9 of his ninth year.\(^{49}\) Two dates from a year 10 found on Theban graffiti dated to II 3ḫt 7 and 13 announcing the inundation are usually assigned to Merenptah.\(^{50}\) These years indicate his death was either in 1316 or 1315. The date of IV ṣṃw 9 must come toward the end of a regnal year if Merenptah ascended early in II 3ḫt. Considering the following chronology—in which Seti II has a lunar date in his second year in −1310 (1311 BCE) giving him an accession in 1312, and the need to fit in another king between Merenptah and Seti II, namely Amenmesses, who is known to have reigned into his third year—the indications are that Merenptah reigned into his 10th year provided that Amenmesses’ third year consisted of only a few months. The two inundation dates from year 10 would follow soon after the beginning of his 10th year, and would correctly fall in July after the heliacal rising of Sothis. Otherwise, Merenptah’s highest date is presumed to be IV 3ḫt 7 in year 10 mentioned on pSallier I, 3, 4.\(^{51}\) News of Merenptah’s death reached Deir el-Medina on the 16th day of a month of ṣṃw, the number not being legible.\(^{52}\)

The date for Merenptah’s death can probably be narrowed down to III ṣṃw 16 because Amenmesse’s accession has been set between I ṣṃw 27 and III ṣṃw 18.\(^{53}\) Since I ṣṃw 27 comes 70 days after III ṣṃw 18 (and 70 days is the normal period of embalming)

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\(^{47}\) Kitchen, *TIP*, xlv.


\(^{49}\) From O. Gardiner 197 in *KRI* IV 159, 5 cited by Hornung, “New Kingdom,” 212.

\(^{50}\) Hornung, “New Kingdom,” 212.


\(^{52}\) Hornung, “New Kingdom,” 212.

\(^{53}\) Ibid., 213, citing O. Cairo *CG* 25783 and 25784: *KRI* 227, 6.
it appears to refer to the burial day of Merenptah. The day of his death, III \( \text{prt} \) 16, equates to 29 January 1314 BCE.

**Sothic Cycle Begins in 1314 BCE**

Chapter 11 discussed the date of a Sothic cycle beginning at Memphis in 1314 BCE on I \( \text{3ht} \), which equates to 18 July. This now appears to have fallen in the first year of Amenmesses, understood here to be the successor of Merenptah. In conventional chronologies, Merenptah was followed by Amenmesses, though scholars are now considering whether his reign of about three to four years was subsumed under that of Seti II.

**Israel Stela**

Merenptah’s reign is famous for the mention of “Israel” in the so-called Israel Stela (also known as the Merneptah Stela) recording the exploits of Merenptah (variant spelling) and his army in the Levant in his fifth year, dated to III \( \text{šmw} \) 3. This date falls on 15 June 1319 BCE. This is said to be the only mention of Israel in Egyptian records. The reference to “Israel” in the stela will receive comment in the next chapter.

**Merenptah Not the Pharaoh of the Exodus**

Many past scholars have proposed that Merenptah was the biblical “Pharaoh of the Exodus” who drowned in the Red Sea when pursuing the escaping Israelites. After Merenptah’s mummy was found in the tomb of Amenhotep II (KV 35) along with 15 other mummies in 1898, this identification lapsed.\(^{54}\) For the “Pharaoh of the Exodus” see the next chapter.

**Amenmesses**

In the traditional view, Amenmesses is a son of Merenptah and a lesser queen, Takhat.\(^{55}\) Scholars who hold/held this view propose that at the time of Merenptah’s death the intended heir, Seti-Merenptah, was absent and Amenmesses seized the opportunity to become king, and reigned for four years. Amenmesses was then succeeded by the rightful heir, Seti-Merenptah, now known as Seti II. The reasons for thinking that Amenmesses succeeded Merenptah are given by Wente and van Siclen who agree with Helk, against Černý, that Cairo ostracon 25516 reflects a transition from Seti II to Siptah,\(^{56}\) and not Amenmesses to Siptah, indicating that Amenmesses preceded Seti II. They point out from recto lines 3–4 that there is an “absence of dates for the consumption of lamps after I \( \text{prt} \) 18 and before I \( \text{prt} \) 23.”

These dates coincide with the time during which workmen at Deir el-Medina did no work beginning with the announcement of Seti II’s death on I \( \text{prt} \) 19 (Cairo ostracon 25515, verso, cols. ii–iii).\(^{57}\) Noted on the ostracon are the two chief workmen, Hay and Paneb, from the left and right gangs, respectively, who, Wente and van Siclen say, only filled this position during the reign of Seti II and not of Amenmesses.\(^{58}\) Therefore, the order of transition is Merenptah, Amenmesses, Seti II, Siptah.\(^{59}\)

A second view proposed more recently by some scholars (notably Krauss and Dodson), is that after the death of Merenptah, Seti II and Amenmesses fought for the

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54 Clayton, *Chronicle of the Pharaohs*, 158.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.
59 This is the order given by Hornung, “New Kingdom,” 212-13.
crown of Egypt. This is inferred from monumental evidence that in years two to four of his reign Seti was in control of Upper Egypt and Nubia. But years three to four of Seti’s reign are not documented, while in these years Amenmesses is attested in Upper Egypt on several ostraca. Seti is thought to be absent, giving the impression that Amenmesse was reigning as king.

It is also suggested that during this time Amenmesse vandalized Seti II’s tomb in the Valley of the Kings. According to Papyrus Salt 124, in Amenmesse’s reign, he, or one of his officials, “Msy,” killed a chief workman Neferhotep. Yet, according to Ostraca MMA 14.6.217, Neferhotep is still listed as being in office in the work register, which also records the accession of Seti II to the throne—a work register that was later used to record the absence of workers in Seti II’s reign.

According to Hornung, citing Černý, “the foreman Neferhotep was absent from work after the accession of Sety II.” The theory is that Amenmesses or his agent killed Neferhotep in the reign of Seti II and therefore the reigns of the two rival kings overlapped. Some scholars suggest that the rivals were situated in different areas—Seti II in Lower Egypt and Amenmesses in Upper Egypt.

According to theory, during his fourth year, Amenmesses was defeated by Seti II, the legitimate heir, who then set up a campaign to destroy any memory of Amenmesse, by erasing scenes and texts from his tomb KV 10, and also those of Khaemter, a former Viceroy of Kush who was Amenmesse’s Vizier. This pattern of destruction is said to best explain the rival kingships of Amenmesses and Seti II.

Amenmesses’ Third Year Recorded on Ostraca

Various ostraca from a single year are attributed by some scholars to the reign of Amenmesses.

IV *prt* 10–19 have been omitted in an ostracon, possibly due to a work-free period;

I *šmw* 8 when most of the gang were working;

I *šmw* 18 when most “royal artisans” were working;

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61 Wente and van Siclen, “Chronology of the New Kingdom,” 252.


68 „Amenmesse,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Amenmesse


70 O. Cairo CG 25780, 3; Jauhiainen, “Do not Celebrate,” 211 and n. 5.

III šmw 1 when men were absent from their work;\textsuperscript{73}
III šmw 16 when most men were working.\textsuperscript{74}

If correctly attributed to Amenmesses, these notations indicate that his year three began before IV prt 10 and ended after III šmw 16. Since Merenptah’s day of death is thought to be III prt 16, the dates above occurred early on in Amenmesses’ year three. Amenmesses’ death soon after III šmw 16 would allow Seti II’s accession in III or IV šmw, and his second year to include the Epiphi feast date of IV šmw 1–2.

However, a conflict occurs in starting Seti II’s reign after the middle of II šmw because a Beautiful Feast of the Valley dated to II šmw 25 is attributed to his sixth year.\textsuperscript{75} It can only come in his sixth year if he begins to reign before II šmw 25. If not, the Valley Feast date has to be attributed to his year five. Since the date for his sixth year seems to have more to commend it, as I show below, it seems probable that the dates in III šmw attributed to Amenmesses should rather be assigned to Seti II. On this proviso, Amenmesses can be attributed two years and about four months before Seti II became king; thus the first three of the ostraca references listed above apply to Amenmesses, while those in III šmw apply to Seti II.

**Seti II**

The next lunar anchor date after Merenptah’s death on III prt 16 in his 10th year in 1315 BCE comes in the reign of Seti II who has an Epiphi feast dated to IV šmw 1–2 in his second year, as I noted earlier.\textsuperscript{76} Epiphi feasts started in the latter half of III šmw—inscriptions often citing III šmw 28 or 29—and extended into IV šmw.\textsuperscript{77} The date of IV šmw 2 applies to 1311 BCE (−1310) (Table 31.14).

**Table 31.14: Seti II’s second year in −1310 (new moon listing for −1310)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>−1310</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1310</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>−1310</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1310</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>−1310</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week; ToD = time of day.

The lunar date for Seti II indicates that three years came between him and Merenptah, and resolves the identity of Merenptah’s successor: Amenmesses not Seti II.\textsuperscript{77} According to Wente and van Siclen, the highest date for Amenmesses is year four, III šmw 29,\textsuperscript{78} but more recently this date has been attributed to the unnamed “rival king,” this being his last and only known date for that year.\textsuperscript{79}

The question that remains is whether Amenmesses died before Seti II came to the throne or whether he was the “rival king” who sought to overthrow Seti II even after the latter became king. Seti II also has a year six during the Beautiful Feast of the Valley. Referring to the Valley Feast, Jauhiainen writes, “Amon crossed the river back to the

\textsuperscript{72} O. Cairo CG 25782 verso 6-8; Jauhiainen, “Do not Celebrate,” 213 and nn. 11-13.
\textsuperscript{73} O. Cairo CG 25783 recto 27-29; Jauhiainen, “Do not Celebrate,” 217 and nn. 5 and 6.
\textsuperscript{74} O. Cairo CG 25883, verso 23-27; Jauhiainen, “Do not Celebrate,” 219 and n. 4.
\textsuperscript{75} R. Krauss, Sothis- und Monddaten, Studien zur astronominischen und technischen Chronologie Altägyptens (HÄB 20; Hildesheim: Gerstenberg, 1985) 151.
\textsuperscript{76} Jauhiainen, “Do not Celebrate,” 155-57.
\textsuperscript{78} Wente and van Siclen, “Chronology of the New Kingdom,” 236.
\textsuperscript{79} O. Cairo CG 25784, 15; Hornung, “New Kingdom,” 213.
east side on II šmw 25, as stated in O. Cairo CG 25538.”

The feast is known to be associated with the new moon. Year two of Seti II’s reign fell in the year 1311 BCE (−1310), so his sixth year would have been in 1307 BCE (−1306). In that year the date of the new moon fell on II šmw 20 as seen in Casperson’s table below (Table 31.15). The crossing of the river took place five days after the first day of the lunar month.

Table 31.15: Seti II’s sixth year in −1306 (new moon listing for −1306)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1306</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>−1306</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1306</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>−1306</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1306</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>−1306</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week; ToD = time of day.

Seti II’s death was reported on I prt 19 and was attributed to his year six. However, the next documented feast date is a year six in the reign of Siptah, which, as we shall see, occurred in the year 1299 BCE (−1298). Therefore, between the year six of Seti II in 1307 BCE and the sixth year of Siptah in 1299 BCE, there are about eight years. Since six of these are taken up with the reign of Siptah, the previous two must belong to Seti II, thus giving to him an eighth year. Seti II died sometime prior to the report of his death on I prt 19, so his death came about approximately in the first half of I prt in 1305 BCE.

Therefore, Seti II reigned seven years and about nine months, from 1312 to 1305 BCE. The record of his death in his sixth year, when it should be the eighth, must founder on some sort of error, either in the ostracon or in its transcription.

Siptah

Siptah’s origins are uncertain. Siptah was about 10 years old when he became king—judging from his mummy, which is presumed to be of a 16-year-old, about 1.6 meters in height. His left foot, at some stage, had been deformed, probably from poliomyelitis. His mummy was found in KV 35 in 1898 where it had been moved from KV 47.

Siptah’s royal duties were undertaken by Twosre, widowed queen of Seti II, assisted by a high-ranking official, the Chancellor Bay, who had risen to power in the reign of Seti II. He was honored by Seti II by having a private tomb (KV 13) ordered for him, but Bay fell into disrepute in the reign of Siptah, and in his fifth regnal year in III šmw 27 Siptah had him executed.

An unprovenanced listing attributes to Siptah a Beautiful Feast of the Valley on II šmw 25 in his year four. With Seti II’s death and Siptah’s accession in I prt in 1305 (in December) with most of the year being in 1304, Siptah’s year four falls in 1301 BCE.

80 Jauhiainen, “Do not Celebrate,” 151.
83 For more about Siptah, see “Siptah.” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siptah
84 G. Callendar, “The Cripple, the Queen and the Man from the North,” Kmt 17 (2006) 87, 52.
85 J. Dunn, “King Siptah and his Tomb in the Valley of the Kings,” at http://www.touregypt.net/featurestories/siptah.htm
86 Clayton, Chronicle of the Pharaohs, 159.
However, in 1301 there was no new moon on II šmw 25. But in the year 1302 BCE (−1301) a new moon fell on II šmw 26 as shown in Casperson’s table (Table 31.16). This date indicates that the applicable year fell in Siptah’s year three, not four.

**Table 31.16: Siptah’s third year in −1301 (new moon listing for −1301)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1301</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>−1301</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1301</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>−1301</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1301</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>−1301</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week; ToD = time of day.

The given date of II šmw 25 is one day before the new moon, but almost certainly is associated with the Feast of the Valley. This feast, attributed to Siptah’s third year, concurs with the aforementioned Deir el-Bahari (DB) feast falling in his sixth year in 1299 BCE.

Siptah’s DB feast (no. 9) dates to III šmw 9 of his sixth year. Four DB dates are characterized by the refrain, “Amun rests in the funerary temple of …” (name of king).89 With his third year dated to −1301, Siptah’s sixth year dates to −1298. But in this year the new moon fell on III šmw 23, and, therefore, is not applicable (Table 31.17).

**Table 31.17: Siptah’s sixth year in −1298 (new moon listing for −1298)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>ToD</th>
<th>Morning visibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week; ToD = time of day.

However, the date of III šmw 9 is one day after a full moon that fell on III šmw 8 in −1298 as Casperson’s table below shows (Table 31.18). Since DB feasts could last over several days with the visit of Amun and the procession to the temple, the day after the full moon would have been a day of festivity.

**Table 31.18: Siptah’s sixth year in −1298 (full moon listing for −1298)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>Time of Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>−1298</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week.

Siptah was the penultimate king of the 19th Dynasty. His sixth year, seen on a graffito at Buhen, appears to have been his last. This gives to Siptah a reign of about five years and nine months, 1305–1299 BCE.

Other scholars propose that he died between II 3ḥt 9 and 12, and was buried on IV 3ḥt 22 of his year seven.90

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Twosre

Siptah was succeeded by Twosre. Her years of reign were counted as a continuation of Siptah’s. Twosre’s first year is dated to a DB feast (no. 3) in “year 7” on II šmw 28, thus the next year after Seti II’s death in his seventh year, –1297 (Table 31.19).

Table 31.19: Siptah’s “seventh year” = Twosre’s first year in –1297 (full moon listing for –1297)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Julian</th>
<th>Gregorian</th>
<th>Egyptian</th>
<th>DoW</th>
<th>Time of Day</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Mo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–1297</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>–1297</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–1297</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>–1297</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>–1297</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>–1297</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DoW = day of week.

The fact that these DB dates apply to full moons and not new moons is endorsed by two subsequent DB dates that also apply to full moons: DB 6 for Ramesses VI and DB 10 for Ramesses VII of the 20th Dynasty.

After Siptah died, Twosre adopted the full titles of a pharaoh and extended the tomb (KV 14) for herself that had been started in the second year of Seti II on I prt 8. Twosre’s date of death is uncertain. On O. Cairo 25293 there is a DB feast, full moon on II šmw 25 with new moon on IV šmw 25, which would have ended her reign in 1297 BCE (–1296). It allows Twosre a reign of about one year and ten months after the death of Siptah. IV šmw 1 equates to 8 June 1297 BCE. Twosre’s death brings the 19th Dynasty to an end as there were no heirs to fill the vacant throne. Political turmoil provided the opportunity for a commoner, Sethnachte, to take control and commence a new dynasty. The dates of the 19th Dynasty rulers are shown in Table 31.20.

Table 31.20: 19th Dynasty from Ramesses I to Twosre with regnal years and dates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ruler</th>
<th>Regnal years*</th>
<th>Dates BCE</th>
<th>Lunar or Sothic anchor points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ramesses I</td>
<td>2 yr, 3 mo</td>
<td>1404–1401</td>
<td>None known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seti I</td>
<td>11 yr</td>
<td>1401–1390</td>
<td>None known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramesses II</td>
<td>66 yr, 3 mo</td>
<td>1390–1324</td>
<td>Yr 34 Feast of Pthah full moon on IV šmw 25 in 1356; Yr 41 Heliacal rising of Sothis I 3ḥt 22 in 1349; Yr 52 new moon II prt 27 in ship’s log, 1338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merenptah</td>
<td>9 yr, 6 mo</td>
<td>1324–1314</td>
<td>Yr [4] Heliacal rising of Sothis on I 3ḥt 29 at Thebes in 1321 (calendar of Upper Egypt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenmesses</td>
<td>2 yr, 4 mo</td>
<td>1314–1312</td>
<td>1314 New Sothic cycle commences at Memphis on I 3ḥt 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seti II</td>
<td>7 yr, 9 mo</td>
<td>1312–1305</td>
<td>Yr 2 Epiphi feast days on IV šmw 1–2 with new moon on IV šmw 2 in 1314; Yr 6 Beautiful Feast of the Valley, river crossing on II šmw 25 with new moon on II šmw 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Siptah</td>
<td>5 yr, 9 mo</td>
<td>1305–1299</td>
<td>Yr 6 DB feast, full moon on III šmw 8 in 1299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twosre</td>
<td>1 yr, 10 mo</td>
<td>1299–1297</td>
<td>“Yr 7” DB feast, full moon on II šmw 28 in 1298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>107 yr, 7 mo</td>
<td>1404–1297</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* = most months approximate; DB = Deir el-Bahari.

92 Krauss assumed that the DB feasts were new moon dates on the analogy of DB 31 being a Feast of the Valley date, the only one so described (Krauss, “Lunar Dates,” 416).
Twosre’s final date of 1297 BCE is the starting date for the 20th Dynasty in this chronology.