Chronology of the 18° and 19° dynasty (Crasto e Cimmino)

by **Antonio Crasto**

The sequence of the pharaohs of the Eighteenth Dynasty is fairly well-established, but there are still some issues on the duration of kingdoms and the existence and the lives of some co-regencies. Regarding the nineteenth dynasty the problems are even more important, is not clear even the sequence of the last four rulers [1].
It does not help much history handed down to us by referents of Manetho: Josephus, Giulio Sixth African and Eusebius, as it can be seen in several inaccuracies and are not signaled any co-regencies.
Have been proposed in the last century various absolute chronologies absolute, the result of different assumptions made by some scholars.
The absolute chronology is based on some dating: the astronomical dating of Amenhotep I and Thutmose III, the date of the Exodus after Akhenaten, according to the report of Manetho and the Jewish tradition, and the beginning of a new Era of Sothis. To these more or less precise dating you add some reports of eclipses and lunar phases.
The absolute dating of Amenhotep I used to indicate the beginning of the reign of Ahmose, the first king of the Eighteenth Dynasty, around 1580 BC. However, it was assumed by some scholars that the observation of the heliacal rising of Sirius in the 9th year of the reign of Amenhotep I had not been observed at *Iwn* / Heliopolis, but at *Waset* / Luxor or at *Ta neteret* / Dendera. This hypothesis, accepted by a large part of Egyptologists, leads to delay the start of the dynasty of about 20 years, by virtue of an advance of astronomical phenomenon with decreasing latitude (about 1 day every degree less latitude).
Unfortunately, the lack of attention of many Egyptologists and used without further copying timelines proposed by others has led to mistakes, so as to have dating the beginning of the reign of Amenhotep I cut by 9, 20, 29 or 40 years, due to an exchange of astronomical dating of the event with the beginning of the kingdom.
The absolute dating relative to Thutmose III is unfortunately not usable because the signal is missing the year of the reign in which it was observed the heliacal rising of Sirius and the imprecision is too high in view of the 55-year reign.
The dating of the Exodus according to Manetho and the Jewish tradition has generally been neglected, as some interpretations of Bible passages lead to hypothesize the Exodus in the next dynasty during the reign of Ramesses II and that of Merenptah.
The beginning of a new Era of Sothis can be dated with good accuracy and Egyptologists believe that the reporting of the historical Theon was referring to Sethy I or Ramesses I.
This absolute dating, relative to the beginning of the nineteenth dynasty, has been neglected since it is difficult to apply in the case to consider the beginning of a late eighteenth dynasty of the late 20s or wrong 9, 29 or 40 years. In the first case we have some problems on the duration of the kingdoms of some pharaohs, but the chronology is still acceptable, while the further postponement wrong of 20 or 29 years makes it more problematic.
Despite this, and based on a possible dating of a moon phase for the 52nd year of the reign of Ramesses II, the majority of Egyptologists today prefer to ignore the absolute dating the beginning of the Era of Sothis and considerably delay the start of the nineteenth dynasty.

Chronologies proposed by Crasto

These issues have led me to propose in succesion, in the context of the study of the first nineteen dynasties, four different chronologies of the eighteenth dynasty based on Exodus in 1385 BC and taking account of:

1. the absolute dating of Amenhotep I postponed for 20 years and the start of reign of Ramesses I coincident with the start of the new Era of Sothis (1321 BC);
2. normal absolute dating of the reign of Amenhotep I and the start of reign of Ramesses I coincident with the start of the new Era of Sothis (1317 BC);
3. normal absolute dating of Amenhotep I and the beginning of the new Era of Sothis (1317 BC) during the reign of Sethy I;

4. the beginning of the reign of Ramesses II in 1304 BC on the basis of a study about the dates of the 5th and 6th jubilee and the beginning of a new Era of Sothis (1316 BC) during the reign of Sethy I.

The second proposal eliminates the forcing of the duration of the reign of several pharaohs and takes into account the reports of solar eclipses, which somehow affected the dynasty.
The third proposal consider the beginning of the new Era of Sothis (1317 BC) within the reign of Sethy I (13th year), thus correcting the long period of the reign of Horemheb, which was obtained in the second proposal, and bringing it back to the 37 years reported by African.
The fourth proposal: considers a cycle sothiaco of 1455 instead of 1456 years, assigns an extra year to Amenhotep II by separating it out coregency, considers the beginning of the new cycle sothiaco within the kingdom of Sethy I (14th year), increased by six years the duration of the kingdom of Sethy I and considers the new absolute dating of 1304 BC for the beginning of the reign of Rameses II.

	Crasto								**Kitchen** [5]	
dynasty	**1° proposal** [2]		**2° proposal** [3]		**3° proposal** [4]		**4° proposta**			
18°	years	date	years	date	years	date	years	date	years	date
Ahmose	25	1561	25	1577	25	1577	25	1578	25	1550
Amenhotep I	21	1536	21	1552	21	1552	21	1553	21	1525
Thutmose I	13	1515	13	1531	13	1531	13	1532	12	1504
Thutmose II	2	1502	3	1518	3	1518	3	1519	13	1492
Hatshepsut	22	1500	22	1515	22	1515	22	1516	22	1479
Thutmose III	(22)+26	1478	(22)+33	1493	(22)+33	1493	(22)+33	1494	(22)+32	1457
Amenhotep II	(10)+13	1452	(6)+17	1460	(6)+17	1460	(5)+18	1461	(2)+24	1425
Thutmose IV	9	1439	10	1443	10	1443	10	1443	10	1401
Amenhotep III	27+(12)	1430	30+(9)	1433	30+(9)	1433	30+(9)	1433	38	1391
Amenhotep IV Akhenaton	12+5	1403	9+8	1403	9+8	1403	9+8	1403	17	1353
Nefernefruaton Nefertiti	(3)		(3)		(3)		(3)			
Smenkhkara	1	1386	1	1386	1	1386	1	1386	2	1336
Merytaton o Ay	3	1385	3	1385	3	1385	3	1385		
Tutankhamon	(3)+9	1382	(3)+9	1382	(3)+9	1382	(3)+9	1382	9	1334
Ay - It neter	5	1373	5	1373	5	1373	5	1373	4	1325
Horemheb	47	1368	51	1368	37	1368	37	1368	29	1321
Totale	**240**		**260**		**246**		**248**		**258**	
19°										
Ramesse I	1	1321	1	1317	1	1331	1	1331	2	1292
Sethy I	20	1320	20	1316	20	1330	26	1330	11	1290
						1317		1316		
Ramesse II	66	1300	66	1296	66	1310	66	1304	66	1279
Merenptah	10	1234	10	1230	10	1244	10	1238	10	1213
Amenenmes	5	1224	5	1220	5	1234	5	1228	4	1203
Sethy II	6	1219	6	1215	6	1229	6	1223	6	1199
Ramesse Siptah	6	1213	6	1209	6	1223	6	1217	6	1193
Tausert	7	1207	7	1203	7	1217	7	1211	2	1187
Totale	**121**	1200	**121**	1196	**121**	1210	**127**	1204	**107**	1185
Totale 18° - 19°	**361**		**381**		**366**		**375**		**365**	

(Highlighted in green changes to the 3rd proposal)

Chronologies proposed by Cimmino

The illustrious Italian Egyptologist has shown in several of his books a few different chronologies for the eighteenth and nineteenth dynasty, and showed that he also adapted its chronologies to the hypothesis advanced by some scholars.
He has presented two later proposals, in which take into account the normal absolute dating of Amenhotep I and the beginning of the Eighteenth Dynasty in 1580 BC.

The second proposal, almost same as duration of the dynasty, it differs substantially from the first to the consideration of a co-regency of 11 years between Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV, and a longer duration of the reign of Horemheb.
The third proposal considers an absolute dating postponed for Amenhotep I, but mistakenly takes 40 years instead of 20 (1517 against 1557). It considers again a longer duration of the reign of Thutmose I (13 instead of 10), a shorter duration of the reign of Thutmose II (4 instead of 15), a shorter duration of the reign of Thutmose IV (11 instead of 17), a greater duration of the reign of Amenhotep III (39 instead of 36), with an overall reduction of the Eighteenth dynasty of 15 years (251 instead of 266).
This reduction comes from having cut 20 years for the double wrong postponed to the start of the reign of Amenhotep I, and to have pegged the beginning of the reign of Ramesses II to 1279, based on the lunar dating in the 52nd year of the reign of this sovereign.
This hypothesis of the moon phase indicator, however, is quite inaccurate, as the repetition of a phase of the moon in the Egyptian civil calendar has a cyclicity of about 25 years, so the beginning of the reign of Ramesses II in 1279 BC could be replaced since 1304 BC, very close to 1310 BC I have proposed.

	Cimmino						**Kitchen** [5]	
dinastia	**1° proposal** [6]		**2° proposal** [7]		**3° proposal** [8] ± 30 anni			
18°	anni	data	anni	data	anni	data	anni	data
Ahmose	23	1580	23	1580	26	1543	25	1550
Amenhotep I	27	1557	27	1557	21	1517	21	1525
Thutmose I	10	1530	10	1530	13	1496	12	1504
Thutmose II	15	1520	15	1520	4	1483	13	1492
Hatshepsut	21	1505	21	1505	22	1479	22	1479
Thutmose III	(21)+34	1484	(21)+34	1484	(22)+33	1457	(22)+32	1457
Amenhotep II	25 ?	1450	25 ?	1450	26	1424	(2)+24	1425
Thutmose IV	17 ?	1425	17 ?	1425	11	1398	10	1401
Amenhotep III	36	1408	36	1408	39	1387	38	1391
Amenhotep IV Akhenaton	18	1372	(11)+6 ?	(1379) 1368	(11)+6	(1359) 1348	17	1353
Ankhkheperura Smenkhkara			(2) ?	(1364)	?	?	2	1336
Smenkhkara	2 ?	1354			3	1342		
Merytaton o Ay								
Tutankhamon	9 ?	1352	9 ?	1362	10	1339	9	1334
Ay - It neter	4 ?	1343	6 ?	1353	4	1329	4	1325
Horemheb	25 ?	1339	30/33 ?	1347	33	1325	29	1321
Total	**266**		**263/266**		**251**		**258**	
19°								
Ramesse I	2	1314		1317/14	2	1292	2	1292
Sethy I	22 ?	1312			11	1290	11	1290
Ramesse II	66	1290			67	1279	66	1279
Merenptah	10	1224			10	1212	10	1213
Amenenmes	5 ?	1214			3	1196	4	1203
Sethy II	6 ?	1203			6	1202	6	1199
Ramesse Siptah	6 ?	1209			5	1193	6	1193
Tausert	8 ?	1197			2	1188	2	1187
Total	**125**	1189			**106**	1186	**107**	1185
Total 18° - 19°	**391**				**357**		**365**	

The erroneous postponement of the beginning of the reign of Amenhotep I, the desire to anchor the beginning of the reign of Ramesses II to 1279 BC and the end of the nineteenth dynasty around 1186 B.C. has led Cimmino to propose a significant reduction in the duration of the reigns of the last four pharaohs of the nineteenth dynasty, bringing the duration of the dynasty from 125 years of its first proposal to the 106 years of its third proposal.
Cimmino was aware of the problems in defining the absolute chronology of the eighteenth and

nineteenth dynasty and attempt to resolve this uncertainty by proposing a ± 30 years at the dating reported. The proposal does not, however, resolve the problem. Not wanting to delve into the issues that led to its proposal, it would be more fair to say that the dates could be postponed and have an error of 30-40 years, but apparently such an implied warning that you understand the mistakes of chronology proposed by him (double postponement of 20 years and the wrong anchor the beginning of the reign of Ramesses II).
In this respect, I present an excerpt of the article of RA Parker about the absolute dating, relative to the reporting of the New Moon in the 52 th year of Ramesses II.

THE LUNAR DATE OF RAMESSES II

This date too is well known. II *prt* 27 of his 52d year is noted in a Leiden papyrus as being *pšḏntyw*.[12]

There is no independent astronomical data to establish a range for this date and we are thus restricted to historical considerations alone. In a recent carefully argued and exhaustive investigation of the date of Ramesses' reign, M. B. Rowton set a period of 12 years, from 1246 to 1234 B.C., in which the lunar date must fall.[13] Let us, for the sake of thoroughness, extend this period by 10 years at each end. The possible solutions would then be these:

1. II *prt* 28 is *pšḏntyw* on Dec. 26, 1253. (Year 1 is 1304.)

By calculation the preceding lunar month began on I *prt* 28. It is possible that the following month was begun in error on II *prt* 27.

2. II *prt* 26 is *pšḏntyw* on Dec. 24, 1250. (Year 1 is 1301.)

By calculation the preceding lunar month began on I *prt* 26. This solution is not admissible, as it is not possible for the month to have begun in error on II *prt* 27.

3. II *prt* 26 is *pšḏntyw* on Dec. 21, 1239. (Year 1 is 1290.)

By calculation the preceding lunar month began on I *prt* 27. It is possible that the following month was begun in error on II *prt* 27.

4. II *prt* 28 is *pšḏntyw* on Dec. 20, 1228. (Year 1 is 1279.)

By calculation the preceding lunar month began on I *prt* 28. It is possible that the following month was begun in error on II *prt* 27.

5. II *prt* 26 is *pšḏntyw* on Dec. 17, 1225. (Year 1 is 1276.)

By calculation the preceding lunar month began on I *prt* 26. This solution is not admissible, as it is not possible for the month to have begun in error on II *prt* 27.

We are left with three possible solutions, one of which, No. 3, is securely within the range set by Rowton and is, indeed, the one he himself proposed. The other two, one earlier and one later, are outside his range, the earlier by seven years and the later by six. I am myself inclined to eliminate them from consideration and to agree with Rowton that the reign of Ramesses II began in 1290 B.C.

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[12] P. Leiden 350, vs. 3, 6; Spiegelberg, *Rec. Trav.* XVII, 147.

[13] "Manetho's date for Ramses II," *JEA*, XXXIV (1948), 69.

Lunar dating for Ramesse II

By Richard A. Parker (Brown University), *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* Vol. 16, No. 1 (Jan., 1957), pp. 39-43
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The message contained in the Leiden papyrus regards the 27th day of the 2nd month of prt in 52 years of Ramesses II (maybe New Moon).

M.B. Towton has proposed a date of the event within the range of 1246 - 1234 BC.

R. A. Parker has defined a wider field and has found five dates of the Julian calendar:

- Dec. 26, 1253 BC (early kingdom in 1304 BC);
- Dec. 24, 1250 BC (early kingdom in 1301 BC);
- Dec. 21, 1239 BC (early kingdom in 1290 BC);
- Dec. 20, 1228 BC (early kingdom in 1279 BC);
- Dec. 17, 1225 BC (early kingdom in 1276 BC).

Parker feels the need to discard the 2nd and the 5th solution as unlikely, so the choice is focused on three dates coronation: 1304, 1290 and 1279 BC.

Consideration

It is therefore not true that 1279 B.C. is the unique absolute date of the coronation of Ramses II.
In this regard, F. Cimmino choose in his *Ramesses II Il grande* the date of 1290 BC and in his *Dizionario delle dinastie faraoniche* the date of 1279 BC.
This choice, however, is due to having accepted the postponement of the Eighteenth dynasty of 20 years and to have erroneously considered the beginning of the eighteenth dynasty, late of 37 years:

- (1580 BC without postponement);
- (1560 BC with the postponement of 20 years);
- (1543 BC wrong with the postponement of 37 years).

In conclusion, considering a possible lunar dating and not considering the postponement of 20 years on the beginning of the eighteenth dynasty, the most likely date for the coronation of Ramses II should be 1304

BC.
Given the results obtained for the 5 th and 6 th jubilee of Ramesses II was decided to change the date of the coronation of Ramses II, thus changing the kingdom of Sethy I.

Conclusion

With regard to the issue of co-regency between Amenhotep III and Amenhotep IV I had arrived at the conclusion that it must be considered a long co-regency of 9 - 12 years, finally opting for a co-regency of nine years, began on the occasion of the 1st jubilee of Amenhotep III [9].
Recently, it has been found archaeological evidence of the goodness of my proposal. The archaeological team of Dr. Francisco j. Martin has discovered, during the cleaning of the tomb of the vizier Amenhotep Huy (TT28 at Asasif - Luxor west bank), the cartouches flanked of the two sovereigns, a clear sign of co-regency, in a scene dated the 1st jubilee of Amenhotep III, 30th year, the 27th day of the 2nd month of the 3rd season - Shemu [10].
In view of the symbolism of the reappointment of the *Heb sed* – jubilee festival, it can therefore be concluded that, for reasons not well known, Amenhotep III decided not to order or having to govern alone and has decided to appoint co-regent the heir to the throne Amenhotep IV on the occasion of the 1st jubilee.

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Antonio Crasto, author of essays on ancient Egypt:

HASSALEH – L'OCCHIO DI HORUS. Manetone aveva ragione!

DENDERA – La sacra terra della dea

I MITANNI alla corte dei faraoni