Apis and the Serapeum

On June 27th 1987 Mohamed Ibrahim delivered his ISIS Fellowship Lecture entitled 'Excavations at the Serapeum - 1985' to an audience of ISIS members and invited guests, following the Annual General Meeting of the Institute. The paper presented here is an expanded version of that talk, written jointly by Ibrahim and Rohl, which takes into consideration details and arguments excluded from the original lecture. With its strong emphasis on a visual presentation of the EAO 1985 excavation work at the Serapeum, it was not possible for Mr Ibrahim to present the chronological and additional Apis cult material in any detail, given the limited time made available for the Fellowship Lecture. It was therefore decided to hold that discussion over for publication in JACF 2 where the material could be dealt with more thoroughly.

Mohamed Ibrahim & David Rohl

The purpose of Part One of this paper is to give a brief overview of the famous Apis cult of Ancient Egypt as it has come down to us from the Late Period and Graeco-Roman era.

Part Two will then go on to deal with the archaeological work undertaken in the burial ground of the Apis bulls at the Serapeum of Sakkara from its discovery in the last century of the modern era up to the present day. Within this section we therefore intend to review briefly the results of the recent reopening of the Lesser Vaults of the Serapeum, by the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation [1], after an interval of 135 years.

Having thus familiarised the reader with the archaeological background of the site we can then proceed, in Part Three, to assess the chronological material produced by these excavations. In particular, we will be concentrating on a number of unanswered questions that arise from the published results of the original discovery [2] and discussing the proposition that the historical data provided by the Apis bull interments may lend support to the hypothesis that the chronology of Egypt for the Third Intermediate Period is in need of revision. Future excavation at the site, utilising modern archaeological techniques and scientific methods of find-analysis, lacking in the days of the initial discovery, should help to clarify the history of the Third Intermediate Period in Egypt, the chronology of which is still very much a matter for debate.

Finally, Part Four forms a supplementary section dedicated to some of the speculative ideas about Apis and its cult which have been suggested by various scholars in the past. These speculations principally concern bull-worship and its associations with kingship, especially the Jubilee Festival or Heb-Sed, but also include a suggestion as to the location of the Serapeum of the era prior to the vaults of the mid-18th to Ptolemaic Dynasties discovered by Mariette in 1851. Given the somewhat contentious nature of this final section, it should be stated here that these ideas are not necessarily supported by the authors in their entirety, but are included here to complete the general review of the Apis cult and its archaeology. There is also a healthy

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disagreement between the collaborators of this paper on certain points in Part Four, a disagreement which we regard as one of the more stimulating aspects of working together on a subject of mutual interest. To illustrate this point with an example: Ibrahim is against the proposal that Apis was killed by drowning, based on the available textual evidence, whilst Rohl sees this as an interesting possibility which merits further investigation (see Part Four, p. 19). The views of Ibrahim on Apis and the Heb-Sed are to be included in his PhD thesis and do not, therefore, appear in this article. Both authors, however, feel that the reader should be made aware of the arguments voiced by other scholars - but with the proviso that they keep in mind the fact that most of the ideas in this section are, as yet, not securely supported by the archaeological evidence.

Part One

The Cult of Apis in the Late Period

The worship of sacred animals in ancient Egypt, as manifestations of the gods, played a major part in the everyday religious life of all the social classes from the king himself right down to the common people. With the gradual evolution of a complex web of myths and legends associated with the gods, it was inevitable that the indigenous fauna of Egypt would be assimilated to the numerous aspects of the principal deities [3]. One of the most famous of these associations was that of the Apis bull (hpw) with the creator-god, Ptah, chief deity in Memphis. At death this sacred animal appears to have been transformed into the physical embodiment of the god of the underworld, Osiris.

Most of the surviving material pertaining to the Apis cult comes from the Late Period and Ptolemaic Dynasties and it is from this era that contemporary documents such as the Demotic Papyrus in Vienna (No. 27), published by Spiegelberg [4], detail the burial rites of the sacred bull. Apis was especially popular in the last centuries of the first millennium BC when the Hellenistic Greeks and, subsequently, the Romans adopted this bull cult as their own, giving us the familiar names of Apis, Serapis and Serapeum, used by scholars today and handed down in the writings of Herodotus [5], Strabo [6], Plutarch [7], Pausanias [8] and Diodorus Siculus [9].

It was these writings that would eventually lead to the discovery of the burial place of the sacred bulls by a young Frenchman in the early 1850's when the modern study of Egypt's past was still as yet in its infancy.

The Search for Apis

The virility and strength of the pharaoh had to be sustained down the generations, passed from father to son, just as the cycle of death and rebirth was re-enacted in the story of the resurrection of Osiris in the form of his offspring Horus. In the same way the spirit of Osiris was reawoken [10], following the death of the Apis bull, in the body of a newly born calf which possessed the sacred markings special to the reincarnated Apis. The chosen bull would only be selected if it had the correct physical characteristics. These were: an inverted white triangle on its forehead; white markings resembling a vulture over the shoulders and a falcon round the rump; a tufted tail; and the configuration of a scarab on its tongue.

The story of the search for the reborn Apis is perhaps best described in the words of the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus (80 BC to 20 BC):

There should be added to what has been said what still remains to be told concerning the ceremonies connected with the sacred bull called Apis. After he has died and has received a magnificent burial, the priests who are charged with this duty seek out a young bull which has on its body markings similar to those of its predecessor; and when it has been found the people cease their mourning and the priests who have the care of it first take the young bull to Nilopolis, where it is kept forty days, and then, putting it on a state barge fitted out with a gilded cabin, conduct it as a god to the sanctuary of Hephaestus [Ptah] at Memphis. During these forty days only women may look at it; these stand facing it and pulling up their garments show their genitals, but henceforth they are forever prevented from coming into the presence of this god. Some explain the origin of the honour accorded this bull in this way, saying that at the death of Osiris his soul passed into this animal, and therefore up to this day has always passed into its successors at the times of the manifestation of Osiris ... [11]

The Burial of Apis

We must again rely upon the Late Period texts for an impression of the rituals and ceremonial practices surrounding the burial of the sacred Apis, as no comprehensive description survives from the New Kingdom or Third Intermediate Period.

At this point it would perhaps be a suitable moment to make the statement that we cannot be certain the information we possess about the Apis rites from this era is necessarily an accurate reflection of the rites of earlier periods. Evidence for the mumification of the bulls in later times does not indicate that the same practices applied in the New Kingdom or the Third Intermediate Period and intact burials of these earlier periods (see below) appear to confirm that the process was indeed different. However, returning to the information derived from the Vienna Demotic Papyrus already mentioned and other sources, we can put forward the following scenario.
When the bull died, there was national mourning: the priests and the servants of Apis and Ptah kept vigil, fasted and abstained from sexual intercourse whilst mourners walked and tore their hair. The caress of the Apis was taken to the embalming house, where it was placed on an alabaster slab, designed as a royal couch with lions carved in relief along its sides. After purification, the brain and internal organs were removed and the body dried out with natron and spices, according to normal Egyptian mumification practice. The entrails, or viscera, were placed in canopic jars. Halfway through the embalming period (formally 70 days but often much longer), the wrapping of the corpse in many metres of linen bandage began until the reclining form of the animal was restored. The mummy was then plastered and painted to represent the bull as in life, with a splendid gilded sun-disk placed between his horns.

During the funerary procession the bull was mounted on a sledge under a painted and gilded wooden canopy; behind came a procession of gods in shrines, as with a royal funeral. The priests of Ptah, once again fasting and alighting vigil, led the procession whilst two priestesses, representing Isis and Nephthys, sat at each end of the sledge that bore the mummy. The great men of state and the population of Memphis lined the route to the desert plateau where an enlarged dragging team took over to draw the sledge up the escarpment and on towards the Serapeum itself, situated a further kilometre into the western desert.

When the procession reached the Serapeum (which the ancient Egyptians called the Knum - 'the black'), whilst the cries of the mourners continued, the sacred Apis was purified again. The final rite, carried out at the entrance to the catacombs, was the Opening of the Mouth ceremony which gave the dead bull the magical power to be reborn in the afterworld. The priests and mourners then conveyed Apis down into the dimness of the vaults where, after the removal of the canopy, the sledge containing the sacred bull was drawn into the burial chamber of its final resting place before the vault was sealed with fine limestone masonry.

Large regularly dated official mortuary stelae were placed in the centre of the sealing walls (although only one - that of Year 21 of Psamtek I - was found in situ). The priests of Ptah, who were responsible for the burial, were allowed to attach inscribed stelae onto the surface of the sealing wall of the Apis chamber or in special niches cut into the walls of the main passage. In this way they could record their priestly offices, their ancestry, and the part they had played in the burial ceremony of the god. The minor priests and mourners who built the vault and dragged the sarcophagus to its resting place were also allowed to leave small stelae (mostly around the entrances to the catacombs), whilst later visitors and pilgrims scribbled their names on other walls within the complex. Besides the stelae and graffiti, the priests deposited inscribed ushabtis in small niches in the vaults or in pits in the ground around the coffins of the sacred bulls. Thus the Serapeum contained a wealth of inscriptions, the most significant of which were the official stelae and those of the high officials from the Ptolemaic Temple at Memphis. Fortunately for chronologists and historians these more important donation stelae often bore the regnal years of the monarchs in whose reigns the bulls were buried.

The significance of the Apis cult for chronological studies has been well noted by Third Intermediate Period scholars, for these dedicatory monuments are one of the few sources of texts that provide a fairly continuous sequence of dated inscriptions from the late-18th Dynasty (Amenhotep III) right down to the Ptolemaic era (Ptolemy VII). Apis burials for the periods prior to and later than this time have not as yet been discovered, although the pre-Amenhotep III burials most probably lie in the vicinity of those found in the mid-19th century of the modern era (see Part Four below). The unearthing of these missing Apis burials would no doubt give a fresh impetus to the study of Egyptian chronology and therefore, by implication, much of the history of the ancient Near East.
Part Two

The Archaeology of the Serapeum

The Discovery

On the 2nd of October 1850 a young Frenchman, Auguste Mariette, attached to the Louvre's Department of Egyptian Antiquities, found himself in Cairo with instructions to negotiate the purchase of Coptic manuscripts. His ambitions, however, appear to have lain in another direction, as is apparent from his later writings. Whilst whiling away his time in Egypt, waiting for the Coptic Patriarchate to release the manuscripts, he observed that a number of small sphinxes had recently come onto the antiquities market; very saleable artefacts which had soon been purchased for the private collections of the wealthy residents of Cairo and Alexandria. He managed to discover that they had all come from the salerooms of an Italian dealer named Fernandez, who was eventually persuaded by the Frenchman to divulge that these fine Late Period sculptures had been removed from the necropolis of Sakkara. This piece of information appears to have remained in the forefront of Mariette’s mind during those early days in Cairo and may have been the catalyst for the sudden change of plan which found him heading out of Cairo and into the history books as the first great Egyptologist-explorator.

As the days drifted by and the negotiations for the Coptic manuscripts dragged on, Mariette found himself with plenty of time on his hands. So it was that he ended up one late afternoon visiting the Citadel of Saladin, overlooking the city, to take in the magnificent view of the Giza Pyramids above and beyond the haze of Old Cairo. Later, whilst preparing his Serapeum manuscript for publication, just before his death, he vividly described the memory of that crucial moment in his life:

... the stillness was extraordinary. At my feet lay the city. Upon it a thick and heavy fog seemed to have settled covering all the houses to the rooftops. From this deep sea rose three hundred minarets like masts from some submerged fleet. Far away, towards the south, one could perceive the palm groves that rise from the fallen ruins of Memphis. To the west, bathed in the gold and flaming dust of the sunset, were the pyramids. The view was superb. It held me and absorbed me with a violence that was almost painful. The moment was decisive. Before my eyes lay Giza, Abusir, Sakkara, Dashur, Mit-Rahina. This life-long dream of mine was materialising. Over there, practically within my grasp, was a whole world of tombs, steles, inscriptions, statues. What more can I say? The next day I hired two or three mules for my luggage, one or two donkeys for myself; I had bought a tent, a few cases of provisons, all the necessitics for a trip to the desert and, on the 20th October 1850, I pitched my tent at the foot of the Great Pyramid ... [12]

Mariette’s sarcophagus tomb in the gardens of the Cairo Museum. [Photo: D. Rohl]

A week later he had moved a few miles up the Nile valley to Sakkara, the desert necropolis situated above the ancient capital of Memphis. Even today Sakkara still holds its visitors in awe, not because of the size or magnificence of the monuments, the majority of which are relatively unspectacular by Egyptian standards, but because of the ageless desolation of the sandy terrain. In spite of the intensive excavation work that has gone on at the site since Mariette’s arrival, there is still the feeling that beneath the sand and rubble much more is yet to be discovered. Only a few years ago a joint expedition of the Egypt Exploration Society and Leiden Museum, under the supervision of field director Geoffrey Martin, re-discovered the tomb of Horemheb which was first found at
Mariette immediately set about hiring a team of 30 workmen to clear the sand and on the 1st November 1850 work began. Before long, they had exposed a long avenue of 134 sphinxes leading westward from the cultivation zone towards the Sahara. His belief that this must be the ceremonial way leading to the famous Serapeum of the Classical writings inspired him to press on, in spite of rapidly diminishing funds, in an attempt to reach his goal before being forced to explain his actions to his superiors back in Paris.

At one point the avenue of sphinxes came to an abrupt end, much to Mariette’s initial disappointment. It was not long, however, before the discovery of another sphinx, at right-angles to the others, led the workmen to a hemicycle of Greek statues (the Stibadeion) [14] including those of the various personages of the Hellenistic period. Here were assembled such honoured personages as Pindar, Plato, Protagoras and Homer, presiding over the way of pilgrimage that must surely lead Mariette to the entrance of the great cult-centre of the Serapeum itself. Soon his workmen had uncovered a pavement in front of the stibadeion, and, beyond that, to the south, the remains of a temple built by Nectanebo II and dedicated to Serapis. Now the young Frenchman knew for certain he was on the right track and so he pressed on with even more vigour. Working westwards once more another avenue revealed itself, but this time it was paved and lined with a low dressed wall on both north and south sides. Small statues had been placed on the walls on either side of the dromos and, beneath the paving stones, which Mariette removed in his search for the Serapeum entrance, he found hundreds of bronze statuettes.

At this point in his search politics encroached onto the excavation site, for rumours had spread that the statuettes were not bronze but solid gold! Mariette had also neglected to apply for a concession to dig in his haste to commence the search. The result was that the Egyptian Government put a halt to the work and, only after protracted negotiations, did his search recommence on 30th June 1851. Finally, however, following the exposure of the foundations of a pylon-gateway and enclosure wall, within which the remains of a Late Period temple were located, Mariette entered the burial vaults of the Serapeum, a full year after commencing excavations, on 12th November 1851 [15].

The Underground Vaults of the Serapeum

What Mariette found when he penetrated the entrance passage of the Serapeum seemed to be a maze built by giants. Long underground corridors with barrel-vaulted ceilings stretched off into the darkness with huge sepulchral chambers (the hwt ni nhkh of the texts) dispersed at intervals along their lengths and at right-angles to the axis of the vaults. Within the section which Mariette designated the ‘Greater Vaults’ the chambers were found to contain massive granite and basalt sarcophagi, some weighing as much as 70 tons [16]. All had been rifled in antiquity.

What remained were hundreds of votive stelae, either lying amongst the rubble or the passageways or embedded in the walls. These stelae contained dedications to Osiris, Apis and, as already mentioned, were sometimes dated by the regnal years of the reigning monarch. In respect of the Greater Vaults, this data provided scholars with supportive evidence for the chronological sequence and duration of reigns from roughly the beginning of the 26th Dynasty (Year 52 of Psamtek I) through to roughly the end of the Ptolemaic era, the last named ‘burial being that in the reign of Ptolemy (Euergetes) VII. The information thus obtained corroborated the dates and order of kings, as given by Manetho, and helped to fix the history of Egypt from 610 onwards to an accuracy of within one year.

But this was not all that Mariette discovered in the year...
of 1851, because, at the eastern end of the main gallery of the Greater Vaults, he was able to enter the ‘Lesser Vaults’ of an earlier period - dating from the middle of the 19th Dynasty to the end of that era known today as the ‘Third Intermediate Period’ (TIP). With the latter being perhaps the most politically complex epoch in the history of Egypt, information contained on the stelae in this section of the vaults should have provided much needed help in unravelling the chronology of the 21st to 25th Dynasties - but alas this was not to be, as poor excavation techniques, historical misconceptions and sheer bad luck contributed to the establishment of what scholars accept is an insecure chronology still to be satisfactorily finalised.

It is not really surprising that the findspots for much of the Lesser Vault material remain uncertain, for the chaos that greeted Mariette as he broke into the earlier vaults is quite apparent from his own vivid description:

The walls are covered with stelae, you walk on statuettes of all colours, on vases, on fragments of wooden sarcophagi. All this is in dreadful disorder, ... I have come upon ... such a disorder that at first sight I despaired of ever recognising anything. [17]

Subsequent to the clearing of the vaults, Mariette also uncovered an even earlier set of seven isolated tomb chambers to the south of the main complex which dated from the reign of Amenhotep III down to Year 30 of Ramesses II.

It was in these burial vaults that the archaeologist found three intact Apis interments (one of Horemheb and two of Ramesses II) which added one further surprise. In every instance, upon lifting the coffin lid, Mariette found a mound covered in muslin and shaped like a reclining bull. Beneath the muslin canopy was not an intact and mummified Apis, but a disordered mass of broken bull’s bones and bituminous matter [18]. In two cases (both bulls of Ramesses II) Mariette was astonished to find that even the bulls’ skulls were missing. None of the three piles of bone-fragments contained any signs of linen bandages and there was no flesh

Mariette’s original photograph looking west along the dromos. The stibadeion can be seen in the left foreground.
upon the bones. Mariette's own words once again conjure up the moment of discovery of the intact Apis burial of Horemheb. Having explained that he had expected to find a fully embalmed bull beneath the coffin lid, he goes on to say:

... when I lifted up the lid, I thought the tomb was empty. But when I looked a little closer, I saw at the bottom of the coffin a bull's head and underneath it a blackish mass that served as a support. I examined first the head. It was not attached to anything and had been placed on top of the mass. The skin had completely disappeared and all my efforts at finding traces of bandages were in vain.

I then examined the support. It was oval in shape, fairly regular, and measured about a metre in length, thirty centimetres in width and about the same in thickness. As far as its nature is concerned, I recognised that it was made up of a confused mass of bitumen and large, broken bull's bones, the whole thing heaped up without order under a muslin wrap.

This was the undisturbed Apis of Horus [Horemheb]. Not one amulet, not one statuette were found. The burial, as I said, was as poor as possible, and at the same time it was further removed than I would have suspected from the generally prevalent way of burial in Egypt. [19]

Having, in his own mind, completed the work at the Serapeum, the Frenchman moved on to other areas of the necropolis in search of tombs and was never to return to the vaults of the sacred bulls for further work. A huge collection of some 800 stelae was transported to the Louvre where it remains today, still, as yet, not fully studied, although this work is now in progress. The bulk of the remaining 400 stelae were housed in the Boulak Museum in Cairo where subsequently the majority were destroyed by flooding resulting from severe inundations of the Nile. Only 30 survived to be transferred to the Cairo and Alexandria Museums where they remain today.

Little further research at the Serapeum has been undertaken in the intervening years up to the 1980s. Although the Greater Vaults were opened to visitors, the entrance-way to the Lesser Vaults had been so completely covered in sand and completely hidden. Thus the interior of this earlier burial complex had remained in the state which Mariette had left it in 1851. Some work was recently undertaken in the 26th-Dynasty section of the Greater Vaults by John Ray, Jaromir Malek and Helen McKeown, who recorded the inscriptions and graffiti on the walls of the main East/West corridor [20]. Now, however, the Lesser Vaults are being re-excavated and a number of significant finds have come to light during the first year's work.

The Lesser Vaults Re-discovered
(A report of the reopening of the Lesser Vaults by Mohamed Ibrahim)

In 1985 an architectural survey of the Serapeum was initiated by the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation, under the direction of Ramzy Nagy of the Egyptian National Museum, in conjunction with a work-team from the Faculty of Engineering (Mining Section), Cairo University, led by Prof Hassan Fahmy and Dr Hany Hefal. As Director of Sakkarra, it fell to me to supervise the work at the site. The project undertook to investigate part of the Greater Vaults in order to ascertain the best method of securing and consolidating the roof of the main underground galleries, sections of which were becoming unstable and had therefore been closed to visitors on safety grounds.

The natural living rock of the Sakkarra necropolis is not of fine quality and is the type of material known as 'swelling clay'. The mother rock out of which the Serapeum galleries were hewn is therefore susceptible to severe fracturing. In ancient times the vaults were partly lined with fine limestone blocks, presumably to reinforce the vaults where cracks had begun to appear.

After surveying the site, Mr Nagy's team recommended the dismantling of the floor of part of the galleries in order to investigate the condition of the underlying rock-bed foundations. It was decided, therefore, to begin the work in the earliest part of the Greater Vaults, which had been closed to visitors for a number of years, in order to avoid disruption of the normal workings of the site.

The eastern section of the main gallery was chosen, between the sepulchre of Psamtik I built in his Year 52 (Fig. 3: Chamber 12) and the vault of Darius I (Fig. 3: Chamber 15). Here we set about removing the limestone flags which made up the ancient floor of the main gallery and Chambers 12, XF and 14. In doing so, we revealed a quantity of ushabitis; some 80 stelae, whole and in fragments; pieces of statues; and a section of carved tomb wall.

At this stage I decided to request the technical assistance of Madame Paule Posoner-Krieger, Director of the French Institute for Oriental Archaeology at Cairo, who also kindly provided me with a photographer. As a result, publication of the stelae will now be undertaken through the auspices of the French Institute.

The stelae contained genealogies of the donors along with their titles, most of which were preceded by the formula im3hw kr Wsr-ItR i.e. 'honoured under Osiris-Apis'. Stela number RB 18382 records the 34th year of Darius I in which the Apis bull died on day 11 in the second month of peret (winter season). A second stela (no. RB 18403) is written in demotic and is dated to Year 31, third month of akhet (season of inundation), of Darius. Typical of the standard donation stelae from the Serapeum is RB 18393, dedicated...
by a general (mr-mt) P(3)-(n)-Pth (Pacemptah), son of P(3)-hn-b3if (Pamenhatet) and the lady T2-3-3r-(n)-(12)-hih (Tashertentabet). The owner is depicted worshipping the god Apis who sits before him in human form with a bull’s head and the sun disk between his horns.

Stela RB 18362 (in two fragments) proved to be very interesting because one of its two missing parts (the lunette) came to light during subsequent research work at the Louvre, being undertaken by Didier Devauche, apparently having been brought there with the rest of the collection in the 1850s. The lunette section itself was not found in the storerooms of the museum - rather a black and white photograph taken during the logging of the collection following its arrival in Paris. The information gleaned from the assembly of the pieces provided the date of the death of an Apis bull in Year 2 of Nepherites (N3if, h-w-rwd), probably the first king of the penultimate native Egyptian dynasty. The date given is Year 2 of the 2nd month of shemu (Summer). This corresponds nicely with the three other surviving Serapeum stelae from this reign (IM 4092, IM 4101 & IM 4103) which, between them, supply the date of the bull’s burial in Year 2 of the 4th month of shemu on day 20. Accordingly, if we were to accept a 70-day embalming period, the death of the bull should have taken place around the 10th day of the 2nd month of shemu and, although the actual day is not recorded, the month in which the bull died is confirmed by the discovery of RB 18362.

The initial exploration of the floor of the Greater Vaults had provided quite a surprise for the excavation team and, by the end of the work, we had collected a wide variety of donation stelae of differing sizes (one as small as 5cm by 3cm) and containing different scripts - some in hieroglyphs, others in hieratic and one in both hieroglyphic and hieratic. In many cases, due to the sealed context of the discovery, the pigments had been well preserved with the colours remaining vibrant.

All this had convinced me that there might be further material left behind by Mariette in the part of the Serapeum which had remained undisturbed since 1852, that is to say the Lesser Vaults. There was also a second motive for clearing the entrance stairwell to these earlier vaults, for our work had shown that further ventilation of the Greater Vaults would be an additional help in the conservation of the rock-cut passageways. This could best be achieved by the reopening of the two ancient doorways to the main passage which were located at the bottom of this stairwell (opposite chambers XF and 12, Fig. 2). Work began on the clearing of the Lesser Vaults in the spring of 1986.

The entrance to the Lesser Vaults was completely covered by wind-blown sand soon after Mariette had left the site. The first task, therefore, was to bail out the sand and debris from the stairwell to what eventually transpired to be a depth of 30 metres. On clearing what we thought was the original stairway, we discovered that the Frenchman had failed to observe that there had been an even earlier entrance stairway running in a straight west to east direction (Fig. 2: A). This earlier stairway (probably constructed in the 19th Dynasty) thus appears to have been cut in the opposite direction to the main sloping ramp (B) of the Greater Vaults (i.e. the modern access to the Serapeum). At some later stage (most likely during the Ptolemaic era) when the giant sarcophagus of Cambyses’ bull (Z) was abandoned blocking the original entrance to the Greater Vaults (made by Psamtek I), a second entrance (C) was cut (Fig. 2: opposite XF). This new entry to the vaults necessitated the cutting away of the original west-east stairway which blocked the planned point of access to the Greater Vaults and, as a result, a new stairwell was created, which turned firstly at right-angles (east) to the original entrance cutting, and then south again to run directly into the new vaults.
The entrance passage to Chamber 1 has been restored to await a further season of excavation. [Photo: D. Rohl]

opening. From there a further subterranean stairway led to the main corridor of the Greater Vaults. This exercise had left the original 19th Dynasty west-east stairway with only three steps and then a sudden drop of 10 metres to the bottom of the cutting which then proceeded horizontally towards the old entrance to the Lesser Vaults.

Along the walls and surrounding the three entrances to the two complexes the remains of demotic inscriptions could be seen painted in black ink upon the almost white limestone. Perhaps the most intriguing discovery made during the exterior excavation of the Lesser Vaults was the uncovering of a fourth doorway which appears to lead to a section of the complex so far unexcavated. This small entrance is located in the north wall of the Vestibule opposite the first entrance to the Greater Vaults (opened by Psamtek I) to the south and at right angles to the entrance to the Lesser Vaults themselves. Mariette may have missed this discovery because the doorway lies below the floor level of the other entrances. The blocked passage which leads northwards from the Vestibule is undoubtedly the mysterious Chamber I found by Mariette under Chamber 6 of the main Lesser Vault corridor which we will be discussing in more detail below.

The Lesser Vaults were re-entered once the stairwell and Vestibule were cleared. So far, working systematically from south to north, we have been able to clean and examine the Ramesside section of the vaults for a distance of some 20 metres along the main gallery. The chambers have revealed several buried ushabti figures, some of considerable size and excellent craftsmanship. They had been deposited in niches and shallow pits around the now empty burial place of the Apis and had been completely missed by Mariette. We therefore expect that much further material should be recovered when we penetrate beyond the section of collapsed ceiling which blocks the passage leading to the TIP section of the Lesser Vaults.

A most spectacular discovery was made during the course of clearing the first chamber opposite the doorway into the Lesser Vaults (Fig. 3, Chamber 2). Mariette had claimed this to be a vault of Ramesses II, but the partition wall which separates this vault from the main passage was dismantled to reveal that the in-filling was partly made up by seventy-three stelae in a state of excellent preservation. They were from a period much later than the 19th Dynasty (that is from the mid TIP to Year 21 of Psamtek I). These stelae, when published, will be able to tell us much more about the burials of the TIP and may go some way towards resolving the outstanding issues which are raised later in this paper. The question that immediately arises from this dis-

covery, however, is who built or reutilised the chamber at the end of the TIP?

Finally, we have been able to collect together a number of reused blocks of the 19th Dynasty, commandeered at some later date for sheering up the ceiling of the main gallery. A number of these blocks are intriguing because they appear to be from the tomb of Kha'et-enwaset and/or his mother queen Iseshrefret, second wife of Ramesses II. This would indicate that the tomb of the famous High Priest of Ptah and fabled son of Ramesses lies close by, perhaps within the confines of the Scraepum enclosure itself.

Chaos and Confusion

When Mariette first undertook excavation work at Sakkara he was 29 years of age and without previous archaeological experience. In those days tomb clearance and analysis of finds in situ were still crude operations, to say the least, for it was not until the 20th century that archaeology became a more exacting science. It would not be unreasonable therefore to expect a certain amount of inaccuracy to have crept into the excavation report when finally published in the 1880s. But worse was yet to come. Whilst Mariette continued his work in Egypt his invaluable ‘journal des fouilles’, recording the finds and their provenance during the clearance of the Scraepum, was sent to the Louvre where it was lent to Eugène Grébaut, future head of the Cairo Museum. The loan of the document resulted in a great loss to archaeology, for it was never to be seen again.

The archaeological report of the Scraepum excavations was not published until 1882 and had to be compiled by Gaston Maspero, following Mariette’s death, from an incomplete manuscript left by the discoverer—a thankless task which could only compound the inaccuracies already inherent in the archaeological method of Mariette’s work. It was not until 1968 that the first volume of a comprehensive catalogue of the Scraepum stelae, containing the monuments attributed to the 19th to early 26th Dynasties, was published [21]. The authors of that work found it necessary to reassign a number of stelae to different dynasties, as Mariette had apparently incorrectly attributed them in the original publication. This had to be done on the basis of style, content and the need to fill certain gaps in the burial sequence, as there was little information available regarding the location of the finds.

Naos-shaped pectoral found inside an Apis coffin dated to Ramesses II, now housed in the Louvre. [Photo: D. Rohl]
Part Three

The Serapeum and Chronology

The Stelae

The new catalogue contains descriptions of 251 stelae of which the first 13 originate from the isolated tombs outside the main vaults. From the remaining 238, about 50% can be definitely attributed to specific kings and a still smaller percentage contain actual year dates from those rulers. The rest of the stelae can only be assigned on a more general basis using comparative analysis techniques. The contents of the inscriptions, style of dedicatory text and attitude of the Apis shown on the stela can give certain clues as to when the dedication was made.

The majority of the stelae have rounded tops (the lunette) in which a scene of the worship of Apis is either carved or simply painted, depending on the importance and wealth of the donor. In the bottom half of the stela the dedication text is inscribed, naming the donor and sometimes a short genealogy. As mentioned already, a small proportion of the more important stelae also contain the name of the king, the year in which the bull was buried and, in some special cases, the date of induction of the bull and his age at death. Examples of such stelae are Numbers 21 and 22 [22] dedicated to the sacred bulls which died in Year 28 of Shoshenq III and Year 2 of Pimay:

Stela No. 21
Stela donated by the Great Chief of Ma Pediese, son of the Chief of Ma and High Priest of Memphis - Takelot, son of the High Priest of Memphis - Prince Shoshenq, son of King Userma'atra Setepenamun Osorkon.
Installation date of Apis - not given.
Date of death of Apis - Year 28 of king Shoshenq III.
Age at death - not given.

Stela No. 22
Stela donated by the Great Chief of Ma Pediese (titles as 21)
Installation date of Apis - Year 28 of king Shoshenq III.
Date of death of Apis - Year 2 of king Pimay.
Age at death - 26 years.

From amongst all this valuable information we can be certain that king Pimay ascended the throne 25 years after the 28th year of king Shoshenq, and that these monarchs reigned four and three generations respectively after a king Userma'atra Osorkon. This example illustrates the importance of these Apis stelae in fixing the reign lengths and therefore history of the TIP. Unfortunately not all the stelae are quite so helpful, giving us tantalising clues like 'Year 10+X' or 'Year 4' without naming the king associated with the year date. A summary table of data extracted from the stelae is provided for easy reference on the following page.

Anomalies Arising from Mariette’s Excavation

One of the most inexplicable aspects of the finds from the Serapeum is the complete lack of stelae for the whole of 21st Dynasty and for the first half of the 22nd Dynasty. Of around 240 stelae found in the Lesser Vaults not one single inscription can be attributed to the kings from Smendes to Takelot I, a period assumed to have lasted c. 195 years. A time span of this length should have provided at least nine or ten burials (the average age of the bulls being 18 years [23]) and therefore a number of stelae - yet none were found. In fact, the only monument related to Apis from this period ever found is the so called ‘emblaming table’ of the High Priest of Ptah Shedsuneferi tem (dated to the reign of Shoshenq I) which in reality is a lintel from the 22nd Dynasty wht which formed a part of the ‘Apis House’ complex so vividly described by Herodotus in Book II,153 [24]. This block had been reused as foundation material for a wall or pavement in the area of the Apis embalming house of the 26th Dynasty and, because of its location near to the later embalming tables of the Saite period, was taken to be another of the same [25].

Apart from the complete lack of stelae for the 21st Dynasty, another interesting point can be drawn from the layout of the Lesser Vault complex itself - that is the order of sepulchres carved along the north/south axis of the main corridor. As can be seen from Mariette’s original plan (Fig. 3), the sequence of burials seems to follow a south to north progression suggesting a gradual excavation of the vaults,
as was the practice in later times [26]. This may not, how-
ever, necessarily have been the case because the length of
the main corridor, as far north as Chamber 4, appears to
have been excavated in the reign of Ramesses II. This con-
clusion is based on Mariette’s discovery of an anthro-
rophic coffin found under the collapsed section of ceiling
between chambers 4 and X, on the ‘mummy’ bed of
which was found jewellery of Ramesses II and his son
Prince Kha-em-waset, who was High Priest of Ptah during
a good part of the former king’s long reign [28]. The burials
of the 20th Dynasty were in chambers south of this point.
It could be argued that this is the burial of an individual
from a later period bearing reused ornaments; but, given the
quality and quantity of the jewellery, it seems much more
likely that we are dealing with a mummy wrapped during
the lifetime of Ramesses II. On the other hand, this find
may represent the reburial of Kha-em-waset himself at some
point later than the 19th Dynasty. This scenario is, how-
ever, less convincing given the usual TIP practice of
removing valuables when royal mummies were reburied.
Furthermore, although no stele of the 19th or 20th
Dynasties have been found on the northern extremity of the
central corridor, the recent excavations have revealed a wall
painting in this location showing a high priest of Memphis
adoring Apis (in human form with a bull’s head). This
scene is typical of the 19th Dynasty stele found by Mariette
and suggests the possibility that the corridor was completed
to its full extent before the end of the New Kingdom
(perhaps by the end of the 19th Dynasty).

What can be said with reasonable certainty is that the
main corridor was completed by the reign of Pimay, as two
stele (Nos. 25 & 60) dated to Year 2 of this king were
located by Mariette at the northern extremity of the Lesser
Vaults. Certainly, officials of his successor Shoshenk V
deposited six stele at this spot (Nos. 26, 28, 29, 49, 163
& 168). As already noted, no stele of the 19th or 20th
Dynasty were found at the northern location which indicates
that, even though the corridor itself may have been cut this
far, this section of the Serapeum was not in use for Apis
burials during the New Kingdom and probably the early part
of the TIP. Indeed, we can determine from Mariette’s
surviving notes, that only stele of Pimay, Shoshenk V,
Bakenraneff, Taharka, and Psamtek I were discovered at the
northern end of the Lesser Vaults.

Although later texts mention that the Vaults were only
opened during the 70-day embalming period and therefore
the chambers, at that time, may have been cut one at a time,
the evidence of the ‘Kha-em-waset mummy’ burial, the
Ramesside (?) wall painting and the location of certain
stela, combined together to suggest a single- or perhaps
two-phase construction of the Lesser Vaults main corridor.
Furthermore, it appears that the 21st Dynasty burials
(assuming they existed) should have been located north
of Chamber 4 as virtually all the burials in chambers south of
this point seem to be accounted for. Mariette’s two unattributed
chambers south of Chamber 4 are unlikely candidates for the following reasons:- Chamber XA is in a
southerly position in the area of the New Kingdom burials
and the recent excavations have confirmed that it had been
occupied during the Ramesside period. It may be a vault
from the reign of Ramesses VI to whom Mariette assigns
a burial but does not allocate a chamber. A jar bearing
this king’s cartouche was found in the vaults [29]. Chamber
XB appears not to be a burial sepulchre at all but an
abandoned attempt to extend the Lesser Vaults in an easterly
direction [30]. The entrance to this ‘passage’ is very wide
and is unlikely to have been sealed by a wall as was the
case with the other chambers. It was probably the very

### Apis Burials from the Late 18th to Early 26th Dynasties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regnal Date of Burial</th>
<th>Orthodox Interval</th>
<th>Location of Burial</th>
<th>Link with Previous Apis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Amenhotep III</td>
<td>c. 20 years</td>
<td>Isolated Tomb A</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Akhenaten ??</td>
<td>c. 16 years</td>
<td>Isolated Tomb B</td>
<td>Known successor if Akhenaten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Tutankhamun</td>
<td>c. 17 years</td>
<td>Isolated Tomb C</td>
<td>Known successor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Horemheb</td>
<td>c. 16 years</td>
<td>Isolated Tomb D with</td>
<td>Known successor after Ay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Horemheb</td>
<td>c. 17 years</td>
<td>Isolated Tomb E</td>
<td>Second chamber in same tomb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Seti I</td>
<td>c. 20 years</td>
<td>Isolated Tomb F</td>
<td>Known successor after Ramesses I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 16 Ramesses II</td>
<td>c. 9 years</td>
<td>Isolated Tomb G with</td>
<td>Known successor &amp; son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 30 Ramesses II</td>
<td>c. 9 years</td>
<td>Isolated Tomb H</td>
<td>Side chamber off tomb ramp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses II</td>
<td>c. 9 years</td>
<td>Chamber 1</td>
<td>Same reign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses II</td>
<td>c. 9 years</td>
<td>Chamber 1</td>
<td>Same reign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses II</td>
<td>c. 9 years</td>
<td>Chamber 2? but unlikely</td>
<td>Same reign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses II</td>
<td>c. 9 years</td>
<td>Chamber 3</td>
<td>Same reign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses II or Siptah ??</td>
<td>c. 20 years</td>
<td>Possibly Chamber XA??</td>
<td>Same reign? or none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses III</td>
<td>c. 23 years</td>
<td>Chamber 4</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses VI</td>
<td>c. 26 years</td>
<td>Chamber 5</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses IX ?? or X ??</td>
<td>c. 24 years</td>
<td>Chamber 6</td>
<td>Known successor after Ram X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses XI</td>
<td>c. 20 years</td>
<td>Chamber 6</td>
<td>Same reign &amp; same chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses XI</td>
<td>c. 12 years</td>
<td>Chamber 6</td>
<td>Same reign &amp; same chamber</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year ?? Ramesses XI</td>
<td>c. 12 years</td>
<td>Probably Chamber XC</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 23 Osorkon II</td>
<td>c. 224 years</td>
<td>Probably Chamber XC</td>
<td>Same chamber? &amp; son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 24 Akeket II ??</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>Chamber 7</td>
<td>Known successor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 28 Shoshenk III</td>
<td>39 years</td>
<td>Chamber 8</td>
<td>Firm link of Stela No. 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2 Pimay</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>Chamber 8</td>
<td>Son of previous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 11 Shoshenk V</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>Chamber 8</td>
<td>Same reign &amp; same chamber?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 37 Shoshenk V</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>Chamber 8</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 6 Bakenraneff/yr 2 Shabaka</td>
<td>16 years</td>
<td>Chamber 9 or 9</td>
<td>Known successor after Shabiku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 4 Taharka ??</td>
<td>28 years</td>
<td>Chamber 10</td>
<td>Same reign if yr 4 = Taharka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year24 Taharka</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Chamber 11</td>
<td>Firm link of Stela 192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year21 Psamtek I</td>
<td>23 years</td>
<td>Chamber 11</td>
<td>Same reign but in new vaults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year52 Psamtek I</td>
<td>31 years</td>
<td>Chamber 12 (G. Vaults)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Yet More Subterranean Chambers?

A possible solution to this vexing problem revolves around a strange discovery made by Mariette during the two months spent clearing the Lesser Vaults. Near the end of his work, the excavator appears to have found an even deeper subterranean vault (Chamber 1) beneath Chamber 6, the original entrance to which has now been located in the floor of the Vestibule of the Lesser Vaults. The bad air and continuous inflating of sand forced Mariette to abandon his efforts to reach the floor and passage(s) to the vault and it remains uncleared to this day (see above for a report on the current condition of the entrance to this vault). We shall let Mariette himself describe the difficulties which he incurred concerning this new discovery:

During the clearing of the chamber in which the five previous Apis had been encased [Chamber 6], certain indications gave rise to the suspicion that there was a second chamber underneath the first. A vertical shaft was sunk in the floor and in fact there was an empty space beneath, into which I descended. The new chamber was full up to the vault. A candle in each hand, I advanced, creeping my back against the ceiling and my belly on the sand. The heat was suffocating and the air so rarefied that the candles went out. I had to go back and give up the exploration of our new conquest for that day. The next day, I had the sand removed via the vertical shaft with our ordinary excavation equipment. But we realised soon that the walls that had been designed to hold up the crumbling vaults had been built on the same sand and the enterprise had to be totally abandoned. The operation had, however, the result that we were able to prove that the lower vault had been inhabited by three Apis whose graves, constructed with the same negligence as the upper chamber, supplied the only data on which I rely to assign the construction of the chamber to a date near that of the Apsis of Ramessses XIV [the modern Ramesses XI]. Otherwise, even the door of the lower chamber remains unknown; perhaps with more expense and perseverance, we would have been able to obtain results which would have made our effort worthwhile. However this may be, I conjecture that the three new Apis belong to the 21st Dynasty. [32]

Could this hidden chamber be the resting place of the missing bulls of the early TIP as Mariette concludes? Or perhaps the vault is of a later date? The clearing of the Vestibule floor has revealed a pavement which appears to be directly related to both the entrance to the Greater Vaults and Chamber I. This has suggested to the excavator the possibility that Chamber I may be a missing burial of Psammetich II between Year 21 and Year 52. Whatever the case, a discovery of some significance could still await the archaeological team on venturing to clean the blocked passageway which opens into the Vestibule of the Lesser Vaults. However, even before this important work is completed, we can reasonably assume that Chamber I does not represent the first chamber of a new network of chambers, there being no indications of a central corridor (interconnecting burial chambers without an access corridor would be highly unlikely, given that the chambers were sealed immediately after each burial). This is supported by the fact that there are no indications that we are dealing with a single chamber and, as such, it could not possibly contain the full compliment of 10 bulls required by the conventional chronology for the early TIP. Indeed, Mariette himself states that there are only three burials in the chamber. Even if these do represent the 21st Dynasty burials, this still leaves us with seven missing bulls spanning around 126 years, or alternatively the chronology of the early TIP must be shortened by a similar amount, thus eliminating the anomaly at a stroke.

Some Secondary Anomalies

There are several further problems still to be discussed concerning the archaeology of the Lesser Vaults; these can be dealt with fairly succinctly. First, we have the issue of whom to assign the stela bearing the regnal years '04-X and 4. Malquine et al. [33] have proposed to date both burials to the 25th Dynasty on the not unreasonable grounds that, in the orthodox chronology, there are no burials attested between Year 2 of Shabako and Year 24 of Taharka - a time span of some 50 years. In view of the chronological proposals advocated by Rohl and James [34] which suggest a possible overlap between the late 22nd Dynasty and Ethiopian period, it may be expedient to reserve any firm conclusions on the issue until the revised TIP chronology
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pimay Year 2</th>
<th>Shoshenq V Year 11</th>
<th>Shoshenq V Year 37</th>
<th>Bakenrenerf Year 6</th>
<th>Taharqa?? Year 4</th>
<th>Taharqa Year 24</th>
<th>Psamtik I Year 21</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irheu’aa(wa)</td>
<td>? 29</td>
<td>42 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>49 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>217 220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Ankhwenennefer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>65 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>126</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Ankhkhons</td>
<td>X 40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td>160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakheredenehmet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
<td>222</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakheredensekhmet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>158</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padiusir</td>
<td>? 102</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>223</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Padja</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>41 years</td>
<td>91 years</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ptahhetep</td>
<td>X 163</td>
<td>86 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>85</td>
<td>216</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ptahdiau</td>
<td>X 44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>125</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senebef</td>
<td>? 24</td>
<td>57 years</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Fig. 4:** A selection of stelae bearing like-named donors. Stelae where the evidence of the donor’s parentage negates an exact match are overlayed with a cross; those where there is insufficient evidence to confirm the donor’s identity are indicated by question marks; and those where the donor and parents both match are marked with ticks. [Illustration: D. Rohl]

is more fully published. It should, however, be noted that Mariette assigned the 10+X to a burial in Year 14 of Takelot II and he may have been basing his conclusion on the find spot of the stela concerned or upon some other undisclosed evidence which remains unavailable to us at present. On the other hand, the Year 4 burial may well be from the 25th Dynasty and possibly that of Taharqa, as Malinine et al. suggest, rather than to Year 4 of Shoshenq V as per Mariette.

The second of our problems stems from some research into the private donors of the stelae, based on a cross-checking of the principal donor’s name and his immediate family, if and when recorded on the stela. The table [Fig. 4] represents, in a visual format, the reoccurrence of private names on the stelae of the different burials. In most cases the secondary evidence of the father and mother of the donor enables us to eliminate false instances of donation stelae which might otherwise appear to have been made by the same individual over the period of more than one Apis interment. However, at least two exceptional cases need some comment. Between the burial in Year 6 of Bakenrenerf and the burial in Year 21 of Psamtik I - a period of 70 years - two individuals appear to be in attendance at both events.

First we have the wrw priest of Letopolis, Senebef, son of ‘Ankhsheshken and Meryptah who is attested on stela 100 (Year 6 Bakenrenerf); another Senebef, with precisely the same parentage, appears on stela IM5342 [35] (Year 21 of Psamtik I - housed in the Alexandria Museum). We should therefore reasonably assume that the two stelae were donated by the same official and that he must have lived well into his nineties. On its own this exceptional longevity may not be too significant for the chronology of the late TIP, but, when we find another individual attested at precisely the same two burials, the significance must surely increase.

The name ‘Ankhwenennefer (otherwise a not uncommon name in this period) is attested on stela 92 of the time of Bakenrenerf and also on stelae 217 and 220 dated to Year 21 of Psamtik. Indications suggest that they are the same individual, because 92 gives his father as […]-ptah whilst 217 names ‘Ankhwenennefer’s parents as Nesphat and Tar (220 confirms this parentage). The broken section of the father’s name in 92 represents a single sign space and would neatly accommodate the ns tongue hieroglyph which forms the first element of the name Ns-pth. Although not an absolutely firm match, there is a strong likelihood that here too we have the same ‘Ankhwenennefer serving at two Apis burials which are 70 years apart. Both Padiusir and ‘Ankhwenennefer attending the Bakenrenerf burial, is it then very likely that we have two nonagenarians present at the burial of Psamtik’s Apis so many years later, or might the interval of time between the two Apis burials in fact have been much shorter? A word of caution must be added here, as it is of course possible that the stela of Year 21 are dedications made by the grandchildren of the Bakenrenerf officials. In other words, the Psamtik officials were given the names of their grandfathers and their fathers were also named after their grandfathers. This practice is not uncommon in this period. Here though we must note that, in the case of Senebef, it is both parents which bear the same name - this is not so easy to dismiss as family tradition.

As an illustration of the sort of confusion that has arisen from Mariette’s original excavation and Maspero’s later publication of the excavator’s results, we can set out the following observation. In the text of Mariette’s report,
presumed to be in the excavator’s own words and only edited by Maspero, we read that bulls belonging to Shoshenq V (Year 37) and Bakenrenef (Year 6) were buried in the same sepulchre (Chamber 10) [36]. On the basis that Bakenrenef’s Year 6 was apparently contemporary with Shabako’s Year 2, historians have placed the reign of Shoshenq V just before the beginning of the 25th Dynasty proper. If this were indeed the case then there would be little room for manoeuvre as far as any attempt at a chronological revision of this period was concerned. However, when one comes to look at the original plan of the Lesser Vaults drawn by Mariette himself [37], presumably whilst at the site, a quite different picture emerges. Chamber 10 (Mariette’s Chamber S) is attributed to Bakenrenef and Shabako, whilst it is Chamber 9 (Mariette’s R) which holds the burial of Year 37 of Shoshenq V. This would make sense of the statement that Shabako recorded his Year 2 in the same chamber as the Year 6 burial of Bakenrenef and raises some serious doubts as to the accuracy of the later publication. If the plan is correct, and the later text a mistake, then there is no evidence that Shoshenq V’s reign ended before that of Shabako.

Finally, Mariette failed to produce any material related to an Apis burial between the Year 21 interment of Psamtek I and the building of the Greater Vaults, inaugurated with the burial in Year 52 of Psamtek. The time interval in this case is 31 years which would be a record life-span for an Apis bull by a margin of several years. This suggests that we should explore the possibility of a burial having taken place somewhere between these dates, perhaps under the patronage of another monarch ruling contemporaneously with the Saite king.

Summary of the Chronological Discussion

It is hoped that the chronological material gathered together here will be useful in the search for a workable model for the history of the Third Intermediate Period. Clearly the conventional arrangement of Dynasties 21 to 26 does not sit well with the data from the Serapeum, which is one of our primary chronological sources for the post-New Kingdom era. There is at present no evidence for burials during the 21st Dynasty, which suggests that it may not have been chronologically independent of the late 20th or early 22nd Dynasties. There is also the question of the absence of burials during the middle years of the 25th Dynasty, that is unless we can definitely attribute the unnamed Year 4 burial to Taharka. Moreover, other problems imply chronological difficulties at the end of the 19th Dynasty, where the early 26th Dynasty Apis data poses some interesting questions.

Finally, there is the matter of future excavations in the Lesser Vaults of the Serapeum when, amongst many other questions that we must endeavour to answer, certain very important chronological evidence, stemming from Mariette’s original discovery, must be confirmed or corrected:

1. Is there any evidence for Mariette’s identification of a burial in Year 14 of Takelot II? The same goes for his Year 4 of Shoshenq V.

2. Does the inscription of Shabako found on a wall in the Bakenrenef chamber read Year 2, as Mariette reported, or is it possible that we are dealing with a damaged Year 10? This is a key synchronism and this year-date must be established with certainty for any chronological revision to proceed with confidence.

3. The burial chamber below Chamber 6 must be cleared, in spite of the dangers, in order to perhaps resolve the mystery of the missing 21st Dynasty burials.

4. Given the excellent results so far achieved in the re-excavation of the southern section of the Lesser Vaults, it should still be possible to identify the burial chambers of the various Apis bulls; especially those of Osorkon II, Shoshenq V and Bakenrenef. This task will go a long way towards clearing up the confusion left after the original excavation.

Part Four

The Cult of Apis

Bull worship was a common phenomenon throughout the ancient world, the principal reason for this being that the bull represented fertility in a twin capacity. To the primitive mind he was a symbol of strength and an object for emulation; but he was also one of the prime representations of fertility in agricultural life, both as ‘lord of the cattle’ and as ‘tiller of the soil’. As such it was perhaps inevitable that this strong and handsome animal would become a potent symbol of chieftainship and of kingship itself.

The Apis bull, as the living representation or ‘herald of Ptah’ (when n Ptḥ) [38], was naturally associated with the great temple of Ptah at Memphis. According to the Classical writers, the so-called ‘House of Apis’ (the Apieion of the Greeks or sēkōs = ‘stall’ of Strabo) was located inside the temple precinct [39] and the it has been claimed, although not universally accepted, that the ‘embalming house’ of Apis or wa’bet (w‘bt = ‘place of embalment’) has been discovered within the south-west quadrant of the temple enclosure [40]. It was in the sēkōs that the sacred bull spent his days. During the great annual festivals at Memphis he appeared in processions, heavily adorned with garlands of flowers and bedecked in a richly decorated harness. He also had his own ‘Window of Appearance’ in which he could appear, like the king, before the courtiers and suppliants who came to ask the god to grant them favours.

As we have already noted, the Apis cult was especially popular in the Late Period and Graeco-Roman era, and we have discussed the burial ground of the sacred bulls in the Serapeum from the mid-18th Dynasty down to the end of the Ptolemaic Dynasty. The existence of the Apis cult, however, goes back at least to the Old Kingdom. Apis is mentioned on the Palermo Stone under the entries for the 5th king of the 1st Dynasty, Den/Udium (Manetho’s ‘Usaphis’), and then under his successor Anedjib (‘Miebis’) [41]. The former entry records a Year X+12 in which ‘The first occurrence of the Running of Apis’ took place [42] - presumably the first occasion in that reign. One tradition, handed down to us by the Classical author Aelian [43], relates that the Apis cult was initiated by king Menes, founder of the 1st Dynasty, and, indeed, a brief inscription upon a stone bowl, now in the Michaelides Collection, confirms that the Apis cult existed at the beginning of the 1st Dynasty [44]. This vessel bears the serekh (the Horus

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Name set within a depiction of a palace facade of king Aha (whom a number of authorities believe to have been the Mnt of the later king lists) and next to it the earliest occurrence of the phrase *sp tpy phrr Hf* ‘First occasion of the Running of Apis’.

**Fig. 4: Michaelides’ bowl inscription.**

On the other hand, Manetho places the establishment (?) of the Apis and Mnevis cults in the reign of king Kaiechos [45] (the Ra’neb Kakau of the monuments), second ruler of the 2nd Dynasty. However, with the evidence at our disposal, we can be quite certain that Apis played an important ceremonial role in the activities of the early 1st Dynasty and hence the origins of bull worship probably lie even earlier, in Predynastic times, at the dawn of Egyptian civilization.

**The Heb-Sed Rites**

The association of strong kingship with the virility and strength of a young bull is reflected in the adoption by the rulers of the New Kingdom of the name ‘Horus, the strong bull ...’ (*Hr k3 nb) and the celebrations of the Heb-Sed or ‘jubilee’ festival when the ruler of Egypt rejuvenated his power in a magical ritual which appears to have involved the Apis bull in some way. The image of the bull-king as a potent metaphor of kingship is nicely demonstrated with a quotation from the Arman stela of Thutmose III:

> He slew seven lions by archery in a single moment, having already taken the skins of twelve bulls in a single hour. And by breakfast-time their tails were (already) at his backside. [46]

Here then, following a successful military campaign in northern Syria, Thutmose undertakes a hunt of the great beasts which symbolise kingship. By slaying these powerful animals, he is able to adorn himself with their tails to signify that he, the king of Egypt, is the great lion and the mighty bull. Armed with this basic understanding of one important aspect of kingship, we can then go on to discuss certain aspects of the king’s jubilee festival itself.

During the first half of this entury it was proposed that the Heb-Sed rites may have evolved from an archaic ceremony dating to Predynastic times whereby the pharaoh underwent ritual regicide when he had reached a certain age [47]. This hypothesis was argued by Petrie [48] and was later supported by Emery:

> This festival was a survival of a time when the monarch was not allowed to reign for a longer period than thirty years ...

> The king was a being apart and as the living Horus was the link between gods and men; as such he must not be allowed to fail either from age or ill health. It would appear probable that in primitive times, when the king showed sign of failing powers, he was forcibly removed by death. [49]

This scenario was paralleled in the ethnographic record; for example, in 1934, Seligman argued that certain East African tribes undertook customary regicide [50]. He was able to show that the Sudanese Shilluk tribe had for centuries performed the ritual slaying of their king when he had outlived his usefulness [51]. Strabo [52] and Diodorus Siculus [53], between them, tell of a similar practice in the Late Period kingdom of Ethiopia where the priests apparently ordered the king to end his life so that they could appoint another younger man in his place. Diodorus adds the information that the practice was not abolished until as late as the 3rd century BC. Thus there appeared to be some evidence that kings or chieftains may have been customarily sacrificed for the good of their people in both ancient and fairly recent times.

On the other hand, in terms of modern anthropological thinking, these sorts of ideas are not widely accepted and anthropologists now reject actual regicide as proposed by the Frazerian school of anthropology which was fashionable in the early 20th century.

However, if one follows the earlier thinking of Murray, Petrie and Emery, in terms of ancient Egyptian civilisation, one must suppose that a late Predynastic or Protodynastic king broke the mould by transferring the actual sacrifice to the deities associated with kingship which were represented on Earth by certain sacred animals. The king himself only underwent a ritualised murder, as Osiris at the hands of Seth, during his Heb-Sed, to be reborn in all his strength and glory as Horus. Thus this admirably astute ruler was able to acquire instead the power of the gods by eating them and, at the same time, managed to remain on the throne until death resulted from more natural causes!

**The Death of Apis**

Moving on from this scenario we may tentatively take one step further by adding to it another theory which has been postulated about the Apis cult. It was suggested by Leca (and others) that the Apis bull, as one of the principal representations of kingship, was drowned, as the Classical writers relate, in a re-enactment of the death of Osiris, so that the king could regain his strength by devouring the flesh of the god incarnate and therefore continue his rule with renewed vigour:

Their late after death was radically different in the classical Egyptian period from later times, for up to the Nineteenth Dynasty and perhaps later they were eaten. ... It is not unlikely that the bull was ceremonially devoured, in a rite similar to the one described in a pyramid text as the ‘cannibal hymn’, in which the dead pharaoh consumes the flesh of the gods and so becomes their equal. ... Through this sympathetic magic, the deceased king could acquire the force and power of the gods, and one can easily imagine a similar rite in which the pharaoh ate the Apis’ flesh and marrow in order to take on his strength and virility. [54]

The so-called ‘Cannibal Hymn’ is to be found engraved on the East Wall of the Antechamber in the pyramid of king Unas, last ruler of the 5th Dynasty, and forms a section (Utterances 273 & 274) in the collection of funerary prayers known as the Pyramid Texts. The relevant extracts are as follows:

A god who lives on his fathers, who feeds on his mothers! ... Unas is the bull of heaven, who rages in his heart, who lives on the being of every god, who eats their entrails when they come, their bodies full of magic from the Isle of Flame. ... Unas
will judge with Him-whose-name-is-hidden on the day of slaying the eldest. Unas is lord of offerings who knits the chord, who himself prepares the meal. Unas is he who eats men, feeds on gods, master of messengers who sends instructions: it is Horn-grasper [in Kehau] who lassoes them for Unas; it is Serpent Raised-head who guards, who holds them for him; it is Khnum, slayer of lords, who cuts their throats for Unas, who tears their entrails out for him, he the envoy who is sent to punish. It is Shesmu who carves them up for Unas, cooks meals of them for him in his dinner-pots. ... Unas has risen again in heaven, he is crowned as lord of lightland. He has smashed bones and marrow, he has seized the hearts of gods, ... The dignities of Unas will not be taken from him, for he has swallowed the knowledge of every god; ... Lo, their power is in Unas' belly, their spirits are before Unas as broth of the gods, cooked for Unas from their bones. [55]

The phrase 'it is Horn-grasper who lassoes them for Unas' suggests that we are dealing at least in part with bovine gods and this would compare well with the scenes of corrilled carde (and antelopes) on the Narmer mace-head which may represent a scene from the king's Heb-Sed (see Fig. 4).

Thus we can find here an explanation of the remains discovered by Mariette in the intact burials of Horemheb and Ramesses II (discussed above). The reason why only piles of blackened bones were found under the coffin lids was probably because the bulls had been cooked and eaten, the bones then having been collected together, perhaps painted in bitumen to preserve them, and deposited in the graves in a fairly arbitrary manner. Very similar burials of oxen were found by Caton-Thompson at the Predynastic settlement at Hemamieh, indicating that the practice goes back to the earliest of times [56]. The ritual of the eating of Apis, probably by the king, may have continued right up to the late 26th Dynasty when the introduction of stone sarcophagi suggests that the bulls were, from then on, mummified. Past support for this aspect of this scenario has come from a number of respected scholars such as M. Chassinat [57], Margaret Murray [58] and R. Mond & O. Myers - the excavators of the Buechum [59]. With the archaeological evidence strongly in favour of Apis being devoured in a kingship ritual, we must now return to the question of the death of the bull to complete the picture.

The idea that the Apis may have been drowned, as related by certain Classical authors [60], has been thought unlikely by most of the Egyptologists who have discussed the matter [61]. However, the arguments against the witness of those earlier writers tend to be somewhat difficult to sustain. It has been said by scholars such as Hopfner that the sacrifice of a living god would be anathema to any Egyptian; this is quite so, but in this instance, the very act of drowning avoids the physical killing of the bull by human hand. What has been missed in their argument, is that, by drowning, the bull passed into the other world, in the manner of Osiris whom Apis represented in death. Death by drowning was a sacred occurrence to the ancient Egyptians and anyone who passed into the other world in this manner was honoured with the title of kwy - a 'praised one'. We should add here that it has also been determined that Apis not only represented Ptah and Osiris, but also the two great fertility symbols of the sun and the Nile [62] and, furthermore, there was an instruction that the bull should never be permitted to drink water taken from the Nile itself [63]. Could it be that this taboo had something to do with the ceremonial drowning of Apis? In other words, the sacred animal was forbidden to drink of the waters which would eventually relieve him of this world.

On two stelae of Year 30 of Ramesses II found in the Scraperun (Nos. 4 & 5) the phrase wd3 hm n Hp r khyt r khy w'et occurs. Chassinat translated this as 'the majesty of Apis was carried away in the kehebet in order to rest in the wa'et', and understood the term kehebet to mean 'waters of purification' (from the root khy 'to purify with water'). Thus he argued that this was evidence from a non-Classic source of the death of Apis by drowning [64]. Percouvert, on the other hand, sees this ceremony as part of the purification rites after the death of the bull [65] and throws out the numerous declarations of the Classical authors on the ceremonial drowning of Apis. What might resolve the issue is research into the use of the phrase hm n Hp 'the person of Apis'. Just as hm is used to denote the person of the living king and does not occur in expressions for the deceased monarch, so hm n Hp does not appear to occur in Apis texts where the bull can be shown to have already been dead. If this observation can be confirmed by further research, then we can suggest that it was a living Apis that was brought to the water before being taken, now presumably dead, to the embalming house. It may therefore be possible to translate the crucial phrase in the following manner.

The person of Apis proceeded towards the place of drowning in order to rest (in) the embalming-house.
Apis in the Heb-Sed

The ceremonial boundary run of the king, illustrated on the wooden label of king Den from Abydos and on many of the later Heb-Sed scenes, shows the king wearing a bull’s tail and racing between groups of three markers which presumably represent a delineation of the boundaries of the kingdom [66]. One of the most famous of these representations is that of king Zoser, located in a niche deep within the Step Pyramid [67]. In this case the king holds the flail in his right hand and papyrus roll (the imyty-pr = ‘house document’) in his left, just as in king Den’s label. Later versions of the ‘king’s run’, such as the finely carved relief of Senusret I found at Coptos and now housed in the Petrie Museum, portray the king holding the hp sign (Gardiner’s Aa5 – ‘part of the steering gear of ships?’) [68] and an oar (Gardiner’s P8) which may be read as either hpr or wsr [69]. Thus we could have here twin symbols which are in effect both sportive writings of Apis (Hpwy). On the other hand it might be more interesting to suggest that these two emblems represent the phonetic equivalent of Wsr-Hpwy, that is Osiris-Apis – in other words that the emblems ‘identify’ the king as the reborn Osiris in the form of Apis as he performs the boundary run. It is interesting to note that, prior to the running ceremony, the ‘opening of the mouth’ rite is performed using the foreleg of a bull as well as the more usual adze (nw cf. Pyr. 311) [70].

The association between the ‘king’s run’ and Apis is finally and absolutely assured with the depiction of the Apis bull and the pharaoh running side by side in scenes from the Heb-Sed shrine of Hatshepsut, occurring twice, on two separate blocks [71]. Thus we are able to bring forward the ceremony of the ‘Running of Apis’ from the 1st Dynasty right up to the New Kingdom and to within a few generations of the earliest Apis so far found at the Serapeum itself.

Fig. 7: One of the two sandstone blocks from the bark shrine of Hatshepsut at Karnak. The king is shown running beside the Apis bull holding the nhwy-flail and imyty-pr-scroll.

Further indications of the intimate connection between the bull, the Heb-Sed, Apis and kingship, can be briefly dealt with here. The literal meaning of the name of the festival itself is the ‘Festival of the Tail’ (i.e. hh = festival, and sd = tail) and the king wears a bull’s tail during the Heb-Sed ceremonies. The Niuserra’ (5th Dynasty) Heb-Sed reliefs at Abusir show a scene of the king hoening the ground, apparently a ceremony of foundation for a festival palace [72]. This closely parallels the scene on the Scorpion mace-head [73] where the king is depicted, hoe in hand, performing just such a ceremony, perhaps on this occasion for the cutting of a canal. Could this in turn have a symbolic connection with the bull furrowing the ground with his hoof or as the plougher of fields? The hieroglyphic sign for the hoe (Gardiner’s U6 & 7) and, next to it, a furrow are represented on the ‘Aha label which also depicts boats performing the following of Horus’ (Smn-Hr), a journey up the Nile which formed part of the Heb-Sed. Significantly this label also contains the earliest representation of a running bull.

Finally, at Illahun, Petrie uncovered a Heb-Sed shrine, at the corners of which four pits had been dug - each contained the head of a bull. Could the remains of these animals have any connection with the horned gods of the ‘Cannibal Hymn’?

The implication of all this would appear to be that the king was playing the part of Apis, for at least part of the proceedings, in its capacity to represent fertility and as a manifestation of kingship. Perhaps we may go further by arguing that the Apis bull is as much
the representation of the king in the animal world (in particular in his aspect of fertility) as the more obvious Horus falcon. Thus we can be safe in assuming that Apis was one of the king's principal incarnations.

By making this statement we raise the issue of whether there could ever have been a period when more than one Apis was living at the same time. This point is crucial for those attempting to construct a new TIP chronology, for with separate lines of Apis bulls associated with different contemporary dynasties, there would be little restriction as to when the burials of these bulls might be placed. On the other hand, a single line of bulls imposes upon any attempted chronological compression of the late TIP a requirement that donation stelae naming different rulers must, in certain instances, belong to the same burial. Thus any model put forward has to lock the dynasties together in such a way as to align certain of the Apis burial dates. For example, it is impossible to place the record of an Apis burial under any king between Year 28 of Shoshenq III and Year 2 of Ptomay because the Pediese stelae inform us that only one bull spanned this interval. Only a double line of Apis bulls would allow for an intervening burial.

Given the close association between the king and Apis, if it is at all possible that each dynastic family felt it necessary to possess its own parallel line of Apis bulls? The issue is certainly an intriguing one, but, until it can be definitely shown otherwise, it would be expedient to build the chronological model for the TIP on the basis that there was only a single line of bulls, representing the kingship of Egypt as a whole, to whose burials dedicatory stelae from the representatives of more than one king were deposited in the vaults.

The Early Kemyt of Apis

A clue to the whereabouts of the Old Kingdom Apis burials may come from the discovery of two miniature alabaster lion beds by Firth, the first excavator of the Zoser Step Pyramid complex. These beds bear an uncanny likeness to the three small lion beds found in the Apis House at Memphis by Badawi. The questions that arise from these two discoveries are: a) do these lion beds have an association with Apis and, more to the point, a function specific to Apis? And b) if so, does the find spot of the Saikara lion beds point to the location of an earlier Serapeum within the 3rd Dynasty funerary complex?

What is intriguing about the Firth beds is that they were discovered at one end of an enormous vault running along the whole length of the western side of the Step Pyramid complex [74]. The vault has not been properly excavated beyond a few metres because it is in an extremely dangerous condition. However, from the little which has been investigated, the vault appears to be of a similar design to the Serapeum with a long central gallery and side-chambers. The chambers which had been entered by Firth, at one end of the vault, apparently contained quantities of animal bones and pottery. Although the idea has since been forgotten, it is interesting to note that Mariette himself believed that the Step Pyramid complex would ultimately prove to be the site of the earlier Serapeum [75].

The four miniature lion-beds found in the Apis House. The simple block with markedly different leonine features, and bearing the inscription of Necho II, is set up on the right of the others. [Photo: D. Rohl]

The fact that only three beds were found by Badawi along with a simple block, with entirely different stylistic features but bearing the cartouche of Necho II, suggests that this block was set up as the replacement for a missing fourth lion-bed (the miniature beds/altars, as a set of four, were probably used in the preparation of the viscera before being placed in the four canopic vessels). The question then is whether this might suggest the exciting possibility that, during the 26th Dynasty refurbishment of the Apis House, the three lion-beds were recovered from the Step Pyramid vault, where their sister beds were found in modern times. That the 26th Dynasty were actively involved in 'archaeological' work in the immediate area has already been established by the discovery of a Saite gallery driven into the Step Pyramid itself. During such work it is surely quite likely that they recovered artefacts from a much earlier period, given their archaising spirit, and re-employed them in their own buildings such as the Apis House. It would be a simple matter to check out whether indeed we have a matching set of four beds and this will be done during the ISIS study tour this August.

Fig. 8: Cross-section of the western side of the Zoser Step Pyramid complex showing the location of the underground vaults. [Illustration: D. Rohl]

In spite of the dangers inherent in such an operation, a reopening of the Step Pyramid western vaults may unlock the mystery of the missing kemyt of the Old Kingdom (and perhaps even Middle and early New Kingdoms). Needless to say, the location of the earlier Serapeum would certainly be of tremendous historical importance, given the quantity of inscribed material that one might expect to be retrieved from such a magnificent discovery. □
The Pasenhor Stela

SHOSHENK V
Pasenhor
Hemptah
Pasenhor
Hemptah
Djedptahef'ankh
OSORKON
OSORKON
Nimlot
Paihuty
Mawasan

Nimlot
TAKELOT
SHOSHENK 10
Shoshenk
Nebneshi
Buyuwawa

[1] Introduction of the aforemenioned god [Osiris-Apis] to his father [Ptah] in Year 12, 4th month of Peret, day 4, of King (nsw) Akheperret, [2] Son of Ra', SHOSHENK. He was born in Year 11 of his Person. He came to rest in his place (st.f) [3] in the Sacred Land in Year 37, 3rd month of Akhet, day 27 of his Person.

May he give life, stability, health, and joy to [4] his Beloved Son, the priest of Neith, the God's Father (?), PASENhor - the son (s3) of the Mayor, Overseer of the South (?), Overseer of the Prophets in Heracleopolis, Overseer of the [5] Troops, HEMPTAH; born of (ma.n) the Prophet of Hathor of Heracleopolis, his sister, the Lady of the Household, Iretiru - [6] the son (s3) of (the same titles) (mi nn), PASENhor; born of the Sistrum Bearer of Arsaphes, King (nsw) of the Two Lands, Ruler (hk3) of the Two Banks, [7] Pthahedes (? - the son of (the same titles) HEMPTAH; begotten by (ir.n) (the same titles) Tjaenket - the son of (the same titles) [8] DJEP-TAHET'ANKH; begotten by the Prophet of Hathor of Heracleopolis, the King's Daughter (s3i nsw), the Lady of the Household, Tentspeh - the (royal) son of (s3) [a] (the same titles) Nimlot; [9] begotten by the Sistrum Bearer of Arsaphes ..., Tentspeh - the son (s3) of the Lord of the Two Lands OSORKON; begotten by Djed-
mutes'ankh - the (royal) son of TAKELOT, [10] and the God's Mother (mt ntr) Kapes - the (royal) son of OSORKON, and the God's Mother Tashedkhons - the (royal) son of SHOSHENK, and the God's Mother Ka-
ra'mat' [11] - (and?) [b] the God's Father (it ntr), the Great Chief (wr '3) Nimlot, and the God's Mother Tent-
speh - the son of (the same titles) SHOSHENK; begotten by the Mother of the King (mwt nsw) [12] Mehtenweskhet - the son of (the same titles) PAHUTY - the son of (the same titles) NEBNEHSI - the son of (the same titles) [13] MAWAN - the son of the Libyan Buyuwawa.

Fixed (x2), enduring (x2), [14] established (x2), flourishing (x2), in the House of Arsaphes ..., being one man the son of one (other) [15] man [c], without being obliterated until eternity (x2) and the end of time (x2) in Heracleopolis. - Eds.
The Pasenhor Stela The Genealogy

Orthodox Interpretation

BUYUWAWA ('the Libyan')
GC MAWASAN
GC NEBNEshi
GC PAIHUTY

GC SHOSHENK = Mehtenweskhet

GC NIMLOT = Tentseph (OSORKON)

SHOSHENK = Kara'ma't

OSORKON = Tashedkhons

TAKELOT = Kapes

OSORKON = Djedmutes'ankh

NIMLOT = Tentseph

DJEDPTAHEF'ANKH = Tentseph

HEMPTAH = Tjankemit

Ptahdedes = PASENHOR

Iretirou = HEMPTAH

PASENHOR (Year 37 Shoshenk V)

Revised Interpretation

BUYUWAWA ('the Libyan')

3C MAWASAN
3C NEBNEshi
GC PAIHUTY

GC SHOSHENK = Mehtenweskhet

GC NIMLOT = Tentseph

DJEDPTAHEF'ANKH = Tentseph

HEMPTAH = Tjankemit

Ptahdedes = PASENHOR

Iretirou = HEMPTAH

PASENHOR (Year 37 Shoshenk V)


As an example of one alternative interpretation: By identifying NIMLOT and Tentseph, who are mentioned twice in the text, as one and the same couple, we are able to postulate that the Pasenhor genealogy divides into two at this point, giving us the ancestors of both husband and wife. As can be seen, this reinterpretation does not affect the generation positions of the four 22nd Dynasty kings in respect of SHOSHENK V.
Notes and References

1. The study and publication of the results of the current excavations is the subject of a doctoral thesis being prepared by Mohamed Ibrahim at the University of London.
3. For the first treatment of the subject see K. Kest: Der Götterglaube im Alten Ägypten (Leipzig, 1941). Even for the Old and Middle Kingdom periods, while there is clear evidence for the existence of the Apis and Mnevis bulls, and of other sacred bulls and cows, there is little detail of the nature of the cult and burial rites. For a general account see E. Otto: Beiträge zur Geschichte der Stierkulturen in Ägypten (Hildesheim, 1964).
5. Herodotus II. 153.
7. Plutarch: De Iside et Osiride, 35.
10. The Apis bull was one of several gods equated with the Ba of Path: see L. Zabier: A Study of the Ba concept in the Ancient Egyptian Texts (Chicago, 1968), p. 13; E. Otto: op. cit. [3], p. 27.
11. Diodorus Siculus: op. cit. [9], 85.
15. This account of Mariette's discovery is the usual romantic version given by his biographer and later writers. However, J. Mallet has shown that 'Who Was the First to Identify the Saqqara Serapeum?' in Chronique d'Egypte LVIII (1983), pp. 69-72 that the location of the Serapeum was already known to an Englishman, A. C. Harris.
16. These stone sarcophagi were installed between 20 and 23 of Amasis onwards, those from Year 52 of Psamtik II and onwards presumably being of wood which has not survived. For a discussion of the date of the introduction of stone sarcophagi see B. Gunn: 'Two Misunderstood Egyptian Inscriptions' in ASAE 26 (1926), pp. 92-94.
18. For the Ramesses II burials see Mariette: op. cit. [2], pp. 63-64; and for that of Horemheb see same work p. 67.
20. This work was undertaken for and will be published by the Egyptian Exploration Society, which has also re-examined the lower section of the Serapeum Way, see D. G. Jeffrey & H. S. Smith: The Anubian Vol. 1: The Settlements and Temple Precinct (London, 1986), forthcoming, Chs. 7 & 8.
22. The numbering system used here is that adopted in the new catalogue, op. cit. [21], as the last of a confusing series of catalogue numbers allocated to these stelae. Given the problem of referencing these inscriptions, it was felt best to adopt the new numbers, as the 1968 catalogue gives full referencing to all previous numbering systems.
24. For other blocks carrying the name of Sheshonqerem found at Memphis see A. R. Schulman: Two Unrecognized Monuments of Sheshonqerem in JNES 45 (1986), p. 193-
27. J. Verouc: 'Sarapis' in Lexikon der Ägyptologie, Vol. V, (Wiesbaden, 1984), col. 870 and others continue to consider the remains found at this site as being those of the Memphis, as it is indicated by the best preserved set of Heb-Sed reliefs adorning the festival gateway of Osorkon II at Bubastis. There, a long procession of prophets carrying standards is labelled as the 'Shemnu Hor' (Shemnu Hor), the 'Followers of Horus', see E. P. Uphill: 'The Egyptian Sed-Festival Rites in JNES 24 (1965), p. 371) - a name which the Turin Canon ascribes to the earliest kings.
29. Petrie: op. cit. [42], pp. 74 & 168.
32. Strabo Book XXVI, 1, 33.
33. Diodorus Siculus Book III, 5.
38. M. & Myers: op. cit. [51], p. 4.
39. Ibid., pp. 4-7.
40. Pinty: Natural History Book VIII, 46, Ammianus Marcellinus Book XXII, 4, 7, Solinus, 32.
41. B. S. Hooker: Der Tierkult der Alten Ägypten (Vienna, 1914), p. 84; and Verouc: op. cit. [26], col. 346 ff.
42. M. & Myers: op. cit. [56], p. 15.
43. M. & Myers: op. cit. [56], p. 8.
44. Chatton: op. cit. [32], col. 347.
45. Verouc: op. cit. [26], col. 347.
46. See H. Kees: Der Opferzustand des ägyptischen Königs (Leipzig, 1912).
49. Ibid., p. 499.
50. Uphill: op. cit. [47], p. 379.
51. See P. Lacau: Sur un des Blocs de la Reine Mat'akare Provenant du Temple de Pelleon de Memphis in JARCE XXVI (1926), pp. 131-38.
52. Uphill: op. cit. [47], p. 369.
53. See for example Hoffman: op. cit. [51], p. 214-15.

There is doubt as to the find location of this block. If it can be identified with IM157 then Mariette's notes read as follows: 'Le 25h juillet 1851. Cette pierre avait été employée pour le dallage qui unit les deux terrasses. However in the new catalogue, 18 of its coordinates do not lie in the same position, it is stated that SN 82 (i.e. "sans numéro" - original # name now lost), which contains the only cartouche of this king in the whole of the surviving catalogue, was "trouvée avec des stèles datées de l'an 14". The trouble is that the location is still given by the title as the "living Apis, the Herald of Path, who carrie the true word to Him-with-the-loathe-face."