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Frederick W. Read

Nouvelles remarques sur la Pierre de Palerme.

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NOUVELLES REMARQUES
SUR LA PIERRE DE PALERME

PAR

M. F. W. READ.

M. Joseph Offord, qui a bien voulu rédiger trois comptes rendus de mes deux publications sur les nouveaux fragments de la pierre de Palerme conservés au Musée du Caire [1], vient d'avoir, en outre, l'amabilité de me transmettre, pour être inséré dans notre *Bulletin*, l'article suivant dû à la plume autorisée de M. F. W. Read, le savant anglais qui depuis quelques années s'est tout spécialement intéressé à l'interprétation des textes de la pierre de Palerme [2]. Je remercie très vivement M. F. W. Read pour l'offre gracieuse qu'il vient de faire à notre *Bulletin*. Son travail est plein d'intéressantes observations et de suggestions nouvelles, et je me plais à espérer que, grâce à la collaboration de tous les savants s'intéressant à ces questions, nous serons bientôt en mesure de nous faire une idée précise du contenu de ces premières annales de la monarchie pharaonique.

H. GAUTHIER.

Juin 1916.

REVIEW.

Quatre nouveaux Fragments de la Pierre de Palerme, par H. GAUTHIER (*Le Musée Égyptien*, t. III, 2ᵉ fascicule). Publication du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte, 1915.

In this finely produced work the Service des Antiquités has given to the world of archæologists the fragments which have excited so much interest since it was known that they had been acquired by the Cairo Museum in 1910. The publication consists of eight plates and 25 pages of text by the editor. An enumeration of the plates will indicate how thoroughly the work has been done. Plate XXIV gives the recto of the largest fragment (about the size of

[1] Cf. *Ancient Egypt*, vol. III, 1916, p. 16, pour la petite note que j'ai publiée dans les *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* (année 1914, p. 489); *The Athenæum*, n° 4605, mai 1916, p. 255, et *The Egyptian Gazette*, 13 mai 1916, pour le travail plus complet que j'ai donné en 1915 dans *Le Musée Égyptien*, t. III, 2ᵉ fascicule.

[2] Voir *Egyptian Royal Accessions during the Old Kingdom*, dans les *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archæology*, vol. XXXVI, 1914, p. 282 et seq., et vol. XXXVII, 1915, p. 34 et seq.

BIFAO 12 (1916), p. 215-222 Frederick W. Read
Nouvelles remarques sur la Pierre de Palerme.
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the first-known fragment now at Palermo) and Plate XXV shows the three upper registers (*i. e.* the better preserved portion) on a larger scale, while Plate XXVI presents the complete verso and Plate XXVII its second and third registers. Plate XXVIII indicates the relative positions of the old and the new fragments on the recto of the original monument and Plate XXIX does the same for the verso. Plate XXX shows us Fragments 2 and 3 and Plate XXXI Fragment 4 (on these fragments the verso has been totally obliterated).

A question of some importance arises on the first consideration of these venerable remains of the annals of the Egyptian Kings, namely, whether there was more than one «Palermo Stone», and, if so, how many. M. Gauthier says there were «au moins deux pierres», thus admitting the possibility of more than two, but he evidently inclines to the view that his first three fragments made part of the same stone as the fragment at Palermo, while the fourth is from another source. The last statement is not open to doubt, as the stone is two centimetres (more than three-quarters of an inch) thicker than the old fragment of Palermo, and it is inconceivable that one and the same monument should vary so greatly. It is as little open to doubt that Fragment 1 originally belonged to the stone of which the first discovered portion is preserved in the Palermo Museum. The two are not only of the same thickness, but the arrangement and the style of carving are absolutely identical. We think, however, that Fragments 2 and 3 are not from this monument, but that they formed part of still a third «Palermo Stone». Fragment 2 contains annals of Khufu and therefore would, if belonging to the old Palermo Stone, almost certainly have been part of line 6 of the recto (which contains his predecessor Senefru) or of line 7. Now all the lines of the recto (so far as it has survived) are arranged in three divisions : first, a narrow band for the name of the king, and therefore blank for the most part; second, a series of compartments for the annals, one for each year; and third, a series of quite small compartments for the Nile-height. In Fragment 2 there is no band for the king's name : immediately below the Nile-height are the annals of the next line. It is true it cannot be absolutely proved that *no line* of the recto had this arrangement because of the loss of the lowest lines, but it is not found on any portion even of the verso until we reach line 4 with such comparatively late kings as Sahura and Neferarkara of the Vth Dynasty. In the

BIFAO 12 (1916), p. 215-222 Frederick W. Read
Nouvelles remarques sur la Pierre de Palerme.
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later portion of the annals, where a year takes ten or eleven times the space that it does in the early dynasties, and the name of the king is written at the head of each, the upper band is useless; but the scribe of the Palermo Stone continued it from force of habit long after it was wanted. We suggest that the scribe of Fragment 2 ceased to use the band at a much earlier stage or may even have adopted an arrangement, as by writing the name at the beginning of each reign, which avoided the waste of space in the largely blank upper band. In any case, it is almost impossible to fit Fragment 2 into the Palermo Stone. Moreover, the style is altogether coarser than that of the old fragment and the new Fragment 1. As it appears to us, then, the fragment at Palermo and Fragment 1 are from one monument, Fragments 2 and 3 from another, and Fragment 4 from a third.

The editor has determined the relative positions of the old fragment and the new Fragment 1 by means of the annals of Userkaf on the verso. On the extreme right of the new fragment we have the last part of « the year after the first census ». The remaining portion of the stone is occupied by the bulk of another year, which was of course « the year of the second census », though the final lines are lost. Still further to the left must have come « the year after the second census », and next to that « the year of the third census », which is completely preserved on the old fragment[1]. The space occupied by this last year enables the width of stone lost to be ascertained, always assuming that the three years in question occupied equal spaces. The method, however, is not infallible because we do not know that these years did occupy equal spaces. On lines 2 to 5 of the recto the year-spaces in each line are equal, though they vary from line to line. When we arrive at Senefru with line 6 the annals become more detailed and commence to approximate to the style of those on the verso; and coincidently, as we might expect, the space allowed to a year begins to vary. Of the three years of Senefru preserved, the first is 1 1/2 times as large as each of the other two. So also, of the three years of the same king on Fragment 4, the first is as large as the other two together. We are not able to make similar comparisons for the verso, owing to the

[1] Schäfer, *Ein Bruchstück altägyptischer Annalen* (*Abhandlungen der Berl. Akad. der Wissenschaften*, 1902). Other editions are : Naville, *Recueil de Travaux*, vol. XXV (1903), p. 64; Pellegrini, *Archivio Storico Siciliano*, Nuova Serie, Anno XX (1895), p. 297.

BIFAO 12 (1916), p. 215-222 Frederick W. Read
Nouvelles remarques sur la Pierre de Palerme.
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greater space there occupied by a year, but it is to be presumed that the differences between years did not diminish with the lapse of time. It is obvious that such differences might greatly modify the number of years to be counted on the recto, and such modification would have an important bearing on certain arguments as to the length of individual reigns.

We believe that it is possible to determine the width of the lacuna by means of the recto itself and thus obtain greater certainty than the verso can afford. It so happens that the length of reign of the Horus Neter-n, whose protocol appears in line 4 of the old fragment, can be calculated with almost perfect accuracy. The record of the censuses begins with this line and the year immediately preceding the commencement of the protocol in the upper band is that of the 8th census. The king had therefore reigned 16 years, though 10 only have been preserved. Counting another 16 years on the other side of the protocol and adding seven for the spaces over which the protocol is written, we arrive at a reign of 39 years. It is now clear that if we can find the end of this reign on the new fragment, not only the number of years missing but the exact width they occupied will be known, since all the spaces were equal. Not having seen the stone we are bound to speak with all reserve, but we think there is a faint trace on the plate of a vertical line cutting the upper band (the usual indication of the end of a reign) under the third year-space from the end of the short reign in line 3. That there is *a* division at this point is certain as one is shown there on the editor's plan (Plate XXVIII), and it is visible as far as the lower margin of the upper band (though much fainter beyond that); and therefore cannot well be the ordinary mark of division, ⸢, which *never* touches the horizontal line above. If our interpretation is correct, the lacuna contained about 11 years, there being 20 up to the left edge of the old fragment and 8 on the new. It may be replied, however, that there are elements of uncertainty in the length of the reign, and this must be admitted to be so. In the first place, there is no evidence so far as to whether the first census of a reign was taken in the first or the second year, or whether it simply continued the series of the previous reign. Further, although the substantial truth of the views stated as to the position of the protocol in the upper band and the space occupied by it is not open to doubt, it might be argued from the 6 years and a fraction in line 5 of the old fragment, forming the

BIFAO 12 (1916), p. 215-222 Frederick W. Read
Nouvelles remarques sur la Pierre de Palerme.
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end of a reign lasting 17 years and a fraction, *without any portion of the protocol being visible,* that in that case at any rate it either did not stand precisely in the centre of the reign or was shorter than usual. In view of these possibilities, it is fortunate that we have the means of controlling by other evidence the estimated length of the reign of the Horus Neter-n. In line 2 the year-spaces lost must, as M. Gauthier has pointed out, have amounted to an even number because of the feast of «the following of Horus» occurring every two years. It will also be found that four spaces in line 2 are approximately equal to five in line 3 and to six in line 4. Further, if the margins of the lacuna in line 2 (counting the two small portions of spaces on either side wholly in the lacuna) are continued, the missing portion of the stone is seen to be about half a space wider at line 3 and about one space wider at line 4 than at line 2. There will therefore be, according to our calculation of eleven spaces in the lacuna at line 4, ten spaces to correspond with the lacuna in line 2, which will thus be equal to between six and seven spaces. Since the number must be either six or eight, six is to be preferred for two reasons : (1) it will give seven and a half spaces in line 3, which agrees with the half space remaining at the edge of the lacuna, whereas eight spaces in line 2 would require ten spaces in line 3, leaving the half space unaccounted for; (2) six spaces in line 2 will equal nine in line 4, thus giving ten altogether instead of the calculated eleven, while eight spaces in line 2 will equal twelve in line 4 and so increase the spaces to be supplied from eleven to thirteen. It is unlikely that the calculation is as much as two spaces too small seeing that this difference would have to be thrown wholly on the number of spaces under the protocol, any correction of the census periods being necessarily in the other direction. We therefore conclude that the lacuna at line 2 consisted of six spaces, at line 3 of eight ($7\ 1/2 + 1/2$), and at line 4 of ten ($9 + 1$), reckoning broken portions of spaces in every case in the lacuna.

Of the eight spaces lost in line 3 there happens to be a most interesting confirmation. In this line on the old fragment we have in the upper band the end of the protocol of a king, , which, as already explained, would be written over the middle years of the reign. As the censuses are not recorded at this period, we can only arrive at a minimum length for the reign of about 32 years. Prof. Eduard Meyer, however, has shown that if the Sed-festival,

BIFAO 12 (1916), p. 215-222 Frederick W. Read
Nouvelles remarques sur la Pierre de Palerme.
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which is recorded in the third year of those preserved, took place in the thirtieth year, the king in question must have reigned about 50 years[1]. Now on the new fragment the end of the reign is actually marked. Reckoning the lacuna at eight years, there are 18 years and a fraction after the Sed-festival, or 48 years and a fraction in all. The number of years to the end of the protocol, reckoning the year of the Sed-festival as the 30th, must be 28; there were therefore 21 on either side, or 49 in all. Thus by two quite independent calculations we arrive at substantially the same figures. It is true that 30 years for the period of the Sed-festival is not universally admitted, but this striking agreement must be regarded as confirming at one and the same time the period of thirty years and the width of the lacuna already established on other grounds[2].

From the point of view of the information directly derivable from them, it must be confessed that the new fragments are somewhat disappointing, for their state of preservation is by no means as good as that of the old. The main fragment has on the recto in line 1 the figures more or less completely preserved of ten kings wearing the upper crown, but all the names have perished. The old fragment commences with a similar row of kings wearing the lower crown, of which the names of seven are wholly and of two partly preserved. These were usually supposed to be the kings of Lower Egypt prior to the union of the country under Menes, but this was far from certain. As was pointed out by Maspero and Gauthier, the mere wearing of the lower crown proved nothing because that crown is frequently worn by the kings of united Egypt, and in the lists of kings we find the upper and the lower crowns borne alternately though no one doubts that the kings reigned over the whole country. Now, however, that we know that there was one set of kings with the lower crown and a separate set with the upper, there is strong reason to think that it really was intented to indicate the pre-Menite sovereigns ruling over Lower and Upper Egypt respectively. There is another reason pointing in the

[1] Meyer, *Aegyptische Chronologie* (*Abhandlungen der Berl. Akad. der Wissenschaften*, 1904), p. 198 = *Chronologie égyptienne* (trans. Moret), p. 285.

[2] Putting out of sight any inference to be drawn from the position of the Sed-festival, it is just barely possible that the dividing line on the new fragment might mark the end of a reign commencing in the lacuna; but the possibility is an extremely remote one.

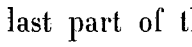
BIFAO 12 (1916), p. 215-222 Frederick W. Read
Nouvelles remarques sur la Pierre de Palerme.
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same direction. As already mentioned, in lines 2 to 5 of the recto the width of a year-space is always the same in the same line, though varying from line to line. But the scribe has not followed the same principle with the kings in line 1, nine kings on the new fragment occupying about the same space as seven on the old. This would certainly seem to show that the two series were regarded as distinct. The probability is that the kings of Lower Egypt were allotted the right half of the line and the kings of Upper Egypt the left half, and as there were more of the latter than the former each was given a smaller space. On this view the centre of the monument must have fallen in the lacuna; and it may be noted that this agrees with Meyer's reconstruction, according to which the centre was immediately to the left of the old fragment.

In lines 2 and 3 are two new protocols of kings, but they are not entirely legible. The latter part of that in line 2 may be transcribed thus : . We see clearly that the name of the king is followed by that of his mother, as had been previously conjectured from the fragmentary name  in line 3 of the old fragment. We also see that the name of the mother is preceded by  «mother», and that therefore  in line 4 of the old fragment cannot be a word meaning «son», as Sethe had supposed. There would appear to be no doubt that we have here the king , the third of the Tablet of Abydos, but that he is the same as Kenkenes, the third of Manetho's first dynasty, does not necessarily follow. If the scribe of the Palermo Stone adopted the same tradition as the very much later scribe of the Tablet of Abydos, it is evident that the theory cannot be correct which makes Menes of the king whose two final years appear to the extreme right of line 2 of the old fragment. The reign commencing immediately after the supposed Menes cannot terminate in the lacuna as the nine spaces preserved without the protocol appearing demand at least sixteen more to the end of the reign. If, then,  is to count as the third king, his predecessor ends in line 2 of the old fragment, and Menes is wholly lost. must have had a reign of about 39 years, made up of 16 years before his protocol (9 on the old fragment + 6 in the lacuna + 1 on the new fragment), 7 covered by the protocol, and 16 beyond it.

In line 3 of the new fragment there remains a complete reign of 8 1/2 years (or rather, according to the view of the present writer, a sole reign fol-

BIFAO 12 (1916), p. 215-222 Frederick W. Read
Nouvelles remarques sur la Pierre de Palerme.
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lowing a co-regency). The cartouche is totally illegible. M. Gauthier transcribes the last part of the protocol : . The signs  can hardly be correct. The termination  is unknown, and the common termination  does not occur after . Moreover, the marks which have been read as  are far too high up in the line. The supposed stroke must be the upper part of some long sign, the lower part having been erased together with the sign under . The previous king in this line will have reigned, for the reasons already fully set out, about 48 years.

In line 4 of the new fragment occurs the line marking the end of a reign which we have discussed above. The new fragment will contain the last years of the Horus Neter-n, for whom we have deduced a reign of about 38 years, and about five years of another reign. In line 5 of the old fragment there is the last part of a reign of about 17 years (counting by the censuses). Of the next reign five years are preserved, there would be about 9 in the lacuna, and 8 or 9 up to the dividing line on the new fragment, making about 23 in all. The protocol must have been wholly contained in the lacuna.

In line 6 there is an important indication which M. Gauthier does not mention, but which seems fairly clear upon the plate. In the upper band, near the right edge, is the letter  followed by a blank space and the sign . As we know from the old fragment that this line contained the annals of , it does not seem very rash to suppose that his name appeared here. This may give us some idea of the length of his reign, but the censuses seem to have got out of their regular course at this time and the year-spaces now begin to be unequal. If we may take the three years preserved on the old fragment as giving the average space for a year, there would be about four years in the lacuna and also on the new fragment. In the first year on the old fragment there is no mention of a census, the second is the year of the seventh census, and the third of the eighth census. So that, although two censuses happen to come together, it is evident that there was not a census every year. Probably on the whole they occurred once in two years as before and after. In that case there will be about 18 or 19 years of reign up to the commencement of the protocol, giving a total reign of about 44 years.

F. W. Read.

BIFAO 12 (1916), p. 215-222 Frederick W. Read
Nouvelles remarques sur la Pierre de Palerme.
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