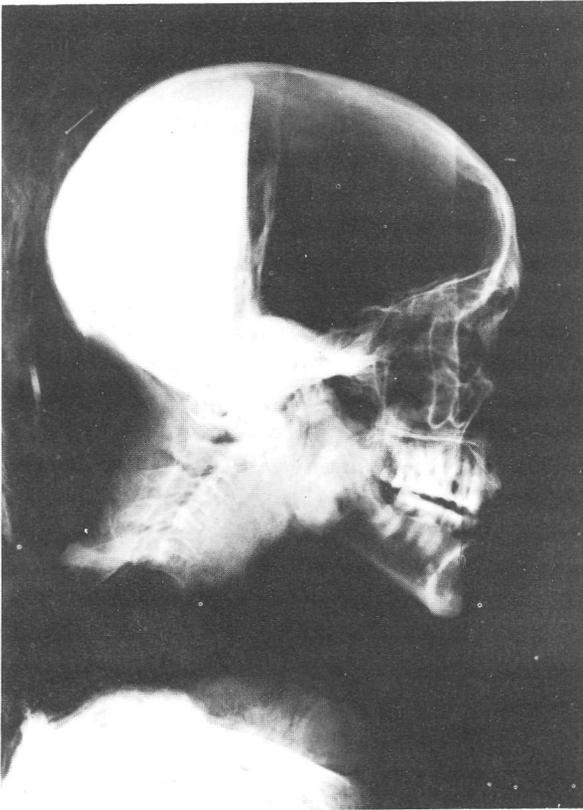


Revising Chronology

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One of the advantages of being associated with the Oriental Institute is that as our fields become increasingly specialized, we can still maintain communication not only with colleagues in the same discipline but also with experts in areas of study not so closely related to our own. Sometimes it may be by accident that two scholars in conversa-



Amenhotep III, one in a series of X-ray photographs of pharaohs of the New Kingdom being investigated for their racial types and genealogical connections. Photo by Dr. James Harris, courtesy of the University of Michigan

tion find that the topics of their individual research impinge on each other, and fruitful results can be obtained from such dialogue. Mr. Brinkman's research on the massive Nippur archives from the time of the Kassite Dynasty in Babylonia points to certain chronological corrections having a direct bearing on the history of the New Kingdom in Egypt, upon which I have been working in connection with a study of the royal mummies being conducted by Dr. James Harris of the University of Michigan.

Some time ago I prepared a background essay on the chronology and genealogies of the New Kingdom pharaohs for the Harris project, but it depended too heavily on previous estimates of the ages at death of the kings of the New Kingdom. The tentative results now coming back from pathologists examining the X-rays of these mummies have been disturbing, for most of the pharaohs now appear to have been considerably younger than earlier pathologists thought. As a result, I have had to consign my initial essay to the wastebasket—not an uncommon thing for a scholar to do. It is now apparent that any background discussion by an Egyptologist regarding the chronology and genealogy of the New Kingdom royal families should be as objective as possible and not make use of the data submitted by current pathologists or even their predecessors. Similarly Manetho's history is for the moment being disregarded in favor of total reliance on ancient Egyptian evidence.

During my service with the Epigraphic Survey I became interested in the topic of the king's jubilee, which figures prominently in the decoration of the tomb chapel of the steward of Amenhotep's famous queen Tiye. Much has been written about the royal jubilee, and it has often been stated that numerous kings celebrated this event early in their reigns. Yet none of the long-reigning kings of the New Kingdom celebrated the jubilee before the beginning of his thirtieth year of rule, thus substantiating the Greek rendition of the *heb-sed* as a thirty-year festival. This fact has suggested a reexamination of the evidence regarding supposed jubilees of kings who reigned less than thirty years, and the results would seem to indicate that the celebration of a jubilee by a king can be utilized as a valuable indicator for the length of reign.

Some rather significant adjustments in the chronology of the New Kingdom seem demanded, and the revised chronology fits in well with the recent results of Mr. Brinkman's research into Mesopotamian

chronology. When these new dates are compared with those dates used in the recent edition of the *Cambridge Ancient History* (CAH) one can appreciate the magnitude of some of the changes. Thus, the new dates on the Egyptian side for Thutmose IV are 1419-1384 B.C. (CAH: 1425-1417), for Amenhotep III, 1384-1347 (CAH: 1417-1379), for Ramses II, 1279-1212 (CAH: 1304-1237); on the Babylonian side, the new dates for Burna-Buriash II are 1359-1333 (CAH: 1380-1350), for Kadashman-Enlil II, 1263-1255 (CAH: 1279-1265), and—with minor adjustments at the end of the dynasty—for Enlil-nadin-ahi, 1157-1155 (CAH: 1159-1157). I plan to publish my material on the new Egyptian dates as a chapter in Dr. Harris' projected atlas of the royal mummies and an article in *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* entitled "Thutmose III's Accession and the Beginning of the New Kingdom." Mr. Brinkman's work will appear in *Materials and Studies in Kassite History*, Vol. I (1975).

As the work proceeds in the revision of the Egyptian chronology of the second millennium B.C., much credit must be given to Mr. Charles C. Van Siclen III and to the students in my seminar in New Kingdom history for their substantial contributions.