

= Neferhotep I =

Khasekhemre Neferhotep I was an Egyptian pharaoh of the mid Thirteenth Dynasty ruling in the second half of the 18th century BC during a time referred to as the late Middle Kingdom or early Second Intermediate Period , depending on the scholar . One of the best attested rulers of the 13th Dynasty , Neferhotep I reigned for 11 years .

The grandson of a non @-@ royal townsman from a Theban family with a military background , Neferhotep I 's relation to his predecessor Sobekhotep III is unclear and he may have usurped the throne . Neferhotep I was likely contemporaneous with kings Zimri @-@ Lim of Mari and Hammurabi of Babylon . Little is known of his activities during his decade @-@ long reign and the most important document surviving from his rule is a stela from Abydos recounting the fashion of an image of Osiris and Neferhotep 's determination that it be made " as instructed by the gods at the beginning of time " .

Toward the end of his reign , Neferhotep I shared the throne with his brother Sihathor , a coregency that lasted a few months to a year . Sihathor died shortly before Neferhotep , who may have then appointed another brother , Sobekhotep IV , as coregent . In any case , Sobekhotep IV succeeded Neferhotep I soon afterwards , and reigned over Egypt for almost a decade . The reigns of the two brothers mark the apex of the 13th Dynasty .

= = Family = =

= = = Origins = = =

Neferhotep I seems to have come from a non @-@ royal family of Thebes with a military background . His grandfather , Nehy , held the title " officer of a town regiment " . Nehy was married to a woman called Senebtysy . Nothing is known about her other than that she held the common title " lady of the house " . Their only known son was called Haankhef .

Haankhef always appears in the sources as " God 's father " and " royal sealer " and his wife Kemi as " king 's mother " indicating that neither of them was of royal birth . The parentage of Neferhotep and Haankhef is directly confirmed by a number of scarab seals from El @-@ Lahun where the latter is said to be the father of the former . Haankhef is also explicitly recorded as the father of Neferhotep I in the Turin canon , a king list redacted during the early Ramesside era and which serves as the primary historical source for the rulers of this time period . This is an extremely rare occurrence as the Turin canon normally only names the pharaohs while non @-@ royal people are excluded from the list . Beyond Haankhef , the only other exception to this rule is the father of Sobekhotep II .

Egyptologists have noted that instead of hiding their non @-@ royal origins , Neferhotep I , his predecessor Sobekhotep III , and his successor Sobekhotep IV , remarkably proclaimed them on their stelae and scarab seals . This is at odds with the traditional Egyptian system where the legitimation of the new king rests mainly on his filiation . These proclamations of non @-@ royal origins were possibly made to dissociate these kings from their immediate predecessors , in particular Seth Meribre whose monuments have been usurped and defaced . The reason for this remains unknown .

= = = Descendants and succession = = =

Inscriptions from Aswan indicate that Neferhotep I had at least two children named Haankhef and Kemi like his parents , whom he had with a woman called Senebsen . He also possibly had another son named Wahneferhotep . In spite of this , Neferhotep I named his brother Sihathor as coregent in the last months of his reign and when both Sihathor and Neferhotep I died around the same time , they were succeeded by another brother , Sobekhotep IV .

Sobekhotep IV , whose reign marks the apex of the 13th Dynasty , mentions on a stela ( Cairo JE

51911 ) that was placed in the temple of Amun at Karnak that he was born in Thebes :

My majesty [ came ] to the Southern City since I wanted to see the august god ; it is my city in which I was born . ... I saw the vigor of his majesty ( i.e. Amun ) at every single feast when I was a child who could not yet conceive .

Similarly , Neferhotep I could well have been born in Thebes ; even though the capital of Egypt during the 13th Dynasty was still Itjtawy in the north , near the modern village of el @-@ Lisht .

= = Reign = =

= = = Attestations = = =

#### Artefacts

Neferhotep I is known from a relatively high number of objects found over a large area , from Byblos to the North to the Egyptian fortresses of Buhen and Mirgissa in Lower Nubia to the South through all parts of Egypt , especially in the southern portion of Upper Egypt . A single attestation is known from Lower Egypt , a scarab from Tell el @-@ Yahudiya . Other attestations include over 60 scarab seals , 2 cylinder @-@ seals , a statue from Elephantine , and 11 rock inscriptions from Wadi el Shatt el @-@ Rigal , Sehel Island , Konosso and Philae . The inscriptions record the members of Neferhotep 's family as well as two high officials serving him " The royal acquaintance Nebankh " and the " Treasurer Senebi " . Two stelae are known from Abydos one of which , usurped from king Wegaf and dated to his 4th regnal year , forbids the construction of tombs on the sacred processional way of Wepwawet . Two naoses housing two statues each of Neferhotep as well as a pedestal bearing Neferhotep 's and Sobekhotep IV 's cartouches have been found in Karnak . There are also a few attestations from the Faiyum region where the capital of Egypt was located at the time , in particular a statuette of the king dedicated to Sobek and Horus of Shedet , now on display in the Archaeological Museum of Bologna .

#### King lists

Beyond these contemporary attestations , Neferhotep is listed on the 34th entry of the Karnak king list as well as the 7th column , 25th row of the Turin canon . The Turin king list credits Neferhotep with a reign of 11 years and 1 to 4 months , the second or third longest of the dynasty after Merneferre Ay ( 23 years ) and Sobekhotep IV ( 9 ? 12 years ) .

= = = Chronology = = =

Neferhotep I 's relative chronological position is secured thanks to the Turin canon as well as contemporary attestations . He was the successor of Sobekhotep III and predecessor of Sobekhotep IV . Since his father Haankhef and mother Kemi are also well attested and not known to have had any title beyond those of " God 's father " and " King 's mother " , respectively , Egyptologists such as Kim Ryholt and Darrell Baker believe that Neferhotep I was of non @-@ royal birth and usurped the throne . The military background of his family may have played a role in this .

At the opposite , the absolute chronological position of Neferhotep is debated with Ryholt and Baker seeing him respectively as the 26th and 27th pharaoh of the 13th Dynasty while Detlef Franke and Jürgen von Beckerath contend that he was only the 22nd ruler . Similarly , the absolute datation of Neferhotep 's reign varies by as much as 40 years between the scholars , with Kim Ryholt dating the beginning of his reign c . 1740 BC and Thomas Schneider c . 1700 BC .

= = = Extent of rule = = =

Whether Neferhotep I usurped the throne at the expense of Sobekhotep III or inherited it , he possibly acceded to power over a fragmented Egypt . The Egyptologist Kim Ryholt believes that the Canaanite 14th Dynasty was already in existence at the time , forming an independent realm controlling at least the Eastern Nile Delta . This could explain why Neferhotep 's only attestation in

Lower Egypt is a single scarab seal . While this analysis is accepted by some scholars , among whom are Gae Callender , Janine Bourriau and Darrell Baker , it is rejected by others , including Manfred Bietak , Daphna Ben @-@ Tor and James and Susan Allen , who contend that Neferhotep I reigned over the whole of Egypt . Possible vindications of this are the several attestations of Neferhotep found northeast of Egypt , in the Levant , in particular the stela of the Governor of Byblos Yantinu and 4 scarab seals from Canaan , indicating that he retained enough power to maintain trade relations with this region .

Alternatively , recent excavations have yielded seals of Neferhotep 's brother Sobekhotep IV in proximity with seals of the powerful Hyksos king Khyan of the 15th Dynasty ( c.1650 ? 1550 BC ) in a closed archaeological context , possibly indicating that the two were contemporary . If this is so , Neferhotep I would have been contemporary with either Khyan or one of his predecessors , such as Sakir @-@ Har , and would not have reigned over the Nile Delta . This conclusion is strongly debated at the moment since Sobekhotep IV and Khyan are separated by c . 100 years in the conventional Egyptian chronology .

= = = Activities = = =

In spite of the numerous attestations left by Neferhotep I , relatively little is known of the activities he undertook during his decade @-@ long reign . The pedestal of Neferhotep I and Sobekhotep IV as well as the naos of Neferhotep discovered by Georges Legrain in Karnak indicate that he undertook some building works there . This is further confirmed by the 2005 discovery in Karnak of a second naos housing a 1 @.@ 80 m ( 5 @.@ 9 ft ) tall double statue of Neferhotep holding hands with himself . The naos was located beneath the foundations of the northern obelisk of Hatshepsut .

The most important monument of the king surviving to this day is a large , heavily eroded stela dating to the second regnal year of Neferhotep and found in Abydos . The inscription on the stela is one of the few ancient Egyptian royal texts to record how a king might conceive of and order the making of a sculpture . As usual , the stela begins with Neferhotep 's titulary :

The Majesty of the Horus : Founder of the Two Lands , He of the Two Ladies : Revealing the Truth , Falcon of Gold : Lasting of Love , King of Upper and Lower Egypt Khasekhemre , Son of Ra Neferhotep , born to the king 's mother Kemi , granted life , stability , and dominion like Ra forever .

It then describes how Neferhotep , residing in his palace " Exalted of Beauty " likely located in Itjtawy , desires that an image of Osiris be made in order for it to participate in the yearly festival held in the god 's honour in Abydos in Upper Egypt . To this end , Neferhotep first enquires to his officials about instructions regarding the making of divine images said to be contained in " the primeval writings of Atum " . His officials then bring him to a temple library where the writings are located and he orders a messenger , the " Custodian of the Royal Property " , to be sent to the Abydos festival . Meanwhile , or possibly before sending the messenger , the statue of Osiris is made of silver , gold and copper , the work being carried out under the supervision of the king . Finally , the king himself goes to Abydos to celebrate the festival of Osiris .

More generally , Neferhotep 's time on the throne was likely prosperous as there are many private monuments datable to his reign and that of his brother , and especially in sculpture some remarkably high quality art works were produced .

= = = Tomb = = =

As of 2014 , the tomb of Neferhotep I has not been located yet . Nicolas Grimal proposes that he was buried in a pyramid at el @-@ Lisht , close to that of Senusret I , an opinion shared by Michael Rice . This remains conjectural , as no artefact permitting the identification of Neferhotep as the owner of such a pyramid has been found . Grimal 's hypothesis relies only on indirect evidence : the presence of scarabs of Neferhotep in Lisht as well as the discovery of a shawabti of a prince Wahneferhotep " ( King ) Neferhotep endures " close to the northern gateway of the mortuary temple of the pyramid complex of Senusret I. The shawabti was wrapped in linen and placed in a miniature coffin , which is dated to the 13th Dynasty on stylistic grounds . This together with the name of

Wahneferhotep and his title of " King 's son " indicate that Wahneferhotep was likely a son of Neferhotep I , who may have been buried in the vicinity of his father 's pyramid .

Dawn Landua @-@ McCormack suggested that the Southern South Saqqara pyramid could have been a candidate for Neferhotep 's burial site . This pyramid , datable to the middle 13th Dynasty , was provided with two elaborate sarcophagus chambers which might have been destined for two wealthy brother kings of the dynasty such as Neferhotep I and Sobekhotep IV .

In 2015 Josef W. Wegner of the University of Pennsylvania suggested that Sobekhotep IV could have been buried in Abydos in a tomb ( S10 ) belonging to a late Middle Kingdom @-@ Second Intermediate Period royal necropolis which is located just next to the funerary complex of Senusret III of the 12th Dynasty , at the foothills of the so @-@ called Mountain of Anubis ; on that basis , Wegner suggested that the anonymous , large , neighboring tomb S9 could have belonged to Neferhotep I.

= = Coregencies = =

It is not known under which circumstances Neferhotep I died after his reign of eleven years . His successor was his brother , Sobekhotep IV , who is perhaps the most important ruler of the 13th Dynasty . Another brother , Sihathor , appears in the Turin canon as successor , but it seems that he only reigned for a few months as coregent with Neferhotep I and never became an independent ruler , likely because he predeceased his elder brother . After this , it is possible that Neferhotep I designated his younger brother Sobekhotep IV as coregent . There are two inscriptions from Sehel showing Neferhotep I , Sihathor and Sobekhotep IV , which could mean that they reigned for some time together , although Sihathor is declared dead on both lists . Another piece of evidence is an inscription from the Wadi Hammamat showing the cartouches of Neferhotep I and Sobekhotep IV on par , next to each other . Some Egyptologists see this as evidence of a coregency between these two kings , while others , including Ryholt , reject this interpretation and believe the inscription was made by Sobekhotep to honour his deceased brother .

= = Historical synchronism = =

A stela bearing Neferhotep I 's name is of great importance to archaeologists and historians alike as it enables a concordance between the Egyptian and Near Eastern chronologies . This stela depicts the " Governor of Byblos , Yantinu ... who was begotten by Governor Yakin " seated upon a throne in front of which are the nomen and prenomen of Neferhotep I. This is significant for two reasons : first , Yakin is plausibly identifiable with a Yakin @-@ Ilu of Byblos known from a cylinder seal of Sehetepibre , indicating that this king and Neferhotep are separated by a generation . Second , a " King of Byblos Yantin- ' Ammu " is known from the archives of Mari who is most likely the same person as the Governor of Byblos Yantinu of the stela . Indeed , Byblos was a semi @-@ autonomous Egyptian governorate at the time and " the king of Byblos " must be the Semitic king of the city ruling it in the name of the pharaoh . The archives of Mari predominantly date to the reign of the last king of the city , Zimri @-@ Lim , a contemporary of Hammurabi who ultimately sacked Mari . This provides the synchronism Neferhotep I ? Yantinu ? Zimri @-@ Lim ? Hammurabi .

Egyptologist David Rohl in his alternative New Chronology identifies this pharaoh as the one whose daughter adopted Moses .