

Confederation of Kings

*Part VIII of the Sabbath and Jubilee
of 701/700 and 700/699 B.C.E*

The next circumstance that allows for the existence of another Kushite king named Tirhaqah, one who was ruling during Sennacherib's invasion of Judah in 701 B.C.E., comes from the political system generally used among these ancient Middle Eastern kingdoms. Evidence strongly demonstrates that, as with many other countries in the ancient Near East during this period, Kush was ruled by a confederation of kings. Under this system, the strongest members of this confederation dominated the political landscape.¹ The Kushite kings, in turn, were not just allied with each other while in Kush but within Egypt as well, collectively holding authority over different Egyptian dynasts and regions. This system also allowed for co-regencies within each Kushite dynastic line, both those ruling within Kush and those ruling within Egypt.

Kingdoms and Kings

Kush was not a single-dynasty country. Pliny notes that Ethiopia was anciently divided into 45 kingdoms.² Diodorus of Sicily similarly points out that a good part of Ethiopia was composed of several elective monarchies—the heads of which were chosen out of their priests—and that all these princes made the laws of their respective realms the basis of their government.³ Strabo adds that the people “appoint as kings those who excel in beauty, or in superiority in cattle breeding, or in courage, or in wealth. In Meroe the highest rank was in ancient times held by the priests, who indeed would give orders even to the king, sometimes ordering him through a messenger to die, and would appoint another in his stead.”⁴ This practice was later broken up when one of the priest-kings marched against these other priests and slaughtered them all.⁵ These priest-kings, nevertheless, were commonly derived from Kushite royal families.

In Pliny's day (writing in about 76–77 C.E.), amongst these various Ethiopian kingdoms, was the island state of Meroe.⁶ During this period,

¹ Such a system was expressed in Germany up until the end of WWI, e.g., King Francis Joseph I of Austria; King Ludwig III of Bavaria; King Friedrich August III of Saxony; King Wilhelm II of Württemberg; and King Wilhelm II of Prussia all ruled at one and the same time during WWI. Yet King Wilhelm II of Prussia was the leading Kaiser (Emperor) of all Germany.

² Pliny, 6:35.

³ Diodorus, 3:5, 9. In the Aspelta Election Stela we read of a gathering of army commanders and bureaucrats who, by means of the priests in the temple compound, consulted Amun and “elected” the new king (FHN 1, pp. 234–231). Also see UH, 18, pp. 278–281.

⁴ Strabo, 17:2:3.

⁵ Cf. Herodotus, 3:20, “they deem worthy to be their king that townsman whom they judge to be tallest and to have strength proportioned to his stature.”

⁶ Pliny, 6:35.

Meroe was called Ethiopia's "greatest royal seat,"⁷ indicating the existence of other lesser royal seats. Pliny further points out that in his day Meroe was ruled by a woman named *Candacen* (Kandake). The word "Kandake" is a Meroitic title which means "great woman," "Queen," "Queen mother," or "royal mother."⁸ The term is used as a dynastic label, much in the same way as the Egyptians used the term "Pharaoh," the Greek rulers of Egypt used "Ptolemy," the Romans used "Caesar," and so forth. To demonstrate, we are told that the term Kandake was "a name that has passed on through a succession of queens for many years."⁹ Even as late as in the days of Eusebius of Caesarea (writing in c.311 C.E.), we are told that this region of Ethiopia, "following its ancestral custom," was still ruled by a woman,¹⁰ i.e., by a Kandake.

This line of queens were counted as warriors. To begin with, Strabo informs us that, among the Ethiopians, just like the men, the women were armed.¹¹ The warrior-queen status for the queen is further demonstrated on a large sepulchral pyramid near ancient Meroe. Here we find an image of a female warrior with ensigns on her head, dragging forth a number of captives as offerings to the deities. On another portrayal, this queen is in a warlike habit and about to destroy the same captives.¹² Strabo and Cassius Dio both speak of a warrior-queen of the Ethiopians named Kandake, who lived "above (i.e., south of) Egypt," and who invaded Upper Egypt in 23/22 B.C.E.¹³ In the Ethiopian King List there are listed several Kandakes. One queen was named "Nicauta Kandake (Ni-Kauta, Ni-Qauta, Qalhata)" who is said to have ruled in Kush for 10 years (695–686 B.C.E.). Her reign immediately followed that of Shabaqo's, whose own official 12-year reign in Kush began in 707 B.C.E.¹⁴ After this queen, as time passed, there were also listed along with the kings, the queens named Hadina, Nikawla Kandake, Akawsis Kandake, Nikosis Kandake, Awsena, Nicotnis Kandake, Garsemot Kandake, and others.¹⁵

In the New Testament book of Acts, there is a mentioning of another Ethiopian queen named Kandake.¹⁶ Her eunuch, an Ethiopian of great authority over the queen's treasury, visited Jerusalem in order to venerate Yahweh (for which reasons we shall demonstrate below). While he was returning to Ethiopia, this eunuch met with Philip, one of the seven famous Christian deacons of Jerusalem, who converted him to Christianity.¹⁷ The connection of the house of Queen Kandake (a contemporary of the messiah), with Judaism provides us with an important insight into the dynasty that was stationed at

⁷ Strabo, 7:2:2.

⁸ AHOA, p. 115; HDAMN, p. 69, 97, 249; EnBS, p. 302; NQNV, p. 1.

⁹ Pliny, 6:35.

¹⁰ Eusebius, *H.E.*, 2:1:13.

¹¹ Strabo, 17:2:3.

¹² CBTEL, pp. 67f, s.v. Candace.

¹³ Strabo, 17:1:54; Dio, 54:5:4.

¹⁴ CBN, p. 266, Dynasty IV, no. xii. Also see App. F.

¹⁵ CBN, p. 266–268, for the names listed up until 1st century C.E.

¹⁶ Acts, 8:27.

¹⁷ Acts, 8:26–39; cf. Irenaeus, *Ag. Her.*, 3:12:8, 4:23:2; Eusebius, *H.E.*, 2:1.

Meroe. There was a good reason that the high officials of this Ethiopian court were involved in Judaism, thus motivating them to send court officials to venerate Yahweh at the temple in Jerusalem. This connection can be attributed to their longstanding claim that the queen of Shaba (Saba, Sheba), whom they identify until this day with a woman named Makeda, bore a son to King Solomon of Judah and Israel. According to the *Kebrā Nagast*, Makeda (the queen of Shaba) was also named Kandake.¹⁸ From this queen, the name Kandake was passed down from generation to generation.

Solomon's son by Makeda was named 'Ēbana Ḥakīm, throne name Menelik, and he is said to have founded a dynasty from whom a number of famous Kushite kings sprang, such as Kashta, Shabaqo, Aspurta, and others.¹⁹ In their historical sources, which have been passed down in the *Kebrā Nagast*, Yahwehism was brought to this part of Ethiopia by means of King Solomon, who gave his religion to the queen of Shaba (who in turn raised up her son Menelik in that religion), and by means of the contacts made between Menelik and Solomon.²⁰ In addition, this line of queens from Meroe is directly tied to the king named Tirhaqah who came against Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. According to the Ethiopian King List, for example, in the days of Ni-kauta Kandake, there was another important Kushite king who was named Tsawi Terhaq Warada Nagash. He reigned over Kush for 49 years (706–658 B.C.E.).²¹ As our investigation continues, we shall prove that this Terhaq (Terhaq being an Aramaic form of the name Taharqa) is the King Tirhaqah of Kush who attacked Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E.²²

Neither is the confederation of kings construct unique to the Ethiopians. Scriptures speak of several confederations of contemporary kings. One confederation ruled the Assyrians, another the Hittites, still another the Egyptians. This system was found, as well, in use among many other Near Eastern states.²³ Sennacherib's own records report his defeat of some of the "kings of Muzri (Lower and Middle Egypt)"²⁴ along with a "king of Meluḥḥa" ("Meluḥḥa" being the Assyrian designation for Upper Egypt and Nubia)²⁵ at the battle of Eltekeh during his third campaign in 701 B.C.E.²⁶ At this time, the

¹⁸ *Kebrā Nagast*, 34.

¹⁹ CBN, pp. 266–268; AHENA, 1, p. 193. 'Ēbana Ḥakīm means "Son of the wise man," i.e., King Solomon of Judah and Israel.

²⁰ *Kebrā Nagast*, 28–55, 88–92.

²¹ CBN, p. 266, Dynasty IV, no. xiii.

²² See below Chap. XI, and see App. D–L.

²³ Listed as a confederation of kings are the kings of Assyria (2 Chron., 28:16, 30:6, 32:4), the kings of the Midiani (Judg., 8:5, 12, 26), the kings of the Hittites (1 Kings, 10:29; 2 Kings, 7:6; 2 Chron., 1:17), the kings of the Egyptians (2 Kings, 7:6), the kings of Babylonia (2 Kings, 25:28), kings of Persia (Ezra, 9:9), kings of Arabia (1 Kings, 10:15; 2 Chron., 9:14), kings of Aram (Syria) (2 Sam., 10:19; 1 Kings, 10:29; 2 Chron., 1:17, 28:23), the kings of Zobah (1 Sam., 14:47), the kings of the Emori (Josh., 2:10, 9:10, 10:6, 24:12), the kings of the Kanaani (Josh., 5:1; Judg., 5:19), and so forth. Also see our discussions in our forthcoming books entitled IC, IM, GAE.

²⁴ A "king of Egypt" in some inscriptions (JTEH, p. 155).

²⁵ That the Assyrians referred to Upper Egypt as Kush/Meluḥḥa, see below Chap. XI, pp. 173–175, along with its ns. 17 & 19.

²⁶ AS, p. 31, 2:78–80, p. 69, l. 23–25.

Ethiopian king named Shabaqo (707 to 693 B.C.E.)²⁷ was ruling Egypt as its chief pharaoh, standing in alliance with other local Egyptian dynasts. Beginning in 697 B.C.E., Shebitku, the son of Shabaqo,²⁸ was associated with Shabaqo's throne. Then in 695 B.C.E., Shebitku became Shabaqo's co-regent, serving 3 regnal years.²⁹ Meanwhile, Shabaqo, although he only reigned 15 regnal years, continued as a king from Upper Egypt for many years more. Shabaqo did not quit Egypt altogether until he had completed 50 years of reign over Lower Egypt, at which time he permanently returned to Kush, leaving his son Ta-Nuat-Amun on the throne in Egypt.³⁰

Ancient records also prove that more than one Kushite dynasty ruled in Egypt and in Kush at the same time. Herodotus, for example, reports that in the reign of an Egyptian king named Anysis, "Egypt was invaded by Shabaqo the Ethiopian king, and a great army of Ethiopians."³¹ Shabaqo began Manetho's list of Ethiopian kings who ruled Egypt and formed its Dynasty XXV.³² After Shabaqo conquered Lower Egypt, he killed Bakenranef (Bekenrinfef, Greek "Bocchoris"), the son of Tefnakht (Tefnakhte) I, the last king of Dynasty XXIV.³³ We know from his records that "Year 2" of Shabaqo was the same as the 6th and last year of Bakenranef (i.e., 706 B.C.E.).³⁴ At the same time, the year Shabaqo took control of Lower Egypt (706 B.C.E.), Piye began his reign in Kush.³⁵ Accordingly, Piye and Shabaqo were both ruling in Kush during the same period. As we shall later demonstrate, Piye later joined Shabaqo as one of the kings of Egypt (696 B.C.E.).³⁶ Piye's son, Nefertem Taharqa, subsequently became co-regent with Shebitku, the son of Shabaqo (689 B.C.E.).³⁷ At the end of a 6-year co-regency, Pharaoh Shebitku was murdered and Nefertem Taharqa became the sole monarch of the dynasty located at Memphis.³⁸

As previously pointed out, Shebitku, the son of Shabaqo, ruled 6 years jointly with Nefertem Taharqa, the son of Piye. It is also important to note that these two Ethiopian rulers derived from two different Ethiopian royal families (Chart E). Nefertem Taharqa, for example, was the son of Piye,³⁹ the son of

²⁷ Various attempts have been made to push back the dates for the reigns of Shabaqo and Shebitku, ignoring the limits set by Manetho or the other ancient records. More recently, the endeavor has been exacerbated by a misinterpretation of an inscription found at Tang-i Var (e.g., *Orientalia*, NS, 68.1, pp. 31–57; *Orientalia*, NS, 68.1, pp. 58–61; *Orientalia*, NS, 70.1, pp. 1–18; *JEA*, 88, p. 182 & n. 24; *AeUL*, 16, pp. 275–291; *MittSAG*, 17, pp. 139f). For Shabaqo's actual dates and how they related to the Tang-i Var inscription, see App. F.

²⁸ That Shebitku was the son of Shabaqo, see Manetho, frags. 66 & 67a–b; *BPENR*, pp. 223f. Manetho calls Shabaqo "Sabakon" and he calls Shebitku "Sebikhos" (Manetho, frags. 66 & 67).

²⁹ See App. F.

³⁰ See App. K.

³¹ Herodotus, 2:137.

³² Manetho, frags. 66–68; cf. Diodorus, 1:65:1–8.

³³ See App. F, pp. 490, 495.

³⁴ *Orientalia*, 70.1, pp. 10f; *CAH*, 3.2, p. 689; *Kush*, 8, p. 66; *CAW*, p. 82; *LPIE*, p. 141; *HdO*, p. 261, n. 189; *TIP*, pp. 141f. Also see App. F & K.

³⁵ See App. D & F.

³⁶ See App. D.

³⁷ See App. F.

³⁸ See App. F & G.

³⁹ Abar, the mother of Taharqa (Taharqo) II, who was called "the king's sister" and "Queen mother" was the sister-wife of Piye. As a result, Piye was the father of Taharqa; see *Kawa V:16f*, in *TK*, 1, p. 28; *FHN*, 1, p. 131; *KK*, p. 134, n. 31, p. 260; *BPENR*, p. 176; *THDAE*, p. 237; *EnBS*, p. 301.

Alara,⁴⁰ the latter considered by his descendants to be the founder of that dynastic line.⁴¹ Their primary residency in Kush was Napata. Shebitku, on the other hand, was the son of Shabaqo,⁴² the son of Kashta.⁴³ Kashta's line is found in the old Ethiopian King List and goes back to Menelik, the son of Makeda, also known as the queen of Shaba (Saba, Sheba) and the queen of the south.⁴⁴ Their primary home in Kush was the city of Meroe.

Although speculation is advanced trying to tie Alara and Kashta together as brothers—the notion is based entirely upon the hypothesis that a brother succeeded a brother in the Ethiopian royal house. There is absolutely no evidence to support this construct.⁴⁵ In this regard, after examining all of the various ways historians have speculated regarding how kings succeeded each other on the Ethiopian throne, Dan'el Kahn was forced to conclude that “the patrilineal succession pattern was the rule in the kingdom of Kush.”⁴⁶ At the same time, Nicolaus of Damascus wrote:

The Ethiopians have a particular respect for their sisters; the kings do not leave the succession to their own but to their sisters' sons. When there is no successor, they choose as king the most handsome of all and the most warlike.⁴⁷

These two statements are not contradictory. Their patrilineal succession is best understood by the fact that the Kushite kings, like the Egyptian pharaohs of old, married their sisters. Thus, the legitimacy of a royal heir was first determined by who was a son born from the royal brother-sister relationship. The sons of other wives of the king were only given secondary consideration.⁴⁸ If no capable heir was found in one dynasty, a king from another dynasty could produce an heir by means of taking as his wife the sister of another ruling king who failed to have an eligible heir.⁴⁹ In this regard, Shabaqo later married the sister of Nefertem Taharqa, i.e., the daughter of Piye, uniting the family of Alara with the family of Kashta. To demonstrate, according to the Assyrian inscriptions, Urdamane (Urud-Amun) was the son of Shabakû (Shabaqo) and the sister of Tarkû (Nefertem Taharqa). Upon Taharqa's death, Urdamane succeeded Tarkû on the throne.⁵⁰

⁴⁰ See App. F, n. 66.

⁴¹ Especially see FHN, 2, Stela of Nastasen, Year 8, pp. 476f, l. 7–10, p. 478, l. 13–16; TK, 1, p. 58; Kawa, IX:54. László Török writes, “Alara's memory was evoked by his fifth successor Taharqo as founder of his dynasty” (KK, p. 257); also see TK, 1, p. 16, l. 15–18, p. 36, l. 22–24.

⁴² Manetho, frags. 66, 67a & b; BPENR, p. 224.

⁴³ JEA, 35, p. 174; BPENR, pp. 158, 313, n. 36; CRFAE, p. 235.

⁴⁴ CBN, p. 266, Dynasty IV, Dynasty of Menelik I, nos. i–xi; cf. Kebra Nagast, 21–33.

⁴⁵ As Robert G. Morkot points out, “For this, there is no evidence,” and, “There is actually no clear evidence to support this assumption” (BPENR, pp. 158, 157).

⁴⁶ MittSAG 16, p. 163.

⁴⁷ In Stobaeus, *Florilegium*, 4.2:25; FHN, 2, p. 684; Wachsmuth, *Stobaei*, 4, p. 157.

⁴⁸ See App. I.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ ANET, p. 295 (ii). Urdamane is called both the “son of Shabakû” and “son of his (Taharqah's) sister” (ANET, p. 295; ARAB, 2, §§845, 906).

Historians today regularly confuse Urdamane (Urud-Amun) with his brother Ta-Nuat-Amun⁵¹—despite the fact that the Ethiopian archive lists them separately (Chart F), one king ruling Kush immediately after the other.⁵² Because the two thrones merged, the two royal residencies—Napata and Meroe—came under one dynasty. At the time of the Kushite king Aspelta (Aspurta), as the result of the invasion of the Egyptian king Psamtik II (589 B.C.E.), this dynasty was pushed out of their capital city of Napata and was forced to move south to their capital at Meroe.⁵³ Then after the Persian Empire period, this Ethiopian dynasty regained full control of Napata. Later, for example, we find a Queen Kandake of Meroe (c.23–22 B.C.E.) also in possession of a royal residency in Napata, the home of the line of King Piye.⁵⁴

Allied Thrones

During the time when the army of Sennacherib was being destroyed at Jerusalem (701 B.C.E.), King Piye was just one of the chiefs in Kush. He was not crowned in Egypt as a pharaoh until a few years after he had returned from his great conquest of western Asia and northwestern Africa.⁵⁵ Contemporary with the early years of Piye, as already mentioned, ruled Shabaqo (Shabakû, Shabaqu, Shabako, Shabaka, etc.). In this arrangement, the house of Shabaqo was allied with the house of Piye. In 707 B.C.E. Shabaqo took the throne over Upper Egypt. Then in his Year 2 (706 B.C.E.), Shabaqo firmly established his government over Lower Egypt by defeating the king of Sais.⁵⁶ It was in that same year (706 B.C.E.) that Piye began his rule in Kush.⁵⁷ Shabaqo, although a king in Kush, now relocated his main throne from the land of Kush to Thebes in Upper Egypt and to Memphis in Lower Egypt.⁵⁸

Of interest, the old Ethiopian King List does not mention as monarchs of Kush either (1) Shebitku (the son of Shabaqo, who followed his father on the throne of Dynasty XXV in Egypt)⁵⁹ or (2) Khu-Re' Nefertem Taharqa (the son of Meri Amun Piye), who in turn succeeded Shebitku on the throne in Egypt.

⁵¹ Because of the false association of these two kings, many have merged them by simply translating Urdamane as Tandamanê (Tantamani, Tanwetamani, Tanut-Amun, and the like), e.g., ARAB, 2, §§775–777, 845, 908, 944, 1117; CAH, 3, pp. 115, 284. Budge immediately recognized the problem and admitted that it seems “impossible that the Assyrian name Urdamanie could represent the Egyptian Tanut-Amen” (HE, 6, p. 165). Rather than reason that there were two different Ethiopian kings ruling Egypt at this time, Budge tried to explain the discrepancy as an error in transliteration of the Assyrian characters (ibid., pp. 165f). Also see below n. 52, and see App. J.

⁵² In the Royal Ethiopian King List they are catalogued as Erda-Amen Awseya and (Ta-)Nuât-Meawn (CBN, p. 266). Their reigns over Ethiopia were Erda-Amen Awseya 6 years (663–658 B.C.E.) and (Ta-)Nuât-Amun 4 years (657–654 B.C.E.). See App. J.

⁵³ KGNCZ, p. 63; cf. BIFAO, 50, p. 203; MACS, pp. 15, 32; NCA, p. 268. Also see App. E.

⁵⁴ Strabo, 17:1:54.

⁵⁵ FHN, 1, *Sandstone Stela of Piye*, p. 57, l. 1–4, pp. 58f, l. 2–4. That Taharqa Piye is the Tirhaqah of the Scriptures, see our discussion below in Chap. XII; cf. Strabo, 1:3:21, 15:1:6; Severus, 1:50.

⁵⁶ CAH, 3.2, p. 689; HdO, p. 261, & n. 189; TIP, pp. 141f, §114.

⁵⁷ See App. D–I.

⁵⁸ KKNME, p. 64; KK, p. 166f; Herodotus. 2:136, “In his (Anysis’) reign Egypt was invaded by Sabakos king of Ethiopia and a great army of Ethiopians.”

⁵⁹ Manetho, frags. 66, 67a & b, “Sebikhos (Shebitku), his (Shabaqo’s) son.”

Indeed, although their homeland was Kush, there is little evidence that the first two Ethiopians of Dynasty XXV (Shabaqo and Shebitku) ever spent much time in their homeland. Egyptologist Alan Gardiner notes:

Considering the combined length of these two reigns, it is strange how seldom the names of Shabako and Shebitku are encountered. Apart from the pyramids at Kurru where they were buried and from a horse-cemetery in the same place, their Nubian home has hardly a trace of them to show.⁶⁰

That King Shebitku only ruled in Egypt, for example, is supported by the monuments.⁶¹ The lack of records from Nubia indicate that the main influence of the Dynasty XXV pharaohs was in Egypt and not in Kush. For instance, because of the lack of records from Shebitku's reign, Petrie concludes:

Not a single fact of his [Shebitku's] history is recorded. It seems not improbable that he was only the viceroy of Lower and Middle Egypt, which he may have ruled while his aunt Amenardus held Thebes, and his uncle Pankhy II. reigned at Napata.⁶²

It is now known that Shebitku was only related to Piye (Snefer-Ra Piankhi; Petrie's "Pankhy II")⁶³ because his father, Shabaqo, had married the daughter of Piye. Yet Petrie introduces an important point. At the very time that Shabaqo and then Shebitku were ruling Egypt, Piye, the father of Nefertem Taharqa, was ruling Napata, the capital city of Kush Proper. According to the Ethiopian King List, this ruler was Tsawi Terhaq. This timing is our first indication that Tsawi Terhaq (Taharqa) and Snefer-Ra Piye were one and the same person. We shall verify this connection as we proceed with our investigation.

Although Shabaqo was a king of Kush, he spent most of his 50-year reign in the country of Egypt.⁶⁴ The reason for his residency in Egypt comes from the fact that Shabaqo began his rule as a King of Kush and Upper Egypt. Subsequently, beginning in his 2nd year, Shabaqo conquered Middle and Lower Egypt for himself. In turn, neither Shebitku, the son of Shabaqo, nor Nefertem Taharqa are listed in the Ethiopian archives as a king of Kush. Their absence in the king list is for good reason. Shebitku only reigned in Egypt and Nefertem Taharqa spent most of his reign in Egypt and merely visited Kush during certain festival periods. At the same time, during the rule of the Dynasty XXV kings over Egypt, Piye continued to govern Kush. For this reason, even though Piye later claimed authority over Egypt as well, he spent

⁶⁰ EP, pp. 342f.

⁶¹ E.g., "No monuments of Shebitqo, other than his tomb, are known from Nubia" (BPENR, p. 228).

⁶² AHOE, 3, p. 287.

⁶³ EP, p. 450.

⁶⁴ Herodotus, 2:139f, 152. See App. K.

most of his time in Napata, Kush. Their respective residencies in Egypt and Kush help reveal how these two regions were divided up by the Kushite kings. Piye, who was the more powerful king, held dominance in Kush and later in Egypt and elsewhere. On the other hand, Shabaqo and his family, although he was a king in Kush, had expanded his realm into Egypt earlier and maintained their kingdom over large parts of that land.

To demonstrate that the role of the Dynasty XXV kings was primarily in Egypt, we find that when Nefertem Taharqa became sole monarch after the death of Shebitku, the number of his records did not increase in Kush,⁶⁵ as one would expect with a new king of Kush. Indeed, his records in Kush are primarily religious dedications, which are to be expected from the priestly position of an Ethiopian acting in the role of a Kushite king in Egypt. They show no more than a required appearance to the shrines and temples of his homeland, especially at the time when his father, Snefer-Ra (Sneferre) Piye, was aging and less able to serve his priestly functions. We also know that Nefertem Taharqa was forced back to Thebes, and then eventually back to an area in southernmost Egypt and uppermost Nubia, by the Assyrian military power of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal.⁶⁶ Yet even in these inscriptions, as we shall see, not all of the records found in Egypt and Kush presently attributed to Khu-Re' Nefertem Taharqa actually belonged to him. Rather, they belong to an earlier king named Taharqa (Tirhaqah, Tirhaq, Terhak, Tsawi Terhaq, etc.).

Nefertem Taharqa, therefore, was called the king of Kush by the Assyrians but spent most of his time in Egypt and, as we shall see, was ignored as a king of Kush Proper by the Ethiopian King List for several other political reasons. Piye, during these years, was the chief ruler over Kush and his reign in Egypt was largely nominal in presence. Those Ethiopians who continued to live and rule in Egypt, on the other hand, governed primarily from the royal Egyptian cities of Thebes and Memphis, as well as from Heliopolis and Tanis.⁶⁷

In this regard, the Ethiopian King List, which provides a major line of kings who governed in the country of Kush over millennia, proceeds from King Kashta to his son, King Shabaqo, then to Queen Nicauta (Ni-Kauta), and then to Tsawi Terhaq (Tirhaq, Tarhaq, Terhak, etc.)—the last three being contemporary rulers in the land of Kush.⁶⁸ Meanwhile, Piye later also became a king of Egypt. Although he had been crowned in both Thebes and Sais, he immediately

⁶⁵ TK, 1, pp. 4–44; and see the list in AHOE, 3, pp. 294f. These show that the overwhelming portions of Taharqa's inscriptions were in Egypt and not Kush. Those in Kush are found in Lower or northern Kush.

⁶⁶ ARAB, 2, §§554–559, 563f, 575, 580, 582–585, 710, 770–778, 844–846, 875, 892, 900–907, 939, 944, 1117. When Assurbanipal sacked Thebes in 663 B.C.E., Nefertem Taharqa is said to have fled to Kipkipi (ARAB, 2, §777; ANET, p. 295), a city in Nubia (CAH, 3.2, p. 702). Kipkipi, although presently unknown, is very likely the Assyrian name for Napata, the capital of Kush Proper. W. Röllig, on the other hand, identifies it with Kom Ombo, about 120 miles south of Thebes (RIA, 5, p. 604, s.v. Kipkipi; SAK, 34, p. 265, n. 87). Francis Breyer believes Kipkipi is “no toponym at all, but rather a somewhat rude idiomatic expression” (EFZW, pp. 21–24).

⁶⁷ E.g., ARAB, 2, §771, 900–906, cf. 2, §775–778, 844f; KKNME, p. 64.

⁶⁸ CBN, app. A, p. 226, Dynasty IV, nos. x–xiii.

returned home to live at his residence in Napata, Kush.⁶⁹ Due to the fact that other Ethiopian kings were already ruling Egypt, Piye required only rare involvement and very few military campaigns in that land. Even as late as his 20th year as “the King of Upper and Lower Egypt,” Piye is still known from his Victory Stela to have been ruling from Napata, Kush,⁷⁰ just as one would expect of Tsawi Terhaq, the primary king of Kush during this same period. As Robert G. Morkot writes, Piye “apparently did not involve himself further in affairs in Egypt, although he continued to be recognised as pharaoh in Upper Egypt.”⁷¹

The old King List of Kush merely brought into coordination (1) the line of King Kashta down through his son Shabaqo and (2) the line of Alara, which appears in the person of Tsawi Terhaq, who as we shall show is Piye.⁷² These two families dominated Egypt and Ethiopia during the great 50-year period of Ethiopian dominance over Egypt mentioned by Herodotus.⁷³ Nefertem Taharqa, meanwhile, was the son of Piye. A sister of Nefertem Taharqa, being the daughter of Piye, married Shabaqo and produced a royal son named Urdamane (Urdamani, etc.).⁷⁴ After the death of Nefertem Taharqa, Urdamane succeeded to a throne of Kush (663 B.C.E.), and in doing so united the two families into one throne line which subsequently continued to dominate Kush for generations. Their descendants glorified both Kashta, the father of Shabaqo, and Alara, the father of Piye, as their founding ancestors.⁷⁵

Popular interpretation has incorrectly reckoned Piye (Piankhi) to have extended his ruled over Egypt during a time prior to that of Shabaqo, although they admit that “placing the reign of Piye precisely is very difficult.”⁷⁶ In reality, Piye did not begin to rule as a pharaoh of Egypt until several years after Shabaqo had already conquered the Delta. For this reason, ancient writers, such as Herodotus, claim that it was “Sabakon (Shabaqo), king of Ethiopia, and a great army of Ethiopians” and not Piye who invaded and conquered Egypt during this period.⁷⁷ For this same reason, Manetho makes Shabaqo the founder of the Ethiopian kings of Egypt’s Dynasty XXV, not Piye.⁷⁸ This detail becomes our next indication that Piye was connected with Tsawi Terhaq, the ruler of Kush during this period. It was not until after Taharqa Piye—acting only in his capacity as the king of Kush—had returned

⁶⁹ BPENR, p. 180. “Napata, the residence of Pi(ankh)y” (PESPS, p. 5).

⁷⁰ Victory Stela, l. 1 & 9; TCHHL, p. 127; CAH, 3.2, pp. 684f.

⁷¹ BPENR, p. 170.

⁷² For the line of Piye, see below Chart E and App. F, pp. 492f.

⁷³ For the 50 years of dominance beginning with Shabaqo’s conquest of Egypt, see Her., 2:139, 152, and App. K.

⁷⁴ The “Rassam Cylinder” of Assurbanipal calls Urdamane (Urud-Amun) the “son of Shabakû” (ANET, p. 295; ARAB, 2, §775), while Cylinder B refers to him as “the son of his (Nefertem Taharqa’s) sister” (see ARAB, 2, §§844f, 906, 944, 1117). Today it is popular to offhandedly identify Urdamane with Ta-Naut-Amun (Tandamanê; Tantamani, Tanwetamani, Tanut-Amun, etc.), using nothing more than the assumption that the Assyrian cuneiform, which several times names Urdamane, was misunderstood. There is much to indicate that these two names represent two different monarchs, one ruling Kush Proper after the other (e.g., see above n. 52, and App. J).

⁷⁵ See App. J, p. 519, ns. 10 & 12.

⁷⁶ BPENR, p. 200.

⁷⁷ Herodotus, 2:137. This role is also implied by Diodorus, 1:65.

⁷⁸ Manetho, frags. 66, 67a & b.

from his northern campaigns against the Assyrian Empire and other lands of North Africa that he moved against the rebellious dynasts in the Egyptian delta and established his own pharaohship in Egypt (696 B.C.E.).⁷⁹

Conclusion

One of the key factors in uncovering the true identity of the king named Tirhaqah of Kush who came out against Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. lies in the detail that Kush was ruled by a confederation of kings. In turn, the strongest dynasties dominated Kush and the lands they conquered. There were two important dynasties of Kush that, as allies, spread their power into Egypt during the end of the 8th and first half of the 7th centuries B.C.E.:

- (1) The family of Kashta, a descendant of the queen of Shaba (Saba, Sheba), in the personage of Shabaqo and his sons, Shebitku, Urdamane, and Ta-Nuat-Amun.
- (2) The family of Alara, in the personage of Piye and his son Nefertem Taharqa.

The dominance of these two dynasties in Egypt were also marked by co-regencies, not only within their own dynasties but between dynasties. Nefertem Taharqa, the son of Piye, for example, was co-regent with Shebitku, the son of Shabaqo, on the throne at Memphis.

In this discussion, we further find that during the time of Sennacherib's campaign against Egypt in 701 B.C.E. the Ethiopian King List places a king named Tsawi Terhaq on the chief Kushite throne. Yet other evidence indicates that at this very time it was King Piye who was dominant in Kush. This evidence turns our attention towards the identity of Tsawi Terhaq as well as a secondary issue of which king in Manetho's list of Egyptian kings represents Piye, who ruled Egypt in excess of 27 years. Addressing these issues will, in turn, lead us to the true identity of the king of Kush named Tirhaqah, the Kushite king who came out against Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E.

⁷⁹ The beginning of Piye's pharaohship is reflected in Eusebius' version of Manetho, which places "Ammeris the Ethiopian" as the first king of Dynasty XXVI. Also see below Chap. XI, App. D & App. I.

CHART F

THE ETHIOPIAN KING LIST DYNASTY OF MENELIK (MAKEDA TO HANDU WUHA ABRA)

<i>(Transliterations used in CBN, p. 266)</i>	Reign	Dates B.C.E. <i>(Julian Reckoning)</i>
Makeda (the queen of Shaba) ¹	31	968–938
Menelik I (the son of Solomon) ²	25	937–913
Hanyon I	1	912
Sera I (Tomai) (Zerah) ³	26	911–886
Amen Hotep Zagdur II	31	885–855
Aksumay Ramissu	20	854–835
Awseyo Sera II	38	834–797
Tawasya II	21	796–776
Abralyus Wiyankihi (Piyankihi) II	32	775–744
Aksumay Warada Tsahay	23	743–721
Kashta Hanyon II (Kashta)	13	720–708
Sabaka (Shabaqo)	12	707–696
Nicauta Kandake (Queen Qalhata)	10	695–686
Tsawi Terhaq Warada Nagash ⁴ (Taharqa Piye)	49	706–658
Erda-Amen Awseya (Urud-Amun)	6	663–658
Gasiyo Eskikatir	– days –	657
Nuat-Meawn (Ta-Nuat-Amun)	4	657–654
Tomadyon Piyankihi III	12	653–642
Amen Asero II (Senkamanisken)	16	641–626
Piyankihi IV (Awtet) (Anlamani)	34	625–592
Zaware Nebret Aspurta (Aspelta)	41	591–551
Saifay Harsiataw	12	550–539
Ramhay Nastossanan (Nastasen) ⁵	14	538–525
Handu Wuha Abra	11	524–514

¹ That Makeda is the queen of Shaba (Saba, Sheba) who is named in 1 Kings, 10:1-13; 2 Chron., 9:1-12; and the “queen of Egypt and Ethiopia” in Jos., *Antiq.*, 8:6:2, 5–6 (cf. Gregory of Nyssa, *In Cant. Hom.*, 7), see Kebra Nagast, 21-32, which makes her the queen of Kush (Ethiopia).

² That Menelik, the son of Makeda, was the son of Solomon, see Kebra Nagast, 21-50.

³ This Zerah was the king of the Kushites who invaded Judah during the reign of King Asa (904/903—864/863 B.C.E., Abib reckoning), see 2 Chron., 14:9; Jos., *Antiq.*, 8:12:1, where Zerah is specifically called the “king of the Ethiopians.”

⁴ For CBN transliteration, see below Chap. XII, p. 184, n. 11.

⁵ Nastossanan was a contemporary of Cambyses II, king of Persia, when the latter invaded Egypt and Ethiopia in 525 B.C.E. (see App. E).