

*Appendix E*

# *Kushite Chronology of Tsawi Terhaq*

The Kushite chronology of Tsawi Terhaq Warada Nagash (Taharqa Piye) is revealed in the Ethiopian archive list.<sup>1</sup> The kings of Kush, beginning with Shabaqo and Terhaq (Terhak), ruled for a time parallel with the early Egyptian kings of Dynasty XXVI. The dates for Tsawi Terhaq (Tirhaqah), as well those of the other Kushite kings of Dynasty IV of Kush, are adjusted and confirmed by three events: (1) Piye's *Heb Sed* or 30-year anniversary as the king of Kush, (2) Psamtik II's war against Kush, and (3) the dates for the rulership of King Nastossanan (Nastasen, Nastesenen, etc.) of Kush. The Ethiopian list of Kushite kings (see Chart F) also suffers from some minor problems due to dynasty stacking. Yet these instances are easily recognized. The chronology of Tsawi Terhaq (Piye) and the importance of the Ethiopian King List is supported by the following details and facts.

### ***Heb Sed of Piye***

To begin with, we deal in detail with the *Heb Sed* issue for Piye in another Appendix.<sup>2</sup> This data will prove that Piye began to reign in Kush in 706 B.C.E. The last year of his 49-year reign, therefore, was 658 B.C.E. Next, Shabaqo, who is listed in the Ethiopian King List as ruling Kush prior to Tsawi Terhaq, became both the king of Kush and the king of Upper Egypt in the same year.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, Shabaqo's 12-year reign, as found in the Ethiopian King List, is equivalent with his 12-year reign in Egypt, which is attested to by Manetho.<sup>4</sup> As a result, Shabaqo's reign in Kush began in 707 B.C.E. and ended with 696 B.C.E. The reign of Erda-Amen Awseya (Urud-Amun, Urdaman, Urud-Amuni) sets on the other end of our equation. We know that he began to reign in 663 B.C.E., as the inscriptions of Assurbanipal of Assyria report, taking the throne of Kush upon the death of Taharqa II.<sup>5</sup> According to the Ethiopian King List, he reigned only 6 years. This detail makes his last full year 658 B.C.E., the same as the last year of Tsawi Terhaq (Taharqa Piye).

As we can judge from this information, there remains only 32 years between the end of the 12-year reign of Shabaqo and the beginning of the

---

<sup>1</sup> CBN, app. A, p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> App. D.

<sup>3</sup> App. K.

<sup>4</sup> See App. F.

<sup>5</sup> ANET, p. 295; ARAB, 2, §775; "the son of Shabakû"; ARAB, 2, §1117, "son of the sister of Tarkû," cf. ARAB, 2, §§844f, 906, 944. On the possibility that this name stands for Shebitku, the son of Shabaqo, see JEA, 35, p. 147, no. 76; TIP, p. 150 §121; Kush, 8, p. 72. The Ethiopian King List shows that such an interpretation is unnecessary (CBN, app. A, p. 266).

reign of Urud-Amun (Erda-Amen Awseya). Yet within this 32-year period the Ethiopian King List places Queen Nicauta Kandake for 10 years and Tsawi Terhaq for 49 years, a total of 59 years, i.e., 27 years too much. This excess clearly indicates overlapping reigns. It is also obvious that the divergence in the Ethiopian King List occurs after Shabaqo and before Urud-Amun. At this juncture, the complete reign of Tsawi Terhaq Warada Nagash (Taharqa Piye), the son of Alara, was inserted into the list. This interjection was due to (1) Taharqa Piye's fame as being the most important Kushite leader in the ancient world and (2) because Piye's daughter married into the line of King Kashta, uniting the two royal families.

King Tsawi Terhaq Warada Nagash of Kush cannot be Taharqa II, because Taharqa II was 20 years old when he came to power,<sup>6</sup> reigned only 26 years, and then died. His entire lifespan lasted only about 46 to 47 years. Tsawi Terhaq, on the other hand, ruled Kush for 49 years, not 26. If Terhaq ascended the throne of Kush when he was around 20 years old, as was normally the case with these Ethiopian monarchs—a requirement based upon an expectation that the new king would need to lead an army,<sup>7</sup>—Tsawi Terhaq (Taharqa Piye) would have been about 69 years old when he died. To this detail is added further support from the fact that Taharqa Piye led a massive Ethiopian army against the Assyrians in 701 B.C.E. His leadership role is hardly an act committed into the hands of a child. According to this evidence, and with the reasonable assumption that Piye ascended to the throne at about age 20, Tsawi Terhaq (the Tirhaqah of the Scriptures) would have been about 25 or 26 years old when he led his Kushite army against the Assyrian forces of Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. Tsawi Terhaq would have been age appropriate for the task.

Next, in the Ethiopian King List, immediately after Shabaqo and just before Tsawi Terhaq, is listed Nicauta Kandake (695–686 B.C.E.).<sup>8</sup> The word “Kandake (Candace)” is not a personal name but a Meroitic title which means “Queen,” “Queen mother,” or “royal mother.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, we have a reference to a queen (royal mother) named Nicauta. Nothing otherwise is known about this queen of Kush but it is clear from the record that she was manifestly a transitional figure. In this regard, it is insightful that Shebitku, the son of Shabaqo, the next king of Dynasty XXV of Egypt, is not listed. Instead, the Ethiopians give the name of this queen. The most likely explanation is that she represents the queen of Kush who stands between King Shabaqo, who derives from the dynasty line of Menelik I, the son of the queen of Shaba (Saba, Sheba), and the line of Taharqa Piye, the son of Alara. The Ethiopians, who gloried in the fact that their royal line had descended from the queen of Shaba (Makeda) down

<sup>6</sup> TK, p. 17, n. 17, p. 18, n. 30; EnBS, p. 301, “He began his reign at the age of 20.”

<sup>7</sup> Taharqa II, for example, took the throne at age 20 (see above n. 1). When Urdamane took the throne in 663 B.C.E., he immediately went to war against the Assyrians. He clearly had to be of a mature age in order for the Kushites to financially support his immediate campaign into Egypt. Ta-Nuat-Amun, likewise, in the same year that he came to the throne, made an expedition against the Assyrian forces located in Egypt.

<sup>8</sup> CBN, p. 266, Dynasty IV, nos. xi–xiii.

<sup>9</sup> AHOA, p. 115; HDAMN, p. 69, 97, 249; EnBS, p. 302.

to Haile Selassie I (who lived in the 20th century C.E.), would have used the concept of a “Queen mother” to help explain the merging of the two greatest dynasties in ancient Kushite history.

According to the Assyrian records, “Urdamane (Urud-Amun),” who immediately gained a throne in Kush after the death of Taharqa II (663 B.C.E.), was the son of the sister of Taharqa II (i.e., the daughter of Taharqa Piye) and Shabakû (Shabaqo).<sup>10</sup> The name of the daughter of Piye (Taharqa I) was not mentioned but the above record clearly points to Queen Nicauta. It is significant, therefore, that the list, as already mentioned, does not name Shebitku, the son of Shabaqo, who appears to have ruled only in Egypt during Dynasty XXV. In his place stands Nicauta (Ni-Kauta). Once we resume with the reign of Urud-Amun in 663 B.C.E., the line of kings in the Ethiopian King List accurately gives the reigns of the kings of Kush descending from this line down to the time of the Persian kings.

### Psamtik II’s War against Kush

The next connection between the Egyptian and Kushite chronologies comes with the wars between Psamtik II of Egypt and the kings of Kush. In the 3rd regnal year of Pharaoh Psamtik II of Egypt (592 B.C.E.), his army invaded and conquered the northern parts of Kush.<sup>11</sup> The Year 3 stela of Psamtik II at Karnak is dated to II Shemu, day 10 (i.e., the 10th day of the 10th month of the year). It reports:

The army that your majesty sent to Bow-land (Kush) has reached the land of Pnubs. . . . The *Nḥsyw* (Kushites) from all parts (of Kush) had arisen against him, their hearts full of anger when he attacked those who had rebelled against him there; because he was furious at those who had arisen against him. His majesty took part in the combat as soon as he reached the battle. The rebels capitulated before a single arrow was unleashed against them. . . . Those who tried to flee did not succeed and were brought back as prisoners: four thousand two hundred men.<sup>12</sup>

On this first campaign, the Egyptians went as far as Pnubs (Kerma), just south of the Third Cataract. The Year 3 inscription from Shellal near Aswan, likewise, states that the army of Psamtik II (not the king himself) drove as far as Pnubs.<sup>13</sup> The Tanis Stela version states:

His majesty ordered an army to march towards the country of Ššs (Shas), the nobles of the palace being with it. They reached *Trgb*, being the residence of the

<sup>10</sup> See above n. 5.

<sup>11</sup> CAH, 3.3, p. 50; TIP, p. 406 §368.

<sup>12</sup> NPBKN, pp. 166f.

<sup>13</sup> FHN, 1, pp. 279–282. Pnubs was located north of Kawa and between Dongola and Tumbos as the limit of the Third Cataract (JEA, 51.1, p. 103).

Kour (ruler of Kush) which is there, as well as the city of *Ta-dehn*. Then the army of his majesty massacred them, and a great carnage was made among them.<sup>14</sup>

Unfortunately, the names of these regions in Kush are still unknown but, when we compare the different versions of the story, Šš (Shas) must lie in the area of Pnubs. As László Török points out, from these records, “No indication of any further advance towards the Napata region is indicated.”<sup>15</sup>

Psamtik II subsequently led a second attack during his 6th regnal year (589 B.C.E.). Herodotus writes:

Psammis (Psamtik II) reigned over Egypt for 6 years only; he invaded Ethiopia, and IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER DIED, and Apries (Hophra)<sup>16</sup> his son reigned in his stead.<sup>17</sup>

According to the Adoption Stela of Ankhnesneferibre, Psamtik II died in regnal Year 7, on I Akhet day 23 (i.e., on the 23rd day of the 1st month of the year).<sup>18</sup> It would have taken Psamtik II at least a month if not much more to return from Kush downstream to Thebes and at least a minimum of several weeks in order to fight any kind of substantial war in Kush. He may well have spent some additional time in Kush in order to put down the rebellion, consolidate power, and settle some affairs there before returning home. Accordingly, his campaign must have begun, at the latest, in the midpart of his 6th regnal year (589 B.C.E.).

One inscription found at Abu Simbel, which was composed by those who were part of Psamtik II’s army on their return from the second campaign, shows that Psamtik II’s forces went as far south as “beyond Kerkis as far as the river permits.”<sup>19</sup> Kerkis was located just north of the Fifth Cataract of the Nile, which stood well within the land of Kush.<sup>20</sup> This detail indicates that this second expedition moved south well beyond Napata,<sup>21</sup> and even “beyond Kerkis.” Psamtik’s sudden death upon his return home explains why we have not found any stelae dealing with his last campaign. We are left only with a

<sup>14</sup> BIFAO, 50, p. 174, and pl. III & IV; LPSAE, p. 367.

<sup>15</sup> KK, 373.

<sup>16</sup> Apries’ Egyptian name is *Wah-ib-re* (“Constant is the heart of Re”). In Greek it is read as Ἀπρίης (Apries), see Herodotus, 2:161, and Diodorus, 1:68, or as Οὐαφρίης (Uaphris), see Manetho, frag. 68, no. 7, frag. 69a, no. 8, in Latin *Uaphres* (Manetho, frag. 69b). In Hebrew this king is called פֶּרְעֵה הוֹפְרָא (Pharaoh Hophra), see Jer., 44:30.

<sup>17</sup> Herodotus, 2:161.

<sup>18</sup> NPBKN, pp. 166f; JEA, 82, pp. 145–165.

<sup>19</sup> Graffito in Greek on the leg of Ramesses II at Abu Simbel (FHN, 1, pp. 286f), “When King Psammetichus (i.e., Psamtik II) came to Elephantine, this was written by those who sailed with Psammetichus the son of Theocles, and they came beyond Kerkis as far as the river permits. Those who spoke foreign tongues (Greeks and Carians) were led by Potasimto, the Egyptians by Amasis.” The participating Greek and Carian soldiers also scratched their names on the monument.

<sup>20</sup> NEBM, 9, p. 756; BIFAO, 50, pp. 189f.

<sup>21</sup> BIFAO, 50, p. 203; MACS, pp. 15, 32; NCA, p. 268, admits that it went at least “as far as Napata itself.”

comment from Herodotus (mid-4th century B.C.E.), which he obtained from the Egyptian priests, the keepers of the historical records.

The Ethiopian King List further shows us that during this period Piyankihi IV (Awtet), more commonly known as Anlamani (Anl-Amuni; Anar-Amuni), and his brother Zaware Nebret Aspurta (Aspelta) held the dominant throne in Kush.<sup>22</sup> According to the Ethiopian King List, when we correctly begin to count the 1st year of the reign of Urud-Amun from the year 663 B.C.E., when he acquired the throne of Kush that had been held by Taharqa II, we discover that the 34th and last full year of Piyankihi IV (Anlamani) was the same as the 3rd year of Psamtik II of Egypt. Indeed, Egyptologists have recognized for years that this war of Psamtik II against Kush was connected with the period of Anlamani and Aspelta, there being advocates for both views.<sup>23</sup> Actually, both views are correct. The first invasion fell in Year 3 of Psamtik II, being the 34th and last full year of Anlamani. The second invasion, meanwhile, fell in Year 6 of Psamtik II, being the 3rd year of Aspelta (Aspurta).

Psamtik II	Year 3	Anlamani	Year 34	592 B.C.E.
	Year 4	Aspurta	Year 1	591 B.C.E.
	Year 5	Aspurta	Year 2	590 B.C.E.
	Year 6	Aspurta	Year 3	589 B.C.E.

The reason for Psamtik II's initial attack on Kush in 592 B.C.E. was to counter the rise in power of the Kushite kingdom under King Anlamani. This new awakening of Kushite power resulted in their revolt against their Egyptian overlord. Just as important, as the Tanis fragments of the story inform us,<sup>24</sup> and as László Török observes, "the campaign is initiated by the news of the Nubians' intention to attack Egypt."<sup>25</sup> Anlamani died the next year. The defeat and subsequent death of Anlamani allowed his younger brother, Aspurta (Aspelta), to obtain the throne by election in front of the priests, elders, and the entire army.<sup>26</sup> His crowning is dated to "Regnal year 1, 2nd month of Peret (the 6th month), day 15."<sup>27</sup> This dating brings us to mid-591 B.C.E.

In Year 4 of Psamtik II (591 B.C.E.), we find the Egyptian king interfering in the politics of Huru (Khur), i.e., Syria-Palestine, especially Judah,<sup>28</sup> enticing the kings in that region to revolt from their Babylonian overlord, King Nebuchadnezzar II.<sup>29</sup> Psamtik II was successful and at the beginning of the next year King Zedekiah of Judah, having made an alliance with the Egyptian king, revolted from the Babylonian king.<sup>30</sup> As T. G. H. James points out, the

<sup>22</sup> CBN, p. 266, Dynasty IV, nos. xiv-xx.

<sup>23</sup> E.g., TIP, p. 406 §368, "perhaps Anlamani?"; KKNME, p. 65, "perhaps during the reign of Aspelta"; KK, p. 366; NEBM, 8, p. 817.

<sup>24</sup> LPSAE, p. 367, "One came to say to his majesty in Year 3 of his accession: The land of the *Nḥsyw* (Kushites), they are planning to fight with [you]."

<sup>25</sup> KK, pp. 371f.

<sup>26</sup> Election Stela, see FHN, 1, no. 37, pp. 232-244.

<sup>27</sup> FHN, 1, p. 234, *l.* 1.

<sup>28</sup> AEO, 1, pp. 180ff.

<sup>29</sup> CDP, 2, Pap. ix, 14.16-15.9; CDP, 3, pp. 95-97.

<sup>30</sup> See above Chap. XIII.

records for Psamtik II's interference in Huru demonstrates that the Nubian campaign was over and "its outcome was no longer in doubt."<sup>31</sup>

Before Aspelta could recoup from the previous defeat of Kush and before he was able to launch his own counterstrike against Egypt, Psamtik II invaded Kush for a second time (589 B.C.E.). During this event, Psamtik II drove south as far as the Fifth Cataract and, as we shall see, beyond. In response, Aspelta was forced to move his capital city from Napata to Meroe, located well south of the Fifth Cataract.<sup>32</sup> Kenneth Kitchen additionally remarks, "Out of the bitterness of this clash came his erasure of the names of the former Nubian pharaohs from monuments throughout Egypt."<sup>33</sup>

The evidence reveals a period of destruction that occurred at this very time in Kush. For example, during the second invasion of Kush in 589 B.C.E., Psamtik II's Egyptian army reached Napata. Reflective of this conquest, the names of King Aspelta were erased on two major stelae (the Election Stela and the Banishment Stela) in the temple of Amun at Napata, dated Years 1 and 2.<sup>34</sup> On the lunette scene of the Banishment Stela the king's figure was also erased. "On the Election Stela the face of the Queen Mother, her cartouches, and the cartouches of Aspelta's female ancestors . . . were erased as well."<sup>35</sup> Other broken fragments discovered east of the First Pylon of the Amun Temple B 500 at Gebel Barkal and in B 900 (the annex rooms of Temple B 800), suggest to a number of Egyptologists that the attack on Napata took place under the reign of Aspelta.<sup>36</sup> A number of Egyptologists recognized that Psamtik II also pushed into Napata—although this movement actually occurred in Year 6 of Psamtik II and not in Year 3, as often supposed. This push south forced Aspelta to move southward and "transfer" the capital from Napata to Meroe City.<sup>37</sup>

What these records inform us is that Psamtik II defeated the Kushites of northern Kush in 592 B.C.E., being the 34th and last full year of Anlamani. It is also clear that in the middle of the next year, King Anlamani died and his younger brother, Aspelta (Aspurta), was able to bring the priests and other leaders together in order to elect him their next king (591 B.C.E.). No doubt, Aspelta took his 1st year to secure his throne and the next year to build up his army in order to counterattack the Egyptians. Nevertheless, Psamtik II got wind of the plot and during the midpart of his 6th year (589 B.C.E.) once more invaded Kush. This time he drove south "beyond" the district of Kerkis, which laid north of the Fifth Cataract, and still further south to the royal city at Dangeil, located about 37 miles above (south of) the Fifth Cataract. For example,

<sup>31</sup> CAH, 3.2, p. 718.

<sup>32</sup> KGNCZ, p. 63; cf. BIFAO, 50, p. 203; MACS, pp. 15, 32; NCA, p. 268; and see below n. 38.

<sup>33</sup> TIP, p. 406 §368; also see RdE, 8, pp. 215–239.

<sup>34</sup> A Year 3 inscription of Aspelta's did escape but this could be either by chance or by a reproduction that was made in his 4th year to replace the first one that was destroyed.

<sup>35</sup> KK, p. 367.

<sup>36</sup> ZAS, 66, pp. 81f; RTMB, p. 2; SZMC, p. 21; JEA, 6.4, pp. 251f. László Török disagrees but his alternate interpretation seems weak and does not explain the obvious occurrence of the disaster at Napata at this precise time. He also ignores the invasion of Kush in Year 6 of Psamtik II as reported by Herodotus (KK, pp. 360f, 371–374).

<sup>37</sup> KGNCZ, p. 63; BIFAO, 50, p. 203; MACS, p. 15, 32; NCA, p. 268.

at Dangeil archaeologists found the destroyed statues of Taharqa II, Senkamanisken, and Aspelta—the latter receiving the worst damage. Their pieces were found mixed in together, showing a common attack, and may very well have occurred at this precise time.<sup>38</sup> In all, this evidence fits extremely well with the fact that Psamtik II was a contemporary with Anlamani during the latter's 34th and last full year, and a contemporary of Aspelta during that Kushite king's Year 1 through Year 3. Then, immediately after Psamtik II returned home from his second war against Kush, he died.

### Dates for King Nastossanan

Our third point of agreement in the chronology between Kush and Egypt comes at the end of the 14-year reign of Ramhay Nastossanan (Nastasen), the king of Kush (538–525 B.C.E.). His rulership is dated by the reigns of the Ethiopian King List.<sup>39</sup> In May of 525 B.C.E., “in the 5th year of the kingship over the Persians,” i.e., 525/524 B.C.E., spring reckoning,<sup>40</sup> Cambyses II, the king of Persia, conquered Egypt and reigned as Egypt's king “for 3 years.”<sup>41</sup> Cambyses II died after reigning over the Persian Empire for 7 regnal years and 5 months, i.e., around the end of the 5th month (July/Aug.) of his 8th year (522 B.C.E., spring reckoning), leaving 7 months shy to the completion of his

<sup>38</sup> S&N, 13, pp. 78–86. Kerkis is very likely connected in a general way with the modern city of Kurgus (BIFAO, 50, pp. 189f). In the text dealing with this second campaign of Psamtik II against Kush (FHN, 1, pp. 286f), Kerkis is not limited to just the fortress of that name along the Nile. Much more probable, it refers to the entire district from the 90° bend in the river north of Kurgus southward to the Fifth Cataract. Therefore, the claim that the army of Psamtik II went “beyond Kerkis” would mean that they traveled beyond (south of) the Fifth Cataract. The entire statement from this inscription states that the army of Pharaoh not only went “beyond Kerkis” but “as far as the river permits” (see above n. 32). This definition would appear to take the army of the Egyptian king south until they reached the confluence of the Nile and Atbara rivers, a strategic location for military operations by the Kushites. Although from Nov. to May the Atbara is little more than a stream, from June to Oct., at the very time when Psamtik II would have been invading, this stream rises some 18 feet above its usual level and, along with the raging Nile, the two rivers formed a strong barrier against those coming from the north. Beyond this confluence lay the district of Meroe (Saba), the city being located about 37 miles south of this point.

<sup>39</sup> CBN, p. 266, Dynasty IV, nos. xxi and xx; cf. Chart F.

<sup>40</sup> See App. B.

<sup>41</sup> Manetho, frags. 71a & b. Africanus gives a slightly different story. He states that Cambyses II began to reign Egypt in his 5th year but ruled for 6 years (527–522 B.C.E.) (Manetho, frag. 70). It is clear that Africanus was counting Cambyses II's rulership over Egypt by Egyptian reckoning and from the time that the Egyptians began paying him tribute as the monarch of the Persian Empire (527 B.C.E.). Ptolemy, *Can.*, no. 22, gives Cambyses 8 years as king of Babylonia (AY) but does not mention the 7 months of the Magi. The Armenian text states that it was “in the 15th year” of Cambyses II that he began to reign over Egypt (Waddell, *Manetho*, p. 176, n. 1, p. 177, n. 1). This dating is explained by the fact that Cambyses II was co-regent with his father, King Cyrus the Great, from the time that they conquered Babylon on the 3rd day of Arahshamnu (about Oct. 16th) of 539 B.C.E. (NBD, p. 123). For example, in a tablet dated to the 1st year of Cyrus the Great over Babylon, Cambyses is called the king of Babylon (Enc. Ir., s.v. Cambyses II). In addition, in the *Nabonidus Chronicle*, 3:18–28, Cambyses II led the religious ceremonies at Babylon, the responsibility of a king. In addition, in a proclamation of Cyrus the Great to the Babylonians, Cambyses II is named along with Cyrus the Great in giving the prayers to Marduk, a sign of kingship. As a result, the 15 years found in an Armenian version of Eusebius begin with his joint reign alongside his father in Babylonia in 539 B.C.E., i.e., his 15th year is 525 B.C.E., spring reckoning.

8th year.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, Cambyses II reigned over Egypt for 3 years, from about mid-May of 525 to about mid-August of 522 B.C.E. Meanwhile, it was in the last months of his reign that two Magi brothers revolted from Cambyses II and seized the government in Persia. One of the brothers was able to pass himself off as Smerdis, the brother of Cambyses II. The Persian populace was fooled because they were unaware that Smerdis had already been secretly murdered by Cambyses II.<sup>43</sup>

The Magi revolt lasted 7 months and their deception was revealed in the 8th month.<sup>44</sup> The Magi revolt began on the 14th day of the month of Viyakhna (the 12th month, Feb./March),<sup>45</sup> i.e., about March 11th,<sup>46</sup> but they did not secure the throne of the kingdom of Persia until the 9th day of the month of Garmapada (the 4th month, June/July) of 522 B.C.E.<sup>47</sup> Shortly thereafter, when word reached King Cambyses II, who was now in Syria, Cambyses II died "by his own hand," i.e., he had accidentally killed himself due to his own mistake.<sup>48</sup> On the 10th day of the month of Bagayadish (the 7th month, Sept./Oct.), the rebels were killed and Darius the Great became the new king of Persia.<sup>49</sup>

During the 3 years that Cambyses II was the ruler over Egypt (May 525 to May 522 B.C.E.), Cambyses II twice invaded Kush. Herodotus provides us with the sequence of these events. On the 10th day after the conquest of Memphis in May of 525 B.C.E., Cambyses II brought Psamtik III up on the walls of the city of Memphis and showed him the servitude of his people.<sup>50</sup> Cambyses II next went from Memphis to Sais (about 118 miles north) in order to scourge the dead body of King Amasis,<sup>51</sup> the man whose affront to Cambyses II was the cause for the Persian invasion of Egypt.<sup>52</sup> Nevertheless, Amasis had already died before Cambyses II arrived in Egypt.<sup>53</sup> Cambyses II, having accomplished his task, then returned from Sais to Memphis. These events would not have taken more than a month and would bring us to sometime in late June of 525 B.C.E.

---

<sup>42</sup> Herodotus, 3:66f; SIDG, pp. 6–15, *l.* 27–74. This detail is supported by Herodotus who adds, although saying it clumsily, that there yet remained a 7-month period from the death of Cambyses until the end of the 8th year of Cambyses, see Herodotus, 3:67, i.e., after noting that the Magi reigned fearlessly, he adds, "μήνας ἑπτὰ τοὺς ἐπιλοίπους Καμβύση ἐς τὰ ὀκτῶ ἔτα τῆς πληρώσιος (7 months [after the death of Cambyses] which were remaining of Cambyses into filling up the 8th year)." Since the Magi did not reign but about 1½ months after the death of Cambyses, and Cambyses died at the end of the 5th month of his 8th year, it is clear that Herodotus was trying to say that after the death of Cambyses II, there remained a 7-month period left in the king's 8th year. Thus, George Rawlinson's translation of the fuller passage, "Thus then Cambyses died, and the Magus now reigned in security, and passed himself off for Smerdis the son of Cyrus. And so went by the seven months which were wanting to complete the eighth year of Cambyses" (Rawlinson, *Herod.*, 2, p. 110, trans. of 3:67).

<sup>43</sup> Herodotus, 3:61–80; SIDG, pp. 6–15, *l.* 27–74.

<sup>44</sup> Herodotus, 3:68.

<sup>45</sup> SIDG, p. 8, *l.* 35–39.

<sup>46</sup> Enc.Ir, s.v. Cambyses II.

<sup>47</sup> SIDG, p. 9, *l.* 40–43.

<sup>48</sup> SIDG, p. 9, *l.* 40–43; Herodotus, 3:62–67, esp. 3:64; Syncellus, 289.

<sup>49</sup> SIDG, pp. 11f, *l.* 50–59.

<sup>50</sup> Herodotus, 3:14.

<sup>51</sup> Herodotus, 3:16.

<sup>52</sup> Herodotus, 3:1.

<sup>53</sup> Herodotus, 3:10.



## FIRST ATTACK ON KUSH

Cambyses II now made plans to attack three regions: (1) the Carchedoni (Carthaginians) of northwest Africa, (2) the Ammoni, who lived a 10 days' march from Thebes through the sandy desert,<sup>54</sup> and (3) the long-lived Ethiopians of Saba (Meroe).<sup>55</sup> His attempt to send the Phoenician navy against the Carthaginians failed when the Phoenicians refused to attack their brothers who lived in Carthage.<sup>56</sup> To accomplish the other tasks, Cambyses II first sent spies to Meroe, the capital of Ethiopia,<sup>57</sup> asking the Ethiopians various questions in order to test them. The Ethiopians, of course, already knew they were spies.<sup>58</sup> One of their responses was to express doubt that the Persians had the ability to conquer Kush.<sup>59</sup> When the spies returned with this information, Cambyses II was "angry" at their boast "and marched forthwith against the Ethiopians."<sup>60</sup> Nevertheless, Cambyses II was ill-prepared for the expedition, beginning the exploit before he was fully ready. For this reason, Herodotus, agreeing with the Egyptians, thought Cambyses II had gone insane.<sup>61</sup>

After reaching Thebes, the Persian king sent part of his forces against the Ammoni, while Cambyses II himself led the main army against Ethiopia. Both expeditions failed and Cambyses II was forced to return to Egypt.<sup>62</sup> Regarding his invasion of Kush, we read:

Yet before his army had accomplished the fifth part of their journey they had come to an end of all there was in the way of provisions, and after the food was gone they ate the beasts of burden until there was none of these left also. Now Cambyses having perceived this, changed his mind and led his army back again . . . .<sup>63</sup>

Herodotus adds that the army of Cambyses II was forced to eat grass in order to stay alive and Cambyses II feared that they would become cannibals. So he "gave up his expedition against the Ethiopians and marched back to Thebes, with the loss of many of his army."<sup>64</sup> If we allow about 3½ months for the journey of the spies to both reach Kush and return downstream to Memphis, and then for Cambyses II to hastily gather his army and set out against Ethiopia, we will have reached October of 525 B.C.E.

---

<sup>54</sup> Herodotus, 4:181.

<sup>55</sup> Herodotus, 3:17.

<sup>56</sup> Herodotus, 3:19.

<sup>57</sup> The spies went to see the "Table of the Sun" which was held by the long-lived Ethiopians (Herodotus, 3:17–19, 23); cf. Pausanias, 1:33:4, "The most righteous of them (the Ethiopians) inhabit the city of Meroe and what is called the Aethiopian plain. There are they who show the Table of the Sun, and they have neither sea nor river except the Nile."

<sup>58</sup> Herodotus, 3:21.

<sup>59</sup> Herodotus, 3:17–24.

<sup>60</sup> Herodotus, 3:25.

<sup>61</sup> Herodotus, 3:25, cf. 3:30, 34, 37f, 61.

<sup>62</sup> Herodotus, 3:25f.

<sup>63</sup> Herodotus, 3:25.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

It would have taken no more than 3½ months for Cambyses II to march his forces from Memphis to Thebes (a month and 10 days' journey upstream) and then coming only as far as a fifth of the way towards his target in Kush, where his army experienced starvation that caused them to return to Thebes. Therefore, his first campaign against Ethiopia ended in mid-January of 524 B.C.E. Having reached Thebes and safety, Cambyses II now returned to Memphis, a march of a month and 10 days' journey upstream but far less going downstream (about 3 weeks),<sup>65</sup> bringing us to mid-February. Just after arriving in Memphis, Cambyses II—who mocked the religious practices of the Egyptians—caused the death of the newborn bull calf identified by the Egyptian priests as the deified Apis.

Having searched for and found an animal who had the correct designated markings,<sup>66</sup> the priests at Memphis would then declare this calf the Apis. After this declaration, they would next begin a 7-day festival in its honor. Hearing the tumult of the celebration, Cambyses II called the priests to bring the animal to him, which apparently occurred on the 1st day of the celebration.<sup>67</sup> It was at that time that the king stabbed the animal. Seeing the contempt Cambyses II expressed for the Apis bull, the priests buried the animal without giving knowledge of its whereabouts to the king.<sup>68</sup>

An epitaph of the Apis bull (IM 4133), who died while Cambyses II was on his expedition to Kush and which prompted this search for a new calf, dates the previous animal's birth to Year 27 (of Amasis) and its death to Year 6, 11th month, (day unreadable) of Cambyses II.<sup>69</sup> Since "Year 27" certainly refers to Amasis, Year 6 of Cambyses II would also have been counted by the Egyptian system, i.e., beginning about January 1 of each year.<sup>70</sup> Since the Egyptians used the non-accession-year system, his "Year 6" was counted in this text from when Cambyses II began as the king of Persia (Cambyses II having ascended the throne in December of 530 B.C.E.). Under this system, the 6th year of Cambyses II was the year 525 B.C.E., January reckoning. As a result, the Apis bull died about mid- to late November of that year. The previous Apis bull, therefore, as we have said, died while Cambyses II was on his first expedition against Kush. The normal time for embalming the animal and the ceremonies

---

<sup>65</sup> A military march upstream from Memphis to Thebes is stated to have taken a month and 10 days (ARAB, 2, §§901, 906). Nevertheless, it would have been much faster going downstream from Thebes to Memphis.

<sup>66</sup> "The marks of this calf called Apis are these: he is black, and has on his forehead a three-cornered white spot, and the likeness of an eagle on his back; the hairs of the tail are double, and there is a knot under the tongue" (Herodotus, 3:28, cf. 2:153). "Memphis . . . contains temples, one of which is that of Apis, who is the same as Osiris; it is here that the Apis bull is kept in a kind of sanctuary, being regarded, as I have said, as deity; his forehead and certain other small parts of his body are marked with white, but other parts are black; and it is by these marks that they always choose the bull suitable for the succession, when the one that holds the honor has died" (Strabo, 17:1:31).

<sup>67</sup> Herodotus, 3:27–29.

<sup>68</sup> Herodotus, 3:29.

<sup>69</sup> LPDPE, pp. 30–35; PECSA, pp. 122–124.

<sup>70</sup> HdO, p. 276.

regarding its death took about 70 days,<sup>71</sup> which brings us to early February of 524 B.C.E. At this time, the search went out for a new bull calf. The timing brings us precisely to the days when Cambyses II returned to Memphis from Thebes and the 1st day of the Apis festival.

Herodotus informs us that Cambyses II, seeing the worship of an animal as an act which personally mocked him, stabbed the new Apis bull calf in its thigh, scourged the priests, and threatened to kill any one who continued the Apis festival. The Apis was laid in the Temple and died shortly thereafter (although the exact time is not stated).<sup>72</sup> For this reason, a new Apis bull was not sought again until after Cambyses II was willing to accept the cult. That time did not arrive until Cambyses II was ready to leave Egypt in 522 B.C.E. The record of this new calf is found on stela IM 4187 in the Louvre.<sup>73</sup> This official Egyptian record states that this Apis bull was born in Year 5 of Cambyses II, on the 29th day of the 5th month, and it died in Year 4 of Darius I, the new Persian king of Egypt, on the 4th day of the 9th month. It was buried in Year 4, the 13th day of the 11th month.

Two points catch our interest. First, because the issue is the Apis bull, the year system used by the Egyptian record found in IM 4187 is based upon Cambyses II and Darius I as pharaohs of Egypt, not as the kings of Persia. Accordingly, the Egyptian year system (January 1 reckoning) was used. In turn, the numbering of the year of the king is different than the system that was being used by the Persians for the kings of Persia. The year system of Cambyses II as Pharaoh of Egypt is revealed in the demotic papyrus text entitled the *Peteisis Petition*.<sup>74</sup> In this document we read:

In his 2nd year, therefore, Cambyses really conquered Egypt, and in the 5th year he died.<sup>75</sup>

The Persians and Egyptians during this period were known to record events in Egypt by both the Egyptian and Persian systems, even using double dating.<sup>76</sup> Under either system, this text clearly shows that Cambyses II counted his kingship over Egypt from his conquest of Pelusium in December of 526 B.C.E.; but he “really” did not become king until Year 2, when he had captured Memphis. Under this arrangement, Cambyses II did, in fact, die during his 5th year as Pharaoh (whether 522 B.C.E., January 1st Egyptian reckoning or spring Persian reckoning). In turn, Cambyses II, now seeking favor from the Egyptians as he was preparing to leave Egypt, finally allowed a new Apis bull calf to be chosen. As mentioned above, the animal was born at the end of May, 522 B.C.E., and not long after was brought into service.<sup>77</sup> Cambyses II apparently sanctioned the calf and its festival just before he left Egypt on his

<sup>71</sup> JNES, 54.2, p. 123, n. 22.

<sup>72</sup> Herodotus, 3:29.

<sup>73</sup> LPDPE, pp. 36–41.

<sup>74</sup> DFBU, p. 13.

<sup>75</sup> P. Rylands, IX:21, dated Year 9 of Darius, see DFBU, p. 13.

<sup>76</sup> E.g., JNES, 13.1, pp. 1–20.

<sup>77</sup> That the Apis bull was put into service when it was about 9 months old, see Kush, 8, p. 74.

return to Persia (about June/July), although in deference to the king it may not have entered service until after Cambyses II left Egypt.

As the drama unfolded, while Cambyses II was in Agbatana, Syria, he learned of the revolt of the Magi. Angry and acting too hastily, he accidentally stabbed himself in the thigh with his sword while mounting his horse. About 20 days thereafter, in the 5th month of that same year (July/Aug.), Persian reckoning, he died in Agbatana, Syria of gangrene from his wound.<sup>78</sup>

#### SECOND ATTACK ON KUSH

Returning to the events in Egypt in February, 524 B.C.E., two other important occurrences took place that date a second invasion of Kush by King Cambyses II. Just after Cambyses II returned from Thebes and killed the Apis calf, he further descended into madness. Out of jealousy, the Persian king now sent his trustiest servant, Prexaspes, to follow after Smerdis, his full brother, who was returning to Persia, with orders to murder him. Two reasons are given. First, Smerdis could draw the powerful bow given to them from the Ethiopians while no other Persian could accomplish the task;<sup>79</sup> and second, Cambyses II had a dream which he interpreted to mean that Smerdis would sit upon the royal throne in Persia.<sup>80</sup> Then after Prexaspes left, Cambyses II married his full sister,<sup>81</sup> whose name was Meroe. No doubt, this was an attempt to mimic the practice of brother-sister marriages used by the Egyptian and Ethiopian kings in order to establish legitimacy on the Egyptian and Ethiopian thrones.<sup>82</sup> Nevertheless, these two events would have only occupied no more than about 1 or 2 months' time, bringing us to a date no later than April of 524 B.C.E.

Herodotus now discusses the story of how Cambyses II killed his sister-wife because she criticized him about the murder of Smerdis, their brother.<sup>83</sup> Importantly, between Cambyses II's marriage to his sister and her death, Cambyses II was able to make a second expedition against Kush. Despite his previous losses, Cambyses II's army (a good part which apparently had remained stationed at Thebes during this period) was able, again, to march southward into Kush. This time Cambyses II was victorious, conquering parts of Ethiopia as far south as Upper (southern) Kush and its capital city of Saba (Meroe). We know this detail because his sister-wife, who was pregnant at the time, died in Meroe, where an outraged Cambyses II killed her. In her honor, Cambyses II renamed the city of Saba "Meroe." Herodotus, for example, speaks of "the Ethiopians nearest to Egypt," i.e., those of Lower or North Kush, "whom Cambyses subdued during his march towards the long-lived Ethiopians (of Upper or South Kush);<sup>84</sup> and also those who dwelt about the

<sup>78</sup> Herodotus, 3:64–66.

<sup>79</sup> Herodotus, 3:21, 22, 30.

<sup>80</sup> Herodotus, 3:30, 63–65.

<sup>81</sup> Herodotus, 3:31.

<sup>82</sup> See App. I.

<sup>83</sup> Herodotus, 3:32.

<sup>84</sup> That the long-lived Ethiopians were those who dwelt in Saba (Meroe), see Herodotus, 3:17–19, 23; cf. Pausanias, 1:33:4.

sacred Nysa (Napata),<sup>85</sup> where Dionysus (Amun) is the deity of their festivals.”<sup>86</sup> Other ancient writers agree. Strabo, for example, writes:

Furthermore, when Cambyses took possession of Aegypt, he advanced with the Aegyptians even as far as Meroe—some say HIS WIFE DIED THERE.<sup>87</sup>

Josephus reports:

. . . Saba, the capital of the Ethiopian realm, which Cambyses later called Meroe after the name of his sister . . . .<sup>88</sup>

George Syncellus states:

Kambyses, the son of Cyrus, captured this city (Saba) and decreed that it be named Meroë after his sister.<sup>89</sup>

Lucius Ampelius, likewise, points out that Ethiopia was a place where Cambyses II “founded the city of Meroe.”<sup>90</sup> Taken together, this evidence reveals that Cambyses II renamed the city of Saba “Meroe” in honor of his sister-wife after he murdered her in that city.

Herodotus points out that Meroe is located about a 2 months’ journey by land and river as one goes south from Elephantine (Aswan).<sup>91</sup> As previously noted, it takes a month and 10 days for an army to reach Thebes from Memphis, and there are still another 199 miles from Thebes to Elephantine—about a 13 to 15 days’ journey. Therefore, it was a journey of about 4 months from Memphis to Meroe. When we add that the sister-wife of Cambyses II was pregnant at the time of her death (most likely becoming pregnant soon after their marriage), it is very likely that Cambyses II’s second expedition left Memphis in about May of 524 B.C.E. Cambyses II would have defeated the Ethiopians and reached Saba (Meroe) in about September or October, 524 B.C.E. He certainly would have remained there for at least a short period, if for no other reason than to rest his army and resupply. Cambyses II would also have wanted to punish the king of Ethiopia for earlier mocking him and his Persian army.

Undoubtedly, King Nastossanan of Kush would have been removed from power by Cambyses II at this precise moment, just as Cambyses II had earlier

---

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Herodotus, 2:146. Mount Nysa is the sacred mountain of Zeus. The Ethiopian Holy Nysa can be none other place than Gebel Barkal (Pure Mountain) in Nubia, which mountain is called “sacred” in hieroglyphic inscriptions (e.g., Godley, *Her.*, ii, p. 125, n. 1).

<sup>86</sup> Herodotus, 3:97.

<sup>87</sup> Strabo, 17:1:5. Diodorus, 1:33, claims she was his mother, but this is only a misunderstanding of the Egyptian theme of Hathor as the mother-wife being incarnate as the sister-wife. Hathor is at times not only the wife but the mother and the daughter of Ra. Like Isis, she is at times described as being the mother of Horus, the god who is the representation of Pharaoh.

<sup>88</sup> Jos., *Antiq.*, 2:10:2.

<sup>89</sup> Syncellus, 139.

<sup>90</sup> Ampelius, 13.

<sup>91</sup> Herodotus, 2:29–31.

removed the king of Egypt—a common political practice utilized by this Persian monarch. Persian occupation of southern Kush was, nevertheless, short-lived. This point is demonstrated by the fact that only North Ethiopia was counted as a part of the Persian Empire by Cambyses II's successor, Darius I.<sup>92</sup> In this region of Kush, the best time to march northward back to Thebes would have been in mid-winter, when the weather was cooler. Therefore, the Persian army, with a very high probability, would have left Kush in about February, returning to Memphis in about June of 523 B.C.E.

After mentioning Meroe's death, Herodotus goes on to list several other insane acts committed by Cambyses II while he was still living in Memphis.<sup>93</sup> Then, after a digression in the story,<sup>94</sup> Herodotus continues by reporting that, after Cambyses II had lost his wits, and "while he still lingered in Egypt, two Magi, who were brothers, rebelled against him."<sup>95</sup> This brings us up to the 12th month of his 7th year as the king of Persia, i.e., March of 522 B.C.E.<sup>96</sup> By using the expression "he still lingered in Egypt," Herodotus clearly indicates that, after returning from Kush, Cambyses II spent the rest of the year 523 B.C.E. in Memphis. He would have left Egypt during the following spring of 522 B.C.E., staying in Syria for only a short period. While in Syria, he heard of the Magi revolt. It was then that he accidentally wounded himself and died, i.e., at the end of his 5th month (July/Aug.), Persian reckoning. This chronology is straightforward and easily tracked.

The Ethiopian King List calculates the reigns of its kings by the non-accession-year method, counting a king's accession year as his first. Therefore, Handu Wuha Abra, who followed Nastossanan, would have began his reign with the year that Cambyses II captured South Kush in 524 B.C.E. The last full year attributed to Nastossanan was 525 B.C.E., the year of the first invasion of Kush by Cambyses II. Nastossanan's removal from the throne, accordingly, would have been in 524 B.C.E., the very year that Cambyses II invaded Kush for the second time, also being the time when he conquered South Kush along with its capital city of Saba (renaming it Meroe). The records, accordingly, are in full agreement.

## Conclusion

In summary, there are several touchpoints between Egyptian chronology and the chronology of the Ethiopian King List that allows us to date Terhaq (Taharqa, Tirhaqah, Terhak, etc.):

- Shabaqo's first 12 years of reign over both Kush and Egypt was 707–696 B.C.E.

---

<sup>92</sup> Herodotus, 3:97.

<sup>93</sup> Herodotus, 3:33–38.

<sup>94</sup> Herodotus, 3:39–60.

<sup>95</sup> Herodotus, 3:61.

<sup>96</sup> SIDG, p. 8, *l.* 35–39.

- Taharqa Piye's *Heb Sed* (30-year anniversary) begins his reign in Kush in 706 B.C.E.
- The beginning of the reign of Urud-Amun was in 663 B.C.E.

From the time of Urud-Amun down until the reign of Cambyses II of Persia over Egypt, the Ethiopian King List is accurate. This detail is demonstrated by the fact that Egyptian records touch base again with the Ethiopian King List by the two campaigns of Psamtik II, which took place during his 3rd and 6th regnal years. First, they agree with the 34th and last full year of Anlamani being 592 B.C.E., and second, with the 3rd year of Aspelta. Finally, the second Ethiopian campaign of Cambyses II, which resulted in a great victory, occurred in 524 B.C.E., while he was the king of Egypt. This detail connects the chronology of Cambyses II with the end of the reign of Ramhay Nastossanan (Nastasen) of Kush.

**This page intentionally left blank.**