

Chapter 3: Osorkons, Sheshonks & Takeloths

Osorkon II & Takeloth II

A Revised 22nd/23rd Dynasty Chronology

According to the traditional history, for two hundred years from c.a. 950-750 B.C., Egypt was ruled, at least in Lower Egypt, by a series of 22nd dynasty kings bearing the names Sheshonk, Osorkon, and Takeloth. According to the Egyptologist K.A. Kitchen there were seven Osorkons, five Sheshonks, and three Takeloths. It is a confusing period.

In the middle of this time frame, during the latter part of the reign of Osorkon II, the 22nd dynasty lost control of Upper Egypt to the rival 23rd dynasty. For the next one hundred years the two dynasties ruled simultaneously in the north and south respectively. The dates for Osorkon II and the usurper Takeloth II have been reviewed recently by D. A. Aston⁶¹, who provides a range of dates for Osorkon II (874-835/30 B.C.) and for Takeloth II (c. 838/33-812/07 B.C.). He identifies Osorkon II with the 22nd dynasty and Takeloth II with the 23rd.⁶² Aston's median dates for the two kings and for their immediate successors are incorporated intact into Table 6.⁶³

With Osorkon II we are at the upper end of a line of kings stretching continuously down to Amasis at the end of the 26th dynasty. In this time period there are only a few significant questions concerning reign lengths (see the discussion below) and equally few problems related to the placement of minor kings. The sequence of kings outlined below is otherwise generally accepted.

⁶¹ D.A. Aston, "Takeloth II - A King of the 'Theban Twenty-Third Dynasty'?", *JEA* 75 (1989) 139-153.

⁶² The 23rd dynasty has traditionally been viewed as a single line of kings beginning with Pedubast I, this following Manetho. Only recently has the argument been made that Takeloth II was a Theban pharaoh and that the 23rd dynasty begins with his reign. Klaus Bauer distinguishes five independent branches to this 23rd dynasty, with centers at Thebes, Tanis, Leontopolis, Hermopolis, and Heracleopolis ("The Libyan and Nubian Kings of Egypt: Notes," *JNES* 32 (1973) 4-25).

⁶³ Osorkon II ruled independently for only 25 years. Aston was convinced Osorkon's sole reign ended c.a. 835 B.C. but having lowered the dates for Osorkon's death by some 14 years, was reluctant to leave this lengthy gap in the Egyptian chronology at the upper end. His solution was to leave the date for the beginning of Osorkon's reign unchanged, thus lengthening his reign by these 14 years. There is absolutely no evidence for this extended reign of Osorkon II. It was an unnecessary and unfortunate change on Aston's part, which is corrected in Table 1. The alteration affects only the date of the beginning of Osorkon's reign and therefore has no bearing on this segment of our revision, which is primarily concerned with the dates of Osorkon's successors.

Table 6: Dynasties 22 & 23 Kings: Traditional History

DYNASTY 22	DYNASTY 23
Osorkon II 861-833 B.C.	Takeloth II 836-811 B.C.
Sheshonk III 833-781 B.C.	Pedubast I 826-800 B.C.
Pamay 781-775 B.C.	Iuput I 812-? B.C.
Sheshonk V 775-738 B.C.	Osorkon III 794-766 B.C.
Pedubast II 738-730 B.C.	Takeloth III 771-764 B.C.
Osorkon IV 730-715 B.C.	Rudamon 764-745 B.C.

If our proposed alteration of Egyptian chronology is sound, it follows that the dates for the kings in Table 6 must be reduced. How large a reduction is the only question. It need not be the same 121 years applied to the Saite kings, since reign lengths prior to Taharka and the Saite dynasty are not so well established as within the Saite period. But 121 years cannot be far wrong and therefore that number is subtracted tentatively. The result is shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Dynasties 22 & 23 Kings: Revised History

DYNASTY 22	DYNASTY 23
Osorkon II 740-712 B.C.	Takeloth II 715-690 B.C.
Sheshonq III 712-660 B.C.	Pedubast I 705-679 B.C.
Pamay 660-654 B.C.	Iuput I 691-? B.C.
Sheshonq V 654-617 B.C.	Osorkon III 673-645 B.C.
Pedubast II 617-609 B.C.	Takeloth III 650-643 B.C.
Osorkon IV 609-594 B.C.	Rudamon 643-624 B.C.

We are not quite finished. There are two pharaohs in Table 7 whose dates are hotly contested, namely, Sheshonq III of the 22nd dynasty and Osorkon III of the 23rd. Two widely disparate possibilities exist for the reign lengths of the two kings. Scholars are divided on the issue. Aston follows K.A. Kitchen in assigning 52 years to Sheshonk III and 28 years to Osorkon III. Other Egyptologists credit Sheshonk III with only 39 years and Osorkon III with only 6 years. The lower figures are the highest attested dates on the monuments of these kings and are probably correct. Incorporating these lower reign lengths into Table 7 results in the alternative revised history shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Dynasties 22 & 23 Kings: Alternative Revised History

DYNASTY 22	DYNASTY 23
Osorkon II 740-712 B.C.	Takeloth II 715-690 B.C.
Sheshonq III 712-673 B.C.	Pedubast I 705-679 B.C.
???	Iuput I 691-? B.C.
Pamay 660-654 B.C.	Osorkon III 673-667 B.C.
Sheshonq V 654-617 B.C.	Takeloth III 672-665 B.C.
Pedubast II 617-609 B.C.	Rudamon 665-646 B.C.
Osorkon IV 609-594 B.C.	

The 13-year reduction in the reign-length of Sheshonk III leaves a gap of that duration in the chronology.⁶⁴ For the time being we leave the space unfilled.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ We cannot simply make the reigns of Sheshonk III and Pamay sequential. A gap of 26 years must be left in the table from the 28th year of Sheshonk III to the 2nd year of Pamay to agree with the data on Serapeum stela Louvre Nos.18 & 34; translation in BAR IV 771-74; 778-81. Cf. Malinine, Posener, Vercouter, *Catalogue des Stèles du Serapeum de Memphis I* (1968) Nos. 21-5; pls. 8-9.

⁶⁵ A name will be supplied in the second book of our series.

The chronology in Table 8 will require no further major adjustments. It agrees within a year with the dates provided by Karl Jansen-Winkeln⁶⁶ in a recent study, this of course after this scholar's absolute dates are systematically lowered. We are confident that this is the true historical position of these kings, though that fact remains to be proved. Little time will be spent establishing Osorkon II in the time frame 740-712 B.C. Others have already effectively argued the case for a late 8th century date for this king. Our focus will be on Takeloth II and his successors in the 23rd dynasty. We do begin, however, with Osorkon II. Every argument that links this king to the latter half of the 8th century B.C., rather than the middle years of the 9th century, is an argument in support of the current revision.

Shalmanezzer attacks Samaria 722 B.C.

In the 12th year of Ahaz, king of Judah, Hoshea became king of Israel in Samaria and he reigned nine years (731-722 B.C.) Early in his reign Hoshea made a bid for freedom. Withholding tribute from Assyria, he "sent envoys to So, king of Egypt." (2 Kings 17:4) The diplomatic mission failed to gain the needed assistance, and the Assyrian king Shalmanezzer V (727-722 B.C.) laid siege to Samaria. Three years later, in the 9th year of Hoshea, Samaria fell, its population was deported to Assyria, and the northern kingdom of Israel effectively ended. The palace of Hoshea, built in the time of Omri and Ahab, was destroyed.

Many monographs have been written speculating on the identity of the pharaoh "So" on whom Hoshea relied in vain. K.A. Kitchen argues for (O)so(rkon) IV, based largely on the traditional chronology that makes this pharaoh a contemporary of Hoshea (see Table 6). If our revision is correct (O)so(rokon) II is a better candidate. There is at least some evidence that Osorkon II had diplomatic links with Samaria. Not so with Osorkon IV.

A Commemorative Vase

From the 1908-1910 Harvard excavations at Samaria, from the palaces of Omri (876-869 B.C.) and Ahab (869-850 B.C.), there surfaced "the remains of a large alabaster vase bearing traces of the cartouches of Osorkon II".⁶⁷ The excavators identify the vase as "part of the gifts of an Egyptian embassy to the court of Ahab and Jezebel."⁶⁸ Thus interpreted the vase became a lynchpin in the traditional chronology. Since Ahab ruled from 869-850 B.C., and since, on the sole basis of this vase Osorkon II was his

⁶⁶ Karl Jansen-Winkeln, "Historische Probleme Der 3. Zwischenzeit," JEA 81 (1995) 129-149.

⁶⁷ Kitchen, TIP 284 (p.324), Cf. G.A. Reisner, L.S. Fischer, D.G. Lyon, *Harvard Excavations at Samaria*, 1908-10, I, 132,243, 247, 334, fig. 205; II plate 54b, 56g; for inscription cf. H Gauthier, *Livre des Rois*, III, 340 n.3.

⁶⁸ Reisner, Fischer, Lyon, *Harvard Excavations*, p. 247

contemporary, then Osorkon II must date to the mid 9th century.

But the revisionist historian Immanuel Velikovsky argued in 1979 that the identification with the time of Ahab is incorrect. He pointed out that the jar with Osorkon's inscriptions was found near, but not in, Ahab's palace. And furthermore, it happened that

beneath the layer of Osorkon's jar were discovered written documents that shattered its significance as chronological evidence: Ostraca, or inscribed potsherds, were found near the palace. They were first thought to date from Ahab's reign, but upon re-examination they were attributed to Jeroboam II's reign. Now, according to the excavators, the foundations of the Ostraca House (containing the inscribed sherds) "must have been destroyed previous to the construction of the Osorkon House" (so called because of the jar found in its ruins). It follows that the potsherds were of an earlier date than the Osorkon jar, or the time of its deposition; and that, if anything, the jar can prove only that Osorkon lived after Jeroboam II, not in the days of Ahab. Nevertheless we read again and again that the jar with the seal impression of Osorkon II proves that Ahab and Osorkon were contemporaries.⁶⁹

Jeroboam II reigned forty-one years in Israel. His dates are 786-746 B.C. The Osorkon jar was found in the excavation layer above Jeroboam's. It must be dated in the final quarter of the 8th century.

Almuñécar Vases

Osorkon II formed alliances not only with Hoshea in Israel, but also with the Phoenicians in the coastal towns of the eastern Mediterranean. He claimed to have ruled over "Upper and Lower Retenu".⁷⁰ An inscribed statue of Osorkon II was discovered in Byblos. Unfortunately it lacks a clearly dateable context. But elsewhere several inscribed alabaster jars attest Osorkon's commercial, if not his political associations with the Phoenicians. And these argue strongly for a late 8th century date. They derive from a Phoenician necropolis in southern Spain. Donald Harden, the excavator of Carthage, comments:

One very important site is the early Phoenician cemetery at Cerro de San Cristobal, Almunecar, the ancient Sexi, some 70 km. East of Malaga, excavated by Pellicer Catalan. This yielded, inter alia, a series of alabaster jars, two with genuine Egyptian cartouches of Osorkon II (870-47) and Takelothis II (847-23) and two others with imitation cartouches of Osorkon II and Sheshonq III (847)... Despite the presence, however, of these apparently ninth-century

⁶⁹ Immanuel Velikovsky, *Ramses II & His Times* (1979) p. 246-7.

⁷⁰ TIP 285 n.456

vessels, the cemetery is not thought to be earlier than the late eighth and early seventh centuries B.C., since two early proto-corinthian kotylai of the first quarter of the seventh century were found in tomb 19.⁷¹

Excavations at other Phoenician sites in southern Spain confirm the date of colonization of this area. Harden makes no further comment on the Almunecar find, though clearly some explanation is in order. Jean Leclant dates the cemetery in the early part of the seventh century.⁷² Pierre Cintas, another noted authority, agrees.⁷³ Then how do they explain the vases? Both scholars suggest that some of the tombs may be slightly earlier than the excavators suggest. Leclant conjectures additionally that some of the vases may have been local imitations while others spent some time in an eastern Phoenician context before being transmitted to Almunecar, where they were eventually entombed with their owners. Cintas disagrees with Leclant, arguing that the cartouches cannot be anything other than the manufacture of the pharaohs they depict. But with Leclant he agrees that the ninth century vases had already known a lengthy usage at the time of their entombment. What else could be argued? If the tombs are at earliest mid-eighth century while the vases are at latest mid-ninth century, then the vases must be later imitations or have been preserved in some unknown context for over a century before being entombed with their present owners. How likely is this scenario? Let the reader judge.

Cintas is correct when he argues that the inscriptions are the manufacture of the pharaohs whose cartouche names they bear. Other explanations are strained. But there is no need to postulate a lengthy pre-interment usage. Osorkon II and his near contemporaries Takeloth II and Sheshonk III are occupants of the late 8th and early 7th centuries, the dates assigned to the necropolis by the excavators.

Centuries of Darkness

Many similar finds favouring a lowering of 22nd dynasty dates, including those of Osorkon II, are presented by a group of Cambridge scholars in the recently published *Centuries of Darkness* (1991). These include "a relief chalice fragment at Beuseirah in Edom" dated 200 years earlier than its context and "a scarab of Osorkon I or II found in a tomb at Salamis, Cyprus, the other contents of which were dated by Karagiorghis to around 700 B.C."⁷⁴ It is claimed by the excavators in both cases that these are "heirlooms."

⁷¹ 9. Donald Harden, *The Phoenicians* (1962) reprint ed. 1971, p. 221 n. 62

⁷² Jean Leclant, Les relations entre l'Egypte et la Phenicie du voyage d'Ounamon a l'expedition d'Alexandre, in Wm. A Ward, ed., *The Role of the Phoenicians in the Interaction of Mediterranean Civilizations* (1968) p. 13. Cf. also p. 25, n. 34.

⁷³ Pierre Cintas, *Manuel d'Archeologie Punique vol. 1* (1970) p. 435-37.

⁷⁴ Peter James, in collaboration with I.J.Thorpe, Nikos Kokkinos, Robert Morkot and John Frankish, *Centuries of Darkness* (1991) p. 251-2. Cited henceforth as CD.

Inscriptional evidence from Carthage is particularly abundant.

At Carthage a number of Libyan period scarabs were found in tombs, along with pottery from the earliest days of the city. The scarabs carry the names of Pedubast I (eight tombs), Pimay son of Shoshenq III (one tomb) and Osorkon III (one tomb). Cintas attempted to use these finds to date the tombs to the early 8th century BC, supplying the evidence needed to take the history of Carthage back to its traditional foundation date of 814 BC. Unfortunately for Cintas, the Greek and Phoenician pottery also excavated from the lowest levels shows that they can be no earlier than about 720 BC, which would leave the scarabs, now rarely mentioned, as another collection of ostensible 'heirlooms'. (CD 253)

These inscribed objects, individually problematic for the traditional history, are collectively an embarrassment. And they are but small parts of a broader argument. In hundreds of pages of closely reasoned text the authors of *Centuries of Darkness* apply results from many scientific disciplines, including archaeology, to argue their case that the dark ages which exist in many Near Eastern and Balkan countries, including Greece, are a fiction. They result from a faulty Egyptian chronology to which the histories of these countries are linked. That faulty chronology includes dynasties 18 through 22. Dates for all these dynasties, not just the 22nd, need to be lowered by at least a century. Every detail in this extremely important anthology is indirectly an argument supportive of the present revision.

There is but a single criticism to be levelled at the Cambridge scholars. They ended their reconstruction with the 22nd dynasty at the end of the 8th century. This was a mistake. It created a chronological bottleneck at the terminal point in their revised chronology. According to Peter James, the spokesman for the group, "it is too early to offer a complete revised scheme, with every king slotted neatly into place." The reason for the caution is understandable. By correctly identifying the true position of the 22nd/23rd dynasty complex of pharaohs, the authors had already overlapped the traditional territory of the 25th dynasty. The 22nd dynasty was moved; the 25th dynasty was left in place. In the opinion of the authors: "Whilst there is still some doubt, the date of the Kushite invasion of Egypt by Shabaqo is most likely to fall within the parameters established by Kitchen and Redford, i.e. 716-711 BC." Unable to determine exactly how to fit the 22nd/23rd dynasties in the same space occupied by the 25th dynasty they wisely stopped. "Without giving precise dates for each pharaoh", they had established "broad lines of a new construction"⁷⁵.

A chronological firewall had been reached.

By the time of the 26th Dynasty (664-525 BC) we are well within the era of solidly dated history, where large-scale adjustments can be ruled out by a

⁷⁵ *Centuries of Darkness*, p. 254

wealth of interlocking evidence from Greek, biblical, Assyrian and Babylonian sources, as well as Egyptian. (CD 220)

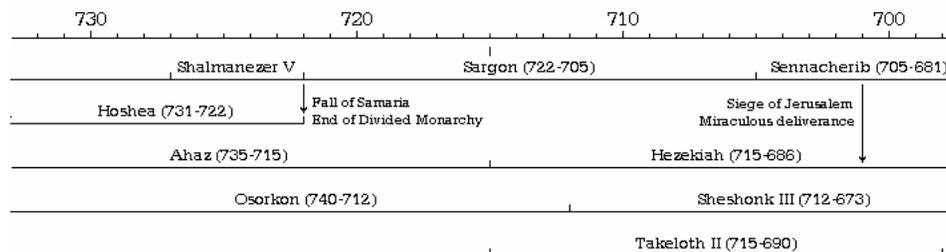
We are advised by the *Centuries of Darkness* authors that "The starting point for a revised chronology must be the later 25th Dynasty, whose last kings can be fixed exactly in time by links with the 26th Dynasty and the Assyrian kings."⁷⁶

Taharka's "certain dates" are not merely the bane of Egyptologists. They are the Achilles heel alike of traditionalists and reformers, a barrier to progress.

It is time for the barrier to fall.

Osorkon II ruled from 740 B.C. through 712 B.C. In the final three years of his life he shared power with Takeloth II who had assumed control over Upper Egypt. Takeloth II, according to our revised dates, ruled from 715-690 B.C. We have already noted the Almunecar vase inscriptions that provide some confirmation of these dates. Is there other evidence that Takeloth II lived and ruled in Egypt at this time?

Figure 12: Timeline – End of the 8th Century (Revised History)



Sennacherib Attacks Jerusalem 701 B.C.

With the demise of the Hoshea's northern kingdom, Judah continued as the sole surviving Jewish state. Ahaz died and was succeeded by his son Hezekiah (715-686 B.C.). In Assyria as well power changed hands - first, from Shalmanezzer to Sargon (722-705 B.C.), and then to his son Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.). A quarter century after the envoys of Hoshea sought the assistance of pharaoh So, king Hezekiah challenged the authority of Sennacherib. The Assyrian king reacted, laying siege to Jerusalem. This time Egyptian support was forthcoming. In the midst of the siege "Sennacherib received a report that Tirhakah, the Cushite king of Egypt, was marching out to fight against

⁷⁶ *Centuries of Darkness*, p. 220

him". (2 Kings 19:9) The threat was not taken seriously by the Assyrian monarch, who sent messengers to Hezekiah with the word: "Say to Hezekiah, king of Judah: Do not let the god you depend on deceive you when he says, 'Jerusalem will not be handed over to the king of Assyria'". (2 Kings 19:10) Apparently the advancing Egyptian army did not intimidate Sennacherib. The Hebrew Bible omits any mention of the ensuing battle but the annals of Sennacherib record the event. In those annals, which document the 3rd campaign of Sennacherib, in the midst of a description of the assault on Jerusalem, it is noted that Hezekiah

had become afraid and had called (for help) upon the kings of Egypt (Mus(u)ri) (and) the bowmen, the chariot(-corps) and the cavalry of the king of Ethiopia (Meluhha), an army beyond counting - and they (actually) had come to their assistance. In the plain of Eltekeh (Al-ta-qu-u), their battle lines were drawn up against me and they sharpened their weapons. Upon a trust (-inspiring) oracle (given) by Ashur, my lord, I fought with them and inflicted a defeat upon them. In the melee of the battle, I personally captured alive the Egyptian charioteers with the(ir) princes and (also) the charioteers of the king of Ethiopia.⁷⁷

The siege of Jerusalem resumed. There is no further mention of Egypt by the Jewish historians. Instead we are informed regarding some intervening "miraculous" deliverance of Hezekiah's city. It came at night. How long after the battle of Eltekeh we can only guess.

That night the angel of Yahweh went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning - there were all the dead bodies. So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and remained there. (1 Kings 19:35,36)

The date of the siege of Jerusalem, of the advance of Egyptian forces under king Tirhakah, and of the "miraculous" deliverance of Jerusalem, was 701 B.C.

Who was king Tirhakah, the king of Cush who, along with other Egyptian kings, provided military assistance to Hezekiah? Unlike the question regarding the identity of king So, historians were able to answer this one unequivocally. A perfect candidate was at hand. Or nearly so.

In the traditional history the date 701 B.C. is a decade in advance of the "certain" dates of Taharka (690-664 B.C.), the Ethiopian (Cushite) king of Egypt who opposed Assurbanipal and whose death immediately preceded the Saite dynasty. In spite of the lack of correspondence in date the assumption is made, and never questioned, that the Jewish historians are referring to this 25th dynasty king. They have no option. With the

⁷⁷ A. Leo Oppenheim, ANET, p. 288 Oppenheim is responsible for the translations of all "Babylonian and Assyrian Historical Texts" in ANET (pp. 265-317)

dynasties displaced no other candidate is on the scene.

But the chronological difficulty with this identification has not gone unnoticed. The Tirhakah who moved to assist Hezekiah in 701 B.C. was called “king of Cush”. Taharka did not become king until 690 B.C.

Two distinct resolutions of the problem emerged. Most historians, following the lead of Egyptologists, assumed that *prince* Taharka was acting in 701 B.C. as a commander of the armies of his brother Shabataka. The reference to him as “king” was either anachronistic or, as Kitchen explains it, proleptic.⁷⁸

An alternative solution, proposed and defended by biblical scholars, assumed that the battle referred to actually occurred later in the careers of Hezekiah and Sennacherib, when Taharka was in fact the king. The historian John Bright takes a dozen pages of his *History of Israel* (2nd) to analyze what he terms this “difficult problem.” Bright sides with those who argue for two campaigns, one in 701 B.C. which ended in the “miraculous” slaughter of the Assyrian army, and one in 686 B.C. in which Tirhakah participates.⁷⁹

The arguments and counter arguments serve only to emphasize the difficulty inherent in the proposed identification.

The debate about Tirhakah king of Cush is unnecessary. The similarity of names notwithstanding, Taharka was neither prince nor king of Cush in 701 B.C. He was born in the early 6th century B.C. He could not have come to the assistance of Hezekiah in the last year of the 8th century B.C.

There is a better candidate on hand in the restored chronology. Takeloth II was a contemporary of Sennacherib and Hezekiah. He ruled over Upper Egypt. He is arguably a king of Cush.⁸⁰ And his name is right.

⁷⁸ TIP 129

⁷⁹ John Bright, *A History of Israel* 2nd (1972) "Excursus I: The Problem of Sennacherib's Campaign in Palestine", p. 296-308.

⁸⁰ Although, strictly speaking, Cush was a designation for lands south of the 1st cataract, in many instances in both Assyrian and biblical texts (as here), the term appears to be synonymous with upper Egypt, perhaps because the 23rd dynasty pharaohs were Cushite in origin, perhaps because northern Cush and Pathros (Upper Egypt) were part of one administrative district. Where Cush is used synonymously with Upper Egypt or Pathros, the term Melukkha is used to designate the Napatan region, thus distinguishing the two geographical areas. But even this distinction is not consistently followed. Cf. comments in notes 84, 85 and 110.

Takeloth = Takeroth = Tarkoth

The 22nd dynasty kings were not native Egyptians. Their personal names Osorkon, Takeloth, and Sheshonk are of unknown provenance and meaning.⁸¹ They are simply spelled out using consonantal hieroglyphs. Vowel sounds are not represented. Thus the personal name of Takeloth is written t-k-l-t, or t-k-r-t. The variant third consonant is the Egyptian "mouth" hieroglyph. It has the value of an "r" in Egyptian, but serves to represent an "l" where this sound occurs in foreign names (Egyptian has no "l"). Without corroborative evidence from foreign texts, there is no rationale for choosing between the spellings Takeloth and Takeroth. Early Egyptologists use both.

So Takeloth becomes Takeroth merely by giving the hieroglyph its usual value. But even the order of the consonants is not certain. While Egyptian texts are usually - though not always - read in a fixed order following a traditional sequence pattern, not so foreign names. When Assurbanipal entered Egypt two decades after Sennacherib's attack on Hezekiah he encountered a king Limintu. Egyptologists have no qualms about equating Limintu with a minor king Nimlot (n-m-l-t) though this implies a complete inversion of the order in which the hieroglyphs are typically read. Other instances can be cited of similar inversions especially at the time of the 22nd/23rd dynasties. The only certain way of knowing whether the consonants are to represent the sequence t-k-r-t or t-r-k-t or even some third variant is to fortuitously encounter a reference to the Egyptian king in a foreign language text where the reading is certain. Hebrew is one such language. Assyrian is another. We assume therefore that the name read as tkrt may have been vocalized as trkt by the Egyptians.⁸²

Finally, we are reminded that foreigners often abbreviated the names of pharaohs. If it can be argued that pharaoh So is (O)so(rokon), then we should not be surprised if the "t" ending in t-r-k-t was not sounded. It may never have been vocalized within Egypt.⁸³

⁸¹ Most Egyptologists believe the names are Libyan.

⁸² We expect no quarrel from Egyptologists on this point. The equation Tirhakah = Taharka already assumes the phenomenon. The Hebrew text has the consonants trhkh while the name of the 25th dynasty king Taharka is written thrk. There is an assumed inversion in the order of the second and third consonants that is rarely discussed. Kitchen refers to the anomaly as "metathesis", and appears to ascribe this metathesis to the Massorettes, the 16th century editors of the Hebrew consonantal text. (TIP 421 n.136) There is no point arguing, since the problem is moot. Tirhakah is not Taharka. There remains the possibility, however, that the shortened form of the Ethiopian name was Teker and that metathesis has occurred on the part of the Jewish and Assyrian historians. Metathesis is common in Semitic languages (cf. S. Moscati, *An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages* (1969) 63 (sect. 7))

⁸³ Cf. the discussion by M.F. Laming Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa I* (1949) p. 53, who argues that in Meroitic a locative postposition -te occurs on the name of the Nubian capital Napate which is absent in the Egyptian vocalization: " ... the Greek form ta Napata restores the final syllable, which must have been absent from the Egyptian form of the word." It may be that the final "t" in tkrt was never sounded in Egypt, a phenomenon that may have been duplicated in the

Combining all of the arguments noted above we conclude that the name traditionally written Takeloth was actually T(e)r(e)k or T(e)r(e)ka, this with hypothetical vowels included. The Hebrew consonants *thrkh* support this conjecture. Tirhakah is but one of many possible renderings of the Hebrew name. The Hebrew consonantal text preserves his name as t-r-h-k-h. Vowels and inflection points were added by Jewish linguists (Massorettes) in the 16th century of the present era, roughly two thousand years after the event. Theirs was only a guess as to the original pronunciation. If we take the two h's as vowel indicators then the Hebrew text could be repointed as T(e)r(eh)k(ah). In this case both the Hebrew and Egyptian vocalizations are identical.

Based on these considerations we argue that Tirhakah, king of Cush is none other than Takeloth II. The name is right. The time is right. Takeloth II was a Theban pharaoh, and for reasons discussed earlier (see note 80) the biblical author calls him a king of Cush.⁸⁴ When Sennacherib describes the battle at Eltekeh he refers to his opponents in the plural. He fought a combination of Egyptian kings and a king of Melukkha. It is possible that the Assyrian annalist is here preserving the same distinction we make between Lower and Upper Egypt, the former ruled by “kings of Egypt”, which must include Sheshonk III, the latter by Takeloth II, king of Cush (or Melukkha).⁸⁵ Concerning Takeloth II little is known, save that he was the founder of a rival dynasty and therefore arguably ambitious and militarily capable. His burial in a second-hand sarcophagus in a side chamber of the tomb of Osorkon II in Tanis, excavated by Montet in 1939, reflects the turbulent character of the times in which he lived.

Concerning these turbulent times more can be said.

pronunciation of other foreign names.

⁸⁴See also notes 85 and 110.

⁸⁵ It is also possible, perhaps even probable, that the terms “Cush” and “Melukha” should be distinguished in this instance. If so then the king of Melukha referred to by Sennacherib is not Takeloth II, the king of Cush (= the region of Upper Egypt), who must be included among the “kings of Egypt”. But if so, the king of Melukkha is clearly an ally of Takeloth II, sending skilled warriors to assist in the battle against Sennacherib. Later we introduce the possibility that the king of Melukha at this time in history is named Shabataka, not to be confused with the 25th dynasty king of like name who ruled a century later. This Shabataka, king of Melukkha, may or may not have been related to Takeloth II by marriage. In one argument we suggest that he was married to the sister of Takeloth II, and that his son by this marriage, named Rudamon, succeeded Takeloth II on the Egyptian throne (see below).

Shifting Sun & Suffocating Wind

In 701 B.C. Takeloth II advanced on Jerusalem intending to assist Hezekiah, king of Judah, in his rebellion against Assyria. He was driven back, losing part of his army. Instead, the deliverance of the city is credited by the Jewish historians to an unspecified calamity, the effect of which was the overnight extermination of much of the Assyrian army. What exactly happened, however, is a mystery. The Jewish historian says only "that night the angel of the Lord went out and put to death a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning - there were all the dead bodies!" (2 Kings 19:35) As a result Sennacherib, who must have been quartered separately from his troops, withdrew and returned to Nineveh.

In his controversial first book, *Worlds in Collision* (1950), Immanuel Velikovsky attributes the massive loss of life to asphyxiation resulting from hot gaseous clouds generated by volcanic upheavals triggered by a cosmic near collision of the planets earth and Mars. He alludes to predictions made by the prophet Isaiah that Yahweh would "send a blast upon" Sennacherib and cause him to return to his own land, and he cites Talmudic and Midrashic sources which claim that

a blast fell from the sky on the camp of Sennacherib. It was not a flame, but a consuming blast: "Their souls were burnt, though their garments remained intact." The phenomenon was accompanied by a terrific noise. (WC 231)

Velikovsky mistakenly ascribed to the two-invasion theory of Sennacherib - which we have previously discounted - and he dates the cosmic event to the hypothetical second invasion of 687 B.C. He was wrong. Whatever the cause of the volcanism that generated the noxious gases - assuming that was indeed the cause of the extensive loss of life - the date is certain. It took place in 701 B.C. But Velikovsky correctly connected the event with an unusual solar phenomenon suggested by a story told in Isaiah 38:6-8 and 2 Kings 20:8-11.

The story begins with Hezekiah ill and at the point of death, pleading for divine healing. Isaiah, the current prophetic spokesman, is sent to Hezekiah with promise of a lengthy remission of his illness:

Go back, and tell Hezekiah, the leader of my people, 'This is what the Lord, god of your father David, says: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I will heal you. On the third day from now you will go up to the temple of the Lord. I will add fifteen years to your life. And I will deliver you and this city from the hand of the king of Assyria. I will defend this city for my sake and for the sake of my servant David. (2 Kings 20:5,6)

Hezekiah anxiously sought visible assurance to confirm the prophet's message. He asked Isaiah,

What will be the sign that the Lord will heal me and that I will go up to the temple of the Lord on the third day from now?" Isaiah answered, "This is the Lord's sign to you that the Lord will do what he has promised: Shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or shall it go back ten steps?" "It is a simple matter for the shadow to go forward ten steps," said Hezekiah. "Rather, have it go back ten steps." Then the prophet Isaiah called upon the Lord, and the Lord made the shadow go back the ten steps it had gone down on the stairway of Ahaz. (2 Kings 20:8-11)

The Jewish annalists who recorded this historical vignette apparently considered the sudden shift in the position of the shadow to be an act of God, something completely unnatural and unexplained. At minimum the language of the text suggests that the apparent position of the sun in the sky had changed. According to the story, this motion reversed an apparent movement of the sun in the opposite direction that had taken place sometime during the reign of Ahaz, at least 14 years earlier. We are not told how long it took for the sun to reach its altered position. Nor is any explanation of the cause provided. Which leads us to inquire: what happened?

For Velikovsky the answer was cosmic in nature. Already he had discovered an abundance of evidence from literary sources around the world that at this time in history the position of the sun in the sky was mysteriously altered. He also found numerous references to a near collision between the planets earth and Mars, which at the time was following a different orbital path than it does today. The combined discoveries led to the conclusion that the enormous gravitational attraction between the two planets wrenched the earth out of orbit, realigned its axis of rotation, and buckled the surface of the earth, generating a variety of catastrophic events. The changed position of the sun in Hezekiah's sky was one result. The clouds of noxious gas that selectively fell on the Assyrian army was yet another.

There are, of course, other possible explanations that maintain a connection between those same two events. The change in the position of the sun could just as easily result from a buckling of the earth that supported the stairwell, changing its angle of orientation to the sun and causing the shadow to move. And the movement of the earth that shifted the shadow might have been caused by the same volcanic event that produced the suffocating gases that smothered the Assyrian army.

We simply do not know what happened. But the coincidence in time of the altered solar alignment suggested by the moving shadow, and the suffocating wind from heaven that fell suddenly on Sennacherib's army, do suggest that the two events are somehow related.

The solar phenomenon occurred 15 years before Hezekiah's death in 686 B.C. It must have taken place in 701 B.C., perhaps in the days shortly before or after Sennacherib laid siege to Jerusalem. The reference in the quoted passage (2 Kings 20:6) to an Assyrian threat to the city can only refer to that time. Additional confirmation is available from rabbinical sources that confirm "that the disturbance in the movement of the sun happened on the evening of the destruction of Sennacherib's army by a devouring blast."⁸⁶

The year 701 B.C. is the fifteenth year of Takeloth II. If our revision is correct, and if the wayward sun in the day and winds of noxious gases during the night are historical realities, then unusual cosmic phenomenon cannot have escaped the notice of Takeloth's army as it retreated from its defeat by Sennacherib.

Chronicle of Prince Osorkon

Around his 10th year Takeloth II installed his eldest son Osorkon as High Priest of Amon in Thebes. This Osorkon was "an energetic, probably impatient, perhaps precocious, young man in his 20s" and as high priest he became "general of the whole land, army-leader, and Governor of the South".⁸⁷ Osorkon, the priest and army commander, would one day become king Osorkon III, but his life as high priest was of sufficient interest to warrant recording its details in a prominent position on the inside wall of the court of the temple of Amon in Thebes.

This so-called Chronicle of the crown prince Osorkon is the source of considerable historical information related to the first dozen years following his installation. During his first few years as high priest Osorkon regulated the affairs of Egypt for his father Takeloth II from a base in the central Egyptian town of El-Hibeh. From there he promoted works of restoration, performed ritual duties at the thrice-yearly festivals in Thebes, and successfully suppressed the growing political unrest in the country. Then, suddenly, in year 15 of Takeloth II (701 B.C. in our revision) "without any omens or warning signals of disaster, Egypt erupted into civil war - 'a (great) convulsion broke out in this land ... the children of rebellion, they stirred up strife in (both) South and North'. For his part, Osorkon 'did not weary of fighting in their midst like Horus following his father'. The Egyptian kingdom was shaken to its foundation - 'years passed by, when one could not repel the depredations of one's fellow'."⁸⁸ The conflict continued for close to 10 years.

What happened in 701 B.C. to trigger this widespread political upheaval? Breasted's translation of the relevant section of the Chronicle provides the context from which we

⁸⁶ WIC 233

⁸⁷ TIP 291

⁸⁸ TIP 293

can glean the answer:

Now, afterward, in the year 15, fourth month of the third season, day 25, under the majesty of his August father, the divine ruler of Thebes, **before heaven devoured the moon**, [great] wrath arose in this land like - - the [hated] and the rebels. They set warfare in the South and North --- not ceasing to fight against those who were therein and those who followed his father; while years passed [in] hostility (hsj-') (each) one seizing upon his neighbour, [not] remembering his [son] to [protect] him who came forth from him. (BAR IV 764) (emphasis added)

A cosmic phenomenon preceded the decade of chaos in Egypt. But we would miss that point if we depended on Breasted's translation. He, and many others following him, interpret the introductory portion of the quoted passage as a reference to an imminent eclipse of the moon or the immediate arrival of a new moon, an event that serves only to date the beginning of this period of political disruption in Egypt.⁸⁹ But even a cursory reading of the text tells us this cannot be true. The lunar activity is clearly connected with the ensuing chaos, though not necessarily as cause and effect. And it does not refer to a lunar eclipse.

Another early Egyptologist, C.W. Goodwin, provides a less interpretive translation:

In the 15th year, the 25th of Mesori, in the reign of father Horus the noble, divine regent of Thebes, **the heaven not devouring the moon**, great calamity (*nšn* ') happened in the land.... Likewise the children of rebellion ...⁹⁰ (emphasis added)

Goodwin points out what many others since have echoed, that the text says expressly: "heaven *did not* devour the moon." He expressed doubts that this phrase could be describing an eclipse. And, he adds, "It is difficult to understand why the non-occurrence of an eclipse of the moon should be recorded. Can it be that an eclipse had been predicted but did not happen as expected, or are the words used to denote a partial eclipse, one by which the moon was not wholly swallowed, but which nevertheless was followed by some heavy calamity to the country?" There he leaves the matter. He is

⁸⁹ To be fair, Breasted is not convinced that the phenomenon referred to is an eclipse. Elsewhere he states that "in the year 15 there occurred a remarkable prodigy of uncertain nature, but in some way connected with the moon." (BAR IV 757) In a footnote to his translation he equivocates: "This is the famous passage supposed by Brugsch to record an eclipse of the moon. This seems to me possible only on the basis of the rendering I have adopted, according to which the meaning may be: "just before new moon;" or possibly: "just before an eclipse of the moon." (BAR IV 764 n. d)

⁹⁰ C.W. Goodwin, "On an inscription of Takelut II," ZAS 6 (1868) p. 25-29. Goodwin does not provide a continuous translation. The passage quoted is pieced together from individual snippets of translation.

clearly perplexed. Of only one thing is he convinced: “If an eclipse be not the phenomenon intended here, it seems clear at least that some sort of occurrence connected with the moon is mentioned, and that certain calamities are represented as consequent there-upon.”⁹¹

There was no eclipse. There was no failed eclipse. The expressive language of the text suggests that this was the time of the astronomical new moon or dark moon. To the ancients a waning moon appeared night by night as if being consumed or devoured. The night of the “new moon”⁹² was the night the heaven finally devoured the moon. The moon disappeared from view. On the 25th of Messori, 701 B.C. such a new moon, or rather no moon, was anticipated, but apparently the moon appeared. If not this, then some other unusual manifestation of the moon, somehow connected with altered atmospheric conditions, is being referenced. Unfortunately the Egyptian text is sufficiently ambiguous to preclude further detailed analysis. We leave the matter to others to investigate. What we can determine is that the anomalous behaviour of the sun in Judah and bizarre appearance of the moon in Egypt appear to have taken place at precisely the same time in history. And that is one reason we have belaboured the point. In 701 B.C. the sun changed position in the sky over Judah; in the 15th year of Takeloth II “the sky did not devour the moon” over Egypt. If the two events are related they provide convincing evidence of the accuracy of our revised chronology. And for that reason we point out one further correspondence between the anomalous behaviour of sun and moon in these locations.

In Judah the altered solar appearance is connected with a catastrophic atmospheric event, resulting in the asphyxiation of Sennacherib’s army. Any reasonable explanation for the wayward sun seems to confirm that it was accompanied by (or the result of) some cataclysmic upheaval on the earth’s surface. We have also mentioned the fact that in Osorkon’s Chronicle the visual lunar anomaly was followed by political chaos throughout Egypt, chaos that lasted for almost thirty years. The Chronicle of prince Osorkon refers to it as the “disruption”(nšn). Were there also manifest in Egypt symptoms of some natural disaster. Was the anomalous moon followed by (or the result of) a cataclysm in nature, as it was in Judah? The answer is a resounding yes.

The translations habitually downplay the physical aspects of the chaos that followed the night of Osorkon’s “new moon”. Instead they interpret the whole of Osorkon’s text as

⁹¹All quoted material in this paragraph originates from Goodwin on p. 27.

⁹²The phrase “new moon” is used in two senses in modern literature. On the one hand it is used to refer to the first appearance of the waxing crescent moon immediately after sunset at the beginning of each lunar month. As such it becomes the subject of an intensive visual search for peoples around the world whose religious or social calendars are based on the cycles of the moon, thus warranting the designation “calendrical new moon”. The term “new moon” is also used, as in the present circumstance, for the situation technically referred to as the “astronomical new moon”, when the moon passes between the earth and the sun (conjunction), and is therefore not visible from earth.

descriptive of social and political disruption within Egypt. But Goodwin rightly points out that the calamities consequent on the lunar phenomenon are both physical and social. There is a clear ordering in the text. First the sky did not swallow the moon; then great (physical) upheaval (*nšn* ‘); then great social upheaval (*nšn* ‘).

The word *nšn* has connotations of “darkness” and “heat”. It implies not only social disruption but also widespread physical damage. We will encounter the phrase again in chapter 5 where it is used by one observer to describe Egypt in the aftermath of Nebuchadrezzar’s invasion. But Goodwin is troubled by the suggestion that a lunar phenomenon could be the cause of physical destruction on earth. Unable to connect a lunar event with widespread physical damage he points out that *nšn* is associated with heat, and that the anomalous moon was perhaps followed by extreme drought, the events being somehow related. We understand his dilemma. At least he is attempting to interpret the text without resorting to emendation. He rests his case and continues: “Besides this calamity of a great drought or whatever else it may have been, the text next refers to something of another nature, namely a rebellion.”⁹³ The chronicle appears to liken the three events. The social chaos is likened to the physical chaos that has occurred both in the land and in the sky.

We rest our case. The two cosmic phenomena were introduced for two reasons, namely, 1) to provide the context in which to introduce related historical matters germane to our discussion, and 2) to synchronize the histories of Assyria, Judah and Egypt, further validating our revised chronology. Both objectives have been met without our having to explain precisely the nature or causes of the respective incidents. The cosmic phenomena, interesting in their own right, are otherwise irrelevant to the overall argument of this book. Let the critic supply his own rationale for the events described.

At minimum Hezekiah’s sun and Osorkon’s moon provide a link between the time of Sennacherib, Hezekiah, and Takeloth II. And the physical chaos in Egypt helps us to understand the resulting political disruption that allowed the Assyrian armies of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal to invade and conquer the land, for within three decades of the day when “the sky did not devour the moon”, Egypt was ruled by the Assyrians.

⁹³ Goodwin, op.cit. p. 27

Assyrian Invasions

Esarhaddon's Campaigns

Immediately following the day when the sun veered off course and a moon appeared in the sky where none was expected, Sennacherib returned to Assyria where his reign lasted to 681 B.C. He was brutally murdered by one of his sons. His successor was another son named Esarhaddon.

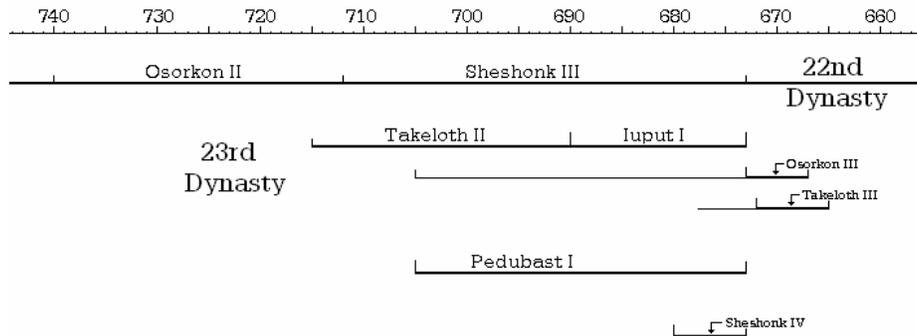
Meanwhile in Egypt Takeloth II endured a decade of the civil war that accompanied the disruption, then died. His successor Iuput I, Sheshonk III (who succeeded Osorkon II), rivals Pedubast I, Sheshonk IV, and others, contested for control of Egypt, while the high priests Prince Osorkon (Osorkon B) and Harsiese (Harsiese B) both claimed religious authority in Thebes. The details are unimportant. Egypt was weakened by this civil strife, which lasted for several decades. The land perhaps still suffered the effects of the physical damage associated with the *nšn*. Assyria decided the time was right to enlarge its kingdom.

In his seventh year Esarhaddon invaded Egypt. He miscalculated Egypt's strength. A later Babylonian Chronicle records the outcome in a note remarkable for its brevity: "Seventh year: In the month of Addarum the 5th day, the army of Assyria was defeated in a bloody battle in Egypt."⁹⁴ The seventh year of Esarhaddon was 674 B.C.

For convenience we reproduce below a time line of the Jansen-Winkeln chronology of dynasties 22 and 23 with dates systematically reduced 121 years, augmented slightly using Aston's data (again with dates reduced). This is essentially the identical chronology presented earlier in table 8. It is of interest to note the centrality of the years 674 and 673 B.C. The year 673 B.C. was the last attested year of Sheshonk III. He was perhaps injured in the "bloody battle" with Esarhaddon and died soon after. It was the same year that prince Osorkon, high priest of Amon, declared his kingship. It is possible that his new status resulted from the Egyptian victory. "Commander of the army" was one of his titles and he probably participated in the battle. It is also likely that the Assyrian threat was responsible for his elevating his son Takeloth III to share the throne in 672 B.C. Twenty-nine years as high priest had taken its toll. He was not a young man, and he was correct in assessing his need for help. Esarhaddon had retreated only to entrench. Three years later he was back.

⁹⁴ Oppenheim, ANET 302

Figure 13: Kings of Egypt prior to Assyrian Rule



Revised History 740-660 B.C.

In his tenth year, Esarhaddon left Assyria and advanced toward Egypt. He writes:

“I departed from my city Ashur. I crossed the Tigris and the Euphrates at (the time of their flood); I advanced over the difficult territory (of my route) (as quick-footed) as a wild-ox. In the course of my campaign I threw up earthwork (for a siege) against Ba’lu, king of Tyre who had put his trust upon his friend Tirhakah (Tarqu), king of Nubia (Kusu), and (therefore) had thrown off the yoke of Ashur, my lord...” (ANET 292)

Egypt's victory in 674 B.C. had prompted Tyre to reject Assyrian suzerainty. This was a mistake. Tyre fell and Esarhaddon moved on to do battle with Egypt for the second time. This time he was successful. The year was 671 B.C.

Esarhaddon was justly proud of his conquest of Egypt. He publicized his victory prominently. The double conquest of Tyre and Egypt was commemorated on a large stela erected near Senjirli in Syria. There he stands, larger than life, holding captive as on a leash, kneeling royal figures, one clearly representing Ba’alu of Tyre, the other mistakenly identified from antiquity as Tarqu of Egypt. It was instead Tarqu's son. The text tells the story of the conquest:

From the town of Ishhupri as far as Memphis, his royal residence, a distance of 15 days (march), I fought daily, without interruption, very bloody battles against Tirhakah (Tarqu), king of Egypt and Ethiopia, the one accursed by all the great gods. Five times I hit him with the point of (my) arrows (inflicting) wounds (from which he should) not recover, and (then) I led siege to Memphis, his royal residence, and conquered it in half a day by means of mines, breaches

and assault ladders; I destroyed (it), tore down (its walls) and burnt it down. His “queen,” the women of his palace, Ushanahuru, his “heir apparent,” his other children, his possessions, horses, large and small cattle beyond counting, I carried away as booty to Assyria. All Ethiopians I deported from Egypt - leaving not even one to do homage (to me). Everywhere in Egypt, I appointed new (local) kings, governors, officers (šaknu), harbor overseers, officials and administrative personnel. I installed regular sacrificial dues for Ashur and the (other) great gods, my lords, for all times. I imposed upon them tribute due to me (as their) overlord, (to be paid) annually without ceasing. I had (also) made (this) stela (bearing) my name-inscription and had written thereupon the praise of the valor of my lord Ashur, my own mighty deeds ... (ANET 293)

From the Dog River in Syria comes a second stela.⁹⁵ Again Esarhaddon boasts of defeating Tarqu and capturing Ushanahuru, “the heir to his throne”. Tarqu and Ushanahuru are both prominent Egyptians. Fortunately we can identify both individuals.

Ushanahuru

On the assumption that Tarqu was Taharka of the 25th dynasty, scholars searched in vain for inscriptional records of his son and heir Ushanahuru, taken captive by Esarhaddon. None were found. Not a single document naming this prince is known. Neither has his tomb been found. The Egyptian name represented by the Assyrian vocalization presents a problem. It can only be guessed at. “His name in Egyptian may have been Esanhuret.”⁹⁶

Documentation cannot be found for Ushanahuru among 25th dynasty monuments because he was not a 25th dynasty prince. If our revised history is correct he belongs to the 22nd or 23rd dynasties. According to K.A. Kitchen, among the attested royalty of the 22nd dynasty “the one doubtful name of any moment is the possible Was-neter-re Shoshenq VI. His very existence remains open to question.”⁹⁷ He “is so far attested solely by a bronze pendant bearing the cartouches: Was-neter-re Setep(en)-re, Shosh(enq Mery)-Amun, god, (Ruler) of Thebes.”⁹⁸ Kitchen refers to him as a king because of his cartouche names, but the cartouches indicate only his royal status. The Egyptologist Flinders Petrie produces a photo of the pendant, waffles on whether its owner is a king or a prince, and adds an intriguing reference to armour. He produces a photo of the pendant beside which is written the name “Uas.Neter.Ra Sotep.en.Ra

⁹⁵ ANET 293

⁹⁶ M.F. Laming Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa vol. 1* (1949) p. 124.

⁹⁷ TIP 109 Kitchen is only guessing when he suggests this prince belonged to the 22nd rather than the 23rd dynasty.

⁹⁸ TIP 67

Shesh(enq) Amen.uas.neter.an (?) of Busiris". Below the name he adds the comment:

A double cartouche pendant of bronze bears these names and probably of the same king is the piece of bronze scale armour, with scales inscribed Ra.Neter Amen.Mery Sheshenq... As this name cannot be that of any Sheshenq from I to IV, it is probable that the ruler who made these objects was this prince of Busiris. We cannot distinguish which Busiris this is. Possibly to the same prince may belong the base of a statuette from Bubastis. (HE III 271-272)

Uas.Neter.Ra and Usanahuru are Egyptian and Assyrian vocalizations of the same name.

The fact that so few inscriptions of this obscure prince have been found is not surprising. He was taken captive as a young man. The fact that no tomb of his has been found is understandable. He likely died in captivity in Assyria. But what of his father Tarqu? Since Ushanahuru was taken captive in 671 B.C. we search for Tarqu among the list of Egyptian pharaohs at that date in Table 8 and figure 13. Tarqu is immediately visible. Historians know him otherwise as Takeloth III.

Tarqu = Takeloth III

There is no need to repeat the linguistic argument regarding the name. If Takeloth was actually Terek as we have previously argued, there is no surprise that the Assyrians referred to him as Tarqu, supplying the Assyrian nominative ending. The "k" and "q" sounds are virtually identical and the "sloping hill" hieroglyph transcribed by a "k" in Takeloth's name is as often transcribed with a "q". The name is certainly right, but so also is the time.

The reader will immediately see the significance of the dates of Takeloth III as they appear in the table 8 and figure 13. These dates, we repeat, follow directly from the studies of Aston and Jansen-Winkel after consistently reducing their absolute dates by around 121 years. We have not stretched a chronology to suit our purposes. It is the hand we were dealt. The interpretation follows from the chronology. And we are therefore pleased, but not surprised, to see Takeloth III on the throne of Egypt during the years 672-665 B.C. If it were otherwise we would have to abandon our research. For in 671 B.C., according to the Senjirli and Dog River inscriptions Esarhaddon of Assyria invaded Egypt and fought with Tarqu, king of Egypt and Cush; and in 667 B.C. as we will soon see, Ashurbanipal fought this same Tarqu and drove him from Egypt, and around 665 B.C. Tarqu died. If coincidence can substantiate chronology, as was arguably the case in the errant placement of the Saite dynasty, then we should be convinced that Tarqu and Takeloth III are one and the same king.

There are few monuments clearly naming Takeloth III. A single relief dedicated to a high priest identified as "the King's Son Takeloth whose mother was Tentsai" is credited to him. "The Nile-level text No. 4, dated in Year 6 of a king (no prenomen) 'Takeloth Meryamun, Si-Ese, whose mother is Tentsai' is also his. It is less certain but still likely that he is "the Crown Prince and Eldest Son, Takeloth, son of the Lord of the Two Lands ... Osorkon (III)."⁹⁹ We know little else about this king from Egyptian monuments. Aston and Taylor have recently argued that Takeloth III died prematurely!¹⁰⁰

There does exist a single reference to Takeloth III outside of Egypt and it is instructive.

At Assur an alabaster vase was found with an inscription of a Libyan prince called Takeloth, whose titles suggest that he was the son either of Shoshenq III (825-773 BC) or of Osorkon III (787-759 BC). But the vase also bore a secondary inscription of the Assyrian King Esarhaddon (681-669 BC), stating that it was looted from the palace of the King of Sidon, a city which he sacked in 677 BC. (CD 252)

Jean Leclant is even more specific concerning this vase. According to him the inscription refers to the " 'prophet of Arsaphes mistress of the two lands, governor of the fortress of Pisekhemkheperre, the royal son of Ramses, general, commander in chief, Takelot, son of Tentsai', that is to say the future Takelot II."¹⁰¹ This is the only inscriptional evidence confirming that Takeloth III was a military leader. His activity as commander in chief of the army must precede his becoming king in 672 B.C., which agrees with the 677 B.C. date when Esarhaddon acquired the vase as a trophy of war. It was probably a gift from prince Takeloth to the king of Sidon and confirms the fact that Takeloth was diplomatically active on behalf of Osorkon III prior to the 674 B.C. invasion of Esarhaddon.

It is now clear why Esarhaddon took a special interest in this vase. It belonged to Tarqu, the meddlesome Egyptian king who defeated him in battle in 674 B.C. and over whom he was finally victorious in 671 B.C. On the assumption that Takeloth III was an 8th century king (770-763 B.C.) it is difficult to understand either how the vase was preserved intact for almost a century or why Esarhaddon would derive any satisfaction from inscribing a trophy which bears the name of an obscure Egyptian prince.

⁹⁹ TIP 73

¹⁰⁰ D.A. Aston and J.H. Taylor, "The Family of Takeloth III and the 'Theban Twenty-Third Dynasty'," in A. Leahy ed. *Libya and Egypt c. 1300 - 750 B.C.* (1989) 145-6.

¹⁰¹ Jean Leclant, "Les relations entre l'Égypte et la Phénicie du voyage d'Ounamon à l'expédition d'Alexandre, in Wm. A. Ward, ed., *The Role of the Phoenicians in the Interaction of Mediterranean Civilizations* (1968) p. 13. Cf. also p. 25, n. 35.

Ashurbanipal's Campaigns

Esarhaddon conquered Egypt in 671 B.C. and left it under the administration of "(local) kings, governors, officers (šaknu), harbor overseers, officials and administrative personnel." He himself never returned. In 668 B.C. he died en route to Egypt and the crown passed peacefully to his son Ashurbanipal (668-627 B.C.). Takeloth III seized the opportunity to reassert his influence in Egypt. Ashurbanipal acted quickly.

In my first campaign I marched against Egypt (Magan) and Ethiopia (Meluhha). Tirhakah (Tarqu), king of Egypt (Musur) and Nubia (Kusu), whom Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, my own father, had defeated and in whose country he (Esarhaddon) had ruled, this (same) Tirhakah forgot the might of Ashur, Ishtar and the (other) great gods, my lords, and put his trust upon his own power. He turned against the kings (and) regents whom my own father had appointed in Egypt. He entered and took residence in Memphis (Me-im-pi), the city which my own father had conquered and incorporated into Assyrian territory. An express messenger came to Nineveh to report to me. I became very angry on account of these happenings; my soul was aflame. (ANET 294)

En route to Egypt he gathered recruits from over twenty vassal territories.

I made these kings accompany my army over the land - as well as (over) the sea-route with their armed forces and their ships (respectively). Quickly I advanced as far as Kar-Baniti to bring speedy relief to the kings and regents in Egypt, servants who belong to me. Tirhakah, king of Egypt (Musur) and Nubia, heard in Memphis of the coming of my expedition and he called up his warriors for a decisive battle against me... I defeated the battle (-experienced) soldiers of his army in a great open battle. Tirhakah heard in Memphis of the defeat of his army (and) the (terror-inspiring) splendor of Ashur and Ishtar blinded (lit. overwhelmed) him (thus) that he became like a madman. The glamour of my kingship with which the gods of heaven and nether world have endowed me, dazzled him and he left Memphis and fled, to save his life, into the town Ni (Thebes). This town (too) I seized and led my army into it to repose (there). (ANET 294)

The rebellion was quashed. The record resumes with Ashurbanipal re-establishing as vassals, over the city-states and nomes of Egypt, the kings and governors originally set up by his father. The list is revealing:

Necho (Ni-ku-u), king of Memphis and Sais (Sa-a-a), Sharruludari, king of Si'nu, Pishanhuru, king of Nathu, Pakruru, king of (Pi)Shaptu, Bukkununni'pi, king of Athribis (Ha-at-hi-ri-bi), Nahke, king of Hininshi, Putubishti, king of Tanis (Sa-'a-nu), Unamunu, king of Nathu, Harsiaeshu, king of Sabnuti, Buaima, king of Pitinti, Shishak (Su-si-in-qu), king of Busiris (Bu-si-ru), Tabnahti, king of Punubu, Bukkananni'pi king of Ahni, Iptihardeshu, king of

Pihattihurunpi (ki), Nahtihuruansini, king of Pishabdi'a, Bukurninip, king of Pahnuti, Siha, king of Siut (Si-ia-a-u-tu), Lamentu, king of Himuni (Hermopolis), Ishpinatu, king of Taini, Mantimanhe, king of Thebes; these kings, governors and regents whom my own father had appointed in Egypt and who had left their offices in the face of the uprising of Tirhakah and had scattered into the open country, I reinstalled in their offices and in their (former) seats of office. (Thus) I seized anew (control over) Egypt (Musur) and Nubia which (already) my own father had conquered; I made the garrisons stronger than before and the(ir) regulations (more) severe. With many prisoners and heavy booty I returned safely to Nineveh. (ANET 294)

We can only speculate on the whereabouts of Tarqu between the wars of 671 B.C. and 667 B.C., the likely date of Ashurbanipal's first campaign. Thebes is most likely, since that is where he seeks refuge in flight from Ashurbanipal. He may temporarily have vacated Thebes for sanctuary in lower Nubia. Tarqu is called the king of Egypt and Nubia. Ashurbanipal elsewhere calls Thebes (Ni') "the royal residence of Egypt (Musur) and Nubia (Kusu)."¹⁰² Takeloth III was a Theban (and thus a Nubian) pharaoh.

Ashurbanipal names 20 kings as administrators of Egypt. It is curious to note how many of them are familiar names from the 22nd/23rd dynasty and are possibly the same kings we see in table 8 and figure 13.¹⁰³ We immediately recognize Harsiese (Harsiaeshu) and Pedubast (Putubishti) and Sheshonk (Su-si-in-qu). Limintu is Nimlot as previously mentioned. Kitchen identifies a Nimlot C as a high priest under Osorkon II, but we could argue that he functioned instead under Osorkon III. Buaima (or equally Puaima) and Bukkananni'pi are recognizable as Pemay and Bakennefi A, sons of Sheshonk III¹⁰⁴

Tabnahti is Tefnakht. Another king by this name will battle with Piankhi late in the 7th century (past tense and in the 8th century in the traditional history). Kitchen finds the name on a donation stela from Buto, the text of which is unfinished. It is dated in the 38th year of an unknown king. He argues that "the Buto stela of Tefnakht can definitely be dated to year 38 of either Shoshenq (III) or (V)."¹⁰⁵ He chooses Shoshenq V for reasons based on the traditional chronology. From the occurrence of the name in the Assyrian annals it is best connected with Shoshenq III.

¹⁰² ANET 297

¹⁰³ In the listing of kings in Table 8 and Figure 13 several of the kings and dignitaries, including Pedubast I, Sheshonk IV, and Harsiese, are said to have died around 673 B.C. But those figures result from the systematic lowering of dates from the king lists of Aston and Jansen-Winkel. Those dates could well be in error by the six or seven years necessary to extend the lives of these Egyptians into the reigns of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, under whom they continued to exercise limited authority as vassals. These kings may well have stopped inscribing monuments in their own name once they became vassals of Esarhaddon.

¹⁰⁴ TIP 305

¹⁰⁵ TIP 85

According to Kitchen most of the Delta rulers named by Ashurbanipal, Tefnakht included, are "no more than local mayors, chiefs of second rank." (TIP 357) He has to argue this. In the traditional history (which places the 25th dynasty in the time of Sargon, Sennacherib, and Esarhaddon, plus the first few years of Ashurbanipal) the king names in Ashurbanipal's list are out of place. Those names, with few possible exceptions, belong to the 22nd and 23rd dynasties.

Ignoring these apparent 22nd dynasty anachronisms, and acting instead on the belief that Tarqu was the 25th dynasty pharaoh Taharka in the last years of his life, scholars proceeded to search Ashurbanipal's annals for some indication of an impending dynastic change. In the traditional history, within a few years of Ashurbanipal's 667 B.C. invasion, the Saite dynasty must be installed in office and the Assyrian army driven from the Delta. What evidence exists that the apparent 22nd dynasty connections in the Assyrian annals are an illusion and that we are instead in the age of Taharka and Psamtik I?

Search for Saite Dynasty Antecedents

Notice was taken of Mantimanhe, king of Thebes in Ashurbanipal's list. This king was immediately identified by most scholars with Mentuemhet, a 4th prophet of Thebes whose life overlapped the reigns of Taharka and Psamtik I. But Mantimanhe was a king and Mentuemhet consistently identifies himself as 4th prophet of Amon. He never claims royal status. As we will soon see, his life was consumed in repairing the devastation caused by Nebuchadrezzar yet a century away. Instead we suggest tentatively that the reference is to Mutemhet, identified in one text as the wife of king Osorkon (Osorkon I according to Egyptologists; Osorkon III according to this revision). Petrie says of her: "She was the great heiress of the kingdom, as appears by her double cartouche, Amen.mery, Mut.em.hat, Mut.mery Karomama on her beautiful bronze statue inlaid with gold".¹⁰⁶ There is no time to defend the claim, save to say that if she was the wife of Osorkon III, who apparently died in the 667 B.C. invasion, she would be the likely choice to succeed her husband. It is known that she claimed royal status. Petrie calls her the "heiress of the kingdom." And she lived in Thebes.¹⁰⁷

Apart from Mantimanhe, the search for Saite dynasty antecedents centered on Niku (Niku-u), king of Memphis and Sais (Sa-a-a) in the Assyrian list of Egyptian kings. Scholars claim that he was the father of Psamtik I. To properly critique the argument we need to continue the story.

¹⁰⁶ HE III 246

¹⁰⁷ The identification is not critical. If correct, scholars will recognize that we are here equating Kitchen's Mutemhet A and B (TIP 48-49) They will also note that the identification implies a 21st dynasty connection lurking in the background. There are also implications for the institution of the "god's wife of Amon" at Thebes. The subject of god's wives will be taken up in the 2nd book of this revision.

Ashurbanipal returned to Nineveh with considerable plunder after his 667 B.C. battle. Almost immediately several kings planned a renewed rebellion, in connection with which they sent messages seeking the assistance of Tarqu, now in exile and called merely the "king of Nubia". The plot was discovered. Ashurbanipal documented his response.

(But) my officers heard about these matters, seized their mounted messengers with their messages and thus learned about their rebellious doings. They arrested these kings and put their hands and feet in iron cuffs and fetters. The (consequences of the broken) oaths (sworn) by Ashur, the king of the gods, befell them. I called to account those who had sinned against the oath (sworn by) the great gods (and those) whom I had treated (before) with clemency. And they (the officers) put to the sword the inhabitants, young and old, of the towns of Sais, Pindidi, Tanis and of all the other towns which had associated with them to plot, they did not spare anybody among (them). They hung their corpses from stakes, flayed their skins and covered (with them) the wall of the town(s). Those kings who had repeatedly schemed they brought alive to me to Nineveh. From all of them, I had only mercy upon Necho (Niku) and granted him life. I made (a treaty) with him (protected by) oaths which greatly surpassed (those of the former treaty). I clad him in a garment with multicoloured trimmings, placed a golden chain on him (as the) insigne of his kingship, put golden rings on his hands; I wrote my name (phonetically) upon an iron dagger (to be worn in) the girdle, the mounting of which was golden, and gave it to him. I presented him (furthermore) with chariots, horses and mules as means of transportation (befitting) his position as ruler. I sent with him (and) for his assistance, officers of mine as governors. I returned to him Sais as residence (the place) where my own father had appointed him king. Nabushezibanni, his son, I appointed for Athribis (thus) treating him with more friendliness and favor than my own father did. The terror of the (sacred) weapon of Ashur, my lord, overcame Tirhakah (Tarqu) where he had taken refuge and he was never heard of again. (ANET 295)

Immediately following the discovery of the Assyrian annals in the 19th century the assumption was made and defended that the Assyrian appointee named Niku was the father of Psamtik I. Manetho lists a Nechao as the immediate ancestor of Psamtik I in his list of "nine kings of Sais." This Nechao supposedly reigned 8 years. Esarhaddon had established Niku as king of Sais in 671 B.C. and this favorite son of Assurbanipal ruled at least till 665 B.C., the likely date for his return to Sais following the aborted coup. . Therefore Niku must be Necho and Neco's son Nabushezibanni might possibly be Psamtik I. The argument ends there. The rests is assumption and innuendo. There is no evidence that Niku died within two years of his return to office and was replaced by a son named Psamtik. There is no confirmation that Nabushezibanni is Psamtik. The entire structure of the traditional Saite history is supported at its upper end by a very fragile argument.

When we examine the reign of Psamtik I later in this revision we will find no reference to the Assyrians. There will be a complete disparity between circumstances in Psamtik's early life and those which prevail in the time of Ashurbanipal. Herodotus knows nothing of any connection between Psamtik and Niku or between Psamtik and the Assyrians. The Assyrians say nothing about Psamtik.

Though not all scholars assume that Nabushezibanni is Psamtik I, the claim is typically made that his Assyrian overlords gave him this Assyrian name. It is supposed that Esarhaddon gave Assyrian names to several of his Egyptian governor/kings. But Cylinder E says, concerning Esarhaddon, "The former names of the cities he changed, giving them new denominations."¹⁰⁸ There is nothing said in the annals about changing the names of individuals. If several of the king names are Assyrian it should follow that those kings are Assyrian, not Egyptian. If Niku's son has an Assyrian name, then Niku must have given it to him. Was Niku therefore an Assyrian? The Assyrian annals record elsewhere (BM text K) that Niku, Sharruludari, and Pakruru were the instigators of the 666 B.C. attempted coup. Sharruludari is an Assyrian name. Perhaps Pakruru is as well. These three kings were given important kingships in the Egyptian delta. Following the unsuccessful coup attempt the three were afforded special treatment. The culpable 22nd dynasty kings were brutally murdered. Niku, Sharruludari and Pakruru were taken to Nineveh, where two of the three were later executed. Only Niku was spared. But why were the Egyptian inhabitants of the rebellious cities ruled by these three rebels treated mercilessly while the rebel kings were at least temporarily spared. That is certainly not typical Assyrian practice. Foreign kings are the first to be impaled and hung up outside their city walls as examples.

It is likely that Niku was an Assyrian. Nabushezibanni was his Assyrian son. His favoured treatment was probably due to his nationality. Perhaps he was related to Ashurbanipal.

Assumed Loss of Egypt

If the Assyrian nationality of Niku is disputed, nothing is lost. He cannot be the father of Psamtik regardless, because there is no place for Psamtik and the Saite dynasty in the Assyrian annals. Those annals clearly indicate that Assyria did not lose Egypt to Psamtik or to anyone else within several decades of the 666 B.C. attempted coup, much less within a few years. The drafts of the annals that we have been reading were not written till at least twenty years, and closer to thirty years later. They contain no mention that Egypt has been lost in the interim. And in view of the prominent position of Egypt in the annals elsewhere it is inconceivable that the loss of that country would not have been described in great detail. The absence of evidence to the contrary leaves the distinct impression that throughout those thirty years political life in Egypt remained

¹⁰⁸ ANET 296

much as Esarhaddon left it.

Flinders Petrie, examining the political landscape in the time of Ashurbanipal, comments:

The country was divided among twenty petty rulers, who had been established by Esarhaddon; these so closely parallel the chiefs subject to Piankhy I, that it seems the country had continued to be divided in the same way throughout the couple of generations of the Ethiopian rule. (HE III 298)

Petrie believed that the conditions which prevailed in the time of Ashurbanipal were those which existed at the time of Piankhi's invasion, this on the assumption that Piankhi invaded Egypt 50 years before the arrival of Esarhaddon. But Piankhi's invasion is 50 years in the future. His arrival and the rise of the 25th dynasty coincide with the decline of Assyria, not its ascendancy. Petrie's observation needs to be turned on its heels. The conditions that prevailed in the days of Ashurbanipal continued relatively unchanged till near the end of the reign of Ashurbanipal in 628 B.C., which date corresponds roughly to the time of Piankhi. Even after the death of Ashurbanipal, under the reign of his successor Sinsharishkun, Egypt and Assyria were diplomatically united, as we saw in chapter one of this revision. Assyria did not lose Egypt in a rebellion otherwise unrecorded in the Assyrian annals. Assyria lost Egypt only when her power and authority waned in the closing years of Ashurbanipal. As Assyrian power waned the 25th dynasty pharaohs Piankhi and Shabaka assumed control of Egypt.

This lengthy domination of Egypt by Assyria will find further confirmation as we continue.

We need to pause briefly to answer an objection that the critic must by now be voicing. We have stated rather emphatically that the Assyrian annals do not record the loss of Egypt to Psamtik I. If so, then how is it that the history books say otherwise? Gardiner, whom we have quoted frequently, is a case in point. In his section concerned with Saite dynasty origins he refers to Assyrian annals wherein "the circumstance which enabled Psammetichus to free himself from the Assyrian domination is recounted in an altogether trustworthy manner."¹⁰⁹ What is the nature of this trustworthy reference?

Tushamilki King of Musru

The first campaign of Ashurbanipal took place in 667 B.C. The attempted coup and its suppression occurred in all probability the next year, 666 B.C. The reinstatement of Niku on the throne of Sais can be dated to 665 B.C. Later that same year or early the next there was another attempt to usurp Assyrian control of the country, this time by a

¹⁰⁹ Gardiner, *Egypt of the Pharaohs*, p. 353

successor of Tarqu named Urdamanie. This prompted a second campaign by Ashurbanipal. The substance of this second campaign will be examined later in this chapter.

The same Rassam cylinder annals which described these first two campaigns also describes a third, possibly dated two or three years later than the second, certainly no earlier than 662 B.C. This expedition was directed against Tyre and Arvad and other territories northward along the eastern Mediterranean coast. At the same time that Ashurbanipal was reasserting control of these Phoenician territories, Gyges, the king of Lydia in western Anatolia, was being overwhelmed by Cimmerian hordes from the north. Gyges sought help from Ashurbanipal and with Assyrian assistance repulsed the invaders.

Guggu (Gyges), king of Lydia, a district of the other side of the sea, a distant place, whose name, the kings, my fathers, had not heard. Assur, the god, my creator, caused to see my name in a dream. "Lay hold of the feet of Assurbanipal, king of Assyria and conquer thy foes by calling upon his name." On the day that he beheld this vision, he dispatched his messenger to bring greetings to me. (An account of) this vision, which he beheld, he sent to me by the hand of his messenger, and made it known to me. From the day that he laid hold of my royal feet, he overcame, by the help of Assur and Ishtar, the gods, my lords, the Cimmerians, who had been harassing the people of his land, who had not feared my father, nor had laid hold even of my royal feet. From among the chieftains of the Cimmerians, whom he had conquered, he shackled two chieftains with shackles, fetters of iron, manacles of iron, and sent them to me, together with his rich gifts. (LAR II.784)

Gyges was thankful to receive Assyrian aid, but his gratitude was tempered by his fear of Assyrian aggression. Assurbanipal was becoming as much a threat as the Cimmerians. As Ashurbanipal moved toward the tiny Phoenician buffer state of Musur in southeastern Anatolia, Gyges decided to halt his advance. He sent troops to support Tushamilki, its king.

His (Gyges') messenger, whom he kept sending to me to bring me greetings, he (suddenly) discontinued, because he did not heed the word of Assur, the god who created me, but trusted in his own strength, and hardened his heart. He sent his forces to the aid of Tushamilki, king of Musur, who had thrown off the yoke of my sovereignty. I heard of it and prayed to Assur and Ishtar, saying: "May his body be cast before his enemy, may (his foes) carry off his limbs." The Cimmerians, whom he had trodden underfoot, by calling upon my name, invaded and overpowered the whole of his land. His (Gyges') son seated himself upon his throne, after him (i.e., his death). He sent me, by the hand of his messenger, (an account) of the evil which the gods, my helpers, visited upon him (in answer) to my prayers, and he laid hold of my royal feet, saying: "Thou art the king whom the god has favoured (lit. looked upon). Thou didst curse my

father and evil was visited upon him. I am (thy) slave, who fears thee, be gracious unto me and I will bear (lit. draw) thy yoke." (LAR II.785)

We have made but a single change to the translation provided by Luckenbill in his *Ancient Records of Assyria*. He interprets the place name Musur as a reference to Egypt; we leave the place name precisely as it appears in the Assyrian text. It is claimed by scholars that here, in an offhand remark intended to explain the rise and fall of Gyges, king of Lydia, we are furnished with the desired proof that Psamtik I had wrested control of Egypt from Assyria. It is assumed that Gyges has sent troops across the Mediterranean to assist Egypt (Musur) and Egypt's king (Tushamilli = Psamtik I) fend off Assyrian troops after a coup led by Psamtik. The story is reproduced as such in all books and monographs concerned with Egyptian Saite dynasty history. It is further claimed, as by Gardiner above, that this interpretation of the inscription is altogether reliable. But nothing could be further from the truth. It is a complete misrepresentation. The matter is serious enough to warrant a closer look.

Egyptologists without exception interpret Musur in this Lydian narrative as a reference to Egypt. This is, after all, the name by which Egypt is typically known elsewhere in these same annals.¹¹⁰ But Musur (Musru or Musri) is not the only country by that name in the eastern Semitic world.

Twice elsewhere Musur appears as an Assyrian place name in the annals of Tiglath Pilezar (744-727 B.C.). Both instances refer to the installation of Idi-bi'li as a Warden of Marches on the border of Musur. It is clear from the context that this country was located somewhere near Que in south-eastern Asia Minor, precisely where we anticipate it should be located based on an unbiased reading of the Gyges incident.

I installed Idi-bi'li as a Warden of Marches on the border of Musur. In all the countries which ... [I received] the tribute of Kushtashpi of Commagene (Kummuhu), Urik of Qu'e, Sibitti'be'l of Byblos, ... Enil of Hamath, Panammu of Samk'al, Tarhulara of Gungum, Sulumal of Militene, ...¹¹¹

This Musur was a country with a lengthy tradition of independence and opposition to Assyrian control. In the famous battle of Qarqar in 853 B.C. Musur had supplied 1000 troops to augment the 500 supplied by its neighbour Que, to assist Ahab of Israel and Hadadezer of Damascus in their fight with Shalmanezar III. Oppenheim appends a

¹¹⁰ The annals frequently separate Egypt into Lower Egypt (Musur) and Upper Egypt, which appears to include the northern extremities of Ethiopia (Kusu). Cush is therefore more a reference to Egypt than it is to Nubia. Nubia proper is called Meluhha by the Assyrians. However, these distinctions are not consistently followed. As Oppenheim notes in reference to one problematic text: "This text uses the geographical terms Musru, Magan, Melukkha etc. rather loosely" (ANET 292 n.1) Cf. comments in note 80.

¹¹¹ ANET 282. Cf. the footnote reference provided by Oppenheim to P. Naster, *L'Asie Mineure et l'Assyrie aux VIII^e et VII^e siècles av. J.-C. d'après les annales des rois assyriens*, (1938).

footnote to his translation of the relevant text:

Here, the name Musru refers probably to a country in southern Asia Minor (cf. Winckler, Arabisches Musri in MVAG, xi [1906], 102-116, and E.F. Weidner [apud H. Bauer] in AfO, viii [1932-3], 4, n.3, as well as recently in AfO, xiv (1941), 45, for three, or even more, countries bearing this name). The basic meaning of Musru is always "march" (from Masdru "to mark, draw a line"), i.e. "border country." (ANET 279 n.9)

Even if this evidence for the existence of a Musur in southern Asia Minor were lacking we should be forced to conjecture its existence. The natural reading of the text demands it. Lydia was under siege by the Cimmerians from the north. The Assyrians to the east further threatened her sovereignty. Yet scholars inform us that Gyges' solution to the problem was to send his troops south, five hundred miles across the Mediterranean, to act as mercenaries in a war of independence in Egypt.¹¹² The logic of this military strategy escapes us. Yet Gardiner is convinced of its essential soundness. Both the traditional and the revised interpretations of the Gyges incident are pictured in figures 14 and 15 respectively. Let the reader decide which one is correct.

The matter is further complicated by the inclusion of the name of the king of Musur. Tushamilki is not an Egyptian name - it is east Semitic, almost certainly Phoenician. Already on his third campaign Ashurbanipal had encountered Abimilki and Ahimilki, sons of Iakinlu, king of Arvad. Ba'al-maluku was yet another brother. On his first campaign Ashurbanipal had dealings with Ahumilki, king of Ashdod and Milkiashapa, king of Byblos. Earlier still his father Esarhaddon had encountered another Ahimilki, king of Ashdod and an Abdimilkutte, king of Sidon. There can be no mistaking these personal names, all compounded with nominal forms of *mlk*, the Semitic word for "king" (cf. Heb. melek).

From the outset a suggestion was made to read the Assyrian personal name as Pishamilki, rather than Tushamilki, this for a rather obvious reason. Pishamilki at least bears some visual resemblance to the Greek form of Psamtik's name - Psammetichus. The reading, however, could not be defended, and has subsequently been abandoned, though periodically we see the name resurrected or appearing in brackets beside Tushamilki, as if its inclusion solves the problem.

No explanation is forthcoming how Psamtik acquired a Phoenician name.

¹¹² We must assume the troops were sent by ship, even though a Lydian navy is no part of the text. To assume they travelled 1500 miles by land through the Phoenician coast occupied by the Assyrian army makes even less sense than the already strained interpretation.

Figure 14: Gyges Incident (Traditional History) – Lydia is threatened by Cimmerians and by Ashurbanipal – solution is to send troops 500 miles away to assist Musur (= Egypt) ruled by Psamtik (= Tushamilki)

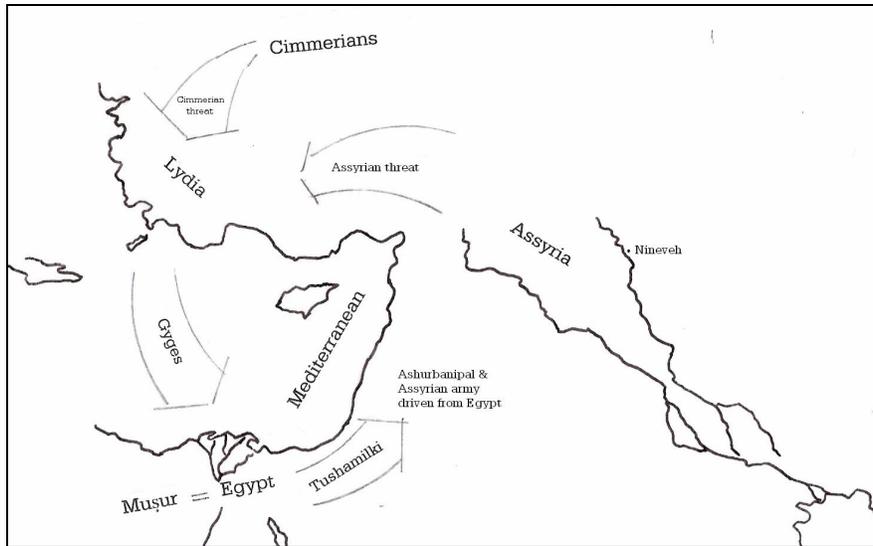
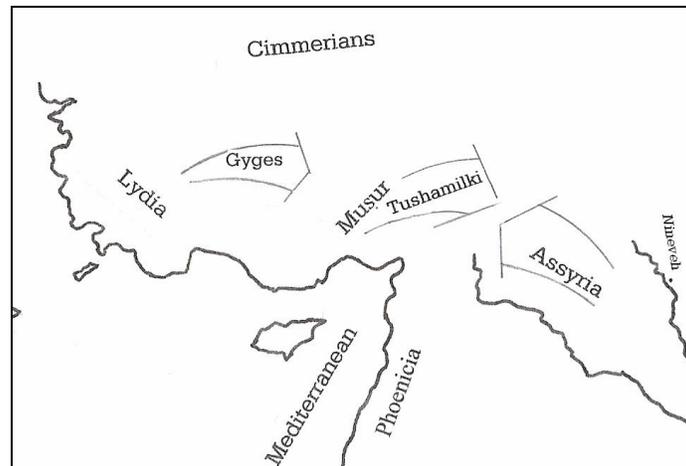


Figure 15: Gyges Incident (Revised History) - Lydia is threatened by Cimmerians and by Ashurbanipal – solution is to lend support to buffer state of Musur ruled by the Phoenician king Tushamilki.



A final related problem remains unexplained. The third campaign of Ashurbanipal began during or subsequent to the year 662 B.C. Gyges sending troops to assist Tushamliki in his struggle against Assyria cannot possibly be dated before 661 B.C. But according to the traditional history Psamtik drove the Assyrians from Egypt in 664 B.C. and founded a dynasty that lasted 139 years. The year 661 B.C. was the 4th year of Psamtik I in the traditional history. When we examine that same 4th year later in this revision, as described in a demotic papyrus, we will see that this assumed military conflict between Ashurbanipal and an Egyptian/Lybian coalition is an illusion.

Gardiner's confidence notwithstanding, the Gyges incident is not a description of the end of Assyrian domination of Egypt. Tushamliki king of Musur is not Psamtik king of Egypt. To have conjectured otherwise was surely wishful thinking on the part of traditionalist Egyptologists, who must have recognized the difficulty of maintaining the fiction of the rise of the 26th dynasty in 664 B.C. if the Assyrians remained in the country for thirty years thereafter.

Having dispensed with Ashurbanipal's third campaign, we return momentarily to examine his second.

Rudamon & His Successors

Ashurbanipal's Second Campaign

Following the aborted coup attempt in 666 B.C. Tarqu was never heard from again. We can assume he died early in 665 B.C. since later that same year the antagonist of Ashurbanipal is another Cushite king named Urdamane. Oppenheim translates from the Rassam cylinder:

Afterwards URdamane, son of Shabaku (var.: son of his [Tarqu's] sister), sat down on the throne of his kingdom. He made Thebes and Heliopolis (U-nu) his fortresses and assembled his (armed) might. He called up his battle (-experienced soldiers) to attack my troops, (and) the Assyrians stationed in Memphis. He surrounded these men and seized (all) their communications (lit. exits). An express messenger came to Nineveh and told me about this. In my second campaign I marched directly against Egypt (Musur) and Nubia. URdamane heard of the approach of my expedition (only when) I had (already) set foot on Egyptian territory. He left Memphis and fled into Thebes to save his life. The kings, governors, and regents whom I had installed in Egypt came to meet me and kissed my feet. I followed URdamane (and) went as far as Thebes, his fortress. He saw my mighty battle array approaching, left Thebes and fled to Kipkipi. Upon a trust (-inspiring) oracle of Ashur and Ishtar I, myself, conquered this town completely. From Thebes I carried away booty, heavy and

beyond counting: silver, gold, precious stones, his entire personal possessions, linen garments with multi-coloured trimmings, fine horses, (certain) inhabitants, male and female. I pulled two high obelisks, cast of shining zahalu-bronze, the weight of which was 2,500 talents, standing at the door of the temple, out of their bases and took (them) to Assyria. (Thus) I carried off from Thebes heavy booty, beyond counting. I made Egypt (Musur) and Nubia feel my weapons bitterly and celebrated my triumph. With full hands and safely, I returned to Nineveh, the city (where I exercise) my rule. (ANET 295)

The identity of Urdamanie was the object of scholarly research from the first moments the annals were read.

Rudamon

In 1866 Edward Hincks in a journal article informed the general public of the recent finds from Assyria. "It will appear strange to many readers of this journal," he writes, "that an Assyrian army should at one time have penetrated to Thebes and sacked it." He goes on to identify several key names in the annals. From the outset Tarqu was identified with Taharka. The established history was already written; all subsequent evidence must conform to it. But Urdamanie was not part of the established history. We thus receive an unbiased interpretation.

As to the name Urdamani, I first observe that Ursa, who was king of Armenia in the reign of Sargon, is also called Rusa. The Assyrians seem to have disliked an initial r, and to have prefixed an א (Hebrew letter *aleph*) with the vowel that should follow the r before it. Rudamani may, therefore, have been the true form of the Egyptian name represented. This is the (*cartouche of Rudamon drawn*) of the hieroglyphics, a name borne by a king mentioned by M. de Rouge in his "Inscription Historique" p. 18, who is named in a Gurna inscription there cited. This, however, was not the king with whom we have now to do. He must have lived more than a century earlier. M. de Rouge also cites royal names, which he reads Ra-user-ma setep-en-Amon Amenrut-meri-Amen, as occurring on a vase of rock-crystal at the Louvre. I think it likely that this belonged to the stepson of Taharqa.¹¹³

Hincks is not referring to the text of the Rassam cylinder translated earlier by Oppenheim. Instead he refers to a parallel version of the Assyrian annals known as cylinder A. We learn three things from this Assyrian text as interpreted by Hincks. The name of Tarqu's successor was Urdamanie. He is identified as the son of a wife (NIN) of Tarqu. And he would have been identified with a king by the name Rudamon, known on the monuments, except that that king lived one hundred years too early.

¹¹³ Edward Hincks, "The Assyrian sacking of Thebes," ZAS 4 (1866) p. 1-3.

Oppenheim corrects Hincks on at least one point. Interpreting the Sumerian ideogram NIN as "sister" rather than "wife", he refers to Urdamanie instead as a son of Tarqu's sister. Most scholars agree. Urdamanie was Tarqu's nephew, not his stepson. Leaving aside for the moment the questionable reference to his being a "son of Shabaka", we look for Urdamanie in our revised history.

We have no problem identifying him as Rudamon, whose name occurs in Table 8 immediately after Takeloth III. He was the immediate successor of that king in the 23rd dynasty. He is of course the same as the first king cited by M. de Rouge in Hincks' article, but with the lowering of the dates of the dynasty in this revision he is no longer a century too early. He is also the king named on the rock crystal vase cited by de Rouge, which does not date to the time of Taharka as Hincks seems to think. According to Petrie the Rudamon on this vase is "said to be a son of a king Uasarkon, probably the IIIrd (Rec. xix.20), and to be the father of king Pef-dudu-bast of Henensuten (L.D. iii. 284 a)".¹¹⁴

There are two problems with our identification of Urdamanie and Rudamon. The first is the reference to Rudamon as the son of Osorkon III, mentioned by Flinders Petrie. The second is the reference to Rudamon as "son of Shabaka" in the Rassam cylinder annals. We treat these two problems in order.

Rudamon, Grandson of Osorkon III

The vase inscription itself is not the source of the problem. When Petrie says that the Rudamon named on the vase is said to be a son of King Osorkon III, he is looking elsewhere for the latter bit of information. The vase itself contains only the cartouche names of Rudamon. The identification of Rudamon as a son of Osorkon III derives instead from a block inscription found at Medinet Habu in Thebes. Kitchen, translating that inscription, agrees with Petrie.

On a large reused block found at Medinet Habu, the 'Lord of the Two Lands Rudamun' is called 'King's Son of the Lord of the Two Lands, Osorkon, justified, possessing reverence'.¹¹⁵ The Osorkon concerned must be Osorkon III, for the cartouches of Usimare Rudamun Meryamun occur in the temple of Osiris which had been built and largely decorated by Osorkon III and Takeloth III. The latter king would thus have been succeeded by his brother. (TIP 101)

This inscription is the sole basis on which Petrie and Kitchen base their claim that Rudamon was the son of Osorkon III, and therefore, that Takeloth III was his brother.

¹¹⁴ HE III 265

¹¹⁵ Kitchen cites as references Darressy, RT 19 (1897) 20-21 and Gauthier, *Les Livres des Rois* III p. 392 5.1.

Accordingly the claim is made that "Takeloth III was succeeded not by a son, but by a younger brother, Rudamon, of whose reign, which was probably brief, the merest traces are known."¹¹⁶

If we accept Kitchen's translation of the Medinet Habu block inscription then we must believe with him that Rudamon and Takeloth III were brothers, both sons of Osorkon III. But according to the cylinder A version of the Assyrian annals, Urdamanie (Rudamon) was the son of the sister of Tarqu (Takeloth III) and thus the grandson of Osorkon III. Therein lies the problem. How do we reconcile the annals and the block inscription?

There is a simple solution to the dilemma. If "son" means "grandson", as often in Egyptian, then Rudamon becomes a grandson of Osorkon III on the block inscription, as in the annals. There is no longer a problem. The relationship is diagrammed below in figure 16.

There is, however, no need to assume that "son" means "grandson". Kitchen, following Petrie and others, has mistranslated the text. The Medinet Habu block actually says: "Lord of the Two Lands Rudamon, justified, *king's daughter* of the Lord of the Two Lands, Osorkon, justified, possessing reverence'. There is clearly an error in the text. In fact, the Egyptologist Henri Gauthier, in his transcription of the identical sentence, identifies two errors. Only the first is relevant. He corrects "king's daughter" to "king's son",¹¹⁷ as do Petrie and Kitchen following. But at least Gauthier indicates the presence of the error.

We disagree with all three Egyptologists, who assume that the Egyptian scribe has mistakenly added a feminine indicator (t) to the hieroglyph for "son", thus creating the word for "daughter". We think it more likely that he has omitted, rather than added, a hieroglyph. There appears to be missing from the text the sign for "son" [egg hieroglyph] preceding the signs for king's "daughter" [egg and t hieroglyphs]. The error would result naturally as an haplography or deliberately due to confusion on the part of the artisan, who misunderstood this unusual double construct. The text originally planned would have referred to Rudamon as the "son of the king's daughter of Osorkon", precisely as in the Assyrian annals.

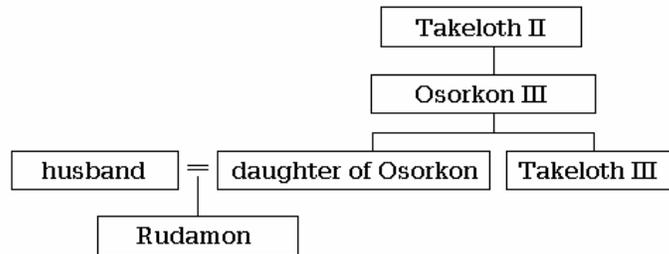
So much for the genealogy of Rudamon on his mother's side. It is established with reasonable certainty. The fact that Rudamon and Urdamanie were nephews of Takeloth III and Tarqu respectively, and that each succeeded his uncle and ruled only briefly, further settles the question of their identity. The likelihood of such a coincidental correspondence of genealogies occurring in the case of kings whose regnal dates, independently established, are otherwise identical, is all but impossible if we do not accept the equations Takeloth III = Tarqu and Rudamon = Urdamanie. The genealogy

¹¹⁶ TIP 322

¹¹⁷ Gauthier, op. cit. (G3,392.5.I), cf. note 26. Gauthier does not in fact translate the text, but notes the errors (with "sic.") and thus implies the change.

of Rudamon depicted in figure 16 is also the genealogy of Urdamanie.

Figure 16: Immediate Ancestry of Rudamon



Before we turn our attention to the father of Urdamanie/Rudamon we need to look one last time at the traditional history, in which Rudamon and Urdamanie lived a century apart. If Urdamanie is not Rudamon, then who is he? With whom do traditional historians identify this enigmatic king?

Tanuatomon

The search for Urdamanie in the traditional history was difficult. The only possible candidate was Tanuatamon, a Nubian king associated with Taharka on a few monuments. An undated stela inscription of this king describes an attack by him on Egypt, initiated from his home in Nubia. It mentions a Pakruru. But no other details of the inscription remotely resemble the Assyrian context in which Urdamanie's insurrection took place. Besides, was not Pakruru among the rebel kings removed to Nineveh with Niku? And was not Niku the only king returned alive? Undaunted, scholars persisted with the identification of Urdamanie and Tanuatamon. The lack of correspondence of name was troublesome, but Assyriologists, after several ingenious though somewhat contrived attempts, and a century of effort, finally determined that the UR sign might be read as Tan and the name might be read Tandamani.¹¹⁸ Close enough for the critics.

But Tanuatamon or Tandamani is not Urdamanie. Tanuatamon invaded the whole of Egypt from a location hundreds of miles to the south of Egypt. Urdamanie did not invade Egypt at all. According to the Assyrian text he had previously established roots in Thebes and Heliopolis, in the south and north of Egypt respectively. When opportunity arose the Egyptian troops loyal to him expelled the Assyrian garrisons in

¹¹⁸ *Third Intermediate Period* 120 n.276

nearby Memphis and in Thebes. The description of his insurrection contained in the Assyrian annals bears no resemblance whatever to the invasion of Tanuatamon described on that king's stela. In the next chapter we will set the record straight concerning Tanuatamon.

Rudamon son of Shabaka?

Only one question remains. We have argued the case that Urdamanie, the successor of Tarqu in the annals of Ashurbanipal, must be identified as Rudamon, the son of the sister of his uncle Takeloth III of the Libyan 23rd dynasty. We have not commented on the identity of Rudamon's father. In particular we postponed comment on the problematic reference in the Rassam cylinder to "Urdamanie son of Shabaka". In order to define the problem it is necessary for us to digress momentarily and place Shabaka in historical context. This will give us opportunity to introduce the Egyptian 25th dynasty, a necessary step leading up to our treatment of Taharka in the next chapter.

Scholars typically identify the name Shabaka in the Rassam cylinder with either Shabataka or Shabaka, the kings who immediately precede Taharka in the succession of kings Manetho calls his 25th dynasty¹¹⁹. To date we have provided dates only for Taharka.¹²⁰ It is time to extend that courtesy to his predecessors.

While Taharka's dates (690-664 B.C.) are considered "certain" by historians, not so those of his ancestors. The reign length of Shabataka, brother and immediate predecessor of Taharka, varies from 3 to 13 years in various chronological schemes, and must now be increased to 16 years minimum based on a recently discovered inscription.¹²¹ His dates, accordingly, would be 706-690 B.C. Shabaka, the father of Shabataka is credited with at minimum 15 years, the highest number on any of his dated inscriptions. If that figure is accurate his regnal years would fall in the time frame 721-706 B.C. These figures will suffice for the purposes at hand. Since we don't believe these kings actually reigned in the 8th century, we need not be more specific.

According to Manetho these were the only kings of the dynasty, but scholars have added a king Piankhi to the mix.¹²² According to a stela erected by Piankhi himself, he

¹¹⁹ Manetho describes the dynasty as consisting of "three Ethiopian kings Sabacon, Sebichos, and Tarcos" and assigns them reign lengths of 8, 14 and 18 years (Africanus) or 12, 12 and 20 years (Eusebius) respectively.

¹²⁰ On page 65 we did have cause to mention Shabataka, on whose behalf Taharka supposedly led an army in opposition to Sennacherib. That incident alone has led scholars to assign this king a reign length of at least 11 years (701-690 B.C.)

¹²¹ Discussion on the Tang-i-Var inscription follows immediately and in an appendix to this book.

¹²² Some Egyptologists add at the beginning an enigmatic figure named Kashta, and at the end a king Tanuatamon. We say no more about Kashta until book two in our series. Tanuatamon is discussed later in this chapter.

invaded Egypt sometime prior to the reign of Shabaka in order to suppress a rebellion. Apparently sometime earlier he had taken possession of Egypt. Since the stela is dated in Piankhi's 21st year, we assume that his sovereignty over Egypt began 20 years before his invasion. That conclusion follows naturally. It matters little that Egyptologists think otherwise.

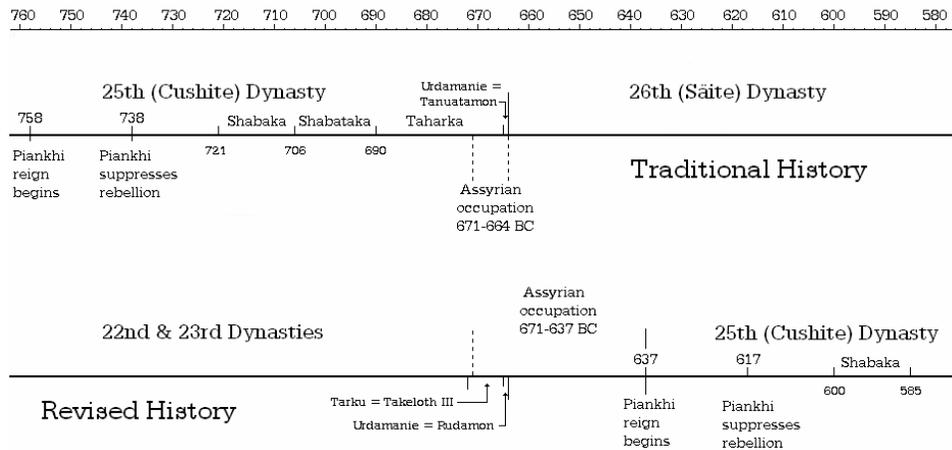
Since Aston dates Piankhi's invasion to around 738 B.C., his reign must have begun in 758 B.C., this according to the traditional history.

Needless to say, this entire dynasty has been repositioned in our revision. All dates discussed thus far are lowered by 121 years, moving these 25th dynasty kings from their traditional location preceding the Assyrian invasion of Egypt, to a position following. Since Piankhi assumed control of Egypt in the 1st year of his reign, 637 B.C. in the revised chronology (758 B.C. – 121 years = 637 B.C.), this must be the date when he supplanted the Assyrians as suzerain of the country. The invasion in his 21st year must have taken place in 617 B.C. The dates for Shabaka (600-585 B.C.) and Shabataka (585-569 B.C.) that result by subtracting 121 years from their traditional dates will be adjusted momentarily and in the book which follows. The two dates provided for Piankhi will not. They are remarkably accurate, as we will demonstrate in the second book of our revision.

Both traditional and revised dates for the 25th dynasty are reproduced in the timeline shown in figure 17 below.

These revised dates for the Ethiopian kings will be discussed further later in this chapter and early in the next. We are interested here in only one aspect of this displacement of the 25th dynasty.

With the 25th dynasty moved to the late 7th century the problem with the genealogical reference to "Urdamanie, son of Shabaka" is obvious. How is it possible for Urdamanie/Rudamon, who led an attempted coup and was subsequently driven out of Egypt in 664 B.C., to be the son of a 25th dynasty king who ruled late in the same 7th century or early in the 6th? But is it true that the Rassam cylinder refers to Urdamanie/Rudamon as the son of the 25th dynasty king Shabaka"?

Figure 17: Reduction of Dates for the 25th Dynasty

Who is Shabaku, father of URdamanie in the Assyrian annals, if he is not Shabaka or Shabataka of the 25th dynasty? Three possible explanations are readily available.¹²³ We examine them in order.

Shabaka = Ankhpakhered

Using one version of the Assyrian annals we have determined that Urdamanie was the son of a princess, the sister of the late king Tarqu. The scribe of the Rassam stela merely completes the genealogical picture, providing us with the name of the other parent This Shabaka, whoever he was, must have been a man of some stature, to have married a princess and fathered a king.

To identify the father of king Rudamon we need first correct the transcription and transliteration of the name in the Rassam cylinder. We have already noted how Assyriologists, in their haste to establish synchronisms between Assyrian and Egyptian chronologies, have tortured the cuneiform script to turn Urdamanie into Tanuatamon and Tushamilki into Psammetichus. They have also too readily accepted the transcription of

¹²³ We omit discussion of the possibility that the name Shabaku has been errantly transcribed and actually provides the name of the princess, the mother of Urdamanie, in which case the Rassam cylinder actually reads “Urdamanie, son of (female name)”. In this case the Rassam and cylinder A texts (cf. bottom of page 90) would parallel one another.

the Rassam stela as a reference to Shabaka of the 25th dynasty.

The name is inscribed on the cylinder using four cuneiform signs that are transcribed as šá-ba-ku-u. But we must remember that Assyrian cuneiform signs, on the principle of polyphony, have multiple possible sound values. The sign which is transcribed as ba could also be given the value pá, and the initial sign transcribed šá could equally be assigned any of the common values ník, níq, nig, or gar (or any of several lesser used values). The selection of the appropriate phoneme, as one authority reminds the beginning student in Akkadian, “can be determined only by the context of the word or sentence”.¹²⁴ For the translators of the Rassam cylinder, the context was an Egyptian 25th dynasty, for which Shabaka was a perfectly natural selection. For the present revision, the context is the Libyan 22nd/ 23rd dynasties. In this case the Rassam cylinder might be referring to ník-pá-ku-u, rather than šá-ba-ku-u. The ník sign will immediately be recognized as Egyptian ‘ankh, and if we accept that ku-u can represent Egyptian kha, we can enquire as to the identity of Ankhpakha, the father of Rudamon and husband of the sister of Takeloth III of the 23rd dynasty. We do not have to look long and hard. Several applicants immediately line up with the proper credentials.

Thus far we have ignored the administrative sub-culture of the 22nd and 23rd dynasties. Kitchen discusses in excruciating detail the important family connections of the vizier Nakhtefmut and several relatives named Ankhpakhered.¹²⁵ Kitchen's genealogy is not without its critics, but it is clear that there did exist an Ankhpakhered (i) whose wife DjedMutesankh qualifies as a possible sister of Takeloth III. She is a generation removed from Takeloth II, and thus both she and Ankhpakhered lived at the time of the Assyrian invasion.¹²⁶ The identification is inviting, if not certain.

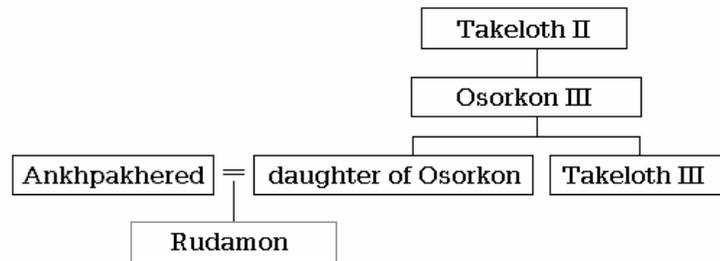
We suggest therefore that “Urdamanie, son of Shabaka” may be a reference to “Rudamon, son of Nikpakhu (Ankhpakhered)”, which has been improperly transcribed and translated. If we are correct, then Rudamon's genealogy must be modified as in figure 18 below.

¹²⁴ T.A. Caldwell, John N. Oswalt, John F.X. Sheehan, eds. *An Akkadian Grammar: A Translation of Riemschneider's Lehrbuch des Akkadischen*, (1974) p.10.

¹²⁵ *Third Intermediate Period*, 180-181

¹²⁶ These same family connections are reviewed by M.L. Bierbrier, *The Late New Kingdom in Egypt* (1975) whose remarks directed toward the activities of the family of DjedThutefankh B (Nakhtefmut A), which included Ankhpakhered, are pertinent: "The family of the Fourth Prophet of Amun DjedThutefankh B demonstrated far more acumen and ability than the families previously discussed. From a relatively obscure background the family managed **by the technique of frequent marriages to royal princesses** to win high office and then to hold it." (p. 85).(emphasis added)

Figure 18: Expanded Genealogy of Rudamon – First Possibility



But there is a second possibility, one that also preserves the integrity of the revised chronology. In this instance we accept the transcription of the name Shabaka at face value, or minimally as a reference to a king Shabataka.¹²⁷ In this scenario, the Assyrian annalist has correctly identified Rudamon as the son of Shabaka, but the Shabaka being referenced is not the 25th dynasty king by that name, but rather a Melukkhan king who ruled shortly before 700 B.C. The matter is sufficiently important and structurally complex to warrant separate treatment in an appendix to this book. Here we only highlight the essential features of the argument.

The Tang-i-Var Inscription

In a recently published monograph the Assyriologist Grant Frame claims to have discovered a reference to a Shabataka, king of Melukkha, in an inscription belonging to the Assyrian king Sargon (722-705 B.C.). The inscription is situated on a canyon wall in the remote Tang-i-Var pass in eastern Iraq. It was apparently inscribed in the final years of Sargon's life, and the relevant section of the text describes an incident most reasonably dated around 712 B.C. Melukkha, here as elsewhere in Assyrian texts, refers to a remote inaccessible region located somewhere south of Egypt. Most scholars view it

¹²⁷ Many Egyptologists assume that the Assyrian annalist mistakenly recorded the name as Shabaka, when Shabataka was intended. The reason is simple. Rudamon began his reign in 664 B.C. Shabaka died at least as early as 701 B.C. in most chronological schemes. (To account for Taharka's presence as head of Shabataka's army fighting against Sennacherib, Shabataka had to be king in Egypt. Therefore Shabaka must be dead.) It is much easier to rationalize the initial appearance of a son of Shabataka as king in 664 B.C. than a son of Shabaka. Shabaka died at least 35 years before Rudamon's appearance, Shabaka only 26 years. That argument is even more convincing today, if we accept the interpretation of the Tang-i-Var reference to Shabataka as king as early as 712 B.C. No scholar today can reasonably accept both the fact that Shabaka died before 712 B.C. and that his son Rudamon began his reign in 664 B.C. An error must be assumed somewhere.

as an alternate name for the region around Napata, the classical home of the 25th dynasty kings. If so it is synonymous with ancient Cush (Ethiopia).

We argue here and at length in an appendix that this Shabataka cannot be the 25th dynasty king who bears the identical name. In support of that conclusion we point to the fact that namesake kings are abundant within Egypt at this time in history. They are also commonplace elsewhere, and nowhere more so than in Melukkha (Cush). In a biblical genealogy of the founding fathers of ancient Cush five kings are named. Three bore names compounded with Sab.

The sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim, Put and Canaan.

The sons of Cush: **Seba**, Havilah, **Sabtah**, Raamah and **Sabteca**. Genesis 10:6,7
(emphasis added)

And we are by now well aware that of the three named kings of Manetho's 25th Cushite dynasty - Sabacon (Shabaka), Sebichos (Shabataka) and Tarcos (Taharka) - two derive their names from that same linguistic stem. According to Flinders Petrie the term Sab (or Shab) is "the present Nubian for the male wild cat"¹²⁸ an appropriate name for a tribal leader. The fact that five of eight documented names of the Cushite royal family employ the term Sab in combination with various suffixes tells us that the name was extremely popular within that family. It may even have become a title. If a patronym it might have been passed down for centuries. It is a false "economy of exegesis" to assign every occurrence of this name to the two 25th dynasty kings most familiar to us.

We argue accordingly that the reference to Shabaka as the father of Urdamanie /Rudamon is not convincing evidence that Urdamanie postdates the 25th dynasty king by that name. And were it not for the fact that the Tang-i-Var inscription refers to a Shabataka rather than Shabaka, we would be more inclined than we are to identify the Melukkhan king mentioned in the Tang-I-Var inscription as the father of Rudamon. The time is certainly right.¹²⁹ We argue in the appendix that Osorkon III might well have arranged a marriage between the Melukkhan king and his daughter as part of a pact of friendship, or an alliance between himself and his neighbour. The early 7th century was a chaotic time in Egypt. Osorkon needed every ally he could get midst the interdynastic feuding which characterized the time of the great disruption.

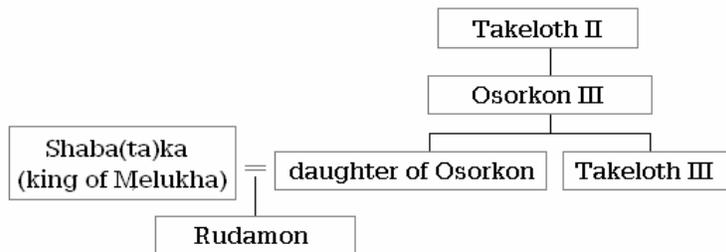
We suggest, therefore, that one of the scribes may have made a mistake, whether the annalist who spelled out the name of Sha-ba-ku-u on the Rassam cylinder, or the workman who inscribed Shabataka on the canyon wall at Tang-i-Var. If we are correct in that assumption, the reading "Urdamanie, son of Shabaka" should remain unaltered.

¹²⁸ HE III 284

¹²⁹ The king of Melukkha in the Tang-i-Var inscription (dated ca.712 B.C.) could have lived well into the 7th century. Perhaps around 690 B.C. he married a young daughter of prince Osorkon, whose career began in 705 B.C.. The daughter may have been as young as 15. Rudamon, the firstborn of this marriage, would be around 25 years of age in 664 B.C.

Only the identification of Shabaka is changed. The resulting genealogy of Rudamon is diagrammed in figure 19 below.

Figure 19: Expanded Genealogy of Rudamon – Second Possibility



Rudamon, Father of Shabaka

The proposals that šá-ba-ku-u should be re-transcribed nik-pa-ku-u and that it refers to an obscure dignitary named Ankhpakhered, or that Shabaka was the king of a remote Ethiopian country named Melukkha, solves one problem but raises a question. The Rassam cylinder that records this name "is dated in the Assyrian eponymy of Shamash-daninanni"¹³⁰, sometime between 644 and 636 B.C. It was inscribed in commemoration of the completion of the rebuilding of the royal palace at Nineveh. How did the scribes at this late date know the intricate family connections of Rudamon, a 23rd dynasty king of apparently little consequence, whom the Assyrian army encountered and defeated in a brief battle 20-30 years earlier? And what purpose was served by including the additional genealogical reference to Shabaka (or Shabataka)? Neither Ankhpakhered nor Shabataka, king of Melukkha were well known outside of Egypt in their lifetimes, much less a half century after their deaths. How would scribes in 636 B.C. know the names of Rudamon's father at this late date? And why would they care to mention him, as if the inclusion of his name explained who Rudamon was? It seems more likely that when the Assyrian annalist mentions a coup attempt by Rudamon and includes a genealogical reference to explain to his audience the identity of this Rudamon, that the reference should be to a name well known to his contemporaries. Thus we argue that Shabaka must have been a significant figure at the time the Rassam cylinder annals were written, and that the Rassam cylinder text might be referring instead to a *son* of Rudamon named Shabaka". Is it possible that "Urdamanie, son of Shabaka" should be translated instead "Urdamanie, father of Shabaka"?

¹³⁰ Luckenbill *Ancient Records* II 290.

Clearly we believe the possibility exists else we would not have mentioned it. But before we argue the case, we should first defend our suggestion that around the year 636 B.C., the date the Rassam cylinder was probably inscribed, the 25th dynasty king Shabaka was well known to the Assyrian public. And there is a very good chance that *he was a son of Rudamon*. If so, we should expect to find someday a reference to Rudamon as the father of Shabaka. That it occurs in an Assyrian, rather an Egyptian document, is the only surprising feature of the Rassam cylinder inscription.

Our remarks will necessarily be brief. The historical situation about which we speak is taken up again in chapter four and it occupies our attention in the whole of *Piankhi the Chameleon*, the sequel to the present book. Here we can only summarize aspects of these later developments.

We begin our argument by repeating our previously stated belief that Egypt, in the decades that followed the Assyrian invasion of the country, was governed at any one time by as many as a dozen governor-kings. The districts they administered were essentially the same ones established by Esarhaddon in 671 B.C. This division of the country persisted through to the end of the Assyrian Empire in 612 B.C. and lasted until the invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar in 564 B.C.

Furthermore, we reiterate our previous claim that the Assyrian domination of Egypt ended around the year 637 B.C., when a king named Piankhi drove the Assyrians from Egypt and took control of the country. Piankhi displaced the Assyrians, but he left intact the system of local administrator-kings.

Several of the “kings” who governed these administrative districts during the Assyrian occupation, and through the years of Piankhi’s domination, were relatives of Rudamon. We have already encountered the name of one of these individuals on a vase inscription that identifies king Rudamon as the father of a king Pefdudubast of Henensuten.¹³¹ Pefdudubast must have ruled in the decades immediately following Rudamon’s expulsion from Egypt in 664 B.C.

As late as 617 B.C. a stela erected by Piankhi, describing his suppression of an attempted coup by an administrator-king named Tefnakht, informs us that Egypt remained fragmented into the same political units Piankhi had inherited from the Assyrians. Among the local governors were kings Pefdjuawybast and Iupet, who ruled in the cities of Heracleopolis and Leontopolis respectively. Pefdjuawybast is known to have married a daughter of Rudamon.¹³² He is therefore Rudamon’s son-in-law. Iupet is considered by many Egyptologists to be Rudamon’s main successor in the 23rd dynasty, and as such is identified in the king lists. The implication is that he is a son of Rudamon, though evidence for the claim is lacking. Even the infamous king Piankhi himself was long associated with Rudamon’s family. Though the theory is no longer in

¹³¹ See above, p. 91.

¹³² TIP 101

favor, there was a time when it was argued that "Rutamen-Meriamen was the father or ancestor of Piankhi" (der vater oder Vorgänger von Pianchi war Rutamen-Meriamen).¹³³ In due time we will show that the early Egyptologists were correct.¹³⁴

The point we are making is that many of the "kings" within Egypt during the 100 years that separated the expulsion of Rudamon in 664 B.C. and the invasion of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar in 564 B.C. were sons and relatives of Rudamon. It follows that Shabaka, who ruled around the time of Piankhi, could in theory have also been a son of Rudamon. It was a family affair. Which leads us to our second point.

It is our contention that Shabaka ruled over the district of Memphis for an extended period of time in the middle decades of this century long period. His rule almost certainly began around the time Piankhi displaced the Assyrians as suzerain of Egypt in 637 B.C. It continued minimally through the 617 B.C. date when Piankhi suppressed the rebellion of Tefnakht,¹³⁵ He was almost certainly a relative of Piankhi, a fact long acknowledged by Egyptologists. Proof of these facts must await developments in our second book.

As nomarch of the prestigious and powerful region of Memphis, and a relative of Piankhi, Shabaka was one of the most influential of the administrator-kings of Egypt, all of whom, if we believe the Piankhi stele, were subservient to Piankhi. In a moment we will see that around the time of the Tefnakht rebellion Shabaka acted, on behalf of Piankhi, in negotiating a treaty of alliance with the Assyrian king Sinsharishkun. We also believe that twenty years earlier, in 637 B.C., he had assisted Piankhi in wresting control of Egypt from the Assyrians. Some of this we can prove; some we cannot.

Our argument concludes at this point. Assuming that the stated facts are true, we can readily see why an Assyrian scribe, writing in 636 B.C., might refer to Rudamon (who led an unsuccessful coup attempt in Egypt thirty years earlier) as the father of Shabaka, who had assisted in freeing Egypt from Assyrian domination only the year before. Rudamon was unsuccessful and largely forgotten; Shabaka, successful and well known.

¹³³ W. Pleyte, "Über zwei Darstellungen des Gottes Horus-Seth," ZAS 14 (1876) 50

¹³⁴ At minimum we will show the likelihood that Piankhi was related by marriage to Osorkon III, the father of Rudamon.

¹³⁵ Some astute and knowledgeable reader may enquire why Piankhi did not name Shabaka on his stele, if indeed Shabaka was ruling in Memphis in 617 B.C. We can only hazard an informed guess. We argue momentarily that Shabaka left the country sometime prior to Piankhi's invasion in order to negotiate conditions of an alliance between Egypt and Assyria, probably at the request of Piankhi. In Shabaka's absence the nomarch of Sais, named Tefnakht, initiated a rebellion, took over the temporarily vacant administrative district of Memphis, and proceeded to move southward to assume control of the whole of Egypt. It was this rebellion that prompted Piankhi's response according to Piankhi's stele. Shabaka was not mentioned because he was absent from Egypt on his diplomatic mission.

With this lengthy but necessary aside, we return to the problem of the Rassam cylinder inscription and suggest that a mistake has been made in either the transcription or the translation of the inscription. The Rassam cylinder does not refer to Rudamon as the son of Shabaka. It identifies him as Shabaka's father. We simply outline the argument. Let others with more time and skill investigate the matter in detail.

That the text should read "Rudamon, father of Shabaka" is a claim properly investigated only by Assyriologists. But even the most casual reader can understand the essential features of the argument. We supply only the essential elements.

When the Assyriologist Rawlinson first transcribed the text from the Rassam cylinder and published his results late in the 19th century, he recorded the relevant passage as "URdamanie DUMU Sha-ba-ku-u" (lit. Rudamon son Shabaka). We have already discussed the four cuneiform signs that produce the name Shabaka. At issue now is the single sign transcribed DUMU. We argue that the sign observed by Rawlinson was instead the ideogram AD.

DUMU is the Sumerian word for "son", used here by the scribe in place of "marum"¹³⁶, the common Assyrian word for "son". AD is the Sumerian word meaning "father", often used by Assyrian scribes as an alternate for "abum" (father).¹³⁷ There is no problem with the scribe choosing to use a Sumerian ideogram rather than a phonetic spelling of the Assyrian equivalent. He was attempting to condense a lengthy narrative onto a small clay cylinder. What is important for us is determining which of the Sumerian words appears on the cylinder. In the original publication there were no close-up photographs of the text, only a transcription. We are therefore entirely dependent on Rawlinson's eyesight, and to a lesser degree on his integrity. Let me explain.

Assyrian phonetic spellings of words and Sumerian ideograms representing entire verbal ideas were all produced by impressing into clay with a stylus a number of wedge shaped marks in various orientations and combinations that formed a unique sign. The sign represented either a "syllable sound", such as the four which spell out the name of Shabaka, or an "idea", such as "father" or "son" (hence the name "ideogram"), used more often by the Sumerians, who preceded the Assyrians in the Tigris/Euphrates region. Though distinct, these signs can be misread if written in haste by a scribe, or if the clay surface in which they were impressed is damaged over time (a common situation in the case of 2600 year-old tablets). The likelihood of a misreading increases the more closely the signs resemble each other. The reading is also influenced by the expectations of the person examining the tablet. In the case of a damaged or carelessly written sign the reading is often suggested by the context.

The reader has by now anticipated the balance of our argument. The Sumerian ideograms for DUMU and AD are practically identical. If written carelessly or in haste,

¹³⁶ We would expect in this situation to read "mar", the construct case of "marum".

¹³⁷ Again we would expect the construct case "ab".

or if damaged even slightly, they would be practically indistinguishable. We have reproduced in figure 20 the representation of these two signs from one of the standard collations of Assyrian and Babylonian cuneiform signs, the *Manuel D'Epigraphie Akkadienne* of Rene Labat. Labat has organized his material systematically, grouping together signs that resemble one another. It is significant therefore that the signs for DUMU and AD are placed in sequence in his book and are numbered 144 and 145 respectively. They differ only in the length and placement of a single vertical wedge.

And there can be no doubt that Rawlinson "expected" to read DUMU rather than AD.

Figure 20: Comparison of Sumerian ideograms DUMU and AD



DUMU

= Assyrian
"marum" (son)
Labat sign
144



AD

= Assyrian
"abum" (father)
Labat sign
145

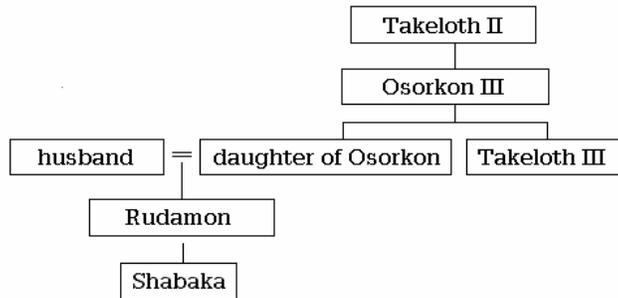
If there were any question about the reading of the sign preceding "Sha-ba-ku-u" on the Rassam cylinder Rawlinson would almost certainly have read DUMU rather than AD. He was well aware that the 25th dynasty king Shabaka lived and ruled in the late 8th century B.C., and that the Urdamania under consideration was being driven from Egypt by Ashurbanipal early in the 7th century. Under no circumstance could Urdamania be the father of Shabaka. DUMU was the only conceivable reading of the Assyrian text, regardless of how closely the sign observed by Rawlinson resembled the Sumerian ideogram AD. Thus the reading DUMU.

There is only one way to settle the matter. The Rassam cylinder should be re-examined by a competent and unbiased authority. We leave the matter there.

In our opinion, the text should probably read "Urdamania AD Sha-ba-ku-u". Time will tell if we are correct. But if so, then the genealogy of Rudamon must be revised yet a third time, as shown in figure 21 below.¹³⁸

¹³⁸ Note that this third variation leaves open the question of the identity of the father and mother of Rudamon.

Figure 21: Expanded Genealogy of Rudamon - Third Possibility



In the course of the argument above we mentioned the fact that Shabaka, around the year 617 B.C. was active on behalf of Piankhi in concluding a treaty aligning Egypt with the Assyrians. The Assyrian king at the time was Sinsharishkun, who had succeeded Ashurbanipal a decade earlier, around 628 B.C. We have come full circle. Nabopolassar was threatening Assyria in 617 B.C. In a few years he would attack and ransack Nineveh in league with the Medes, precisely where we began our story in chapter one. Since we have already mentioned the alliance with Assyria, this seems an opportune time to document the evidence of Shabaka's involvement. Any evidence which places Shabaka at the end of the 7th century serves to confirm our revised chronology.

Shabaka's Treaty with Assyria

That Shabaka was a representative of an Egyptian confederacy in league with Assyria has independent confirmation. In his excavation of the palace of Sennacherib in Nineveh in the mid 19th century, Layard stumbled on the remains of a small cache of official documents:¹³⁹ He describes how

"in a chamber, or passage, in the south-west corner of this edifice, were found a large number of pieces of fine clay bearing the impressions of seals which, there is no doubt, had been affixed, like modern official seals of wax, to documents written on leather, papyrus, or parchment. ... The writings themselves had been consumed by fire which destroyed the building or had perished from decay. In the stamped clay, however, may still be seen the holes for the string, or strips of skin, by which the seal was fastened; in some instances the ashes of the string itself remain, with the marks of the fingers and thumb. (Discoveries 153-4)

¹³⁹ A.H. Layard, *Discoveries in the ruins of Nineveh and Babylon* (1853), esp. ch. VI. p. 135-161.

Most of the seal impressions were Assyrian. A few were Phoenician and Egyptian.

But the most remarkable and important of the Egyptian seals are two impressions of a royal signet, which, though imperfect, retain the cartouche, with the name of the king, so as to be perfectly legible. It is one well known to Egyptian scholars, as that of the second Sabaco the Ethiopian, of the twenty-fifth dynasty. On the same piece of clay is impressed an Assyrian seal, with a device representing a priest ministering before the king, probably a royal signet (Discoveries 156)

Layard was wrong on one point. The seal impression is that of Shabaka, the first, not the second of the two 25th dynasty kings of like name. Shabataka was the second. These seal inscriptions were interpreted as an indication of a treaty between Egypt and Assyria:

It would seem that a peace having been concluded between the Egyptians and one of the Assyrian monarchs, probably Sennacherib, the royal signets of the two kings, thus found together, were attached to the treaty, which was deposited amongst the archives of the kingdom. Whilst the document itself, written upon parchment or papyri, has completely perished, this singular proof of the alliance, if not actual meeting, of the two monarchs is still preserved amidst the remains of the state papers of the Assyrian empire; furnishing one of the most remarkable instances of confirmatory evidence on record. (Discoveries 159)

The seal of Shabaka is indeed evidence of an alliance between Assyria and Egypt. But the alliance was not between Sennacherib and Shabaka. Sennacherib began his reign in 705 B.C. He did not sign a treaty with Shabaka whose rule ended around 702 B.C. in the traditional history, or in the time frame 712-706 B.C. if we accept the evidence from Tang-i-Var discussed earlier. Even if we were not aware precisely when Shabaka died, we would have insisted that no treaty was ever signed between Assyria and Egypt around that time. The two countries were antagonists throughout the last decade of the 8th century and for decades beyond. Besides, the Kouyunjik palace built by Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) in the northern sector of Nineveh was not completed until early in the 7th century, years after the death of Shabaka. Ashurbanipal occupied it early in his reign till that king built his own palace further south in Nineveh. Shabaka's treaty must postdate the completion of the Kouyunjik palace, where the Shabaka seal impressions were found. It almost certainly originates from late in the reign of Ashurbanipal, and more likely during the reign of Sinsharishkun, in the final days before the fall of the Empire (612 B.C.).

In support of this last statement we note that Assyrian treaties were typically written in cuneiform on clay, not on parchment. Some exceptional circumstance must exist to explain an agreement recorded in this atypical medium. There is no evidence of an accord between Assyria and Egypt in the entire span of the reigns of kings Sennacherib, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal. But an alliance was formed in the reign of Sinsharishkun. We began our first chapter documenting the results of that alliance. The treaty with

Shabaka must date to the reign of Sinsharishkun, and only shortly before the fall of the Assyrian kingdom. The fact that the document was found in a corridor or chamber, not in the state archives, and that it was burnt, suggests a time not long preceding the fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C. And since the Babylonian Chronicle places an Egyptian army on the upper Euphrates in 616 B.C., acting in league with the Assyrians against Babylon, the treaty was most likely concluded the year before, thus in 617 B.C. This was, of course, the time of the Tefnakht rebellion.

This concludes our discussion of the 22nd-23rd dynasties. We have argued our case. The 25th dynasty has been dislodged from its errant position preceding the Assyrian invasion. The 22nd/23rd dynasties have filled the void. Taharka has been removed from the early 7th century where he does not belong. There remains the problem of identifying his true historical context. For this we will need the entire chapter following. But first we pause to reflect on the accuracy of our revision thus far.

Pause for Reflection

The seemingly arbitrary reduction of 22nd/23rd dynasty dates by 121 years has fared remarkably well. Its immediate consequence was the lowering of dates for Osorkon II, Takeloth II, Sheshonk III and Pedubast I, positioning these kings in the late 8th and early 7th centuries, precisely where they belong according to an abundance of inscriptional evidence from well dated Phoenician sites. The resulting dates for Takeloth II, Takeloth III, and Rudamon place these kings precisely opposite their biblical and Assyrian namesakes, Tirhakah, Tarqu, and Urdamanie. In the case of Takeloth III/Tarqu and Rudamon/Urdamanie the correspondence was so remarkable that it could not be improved were we given liberty to emend dates and data at will.

The revision also supplies answers to a wide assortment of problems that have occupied the attention of scholars for centuries. It confirms the identity of pharaoh So, explains why Tirhakah could be called "king of Cush" in 701 B.C., and supplies the date and probable cause of the extermination of Sennacherib's army. We now know the meaning of the sky not devouring the moon in the annals of prince Osorkon, why Ashurbanipal employed 22nd dynasty kings and dignitaries to administer the Assyrian province of Egypt, why Esarhaddon treasured a vase inscribed with the name of the 22nd dynasty prince Takeloth son of Tentsai, and why Egyptologists are unable to find the tomb of the 22nd dynasty prince Wasneterra Sheshonk, nor any inscriptional evidence proving the existence of a 25th dynasty prince Ushanahuru. The origins of the fragmented kingdom in the days of Piankhi can now be traced to the division of administrative power under Esarhaddon. The absence of any Assyrian reference to the loss of Egypt through most of the lifetime of Ashurbanipal is equally comprehensible. Egypt remained until 637 B.C. a vassal state of Assyria.

Seemingly trivial details of 23rd dynasty history suddenly become significant - why

Takeloth III reigned such a short time, why he was succeeded by a nephew, and not by a son, why there are so few monumental remains from the reign of Rudamon, and why Rudamon's genealogy is traced through his royal mother to his grandfather Osorkon III.

The seemingly arbitrary displacement of the chronologies of dynasties 22 and 23 by 121 years should have resulted immediately in multiple irresolvable conflicts. Is it mere coincidence that it does precisely the opposite?

We are at least encouraged to continue.