

## Chapter 8: Neco & the Persian Wars

### Neco Wahemibre & Darius I

Darius I (522-486 B.C.)

From the death of Udjhorresne around 514 B.C., in the 8th year of Darius I, until a few years before the end of Darius' reign in 486 B.C., there is an almost total absence of historical information forthcoming from Egypt. In the last decade of his reign strained relations between Persia and Greece led to a military confrontation that climaxed in 490 B.C. when Darius launched, under command of his nephew, a failed attempt to conquer Greece. The aborted battle at Marathon only increased his desire for conquest. The war was not over, only delayed.

Meanwhile, preparations for the Greek war proceeded apace. As Darius saw it, Marathon was only a temporary setback to a hitherto successful policy of steady frontier advance. All that was needed, he thought, was a larger army under proper direction, and then, when the surviving city-states had been crushed, the whole Greek world would be incorporated within the ever-expanding Persian Empire.<sup>286</sup>

Darius proceeded to intensify his war effort, conscripting troops and replenishing military supplies to provision the anticipated expedition. These oppressive actions and the bleak prospect of further foreign wars led to a rebellion in Egypt. According to Herodotus the revolt took place in the fourth year after Marathon, around 487 B.C.<sup>287</sup>

King Darius, son of Hystaspes, had been greatly incensed against the Athenians because of their raid on Sardis, but when news reached him of the battle fought at Marathon, his wrath was still more kindled, and he pressed on all the more with preparations for war against Greece. He lost no time in sending messengers to every city calling for the raising of an army, requiring of each a far greater number of men than ever before, and ships of war, food, horses, and transports besides. This levy kept Asia in travail for three years, the best men being taken up with the war on Greece or preparations for it. And in the fourth year the Egyptians, brought into subjection by Cambyses, revolted against the Persians. Thereafter even greater preparations were made for war on both countries. Her.7.1

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<sup>286</sup> A.T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* (1948), p. 226.

<sup>287</sup> The rebellion proper, i.e. open hostilities, began with a siege of the fortress of Migdol. This took place slightly over 3 years after Marathon, thus late in 487 B.C. since Marathon is usually dated to August or September of 490 B.C. Darius died roughly a year later, in November 486 B.C. For this information we are largely dependent on Herodotus.

Darius' death in November 486 B.C. interrupted his plans to quash the rebellion. The lot fell instead to Xerxes, Darius' son and successor, who in due course invaded Egypt. Details of the Egyptian revolt and of its suppression by Xerxes are lacking in all sources. We know only that for over two years (487-484 B.C.) Egypt was in control of local authorities. It was a time of national rejoicing, remembered and celebrated for decades. But the revolt ultimately failed.

Egypt had been recovered by January 9, 484. Quarrying at the Hammamat gorge by the returned Atiyawahy and by Ariurta proves a certain amount of building at the royal command. But the property of numerous temples was confiscated and the treatment of the natives made harsher. Apparently Pharendates had perished in the revolt, for Xerxes placed Egypt under the rule of his brother Achaemenes as satrap.<sup>288</sup>

#### The Revised History: (522-486 B.C.)

In the revised chronology Psamtik I ruled over the Persian province of Egypt from 543-489 B.C. The latter half of his tenure thus overlapped most of the reign of Darius I. From the death of Udjhorresne around 514 B.C., in Psamtik's 30th year, until Psamtik's death in 489 B.C. (only three years before the death of Darius I) there is an almost total absence of historical information forthcoming from Egypt. This is not surprising. Psamtik was a pharaoh in name only; in truth he was nothing more than a Persian bureaucrat. Besides, he was old. We have argued that Psamtik was born some time before 564/563 B.C. when his father Necao I died during the invasion of Nebuchadrezzar. He must have been a young man in his late twenties or early thirties when installed in office by Cyrus in 543 B.C. He died in his 55th regnal year after 54 years regulating Egyptian affairs on behalf of three Persian kings. He must have been well over eighty years old at death. His son Wahemibre Necao ruled after him from 489-474 B.C. The rebellion against Darius (487-484 B.C.) must have occurred early in Necao's reign.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>288</sup> Olmstead, *op.cit.*, p. 235.

<sup>289</sup> Petrie attributed this "brief insurrection" to Khababasha (*History of Egypt III*, p. 369) Yoyotte at one time believed the rebel leader was a king Pedubast III but has since changed his mind ("Petoubastis III" *RdE* 24 (1972) p. 216 cf. n.4). E. Cruz-Urbe ("On the Existence of Psammetichus IV," *Serapis* 5 (1980) 35-9) and P.W. Pestman ("The Diospolis Parva Documents, Chronological Problems concerning Psammetichus III & IV," in J. Thissens/Th. Zauzich eds. *Grammata Demotika: Festschrift für Erich Luddeckens zum 15 Juni 1983*) have recently argued that a hitherto unknown Psamtik IV led the rebellion. All three of these kings did in fact rule parts of Egypt approximately twenty years after the end of the reign of Darius I. The matter is considered in chapter 9.

What evidence is there that Necao Wahemibre and Darius I were contemporaries and that Necao led a rebellion against Darius only a few years after his father's death? The answer will occupy this entire chapter. Ironically, much of the source material comes from Herodotus.

## Canal Construction & Circumnavigation

### Nile/Red Sea Canal

According to Herodotus in his chapter two Saite history:

Psammetichus had a son Necos, who became king of Egypt. It was he who began the making of the canal into the Red Sea, which was *finished by Darius the Persian*. This is four days' voyage in length, and it was dug wide enough for two triremes to move in it rowed abreast. It is fed by the Nile, and is carried from a little above Bubastis by the Arabian town of Patumus; it issues into the Red Sea. The beginning of the digging was in the part of the Egyptian plain which is nearest to Arabia; the mountains that extend to Memphis (in which mountains are the stone quarries) come close to this plain; the canal is led along the lower slope of these mountains in a long reach from west to east; passing then into a ravine it bears southward out of the hill country towards the Arabian Gulf. Now the shortest and most direct passage from the northern to the southern or Red Sea is from the Casian promontory, which is the boundary between Egypt and Syria, to the Arabian Gulf, and this is a distance of one thousand furlongs, neither more nor less; this is the most direct way, but the canal is much longer, inasmuch as it is more crooked. In Necos' reign a hundred and twenty thousand Egyptians perished in the digging of it. During the course of excavations, Necos ceased from the work, being stayed by a prophetic utterance that *he was toiling beforehand for the barbarian*. The Egyptians call all men of other languages barbarians. *Necos then ceased from making the canal and engaged rather in warlike preparation*; some of his ships of war were built on the northern sea, and some in the Arabian Gulf, by the Red Sea coast: the landing -engines of these are still to be seen. He used these ships at need, and with his land army met and defeated the Syrians at Magdulus, taking the great Syrian city of Cadytis after the battle. He sent to Branchidae of Miletus and dedicated there to Apollo the garments in which he won these victories. Presently he died after a reign of sixteen years, and his son Psammiss reigned in his stead. Her. 2.158-9 (italics added)

It is intriguing that the names of Necao and Darius are linked together in connection with this monumental historical achievement, a water link between the Mediterranean and the Red Sea for which both the initiative and the lion's share of the work appear to be credited to Wahemibre Necao. The fact that over a hundred thousand lives were lost,

notwithstanding the probable hyperbole, suggests it was a lengthy and labour intensive effort. There can be little doubt that the construction was all but finished when abandoned by Necao. It is surprising therefore that this mammoth undertaking, so potentially advantageous for the Egyptian economy, and so near to completion, was ignored for 100 years till work resumed and the canal was completed under Darius I - this on the assumption that Necao ruled Egypt from 610-595 B.C., a century before Darius. This criticism is particularly incisive considering the explosion of commercial activity that took place in the lengthy and prosperous reign of Amasis. Why did Amasis not finish the canal? And who are the "barbarians" on account of whom Necao was loathe to complete this water bridge between the Nile and the Red Sea?

That a canal joining the Nile (and thus the Mediterranean) with the Red Sea, via the wadi Tumulat, was in fact completed under Darius I, is not in doubt. Excavations by the French in the late 19th century uncovered the outlines of the canal and, more importantly, the huge stelae erected by Darius to commemorate its construction.<sup>290</sup> The original waterway was a hundred and fifty feet wide and deep enough for the passage of sea going vessels. It could be traversed in four days.

Concerning the stelae, Olmstead remarks:

Five huge red-granite stelae to commemorate the vast project greeted the eyes of the traveller at intervals along the banks. On one side the twice-repeated Darius holds within an Egyptian cartouche his cuneiform name under the protection of the Ahuramazda symbol. In the three cuneiform languages he declares: "I am a Persian. From Parsa I seized Egypt. I commanded this canal to be dug from the river, Nile by name, which flows in Egypt, to the sea which goes from Parsa. Afterward this canal was dug as I commanded, and ships passed from Egypt through this canal to Parsa as was my will." On the reverse is the fuller Egyptian version. Under the Egyptian sun disk, ultimately the original of the Ahuramazda symbol depicted on the front, stand the two Niles in the traditional ritual of "binding the two lands." One tells Darius: "I have given you all the lands, all the Fenkhu (Phoenicians), all the foreign lands, all the bows"; the other "I have given you all mankind, all the men, all the peoples of the isles of the seas."<sup>291</sup>

On the stelae Darius calls himself "king of kings, son of Hystaspes, great king"; but he also assumes Egyptian titles, including "born of Neith, mistress of Sais," the patron deity of the Egyptian capital during the Saite dynasty. What, if anything, should we read into this association of the Persian and Saite dynasties?

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<sup>290</sup> The earliest and best publication of these stelae, with photographs, transcription and translation is provided by G. Posener, *La Première Domination Perse En Egypte* (1936) p. 48-87.

<sup>291</sup> Alan B. Lloyd, "Necho and the Red Sea: Some Considerations," *JEA* 63 (1977) p. 149. The arguments pro and con are presented on pages 149-154.

Nowhere in the vicinity of Darius' canal is there evidence of the waterway constructed by Necao a century earlier, this in spite of the fact that the location fits the geographical details of Necao's canal as provided by Herodotus. Therefore scholars assume - though entirely without evidence - that Darius has merely cleared out the sand filled remains of Necao's earlier canal and claimed the result as his own achievement.

But the questions raised earlier remain. Why did Necao's canal remain all but completed for a hundred years? And how is it that the completion of this Egyptian canal could work to the benefit of an unnamed barbarian, so much so that in spite of the enormous loss of life and expenditure of time already incurred, Necao abruptly abandoned the undertaking? And why, in the immediate aftermath of this interruption in his canal building operation, did Necao prepare for war? These questions deserve an answer.

The reader can anticipate our response to the first of these questions. In the revised history Darius and Necao are contemporaries. There were not two canals built in the same location a century apart. There was a single canal, the construction of which was ordered by Darius I in anticipation of his wars with Greece, and which construction became the responsibility of Necao, son of the aging Psamtik I. This assumes, of course, that even before he became king in 489 B.C., Necao had taken over many of the official functions of his father. The canal construction, probably begun several years before Marathon, continued through the death of Psamtik I and into the second year of Necao (488 B.C.). Then it abruptly stopped. Necao, reflecting the national sentiment, determined to free the country from the destructive policies of Darius and the Persians. And therein lies the answer to the other two questions. The cessation of work on the canal was the beginning of a rebellion against Persia.

According to Herodotus Necao ceased construction on the canal for fear that "he was toiling beforehand for the barbarian". There is not ambiguity in Herodotus' use of the term "barbarian". By this term he refers to foreigners unfamiliar with the Egyptian language. Many times in his *Histories* he uses the identical word in reference to the Persians. And in the revised history, with Necao Wahemibre assuming the Egyptian throne at the precise moment when Darius I is mobilizing his empire to fight with Greece, there can be no doubt that Darius is the "barbarian". The revised historical context settles the question.

The canal was constructed by order of Darius, whose vested interest in such a venture is undeniable. His war with Greece required naval vessels for the anticipated battle and ready access to provisions for the troops. Egypt was a major supplier of both. But part of the Persian navy and many of the potential sources of supply lay south and east of Egypt. A water bridge to the Red Sea was essential. It would give immediate access to supplies from Persian provinces bordering on the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. It would facilitate the movement of ships constructed and troops conscripted elsewhere in the southern regions of the Persian Empire. And it would provide a faster and less physically demanding route to the Persian homeland.

Necao recognized that the completion of the canal would only intensify the suffering of the Egyptians. Already, if Herodotus can be believed, a hundred thousand lives had been sacrificed in this Persian cause. Additional life had been lost in the battle at Marathon and more deaths appeared inevitable as Darius pursued his ambition to annex Greece. To complete the canal would further a war effort which could only result in innumerable casualties, and all this for a "barbarian" whose repressive taxation and conscription was becoming intolerable.

When work on the canal stopped Necao was in effect declaring Egyptian independence. Retaliation from the Persians could be expected soon. Egypt had to ready itself for war. It is no surprise therefore that a work stoppage led immediately to a war effort. Herodotus captures the connection precisely. "Necos then ceased from making the canal and engaged rather in warlike preparation" The anticipated reaction from Persia would come from land and sea.

A single problem in the comments by Herodotus requires explanation. According to him Necao left the canal incomplete. And in our interpretation of the probable sequence of events Necao's act of defiance led within a year to a full-blown rebellion. Darius died before the rebellion could be quashed. There is no room in this historical construct for Darius to complete the canal. Yet Herodotus says specifically that "the canal was finished by Darius the Persian." And Darius himself, on the memorial stelae erected at strategic points along the canal, declared: "Afterward this canal was dug as I commanded and ships passed from Egypt, through this canal to Parsua as was my will." How do we explain the apparent discrepancy?

In spite of apparent statements to the contrary by Herodotus and Darius we maintain the claim that the canal was left incomplete until some indeterminate time after the Egyptian rebellion, precisely when we cannot say. The canal stelae were likely inscribed before the anticipated completion of the canal, being erected at each successive stage as construction was completed. And Herodotus is here either mistaken or misinterpreted. He is apparently heir to two traditions - one that claimed that Necao built the canal but stopped short of completion, and another, lacking this qualification, which claimed that Darius built the canal. The second tradition is technically true. It is the back-to-back juxtaposition of the two traditions which gives rise to the impression that Darius completed the unfinished work of Necao. Herodotus does not actually say that Darius "finished" the work of Necao. That is the translator's interpretation.

The claim that Herodotus is misrepresented is not without support. Other classical scholars preserve traditions of Darius' canal construction. Aristotle (*Mete.* I. 14 (352b)), Diodorus Siculus (I.33.9ff.), Strabo (17.1.25 (C804)) and Pliny (HN 6.165 ff.) all insist that the canal was left unfinished by Darius.<sup>292</sup> The matter must be left at that.

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<sup>292</sup> The classical references are taken from Lloyd, *op.cit.*, p. 143 n. 8. I did not check the Pliny and Aristotle citations. Lloyd also notes that the canal was reopened by Trajan, but if not completed by

We will discuss Necao's rebellion in more detail later. While we are on the subject of his canal construction we should pause briefly to comment on a second notable pioneering effort credited to him by Herodotus, the first circumnavigation of the African continent.

### Circumnavigation of Africa

Later in chapter four Herodotus again mentions the canal, this time in the context of a naval expedition, the first documented circumnavigation of the African continent.

It is certain that Libya is surrounded by sea, except where it is joined to Asia, and the first to demonstrate this, so far as we know, was the Egyptian king Necos. For, when he abandoned the digging of the canal from the Nile to the Arabian Gulf, he dispatched certain Phoenicians on a voyage, and bade them sail so as to come home between the Pillars of Heracles to the sea on the north side of Libya and thus back to Egypt. The Phoenicians set out from the Red Sea and sailed the southern sea; as often as autumn came they went ashore and sowed the land in whatever part of Libya they had reached in their voyage and waited for the harvest; when they had gathered the crop, they sailed on. Thus two years passed, and in the third year they turned through the Pillars of Heracles and reached Egypt. They said what to me is unbelievable, though some may believe it; that as they sailed around Libya they had the sun on their right hand. Her. 4.42

Necao's Suez-canal prototype might, in and of itself, be considered the achievement of a lifetime. To follow it up with an east-west 15,000-mile journey from the Red Sea to the Nile delta around the tip of the African continent, appears to solidify Necao's reputation as a visionary and an achiever. So seemingly legendary are these exploits, in fact, that the credibility of Herodotus has been called into question, at least in the case of the circumnavigation. According to the Egyptologist Alan Lloyd "this remarkable narrative has excited, and will continue to excite, considerable discussion, some championing its historicity, others refusing to accept it."<sup>293</sup> Lloyd, for one, believes Herodotus to be mistaken, believing the incident to be totally out of character for an Egyptian pharaoh in this time period. According to him "it is extremely unlikely that an Egyptian king would, or could, have acted as Necho is depicted as doing ... all the more unlikely since the Saites were distinctly prone to following well-worn paths." He goes on to say that

If an Egyptian king, at any period, organized and dispatched an expedition, he did so for specific practical ends to meet specific practical needs. Disinterested

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Darius then either it was completed in the interim and reopened by Trajan, or Trajan completed the unfinished work of Darius II & Necao.

<sup>293</sup> Lloyd, op.cit., p. 149.

inquiry or plain curiosity were always amongst the least evident of Egyptian habits of mind. What possible end could an Egyptian king have thought an enterprise of this sort might have served? To anyone familiar with Pharaonic ways of doing things the reply immediately prompted is an emphatic 'None at all!'. Given the context of Egyptian thought, economic life, and military interests, it is impossible for one to imagine what stimulus could have motivated Necho in such a scheme and if we cannot provide a reason which is sound within Egyptian terms of reference, then we have good reason to doubt the historicity of the entire episode.<sup>294</sup>

Lloyd's remarks might be justifiable in the context of the traditional history where there exists no discernible reason for this naval activity. But in the revised history it is not at all "impossible for one to imagine what stimulus could have motivated Necho in such a scheme."

In the first place we argue that Necho was here motivated by the identical cause that prompted his canal construction. He dispatched the expedition in search of an alternate route to the Mediterranean because he was ordered to do so. The initiative belonged to Darius, not Necho. The proof comes from Strabo who, writing centuries after Herodotus, not only credits Darius I with the idea, but also claims that this knowledge was derived circuitously from Herodotus:

In giving the names of those who are said to have circumnavigated Libya Poseidonius says that Herodotus believes that certain men commissioned by Darius accomplished the circumnavigation of Libya; and adds that Heracleides of Pontus in one of his Dialogues makes a certain Magus who had come to the court of Gelo assert that he had circumnavigated Libya.<sup>295</sup>[

It is typically argued that Strabo was wrong. The authors of the Loeb Classical Library edition of Strabo are sufficiently convinced of that fact that they replace Darius name in the translation with that of Neco, adding in a footnote:

All scholars agree that Strabo or Poseidonius made a mistake in giving the name of Darius here. It was Neco who ordered the circumnavigation of Africa, while Darius ordered that of Arabia."<sup>296</sup>

But Strabo has made no mistake. Neither can we accuse Poseidonius of error. Necho, at the time of the expedition, was a vassal of Persia and subject to directives forthcoming from that source. There is no fundamental conflict between Strabo's claim that the naval expedition was "commissioned" by Darius I, and the statement of Herodotus who says

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<sup>294</sup> Lloyd, *op.cit.*, p. 150-51.

<sup>295</sup> Strabo, *Geography* 2.3.4. We use the translation of H.L. Jones and J.R.S. Sterrett in the Loeb Classical Library.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.* Vol. I, p. 376 - note 1 to the Greek text.



that the sailors were "dispatched" by Necao. Whether Poseidonius knew that Necao was acting under directives from Darius, and interpreted Herodotus accordingly, or whether some portion of the original Herodotus has been lost in transmission is impossible to say. We can note, however, that once again the names of Darius I and Wahemibre Necao have been confused in the historical record and apparently for the same reason. The two kings were contemporaries and participants in the identical activities.

It is obvious what motivated Darius to initiate the naval expedition. The oceanic route to the Mediterranean was likely conceived for precisely the same reasons as the canal construction. Darius was in desperate need to establish a water bridge between Persia and the anticipated Mediterranean/Adriatic arena of his war with Greece. Supply links had to be created. Assuming that the expedition was planned before Necao's rebellion, a sea-route, assuming the sailors were able to discover one, would be an alternative to the canal route, and particularly valuable should the canal not be completed on schedule. It might also discover new sources of supply.

But Herodotus seems to suggest that Necao dispatched the Phoenician sailors *after* he had "abandoned the digging of the canal from the Nile to the Arabian Gulf." It is possible, of course, that Herodotus is mistaken in the timing of the event and that the ships were dispatched before Necao's revolt was underway, in which case there is no problem. But even assuming the accuracy of Herodotus there is no inherent difficulty. Necao was now at war with Persia and anticipating a Persian reprisal. Warships were necessary on two fronts - on the Red Sea to counter a Persian naval offensive via the Indian Ocean, and at the Nile Delta where numerous tributaries needed defending. Of the two locations the latter was by far the more susceptible to attack and the least defensible. With the canal construction abandoned Necao may have decided to proceed with the Darius initiative, both for supplies and as a possible means of transferring part of his Red Sea fleet to the Delta should need arise.

The reduction of Saite dynasty dates by 121 years, which produces an overlap between the last few years at the end of the reign of Darius I and the first few years of the reign of Wahemibre Necao, has once again solved rather than created problems. We are now able to explain the otherwise inexplicable dual traditions crediting Darius I and Necao with the identical activities of canal construction and circumnavigation. We have at hand the identity of the "barbarian" mentioned by Herodotus; an explanation of how an Egyptian king can be described as "toiling on behalf of" this barbarian, and a reason why building a canal should be deemed so offensive that it is abruptly terminated only marginally short of completion. We also know why the work stoppage was followed immediately by war preparation. Is it merely coincidence that the first years of Necao fall precisely at the time of Darius' wars, a correspondence in time essential to all of the explanations? A more detailed analysis of Necao's rebellion will only increase the conviction that we are on the right track.

## Triremes & Rebellion

### Triremes on the Red Sea

Immediately following the work stoppage on the canal Necao redirected the war effort. Instead of working to assist Persia against Greece, he prepared to drive the Persians from Egypt. According to Herodotus he immediately began building warships (triremes) both on the Mediterranean and on the Red Sea. We repeat the quote from Herodotus:

Necos then ceased from making the canal and engaged rather in warlike preparation; some of his ships of war (lit. triremes) were built on the northern sea, and some in the Arabian Gulf, by the Red Sea coast: the landing-engines of these are still to be seen. He used these ships at need, and with his land army met and defeated the Syrians at Magdolus, taking the great Syrian city of Cadytis after the battle. He sent to Branchidae of Miletus and dedicated there to Apollo the garments in which he won these victories. Presently he died after a reign of sixteen years, and his son Psammis reigned in his stead. Her. 2.159

We should probably understand this shipbuilding activity as a continuation of an effort already underway, since we know from previous discussion that Darius had requisitioned warships from unspecified locations within his empire in preparation for his anticipated war with Greece. The shipyards were already in place; the construction already in progress. Necao merely allocated the production to a different cause.

Some have questioned the fact that Necao would build triremes for use on the Red Sea. Alan Lloyd, for example, arguing from the point of view of the traditional history, can see no possible use for such warships in this region at this time.

Whether we take the view that the word 'triremes' reflects the use of Greek triremes, or the view that they are Phoenician, or whether we adopt the minimalist interpretation that the term is anachronistic and simply reflects the introduction of the most up-to-date ramming war-galleys available, we are still confronted with the situation that Necho has considered it worth his while to place a squadron of the most advanced warships of his time in an area where, to an Egyptological or Classical eye, they appear completely superfluous. Yet such vessels were expensive, particularly in high-quality timber resources with which Egypt was very ill endowed. They were also, in the light of current ambitions, worth their military weight in gold in the Mediterranean. Necho must have had what he thought was a very good reason for this move. What was it? <sup>297</sup>

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<sup>297</sup> Lloyd, "Necho and the Red Sea," p. 146.

Lloyd recalls the argument, proposed by another scholar, that Necho's action reflected a concern over possible expansionist policies of the Chaldaean Empire and that therefore the "the ships were intended to meet a possible attack by naval forces operating against the east coast of Egypt". He appropriately rejects the suggestion. Neither Nabopolassar nor Nebuchadrezzar, Necao's contemporaries in the traditional history, is known to have engaged in naval warfare. And according to that same history, even a land force led by the Chaldaean king never seriously threatened Egypt under Wahemibre Necao. Concerning the possibility of a Babylonian naval attack Lloyd concludes:

This seems extremely improbable. Given all available precedents as well as the prevailing military and naval situation, this would surely have seemed to Necho the remotest of all possibilities - so remote, in fact, that omitting to station a fleet in the Red Sea against the Chaldaeans could surely not have arisen even to the level of a calculated risk. The solution must lie elsewhere.<sup>298</sup>

Elsewhere indeed. The solution lies in correctly placing the Saite dynasty a century forward in time. The Chaldaeans were not a naval threat to Egypt, but Persia certainly was. Persian fleets manned by Phoenician sailors sailed both the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean. And the Persian navy employed by Darius I and Xerxes was famous for its widespread use of the Greek trireme.

Even Herodotus' use of the term trireme, as Lloyd himself admits, is a possible anachronism from the point of view of the traditional history. A strong case can be made that triremes did not exist when Wahemibre Necao ruled Egypt according to the accepted chronology (610-595 B.C.) The trireme is a late sixth century innovation in naval warfare. Only in the fifth century was it widely used as a naval vessel, and that precisely in the time of Darius and Xerxes in their wars with the Greeks. Either the use of the term by Herodotus is anachronistic, or the dates for Necao should be lowered by a hundred years.

There is no time and no need to reproduce the argument regarding the trireme, since the possibility of anachronistic use remains to negate its value. But the fact remains that the earliest literary references to the existence of the trireme are all from Persian times, and classical scholars are almost unanimous in their opinion that the trireme replaced the fifty-oar galley only in the 5th century. According to A.R. Burn, arguably the foremost 20th century authority on the Greek wars with Persia, in his *Persia & the Greeks* (2nd, 1984):

Thucydides (i. 14) says that 'triremes in large numbers were' [first] 'acquired by the Sicilian tyrants and by Kerkyra, not long before the Persian wars and the death of Darius' [486]; 'these were the last significant navies to arise in Greece before Xerxes' invasion. For the fleets of Aigina and Athens and others were small in numbers, and mostly of fifty-oared galleys at that.' Exactly at what

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<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

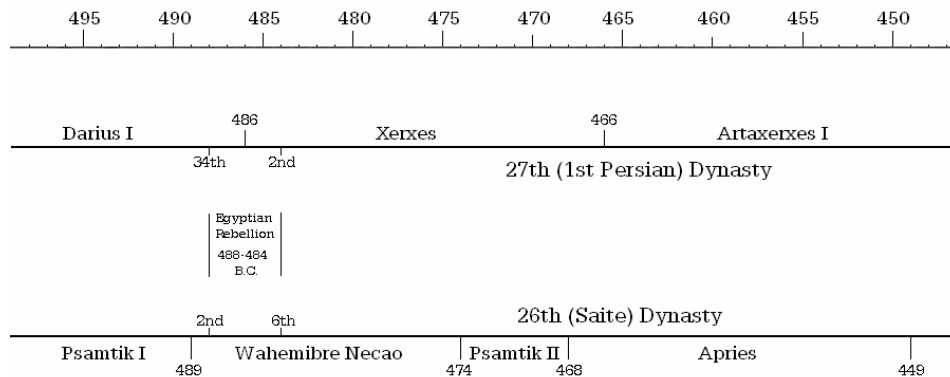
point the simple fifty-oar gave place completely to the trireme as the standard ship of the line, and whether Thucydides can here be completely trusted (he is writing to prove that his was the biggest war ever fought), is a difficult problem. If his statement is completely accurate, there must have been prodigious building activity throughout Greece and the Levant, and not only at Athens, in 490-480.<sup>299</sup>

We remind the reader that 490-480 B.C. is precisely the time of Necao's reign in the revised history. His construction of triremes in large numbers is not anachronistic. It is the accepted Saite dynasty chronology that is in error.

### The Egyptian Rebellion

We are not told by Herodotus precisely how much time was consumed in Necao's "preparations for war" before the actual physical confrontation occurred. We assume less than a year. Since the Egyptian revolt against Darius, based on the data supplied by Herodotus, took place late in the year 487 B.C., about a year before Darius' death in November, 486 B.C., we can reasonably date the cessation of work on the canal, and thus the beginning of the rebellion, to the year 488 B.C., the 34<sup>th</sup> year of Darius.

Figure 31: Timeline – 1<sup>st</sup> Egyptian Rebellion



A single line of text in Herodotus describes the entire military enterprise of Wahemibre Necao. In the aftermath of the cessation of work on the Nile/Red Sea canal, having

<sup>299</sup> A.R. Burn, *Persia & the Greeks* 2nd (1984) p. 276 n. 45.

mobilized his army and sufficiently prepared his navy, Necao "used these ships at need, and with his land army met and defeated the Syrians at Magdolos, taking the great Syrian city of Cadytis after the battle".

In the traditional history these two land battles must suffice to represent the entire military life of pharaoh Necho, who ruled Egypt from 610-595 B.C., who supposedly served as a powerful ally of Assyria in its attempt to defend then recover Harran for the Assyrian king Ashuruballit, who killed Josiah, king of Judah when he attempted to intervene, and who, for a decade, proved to be a foil in Nebuchadrezzar's attempts to dominate the Hatti lands. Is there any hint of the activity of this late 7th century king in the actions mentioned in this single line of text from Herodotus? We think not.

Magdolos (Migdol) is a fortress location on the northeast corner of the Egyptian delta! Cadytis, less clearly identified, is probably another troop location in the vicinity of Gaza (if not Gaza itself), several hundred miles further east from Migdol at the other end of the desert road linking southern Palestine with Egypt. Both locations were defensive strongholds, typically occupied by Egyptian troops. Necao is apparently at war with himself! Something is amiss.

Historians typically emend the Herodotus reference in an attempt to salvage some reminiscence of Neco's wars with Babylon from the description. How and Wells, in their influential *Commentary on Herodotus* illustrate the interpretive process. Concerning Magdolos they say:

The battle was really fought at Megiddo, where the coast-road comes out on the plain of Esdraelon; here Thothmes III had beaten the Syrian confederates nearly 1000 years before. H(erodotus) confuses this name with 'Migdol', the border fortress of Egypt on the north-east (cf. Exod. xiv.2; Jer. xlv.1)."

As for Cadytis, these same authors note that it is

only mentioned here and in iii.5.1 where H(erodotus) describes it as 'about the size of Sardis'. It has been identified with Jerusalem and its name explained as = 'the holy' (cf. the present Arab name 'El Kuds'); Necho perhaps took Jerusalem (2 Chron xxxvi.3). But it is clear from iii.5 that Cadytis was on the coast, at the south end of the road from Phoenicia to Egypt; and H(erodotus)'s comparison with Sardis, which may rest on his own observation, would certainly not suit Jerusalem in the days of humiliation after the return from the Exile. Gaza, on the other hand (certainly captured by Necho), was always an important station of the trade-route from Egypt to Syria and had special connexion with Arabia; cf. G.A. Smith, *Hist. Geog.* 182-3).<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>300</sup> W.W. How and J. Wells, *A Commentary on Herodotus with Introduction and Appendixes* (1912): (2 Vol. reprint ed.) I: 247.

There is no need to emend Magdolus to Megiddo, or to find some etymological way to turn Cadytis into a major Palestinian city. Necao Wahemibre is not the seventh century pharaoh Necho, in spite of the similarity of name. He is the leader of the Egyptian rebellion against Persia in the year 487/6 B.C., and it is not at all surprising that his only military enterprise consisted in attacking Migdol and Gaza, garrison towns most likely defended by the relatively few troops remaining loyal to Persia (if not actual ethnic Persians). We can assume that the mercenaries in old Cairo (Egyptian Babylon), Elephantine and Tahpanhes have already sided with Necao and are party to the Egyptian rebellion.

The brief record of Necao's military action preserved by Herodotus is completely consistent with the 5th century context in which the Saite dynasty king falls in the revised history. Not a single detail in Herodotus remains unexplained. The absence of additional information about his life is precisely what is expected. Within a few years Xerxes put down the rebellion. The name of Necao was obliterated from the few monuments he had erected, probably by Xerxes (certainly not by his successor Psamtik II as Egyptologists claim). We can only speculate as to the fate of the Egyptian king. He clearly survived the reprisal by Xerxes early in 484 B.C., since he lived into his sixteenth year (474 B.C.). Whether he fled the country and lived in exile, was taken captive and later released, or was defeated in battle and immediately restored to office, with increased restriction, is not known.

The problem is not so simple for the traditional history, where hardly a single detail in Herodotus suits the 7th century context in which Necao is placed. On the understanding inherent in the traditional history that Wahemibre Necao was the 7th century pharaoh Necho, arguably a powerful ruler who engaged in extensive wars in Asia throughout the length of his reign, the question has legitimately been raised: Where are the monuments bearing witness to this alleged sixteen year reign of Wahemibre Necao?

Books on Egyptian history tell an extensive story of Necho(ii)'s wars against Nebuchadnezzar, but this story is based on the rich material of the Scriptures; his other activities are described with the help of information gleaned from Herodotus. Egyptian inscriptions have been searched for mention of a pharaoh named Neco and of his campaigns. Egyptian archaeology could not supply the story of the long war. The only extant inscription of any historical value that is related to Pharaoh Necho is supposed to be the Serapeum stele, which records the burial of an Apis by His Majesty Nekau-Wehemibre. ... Historiography is content with this single monumental relic of the rich past of Pharaoh Neco. It is strange indeed that in the annals of Egypt no account has been found of the long war between Nekau-Wehemibre and Nebuchadnezzar; no record of the civic activities of Nekau-Wehemibre is extant; no law published in his day has been found; no temple built by him has been unearthed; no written scroll discovered; no mummy or coffin. Judged by the Egyptian material, he must have been a ruler of few achievements. But then how could he have been a match for

Nebuchadnezzar for almost a generation? How could he have succeeded in making the Palestinian kings, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, believe that he would be able to free Palestine from the yoke of the mightiest monarch Babylon had ever known?<sup>301</sup>

Immanuel Velikovsky, whom we have quoted above, wonders why the only monumental inscription of note that mentions the name of Wahemibre Necao "is an epitaph on the tomb of a bull."<sup>302</sup> And the problem is not only the silence concerning Necao's military achievements. If Herodotus is correct in ascribing to Necao the construction of the first canal joining the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, the building of a large fleet of war ships on the pattern of the Greek triremes, and the pioneering circumnavigation of Africa, achievements any one of which would merit widespread publication by pharaohs who preceded him, the silence of the monuments is overwhelming. Unless, of course, Necao was not the 7th century opponent of Nebuchadnezzar and does not deserve credit for the naval achievements. If he was a puppet king, and the initiative for the canal and the circumnavigation and the construction of triremes was a Persian overlord, specifically Darius, then the silence of Wahemibre Necao is to be expected. Why boast about activities performed under duress, by order of a higher authority?

Necao was not the opponent of Nebuchadnezzar; he was a vassal king of the Persian province of Egypt under Darius II. His dates were 489-474 B.C., not 610-595 B.C. The construction of the canal, the building of triremes, and the circumnavigation of Africa can all be connected with the military wars of Darius II against Greece, and Darius deserves the sole credit for these initiatives. Wahemibre Necao can be commended for a single achievement, of short duration but nevertheless notable - the brief liberation of Egypt from Persian domination. The Egyptians remembered the event for decades. The evidence is forthcoming from the Serapeum chambers of the Apis bulls.

### Apis Bulls of the 1st Persian Domination

Documentation for the Apis bulls that died during the first Persian domination (525-404 B.C.) is curiously lacking. According to the most recent interpretation there are at most five deaths attested for the entire 120-year period. The Egyptologist Didier Devauchelle enumerated the dates most recently. According to this noted authority on the Serapeum stela, the five bulls died in the 6th year of Cambyses (524 B.C.), the 4th (517 B.C.), 31st (490 B.C.) and 34th (487 B.C.) years of Darius I and the 11th year of Darius II (412 B.C.).<sup>303</sup> We have previously examined the data related to the bull that died in the 6th

<sup>301</sup> Immanuel Velikovsky, *Ramses II and His Times* (1978) p 3-4.

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>303</sup> D. Devauchelle, "Le sentiment anti-perses chez les anciens Egyptiens," *Transeuphratene* 9

year of Cambyses and concluded that this was the same bull which died in the 20th year of Psamtik I.<sup>304</sup> Our attention now focuses on the other four bulls, with emphasis on the two deaths attributed to the 31st and 34th years of Darius I. This will be a lengthy digression. The reason should be apparent. If the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> dynasties overlap throughout much of their length, as argued in the revised history, then we must verify that the Apis bull records of the two dynasties can be reconciled. We have made a good start by demonstrating the correspondence between the Cambyses and Psamtik bulls. We will examine the remaining deaths in chronological order.

#### Louvre #357 - 4th Year (Darius I)

According to the Serapeum stela Louvre #357<sup>305</sup> an Apis bull died in the 4th year of a king Darius at the age of slightly over eight years. The bull was born in the 5th year of a king whose name is obscured on the badly damaged stela. On the assumption that the Darius in question was Darius I, the unnamed king is typically identified as Cambyses, and the bull's birth date is fixed in the year 525 B.C., Cambyses' fifth year. Its death is dated to 518 B.C., the 4th year of Darius I. Two problems result from this data that have served to generate a vast quantity of literature, namely 1) the inescapable conclusion that the birth of the second bull precedes the death of its predecessor by a year and three months (an unprecedented phenomenon and apparently in conflict with the basic theology of the Memphis cult) and 2) the time span between the birth and death of the bull amounts to only seven years 3 months, not the eight years 3 months that are named on the stela.

At first glance there is no need for further discussion of the matter. Our reason for reviewing the Apis bull records from the 27th dynasty is to determine if a conflict exists with the documented Apis deaths from the 26th dynasty. In this case there can be no conflict, whether or not this bull is correctly attributed to the reign of Darius I. The record of Apis deaths from the Saite period is missing precisely in the several decades between the 20th year and the 53<sup>rd</sup> years of Psamtik I. If an Apis bull died in 518 B.C., in the 4th year of Darius, thus the 26th year of Psamtik I, then the official stela bearing Psamtik's name, assuming one was made, has either not been discovered or has not survived.

It is for other reasons that we given an opinion on when this bull died. On the one hand the stela we are discussing was found in the tomb of the Amasis bull in the Greater Vaults of the Serapeum. At least four other stelae were found by Mariette in the same general area bearing either the identical date of death or the date of the funeral of this

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(1995) p. 70.

<sup>304</sup> Supra, chapter 6 s.v. "Cambyses' Apis Bull".

<sup>305</sup> The most complete publication remains G. Posener, *La Première Domination Perse En Egypte* (1936) p.36-41 & Pl III.



same bull. Scholars therefore believe, and with good reason, that this bull must have been buried in the vicinity of the Amasis crypt. Most associate this bull with Mariette's chamber B'. If we are to adequately discuss the Serapeum evidence related to the 1<sup>st</sup> Persian domination Apis bulls that occupy the same general area, this bull must be included in the discussion.

On the other hand, we must provide an explanation for the data on one of the four associated stelae mentioned in the previous paragraph. Scholars have long been aware of the existence of the stela Louvre #366, commissioned by an official named Ptahhotep, a devotee of the bull deceased in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius.<sup>306</sup> The stela bears the identical year, month and day of death as does Louvre #357. There is no doubt that Ptahhotep is worshipping the bull in question. But the Ptahhotep stela includes a lengthy genealogy, wherein this dignitary traces his ancestry back at least 11 generations. In the 8<sup>th</sup> generation back he mentions a Neferibre, in the 9<sup>th</sup> a Wahibre, the latter name enclosed in a cartouche. There can be little doubt that Ptahhotep is a 9<sup>th</sup> generation descendant of Wahibre Psamtik, i.e. Psamtik I. What are we to make of this evidence?

Three options were afforded scholars when it came to dating the bull deceased in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius. The bull died in either the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius I (518 B.C.), Darius II (419 B.C.), or Darius III (332 B.C.) The stela of Ptahhotep must have played a part in the rejection of two of these possibilities.<sup>307</sup> According to the traditional history Psamtik I reigned from 664-610 B.C. He was therefore born around 690 B.C. at the earliest. On the assumption of twenty years per generation a 9<sup>th</sup> generation descendant would be born in 510 B.C. The possibility that Ptahhotep was alive in 332 B.C. can be rejected out of hand. Even the Darius II date would seem to be precluded, though lengthening the years per generation figure to twenty-five would date the birth of Ptahhotep around 465 B.C., leaving the second option a definite possibility. The fact that the stelae related to this bull were all found near the chambers that Mariette associated with Darius II would further support this identification. But to my knowledge scholars have never considered identifying Louvre #357 with a bull deceased in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius II. The reason is obvious. Darius II was preceded on the Persian throne by Artaxerxes I who reigned for 43 years. In the traditional history the bull deceased in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius II could not be born in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of the king preceding and live only 8 years. Thus there was only one possible dating of the Darius bull. The reference must be to Darius I, this in spite of an obvious conflict with the Ptahhotep stela. For Ptahhotep to erect a stela in 518 B.C. he must have been born at the latest around 550 B.C. and the years per generation figure must be around 15-16 years. While possibly correct, there is no evidence supporting such early marriages among the rank and file of the Serapeum devotees.

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<sup>306</sup> The only publication of this stela of which I am aware is that of Emile Chassinat, "Textes Provenant du Serapeum de Memphis," RT 23 (1901) 80-81 (bull # CXXXV in the series published by this scholar) Chassinat produces a transcription, but no transliteration and no translation.

<sup>307</sup> This is an assumption only. I have come across no reference to the Ptahhotep stela in any of the discussions related to the Darius year 4 bull, a rather curious omission.

In the revised history the Darius I date is ruled out entirely. Psamtik I reigned from 543-489 B.C. He was born at the earliest around 570 B.C. On the assumption of twenty years per generation Ptahhotep was born around 390 B.C. In 332 B.C. he would be 68. Increasing the age per generation figure to 22 years would lower his age in 332 B.C. to 50. These numbers are quite realistic. The Darius III date is a definite option.

The association with Darius II is tolerable, but like the Darius I option in the traditional history it demands that the age per generation figure be lowered significantly, in this case as low as 15 years.. Even at that Ptahhotep would be a youth of 16 when his stela was erected. Possible, but highly unlikely, though in the revised history there can be no objection on other grounds. It is conceivable that a bull deceased in 419 B.C. could be born 8 years earlier in 427 B.C. and have its date of birth cited as the 5<sup>th</sup> year of some Egyptian king. We have argued many times that Artaxerxes was an absentee landlord, and Amasis was but one of many dignitaries administering parts of Egypt for the Persians, many of whom were self-styled kings. And was 427 B.C. not the 23<sup>rd</sup> year of Amasis, the date when an Apis died and its replacement was likely born?<sup>308</sup>

In view of these numbers we reject entirely the opinion of the current generation of scholars who identify the bull deceased in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius with the first Persian king by that name. The other two options must remain open, the greater probability resting with the association with Darius III. It is altogether conceivable that a bull born in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Artaxerxes III (340 B.C.) was deceased in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius III (332 B.C.).<sup>309</sup>

This takes us back to our other consideration, the identification of the burial site of this bull. The Darius year 4 stelae were found in the vicinity of the Darius I and II chambers in the Greater Vaults, and scholars accordingly, on the assumption that this was a bull deceased under Darius I, have associated this bull with Mariette's chamber B'. We have no argument with the association; only with the dating of the bull. In fact, on the assumption that this bull died in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius II, we are more in agreement with Mariette than is the traditional history, since Mariette assigned this tomb to the reign of Darius II. And the fact that several of the Darius year 4 stelae were found in the tomb of Amasis is equally comprehensible from the point of view of the revised history. The 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius II was the 31<sup>st</sup> year of Amasis. The Darius year 4 bull was also an Amasis bull.

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<sup>308</sup> The fit is not perfect. The Darius bull lived 8 years and 3 month, which would date its birth in 427 B.C. several months prior to the death of the Amasis bull. Adjusting the dates for Darius' reign by a single year would solve that problem. The Darius II option must remain open.

<sup>309</sup> According to the inscription on the stela Louvre #357 the bull died in the 1st month of Shemu (9<sup>th</sup> month), day 4, of the year 4 of Darius. It was born in the first month of Peret (5<sup>th</sup> month), day 29, of the fifth year of a predecessor of Darius, and the bull lived 8 years, 3 months and 5 days. For these figures to fit the situation of Darius III it is necessary to assume that the conquest of Egypt by Artaxerxes III (Ochus) occurred before Nissan 1 in 343 B.C., that Peret 1, day 29 occurred after Nissan 1 the same year, and that both Artaxerxes and Darius III used a predating system.

On the assumption that this bull was deceased in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius III, its burial in chambers alongside bulls deceased in the middle decades of the 5<sup>th</sup> century is less comprehensible, but still within reason. The priests might well have decided to group together the bulls of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Persian dominations. Rather than inter this bull in sequence perhaps 20 meters further west along the southern corridor, they filled an existing gap in the sequence of Saite/Persian tombs.

It is time to move on and consider the bulls deceased later in reign of Darius I.

#### Bulls deceased in the 31<sup>st</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> year of Darius I

The stela of the 4th year of Darius does serve to introduce a chronological problem that deserves to be noted. It is clear from our initial discussion in this chapter that Devauchelle dates the 4th year of Darius I in the year 517 B.C. , while in our subsequent references to the same bull we use the date 518 B.C. This single year difference, which also applies to the remaining bulls which supposedly died under Darius I, is but the proverbial "tip of an iceberg", reminding us that there exist problems related to the dating of Persian kings in this so-called "first Persian domination". These problems will be discussed on an ad hoc basis. In the case of Darius I the major problem is deciding when precisely his reign began. The issue has generated copious amounts of literature and its analysis lies far beyond the scope of this revision. Sufficient to say that we follow throughout this chapter the dating scheme espoused by Leo Depuydt, published in a recent edition of the *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology* (1995).<sup>310</sup> According to Depuydt, who represents the majority of Egyptologists, the 4th year of Darius I occupied the time span from Dec. 31, 519 B.C. through Dec. 20, 518 B.C. and is therefore essentially identical to the Julian year 518 B.C., not the 517 B.C. date which formed the basis of Devauchelle's dating scheme. Accordingly, we must move back one full year the dates for the 27<sup>th</sup> dynasty Apis bulls deceased under Darius I as provided earlier by Devauchelle. The revised dates are reproduced below in table 14. We have already been using the 518 B.C. date in our discussion of the bull supposedly deceased in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius I.

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<sup>310</sup> Leo Depuydt, "Regnal Years and Civil Calendar in Achaemenid Egypt," *JEA* 81 (1995) p.151-173.

Table 15: Apis Bull Deaths (1st Persian Domination)

King Name	Year of Reign	Absolute Date
Cambyeses	6th	524 B.C.
Darius I	4th?	518 B.C.?
Darius I	31st	491 B.C.
Darius I	34th?	488 B.C.?
Darius II	11th?	412 B.C.?

According to Devauchelle two other Apis deaths took place in the reign of Darius I, one in his 31st and one in his 34th year. We dispute this claim. We argue instead that only one bull died. The death occurred in the 31st year of Darius, the burial took place three years later. Explanation is clearly needed. Because the matter is critical to this revision the discussion will be thorough.

### One Apis or Two?

The first edition of the classic Porter & Moss *Topographical Bibliography of Ancient Egyptian Hieroglyphic Texts* lists for the reign of Darius I a single stela dated to his 31st year (Louvre #362) and approximately forty stelae attributed to his 34th year.<sup>311</sup> That same bibliography carefully avoids identifying either of these years as the year of an Apis' death. At least for the year 34 bull the reason is clear - none of the stelae specifically states that an Apis died that year!

Of the forty odd stelae listed for the 34th year of Darius I only eight actually contain the year date. A few others name Darius but give no year. At least thirty of the stelae specify neither the king's name nor the year they were erected. However, when Emile Chassinat published this Darius group of stelae in three editions of the *Recueil de travaux* at the turn of the 20th century, each was assigned an editorial date - the 34th year of Darius I.<sup>312</sup> Chassinat did not equivocate. On other Serapeum stelae published

<sup>311</sup> B. Porter & R.L.B. Moss, *Topographical bibliography of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic texts, reliefs, and paintings* (1927-51) II: 213. The data for Darius' years 31 and 32 is listed but not ascribed to a specific bull. No bull is listed for the 11th year of Darius II.

<sup>312</sup> E. Chassinat, "Textes Provenant Du Serapeum De Memphis" RT 21 (1899) 56-73; RT 23

by the same scholar in this same journal, where the date is uncertain that fact is recorded. No reason is given for Chassinat's confidence regarding the undated stelae, though he probably depends on records supplied by Mariette in his 19th century excavation of the Serapeum. How Mariette arrived at his conclusions is not always clear. Probably, in most instances, the undated stelae were found in close physical proximity to those that are dated and/or they are stylistically similar to those monuments.<sup>313</sup> In the absence of evidence to the contrary we must assume that all these stelae are in some way connected with an event that took place in Darius' 34th year, which we identify as the funeral of an Apis bull. We do not imply that they were all deposited at the identical time, only that they relate to the same bull. Depending on where the stelae were erected, and when they were ultimately consigned to the Serapeum vaults, some may have originated at the time of the bull's death in the 31<sup>st</sup> year (but were undated), others to the funeral in the 34th year. A few may have been erected above ground in the interim between the bull's death and its funeral, and some, perhaps, in the decades immediately following Darius 34th year. As we will soon see, this was not a normal funeral.

By the time of the 2nd edition of the *Porter and Moss Bibliography* the list of year 31 hieroglyphic monuments had increased by one and the year 34 stelae had increased in number to 59, now divided by the *Bibliography* into three groups - 17 dated stelae, 3 stelae from the "time (of) Darius I, probably year 34", and 39 stelae "probably (from the) time (of) Darius I, year 34".<sup>314</sup>

Most recently Devauchelle has added two hieroglyphic and 3 demotic inscriptions to the list of year 31 monuments and 4 demotic inscriptions bearing the date of Darius year 34. He suggests that by now the Serapeum list for this period is likely complete.<sup>315</sup>

Our analysis of these stelae is largely restricted to the early group edited by Chassinat, since these are representative of the entire collection and are readily accessible, at least in transcription. The question that concerns us most is whether these stelae represent the

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(1901) 76-91; RT 25 (1903) 50-62. All but two of the inscriptions are scattered through these three editions. Two others are found in RT 22 (1900) 25-6, 173-4.

<sup>313</sup> On Mariette's map of the Serapeum tombs only one chamber (chamber A) is assigned to a bull deceased under Darius I (Mariette's Apis XLIII). We assume that all of the Darius year 34 stelae were found together in this crypt. Two other chambers are said to relate to bulls which died under Darius II. If we accept this evidence at face value this would argue both for our former suggestion that the year 4 Darius bull does not belong to the reign of Darius I and our present claim that there was but a single death in either year 31 or in year 34. Needless to say, scholars reject Mariette's opinion. This is a mistake on their part. We discuss this matter further momentarily and additional comment will follow later when we look at Mariette's map.

<sup>314</sup> B. Porter & R.L.B. Moss, *Topographical bibliography of ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic texts, reliefs, and paintings* (1927-51) 2nd III: 799-804. The data is now included under the headings indicated. No bull is listed for the 11th year of Darius II.

<sup>315</sup> Didier Devauchelle, "Les steles du Serapeum de Memphis conservees au musee du Louvre," EVO 17 (1994) = Acta Demotica (Acts of the fifth International Conference for Demotists), p. 103-4..

death (and burial) of one Apis bull or two. Scholars are divided on the issue, most accepting the year 34 death while remaining uncommitted on the earlier. The discussion below suggests otherwise. It is the Apis deceased in the year 31 that is certain; the Apis buried in Darius' 34th year is the same bull.

The fact of a single Apis is supported by several considerations:

In the first place there is no room in the Serapeum for an additional bull from the reign of Darius I. Mariette has identified only a single chamber in the greater vaults of the Serapeum belonging to an Apis deceased under Darius I, and two with bulls deceased under Darius II. Scholars assume that Mariette has confused Darius I and II, and they have assigned all three bulls, Mariette's Apis nos. XLIII, XLIV, and XLV, to the year 34 of Darius I, the year 4 of Darius I, and the year 31 of Darius I, respectively. Porter and Moss are careful to describe the year 31 bull ambiguously as a bull deceased "between years 4 and 34 of Darius I". Clearly they entertain doubts as to the date.

This arrangement leaves out of the picture entirely the bull from the 11th year of Darius II, and ignores Mariette's claim that two bulls from the reign of Darius II belong in these tombs. Where did the priests entomb the bull from the 11th year of Darius II? And where is the second Darius II bull? We are short at least two burial chambers.<sup>316</sup>

A second argument relates to the longevity of the bulls in question. Apis bulls typically live between 15 and 20 years. The assumption that an Apis died in year 31 and that his replacement died in year 34 creates two related problems. The three-year life span of the bull that lived from years 31 to 34 is too short, and the twenty-seven years for the bull that died in year 31 (on the assumption that this bull was born in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius I) is too long. Both eventualities are possible, but highly improbable. The life span of 27 years would qualify the one bull as the longest-lived bull on record. The abbreviated 3 years life of the second bull would identify its life as one of the shortest. No wonder that the editors of the *Porter & Moss Bibliography* would rather see the year 31 date lowered somewhat, providing a solution to both problems. But Devauchelle is adamant that the year 31 date is correct.<sup>317</sup>

How are these difficulties to be resolved?

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<sup>316</sup> If we accept our earlier argument concerning the Darius year 4 bull, especially the suggestion that it died in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of Darius II, then Mariette is entirely vindicated. The year 4 bull was buried in chamber B' and the year 11 bull in chamber C'. All tombs would be accounted for and assigned accurately by Mariette.

<sup>317</sup> Ibid. p. 104. "L'existence de cet Apis ist assure bien qu'on n'ait pas retrouve son epitaphe officielle."

### A Single Apis Deceased in Year 31

The controversy can be avoided by a simple expedient, suggested by the nature and quantity of the stelae themselves and by the history of the period as summarized in the preceding sections of this chapter.

We agree with Devauchelle that an Apis died in the year 31. We disagree that its replacement died prematurely in the 34th year. As we will soon see, the replacement bull lived a full eighteen years, equalling its life expectancy. Making this change at least solves the problem of the premature death. The unlikely lifespan of 27 years for the preceding Apis must be explained otherwise. We have already begun the explanation. We have identified the Darius 4<sup>th</sup> year bull as belonging to the time of either Darius II or Darius III. We assume that the replacement for the bull deceased in Cambyses' 6<sup>th</sup> year lived an average lifespan of around 16 years. This would date the death of this bull around the 14<sup>th</sup> year of Darius I (508 B.C.) and would imply that its successor, the bull which died in Darius 31<sup>st</sup> year, also lived an average number of years. Alternatively, on the assumption that the Ptahhotep genealogy is flawed and we maintain the traditional dating of the Darius 4<sup>th</sup> year bull, one might examine the possibility of other dating conventions, an approach already anticipated by Devauchelle himself, who has experimented with alternative ways of numbering the years of Darius I, and has dated the 4th year of that king as early as 519 B.C. and as late as 514 B.C.<sup>318</sup> The matter does not concern this revision.

There remains for us to justify our specific claim that the Apis which died in the 31<sup>st</sup> year of Darius was not buried until the 34th year of that same king. The argument is necessarily long.

We begin by noting that among the forty odd stelae edited by Chassinat, none provides details about the Apis' birth and coronation, and only a single stela provides any reliable historical detail concerning its death. Louvre #326 preserves in the dateline some details about the funeral. "Darius year 34. (In the) 6th month, day 11 the god was conducted in peace to the beautiful west". It continues by describing the titles and name of the donor. The stela says nothing about the date of death of the bull. There remains therefore the *possibility* that the bull had died several years earlier? What is needed is evidence which will turn that possibility into a probability.

In the absence of a stela inscription that explicitly states that the year 34 funeral celebrates the life of a bull deceased three years prior, we itemize below a succession of factual statements, situational anomalies and stela inscriptions that can only be explained

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<sup>318</sup> In his *Acta Demotica* article (note 26 above) Devauchelle dates the 6th year of Cambyses around 524 B.C. and the 4th, 31st and 34th years of Darius II in 514 B.C., 487 B.C. and 484 B.C. respectively. In his *Transeuphratene* article (note 18 above) the Darius years have changed. They are now 517 B.C., 490 B.C. and 487 B.C.. In view of possible delays in publication it is not entirely clear which dates were published earlier.

if that hypothesis is correct. Let the reader decide if we are right.

1) The dateline of Louvre #326 is highly unusual for a private stela erected at a typical funeral. Such monuments are often undated, though a significant number do include the year date of the funeral and a small fraction of these retain the month. The *day* of the funeral is a feature typically included only on the official stela, which is conspicuously absent for this supposedly short-lived bull.<sup>319</sup> The mention of the day of the funeral on this stela is at least suggestive that something unusual is happening. The fact that at least two other stelae, discovered or edited after Chassinat's publications, bear the identical dateline, only serves to underscore the unusual nature of this event.<sup>320</sup>

2) The fact of delayed funerals has already been argued by Egyptologists. We need go no further afield than the Apis bull of Cambyses 6th year. In order to solve the dating problems related to its successor, the bull that died in the 4th year of Darius, Posener long ago argued that the funeral of the first bull, which presumably died in the fifth year of Cambyses, was delayed until Cambyses' 6th year. Many, if not the majority of scholars, accept Posener's solution. It is argued that this delay was due to the confusion surrounding the invasion of Cambyses in 525 B.C.<sup>321</sup> While we dispute this argument, we note for the record that scholars at least admit the possibility of a delayed funeral as proposed in this revision. If the delay could happen once, it could happen twice. Besides, as we will show momentarily, there is no doubt that the burial in Darius' 34th year was delayed by at least a month, and probably much longer.

3) The delayed funeral of the bull deceased in Darius' 31st year can be attributed to two causes, the first related to the political circumstances prevailing at the time of death. The 31st year of Darius I is the Julian year 491 B.C. Within Egypt mobilization was well underway for the Persian assault on Greece. Marathon was only a year away. Egyptians by the thousands had almost certainly been conscripted and had already left for the war. Meanwhile the Nile/Red Sea canal construction was ongoing. Time pressures had perhaps led to an accelerated effort. Hundreds of thousands of Egyptians were labouring intensively to build Darius' canal; tens of thousands were dying in the attempt, this according to Herodotus. In the midst of this turmoil an Apis bull died in Memphis. It was not a suitable time for a funeral, typically a time of national mourning, but at the same time a celebration. We can at least understand why the funeral *might be* delayed.

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<sup>319</sup> EVO 17 (1994) p. 104. "On ne connaît pas l'épithaphe officielle commémorant la mort et l'enterrement de cet Apis."

<sup>320</sup> Devauchelle, "Présentation Des Stèles Nouvellement Découvertes Au Serapeum," BSFE 106 (June 1986) p. 36, sees the date on RB 18382 (no details provided). The dateline also occurs on Vercoutters Texte K (SIM 4039) in *Textes Biographiques* (pp. 70-77). This stela is discussed below.

<sup>321</sup> Posener argues the case in his *La Première Domination Perse En Egypte* (1936) p.172-4. But we argue that transporting the deceased animal from the surface to the underground chamber could be accomplished expeditiously no matter what chaotic conditions prevailed above ground in the vicinity of Memphis.



4) While the political situation might be a partial explanation for a delayed funeral, it remains - as does Posener's proposed solution to the dating problems related to the Cambyses' bull - purely speculative. In the case of the bull deceased in 491 B.C. there exists a more practical and verifiable explanation. When the bull died in 491 B.C. its tomb was not ready. Its burial had to be delayed. The fact is certain based on several considerations. All, save one, are discussed in the various arguments that follow. Only one is considered here. Again we look to the revised history. In that history the year 491 B.C. is the 53rd year of Psamtik I. Scholars have long been aware from the inscription on the stela Louvre #239 that a collapse of major proportions occurred in the "lesser vaults" of the Serapeum in the 52<sup>nd</sup> year of Psamtik I. We have already discussed this event, which must be dated to the year 492 B.C., less than a year prior to the Apis' death in Darius' 31st year.<sup>322</sup> Scholars are unanimous in the belief that the construction of the "greater vaults" began immediately following Psamtik's 52nd year. The Apis death occurred at a most inopportune time. Not only was the tomb not ready, but the labour force necessary to construct an entirely new vault, complete with entrance corridor, was otherwise occupied with the canal and with the war.

5) Assuming that the delayed burial can be attributed to the named causes, how do we explain the timing of the actual burial three years removed. Two explanations are forthcoming, corresponding to the two factors that contributed to the delay. On the one hand three years is a reasonable estimate of the time required to complete the construction of new vaults, complete with corridors, descent ramps and stairs, and at minimum a single burial chamber, especially in view of the labour shortage. Since details are lacking on how much of the "greater vaults" was constructed at this time no more can be said. The political situation is another matter entirely. If the delay was in part attributable to the chaotic conditions prevailing in the years immediately following 491 B.C., then the 34th year of Darius was the earliest suitable time for the burial, even if the vault was completed earlier. The year 34 of Darius I falls in the Julian year 488 B.C. It was the year when Wahemibre Necao ventured to declare Egyptian independence from Persia, halted the hated canal construction, and revolted against the oppressive conscription and excessive taxation of Darius I. The Egyptian rebellion had begun. It was an opportune time for a celebration, in this case a funeral celebration.

6) The historical situation outlined above provides an explanation for three related anomalies not highlighted in our previous discussion. The first concerns the number of stelae erected and raises the question: How do we explain the production of sixty stelae in the 34th year of Darius I? Typically a single stela accompanies the funeral of an Apis. Infrequently there exist upward of a half dozen monuments. The most notable exceptions are the 21st year of Psamtik I and this 34th year of Darius I. The first of these

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<sup>322</sup> Many scholars continue to consider that the bull which was born in Psamtik's 53rd year replaced a bull deceased in his 52nd year, based largely on Louvre #239. But Breasted argued a century ago that this stela has been wrongly interpreted and merely records repairs to some unspecified damage to an Apis burial chamber [BAR IV 963-966].

exceptions, the over 160 stelae commemorating the bull which died in Psamtik's 20th year, has been explained as the result of the arrival of Cambyses in Egypt, marking the end of the "exile", a *cause célèbre* for rejoicing. We noted at the time that no explanation was forthcoming from adherents of the traditional history to explain what was happening. Neither has any attempt been made to explain the unusual response to the assumed death in Darius' 34th year. But an explanation is demanded. In the revised history one is readily available. The year 488 B.C. marked the calm before the storm in the Egyptian quest for national liberation. Excitement was the rule of the day, but anxiety also prevailed at the prospect of retaliation by the Persians. Both were equally good reasons to seek the attention of the god. We can readily understand why, in anticipation of the inevitable encounter with the Persians, there should be erected multiple stelae either in gratitude for the deliverance already received or invoking the protective assistance of Osiris/Ptah. The votive stela admirably served both purposes.

7) The second anomaly concerns the bull to whom such overwhelming devotion was shown. On the assumption that two Apis bulls died in the years 31 and 34 of Darius I, the first having lived for 27 years and the second for 3 years, we should question why the longer lived bull was practically ignored by devotees of the cult, while the neophyte was overwhelmed with attention. No explanation is forthcoming from historians. The question is not even asked by Egyptologists. But the question is valid and our historical reconstruction provides the answer. There was no neophyte bull. It was the death of the elderly "year 31" bull (elderly, though probably not 27 years old) that was being remembered in the 34<sup>th</sup> year of Darius I.

8) A third anomaly exists in connection with the hypothetical bull whose premature death in the 34th year was so widely celebrated. We have previously remarked how the death in year 31, in the days of Chassinat, was attested by a single monument, Louvre #362. This monument actually dates from the Ptolemaic era but memorializes the bull which died several hundred years earlier in the 31st year of Darius I.<sup>323</sup> Considering the two hundred year delay in inscribing this monument we can understand why Egyptologists at the time of Chassinat entertained doubts about the reliability of the year 31 death (and still do). Only subsequently have additional inscriptions surfaced to settle the question for Egyptologists such as Devauchelle. But Louvre #362 raises an entirely different question for this revision, one ignored by scholars. How does it happen that two hundred years after the event the Ptolemies still remembered the bull deceased in Darius' 31st year, a bull seemingly ignored by its Egyptian contemporaries, and in so doing completely ignored the bull deceased in Darius' 34th year, a bull excessively memorialized by the earlier generation of Egyptians? Something is very wrong. But the answer is manifest if our hypothesis is correct. The bull that died in the year 31 was the same bull memorialized in the year 34. The Ptolemies are merely continuing the tradition, begun in the year 34 (or earlier), of publicly memorializing the year 31 bull. It

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<sup>323</sup> Published by Heinrich Brugsch, "Der Apis-Kreis aus den Zeiten der Ptolemaer," ZAS 22 (1884) p. 110-136.

was clearly an important time in Egyptian history, remembered and perhaps celebrated for decades.

9) If we are correct, and an Apis died early in Darius' 31st year, necessitating prolonged and intensive construction within the Serapeum, there ought to be some inscriptional verification of this unusual activity. The evidence is forthcoming from three stelae. The first two must be examined together. The third deserves separate treatment. And following the examination of these three stelae we rest our case.

#### RB 18403 & SIM 4039

The first two stelae were published much later than the Chassinat group. The first, RB 18403 was only recently discovered; the second, excavated by Mariette but ignored by Chassinat, was published a half century later by Jean Vercoutter in his *Textes Biographiques du Serapeum de Memphis* (1962).<sup>324</sup>

The first stela was recovered in the long delayed re-excavation of the greater vaults of the Serapeum, which led in 1985 to the discovery of a horde of inscribed monuments, including around 80 stelae or stela fragments. Several relate to the years 31 and 34 of Darius. One is particularly noteworthy. According to Devauchelle, who has edited the finds on behalf of the excavators, "RB no 18403, written in demotic, is dated in the year 31, 3rd month of Akhat, of pharaoh Darius (I)."<sup>325</sup> The stela thus dates from the third month of the year. Since this is the earliest date recorded on the corpus of year 31 documents, Devauchelle is of the opinion that the date corresponds to the time of death of the earlier bull. This date becomes important when we examine the second stela.

SIM 4039, edited by Vercoutter, refers instead to the year 34 bull. It has a dateline identical to Louvre #326 examined earlier. The following translation is based on Vercoutter:

Year 34, 2nd month of Peret [6th month], day 11 of the king of Upper and Lower Egypt Darius, who has done that which pleases the living Apis in order that he [the Apis] (might) give to him [Darius] life and stability. (On this day) the god was conducted in peace to the beautiful west. Indeed, his majesty directed that his tomb be constructed in order to provide a place for the sarcophagus. The corridor that led there was opened from the end of the corridor that had been made by the forefathers. All the funerary equipment for the god was provided. (The passage) having been obstructed, one sought out the

<sup>324</sup> Jean Vercoutter, *Textes Biographiques du Serapeum de Memphis* (1962) Texte K, pp. 70-77 & plate x. We mentioned this inscription earlier, ch 6 p. 199 (note) and p. 200 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph.

<sup>325</sup> Devauchelle, "Presentation Des Steles Nouvellement Decouvertes Au Serapeum," BSFE 106 (June 1986) p. 36

sand/gravel (or else “one carried away the sand/gravel”) of the (or else “in order that”) ... this god in the year ... 3rd month ... ((lacuna of nearly 2 lines - the end of line 4, all line 5, and the beginning of line 6)) ... until there came the day when the great living god ascended to heaven [i.e. died] one gave (or else “one caused) ... ((lacuna of nearly one line)) ...one has never done (such a thing) ... previously

Several feature of this inscription deserve mention:

1) This not an "official" stela, an opinion expressed by the editors of the latest edition of the Porter & Moss *Bibliography*. According to Vercoutter the official inscriptions served only as a model for this text. Neither is it the typical biographical inscription. No genealogy is preserved, though the entire back (verso) of the stela is damaged and no attempt was made by Vercoutter to translate. The mere existence of this type of monument hints at the unusual circumstances that encouraged its production.

2) The stela is apparently intended to describe the construction of the tomb of the deceased Apis, a project described as one of unprecedented proportions ("one has never done (such a thing) ... previously") It is clear from the extant portion of the badly damaged text that the construction involved a new corridor extending the Serapeum beyond "the end of the corridor which had been made by the forefathers". This cannot merely refer to a lengthening of a pre-existing corridor in order to reach an appropriate location at which to excavate a new burial chamber. Such constructions were commonplace, required each time an Apis died. They were hardly labour intensive and they would not warrant special mention, much less a costly monument. Something entirely new is taking place here, a tomb construction of sufficient magnitude to warrant the time and expense consumed by this public proclamation. Keeping in mind the revised historical context in which we place this bull it seems fair to ask: Is this stela not describing the beginning of work on the "greater vaults" of the Serapeum in the year 491 B.C.? The Darius I burial chamber (chamber A') is the first one encountered when entering the “greater vaults” constructed after the “cave in” of Psamtik’s 52<sup>nd</sup> year. The location is right. And it can be argued that the time is right.

3) The text provides an important date in addition to that of the funeral. Unfortunately all that remains is the number of the month. It is the third month. The season and the year are obscured. The most natural reading of the text would identify this as the date of the bull's death, which normally precedes the date of the funeral by seventy days. But a funeral on the 11th day of the 6th month would imply a death on the 2nd day of the 4th month (4th month of Akhat) At minimum the 3rd month recorded on SIM 4039 would be a month too early, and accordingly the stela must be interpreted as saying that the funeral was delayed by a month, something Vercoutter was loathe to accept. And yet a further problem is evident. Vercoutter notes that the lacuna obscuring the year date preceding the mention of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month is too small to have contained the number 34 (“la lacuna etant trop courte pour contenir les sept signes du chiffre 34”). To circumvent the problem he suggests supplying a word, rather than a number, to fill the

gap. He assumes that the hieroglyphs for the word *in* ("this") should replace the lacuna. He also suggests that the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of "this (34<sup>th</sup>) year" must describe the beginning of the tomb construction described in the text, not the date of the bull's death. This implies that the tomb construction was begun a month before the bull died, not a typical sequence of events. Vercoutter then speculates that the bull was sick and that the illness provided advance warning that a burial chamber would soon be needed. All of this argument assumes as a given that whatever happened in the 3<sup>rd</sup> month happened in the same year as the funeral, the 34<sup>th</sup> year of Darius.

But we know differently. The first stela we examined, RB 18403, suggested that an Apis bull died in the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of Akhat in the 31<sup>st</sup> year of Darius. We have hypothesized that this year 31 bull was not buried until the 34<sup>th</sup> year. It follows that the mention of the 3<sup>rd</sup> month on stela SIM 4039 is also a reference to the death three years earlier.

There was no need for Vercoutter to speculate on the missing year number. An actual number (not the word "this") typically follows the year indicator in dated Serapeum stelae. The seven hieroglyphs denoting the number 34 might not fit in the lacuna, but the four required for the year 31 could fit. The resulting date might well refer to the death of the bull in the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of Akhat in the 31<sup>st</sup> year of Darius, the exact time suggested by stela RB18403 as interpreted by Devauchelle<sup>326</sup>

Alternatively the date might refer to the onset of construction on the "greater vault" described in the stela. But if so, the construction must have begun in the 3<sup>rd</sup> month of the 31<sup>st</sup> year, the death of the bull coming a month later. At least in the revised history there is no need to assume the illness of a bull to explain the onset of construction. The "lesser vaults" were damaged in Darius' 30<sup>th</sup> year; construction on the new Serapeum vault would have begun early in Psamtik's 53<sup>rd</sup> year (= Darius' 31<sup>st</sup> year) without need of an impending death for motivation.

It is time to look at our final stela.

### The General Ahmose

The third and final stela mentioned earlier remains to be examined. The Serapeum stela of the general Ahmose is well known, having been published by Chassinat and many others throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>327</sup> This general, named after Ahmose, the great 18<sup>th</sup> dynasty liberator of Egypt, describes his exhaustive efforts to honour the memory of a deceased Apis bull, including the requisitioning of contributions from high-ranking Egyptians throughout the country. The stela is undated and Chassinat omits any editorial

<sup>326</sup> RB 18403.

<sup>327</sup> Chassinat is perhaps the earliest in RT 23 (1901) p. 78 (CXXXII). Vercoutter's is the most recent in *Textes Biographiques du Serapeum de Memphis* (1962) Texte H, pp. 59-64 & plate viii.

comment, but scholars are unanimous in dating it to the reign of Darius I. Posener, who provides a transcription and translation<sup>328</sup>, suggests that it can belong either to the years 4 or 34. Most scholars adopt the later date. In the words of Olmstead:

At the burial of the Apis bull, presumably that of 488, the general Ahmose (Amasis) conducted the divinity to the hall of embalming and then, accompanied by archers and chosen soldiers, to his place in the necropolis. Ahmose passed all the nights watching and without sleeping, seeking to do every good thing. He placed respect for the god in the hearts of the people as well as of the foreigners of all the foreign lands who were in Egypt. He also sent messengers to the governors of the cities and nomes of Upper and Lower Egypt, and they brought their gifts to the hall of embalming.<sup>329</sup>

The interpretation of this monument has suffered from the unwarranted assumption that the death and burial of this bull are separated by the traditional 70 days. Let the reader decide if the activities of Ahmose can be confined to a two-month period:

The one honoured by the Apis-Osiris, the unique companion, the chief of soldiers, Ahmose, son of Paiouenhor, born of Takapenekhbit. *He says:* (Whereas this god was conducted (lit. taken out) in peace toward the beautiful west, after all the rites in the hall of embalming (lit. W'b-t) had been accomplished for him, while he [Ahmose] remained (constantly) in front of him [the bull], overseeing the soldiers and directing the company and the special guard (lit. the elite soldiers) in order to ensure that this god should attain its place in the necropolis.) "I am a servant acting on behalf of your ka. I have passed all my nights, watching and not sleeping, looking to do for you every useful thing. I have placed respect for (or awe of) you in the heart(s) of all Egyptians (lit. all the world) and (in the hearts) of the foreigners of all foreign countries who are in Egypt by what I have done in the hall of embalming. I sent (lit. I have caused to leave) the emissaries to Upper Egypt and likewise some to Lower Egypt to summon (lit. to cause to come) all the governors of the towns and the nomes with their gifts for the house of embalming." *Also the divine fathers and the prophets of the temple of Ptah say:* "O Apis-Osiris, may you grant (lit. hear) the prayers of the one who has made (for you) every useful thing, the chief of soldiers, Ahmose. He has provided protection (lit. he has mounted a guard) around you. He has come in person bearing money, gold and royal linen, spices (lit. resin), all types of precious stone, and every (other) good thing. Reward him (lit. make for him a recompense) in proportion to what he has done for you. Prolong his years and make his name endure forever, and grant that this stela be established firmly in the necropolis in order that his name be remembered eternally.

<sup>328</sup> G. Posener, *La Première Domination Perse En Egypte* (1936) p. 41-46, Insc. #6.

<sup>329</sup> A.T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* (1948), p. 227.

We highlight the following features of this inscription:

1) The chief boast of Ahmose is that he has spent considerable time guarding the deceased Apis, who is being kept in the "embalming hall" (W'b-t = Ouabet) awaiting burial. Unlike petitioners on other votive stela Ahmose is not at all concerned with the burial ceremony, or its concomitant rites, mentioning it only in passing. We do not understand the parenthetical introduction following the words "he says" as referring to Ahmose leading a funeral procession. He is instead describing his management of the armed guard that surrounded the Ouabet, during the time the preparatory "rites" were being conducted by the priests. This activity is otherwise unknown and unprecedented. Why the necessity of an armed guard of elite soldiers surrounding a funeral parlour? And how long did this protective surveillance last?

2) The reason for the guard seems clear from the inscription. An unusual abundance of treasure was being brought into the Ouabet, ostensibly to mummify and regale the deceased Apis. But this cannot represent the whole truth. The operation of the Serapeum was costly. Priests required an income. Labour must be paid. The construction of new vaults required greater than usual expenditure of funds. That fact alone demanded an unusual fund raising effort. Enter Ahmose, who sent far and wide, requisitioning contributions, no doubt exercising royal privilege and the threat of royal sanction. But the incoming wealth needed protecting, initially against thieves, but in the later stages perhaps also against the Persians. After Marathon Darius was in search of money to fund his war machine. The mounting treasure of the Serapeum must have been tempting for Persian officials.

3) How much time is assumed by the activities described in the Ahmose inscription? Surely time enough to organize the effort, time to send emissaries as far afield as Thebes, five hundred miles south, time for the governors to solicit, gather, and inventory the requested contributions, and time for the return journey to Memphis. A few months? A few years? If we believe Ahmose we should also allow time for his reputation to grow, for he claims that by the time the stela was inscribed, i.e. by the time of the funeral, his reputation had spread to every Egyptian and every resident foreigner, this on account of his successful efforts on behalf of the deceased bull.

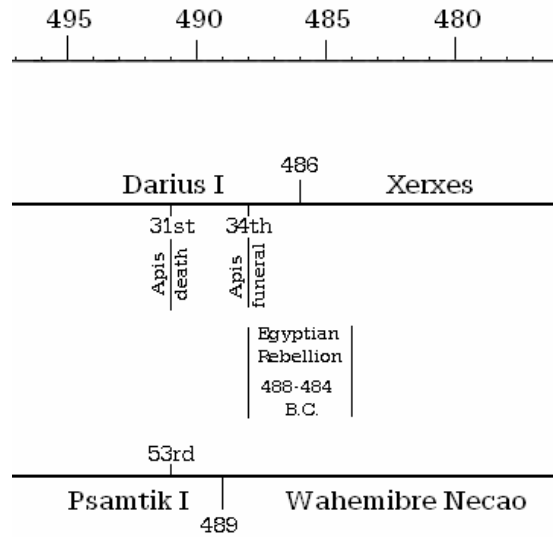
It does not require much imagination to see how the activities of Ahmose, prolonged over the better part of three years, both justify his boast and at minimum corroborate our delayed burial hypothesis. Or is it merely coincidence that this stela appears at this time in history to conveniently illustrate the uniqueness of the 34th year burial?

This concludes a lengthy digression related to the Apis bull that died in the 31<sup>st</sup> year of Darius. Our purpose was clearly stated at the outset, namely, to establish a correspondence between the 26th and 27th dynasty Apis bull records. From the gist of our argument, particularly our insistence that a single bull died in the 31<sup>st</sup> year of Darius I, and our constant repetition of the dates involved, the reader has by now picked up on the fact that the Saite dynasty bull of Psamtik's 53<sup>rd</sup> year and 27<sup>th</sup> dynasty bull deceased

in the 31<sup>st</sup> year of Darius died in same year and are undoubtedly the same bull. It was the Julian year 491 B.C.

The argument must rest at this point. In view of the lack of convincing evidence to the contrary we proceed on the assumption that there was no Apis deceased in the 34th year of Darius I.

Figure 32: Timeline - Apis Bull Deceased in the 31<sup>st</sup> Year of Darius I



#### Louvre #328 - 11th Year (Darius II)

The final Apis bull from the first Persian period is dated tentatively to the 11th year of Darius II. The stela attesting its existence, Louvre #328 is highly controversial and will be examined in chapter 10. Devauchelle mentions this Apis death only as a possibility (peut-etre un en l'an 11 de Darius II)<sup>330</sup>, but those expressed doubts are not warranted. Since this bull's death does not conflict with the revised history, we have included it in tables 14 and 16 without further discussion, for later reference.

<sup>330</sup> D. Devauchelle, "Le sentiment anti-perses chez les anciens Egyptiens," *Transeuphratene* 9 (1995) p. 70. In his article "Les stèles du Serapeum de Memphis conservées au musée du Louvre," *EVO* 17 (1994) = *Acta Demotica* (Acts of the fifth International Conference for Demotists), he notes that this Apis has no official stela and that "il n'est même pas assuré qu'un Apis soit mort à cette date." (p. 105).



We have now discussed all of the Apis bulls known to have died during the Persian occupation of Egypt, and have found no conflict with the Saite dynasty evidence. Our objective has been met. For the record however, we summarize in Table 15 the Serapeum data related to the Saite dynasty, accepted by a majority of scholars since the days of Breasted at the turn of the 20th century.

Table 16: Apis Bull Deaths (Saite Dynasty - Absolute Dates)

King Name	Year of Reign	Traditional Date	Revised Date
Psamtik I	20th	635 B.C.	524 B.C.
Psamtik I	53rd	612 B.C.	491 B.C.
Necao	16th	595 B.C.	474 B.C.
Apries	12th	578 B.C.	457 B.C.
Amasis	5th	566 B.C.	445 B.C.
Amasis	23rd	548 B.C.	427 B.C.

Finally, we merge the data from tables 14 and 15 into a single listing (Table 16 below), setting aside the fictional bull from the 34th year of Darius I. The result speaks for itself, but we add a few comments to highlight several features.

The Serapeum stela Louvre #193 describes the death of a bull deceased in the 16th year of Wahemibre Necao. The bull was born on the 19th day of the 6th month of the 53rd year of Psamtik I.<sup>331</sup> This must be the successor of the bull which died in the 31st year of Darius I (= Psamtik's 53rd year). There is therefore no conflict with the data presented earlier. If we have correctly interpreted Vercoutter's stela SIM 4039 then the death of the earlier bull occurred in the 3rd month of the 31st year of Darius I. We should not be surprised that three months passed between the death of one bull and the birth of its successor. These were trying times. Egyptologists have argued in other situations that the interlude can extend to several years.<sup>332</sup>

<sup>331</sup> For Breasted's translation see BAR IV 974-79.

<sup>332</sup> In fact a delay of upwards of a full year has been argued for this same bull

Table 17: Apis Bull Deaths (Dynasties 27 and 26 Compared)

King Name	Year of Reign	Absolute Date	King Name	Year of Reign	Absolute Date
Cambyses	6th	524 B.C.	Psamtik I	20th	524 B.C.
Darius I	4th?	518 B.C.?			
Darius I	31st	491 B.C.	Psamtik II	53rd	491 B.C.
			Necao	16th	474 B.C.
			Apries	12th	457 B.C.
			Amasis	5th	445 B.C.
			Amasis	23rd	427 B.C.
Darius II	11th?	412 B.C.?			

While we cannot weight the year 31 synchronism too heavily in our argument - since many aspects of its defence have assumed the accuracy of the revised history it would be used to prove - the same cannot be said for the balance of the Apis record. The extensive amount of time in the Persian period during which there exists no record of the death of an Apis bull is an embarrassment to the traditional history. From the 34th year of Darius I to the 11th year of Darius II (if indeed the 11th year date is reliable), thus for at least 75 years, there is not a scrap of evidence attesting the activity of the Memphis Apis cult. On the assumption that the Apis bulls lived an average 15 years, we should reasonably have expected four bulls to have lived within that time frame. That observation has been noted by many scholars, Devauchelle most recently. His explanation is unconvincing.

One notices the lack of evidence concerning the three or four Apis (bulls) which lived at the end of the first Persian domination; that is perhaps due to the hazards of conservation of ancient monuments.<sup>333</sup>

<sup>333</sup> D. Devauchelle, "Notes et Documents Pour Servir a l'Histoire du Serapeum de Memphis," RDE 45 (1994) p. 77 note 4. "Il est souvent difficile de faire la distinction parmi les steles du Serapeum de Memphis de la XXVIe deynastie et celles de la XXVIIe dynastie, s'il n'y a pas une indication de

Any argument involving "chance" omissions from the monumental record is particularly weak in the case of the Serapeum monuments, where stelae have remained relatively undisturbed for several millenia till removed by Mariette and subsequent excavators. The likelihood of a continuous sequence of Apis death records haphazardly disappearing or lost in transit to France is slim to none. Therefore the fact that the Saite dynasty Apis deaths fill the gap in the Persian period sequence with the expected four bulls, after a consistent 121-year reduction in their dates, is persuasive testimony to the reliability of the revised chronology.

On this note we might well close our discussion of the overlapping reigns of Darius I and Wahemibre Necao. But we have omitted one item of interest in our discussion of the Apis bull stelae dated to the 34th year of Darius. We return to the subject briefly, focussing attention on the inscriptions. Most contain nothing more than the donor's name and family connections. But names tell a tale.

## Basiliphorous & "Beautiful" Names

### Basiliphorous Names

The practice of naming a child after a reigning or deceased monarch is not strictly a twentieth century practice, it is a timeless phenomenon and particularly noticeable in ancient Egypt, where the name was typically compounded with other terms, forming a so-called *basiliphorous* name. Such name are particularly abundant during the 25th Saite dynasty where we frequently encounter officials named Psamtik-sa-Neith, Psamtik-menekh, Neferibre-meri-Ptah, Wahibre-seneb, etc. employing either the throne name or the personal name of an Egyptian king, usually but not necessarily a Saite dynasty king. The king's name is frequently enclosed in a cartouche.

According to the argument advanced over a century ago by Wiedeman<sup>334</sup> the use of a cartouche in a private name proves that the person in question must either be a contemporary of the sovereign named or have been born under his reign. While this theory has been contested, and there are notable exceptions, the presence of a cartouche name in an inscription should at least be considered as a factor when dating a particular monument. We have already used this principle in our assessment of the genealogy of Ptahhotep discussed earlier.

Considering the prevalence of basiliphorous names in the Saite era it is rather curious to note that, in the opinion of Egyptologists, very few Egyptians chose to name their

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date."

<sup>334</sup> Alfred Wiedemann, *Geschichte Aegyptens von Psammetich I. bis auf Alexander den Grossen* (1880) p. 622.

children after Necao Wahemibre. In fact, the claim is made that Necao was held in low esteem by his generation, a fact that needs to be explained if, according to the theory espoused in the earlier sections of this chapter, Necao was a liberator of the country. The solution to the problem comes from the Egyptologists themselves. We quote Spalinger who gives a synopsis of the situation. Speaking from the perspective of the traditional history he remarks:

With his north-eastern frontier so constantly threatened, and with a series of defeats to his name, it is no wonder that Necho was vilified by the Egyptians themselves. Although the exact significance of this fact has eluded many, in my opinion Necho's failures abroad must account for the low esteem to which he fell at home. Not only did many private individuals change their names which had been compounded with his, but the name Necho itself was ignored until the Persian Period.<sup>335</sup>

In a footnote, after citing sources for the alleged abusive treatment of Necho's name, Spalinger adds as a criticism that "None of these scholars have explained the reason for such an act."<sup>336</sup> The silence of the scholars is understandable. As advocates of the traditional history they have no answer. In the revised chronology, with Necao correctly positioned in the Persian period, there are readily available explanations. The Persians, not the general public, were undoubtedly responsible for defacing many of the public monuments bearing the name of Necao after the suppression of the rebellion by Xerxes. The change in private name was either an accommodation to the fact that Necao's name became, in the aftermath of the rebellion, anathema to the ruling Persians, or that, in subsequent decades, Psamtik II became even more celebrated than his father. Most of the changes referred to by Spalinger are alterations of *Wahemibre* (Necao's premen) to *Neferibre* (Psamtik II's premen) in basiliphorous names. The change involves the alteration of a single hieroglyph.

Having said this, we should note that Necao's name never did fall into disuse. The admission that the name of Necho reappeared in the Persian period, a difficulty that needs to be explained in the traditional history, is tantamount to saying that its use was never actually discontinued. Necao's reign lay entirely within the Persian period; the appearance of his name at that time is precisely what is expected.

This mention of the name of Necao in the Persian period redirects our attention back to the Serapeum stela dated to or identified with the 34th year of Darius I. If our revision is correct, and the 34th year of Darius falls only a year after the death of Psamtik I, we expect to find either Psamtik's throne name *Wahibre* or his personal name *Psamtik* employed by individuals named in those stela, since all of the named individuals must have been born during Psamtik's lengthy reign. As expected, various compounds of

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<sup>335</sup> Anthony Spalinger, "The Concept of the Monarchy during the Saite Epoch - an Essay of Synthesis," *Orientalia* 47 (1978) p. 20.

<sup>336</sup> *Ibid.*, note 32.

Psamtik's names occur far more frequently than of any other name in the stelae. In four of these monuments both *Wahibre* and *Psamtik* occur in various compounds (Louvre #325, 394, 398, 473). Names compounded with *Wahibre* occur separately on two stelae (Louvre #324, 445) and names compounded with *Psamtik* alone on another seven (Louvre #313, 219, 291, 366, 391, 409, 413). In total thirteen (almost a third) of these stelae include one or both of Psamtik's cartouche names.<sup>337</sup> Four of these monuments are clearly dated to the 34th year of Darius (Louvre #325, 291, 394, 398). Additionally, and of particular significance, one stela bears the name of *Wahibre* in a cartouche (Louvre #473) and one the name of *Psamtik* in a cartouche (Louvre 313). According to Wiedemann's theory the cartouches in these two stelae should strengthen the argument that Psamtik I ruled Egypt in the several decades before the 34th year of Darius.

What do we make of the fact that stelae erected in the 34th year of Darius I (488 B.C.), and in the years immediately following, were dedicated by persons who, according to the accepted history, lived well over a century earlier, some bearing his name in a cartouche as if he were alive at the time the name was given? According to the traditional history Psamtik I ruled Egypt from 664-610 B.C. How do Egyptologists explain the names of *Wahibre* *Psamtik* occurring in basiliphorous names on monuments dating at minimum 120 years later?

For the most part scholars simply ignore the problem or at least minimized the difficulty by interpreting the names *Psamtik* and *Wahibre* as the personal name and throne name respectively of Psamtik II and Apries, thereby decreasing the length of time between the lives of these kings and the 34th year of Darius. And on an ad hoc basis, where the stela itself is not dated, the editorial comment by Chassinat linking the stela to Darius' 34th year is simply ignored. But not all stelae can be dismissed so lightly and on the whole it is acknowledged that the Darius' stelae look very much as if they originate from a Saite dynasty context. Thus Devauchelle comments on how "it is often difficult to make a distinction between the stelae from the Serapeum of Memphis of the 26th dynasty and those from the 27th dynasty."<sup>338</sup>

### Beautiful Names

A few comments must suffice to discuss the phenomena of the so-called "beautiful names", several of which occur in the Darius group of stelae. In Saite dynasty Egypt a tradition developed whereby adults assumed as an epithet a new name, usually compounded with the name of a reigning sovereign, and prefaced by the hieroglyphs *m.f nfr(.f)* (lit. his beautiful name). In the opinion of Egyptologists the tradition was used

<sup>337</sup> None of these names is multiple generations removed from the time when the bull's death or burial took place, as it was in the Ptahhotep stela.

<sup>338</sup> D. Devauchelle, "Notes et Documents Pour Servir a l'Histoire du Serapeum de Memphis (I-V)," RdE 45 (1994) p. 77, n.4

sporadically in the post-Ramesside era, and underwent a resurgence under the Saites and the Persians. Its use is particularly noticeable under Psamtik II and Apries. The Egyptologist Herman de Meulenaere has recently documented almost eighty occurrences of this form of "Egyptian surname" from the late period.<sup>339</sup> A single example of this usage from the Darius year 34 collection warrants particular attention.

Stela Louvre #391 in the Darius group was erected by a religious official who bears numerous Memphite cultic titles and who refers to himself as *Khnemibre-sa-Ptah m.f nfr Necao* ( lit. Khnemibre son of Ptah whose beautiful name is Necao). He names a *Psamtik* as one of his sons. Not only does this individual have both a basiliphorous and a beautiful name, but also both the names *Khnemibre* and *Necao* are contained in separate cartouches. According to Wiedemann's theory and in keeping with the nature of each of these types of names, we should naturally understand that this official was born and named under a king Khnemibre and, as an adult living in the reign of Necao, that he adopted Necao as a beautiful name. At minimum we should understand that the "first name" should precede in time the "adoptive surname"(= beautiful name). And if Chassinat is correct in attributing this stela to Darius' 34th year, this stela uniquely corroborates the revised history, for only in that history is this situation possible. We have previously argued that there existed a king Khnemibre Arikakaman ruling in Nubia contemporary with the reign of Psamtik I in Egypt, both kings subservient to Darius and the Persians. It is no surprise therefore that a religious official, early in the reign of Darius, might name his son Khnemibre (perhaps he was Nubian). There is no problem in the fact that this Khnemibre should, decades later, adopt the personal name of Wahemibre Necao in the first year of Necao's reign (489 B.C.). Nor is it unlikely that this Khnemibre, alias Necao, would erect in the following year, Necao's 2nd, (= the 34th year of Darius) a stela that brought his family's welfare to the attention of Osiris/Ptah.<sup>340</sup> Absolutely nothing is out of place.

Not so if the traditional history is correct. In the first place Khnemibre must now be interpreted as the throne name of 'Ahmose-sa-Neith whose reign began in 570 B.C., twenty-five year *after* Necao's death in 595 B.C. Therefore Khnemibre-sa-Ptah must have received his "first name" several decades after he received his "beautiful name", a strange inversion of the natural order. To handle the problem conventions must be abandoned. Wiedemann's theory must be discarded entirely. This is precisely the

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<sup>339</sup> Herman de Meulenaere, *Le Surnom égyptien à la basse époque* (1966). Corrections and additions are provided in "Le Surnom Égyptien A La Basse Époque," OLP 12 (1981) 127-134, bringing the number up to 94.

<sup>340</sup> Were it not for the Memphite titles we might reason that this stela resulted from the activity of general Ahmose, who specifically sent emissaries to Upper Egypt, probably as far as Elephantine, where the temple of the god Khnum was located, and where a priest might well adopt the prenominal of Khnemibre Arikakaman. Regardless, the Udjahorresne family tree discussed in chapter 10 provides evidence that the name Khnemibre was passed down in that family and was ultimately adopted by Ahmose-sa-Neith as his prenominal. This argues for the use of the name in Lower Egypt.

procedure followed by de Meulenaere when interpreting this particular stela, no.63 in his collection. Even so de Meulenaere, acknowledging the cartouche name of Necao, wants to date the stela "as soon as possible in the reign of Amasis".<sup>341</sup> But the problem is not restricted to an apparent inversion in the naming process. What about Chassinat's supplied date for the stela? De Meulenaere handles the problem expeditiously. He simply lists the date as "uncertain" and in a footnote adds the remark: "according to the editor 'Apis of the year XXXIV of Darius' ".

### Postscript

We leave behind Darius I and Wahemibre Necao. Xerxes succeeded Darius I in the latter's 36th year, and reigned twenty years (485-465 B.C.). His first decade paralleled the last decade of Necao (489-474 B.C.). We are totally ignorant of what transpired in Egypt during those years. There is but a single curiosity confirming the synchronism of their respective reigns.

In the treasury building constructed by Darius I in Persepolis, the Persian capital, in the archives surrounding the courtyard on the east, south and north, were found the remains of the new state archive, unfortunately burned by the invading armies of Alexander the Great.

Today, only a few charred shreds of cloth remain of the precious documents; fifteen clay bullae alone retain the impression of the seals, a few of which might be attributed to Darius or Xerxes I. But the fire that destroyed papyri and parchments also unknowingly preserved more numerous if intrinsically less important documents written on unbaked tablets, baked hard by the flames. The vast majority has been found, as they were stored, in a single oversized chamber. This new archive begins with 492.<sup>342</sup>

On the west side of the same courtyard, in a great columned hall, were found the remnants of what Olmstead refers to as treasures of war. As the war effort prospered the exhibition room was filled, and a second exhibition room was built, probably by Xerxes.

To the west of the courtyard is a great room, roofed by means of nine rows of eleven columns each, which can be described only as an exhibition hall. Great masses of precious or rare objects which poured in as loot from the wars soon demanded a second addition to the treasury building, a second exhibition hall which covered virtually the whole northern face.<sup>343</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> De Meulenaere's arguments can be found on page 33. His criticism of Wiedemann's theory is restricted to footnote 6 on that page.

<sup>342</sup> A.T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* (1948), p. 219

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid.*

The second exhibition hall on the northern face of the treasury had received from Alexander's army a fate similar to that of the archives. Items of obvious value had been removed and much of what remained had been destroyed.

For the most part it is impossible to determine which of the objects preserved were first installed in this reign. So thorough was the looting by Alexander that no large-sized work of art in a precious metal has survived. The many superb vessels of stone that bear the name of Xerxes were all deliberately smashed, though fortunately a good many can be fitted together again. Of the trophies from successful wars, some come from Egypt. A creamy alabaster bowl, banded in white and light grey, bears near the small handle the cartouches of Necho. Further names of the same monarch appear on the base of a blue paste statuette. Amasis is mentioned on an alabaster vase stand and on a composite alabaster vessel.<sup>344</sup>

We can only speculate on what treasures from the time of Necao were originally contained in Xerxes exhibition room. What remains helps to explain, at the very least, why so few *objets d'art* have been found in Egypt from Necao's reign. We assume that Xerxes removed everything of value from the country during his invasion of 484 B.C., particularly those "trophies" bearing the name of the upstart king who had dared to rebel against his father. But the few remaining objects raise an intriguing question for the proponents of the traditional history. Since Xerxes invaded Egypt for the first time in 484 B.C., how do we explain his possession of objects, especially the fragile alabaster vase, dating from over a century earlier? According to that history Wahemibre Necao ruled Egypt from 610-595 B.C. Why would Xerxes in 484 B.C. even care to possess a statue of a foreign king long since dead and forgotten. The preservation of alabaster objects from the reign of Amasis is also a problem, since they must have been preserved for at minimum forty years and have endured, along with those of Necao, the devastation assumed to have been wrought by Cambyses.

In the following chapter we turn our attention to Xerxes' second decade and the early years of Artaxerxes I, when the spirit of rebellion, temporarily suppressed following Necao's brief flirtation with freedom, rose to an unprecedented level. It is an interesting time.

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<sup>344</sup> Ibid.