

Chapter Nine

Descendants of Pinudjem I

Pinudjem I (continued)

In our previous chapter we outlined a scenario in which Pinudjem, the father of Menkheperre, occupied the office of High Priest of Amun for 16 years (662-646 B.C.) and then assumed a kingship, localized in the area of El Hibeh in north central Egypt, which lasted for another nine years (646-638 B.C.). For much of his tenure in office he was a contemporary of Aakheperre Psusennes, our Psusennes II, incorrectly identified by Montet as Psusennes I of the 21st Tanite dynasty. Sheshonk V of the 22nd dynasty, and Rudamon, the grandson of Osorkon III, were contemporaries. We also argued that Pinudjem adopted the name of Aakheperkare Thutmose, an 18th dynasty pharaoh whose tomb he apparently robbed and whose coffin inscription he altered, claiming the coffin as his own.

We also suggested an alternative scenario in which the kingship of Pinudjem I began in his first year and ran in conjunction with his high priesthood for the first 15 years, and then independently for the next nine years, as Masaharta was elevated to that office to assist his father. This possibility certainly exists, and would be more consistent with a thesis discussed below, namely, that the year dates on the documents which provide the basis for the chronology cited above are all referenced to the duration of Pinudjem's combined high-priesthood/kingship. Those year dates would make more sense if Pinudjem were king throughout the entirety of his 25 years in office.

Clearly there is need to review the documents which undergird this chronology.

The Chronology

Fully half of the relative dates assigned to the 21st Theban dynasts are

derived from the docketts and bandage epigraphs on the mummies processed by these priest/kings and deposited in the Deir el Bahri tombs. The others are found in inscriptions on sundry monuments. Unfortunately, though apparently dated to the year of a reigning king, few of the Deir el Bahri documents provides the name of the king. The result is confusion and disagreement among scholars. To engage the debate fully would take us far afield. Fortunately the most relevant data, that which relates to Pinudjem and his two sons Masaharta and Menkheperre, is summed up in a few sentences provided in an article by the Egyptologist Eric Young.¹⁷⁷

According to Young:

Documents mentioning Pinudjem I as H.P. only are dated between years 1 and 15 of an unnamed king, presumably Psousennes I. His son *M3-s3-h3rti* as H.P. has documents of years 16-19 of an unnamed King. His younger son *Mn-hpr-Rc* as H.P. has documents dated in years 6, 7, 25, 40, and 48, whilst *Pci-ndm* I himself, as king, has a document dated in year 8, which can be associated, because of the handwriting, with those of years 6 and 7 of *Mn-hpr-Rc*. The document of *M3-s3-h3rti* of year 16 mentions *Pci-ndm* I as king, whilst those of years 25,40, and 48 of *Mn-hpr-Rc* also mention *Pci-ndm* I as king, although not necessarily alive. Can any or all of these documents refer to regnal years of *Pci-ndm* I, or do some or all refer to years of the Tanite kings?

Scholars continue to debate the possible answers to Young's final question, though the majority conclude that at least the year 1-15 inscriptions of Pinudjem I, the year 16-19 inscriptions of Masaharta, and the year 25 inscription of Menkheperre all relate to the years of the Tanite king Psusennes I. It is further agreed that Masaharta's high priesthood must have paralleled the kingship of Pinudjem I, i.e. that Pinudjem elevated his eldest son to the high priesthood, and thus to control of the army, in the 16th year of Psusennes, 646 B.C. in the revised chronology. That sixteenth year document names both Masaharta as high priest and his father Pinudjem as king, providing some support for this schema. This interpretation is certainly possible but is not the only one in vogue. It was rejected long ago by no less an authority than Pierre Montet, the excavator of Tanis, who theorized that all of these year dates should be assigned to Pinudjem, beginning with the start of his high priesthood and

¹⁷⁷Eric Young, "Some Notes on the Chronology and Genealogy of the Twenty-First Dynasty," JARCE 2 (1963) 101-2.

continuing through his kingship. Our proposal is only a step removed from that of Montet. We argue that Pinudjem became both king and priest in 662 B.C. and that the year dates from 1 through 25 are his regnal years.

Since we have proposed in our table 13 (p. 204) that the rule of Psusennes II began in 660 B.C., only two years after the beginning of Pinudjem's high priesthood, insofar as our chronology of the reigns of Pinudjem I and Menkheperre is concerned it not really critical which of these theories holds. But for the record, we do believe that all dates used by the Theban pontiffs relate to the years in office of Theban kings, unless specifically informed otherwise.

It appears from the Maunier Stele (see below) that Menkheperre was already high priest in the year 25 of his father, but not yet king, and the conclusion follows that Masaharta must have predeceased Pinudjem I by upwards of a year, and that Menkheperre functioned as high priest for about a year before his father died. This must be the case if we accept Kitchen's argument that the high priesthood of Masaharta lasted for nine years.

The only problematic document referred to by Young, that which supposedly refers to the 8th year of Pinudjem I as king and is somehow associated with the early years of Menkheperre, is discussed briefly below on page 257 and again in Appendix C. In our opinion this 8th year refers to the reign of Pinudjem II and has no bearing on our discussion of the kingship of Pinudjem I.

The year 6 and 7 documents mentioned by Young, those which name Menkheperre as high priest, must refer to the 6th and 7th years of Menkheperre's kingship, and should therefore be dated to the years 633 and 632 B.C. respectively. We will discuss in due course the year 40 and year 48 documents naming Menkheperre, and demonstrate that these documents refer to the years of Menkheperre's kingship, which began in 638 B.C. Later we will also argue that Menkheperre continued as both high priest and king for at least the first 15 years following 638 B.C., and then called upon several of his sons to assist. It should not seem strange that Menkheperre Piankhi might choose, especially early in his kingship,

to continue performing some of the duties of a high/priest. We have already suggested that his father did the same for the first 16 years of his reign, until relieved by Masaharta. And we have witnessed the passionate devotion to Amun of this priest/king both during the Tefnakht rebellion, and again, over a decade into his kingship, when he took a nostalgic look back at his youthful encounter with the god Amun, when he was a young priest in the Karnak temple (on the Coronation Stele). And we are mindful of that same devotion manifest in the Annals during the twenty years of his Syrian campaigns. In a moment we will see the same fervor exhibited during his first days in office as described on the Maunier Stele. For Piankhi the priesthood was apparently more important than the kingship. As we have argued once before: once a priest, always a priest.

Before we leave behind our discussion of the formative years of the Theban 21st dynasty we need to tarry briefly to clarify our position regarding the dating system employed by these priest/kings. We agree with Egyptologists, against Montet, that high priests did not number the years of their pontificates. That is, in part, the reason we extended the kingship of Pinudjem back to the year 661 B.C. In fact, as we will soon see, at no time was this Theban dynasty ever without a king, and all dates on their documents refer to the years of the reigning king, almost exclusively the years of either Pinudjem I, Menkheperre, or Pinudjem II. The kingship of Pinudjem was followed immediately by that of Menkheperre, then briefly by Pinudjem II and Psusennes III. Menkheperre's son Smendes, like Masaharta son of Pinudjem I, was HPA only, this taking place during the reign of his father. In cases where the king has elevated a son to assist him, effectively giving up the high priesthood (as did Pinudjem when he elevated Masaharta), then the high priest consistently dated his years in office by the years of his father, the king. It is not an unusual system. As we will soon see, it continued through to the end of the dynasty. It ought not to have resulted in mass confusion on the part of scholars, as has been the case.

This must suffice as an overview of the chronology of the early years of the 21st Theban dynasty. We have spent considerable time detailing various aspects of the "reign" of king Pinudjem. We would like to move on and discuss issues related to his successors, Menkheperre in particular.

But before we do we need to discuss two remaining aspects of his life, both potential subjects for debate if and when critics respond to our proposals. One relates to our claim that Pinudjem I adopted the name Aakheperkare; the other to the documents which we claim were authored by him using this name. We treat these two issues separately and in sequence.

Who is Kheperkhare Pinudjem?

Regarding our claim that Pinudjem adopted the name Aakheperkare Thutmose we expect strong reaction from the critics. The argument will surely be raised that the titulary names of Pinudjem I are otherwise well known and do not at all correspond to those of Thutmose I. According to the textbooks Pinudjem as king adopted the prenomen Kheperkhare and a distinct five-fold titulary bearing almost no resemblance to that of the 18th dynasty Thutmose. How do we explain the inscriptions belonging to the king Kheperkhare Pinudjem?

The fact that Pinudjem I became king is well established. On *his* burial shroud Pinudjem II, grandson of Pinudjem I, refers to himself as the "HPA Pinudjem, son of Menkheperre, son of *king* Pinudjem". As well, the bandage inscription of Masaharta to which we have just alluded, clearly refers to the kingship of Pinudjem I. And the borrowed coffin mentioned earlier contains the name of Pinudjem as king, enclosed in a cartouche. Several other artifacts also attest his reign.

What is not so clear, though accepted as fact by all scholars, is that king Pinudjem I adopted as a prenomen the name Kheperkhare in addition to the other names of a complete titulary. If this were the case then our hypothesis that he also adopted the name Aakheperkare Thutmose would be in jeopardy, it being possible, but unlikely, that he possessed two completely different five-fold titularies. But are the scholars correct? Certainly the three inscriptions just mentioned, those most clearly and closely identified with Pinudjem I, fail to add this prenomen. Is it possible that another king Pinudjem ruled in roughly the same time frame and has been confused with Pinudjem I? If so the most likely candidate is Pinudjem II.

The inscriptions of king Kheperkhare Pinudjem are relatively abundant, but none of them supply any genealogical references which would confirm that the name belongs to Pinudjem I as opposed to Pinudjem II. There is no rationale for assigning all monuments bearing this name to the first Pinudjem other than the *assumption* that the second Pinudjem never became king. But that assumption is in turn based entirely on the *assumed* absence of monuments attesting the kingship of the second Pinudjem, circular reasoning at its worst, and also an argument from silence which, in this instance, is entirely the creation of the scholars. What else should we expect but silence if all the monuments attesting the kingship of Pinudjem II have been mistakenly assigned to someone else. Only one piece of physical evidence even remotely connects Kheperkhare with Pinudjem I. Two funerary chests inscribed with the names of Kheperkhare Pinudjem were found in DB320 *near* the coffin of Aakheperkare Thutmose, that which once contained the body of Pinudjem I - hardly the basis for an identification. And there are several positive reasons for arguing that Kheperkhare is Pinudjem II.

We have already observed that all of the documents produced during the years of Pinudjem I and Masaharta, up to and including the first year of Menkheperre, are referenced consecutively and consistently to years 1 through 25 of an unidentified dignitary, assumed by most scholars to be Psusennes I, and by a few others, including Montet, to belong to the high-priest/king Pinudjem I himself. In this system the kingship of Pinudjem is said to have begun either in the 16th year of Psusennes I as king or the 16th year of Pinudjem as high priest. But the only dated inscriptions of king Kheperkhare Pinudjem, a pair of bandage epigraphs on mummies from DB320, both refer to year 8 of this king. If Kheperkare is Pinudjem I, and if Pinudjem's kingship began in the 16th year of this sequence, then we must infer that he adopted a numbering system for his regnal years different from that found on the other documents, most of which are also bandage inscriptions. Masaharta, for example, continues to number his years consecutively beginning with the number 16, while Pinudjem, his father, who is now king, supposedly chooses to start anew at the number 1. This is improbable to say the least. Of course, this argument does not apply if Pinudjem's high priesthood and kingship began at the same time, in year 1 of the sequence, an assumption unique to this revision.

Additionally, we observe that the only inscription which provides a titulary name (other than a nomen) clearly connected with king Pinudjem I, a wall inscription on the Luxor Temple where the name of Pinudjem I is otherwise prominent, contains a Horus name of the king which differs significantly from that of Kheperkhere Pinudjem found elsewhere, suggesting, if it doesn't prove, that the two kings should be distinguished.¹⁷⁸

One series of inscriptions might have settled the matter out of hand. Unfortunately the evidence has been badly handled. Apparently the mummified remains of Pinudjem I found in DB320 did contain several bandage inscriptions containing the king's prenomen. Unfortunately there remains a question regarding the transcription of the name. According to Maspero, in his massive publication of the Deir el-Bahri finds, *Les momies royales de Deir el Bahari*, published in 1889, the mummy bandages several times cite the prenomen Kheperkare¹⁷⁹ (not to be confused with Kheperkhare). This is arguably a shortened form of the name Aakheperkare, which name (according to our thesis) Pinudjem borrowed from the 18th dynasty king whose coffin he usurped. This evidence would argue for the present thesis. But in a list of errata at the end of Maspero's book, volume I in the series of *Memoires* published by the *Mission Archeologique Francaise Au Caire*, the noted Egyptologist (or more likely the editors of the series) modified the earlier reading, arguing instead that the name in all instances should read Kheperkhare. What is fundamentally clear is that this adjusted reading was not based on a reexamination of the bandages. It is likely that Maspero was, by the time of publication of his book, domiciled in France, while the mummy and inscribed bandages (assuming they were preserved) were in Cairo. We assume that the change was made in hindsight, based entirely on probabilities. Maspero (or his editors) believed, as did all scholars, that king Pinudjem I had adopted the prenomen Kheperkhare. The name Kheperkare on his mummy made no sense in light of the traditional history. Ergo the name change in the errata based entirely on the *assumption* that an error had been made in the original transcription. But if an error was made it was made multiple times since the inscribed

¹⁷⁸Both begin with the ubiquitous title Ka Nakht (strong bull) but then diverge. Cf. H. Gauthier, *Le Livre Des Rois D'Egypte III*, 250 XXIV and note 1.

¹⁷⁹*Ibid*, p. 251 XXIX, cf. note 1.

prenomen was present on multiple bandages. This is, *a priori*, very unlikely, more so since the “ka” and “kha” hieratic signs do not at all resemble one another. A reexamination of the mummy might settle the question, though chances are slim to none that the evidence remains intact.¹⁸⁰

In the absence of evidence to the contrary we assume that the prenomen Kheperkhare belongs to the second, not the first Pinudjem. The presence of several funerary boxes bearing his name in the vicinity of a coffin which had once been occupied by the mummy of Pinudjem I, his grandfather, hardly qualifies as an objection.¹⁸¹ Beside that same coffin were two other chests bearing the name of the high priest Pinudjem, son of Piankh, i.e. Pinudjem I himself. Surely the first Pinudjem was not buried with two entirely distinct sets of funerary artifacts (ushabtis?).

The Inscriptions of Pinudjem I

The second problem alluded to earlier is related to the identification of the monuments of Pinudjem I. If he adopted the name Aakheperkare Thutmose, then which monuments bearing this name belong to him, and which belong to the 18th dynasty king whose name he borrowed. . There exists some difficulty separating the inscriptions of the two kings named

¹⁸⁰Even if the bandage inscriptions did read Kheperkhare the traditional history has a problem. The names were placed on the linen and the bands of the mummy, clearly after the death of Pinudjem I. There is no other inscription indicating they were the names of the deceased. They could as easily, and perhaps more justifiably, be identified as the names of his grandson Pinudjem II, who buried him. Names on bandages, usually but not always preceded by the phrase “ir.n” (made by), were more often than not placed there to identify the donor of the linen.

¹⁸¹The critic may object by arguing that the mummy of Pinudjem II was identified only as that of a high priest, “son of Menkheperre and grandson of king Pinudjem.I”. If Pinudjem II was a king when he died, why did he not so identify himself. There are several adequate responses to this hypothetical question. In the first place we observe that the genealogical inscription on the mummy of Pinudjem II is not overly concerned with titles. Menkheperre is assigned no rank at all, in spite of the fact that he is known to have been both high priest and king. We note also that the two funerary chests which lay alongside the coffin of Thutmose I in DB320 (see immediately below), those clearly identified with the burial of Pinudjem, son of Piankh, i.e. Pinudjem I, were inscribed only with the name of “the high priest Pinudjem”. They make no mention of *his* kingship, confirming an observation we will make repeatedly throughout the discussion which follows, that the high-priests/kings of this dynasty appear to have held the high priesthood in more esteem than the kingship. They regarded themselves, first and foremost, as clerics.

Aakheperkare, since there exist many parallels in the early years of their kingships. It is therefore imperative that we examine the relevant inscriptions to determine which, if any¹⁸², were authored by Pinudjem I. Perhaps our effort will shed further light on his "reign".

The military successes of the 18th dynasty king Thutmose I, insofar as they are portrayed in the history books, are determined largely on the basis of the tomb inscriptions of two of his most famous generals, Ahmose pen Nekhbet and Ahmose son of Ebana, in addition to those of one other official, an architect named Ineni. According to these three sources Thutmose I should be credited with an invasion of Nubia early in his kingship followed soon after by moderately successful battles against Asiatics in the vicinity of the Euphrates. No dates are given. These inscriptions are consistent with the anatomical results on the mummy of the king which suggest that Thutmose I died while very young. All of these officials served multiple 18th dynasty kings. Ahmose pen Nekhbet was active under six kings/queens (Ahmose I, Amenhotep I, Thutmose I, II, and III, and Hatshepsut); Ahmose son of Ebana under three (Ahmose I, Amenhotep I, Thutmose I); and Ineni under four (Amenhotep I, Thutmose I, Thutmose II and Thutmose III), a fact which argues strongly that all of these kings had relatively short reigns. Thutmose I in particular reigned for only a brief few years.

But there are other monuments which present a slightly different picture, in which the chronology of Egypt's dealings with Nubia and Syria does not agree with the accounts provided by the two Ahmoses, consistent with our belief that they are authored by a different king. Two in particular, the king's coronation decree and a stela from Tombos, are sufficient to illustrate the alternative view.

The Coronation Decree of Aakheperkare Thutmose

According to Breasted

¹⁸²It is possible that none of the monuments which name Aakheperkare Thutmose, at least those discussed below, belong to Pinudjem I. The discussion related to Pinudjem's kingship, based on the Coronation and Tombos inscriptions, is not a necessary part of our argument.

This unique document is a royal decree *issued on the king's coronation day* to the viceroy of Nubia, Thure, informing him of the king's accession, fixing the full titulary, the royal name to be used in the oath. Thure's official residence was doubtless Elephantine, for he is charged to offer oblations to the gods of that city, and it was he who put up the records of Thutmose I's return from his Nubian campaign, at the first cataract. He then caused the decree to be cut on multiple stelae and set up in Wade Halfa, Kubban, and probably also Elephantine. BAR II 54 (emphasis added)

The inscription begins with an announcement of the king's coronation and a complete rendering of his adopted titulary:

Royal command to the king's son, the governor of the south countries, Thure (*ṯw-rꜥ*) triumphant. Behold, there is brought to thee this [command] of the king in order to inform thee that my majesty has appeared as King of Upper and Lower Egypt upon the Horus-throne of the living, without his like forever. Make my titulary as follows:

Horus: "Mighty Bull, Beloved of Maat"

Favorite of the Two Goddesses: "Shining in the Serpent-diadem, Great in Strength"

Golden Horus: "Goodly in Years, Making Hearts Live;"

King of Upper and Lower Egypt: "Okheperkere;"

Son of Re: [Thutmose], Living forever, and ever." BAR II 55-56

The inscription goes on to request the institution of offerings on the king's behalf in the Elephantine temple. It provides the name of the king's mother, Seniseneb, and the exact day of the coronation, the 21st day of the seventh month in the civil calendar, and then it abruptly ends.

Breasted rightly describes this inscription as a "unique document". It is difficult to fathom the circumstances which might have led to its creation. In Egypt, as in most Ancient Near Eastern cultures, the death of one king and the accession of his successor occur simultaneously. In theory the "feast of the coronation" celebrated the day in the civil calendar when this transition of power occurred, and as such it marked the time of change from one year of the king to the next.¹⁸³ The first such feast should not

¹⁸³We have already encountered one such typical "feast of coronation" When Menkheperre began his 1st Syrian campaign the Annals recorded his setting out and arriving at Thure in his "Year 22, fourth month of the second season (eighth month), on the twenty-fifth day" (BAR II 415). Several lines later it is stated that in the "Year 23, first (month) of the third season (ninth month), on the fourth day, the day of the feast of the king's coronation, (he arrived) at the city, the possession of the ruler, Gaza." (BAR II 417) On the day of a usual "feast of the king's coronation" the regnal

take place till a year after the king came to power, much as one celebrates a wedding anniversary beginning precisely one year after the wedding. But here the stela appears to be concerned with advertising a coronation celebration which takes place *during* the king's first year in office. It closes with a dateline advertising that we are within the first year of the king, not at the beginning of the second. The stela reads: "**Year 1**, third month of the second season (seventh month), twenty-first day, the day of the feast of coronation." (BAR II 60). This is no ordinary coronation feast. What is happening? We can only guess.

In 662 B.C. Ramses XI died in exile. Thebes was left without a legitimate king. Piankh died that same year and Pinudjem inherited the rank of HPA. Apparently he took advantage of the situation and, privately at least, declared himself king. No doubt he solicited and received the agreement of the Assyrian authority. But there remained the task of announcing the fact to his constituency in the Theban area, in order to receive appropriate recognition. Thus this directive to the viceroy Thure. The "coronation feast" was his way of publicly celebrating what was by now a *fait accompli* and announcing to his subjects his (borrowed) titulary

This interpretation of the circumstances behind the stela's creation serves to explain why such an announcement was necessary in the first place and why the stelae were erected only in the extreme south. It is difficult to comprehend the need for such an announcement if the author of the stela was truly Thutmose I, the successor of Amenhotep I and sole ruler of Egypt. It makes more sense to view the document as the work of an otherwise inconsequential Egyptian priest, with some family ties to Nubian lands south of Thebes, announcing a coronation that might otherwise be overlooked, and instituting ritual offerings which might otherwise not be given.

It is clear that the stela inscription is as much concerned with announcing the new names of the fledgling king as with declaring the fact of his kingship. The titulary contains at least one element of interest. We remarked earlier that a Horus name belonging to Pinudjem I, part of a series of inscriptions at the Luxor temple which refer consistently and

year increased by a single digit. This was typical.

often to Pinudjem as a high priest¹⁸⁴ (further proof that his high priesthood and kingship overlapped - high priests did not possess Horus names), bore only the slight resemblance to the Horus name of Kheperkhare described elsewhere. But the Luxor temple name ("Mighty Bull, beloved of Amon"¹⁸⁵, does compare favorably with the Horus name of Aakheperkare in the coronation stele ("Mighty Bull, beloved of Maat"). Such minor alterations in titulary names are commonplace.

Interesting and suggestive though it is, the coronation stele provides no data which connects it unambiguously with Pinudjem I. Nor does it provide detail regarding Pinudjem's kingship. For that information we turn our attention to the Tombos stele.

The Tombos Stela

A second relevant text is "engraved on the rocks on the island of Tombos, just above the third cataract of the Nile"¹⁸⁶, again demonstrating Aakheperkare's preoccupation with Nubia. Like the coronation inscription this text begins (after a dateline citing the 15th day of the second month of the king's 2nd year) with a complete five-fold titulary, essentially identical to that contained in the coronation inscription. The author boasts that already, at this early date, only a year and a month into his reign, he is already the undisputed ruler of the whole of Egypt, Nubia, and Syria. His sovereignty over Nubia is attested both by the location of the inscription, and by large sections of the inscription itself:

He hath overthrown the chief of the [Nubians]; the Negro is helpless, defenseless in his grasp. He hath united the boundaries of his two sides, there is not a remnant among the Curly-Haired, who come to attack him; there is not a single survivor among them. The Nubian Troglodytes fall by the sword, and are thrust aside in their lands ... BAR II 71

To the north Thutmose's domains extended as far as the Euphrates River, which he refers to as the land of "the inverted water". The concluding paragraph, which constitutes fully half the length of the inscription,

¹⁸⁴Gauthier *Le Livre Des Rois D'Egypte* III 246 XI A - J

¹⁸⁵*Ibid.*, 246 XI D

¹⁸⁶This according to Breasted who provides the translation used below.

describes the limits of his Syrian possessions:

(He) brought the ends of the earth into his domain; (he) trod its two extremities with his mighty sword, seeking battle; *(but) he found no one who faced him.* (He) penetrated valleys which the (royal) ancestors knew not, which the wearers of the double diadem had not seen. His southern boundary is as far as the frontier of this land, (his northern) as far as that inverted water which goes downstream in going up-stream. The like has not happened to other kings; his name has reached as far as the circuit of heaven, it has penetrated the Two Lands as far as the nether world ... Subject to him are the isles of the Great Circle (Sn[w].wr, Okeanos), the entire earth is under his two feet, bodily son of Re, his beloved, Thutmose, living forever and ever ... BAR II 73 (emphasis added)

We cannot help but wonder, if this document is authored by Thutmose I, how that young king managed to conquer domains fully as extensive as those of his famous (grand-)son Thutmose III, all in slightly over a year in office. It behooves us to explain the incongruity of these boastful remarks vis-a-vis the life of the 18th dynasty Thutmose, and how they mirror precisely the circumstances of the life of Pinudjem I. Then we must move on.

Documents of Thutmose I

We have already mentioned that the military life of the 18th dynasty Thutmose is provided in capsule form in the tomb inscriptions of two of his generals, Ahmose pen-Nekhbet and Ahmose son of Ebana. Those two inscriptions agree in describing an Egyptian invasion of Nubia early in the king's tenure in office, followed by a campaign in which battles were fought in Naharin at the bend of the Euphrates. There is no ambiguity about the order of events - first the conquest of Nubia, then successful battles near the Euphrates. Though no year dates are provided in these tomb inscriptions, Egyptologists are emphatic in stating that the Nubian campaign began in year 2 and finished in year 3 of the king.

The year 2 date is derived, as we might have expected, from the Tombos inscription. The fact that the campaign ended in year three, some 8 months after the Tombos date, is based on two inscriptions found at Sehel and Assuan, erected by the same viceroy Thure mentioned in the coronation inscription, and dated the 22nd day of the ninth month of the

3rd year of the king. Apparently on the return from the Nubian campaign the king found the canal, which by-passed the cataract, stopped up, and set about to clear it, leaving record of his achievement.¹⁸⁷ The Syrian campaign must have begun later in the third year or into the fourth.

The conflict is transparent. In the tradition provided by his generals, Thutmose conquered Nubia at an unspecified date and followed that up with a Syrian campaign in which battles were fought. The order of events is unmistakable. First Nubia, then Syria. It is also worth noting that on his return from the Nubian campaign, there is no mention of any obstruction at the first cataract, only smooth sailing into Thebes. And we should not overlook the fact that the Syrian victories were inconsequential. Ahmose, at the head of the army, boasts of capturing a single prisoner. For the record we cite a brief passage from the annals of Ahmose Pen-Nekhbet.

His majesty was furious thereat, like a panther; his majesty cast his first lance, which remained in the body of that fallen one. This was ---- — powerless before his flaming uraeus, made [so] in an instant of destruction; their people were brought off as living prisoners. His majesty sailed down-river, with all countries in his grasp, that wretched Nubian Troglodyte being hanged head downward at the [prow] of the ba[rge] of his majesty, and landed at Karnak.

After these things one journeyed to Retenu (*Rtmw*) to wash his heart among the foreign countries. His majesty arrived at Naharin (*N3-h3-ry-n3*). His majesty found that foe when he was [planning destruction; his majesty made a great slaughter among them. Numberless were the living prisoners, which his majesty brought off from his victories. Meanwhile I was at the head of our troops, and his majesty beheld my bravery. I brought off a chariot, its horses, and him who was upon it as a living prisoner, and took them to his majesty. One presented me with gold in double measure. BAR 80-81

In the other tradition, that represented by the Tombos and cataract inscriptions of Thure, Thutmose embarked on a Nubian campaign early in his second year and returned the next year, though delayed in the return trip by navigational problems. By the time the Tombos inscription was erected, early in his second year in office, Thutmose was already *master* of Syria. Though Thutmose boasts of sovereignty over Syria, he specifically says that had fought no battles in that region, leading some Egyptologists to suggest that Thutmose received these lands as an

¹⁸⁷ BAR II 75,76.

inheritance from his father Amenhotep I. But no record of Amenhotep's conquest of Syria has ever been found..

How do we explain the two traditions?

The Resolution

The solution to the presence of two incompatible traditions for the military activity of Aakheperkare Thutmose is ready at hand. We assume that the Coronation, Tombos, and cataract inscriptions belong to Pinudjem I. When Herihor died (or was replaced in office by the Assyrian authority) in 661 B.C.¹⁸⁸, Pinudjem assumed both Herihor's rank as High Priest of Amun and his benefice as "commander of the army of all of Egypt" in which he acted on behalf of his Assyrian overlord. He also secretly declared his kingship, following the example of Herihor, publicizing the fact in the coronation inscription.¹⁸⁹ Apparently in his capacity as commander of the army Pinudjem acted in his second year to preserve Assyrian hegemony in Nubia, claiming personal credit for the victories. When he boasts in the Tombos inscription that his domains extend from the Euphrates to southern Nubia, and include the coastal regions of the Mediterranean (called the *Haunebu* elsewhere in the text) he is clearly representing himself, vicariously, as the sovereign of lands actually held by his Assyrian overlord. He did not inherit these lands from his father Amenhotep II, as Egyptologists have suggested. He was the son of Piankh, and he was clearly misrepresenting himself. It is significant that he mentions no warfare in these regions.

The boastful language used by Pinudjem in the Tombos inscription, as also his adoption of the titles of kingship, reflect an understandable

¹⁸⁸This assumes that Herihor outlived Piankh by at most a few months, though it is possible that the armies controlled by both Herihor and Piankh were called to service elsewhere in defense of the Assyrian Empire, leaving Pinudjem free to assume both the high priesthood and a nominal kingship.

¹⁸⁹Alternatively, we might assume that he was assigned the kingship in Thebes by the Assyrians. This scenario is the more likely if we agree with Petrie's analysis of the Assyrian annals discussed earlier, and believe that Piankh, the father of Pinudjem, was the appointed ruler in Thebes from the days of Essarhaddon. The fact that both Pinudjem's high priesthood and his kingship began at the death of his father in 661 B.C. (a thesis unique to this revision) argues for the likelihood that both benefices were passed down from father to son.

desire on his part to be free from Assyrian restraint. No doubt throughout his kingship he hoped to free Egypt from its Assyrian domination. But if so, his dreams would await his death and the ascendancy of his son Menkheperre.

Masaharta & the Tomb of Merytamun

Tomb of Merytamun

Having set forth the chronology, and discussed the relevant documents related to Pinudjem I, we proceed to examine the inscriptions bearing on the life of his eldest son Masaharta and the early years of his more famous son Menkheperre, concluding with a few brief comments on the enigmatic and problematic Mutemhet Maatkare, Pinudjem's daughter.

The inscriptions which name Masaharta are either bandage epigraphs from DB320 or miscellaneous graffiti. They are largely uninformative. There are only two exceptions, and they have some bearing on our revision, insofar as they illustrate the tomb robbery and name borrowing which, according to our thesis, are characteristic of the 21st Theban dynasty priests. Both inscriptions are found on the re-wrapped mummy of queen Merytamun, found in her tomb in a cliff face near the Deir el Bahri temple of queen Hatshepsut.

The tomb was discovered in 1929 by H. E. Winlock and clearance was completed by the next year. The results of the excavation were published in 1932 in a volume entitled *The Tomb of Queen Meryet-Amun at Thebes*. According to this report two mummies were found inside, that of a late 21st dynasty queen Entiu-ny, whose body and funerary equipment had been hastily inserted into the tomb immediately before its final sealing, and that of an 18th dynasty queen Merytamun, for whom the tomb had been constructed originally. According to Winlock, in the interim between the original burial of Merytamun and the rude and hasty intrusion of the body of Entiu-ny, the tomb had been robbed and restored, then robbed again and restored again. The final restoration had been carried on by the high priest Masaharta in the 19th year of an unnamed king, whom we identify as Pinudjem I. According to our

chronology this would be the year 643 B.C.. Winlock's theory of two robberies and two restorations is questionable, since he admits that "there is only the most meager evidence that the earlier robbery ever took place at all."¹⁹⁰

What caused Winlock to assume two robberies were the large number of intrusive objects in the tomb, presumably left by the restoration parties clearing up after each robbery. These consisted of large boxes made of fragments of 20th dynasty coffins, many large pots, clearly of late date, which had contained supplies for the restoration(s), and assorted other artifacts, too many apparently to assume a single enterprise (though Winlock agrees that the two restorations took place in relatively quick succession). Apparently the restorations were a large scale operation. In reference to the second restoration Winlock has this to say:

When a preliminary investigation had fixed the seriousness of the damage done in the tomb, a party of restorers was sent there with full equipment. There was a scribe who was supplied with an official seal, there were embalmers - or bandagers at least - and there must have been workmen, who brought their own food intending to stay until they had thoroughly cleaned up the tomb. The party brought linen to rewrap the mummy, flowers to redecorate it, and offerings to lay at its feet. They brought paint and plaster and strips of glass to refurbish the coffins, and they brought boxes and pots for their materials.¹⁹¹

We must correct two misconceptions held by Winlock. In the first place we discount entirely the thesis of two robberies and ensuing restorations. The evidence for the first robbery is slim to none and the evidence can all be explained by a reinterpretation of the actual sequence of events. Besides, we wonder why an earlier restoration would have been necessary since apparently the first group of robbers took next to nothing from the tomb. In describing the second robbery, that which took place during the 19th year of Pinudjem I, Winlock appears to indicate that most if not all of the original treasure in the tomb remained intact.

To light their way the thieves made lamps of small broken saucers. That they came equipped with tools is clear enough. They chopped, sawed and broke up the sarcophagus and the third coffin because both were so bulky that that was the easiest way to get into them. They seem to have considered that some of the

¹⁹⁰H.E. Winlock, *The Tomb of Queen Meryet-Amun at Thebes* (1932) 37

¹⁹¹ *Ibid*, p. 42

bigger pieces of wood were worth taking, however, for they had sawed through the corner dovetails to separate the planks without breaking them, and all the larger boards were missing. The second coffin was opened without much damage. The lid was wrenched away, but that only broke the edges opposite the tenons. Then it was methodically peeled, inside and out. The sheets of gold were ripped up, nails and all, and the linen backing of the gilded gesso was stripped off the head, the shoulders, and the column of inscription, bringing the inlays with it. The eyebrows and eyelids were pried out. They were glass and therefore remeltable, while the stone eyes themselves were left as worthless. The first coffin was treated in the same way, and while it had no inlays, the vulture head which was probably of solid metal was well worth removing. If there was a mask on the mummy, it was taken away bodily. The bandages were then slit with a knife down the front from crown to toes, and the inner wrappings, hardened with resin, were hacked with an adze as far as the jewelry went. Over the heart scarab and the incision plaque this meant practically to the skin. *As we have seen, the thieves missed nothing*, barring a stray bead or two, a valueless lock-pin from a bracelet, and the the part of the girdle which was stuck in the resin-soaked bandages across the back.

The destruction of the furniture has already been noted. The chopped-up pieces of wood were taken away and doubtless burnt for the recovery of the gold and silver leaf, while boxes were probably serviceable enough to be kept for their own sakes. Of metal objects not a trace was found and even alabaster seems to have had its value, for only broken chips of the ointment jars were left, and three of the canopic jars had entirely disappeared.¹⁹²

Clearly this robbery was the first and last in the tomb of Meyetamun. Winlock has unnecessarily confused the issue by suggesting an earlier intrusion. But also, by not asking the obvious question, he failed to apprehend that the robbery and the restoration were not separate events. Why, we enquire, did the restorers, possibly accompanied by the high priest Masaharta, go to so much trouble to set things right in the tomb. The tomb was difficult to access. A submerged entrance through a small opening, a long low tunnel, a deep pit which had to be bridged, all before entering the bricked up entrance to the burial chamber, presented robbers and restorers alike difficult transit into the tomb. Why did Masaharta and the burial party subject themselves to the dark, dank litter strewn environment for days in order to restore the mummy of Meryetamun, repairing and repainting her coffin by candlelight, rather than simply removing them for restoration in a more comfortable environment. Why transport heavy boxes and supply filled amphorae into the tomb when the contents of the tomb might as easily be moved outside. Why the

¹⁹² Ibid, pp. 40,41

apparent secrecy of the restoration party?

We can only surmise that the robbery and restoration were part of a single enterprise, carried out clandestinely to avoid detection by Assyrian authorities, or to conceal from the Egyptian public the fact that clerical officials were rifling the tombs of their revered ancestors. Winlock admits that the robbery probably took place only days or weeks before the restoration. But the evidence admits the possibility, if it doesn't argue the probability, that the events coincided.

This tomb is the only existing evidence of the thoroughness of the process of tomb robbery carried out by the 21st dynasty priests. The reports of the excavation need to be reexamined by scholars with our reconstruction in mind. But our purpose in documenting the excavation is not solely concerned with proving and illustrating our hypothesis of tomb robbery sanctioned by the Theban priests. Three other observations are relevant to our overall thesis.

We have several times already argued that the Theban priest/kings borrowed their names from the docketts on the mummies of the 18th dynasty kings whose tombs they robbed. That name borrowing process is also in evidence in the case of the Meryetamun tomb, though in this instance it is the name of a queen, not that of a king, that is borrowed. We know that the 19th year inscription of Masaharta is dated at least two years, and possibly as much as six years before his death, at which time Menkheperre assumed the high priesthood. At the time of the robbery Menkheperre would have been an influential priest in the Theban temple, and, if not part of the robbery/restoration party, then certainly privy to details concerning the tomb's contents. It is therefore significant that he later named one of his daughters Meryetamun, to our knowledge the only occurrence of this name within the third intermediate period.¹⁹³

A second comment relates to the thoroughness of the robbery, which included all funerary artifacts, many of which must have borne the name of the deceased. This is as good a time as any to enquire what use might have been made of such unique personal items. No doubt, in the case of the 18th dynasty kings whose tombs were robbed, some of the stolen

¹⁹³Cf. Kitchen, TIP 54 E

trappings of royalty might have been used by their 25th dynasty namesakes as part of their own royal insignia. Others may have been melted down for the material content. But there certainly existed many other items whose value lay primarily in their "antiquity." Probably these were sold for fair value to enterprising entrepreneurs. And therein lies a partial solution to a dilemma we faced earlier. The vast majority of the tomb robberies took place during the reigns of Ramses IX through XI, i.e., through the time of the great disruption (701-671 B.C.), and during the tenure of the early 21st dynasty Theban priests, at least through the end of the Assyrian domination (671-639 B.C.). Scarabs and other items belonging to most of the famous kings of Egypt, perhaps including Mycerinus, would have come on the "antiquities market" of the day, via the robberies of the royal tombs. This was the heyday of the colonization of the Mediterranean by the Phoenicians, the time of the creation of the cemetery at Carthage. In the traditional history the two events cannot possibly be related, since the tomb robberies must be dated three to four hundred years before the Phoenician expansion. But in the revised history they coincide and provide a probable explanation for the presence of so many mementos belonging to ancient Egyptian kings in the graves of Phoenician sailors and on the Phoenician coastline.

Burial of Entiu-ny

Our final comment relates to the burial in Merytamun's tomb of Entiu-ny, the daughter of a 21st dynasty king, apparently several decades after the robbery/restoration in the days of Masaharta. It was clearly carried out in haste and entirely without planning or ceremony. We let Winlock tell the story:

Curiously enough, the tomb of Meryet-Amun could not have been opened in advance of the arrival of Entiu-ny's burial party. It makes an interesting picture of the funeral of a Twenty-first Dynasty princess when we realize that up to the very moment of Entiu-ny's interment no preparations had been made at the tomb for her burial. In fact, so carelessly was the affair conducted that her coffins had never even had their lids fitted on them before they were brought with the mummy to the tomb. *Everything was hurried.* While the mummy and its open coffins were lying around on the ground and the burial party was waiting, the

grave diggers were still digging out the pit. As soon as they had uncovered the top of the entrance blocking, without taking the trouble to dig any deeper they broke through the wall, and bricks and dirt went clattering down onto the pots and baskets just inside. In this way there was opened a sloping hole just big enough for a man to crawl through, and the first of the party slid down. Probably his first act was to throw back onto the surface some of the basket lids and pieces of the third coffin [of Meryetamun] and some of the rags and fragments of pots which were in his way, and which were afterwards found in the pit.

The coffins were then passed down, regardless of order. The wooden cover for the mummy came first; the body of the outer coffin went next; the lid of the inner coffin followed; the lid of the outer coffin after it; and finally came the inner coffin with the mummy. Meantime, such of the party as were below began to carry the coffins back along the corridors until the first man, with the wooden cover, found himself brought up short on the brink of the protective well. He put the cover down; the bearers of the outer coffin, crowding behind him laid down their burden; the inner coffin lid was dropped beside it; the out lid was propped against the wall at the turn in the corridor; and the inner coffin, containing the mummy with a wig at its head, came to a stop in the first corridor. A collar of flowers seems to have been brought separately and to have been torn in two by some accident. Part of it was dropped on the chest of the mummy as it lay in the coffin, and the rest was dropped in the corridor just behind the coffin. Meantime, those at the entrance were passing down the seven shawabti boxes and the Osiris figure containing the Book of the Dead. When they heard that their companions were held up they piled the shawabti boxes out of the way at the side of the corridor on the rubbish which had just fallen onto the pots standing there. *Everyone was hurried.* The high ends of box 5 broke off and were laid on its own lid. So careless was the handling of the Osiris figure that its head was knocked off against the low ceiling and fell behind the pots, and it was a headless Osiris that was stuck in the nearest basket.¹⁹⁴

How do we explain such disdainful treatment of the remains of a 21st dynasty princess by her near relatives. Winlock paints the picture of her hurried funeral; he makes no attempt to provide a context. But explanation is necessary. Entui-ny is identified by inscriptions as a king's daughter, and her death clearly postdates the time of Masaharta. She is identified by almost all Egyptologists as the daughter of Pinudjem I, based on time considerations and "the similarity between her mummy, coffins, and burial furniture and those of another daughter of Pinudjem

¹⁹⁴ *The Tomb of Queen Meryet-Amun at Thebes*, pp.54,55

named Henttawy. Even her physical appearance connects her with this family. According to Winlock she was “fully seventy years old when she died”, and must therefore have “survived into the reign of one of his [Pinudjem's] successors.” But this would place her death in the reign of Menkheperre, who would have been her brother. We cannot imagine why the priest/king Menkheperre would have sanctioned this callous treatment of his sister, particularly if we are correct in identifying him as the enormously powerful and wealthy conqueror of Syria. We must argue instead that Entui-ny was Menkheperre's daughter, born to the youthful priest/king several years after the beginning of his kingship in 638 B.C. If she died in her seventies then her death must be placed in the vicinity of 565 B.C.. She must have outlived her father by almost twenty years. The time-line provides a ready and reasonable explanation for her hurried funeral. She apparently died only weeks before the Babylonian invasion of Egypt. It is inconceivable that an elderly and revered princess would have been so hurriedly and unceremoniously disposed of except in the most dire circumstances, such as we can envisage in the days immediately preceding the invasion by Nebuchadrezzar.

With that we move on to Menkheperre, where the focus of our attention lies.

Menkheperre & The Liberation of Egypt

We have previously argued that Menkheperre, son of Pinudjem I, replaced his brother Masaharta as high priest as late as the 24th or early 25th year of his father Pinudjem I (639 B.C.) and, as commander of the army, immediately set about liberating Egypt from Assyrian domination. This assumes, of course, that the “year 25” on the Maunier Stele, the document which describes this liberation, is referenced to the years of Pinudjem. Clearly Piankhi's father is still alive, but it follows from the fact that Piankhi's reign began the next year (538 B.C.), that his death followed soon after the liberation of the country. In figure 19 below we have diagrammed the likely timeline.

Figure 19: The Pinudjem I/Piankhi Transition
& the Liberation of Egypt.

overt break with his Assyrian overlord. We let Breasted describe the contents:

We find Menkheperre coming from the north, supposedly from Tanis, to Thebes in Paynuzem I's twenty-fifth year, and the remarkable errand which brought him thither is intentionally narrated in such veiled language that it is impossible to determine exactly what its nature was. He came to put down certain unknown enemies, and to restore affairs in Thebes to their ancient status (ll. 6 and 7). This probably indicates a rising of some sort among the Thebans. When this had been quelled Menkheperre appeared before Amon, and with the usual prodigies, customary, at least since the time of Hrihor, he secured an oracle from the god permitting the return to Egypt of all those who had been banished to the Southern Oasis. Furthermore, he also obtained the god's consent to a decree forever forbidding such banishment in the future, and our stela is the permanent record of that decree. The interview with Amon closed with the god's consent that all murderers should be slain. BAR IV 650

Breasted, along with the majority of scholars, is confused by this inscription. He poses a series of intriguing questions?

The interesting question as to the identity of the banished, who are thus pardoned, is one on which our document is studiously silent. Were they Thebans, on whose behalf the city had risen in insurrection (ll. 6 and 7)? And were they recalled to appease and quiet the turbulent city? And is the last grim enactment of the god a reminder to the violent of what they might expect in case of further insurrection? BAR IV 651

Breasted's problem is understandable. For the traditional historian the actions described in the stela must be dated to the 11th century B.C. and to a time when the only other king in Egypt was Psusennes I. In this context the Theban antagonists against whom Menkheperre acted, and the cause of masses of Egyptians being banished to the oasis, are jointly a complete mystery. The historical context which alone gives meaning to the inscription is missing. With Menkheperre moved to his rightful position in history, near the end of the Assyrian domination of Egypt, we are able easily to answer Breasted's questions.

In the 25th year of Pinudjem, immediately following the death of his brother Masaharta, and only months before his father's death, Menkheperre raised the national army and marched from el Hibeh (not Tanis as Breasted says) toward Thebes, where we assume a few diplomatic representatives, and at most a small garrison of troops loyal to

Ashurbanipal, resided.¹⁹⁵ There he encountered minimal resistance, and was met with a boisterous celebration.

Year 25, first month¹⁹⁶ of the — [season, day] —. Then spake his majesty to the people: “Amon-Re, lord of Thebes — — — their heart is firm — — — their multitude — — the High Priest of Amon-Re, king of gods, commander in chief of the army, Menkheperre, triumphant, son of King Paynozem-Meriamon — — — his — — — — companion of his footsteps, while their hearts rejoiced because he had desired to come to the South in might and victory, in order to make satisfied the heart of the land, and to expel his enemies, that he might give — — — [as] they were in the time of Re. BAR IV 652

Following the expulsion of the Assyrians from Thebes Menkheperre was treated like a king, a fact made clear in the text, though his enthronement would await the death of his father. It is entirely possible that Pinudjem was ill, and that Menkheperre was acting in his stead, much as Nebuchadnezzar led the Babylonian army during the final days of Nabopolassar.

He arrived at the city (Thebes) with a glad heart; the youth of Thebes received him, making jubilee, with an embassy before him. The majesty of this August god, lord of gods, Amon-Re, [lord of] Thebes, appeared (in procession) — — — that he might [—] him very greatly, very greatly, and **establish him upon the throne of his father**, as High Priest of Amon-Re, king of gods, commander in chief of the armies of the South and North. He (the god) decreed to him many gracious wonders, (such as) had never been seen since the time of Re. BAR IV 653 (emphasis added)

This is clearly not a description of the installation of Menkheperre as high priest, as some believe. It is the sanctioning by the god Amon-Re of the future kingship of the high priest Menkheperre on “the throne of his father”. As we have stated previously, king Menkheperre continued for years to hold the office of high priest, though as we will soon see, later in

¹⁹⁵The victory over the Assyrians was brief precisely because Piankhi was the commander of the Assyrian army, no doubt one which consisted entirely of foreign conscripts. At most there would be a few troops in Thebes who remained loyal to Assyria. This was a “military coup” in every sense of the word.

¹⁹⁶This reference to the first month of some season of the year is clearly a misreading of the inscription by Breasted. All of the other dates on the stela reference the third and fourth months of the third season, i.e. the eleventh and twelfth months of the Egyptian year. The advance on Thebes took place in May and June of Pinudjem's 25th year and the celebrations which follow include the New Year celebration in early July.

his reign at least two of his sons inherited the title and took over his duties.

The text goes on to describe Menkheperre's action in recalling multitudes who had been banished to the oasis. Unlike Breasted we know precisely who they are. Several times already we have remarked on the fact that the Assyrians, noted for deporting entire populations of vanquished cities, had exiled king Ramses XI along with multitudes of Egyptians in the year 671 B.C. We noted that they remained in exile into the high priesthood/kingship of Pinudjem I. According to our revised chronology Ramses XI died in exile in 662 B.C., over twenty years before the arrival in Thebes of the liberating army of Menkheperre, but according to the Banishment Stele a large number of Egyptians, perhaps tens of thousands, remained in the oases, apparently prohibited from returning by order of the Assyrian authorities. Now they were freed from their exile. But only after Menkheperre received the sanction of the god Amun.

Then the High Priest of Amon, Menkheperre, triumphant, recounted to him, saying:

"O my good lord, (when) there is a matter, shall one recount it —?" Then the great god nodded exceedingly, exceedingly. Then he went again to the great god, saying: "O my good lord, (it is) the matter of these servants, against whom thou art wrath, who are in the oasis, whither they are banished." Then the great god nodded exceedingly, while this commander of the army, with his hands uplifted was praising his lord, as a father talks with his own son: "Hail to thee, [maker] of all [that is], creator of all that exists, father of the gods, fashioner of goddesses; who equips them in the cities and districts; begetter of men, and fashioner of women, maker of the life of all men. ... Thou shalt hearken to my voice on this day, and thou shalt [relent] toward the servants whom thou hast banished to the oasis, and they shall be brought (back) to Egypt." The great god nodded exceedingly. BAR IV 655

After eliciting from Amun a decree (or promise) that such an exile should not be allowed to happen again, the stele concludes with an expression of thanksgiving. The high priest Menkheperre, soon to be king in the stead of his father, looks back to his youth and sees in these recent events the fulfillment of his youthful ambition. We can only understand the final comments on the Maunier Stele if we keep in mind the Coronation Inscription of Menkheperre discussed in an earlier chapter. There we

read the story of the youthful Menkheperre receiving the promise of a future kingship from the god Amun, while still a novice priest in the Theban temple. We can now better understand his wonder at being singled out from among his fellows for this honor, since he was not the firstborn of the king, an honor that fell to Masaharta, now deceased. It is extremely significant that in the Banishment Stele Menkheperre acknowledges these early days as a youthful priest, lending support to our thesis that the Menkheperre of the Coronation Inscription and the Menkheperre of the Banishment Stele are one and the same person. We listen for the last time to the words of Menkheperre, son of Pinudjem.

Then the High Priest of Amon, Menkheperre, triumphant, spake again, saying: "O my good lord, then my [—] is [for] myriads of times, and the command is for father and mother in every family. My every word shall please the heart in [thy] presence, I am thy faithful servant, profitable to thy ka. *I was a youth in thy city, I produced thy provision* and thy [—], while I was in the womb, when thou didst form (me) in the egg, when thou didst bring me forth [to the great joy] of thy people. Grant that I may spend a happy life as a follower of thy ka. There is purity and health wherever thou tarriest. Set my feet in thy way, and direct me on thy path. Incline my heart [— —] to do —. Grant that I may pass a happy [old age] in peace, while I am established, living in thy August house, like every favorite [— —] BAR IV 657. (italics added)

As we have seen, the god answered Piankhi's prayer and granted him 54 years of unprecedented military success, beginning with this 639 B.C. Theban invasion which freed Egypt at long last from Assyrian domination.

There are no inscriptions of the priest/king Menkheperre which inform us concerning actions taken during the next twenty years of his reign. There is a distinct possibility that among the hundreds of inscriptions assigned to the reign of the 18th dynasty Menkheperre there exist some which belong to Piankhi and which, therefore, could be used to illuminate these decades. But the task of sorting out which documents belong to which king lies far beyond the scope of this paper. We leave the task to others.

What we do know is that by year 21, the date of the great Piankhi stele, Menkheperre is resident in Napata, and must therefore have succeeded the line of Melukkhan kings to whom he was related. Perhaps a marriage alliance or perhaps military conquest led to this state of affairs. There is

no suggestion in the year 21 stele that Napata is his permanent residence, only that he was there when news broke concerning the Tefnakht rebellion. The matter will be discussed further in connection with the god's wife Maatkare, Piankhi's sister. But this discussion is relegated to our Appendix D.

We also know from the Annals that by year 21 Menkheperre claims to have lost control of the Syrian provinces once claimed by his father (under the name Aakheperkare Thutmose). Since Pinudjem's claim to these lands was in part a fiction (they actually belonged to Assyria and Pinudjem was merely the commander of the Egyptian army serving Assyrian interests) this is not surprising. When Assyria lost possession of Egypt, no doubt it forfeited also its control over Syria. Apparently the sequence of campaigns that began in the 23rd year of Menkheperre was Piankhi's long delayed attempt to regain the lands once claimed by his father.

Pending further evidence, we must leave the matter there.

The Sons & Grandson of Menkheperre

Tentative Timetable

In our table 14 on page 204, when we made our final transposition of the 21st Theban dynasty, we omitted from consideration the priesthoods/kingships of Menkheperre's sons and grandson Smendes II, Pinudjem II and Psusennes III. The reason was stated briefly in a footnote¹⁹⁷, though it must otherwise be readily apparent to the reader of our revised history. There is no room in this chronology for their inclusion. Menkheperre/Piankhi died around 583 B.C. and was buried in the Barkal cemetery in Napata in Nubia. Long before his death, possibly around 596 B.C., we believe that he was succeeded as the dominant king within Egypt by his relative Shabaka, who died eleven years later, around 585 B.C.¹⁹⁸ Shabaka was in turn succeeded by Shabataka and in 570

¹⁹⁷Page 204, note 129

¹⁹⁸The date 600 B.C. for the beginning of Shabaka's elevation from regional king to dominant king in Egypt was selected somewhat arbitrarily in the first book of our series, based primarily on the numbers provided by Manetho for the reign lengths of the 25th dynasty kings. At the time we had

B.C. briefly by Taharka. In 565 B.C., eighteen years after the death of Piankhi, Nebuchadnezzar invaded and decimated Egypt. The offspring of Piankhi did not survive the attack. There is insufficient room in this timeline to position the sons of Piankhi named Nesubanebdjed (Smenes II) and Pinudjem II, much less Psebkhanu (Psusennes III), the son of Pinudjem II, at least not with the "reign lengths" postulated by the traditional history. The textbooks assign to these three clerics a combined "reign length" of upwards of 45 years and position them successively following the death of Menkheperre (Piankhi).

Only one possibility exists for these individuals in the revised history. The tenure of one or more of them must have taken place *during* the lengthy kingship of Menkheperre, extending beyond his death for an additional 18 years. There is no conflict here with our claim that the 25th dynasty kings Shabaka through Taharka also ruled during this same interval. The descendants of Piankhi were primarily clerics, functioning in a sacerdotal capacity in the Theban area. Egypt was governed throughout this period by multiple nomarchs, just as it was earlier, at the time of the Tefnakht rebellion. Shabaka and his descendants likely ruled in the Memphis area as the first among equals. Shabataka and Taharka also ruled over the Napatan area of Nubia.

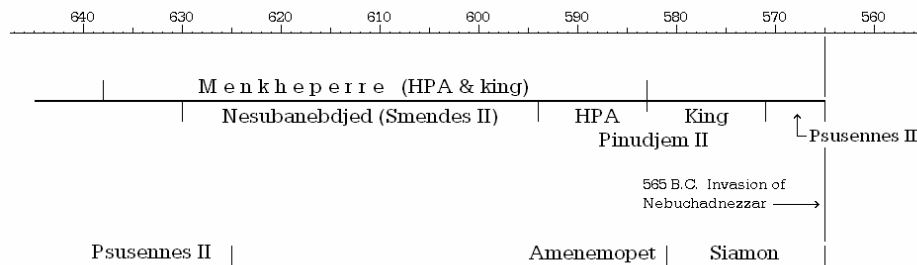
Among the contemporaries of the 25th dynasty kings, and of the sons and grandson of Piankhi, were two high priests of Amon in Tanis named Amenemopet and Siamon. Multiple docket inscriptions and bandage epigraphs from DB320, as well as from the "second find" at Deir el Bahri, cite these two kings as contemporaries of the three named descendants of Menkheperre? The presence of these two northern clerics is not unexpected. Psusennes II, the last of the 21st dynasty Tanite kings, died *at the latest* in 625 B.C. It follows that for most of the reign of Menkheperre, and for the duration of the 18 years which followed, *there*

no other concrete data to guide our deliberations. That situation has now changed, based on our discovery that Piankhi was the author of the Karnak Annals bearing the name Menkheperre Thutmose. In chapter six of the present book we discovered the fact that the last campaign of this Menkheperre Thutmose, alias Piankhi, took place during his 42nd year. This would be 597 B.C. based on the assumption that 638 B.C. was Piankhi's first year as king. We assume therefore that Piankhi "retired" to Napata around that date, and left Shabaka to govern Egypt. Henceforth we should assign the years 597-585 B.C. to Shabaka's reign as the first 25th dynasty king of Egypt. This shorter reign length is more in keeping with Manetho's data which assign to him either 8 years (Africanus) or 12 years (Eusebius).

were no named Tanite kings listed in our earlier tables. But the temple ritual in Tanis was certainly not in abeyance during these years. Psusennes must have been followed by other high priests, perhaps from another family. We have no idea why Manetho stopped his listing of 21st dynasty Tanite kings with Psusennes II.

The history of these “terminal” 21st Theban priest/kings and their Tanite counterparts needs to be rewritten. That task clearly lies beyond the scope of this book. For the record however, and to satisfy the curiosity of our more informed readers, we have included below a timeline which describes one possible arrangement of the late Tanite and Theban priest/kings. We have included in our Appendix C a brief discussion of the documents which led us to these conclusions.

Figure 20: Terminal “21st dynasty” Theban priest/kings and their Tanite counterparts.



Hypothetical End of the 25th Dynasty

We have completed our task. Piankhi, along with his parents, grandparents and children, have been identified and assigned their rightful place in history. If the reader still wonders about Shabaka, Shabataka, and Taharka he should read the first book of this series where some of

their activities are described. As we suggested in the last chapter, they belong to a different branch of the family, as we might have suspected considering that Manetho refers to them as a group unto themselves.¹⁹⁹ We have already positioned Shabaka in the scheme of things, suggesting that for decades following Piankhi's liberation of Egypt, he functioned as a regional king in Memphis, and at some point in time adopted the name Menkheperure Thutmose.²⁰⁰ In the earlier book we placed his death in the year 585 B.C. As part of Piankhi's extended family he likely played a major part in the Syrian campaigns described in our chapters two through five.

The dates we have assigned to Shabaka reflect our belief that Piankhi outlived him by a few years. Apparently Shabaka also shared Piankhi's liking for the land of his ancestors. His tomb was found at el Kurru, near Napata, but he clearly did not live there. Absolutely no artifacts belonging to him have been found at the sight of Piankhi's Barkal temple, nor elsewhere in Nubia.

Shabataka must have become king in Memphis at the death of Shabaka in 585 B.C. Two years later, when Piankhi died, he may also have become king in Napata, leaving his brother Taharka to govern in his absence.²⁰¹ He adopted the prenomen Menkheperre, patterned after his father's

¹⁹⁹The critic may enquire why the line of priest/kings from Herihor through Pinudjem II was not included in Manetho's list. It is a legitimate question, and one to which we have no ready answer, save to argue that to the priest/historian Manetho they appeared to be more high priests and army commanders than kings. Perhaps they were discussed elsewhere in his history, now lost to us. We have already argued many times that these 21st Theban priest/kings appear to have considered themselves, first and foremost, to be priests. We are not surprised that Manetho did not include them among the dynasties of "kings". If that explanation is deemed insufficient, the critic should ask the traditionalist historians the same question. He/she will get the same answer.

²⁰⁰Though we have argued that a king by this name participated in the Syrian campaign of Piankhi the documents that suggest this need to be more closely examined to see if they actually do belong to the 7th century. We need to be constantly mindful that the names on Egyptian monuments were often altered, and sometimes multiple times. Nor is it necessary to argue that this king was Shabaka. Only one set of inscriptions argued that connection. It is also not necessary to assume that Shabaka, or a contemporary who used the name, adopted the full titulary of this king.

²⁰¹We have no idea why Piankhi's son Pinudjem II did not inherit the Napatan throne when Piankhi died, nor why it passed to Shabaka's branch of the family. We can only suggest that in Napata, Piankhi himself may have been an "outsider", an interloper, and that Shabaka and family actually had more of a claim to the Nubian throne. It is perhaps relevant to remind the reader in this context that while Piankhi himself was buried in the Barkal cemetery, his father Pinudjem I and his son Pinudjem II were buried in DB320, and dozens of Piankhi's near relatives were buried in the "second find" at Deir el Bahri. The Theban area was clearly their home.

adopted name (Menkheperure) and a duplicate of his grandfather's. Sometime late in his reign, perhaps around 572 B.C., the Nubian army under Taharka was summoned to Egypt by Shabataka to assist in defending the delta, understandable since in the years 585-573 Nebuchadrezzar and his army had conducted a prolonged siege of Tyre.²⁰² Egypt was clearly the next target for Nebuchadnezzar. The threat to Egypt was real. Fortunately for the Egyptians, the Babylonian king fell ill, and his illness lasted for seven years. Egypt was relieved.

In 570 B.C. Shabataka died and was replaced by Taharka, both as the Memphite king of Egypt and king in Napata. In Thebes Pinudjem died and was replaced by his son Psebkhanu (Psusennes III), whose reign paralleled that of Taharka. In Tanis Siamon lived out the final years of his reign. In spite of the reprieve from the Babylonian threat, there was forboding in Egypt. Taharka went on the offensive, taking the Egyptian army on a whirlwind tour of conquest ranging as far east as the former Assyrian capital at Nineveh. In Egypt Psusennes continued the task begun by his father Pinudjem, that of collecting and reburying dozens of bodies stashed throughout the Valley of the Kings, the results of a century of tomb robbery conducted by the Amun priesthood.

In due time Nebuchadnezzar recovered and took retribution. Egypt fell to the Babylonian horde. The resulting annihilation of the population had at least one fortuitous result. The slaughter and deportation of the masses also silenced the few witnesses to the mass burial of the Theban kings and priestly family members in the vicinity of Deir el Bahri. In Tanis all knowledge of the location of the tombs of Osorkon II and Psusennes II was lost. Documents buried by the priests to preserve them from the impending destruction remained hidden for two and a half millenia. Much of the knowledge we have used to rewrite the history of those eventful times was thankfully preserved.

And with that we conclude our discussion.

²⁰²See *Nebuchadnezzar & the Egyptian Exile*, chapter 1.