

# The Identity of Tirhakah

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

**T**he Tirhakah of Scriptures was not Khu-Re' Nefertem Tirhakah of Dynasty XXV of Egypt. It is true that both were Ethiopians, and that the Ethiopians controlled Egypt during the latter half of the eighth and early part of the seventh centuries B.C.E. But here the similarity ends. Historians have simply ignored the fact that Kush was ruled by a confederation of kings and that two of these kings from the same general period both carried the name Tirhakah. A close examination and analysis of the relevant ancient records reveals the existence of two Kushite kings named Tirhakah—Khu-Re' Nefertem Tirhakah and Tsawi Tirhakah Warada Nagash—one a pharaoh of Egypt and the other a king of Kush. Evidence will also show that Tsawi Tirhakah is better known under the name Snefer-Ra Piankhi.

## Tsawi Tirhakah

We begin to uncover the identity of the king named Tirhakah, the contemporary with the third campaign of King Sennacherib of Assyria in 701 B.C.E., with the following details:

First, the king list from the Ethiopian archives reveals that there was a monarch named Tsawi Tirhakah Warada Nagash who ruled Kush for 49 years.<sup>1</sup> Khu-Re' Nefertem Tirhakah, on the other hand, ruled Egypt as pharaoh for only 26 full years.<sup>2</sup> Regardless of whether we read the evidence, as Macadam does, to indicate that Nefertem Tirhakah was born around 711/710 B.C.E.,<sup>3</sup> or use the longer chronology of Kitchen,<sup>4</sup> making Nefertem 20 years old before 701 B.C.E., there is a substantial difference in the reigns of these two kings. Tsawi Tirhakah reigned over Kush 23 years longer than Nefertem Tirhakah ruled Egypt.

Second, by comparing the Ethiopian king list with other historical records, we have the dates for Tsawi Tirhakah. These records show that he reigned from 713/712 to 665/664 B.C.E. (autumn reckoning).<sup>5</sup> His last year as monarch came one year after the last year of Nefertem Tirhakah.<sup>6</sup> Even if we use the longer chronology of Kitchen, which would have Nefertem arrive in Egypt at twenty years of age in 702/701 B.C.E.,<sup>7</sup> for Nefertem Tirhakah to be Tsawi Tirhakah, he would have ascended the throne of Kush at age eleven.

1 CBN, p. 266, #xiii. See Chart E.

2 See above, Chap. VIII, pp. 87f.

3 TK, 1, pp. 18ff, n. 30.

4 TIP, pp. 154–172.

5 App. B. For the autumn reckoning see CBN, p. 263.

6 Cf. App. B with Chap. VIII, pp. 87–91.

7 TIP, pp. 164–172, 383–386.

This circumstance is not impossible but extremely unlikely since there were plenty of seasoned men and women of royal blood already ruling at the time (e.g. Shabako, Snefer-Ra Piankhi, Queen Kandake).

Third, even if Kitchen was correct in his theory that Nefertem Tirhakah gained some kind of political power in the year 702/701 B.C.E. at the age of twenty, by this date Tsawi Tirhakah would have already been in power over Kush for eleven years.

Fourth, the above theory would place Nefertem in power in Kush (as Tsawi Tirhakah) before his elder brother Shebitku gained authority in Egypt. This arrangement is impossible due to the fact that it was King Shebitku who summoned Nefertem and his other brothers out of Nubia to come to Egypt to be with him. Shebitku, being ruler of Egypt and not Kush, is in such a scenario made to be a junior king. He could hardly command such authority over another earlier king of Kush. Yet in Nefertem's inscriptions, he clearly places himself in a lesser status to Shebitku at the time he came north to be with him and never even hints to any kingly status for himself.<sup>8</sup> Further, Nefertem gained the throne of Egypt after Shebitku. None of these details would allow Nefertem to rule Kush before his brother held power in Egypt.

These different records could hardly represent the same monarch. More importantly, Tsawi Tirhakah ruled during the time of Sennacherib's third campaign. Nefertem Tirhakah did not. By the time Nefertem Tirhakah became sole Kushite ruler of Egypt's Dynasty XXV, Tsawi Tirhakah had reigned twenty-two years. In the spring of 701 B.C.E., as we have said, Tsawi Tirhakah would have already been in power for over eleven years. Since a king's early years are his most active, and his most likely for leading armies into military expeditions, the time frame of Tsawi Tirhakah perfectly matches that of the Tirhakah from Scriptures.

### **Bifurcated Dynasty**

In the Ethiopian king list, Tsawi Tirhakah follows Aksumay, Kashta, Shabako, and Queen Nicauta Kandake.<sup>9</sup> We are struck by the fact that there is no mention of Snefer-Ra Piankhi or his sons Shebitku and Khu-Re' Nefertem Tirhakah. At the same time, Nefertem Tirhakah makes an issue out of his kinship, on his mother's side, to Piankhi Alara (son of Usimare Piankhi).<sup>10</sup> Further, as we have already discussed, Alara (Aksumay) must have, in part, ruled jointly with Kashta.<sup>11</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> TK, 1, pp. 14–44. Kitchen makes an issue out of the fact that when Nefertem Tirhakah went to Egypt as a twenty year old he came north "with an army" (TK, 1, p. 15, *l.* 10; see TIP, p. 157). Obviously, the members of the royal family would be escorted from Nubia to Egypt (the roads being filled with various threats). But this circumstance does not prove that Tirhakah led that army against the Assyrians, as Kitchen would have us believe. In fact, that the text mentions the army proves just the opposite. First, it expressly states that the army belonged to "his majesty," i.e. King Shebitku (TK, 1, p. 15, *l.* 10; also see App. A). If Tirhakah was a king at that time, he would have led his own army. Second, if he had led this army against Sennacherib he most certainly would have mentioned this glorious deed in his texts. But all that the text informs us is that on the journey Tirhakah found a temple in the nome of Amun of Gempaten in poor condition. These are hardly the words of a man who had caused the army of the Assyrian king to flee.

<sup>9</sup> CBN, p. 266, #x–xiii. See Chart E.

<sup>10</sup> TK, 1, p. 16. Also see above Chap. VIII, pp. 94f, n. 78.

<sup>11</sup> See above Chap. VIII, pp. 92ff.

This evidence indicates that, at the time just before the conquest of Egypt by the Ethiopian king, Shabako, the Menelik Dynasty of Kush bifurcated. At first, the Kushite ruling house was divided between Kashta and Alara (Aksu-may). Since Kashta followed Usimare Piankhi, Alara would have most likely been placed on the throne of Kush at the time his father, Usimare Piankhi, was also seated upon the throne at Thebes (746/745 B.C.E., autumn reckoning).<sup>12</sup> Kashta received rights to the throne of Kush in the twentieth year of Usimare Piankhi's Egyptian rule, the year Usimare marched against the rebellion of Tefnakhte in Lower Egypt (727/726 B.C.E.).<sup>13</sup>

After Kashta left or retired from the throne of Kush, his rulership over Napata and Thebes was given to his son Shabako, who that same year conquered Lower Egypt (714/713 B.C.E.).<sup>14</sup> This chronology is verified by Manetho and Herodotus. Manetho gives Shabako 12 years in Egypt following the six year rule of Bekenrinf (Bocchoris).<sup>15</sup> At the same time, Herodotus begins Shabako's Egyptian reign 50 years before Psamtik took the throne in 664/663 B.C.E. Shabako's 15 year pharaohship, therefore, started in 714/713 B.C.E.<sup>16</sup> In Shabako's second year, meanwhile, he eliminated Bekenrinf, the last king of Dynasty XXIV, and assumed the sole leadership of Lower Egypt (713/712 B.C.E.).<sup>17</sup> The data shows that it was this same year that Tsawi Tirhakah assumed the throne of Kush (Chart E). Both men, as we shall demonstrate, not only were kings of Kush but ruled as kings over Egypt. Therefore, when Kashta's family established Shabako as a Pharaoh in Lower Egypt, the dominance of Kush was given into the hands of Tsawi Tirhakah.

Shabako's third year (712/711 B.C.E.), the year following Bekenrinf's sixth and last year, accordingly, is the first year for Shabako as proclaimed by Manetho. Manetho also points out that Shebitku ruled jointly with Shabako for two years before he acquired the pharaohship by himself.<sup>18</sup> The Nile Level text of Shebitku confirms that during Shebitku's third year he was raised to that throne.<sup>19</sup> Since Shabako only reigned as pharaoh for 15 years, all of these sources prove that Shabako reigned two years with Bekenrinf, 10 years alone, and 3 years jointly with Shebitku. In Shabako's fifteenth and last year, while Snefer-Ra Piankhi was ruling Napata, being the third year of Shebitku, Shebitku was raised to the throne of Egypt as chief pharaoh. After that year, the official records were no longer dated by Shabako's reign.

Another important point, even though there was a temporary dominance of Shabako in Egypt at the beginning of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, the descendants of the line of Usimare Piankhi (a legitimate pharaoh at Thebes and

<sup>12</sup> This date is arrived at by the following: Shabako began to rule Egypt 50 years prior to the death of Nekao and the year that Nekao's son, Psamtik, obtained the throne at Sais (Her., 2:138f, 152), i.e. fifty years prior to 664/663 B.C.E., being 714/713 B.C.E. Shabako's second year was also the sixth and last year of Bekenrinf (TIP, pp. 141f). Tefnakhte ruled prior to Bekenrinf for eight years (LR, 3, p. 409 V). Tefnakhte's first year was also the twenty-first year of Usimare Piankhi (TIP, pp. 139f, 142). Therefore, the first year of Usimare Piankhi at Thebes was 734/733 B.C.E.

<sup>13</sup> ARE, 4, #816–883; TIP, p. 146.

<sup>14</sup> See above Chap. VIII, pp. 92–95.

<sup>15</sup> Manetho, frags. 64–67.

<sup>16</sup> Her., 2:2:139, 152; and see above Chap. VIII, pp. 92–95.

<sup>17</sup> TIP, pp. 141f; CAH, 3, pt. 1, p. 575.

<sup>18</sup> Manetho, frag. 66, cf. frag. 67 and Eusebius, *Inter. Arm.*, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup> ARE, 4, #887. See TK, 1, p. 19; CAW, p. 82; AUSS, 4, pp. 5f.

Napata) were eventually given primary control over Egypt. Shabako remained in Egypt to assure his interest and the dominance of Kush. This bifurcation ceased after Shabako gave up Egypt and returned to Kush.<sup>20</sup> At that time, upon the demise of Tsawi Tirhakah, Urdamane, the son of Shabako, who had ruled Egypt under his father, took the throne of Kush.<sup>21</sup>

### **Different Realms**

Not only did the two Tirhakahs rule at different times, but they ruled different realms. It is true that Manetho refers to all of the kings of Dynasty XXV as “Ethiopian kings,”<sup>22</sup> but this is tempered by the fact that neither Shebitku or Nefertem Tirhakah ever ruled Kush proper. In the records of Nefertem Tirhakah, for example, he only refers to himself as “the king of Upper and Lower Egypt,” never as the king of Kush.<sup>23</sup> He also states that he was “fetched from Nubia” and “came from Nubia” to Egypt, where he later came to rule.<sup>24</sup> His claims make no sense if he was also the only king in Kush. But his words are compatible with the fact that he was an Ethiopian from Kush ruling Egypt, while someone else from his family was ruling the homeland.

To support the idea that Nefertem Tirhakah was the king of Kush proper it is pointed out that the Assyrians referred to him as the king of Egypt (Muzur, Muzri, Mizri, etc.) and Kush.<sup>25</sup> But this is a clear misrepresentation of the Assyrian definition. The term Kush, also called Meluḥḥa,<sup>26</sup> was applied by the Assyrian scribes to Upper Egypt. Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal, for example, both claimed that they invaded and conquered Kush/Meluḥḥa.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, the Assyrian records reveal that they never drove further south than Thebes (Ni), the capital of Upper Egypt.<sup>28</sup> In fact, Thebes, the capital of Upper and Lower Egypt, is said in the Assyrian records to be the capital of Muzri and Kush.<sup>29</sup> Napata was the capital of Kush proper,<sup>30</sup> not Thebes (cf. Map 2). Thebes was the capital of all Egypt during this Ethiopian period.

George Smith, likewise, concludes that Kush “appears in the Assyrian inscriptions to include part of Upper Egypt as well as Ethiopia; for although Esarhaddon’s conquests did not extend higher than Thebes, he is said to have

<sup>20</sup> Shabako gave up Egypt the year that Psamtik I came to the throne (Herodotus, 2:152). This was the same year that Assurbanipal invaded Egypt and drove all the way to Thebes (ARAB, 2, #770–778, 844–846, 900–907; ANET, pp. 294–297), i.e. his second campaign in 663 B.C.E.

<sup>21</sup> That Urdamane was the son of Shabako and followed Nefertem Tirhakah on the throne of Egypt see ANET, p. 295 (ii). That Urdamane later followed Tsawi Tirhakah on the throne of Kush see CBN, p. 266, #xiii–xiv; and see Chart E.

<sup>22</sup> Manetho, frags. 66–67.

<sup>23</sup> TK, 1, pp. 4–41; ARE, 4, #888, 895, 918.

<sup>24</sup> TK, 1, p. 15, l. 8, p. 28, l. 13.

<sup>25</sup> Esarhaddon refers to Nefertem Tirhakah as “the king of Egypt and Kush” before driving him out of Memphis (ARAB, 2, #580). Assurbanipal calls him the “king of Egypt and Kush” when he names Tirhakah in his records dealing with the Assyrian invasion against “Egypt and Kush” (ARAB, 2, #770, 771, 875).

<sup>26</sup> HA, p. 48; cf. ARAB, 2, #568, 770, 875.

<sup>27</sup> ARAB, 2, #571, 710, 770–771, 778, 846, 892, 901, where Assurbanipal states his objective was to drive Tirhakah out of both Egypt and Kush, which he equates with Memphis (Lower Egypt) and Thebes (Upper Egypt), 939, 944.

<sup>28</sup> Accomplished by Assurbanipal in his second campaign (663 B.C.E.), see ANET, p. 295 (ii); ARAB, 2 #776–778, 900–906.

<sup>29</sup> ANET, p. 295, n. 12.

<sup>30</sup> CAH, 3, pp. 268, 313; CAH, 3, pt. 1, p. 570; EP, p. 335.

conquered both Muzur and Kush."<sup>31</sup> The definition used by Esarhaddon, that he conquered "Muzri, Patursu and Kush"<sup>32</sup> (Patursu being the regular name applied to Upper Egypt), despite the fact that he never actually reached further south than the districts of Thebes, is merely the Assyrian way of dividing Egypt into Lower, Middle, and Upper Egypt—divisions which have long been applied to that country. Middle Egypt, a district normally included by the Egyptians in their definition of Upper Egypt (Patursu), represented all of Patursu for the Assyrians.

Indeed, the Assyrian king, Esarhaddon, called himself the "king of the kings of Muzri, Patursu and Kush."<sup>33</sup> Yet, when Assurbanipal, whose Egyptian conquests went farther than that of his father Esarhaddon, lists these subkings of "Egypt and Kush, which my father had conquered," he only mentions those cities located in Lower, Middle, and Upper Egypt—and then only cities as far south as Thebes.<sup>34</sup>

The Assyrian definition of Upper Egypt as Kush arose because that part of Egypt was then under direct Kushite control. This definition also helped aggrandize the deeds of the Assyrian kings, making it appear as if their conquest included the land of Kush proper.<sup>35</sup> In fact, no foreign power outside of Egypt had conquered any part of Kush proper until that feat was accomplished years later by the Persian monarch Cambyses in 525 B.C.E. The Assyrian definition of Kush, therefore, is not to be confused with the Scriptural definition of Kush, which, as supported by the LXX, Josephus, and other ancient Jewish writers, is applied only to the regions south of Syene (modern Aswan) and the first cataract.<sup>36</sup> When the Assyrian scribes said that Nefertem Tirhakah was king of Muzri (Egypt) and Kush, it is certain that they meant

<sup>31</sup> HA, p. 48.

<sup>32</sup> ARAB, 2, #575, 710, 758; ANET, p. 290.

<sup>33</sup> ARAB, 2, #583.

<sup>34</sup> ANET, p. 294; ARAB, 2, #771. Also see Map 2.

<sup>35</sup> Assyrian geography often reinterpreted boundaries to give the impression of a greater conquest. Their use of the term Khatti-land (Hatti-land, Khitti-land, etc.), which properly belongs to central and western Asia Minor, to designate Syria-Palestine is well-known. Another example, one relating to Egypt, is the Assyrian reference to the Wadi el-Arish, located south of Raphia (called Rapihu, Rapihu, etc. in the Assyrian inscriptions) and near Arzani, as the "River of Egypt" and the "border of Egypt." Sargon's defeat of an Egyptian force at Raphia, to demonstrate, is framed as a defeat of his foes and as conquering as far as the "borders of Egypt" and the "river of Egypt" (cf. ARAB, 2, #18, 54f, 82, 92, 96–99, 118, 515, 529, 550, 557, 712). Esarhaddon even mocks this definition, stating that Raphia is by the river of Egypt, "where there is no river" (ARAB, 2, #557), the wadi often being dry.

It is true that during Sargon's period the Wadi el-Arish was considered by the Egyptians as their empire border with their Asiatic neighbors, but it is certainly not the border of Egypt proper. This honor belonged to the Shihor arm of the Nile (Gihon, Yaur) river and its Bubastis mouth, near the city of Pelusium. The Shihor was understood even by the Israelites as the river, border, and gateway into Egypt (e.g. cf. Gen., 15:18, with Philo, *Gen.*, 3:16; Josh., 13:2–3; Jer., 2:18 [& LXX]; Isa., 23:3; 1 Chron., 13:15 [& LXX]; 2 Kings, 24:7 and Jos., *Antiq.*, 10:6:1; Jos., *Wars*, 4:10:5; Yashar, 10:21–22, 15:1–3, 8; Gen. Apoc., 19:11–14; Diodorus, 15:42, 18:6; and so forth; also cf. Gen., 2:13, with LXX; Gen. Apoc., 21:15, 17f; Philo, *Leg. All.*, 1:19, 21, 27; Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:1:3).

<sup>36</sup> The LXX translates the name Kush found in the MT text as Ethiopia: e.g. Gen., 2:13; 4 Kings, 19:9 (cf. MT 2 Kings, 19:9); Esther, 8:9; Job, 28:19, Ps., 86:4 (cf. MT Ps., 87:4); Isa., 18:1, 20:3, 5, 37:9, 43:3, 45:14; Ezek., 29:10, 30:4, 38:5; Nah., 3:9; Zeph., 3:10. Josephus, likewise, states that those called by the Hebrews "Kushites" are by others called "Ethiopians" (Jos., *Antiq.*, 1:6:2). Thebes (Noa, Noa Ammon, Ammon, Diospolis, etc.), meanwhile, is described in the Hebrew and LXX texts, as well as in the works of Josephus, as located in Mizraim (Egypt), see Jer., 46:25 (LXX Jer., 26:25, Ammon); Ezek., 30:13–19 (LXX Diospolis); Nah., 3:8 (LXX Ammon); Jos., *Wars*,

only Lower and Upper Egypt, the same definition applied by Nefertem Tirhakah to himself.

Accordingly, the pharaohship of Nefertem Tirhakah of Egypt presents a problem. If the scribes of Scriptures anachronistically meant that the Tirhakah who opposed Sennacherib was the pharaoh of Egypt by that name, they should have more properly labeled him “the king of Egypt,” or at least “the king of Egypt and Kush.” In Scriptures, to demonstrate, Shabako is called “Sua the king of Egypt,”<sup>37</sup> though the Lucianic recension of the LXX substitutes with “Adrammelech the Ethiopian, living in Egypt.”<sup>38</sup> Indeed, “the king of Egypt” is how the Greek writers referred to Shabako, the uncle of Nefertem Tirhakah, a known Ethiopian king who ruled Egypt as pharaoh during this period.<sup>39</sup> The Tirhakah of Scriptures, on the other hand, is only referred to as the “king of Kush.”<sup>40</sup> Tsawi Tirhakah, in conformity, is listed as the king of Kush proper.<sup>41</sup>

Next, Josephus remarks that, “Tharsikēn (Tirhakah), the king of Ethiopia, was coming to the aid of the Egyptians with a large force and had decided to make the journey through the desert and fall upon the Assyrians

7:10:1, *Antiq.*, 11:8:6, *Apion*, 1:14. At the same time, Ezek., 29:10, and Jos., *Wars*, 4:10:5, both state that Kush (Ethiopia) laid south of Syene (Aswan), Egypt. The country of Kush, as described in Scriptures, therefore, started at the first cataract, well over 120 miles south of Thebes. It should not go unnoticed that the Israelites referred to Upper and Lower Egypt by the plural Mizraim (SEC, #4714), i.e. the two Mizri (cf. SEC, #4693). The Assyrians, meanwhile, only named Muzri, indicating only one of the two regions. Kush/Meluhha became their designation for Upper Egypt.

<sup>37</sup> 2 Kings, 17:4. The identification of Sua with Shabako derives from the following details: King Sua was in alliance with Hosea, the king of Israel, during the latter’s sixth and seventh years (2 Kings, 17:4), i.e. 713/712 and 712/711 B.C.E., spring reckoning. These dates are established by the fact that the fourth and sixth years of Hezekiah equal the seventh and ninth years of Hosea (2 Kings, 18:9f) (also see below n. 38). In the Lucianic recensions of the Septuagint, “Sua, king of Egypt” is substituted with “Adrammelech the Ethiopian, living in Egypt.” Sua, therefore, was a Kushite living and ruling in Egypt. The chronology of Shabako also supports this connection. Shabako ruled Egypt from 714/713–700/699 B.C.E., autumn reckoning, precisely at the time Hosea was in alliance with Sua.

Next, the Hebrew spelling, שׂוֹא (Sua, So), easily complies as the short form of the Egyptian name Shaba-ko (i.e. *Shaua-ko*: *b = u*). This connection is supported by Josephus (*Antiq.*, 9:14:1), who renders the name Σώαν (*Soan*), and by the transliterations found in the LXX texts, Σωά (*Soa*), Σωβά (*Soba*), and Σηγώρ (*Segor*) (Marcus, *Jos.*, vi, p. 146, n. a). Σωβά (*Soba*) is certainly Shaba and Σηγώρ (*Segor*) is a rough attempt at Sua-ko(r) = Shaba-ko.

Sua was originally believed to be Shabako (cf. CAH, 3, pp. 275f) but was later rejected for an identification with Sib’e, the assumed name of an Egyptian *turtānu* found in the Assyrian records. The reading “Sib’e,” though, was an error and is now known to be “Re’e,” so this association has lost all possibility (CAH, 3, pt. 1, pp. 575f). The only other objection has been chronological, based upon the dating of Hosea. With regard to this issue of dating Hosea, it can be verified beyond any doubt that Hosea’s reign began in 718 B.C.E., not earlier as often assumed. For the dating of Hosea, the king of Israel, see our forthcoming text entitled *Israelite Chronology*.

<sup>38</sup> CAH, 3, p. 275. The dates for Hosea (718/717–710/709 B.C.E., spring reckoning), who (according to 2 Kings, 17:4–6 and 18:9) was contemporary with Sua during the former’s sixth and seventh years (713/712 and 712/711 B.C.E.), are proven by the chronological statement in 2 Kings, 18:9f, and in our forthcoming book entitled *Israelite Chronology*. This chronology reflects the fact that Hosea entered into his conspiracy with Shabako the very year that Shabako killed Bekenrinf of D. XXIV and took total control of Lower Egypt.

<sup>39</sup> For example, for Shabako as king of Egypt see Diodorus, 1:65, Manetho, frag. 66–67. Herodotus (2:137), referring to the time that Shabako invaded Lower Egypt, calls him the “king of Ethiopia,” which is in conformity with the Ethiopian list, declaring him a king of Kush. The expression found in the works of Manetho’s transmitters, referring to the three kings of Dynasty XXV as “three Ethiopian kings,” i.e. kings of Egypt from Ethiopia,” on the other hand, does not say that the last two (Shebitku and Nefertem Tirhakah) ever ruled Ethiopia proper, only Egypt.

<sup>40</sup> 2 Kings, 19:9; Isa., 37:9.

<sup>41</sup> CBN, p. 266.

suddenly."<sup>42</sup> If Sennacherib was fighting against Egypt, and Tirhakah was Pharaoh of Egypt, why would it be said that he was coming to aid the Egyptians? Would he not be coming to his own aid?

Another consideration is that, although their homeland was Kush, there is little evidence that the first two Ethiopians of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty (Shabako and Shebitku, the uncle and brother of Khu-Re' Nefertem Tirhakah) ever spent much time in their homeland. Egyptologist Alan Gardiner notes:

Considering the combined length of these two reigns, it is strange how seldom the names of Shabako and Shebitku are encountered. Apart from the pyramids at Kurru where they were buried and from a horse-cemetery in the same place, their Nubian home has hardly a trace of them to show.<sup>43</sup>

The lack of records from Nubia indicate that the main influence of the Dynasty XXV pharaohs was in Egypt and not Kush. For instance, because of the lack of records from Shebitku's reign, Petrie concludes:

Not a single fact of his [Shebitku's] history is recorded. It seems not improbable that he was only the viceroy of Lower and Middle Egypt, which he may have ruled while his aunt Amenardus held Thebes, and his uncle Pankhy II. reigned at Napata.<sup>44</sup>

Though it is now known that Shebitku was the son and not the nephew of Snefer-Ra Piankhi (Petrie's Pankhy II),<sup>45</sup> Petrie introduces an important point. At the very time that Shabako and then Shebitku were ruling Egypt, Snefer-Ra Piankhi, the father of Shebitku and Nefertem, was ruling from Napata, the capital of Kush proper. According to the Ethiopian king list, it was Tsawi Tirhakah. This timing is our first direct indication that Tsawi Tirhakah and Snefer-Ra were one and the same person.

Though Shabako was a king of Kush who conquered Middle and Lower Egypt for himself, his conquests occurred during his first and second year. He spent the rest of his 50 year reign in the country of Egypt.<sup>46</sup> Shebitku, like his brother Nefertem Tirhakah, is not listed in the Ethiopian archives as a king of Kush. He too spent his entire reign in Egypt. During their Egyptian rule it was Snefer-Ra Piankhi who governed Kush.

When Nefertem Tirhakah became sole monarch after the death of Shebitku, his records increased somewhat in Kush.<sup>47</sup> But these are primarily religious

---

<sup>42</sup> Jos, *Antiq.*, 10:1:4(17).

<sup>43</sup> EP, pp. 342f

<sup>44</sup> AHOE, 3, p. 287.

<sup>45</sup> JEA, 35, p. 147, #69; EP, p. 450.

<sup>46</sup> Herodotus, 2:139f, 152.

<sup>47</sup> TK, 1, pp. 4-44; and see the list in AHOE, 3, pp. 294f. These show that the overwhelming portions of Tirhakah's inscriptions were in Egypt and not Kush. Those in Kush are found in Lower or northern Kush.

dedications, which are to be expected from the priestly position of an Ethiopian acting in the role of a Kushite king in Egypt. They show no more than a required appearance to the shrines and temples of his homeland, especially at the time when his father, Snefer-Ra Piankhi, was aging and less able to serve in his priestly functions. We also know that Nefertem Tirhakah was forced back to Thebes, and eventually even to Nubia, by the Assyrian military power of Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal.<sup>48</sup> Yet even in these inscriptions, as we shall see, not all of the records found in Egypt and Kush presently attributed to Khu-Re' Nefertem Tirhakah actually belonged to him.

### **Different Kings**

These details indicate that someone else was dominating Kush during the years that Dynasty XXV ruled Egypt. This other Kushite king is reflected in the king list from the Nubian archives (Chart E). The kings of Kush and the Kushite kings ruling Egypt, therefore, would have been in confederation, part of a family system wherein certain members of the royal clan held power as pharaohs in Egypt while others handled the affairs at home (though these too held some authority over parts of Egypt, especially Thebes).

According to the Ethiopian archive list, Shabako ruled Kush for 12 years and held the throne there before Tsawi Tirhakah came to power.<sup>49</sup> Herodotus similarly writes that Shabako was the king of Ethiopia when he conquered Egypt.<sup>50</sup> References to "Year 1" of Shabako in Egypt are wholly missing, though there are several for years "2" and "3."<sup>51</sup> This fact indicates that it was late in Shabako's first year as a king of Kush that he conquered Lower Egypt. During Shabako's second year as pharaoh (713/712 B.C.E.), he took full control over Lower Egypt by killing Bekenrinf (Bocchoris), the last king of Dynasty XXIV.<sup>52</sup> In that same year Tsawi Tirhakah started his rule in Kush. Likewise, Shabako's fifty years of dominance over Egypt ended the same year that Tsawi Tirhakah ended his rule over Kush (665/664 B.C.E.).

Shabako's connection with Tsawi Tirhakah is demonstrated in yet another way. In the Ethiopian archive list Shabako is given 12 years. The last three years of his 15 year pharaohship of Egypt is not considered. The dates for Shabako and Tsawi Tirhakah, meanwhile, are both firmly grounded. When we lay their chronologies alongside one another, we find that Shabako is no longer considered a king of Kush in the year 702/701 B.C.E., autumn reckoning (Charts C & E). This was the year that Shabako suffered his humiliating defeat at the hands of Sennacherib in the battle at Eltekeh. It was the same year that Tirhakah of Kush came out against Sennacherib, forcing the Assyrian king to flee. The combination of Shabako's defeat and Tirhakah's victory is therefore reflected by Tsawi Tirhakah becoming the sole monarch of Kush.

<sup>48</sup> ARAB, 2, #554–559, 563f, 575, 580, 582–585, 710, 770–778, 844–846, 875, 892, 900–907, 939, 944, 1117. When Assurbanipal sacked Thebes in 663 B.C.E., Nefertem Tirhakah is said to have fled to Kipkipi (ARAB, 2, #777; ANET, p. 295), a city in Nubia (CAH, 3, p. 185), and very probably the Assyrian name for Napata, the capital of Kush proper.

<sup>49</sup> CBN, p. 266, #xi–xiii.

<sup>50</sup> Herodotus, 2:137.

<sup>51</sup> TIP, p. 142.

<sup>52</sup> Manetho, Frag. 66–67; TIP, pp. 141f; CAH, 3, pt. 1, p. 575.

We must now consider Queen Nicaute Kandake, mentioned in the Ethiopian archive list between Shabako and Tsawi Tirhakah. She most certainly represents the daughter of Kashta, a queen named Amenirdis (Amonortais, Amenardus, etc.), who became a “deity’s wife,” and was “to all intents and purposes the equal of the king her father.”<sup>53</sup> Though in the Ethiopian archives she is listed as ruling Kush after Shabako, in reality, she was at first the contemporary of her father Kashta.<sup>54</sup> Her ten year rule in Kush (723/722 to 714/713 B.C.E.) exactly fills the gap between Aksumay (Alara) and Tsawi Tirhakah. Her rule over Kush ended the same year that Shabako conquered Lower Egypt. At that time, Nicaute (Amenirdis) obtained authority in the Theban principality, appointed there by her brother, Snefer-Ra Piankhi. There she came to live and later died.<sup>55</sup>

These details indicate that Amenirdis set aside her Kushite throne in order to concentrate on her duties in the Thebaid province when Snefer-Ra came to power. According to the Ethiopian king list, this circumstance left Tsawi Tirhakah to rule Kush proper, though for his first eleven years Shabako technically shared the title with him. We also know that Shebitku, Amenirdis and Piankhi all reigned together.<sup>56</sup> These records demonstrate that all three were contemporaries at the time that Shebitku held authority in Lower and Middle Egypt.

At the same time, Shabako’s eldest son, Harmakhet, never became king, though he did serve in various high offices under Nefertem Tirhakah and Ta-Nuat-Amun.<sup>57</sup> Yet later, after the death of Nefertem Tirhakah in 666/665, Urdamane, another son of Shabako, came to the throne.<sup>58</sup> Nefertem Tirhakah, being the son of Snefer-Ra Piankhi, therefore, belonged to the next generation after Shabako and Tsawi Tirhakah.

This evidence would indicate that Tsawi Tirhakah was not only from the same generation as Shabako but that he was connected in some way with Shabako and Amenirdis. Snefer-Ra Piankhi was the brother of Shabako and Amenirdis and was the contemporary of both, as well as the with the reign of his son Shebitku.<sup>59</sup> When we combine these circumstances with the fact that, according to the information from the Ethiopian list, Tsawi Tirhakah ruled Kush during the same period as Shabako and Shebitku in Egypt, we have another strong indication that Tsawi Tirhakah was Snefer-Ra Piankhi.

---

<sup>53</sup> EP, p. 343; AHOE, 3, pp. 288f.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.; AUSS, 4, p. 3.

<sup>55</sup> Kitchen correctly concludes that, just because Amenirdis names her father (Kashta) in her inscriptions, it does not prove that Kashta installed her in Thebes. He believes this act was carried out by her brother Snefer-Ra Piankhi (TIP, p. 151 and n. 289). In fact, both details are correct. Amenirdis at first ruled with her father in Kush. Therefore, most Egyptologists are correct in assuming that the inscriptions of Amenirdis, which mention Kashta, demonstrate some sort of co-regency. No doubt Kashta continued to live for a time after his 13 years of official rule. But it also seems correct that it was Snefer-Ra Piankhi who installed her at Thebes after he came to power. Kitchen’s view, therefore, would seem supported by the Ethiopian king list. Neither should we ignore the possibility that both Kashta and Snefer-Ra supported her at Thebes.

<sup>56</sup> E.g. see AHOE, 3, pp. 287–291.

<sup>57</sup> TK, 1, p. 124.

<sup>58</sup> ANET, p. 295 (ii).

<sup>59</sup> JEA, 35, p. 146, #61, 149; EP, p. 450; TIP, p. 478; and see Chart D.

## The Empire of Tsawi Tirhakah

No one has considered the ramifications arising from the fact that Sennacherib retreated from his war against Egypt when he heard that Tirhakah of Kush was coming out. No battle was ever fought. With such a powerful army at Tirhakah's disposal and with the Assyrian army of Sennacherib in full retreat, the King Tirhakah of Kush who came against Sennacherib would have been presented with an excellent opportunity for conquest. Yet, the records of Nefertem Tirhakah of Dynasty XXV make no mention of any great or important conquest outside of Egypt. Nefertem Tirhakah, whose records demonstrate that he sought the most insignificant events in his reign to brag about, would certainly not have missed the opportunity to mention such a great victory in these records.

Nevertheless, a record of great military conquest of northern Africa and western Asia was left to us by an Ethiopian king named Tirhakah. At Medinet-Habu (the Pylon of the Ethiopians) we read that a king named Tirhakah claimed to have conquered Tamit (Egypt), Teshet (the desert), and Tapa.<sup>60</sup> Why would Khu-Re' Nefertem Tirhakah claim conquest of Egypt? He was the designated heir to the Egyptian throne of his brother Shebitku. But the record does make sense for an Ethiopian king who came to control Egypt as the result of the failure of Pharaoh Shabako to defend that country against the Assyrian army of Sennacherib.

Next, Egyptologists were amazed to find a long list of captured cities written on the base of a statue found at Karnak which belonged to a king named Tirhakah.<sup>61</sup> Each city represents the greater region under the control of this king. This record not only states that a king named Tirhakah controlled Ethiopia, Egypt, and northern Africa, but it claims that he had some sort of sovereignty over Tunip (Upper Syria, west of the Euphrates),<sup>62</sup> Qadesh (Lower Syria/Palestine),<sup>63</sup> and the Shasu (region of Edom and the

<sup>60</sup> MH, p. 9.

<sup>61</sup> KETA, Plate 45a; ETL, p. 187, List xxxvi. Mariette-Bey (KETA, pp. 66f), followed by Petrie (AHOE, 3, p. 297) and others, thought this list from Tirhakah was copied from an identical one found on a colossus which they believed belonged to Ramesses the Great (cf. KETA, Plate 38f). This colossus was identified with Ramesses II because his name was found inscribed upon it. Yet the style and the execution of the colossus "are rather different from those of the period of Ramesses II" (ETL, p. 52). Simons concludes from this evidence that the colossus, together with the pylon itself, was originally built by Haremhab and first inscribed by him. A later inscription was added by Ramesses II (ETL, p. 52, cf. p. 135). Because the above inscription, which is identical to the one belonging to Tirhakah, bears no resemblance to any produced by either Ramesses II or Haremhab, it is highly probable that this secondary inscription was composed by Tsawi Tirhakah, who viewed himself as a great conqueror like Ramesses II. He simply emulated his predecessor, placing his own record of conquest on a monument alongside that of Ramesses II.

<sup>62</sup> For the location of the city of Tunip, located north of Aleppo, see AEO, 1, pp. 179f.

<sup>63</sup> Since all of the regions are named after important capital cities and regional names, there are at least four possibilities for Qadesh (Sacred Place). Besides Qadesh on the Orontes, there is a Qadesh in northern Israel, called Qadesh of Naphtali (Judges, 4:6; Josh, 19:37, 20:7, 21:32; 1 Chron., 6:76), and another city of Qadesh (Kadutis) named in Herodotus, 2:159. The city mentioned in Herodotus is identified by modern day historians with either Gaza or Jerusalem.

The Qadesh (Sacred Place) at question may not be Qadesh on the Orontes, for it might conflict with the context of the geographical statement given by Tirhakah (Qadesh on the Orontes also lying in Upper Syria, south of Tunip). Qadesh of Naphtali is also eliminated because it ceased to be an important city after the deportation of the Israelites from that region several years before Tsawi Tirhakah came to power. These details bring us to the Qadesh mentioned by Herodotus.

THE NEAR EAST: 701 B.C.E.



Trans-Jordan),<sup>64</sup> as far north as Arzawa (western Asia Minor),<sup>65</sup> Khatti (eastern Asia Minor),<sup>66</sup> and Naharin (western Mesopotamia),<sup>67</sup> and as far east as Assur (Assyria)<sup>68</sup> and Sinagar (Babylonia).<sup>69</sup>

These conquests clearly do not reflect the political history of Khu-Re' Nefertem Tirhakah of Dynasty XXV.<sup>70</sup> Because these conquests were unhistorical for Nefertem Tirhakah, the inscription was branded by the noted Egyptologist E. A. Wallis Budge as an "example of the worthlessness, historically, of such lists."<sup>71</sup> Petrie concludes that "Taharqa was as much ruler of Qadesh and

The Qadesh of Herodotus is identified by several present-day historians as Gaza, based upon a similar form of the name used by Herodotus (e.g. Godley, *Herodotus*, i, p. 473, n. 2; HH, 1, p. 411, n. 2, 2, p. 208, n. 2, p. 334, n. 7). But a closer look indicates that this Qadesh is Jerusalem, the main center of political power in Lower Syria during the time of Sennacherib's third campaign. Not only is Jerusalem referred to as Qadesh (Sacred) in Scriptures (e.g. Neh., 11:1, 18; Isa., 52:1, 66:20; Ezek., 45:1-4; Dan., 9:16, 24), and Judah called the Qadesh land (e.g. Zech., 2:12), but, as Rennel accurately concluded some years ago (GSH, 1, p. 324, 2, p. 362), the records of Herodotus show that he also called the region of Judaea and its capital city Qadesh. Herodotus states that the city and country of Kadutis (Qadesh, see GSH, 1, p. 324) was located south of Phoenicia, that it belonged to the "Syrians of Palestine," and that it was about the size of the city of Sardis (Herodotus, 3:5). At the same time, he elsewhere refers to the Jews, who practice circumcision, as "the Syrians of Palestine" (Ibid., 2:104). The size of the city by itself clearly points to Jerusalem, the only major city of any size during the time of Herodotus. (Those who hold that Gaza is meant, on the basis that the word Kadutis in Herodotus is similar to the Egyptian word *G'-d'-y* [i.e. Gaza] seem not to have considered these factors).

Herodotus further states that the main road to Egypt ran from Phoenicia as far as "the borders of the city of Kadutis (Qadesh)," after which it passed to the city of Ienysus and the seaports belonging to the Arabians (Herodotus, 3:6). The region of Qadesh (Jerusalem) was named after its chief city, as the regions of Samaria, Babylonia, and Damascus were named after their capitals (i.e. city-states). The description of this road to Egypt is accurate. The main highway (the Palestim road) made its way south along the coast, passing along the coastal borders of Judaea before continuing through Palestia and then on into Egypt.

Herodotus also tells the story of how Pharaoh Nekao of Egypt defeated the Syrians (Jews of Syria) at Magdolum (Megiddo) and then obtained the "great Syrian city of Kadutis (Qadesh)" (Herodotus, 2:159). In Scriptures Nekao's victory at Megiddo was followed by the submission of Jerusalem (2 Kings, 23:29-35; 2 Chron., 35:20-36:4), which once again confirms the identity of Kadutis (Qadesh) with Jerusalem. Neither should we forget that the Ethiopian ruling house believed that they were connected by bloodline from King Solomon of Jerusalem (Kebra Nagast). At the same time, during the days of Tirhakah, Judah was a close ally of the Ethiopians. There would be a natural tendency of the Kushite leaders to allow the Judahite definition of their city and country as Qadesh, the Sacred Place.

In either case, whether the Qadesh of Tirhakah's inscription stands for Qadesh on the Orontes, Jerusalem, or Gaza, it represents Syria-Palestine.

<sup>64</sup> The Shasu were Edomites (ARE, 3, #636-638, "the tribes of the Shasu of Edom"). They dominated Arabia Petraea, the Trans-Jordan, and they were themselves positioned southeast of the Dead Sea. The Shasu, therefore, represented the southernmost of the Asiatic conquest.

<sup>65</sup> For the location of the Arzawa lands see GHE, pp. 83-100, and map 1.

<sup>66</sup> For the location of the Khatti lands see GHE, pp. 1-31, and map 1.

<sup>67</sup> For the location of Naharin country see AEO, 1, pp. 171-180.

<sup>68</sup> That Assur is Assyria, east of Naharin, see AEO, 1, pp. 191-194.

<sup>69</sup> That Sinagar is Babylonia see AEO, 1, pp. 209-212.

<sup>70</sup> Nefertem Tirhakah's career largely consisted of fighting with Assyria over possession of Lower Egypt and then Upper Egypt. There is a record demonstrating an alliance between a "Tirhakah of Kush" with the king of Tyre during the tenth year of Esarhaddon (ARAB, 2, #554-556). Yet the very fact that this Tirhakah is only called the king of Kush (the Assyrian definition of Upper Egypt) at a time when Nefertem Tirhakah was also pharaoh of Lower Egypt suggests that this might well be Tsawi Tirhakah. Nefertem Tirhakah's role in neighboring Syria and Palestine was almost negligible, as demonstrated by those inscriptions which can clearly be identified with him. As Gardiner points out, "Tahark\`a was nothing loath to publicize his fortunes and his achievements" (EP, p. 344). Nevertheless, these important inscriptions say nothing of any conquests or alliances outside of Egypt (e.g. TK, 1, 4-44).

<sup>71</sup> HE, 6, p. 157.

Naharaina as George II. was king of France, though officially so called."<sup>72</sup>

Despite the fact that these inscriptions are presently shunned, the ancient Greek records actually confirm them. Strabo speaks of a great king named "Tearko the Ethiopian,"<sup>73</sup> Tearko being the Greek form of the name Tirhakah.<sup>74</sup> Tearko, he states, had led one of the great expeditions of the ancient world which were not "matters of off-hand knowledge to everybody."<sup>75</sup> He lists the great kings of such expeditions as "Madys the Scythian, Tearko the Ethiopian, Cobus the Treran, Sesostris and Psammethichus the Egyptians, and the Persians from Cyrus to Xerxes."<sup>76</sup> In another place, Strabo, citing Megasthenes, defines how far Tearko conquered:

However, Sesostris, the Egyptian, he (Megasthenes) adds, and Tearko (Tirhakah) the Ethiopian advanced as far as Europe; and Nabocodroser (Nebuchadnezzar), who enjoyed greater repute among the Chaldeans than Heracles, led an army even as far as the Pillars (Gibraltar and Jebel Musa). Thus far, he says, also Tearko went; and Sesostris also led his army from Iberia to Thrace and the Pontus.<sup>77</sup>

Unable to distinguish between the two Tirhakahs, many historians have become puzzled by this evidence. Budge comments:

Curiously enough, Tirhakah obtained the reputation of being a great traveller and conqueror, and Strabo, under the name of 'Tearko the Ethiopian,' mentions him . . . as one whose expeditions were not generally known.<sup>78</sup>

Once we recognize that we are dealing with two different kings, both named Tirhakah, all the facts fit into place. The Tirhakah who came against Sennacherib and from whom Sennacherib retreated in fear was a powerful king of Kush whose resulting empire claimed to have authority that extended across north Africa, Asia Minor as far as the Aegean Sea (therefore, bordering upon Europe), all of Palestine-Syria, Mesopotamia, Assyria, and Babylonia.

---

<sup>72</sup> AHOE, 3, p. 297.

<sup>73</sup> Strabo, 1:3:21, 15:1:6.

<sup>74</sup> HE, 6, p. 157.

<sup>75</sup> Strabo, 1:3:21.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Strabo, 15:1:6.

<sup>78</sup> HE, 6, p. 157. Budge denies the testimony that Tirhakah conquered as far west as the Pillars of Hercules because it is tied in with the statement that Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon did likewise. Based upon the idea that there are no records claiming that Nebuchadnezzar went this far, he concludes that neither did Tirhakah. Budge is in error. First, there is supportive evidence that Nebuchadnezzar (by utilizing the Phocaeian navy) did conquer regions along the Mediterranean Sea as far west as Spain. Josephus (*Antiq.*, 10:11:1), for example, citing Megasthenes, states that Nebuchadnezzar "subdued the greater part of Libya (Africa) and Iberia (Spain)." Old records further testify that Nebuchadnezzar ruled Spain for 9 years (RG, p. 697; UH, 18, p. 512). Second, the records of Tsawi Tirhakah accommodate the fact that his domain stretched across northern Africa to tribes who would have extended to the Pillars on the African side (KETA, Plate 45a; ETL, p. 187, List XXXVI). There is no reason, therefore, not to accept the record provided by Strabo.

Tsawi Tirhakah's rule in Kush began many years prior to that of Nefertem Tirhakah of Egypt's Dynasty XXV. His vast empire was very likely short-lived—the Assyrians, for example, having quickly regrouped and reconquered Babylonia the next year (700/699 B.C.E.). Nonetheless, it was notable and still recognized by ancient writers centuries later. Nefertem Tirhakah, meanwhile, appears not to have extended his realm beyond Egypt.

### Tirhakah Piankhi

All the evidence so far points to the probability that Tsawi Tirhakah of the Ethiopian list of Kushite kings is the same person as Snefer-Ra Piankhi. It certainly explains why Snefer-Ra Piankhi's name is not found in the Ethiopian list and why in his place is given Tsawi Tirhakah. Tsawi's long reign of 49 years over Kush also establishes him as a different king from Nefertem Tirhakah of Egypt. Snefer-Ra Piankhi's "30 plus x years" over Thebes<sup>79</sup> fits well with the fact that the Tirhakah of Scriptures brought Egypt under his sway in 701 B.C.E. and that Tsawi Tirhakah's last year of rulership was in 664 B.C.E., i.e. a total of 38 years of domination over Upper Egypt.

Tsawi's dates, likewise, place him in the same generation as Shabako and Amenirdis. Further, Tsawi Tirhakah ruled Kush, just as the Tirhakah of Scriptures and Snefer-Ra Piankhi did. Both Tsawi and Piankhi also ruled at the time of Sennacherib's third campaign. Nefertem Tirhakah of Egypt, on the other hand, is never counted as the king of Kush proper and his Egyptian rule took place years after Sennacherib's attack on Judah.

Fortunately, we have verification of this identity. It is found on a unique scarab located in the collection of John Ward (see Fig. 1). This scarab has been a source of puzzlement for Egyptologists for only one reason: they refused to recognize that Snefer-Ra Piankhi was also known as Tirhakah. The inscription with a double cartouch reads:

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Tirhakah, Son of  
Ra, Piankhi.<sup>80</sup>

Unable to believe the inscription, Petrie concluded that it must indicate the co-regency of Nefertem Tirhakah and Snefer-Ra Piankhi.<sup>81</sup> But the inscription cannot mean this, for in that case Piankhi would also be designated as "king." Another view, expressed by Ward himself, suggested that Tirhakah had placed "his wife's family title beside his own."<sup>82</sup> Ward based this idea on the belief that Nefertem Tirhakah

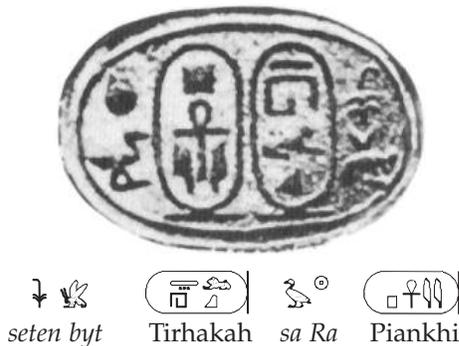


Fig. 1. Scarab of Tirhakah Piankhi

<sup>79</sup> British Museum no. 6640; TIP, p. 152 and n. 292. Also see above Chap. VIII, pp. 94f.

<sup>80</sup> PSBA, 22, pp. 386–401, pl. vii, #54.

<sup>81</sup> AHOE, 3, p. 290.

<sup>82</sup> PSBA, 23, p. 27; cf. above n. 80.

was not of royal blood. Ward's premise is now known to be incorrect. Further, it is discredited by the fact that nowhere else can one find an example of an Egyptian or Kushite king placing the cartouch belonging to either his wife's or his own family alongside that of his own.

On the other hand, we have numerous examples of a Kushite king referring to himself by both his *seten byt* (King of Upper and Lower Egypt) name and his *sa Ra* (Son of Ra) name. The following are important examples of this combination:

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Neferke-Ra, Son of Ra, [Shabako].<sup>83</sup>

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Beke-Re, Son of Ra, Ta-Nuat-Amun.<sup>84</sup>

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, 'Nkh-ka-Ra, Son of Ra, Anlamani.<sup>85</sup>

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Nefer-ib-Re, Son of Ra, Aman-Nete-Yerike.<sup>86</sup>

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Khu-Re' Nefertem, Son of Ra, Tirhakah.<sup>87</sup>

The above example from Nefertem Tirhakah should now be compared with that from Tirhakah Piankhi:

King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Tirhakah, Son of Ra, Piankhi.

Notice that the Son of Ra name for Nefertem Tirhakah is Tirhakah, while the Son of Ra name for Tirhakah Piankhi is Piankhi. They represent two different kings.

It can be no coincidence that in the Nile Level texts we find an inscription belonging to Shebitku claiming that in his "Year 3" he was "crowned as king in the house of Amon."<sup>88</sup> Therefore, during Shebitku's third year of coregency in Egypt, he obtained a position above that of Shabako. According to the transmitters of Manetho, Shebitku is given two years with Shabako. In this arrangement, year three of Shebitku would equal the fifteenth and last year of Shabako as pharaoh. Year one of Shebitku, as a result, is 702/701 B.C.E., autumn reckoning, the year that Tirhakah, king of Kush, caused Sennacherib to flee from the borders of Egypt; it was this year that Shabako was no longer considered the king of Kush.

<sup>83</sup> ARE, 4, #886.

<sup>84</sup> ARE, 4, #921.

<sup>85</sup> TK, 1, p. 46, ℓ 1.

<sup>86</sup> TK, 1, p. 51, ℓ 1.

<sup>87</sup> TK, 1, pp. 5, 15, ℓ 1, p. 23, ℓ 1, p. 33, ℓ 1, p. 42, ℓ 1; ARE, 4, #888. Tirhakah is also called "King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Tirhakah" (e.g. ARE, 4, #895; TK, 1, p. 6, ℓ 7, p. 7, ℓ 10, 11, p. 8, ℓ 15), but this title is only found when the Son of Ra name is not used. When the Son of Ra title is utilized, Nefertem always makes it Tirhakah.

<sup>88</sup> ARE, 4, #887. See TK, 1, p. 19; CAW, p. 82.

This evidence proves that Shebitku came to full power in Egypt the very year that his father, Snefer-Ra Tirhakah Piankhi, came to the aid of his brother Shabako and took possession of Egypt. Tirhakah Piankhi, taking advantage of the Assyrian retreat of Sennacherib in the spring of 701 B.C.E., then created his own empire for Ethiopia. Herein lies the reason that Shabako surrendered the Egyptian throne to the sons of Snefer-Ra Piankhi. It also explains why Shebitku and Nefertem Tirhakah only assumed the mantle as pharaoh of Egypt. Their father, Snefer-Ra, tightly retained control over Kush proper until his death. In turn, when Snefer-Ra Tirhakah Piankhi and his son Khu-Re' Nefertem Tirhakah both died, Shabako overcame his brother's power and placed his own son, Urdamane, over the throne of Kush.

Here, then, lies the solution to the identity of the mysterious Tirhakah who opposed Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E. The Tirhakah who came out of Kush to attack Sennacherib is found under the name Tsawi Tirhakah in the Ethiopian king list. Tsawi Tirhakah, in turn, was known as Snefer-Ra Piankhi, the powerful Ethiopian monarch of Napata during the time that his brother, Shabako, ruled Egypt. Because Snefer-Ra Tirhakah Piankhi was able to seize power over Egypt after his brother's failure to stop Sennacherib, he enforced his own political will over that country by placing his son, Shebitku, on the throne of Egypt as pharaoh. Two years later, Shebitku completely usurped the pharaohship from his uncle Shabako. Nevertheless, Shabako was able to continue in the capacity as a lesser king over parts of Egypt until he accomplished 50 years of rule. Afterwards, he returned to Kush.

## **Conclusion**

The evidence compels us to the conclusion that we are dealing with two different kings named Tirhakah: one who ruled Kush and the other a Kushite who only ruled Egypt. The fact that Tsawi Tirhakah, also known as Snefer-Ra Piankhi, was the king of Kush and ruled during the early years of Sennacherib readily establishes him as the Tirhakah of Scriptures. Kashta had placed his sons Shabako over Egypt and Tsawi Tirhakah (Snefer-Ra Piankhi) over Kush. To assure Ethiopian political dominance in Egypt, Tirhakah Piankhi later assigned his sons Shebitku and Nefertem Tirhakah to govern Egypt as pharaohs. These men, being descendants of Usimare Piankhi, Pharaoh of Egypt, were legitimate heirs to the Egyptian throne and acceptable to the Egyptian masses. But more importantly, they represented the superior power of Snefer-Ra Piankhi over his brother Shabako after the defeat of the latter's army by Sennacherib at Eltekeh.

The recognition that the king named Tirhakah, who commanded the army of Kush that came against Sennacherib in 701 B.C.E., was a different king than the Tirhakah who later ruled Egypt as pharaoh removes the unnecessary obstacle placed as an interpretation upon the history found in Scriptures. The existence of an earlier Tirhakah, the evidence of which until now has been generally ignored, dismantles the heart of the two invasion hypothesis and once again confirms that there was only one invasion against Judah by Sennacherib. Our dates of 701/700 and 700/699 B.C.E. for the Sabbath and Jubilee years during the reign of Hezekiah, thereby, stand unshaken.