

Appendix K
*The 50 years
of Shabaqo*

Shabaqo, the first king of Dynasty XXV of Egypt, continued to be recognized in Egypt as a king for 50 years. These 50 years commenced when Shabaqo seized power in Lower Egypt in 706 B.C.E. and ended when he abandoned that country and left it solely to his son Ta-Nuat-Amun (early in 656 B.C.E.). Shortly thereafter, Ta-Nuat-Amun was attacked by Psamtik I of Sais, who drove Ta-Nuat-Amun out of Memphis and back to Thebes. A peace was struck between the two sides which allowed Ta-Nuat-Amun to continue as a king in Upper Egypt from Thebes until his death. After his death, no Kushite ever ruled Egypt again. This history helps tell the story of the Ethiopian Empire in Egypt until the conquest of both Upper and Lower Egypt by Psamtik I of Dynasty XXVI of Sais.

Shabaqo to Psamtik I

Most scholars assume that Shabaqo died after reigning 15 regnal years,¹ an opinion expressed without one iota of evidence. In the case of Shebitku and Taharqa, for example, we have historical evidence of the year in which they died.² None is given for Shabaqo. On the other hand, Herodotus claims that Shabaqo continued to reign as a king (or, at minimum, was involved in political affairs) in Egypt for 50 years.³ He supports this detail when he points out that it was Shabaqo who killed Nekos (Nekau I), i.e., in 663 B.C.E.⁴ This statement is clear evidence that Shabaqo continued to hold his rank as king long after his 15th regnal year (693 B.C.E.). It was in 663 B.C.E. that Shabaqo joined his son, Urdamane, on an attack against the Assyrians who had earlier in 666 B.C.E. wrested control of Egypt away from the Kushites. As the result of Urdamane's invasion of Egypt in 663 B.C.E., the Kushites established themselves at "Ni" (Thebes) and Unu (Heliopolis),⁵ regaining control of the Delta. It was at this point that Nekau I was killed.

¹ E.g., CAH, 3.2, p. 691; HdO, p. 259, 261; TIP, pp. 153–155 §§125–126.

² Shebitku died in the latter part of Year 6 of Taharqa (Kawa, V, l. 15f; and see App. F & G); Taharqa died after reigning 26 years (LSDM, iii pl. 36; Kush, 8, pp. 72; ARE, 4, §§959–962; CAW, p. 81; TIP, pp. 161f §§130–131; HdO, p. 290; Kush, 8, pp. 267–269). The Assyrian records in conformity speak of his death at precisely this time (*Rassam Cylinder*, see ANET, p. 295; ARAB, 2, §775).

³ Herodotus, 2:137, 139f. During the years of the Assyrian conquests of Egypt, Shabaqo would have migrated south to Nubia. He then returned in those years when the Kushites pushed the Assyrians back.

⁴ Herodotus, 2:152. For the last year of Taharqa and the beginning year of Psamtik I, see App. B & F.

⁵ Rassam Cylinder, see ANET, p. 295; ARAB, 2, §775.

Next, Herodotus points out that after the reign of Sethos, priest of the deity Hephaestus, the contemporary of King Sennacherib of Assyria in 701 B.C.E.,⁶ the Egyptians were free from overlords. Since a large number of Egyptians came to realize that they could not live without a king, they eventually divided Egypt, by which Herodotus means Lower Egypt, into 12 portions and set up 12 kings.⁷ Their families intermarried, assisted one another, and agreed not to overthrow each other in the kingship.⁸ They also abided by an oracle that the one “who poured a libation from a bronze vessel in the temple of Hephaestus—where, as in all the temples, it was their wont to assemble—should be king of all Egypt.”⁹

As things turned out, there came about a festival during which the high priest mistakenly brought forth only 11 golden vessels instead of the 12 required for the pouring out of the libations. Psamtik I found himself without a golden vessel, so “he took off his bronze helmet” and used it to pour out his libation.¹⁰ Recalling the oracle, the 11 other kings immediately became angry. Yet they did not hold Psamtik I at fault so as to give him the penalty of death for breaking their agreement, since they had determined that he did not act with intent. So they stripped him of his power and “chased him away into the marshes,” warning him not to concern himself with the rest of Egypt.¹¹

Herodotus adds that, prior to this event, Psamtik I had been living in Syria, the place to which he had fled in fear of Shabaqo (Shabaqo), the Ethiopian king of Egypt, who killed Nekos (Nekau I), Psamtik I’s father (663 B.C.E.).¹² This data, by the way, shows just how inadequate our modern view is about Egyptian chronology. Present-day Egyptologists admit that they assume that Shabaqo died after his 15th regnal year (which we have proven to be 693 B.C.E.).¹³ Yet here we have clear evidence that Shabaqo continued to reign even beyond the great war between Assyria and Kush in 663 B.C.E., when Nekau I was killed. As we shall shortly demonstrate, Shabaqo ruled Egypt for 50 years. The difference is that regnal years designate the reign of the king who has primary responsibility at the time, while his overall rule can begin either prior to or continue until one abandons the throne or dies.

According to Herodotus, from the conquest of Egypt by Shabaqo, “the Ethiopians ruled Egypt for 50 years.”¹⁴ He adds that Shabaqo “fled away from the country” after having a dream that, if he remained, he would commit sacrilege by killing the priests, for which he believed he would be fully punished by either the deities or men.¹⁵ Herodotus continues:

⁶ Herodotus, 2:141f, 147.

⁷ Herodotus, 2:147.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Herodotus, 2:147.

¹⁰ Herodotus, 2:151.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Herodotus, 2:152.

¹³ HdO, p. 259; TIP, pp. 153f, Limestone cube statue of Ity, BM EA 24429, Year 15, 2nd month of Shomu, day 11 of Shabaqo (ESSE, pp. 15–18, and pl. V; TIP, p. 153 §125); and see above App. F.

¹⁴ Herodotus, 2:137, cf. 2:137, 140, regarding the blind king, Anysis, and the 50 years.

¹⁵ Herodotus, 2:139.

He would not (he said) act so, but otherwise, for the time foretold for his rule over Egypt, after which he was to depart, was now fulfilled: for when he was still in Ethiopia the oracles which are inquired of by the people of that country declared to him that he was fated to reign 50 years over Egypt. Seeing that this time was now completed and that he was troubled by what he saw in his dream, Sabakos departed from Egypt of his own accord.¹⁶

Herodotus goes on to inform us:

... when the Ethiopian (Shabaqo) departed by reason of what he saw in a dream, the Egyptians of the province of Sais brought him (Psamtik I) back from Syria; and now, Psammetichus (Psamtik I) was for a SECOND TIME made king, when it happened to him that he was driven away into the marshes by the 11 kings by reason of the matter of the helmet.¹⁷

We now understand why there were only 11 golden vessels brought out by the priests. While Psamtik I had remained in Syria, there were only 11 kings who regularly attended the ceremony. Psamtik I only returned after Shabaqo had completed his 50 years and fled Egypt to go back to Ethiopia, i.e., returning home at the beginning of his 51st year. Yet Psamtik I, not realizing that he had transgressed the original agreement made by his father with the other 11 kings, was now banished to the marshes. We are then told that "after no long time,"¹⁸ i.e., shortly after being banished, Psamtik I, believing he was fulfilling an oracle, gathered to him some Ionians and Carians who were clad in bronze armor and who had been forced onto the shores of Egypt. Having promised them rewards, they attacked and deposed the 11 other kings, making Psamtik I "master of all Egypt."¹⁹

Diodorus supports the story told by Herodotus. He too writes that during the reign of Shabaqo, "there being no head of the government in Egypt (i.e., the Delta) for 2 years," 12 of the most important local leaders formed a solemn league.²⁰ They met together in Memphis and proclaimed themselves kings. They were able to maintain their mutual accord for 15 years. The next year, Psamtik I, who had succeeded his father on the throne of Sais in 663 B.C.E., lacking a golden vessel, used his bronze helmet for the libation. Because of this act, Diodorus reports, the other 11 allied kings banished him to the marshes along the sea. Psamtik I then contacted some mercenaries from Caria and Ionia and formed an army. They attacked the 11 and "overcame the others in

¹⁶ Herodotus, 2:139.

¹⁷ Herodotus, 2:152.

¹⁸ Herodotus, 2:152.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Diodorus, 1:65f.

a pitched battle near the city called Momemphis," killing some of these kings in the battle and driving some out into Libya. These other kings "were no longer able to dispute with him for the throne."²¹ After Psamtik's victory, he "established his authority over the entire kingdom."²²

This history, as reported by Herodotus and Diodorus, is easily reconstructed. The 2-year period of anarchy in the Delta began in 673 B.C.E., the year that the Assyrian king Esarhaddon was defeated by Taharqa II, the king of Kush and Egypt. This year represents the first effort by King Esarhaddon to invade Egypt. The 15-year period commenced in 671 B.C.E., the 10th year of Esarhaddon, when the Assyrians conquered Egypt as far as Memphis and, from Memphis, set up 20 local dynasts as kings in Egypt under his authority:²³

- Nikû (Nekau I), king of Memphis and Sais
- Sharru-lu-dari, king of Si'nu
- Pishanhuru, king of Nathû
- Pakruru, king of Pishaptu (Pišaptu)
- Bukkunanni'pi, king of Hathiribi
- Nahkê, king of Hininshi
- Putubishti (Pedubast II), king of Sa'nu (Tanis)
- Unamunu, king of Nathû
- Harsiaeshu, king of Sabnûti (Sebennytos)
- Bûâma, king of Pintiti
- Susinku (Shoshenq VII), king of Pushiru (Busiris)
- Tabnahti, king of Punubu
- Bukkunanni'pi, king of Ahni
- Iptihartêshu, king of Pihattihurunpik
- Nahtinuruansini, king of Pishabdi'a
- Bukurninib, king of Pahnuti
- Sihâ, king of Shiâtu (Asyût, modern Siût)
- Lamentu, king of Himuni (Hermopolis)
- Ishpimâtu, king of Taini (Theny, This)
- Mantimeanhê, king of Ni' (Thebes)

This list begins with the areas in Lower Egypt and progresses southward to Thebes in Upper Egypt. Obviously, the first 12 of these local dynasts belonged to the area around Memphis and the Delta. One of these dynasts was Nikû (Nekau I, Necho I), the king of Sais and Memphis.²⁴ He was subsequently killed by Shabako during this 15-year period and his son, Psamtik I, succeeded him on the throne of Sais.²⁵ From among these, 12 of their number, including

²¹ Diodorus, 1:66.

²² Diodorus, 1:67.

²³ Listed by name by King Assurbanipal of Assyria, see ARAB, 2, §771, who makes reference to King Esarhaddon of Assyria; cf., ARAB, 2, §§580f; ABC, 14, l. 28f.

²⁴ Manetho, frags. 68, no. 2 & 3, 69a & b, no. 4 & 5.

²⁵ Herodotus, 2:152.

the king of Sais, formed the alliance spoken of by both Herodotus and Diodorus. The last year of this 15-year period was 657 B.C.E., which by definition has to be the 50th and last year of Shabaqo's rulership over Egypt. The next year, 656 B.C.E., would be the 8th year of Psamtik I, at the beginning of which year Shabaqo abandoned Egypt and returned to Ethiopia.

The inscriptions from Egypt confirm this reckoning. There are no records for Psamtik's reign in Egypt from Year 1 through Year 7. Although Psamtik I counted his reign from 663 B.C.E., the year of his father (Nekau I's) death, he had to immediately flee Egypt that year in order to escape the hands of Shabaqo.²⁶ Psamtik I then remained in Syria until Shabaqo fled Egypt for Ethiopia, i.e., in the 16th year of the 12-king alliance, being the 8th year of Psamtik I. In this regard, the first inscription we find in Egypt regarding Psamtik I is dated to his 8th year:

Regnal Year 8 of the good deity, Lord of the Two Lands, Psamtik.²⁷

On the lunette, the king is wearing the double crown and in the inscription mentions the suppression of some local dynasts.²⁸ This date perfectly matches the year that Psamtik I returned to Egypt, fled to the marshes, and then, with the assistance of Ionians and Carians, defeated the other 11 kings and took control of all of Egypt. This conquest would include the region of Thebes in Upper Egypt, over which Psamtik I claimed full control at the beginning of his 9th year.²⁹

Accordingly, the 50th and last year of Shabaqo is the year 657 B.C.E., the 7th year of Psamtik I. When we count back to the beginning of this 50-year period, we arrive at the year 706 B.C.E., the 2nd year of Shabaqo. There is no record in Egypt of Shabaqo's Year 1, which year for the most part actually belonged to his father Kashta.³⁰ Indeed, Herodotus states Shabaqo conquered Egypt, not as an Ethiopian king of Egypt but as the "king of Ethiopia."³¹ He was nominally in power in Year 1 of Kashta as a king of Kush and Egypt, thus Manetho gives him that year, but he primarily governed as co-regent from Kush. In regnal Year 1, therefore, we can firmly state that Shabaqo was already in power in Kush and nominally in Upper Egypt, where no conquest for control was required, since Kashta was already recognized in that region.³² Kashta died that year and the regnal years for Shabaqo took effect. In regnal Year 2, Shabaqo was the sole monarch of his kingdom. This was the very year, as

²⁶ Herodotus, 2:152.

²⁷ LAIE, p. 583. Also see the label for King Psamtik I, "The good deity, Lord of the Two Lands, Psamtik."

²⁸ LAIE, p. 582.

²⁹ LAIE, pp. 576–582, esp. l. 7, "Regnal Year 9, first month of the first season, 28th day," i.e., the 28th day of the first month of the 9th year, the date when Psamtik I sent his eldest daughter south to Thebes in order to take up the post as divine votaress to Amun.

³⁰ See App. L.

³¹ Herodotus, 2:137.

³² See App. L; ZAS, 98, pp. 16–18; BPENR, p. 158.

Kenneth Kitchen states, that Shabaqo conquered Lower Egypt, beginning his reign over Memphis and governing all Egypt. Kitchen states, "Shabako conquered Egypt only in his 2nd year."³³ He adds:

It is noteworthy that the Serapeum epigraph of Shabako dates to his Year 2, not Year 1. He therefore spent his first year confirming his rule in Nubia, and only marched into Egypt in his 2nd year. No record of Year 1 of Shabako has yet been found in Egypt, but several of Years 2 and 3.³⁴

Robert G. Morkot similarly writes, "it is certain that Shabaqo was in Egypt in his second year—an inscription on the quay at Karnak is dated to it, as is a stela from Horbeit (*Pharbaithos*)."³⁵ Karnak is part of Thebes and Horbeit lies in the 19th nome of Lower Egypt (the Tanis area). It is also significant that in that year, Taharqa Piye, the son of Piye Alara, came to power in Kush. Accordingly, while Shabaqo sought his fortune in Egypt, Taharqa Piye rose to dominate Kush.

This evidence adds further confirmation that our chronology for the Ethiopian kings of Kush and Egypt during this period is accurate. There were exactly 50 years from Year 2 of Shabaqo (706 B.C.E.), when he conquered all of Egypt, until the end of the 7th year of Psamtik I (657 B.C.E.), also being the 15th year of the league of 12 kings in Lower Egypt. The next year, Shabaqo abandoned Egypt and returned to Kush. Shabaqo's move allowed Psamtik I to return from Syria, take up his kingship for a second time in his Year 8, get expelled to the marshlands by the 11 other kings, and then shortly thereafter gather a mercenary army and take control of all Egypt. This data also helps to verify that Shabaqo reigned contemporary with Piye—both while Piye was a king of Kush and later when Piye was also one of the kings of Egypt—as well as with Shebitku, Nefertem Taharqa, and Urdamane.

Let Him Live Forever

There is also another detail that supports the fact that the rulership of Shabaqo was contemporary with that of Piye in Egypt. A limestone cube statue of Ity (British Museum EA 24429) is dated to the 15th year, 11th day of the month of Pauni (= 2nd Shemu, the 10th month of the Egyptian year) of King Shabaqo. This inscription also bears an epithet given to King Piye, using the words 'nh dt (ankh dt; Let him live forever).³⁶ William Joseph Murnane points out that 'nh dt (ankh dt; Let him live forever)³⁷ and 'nh tj (ankh ti; Let her live forever) are variants of *dj-*nh** (*dj-ankh*; given life).³⁸ He then adds:

³³ TIP, p. 154 §125.

³⁴ TIP, p. 142 §114.

³⁵ BPENR, p. 207.

³⁶ MittSAG, 17, p. 136; ESSE, p. 21.

³⁷ Richard Holton Pierce (FHN, 1, p. 65, l. 1) translates the phrase to mean "may he live forever."

³⁸ AEC, p. 267.

The primary meaning of *dj-nḥ* describes the condition of a currently living person.³⁹

Harry Reginald Hall immediately saw that the statement from Ity “implies that Piankhi was still king in Shabaka’s 15th year.”⁴⁰ In addition, we should add, on Piye’s Victory Stela, dated to his 21st year, while he was clearly alive (having ruled Egypt at least 27 regnal years and Kush for 49 years),⁴¹ the scribe gives Piye the epithet *nḥ dt* (Let him live forever).⁴² Another scribe wrote under both the cartouche of Piye’s daughter, Shepenupet II, and of his granddaughter, Amenirdis II, while both were still alive, “*nḥ tj* (Let her live forever).”⁴³

In William Joseph Murnane’s discussion of this epithet, he goes on to point to a few exceptions where the term was applied in funeral epithets to someone deceased.⁴⁴ Those, like Murnane, who hold on to the notion that there were no co-regencies during Dynasty XXV, questioned Hall’s conclusion—although they admitted that it was “*demande non sans raison* (asks not without reason)” that he came to this understanding.⁴⁵ Instead, they argued “on chronological grounds,”⁴⁶ holding that there was no evidence of a co-regency of Shabaqo and Piye or any other Ethiopian pharaoh of Egypt and Kush. Jean Leclant and Jean Yoyotte, for example, reasoned that “unless one imagines that Piankhy, Shabaka, and Shabatka exercised royalty all three together, for a certain time,”⁴⁷ the epithet would not be applicable to a living king. Therefore, in their minds, it must belong to a dead king.

There are several problems with the “no co-regency” scenario, which causes its advocates to push aside the evidence that Piye was a co-regent with Shabaqo. First, the comment about Piye found on the cube statue of Ity was not found in the burial chambers of Piye or Shabaqo, which are both in Kush. It was found at Thebes, Egypt where both kings held a throne. Ity also states, that the god Osiris is “known to the king, great hunter, Piye, son of Isis, loved of Amun, Let him live forever.”⁴⁸ This phrasing points directly to the fact that Piye was still alive. Furthermore, the greater number of the epithets using *nḥ dt*, as Murnane demonstrates himself, are a reference to a living king, not to someone who is dead.⁴⁹ Rather than boosting the concept of no co-regencies for these pharaohs, it actually lends support to the fact that Piye and Shabaqo were both alive and ruling in Egypt during the 15th year of Shabaqo.

³⁹ AEC, p. 267.

⁴⁰ CAH, 3, p. 277, n. 1.

⁴¹ For at least 27 years in Egypt, see above App. D, n. 2; for his 49 years in Kush (as Tsawi Terhaq [Terhak]), see CBN, p. 266, Dynasty IV, no. xiii.

⁴² “Regnal year 21, first month of Akhet, under the Majesty of the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Piye, beloved of Amon, *nḥ dt* (Let him live forever)” (Victory Stela, main text, l. 1; see LAIE, p. 468, main text, l. 1; FHN, 1, pp. 64f, l. 1).

⁴³ LAIE, p. 461, (1) and (2).

⁴⁴ BdE 17, pp. 15–27; MittSAG, 17, p. 136; AEC, pp. 267–272.

⁴⁵ BIFAO, 51, p. 25, n. 3.

⁴⁶ AEC, pp. 188f.

⁴⁷ Translated from the original French, found in BIFAO, 51, p. 25, n. 3; AEC, p. 235.

⁴⁸ Limestone cube statue of Ity, BM EA 24429.

⁴⁹ AEC, pp. 267–272.

On the one hand, the evidence gathered by our research has uncovered clear proof that three Ethiopians did, in fact, rule Egypt from Thebes in Upper Egypt as contemporaries during the 15th year of Shabaqo (693 B.C.E.). For example, in Lower Egypt, Shebitku was co-regent with his father Shabaqo on the throne at Memphis. Meanwhile, Piye, who the Greek commentators of Manetho called Ammeris, was in his 4th regnal year as the king of Sais. For those advocating that there were no co-regencies (despite the evidence from Manetho to the contrary), basing their argument purely upon their own chronological framework, they declared that Piye was already dead. Therefore, extrapolating from this construct, they claim Ity's text had to actually be referring to the funerary cult of Piye. Searching to justify their own chronology, they point to the detail that the "epithet *'nḥ dt* was also applied to dead kings."⁵⁰ Overlooked was the fact that the funeral was that of Ity's, not Piye's.

This evidence fully supports our construct that the Ethiopian Kings of Egypt governed Egypt as a confederation of kings and that several were ruling contemporaneously with each other, counting some years by regnal years and other years by the entire length of their respective reign. Therefore, the records show that Shabaqo reigned a full 15 regnal years over Egypt. Pharaoh Piye, meanwhile, reigned his first 4 regnal years over Egypt alongside the last 4 regnal years of Pharaoh Shabaqo. Nevertheless, both kings continued to reign over Egypt for many years thereafter. Piye ruled at least 27 regnal years, abandoning his power in Egypt upon the death of his son, Nefertem Taharqa (663 B.C.E.). He then retired to Kush after 33 regnal years as Pharaoh in Egypt. Meanwhile, Shabaqo continued for another 35 years following his last regnal year, also retiring to Kush in early 656 B.C.E. Contemporary with these two Ethiopian kings was Nefertem Taharqa, who continued to rule the throne at Memphis after the death of Shebitku.

⁵⁰ MittSAG, 17, p. 136.