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THE ROYAL SUCCESSION IN THE 25TH DYNASTY^o

One of the unresolved problems of Kushite studies is the succession pattern in the 25th Kushite dynasty ruling in Egypt and their descendents, the rulers of the Kingdom of Napata. It is the purpose of this paper to address this problem anew. In the following paragraphs I will forward a review of the prevailing theories of succession in Kush. Then, I will argue that the succession pattern in Kush was patrilineal according to the right of primogeniture, i.e. the kingship passed from father to the eldest surviving son based on Egyptian religious beliefs and was not different from the practice in the Ancient Near East.¹

THEORIES

1. *The patrilineal succession*

Basically, the Kingship in the Ancient Near East was regarded as hereditary through a patrilineal succession line, normally (but not always), according to the right of primogeniture. This was the case in the majority of Ancient Near Eastern Kingdoms:² Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Elam,³ Hatti,⁴ Ugarit, Canaan

• I would like to thank Tim Kendall, Eleonora Kormischeva, Angelika Lohwasser, Robert Morkot, Claude Rilly, László Török, Alexey Vinogradov, Janice Yellin, Michael Zach and Karola Zibeliuss-Chen for sending me offprints of their articles and for numerous insights, suggestions and references.

1 The different modes of succession in Africa are reviewed in R. Morkot, "Kingship and Kinship in the Empire of Kush", in: St. Wenig (ed.), *Akten der 7. Internationalen Tagung für meroitische Forschungen vom 14. bis 19. September 1992 in Gosen bei Berlin*, (Meroitica 15, Wiesbaden 1999) 214-217. I find it methodologically incorrect to compare the patterns of succession in the recent history of Africa with the pattern of succession in the first millennium B.C.

2 T. Ishida, *The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel*, Berlin – New-York, 1977, Ch. 2.

3 Y. B. Yusifov, "The Problem of the Order of Succession in Elam Again", *Acta antiqua* 22 (1974) 321-331. Earlier scholars postulated that in Elam "the throne passed to brothers who in their turn married their sisters and sometimes their mothers, and all this gave the right to succeed to the throne".

4 G. M. Beckman, "Inheritance and Royal succession among the Hittites" in: H. A. Hoffner Jr. and G. M. Beckman (eds.), *Kaniššuwār, a Tribute to Hans G. Güterbock on his*

(according to the El-Amarna tablets), Phoenicia, Israel (although the kingdom of Israel suffered from many *coups*), Judah, Amon,⁵ Moab, Edom, Philistia,⁶ Egypt, etc.

This pattern of succession was not seriously considered in Nubian studies for the 25th dynasty because the written evidence does not directly suggest it.

2. *The collateral (fratrilineal) succession*

According to the genealogical information from Kushite monuments, published by M. F. L. Macadam in 1949 and from an additional article written with D. Dunham during that same year,⁷ it was postulated that the royal succession in Kush did not descend from father to the eldest son. It was suggested that it was a different type of male-succession pattern passing from the elder brother to the younger brother and then to the children of the elder brother. Thus, Macadam reconstructed the royal dynasty of Kush as follows:

- Alara (first known ruler by name)
- Kashta (supposed to be a younger brother of Alara)
- Piankhy (son of Kashta)
- Shabako (younger brother of Piankhy)
- Shebitku (son of Piankhy⁸ and not son of Shabako as stated in Manetho⁹)
- Taharqa (younger son of Piankhy, brother of Shebitko)¹⁰

Seventy-Fifth Birthday, May 27, 1983 (Assyriological Studies 23, Chicago, Illinois 1986) 13-26.

5 F. M. Cross, "Notes on the Ammonite Inscription From Tell Sirān" *BASOR* 212 (1973) 12-15.

6 S. Gittin et al. "A Royal Dedicatory Inscription from Ekron", *IEJ* 47 (1997) 9.

7 M. F. L. Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa, I*, London, 1949, 119-131; D. Dunham and M. F. L. Macadam, "Names and Relationships of the Royal Family of Napata", *JEA* 35 (1949) 139-149.

8 Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa*, 124 based on Kawa IV, 19 where Taharqa is mentioned as *sn nsw* "king's brother".

9 W. G. Waddell, *Manetho*, London, 1964, 166-9, Fragments 66, 67 a, b, l. 2.

10 Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa*, 36 n. 90: Kawa VI, l. 24 translates *rdi.f n.f s3.f snw.f* "He (Amun) appointed for him his son, the like of him" *scil.* Amun's son and peer.

- Tanutamun (*emending* the Assyrian record from son of Shabako to son of Shebitku).¹¹

This reconstruction was generally accepted. Leclant coined the term “collateral succession” for this mode of “brotherly succession”.¹²

In a recent article Morkot reviewed Macadam’s theory of succession and the responses to it extensively. He questioned Macadam’s assumption that the Kushite royal line consisted of only one family at the beginning of the Kushite dynasty, and Macadam’s conviction that Alara and Kashta were brothers and that Piankhy and Shabaka were also brothers, sons of Kashta and that these kings married their own sisters.¹³ Morkot’s remarks should be considered seriously when dealing with the succession in the kingdom of Kush. It can be seen that Macadam’s reconstruction of the Kushite royal succession was based on unfounded (although *not always* necessarily wrong) suppositions of relationships (Alara and Kashta; Piankhy and Shabaka¹⁴) and emendations of the texts (the filiation of Shebitku) and thus they

K. Jansen-Winkeln, “Alara und Taharka: zur Geschichte des Nubischen Königshauses”, *Or* 72 (2003) 150 understands *snw* as “Zweiten”, “Ebenbürtigen” or less likely “sein Sohn und sein Bruder” meaning “Groß-Neffe”.

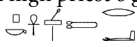


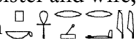
11 Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa*, 124-5. “If the succession went from brother to brother... and then to the children of the eldest son in the same manner, Tanwetamani, if he had been a son of Shabako, would again have no right to the throne. The explanation must be that Tanwetamani was a son of Shebitku, whose name is represented by the Assyrian ‘*Shabakū*’, and as such would have been next to succeed if there were no more brothers of Taharqa and Shebitku available.”

12 J. Leclant, “Kuschitenherrschaft”, *LÄ III*, 895.

13 Morkot, *Meroitica 15* (1999), 189 ff. and cf. Török’s theories of adoption below.

14 Morkot, *Meroitica 15* (1999) 190 criticized Macadam’s incorrect interpretation of the evidence concerning the brotherhood of Piankhy and Shabaka as follows “Macadam read the ‘Neitiqert (=Nitocris) Adoption Stela’ as a record of Neitiqert’s adoption by Shepenwepet II. From this he argued that Shepenwepet II had been given to her father’s sister; as her father is known by numerous inscriptions to have been Piye, then Piye must have been a brother of Amenirdis I. Based on his understanding of the text the argument was logical. R. A. Caminos, “The Nitocris Adoption Stela”, *JEA* 50 (1964) 78-79 demonstrated quite conclusively, however, that the text must be understood as saying that Neitiqert was adopted by Amenirdis II. The text therefore tells us that Amenirdis II was given by her father, Taharqa, to *his* sister, Shepenwepet II daughter of Piye”. Thus, the Nitocris Adoption Stela cannot be used as evidence of a brother relation between Piankhy and Shabaka. However, the father-son relationship between

should be discarded altogether.¹⁵ Furthermore, only in the case of Aspelta,¹⁶ who succeeded his brother Anlamani is it said that he inherited the throne of his brother. Aspelta needed to enumerate seven generations of king’s sisters to legitimate his rule (*FHN I* 240: Election Stela of Aspelta, ll. 20-21), he mentioned his election by the God Amun (*FHN I* 237: Election Stela of Aspelta, ll. 11-19), the reinforcement of

Kashta and Piankhy can be inferred from Peksater’s monuments. On a relief from the NE (“S”) wall of court B 502 in the Great Amun Temple (B 500) at Gebel Barkal, Piankhy is depicted in high priest’s garb, followed by his “royal wife and sister”  Peksater, who are greeting the bark of Amun (approaching from left). The inscription reads: -Royal Sister and Wife- Peksater. See K. -H. Priese, “Nichtägyptische Namen und Wörter in den ägyptischen Inschriften der Könige von Kush I” *MIO* 14 (1968) 177 ff. Priese reads the name of the queen as Pekrslo(ye). This reading was recently adopted by C. Rilly, “Une nouvelle interprétation du nom royal Piankhy” *BIFAO* 101 (2001) 359. In the photo depicting the scene, however, the name *p-k-(nh)-s3-t-r* with the determinative D 36  or D 40  can be read clearly. See T. Kendall, “The Origin of the Napatan State: El-Kurru and the Evidence for the Royal Ancestors” *Meroitica 15* (1999) 116, fig. 19 and Orinst P. 2995, which is available on the Oriental Institute site online. In Rilly, *BIFAO 101* (2001) 359 d. Peksater bears the titles: daughter of Kashta, daughter of Pabatma and wife of king Piankhy. Thus, if the reading of Breasted quoted in Priese’s article that Pekerslo’s (sic) titles as royal sister and wife are correct, Peksater was Piankhy’s wife and sister and Kashta’s and Pabatma’s daughter. Thus Piankhy and Shabaka were brothers, sons of Kashta. This conclusion is, however, based on problematic evidence. The titles cannot be collated on site because the scene is not preserved (T. Kendall in private communication); the photos of the Oriental Institute do not show the specific column in question bearing the titles of royal sister and wife; Breasted’s reading of the name of the queen  clearly differs from the photo! Thus, the accuracy of the whole scene is doubtful and is difficult to rely on.

15 Theoretically one could postulate a brother succession in the kingdom of Ashkelon of the late eighth –beginning of the seventh c. B.C. In the days of Tiglath-Pileser III (733 B.C.) Rukibti ascended the throne. Sharruludari his son followed him on the throne. The throne went to his brother (or uncle) *Sidqa* and then to *Sidqa*’s son, Mitinti II. Without the Assyrian records, we could come to the conclusion that the succession pattern in Ashqelon was similar to the Kushite succession pattern at this particular point in time. It is clear that this peculiar pattern of succession was not natural and was forced by the Assyrians. See H. Tadmor, “Philistia Under Assyrian Rule.” *BA* 29 (1966) 96. Cf. D. Marcus, “Sharruludari, Son of Rukibtu, Their Former King: A Detail of Phoenician Chronology”, *JANES* 9 (1977) 27-30.



his legitimacy by Khaliut, his long-deceased predecessor, son of Piankhy (*FHN* I 268-276: Khaliut Stela) and was not satisfied with mentioning that his brother was the former king proves, however, that there was no collateral system of inheritance in Kush.

Brother succession is also attested in the fifth Dynasty in Old Kingdom Egypt.¹⁷ It is also possible that Smenkh-ka-re and Tut-ankh-Amun from the Amarna period (Dyn. 18) were brothers, however, this cannot be proved.¹⁸ Brother succession by Usurpation is hinted in the myth of Osiris and Seth. Return to the cosmic order (Ma'at) is achieved by the victory of Horus (the son and rightful heir) over Seth (the brother of the dead king and a usurper).¹⁹

In Assyria *Aššur-etil-ilāni* as succeeded by his brother *Sin-šar-iškun*. The circumstances of *Aššur-etil-ilāni*'s death and the transfer to power to his brother are not yet known. There is no evidence that

the latter was promoted by a *coup d'état* or that he deposed his brother and took his throne. But brother succession was not the norm in Assyria. *Sin-šar-iškun* legitimized his rule by claiming that the gods selected him.²⁰ In Hatti several cases of brother succession are known. In the case of Murshili II and Shuppiluliuma II it is clearly stated that the deceased king did not leave even a pregnant woman behind. In other cases the reign was usurped by the brother.²¹ In the kingdom of Israel Ahaziah (852 B.C.) succeeded his father Ahab to the throne and died prematurely leaving no heir to the throne. His brother Jehoram succeeded him as king (I Kings 22: 52-54; II Kings 1:2, 17). In c. 713 B.C. Sargon II, King of Assyria suppressed a rebellion of Aziru, King of Ashdod, and nominated his brother, Ahimuti.²² This brother succession was forced by external factors. In the kingdom of Judah, Josiah (639-609 B. C.) was killed by Necho II, King of Egypt, and was succeeded by his younger son, who was elected by "Am ha'arets" (the people of the land).²³ Necho II deposed him and nominated Jehoiakim, his elder brother, and rightful heir to the throne of Judah as king (II Kings 23:31-36).

In all these cases and in many others not mentioned here, brothers succeeded their predecessors as kings in the Ancient Near East through extraordinary circumstances.

3. The Matrilineal succession²⁴

Priese claimed that the Kushite succession was based on matrilineality, basing his supposition on the statement of Nicholas of Damascus, "the Ethiopians have a particular respect for their sisters; the kings do not leave the succession to their own but to their sisters' sons."²⁵ Priese enforces this statement with

- 16 Election Stela of Aspelta, l. 23: *iw n.k sdn n sn.k* "Yours is the crown of your brother". T. Eide, T. Hägg, R. H. Pierce, and L. Török, (eds.), *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum: Textual sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region between the Eighth Century BC and the Sixth Century AD*. Vol. I, *From the Eighth to the Mid-Fifth Century B C*, Bergen, 1994, (Henceforth *FHN* I) 242. In this case the term *sn* should be taken literally, because their common mother is Nasalsa. Contra A. Lohwasser, "Die Ahnenreihe das Aspelta", *IBAES* V (2005) 152, who suggests that Nasalsa is probably not Aspelta's biological but his adoptive mother, because the name of the king's mother is erased on Aspelta's Election Stela, while Nasalsa's name is not harmed on the Khaliut Stela.
- 17 J. Malek, "The Old Kingdom (c. 2686-2125 BC) in: I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, Oxford, 2000, 109. Sahura and Neferirkara are both sons of Queen Khentkawes. According to Papyrus Westcar the three first rulers of dynasty 5 were brothers. See M. Lichtheim *AEL* I, Berkeley, 1975, 220-2.
- 18 I thank Chris Bennet, Peter Brand, and Wolfram Grajetzki for the following references to possible brother successions in Egypt: Dyn. 4: Khafre and Djedefre. Dyn. 5: Neferirkara and Sahure. Neferefre and Niuserre. Dyn. 6: Pepi II and Merenre, Dyn. 13: Sebekhotep IV and Neferhotep and Sihathor. Dyn. 17: Inyotef the Elder and Inyotef. Senakhtenre Tao the Elder might have been the brother of Seqenenre Tao. It is generally held that Kamose was the elder brother of King Ahmes. Dyn. 20: Ramses IV, VI and VIII. It is beyond the scope of this paper to address the phenomena of brother successions in Egypt, the veracity of each postulated succession, the ideological motivation and the political and familial circumstances, which led to these successions.
- 19 A. Tobin, *Theological Principles of Egyptian Religion*, (American University Studies, Series VII: Theology and Religion 59, New York, 1989) 114-121.

- 20 N. Na'aman, "Chronology and History in the Late Assyrian Empire (631-619 B.C.)" *ZA* 81 (1991) 255. See below on the motive of election in Kushite inscriptions.
- 21 Beckman, *Kaniššūwar*, 23-4.
- 22 A. Fuchs, *Die Inschriften Sargons II. aus Khorsabad* (Göttingen, 1994) 326: Annals, l. 244; P. 348: Display l. 94.
- 23 See below on election in the Kushite kingdom.
- 24 For a reconstructed matrilineal pattern of succession in the Hittite Kingdom, see K. Riemschneider, "Die Thronfolgeordnung im Althethitischen Reich" in H. Klengel (ed.), *Schriften zur Geschichte und Kultur des alten Orients* I, 1971. Contra Sh. R. Bin-Nun, *The Tawananna in the Hittite Kingdom*, Heidelberg, 1975, 214 ff.
- 25 K. -H. Priese, "Matrilineare Erbfolge im Reich von Napata", *ZÄS* 108 (1981) 49 and *FHN* II, 684. This is a fragment of the work Nicolaus of Damascus (time of Augustus) retained in Stobaeus (5th century A.D.). The information in the text might reflect the customs of the Meroitic Empire, centuries after the period treated in this article,



citations from the Napatan texts of Taharqa (*FHN* I 141: Kawa IV 16-19 and *FHN* 173-4: Kawa VI 22-24, 26), Aspelta's seven generations long genealogy of female ancestors, Tanutamun's descent from Taharqa's sister according to the Assyrian sources, Anlamani's request from Amun to watch over his mother (*m33.k mwt.i*) and establish her children on earth (Kawa VIII 26).²⁶ After discussing the possible schemes of inheritance through the matrilineal line, he came to the conclusion that the right of succession was passed to all the sons of the eldest sister of the King.²⁷

Lohwasser basically agrees with Priese's theory and detects strong matrilineal components in the succession pattern. However, she expands Priese's scheme from "the right of succession passing to all the sons of the eldest sister" to "the sons of the sisters (*sn.t nsw*) inherit the throne". According to Lohwasser the title *sn.t nsw* encompasses not only all the immediate sisters of the king but also any female descendant of a sister of a previous king, thus, actually including almost any member of the royal clan as long as one of his female ancestors was a sister of a king. According to Lohwasser, the king would have been elected from this cadre.²⁸

when admittedly cultural changes occurred and women could more easily ascend the throne. Still, one must remember that this statement cannot be corroborated by contemporary texts until the Meroitic language has been deciphered.

26 *FHN* I 224. There is no need to watch over Anlamani's father since he was already dead when Anlamani ascended the throne. Anlamani's request and that of Alara (*FHN* I 174: Kawa VI 24) to act for his sister and elevate her children to kingship speak against election of a candidate from a descendant of a different king's sister.

27 See G. A. Reisner, "Inscribed Monuments from Gebel Barkal", *ZÄS* 66 (1931) 99, for the idea of matrilineality. And a more elaborate scheme by K. -H. Priese, *ZÄS* 108 (1981) 49-53. It should be noted, however, that Priese, op. cit. 51, n. 10, questions Macadam's assumption that Shebitku was a son of Piankhy. Thus, the scheme that Priese uses in the diagram does not fit the evidence. Furthermore, only the succession of Anlamani and Aspelta shows a succession of two sons of a sister of the king. It is not even possible to determine whether she is the oldest sister of the king. Cf. A. Lohwasser "Queenship in Kush: Status, Role and Ideology of Royal Women", *JARCE* 38 (2001) 65. I accept Manetho's information (see n. 9 above) and the Assyrian annals that Tanutamun was Shabaka's son. See Leahy, "Tanutamun, Son of Shabako?" *GM* 83 (1984) 43-45 and H. -U. Onasch, *Die Assyrischen Eroberungen Ägyptens*, I: *Kommentare und Anmerkungen*, *ÄAT* 27, Wiesbaden, 1994, 122, 155.

28 A. Lohwasser, "Die Auswahl des Königs in Kusch", *BzS* 7 (2000) 85-102, esp. 92-94, 98, and see n. 38 dealing with

The idea of matrilineal succession was based on the following assumptions:

- a. The important position of king's mothers in Napatan texts and reliefs,
- b. The important position of king's sisters in Napatan texts and reliefs,
- c. The model of the Kandake in Meroitic studies,
- d. The Egyptian God's wife of Amun and Kushite queenship and
- e. The patterns of queenship and the inheritance of the kingship through the female line in New Kingdom of Egypt.

In the following paragraphs I will deal with each of these assumptions:

3.1. *The important position of king's mothers in Napatan texts and reliefs*

The Queen-mother held a very prominent position in Kush. She assisted at the coronation rites of the king, shaking the sistrum and appeasing the gods and pouring libations before the gods.²⁹ In all visual representations of Napatan coronation rites (reliefs and stelae) the mother and wife of the king are depicted. However, in all cases the king has a superior position to his female company. When the king is too young, the queen mother might have acted as regent for the young king, as might have been the case with Nasalsa and her son Aspelta,³⁰ because she was the only Kushite queen that was called *S3.t R^c* "Daughter of Re", the female equivalent of the birth name *S3 R^c* "Son of Re".³¹ This does not prove matrilinearity. Furthermore, in royal Napatan texts the queen-

the immense number of potential heirs to the throne according to this system. Natural death at birth diminishes the number of contenders for the throne.

For the exclusion of sons of lower rank from kingship in Hatti, see Sh. R. Bin-Nun *The Tawananna in the Hittite Kingdom*, Heidelberg 1975, 218-228.

29 E. Y. Kormysheva, "Remarks on the Position of the King's Mother in Kush", in: St. Wenig (ed.), *Akten der 7. Internationalen Tagung für meroitische Forschungen vom 14. bis 19. September 1992 in Gosen bei Berlin*, (Meroitica 15, Wiesbaden 1999) 239-251. A. Lohwasser, *JARCE* 38 (2001) 67-72.

30 Note that the king's wife, Madiqen, appears first on Aspelta's adoption Stela of year 3 whereas in earlier stelae the king's mother Nasalsa appears. Does this mean that he was too young to be married at accession? On the Stela of Aspelta on the mortuary cult foundation of Prince Khaliut (*FHN* I 268, l. 13) the text reads: *h^c m nsw-bity hr st Hrwn^t 'nh.w dt hn^c mwt nsw Nn-s-rw-s 'nh.ti* "appearing as King of Upper and Lower Egypt on the throne of Horus of the living together with the king's mother Nasalsa, may she live". (my emphasis).



mother is never the subject of a text as the king is, and thus her status is inferior to the king also in the literary sphere.

Hintze has noted that in funerary texts the name of the mother of a deceased is mentioned in the majority of the cases after the name of the deceased and the father's name is less prominent in these texts, and sometimes does not appear at all. Hintze argued that this is a sign of a matrilineal society. According to him, in the cases where the father is in a more prominent position than the mother, one can detect Egyptian influence and closer proximity to Lower Nubia and Egypt.³² In his table 3, however, two inscriptions from *Meroe* list the father's name (as opposed to eight inscriptions mentioning the mother's name) after the deceased name. In this case no Egyptian influence or Lower Nubian origin can explain the choice of parents appearing on the stela. It is also strange (although not impossible) that in *Meroe* people describe their descent according to both patrilineal and matrilineal descent. It seems to me that mentioning of parents and the order of their appearance in funerary inscriptions is not influenced by Egypt and does not prove "Mutterrecht" (or "Vaterrecht" for that matter). The reason for the alternating order of appearance of the parents should be sought elsewhere. One might tentatively suggest that the deceased was more attached to the mentioned parent or that only one parent was still alive.

Moreover, influential regent-queens and queen-mothers are also known in Ancient Egypt. It will suffice to mention but a few from the eighteenth dynasty:³³ Ahhotep II, Ahmose-Nefertari,³⁴ and Hatshepsut.³⁵ Their immense power and influence were

due to special circumstances and do not suggest that Egypt was a matriarchal society.

Furthermore, in Assyria, Sammuamat, mother of Adad-Nirari III, and Naqi'a-Zakûttu, mother of Esarhaddon, also played a significant role in Empire politics and managed to elevate their sons to kingship even though they were not the heirs apparent.³⁶ In the kingdoms of Israel and Judah the status of the queen-mother (Gēbîrâ) was also elevated,³⁷ as was the status of the Tawananna in Hatti.³⁸ The elevated status of these women does not mean that the succession of Kingship in these kingdoms was matrilineal!³⁹

3.2. *The important position of king's sisters in Napatian texts and reliefs*

As Robins and others have shown, in Egypt's royal dynasties some kings married their sisters or half sisters and had children with them. Such marriages seem to have been rare among non-royal Egyptians, but they occur among deities. At the time of creation the creator god produced a pair of offspring (Shu and Tefnut) who in turn produced a second divine couple (Geb and Nut) and so on, the most famous being Osiris and his sister-consort Isis. So, at the time of creation, choice of partner was perforce limited to brother or sister. By marrying his sister the Egyptian king imitated the gods and stressed the divine side of kingship.⁴⁰

The Kushite kings adopted this theological belief and practiced brother-sister marriage, imitating the divine couple Osiris and Isis.⁴¹ This imitation of the

31 A. Lohwasser, *Die königlichen Frauen im antiken Reich von Kusch (25. Dynastie bis zur Zeit des Nastasen)* (Meroitica 19, Wiesbaden 2001) 199-200. It is possible that the title *S3.t R'* was used for legitimization in the Election Stela. This title is attested for reigning queens in Egypt like Hatshepsut, Ahmose Nefertari, and Karomama. Lohwasser follows Priese's rendering of the anonymous mother of Irike-Amannote in Kawa IX l. 10 as *S3.t R'*. The name was hacked out and the context is broken so restoration is doubtful.

32 F. Hintze, "Meroitische Verwandtschaftsbezeichnungen" in: St. Wenig (ed.), *Akten der 7. Internationalen Tagung für meroitische Forschungen vom 14. bis 19. September 1992 in Gosen bei Berlin*, (Meroitica 15, Wiesbaden 1999) 230-8. Cf. K. Zibelius-Chen, "Neue Studien zur Meroitistik" OLZ 98 (2003) 442-3.

33 G. Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1993, 42-55. In none of the reliefs known to me were these queens in a higher position than their respective sons and contemporary kings. See also A. Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 283 ff.

34 Especially posthumously.

35 As queen regent before assuming kingship, Hatshepsut was not queen mother, but wife of the former king, aunt and stepmother of Thutmose III. The role and influence of Thutmose's mother, Isis, in her son's accession and reign is not known.

36 H. Lewy, "Nitokris-Naqi'a" *JNES* 11 (1952) 264-290. S. Melville, *The Role of Naqia Zakuttu in Sargonic Politics* (SAAS 9, Helsinki 1999).

37 Z. Ben-Barak, "The Status and Right of the Gēbîrâ", *JBL* 110 (1991) 23-34. Ben-Barak claims that the documented high status of queen-mothers in the bible and the Ancient Near East is rare and stems from their individual character, ambition and personal abilities.

38 See Bin-Nun, *The Tawananna*, n. 28 above. See also Sh. Arbeli, "The Removal of the Tawananna from her Position", in: *Society and Economy in the Eastern Mediterranean (c. 1500-1000 B.C.)*, M. Heltzer and E. Lipiński (eds.), (OLA 23, Leuven 1988) 79-85.

39 According to scholars, in Elam the son of the sister often ascended the throne. See F. W. König "Geschwisterehe in Elam" *RLA* III, 1957, 224-230. Cf. n. 3 above.

40 Robins, *Women in Ancient Egypt*, 1993, 17-18, 27.


41 See below n. 130.



divine sphere (backed by textual evidence) demanded a marriage between the king and his sister as in Egypt.⁴² It is true that not all designated *sn.t nswt* had to be sisters of the reigning king, and could be sisters of the former king or closely related to him as in Egyptian texts. According to Robins the term *sn.t* can mean in Egyptian texts: sister, father's sister, mother's sister (?), brother's daughter, sister's daughter and perhaps mother's sister's daughter, wife (and also "beloved" in love songs).⁴³ Any claim that *sn.t* means something remoter than this relationship in a family, a title or a social group needs to be corroborated by textual evidence.⁴⁴


According to Lohwasser's theory, the *sn.t nswt* actually encompasses almost any member of the royal clan as long as one of his female ancestors was a sister of a king. However, Queen Tabiry, daughter of Alara and Kasaqa and wife of Piankhy, and many subsequent Napatan queens were not designated *sn.t nswt* on their surviving monuments,⁴⁵ according to Lohwasser, only offspring of women bearing this title could be elected to the Kushite kingship.

Alara's covenant with Amun (*FHN* I 141, 173-4; Kawa IV 16-19; Kawa VI 23-24) was used as an example to demonstrate the matrilineal tendencies of the Kushite pattern of succession.⁴⁶

Kawa VI 23: 
m33.k n.i r sn(t).i hmt ms hn^c.i m ht w^c.t

Pierce, following Macadam, translates this sentence in *FHN* I 173 "Look upon my sister for me, a woman

born with me in one womb".⁴⁷ Alara then asked Amun to act for her and elevate (to kingship) her children (*msw.s*) in this land (l. 24).⁴⁸

Jansen-Winkeln translates "Mögest du mir achten auf *meine Schwester-Gemahlin(?)* (italics by D.K.), die mit mir aus einem einzigen Leib geboren wurde".⁴⁹ The translation of the words *sn(t).i hmt* as "meine Schwester-Gemahlin(?)" seems to coincide with the custom of brother-sister marriage in the royal family and can be corroborated by the title of many of the Kushite queens.⁵⁰ The separation of the nouns *sn.t* and *hmt* by the first person suffix pronoun  seems, however, to speak against this interpretation.

Thus, it seems that the first interpretation should be preferred on grammatical grounds. One might postulate that as Alara is not known to have had any sons, and his known daughter, Tabiry might have been too young at the time of her father's death and probably not yet married to Piankhy (Alara then, had no known son-in-law), Alara's throne went to the *son* of one of his (full) sisters who should probably be identified as Kashta. Thus it is possible to construct a hypothetical scheme in which the succession of kingship goes to the son of the sister only when there is no son or son-in-law to inherit the throne.

In Tanutamun's case, Assyrian scribes recorded his legitimization to the throne. The Assyrians had three ways to describe royal successions: the new king was a son of the former king, or a member of the royal family or a usurper. Tanutamun clearly belonged to the second category and his relation to


42 Contra A. Lohwasser, *JARCE* 38 (2001) 65. Although, it is clear that not in all royal marriages the king married his sister or half-sister.

43 G. Robins, "The Relationships Specified by Egyptian Kinship Terms of the Middle and New Kingdoms", *CdE* (1979) 203 ff.

44 Contra D. Apelt, "Bemerkungen zur Thronfolge in der 25. Dynastie. *Studia in Honorem Fritz Hintze*. (Meroitica 12, Wiesbaden 1990) 28 and Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 232, 241 basing her theory on the work of D. Franke, *Altägyptische Verwandtschaftsbezeichnungen im mittleren Reich*, Hamburg, 1983, esp. 311.

45 This lack of title is also attested with many other Kushite queens. See the list of attested titles of queens in Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 140-191. Achrasan, Artaha, Arty, Asata, Astarasaka, Atachebasken, Atmaatata, Cherisis (Khalese), Henutirdis, Kasaqa, Katimalo, Makmalo, Maloqe, Malotasan, Mernua?, Pihatis, Piye-her, Sachmach, Sakachaye, [...].salka, Tagtal. Note, however, that many of these queens are only poorly attested and mostly in graves. It should be borne in mind that this could change with additional excavations.

46 Priese, *ZÄS* 108 (1981) 51-3; Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 248-251, 257-8.

47 The use of the undefined noun *hm.t* after *sn(t).i* is the only way to get a non-restrictive relative clause with a defined antecedent. The phrase *sn(t).i ms hn^c.i m ht w^c.t* (without using *hm.t*) would imply that this was the ONLY sister from the same mother as the speaker's. Clearly Alara had more full sisters. I thank Dr. D. Sweeney from Tel Aviv University and Prof. A. Loprieno from Basel for this insight. A. K. Vinogradov, "[...] their Brother, the Chieftain, the Son of Re^c, Alara [...]?"", *CRIPEL* 20 (1999) 84-5, n. 10 understands  as "my sister" (lit. brother-woman?).

48 And not the brother as expected in collateral succession. Note also that in Kawa IV the sisters of Alara were consecrated by their brother, and he requested that their children be established on earth. This speaks against Priese's suggested succession pattern, which enables only the eldest sister of the king to be the mother of the next king.

49 Jansen-Winkeln, *Or* 72 (2003) 144, 148-9, n. 10 based on the translation of *sn.t i hmt* as "ma soeur-épouse" by J. J. Clère's review of Macadam *The Temples of Kawa* In *BiOr* 8 (1951) 179 instead of "my female sister" as proposed by Macadam.

50 See the concordance of queens with their respective titles in Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 141-191.



the royal family was described in the Harran Tablets Vs. 70-71 as follows:⁵¹

Tarqû šar māt Kūsi hattu puluhti bēlūtija ishupšuma ilik nammušišu

Tandamanē mār ahātīšu ina kussīšu ūšibma uma''er mātu

Vs. 70 "As for Taharqa, King of Kush, the fear and terror of my lordship stunned him and he went to his fate.

Vs. 71 Tanutamun, the son of his sister sat on his throne and ruled the country"

This description was not extraordinary or piquant. It just stated the facts as they were. It cannot be used to prove matrilineality in Kush. It only proves that Tanutamun's mother was Taharqa's sister. If the Assyrian scribe intended to describe a matrilineal succession pattern as opposed to the Assyrian patrilineal one (which was common in the whole Ancient Near Eastern known world), it would have been stated that although there was a legitimate heir according to the patrilineal system, the Kushites chose a candidate according to a different and unfamiliar pattern. This note would than have been repeated in all subsequent editions. This was not the case. Prism A Col. II 22, which was composed c. 20 years later described Tanutamun's kinship through his father's lineage:⁵²

arkānu Tandamanē mār Šabakû ūšib ina kussî šarrūtīšu

Later (after Taharqa's death), Tanutamun, son of Shabaka sat on the throne of his kingship.

The royal genealogy of Aspelta functions in the political sphere. It is linear in form and serves to link the king through his female ancestors with the founder of his dynasty (Urahn/in),⁵³ and thus to legiti-

mize his rule. It is not necessary to cite a lengthy genealogy to show that a king is a legitimate heir of his predecessors. Rather, Aspelta needed only to demonstrate that he is genealogically related in the proper way to the previous officeholder. That Aspelta was the *only* known Kushite king who cited his genealogy seven female generations back, and that he mentioned that he was the son of a *sn.t nsw* and of a former king and that his brother Anlamani reigned before him⁵⁴ and, finally, that an assembly of the priesthood, the administration, and the military Elite sought for divine council from several gods to choose him (Election Stela of Aspelta lines 3-19) suggests that his right to rule was being challenged seriously and needed all the legitimatization it could get.⁵⁵ It

East, however, where the telescoping occurs without mentioning the intervening ancestors. See R. R. Wilson, *Genealogy and History in the Biblical World* (Yale Near Eastern Researches 7, Yale 1977) 69-72. This means, that telescoping of the genealogical cannot be ruled out.

Moreover, Lohwasser and Zibelius-Chen assert, that it is almost impossible to connect the line of ancestors to Alara or to a King that preceded Alara by two generations. Alternatively, they arrive at the reign of Piankhy, because, according to them, the length of female generations might be shorter than male generations. See recently K. Zibelius-Chen, "Neue Studien zur Meroitistik", *OLZ* 98 (2003) 441.

⁵⁴ *FHN* I 240-2: Election Stela of Aspelta, Amun Temple B 500 at Gebel Barkal, lines 19-21, 23-4.

⁵⁵ Note the erasures on the Election stela and the content of the Banishment Stela *FHN* I 252-258. Priese dates the Banishment stela to an earlier period. K.-H. Priese, "The Kingdom of Napata and Meroe", in: D. Wildung, *Sudan, Ancient Kingdoms of the Nile*, Paris - New-York, 1997, 207. I thank A. Lohwasser for this reference. For assigning the erasures on Aspelta's monuments to internal strife, see Lohwasser, *IBAES* V (2005) 147-148, 152. It seems to me, however, that the fact that the names were erased on the Election Stela at Gebel Barkal, but not on the Khaliut Stela from the same place, nor on the adoption Stela of Aspelta from Sanam, can not be explained as an early failed attempt to legitimize Aspelta's kingship through his female ancestors, which was then rectified by an additional attempt to legitimize Aspelta's reign after the first attempt failed through the deceased Prince Khaliut. Would Aspelta's opponents, who did not accept his initial attempt to legitimize his reign, suddenly, be appeased by a second attempt? Was the election by Amun, which was mentioned on Aspelta's Election Stela not enough to convince Aspelta's opposition, but the intervention of a deceased prince made them change their minds and accept Aspelta's claims to kingship? It is more feasible that the different attempts to legitimize Aspelta's rule were construed more or less at the same time on different levels and that the defacement was not systematic. Cf. the non-systematic erasures in the Amarna period. See P. der Manuelian "Semi-liter-

⁵¹ Onasch, *Die Assyrischen Eroberungen Ägyptens*, I, 108.

⁵² Onasch, *Die Assyrischen Eroberungen Ägyptens*, I, 122.

⁵³ Lohwasser, *Meroïtica* 19 (2001) 250-1. K. H. Priese, "Der Beginn der kuschitischen Herrschaft in Ägypten" *ZÄS* 98 (1972) 23 postulates that the genealogical line precedes Alara by two generations. This calculation is accepted by Morkot, *Meroïtica* 15 (1999) 198-200; Jansen-Winkel, *Or* 72 (2003) 155. Török, *FHN* I 249, on the other hand, does not accept Priese's calculation and presents an elaborate ingenious scheme of adoptions to make Alara the founder of this particular branch of the family. It is not clear if the seven enumerated generations are fictional (playing on the magical number seven), precise, telescoped, or if the length of a generation can be determined with precision. Lohwasser, *IBAES* V (2005) 151-152 asserts that this line of king's sisters is not symbolic or magical but real and precise, because the names of the ancestors were all hacked out. As for the telescoping of genealogical lists, enough lengthy genealogies are known all over the Ancient Near



is possible that his genealogy preceded Alara by one or two generations, thus claiming his legitimacy from the ruling branch that preceded the possible usurper Alara.⁵⁶

3.3. *The model of the Kandake*

In contrast to the rule in Napatan times when no woman could become ruler of the country,⁵⁷ the Kandake (queen mother) in Meroitic times held an important role as regent and sometimes as ruler *de facto* in the Meroitic Empire,⁵⁸ but this is no exception in the Ancient Near East.

The presence of ruling Queens in Egypt is not a regular theme, but queens such as Neitikeret,⁵⁹ Sobekneferu,⁶⁰ Hatschepsut,⁶¹ Ankhetkheperure (?)⁶² and

Tauseret⁶³ are well known. The existence of reigning queens in Ancient Egypt does not mean that the succession pattern in Egypt was matrilineal. These queens ruled during special circumstances.⁶⁴ They all reigned after the demise of their husbands with no (adult) male heir to continue the dynasty.

The phenomenon of reigning queens can also be detected among the Arab tribes in the Ancient Near East. The following Arab Nomad queens are known to have ruled according to Assyrian sources: Adiyeh, Samsi, Tabûa, Te'elhunu, and Zabibe(h).⁶⁵ Queenship, however, was not the rule among the nomad Arabs and male rulers are also attested. It is not clear what the pattern of succession among the Arab nomads was.

In Meroitic art the Kandake is shown in a prominent position functioning as the ruler in the duties of smiting enemies and worshiping the gods. Sometimes she is followed or served by a smaller male figure, thus indicating a prominent position in the scene.⁶⁶ The Kandake never precedes the reigning king in reliefs,⁶⁷ however, thus indicating that her status was never higher than that of a male king.

acy in Egypt: Some Erasures from the Amarna Period", in: E. Teeter and J. A. Larson (eds.), *Gold of Praise: Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente* (SAOC 58 Chicago, 1999) 285-298.

56 If the adoratrice of Amun were to be identified with a follower of Amenirdis II, as Dodson (see n. 78 below) has proposed, and Alara and Alara's sister was Taharqa's great grandmother, the ancestor of Aspelta would precede Alara by one generation. Because Taharqa refers to Alara as the founder of his line of succession, although he clearly was not the founder of the El-Kurru dynasty, it might be postulated that Aspelta as well as his brother Anlamani, his father and the whole genealogical line from his mother's side were descendants of the founding branch of the dynasty.

57 For a possible attestation of a ruling queen: Sakhmakh, Queen of Nastasen, the last Napatan king, as *nsw* with a Horus name, see Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 181-2, 343-4.

58 See M. Zach "Meroe: Mythos und Realität einer Frauenherrschaft im Antiken Afrika" in: E. Specht (ed.), *Nachrichten aus der Zeit: Ein Streifzug durch die Frauengeschichte des Altertums* (Wien 1992) 77-114. The importance of the Kushite ruler queen is clear. The function of the occasional accompanying men is more difficult to estimate. Furthermore, female rule is by no means the standard. Meroitic male kings are attested as well in this period. It is not clear what the exact pattern of succession is in Meroe. See L. Török, *The Kingdom of Kush: Handbook of the Napatan-Meroitic Civilization*, Leiden, 1997, Ch. 7. For a possible Meroitic ruling queen cf. the title *ḥꜣ pr-ḥꜣt* of Naytal, queen-mother of Aqrakamani. See Zibelius-Chen, *OLZ* 98 (2003) 444, n. 36 and *FHN* II, 688.

59 But cf. K. Ryholt, "The Late Old Kingdom in the Turin King-list and the identity of Nitocris, *ZÄS* 127 (2000) 87-100.

60 G. Callender "What Sex was King Sobekneferu?" *KMT* 9, (1998) 1-45 and V. G. Callender "Materials for the Reign of Sobekneferu", in: C. J. Eyre (ed.), *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Egyptologists*, 1998, 227-236.

61 In Hatschepsut's reliefs where Tuthmosis III. also participates, she is depicted in front of him as senior ruler.

62 J. P. Allen, "Nefertiti and Smenkh-ka-re", *GM* 141 (1994) 7-17. The correct identification of this queen, whether Nefertiti, Meretaton, or Ankhesenaton/ Amon does not affect the conclusions of this paper.

63 I. Shaw (ed.), *The Oxford History of Ancient Egypt*, 117, 170-1, 237-8, 303-4.

64 See Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 230. Cf. the reign of Athalia, Queen of Judah in II Kings, 11.

65 I. Eph'al, *The Ancient Arabs: Nomads on the Borders of the Fertile Crescent 9th-5th Centuries B.C.*, Jerusalem, 1982.

66 Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 341-344, esp. 342, notes 662-667. Lohwasser postulates that these men are the "male complement" (as the queens are the female complement for the king). On some occasions we know who the man is, like in the case of Akinidad with Amanirenas. According to Lohwasser, he is a kind of chief of military in the reign of Teriteqas and appears with Amanirenas after Teriteqas' death. But in most cases one does not know WHO exactly this man is. Zach "Meroe: Mythos und Realität", (Vienna 1992) 94-96, 97 identifies the male follower in several cases as the heir to the throne as in the case of *Šandakdahete*. In reliefs in the temple F (N 500) of Naqa a man appears behind the queen. On the right side of the northeastern wall *Šandakdahete* stands before a goddess while on the left side the man stands before a god. According to Zach they are depicted as equals.

67 I thank A. Lohwasser and M. Zach for this information.



3.4. *The Egyptian God's wife of Amun and Kushite queenship*

The position of god's wife of Amun (GWA) is known from the Middle Kingdom and received a very high status during the reign of Ahmes-Nefertari (or possibly earlier during Ahhotep's queenship) at the beginning of the 18th Dynasty when the King's chief wife held the title.⁶⁸ During the Third Intermediate Period, the female holders of the office of GWA were probably celibate⁶⁹ and attained a very high status and at the end of the Third Intermediate Period they even adopted the royal prenomen and were regularly depicted in scenes that were previously reserved for the exclusive use of the king, such as elevating the *tst*-support, "the rites of protection at the cenotaph," the ritual driving of the four calves, the *hwt bhsw*, and the rite of consecrating the Meret-chests, consecrating offerings to the gods, burning incense and pouring libations before them, presenting Maat to Amun and Mut.⁷⁰ The power of GWA equaled that of the king in Upper Egypt.⁷¹

The GWA was dragged into the discussion about the royal succession in Kush because of the mention of a *dw3t ntr n Imn R' nsw ntrw n W3st* "Divine adoratrix of Amun-Re, king of the gods of Thebes" in the genealogy of Aspelta.⁷² While commenting on the Election Stela of Aspelta, Macadam proposed that the "mother" (*mwt*) relationship throughout the seven generations of the Aspelta genealogy was adoptive because the *dw3t ntr* presumed to be

Amenirdis II. was celibate and therefore could not have been the natural mother of Queen Nasalsa, mother of Anlamani and Aspelta. Macadam came to the conclusion that the term *mwt.s* "her mother" designated only an adoptive relationship thus establishing a principle that queens who were not GWA could *adopt* daughters, and they could even adopt more than one.⁷³ Török adopted this principle and elaborated it.⁷⁴ Morkot criticized Macadam's assumptions and postulates that the genealogical line of Aspelta's female ancestors represents a *true* genealogy and not an adoptive one.⁷⁵ He also came to the conclusion that Amenirdis II., the *dw3t ntr* ceded her office in Thebes, returned to Kush and married a king, probably Tanwetamani or Atlanersa.⁷⁶ Dodson, on the other hand, proposes that Amenirdis II. stayed in office until at least the end of Psammetichus' reign and that the *dw3t ntr* should be identified with another yet unknown prospective successor of Amenirdis II. as GWA who did not inherit Amenirdis II.'s position in Thebes, a GWA serving the God in Kush⁷⁷ or a Kushite queen who adopted the titles of GWA.⁷⁸

Be that as it may, the information of the Election Stela of Aspelta is too fragmentary and its interpretations too speculative and uncertain to reconstruct a matrilineal succession pattern based on its (adoptive or real) genealogical list without knowing the context of the appearance of the king's mother in the list of the king's predecessors. It is impossible to deduce exact chronological and historical information and date the first ancestor in the generation of Alara or two generations earlier as Priese has maintained.⁷⁹

68 For a summary of the position of God's Wife of Amun, see Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 294-300 with earlier literature.

69 T. B. Bács, "A Note on the Divine Adoratrix Isis, Daughter of Ramses VI", *GM* 148 (1995) 7-11. Contra E. Teeter "Celibacy and Adoption among Gods' Wives of Amun and Singers in the Temple of Amun: A Re-examination of the Evidence", in: E. Teeter and J. A. Larson (eds.), *Gold of Praise: Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honor of Edward F. Wente* (SAOC 58 Chicago, 1999) 405-14. See criticism by M. Ayad, "Some Thoughts on the Disappearance of the Office of the God's Wife of Amun" *JSSEA* 28 (2001) 2, 10, n. 14 and A. Dodson, "The Problem of Amenirdis II and the Heirs to the Office of God's Wife of Amun during the Twenty-sixth Dynasty", *JEA* 88 (2002) 181, n. 21

70 Private communication with M. Ayad from Memphis University.

71 For the supposed influence of the institution of Gods' Wife of Amun on Kushite Queenship, see L. Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom: Kush and her Myth of the State in the First Millennium BC*, CRIPEL Supp. 4, 1995, 94-5. For the influence of the Kushite Queenship upon the importance of the GWA, see A. Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 296 ff.

72 See discussion in Morkot, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 196-200.

73 Macadam, *The Temples of Karwa*, 126 ff.

74 L. Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom*, 98, 107-111.

75 R. Morkot, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 197-200. Morkot wrote the article in 1992 and thus did not comment on Török's theory.

76 Contra L. Habachi, "Mentuhotep, the Vizier and Son-in-Law of Taharqa", in: E. Endesfelder et al (eds.), *Ägypten und Kusch. Festschrift F. Hintze*, Berlin, 1977, 165-170.

77 For a possible depiction of a GWA or the Egyptian goddess Mut rattling a sistrum before Amun see Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 300-1.

78 Dodson, *JEA* 88 (2002) 185-186. There are, however, no further attestations of a Kushite and later Meroitic queen with the title of Gods' Wife. A. Lohwasser, *IBAES* V (2005) 151, notes that nowhere is Amenirdis II called *sn.t nsw*, thus she is not the divine adoratrice mentioned on the Election Stela of Aspelta, or, less likely, her titles might have been adjusted to create a pure and legitimate line of ancestors. Cf. E. Graefe, "Nochmals zum Gebrauch des Titels *dw3t-ntr* in der Spätzeit" *JEA* 89 (2003) 246-247 contra Dodson.

79 K. H. Priese, *ZÄS* 98 (1972) 23. Cf. Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom*, 107-111. *idem*, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 236-239.



Furthermore, the position of GWA was elevated in the Libyan period and continued into the 26th dynasty, as did the adoption of a new GWA into her office.⁸⁰ Should we postulate that the position of God's wife of Amun in the 26th Dynasty affected the right of succession in the 26th dynasty too? Was the right of succession in the 26th dynasty matriarchal or through adoption? From the genealogical evidence from dynasty 26 it is clear that the office of GWA did not affect the patriarchal succession pattern in the 26th dynasty.⁸¹

3.5. *The patterns of queenship and the inheritance of the kingship through the female line in New Kingdom Egypt*

Recently, Gay Robins refuted the idea of the succession kingship through the female line in New Kingdom Egypt line in Egypt.⁸² This has been noted by scholars in Kushite studies, but this did almost not inspire a re-evaluation of the suggested matrilineal inheritance pattern in Nubian studies.⁸³

4. *Additional treatments of the right of succession*

Morkot postulates that up to three or even four families founded the Kushite monarchy,⁸⁴ basically because there are no clues to the filiations and family relationships of Alara and Kashta. It is not clear whether Piankhy and Shabaka were brothers (but see *n. 14* above), nor whether Abar was Piankhy's sister.⁸⁵ Morkot does not accept the brother (collateral) succession proposed by Macadam. He also does not opt for a matrilineal line⁸⁶ as there is no solid supportive evidence. He enumerates several known possibilities: patrilineal succession, brother succession, rotation through houses, dual monarchies (two

distinct families) and election. Finally, Morkot mentions some of the factors that might have been taken into consideration in determining the crowning of a new king: According to him, there was no single legitimate "heir" (it is not stated, however, according to what criteria the heir is eventually chosen); the rank of the prince's mother may have been significant in determining the rank and position within the succession; the heirs might have been born after the accession providing young successors (Taharqa and Tanutamun, however, were born before their predecessor's accession and their age at accession was relatively old); potential successors may have been debarred by disease or disability (we have no proof that such was the case); and custom does not matter until backed by force (this is true for every ruler and there are some hints of opposition to Alara,⁸⁷ Piankhy,⁸⁸ Shabatka,⁸⁹ Taharqa (?),⁹⁰ Tanutamun,⁹¹ Anlaman (?),⁹² Aspelta (*FHN* I, 255, 257-8: banishment stela). Mainly, Morkot opens a lot of questions that have to be discussed to better comprehend the succession pattern in Kush. Most of his questions remain unanswered because of lack of evidence.

4.1. *The Alternating Pattern of Succession*

Török exhibits the most integrative treatment of all the succession theories. He tries to integrate the patrilineal, matrilineal and collateral succession systems, abandoning and re-embracing these systems when describing the genealogy and succession in the kingdom of Kush.⁹³ He recognizes the

80 Cf. The adoption of Nitocris, Daughter of Psammetichus I (R. A. Caminos, *JEA* 50 [1964]) 71-100 and the adoption of Ankhnesneferibre, daughter of Psammetichus II (A. Leahy, "The Adoption of Ankhnesneferibre at Karnak", *JEA* 82 (1996) 145-165.

81 G. Vittmann, "Die Familie der Saitischen Könige", *Or* 44 (1975) 375-387.

82 G. Robins, "A Critical Examination of the Theory that the right to the Throne of Ancient Egypt Passed Through the Female Line in the 18th Dynasty", *GM* 62 (1983) 67-77.

83 But cf. the analysis of Morkot, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 210-214.

84 Morkot, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 179-229.

85 Morkot, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 190, 218-9. Cf. R. A. Caminos, *JEA* 50 (1964) 79. This theory is possible, although it cannot be substantiated on textual or archaeological evidence and is purely based on lack of evidence.

86 Although he suggests this idea for the family of Alara based on Kawa VI 22-24. See Morkot, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 190.

87 *FHN* I 174: Kawa VI, 23-24. Jansen-Winkel, *Or* 72 (2003) 155.

88 Erasure of his name. G. A. Reisner, "Inscribed Monuments from Gebel Barkal", *ZÄS* 66 (1931) 90, 92-93.

89 L. Depuydt, "Glosses to Jerome's Eusebios as a Source for Pharaonic History" *CdE* 76 (2001) 32 ff.

90 P. Vernus, "Inscriptions de la troisième période intermédiaire (I)", *BIFAO* 75 (1975) 46 (aar). Inscription in the peristyle court north of pylon VI of the Amun temple in Karnak, lines 17-8, although, this sentence might refer to Taharqa's withdrawal *nhm wi*.

91 Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa*, 125. N. -C. Grimal, *Quatre stèles Napatéennes au musée du Caire*, Cairo, 1981, 8, lines 7-8.

92 *FHN* 219, 221 l. 7 [s]hr=f hft(y)w=k nbw m t3 pn and l. 13-14. This may be a hint to opposition when ascending the throne, but can also be a meaningless cliché or part of the ritual of overthrowing the enemies.

93 Several quotes will illustrate this point: L. Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 260-2 "The succession of Kashta... was collateral..., Piye... seems to have been legitimated in terms of his *patrilinearity* and probably also as the son of a member of the *female line*..., neither Shabako himself nor his descendants were originally expected to inherit the



patrilineal character of the system and attributes it to the Egyptian concept of divine sonship⁹⁴ (reflected in the texts by the use of the epithets *s3 R^c* “son of the god Re”, sonship from Amun and Atum, the identification of the living king with Horus, son of Osiris and the fact that all kings were sons of previous kings).⁹⁵ He accepts the collateral system as a native indigenous system (the sequence Alara-Kashta, Piankhy-Shabaka, Anlamani-Aspelta). He also recognizes the importance of the female line (as in the Aspelta genealogy, and the importance of the king’s mother and divine adorer) although he modifies Priese’s scheme. According to Török, Priese’s theory of the succession in the female line (i.e., the crown would be inherited from the actual king’s maternal uncle) proves to be wrong in several cases. Török notes that certain queenly titles can help to distinguish particular queens as “vehicles of succession”.⁹⁶ According to him the succession passed through the female ancestors through a chain of adoptions (based on the appearance of Amenirdis II., divine adorer).⁹⁷ According to Török, this was an-

throne. His succession was established on the basis of the *native collateral system*. Shebitqo ... *abandoned the collateral system*...the succession of Shebitqo represents the *return to the patrilineal system*... (but he would have) preferred to maintain the native collateral system. (The enthronement of Tanutamun and) the vindication of the cadet line was doubtless a *practical compromise*. ... From this time (the rule of Atlanersa) onwards, Shabaqo’s line disappears from the record. It remains, however, undecided whether this is a consequence of its natural extinction, or whether Shabaqo’s (and Tanwetamani’s) descendants were eventually eliminated by the senior party... Senkamanisken was *not the son of a member of the female succession line*...the mother of the actual heir, Senkamanisken, was not adopted into the line... Atlanersa did not appoint his own wife Malotrar into the female succession line...The *legitimacy by the female line* was, however, *reestablished* by Amenirdis II., ...The ideological significance of the *female succession line* was *reinterpreted* in the subsequent period...Anlamani’s throne was inherited by his brother Aspelta according to the *revived collateral system*, yet Aspelta was *legitimized by his mother*, Nasalsa, too ... [emphasis by D.K.]. It can be seen that according to Török’s proposed scheme there was no consistent succession pattern, or rather too many patterns of succession used simultaneously. Cf. *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom*, 97: “...the legitimacy is not conveyed by the maternal ancestors in any of the cases quoted – the matrilineal aspect occurs in them as a complementary feature alongside *divine sonship and patrilinear descent* from kings or a king”.

94 Cf. the divine sonship motive in the Bible: II Sam. 14; Psalms 2:7.

95 Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 255-6.

96 Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom*, 64.

other restrictive mechanism in the context of a patrilineal succession.⁹⁸

A brief look at Török’s *The Kingdom of Kush* Table O, pp. 237-8 shows, however, that several kings were not descendants of the female “succession vehicle” line, and several women of the adoptive “succession vehicle” line did not become kings’ mother. On occasion, sisters supposedly adopted each other to pass on the kingship to their descendants (Amenirdis II. and Khalese),⁹⁹ but queens that were not adopted, still had sons who ruled as kings (Taharqa son of Abar, Senkamanisken).¹⁰⁰ It seems to me that the adoptive “succession vehicle” line theory does not fit the evidence as well.¹⁰¹

4.2. Election

Apelt tried to find a system in the succession pattern with the help of computer software. She noted that all interpretations of the succession systems are based on the premise that the Egyptian terms “king’s brother” (*sn nsw*) and “king’s sister” (*snt nsw*) are real and not fictive. According to studies on Egyptian affinity terms, these terms can have a very broad spectrum of meaning.¹⁰² Thus, unable to determine the exact relationships in the Kushite royal family she came to the conclusion that the terms *sn nsw* and *snt nsw* are fictive and are not real indications of blood relations but designations of a social group from which the next king would be elected. In sum, she was not able to detect any pattern of succession and concluded that the Kushite kingdom was a “Wahlkönigtum”.¹⁰³ This conclusion was probably derived from the following textual sources.

According to Kawa VI 22 Alara was chosen according to an oracle (*bj3jt*) of Amun.¹⁰⁴ In the sandsto-

97 Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom*, 107-114; idem, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 236-241, 255-262. Cf. Morcott, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 197. Cf. A. Dodson, *JEA* 88 (2002) 186, n. 46.

98 Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 259.

99 Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom*, 111.

100 Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 261, and see especially Török’s notes to Table O, pp. 237-8.

101 Cf. K. Zibelius-Chen, “Theorie und Realität im Königtum der 25. Dynastie”, in: R. Gundlach and Ch. Raedler (eds.), *Selbstverständnis und Realität: Akten des Symposiums zur ägyptischen Königsideologie in Mainz 15-17.6.1995*, (ÄUAT 36,1 Wiesbaden 1997) 90-1; Lohwasser, *BzS* 7 (2000) 91, n. 32; Idem, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 204.

102 Robins, *CdE* (1979) 197-217.

103 D. Apelt, *Meroitica* 12 (1990) 23-31. Cf. Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom* 64, n. 333. For the discussion about the possibility that the Hittite kingship was elective, see Ishida, *The Royal Dynasties*, 14 ff.

104 Jansen-Winkeln, *Or* 72 (2003) 152.



ne Stela of Piankhy,¹⁰⁵ Election stela of Aspelta (*FHN* I, 232 ff.), Irike-Amanote (*FHN* II, 400 ff.), the stela of Nastasen from year 8,¹⁰⁶ there is sufficient evidence to come to the conclusion that the Kushites chose and elected their king from a wider range of candidates. The contemporary Kushite texts are corroborated by later classical sources.

According to Herodotus, “the man among the citizens whom they find to be the tallest and to have strength in proportion to his height they find fit to be king.”¹⁰⁷ According to Agatharchides as preserved in Diodorus Siculus, “the priests select the best candidates from among themselves,¹⁰⁸ and from among these selected men the multitude then chooses as king him whom the god seizes while being carried about in procession in a traditional manner.”¹⁰⁹ Nicolaus of Damascus informs us that “the Ethiopians have a particular respect for their sisters; the kings do not leave the succession to their own but to their sisters’ sons. *When there is no successor* (my emphasis), they choose as king the most handsome of all and the most warlike.”¹¹⁰ Note that Nicolaus noted that the election was only the *last* resort, when there was no successor.

Török states that “rather naively, students of Nubian history believed that kings could be elected by certain circles of the society (soldiers, priests, courtiers) from the upper strata and did not realize the contradiction between the principle of divine sonship reflected by the same texts – and forgot also to ask about the political applicability of such an anachronistically democratic practice...” “Instead, it was suggested that the election of the king was an indigenous, “African”, tradition. He does not believe that the Kushite kings were really elected by men, who merely act as a medium of the divine will, and accept the legitimacy of an heir by rightful descent.”¹¹¹

105 *FHN* I, 57, l. 6: Gods make a king, men make a king (*rmt ir.w nsw*), (but) it is Amun who made me.

106 *FHN* II, 471 ff. but cf. the interpretation of E. Kormysheva, $\text{𓆎} \text{𓆏} \text{𓆐}$ in line 5 of Nastasen’s Stele”, *Ancient Egypt and Kush: in Memoriam Mikhail A. Korostovtsev*, Moscow, 1983, 268.

107 Herodotus III, 20; *FHN* I, 326.

108 A. K. Vinogradov, “Diodorus on the Election of Kings of Meroe”, *Meroitica* 10 (1989) 353-364, esp. 357. Vinogradov advances a grammatical analysis of the Greek text and claims that the pronoun should not be reflexive and relate to the priests but should relate to the Ethiopians in the previous paragraph.

109 Diodorus 3.5.1, *FHN* II, 646. For additional Greek sources with similar descriptions, see Vinogradov, *Meroitica* 10 (1989) and Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 268-9, n. 331.

110 *FHN* II, 684.

111 Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom*, 74. Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 217, 269-70. “The survey

But how should we treat the Kushite texts, that explicitly describe the election of certain kings by the army, priests, and court officials?

Lohwasser completely disagrees with Török.¹¹² She postulates that every king of Kush was elected after the death of his predecessor. There was no automatic inheritance of the kingship. The new king was elected from a limited group of people. According to Lohwasser, the members of this group were not necessarily “Königsbrüder” im genealogischen Sinn, als vielmehr Gleichrangigkeit der zur Wahl stehenden Kandidaten... Die *snw niswt* bilden eine soziale Gruppe”.¹¹³ The *sn niswt* “king’s brother” had to descend from a *snt niswt* “king’s sister”. The potential heir had to descend from a female family member, even a very remote one, of the Kushite king. Thus, the Kushite king was elected according to his matrilineal descent.

Lohwasser raised the question whether these stela were the exception and were erected to legitimize a rule of a king, who came to power in an (unspecified) irregular manner, retrospectively. She came to the conclusion that because these stela were not exposed to the public, and that if they had been seen, the crowd could not have read them anyway, they did not convey propaganda but were a manifestation of ideology.

It seems to me that Török’s statement that kings were not elected by certain circles of the society but only by the gods contradicts the evidence. Why document a whole procedure of election in several stela if it contradicts the basic elements of the Kushite state ideology? On the other hand, accepting the information of the Greek sources, which suggest that the king was elected from all the Kushites at face value, or Lohwasser’s suppositions that there was no order of succession or strict criteria and that the king was always elected from a limited circle of a social group would be rather chaotic and raises several questions:

of evidence pertinent to the Kushite succession order and legitimacy...completely excludes the possibility of a real, or even mythologized, competition for kingship.”

112 Lohwasser, *BzS* 7 (2000) 85-102. According to Lohwasser (p. 85, n. 5), the stela of Harsiotef (*FHN* II, 443-5), should also be regarded as a description of human election, however I understand the consultation with the old man as an oracle given by the gods through an intermediary. As for the Stela of Sabrakamani (*FHN* II 534-6) it is too fragmented to decide if it deals with human election. It is also difficult to decide whether he was supposed to be the designated heir and whether he was Piankhy-erike-qo’s immediate successor (note his relatively advanced age of 39).

113 Lohwasser, *BzS* 7 (2000) 90- 91, n. 24. This is compared to costumes in certain African tribes.



Who appointed the members of the assembly, and was their authority accepted by all potential claimers of kingship? If some potentates did not accept the assembly's authority, how was the protest carried out? Is there any clear evidence of a conflict between potentates for the throne? According to what criteria was the next king chosen if it was not determined according to hierarchy in kinship? How can we explain that the farthest relative to be chosen for kingship from such a big group of far-related royal brethren (in the parts of the dynasty that can be reconstructed with certainty), was a cousin or an uncle and all were sons of a former king?

In the "Aspelta Election Stela", when an assembly of army commanders and bureaucrats felt the need to choose a new ruler, they went to the temple of Amun and with the priests went into the temple compound where *Amun* (and not the people; although it would be naïve to think that the statue of Amun elected the king and not the priests who carried the statue) chose Aspelta (*FHN* I, 234-241: Aspelta Stela, 3, 15, 18-19).¹¹⁴ Irike-Amannote's age (41 at accession) and his descent from an earlier king also points to the fact that there were no suitable young candidates. On the other hand, one can hardly elect a young child as king to rule over a vast kingdom in times of war.¹¹⁵ In the Nastasen stela of his regnal year 8 he also does not describe a real election from a group of contenders. When Nastasen was still a prince in Meroe, he was elected by Amun. Nastasen summoned the royal brethren to come and seek a judgment about their nobleman (*im.tn sywh3.s (i)rm.n wp n p3y.n sr[...]*).¹¹⁶ But, no election took place. Nastasen's legitimacy was acknowledged right away. Not knowing the name of Nastasen's father, it is not possible to determine whether the election that was suggested by Nastasen was the normal procedure or if it was needed because there was no designated heir according to the normal hierarchy of heirs to the throne or it was a forceful intervention of the Elite in times of national crisis.

In Egypt, too, election by the gods through oracle is attested. According to the texts, an oracle of Amun elected Hatshepsut, Thutmose III, Horemheb from dynasty 18 as well as kings from dynasties 20 and 21, (It would only be naïve to think that these oracles were not predetermined by the leading parties of the kingdom). The existence of these texts does

114 Cf. Urk. IV 158: the election of Thutmose, the royal son of a lesser queen by Amun.

115 Inscription of Irike-Amannote from year 1-2. *FHN* II 400 ff. lines 3-5, 12 mentioning his father?

116 Note that the object of *wp* seems to be in the singular (*p3y.n sr*) and not in the dual or plural and does not designate a judgment between two or more contenders for the throne.

not change the basic system of ascendance to kingship in the New Empire of Ancient Egypt according to the right of primogeniture.¹¹⁷

In Assyria, Sin-Shar-Ishkun claims that he was elected from his peers.¹¹⁸ Does this mean that there was an election system in Ashur too? In Ashur, patrilineal succession is well attested.

In Judah, for instance, the enthronement of Jehohaz (609 B.C.), son of Josiah King of Judah, instead of his elder brother Jehoahaz was conducted by the "am Ha'aretz" (lit. People of the land) – a Judahite Élite group – after the sudden death of King Josiah at Megiddo by Necho II, King of Egypt in 609 B.C.¹¹⁹ In all instances where the "am Ha'aretz" intervened in the election of the king, they did so in favor of the continuity of the dynasty of the house of David.

In the kingdom of Israel, King Saul (who was taller than all his peers) was elected by the prophet Samuel according to the will of god in front of all the tribes of Israel to lead them and be their king and relieve the military pressure of the philistines (I Samuel 9:1 ff., 16). In a different version of Saul's enthronement, he is chosen by the people (the army?) to be king after he proved his charisma to rule and defeated the king of Ammon (I Samuel 11:12). David was chosen by his followers after the death of Saul and Jonathan, his son, in battle (II Samuel 2: 4) and subsequently, when the last heir to the house of Saul was killed, by all the people of Israel and their elders (II Samuel 5: 1-4).¹²⁰

It has been widely held that during the earliest period of Hittite history the king was elected by the nobility, meeting in an assembly for this purpose.¹²¹ Recently G. Beckman has demonstrated, however that this assembly was subject to the will of the monarch and its functions were primary judicial and that

117 K. Jansen-Winkel, "Die Wahl des Königs durch Orakel in der 20. Dynastie" *BSEG* 23 (1999) 51-61 and additional bibliography there. The reason for every one of these oracles should be investigated, but such investigations exceed the scope of this paper.

118 See N. Na'aman, *ZA* 81 (1991) 255.

119 See II Kings 23:31-35. For additional interventions of 'Am ha'aretz' in the election of members of the house of David in the Kingdom of Judah, see S. Talmon, "'Am ha'aretz' in Historical Perspective", *Papers of the Fourth World Congress of Jewish Studies* I (Jerusalem 1967) 71-76.

120 See the enthronements of Rehoboam (I Kings 12: 1); Jeroboam (I Kings, 12: 20); the civil war between Omri and Tibni (I Kings 16: 16, 21-22); Jehu (II Kings 9: 1-14) by a disciple of the prophet Elishah. Note that all these kings were founders of a new dynasty except for Rehoboam who faced serious opposition at his accession.

121 Ishida, *The Royal Dynasties*, 14 ff. See also discussion in Bin-Nun, *The Tawananna*, 245-248.



the assembly was convened by the monarch. There is no evidence whatsoever that they possessed the right or the responsibility of electing the monarch.¹²²

Note that in all these cases the basic succession pattern was not elective. In the above mentioned selection of instances from around the Ancient Near East, a group of the elite came together to choose an heir to the throne or to affirm the king's choice when there was no clear heir to the throne in times of war, internal strife, and distress.

From reviewing all these different options of succession it seems to me that most of the options can be ruled out because:

- a. Matrilineal and collateral succession patterns do not fit the evidence and need emendations.
- b. Török's alteration of all systems is not systematic but descriptive.
- c. Election is the last resort when there is no competent designated heir (especially in times of distress and war) according to the right of succession.
- d. They lack the theological ideology in the texts.

The collateral succession pattern does not have any mythical or ideological interpretation in the texts. When it is clearly stated that a king inherited his brother's kingship (Aspelta and Anlamani), the new king does not mention that a collateral succession was the norm. Moreover, the erasures of cartouches in Aspelta's stela might indicate a struggle for power and discontent from his rule, even though he was a brother of the former king.¹²³

The importance of the King's mother or sister does not reflect an unknown indigenous Kushite myth. On the contrary, they use *Egyptian* terminology and mythology and do not prove matrilineality.

So, can we detect any theological motivation for the royal succession in the Kushite texts?

As in Egyptian texts, on the ideological level, Amun elected the king through an oracle or a dream.¹²⁴ He was the son of Re,¹²⁵ the son of Amun¹²⁶

through divine birth, the descendent of Atum,¹²⁷ Geb,¹²⁸ and the incarnation of Horus,¹²⁹ son of Isis and Osiris.

The role of the queen mother as the incarnation of Isis is emphasized in the texts and has been understood as an indigenous aspect of the importance of the female succession line in the Kushite kingship.¹³⁰

127 Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 256 The son of Taharqa was called *nsy-šw-tfnwt*; 268, 274 Piankhy Victory Stela "likeness of Atum"; 275 Aspelta is called "Atum of the beginning" in the Banishment Stela, l. FHN I, 254. For Anlamani, see Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom*, 66-7, n. 342.

128 For the succession of the Egyptian Pharaoh from his divine ancestors Atum and Geb, see: Tobin, "The Egyptian Kingship", in: *Theological Principles of Egyptian Religion*, (American University Studies, Series VII: Theology and Religion 59, New York, 1989) 92. For Kush, see: Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 290, 297: Taharqa wears the crown of Geb; FHN I, 255: Banishment Stela l. 4. "His majesty being seated on the throne of Geb".

129 Cf. the Horus and golden Horus names of the Kushite kings; Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 235: *Piankhy* Victory Stela: ll. 34, 56, 60, 71, 105. *Shabatka*, Nile level record l. 4 "He (Amun) granted him that he (4) will appear like Horus on the throne of Re" FHN I, 128; *Taharqa*: Kawa IV 27 "appearance on the throne of Horus forever" FHN I 143; Kawa V 10, 18-22, FHN I, 151, 154-5; Kawa VII, 15, FHN I 180; Stela of Taharqa from Dahshur, l. 17, FHN I 162; *Tanutamun's* Dream Stela, l. 6, 42: The king's appearance on the throne of Horus; l. 6. Horus leaving Chemmis; *Anlamani* Enthronement stela, l. 16, 23, 28 FHN I 221, 223, 224; *Aspelta's* epithet *Hrw nḏ it.f*; Election Stela of Aspelta, l. 6 the king is equated to Hor-sa-Iset; l. 5 in the lunette, l. 6, 29, FHN I 233, 235, 244, the king's appearance on the throne of Horus; Stela of *Harsiotef*: The *S3 R'* name of the king emphasizes his right of succession as son of Osiris. Cf. the choice of his other names to legitimize his rule. FHN II, 436-7: Processions in honor of Osiris, Isis, and Horus, lines 152, 155.

130 Kormysheva, *Meroitica 15* (1999) 239. The mothers of Taharqa, Anlamani, and Irike Amanote enacted the role of Isis coming to see her son Horus in Chemmis, where he was hiding in the papyrus thicket until he was old enough to inherit the throne of his father, Osiris, and avenge his father's death. J. W. Yellin, "Egyptian Religion and its Ongoing Impact on the Formation of the Napatan State: A Contribution to László Török's Main Paper: The Emergence of the Kingdom of Kush and her Myth of State in the First Millennium BC." *CRIPEL 17* (1995) *Actes de la VIIIe conference internationale des études Nubiennes, Lille 11-17 Septembre 1994, Communications principales*, 254-5. Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 225, 235; A. Lohwasser, König/Königin - Gott/Göttin. Zur Komplementarität von Männlichem und Weiblichem in napatanischer und meroitischer Zeit; in: A. Lohwasser (Hg.), *Geschlech-*

122 G. Beckman "The Hittite Assembly", *JAOS* 102 (1982) 435-442.

123 See the erasures on Aspelta's Election Stela (year 1) and Banishment Stela (year 2). FHN I, 230-1, 245, 256-7. Not like other erasures of Kushite kings made by Psammetichus II. during his conflict with Kush. J. Yoyotte, "Le martelage des noms royaux Éthiopiens par Psammétique II", *RdE* 8 (1951) 215-239.

124 Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 263-271; idem, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom*, 73-88.

125 Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 266.

126 Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 267-268.



The role of Osiris in the Kushite succession is, however, underestimated by scholars.¹³¹ The reason for this neglect is probably the nature of the royal texts. Osiris symbolizes the dead king, whereas the Kushite royal texts emphasize the role of the living king. Several Kushite historical texts mention the dead king.

Taharqa describes the arrival of his mother in Egypt after Taharqa was crowned: "Then she came sailing north to see me after a period of years. She found me appearing on the throne of Horus, after I received the diadem of Rê, and was wearing the uraei on my head, all the gods being the protection of my body. She was exceedingly joyful after seeing the beauty of his majesty, (just) as Isis saw her son Horus appearing on the throne of his father Osiris after he had been a youth in Khemmis" (*FHN* I, 154: Kawa V, 17-20).

In the Election stela of Aspelta, the king cites the words of the search committee (army officers and bureaucrats): "Would that we might know him, that we might enter under him and serve him, as the two lands served Horus, son of Isis after he rested upon the throne of his father, Osiris ... (*FHN* I, 235: Election Stela of Aspelta l. 6)".

The stela of Aspelta on the mortuary cult foundation of Prince Khaliut (*FHN* I, 272-273) "appearing as king of Upper and Lower Egypt on the throne of Horus of the living forever together with the king's mother, Nasalsa, may she live, as Isis did with her son Horus in the two lands. His monuments (are spread) as far as your rays shine because he is a son who is beneficial for his father, Osiris, the protector of his mother, Isis" ... ll. 13-4. "He has made excellent plans in this land (even) as Horus did after¹³² he appeared on the throne of his father, Osiris" l. 19. "He established my food offerings for ever and ever (just) as Horus [for his father, Osiris] l. 23, cf. l. 28.

Osiris and his cult can also be found in many funerary scenes,¹³³ royal inscriptions,¹³⁴ temples and chapels,¹³⁵ tombs¹³⁶ and funerary artifacts¹³⁷ dealing

terforschung in der Ägyptologie und Sudanarchäologie, IBAES II (2000) 65.

131 For the Egyptian identification of the Dead king with Osiris and the living king with Horus, see Tobin, "The Egyptian Kingship", 93-95. The only scholar (as far as I know) who emphasized the mythical role in the Kushite succession is Török in *The Kingdom of Kush*, 265.

132 Note that the new king ascends to the throne only after the death of the previous king. Cf. Kawa V 15, *FHN* I, 153 "I received the diadem in White-wall (Memphis) after the falcon went up to heaven". A. F. Rainey, "Taharqa and Syntax" *Tel Aviv* 3 (1976) 40.

133 The rituals that Beg 07 – 13 chose to use from Egyptian sources deal with the proper burial of Osiris by Horus. I thank J. Yellin for this reference and for several more references in the following notes.

134 E. Graefe and M. Wassef, "Eine fromme Stiftung für den Gott Osiris-der-seinen-Anhänger-in-der-Unterwelt-rettet aus dem Jahre 21 des Taharqa (670 v. Chr.)" *MDAIK* 35 (1979) 104-118; *Annals of Harsiotef* 148-161, processions with statues of Osiris in Meroe, Maratae, Garere, Sehrase, Sekarage, Napata, Nehane, Gempaaton (Kawa), and Pnubs (Kerma? Cf. C. Bonnet and D. Valbelle "Un prêtre d'Amon de Pnubs enterré à Kerma" *BIFAO* 80 [1980] 3-12) *FHN* II, 456-7, 463; Mortuary Stela of Amanibakhi, *FHN* II, 466; Fragment of a Stela of Adikhalamani from Philae. According to *FHN* II 594-5, in the inscriptions accompanying the offering scenes, Adikhalamani appears as son of Osiris and Isis and thus as heir of Osiris to his throne.

135 Built by *Shabaka* and Amenirdis I Chapel of Osiris *nb 'nh*, see Török, *The Kingdom of Kush* 138, n. 82 Additions to the Osiris Ruler of Eternity (*hk3 dt*) chapel at Karnak by *Shabatka* and Amenirdis I. and the Chapel of Osiris Wennefer-who-is-in-the-midst-of-the-Persea-tree built by Shepenwepet II., Chapel of Osiris *nb dt* built by *Taharqa* and Shepenwepet II., see J. Leclant, *Recherches sur les monuments thébains de la XXV^e dynastie dite Ethiopienne*, Cairo, 1965, 41-47, 59-61, 99 ff. For the Osireon at the sacred lake of Karnak, see J. -C. Goyon, J. Leclant, and R. A. Parker, *The Edifice of Taharqa by the Sacred lake of Karnak*, Providence, 1979. Chapel of Osiris *nb 'nh* with Shepenwepet II, Leclant, *Recherches*, 25 ff., 269 ff; Osiris-Ptah *nb 'nh* and its completion by Tanutamun Leclant, 1965, 110 ff. T. Kendall, in a preprint titled "Napatan Temples: A Case Study from Gebel Barkal. The Mythological Nubian Origin of Egyptian Kingship and the Formation of the Napatan State" given at the Tenth International Conference of Nubian Studies, University of Rome, September 9-14, 2002, p. 19 suggested interpreting Temple B 700 from Gebel Barkal dating to the late seventh c. B.C. as a royal mortuary temple dedicated to the Osirian forms of Amun.

136 The burial of Tabiry in an East-West oriented chamber grave at El-Kurru (as first attested in Ku. 14, see next note) and a preserved stela from this chamber depicting the queen before Isis and Osiris. See Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 165. For the burials of members of the Kushite royal house in Abydos, see St. Wenig, "Pabasma - Pekereslo - Pekar-tror, Ein Beitrag zur Frühgeschichte der Kuschten", *Meroitica* 12 (1990) 333-352 and A. Leahy, "Kushite Monuments at Abydos", in: Eyre, Ch., A. Leahy and L. Montagno Leahy (eds.), *The Unbroken Read. Studies in the Culture and Heritage of Ancient Egypt in Honour of A. F. Shore*, (London 1994) 171-92. The tomb of Taharqa was built in the form of the Osireion. See T. Kendall, "The 1997 Season of the MFA Boston at Gebel Barkal, Sudan", *NARCE* 173, 1997, 12-13. Funerary scenes dating to Arikakamani and later depicting Osiris, Isis, and Nephthys, see A.M. Abdallah, "Meroitic Funerary Customs and Beliefs from texts and scenes", *Meroitica* 6 (1982) 62-4.

137 Broken red pots from the tomb of lord B at El-Kurru with allusions to the cult of Osiris (?) and first signs of mum-



with the cult of the dead. These numerous mentions of Osiris in various genres, locations and on different artifacts show that the cult of Osiris was prosperous and thriving continuously during the Napatan and Meroitic periods. It seems to me that the Egyptian Royal triad consisting of Osiris, Isis and their son, Horus was worshiped in Kush, and as in Egypt, was identified respectively with the deceased king, the queen mother, and the heir to the throne, the living king. This means that, in theory, the Kushite pattern of succession resembled the Egyptian pattern of succession based on primogeniture, i.e. the eldest son succeeds his father on the throne upon his death.

It may thus seem that the changes in the succession order, deduced from the Kushite monuments, were determined by practical factors and internal policy within the dynasty rather than by the strict principles of any of the aforementioned proposed succession systems.

GENEALOGY OF THE KINGS FROM ALARA TO TANUTAMUN

In the following section I will briefly survey the genealogy of the kings of Kush from Alara to Tanut-

mification, see T. Kendall, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 22 n. 28, 53. Cf. Yellin, *CRIPEL* 17 (1995); Mummy-form Ushabti figurines of Piankhy [Kendall, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 38] of Taharqa [T. Kendall, "Napata and the Kushite Dynasty, Kings of the Sacred Mountain: 1000-656 B.C." in: D. Wildung (ed.), *Sudan, Ancient Kingdoms of the Nile*, Paris – New York, 1997, 194-195.] Taharqa has the epithet "Osiris" on the inscribed spells. Ushabtis of Anlamani [D. O'Connor, *Ancient Nubia, Egypt's Rival in Africa*, Philadelphia, 1993, Pl. 10]. I. Hofmann, "Isis, Osiris und Amun in den Anrufungsformeln der meroitischen Totentexte" *Meroitica* 6 (1982) 148-150. The invocation on the Meroitic offering tables is thought to begin with: "oh Sori (=Osiris)! Oh Wos (=Isis)!" cf. *FHN* II 673, the mortuary inscription of Tsmere from Faras. Napatan period has the typical "*hṯp di nsw*" formula which of course names Osiris in the invocation as well. The sarcophagi of Anlamani and Aspelta with numerous spells from the Book of the Dead mentioning Osiris. Cf. S. Doll, *Texts and Decoration on the Napatan Sarcophagi of Anlamani and Aspelta*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Brandeis University, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, 1978; idem. "The Day Hour Texts on the Sarcophagi of Anlamani and Aspelta", in: *Studies in Ancient Egypt, the Aegean, and the Sudan: Essays in Honor of Dows Dunham on the Occasion of his 90th birthday, June 1, 1980*, Boston, 1981, 443-54; idem. "Identification and Significance of the Texts and Decorations on the Sarcophagi of Anlamani and Aspelta", *Meroitica* 6 (1982) 276-280.

amun and the actual order of inheritance. I will try to explain the reasons for the deviation from the system of primogeniture in each case separately.

Our knowledge about the royal house of Kush starts with Alara.

Alara and Kashta

Alara and Kashta are generally assumed to be brothers. No sons of Alara are known and if Alara and Kashta were brothers, the latter would probably have been the closest living relative to inherit the throne. Morkot has rightly pointed out, however, that there is no clear indication that Alara and Kashta were brothers.¹³⁸ If we understand Kawa VI 22 literally it becomes clear that Alara was Taharqa's great uncle.¹³⁹ In this case Alara and Kashta were from the same generation and could be identified as brothers.¹⁴⁰ This conclusion is difficult to apprehend. If the succession pattern in Kush was a brother succession, it is not clear why Taharqa referred to his legitimacy through his female ancestors and not through the brother-relationship of Alara and Kashta. If the succession pattern, on the other hand, was matrilineal, Alara's sister as "vehicle of succession" would have passed the reign to her son (if she had one) and

138 Morkot, *Meroitica* 15 (1999) 190, 208. Morkot postulates that Alara and his sister might have shared the same mother but not necessarily the same father. There is no straightforward evidence that Alara and Kashta were brothers. They might be from different ruling families. There is nothing to suggest intermarriage between ruling families or rule it out.

139 *FHN* I 173. *mwt n mwt.f* literally means grandmother, but it might also mean a female ancestor. In Kawa IV 16 *mw.wt nt mwt.i* "the mothers (plural) of my (i.e. Taharqa's) mother were ordained for Amun. *FHN* I, 141. Translated in *FHN* as (fore)mothers. Vinogradov, *CRIPEL* 20 (1999) 92 understands that the sisters of Taharqa's grandmother were also "committed" to Amun. See also Jansen-Winkel, *Or* 72 (2003) 151. It is difficult to visualize Alara's sister as farther removed from Taharqa than three generations at most because Tabiry, Alara's daughter, was married to Piankhy (*FHN* I 119: Stela of Tabiry, 3-4). It is clear that they are not brother and sister, as it is not mentioned in her titles. Thus, Piankhy is clearly *not* the son of Alara. Tabiry might be a later daughter by Alara if he is three generations away from Taharqa. Tabiry could then be Piankhy's aunt. It is also plausible; however, that Tabiry was from Piankhy's generation. Tabiry is titled *hm.t nsw 3.t tp.t n hm.f* "The first great royal wife of his majesty" but did not produce a royal heir, perhaps because of premature death or late marriage.

140 On the possibility that Kashta was Piankhy's father, see NE ("S") wall of court B 502 in the Great Amun Temple (B 500) at Gebel Barkal in n. 14 above.



become a *mwt nsw*. Passing the succession to her husband would have been the last resort.

Alara could, hypothetically, be Kashta's father (though it is strange that there is no hint of such a relationship) or, more likely, his uncle, if Alara's sister was not Taharqa's grandmother but his great grandmother.¹⁴¹

Kashta and Piankhy

If Peksater, daughter of Kashta and Pabatma,¹⁴² was a royal wife and sister of Piankhy as might have been recorded on the NE ("S") wall of court B 502 in the Great Amun Temple (B 500) at Gebel Barkal,¹⁴³ then it becomes clear that Piankhy was a son of Kashta.



Shabaka – Shabaka is clearly younger than Piankhy, since he succeeded him on the throne. If Piankhy was Kashta's son, then Shabaka would have been his brother or half brother.

Pekartor – Another possible son of Pabatma is attested, if this queen should be identified with *P(3)-3b(i)-T3-mri*. This identification, however, is not certain at all as he did not have the title, king's son or king's brother.¹⁴⁴

Piankhy and Shabaka

If Piankhy was a son of Kashta then he and Shabaka were brothers.¹⁴⁵ It remains to be clarified why Piankhy's attested children did not inherit his throne directly. The known sons¹⁴⁶ of Piankhy are: Khaliut,¹⁴⁷ the King's son (Piankhy?) Haru,¹⁴⁸ and Taharqa.

Khaliut – It is not known whether Khaliut predeceased his father, but one might postulate that the use of one epithet only in Khaliut's mortuary inscription (*h3ty-^c n K3nd*) points to the fact that his career was quit short.

(*Piankhy?*) Haru – It is not clear whether this individual was the son of Piankhy, and his name was Haru, or that he was the son of an unnamed king and his name was Piankhy-Haru. He fathered Wedjarenes, wife of Montuemhat. In year 14 of Psammetichus I. (October 4, 651 B.C.),¹⁴⁹ Montuemhat's and Wedjarenes' grandson, Montuemhat II prophet of Amun-Re served as a witness in an oracle procedure. It is clear then that Wedjarenes was a grandmother in 651 B.C. to an adult priest (it is not clear whether she was still alive at this time. The last time she is attested is in 656 B.C. on the adoption stela of Nitocris, l. 22.)¹⁵⁰ The minimum age for becoming a grandmother is about 30. Adding to that c. 15 years for the grandchild to become an adult, it is possible to set the latest date for Wedjarenes' birth at c. 696 B.C. Her father, Prince (Piankhy?)-Haru, had to be an adult (minimum 15 years old), so he was born at the latest at c. 711 B.C. when Shabaka was king of Kush. Thus, (Piankhy?)-Haru was either a son of Shabaka (his name incorporating his uncle's name), or his name was Haru and he was the son of King Piankhy.¹⁵¹ I believe that the second option is more plausible. Because Wedjarenes, (Piankhy?)-Haru's daughter, was still alive in 656, (Piankhy?)-Haru himself was probably born at the end of Piankhy's long reign. It is therefore probable that (Piankhy?)-Haru was a small child when his father died in 721 and hence did not inherit the kingship of Kush upon his father's death. Another possibility is that (Piankhy?)-Haru did not outlast Piankhy's long reign. In this case, might it be possible to equate  Khaliut with  Haru?¹⁵²

Taharqa – Taharqa was born in 721 B.C., the last year of Piankhy's reign. It becomes clear that he did not become king upon the death of his father because of his age.¹⁵³

141 *Mwt* means mother but could also mean grandmother.

See Robins, *CdE* 54 (1979) 200. See also Lohwasser, *Meroïtica* 19 (2001) 236 for Taharqa's genealogical relationship with Alara.

142 Rilly, *BIFAO* 101 (2001) 359 doc. D. and earlier literature there.

143 See n. 14 above.

144 Wenig, *Meroïtica* 12, (1990) 340-343, 346-350. Cf. Leahy, "Kushite Monuments at Abydos", 182-187. Lohwasser, *Meroïtica* 19 (2001) 172-175.


145 Shabaka is attested as brother of Amenirdis I., daughter of Kashta, and is clearly a son of Kashta. See Morkot, *Meroïtica* 15 (1999) 190.

146 Bibliography about all of Piankhy's children can be found in Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 133.






147 M. B. Reisner, "Inscribed Monuments from Gebel Barkal", *ZÄS* 70 (1934) 35-46. There is no additional information about Khaliut.

148 J. Leclant *Montuemhat, quatrième prophète d'Amon, prince de la ville, Le Caire*, 1961, 263 ff.

149 R. Parker, *A Saïte Oracle Papyrus from Thebes in the Brooklyn Museum [Papyrus Brooklyn 47.218.3]* Providence, Rhode Island (1962) 1.

150 See Caminos, *JEA* 50 (1964) 75, 89-90. In line 22 of the Nitocris adoption stela she is designated as *m3't hrw*  (M 2) and might have died in the interval between the stipulations of her commitment and the carving of the stela.

151 Note that Piankhy's name does not have any titles or epithets in the name "son of the king Piankhy Haru" (see Leclant *Montuemhat*, 264), nor with the name "son of the king Piankhy, Khaliut" (see Reisner, *ZÄS* 70 (1934) 40).

152 Two main objections can be raised to this idea: 1. There is no evidence that  replaces  and vice versa (according to Dr. C. Rilly, private communication, however, the  was not in use in Meroitic.). How would one spell a name that was originally written with  ? 2. There is no reason to add a final  to the end of the name.

153 D. Kahn, "The Inscription of Sargon II at Tang-i Var and the Chronology of Dynasty 25" *Or* 70 (2001) 8. Lohwasser, *Meroïtica* 19 (2001) 142 doubts that Taharqa is the son of Piankhy.



It can now be understood that Shabaka inherited his brother's throne for practical reasons: as far as we know, Piankhy had no adult son to inherit him. Contrary to the practice in Egypt where a child can become Pharaoh on his father's death (Pepi II, Tutmosis III, Tutankhamun etc.) the Kushite state did avoid such practice, perhaps because of even higher child mortality than in Egypt.

Shabaka and Shabatka

Shabatka - Macadam postulated that Shabatka was son of Piankhy based on Kawa IV, 19 where Taharqa is mentioned as *sn nsw* "king's brother".¹⁵⁴ He enforced his theory of collateral succession pattern passing from the elder brother (Piankhy) to the younger brother (Shabaka) and then to the children of the elder brother (Shabatka and Taharqa) in the same way.¹⁵⁵ Many scholars followed Macadam's view uncritically. Manetho states, however, that Shabatka was a son of Shabaka, and thus succeeded his father on his death.¹⁵⁶ Corroboration to this information can be found in the demotic fairy-tale of Pap. Vandier where the poisoned pharaoh *Dd-k3-r*^c (throne name of Shabatka) is called *s3 Sbk*, possibly "son of Shabaka".¹⁵⁷

Leahy published a brief account of the Cairo museum record of coffin fragments belonging to Istemkheb, on which a daughter of Shabaka was called *s3.t nsw Š3b3k3*, *hm.t nsw wr.t*, *sn.t nsw*. Apparently she had a brother (and Shabaka a son) who reigned as king. Leahy raises the possibility that she might have been married to Shabatka, but came to the conclusion that she most probably was Tanutamun's wife.¹⁵⁸ Istemkheb's coffin should be used to prove Shabatka's filiation from Shabaka and cannot be used to prove Tanutamun's.¹⁵⁹ Istemkheb, who was a daughter of Shabaka, was a *hm.t nsw wr.t* and was at least 42 at Tanutamun's accession (Shabaka died in 706 B.C. at the latest). If Istemkheb was Tanutamun's great royal wife at his accession and was probably

married to him years earlier, it is strange that on the Dream Stela of Tanutamun his wife Piankhirty¹⁶⁰ was depicted and not Istemkheb. It can thus be concluded that Shabatka was definitely the son of Shabaka.

Tanutamun - According to Assyrian texts, Tanutamun, the opponent of the Assyrians in the war of 664/3 B.C. against Egypt, was the son of Shabaka and of a sister of Taharqa.¹⁶¹

Macadam determined that Tanutamun was the son of Shabatka and not of Shabaka,¹⁶² in order to adjust his suggested collateral succession theory. He thus had to emend the Assyrian record from "son of Shabako" to "son of Shebitku" to be consistent with his theory. If Tanutamun was a son of Shabaka, he was clearly a younger brother of Shabatka, and thus, originally, was not destined to rule.


Horemakhet (Harmakhis), an additional son of Shabaka, is known from Egypt. He served as the high priest of Amun and was called Horemakhet,¹⁶³ a good Egyptian name. The fact that he bore an Egyptian name suggested to some scholars that he was not destined to become king and that he was destined to be a priest.¹⁶⁴ From the inscription on his statue it can be deduced that he was born at the end of Shabaka's reign and was a minor during Shabatka's reign. He served as priest in Taharqa's and Tanutamun's reigns. Thus he was a younger brother of Shabatka and probably also a younger brother of Tanutamun, although this cannot be verified.¹⁶⁵

Shabatka and Taharqa

The rules of succession are more difficult to follow with these two kings. No sons of Shabatka are known by name even though they are mentioned in different sources, namely: In Kawa V 14 (*FHN I*, 153) the events leading to Shabatka's campaign in the north were described by Taharqa:

*Mr.n.f wi r snw.f nb{t} r msw{t}.f nb
tn.kw(i) r.sn hr hm.f*

¹⁶² Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa*, 124-5. See n. 11 above.

¹⁶³ G. Legrain, "Le premier prophète d'Amon  Harmakhouti et quelques-uns de ses contemporains" *ASAE* 7 (1906) 188-9.

¹⁶⁴ Priese, *ZÄS* 108 (1981) 51, n. 9 suggests that he had no right to the throne as he served as priest in Egypt, like the son of Taharqa.

¹⁶⁵ G. Lefebvre, "Grand prêtre d'Amon, Harmakhis et deux reines de la XXVe dynastie" *ASAE* 25 (1925) 25-33. Lefebvre noted that Horemakhet was designated *s3 wr* "big brother" and postulated that he renounced the throne and was contented with being high priest of Amun. L. Depuydt, *CdE* 76 (2001) 36 hints that Shabatka's name was missing from Horemakhet's statue because there was tension in the Kushite royal court after Taharqa assassinated Shabatka.

¹⁵⁴ Macadam, *The Temples of Kawa*, 124 based on Kawa IV, 19 where Taharqa is mentioned as *sn nsw* "king's brother".

This was questioned by Priese.

¹⁵⁵ Objections to this theory were forwarded in § 2. Collateral succession.

¹⁵⁶ Waddell, W.G., *Manetho*, London, 1964, 166-9, Fragments 66, 67 a, b, l. 2.

¹⁵⁷ Depuydt, *CdE* 76 (2001) 35.

¹⁵⁸ Leahy, *GM* 83 (1984) 43-45.

¹⁵⁹ See Török, *The Kingdom of Kush*, 134, 139, 234 without explaining his reservation about Leahy's theory.

¹⁶⁰ The queen cannot be Irty, daughter of King Piankhy, as some have suggested on chronological grounds because Piankhy died in 721 B.C.

¹⁶¹ See notes 51, 52 above.



“It is because he (Shabatka) loved me more than all *his*¹⁶⁶ brothers and more than all his sons I was promoted over them by his majesty”.

In the Babylonian chronicle, the capture of [DUMU.ME]Š ŠEŠ-šū “[the son]s of his brothers” is reported. The text is damaged, however, and it is impossible to conclude whether his (Taharqa’s) nephews or sons and brothers were meant.¹⁶⁷

In Esarhaddon’s stela of Nahr el Kalb l. 25 describing the conquest of Memphis in 671 B.C., the princes, [sons] of kings (*mârêmeš šarrânimeš*) are mentioned in a broken context describing the deportation of Kushite royalty and Egyptian craftsmen to Assyria. This emendation is strengthened by an additional description of tribute and deportees from Egypt brought back to Nineveh. In tablet Bu 91-5-9, 218, obv. 6’ *zēr bīt abīšu mārê šarrê mahrūte* “the offspring of his father’s house, sons of earlier kings ...” are mentioned.¹⁶⁸ It is clear that the sons of *earlier kings* (i.e. Shabatka and Shabaka) were deported (is it possible that surviving sons of Piankhy were also among the deportees?).¹⁶⁹

One can only speculate that some of Shabatka’s sons were too young at his death to inherit his throne, some died before him or were taken as captives (which must be the case with the sons of Shabatka mentioned in Kawa V 14).¹⁷⁰ It is more difficult to explain why one of Shabaka’s children did not inherit the throne at Shabatka’s death. It is clear that Horemakhet lived in the days of Tanutamun and that at least one of his brothers was deported in 671 B.C., some 19 years after Shabatka’s death. Both descendants of Shabaka were at least 16 years old in 690 B.C. and old enough to rule over Kush when Shabatka died.¹⁷¹

166 If Shabatka and Taharqa had been brothers, he would phrase this sentence differently: “(because) he loved me more than all my/our brothers...”

167 Onasch, *Die assyrischen Eroberungen* I, 19.

168 Onasch, *Die assyrischen Eroberungen* I, 32.

169 Piankhy’s sons, if any still lived, would have been at least 50 years old in 671 because he died in 721 B.C. It seems to me that in normal circumstances, if any of Piankhy’s sons had survived until 690 B.C., when Shabatka died and his sons did not succeed him for some reason (and he was a descendent from a more distinguished wife than Abar, he would have become king). Cf. Török, *The Birth of an Ancient African Kingdom* 103-5.

170 In Sennacherib’s report about his third campaign, the capture of Egyptian princes in battle is mentioned but not the capture of Kushite princes, so it is clear that no sons of Shabatka were captured in that war. It seems that they did not participate because they were too young in 701 B.C.

171 Shabatka ascended the throne in 706 B.C. after Shabaka’s death and ruled for 16 years. See Kahn, *Or* 70 (2001) 2.

Why did Taharqa inherit Shabatka’s throne?

In Kawa IV 9 (*FHN* I 139) it is stated that when Taharqa was summoned to the north (to fight the Assyrians in Eltekeh, Palestine in 701 B.C.) he was loved more than all his (Shabatka’s) brothers. This is stated again in Kawa V 14 (*FHN* I 153), where he was even loved more than Shabatka’s children. In II Kings 19, 9 Taharqa led the Egyptian forces and was even anachronistically designated as king of Kush in 701 B.C. It is clear that he was appreciated as an outstanding army commander.¹⁷²

Several data suggest that Taharqa usurped the throne from Shabatka:

Taharqa deserted the dynastic family necropolis at El-Kurru and built his tomb at Nuri, 25 km. downstream on the right bank. Trying to explain this action, scholars postulated that he was not a member of the main royal line and thus wished to distance himself (or his successor wished to distance him) from his predecessors. Kendall showed, however, that the move of Taharqa’s pyramid to Nuri was not based on internal strife within the royal family but was based on religious meaning.¹⁷³

Depuydt¹⁷⁴ quotes from a gloss in Jerome’s Latin version and adaptation of the lost Greek Chronicle of Eusebius a paragraph in which “This one (i.e. Taharqa) led an army from Nubia, killed Sebio (Shabatka) and ruled the Egyptians himself”. Depuydt noted that according to Kawa IV, 10 Taharqa arrived in Egypt with an army. He then states: “The similarity suggests that at least one half of the Jerome gloss is not a product of the imagination. Then why would the other half be?”. In no way can this arrival of Taharqa among his brethren and Shabatka’s army to the north be connected with an alleged *coup d’état* conducted by Taharqa in 690 B.C. As also noted by Depuydt, Taharqa departed from Nubia and left his mother according to Kawa V 16-18.¹⁷⁵ This occurred when he was 20 years, and he did not see his mother again until his crowning in 690 B.C. He was 20 in 701 B.C. and departed with Shabatka’s army to wage war against the Assyrians. He did not return to Nubia or see his mother until his coronation (!), so Jerome’s information is erroneous! Furthermore, the early Demotic fairy-tale allegedly hinting at the poisoning of Shabatka is exactly that – a fairy-tale!¹⁷⁶

172 Wenig, *Meroitica* 12, (1990) 346-350 postulated that a prince who became army commander was excluded from kingship and thus Taharqa was a usurper.

173 T. Kendall, *NARCE* 173 (1997) 12-13.

174 Depuydt, *CdE* 76 (2001) 33.

175 *FHN* I, 153-154. As for Taharqa’s participation in the clashes against Assyria in Palestine in 701 B.C., see Kahn, *Or* 70 (1999) 7-8.

176 Depuydt, *CdE* 76 (2001) 35.



The omission of Shabatka's name from Horemakhet's statue also does not prove any tension between Shabatka and Taharqa.¹⁷⁷ Horemakhet was simply too young to serve as priest in Shabatka's reign.

K. Jansen-Winkel¹⁷⁸ forwarded further data that could support Taharqa's usurpation of Shabatka's throne. He claimed that the Kushite king Alara, who was mentioned twice in Taharqa's inscriptions as legitimizing Taharqa's rule, was not the first king in the dynasty but was a usurper who started a new branch of rulers in the dynasty, the branch of Taharqa. Alara's ascendance to power was involved with some sort of strife against another (legitimate?) potentate and he also might have been a usurper. Alara's reign was legitimized by an oracle (*bjjt*) (Kawa VI 23) of Amun, as was Taharqa's reign (Kawa VI 22).¹⁷⁹

Be it as it may, there is no clear evidence of Taharqa's usurpation of the Kushite throne, or the murder of Shabatka, although, these theories cannot be ruled out!

I think Taharqa was elevated to kingship because he would have succeeded Piankhy if he had not been an infant at the time of his father's death and when there was no adult heir to Shabatka, the family-member with the most rights to inherit the kingship of Kush ascended the throne.¹⁸⁰ It is still difficult to explain why having Piankhy as his father (according to the patrilineal system) and Abar, a king's sister,¹⁸¹ (according to a matrilineal system) as his mother was not enough to legitimize his claim to the kingship and he had to introduce the covenant of Alara with Amun and legitimize his ruler via his (great?) grandmother.

Taharqa and Tanutamun

Taharqa had at least three sons. His eldest son did not follow him on the throne, as one would expect in a patrilineal succession based on primogeniture.

Nes-shu-Tefnut – Nes-Shu-Tefnut was probably appointed as 2nd prophet of Amun¹⁸² by his father. His mother was designated *hm.t nsw wr.t tp.t n hm.f* "Great wife of the King, the first of his majesty".

177 Depuydt, *CdE* 76 (2001) 36. Cf. n. 165 above.

178 Jansen-Winkel, *Or* 72 (2003) 151 ff.

179 Jansen-Winkel, *Or* 72 (2003) 155. Kawa VI 23-4: *sh.m.k n.i w3w3 dw r.i s'h(24).n.k w.i m nsw* "You put a stop to him that plotted evil against me after you set (24) me up as king".

180 Cf. II Kings 24: 18 ff. Zedkiah, last king of Judah and son of Josiah became king of Judah only after his nephew Jehoiachin was deposed by Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.

181 Lohwasser, *Meroitica* 19 (2001) 142.

182 Legrain, *ASAE* 7 (1906) 191-2.

Her son was intended to be the crown prince even though he was a priest and bore an Egyptian name.¹⁸³ Nothing is known about Nes-Shu-Tefnut, and it is possible that he died before 671 when the heir apparent was Nes-inheret.

Nes-inheret – Nes-inheret was probably the oldest surviving son of Taharqa and heir apparent in 671 B.C. He does not appear in Egyptian texts but a description of his imprisonment by the Assyrian forces in 671 together with his brothers and sisters survived.¹⁸⁴ From the Assyrian account we learn that Nes-inheret (Ushanhuru) was intended to inherit Taharqa's realm and was designated as *mâr ridûtišu* (Crown Prince). Thus, we can infer that the *succession was supposed to be patrilineal* when there was no external interruption.

Tanutamun was son of Shabaka¹⁸⁵ and was not destined to be king. He succeeded Taharqa on the throne at the earliest when he was of 42. If Tahar-

183 It is possible that his mother was also the mother of Nes-inheret, who was crown prince and that Nes-Shu-Tefnut remained 2nd prophet of Amun. It is hard to believe that he outlived his father. In 656, when Nitocris was adopted in Thebes, the 2nd prophet of Amun was absent from the ceremonies. See Caminos, *JEA* 50 (1964) 75, 89 ff.

184 In Taharqa's prayer to Amun, he begs his god to safeguard his children. See D. Kahn, "Taharqa, King of Kush and the Assyrians" *JSEA* (forthcoming): *i Imn (17)* [... .. *n3y.(?)i hmwt imi 'nh n3y.i hrd.w 'md n.i p3 mwt r.w* "Oh Amun, (17) [... .. m]y wives, let my children live. Keep death away from them for me." The capture of Taharqa's offspring is also mentioned in Assyrian records. A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles* (TCS V; Locust Valley, New York 1975) 85-86, Chron 1 iv 27 *mâr-šû u a[h]ušu ina qâtê sa-a]b-tu* "His (the king's) son and bro[ther?] were taken pri[soner]"; 127: Chron. 14, 25-26; See W. G. Lambert, "Booty from Egypt?", *JJS* 33 (1982) 65-6: K 8692 22-23 *aššatišu mârêšu u mârati[isu]* (23) [*ša*] *kîma šašûma kîma ištê salmu širûšu[nu]* "(22) His wives, his sons and [his] daughters (23) [who]se bodies like his, have skins as black as asphalt (he counted as booty)."; R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Assarhaddons, Königs von Assyrien*, (BAFO 9; Graz 1956) 99: In the lunette of the Senjirli stela Esarhaddon, King of Assyria, is depicted holding a king, who is commonly identified with Ba'al, King of Tyre, together with the Nubian crown prince Ushanhuru (*Ns-ini-hr.t*), a rope piercing his lips. See Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (ed.), *Das Vorderasiatische Museum* (Mainz 1992) 180, cat. 116. In the text of the Senjirli stela 43-44 *sinnišat êkallišu MÍ.ERIM..É.GAL.MEŠ-ŠU-Ušanhuru mâr ridûtišu u rihti mârêšu u mâratišu...* "His queen, his concubines, Ushanhuru his heir apparent, and his remaining sons and daughters (he deported to Assyria)". This event is described again in R. Borger, *Die Inschriften Assarhaddons* 101: Nahr el Kelb Stela 12.

185 see note 158.



qa had any male heirs they were probably infants because his children were deported in 671 to Assyria. A son born after 671 would have been 7 at most when Taharqa died in 664. For practical reasons, at times of war the Kushite kingdom did not appoint a child to the throne but an experienced adult. The Assyrian anecdote that Tanutamun was the son of Taharqa's sister was not meant to emphasize the matrilineal pattern of inheritance, rather it was meant to describe the brother-sister marriages that were common in the Egyptian and Kushite royal houses.

In this article I will not address the succession of the rest of the dynasty as there is not enough information on the parentage of the kings and their children, or of the circumstances that affected any possible changes in the succession pattern.

Thus, it can be concluded that the patrilineal succession pattern was the rule in the kingdom of Kush. It was based on deep Egyptian religious beliefs. Any deviation from this pattern can be explained by lack of surviving *adult* heirs or by external political threat that demanded an experienced leader at the head of the state. Even then, a son of an earlier king was chosen to stand at the head of the Kingdom of Kush. When no male heir survived, a descendant of the sister could inherit the throne. When there was no immediate relative or in times of distress, a candidate could be chosen from remoter family members. The pattern of succession in Kush was not different from any other kingdom in the ancient Near Eastern world.

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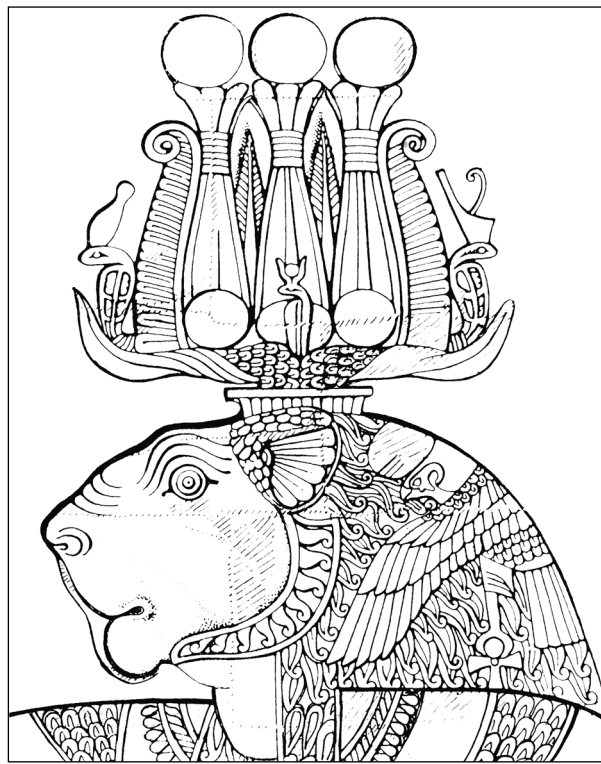
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Angesichts der Tatsache, daß die globalen wirtschaftlichen, ökonomischen und politischen Probleme auch zu einer Gefährdung der kulturellen Hinterlassenschaften in aller Welt führen, ist es dringend geboten, gemeinsame Anstrengungen zu unternehmen, das der gesamten Menschheit gehörende Kulturerbe für künftige Generationen zu bewahren. Eine wesentliche Rolle bei dieser Aufgabe kommt der Archäologie zu. Ihre vornehmste Verpflichtung muß sie in der heutigen Zeit darin sehen, bedrohte Kulturdenkmäler zu pflegen und für ihre Erhaltung zu wirken.

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