



TIRHAKAH, KING OF KUSH AND SENNACHERIB

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ABSTRACT

According to the Assyrian sources, Sennacherib, King of Assyria (704–681 BCE) went on a campaign to the West to quell a rebellion in 701 BCE. During his campaign he conducted a pitched battle against the forces of Egypt and Kush and won the war. However, according to the Biblical narrative the Assyrians suffered an enormous defeat by the angel of God. Furthermore, the Kushite ruler who came to the aid of the Judean forces was Tirhakah (=Taharqa), King of Kush, who ascended the throne of Egypt-and-Kush only eleven years later, in 690 BCE.

How then, can we explain the mentioning of Taharqa in the biblical account? Is the information that he was present in the events of 701 BCE an anachronism or is it historically reliable? Can his role in the events be determined? Who won the war – Sennacherib, King of Assyria or Taharqa, King of Kush (and his ally, Hezekiah, King of Judah)? Did Sennacherib conduct two campaigns against the Levant, as some have suggested? The purpose of the article is to address these questions.

According to the Assyrian sources, Sennacherib, King of Assyria (704–681 BCE) ascended the throne after the untimely death in battle of his father, Sargon II (721–705 BCE). The Assyrian vassals immediately reacted to Sargon's death and rebelled against their overlord. After waging war against Babylonia, Sennacherib finally campaigned against the Levant in his fourth regnal year (701 BCE), entitled in his inscriptions his third campaign. According to Sennacherib's inscriptions, he received homage from the submissive rulers of Phoenicia, Philistia and Transjordan. He then conquered the rebelling kingdom of Sidon (and Tyre) and replaced its king, Luli, who fled to Cyprus; Sennacherib then marched south, conquered Ashkelon, and deported its king; he slew the instigating officials and nobles of Eqron and reinstated, Padi, its king; he defeated the Egyptian and Kushite forces, who fought a pitched battle against the Assyrians:

(42) (As for) the governors, the nobles, and the people of Ekron ... They formed a confederation with the kings of Egypt (and) the archers, chariots, (and) horses of the king of the land of Meluhha, forces without number, and they came to their aid. (44) In the plain of the city of Eltekeh, they sharpened their weapons while drawing up in battle line before me. With the support of (the god) Aššur, my lord, I fought with them and defeated

them. (45) In the thick of battle, I captured alive the Egyptian charioteers (and) princes (DUMU.MEŠ LUGAL.MEŠ KUR *mu-uš-ra-a-a*), together with the charioteers of the king of the land Meluhha (emphasis mine).¹

The Assyrians described this military encounter as a victory over the Kushite and Egyptian force – in terms of a victory of the forces of light over the forces of chaos, alluding to the victory of Marduk (or the god Assur his Assyrian counterpart) against Tiamat and her gang in the Enūma Eliš myth.² The third campaign was also the focus of the decoration of the throne-room, as has recently been suggested by Russell and accepted by Uehlinger.³ In this room at least three episodes of the 701 campaign were recorded: the escape of Luli from Sidon, the possible capitulation of Hezekiah, and immediately adjoining this scene, thus claiming temporary and geographical proximity and continuity of events, the preparations of the Assyrian army for war, followed by a pitched battle – most probably against the Egyptian-Kushite army in the next scene. The outcome of the battle is clear. The Assyrians routed the fleeing enemy, which tried to cross a flowing river, possibly hinting to the border of Egypt.⁴ Thus, the Assyrian reliefs depicted a pitched battle, probably the battle at Elteqeh, in conjunction with the blockade of Jerusalem(?).

After reinstating Padi, the loyal king of Eqron on his throne, Sennacherib describes the submission of Hezekiah, King of Judah, and his payment of a heavy tribute.

This campaign is also described in several biblical sources. The main narrative can be found in 2 Kgs 18:13–19:37 and a parallel with minor changes in the Book of Isaiah 36–37. The biblical story of Sennacherib's campaign against Jerusalem has been discussed in numerous publications. Already in the mid 19th century, the Hezekiah-Isaiah narrative (Isa 36–37) has been identified as a composite literary creation, where the literary seems were detected. According to Stade,⁵ the narrative was constructed by different sources: a chronistic record labeled "Source A" (2 Kgs 18: 14–16 which is absent in the Book of Isaiah). The chronistic record reports about Hezekiah's tribute payment and subjugation to Sennacherib. It seems to be in accordance with the Annals of Sennacherib and is dated to the immediate aftermath of Sennacherib's campaign.⁶ Stade suggested that two independent traditions about the delivery from the Assyrian threat have been combined into one story: (a) The first story, 2 Kgs 18:13, 17–19:9a was labeled B1 and (b) the second 2 Kgs 19b–37 was labeled B2. This division mentioned only one complete closing for two narratives. Stade's hypothesis was further refined in 1967 by Childs,⁷ who argued, that 2 Kgs 19:36–37 is the original ending of the first story, while 2 Kgs 19:35 is the end of the second.⁸ The majority of scholars agreed with the Stade-Childs hypothesis that the narrative was created by combining three different sources.⁹

THE B1 SOURCE

When the Assyrian forces arrived at the walls of Jerusalem, *Rāb šaqé*, the representative of Sennacherib, faced the Judean emissaries with threatening words, exercising psychological pressure upon the besieged to surrender. *Rāb šaqé* addresses a Judean delegation of high officials and opened his first speech with a formal opening "Say to Hezekiah: "Thus says the great king, the king of Assyria"".¹⁰ He then started his negotiations with discouraging arguments:

"On whom do you depend, that you rebel against me? Look, I know you are depending on Egypt, that splintered reed of a staff, which pierces the hand of anyone who leans on it! Such is Pharaoh King of Egypt to all who depend on him"(2 Kgs 18: 20–21/ Isa 36: 5–6).

In the following verse 2 Kgs 18:22/ Isa 36:7, *Rāb šaqé* mentioned a theological argument, which authenticity has been debated, and it seems not to be original, but a later insertion.¹¹ The third argument is again military, and tackles Hezekiah's reliance on Egyptian equipment for *open field battle*, namely horses and chariots for his soldiers, equipment which is totally unsuitable and irrelevant for an upcoming siege against Jerusalem.¹²

"Come now, make a wager with my master the king of Assyria: I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them. How then can you repulse a single representative (*pāḥāt*)¹³ among the least of my master's servants, when you rely on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen?" (Isa 36:8–9).

Thus, if 2 Kgs 18:22/Isa 36:7 is a late interpolation, as the majority of scholars think, both original sequential verses deal with Hezekiah's military reliance upon Egypt and upon his own forces for the deliverance of Judah from the Assyrians.

In 2 Kgs 19:9a/Isa 37:9a, Tirhakah (=Kushite Taharqa) 'king of Kush' is mentioned in connection with the Assyrian withdrawal from Judah, possibly materializing the military option which *Rāb šaqé* so degraded.

The end of Sennacherib's campaign is described in miraculous terms:

*That very night*¹⁴ the angel of the LORD set out and struck down one hundred eighty-five thousand in the camp of the Assyrians; when morning dawned, they were all dead bodies (2 Kgs 19:35/ Isa 37:36).

Scholars have noted two discrepancies between the Biblical story and the Assyrian text and known Egyptian history:

1. The designation of Taharqa as King of Kush does not fit the events of 701, since Taharqa ascended the throne of Kush in 690BCE, eleven years after the campaign of 701 and ruled in Kush and Egypt until 664 BCE.¹⁵
2. According to the Assyrian sources as well as the chronistic source in 2 Kgs 18:13–16 Sennacherib's campaign ended with an Assyrian victory and with the subjugation of the entire Levant to the Assyrians.

The question arises how to explain the mention of Taharqa, King of Kush in the biblical account, and therefore the information that he was present in the events of 701 BCE as historically reliable? In that case, can Taharqa's role in the events be determined? I will address these questions as follows.

A. The Mentioning of Taharqa, King of Kush (2 Kgs. 19: 9/ Isa. 37: 9)

In order to solve the discrepancy between the Biblical note, where Taharqa is designated "King of Kush", and the historical data from Egypt, in which Taharqa ascended the throne only in 690 BCE (as well as to solve the discrepancy between the Biblical account with the Assyrian description of Sennacherib's campaign against Judah), the following solutions were offered:

1. *Two Campaigns Theory*

The description of the Assyrian onslaught against Judah in 2 Kgs. 18:13–16 (source A)¹⁶ seemed to be corroborated by the Assyrian annals of Sennacherib which were discovered and deciphered in the mid 19th century.¹⁷ The adjoining narratives in the book of Kings (18:17–19:37/ Isa. 36–37 = sources B1 and B2 of Stade¹⁸ and of Childs¹⁹), which describe the arrival of the Assyrian delegations demanding immediate surrender by Hezekiah after he already had done so, seem to contradict the foregoing description. Modern scholars mention several solutions for this lack of corroboration between the different parts of the narrative.

The first solution was to reconstruct the events as different sequel episodes of the same campaign according to their order of appearance in the Biblical narrative. First Hezekiah surrendered to Sennacherib, but for some reason, Sennacherib changed his mind and demanded full surrender and deportation.²⁰

The second solution was that source A (2 Kgs. 18: 14–16, with its close Assyrian Parallel) is the summary of the campaign, while the B sources described in detail are episodes within the campaign.²¹

Noting the discrepancy between the complete surrender of Hezekiah in source A as opposed to the miraculous delivery of Jerusalem, the destruction of the Assyrian army and the murder of Sennacherib in sources B1 and B2, a third solution was proposed, namely that these sources (A, B1 and B2) telescope (at least two) different campaigns, suggesting that the Biblical account has conflated two different wars into a single campaign. Some scholars suggested that the first campaign occurred during the reign of Sargon (in 715 or 714 BCE, the fourteenth year of Hezekiah²² [2 Kgs. 18: 13]), when Sennacherib was crown prince.²³ Others suggested that the second campaign occurred in 698 BCE,²⁴ within a few years from the 701 BCE capitulation of Judah. However, this campaign is difficult to fit into the attested campaigns of Sennacherib in his surviving annals until the fall of Babylon in 689 BCE, after which there are no more dated historical sources from his reign. Thus, a second campaign of Sennacherib against Jerusalem was postulated after the cessation of Assyrian annals in 689 BCE.²⁵ This proposed date for the campaign also seemed to fit the mention of Tirhaqa as King of Kush (=Taharqa) in 2 Kgs 19:9; Isa. 37:9 during the campaign, since he ascended the throne of Kush in 690 BCE.²⁶ Furthermore, according to the low chronology of the reign of Hezekiah, mentioned in 2 Kgs 18:13, the campaign had to occur before the death of Hezekiah in 686 BCE.²⁷ The results of this campaign, according to the supporters of the two campaigns theory, were disastrous for the Assyrians (2 Kgs 19:35/ Isa 37:36).

As a result of the publication in 1949 of Taharqa's royal inscriptions from the temple of Amun at Kawa, Sudan, the 'two campaigns theory' received an alleged corroboration and came again in vogue. In Kawa Stela V it is stated that Taharqa was sent by Pharaoh Shebitku²⁸ as a youth of twenty years old together with an army to the North.²⁹ Macadam,³⁰ the excavator of Kawa,

wrongly assumed that Taharqa was 20 *when he ascended the throne as coregent* until he became sole ruler in his sixth regnal year (685 BCE). Accordingly, he was only nine years old during Sennacherib's campaign in 701, and clearly *could not have participated in the battle against the Assyrians*, let alone lead it (emphasis mine). This reading strengthened the opinion that Sennacherib conducted a second campaign against Judah between the years 690 and 686, Hezekiah's approximated year of death. Many accepted this view uncritically.³¹

However, many Egyptologists³² showed that Taharqa was 20 years old *when he was recruited in Kush by Pharaoh Shebitku and sailed northwards* together with a great army, and not when he ascended the throne.³³ Thus, according to Taharqa's own inscription, he was old enough when arriving with an army in northern Egypt. He may have participated in the battle between Assyria and Kush in 701 BCE, and could technically even have commanded the army.

William Shea, the main remaining advocate for the "two campaigns theory", re-dates, reinterprets and assigns texts to the period of the alleged second campaign in series of articles.³⁴ In the following I shall discuss the relevance of Shea's related sources to the "two campaigns theory".

1.1 *The "Azeqah Inscription"*

According to Shea, the famous "Azeqah inscription" (BM 81-3-23,131), describing in a highly literary style the conquest of Azeqah in the Judean Shephelah, should not be ascribed to the days of Sargon, as Tadmor, Galil, Frahm and Becking have suggested,³⁵ or to the campaign of 701 as Na'aman thought.³⁶ Shea dates this text, based on the writing of the divine name of the god Ashur as AN.ŠÁR to the period *after* the conquest of Babylon.³⁷ However, the use of the writing AN.ŠÁR for the god Ashur is clearly attested from the beginning of the reign of Sargon, and it is not possible on the basis of its appearance in the text to decide if this name was written in the days of Sargon II or Sennacherib.³⁸

1.2. *The Mention of Yeore Maşor in Isa 37:25/ 2 Kgs 19:24 and the Hydrological Works on Mount Muşri*

Shea's next point was to use as support for the second campaign theory the interpretation of the biblical verse Isaiah 37: 25/2 Kgs 19:24 in Sennacherib's taunt song. Virtually, most modern translators and commentators have identified in the verse "I dried up with the sole of my foot all the rivers of Maşor",³⁹ the phrase *כל נארי מצור* as the Nile of Egypt, accepting that Maşor is an alternate name for Egypt. Since the first Assyrian King to conquer Egypt was Esarhaddon (671 BCE), and not Sennacherib, as was claimed in the taunt song, this verse was thought to refer to Esarhaddon.⁴⁰ Others claimed that the fact that the taunt song exalted Sennacherib instead of Esarhaddon for conquering Egypt proves that there was a distance in time between the narrator and the event. Furthermore, a proximity to the thought of Deutero-

Isaiah, where Yhwh dried up rivers and seas (Isa 44:27; 50:2; 51:10), was felt.⁴¹ Thus, the verse was considered late.

However, the identification of Maṣor with Egypt מצרים, and thus connecting this verse to Sennacherib's successors was contested. It has been noted that not a single ancient version is acquainted with this uncommon equivalent (i.e. Maṣor) of *Miṣrayim*.⁴² Tawil has suggested that Maṣor should be identified with Mount Muṣri, and that the verse described the hydrological endeavors which were completed in 694 BCE.⁴³ Thus, according to Tawil, followed by Shea, Sennacherib must have campaigned in Judah after 694, since these projects were mentioned in the taunt song of Isaiah.⁴⁴

Kitchen and Yurco rejected this interpretation, since the text in its final form was clearly edited after the murder of Sennacherib in 681 BCE, and one cannot learn from the reference about a second campaign against Judah after 701.⁴⁵ Furthermore, as Weissert has noted, it would seem that Maṣor מצור is derived from the root צור in the *maqṭal* form, meaning "place of dripping water". Thus, this verse should not be connected any more, neither to Egypt and its conquest, nor to the GN Mount Muṣri, and consequently, cannot be used as an indication of a second campaign by Sennacherib against Judah after 690 BCE.⁴⁶

1.3. The Adon Papyrus

An Aramaic letter which was discovered in a clay jar at Saqqarah in 1942. It was immediately designated "An Aramaic contemporary of the Lachish letters", and was dated to the end of the Seventh century BCE during Nebuchadnezzar's conquest of the Levant (ca. 604 BCE). The letter was written by a certain ruler, named Adon-[xx?], and was addressed to the king of Egypt. It contained an appeal to Pharaoh for help against the king of Babylon, which had advanced as far as Aphek. The locality of Adon was disputed but according to a demotic address on the verso of the papyrus, the ruler sent the letter most probably from Eqron in the Philistine Shephelah.⁴⁷

This dating has been contested by Krahmalkov, who dates the papyrus to ca. 702 BCE and claims that the letter describes the Babylonian diplomatic embassy sent by Merodach Baladan II, King of Babylon to the southern Levant (Cf. 2 Kgs 20:12–19). He furthermore identifies the remains of the letters *šndwr* in line 9 as Sanduarri, King of Kundu and Sissu in the Taurus range, who conspired with the king of Tyre against Assyria in the days of Esarhaddon, and may have started his instigations already in the days of Sennacherib.⁴⁸ Shea proposed dating the letter later in Sennacherib's reign (ca. 688/687 BCE) closer in time to the reign of Esarhaddon. He claimed that the designation "King of Babylon" would be used by Sennacherib after his conquest of that city in 689 BCE. Contrary to Shea's assertion, it seems that following Sennacherib's Babylonian problem, he was very reluctant to use the title "king of Babylon" in his inscriptions. After the conquest of Babylon in 689, administrative texts in Babylon were

posthumously dated in 688 and 687 BCE to the regnal years of his late son, Assurnādinšumi's (several years after his death in 694 BCE). The first inscribed legal text from Babylonia, dated to Sennacherib, bearing the title King of Assur (and not King of Babylonia!) is from 686 BCE.⁴⁹ In Sennacherib's Royal Inscriptions he does not use the title King of Karduniash (Babylonia). In his royal inscriptions, Esarhaddon terms himself governor of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad. Even if one could claim that the Assyrian king was king of Babylonia, there is no reason for an Egyptian vassal trying to save his life, to call him in a letter of distress, King of Babylon, instead of King of Assyria, which Sennacherib and Esarhaddon definitely were.

Green tried to identify the date of the events with more precision.⁵⁰ The title מרע מלכין, equivalent of akkadian *bēl šarrāni* 'lord of kings' which is occurs about 40 times in texts from the reign of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal (the majority in the latter's reign), and continued in use in imperial Aramaic during the Persian period (Dan. 2:47), Green chooses to date the letter to the reign of Esarhaddon. This seems to be tempering with the evidence in order to reach the wished for dating. Next, Green ratified the reading *šndwr* as Sanduarri, King of Kundu and Sissu. The following word, which was previously read as *wspw* and translated as "and a letter..." he read as "*wspw*" and his end" hinting at Sanduarri's decapitation by Esarhaddon in 677. However, while the word סוף may denote the demise of a person, the suffixed noun before the personal name of Sanduarri makes it difficult to connect between "his end" and the following name of Sanduarri without connecting them without a genitive. Furthermore, this reading cannot be corroborated, since the papyrus is broken exactly at the top of the letter r/w and there is no way to discern if the hook was closed or open.⁵¹ Green further proposed to identify the route of the king as coming from Sissu (reading in line 4 *mz(ʾs)š*). This reading seems quite speculative and does not reflect the akkadian transcription.⁵² The order of events in Esarhaddon's inscriptions also speaks against Green's reconstruction. The capture of Abdimilkuti, king of Sidon, is first mentioned and his beheading occurred in the month of Tishri (VII). Only then is Sanduarri captured in the mountains to which he fled, and his subsequent beheading is dated in the month of Adaru (XII), some five months later.⁵³ It would seem that Green's reconstructed direction of movement from Cilicia to Sidon should be reversed.

From analyzing the demotic docket, Yurco rightly concluded that the letter could not have been written before the 650's since the demotic script had not been developed before that time.⁵⁴ It must be added, that if the docket was written by an official cleric, it would have been inscribed in abnormal hieratic, the official script used by the 25th dynasty, ideologically and politically distinguished from the Saite demotic script. Thus, despite the recent attempts to redate the Adon Papyrus, its date should better remain at the end of the seventh century BCE, as originally proposed.

1.4. *A Text of Taharqa from the Bark-Sanctuary at Karnak*

In 1975 Vernus reconstructed, collated and published a text found on a badly damaged series of blocks, which adjoined the bark-sanctuary at Karnak on the back of the Annals of Thutmose III. These blocks were formerly attributed to Shoshenq I or to Osorkon II. According to Vernus, this inscription should be assigned to Taharqa and it reflects the Assyrian advance towards Egypt and Egypt's temporary control over the Levant and its loss. Vernus and Spalinger have noted the special tone of the text and the degree of piety, supplication and personal responsibility expressed by the king. The text has no date, but basing their arguments especially on cols. 5⁵⁵ and 16⁵⁶ of the text, Vernus dated the text to the period between years 14 and 17 of Taharqa (677/6-674/3 B. C.). Spalinger dated the text to 675 BCE and connected the text with Esarhaddon's subjugation of Phoenicia in 676 BCE, thus before the successful battle of Taharqa against the Assyrians in 673 on Egyptian soil.⁵⁷ Shea states that the relevant Assyrian texts do not mention any contact with Egyptian troops during the campaigns of 679 to the Brook of Egypt and in 676 against Phoenicia, and claims that no Assyrian-Egyptian confrontation occurred during these years.⁵⁸ Since the military confrontations between Assyria and Egypt did not take place during the early years of Esarhaddon, before 675, the Assyro-Kushite military contacts should be sought earlier, during the years in the reign of Sennacherib, which were contemporaneous with the reign of Taharqa (690–681 BCE).⁵⁹ However, it is my opinion that this unique text, which is a prayer of Taharqa to the god Amun in order to save his children, should be dated after the Assyrian conquest of Egypt and the capture of the Kushite heir apparent and son of Taharqa, *Ns-Inhrt* –Ushanhuru in 671 BCE.⁶⁰ This text as well, has no relevance to an unattested second battle between Assyria and Egypt during the reign of Sennacherib, in which the Egyptians had the upper hand.

1.5. *The Sheikh Labib Storeroom Text from Karnak*

In 1993 Redford published a preliminary edition of a fragmentary text from Karnak. The name of the King did not survive. Mention is made of neglecting a cult of an unnamed god; a victory over an unnamed opponent; the taking of prisoners and their settlement with their cattle in villages and the occurrence of a great flood. Redford, based on the occurrence of the flood, attributed this text to Taharqa. He identified the defeated enemy as "some Libyan group".⁶¹ Shea asserts that this text provides Egyptian evidence in support of the two-campaign theory. He claims that the defeated enemy was Sennacherib and that the events appear in chronological order, namely, that all military engagements preceded the Nile flood of Taharqa's famous flood in regnal year 6 (685 BCE), and thus should be assigned to the years 689–686, the years of Sennacherib's alleged second campaign

to the West.⁶² Cogan countered Shea's arguments on biblical and historical grounds.⁶³ Furthermore, if Taharqa defeated the Assyrians, the world's superpower, in a pitched battle during his early regnal years, one expects that he would boast about it. However, strangely enough, he did not do so in even one of his numerous monumental inscriptions from Kawa, dated to his first decade.⁶⁴ Finally, Revez has prepared an edition of this fragmented text and dates it to the Third Intermediate Period.⁶⁵ So, this text as well, seems to be irrelevant to the question of the two campaign theory, and should be left out of the discussion. Thus, with no new relevant evidence at our disposal, the theory of Sennacherib's two campaigns should be discarded until new evidence emerges. We can now turn to additional attempts to explain the mentioning of Taharqa, as King of Kush, during the confrontation between Sennacherib and the Kushites in 701 BCE.

2. *Prolepsis*

The Biblical text mentioning Taharqa as King of Kush must have been written after his accession to the throne. Kitchen explained this solution as follows:

"In 681 BC, Taharqa has *already been king for 10 years*, and so he was thus called 'king' in these narratives of 681 BC or after. So simple! Taharqa himself did *exactly* the same; as prince, he brought troops north to king Shebitku, but in narrating this later on, *while king*, he terms himself 'His Majesty' in speaking of the pre-kingly episode. It is the same today, as when one says 'Queen Elizabeth II was born in 1926' – she was, but not as queen then – if one pedantically had called her 'Princess Elizabeth', who was meant might not be clear. All this is the universal use of prolepsis, not anachronism. The Hebrew writers do not say that Taharqa bore kingly titles in 701 BC ..."⁶⁶

3. *Anachronism, Scribal Mistake, Faulty Gloss or Substitution.*⁶⁷

Spalinger rejected Kitchen's idea of prolepsis, and claimed that Taharqa is mentioned in 2 Kgs 19:9a/Isa 37:9a because, when the story was written down, he was remembered as a well-known ruler who had campaigned victoriously in the earlier years of his reign,⁶⁸ while the King during the battle of 701 was forgotten since he did not participate in person,⁶⁹ or simply due to an error in recording the events.⁷⁰ Yun sees the information about Taharqa as a secondary insertion and as a redactional linkage by the Deuteronomistic Historian in order to link between the two parallel accounts B1 and B2 of Sennacherib's invasion of Judah.⁷¹ In a forthcoming study I will address the date of the composition, and will suggest that the relevant strand mentioning Taharqa as King of Kush was written during the decade following the murder of Sennacherib.

4. *Taharqa, "King of Kush" - A Viceroy of the King of Egypt*

A different solution was proposed, again by Kitchen in several publications, due to the publication of the Tang-I Var Inscription of Sargon II, which mentions Shebitku as king of Meluhha (Kush) already in 706 BCE.⁷² According to Kitchen, in 2Kgs 18:21/Isa 36:6 the Assyrians scorn the illusory power of "Pharaoh, King of Egypt". Later in the narrative, Sennacherib again threatens Jerusalem at the approach of "Tirhakah, King of Kush" (2 Kgs 19:9). Most modern commentators have equated the pharaoh of 18:21 with Tirhakah of 19:9, as if he were in fact ruler of Egypt. There is no argument that Taharqa was *not* king of Egypt in 701 BCE. Kitchen suggested that Taharqa was in fact ruler of Nubia (Kush), *under* Shebitku, King of Egypt (702–690) – the real 'Pharaoh' of 2 Kgs 18:21.⁷³

Hoffmeier, as well, suggested that the title "King of Kush" was used to designate a coregent, or "viceroy of Kush", who served under a Kushite "Pharaoh", who ruled from Memphis. According to Hoffmeier, this "viceroy" followed the practice during the New Kingdom in Egypt and the Third intermediate Period, in which a "s3 nsw K3š "king's son (of Kush)" administered the vast area of Nubia.⁷⁴ However, there is no evidence that the administrative institution of s3 nsw K3š was practiced during the 25th Dynasty.⁷⁵ There is also no shred of evidence that the Kushite ruler, who designated himself in his inscriptions as Pharaoh, and nsw bity, King of Upper and Lower Egypt, appointed a viceroy in Kush, bearing the title of "King".⁷⁶ Furthermore, if this alleged system of junior "Kings of Kush" or "viceroys" serving under their overlord in Egypt, for which there is no textual evidence at all (!), really existed, it miraculously disappeared in the days of Taharqa, who was King of Egypt and Kush according to the Assyrian records. Furthermore, it is claimed that in his function as viceroy of Kush, Taharqa arrived in the North and led the campaign against Assyria. If the Kushites copied the Egyptian model of government and administration, then this was probably also the case with the function of "king's son". However, none of the attested Egyptian viceroys of Kush acted as army commanders in the Levant during their term of office.⁷⁷ It is militarily irrational to appoint an administrator of the South, who had no knowledge of the geographical, climatic aspects of the battlefield, nor any acquaintance with his opponents and according to his words arrived for the first time in the north of Egypt on this occasion, as commander of the battlefield in the Levant!

As for Kitchen's above mentioned assertion that one should distinguish between "Pharaoh, King of Egypt" and "King of Kush" – during the reign of the 25th Dynasty, the Kushite ruler was designated in his own inscription as *Pr-ꜥ3* i.e. Pharaoh, and *nsw bity* King of Upper and Lower Egypt, never "King of Kush". The Kushites saw themselves as the legitimate heirs of the entire *Egyptian-and-Kushite* Empire. In the Assyrian royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal as well, the Kushite king (Taharqa at that time) was designated *šar māt Mušur* "King of Egypt", and at the same time, was also perceived as *šar māt Kūsi*

"King of Kush", without any hint of a coregent functioning in this capacity and bearing the title 'King of Kush'.⁷⁸ There is no mention of an alleged "king's son (of Kush)" or viceroy in any of the Kushite inscriptions from the 25th dynasty, not even in Taharqa's inscriptions Kawa IV and V, where he was allegedly occupying the function of junior King of Kush. It is clear that the motivation behind Kitchen's change of argumentation is biased, in order to defend his ca. 40 years long chronological reconstruction of the entire Third Intermediate Period.⁷⁹

B. Was Taharqa Present at the Battle of Elteqeh?

From the combination of the Biblical and the Assyrian sources a problem arises. How many encounters occurred between the Egyptians and Assyrians, and when did the encounter(s) take place in the sequence of events of the campaign. According to the Assyrian source, *one* decisive battle was fought at Elteqeh between Sennacherib and the Egyptian Kings and Kushite forces. The exact time of this event, according to the Assyrians source was during the subjugation of Eqron. According to the Biblical passage (Isa 37:8/2 Kgs 19:8) the arrival of the Egyptian force took place only when the Rab Saqeh returned from Jerusalem to Lachish. It seems that the Bible describes an event which occurred at a later stage of the campaign. From this discrepancy in the sources several questions arise:

1. Are these two sources describing the same event or are these descriptions of two different events?
2. When did this/these event(s) occur during the campaign?
3. What was Tirhakah's role in the event(s)?

In other words: Did the report of Taharqa's approach (2 Kgs 19:9) result in the battle of Elteqeh, and if so, did the battle occur *after* the Assyrian invasion of Judah had begun, as suggested by the Bible or did it occur during the siege of Eqron *before* the invasion of Judah, as stated in the Assyrian account.

At first sight, it would seem that the Assyrian and Biblical narratives describe different events occurring at different times. Scholars like Yurco⁸⁰ and Kitchen⁸¹ have supposed that two Egyptian forces waged two different battles against the Assyrians, which were separated by weeks or months, in order to reconcile the alleged different times of the battle. The first confrontation was between the Assyrians and a small Egyptian-Kushite task force, which was sent to prevent Assyrian advance, while the main Egyptian-Kushite force was mobilized. The small task force was defeated by the Assyrians. Kitchen noted that no Kushite king or prince (hinting at the absence of Taharqa at the battlefield)⁸² is mentioned in the Assyrian records.⁸³ Since only one event is described in the Bible as well, Yurco and Kitchen surmised that the second presumed event – the arrival of the main Egyptian-Kushite force, led by Taharqa (as mentioned in 2 Kgs 19:9), probably did not materialize and remained a rumor, possibly because of its late arrival from Kush many weeks after the first

confrontation, and its early discovery by the Assyrians with the loss of the element of surprise. Thus, according to Kitchen and Yurco, Taharqa came too late and did not take part at all in the military activity in the summer of 701 BCE.

Spalinger notes the problems when assuming that there were two separate Egyptian armies in Palestine. The Assyrian texts fail to mention such a case, and such a reconstruction presumes that, after leaving Jerusalem, Sennacherib's forces moved west to Ashkelon and forced a second Egyptian army to withdraw. Tadmor, as well, has demonstrated that the Assyrian narrative is not in a strict chronological sequence in the case of the Ashkelon and Ebron episodes. This creates a literary effect, slowly increases tension, progressing from the easy to the difficult.⁸⁴ Thus, no logical chronological arrangement of the events of Sennacherib's campaign can be described, and the existence of two alleged confrontations cannot be proven.⁸⁵

Gallagher states that the Assyrian encounter with the Egyptian forces occurred at an early stage of the campaign, when the Assyrian forces were still in the vicinity of Elteqeh (identified as Tell esh-Shalaf) in Northern Philistia. He does not find any reason (literary or other) for altering the order of events in the annals at this stage. According to Gallagher there is no evidence that a battle against Taharqa took place at a later stage. Furthermore, he considers an arrival of Egyptian forces after the fall of Philistia and Lachish poor strategy.⁸⁶ Gallagher's last point is that in the speech of *Rāb šaqé*, pharaoh is described as a splintered reed, which Hezekiah should not count on. Gallagher sees this as proof of Pharaoh's defeat at the battle of Eltekeh before the rumor of Taharqa's arrival.

However, one can explain the reason for altering the narrative, as a means to avoid the outcome of the battle against the Egyptians, and focusing on the fate of Judah and its rebellious king. Furthermore, while the exact identification of Elteqeh is not known, but probably should be located in the northern Shephelah (and possibly Tell esh-Shalaf as suggested), neither the exact military advance of the Assyrians in Philistia and Judah and their deployment, nor the advance and tactics of the Egyptians are known.⁸⁷ As for terming the late arrival of the Egyptian forces as 'poor strategy' – there may have been no other possibility, in spite of Gallagher's negative evaluation. There are indications that this is not the only occurrence where the besieged hoped for Egyptian reinforcement to arrive after the beginning of a siege to save the day.⁸⁸ Thus, there is no reason to separate between the battle of Eltekeh and the arrival of Taharqa. As for the last point mentioned by Gallagher – designating Pharaoh as a splintered reed: Firstly, Gallagher assumes that *Rāb šaqé*'s first speech to the besieged Judeans on the walls of Jerusalem is authentic (2 Kings 18:19–25). This is not the view of the majority of scholars. But, allowing Gallagher's assertion to be right, this an akkadian denigrating idiom,⁸⁹ which does not have to be connected with a previous victory over Egypt, and even if this refers to former events, one should not exclude that the term refers to the victory of Sargon II over the Egyptian *Turtānu* in 720 BCE.⁹⁰ There seems to be no reason to suppose that there were two Egyptian

onslaughts against the Assyrians in 701 BCE.

Galil thinks that operations against Philistia and Judah were conducted simultaneously, and lasted for many weeks. Only after the return of *Rāb šaqé* to Lachish did the Assyrians encounter the Egyptian forces.⁹¹ This may be corroborated by the time needed to construct the Lachish ramp,⁹² and possibly a siege ramp at Azeqah as well, which has been discovered during the 2013 excavations of Tel Aviv University.

C. Taharqa's Role in the Battle of 701 between Assyria and Egypt-and-Kush

Sennacherib recorded in his inscriptions that the Egyptian kings and princes participated in the battle of Elteqeh.⁹³ On the other hand, no mention is made of the participation of the King of Kush, or of any of his commanders, or of Taharqa in particular. However, a commander must have led the Kushite forces, and Taharqa certainly may have been a leading military person. However, in his own inscription (Kawa IV, l. 7),⁹⁴ Taharqa does not bear any hereditary administrative titles. He is simply designated a "king's brother, sweet of love" (*snw-nsw bnr mr.wt*), according to *his own* testimony. He claims to have been especially favored among the royal retinue, but what functional meaning does this term convey in military context?

Can his exalted status during his predecessor's reign be proven from contemporary external sources? There is simply no proof that he was appointed as heir apparent during the reign of Shebitku as some scholars maintain.⁹⁵ Furthermore, in his inscriptions, Taharqa does not bear distinctive high military titles of army leader before ascending the throne. He is simply termed *hwn nfr* Lit.: "handsome/good youth", among other youths and army personnel. The translation of this term is problematic. In Egyptian sources *hwn* can denote people from infancy to adulthood and by extension may mean vigorous. In Kushite texts this term is used in military connotations. Irikeamanote, King of Kush, for instance, was a *hwn nfr*, among the royal children being *41 years old* when the former Kushite king died. The army searched for a new leader to fight the battle and win the war against revolting nomads. Irikeamanote was eventually chosen. It cannot be that he was only a recruit, or a youngling according to the text. He was 41 years old and fit to be a king.⁹⁶

IN SUM

Did Taharqa participate at the battle of Elteqeh against the Assyrians as the source in 2 Kgs 19:9/Isa. 37:9 claims? It certainly is possible. There is no clear evidence in the Egyptian sources that he did, but the Bible does mention him. He was certainly at the right age – 20 years old (Kawa V, l. 17), and not only nine years as Macadam originally suggested.⁹⁷

Taharqa's texts claim that he was summoned to the north (*T3 Mḥw*) (Kawa IV, l. 10; Kawa V, l. 17) not specifying if he was engaged in the Delta or operated in the Levant, but as Kitchen asked so many times: What reason could there be to transfer a

massive army all the way from Kush to the north over thousands of km, other than to wage a great war? A war against Assyria in 701 BCE is certainly the most serious reason to mobilize a vast army and send it to the Levant.

It is also not clear in what capacity Taharqa acted: Did he command the Kushite forces, as can be deduced from the Biblical narrative, or was he a simple prince joining the royal retinue? It can only be said for certain that he was not yet the King of Kush in 701.

From the Assyrian sources it would seem that the Egyptian-Kushite force did not succeed in its mission in 701. According to

2 Kings 18:13–16, Hezekiah capitulated to Sennacherib after a great part of Judah was devastated. Why did the prophetic sources in Isaiah 36 – 37/ 2 Kgs 18:17 – 19:37 describe the event as an Assyrian defeat?

It remains to be answered why Taharqa was mentioned in 2 Kgs 19:9/ Isa 37:9 in the prominent capacity of King of Kush, who marched against the Assyrians in order to repulse them, although we know this was not the case? An answer to this question will be given in a future study on the Biblical narrative.

NOTES

- ¹ Rassam Cylinder, ll. 42–45. Grayson, A.K. and Novotny J. *The Royal Inscriptions of Sennacherib, King of Assyria (704-681 BC), Part 1* (RINAP 3/1; Winona Lake, Ind.: Eisenbrauns, 2012), p. 64.
- ² Gallagher, W.R. *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: New Studies*, (SHCANE 18; Boston: Brill, 1999), pp. 120–121; Younger, "Assyrian Involvement in the Southern Levant", pp. 255–256. According to Younger's scheme, the Egyptian episode is at the very center of the description of defeating the rebels (his "phase two"), heightening the achievement of the Assyrians. See: Younger, "Assyrian Involvement in the Southern Levant", p. 249. Since the climax of the narrative is at the end with Hezekiah's capitulation, I find it hard to believe that the reader would have noted the alleged chiasmic structuring proposed by Younger.
- ³ Russell, J. M. *Sennacherib's Palace without Rival at Nineveh*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 160–164; idem. *The final sack of Nineveh: The Discovery, Documentation, and Destruction of King Sennacherib's Throne Room at Nineveh, Iraq*, (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998), pp. 36–39, 219–227; Uehlinger, C. "Clio in a World of Pictures - Another Look at the Lachish Reliefs from Sennacherib's Southwest Palace at Nineveh", in: Grabbe, L. L. (ed.), *'Like a Bird in a Cage'. The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE (JSOT.S 363) (ESHM 4; London/ New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003)*, pp. 299–302.
- ⁴ Cf. Tadmor, "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah", p. 665, n. 23.
- ⁵ B. Stade, "Miscellen. 16. Anmerkungen zu 2 Ko. 15–21. Zu 18,13–19,37", *ZAW* 4 (1886), pp. 172–186.
- ⁶ Geyer, J.B. "II Kings 18:14–16 and the Annals of Sennacherib", *VT* 21 (1971), pp. 604–606; Kim Yoo-Ki, "In Search of the Narrator's Voice: A Discourse Analysis of 2 Kings 18:13–16", *JBL* 127/3 (2008), pp. 477–489; Goncalves, F. J. *L'Expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine dans la Littérature Hébraïque Ancienne*, Publications de l'Institut orientaliste, 1986), pp. 30–44; However, cf. Seitz, C. R., "Account A and the Annals of Sennacherib: A Reassessment", *JSOT* 58 (1993), p. 47–57; Laato, A. "Hezekiah and the Assyrian Crisis in 701 B.C.", *SJOT* 1/2 (1987), pp. 56–57.
- ⁷ B. Childs, *Isaiah and the Assyrian Crisis*, (London, 1967), pp. 69–103.
- ⁸ R. E. Clements, *Isaiah and the Deliverance of Jerusalem: A Study in the Interpretation of Old Testament Prophecy* (Sheffield, 1980), 58 ascribes v. 35 to a later editor. Cf. A. Millard, "Sennacherib's Attack on Hezekiah", *Tyndale Bulletin* 36 (1985), p. 76.
- ⁹ For recent defenders, see: Na'aman, N. "Updating the Messages: Hezekiah's Second Prophetic Story (2 Kings 19.9b–35) and the Community of Babylonian Deportees", in: Grabbe, L. L. (ed.), *'Like a Bird in a Cage'. The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE (JSOT.S 363) (ESHM 4; London/New York, Sheffield Academic Press, 2003)*, pp. 201–220; Baruchi-Unah, A. "The Second Story of Sennacherib's Judean War (2 Kings 19: 9b–35) and the Polemic concerning Jerusalem's Immunity at the Close of First Temple Period", *Zion* 71 (2011), pp. 265–278 (in Hebrew).
- ¹⁰ Cohen, C. "Neo-Assyrian Elements in the first Speech of the Biblical rab-šaqa", *Israel Oriental Studies* 9, (1979), pp. 38–39; Ben Zvi, E. "Who Wrote the Speech of Rabshakeh and When?", *JBL* 109,1 (1990), p. 82.
- ¹¹ Ben Zvi, E. "Who Wrote the Speech of Rabshakeh and When?", *JBL* 109,1 (1990), p. 83 ; Na'aman, "The Debated Historicity of Hezekiah's Reform in the Light of Historical and Archaeological Research", *ZAW* 107 (1995), p. 183; Young, R. A. *Hezekiah in History and Tradition (VT.S 155; Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2012)*, pp. 104–105, n. 44; Walsh, J. T. "The Rab Šāqēh between Rhetoric and Redaction", *JBL* 130/2 (2011), pp. 263–279 divides these sentences differently and ascribes 2 Kgs 18 vv. 19b–22a, 25 the words of Sennacherib, while vv. 22b–24 to Rab Šāqēh; Edelman, Diana, "Hezekiah's Alleged Cultic Centralization", *JSOT* 32/4 (2008), pp. 398 contrasts the description of Ahaz with that of Hezekiah; Carr D. M. "What Can We Say About the Tradition History of Isaiah? A Response to Christopher Seitz's *Zion's Final Destiny*", in: Lovering, E. H. (ed.),

- (SBL.SP 31; Atlanta, Scholars Press, 1992), p. 594 calls attention to the fact that the Hezekiah-Isaiah narrative is closely linked with DtrH that it must presuppose it as a basis in 2 Kgs 18:22 as well as in 2 Kgs 18:13; 20:6, 16–18. Wildberger, H. *Isaiah 28–39*, p. 379. Wildberger notices that there are several lines of thought. On the one hand trust in YHWH does not make sense, since Hezekiah destroyed his altars. On the other hand Wildberger claims that Hezekiah's military weakness is so obvious that trust in YHWH cannot help anymore. However this was clearly not the intention of the writer in vv. 8 and 9 as Wildberger understands. Rather, the question is raised if the Egyptians can be of aid. The answer to this rhetorical question is clearly negative.
- ¹² Cf. the observations of Eph'al, I. "On Warfare and Military Control in the Ancient Near Eastern Empires: A Research Outline" in: Tadmor, H. and Weinfeld M. (eds.), *History, Historiography and Interpretations*, (Jerusalem: Magnes Press, the Hebrew University, 1983), pp. 91–94.
- ¹³ For the problematic rendering of this term in the sentence, see: Wildberger, H. *Isaiah 28 – 39*, p. 373.
- ¹⁴ The editor of 2 Kgs inserts in v. 19: 36 a chronological adverbial sentence *ויהי ברילה ההוא* which creates greater intensity to the angel's reaction.
- ¹⁵ The Accession year of Taharqa is 690 B.C. see: J. Von Beckerath, *Chronologie des Pharaonischen Ägypten*, (MÄS 46; Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1997), 91; E. Hornung, R. Krauss and D. A. Warburton, *Ancient Egyptian Chronology*, (Handbuch der Orientalistik 38; Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2006), p. 256.
- ¹⁶ Geyer, J.B. "II Kings 18:14–16 and the Annals of Sennacherib", *VT* 21 (1971), pp. 604–606; Kim, Yoo-Ki, "In Search of the Narrator's Voice: A Discourse Analysis of 2 Kings 18:13–16", *JBL* 127/3 (2008), pp. 477–489; However, cf. Seitz, C. R., "Account A and the Annals of Sennacherib: A Reassessment", *JSOT* 58 (1993), p. 47–57; Laato, A. "Hezekiah and the Assyrian Crisis in 701 B.C.", *JSOT* 1/2 (1987), pp. 56–57.
- ¹⁷ Rawlinson, H. "Outlines of Assyrian History, Collected from the Cuneiform Inscriptions", *XXIVTH Annual Report of the Royal Asiatic Society (1852)*: XV–XLVI; Millard, A. R. "Sennacherib's Attack on Hezekiah" *Tyndale Bulletin* 36 (1985), pp. 61–68.
- ¹⁸ Stade, B. "Miscellen. 16. Anmerkungen zu 2 Ko. 15–21. Zu 18,13–19,37", *ZAW* 4 (1886), pp. 172–186.
- ¹⁹ Childs, B.S. *Isaiah and the Assyrian crisis*, (SBT second series 3, London: SCM Press, 1967).
- ²⁰ Childs, op. cit. pp. 12–14.
- ²¹ Childs, op. cit. pp. 14–15; Kitchen, K. A. "Review of William R. Gallagher, 'Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah, New Studies'", *JSS* 47/1, (2002), 135.
- ²² Dating Hezekiah accession according to the synchronism with the reign of Hoshea, last king of Israel. See: 2 Kgs 18: 1, 2, 9.
- ²³ For dating the early campaign to the reign of Sargon, see: Jenkins, A. K. "Hezekiah's Fourteenth Year", *VT* 26 (1979), pp. 284–98; Goldberg, J. "Two Assyrian Campaigns against Hezekiah" *Biblica* 89 (1999), pp. 360–90; Becking, Bob. *The Fall of Samaria: An Historical and Archaeological Study*. (SHANE 2; Leiden: Brill, 1992), pp. 54–55; Idem. "Chronology: A Skeleton without Flesh? Sennacherib's Campaign as a Case-Study", in: Grabbe, L. L. (ed.), *'Like a Bird in a Cage'. The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE (JSOT.S 363) (ESHM 4)*, London/New-York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), pp. 46–72; idem. Sennacherib and Jerusalem: New Perspectives", *Journal for Semitics* 16/2 (2007), pp. 267–288. But see: Gallagher, W.R. *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: New Studies*, (SHCANE 18; Boston: Brill, 1999), p. 8.
- ²⁴ Rawlinson, G. *The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient Eastern World II* (London: J. Murray, 1864), p. 439.
- ²⁵ Rawlinson, G. *The History of Herodotus I* (London: John Murray, 1858), pp. 477. ff; Winckler, H. *Alttestamentliche Untersuchungen*, (Leipzig: E. Pfeiffer, 1892), pp. 26–46. For a possible campaign against Adumatu in Arabia after 690, see, p. 37 ff. and recently Frahm E., *Einleitung in die Sanherib-Inschriften*, (Archiv für Orientforschung, Beiheft 26; Wien: Institut für Orientalistik der Universität Wien, 1997), T62, ll. 53–59, pp. 133–136. There is no indication that the itinerary of this campaign went through Jerusalem; Fullerton K. "The Invasion of Sennacherib", *Bibliotheca Sacra* 63, no. 252, (1906), pp. 577–634; Rogers, R. W. "Sennacherib and Judah", in: K. Marti (ed.), *Studien zur semitischen Philologie und Religionsgeschichte: Julius Wellhausen zum siebenzigsten Geburtstag* (BZAW, 27; Giessen: Alfred Topelmann, 1914), pp. 317–28; See summary of the options by Honor, L. L. *Sennacherib's Invasion Palestine: A Critical Source*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1926), pp. 36–42; Childs, op. cit. pp. 12–17; For additional proponents of the 'two campaigns theory' until 1963, see Rowley, H. H., 'Hezekiah's reform and rebellion', in H.H. Rowley (ed.), *Men of God*, (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons. 1963), p. 108, n. 1 and his critique dismissing the theory on pp. 108–132.
- ²⁶ Note the varying dates of Taharqa's reign in these early publications.
- ²⁷ Na'aman, N. "Hezekiah and the Kings of Assyria" *TA* 21 (1994), pp. 236–239.
- ²⁸ The accession year of Shebitku is debated among Egyptologists/ Nubiologists. His highest attested regnal year is his third regnal year. Thus, Depuydt, L. "The Date of Piye's Egyptian Campaign and the Chronology of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty", *JEA* 79 (1993), pp. 271 dates his accession to 692 BCE; J. von Beckerath, "Ägypten und der Feldzug Sanheribs im Jahre 701 v. Chr.", *UF* 24 (1992), pp. 3–8, dates Shebitku's campaign against the North (i.e. Libyan the Delta according to him) and dates these events to ca. 694/5/4; Morkot, R. G., *The Black Pharaohs: Egypt's Nubian Rulers*, (London: Rubicon Press, 2000), p. 226 follows von Beckerath.

- ²⁹ Breasted, J. H. *Ancient Records of Egypt* IV, (London, 1906), p. 455: the fragmentary Tanis Stela of Taharqa. Breasted thought that the king, who sent Taharqa northward and who's name did not survive on the Tanis exemplar, was Shabaka, and referred to the Biblical mentioning of Tirhakah in 2 Kings 19:9. Three additional copies of this text were also erected in Coptos, Matanah and Kawa. See: Eide, T. Hägg, T. Pierce R. H. & Török L. *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum. Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region Between the Eighth Century BC and the Sixth Century AD I. From the Eighth to the Mid-Fifth Century BC*, (Bergen, 1994), pp. 145 – 158, esp. 156. It is now clear that the King who sent Taharqa to the North was Shebitku.
- ³⁰ Macadam M.F.L. *The Temples of Kawa*, vol. I (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), pp. 115–16, 18, n. 30.
- ³¹ Albright, W. F. "New Light from Egypt on the Chronology and History of Israel and Judah", *BASOR* 130 (1953), pp. 4–11 & 141; Albright, W. F. "Further Light on Synchronisms between Egypt and Asia in the Period 935 – 685 B. C.", *BASOR* 141 (1956), pp. 23–27; Horn, S.H. "Did Sennacherib Campaign Once or Twice Against Hezekiah?" *AUSS* 4 (1966), pp. 7–11; Bright, J. *A History of Israel*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia, Westminster Press 1981), pp. 297–298 with earlier literature there; Grayson, A.K. "Assyrian Foreign Policy in Relation to Egypt in the Eighth and Seventh Centuries B.C.", *JSSA* 11 (1981), pp. 85–88.
- ³² Leclant, J. and Yoyotte, J. "Notes d'histoire et de civilisation éthiopiennes", *BIFAO* 51 (1952), pp. 17–27; Kitchen, K. A. *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt*, (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1973), pp. 158–159, 383 ff; idem. "Late Egyptian Chronology and the Hebrew Monarchy: Critical Studies on Old Testament Chronology, I", *JANESCU* 5 (1973) (The T. H. Gaster Volume), pp. 225–233; Idem. "Egypt, the Levant and Assyria in 701 BC", in: Görg, M. (ed.) *Fontes Aetque Pontes*, Festschrift Hellmut Brunner, (ÄUAT 5; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983), p. 251; Rainey, A. F. "Taharqa and Syntax", *Tel Aviv* 3 (1976), 38–41.
- ³³ See also: Avaux, M. "La mention de Taharqa en 2 Rois 19:9, Isa 37:9", *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves* 20 (1973), pp. 31–43; Bates, R. D. "Could Taharqa Have Been Called to the Battle of Eltekeh?: A Response to William H. Shea", *NEASB* 46 (2001), pp. 43–63; Yun, Il Sung, A. "Different Readings of the Taharqa Passage in 2 Kings 19 and the Chronology of the 25th Dynasty", in: From Babel to Babylon: Wood, J. R., Harvey, J. E and Leuchter, M. (eds.), *Essays on Biblical History and Literature in Honour of Brian Peckham* (London: Clark, 2006), pp. 169–181.
- ³⁴ Shea, W. H. "Sennacherib's Second Palestinian Campaign", *JBL* 104/3 (1985), pp. 401–418; idem. "The New Tirhakah Text and Sennacherib's Second Palestinian Campaign" *AUSS* 35/2 (1997), pp. 181–187; idem. "Jerusalem under Siege; Did Sennacherib Attack Twice?" *BAR* 26/6 (1999), pp. 36–44. 64; idem. "The Murder of Sennacherib and Related Issues", *NEASB* 46 (2001), pp. 25–41.
- ³⁵ Tadmor, H. "The Campaigns of Sargon II of Assur: A Chronological-Historical Study", *JCS* 12 (1958), pp. 80–84; Galil, G. "A new look at the "Azekah Inscription" *Revue Biblique* 102,3 (1995), pp. 321–329; ; Frahm, *Sanherib-Inschriften*, p. 231 (attributing this inscription to the events of 720 BCE); Becking, B. "Chronology: A Skeleton without Flesh? Sennacherib's Campaign as a Case-Study", in: Grabbe, L. L. (ed.), *'Like a Bird in a Cage'. The Invasion of Sennacherib in 701 BCE (JSOT.S 363) (ESHM 4)*, London/ New York: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003), pp. 56–57.
- ³⁶ Na'aman, N. "Sennacherib's 'Letter to God' on his Campaign to Judah", *BASOR* 214 (1974), pp. 25–39.
- ³⁷ Shea, "Sennacherib's Second Palestinian Campaign", *JBL* 104/3 (1985), pp. 406 – 407. Shea, W. H. "The Murder of Sennacherib and Related Issues", *NEASB* 46 (2001), pp. 26–29. Na'aman, N. "Sennacherib's "Letter to God" on His Campaign to Judah", *BASOR* 214 (1974), p. 31.
- ³⁸ Tadmor, H., Landsberger, B.† and Parpola, S., "The Sin of Sargon and Sennacherib's Last Will", *SAAB* III/1 (1989), pp. 29–30. See Yurco's response to Shea's arguments: Yurco, F. J. "The Shabaka-Shebitku Coregency and the Supposed Second Campaign of Sennacherib against Judah: A critical Assessment", *JBL* 110 (1991), p. 40; Na'aman, N. "Hezekiah and the Kings of Assyria" *TA* 21 (1994), pp. 246–247.
- ³⁹ 2 Kgs 19:24; Isaiah 37:25.
- ⁴⁰ Cf. Cogan M. and Tadmor, H. *II Kings* (AB 11; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1988), p. 237, n. 24; Aster, S. Z. "The Subversion of Assyrian Motifs in the Prophetic Narrative about Sennacherib's War Against Judah (Isa. 37:24–25//II Kings 19:24–25)" (Heb.), *Shenaton Le Miqra Ve La Mizrah Ha Qadum* 19 (2009), p. 117.
- ⁴¹ Berges, U. F. *The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition and Final Form* (Trans. Lind M. C. from *Das Buch Jesaja: Komposition und Endgestalt* Freiburg: Herder, 1998), (Hebrew Bible Monographs, 46; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2012), p. 283, n. 192.
- ⁴² Calderone, P. J. "The Rivers of 'Mašor'", *Biblica* 42 (1961), p. 423; See also: Meer, M. van der, "Bridge over troubled waters?: The Γέφυρα in the Old Greek of Isaiah 37:25 and contemporary Greek sources", in Peters M.K.H. (ed.), *XIII Congress of the International Organization for Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Ljubljana, 2007* (Society of Biblical Literature, Septuagint and Cognate Studies 55; Atlanta, 2008), pp. 310–311.
- ⁴³ Tawil, H. "The Historicity of II Kings 19:24 (=Isaiah 37:25): The Problem of Ye'ore Masor", *JNES* 41 (1982), pp. 195–206.
- ⁴⁴ Shea, W. H. "Sennacherib's Second Palestinian Campaign", *JBL* 104/3 (1985), pp. 407–408.
- ⁴⁵ Kitchen, K. A. *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt*, 2nd ed. (Warminster: Aris and Phillips, 1986), pp. 552–

- 553; Yurco, “The Shabaka-Shebiktu Coregency”, p. 41.
- ⁴⁶ Weissert, E. “Jesajas Beschreibung der Hybris des Assyrischen Königs und seine Auseinandersetzung mit ihr”, in: J. Renger (ed.), *Assur: Gott, Stadt und Land*, (Colloquien der Deutschen Orient-Gessellschaft; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2011), p. 293.
- ⁴⁷ Porten, B. “The Identity of King Adon”, *BA* 44 (1981), pp. 36–52; Vittmann, G. “Kursivhieratische und frühdemotische Miszellen”, *Enchoria* 25 (1999), pp. 124–127. But see the reservations of Green: Green, A. B. “Esarhaddon, Sanduarri, and the Adon Papyrus”, in: Kaltner, J, and Stulman L. (eds.), *Inspired Speech: Prophecy in the Ancient Near East. Essays in Honor of Herbert B. Huffmon*, (Journal for the study of the Old Testament. Supplement series 378; London: Continuum, 2005), p. 91.
- ⁴⁸ Krahmalkov, C. R. “The Historical Setting of the Adon Letter”, *The Biblical Archaeologist* 44, 4 (1981), pp. 197–198.
- ⁴⁹ Brinkman J. A. “A Legal Text from Borsippa dated Posthumously Under Assurnādinšumi”, *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 1992/3, 88, pp. 67–68.
- ⁵⁰ Green, “Esarhaddon, Sanduarri, and the Adon Papyrus”, pp. 88–97.
- ⁵¹ Porten B. and Yardeni, A. *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt, Vol. 1: Letters*, (Jerusalem: The Hebrew University, 1986), p. 7.
- ⁵² Green, “Esarhaddon, Sanduarri, and the Adon Papyrus”, p. 93 transcribes the letters z and š, when one should expect ss. Phonetically, this reconstruction seems stressed.
- ⁵³ Cf. Leichty, E. *The Royal Inscriptions of Esarhaddon, King of Assyria (680–669 BC)*, (RINAP 4; Winona Lake, Ind: Eisenbrauns, 2011), pp. 17, 28–29, 37, 48–49.
- ⁵⁴ Yurco, F. J. “The Shabaka-Shebiktu Coregency and the Supposed Second Campaign of Sennacherib against Judah: A critical Assessment”, *JBL* 110 (1991), pp. 641–642; totally ignored by Green, “Esarhaddon, Sanduarri, and the Adon Papyrus”, pp. 88–97.
- ⁵⁵ “Oh, (5) [Amun ...]. Oh, You who did not abandon what he has created, while it is half realized”.
- ⁵⁶ “Oh Amun, what I did in the land of Nubia, let [... (16)], let me do it with your tribute (inw) of Kharu (Syria-Palestine) which has been turned aside from you.”
- ⁵⁷ Vernus, P. “Inscriptions de la troisième période intermédiaire (I)”, *BIFAO* 75 (1975), pp. 45–46; Spalinger, J. A. “The Foreign Policy of Egypt Preceding the Assyrian Conquest”, *CdE* 53, (1978), p. 43.
- ⁵⁸ Shea, “Sennacherib’s Second Palestinian Campaign”, pp. 413–415; Shea, W. H. “The Murder of Sennacherib and Related Issues”, *NEASB* 46 (2001), pp. 37–38.
- ⁵⁹ And see the objections by Yurco, “The Shabaka-Shebiktu Coregency”, pp. 43–45.
- ⁶⁰ Kahn, D. “Taharqa, King of Kush and the Assyrians”, *JSSA* 31, (2004), pp. 109–128.
- ⁶¹ Redford, D. B. “Taharqa in Western Asia and Libya”, *Eretz Israel* 24 (1994), pp. 188*–191*.
- ⁶² Shea, W. H. “The New Tirhakah Text and Sennacherib’s Second Palestinian Campaign”, *AUSS* 35/2 (1997), pp. 181–187; Shea, W. H. “Jerusalem under Siege; Did Sennacherib Attack Twice?” *BAR* 26/6 (1999), pp. 38, 40.
- ⁶³ Cogan, M. “Sennacherib’s Siege of Jerusalem, Once or Twice?”, *BAR* 27/1 (2001), pp. 40–45, 69. Cf. Shea’s response: Shea, W. H. “The Murder of Sennacherib and Related Issues”, *NEASB* 46 (2001), pp. 37–38.
- ⁶⁴ I will not discuss the articles of Shea, W. H. “Hezekiah, Sennacherib and Tirhakah: A Brief Rejoinder”, *NEASB* 45 (200), pp. 37–38; and Bates, R. D. “Could Taharqa Have Been Called to the Battle of Eltekeh?: A Response to William H. Shea”, *NEASB* 46 (2001), pp. 43–63. which deal with the question if Shebitku was king in 701. These articles did not really take into consideration the chronological implications of the Tang-I Var inscription of Sargon II on the chronology of the 25th Dynasty. For these chronological issues and the dat of accession of Shebitku, see: Kahn D., “The Inscription of Sargon II at Tang-I Var and the Chronology of Dynasty 25”, *Or* 70 (2001), pp. 1–9.
- ⁶⁵ See: Revez, J. “Une stèle inédite de la troisième période intermédiaire à Karnak: une guerre civile en thébaïde?”, *Cahiers de Karnak* 11(2003), pp. 535–569; Jansen-Winkel, K. *Inscriben der Spätzeit. Teil 2: Die 22.-24. Dynastie*. (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2007), 440–442 also includes this text in his volume on the Third Intermediate Period in Egypt, and does not consider it as a text from the reign of Taharqa. I have accepted this view in my article: “The Assyrian Invasions of Egypt (673–663 B.C.) and the Final Expulsion of the Kushites”, *SAK* 34, (2006), p. 259. However, on orthographical grounds (one example: the word ssm.wt “horses”, is always written with this orthography during the *thIP*, but was written as smsm from the 25th Dynasty onwards). It seems that the text should be dated to the mid of the ninth century BCE.
- ⁶⁶ Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt* (Warminster: Axis and Phillips, 1973) 158–159, and in the 2nd edition of 1986, also pp. 552–553; *ibid.* “Late Egyptian Chronology and the Hebrew Monarchy: Critical Studies on Old Testament Chronology, I”, *JANESCU* 5 (1973) (The T. H. Gaster Volume), pp. 230–231; *ibid.* “Egypt, the Levant and Assyria in 701 BC”, in: M. Görg, (ed.) *Fontes atque Pontes, Festschrift Hellmut Brunner*, (ÄUAT 5; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983), pp. 250–251; *ibid.* “Egyptian Interventions in the Levant in Iron Age II” in: Dever, W. G. and Gitin S. (eds.), *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palestina*. Proceedings of the Centennial Symposium W.F. Albright Institute of Archaeological Research and American Schools of Oriental Research, Jerusalem, May 29-31, 2000,

- (Winona Lake Ind.: Eisenbrauns: 2003), pp. 127–128; ibid. Review of "William R. Gallagher, *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah, New Studies*", *JSS* 47/1, (2002), pp. 135–136.
- ⁶⁷ Avaux, "La mention de Taharqa en 2 Rois 19:9, Isa 37:9", *AIPHOS* 20 (1973), p. 39.
- ⁶⁸ Spalinger, J. "The Foreign Policy of Egypt Preceding the Assyrian Conquest", *CdE* 53, (1978), p. 40; Gonçalves, F. J. *L'Expédition de Sennachérib en Palestine dans la Littérature Hébraïque Ancienne*, (Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain 34; Louvain-La-Neuve Université catholique de Louvain, Institut orientaliste, 1986), p. 443; Gallagher, W.R. *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: New Studies*, (SHCANE 18; Boston: Brill, 1999), pp. 220–223.
- ⁶⁹ Beckerath, J. von, "Ägypten und der Feldzug Sanheribs im Jahre 701 v. Chr.", *UF* 24 (1992), p. 7; ibid. "Über chronologische Berührungspunkte der altägyptischen und der israelitischen Geschichte", in: Dietrich M. and Kottsieper, I. (eds.), *Und Mose schrieb dieses Lied auf*. *Studien zum Alten Testament und zum Alten Orient. Festschrift für Oswald Lorentz zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres*. (AOAT 250; Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1998), pp. 98–99.
- Redford, D. B. *Egypt, Canaan, and Israel in Ancient Times* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992) 353 n. 163; Smelik, K. A. D. "King Hezekiah Advocates True Prophecy. Remarks on Isaiah xxxvi and xxxvii/ii Kings xviii and xix", in idem, *Converting the Past. Studies in Ancient Israelite and Moabite Historiography* (OTS 28; Leiden: Brill, 1992) 105 n. 53; Dion, "Sennacherib's Expedition to Palestine", p. 24.
- ⁷⁰ Rowley, H.H. "Hezekiah's Reform and Rebellion", in: H.H. Rowley (ed.), *Men of God*, (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons. 1963), pp. 120-23: "the name Tirhaka has been wrongly ascribed to the king of Ethiopia at this time"; Bright, *A History of Israel*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia, Westminster Press 1981), p. 300. However, all other details show good memory.
- ⁷¹ Yun, "Different Readings", pp 177-179.
- ⁷² G. Frame "The Inscription of Sargon II at Tang-i Var", *Orientalia* 68 (1999), pp. 31-57.
- ⁷³ K. A. Kitchen, "The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt: An Overview of Fact & Fiction", in: G. P. F. Broekman, R. J. Demarée and O.E Kaper, *The Libyan Period in Egypt: Historical and Cultural Studies into the 21st-24th Dynasties: proceedings of A Conference at Leiden University, 25-27 October 2007*, (Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 2009), p. 163; ibid., "External Textual Sources – Egypt", in: A. Lemaire and B. Halpern, (Eds.), *The Books of Kings: Sources, Composition, Historiography and Reception* (SVT 129; Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2010), pp. 378–380. ibid. "The Strengths and Weaknesses of Egyptian Chronology – A Reconsideration", *Ägypten und Levante* 16 (2006), p. 294; ibid. "Egyptian and related chronologies: look, no sciences, no pots!", in: Bietak, M. and Czerny, E. (eds.), *The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium B.C.*; 3; *proceedings of the SCIEM 2000 - 2nd EuroConference, Vienna, 28th of May - 1st of June 2003*; (Contributions to the chronology of the Eastern Mediterranean 9; Denkschriften der Gesamtakademie; Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften 37; Wien: Verlag der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2006), p. 166.
- ⁷⁴ Hoffmeier, J. K. "Egypt's role in the events of 701 B.C. in Jerusalem", in: Vaughn, A. G. - Killebrew, A. E. (eds.), *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology. The First Temple Period* (SBL.SyS 18; Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), pp. 222, 227–231; ibid. "Egypt's Role in the Events of 701 B.C.: A Rejoinder to J.J.M. Roberts", in: Vaughn, A. G. - Killebrew, Ann E. (eds.), *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology. The First Temple Period* (SBL.SyS 18; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), pp. 285–289; Bates, R. D. "Could Taharqa Have Been Called to the Battle of Eltekeh?: A Response to William H. Shea", *NEASB* 46 (2001), pp. 43–63. Bates (p. 58) claims that Taharqa came to Thebes and was crowned there as "King of Kush", came to the battle of Eltekeh, but probably did not reach the battle in time. In the end, Taharqa never returned to Nubia and continued to aid his brother Shebitku. According to this reconstruction, the title of "King of Kush" has become devoid of any practical meaning; Young, R. A. *Hezekiah in History and Tradition* (VT.S 155; Leiden/ Boston: Brill, 2012), pp. 75–76.
- ⁷⁵ Török, L. *Between Two Worlds: The Frontier Region between Ancient Nubia and Egypt 3700 BC - 500 AD*, (Probleme der Agyptologie 29; Leiden: Brill, 2009), p. 177.
- ⁷⁶ See: Kahn, D. "Was there a Coregency in the 25th Dynasty?", *Antike Sudan: Mitteilungen der Sudanarchäologischen Gesellschaft (MittSAG)* 17 (2006), pp. 135–141.
- ⁷⁷ Török, *Between Two Worlds*, pp. 171–177. From the forty attested viceroy's during the New Kingdom, only Nehy (no. 4 in Török's list), is associated with the Levant, *before* he became viceroy.
- ⁷⁸ Spalinger J. A., "Esarhaddon and Egypt: An Analysis of the First Invasion of Egypt", *Orientalia* 43, (1974a), p. 322.
- ⁷⁹ Cf. the criticism of Roberts on Hoffmeier's article: Roberts, J. J. M., "Egypt, Assyria, Isaiah, and the Ashdod Affair: An Alternative Proposal", in: Vaughn, A. G. - Killebrew, A. E. (eds.), *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology. The First Temple Period* (SBL.SyS 18; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), p. 272.
- ⁸⁰ Yurco, F. J. "Sennacherib's Third Campaign and the Coregency of Shabaka and Shebitku," *Serapis* 6 (1980), pp. 224–228.
- ⁸¹ Kitchen, K. A. "Egypt, the Levant and Assyria in 701 BC", in: M. Görg. (ed.) *Fontes atque Pontes, Festschrift*

- Hellmut Brunner*, (ÄUAT 5; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1983), pp. 249–251; accepted by Younger, K. L. "Assyrian Involvement in the Southern Levant at the End of the Eighth Century B.C.E.", in: Vaughn, An. G. and Killebrew, A. E. (eds.), *Jerusalem in Bible and Archaeology. The First Temple Period* (SBLSS 18, Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), p. 258.
- ⁸² Kitchen, "Egypt, the Levant and Assyria", p. 247.
- ⁸³ Na'aman, N. "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah and the Date of the LMLK Stamps", *VT* 29 (1979), pp. 64–66 even suggests that the leader of this early expedition may have been a Delta prince according to the order of appearance of the forces. It seems to me, that the order of listed participants is reversed since Egyptian Kings participated in person, while the Kushite King only sent his troops.
- ⁸⁴ תדמור, ה. "'מלחמת סנחריב ביהודה: בחינות היסטוריוגרפיות'". Translated into English: Tadmor, H. "Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah: Historical and Historiographical Considerations, in: Cogan, M. (ed.), *"With my Many Chariots I have Gone Up the Heights of Mountains": Historical and Literary Studies on Ancient Mesopotamia and Israel* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society, 2011), pp. 664, 666; Younger, "Assyrian Involvement in the Southern Levant", p. 249.
- ⁸⁵ Spalinger, J. "The Foreign Policy of Egypt Preceding the Assyrian Conquest", *CdE* 53, (1978), p. 38; see also: Younger, "Assyrian Involvement in the Southern Levant", p. 249.
- ⁸⁶ Gallagher, *Sennacherib's Campaign to Judah*, pp. 123–125.
- ⁸⁷ Galil, G. *Israel and Assyria*, (Haifa: University of Haifa Press, 2001), p. 108 adds to his earlier article "Sennacherib Vs. Hezekiah: A New Look at the Assyrian Campaign to the West in 701 BCE", (Hebrew) *Zion* 53 (1988), p. 9 a sentence, where he cautiously suggests that in a surprise manoeuvre, the Kushite forces arrived by Sea. They may have landed at the harbour of Jaffa or Jabneh-Yam.
- ⁸⁸ See: Jer. 37:5 ff. Cf. also, the letter b y Adon, King of Eqron (?) to Pharaoh, to send help in order to repel the Babylonians, who were already at Aphek, a day's march from Eqron. See: Porten, B. "The Identity of King Adon", pp. 45. Taking into consideration the time for the message to arrive at the Egyptian court, the time for consultation and planning, mobilizing the forces and marching to Canaan, the help could have been anticipated only many weeks later. The Egyptian help, if it came at all, clearly arrived too late. Eph'al, I. *The City Besieged: Siege and its Manifestations in the Ancient Near East*, (CHANE 36; Leiden: Brill, 2009), p. 43, n. 27.
- ⁸⁹ See: Cohen, C. "Neo-Assyrian Elements", pp. 41–42. Cf. the biblical use in: Ezek. 29: 6–7.
- ⁹⁰ Kahn D., "The Inscription of Sargon II at Tang-I Var and the Chronology of Dynasty 25", *Orientalia* 70 (2001), pp. 11–13.
- ⁹¹ Galil, "Sennacherib Vs. Hezekiah", p. 9.
- ⁹² Eph'al, I. "The Assyrian Siege Ramp at Lachish: Military and Lexical Aspects", *Tel Aviv* 11 (1984), p. 603.
- ⁹³ Looking at this text from an unbiased point of view with no earlier knowledge it seems that the Assyrians mentioned the Egyptian king/kings before the Kushite king and that in Assyrian eyes Egypt might have been the overlord in this coalition.
- ⁹⁴ Eide, T., Hägg, T., Pierce, R. H., and Török, L. (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: University of Bergen, 1994), pp. 139, 153.
- ⁹⁵ See note 75 above. Cf. however, Kahn, D. "The Royal Succession in the 25th Dynasty", *Antike Sudan: Mitteilungen der Sudanarchäologischen Gesellschaft (MittSAG)* 16 (2005), pp. 160–162. It is not clear that Taharqa was the legitimate heir of Shebitku, let alone that he was nominated as heir apparent immediately with the accession of Shebitku.
- ⁹⁶ See: Lohwasser, A. Der „weise Alte“, in: Hasitzka, M.R.M., et al. (eds.), *Das alte Ägypten und seine Nachbarn. Festschrift zum 65. Geburtstag von Helmut Satzinger*, (Krems: Wissenschaftliche Reihe 3; Krems: Österreichisches Literaturforum, 2003), p. 113. Schulman *MRTO*, pp. 20–21 translates *nfrw* as "elite troops".
- ⁹⁷ Lohwasser, A. "Der 'weise Alte'", p. 113 lists the arrival of the Kushite General Peqertor at the age of 20 to bury his mother. It is not clear if he was already a high military officer at that stage.