

Negroid" features was a distortion of its actual appearance. Here, as in our reference to Akhenaton, we find it quite possible to believe that the artists were simply depicting Black people in an accurate manner. But, even if we assume that the artwork was stylized, is it not possible for Black people to have stylized art? Does stylized Greek art mean that the people generally depicted were not White Europeans?

95. Ibid.

96. Cyril Aldred, *New Kingdom Art in Ancient Egypt*, fig. 174. Also see Maspero, *Struggle of Nations*, p. 348.

THE NUBIAN RENAISSANCE

By Phaon Goldman (Tarharka)

Due to the great dearth of inscriptions from the end of the New Kingdom to the beginning of the Twenty-fifth Dynasty, precious little is known about this epoch, but in the early years of the Eighth Century B.C., an Ethiopian (or Kushite) king named Kashta penetrated and subdued the kingdom of the Pharaoh.¹ From his capital of Napata Kashta pushed as far north as Thebes—the Capital of Upper Egypt. In this way the Princes of Kush became kings of both Egypt and Nubia and, in fact, permanently moved the capital of the Empire from Napata to Thebes in order to have firmer control over the administration of the now-subject Fatherland of the Pharaohs.

Shabaka, one of Kashta's sons, has been accorded the honor of being the first ruler of the Twenty-fifth or Ethiopian Dynasty, in the opinion of many antiquarians.² Herodotus spoke of Shabaka as neither barbarian nor tyrant but rather a benefactor to the nation through the construction of hydraulic irrigation systems. George Rawlinson, oft-quoted translator of *The History of Herodotus*, remarked respectfully that this African lord was a sovereign of great humanity, exhibiting deep understanding for and deference to Egyptian customs while he reigned as an Ethiopian king over Egypt. Diodorus Siculus said, "... (he) went beyond all his predecessors in his worship of the gods and in his kindness to his subjects." Legend has it that he retired from the throne, "lest he should commit an act of injustice."

By sponsoring a cultural revival, among other acts, Shabaka attempted to rekindle the withering fortunes of Egypt. In erecting chapels and refurbishing temples, he, like the rulers of this Dynasty to follow him, kept the language of their inscriptions and the architecture of their buildings and memorials purely Egyptian—an attribute of governing that affirmed the fact that they considered themselves true Egyptian Pharaohs. Perhaps in a deliberate move to highlight the racial ties between this clan of Ethiopian monarchs and earlier Egyptian royal families with claims of southern extraction, these emperors, in many details, pointedly resurrected the linguistic and artistic style of Old and Middle Kingdom pharaohs.

Piankhy was the next son of Kashta to accede to the throne of the Nubian-

Egyptian nation. At his birth black bards exulted, "Happy is the mother that bore you . . . she has borne a Bull!"

The pioneer Egyptologist, Dr. Margaret A. Murray, reiterated, with regard to Piankhy, the phrase about "that certain claim" which we authenticated in an earlier chapter as giving evidence of ancestral and racial ties between Upper Egyptian Blacks and other ruling clans of Egypt. Speaking of the years in which Piankhy reached his majority, Dr. Murray bore witness that, "Ethiopia was in a flourishing state, and the Ethiopian kings had a certain claim to the throne of Egypt. Piankhy of Napata, therefore, set out to enforce the claim, and he left a detailed account of his invasion . . ."³

The account of which this archeologist spoke was known as Piankhy's "Conquest Stela" and it was discovered quite by accident in 1862 by an Egyptian army officer on military assignment in the Sudan which was then under Egyptian suzerainty. The hieroglyphic text finally reached the eminent French archeologist and Egyptologist, Auguste Edouard Mariette, who recognized in a trice that this cryptograpy represented the lengthiest and most detailed narrative of the mastering of Egypt by the Kushites that had yet to come to light.

The beginning lines of this memorial pillar recited a litany engaged in by the Commandant and his regiments during their preparation for the battles sure to come. Leading his troops in prayer in the Temple of Amon, the War God, Piankhy intoned:

*Amon is the God who has sent us!
He makes the weak strong, so that a multitude flees before the feeble, and
one man takes a thousand captive.⁴*

*O Open thou the way before us, and
Let us fight under the shadows of thy sword, for
A child if he be sent forth by thee
Shall overcome him that hath overcome multitudes.*

And then he charged his assembled mass of men to stay in a state of readiness to:

*Delay not, day or night . . .
Fight at sight . . .
Yoke the warhorses!
Draw up the line of battle!*

As was their custom when their god-king and war-lord concluded his leadership of this entreaty, the contingent of men-of-war fell to their stomachs before the Emperor and exalted him with this dramatic stanza:

*Behold, O King
Thy name fills us with might and thy counsel
is the mooring-post of thy army*

*It is thy valor that giveth us might
And there is strength in the remembrance of thy name . . .
Thou art the overseer of the operation of war;
Verily thou art a strong king . . .
Who is like unto thee?*

Following this service of devotion and charge to valor, Piankhy and his legions pulled down the Nile to either augment his forces already in Middle Egyptian townships—but under seige—or to overpower additional, key metropolises of Egypt.

The "Conquest Stela" extended the story of this jet-black ruler of Egypt with another instance, this one delineating the saga of the Governor of Heracleopolis, a deputy of Piankhy, whose enclave had been under heavy pressure from a covetous Libyan Prince who had just recently consolidated Lower Egypt under his power and was even now encircling cities in Middle Egypt. This stone tablet told how Governor Pefnefdebast of Heracleopolis had been so profoundly relieved to have been rescued from certain death that he prostrated himself before his saviour and vociferated:

*Hail to thee O mighty King;
Thou are the Bull who conquerest Bulls!
Piankhi, Son of the Sun, King of the North and the South;
Indeed thou art like the warrior-god Montu—a
Bull of mighty arm.⁵*

*I was sunk deep down . . . in Hell;
But now light hath been made to shine upon me.
I found no friend in the day of evil and none
to uphold me in the day of battle, except thee,
O Mighty King*

*Henceforward, I shall be thy servant;
All my possessions are thine and the city of
Heracleopolis shall pay tribute unto thee.
Behold, thou art of the likeness of . . . (the)
chief of the imperishable stars.
As he was, so art thou O King;
As he perishes not, so shalt thou not perish,
O King of the South and North;
Piankhy, who livest forever!*

The monograph continued and recorded that further down the Nile another princeling—Osorken, King of Bubastis—also knelt to pay homage to the regal Ethiopian, proclaiming his desire to "look upon the beauty of His Majesty". It was written that this sachem "sniffed the ground before His Highness" and implored him:

*Come thou to my house and draw back the bolts of my Treasury and make
thyself its master and I shall give unto thee a mass of turquoise as large as*

thy head. I will give thee as much gold as thy heart can wish, and the finest horses which are in my stud farm and the best and strongest which are in my stables.

It came to pass, so noted the Stela, that in the course of his taming of the Libyans and Egyptians, "the legs of his enemies trembled like those of women" and district after district "was on its belly in fear of him." As a warrior-king, Piankhy could—and did, when events demanded it—strike wantonly or wreaking havoc in his wake simply to establish a name that was feared near and far. There have been copious testimonials from authorities on Ancient History, for example, that when he became monarch of Egypt he was tected rather than laid waste its treasure-swollen temples, and his display of humanity and passion for justice tempered with mercy astonished and pleased his opponents.

Sir Alan Gardiner, author of *Egypt of the Pharaohs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), analyzing the character of the man, glowed, "... we can not fail to discern the fiery temperament of the Nubian ruler, a temperament which had also as ingredients, a fanatical piety and a real generosity" (p. 340). The Inspector General of Antiquities of the Egyptian Government recorded in his essay, "The Exploits of a Nigger King," that with Ethiopia's "great and well-trained army of black warriors" Piankhy covered the satraps of the Nile but, "... the good behavior of himself and his troops caused the Egyptians to regard him almost (as) a protector from... Assyria... and Libya."⁶

As frequently as he dared, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of Ethiopia gave the overlords of villages about to be besieged the option of declaring their municipality an "open city". If the officials took advantage of this offer, their shrines and townfolk were untouched. If, however, as happened at Memphis, the Kushite General's merciful gesture was ignored, the population suffered grievously. At Memphis the ultimatum was broadcast: "Shut not up! Fight not! Those who wish to go out, let them go out. The people of Memphis shall be safe and sound, not even a child shall weep! Look at the provinces of the South, not a single person has been killed...." But Memphis chose to fight it out and Piankhy had no choice but to assault the city full force. Scribes wrote of this martial episode, "... multitudes were slain therein or brought as living captives to His Majesty."

Success after success soon put Piankhy in control of all Egypt and the East African gladiator became ruler of a commonwealth which stretched from the shores of the Mediterranean to the borders of modern Ethiopia—almost one-quarter of the African continent. Little wonder the Pharaoh began his numerous commemorative plaques erected after these spectacular victories with the laudatory phrases, "... I who am celestially born King, the living image of the sun-god, (was) destined to rule from birth... (as) King of Lower Egypt, or Upper Egypt and of Kash (i.e., Kush, or Nubia, or Sudan)."

Piankhy had subdued sixteen field marshals and was master of both Egypt and Ethiopia before he returned to his home and capital of Napata. When his triumphant armada arrived at this riverside town the populace caused the waters to resound with their rejoicing, shouting with gladness:

Hail divine Governor and Conqueror!

*Thou hast come and hast made thyself Governor
of the Land North and South. Thou hast made men to be as women.*

*Let the heart of the mother rejoice who has
given birth to thee and let the man be happy who begat thee.*

Let those who dwell in the valley give praise

to the Cow that hath borne such a Bull!

*Mayest thou live forever and may thy strength
endure eternally!*

Piankhy, not unlike Amenhotep III, had a fondness not only for women—he had at least seven wives—but for horses as well as evidenced by the fact that those Viceroy's whose fiefdoms he saved from the Libyans forthwith offered him spirited, powerful steeds, among other prized gifts. Additionally, in the plot adjoining his grave, archaeologists also excavated the tomb of Piankhy's four favorite stallions—each of which had been buried standing erect, facing south and caparisoned in full battle attire.

This Twenty-fifth Dynasty Pharaoh was a pre-eminent individual on every count. His premier act of office, once assured of control of his newly acquired Egyptian domain, was to re-appoint most of the vassal Princes of the North (i.e., Egypt) to their seats with the demand that they now pay tribute to the Ethiopian crown. By initiating this political ploy, the citizenry of Egypt remained peaceful and yet ultimate fiscal and military power lay in Ethiopian hands. Much of Piankhy's reign was devoted to ornamenting the capital of Napata and to embarking upon building campaigns in various Middle Egyptian sectors of his dukedom. So singular was the style and magnitude of these edifices that even centuries later they can still be identified with his paramouncy. The black Prince's crowning accomplishment in this avocation was the part he played in the raising of the monumental Temple of Amon in the splendid religious center at Jebel Barkal, the Sacred Mountain. At the zenith of this constructive era this cathedral was one of the most colossal and sumptuous buildings to be found in the ancient world.

His decisive and speedy mastery of Egypt showed him to be a man of great physical stamina, ready decision and quick mental power. As a military tactician, strategist of all time. A man of action, he earned a high place among the battlefield who governed in the interest of all the people, Piankhy's qualities of character have assured him a place of high honor among the monarchs of man's early civilized states.

Piankhy became the father of Tarkarka (the Biblical "Tirhakah"), who, at the

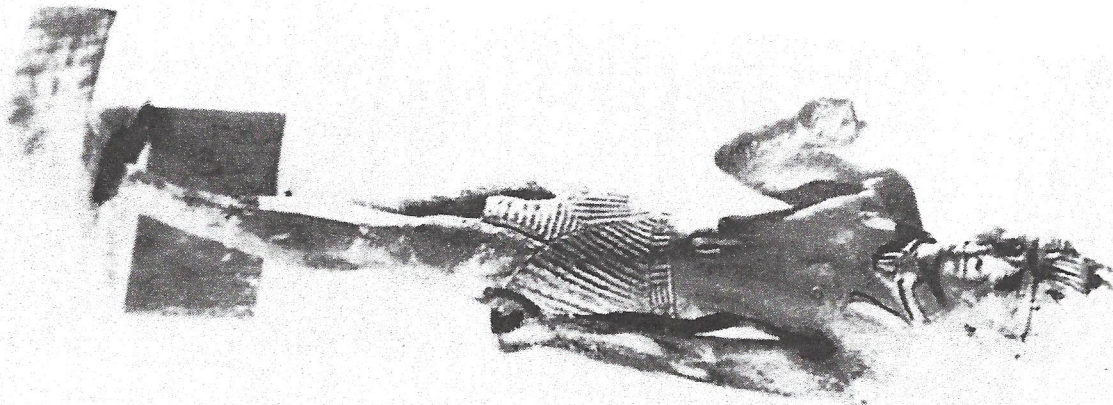


Plate 1. The Nubian Pharaoh, Tarharka.

age of twenty was proclaimed King of Ethiopia and Egypt. He ascended the throne about 688 B. C. and, having assured himself of the continued subjugation of both Middle and Lower Egypt, held a coronation for himself not only at Thebes but at Tanis also (in the general vicinity of Port Said), in addition to his

first assumption of the crown at Napata in the heart of Kush. This triple ceremony amply enhanced his celebrity and added greatly to the belief that the 25th Dynasty was one of phenomenal strength.

His fame became even more towering by the way he regularly reasserted the combatant power of Ethiopia over Egypt in his many sorties up and down the "Father of Rivers." The Egyptian army, with its core of Ethiopia's dreaded legions, once again—as previously during the rule of Thothis III—reveled in the universal fear and respect it received from other potentates of the world. In the Royal Court of the Temple of Ramses III at Thebes Tarharka had portrayed memorials of his victories in Asia over the Assyrians for it was during his reign that Sennacherib, their king, threatened to invade Lower Egypt but the Ethiopian war-hero's determined advance into the Middle East foiled the hopes of the Assyrians.

Tarharka's opening years as Pharaoh were so imposing militarily and diplomatically that nations of the East fancied that his vigor betokened the restoration of the traditional power and glory of the Nile Valley. Many nobles entreated him for pacts of non-aggression and the ebony Emperor was invited to become an ally of Hezekiah, King of Judah.⁷ Erastosthenes, the Third Century, Greek geographer and librarian at Alexandria was quoted in Strabo as saying of Tarharka that he was, "... a warrior who... penetrated into Europe as far as the Pillars of Hercules' (Gibraltar)—that is as a great conqueror."⁸

Tarharka, following in his father's footsteps, showed his respect for the religion and the customs of the Egyptians by the expansive monuments he raised at Thebes. And in his Ethiopian capital he embellished and made even more resplendent the venerated temple at the Holy Mountain, "Jebel Barkel"⁹. "Tirhakah," penned Rev. G. A. Knight, "was a thorough Nubian, as his pronounced negroid features seen in sculpture attest..." and from all accounts he was an exceptional ruler who advanced the economic and cultural life of both Egypt and Ethiopia to such a level that a number of Africanists have marked him as without a rival among the Ethiopian Pharaohs.

One English Egyptologist extended him the "left-handed compliment" of saying that his years on the throne represented an "astonishing epoch of nigger domination" of Egypt. Anthropologist-archeologist D. Randall MacIver confessed, "It seems amazing that an African Negro should have been able with any sort of justification to style himself, 'Emperor of the World!'"

Sir Wallis Budge, the one-time "dean" of Egyptologists, said of Tarkarka:

... (he was) a capable and energetic king, and under his able rule the country, notwithstanding his wars with the Assyrians, enjoyed a period of prosperity for about 25 years. That he should have been able to offer such steadfast resistance... (to the Assyrian kings) says much for his capacity as a soldier and leader of men. There must have been something attractive in his personality, and his deeds appealed so strongly to the popular imagination, at all events in Greek times, that they were regarded as the exploits of a hero,

and he had the reputation of being a great traveler as well as a great conqueror.⁹

This resourceful leader left inscriptions which indicate that he conquered the Hittites and the Assyrians. His sway was so complete and his power was so absolute that he dubbed himself "Emperor of the World."¹⁰

The sages have written, "Ethiopia was ruined by its war with Egypt, whom she sometimes subdued and sometimes served." And in verification of this time-honored quotation there are many examples of persons holding the crook and flail of pharaonic power over Ancient Egypt whose visages were thoroughly African; who paid homage to the gods of the Upper Nile; and who were identified with escutcheons of the dark duchies of southern Egypt. There has even been the concession by many Egyptologists that the broad-featured, black-skinned rulers of Ethiopia held "that certain claim" to the throne of Egypt. And yet because of, in some cases honest doubt, and in other instances—for a mixture of racial and cultural reasons—there has been a running dispute about the "Negro'ness" of some of these members of royalty.

There is hardly any controversy, however, over the fact that the 25th Dynasty which impressed its will on Egypt in the Eighth Century B. C. was thoroughly Ethiopian, from Kasha the Kushite, through Piankhy, "the Bull who Conquered Bulls," to Tarharka, the "Emperor of the World". There is no doubt from the artists' representations left of these overlords or from the ritual of their religious practices, or their deliberate revival of the linguistic and artistic styles of the Old and Middle Kingdom that these ebony ensigns considered themselves culturally and genealogically connected with Egypt's most noteworthy prior ruling families.

Indeed, in the space of the ten chapters making up this, Volume One, of *Black Manhood*—which might fittingly be subtitled, *The Building of Civilization by the Black Man of the Nile*—we have shown that many of the most salient developments and the cardinal personalities in the maturation of the human species and civilization effloresced along the banks of the Nile including the human species and tools, the beginnings of agriculture and man's control of fire. These flash points in man's creative growth and the pace setting, ingenious builders of Egypt's civilization have finally been credited to the pioneer folk of mankind's premier continent—Africa.

Human life began in Africa. In response to the imperatives of his early environment this earliest man was what we today would call a "black" man. The fossil, geological and archeological records of prehistoric times, among other proofs, leave it more than reasonably certain that *Homo erectus* followed the flow of the Nile—aptly nicknamed the "Father and Mother of Man"—from the beginning near the Olduvai Gorge, "Garden of Eden," in East Africa through its broad sweep into the Nile Valley. He developed new techniques for survival and more and more resourceful ways of managing much of the environment about

him as he descended the Nile. In the course of evolutionary time, he stood more and more erect, grew in cranial capacity and capabilities and developed the rudiments of human culture—in terms of managing agriculture, learning to live according to set patterns and regulations, and practicing various industries, etcetera—all of which culminated in the first civilized state, Egypt.

Up to that time, through the millennia of Ancient Egypt's governments—and, as we have seen in this Chapter, even after the demise of native Egyptian ruler-ship—men and women of African birth or extraction have played an intense, always perceptible, offimes dominant role in the rise of the civilization we inherit today.

Who can any longer willfully overlook the negroid visage of the Sphinx—representing King Khafra, a member of the ruling family which gave birth to the timeless pyramids of Egypt? What honest scholar can continue to pigeonhole the copious archeological and literary proofs of the consanguinity of the Middle Kingdom emperors with the black Galla nation to the south of Egypt? And only those who are deliberately duplicitous would refuse to publish the consistently recurring attributions of Negro parentage, or African physiognomy, to a host of the rulers of "the greatest royal family to ever rule anywhere."

We have only been able in these manuscripts to scratch the surface of the renaissance of Ancient Egyptian history which is sure to come now that black men around the world have shown such a heightened interest in their past, and therefore, in their future.

Notes

1. One notable exception to this almost total absence of records was a stela from the reign of Ramses II (Nineteenth Dynasty) which read, in part, "Nubia was governed by a Viceroy of Kush, through whom the Nubians were able to place the priest Herthor on the throne of Egypt in 1035 B. C." (Twenty-first Dynasty).
 2. Samuel M. Jackson (ed.), *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. IX (N. Y.: Funk and Wagnalls, 1911; p. 249), considered Shabaka to have been the King So mentioned in 2 Kings 17:4 in the Holy Bible.
 3. Margaret A. Murray, *The Splendor That Was Egypt*, (Copyright © 1963 by Margaret A. Murray by permission of Hawthorn Books, Inc. N. Y.), p. 65.
 4. Compare this exclamation with Isaiah 30:17 in the Holy Bible. It reads: "One thousand shall flee at the rebuke of one." There are those men-of-letters who have expressed the feeling that the Biblical rendition is but a re-statement of Piankhy's original counsel.
- As mentioned at length in several other Chapters, experts have shown many concurrences between Egyptian literature and scripture from the BIBLE. Space has not permitted us to compare all of them but if we take one more example—Akhmenaten's "Hymn to Aten" ("Hymn to the Sun") and Psalms 104:1-24—we can readily see the proximity of ideas and words. One stanza of the "Hymn" reads:

*How manifold it is, what thou hast made!
They are hidden from the face of man
O sole god, like whom there is no other!*