

ETHIOPIAN ANNALS.

STELE OF THE EXCOMMUNICATION.

TRANSLATED BY

G. MASPERO.

THIS tablet was found at Gebel-Barkal, and was analysed by M. Mariette in the *Revue Archéologique*, 1865, Tome II, p. 161. It was published in the *Monuments Divers*, Tome I, pl. 10 by the same, and translated by G. Maspero in the *Revue Archéologique*, 1871, Tome I, p. 8. Under the two-winged disk at the top of the tablet is

“HUT, the great god, the giver of life,”

A king whose head and names have been carefully defaced, entitled “The good god, Lord of both Lands ever living” presents the goddess Mâ to the trinity of Ethiopia, Amen-Râ, Mut, and Khonsu-m-uàs.¹ Behind the king are various symbols of Eternity ; before him stands the legend :

¹ Khonsu of Thebes.

I give MA unto AMEN, that he may do (for me) the *Dû-ânkh*, like unto RA.

Before Amen is :

AMEN-RA, Lord of the seats of both worlds, residing in *Dû-ûab*, saith : " I give thee all life and power."

The inscription for Mut is :

MUT, Lady of heaven, Queen of gods, saith : " I give thee all health."

That of Khonsu-m-uàs :

KHONSU-M-UAS, Clerk of the divine cycle, HOR, Lord of joy, saith : " I give thee all joy."

The unknown king who erected the tablet must have been contemporaneous with the first sovereigns of the XXVIth dynasty, or about 600 B. C.



STÉLE OF THE EXCOMMUNICATION

- 1 The good god, the like of TUM the creator god, the one who knows . . . , the fleet of foot¹ the duplicate of ATEN; giver of breath to all nostrils, he causes all creatures to subsist, (he) reigns in his strength, like (the god)
- 2 his begetter who leads His Majesty in each turn of all his beneficent exertions; the first-born who framed (his) answer
- 3 at the time he succeeded to his seat,² the King of Upper and Lower Countries, Son of the Sun,³ beloved by AMEN-RA, Lord of the seats of both worlds, residing in Dû-ûab, the giver of life for ever.
- 4 In the second year after his rise, being His Majesty upon the seat of SEB, His Majesty went in state to the temple of (his) father AMEN of Napat, residing in Dû-ûab to expel that
- 5 sect, hateful unto god, which they call *Tum-pesiu Per-tot khäiu*,⁴ saying: "Let not
- 6 them enter the Temple of AMEN of Napat, residing in Dû-ûab, because of that word, a sin it is to tell it (anew), which they spoke in the Temple of AMEN. (For) they told

¹ Lit., "stretching (his) feet."

² This is an allusion to the Osirian myth. The "first-born son who framed an answer when he succeeded (lit., exchanged,) to his seat," *Se semsem nuzti-w ushb sep deb er ast-w*, is Hor-si-esi, who pleaded (gave answer, *ushb*) for his father against Set before the tribunal of gods when first he succeeded to the inheritance of his father. All dead men being identified with Osiris, all first-born sons were or might have been identified with Hor-si-esi, like the king who erected our tablet.

³ The names have been erased on purpose.

⁴ Lit., "The men (who say): Do not cook, let violence kill!"

- 7 a word, but god granted that it had not effect, (and) they plotted a plot in their hearts to slay the man who would not partake of their sin,¹ but god granted not
- 8 that it had effect: god caused the speech of their mouth which they had spoken to that effect to become the ruin of them, he smote them, causing the King's fire to pass (in the middle of them)."
- 9 To impress respectful dread in (the bosom of) all Prophets and of all Priests who go in to that august god² by the greatness of his spirits and the magnitude of his might, decrees the King: "If ever Prophet or Priest do an evil doing in the temples, let god smite
- 10 them; let not their feet be any more upon earth; let not their posterity continue after them so that the temple be not supplied with their crimes, but be free of their lie!"³

The sectarians so solemnly condemned by this King, would have been utterly unknown but for their proscription. Their name is composed with two sentences *Tum pesi*, "Do not cook," *Per-tot khài*, "Let violence kill," which may be said to embody the principal articles of their creed. If so it would not be unreasonable to compare the meaning of *Tum pesi* with a curious custom in Abyssinia that of eating *brinde* or raw meat. The use of *brinde* is probably a last remnant of former pagan habits. That it was held heretical by kings of the old Egyptian persuasion is sufficiently shown by the tenour of this document; that it ended by upsetting old prejudices may be drawn from the fact of this king's face and names having been carefully erased afterwards.

¹ Lit., "the man there is no sin of his."

² Amen of Napat.

³ Lit., "but their lie, it (the temple) be free of it (their lie)."

END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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