

INSCRIPTIONS ON THE STATUE OF  
BAK-EN-KHONSU.

(XIXth DYNASTY.)

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TRANSLATED BY

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THE Glyptothek in Munich possesses a fine statue of a High-Priest of Ammon, named Bak-en-Khonsu, who was also Superintendent of Public Works under Seti I. and Ramses II. He is represented, in the Egyptian style, sitting on the ground with his arms folded across his knees. The inscriptions, of which a translation here follows, cover the legs, back, and lower part of the statue. They have already been published and translated by the late Théodule Devéria, *Monument Biographique de Bakenkhonsou*, in the *Mémoires de l'Institut Égyptien*, tome premier, Paris, 1862; by Professor J. Lauth, *Der Hohepriester und Oberbaumeister Bokenchons*, Leipzig, 1863; and by Dr. H. Brugsch-Bey in his *Geschichte Aegyptens*, Leipzig, 1877.

It would appear from the inscriptions (as Devéria justly observes) that Bak-en-Khonsu himself caused his statue to be executed during his lifetime, when he was 86 years of age. Egyptian epitaphs show us many cases in which the deceased appear to extol their own virtues, and in this instance modesty is certainly not predominant in the High-Priest's estimate of his qualifications. Having completed his statue to his satisfaction, and taken care that no meritorious act of his life should be forgotten, he entreats, as a recompense from his god, the favour of a prolonged existence.



INSCRIPTION COVERING THE BACK OF  
THE STATUE.

The noble Chief, First Prophet of AMEN, BAK-EN-KHONSU, the justified, says: I was equitable and truthful, a favourite of my master, honouring the precepts of my god, walking in his track, performing acts of beneficence within his temple. I was the great superintendent of public works in PA-AMEN,<sup>1</sup> beloved by my master. Oh, all men having reflection in their minds, oh creatures who are upon earth, and come after me from millions of years to millions of years, after age and decay, whose hearts are contented at the sight of glorious acts, I will inform ye who I was upon earth, in all the functions I filled from the time of my birth: I was four years in extreme infancy; I was twelve years in youth; I was made steward by King RA-MEN-MA [SETI I.]; I was priest of AMEN for four years; I was divine father of AMEN for twelve years; I was third prophet of AMEN for fifteen years; I was second prophet of AMEN for twelve [years]. \*He [the King] rewarded me; he distinguished me for my merit; he appointed me first prophet of AMEN, [which I was] for twenty-seven years. I was a good father to my temple servants, providing for their families, tendering the hand to those who were miserable, sustaining those who were inferior, and performing glorious acts in his [the King's] temple. I was the great superintendent of public works of the KHENT of Thebes to his son, issued from his loins, the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, RA-USER-MA

<sup>1</sup> Part of Thebes, situated on the left bank of the Nile.

SOTEP-EN-RA, the son of the Sun, RAMESSU-MERI-AMEN [RAMSES II.], who giveth life. [He] erected monuments to his father AMEN, who placed him on his throne; he did it through the First prophet of AMEN, BAK-EN-KHONSU, the justified. He [BAK-EN-KHONSU] says: I performed glorious deeds in the temple of AMEN, as superintendent of public works of my master; I made him a sacred pylon [named] "RAMESSU-MERI-AMEN, WHO DOTHT LISTEN TO THE BELIEVER," at the upper doorway of the temple of AMEN. I had obelisks in granite erected near it; their summits reach the firmament. The front building before it is of stone, and faces Thebes. The reservoirs and gardens are planted with trees. I constructed huge gilt doors; their summits join the sky. I made lofty flag-staffs; I had them raised in the noble court in front of his temple. I launched large boats into the river for AMEN, MUT and KHONSU.

By the noble Chief, First Prophet of AMEN,

BAK-EN-KHONSU.



INSCRIPTION COVERING THE LEGS OF  
THE STATUE.

“May AMEN-RA, TUM, HOR-EM-AKHUI, the soul of heaven, living in truth, the AKHEM<sup>1</sup> in his boat, MUT, the great, the protectress of the two regions, and KHONSU-NEFER-HOTEP grant a royal table of offerings; may they grant that my name be established in Thebes, and remain stable to all eternity; [may they grant this] to me, the noble Chief, the leader of the prophets of all the gods, First Prophet of AMEN in Ape,<sup>2</sup> BAK-EN-KHONSU, justified.”

He says: Oh prophets, divine fathers and priests of PA-AMEN, present flowers to my statue and libations to my body. I was the virtuous slave of my master, possessing equity and sincerity, rejoicing in truth, hating evil and developing the precepts of my god, I, the First Prophet of AMEN, BAK-EN-KHONSU.

<sup>1</sup> Name of the mummified hawk, a special form of Horus.

<sup>2</sup> A quarter of Thebes, on the right bank of the Nile.



INSCRIPTION COVERING THE LOWER PART  
OF THE STATUE.

The noble Chief, First Prophet of AMEN, BAK-EN-KHONSU, [justified. He says :] I am he who possesseth truth, the virtuous slave of my god, who approacheth him in his turn, who giveth. . . . .<sup>1</sup>

Youth or married man who [art yet] in life, may the happiness of to-day surpass that of yesterday, and (the same) to-morrow ; may it increase more than mine. I was, from youth to old age, within the temple of AMEN, in the service (of my god), contemplating his face. May he bestow upon me a happy existence of one hundred and ten years.

<sup>1</sup> Lacuna.



# END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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