

THE DAUGHTER OF THE PRINCE OF BAKHTAN AND THE SPIRIT THAT POSSESSED HER

TRANSLATED BY PROF. MASPERO

THE monument which has preserved for us this curious narrative is a stele discovered by Champollion in the temple of Khonsu at Thebes, and removed from thence in 1886 by Prisse d'Avennes, by whom it was given to the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris. The text has been published by Prisse d'Avennes: *Choix de Monuments égyptiens* (Paris, 1847); and Champollion: *Monuments de l'Égypte et de la Nubie* (Paris, 1846-76, vol. ii. pp. 280-90); and translated by Birch: *Notes upon an Egyptian Inscription in the Bibliothèque Impériale of Paris* (in the *Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, iv. new series); and E. de Rougé: *Étude sur une Stèle égyptienne appartenant à la Bibliothèque Impériale* (in the *Journal Asiatique*, Aug. 1856, Aug. 1857, June and Aug. 1858).

Champollion had already studied the text and has cited many phrases from it in his works. It was sumptuously reproduced on a single sheet at

the Imperial Printing-Press for the Paris Exhibition of 1855 under the superintendence of E. de Rougé.

Little has been added by later works to de Rougé's results. Translations of it have been given by Brugsch in his *History of Egypt* (English translation, 2d edit., ii. pp. 191-4), and by Maspero in his *Contes égyptiens*, ii. pp. 209-224.

The narrative presents the appearance of an official document. The Ramses recorded in it was believed to be the twelfth of the name who belonged to the twentieth dynasty, and efforts were made to discover the country of Bakhtan in the map. The account begins with a royal protocol in the name of a sovereign who has the same names and *prænomina* as Ramses II or Sesostris. Next come dates which follow a definite order throughout the text; the details of the cult of the deity and of the Pharaonic ceremonial are described with scrupulous exactitude. The whole possesses such a character of probability that the inscription was considered historical until quite recently. Prof. Erman, however, has shown with much sagacity that we must recognise in it a pure fiction invented by the priests of Khonsu in order to heighten the glory of the god and the importance of his temple; see A. Erman: *Die Bentreschstele* in the *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache*, 1883, pp. 53-60.

Prof. Erman has made it clear that the forgers intended to assign the narrative to the reign of Ramses II, and has thus relieved us from an

imaginary Pharaoh. He has brought the redaction of the story down to the Ptolemaic period, but I believe that I can attribute it to the earlier days of the Ethiopian invasions, when the high-priest of Amon was about to fall, and the great priesthoods which still existed at Thebes were to endeavour by all the means in their power to inherit the influence which the fallen priesthood had exercised.

The narrative refers to a belief which is common in popular literature ; a spirit has entered the body of a princess and struggles against the exorcists who have been commissioned to expel it, consenting to depart only on certain conditions. The story furnishes us with the simplest and most ancient form of the belief. A modern Egyptologist has adopted it as the subject of a novelette (H. Brugsch: *Des Priesters Rache, eine historisch beglaubigte Erzählung aus der aegyptischen Geschichte des zwölften Jahrhunderts vor Christus*, in the *Deutsche Revue*, v. pp. 15-41).

Prof. Erman has noted in the narrative an affectation of archaism and somewhat serious errors of language. We can understand that the priests of Khonsu have endeavoured to imitate the language of the period to which they attributed the monument. We can also understand that they could not be equally successful everywhere in maintaining an archaistic tone, and have thus at times committed errors. The sentences are badly constructed, the expression of ideas is poor, the phrase curt and flat.

Moreover, they have assigned to a king of the nineteenth dynasty methods of government which belonged only to sovereigns of the twentieth. Ramses II, devout as he was, would never have considered it necessary to submit to the approval of the gods all the affairs of state ; it was the last successors of Ramses III who introduced the custom of consulting the statue of Amon upon every occasion. With these reservations it may be admitted that the text offers no further difficulties to the interpreter, and with a little attention can be easily translated ; like the *Story of the Two Brothers* it can be advantageously placed in the hands of beginners in Egyptian.

The stele is surmounted by a tableau in which one of the scenes in the story is enacted before our eyes. On the left, the bark of Khonsu, the good counsellor, is carried on the shoulders of eight porters and is followed by two priests reading prayers ; the king, standing before it, offers incense to it. On the right, the bark of Khonsu, which regulates the destinies of Thebes, is figured, carried by four men only, for it is smaller than the other ; the priest who offers incense to it is the prophet of Khonsu who regulates the destinies of Thebes, Khonsu-hâ-nutir-nibit. It is probably the return of the second god to Thebes which is thus illustrated : the first Khonsu comes to receive the second, and the priest and king each render equal homage to his divinity.

THE DAUGHTER OF THE PRINCE OF BAKHTAN

THE HORUS, powerful bull, laden with diadems and established as solidly in his kingdoms as the god ATUMU;¹ the HORUS, the conqueror mighty with the sword and destroyer of the Barbarians, the king of the two EGYPTS, Usir-ma-rî Sotpuri-rî, son of the Sun, Ramses Mî-amun, beloved of AMON-RA, master of KARNAK² and of the circle of the gods, the lords of THEBES, the good god, the son of AMON, offspring of MUT, begotten by HAR-MA-KHUITI, glorious child of the universal Lord, engendered by the divine husband of his own mother, king of EGYPT, prince of the tribes of the desert, the sovereign who governs the Barbarians, scarcely issued from his mother's womb he directed wars and commanded valiantly while still in the egg, like a bull which presses forward, for he is a bull, is this king, a god who issues forth on the day of battles like MONTU,—who is very valiant like the son of NUIT.³

Now his Majesty was in NAHARINA⁴ as was his custom each year, and the princes of every country came bending under the weight of the offerings which they brought to the souls of his Majesty;⁵ the fortresses brought their

¹ [Otherwise transcribed Tum.]

² North of Thebes on the eastern bank of the Nile.

³ The son of Nouit is Sit-Typhon, in this kind of phraseology.

⁴ Written differently from the orthography Naharanna in the Tale of the Doomed Prince. Naharanna was the country between the Orontes and the Balikh, which falls into the Euphrates (on the eastern bank) a little north of the Khabour. It is included in the Aram-Naharaim of Scripture.

⁵ We know that the Sun had seven souls and fourteen doubles (Bergmann: *Hier. Inschriften*, pl. 62, 2). The Pharaoh, as son of the Sun and himself the Sun, had also several *biu* or "souls," and the conquered endeavoured to win them by presents.

tributes, gold, silver, lapis-lazuli, *mafkait*,¹ (and) all the fragrant woods of Arabia, on their backs and walking in order one behind the other. The prince of BAKHTAN sent his tributes and set his eldest daughter at the head of the procession, to salute his Majesty and to ask life from him. She was a very beautiful woman, who pleased his Majesty more than anything else; taking her as his chief royal wife he inscribed her with the name of Nofiru-rî, and when he had returned to EGYPT he assured to her the treatment of a royal wife.²

And it came to pass in the fifteenth year, the 22d day of the month Payni, when his Majesty was at THEBES in the temple *Nakhthonit-ropeu*,³ chaunting the praises of his father AMON-RÂ the master of KARNAK, during his excellent festival in southern THEBES,⁴ the favourite residence of the god since the creation, behold a message is brought to his Majesty: "There is there a messenger of the prince of BAKHTAN who is come with numerous presents for the royal wife." Conducted before his Majesty with his presents, he says, invoking his Majesty: "Glory to thee, O Sun of foreign peoples, to thee by whom we live," and when he had uttered his adoration before his Majesty, he proceeds to speak to his Majesty: "I come to thee, sire, my master, concerning Bint-Rashit,⁵ the younger sister of thyself and the royal wife Nofiru-rî, for a malady penetrates her limbs. Let thy Majesty order a sage to set forth to see her." Then the king said: "Bring me the scribes of the double house of life who are attached to the palace."

¹ The word *mafkait* expresses emerald, green jasper, green feldspar, various oxides of copper, malachite; in short, every kind of precious stone which is naturally coloured green.

² The daughter of the prince of the Hittites, Khiti-saru, similarly received from Ramses II on her arrival in Egypt the title of "chief royal wife" and the Egyptian name of Ma-ur-nofiru-rî, of which the name of the princess in the text is probably only an abridged form.

³ These words, which literally signify "the strong one, the lady of the temples," probably denote one of the chapels in the temple of Karnak.

⁴ Southern Thebes was the modern Luxor; the festival, consequently, must have been the festival of the patron deity in the temple of Luxor.

⁵ The name of this princess appears to be formed from the Semitic *bint*, "daughter," and the Egyptian *rashit*, "joy," the signification being "Daughter of joy."

When they were come, his Majesty said : " Behold I have summoned you in order that you may hear these words : ' Bring me one of yourselves who is expert in his heart, a scribe skilful with his fingers.' " When the royal scribe Thothimhabi had entered the presence of his Majesty, his Majesty commanded him to betake himself to BAKHTAN with this messenger. As soon as the sage had arrived in BAKHTAN he found Bint-Rashit possessed of a demon, and he found the demon who possessed her difficult to combat. The prince of BAKHTAN thereupon sent a second message to his Majesty, saying : " Sire, my master, let thy Majesty order a god to be sent to combat the demon."

When the messenger reached his Majesty in the 23d year, the 1st day of the month Pakhons, the day of the festival of AMON, while his Majesty was at THEBES, behold his Majesty spoke again in the presence of KHONSU in THEBES, the god of good counsel, saying : " Excellent lord, behold me again before thee, concerning the daughter of the prince of BAKHTAN." ¹ Then KHONSU in THEBES, the god of good counsel, was transported towards KHONSU who governs destiny, the great god who drives away strangers, and his Majesty said before the face of KHONSU in THEBES, the god of good counsel : " Excellent lord, if it pleases thee to turn thy face to KHONSU who governs

¹ In order to understand this passage, we must remember that according to Egyptian belief every statue of a god in a temple had in it a *ka* or "double," detached from the actual person of the god and so an incarnation of the god different from his other incarnations. The god Khonsu had in his temple at Karnak two statues at least, each of which was animated by an independent "double," whom the rites of consecration had detached from the god. One of them represented Khonsu, immutable in his perfection, tranquil in his greatness, and not directly interfering with the affairs of men ; this was Khonsu Nofir-hotpu, whose name I have paraphrastically translated "the god of good counsel." The other statue represented a more active Khonsu who governed the affairs of mankind and drove away foreigners (that is to say enemies) from Egypt (*Khonsu p. iri sokhru m uisit, nutir da, sakru shemau*). The first Khonsu, being considered the more powerful, we know not why, does not condescend to go himself to Syria, but sends the second Khonsu after having transferred to the latter his own powers (E. de Rougé : *Etude sur une stèle*, pp. 15-19).

destiny, the great god who drives away strangers, he will be sent to BAKHTAN." And the god twice decidedly nodded assent with the head.¹ Then his Majesty said: "Grant unto him thy virtue so that I may send the Majesty of this god to BAKHTAN in order to deliver the daughter of the prince of BAKHTAN." And KHONSU in THEBES, the god of good counsel, violently nodded assent twice and transmitted his magical virtue to KHONSU who governs destiny in THEBES, four times.² His Majesty ordered KHONSU who governs destiny in THEBES to be despatched on a great bark, escorted by five boats, by chariots and by numerous horses which walked on the right and on the left. When the god had arrived in BAKHTAN, after an interval of a year and five months, behold the prince of BAKHTAN came with his soldiers and his generals before KHONSU who governs destiny, and flung himself on his face, saying:

¹ The statues, being animated by a "double," declared their will either by the voice or by rhythmical movements. We know that queen Hatshopsitu "heard" the god Amon commanding her to send an expedition to the "Coasts of Incense," in order to fetch the perfumes necessary for religious worship. The kings of the twentieth and twenty-first dynasties, less fortunate than she, were gratified only with gestures, which were always the same; when they put a question to a god the statue remained motionless if the answer were negative, but twice shook the head violently if it were favourable. The inquiries were made in accordance with a fixed ritual, the chief points in which have been preserved in contemporaneous texts.

² The innate virtue of the gods (*sa*) seems to have been regarded by the Egyptians as a sort of fluid analogous to that called by us "the electric fluid" or the like. It was transmitted by the imposition of hands and mesmeric "passes" over the neck or spine of the patient; this was called *sofpu sa*, which we may render "to make passes." The ceremony whereby the first Khonsu transferred his virtue to the second is frequently represented on the monuments in the scenes where a statue of a god is making passes over a king. The statue, which was usually of wood, had movable limbs; it embraced the king and passed its hand four times over the nape of his neck while he knelt before it with his back turned towards it. Every statue received at its consecration not only a "double" but also a portion of the magical virtue of the deity whom it represented; the "*sa* of life" was "behind it," which animated and penetrated within it so far as the statue did not lessen the amount of the magical virtue by transmission. The god himself, whom this perpetual flow of the *sa* would have ended by exhausting, replenished himself with a supply of it from a mysterious source in the other world: we are not told how it happened that the source could not be exhausted (Maspero: *Bulletin critique de la religion égyptienne. Le Rituel du Sacrifice funéraire*, pp. 17-18, 28-29).

"Thou comest to us, thou rejoineest us according to the orders of the king of the two EGYPTS, Usir-ma-rî Sotpu-ni-rî." Behold as soon as the god was gone to the place where Bint-Rashit was and had made magical passes over the daughter of the prince of BAKHTAN, she found herself well at once, and the demon which was with her said in the presence of KHONSU who governs destiny in THEBES: "Come in peace, great god who drivest away the foreigner; BAKHTAN is thy city, its people are thy slaves, and I myself am thy slave. I shall depart therefore to the place from whence I am come, in order to satisfy thy heart concerning the matter which brings thee, but let thy Majesty order a day of festival to be celebrated for me and for the prince of BAKHTAN." The god made his prophet a sign of approval with the head, meaning to say: "Let the prince of BAKHTAN present a great offering to this demon." Now while this was taking place between KHONSU who governs destiny in THEBES and the demon, the prince of BAKHTAN was there with his army stricken with terror. And when a great offering had been presented to KHONSU who governs destiny in THEBES and to the demon of the prince of BAKHTAN, and a day of festival had been celebrated in their honour, the demon departed in peace to the place which pleased him, according to the order of KHONSU who governs destiny in THEBES.

The prince of BAKHTAN rejoiced greatly as well as the people of BAKHTAN, and he discoursed with his heart saying: "Since this god has been given to BAKHTAN I shall not send him back to EGYPT." Now after the god had remained three years and nine months in BAKHTAN, as the prince of Bakhtan was lying on his bed, he saw in a dream the god leaving his shrine in the form of a golden hawk which flew on high towards EGYPT; when he awoke he was in a shiver. Then he said to the prophet of KHONSU who governs destiny in THEBES: "This god who dwelt with us, he returns to EGYPT; let his chariot go to EGYPT!" The prince of BAKHTAN allowed the god to start for EGYPT, and he gave him numerous presents of all good things as well as a strong escort of soldiers and

horses. When they reached THEBES, KHONSU who governs destiny in THEBES entered the temple of KHONSU in THEBES the good counsellor; he set the presents which the prince of BAKHTAN had given him before KHONSU in THEBES, the good counsellor, he kept nothing for his own temple. Now KHONSU, the good counsellor in THEBES, re-entered his temple in peace the 19th day of the month Mekhir, the 33d year of the king Usir-ma-rî Sotpu-ni-rî, living for ever like the Sun.

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