

THE BOOK OF HADES.

(FROM THE SARCOPHAGUS OF SETI I.)¹

TRANSLATED BY

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WHEN Belzoni discovered, in 1819, the tomb of Seti I. at Biban-el-Molouk, he found there the empty sarcophagus of the king, with the cover broken. The figures and the hieroglyphics which adorn this sarcophagus, upon which they are carved and filled in with blue colour, have been published in 1864, with descriptions, by Messrs. Bonomi and Sharpe,² under the title of *The Sarcophagus of Oimeneptah I.* In 1870, M. Pierret gave, in the *Revue Archéologique*, an analysis of the pictures and the legends which cover the exterior of the coffin; and later, Messrs. Goodwin³ and Le Page Renouf⁴ have examined the secret writings which are found on a part of the

¹ The sarcophagus is of arragonite, and is now in the Soane Museum, London.

² Cf. Sharpe, *Egyptian Inscriptions*, pl. 61-67.

³ *Zeitschrift*, 1873, p. 138.

⁴ *Zeitschrift*, 1874, p. 101.

sarcophagus. These endeavours are only partial, and a study of the whole has not been made on the sarcophagus of Seti I. before the present translation, which is complete, and comprises all the fragments. The principal subject of the inscriptions on the sarcophagus is the navigation of the sun nightly in the infernal regions. Twelve gates enclose there, successively, twelve sections of space, from which the god passes, having generally at his right hand the blessed, and at his left the damned, who are represented, according to the Egyptian rule of perspective, above and below. The gates correspond probably to the hours of the night, as do the infernal pylons to the astronomical ceilings at Biban-el-Molouk.¹ The order in which these gates follow one another has been pointed out by Champollion,² and they again occur in the like manner in the tomb of Rameses VI. The same composition figures in effect in the royal tombs, and covers there, generally to the left, the sides of certain rooms and corridors. We see by the royal tombs that the Egyptian artist connected the nightly divisions to the gates which preceded; and Champollion himself is the authority for designating, by an abridged form, every division of Hades by the name of the serpent which guarded the gate. There is as a clue to its arrangement, the

¹ Champollion, *Notices*, Tom. II., p. 630-684; cf. *Todtenbuch*, ch. 145, 146.

² *Lettres*, new edition, p. 189-192.

number, and the succession of these gates which comprise this species of the Book of Hades itself, a variant of the Book of the Lower Hemisphere.

1st division :		without a gate.
2nd	„	door of the serpent Saa-set.
3rd	„	„ Akebi.
4th	„	„ T'etbi.
5th	„	„ Tek-her.
6th	„	„ Set-m-ar-f.
7th	„	„ Akhen-ar.
8th	„	„ Set-her.
9th	„	„ Ab-ta.
10th	„	„ Stu.
11th	„	„ Am-netu-f.
12th	„	doors of the serpents Sebi and Reri.

It is noticeable that the first division has not a door, and that the last has two. Further, in the tombs of Seti I. and of Merenptah I. the pictures and the legends relating to the door of Set-m-ar-f differ entirely from those which are attached to the same gate in the other tombs, and on the sarcophagus of Seti I. According to Champollion¹ the tomb of Amenophis III. which was complete, contained the book which he there describes, but only a few fragments of it now remain in the chief chamber. The notices of the same scholar attribute the 8th, 9th, and 10th divisions to the tomb of Ta-user-t, these are found in the chief

¹ *Lettres*, new edition, p. 202, 203.

chamber; the 3rd and 4th are seen in the tomb of Rameses I.¹ in the chamber which follows the 2nd corridor; the 2nd and 3rd occur in the chamber having six pillars; the 4th, 5th, 6th, (the chamber of the well), and 7th (on the principal chamber having four pillars) in the tomb of Seti I.; the 4th, 5th, and 6th in the principal chamber of the tomb of Merenptah I.; the 5th (in the 3rd chamber), 6th (other chamber) 3rd, 8th, 9th, and 11th (in the principal chamber), of the tomb of Rameses III.; the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th in the tomb of Rameses IV. (the principal chamber); the 1st and 2nd are found in the tomb of Rameses VII. on the first corridor. The tomb of Rameses VI. contains the composition entirely complete to the commencement of the first corridor. The other tombs are more or less damaged, or they would have been able otherwise to have restored for us wholly or in part those divisions which appear to be wanting from the sometimes incomplete notices of Champollion. On the sarcophagus of Seti I. the beginning of the text is found on the outside at the foot of the chest; the 2nd and 3rd divisions follow to the right; the 4th is at the head and on a part of the left side, at which the 5th adjoins the 1st. The 6th and the 7th divisions, of which only fragments remain, occupy the two exterior sides of the lid; the 6th at the right, the 7th at the left side of the head. In

¹ Cf. Egyptian Museum, Paris.

the interior and adjoining the head, at the left side, the 8th and 9th divisions; the 10th commences at the foot; and the 11th, which extends to the right, finishes at the head, where is the 12th. There the great composition stops. Other texts, now incomplete, covered the interior part of the lid, these generally belong to the "Book of the Dead." Finally, the bottom of the chest, which is intact, shows the goddess Nu surrounded with prayers and chapters from the Book of the Dead. The general sense of the great composition (the scenes of which have no other relation than to present the variants of a same idea) is that the sun and the gods, or the souls who accompany him, are swallowed up by the earth¹ in the West, and that they arise at the East. The earth is described in certain passages as a two-headed bull,² or a two-headed serpent;³ and sometimes the Egyptians, to symbolize the resurrection, represented coming forth from the serpent the heads which he had swallowed,⁴ and introduced his face⁵ to the sun to appoint the dawn. The nocturnal sun was a soul,⁶ and had consequently the head of a male sheep; the earth, being more material, after the final scene formed the body of Osiris who surrounded Hades. The

¹ Pl. iv., F. 19, 18; pl. iii., c. 27.

² Pl. ii.; iii. c.

³ Pl. xii., cf. *The Book of the Lower Hemisphere*, 8th hour.

⁴ Pl. xii. A, cf. Champollion, *Notices*, Tom. II., p. 770-775.

⁵ Pl. xi. B.

⁶ Pl. iii. c, 26, 27.
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earth had been created by the sun or Ra, seeing that the legend of the two-headed bull said, that the god rested in that which he had created.¹ It must be remarked on the subject of the creation, that this act is represented in several places as an emanation: thus the gods go out from Ra² or from his eye;³ the Egyptians are the tears of the eye of Horus,⁴ and the eatable plants come from the divine mouth.⁵ This pantheistic doctrine existed to the XVIIIth dynasty; indeed the composition, which contains it, is found in the tombs of Amenophis III. and of Ta-user-t; and M. Naville has shown that it is also the foundation of the "Litany of the Sun,"⁶ with which the royal tombs begin. The Egyptian theology allowed besides the responsibility of man, the immortality of the soul; and the subterranean world, on the sarcophagus of Seti I. is, therefore, represented in a moral, as well as a physical point of view. The underworld was the place of the chastisement of Apap, the symbol of evil, and the dwelling of the good as well as of the wicked, which were there judged to be recompensed by Ra or punished by Tum and by Horus.

¹ Pl. iii. c, 28; cf. pl. v. E, H.

² Pl. iv. F, G.

³ Pl. iv., iii. E.

⁴ Pl. vii., vi. D.

⁵ Pl. xiii. c.

⁶ See *Records of the Past*, Vol. VI.

EXTERIOR OF THE COFFIN.

HORIZONTAL INSCRIPTION.

This inscription runs along in a single line the five first plates of the Book of Hades ; it is divided into two halves : the first (pl. II.-V.) comes from the door of Akebi to the commencement of the first scene ; the second (pl. VIII.-V.) adjoins the first in going from the head, to the place where the fold of the door of T'etbi begins.

PLATE 2.¹

A. Words of MESTA : I am MESTA, I am thy son, OSIRIS, King, Lord of the Two Lands, RAMENMA, veracious, son of RA, SETI-MERENPTAH, veracious, I come, behold me to protect thee. I make to prosper thy dwelling, firmly, firmly, according to the order of PTAH, according to the order of RA himself. Words of ANUBIS, who is with the coffin : I am ANUBIS who is with the coffin. It is said :² Descend my mother ISIS²

PLATE 3.

.² on me, the OSIRIS, King, RAMENMA, veracious, (deliver the son of RA, SETI-MERENPTAH), veracious, from

¹ These references are to the plates in Bonomi's book, and the letters A, B, C, to the three horizontal sections into which each plate of text is divided, according to its position on the sarcophagus.

² Lacunæ.

END OF SAMPLE TEXT



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