



[Sacred Texts](#) [Egypt](#) [Index](#) [Previous](#) [Next](#)

p. vii

## PREFACE.

A STUDY of the remains of the native religious literature of ancient Egypt which have come down to us has revealed the fact that the belief in magic, that is to say, in the power of magical names, and spells, and enchantments, and formulæ, and pictures, and figures, and amulets, and in the performance of ceremonies accompanied by the utterance of words of power, to produce supernatural results, formed a large and important part of the Egyptian religion. And it is certain that, notwithstanding the continuous progress which the Egyptians made in civilization, and the high intellectual development to which they eventually attained, this belief influenced their minds and, from the earliest to the latest period of their history, shaped their views concerning things temporal as well as spiritual in a manner which, at this stage in the history of the world, is very difficult to understand. The scrupulous care with which they performed their

p. viii

innumerable religious ceremonies, and carried out the rules which they had formulated concerning the worship of the divine Power or powers, and their devotion to religious magic, gained for them among the nations with whom they came in contact the reputation of being at once the most religious and the most superstitious of men. That this reputation was, on the whole, well deserved, is the object of this little book to shew.

Egyptian magic dates from the time when the predynastic and prehistoric dwellers in Egypt believed that the earth, and the underworld, and the air, and the sky were peopled with countless beings, visible and invisible, which were held to be friendly or unfriendly to man according as the operations of nature, which they were supposed to direct, were favourable or unfavourable to him. In -nature and attributes these beings were thought by primitive man to closely resemble himself and to possess all human passions, and emotions, and weaknesses, and defects; and the chief object of magic was to give man the pre-eminence over such beings. The favour of the beings who were placable and friendly to man might be obtained by means of gifts and offerings, but the cessation of hostilities on the part of those that were implacable and unfriendly could only be obtained by wheedling, and

p. ix

cajolery, and flattery, or by making use of an amulet, or secret name, or magical formula, or figure, or picture which had the effect of bringing to the aid of the mortal who possessed it the power of a being that was mightier than the foe who threatened to do evil to him. The magic of most early nations aimed at causing the transference of power from a supernatural being to man, whereby he was to be enabled to obtain superhuman results and to become for a time as mighty as the original possessor of the power; but the object of Egyptian magic was to endow man with the means of compelling both friendly and hostile powers, nay, at a later time, even God Himself, to do what he wished, whether they were willing or not. The belief in magic, the word being used in its best sense, is older in Egypt than the belief in God, and it is certain that a very large number of the Egyptian religious ceremonies, which were performed in later times as an integral part of a highly spiritual worship, had their origin in superstitious customs which date from a period when God, under any name or in any form, was unconceived in the minds of the Egyptians. Indeed it is probable that even the use of the sign which represents an axe, and which stands the hieroglyphic character both for God and "god," indicates that this weapon and tool was employed in the

p. x

performance of some ceremony connected with religious magic in prehistoric, or at any rate in predynastic times, when it in some mysterious way symbolized the presence of a supreme Power. But be this as it may, it is quite certain that magic and religion developed and flourished side by side in Egypt throughout all periods of her history, and that any investigation which we may make of the one necessarily includes an examination of the other.

From the religious books of ancient Egypt we learn that the power possessed by a priest or man who was skilled in the knowledge and working of magic was believed to be almost boundless. By pronouncing certain words or names of power in the proper manner and in the proper tone of voice he could heal the sick, and cast out the evil spirits which caused pain and suffering in those who were diseased, and restore the dead to life, and bestow upon the dead man the power to transform the corruptible into an incorruptible body, wherein the soul might live to all eternity. His words enabled human beings to assume divers forms at will, and to project their souls into animals and other creatures; and in obedience to his commands, inanimate figures and pictures became living beings and things which hastened to perform his behests. The powers of nature acknowledged his might, and wind and rain,

p. xi

storm and tempest, river and sea, and disease and death worked evil and ruin upon his foes, and upon the enemies of those who were provided with the knowledge of the words which he had wrested from the gods of heaven, and earth, and the underworld. Inanimate nature likewise obeyed such words of power, and even the world itself came into existence through the utterance of a word by Thoth; by their means the earth could be rent asunder, and the waters forsaking their nature could be piled up in a heap, and even the sun's course in the heavens could be stayed by a word. No god, or spirit, or devil, or fiend, could

resist words of power, and the Egyptians invoked their aid in the smallest as well as in the greatest events of their lives. To him that was versed in the lore contained in the books of the "double house of life" the future was as well known as the past, and neither time nor distance could limit the operations of his power; the mysteries of life and death were laid bare before him, and he could draw aside the veil which hid the secrets of fate and destiny from the knowledge of ordinary mortals.

Now if views such as these concerning the magician's power were held by the educated folk of ancient Egypt there is little to wonder at when we find that beliefs and superstitions of the most degraded character flourished with rank luxuriance among the peasants

p. xii

and working classes of that country, who failed to understand the symbolism of the elaborate ceremonies which were performed in the temples, and who were too ignorant to distinguish the spiritual conceptions which lay at their root--to meet the religious needs of such people the magician, and in later times the priest, found it necessary to provide pageants and ceremonies which appealed chiefly to the senses, and following their example, unscrupulous but clever men took advantage of the ignorance of the general public and pretended to knowledge of the supernatural, and laid claim to the possession of power over gods, and spirits, and demons. Such false knowledge and power they sold for money, and for purposes of gain the so-called magician was ready to further any sordid transaction or wicked scheme which his dupe wished to carry out. This magic degenerated into sorcery, and demonology, and wit craft, and those who dealt in it were regarded as associates of the Devil, and servants of the powers of darkness, and workers of the "black art." In the "white" and "black" magic of the Egyptians most of the magic known in the other countries of the world may be found; it is impossible yet to say exactly how much the beliefs and religious systems of other nations were influenced by them, but there is no, doubt that certain views and religious ideas of many heathen and

p. xiii

Christian sects may be traced directly to them. Many interesting proofs might be adduced in support of this statement, but the limits of this book will not admit of their being given here.

When we consider the lofty spiritual character of the greater part of the Egyptian religion, and remember its great antiquity, it is hard to understand why the Egyptians carefully preserved in their writings and ceremonies so much which savoured of gross and childish superstition, and which must have been the product of their predynastic or prehistoric ancestors, even during the period of their greatest intellectual enlightenment. But the fact remains that they did believe in One God Who was almighty, and eternal, and invisible, Who created the heavens, and the earth, and all beings and things therein; and in the resurrection of the body in a changed and glorified form, which would live to all eternity in the company of the spirits and souls of the righteous in a kingdom ruled by a being who was of divine origin, but who had lived upon the earth, and had suffered a cruel death at the hands of his enemies, and had risen from the dead, and had become the God and king of the world which is beyond the grave; and that, although they believed all these things and proclaimed their belief with almost passionate earnestness, they seem

never to have freed themselves from a hankering

p. xiv

after amulets and talismans, and magical names, and words of power, and seem to have trusted in these to save their souls and bodies, both living and dead, with something of the same confidence which they placed in the death and resurrection of Osiris. A matter for surprise is that they seem to see nothing incongruous in such a mixture of magic and religion, and the general attitude of the mind of the Egyptian on the point is well illustrated by the following facts. Attached to the service of Râ, the Sun-god, at Thebes were numerous companies of priests whose duties consisted as much in making copies of religious books and in keeping alive the "divine traditions," as in ministering to the god in their appointed seasons. The members of these companies who wrote the copies of the Book of the Dead which were buried with kings and queens and personages of royal or exalted rank declared the power and omnipotence of Almighty God, Whose visible emblem to mankind was the Sun, and His sovereignty over things celestial and things terrestrial with no uncertain voice, and we should expect them to believe what they proclaimed, *i.e.*, that God was sufficiently powerful to protect His emblem in the sky. Yet the priests of Thebes made copies of works which contained texts to be recited at specified hours of the day and night, and gave directions for the performance of

p. xv

magical ceremonies, the avowed object of such being to prevent the mythical monster Âpep from vanquishing the Sun-god. And it is stated in all seriousness that if a piece of papyrus upon which a figure of the monster has been drawn, and a wax figure of him be burnt in a fire made of a certain kind of grass, and the prescribed words be recited over them as they burn, the Sun-god will be delivered from Âpep, and that neither rain, nor cloud, nor mist shall be able to prevent his light from falling upon the earth. Moreover, the rubric describes the performance of the ceremony as a meritorious act!

E. A. WALLIS BUDGE.

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[Next: Contents](#)



[Sacred Texts](#) [Egypt](#) [Index](#) [Previous](#) [Next](#)

p. xvii

## CONTENTS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	ANTIQUITY OF MAGICAL PRACTICES IN EGYPT	<a href="#">1</a>
II.	MAGICAL STONES OR AMULETS	<a href="#">25</a>
III.	MAGICAL FIGURES	<a href="#">65</a>
IV.	MAGICAL PICTURES AND FORMULÆ, SPELLS, ETC.	<a href="#">104</a>
V.	MAGICAL NAMES	<a href="#">157</a>
VI.	MAGICAL CEREMONIES	<a href="#">182</a>
VII.	DEMONIACAL POSSESSION, DREAMS, GHOSTS, LUCKY AND UNLUCKY DAYS, HOROSCOPES, PROGNOSTICATIONS, TRANSFORMATIONS, AND THE WORSHIP OF ANIMALS	<a href="#">206</a>

p. xix

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

CHAPTER		PAGE
II.	THE DESTROYER OF HEARTS	<a href="#">31</a>
	THE DECEASED BEING WEIGHED AGAINST HIS HEART	<a href="#">35</a>
	THE DECEASED HOLDING A NECKLACE WITH PECTORAL	<a href="#">40</a>
	THE MUMMY LYING IN THE FUNERAL CHAMBER	<a href="#">45</a>
	THE PRIEST WITH THE "UR HEKAU" INSTRUMENT	<a href="#">60</a>
III.	PTAH-SEKER-AUSAR FIGURE	<a href="#">87</a>
	THE FOUR CHILDREN OF HORUS	<a href="#">90</a>

IV.	HATHOR IN THE SYCAMORE TREE	<a href="#">105</a>
	THE DECEASED DRINKING WATER FROM A STREAM	<a href="#">106</a>
	THE SOUL VISITING THE MUMMIED BODY	<a href="#">113</a>
	THE SOUL AND SPIRIT OUTSIDE THE TOMB	<a href="#">114</a>
	THE SHADOW AND SOUL OUTSIDE THE TOMB	<a href="#">115</a>
	HYPOCEPHALUS OF SHAI-ENEN	<a href="#">117</a>
	CIPPUS OF HORUS ("METTERNICHSTELE I.")	<a href="#">149</a>
	CIPPUS OF HORUS ("METTERNICHSTELE II.")	<a href="#">153</a>
V.	GREEK AMULETS	<a href="#">178, 179</a>
VI.	THE CEREMONY OF OPENING THE MOUTH	<a href="#">199</a>
VII.	THE STELE WITH THE STORY OF THE PRINCESS OF BEKHTEN	<a href="#">209</a>

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[Next: Chapter I: Antiquity of Magical Practices in Egypt](#)



[Sacred Texts](#) [Egypt](#) [Index](#) [Previous](#) [Next](#)

p. 1

# EGYPTIAN MAGIC.

## CHAPTER I.

### ANTIQUITY OF MAGICAL PRACTICES IN EGYPT.

IN the first volume of this series [1](#) an attempt was made to set before the reader a statement of the ideas and beliefs which the ancient Egyptians held in respect of God, the "gods," the Judgment, the Resurrection, and Immortality; in short, to sketch in brief outline much of what was beautiful, and noble, and sublime in their religion. The facts of this statement were derived wholly from native religious works, the latest of which is some thousands of years old, and the earliest of which may be said to possess an antiquity of between six and seven thousand years; the extracts quoted in support of the deductions set forth in it were intended to enable the reader to judge for himself as to the general accuracy of the conclusions there given. Many writers on the Egyptian religion have somewhat blinked the fact that it had two sides; on the one it closely resembles in

p. 2

many respects the Christian religion of to-day, and on the other the religion of many of the sects which flourished in the first three or four centuries of our era, and which may be said to have held beliefs which were part Christian and part non-Christian. In its non-Christian aspect it represents a collection of ideas and superstitions which belong to a savage or semi-savage state of existence, and which maintained their hold in a degree upon the minds of the Egyptians long after they had advanced to a high state of civilization. We may think that such ideas and beliefs are both childish and foolish, but there is no possible reason for doubting that they were very real things to those who held them, and whether they are childish or foolish or both they certainly passed into the religion of the people of Egypt, wherein they grew and flourished, and were, at least many of them, adopted by the Egyptian converts to Christianity, or Copts. Reference is made to them in the best classical works of the ancient Egyptians, and it is more

than probable that from them they found their way into the literatures of the other great nations of antiquity, and through the Greeks, Romans, Arabs, and others into the countries of Europe. In the following pages an attempt will be made to place in the reader's hands the evidence as to the magical side of the Egyptian religion, which would have been out of place in the former work, the object of which was to describe beliefs of a more spiritual nature. But, as

p. 3

in the book on the Egyptian Ideas of the Future Life, the facts here given are drawn from papyri and other native documents, and the extracts are quoted from compositions which were actually employed by the Egyptians to produce magical effects.

The "magic" of the Egyptians was of two kinds: (1) that which was employed for legitimate purposes and with the idea of benefiting either the living or the dead, and (2) that which was made use of in the furtherance of nefarious plots and schemes and was intended to bring calamities upon those against whom it was directed. In the religious texts and works we see how magic is made to be the handmaiden of religion, and how it appears in certain passages side by side with the most exalted spiritual conceptions; and there can be no doubt that the chief object of magical books and ceremonies was to benefit those who had by some means attained sufficient knowledge to make use of them. But the Egyptians were unfortunate enough not to be understood by many of the strangers who found their way into their country, and as a result wrong and exaggerated ideas of their religion were circulated among the surrounding nations, and the magical ceremonies which were performed at their funerals were represented by the ignorant either as silly acts of superstition or as tricks of the "black" art. But whereas the magic of every other nation of the ancient East was directed entirely against the powers of darkness, and was

p. 4

invented in order to frustrate their fell designs by invoking a class of benevolent beings to their aid, the Egyptians aimed being able to command their gods to work for them, and to compel them to appear at their desire. These great results were to be obtained by the use of certain words which, to be efficacious, must be uttered in a proper tone of voice by a duly qualified man; such words might be written upon some substance, papyrus, precious stones, and the like, and worn on the person, when their effect could be transmitted to any distance. As almost every man, woman, and child in Egypt who could afford it wore some such charm or talisman, it is not to be wondered at that the Egyptians were at a very early period regarded as a nation of magicians and sorcerers. Hebrew, and Greek, and Roman writers referred to them as experts in the occult sciences, and as the possessors of powers which could, according to circumstances, be employed to do either good or harm to man.

From the Hebrews we receive, incidentally, it is true, considerable information about the powers of the Egyptian magician. Saint Stephen boasts that the great legislator Moses "was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," and declares that he "was mighty in words and in deeds," [1](#) and there are numerous features in the life of this remarkable man which shew that he was acquainted with many of the practices

of

p. 5

Egyptian magic. The phrase "mighty in words" probably means that, like the goddess Isis, he was "strong of tongue" and uttered the words of power which he knew with correct pronunciation, and halted not in his speech, and was perfect both in giving the command and in saying the word. The turning of a serpent into what is apparently an inanimate, wooden stick, 1 and the turning of the stick back into a writhing snake, 2 are feats which have been performed in the East from the most ancient period; and the power to control and direct the movements of such venomous reptiles was one of the things of which the Egyptian was most proud, and in which he was most skilful, already in the time when the pyramids were being built. But this was by no means the only proof which Moses gives that he was versed in the magic of the Egyptians, for, like the sage Âba-aner and king Nectanebus, and all the other magicians of Egypt from time immemorial, he and Aaron possessed a wonderful rod 3 by means of which they worked their wonders. At the word of Moses Aaron lifted up his rod and smote the waters and they became blood; he stretched it out

p. 6

over the waters, and frogs innumerable appeared; when the dust was smitten by the rod it became lice; and so on. Moses sprinkled ashes "toward heaven," and it became boils and blains upon man and beast; he stretched out his rod, and there was "hail, and fire mingled with the hail, very grievous," and the "flax and the barley was smitten;" he stretched out his rod and the locusts came, and after them the darkness. Now Moses did all these things, and brought about the death of the firstborn among the Egyptians by the command of his God, and by means of the words which He told him to speak. But although we are told by the Hebrew writer that the Egyptian magicians could not imitate all the miracles of Moses, it is quite certain that every Egyptian magician believed that he could perform things equally marvellous by merely uttering the name of one of his gods, or through the words of power which he had learned to recite; and there are many instances on record of Egyptian magicians utterly destroying their enemies by the recital of a few words possessed of magical power, and, by the performance of some, apparently, simple ceremony. 1 But one great distinction must be made between the magic of Moses and that of the Egyptians among whom he lived; the former was wrought by the command of the God of the Hebrews, but the latter by the gods of Egypt at the command of man.

p. 7

Later on in the history of Moses' dealings with the Egyptians we find the account of how "he stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry *ground*; and the waters *were* a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left." When the Egyptians had come between the two walls of water, by God's command Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, "and the sea returned to his strength," and the "waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, *and* all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them." 1 But the

command of the waters of the sea or river was claimed by the Egyptian magician long before the time of Moses, as we may see from an interesting story preserved in the Westcar Papyrus. <sup>2</sup> This document was written in the early part of the XVIIIth dynasty, about B.C. 1550 but it is clear that the stories in it date from the Early Empire, and are in fact as old as the Great Pyramid. The story is related to king Khufu (Cheops) by Baiu-f-Râ as an event which happened in the time of the king's father, and as a proof of the wonderful powers of magic which were possessed by the priest <sup>3</sup> called

p. 8

Tchatcha-em-ânkh. It seems that on a certain day king Seneferu was in low spirits, and he applied to the nobles of his royal household expecting that they would find some means whereby his heart might be made glad; but as they could do nothing to cheer up the king, he gave orders that the priest and writer of books, Tchatcha-em-ânkh, should be brought into his presence immediately, and in accordance with the royal command he was at once brought. When he had arrived, Seneferu said to him, "My brother, I turned to the nobles of my royal household seeking for some means whereby I might cheer my heart, but they have found nothing for me." Then the priest made answer and advised the king to betake himself to the lake near the palace, and to go for a sail on it in a boat which had been comfortably furnished with things from the royal house. "For," said he, "the heart of thy Majesty will rejoice and be glad when thou sailest about hither and thither, and dost see the beautiful thickets which are on the lake, and when thou seest the pretty banks thereof and the beautiful fields then shall thy heart feel happiness." He next begged that the king would allow him to organize the journey, and asked his permission to let him bring twenty ebony paddles inlaid with gold, and also twenty young virgins having beautiful heads of hair and lovely forms and shapely limbs, and twenty nets wherein these virgins may array themselves instead of in their own ordinary

p. 9

garments. The virgins were to row and sing to his Majesty. To these proposals the king assented, and when all was ready he took his place in the boat; while the young women were rowing him about hither and thither the king watched them, and his heart became released from care. Now as one of the young women was rowing, she entangled herself in some way in her hair, and one of her ornaments which was made of "new turquoise" fell into the water and sank; she ceased to row, and not herself only, but all the other maidens ceased to row also. When the king saw that the maidens had ceased from their work, he said to them, "Will ye not row?" and they replied, "Our leader has ceased to row." Then turning to the maiden who had dropped her ornament overboard, he asked her why she was not rowing, whereupon she told him what had happened. On this the king promised that he would get back the ornament for her.

Then the king commanded that Tchatcha-em-ânkh should appear before him at once, and as soon as the sage had been brought into his presence he said to him, "O Tchatcha-em-ânkh, my brother, I have done according to thy words, and the heart of my Majesty became glad when I saw how the maidens rowed. But now, an ornament which is made of new turquoise and belongeth to one of the maidens who row hath fallen into the water, and she hath in consequence become silent, and hath ceased to row, and hath disturbed the

p. 10

rowing of those in her company. I said to her, 'Why dost thou not row?' and she replied, 'An ornament [of mine] made of new turquoise hath fallen into the water.' Then I said to her, 'I will get it back for thee.'" Thereupon the priest and writer of books Tchatcha-em-ânkh spake certain words of power (*hekau*), and having thus caused one section of the water of the lake to go up upon the other, he found the ornament lying upon a pot-herd, and he took it and gave it to the maiden. Now the water was twelve cubits deep, but when Tchatcha-em-ânkh had lifted up one section of the water on to the other, that portion became four and twenty cubits deep. The magician again uttered certain words of power, and the water of the lake became as it had been before he had caused one portion of it to go up on to the other; and the king prepared a feast for all his royal household, and rewarded Tchatcha-em-ânkh with gifts of every kind. Such is a story of the power possessed by a magician in the time of king Khufu (Cheops), who reigned at the beginning of the IVth dynasty, about B.C. 3800. The copy of the story which we possess is older than the period when Moses lived, and thus there can be no possibility of our seeing in it a distorted version of the miracle of the waters of the sea standing like walls, one on the right hand and one on the left; on the other hand Moses' miracle may well have some connexion with that of Tchatcha-em-ânkh.

p. 11

Among the Greeks and Romans considerable respect was entertained, not only for the "wisdom" of the Egyptians, but also for the powers of working magic which they were supposed to possess. The Greek travellers who visited Egypt brought back to their own country much information concerning its religion and civilization, and, though they misunderstood many things which they saw and heard there, some of the greatest of thinkers among the Greeks regarded that country not only as the home of knowledge and the source of civilization and of the arts, but also as the fountain head of what has been called "white magic," and the "black art." In some respects they exaggerated the powers of the, Egyptians, but frequently when the classical writers were well informed they only ascribed to them the magical knowledge which the Egyptian magicians themselves claimed to possess. A striking instance of this is given in the second book of the *Metamorphoses of Apuleius* where, it will be remembered, the following is narrated. The student Telephron arrived one day at Larissa, and as he was wandering about in an almost penniless condition he saw an old man standing on a large block of stone issuing a proclamation to the effect that any one who would undertake to guard a dead body should receive a good reward. When Telephron asked if dead men were in the habit of running away the old man replied testily to the effect that the witches all over Thessaly used

p. 12

to tear off pieces of flesh from the faces of the dead with their teeth, in order to make magical spells by means of them, and to prevent this dead bodies must needs be watched at night. The young man then asked what his duties would be if he undertook the post, and he was told that he would have to keep thoroughly awake all night, to gaze fixedly upon the dead body, to look neither to the right hand nor to the left, and not to close the eyes even to wink. This was absolutely necessary because the witches were able to get out of their skins and to take the form of a bird, or dog, or mouse, and their craftiness was such

that they could take the forms of flies and cast sleep upon the watcher. If the watcher relaxed his attention and the body became mutilated by the witches, the pieces of flesh torn away would have to be made good from the body of the watcher Telephron agreed to undertake the duty for one thousand nummi, and was led by the old man to a house, and, having been taken into the room where the dead body was, found a man making notes on tablets to the effect that nose, eyes, ears, lips, chin, etc., were untouched and whole. Having been provided with a lamp and some oil that night he began his watch, and all went well, notwithstanding that he was greatly afraid, until the dead of night when a weasel came into the chamber and looked confidingly at the watcher; but he drove the animal--which was no doubt a witch--from the room, and then fell fast

p. 13

asleep. In the early morning he was suddenly wakened by the trumpets of the soldiers, and almost immediately the widow of the dead man came to him with seven witnesses, and began to examine the body to see if it was intact; finding that no injury had been done to it she ordered her steward to pay Telephron his fee, and was so grateful to him that she promised to make him one of her household. In attempting to express his thanks, however, he made use of some inauspicious words, and immediately the servants of the house fell upon him, and buffeted him, and plucked out his hair by the roots, and tore his clothes, and finally cast him out of the house. Soon afterwards, whilst wandering about, he saw the funeral procession pass through the forum, and at that moment an old man went to the bier, and with sobs and tears accused the widow of poisoning his nephew so that she might inherit his property and marry her lover. Presently the mob which had gathered together wanted to set her house on fire, and some people began to stone her; the small boys also threw stones at her. When she had denied the accusation, and had called upon the gods to be witnesses of her innocence, the old man cried out, "Let, then, Divine Providence decide the truth, in answer to her denial. Behold, the famous prophet Zaclas the Egyptian, dwelleth among us, and he hath promised me that for much money he will make the soul of the dead man to return from the place of death

p. 14

in the underworld, and to make it to dwell in his body again for a short time." With these words, he led forward a man dressed in linen, and wearing palm-leaf sandals, who, like all the Egyptian priests, had his head shaved, and having kissed his hands and embraced his legs he implored him by the stars, and by the gods of the underworld, and by the island of the Nile, and by the Inundation, etc., to restore life to the dead body, if only for the smallest possible time, so that the truth of his accusation against the widow might be proved. Thus adjured Zaclas touched the mouth and the breast of the dead man three times with some plant, and having turned his face to the East and prayed, the lungs of the corpse began to fill with breath, and his heart to beat, and raising his head and shoulders he asked why he had been called back to life, and then he begged to be allowed to rest in peace. At this moment Zaclas addressed him, and telling him that he had the power, through his prayers, to cause the fiends to come and torture him, ordered, him to make known the means by which he had died. With a groan he replied that the wife whom he had recently married gave him poison to drink, and that he died in consequence. The wife at once contradicted the words of her husband, and of the people who were standing round some took one side and some

another. At length the husband declared that he would prove the truth of his own words, and pointing to Telephron,

p. 15

who had attempted to guard his body, told those present that the witches after making many attempts to elude his vigilance had cast deep sleep upon him. They next called upon himself by his name, which happened to be Telephron, like that of his watcher, and whilst he was endeavouring feebly to obey their spells, his watcher rose up unconsciously and walked about. Seeing this the witches forced their way into the room through some unknown place, and having taken off the nose and ears of the watcher they placed models of these members in their places. Those who heard these words looked fixedly at the young man, who at once put up his hands and touched the members, whereupon his nose came off in his hand, and his ears slipped through his fingers on to the ground.

The end of the story does not concern us, and so we pass on to note that the act of touching the mouth which Zaclas performed is, of course, a part of the ceremony of "opening the mouth" which is so often referred to in religious texts, and was considered of extreme importance for the welfare of the dead, 1 and that the power of bringing back the dead to life which Apuleius ascribes to the priest or magician was actually claimed some thousands of years before Christ by the sages of Egypt, as we may see from the following story in the Westcar Papyrus.

A son of king Khufu (or Cheops, who reigned about

p. 16

[paragraph continues] B.C. 3800) called Herutâtâf, who was famous as a learned man and whose name is preserved in the "Book of the Dead" in connection with the "discovery" of certain Chapters of that wonderful compilation, 1 was one day talking to his father, presumably on the subject of the powers of working magic possessed by the ancients. In answer to some remark by Khufu he replied, "Up to the present thou hast only heard reports concerning the things which the men of olden time knew, and man knoweth not whether they are true or not; but now I will cause thy Majesty to see a sage in thine own time, and one who knoweth thee not." In reply to Khufu's question, "Who is this man, O Herutâtâf?" the young man replied, "It is a certain man called Teta, who dwelleth in Tet-Seneferu, and is one hundred and ten years old, and to this very day he eateth five hundred loaves of bread, and the shoulder of an ox, and he drinketh one hundred measures of ale. He knoweth how to fasten on again to its body a head that hath been cut off; he knoweth how to make a lion follow him whilst his snare is trailing on the ground; and he knoweth the number of the *aptet* of the sanctuary of Thoth." Now Khufu had for a long time past sought out the *aptet* of the sanctuary of Thoth, because he was anxious to make one similar for his own "horizon." Though at the present it is impossible to say what the

p. 17

*aptet* was, it is quite clear that it was an object or instrument used in connection with the working of

magic of some sort, and it is clear that the king was as much interested in the pursuit as his subjects. In reply to his son's words Khufu told him to go and bring the sage into his presence, and the royal barge or boat having been brought, Herutâtâf set out for the place where the sage dwelt. Having sailed up the river some distance he and his party arrived at Tet-Seneferu, and when the boats had been tied to the quay the prince set out to perform the rest of the Journey, which was overland, in a sort of litter made of ebony, which was borne by men by means of poles of *sesnetchem* wood, inlaid with gold. When he had arrived at the abode of Teta, the litter was set down upon the ground, and the prince came out to greet the sage, whom he found lying upon a basket-work bed or mattress, which had been placed for him in the courtyard of his house, whilst one servant shampooed his head, and another rubbed his feet. After a suitable greeting and reference to the sage's honourable condition had been made, Herutâtâf told him that he had come from a great distance in order to bring to him a message from Khufu his father, and the sage bade him "Welcome" heartily, and prophesied that Khufu would greatly exalt his rank. The greetings ended, Herutâtâf assisted Teta to rise, and the old man set out for the quay leaning upon the arm of the king's son,

p. 18

and when he had arrived there he asked that a boat might be provided for the transport of his children and his books. Two boats were at once prepared and filled with their complement of sailors, and Teta sailed down the Nile with Herutâtâf, while his family followed.

After a time the party arrived at Khufu's palace, and Herutâtâf went into the presence of his father, and reported to him that he had brought Teta the sage for him to see; Khufu gave orders that he was to be brought before him quickly, and having gone forth into the colonnade of the palace, Teta was led in to him. Khufu said to him, "How is it, Teta, that I have never seen thee?" and the sage replied, "O Prince, he who is called cometh; and since thou hast called me, behold, here I am." Khufu said to him, "Is it true, according to what is reported, that thou knowest how to fasten on again to its body the head which hath been cut off?" and the sage replied, "Yea, verily, O my lord the Prince, I do know how to do this thing." And Khufu said, "Let a captive who is shut up in prison be brought to me so that I may inflict his doom upon him," but Teta made answer, "Nay, my lord the king let not this thing be performed upon man, but upon some creature that belongeth to the sacred animals." Then some one brought to him a goose, and having cut off its head, he laid the body of the goose on the west side of the colonnade, and the head on the east side. Teta then stood up and spake certain words of magical power,

p. 19

whereupon the body began to move and the head likewise, and each time that they moved the one came nearer to the other, until at length the head moved to its right place on the bird, which straightway cackled. After this Teta had a *khet-âa* bird brought to him, and upon it he performed the same miracle which he had wrought upon the goose; and to prove that he had similar power over the animal creation, an ox was brought to him, and having cut off its head, which fell upon the ground, he uttered words of magical power, and the ox stood up and lived as before.

The two stories from the Westcar Papyrus given above are sufficient to prove that already in the IVth dynasty the working of magic was a recognized art among the Egyptians, and everything we learn from later texts indicates that it is well-nigh impossible to imagine a time in Egypt when such was not the case. But the "wisdom" of the Egyptians was of two kinds, that is to say, they were possessed of the two kinds of "wisdom" which enabled them to deal with both the material world and the spiritual world; the nations around, however, confused the two kinds, and misunderstood matters in consequence.

One of the oldest names of Egypt is "Kamt" or "Qemt," a word which means "black" or "dusky," and it was applied to the country on account of the dark colour of the mud which forms the land on each side of the Nile; the Christian Egyptians or Copts

p. 20

transmitted the word under the form Khême to the Greeks, Romans, Syrians, and Arabs. At a very early period the Egyptians were famous for their skill in the working of metals and in their attempts to transmute them, and, according to Greek writers, they employed quicksilver in the processes whereby they separated the metals gold and silver from the native ore. From these processes there resulted a "black" powder or substance which was supposed to possess the most marvellous powers, and to contain in it the individualities of the various metals; and in it their actual substances were incorporated. In a mystical manner this "black" powder was identified with the body which the god Osiris was known to possess in the underworld, and to both were attributed magical qualities, and both were thought to be sources of life and power. Thus, side by side with the growth of skill in performing the ordinary, processes of metal-working, in Egypt, there grew up in that country the belief that magical powers existed in fluxes and alloys; and the art of manipulating the metals, and the knowledge of the chemistry of the metals and of their magical powers were described by, the name "Khemeia." that is to say "the preparation of the black ore" (or "powder") which was regarded as the transmutation of metals. To this name the Arabs affixed the article *al*, and thus we obtain the word Al-Khemeia, or Alchemy, which will perpetuate

p. 21

the reputation of the Egyptians as successful students both of "white magic" and of the "black" art.

But in addition to their skill as handicraftsmen and artisans the Egyptians were skilled in literary composition, and in the production of books, especially of that class which related to the ceremonies which were performed for the benefit of the dead. We have, unfortunately, no means of knowing what early contemporary peoples thought of the Egyptian funeral ceremonies, but it seems to be certain that it was chiefly by means of these that they obtained their reputation as workers of miracles. If by chance any members of a desert tribe had been permitted to behold the ceremonies which were performed when the kings for whom the Pyramids had been built were laid to rest in them., the stories that they took back to their kinsmen would be received as sure proofs that the Egyptians had the power to give life to the dead, to animate statues, and to command the services of their gods by the mere utterance of their names as words of power. The columns of hieroglyphics with which the walls of the tombs were often covered, and

the figures of the gods, painted or sculptured upon stelæ or sarcophagi, would still further impress the barbarian folk who always regard the written letter and those who understand it with great awe. The following story from Mas'ûdî 1 will illustrate the views which the Arabs

p. 22

held concerning the inscriptions and figures of gods in the temples of Egypt. It seems that when the army of Pharaoh had been drowned in the Red Sea, the women and slaves feared lest they should be attacked by the kings of Syria and the West; in this difficulty they elected a woman called Dalûkah as their queen, because she was wise and prudent and skilled in magic. Dalûkah's first act was to surround all Egypt with a wall, which she guarded by men who were stationed along it at short intervals, her object being as much to protect her son, who was addicted to the chase, from the attacks of wild beasts as Egypt from invasion by nomad tribes; besides this she placed round the enclosure figures of crocodiles and other formidable animals. During the course of her reign of thirty years she filled Egypt with her temples and with figures of animals; she also made figures of men in the form of the dwellers in the countries round about Egypt, and in Syria, and in the West, and of the beasts which they rode. In the temples she collected all the secrets of nature and all the attracting or repelling powers which were contained in minerals, plants, and animals. She performed her sorceries at the moment in the revolution of the celestial bodies when they would be amenable to a higher power. And it came to pass that if an army set out from any part of Arabia or Syria to attack Egypt, the queen made the figures of its soldiers and of the animals

p. 23

which they were riding to disappear beneath the ground, and the same fate immediately overtook the living creatures which they represented, wherever they might be on their journey, and the destruction of the figures on sculptures entailed the destruction of the hostile host. In brief, the large figures of the gods which were sculptured or painted on the walls, and the hieroglyphic inscriptions which accompanied them, were considered by those who could neither understand nor read them to be nothing more nor less than magical figures and formulæ which were intended to serve as talismans.

The historian Mas'ûdî mentions 1 an instance of the powers of working magic possessed by a certain Jew, which proves that the magical practices of the Egyptians had passed eastwards and had found a congenial home among the Jews who lived in and about Babylon. This man was a native of the village of Zurârah in the district of Kûfa, and he employed his time in working magic. In the Mosque at Kûfa, and in the presence of Walîd ibn Ukbah, he raised up several apparitions, and made a king of huge stature, who was mounted upon a horse, gallop about in the courtyard of the Mosque. He then transformed himself into a camel and walked upon a rope; and made the phantom of an ass to pass through his body; and

p. 24

finally having slain a man, he cut off the head and removed it from the trunk, and then by passing his sword over the two parts, they united and the man came alive again. This last act recalls the joining of the head of the dead goose to its body and the coming back of the bird to life which has been described

above.

We have now to describe briefly the principal means upon which the Egyptians relied for working magic, that is to say, magical stones or amulets, magical figures, magical pictures and formulæ, magical names, magical ceremonies, etc., and such portions of the Book of the Dead as bear upon these subjects generally.

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## Footnotes

[1:1](#) The series referred to is Books on Egypt and Chaldaea, published by Kegan Paul. Budge wrote several volumes in the series, including the first, mentioned here, Egyptian Religion.--THE PUBLISHER

[4:1](#) Acts vii. 22.

[5:1](#) Exodus vii. 10 ff. Two of Moses' opponents were called "Jannes" and "Jambres" (See 2 Timothy iii. 8).

[5:2](#) That Moses' rod or serpent should swallow up the rods or serpents of the Egyptians is, of course, to be expected, just as his magical powers are declared to be superior to those of the Egyptians.

[5:3](#) An interesting paper on the use of the rod by the Egyptians and Hebrews was published by Chabas in *Annales du Musée Guimet*, tom. i. pp. 35-48, Paris, 1880.

[6:1](#) For details, see Chapter III. (Magical Figures).

[7:1](#) Exodus xiv. 21-28.

[7:2](#) See Erman, *Die Märchen des Papyrus Westcar*, Berlin, 1890.

[7:3](#) He was the chief *kher heb*, *i.e.*, the head of the priests who officiated in funeral ceremonies, and read the service from a book.

[15:1](#) See Chapter VI. (Magical Ceremonies).

[16:1](#) Chapters XXX., LXIV., CXXXVII. See my *Chapters of Coming Forth by Day* (text), pp. 97, 141, 309.

[21:1](#) *Les Prairies d'Or* (ed. by B. de Meynard and P. de Courteille), Paris, 1863, tom. ii. p. 398 f.

[23:1](#) *Les Prairies d'Or* (ed. B. de Meynard), Paris, 1865, tom. iv. pp. 266, 267.

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[Next: Chapter II. Magical Stones or Amulets](#)



p. 25

## CHAPTER II.

### MAGICAL STONES OR AMULETS.

"AMULET" is a name given to a class of objects and ornaments, and articles of dress and wearing apparel, made of various substances which were employed by the Egyptians, and later by other nations, to protect the human body, either living or dead, from baleful influences, and from the attacks of visible and invisible foes. The word "amulet" is derived from an Arabic root meaning "to bear, to carry," hence "amulet" is "something which is carried or worn," and the name is applied broadly to any kind of talisman or ornament to which supernatural powers are ascribed. It is not clear whether the amulet was intended first of all to protect the living or the dead body, but it seems that it was originally worn to guard its owner from savage animals and from serpents. As time went on the development of religious ideas and beliefs progressed, and as a result new amulets representing new views were invented; and the objects which were able to protect the living were made, by an easy transition

p. 26

in the minds of those who wore them, to protect the dead. Moreover, as the preservation of the corruptible body, with the number of its members complete and intact, was of the most vital importance for the life of the spiritual and incorruptible body which was believed to spring therefrom, under the influence of the new beliefs the dead body became a veritable storehouse of amulets. Each member was placed under the specific protection of some amulet, and a number of objects which were believed to protect the body generally from serpents, worms, mildew, decay and putrefaction were laid with a lavish hand in, and upon, and about it, and between the bandages with which it was swathed. When men in Egypt began to lay amulets on their dead cannot be said, and it is equally impossible to say when the belief in the efficacy of such and such an amulet sprang into being; it seems clear, however, that certain amulets represent beliefs and superstitions so old that even the Egyptians were, at times, doubtful about their origin and meaning.

Amulets are of two kinds: (1) those which are inscribed with magical formulæ, and (2) those which are not. In the earliest times formulæ or prayers were recited over the amulets that were worn by the living or placed on the dead by priests or men set apart to perform religious services by the community; but it was not in the power of every man to employ them, and at a comparatively early date words of magical

p. 27

power and prayers were cut upon the amulets, which thus became possessed of a twofold power, that is to say, the power which was thought to be inherent in the substance of which the amulet was made, and that which lay in the words inscribed upon it. The earliest name for the formulæ found upon amulets is *hekau*, and it was so necessary for the deceased to be provided with these *hekau*, or "words of power," that in the XVIth Century B.C., and probably more than a thousand years earlier, a special section 1 was inserted in the Book of the Dead with the object of causing them to come to him from whatever place they were in, "swifter than greyhounds and quicker than light." The earliest Egyptian amulets known are pieces of green schist, of various shapes, animal and otherwise, which were laid upon the breast of the deceased; these are found in large numbers in the pre-historic or predynastic graves at several places in Egypt. It is most unlikely that they were made by the aboriginal inhabitants of Egypt, for, notwithstanding the various conjectures which have been made as to their object and use, it is pretty certain that, as M. J. de Morgan said, 2 they "belong to the cult." According to this writer their use was exceedingly widespread until the end of the neolithic period, but with the advent of the

p. 28

people whom we call Egyptians they become very rare. In the subsequent period the animal forms disappear, and their place is taken by plaques of schist, rectangular in shape, upon which are inscribed, in rough outline, figures of animals, etc. The theory that these objects were

intended as whetstones, or as slabs upon which to rub down paint, will not hold, for the reasons which M. J. de Morgan has given. Moreover, in the green stone scarab which was laid upon the breast of the deceased in dynastic times, we probably have a survival of the green schist amulet of predynastic times in Egypt, both as regards the object with which it was made and the material. But the custom of writing hekau, or words of power, upon papyrus is almost as old as that of writing them upon stone, and we see from the inscription on the walls of the corridors and chambers of the pyramid of Unas, king of Egypt about B.C. 3300, that a "book with words of magical power" was buried with him. <sup>1</sup> Elsewhere <sup>2</sup> we are told that the book which Teta, king of Egypt about B.C. 3266, had with him "hath effect upon the heart of the gods"; and there is no doubt that the object of every religious text ever written on tomb, stele, amulet, coffin, papyrus, etc., was to bring the gods under the power of the deceased, so that he might be able to compel them to do his will.

p. 29



## 1. THE AMULET OF THE HEART,

The heart was not only the seat of the power of life, but also the source of both good and evil thoughts; and it sometimes typified the conscience. It was guarded after death with special care, and was mummified separately, and then, with the lungs, was preserved in a jar which was placed under the protection of the god Tuamutef. Its preservation was considered to be of such importance that a text <sup>1</sup> was introduced into the Book of the Dead at an early period, with the view of providing the deceased with a heart in the place of that which had been removed in the process of mummification. The text reads:--

"May my heart be with me in the House of Hearts! May my breast <sup>2</sup> be with me in the House of Hearts! May my heart be with me, and may it rest there, or I shall not eat of the cakes of Osiris on the eastern side of the Lake of Flowers, neither shall I have a boat wherein to go down the Nile, nor another wherein to go up, nor shall I be able to sail down the Nile with thee. May my mouth [be given] to me that I may speak therewith, and my two legs to walk therewith, and my two hands and arms to overthrow my foe. May the doors of heaven be opened unto me; may Seb, the prince of the gods, open wide his

p. 30

two jaws unto me; may he open my two eyes which are blindfolded; may he cause me to stretch apart my two legs which are bound together; and may Anpu (Anubis) make my thighs to be firm so that I may stand upon them. May the goddess Sekhet make me to rise so that I may ascend into heaven, and may that which I command in the House of the Ka of Ptah be done. I shall understand with my heart, I shall gain the mastery over my heart, I shall gain the mastery over my two hands, I shall gain the mastery over my legs, I shall have the power to do whatsoever my *ka* (*i.e.*, double) pleaseth. My soul shall not be fettered to my body at the gates of the underworld, but I shall enter in and come forth in peace."

When the deceased had uttered these words, it was believed that he would at once obtain the powers which he wished to possess in the next world; and when he had gained the mastery over his heart, the heart, the double, and the soul had the power to go where they wished and to do what they pleased. The mention of the god Ptah and of his consort Sekhet indicates that the Chapter was the work of the priests of Memphis, and that the ideas embodied in it are of great antiquity. According to the Papyrus of Nekhtu-Amen, the amulet of the heart, which is referred to in the above Chapter, was to be made of lapis-lazuli, and there is no doubt that this stone was believed to

p. 31

possess certain qualities which were beneficial to those who wore it. It will also be remembered that, according to one tradition, <sup>1</sup> the text of the LXIVth Chapter of the Book of the Dead was found written in letters of lapis-lazuli in the reign of Hesepti, king of Egypt about B.C. 4300, and the way in which the fact is mentioned in the Rubric to the Chapter proves that special importance was attached to it.