

THE LITANY OF RA.

TRANSLATED BY

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THE following Litany of Ra is the translation of a long text which is to be found at the entrance of several of the largest tombs of the kings, in the valley called *Biban el Motuk* at Thebes. It is a kind of introduction to the long pictures which adorn the walls of the royal sepulchres, and which generally represent the course of the sun at the different hours of night.

Although very nearly connected with the *Book of the Dead*, this text has not yet been found complete in any funereal papyrus; the second section of the fourth chapter only, is contained in a papyrus of the British Museum.

The importance of this text consists in this, that it gives us an idea of the esoteric doctrine of the Egyptian priests, which was clearly pantheistic, and which certainly differed from the polytheistic worship of the common people.

The present translation has been made from my book *La Litanie du Soleil* (Leipzig, 1875, avec un vol. de XLIX planches), where this text has been first translated in French, with a commentary. Among the different tombs where this inscription was collected, that of Seti I, commonly called Belzoni's tomb, has been chosen as the standard text.



THE LITANY OF RA.

CHAPTER I.

Title. The beginning of the book of the worship of RA in the Ament,¹ of the worship of TEMT² in the Ament. When any one reads this book, the porcelain figures are placed upon the ground, at the hour of the setting of the Sun, that is of the triumph of RA over his enemies in the Ament. Whoso is intelligent upon the earth, he is intelligent also after his death.

- 1 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, the master of the hidden spheres who causes the principles to arise, who dwells in darkness, who is born as³ the all surrounding universe.
- 2 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, the beetle that folds his wings, that rests in the empyrean, that is born as his own son.
- 3 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, TONEN⁴ who produces his members,⁵ who fashions what is in him, who is born within his sphere.
- 4 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, he who discloses the earth and lights the Ament, he whose principle has (become) his manifestation, and who is born under the form of the god with the large disk.
- 5 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, the soul that

¹ The heavenly region.

² The universal being.

³ Under the form of.

⁴ The earth.

⁵ Gods.

speaks, that rests upon her high place, that creates the hidden intellects which are developed in her.

- 6 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the only one, the courageous one, who fashions his body, he who calls his gods (to life), when he arrives in his hidden sphere.
- 7 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who addresses his eye, and who speaks to his head,¹ he who imparts the breath of life to the souls (that are) in their place ; they receive it and develop.
- 8 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the spirit that walks, that destroys its enemies, that sends pain to the rebels.
- 9 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who shines when he is in his sphere, who sends his darkness into his sphere, and who hides what it contains.
- 10 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who lights the bodies which are on the horizon, he who enters his sphere.
- 11 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who descends into the spheres of Ament, his form is that of TUM.
- 12 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who descends into the mysteries of ANUBIS, his form is that of CHEPRA (ATMU).
- 13 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he whose body is so large that it hides his shape, his form is that of SHU.
- 14 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who leads RA into his members, his form is that of TEFNUT.
- 15 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who sends forth the plants in their season, his form is that of SEB.
- 16 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the great one who rules what is in him, his form is that of NUT.
- 17 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who goes

¹ Who speaks to himself.

- always towards him who precedes him, his form is that of Isis.
- 18 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he whose head shines more than he who is before him, his form is that of NEPHTHYS.
- 19 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the urn¹ of the creatures, the only one, that unites the generative substances, its form is that of HORUS.
- 20 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the brilliant one who shines in the waters of the inundation, his form is that of NUN.
- 21 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who creates the water which comes from within him, his form is that of REMI.²
- 22 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the two vipers that bear their two feathers, their form is that of the impure one.
- 23 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who enters and comes forth continually from his highly mysterious cavern, his form is that of AT.³
- 24 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the spirit that causes his disappearance, his form is that of NETERT.⁴
- 25 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the spirit that sets up (those whom he has created), that creates⁵ his descendants, his form is that of NTUTI.⁶
- 26 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who raised his head and who lifts his forehead, the ram, the greatest of the creatures.
- 27 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the light that is in the infernal regions, its form is that of Ament.

¹ Crater.² The weeper.³ A fish, most likely the *phagos*, the appearance of which was connected with the inundation.⁴ The divine eye.⁵ Vivifies.⁶ The meaning of this name is doubtful.

- 28 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the penetrating spirit who is in the Ament, his form is that of KERTI.¹
- 29 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the timid one who sheds tears, his form is that of the afflicted.
- 30 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who raises his hand and who glorifies his eye,² his form is that of the god with the hidden body.
- 31 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the spirit who is raised upon the two mysterious horizons, his form is that of CHENTAMENT.³
- 32 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the god with the numerous shapes in the sacred dwelling, his form is that of the beetle.
- 33 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who puts his enemies into their prison, his form is that of the lion.
- 34 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the ray of light in his sarcophagus, its form is that of the progenitor.
- 35 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the covering of the body, which develops the lungs, its form is that of TEB-ATI.⁴
- 36 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who calls the bodies into the empyrean, and they develop, who destroys their venom, his form is that of the transformer.
- 37 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the being with the mysterious face, who makes the divine eye move, his form is that of SHAI.
- 38 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the supremely great one who embraces the empyrean, his form is that of the spirit who embraces (space).
- 39 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who hides his

¹ The god of the spheres.

² Glorifies himself.

³ A title of Osiris, literally "He who resides in the West."

⁴ The covering of Ati, the air(?).

body within himself, his form is that of the god with the hidden body.

- 40 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who is more courageous than those who surround him, who sends fire into the place of destruction, his form is that of the burning one.
- 41 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who sends destruction, and who causes the development of his body, in the empyrean, his form is that of the inhabitant of the empyrean.
- 42 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the wonderful one who dwells in his eye,¹ who lights the sarcophagus, his form is that of SHEPI.²
- 43 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who unites the substances, who founds³ AMTO, his form is that of one who joins substances.
- 44 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who invents⁴ secret things, and who begets bodies, his form is that of the invisible (progenitor).
- 45 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who furnishes the inhabitants of the empyrean with funeral things, when he enters the hidden spheres, his form is that of APERTO.⁵
- 46 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, his members rejoice when they see his body, the blessed spirit who enters into him, his form is that of the joyful one.
- 47 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the adult who dilates his eyeball, and who fills his eye,⁶ his form is that of the adult.
- 48 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who makes the roads in the empyrean, and who opens pathways in the sarcophagus, his form is that of the god who makes the roads.

¹ Solar disk.

² The splendid one.

³ Gives a body to.

⁴ Creates.

⁵ Perhaps Anubis.

⁶ Solar disk.

- 49 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the moving spirit who makes his legs stir, his form is that of the moving one.
- 50 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who sends forth the stars and who makes the night light, in the sphere of the hidden essences, his form is that of the shining one.
- 51 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who makes the spheres and who creates bodies ; from thy person emanating from itself alone, thou hast sent forth, RA, those who are and those who are not, the dead, the gods, the intellects ; his form is that of creator of bodies.
- 52 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the mysterious, the hidden one, he whom the spirits follow as he conducts them, he gives the step to those surrounding him, his form is that of AMENI.
- 53 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the horn, the pillar of the Ament, the lock of hair that shines in¹ its form is that of the horn.
- 54 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the eternal essence who penetrates the empyrean, who praises the spirits in their spheres, his form is that of the eternal essence.
- 55 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, when he arrives in the good Ament, the spirits of the empyrean rejoice at sight of him, his form is that of the old man.
- 56 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the great lion that creates the gods, that weighs words, the chief of the powers inhabiting the holy sphere, his form is that of the great lion.
- 57 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, when he speaks to his eye and when he addresses his eyeball, the bodies shed tears ; his form is that of the being who speaks to his eye.²

¹ Lacuna.² Who speaks to himself.

- 58 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, he who raises his soul, and who hides his body, he shines and he sees his mysteries, his form is that of HERBA.¹
- 59 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, the high spirit who hunts his enemies, who sends fire upon the rebels, his form is that of KABA.²
- 60 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, the substance which hides the intestines and which possesses the mind and the limbs, its form is that of AUAI.³
- 61 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, the great eldest one who dwells in the empyrean, CHEPRI who becomes two children, his form is that of the two children.
- 62 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, the great walker who goes over the same course, the spirit who anoints the body, SENEKHER, his form is that of SENEKHER.⁴
- 63 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, he who creates his body and who detaches his members by the sacred flame of AMTO, his form is that of the flame of AMTO.⁵
- 64 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, the master of the hooks (who struggles) against his enemies, the only one, the master of the monkeys, his form is that of ANETL.⁶
- 65 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, he who sends the flames into his furnaces, he who cuts off the head of those who are in the infernal regions, his form is that of the god of the furnace.
- 66 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, the parent who destroys his children, the only one who names⁷ the earth by his intelligence, his form is that of TONEN.
- 67 Homage to thee, RA! Supreme power, he who sets up

¹ "He who raises his soul."² "The high spirit."³ Flesh, or substance.⁴ Literally, "the shining face."⁵ "He who is on the ground."⁶ Doubtful meaning.⁷ Creates, fashions.

- the *urshi*¹ themselves upon their foundations, no one sees their mysteries, his form is that of the *urshi*.
- 68 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the vessel of heaven, the door of the empyrean, he who makes the mummy come forth, his form is that of BEST.
- 69 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the monkey² the being in his nature, his form is that of the monkey of the empyrean.
- 70 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who opens the earth and who shews the interior of it, the speaking spirit who names his members, his form is that of SMATO.³
- 71 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, he who is armed with teeth, who consumes his enemies, the flame that lights the wick, his form is that of NEHI.⁴
- 72 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the walker, the moving luminary, who makes darkness come after his light, his form is that of the walker.
- 73 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the master of souls who is in his obelisk, the chief of the confined gods, his form is that of the master of souls.
- 74 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the double luminary, the double obelisk, the great god who raises his two eyes, his form is that of the double luminary.
- 75 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, the master of the light, who reveals hidden things, the spirit who speaks to the gods in their spheres, his form is that of the master of the light.
- 76 Homage to thee, RA ! Supreme power, O RA of the sphere, O RA who speakest to the spheres, O RA who art in thy sphere, homage to thee RA KESCHI, four times They sing praises to the spirit KESCHI,⁵ the spheres honour

¹ The genii of the watches of the night.

² Lacuna.

³ He who opens the earth.

⁴ He who is armed with teeth.

⁵ Doubtful meaning.

his spirit, they glorify thy body which is in thee, saying, Homage to thee, great KESCHI ! four times. They sing praises in thy honour, spirit KESCHI in thy 75 forms which are in thy 75 spheres. The royal OSIRIS knows them by their names, he knows what is in their bodies, all their hidden essences. The royal OSIRIS speaks to them in their forms, they open to the royal OSIRIS, they display the hidden doors to his spirit which is like thy spirit, thou createst them, thou createst the royal OSIRIS ; the development of his body is like thine because the royal OSIRIS is one of thy companions, who are in their spheres, and who speak in their caverns, those who are blessed through thy creation and who transform themselves when thou commandest it. The royal OSIRIS is like one of those who speak in their hidden spheres. Ha ! he has arrived, he advances in the train of the spirit of RA. Ha ! he has completed the journey from Chepri.¹ Hail ! he has arrived. The royal OSIRIS knows all that concerns the hidden beings. Hail ! he has arrived in the midst of you ; homage to his spirit KESCHI ! four times.

- 77 Oh ! RA of the Ament, who hast created the earth, who lightest the gods of the empyrean, RA who art in thy disk, guide him on the road to the Ament, that he may reach the hidden spirits ; guide him on the road which belongs to him, guide him on the Western road ; that he may traverse the sphere of Ament, guide him on the road to the Ament, that the king may worship those who are in the hidden dwelling, guide him on the road to the Ament, make him descend to the sphere of NUN. Hail, RA ! the royal OSIRIS is NUN. Hail, RA ! the royal OSIRIS is thyself and reciprocally. Hail, RA ! thy spirit is that of OSIRIS, thy course is his in the empyrean. Hail, RA ! he dwells in the empyrean, he traverses the

¹ Ra under the form of a scarab.

good Ament. Such as thou art, such is the royal OSIRIS. Thy intellect, RA, is his. OSIRIS worships the hidden gods, he praises their spirits, these latter say to one another that thy course (RA!) is that of OSIRIS, that thy way is his, great god who dwellest in the empyrean. Hail! god of the disk with the brilliant rays, praise be to the spirit KESCHI! four times.

- 78 Hail to thee, universal covering, who createst thy soul and who makest thy body grow; the King traverses the most secret sphere, he explores the mysteries contained in it. The King speaks to thee like RA, he praises thee with his intelligence, the King is like the god; and reciprocally. He moves by himself, he moves by himself. The all surrounding universe says: Ah, guide him into the interior of my sphere; four times.
- 79 This chapter is said to the most mysterious god, these words are written like those upon the two sides of the door of the empyrean² this book is read every day, when he has retired in life, according to custom, perfectly.

² Lacuna.



CHAPTER II.

- 1 Worship of the Spheric Gods, when RA sets in life. Hail, gods of the spheres, gods who are in the Ament, perfect gods¹ the enemies of RA, you make the universal covering² grow¹ you worship the god who is in his disk¹ thou commandest thy enemies, great god who art upon the horizon; four times. Thou commandest thy enemies, OSIRIS TEMT; four times.
- 2 The royal OSIRIS commands his enemies in heaven and upon earth, by authority of all the gods and all the goddesses, by authority of OSIRIS CHENTAMENT, because the royal OSIRIS is RA himself, the great inhabitant of the heavens, he speaks in the presence of Ament. The King governs by favour of the great powers. The royal OSIRIS is pure, what is in him is pure, the royal OSIRIS governs the two worlds, the royal OSIRIS commands his enemies; four times.
- 3 He is powerful, RA in the empyrean, he is powerful, RA in the empyrean. He traverses the empyrean with joy, for he has struck APAP;³ there is joy for thee, god of the horizon, OSIRIS, King of the Ament, there is joy for thy triumphant spirit, for thou destroyest his enemies; thou art delighted, TESHERTI, red spirit who openest the Ament. Thou givest thy hand to OSIRIS, thou art received in the good Ament, and the gods rejoice over thee. OSIRIS gives thee his hand, thou art received by CHENTAMENT. He is brilliant, the spirit of RA in the empyrean, he is brilliant the body of TEB TEMT. RA commands in the empyrean, because he has struck APAP. TEB TEMT

¹ Lacunæ.² Teb Temt.³ Apophis, the great serpent of evil.

commands ; he worships the spirit of the two horizons ; the spirit of the two horizons worships him.

- 4 The royal OSIRIS receives dominion over his enemies from the great powers of the mysterious avenger, he who reveals the mysterious empyrean, who dissipates the darkness, who chases away the rain, he who hurries, and who makes the blessed servants of RA come forth. He¹ sees the body of the god when he assumes forms with a mysterious name, when he sheds his rays in obscurity, and when he hides the uncovered bodies ; when he traverses the mysterious spheres and when he gives eyes to their gods ; they themselves see him, and their spirits are blessed.
- 5 Hail, RA ! give eyes to the royal OSIRIS, give him divine eyeballs, and may they guide the royal OSIRIS. Hail, RA ! give a heart to the royal OSIRIS ; he traverses the earth, he traverses the world like RA.
- 6 Thou takest care that what thou commandest to exist, exists ; thou rulest the royal OSIRIS like CHUTI² and the King honours thy spirit, he glorifies thee.
- 7 Thou commandest OSIRIS to be like KHUTI, the brilliant triangle which appears in the shining place.
- 8 Thou commandest OSIRIS to be like the mysterious spirit which comes forth from the mysterious place.
- 9 Thou commandest OSIRIS to be like the blessed spirit which comes forth from the blessed place.
- 10 Thou commandest OSIRIS to be like the destructive spirit which comes forth from the place of destruction.
- 11 Thou commandest OSIRIS to be like the revealing spirit which comes forth from the opening.
- 12 Thou commandest OSIRIS to be like the elevated spirit which comes forth from the high place.

¹ The royal Osiris.

² The god of the two horizons.

- 13 Thou commandest OSIRIS to be like the hidden spirit which comes forth from the Ament.
- 14 Deliver him from the crocodiles which frighten the spirits, like geese; let them not do their work upon the royal OSIRIS, in the presence of the gods armed with swords; may OSIRIS never fall into their furnaces, may their nets never entangle him; his spirit flies away and soars into the heavens, his spirit returns and enters into the empyrean, because the royal OSIRIS knows the mysteries which are in the empyrean, the secret forms of OSIRIS, that none of his servants know, in the secret of his hidden dwelling. Hail! the royal OSIRIS knows thy form, great and mysterious god.
- 15 Deliver the royal OSIRIS from the agile demons furnished with legs, from the cruel gods who pluck out hearts and who throw them into their furnaces. May they never do their work upon the royal OSIRIS, may they never put him in their furnaces, because OSIRIS is RA; and reciprocally. His soul is that which is in the disk. His body is in the middle of the hidden gods; they make OSIRIS rule, OSIRIS makes them rule; he commands, and he rests as you rest in the Ament.
- 16 The soul of RA shines in his shape, his body rests amid the invocations which are addressed to him; he enters into the interior of his white disk, he lights the empyrean with his rays, he creates it, he makes the souls remain in their bodies, they praise him from the height of their pedestal. He receives the acclamations of all the gods who open the doors, the hidden essences who prepare the way for RA's soul, and who allow the King of souls access to the fields. He traverses his disk himself; he calls (to life) the body of KAT;¹ he places the gods of the stars upon their legs; these latter make the god AN²

¹ Unknown constellation.² The moon.

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