

The Origin and Significance of the Great Pyramid



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BY

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the others in a state of advanced age, confirm the tradition which attributed to him a reign of 50 years."⁴⁴

Remains of this character have not yet been found in association with the Great Pyramid, notwithstanding the tradition as to its being the tomb of Cheops, and the fact that it became dedicated to his worship.

It is not at all improbable that the bodies of both Cephren and Cheops were removed from their resting places during the commotions which occurred at the end of the Fourth Dynasty. As to the latter monarch, at least, it is not necessary to suppose that he was buried in the so-called King's Chamber or in the cave below the base of the pyramid. A more likely place for the purpose would be the niche in the cast wall of the Queen's Chamber, where Maillet,⁴⁵ who in 1692 described it as being three feet deep, eight feet high, and three feet wide, supposed the mummy of the queen to have been placed upright. The niche appears, however, to have an inner shelf, on which the embalmed corpse may have been laid. The Queen's Chamber is stated, however, by Edrysy⁴⁶ to have had an empty "vessel," such as the sarcophagus of the King's Chamber, so that if the niche were used for another purpose the body of Cheops may still have been there deposited. It appears, indeed, that according to some ancient inscriptions, the Pyramids were regarded as sepulchral temples, and priests were appointed for the service of the princes who were buried there, and had attained to the divine nature. A tomb found at Sakkarah belonged to "a priest of Chufu and Chafra."⁴⁷



⁴⁴ Tom ii. p. 73

⁴⁵ Vyse, "Operations," etc., Vol. ii. p. 226

⁴⁶ Vyse, Vol. ii. p. 334. May not the Eighth Pyramid, which tradition assigns as the tomb of the daughter of Cheops, have been that of his wife? The masonry has much resemblance to that of the Great Pyramid. Vol. ii. p. 70

⁴⁷ Duncker, "History of Antiquity," Vol. i. p. 99

CHAPTER IV: THE RELIGIOUS THEORY

THE Great Pyramid was intended to be something more than the tomb or even a temple in honour of Cheops. The astronomical character of many of the chief features of the structure confirms this view, and it is supported by the arguments used by Mr. Proctor to establish its connection with astrological observances. The pyramid had, indeed, a religious character of its own, which probably supplied the primary object of its erection.

It is true that Mr. Proctor remarks that it is not "easy to understand why any building at all, except an astronomical observatory, should be placed so that its four faces front the four cardinal points." He says, however, that "a temple devoted to Sun-worship, and generally to the heavenly bodies, might be built in that way. For it is to be noticed that the peculiar figure and position of the Pyramids would bring about the following relations: when the sun rose and set south of the east and west points, or (speaking generally) between the autumn and the spring equinoxes, the rays of the rising and setting sun illuminated the southern face of the pyramid; whereas, during the rest of the year, that is, during the six months between the spring and autumn equinoxes, the rays of the rising and setting sun illuminated the northern face. Again, all the year round the sun's rays passed from the eastern to the western face at solar noon. And, lastly, during seven months and a half of each year, namely, for three months and three quarters before and after Midsummer, the noon rays of the sun fell on all four faces of the pyramid, or, according to a Peruvian expression (so Smyth avers) the sun shone on the pyramid 'with all his rays.'" Such conditions as these might have been regarded as very suitable for a temple devoted to Sun-worship. And yet Mr. Proctor declares that the temple theory is as untenable as the tomb theory, on the ground, first, that the pyramid form is unsuited for all "the ordinary requirements of a temple of worship," and, secondly, that it gives no explanation of the fact that each king built a pyramid, and each king only one.⁴⁸

These objections would, however, present no difficulty if the temple theory were restricted to the Great Pyramid, the other pyramids being probably intended only for the tombs of their founders. That the erection of the former had a distinctly religious purpose can hardly be denied. What that purpose was may be gathered from the statements of certain Arab writers. Thus Soyuti mentions from earlier writers that the Sabaeans made pilgrimages to the Pyramids and had opened one of them, and that they sacrificed hens and black calves, and burnt incense. He says also that Seth took possession of Egypt, and his son was Hermes, and that he introduced Sabatism, which inculcated, among other things, a pilgrimage to the Pyramids. He adds that, according to some accounts, one pyramid is the tomb of Seth.⁴⁹

An earlier writer, Eddin Ahmed Ben Yahya, does not refer to Seth, but he says that each pyramid was consecrated to a star, and that the Sabaeans performed religious pilgrimages to the greatest and also visited the others. He observes that every pyramid

⁴⁸ "Myths and Marvels of Astronomy," p. 89

⁴⁹ See Vyse, "Operations," etc., Vol. ii. p. 358

presents the form of a lantern surrounded by equilateral sides, which indicates that it was sacred to a star.⁵⁰

Abd Allatif, who wrote nearly 200 years earlier, also refers to the pilgrimages made to the Pyramids, and he affirms that he had read in ancient Sabaeen books that one pyramid was the tomb of Agathodaemon, and the other of Hermes.⁵¹ Agathodaemon was none other than Seth, and according to some writers Hermes was his son.⁵²

A modern author, Mr. Palgrave, states that frequent enquiries were made of him in Oman regarding the Egyptian Pyramids, a memory, he thinks, derived from old Sabaeen times.⁵³ This traveller remarks elsewhere that the Arab writers give us the following information as to the ancient Sabaeans. "That they worshipped the seven planets, and pre-eminently the sun; that they observed a fast of thirty days, set apart in the early spring, before the vernal equinox; that their chief annual feast coincided with the entrance of the sun in the sign of Aries (a fact which supposes a solar, not lunar, computation of the months); that they had a special veneration for the two great pyramids of Egypt, believed by them to be the sepulchres of Seth and Idrus (Enoch); that their stated prayers recurred seven times a day . . . and that during their devotions they turned their faces towards the north; lastly, that they possessed a book, or code of laws, ascribed to Seth himself (in what language, unhappily, it is not said), and believed to contain the dogmas and institutions of that primeval patriarch."

Mr. Palgrave adds, that two points of great importance seem to have distinguished the ancient form of Sabaism: one, the absence of image-idols and idolatry; the other, the absence of any priestly caste.⁵⁴ These points are, indeed, of great importance, and if it can be shown that the two great pyramids had really anything to do with Sabaism, it is not surprising that their founders were regarded with hatred by the Egyptian priests. The builder of the Third Pyramid, Mycerinus, was not so regarded, however, and perhaps, therefore, he may be referred to in the legend which spoke of one of the pyramids of Ghizeh as the tomb of Hermes. This personage was not only the son of Seth, but probably also the same as Thoth, the Egyptian god of Wisdom; and to the reign of Mycerinus was assigned the discovery of a mystical text, which formed the most profound passage in the Book of the Dead. M. Lenormant states that numerous legends of the discoveries of books of a supernatural and divine origin were current among the Egyptians, who generally placed them under the earliest dynasties.⁵⁵

We have already had occasion to notice that the city of Memphis, near which the Pyramids were situated, was founded by Menes, who established a political and military monarchy on the ruins of the priestly authority. Prior to his reign, the priests had exercised supreme power, the chief seat of which was in the middle part of Upper Egypt. 'In this region, says Lenormant, was situate Abydos, the principal centre of the worship of Osiris, whose tomb was there shown, the only worship which was common to all Egypt; Thebes, which boasted itself to have been the birth-place of the same god;

⁵⁰ Vyse, "Operations," Vol. ii. p. 349. According to the Platonists, a pyramid is the figure of fire

⁵¹ Vyse, vol. ii., p. 342

⁵² See Appendix I. for various ancient references to Seth and Hermes, as give by Dr. Sprenger

⁵³ section Vol. ii. p. 264

⁵⁴ Vyse, vol. ii. p. 258

⁵⁵ "Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient," 9th edition, Tom. ii. p. 74

Tentyris, the favorite abode of the goddess Hathor; Deb or Edfou, where Har-m-akhouti, with his son Har-houd, are supposed to have assembled the army with which they combatted Set or Typhon.⁵⁶

Set or Seth is thus brought into connection with the Egyptian mythology, and he occupies a remarkable position in relation to it. "Seth was at one time," says Bunsen, "a great god, universally adored throughout Egypt, who conferred on the sovereigns of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Dynasties the symbols of life and power. The most glorious monarch of the latter dynasty Sethos, derives his name from this deity. But, subsequently, in the course of the Twentieth Dynasty, he is suddenly treated as an evil demon, inasmuch that his effigies and name are obliterated on all the monuments and inscriptions that could be reached." The hatred of the Osirian priests to the worship of Seth, which this conduct betokens, cannot, however, have had a sudden rise. It must have been merely the culmination of a feeling similar to that which led to the detestation in which the memory of Cheops and Cephren was held. It was, indeed, probably connected with the hatred of the Pyramid builders, if we may judge from the position occupied by the god Seth. According to Bunsen, this deity was the primitive god of Northern Egypt and Palestine, and appears as the background of religious consciousness among the Semites. Moreover, his genealogy as "the Seth of Genesis, the father of Enoch (the man) must be considered as originally running parallel with that derived from the Elohim, Adam's father."⁵⁷

Seth, therefore, is not only the primitive god of the Semites, but also their semi-divine ancestor. We have here, probably, the explanation of a fact mentioned by Herodotus, who, after speaking of the aversion of the Egyptians for the memory of Cheops and Cephren, says, "they will not even mention their names, and for this reason they call the Pyramids after the Shepherd Philitis, who at the time of their erection used to feed his flocks near the spot." The occupation of a keeper of sheep was an abomination to the Egyptians, and if a shepherd prince dwelt near Memphis there must have been some very powerful reason for his doing so. That there was a religious reason we may infer from the stories related to Herodotus by the priests, who told him that the temples were closed during the reigns of Cheops and Cephren. M. Lenormant has, indeed, shown that this statement cannot have been correct, as an inscription preserved in the Museum at Boulak enumerates the temples built by Cheops, the pious foundations made by him, and his splendid offerings to the gods,⁵⁸ thus confirming the opinion expressed by Dr. Ebers. Nevertheless, there may have been some ground for the accusation of impiety made against Cheops, and it was probably his recognition of the supremacy of a god foreign to the strictly Egyptian Pantheon, which might be quite consistent with his continuing to show respect for the native gods.

Who the strange deity was may probably be determined by the nationality of Philitis, whose name is mentioned in connection with the Pyramids, although they may have been erected long before his time; unless indeed the name stands for a people and not merely an individual. M. Budenger⁵⁹ ingeniously identifies Philitis with Salatis, the first Hyksos king, and Prof. Duncker states that the name of the former points to a Semitic

⁵⁶ Tom. ii. p. 55

⁵⁷ God in History, Vol. i., pp. 233-4

⁵⁸ Tom. ii., p. 72

⁵⁹ Quoted in Duncker's "History of Antiquity." Vol. i. p. 98 n.

tribe for the Hyksos, "and one immediately bordering on Egypt on the Syrian coast--the Philistines (Pelischtim), from whom the whole Syrian coast was called by the Greeks Palaestina."⁶⁰

The first Hyksos king fixed his residence at Memphis in the neighbourhood of the great pyramids, which had perhaps already become connected with the shepherd princes, and among a people who were probably prepared to receive him as a friend rather than as an enemy. M. Lenormant remarks that the Delta, and especially its eastern part, "appeared to have been inhabited from the highest antiquity by a population somewhat different from that of the rest of Egypt--of a more Asiatic character, and probably mixed in a certain measure with Semitic element." That region, before even the foundation of Memphis by Menes, was for Egypt "the cradle of the worship of more important deities, who took a leading place in the national Pantheon, but in their origin were connected with the cycle of Euphratico-Syrian divinities." One of those deities was Hathor; the other was Set, "the special god of the northern country--in opposition to Horus, the god of the southern country--of whose name the Soutekh of the Shepherds and of the Kheta is only an enlarged form; whom we find adored under the name of Schita in several parts of Assyria; and whom it is perhaps necessary to compare with the antediluvian patriarch Scheth (Seth) in the narrative of Genesis."⁶¹

We see thus that not only was Set (Seth) by his name Soutekh the rational god of the Hyksos, but he was also the chief deity of the semi-Semitic population of the Memphitic region in which that shepherd race established itself. It is not surprising, therefore, that the hatred of the native Egyptians for the Hyksos was afterwards entertained in an intensified form towards the god whom they adored, although previously, as the special deity of Lower Egypt, he had been recognised as the Agathodaemon. The Hyksos and their congeners of Northern Egypt, however, were probably more closely connected with the ancient Cushite race, referred to by Arab tradition as the people of Ad, than with the pure Semitic stock. The Arabian branch of that race was thought to have become extinct before the establishment of the later Arabs in the peninsula. Remnants of it, however, are still to be found in the territory between the Hedjaz and Yemen, and also in the Hadramaut and Mahrah, between Yemen and Oman, where a large number of independent tribes exist.⁶²

The religion of these tribes was down to a comparatively recent period star-worship, and their ancestors, the people of Ad, were adherents of the Sabaeism which was so widely spread in the ancient world. To this cult the Hyksos belonged, as shown by the identification of their god Soutekh with the Seth of the Sabaeans. The race connection between the population of Lower Egypt and the Hyksos, with the position occupied by Seth as the national deity, agree with the fact of Sabaeism being the religion also of the northern Egyptians. Dr. Tiele, remarks that "star-worship was not unknown to the Semites, but the highly developed astrology and magic which we find among the Babylonians and Assyrians were derived from the Akkadians," to whom the early population of Arabia, known as the people of Ad, were related. That early race, moreover, furnished the Babylonians with the models on which their temples were

⁶⁰ Ducker, Vol. i. p. 127

⁶¹ Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient, Tom. ii. p. 147

⁶² M. Vivien de Saint-Martin, in his "Nouveau Dictionnaire de Geographie Universelle,"--art. Arabie. And see the "Preliminary Discourse," in Sale's "Koran," as to the tribe of Ad, and other early peoples of Arabia

built, "namely, in the form of terraced pyramids, such as were erected also in Elam, and among the oldest inhabitants of Media and India, to which class belonged the famous Tower of Babel."⁶³

The Great Pyramid of Egypt may well, therefore, have been a monument of star-worship, dedicated to the god Seth. Nor is this conclusion, that the Great Pyramid was intimately associated with the worship of Seth, inconsistent with the fact that it appears to have been sometimes referred to by the Egyptians as the tomb of Osiris.⁶⁴

This opinion is connected with the myth of Osiris and Isis in its later form, which introduces Seth (Typhon) as the great enemy of Osiris. According to Bunsen, however, this form was not known earlier than the 13th or 14th century B.C., so that the Great Pyramid would not be spoken of as the tomb of Osiris before that date. It could not have been thus regarded originally, as we know that neither Cheops nor Cephren received the name of Osiris, an honour which was conferred by the Egyptian priests on the later monarch, Mycerinus, owing to his great benevolence and justice--or, shall we say, his orthodox religious views. The learned Dupuis expresses the opinion that the Agathodaemon, or Good Spirit, whom the Sabaeans believed to repose under the pyramid, was in reality Osiris, the benevolent god of Nature.

The Agathodaemon of the early Egyptians was, however Seth, the special deity of Northern Egypt, and we shall not be wrong in supposing the Great Pyramid to have been erected by the Sabaeans in his honour.

In so doing, we explain perfectly the scientific features which have been traced in the structure. The worshippers of the heavenly host would, undoubtedly, in so grand a religious monument as the Great Pyramid, embody all the astronomical knowledge they possessed, and this must have been considerable. The Arabian historian, Abulfaraj, as quoted by Dupuis,⁶⁵ says that the religion of the Chaldeans and of the Sabaeans was the same, and that the former were distinguished by their astronomical observations and studied the nature of the stars and their secret influences. Nor was this true merely of the later Chaldeans. Mr. Proctor remarks, that "no one who considers the wonderful accuracy with which, nearly 2,000 years before the Christian era, the Chaldeans had determined the famous cycle of the Saros, can doubt that they must have observed the heavenly bodies for several centuries before they could have achieved such a success."⁶⁶

As to the later Chaldeans, the Jewish writer Philo observes that they make everything depend on the movement of the stars, which they regard as the sovereign arbiters of the order of the world. They limit their homage to the visible, and do not form any idea of the invisible and intellectual being; on the contrary, in observing the order of the world, they think they see in it the divinity itself, which exercises its power by the movements of the sun, the moon, the planets, and the fixed stars, by the successive revolutions of the seasons, and by the combined action of the heaven and the earth.⁶⁷

⁶³ "Outlines of the History of Religion" (Eng. Trans.), p. 75

⁶⁴ Dupuis, "L'Origine de tous les Cultes," Tom. i. p. 424

⁶⁵ Tom, i. p. 7.

⁶⁶ "Myths and Marvels of Astronomy," p. 73

⁶⁷ Treatise on Abraham, Sec. 15

A religion such as this could have no fitter monument than a vast astronomical observatory, which the Great Pyramid probably was, until at least it was completed on the death of its royal founder. The building was a worthy symbol of the remarkable system of religion which, according to ancient writers, once pervaded nearly the whole world, and was said to have been founded by Seth, the son of Adam. According to Philo, Abraham was educated in its principles, which he held, until having opened his eyes, he saw the light and recognised in the Universe a sovereign guide, whom he had not before suspected.



CHAPTER V: SETH AND SERPENT WORSHIP

THE association of the name of the god Seth with the Great Pyramid--a structure which appears to embody or to bear a relation to the chief scientific truths recognised by the ancient world, throws light on certain ideas entertained as to the nature of that deity. The god of intelligence of the Egyptians was Thoth, the Hermes of the Sabaeans. Hermes was, however, called the son of Seth, and this deity is in some sense to be identified with Thoth. In a passage of the Book of the Dead, the former has the name Tet which, according to Bunsen, intimates that Thoth inherited many of the attributes of Seth.⁶⁸

It may, indeed, show that they are the same deity. Seth was the true god of Wisdom, and the pillars of Seth, on which, according to Josephus,⁶⁹ was inscribed the astronomical knowledge of the ancient world, were the same as those mentioned in an apocryphal work ascribed to Hermes, which, according to Cedrenus, affirmed that "Enoch, foreseeing the destruction of the Earth, had inscribed the science of astronomy upon two pillars."⁷⁰

By these structures was probably intended the two great pyramids of Ghizeh, which appear originally to have had many inscriptions on their external coverings. Makrizi cites various authors as to the origin of the Pyramids, and among other statements it was said that that they were built by Surid, and that the First was dedicated to history and astronomy, and the Second to medical knowledge.⁷¹

As Seth, Thoth, or Hermes was the god of Wisdom, so the serpent was its emblem, and especially connected with that God and with other deities of similar characteristics. "Wise as serpents.⁷² and harmless as doves," is an old saying, which probably has a deeper meaning than that usually ascribed to it. The connection between the serpent and the idea of wisdom is well seen in the Hindu legend as to the Nagas. Mr. Fergusson remarks, "the Naga appears everywhere in Vaishnava tradition. There is no more common representation of Vishnu than as reposing on the Sesha, the celestial seven-headed snake, contemplating the creation of the world." The Upanishads refer to the science of serpents, by which is meant the wisdom of the mysterious Nagas who, according to Buddhistic legend, reside under Mount Meru, and in the waters of the terrestrial world. One of the sacred books of the Tibetan Buddhists is fabled to have been received from the Nagas, who, says Schlagentweit, are "fabulous creatures, of the nature of serpents, who occupy a place among the beings superior to man, and are regarded as protectors of the law of the Buddha. To these spiritual beings Sakyamuni is said to have taught a more philosophical religious system than to men, who were not sufficiently advanced to understand it at the time of his appearance."

⁶⁸ "Egypt," Vol. iii. p. 427

⁶⁹ "Antiquities," Chap. ii. sec. iii

⁷⁰ Vyse, "Operations, etc.," vol. ii. p. 330 n

⁷¹ Ditto, p. 354. See Appendix II. for Masoudi's account of the Legend of Surid

⁷² The Sophia, or Divine Wisdom and the Ophis-Christos of the Gnostics, was represented under the form of a serpent.--Matter's "Histoire Critique du Gnosticisme," Planches II. A. B. c. Matter appears to identify the Ophis with the god Kneph, p. 32.

The serpent holds an analogous place in the religious ideas of the modern Hindus. Siva,⁷³ as Sambhu, is the patron of the Brahmanic order, and, as shown by his being three-eyed, is essentially a god possessing high intellectual attributes. Vishnu also is a god of wisdom, but (notwithstanding the association with him of the Sesha), of a somewhat lower type, such as is distinctive of the worshippers of truth under its feminine aspect. The serpent has been connected with the god of Wisdom from the earliest times of which we have any historical notice. This animal was the especial symbol of Thoth or Taut, a primeval deity of Syro-Egyptian mythology, and of all those gods, such as Hermes and Seth, who can be connected with him. This is true also of the third member of the primitive Chaldean triad, Hea or Hoa. According to Sir Henry Rawlinson, the most important titles of this deity refer to "his functions as the source of all knowledge and science."

Not only is he "the intelligent fish," but his name may be read as signifying both "life" and a "serpent," and he may be considered as "figured by the great serpent which occupies so conspicuous a place among the symbols of the gods on the black stones recording Babylonian benefactions." M. Lenormant identifies Hea with the fish-god Oannes of Babylonian mythology, who, according to Berosus, "spent the whole day amongst men without taking any food, while he taught them letters, science, and the principles of every art, the rules for the foundation of towns, the building of temples, the measurement and boundaries of lands, seed-time and harvest, in short, all that could advance civilization, so that nothing new has been invented since that period."⁷⁴ Hea, as the god of Science, was the defender of "the frame of nature against the incessant ravages of the wicked spirits," and "help was sought from him when neither word, rite, talisman, nor even the intervention of any other of the gods had availed to destroy the demons' power."⁷⁵

The Chaldean god was moreover, the healer of disease,⁷⁶ in which character he resembled the God of the Hebrews, the sight of whose serpent-symbol was supposed to cure those bitten by the fiery serpents in the wilderness. There is reason to believe⁷⁷ that this deity was the same as Seth, the Agathodaemon of the early Egyptians, who was represented under the form of the serpent, and who was the giver of happiness and good fortune.⁷⁸

The good genius which presided over the affairs of men as the guardian spirit of their houses was a serpent, the Asp of Ranno, the snake-headed goddess who is represented as nursing the young princes. That the idea of health was among the Egyptians intimately associated with the serpent, is shown, moreover, by the crown formed of the asp, or sacred Thermuthis, having been given particularly to Isis, a goddess of Life and Healing. It was also the symbol of other gods of health and the like attributes, as stated by the learned Dupuis in the chapters entitled "Esculapius, Serapis, Pluto, Esmun,

⁷³ Siva would seem to be the same deity as Saturn, and possibly therefore as Set (Seth), a fact which confirms the serpent character of the last named deity

⁷⁴ Lenormant "Chaldean Magic and Sorcery" (Eng. trans.), p. 157

⁷⁵ Ditto, p. 158

⁷⁶ Ditto, p. 21

⁷⁷ section See the "Journal of Anthropology," 1870, p. 209, on this point

⁷⁸ Wilkinson's "Ancient Egyptians," Vol. iv. p. 413. Mr. Lane states that each quarter of Cairo (which was built out of the ruins of Memphis and its tombs), is supposed to have its guardian genius or agathodaemon, in the form of a serpent.--"Manners and Customs of the Egyptians," Vol. i. p. 289

Cneph, and all the divinities with the attributes of the serpent"⁷⁹ is remarkable that a Moslem saint of Upper Egypt is still thought to appear under the form of a serpent, and to cure the diseases which afflict the pilgrims to his shrine. The power of healing is an evidence of the possession of wisdom, and so also is the power of influencing atmospheric changes. This is a most important attribute, and, as Mr. Fergusson points out, a chief characteristic of the serpents throughout the East in all ages seems to have been their power over the wind and rain. According to Colonel Meadows Taylor, in the Indian Deccan, at the present day, offerings are made to the village divinities (of whom the nag, or snake, is always one) at spring time and harvest for rain or fine weather, and also in time of cholera or other diseases or pestilence. So, among the Chinese, the dragon is regarded as the giver of rain, and in time of drought offerings are made to it. In the spring and fall, of the year it is one of the objects worshipped, by command of the Emperor, by certain mandarins.

The Chinese notion of the serpent or dragon dwelling above the clouds in spring to give rain reminds us of the Aryan myth of Vritra, or Ahi, the throttling snake, or dragon with three heads, who hides away the rain-clouds, but who is slain by Indra, the beneficent giver of rain. M. Breal says,⁸⁰ that "Typhon is the monster who obscures the heavens, a sort of Greek Vritra." The myth of Indra and Vritra is reproduced in Latin mythology as that of Hercules and Cacus. Cacus also is analogous to Typhon, and as the former is supposed to have taken his name from, or given it to, a certain wind which had the power of clothing itself with clouds, so the latter bore the same name as a very destructive wind which was much dreaded by the Phoenicians and Egyptians. Moreover, the name Typhon was given by the Egyptians to anything tempestuous and hence to the Ocean.

We have here a reference to the serpent as the embodiment of the Evil Being; and in the later identification of Seth with Typhon, the enemy of Osiris, we have evidence of the connection of the serpent with the former deity. M. Lenormant tells us that, "evil was personified in a particular god, Set or Soutekh,⁸¹ called also sometimes Baal, who was the supreme god of the neighbouring Asiatic populations, and, at a later period, of the shepherd kings; the Greeks considered him the same as their Typhon, and it was said that Osiris to his blows."⁸²

The name Typhon appears to have been given more especially to the Evil Being, as the opponent of Horus, who was, however, the same deity as Osiris, whose son he was said to be. The former was then represented as Apap or Apophis, or the giant serpent, who was pierced by the spear of Horus, as the serpent Pytho was slain by Apollo.⁸³ Henceforth Seth, instead of being regarded by the Egyptians as the Agathodaemon, was looked upon as the principle of evil. The same change took place among the Accadian population of Media. M. Lenormant states that the "worship of serpent-gods is found

⁷⁹ "Origine de tous les Cultes," Tom. ii. Part 1, p. 165

⁸⁰ "Melanges de Mythologie et de Linguistique," p. 95

⁸¹ The earlier character of this deity is well shown by the remark of Tiele, that the name Sutech is an attempt to reproduce in Egyptian form the Semitic divine name, Sedeq, "the righteous."--"Outlines of the History of Religion," p.55.

⁸² "Chaldean Magic," p. 83

⁸³ "Chaldean Magic," p. 83; Wilkinson, Vol. iv. pp. 395, 435--Apophis, may have given name to Papi, and Egyptian king, who lived about a century after Cheops, and also to Apepi, or Apappos one of the Hyksos kings; unless the 'Giant' Serpent took this title from the former monarch.

amongst many of the Turanian tribes. The Accadians made the serpent one of the principal attributes, and one of the forms of Hea." When once, however, "the Iranian traditions were fused with the ancient beliefs of the Proto-Medic religion, the serpent-god naturally became identified with the representative of the dark and bad principle, for, according to the Mazdean myths, the serpent was the form assumed by Angromainyus, in order to penetrate into the heaven of Ahuramazda."⁸⁴

Here is the conflict between light and darkness, and between life and death, which is reproduced in Egyptian mythology, where the evil principle is represented in the one case by the serpent Apap, and in the other by Set⁸⁵ (Seth), whose symbol was the serpent.

The association between the serpent and the idea of darkness had an astronomical foundation. The position which the constellation Draco at one time occupied showed that the Great Serpent was the ruler of the night. This constellation was formerly at the very centre of the heavens, and it is so extensive, that it was called the Great Dragon. Its body spreads over seven signs of the Zodiac, and Dupuis, who sees in the Dragon of the Apocalypse a reference to the celestial serpent, says, "It is not astonishing that a constellation so extended should be represented by the author of that book as a great dragon with seven heads, who drew the third part of the stars from heaven and cast them to the earth."⁸⁶

Moreover, when the constellation Draco occupied its elevated position, it supplied the polestar of the heavens. The importance of this fact, in connection with the erection of the Great Pyramid, will be understood after what has been said as to the association of the Pyramid with the god Seth. That structure was erected, not only as a tomb for its founder, but as a monumental temple in honour of a deity whose special symbol was the serpent, the emblem of wisdom with the primitive race whose religion would appear to have been a combination of serpent-worship and Sabaism. The Great Pyramid is thus a monument not only of Sabaism, but of serpent-worship, and, as such, its scientific as well as its astronomical character receives the proper explanation. The builders of such a temple would apply their utmost skill in its construction and they would seek to preserve in it, as far as possible, the scientific knowledge which they had derived from their ancestors.

According to a Coptic MS., upon the walls of the Pyramids were written the mysteries of science, astronomy, geometry, physic, and much useful knowledge. The same MS. states, that they were built before the Flood by Surid, for safety, and as tombs for himself and household.⁸⁷

It is remarkable that, as Sir Gardner Wilkinson points out, Tufan, which appears to be the same word as Typhon, the name of the Evil Being, is the Arabic name of the Deluge.⁸⁸ The association of the Pyramids with a flood has, however, a purely astronomical explanation. Mr. Proctor, when speaking of the position of the pole-star

⁸⁴ "Chaldean Magic," p. 232

⁸⁵ Tiele, "Outlines of the History of Religions," p. 47; also, "History of the Egyptian Religion," Vol. i. p. 72

⁸⁶ Dupuis, Tom. iii. p. 255

⁸⁷ Vyse, "Operations," etc., Vol. ii. p. 330, and see Appendix II

⁸⁸ "The Ancient Egyptians," Vol. iv. p. 427 n

Alpha Draconis, at the date of the erection of the Great Pyramid, says,⁸⁹ "We know that in the past the constellation of the Dragon was at the pole, or boss, of the celestial sphere. In stellar temples, like those of which Rawlinson gives examples, the Dragon would be the uppermost or ruling constellation. And here, in passing, it may interest the reader to note that, some find evidence in this relation that when writers of old spoke of the Old Dragon as having been cast from heaven, carrying two-thirds of the celestial beings with him, reference was made--unconsciously, perhaps, on the narrator's part -- to some tradition of the passing away or fall of the Dragon from its former ruling position among the constellations. Those who thus interpret ancient records (much more ancient than Jewish history), find in Hercules, with his heel assailed by the serpent, as in our constellation figures, the first Adam; in Ophinchus, the serpent holder, the second Adam. In Argo they find the Ark--in fact, in a whole series of constellations they find the story of the Flood. In Aquarius, with the streams pouring from his water-jug, they find the beginning of the Flood. In the river Eridanus and the seas in which Pisces and the great sea-monster Cetus seem to swim, they see pictured the prevalence of deep water over the whole earth. The Raven of the Heavens is the raven of the Floodnarrative. Argo is the Ark, shown as if only the stern-half of a great ship lodged in the mountain. The Centaur, bearing sacrifice, as Aratus says, to Ara, the altar, is Noah offering sacrifice after he had left the Ark; and the bow of Sagittarius in the smoke (the Milky-way), which seems to ascend from the altar, is the bow of promise. These may, of course, be only fancies, but it is singular how closely these constellations, which are among the few really seeming to picture recognisable objects in the heavens, correspond in sequence and in range of right ascension with the events recorded respecting the Flood."⁹⁰

Fancies or not, it is unquestionable that the Deluge has been associated in the legends of some Eastern peoples, not only with the Pyramids,⁹¹ but also with the constellations. Thus it is with the Chaldean legend, according to which Saturn in a dream announced the coming catastrophe to Xixutrus, who, like Noah, escaped in an ark. The Assyrian tablets discovered by the late Dr. Smith, and which contain what is called the Nimrod Epic, have preserved a similar account of the Deluge. It is now established that the twelve cantos of that Epic "refer to the annual course of the sun through the twelve months of the year. Each tablet answers to a special month, and contains a distinct reference to the animal forms in the signs of the Zodiac." Thus, "the Deluge forms the subject of the eleventh canto, corresponding with the month of Skebat (Feb.-Jan.), which is consecrated to Rimmon, the god of storms and rain, and harmonises with the eleventh sign of the Zodiac--Aquarius, or the Waterman. The latter month is styled in Sumerish-Accadian 'the month of the curse of the rain,' or, as we might almost say, the Deluge month."⁹²

The ancient Babylonians are usually accredited with the invention of the worship of the heavenly bodies, and the existence among them of the deluge myth in connection with the constellations is an important fact. It is no less important in relation to the question

⁸⁹ Knowledge, Vol. i. p. 243

⁹⁰ Knowledge, Vol. i. p. 243--Dupuis explains fully the position of the heavens at the date of what he terms the "sacred fiction" of the Deluge, Tom. iii. p. 176, seq

⁹¹ See Appendix II. for the Arabian legend as to the connection between the Deluge and the building of the Pyramids

⁹² "The Nineteenth Century," 1382, p. 236

of the object of the Great Pyramid, that the capital of Babylonia contained a structure described by Strabo as a pyramid dedicated to the worship of the planetary bodies, exceeding in size the great Egyptian monument itself, and much resembling the Egyptian Pyramid of Degrees at Sakkarah. The Babylonian Tower was at the base a square of 600 feet, and consisted of eight towers, each 75 feet high, one above the other, making a total height of 600 feet. M. Lenormant speaks of the erection of this temple as having been attributed to "the most ancient king, the first king," and he says it was "the tangible expression, the material and architectural manifestation, of the Chaldaic-Babylonian religion. Serving both as a sanctuary and as an observatory for the stars, it agreed admirably with the genius of the essentially siderial religion to which it was united by an indissoluble bond"⁹³ - language which might be used with exactly the same propriety of the Great Pyramid itself. That the erection of the Great Pyramid had some connection with the constellations is not at all improbable. We have already seen that Mr. Proctor prefers the date 3350 B.C. to the later one of 2170 B.C. for the building of the pyramid. The latter date would seem, however, to be the more probable one. That it was erected during the reign of Cheops⁹⁴ is almost universally admitted; and, although the time when he reigned has not been satisfactorily established, there are grounds for believing it to have been about 2200 B.C. Prof. C. Piazzzi Smyth affirms that "the only monumental conclusion formed by comparing the quarry marks of the Great Pyramid with whatever is to be trusted, or is tolerably agreed upon among Egyptologists, and both of them with an astronomical date of the buildings,--can be no other than that two of the kings of the Fourth Dynasty of Egyptian history--Shofu and Nu-Shofu by name--lived through a period including the epoch of 2170 B.C."⁹⁵

It is true that, as Prof. Smyth points out, this date differs from that fixed by nearly all modern Egyptologists,⁹⁶ although it agrees very nearly with the date 2228 B.C., assigned for the commencement of the Fourth Dynasty by Mr. Wm. Osburn, the author of the "Monumental History of Egypt." It is consistent, moreover, with the chronological facts given by Dr. Birch. This Egyptologist gives 3000 B.C. for the commencement of the first dynasty; and if this Dynasty continued for 263 years, the Second Dynasty for 306 years, and the Third Dynasty for 214 years, as stated by Manetho, we have 2223 B.C. as the date of the commencement of the Fourth Dynasty, and therefore of the erection of the Great Pyramid, if Cheops was its builder. Curiously enough, however, this is about the date fixed for the origin of the constellations. Mr. Proctor states that between 2100 and 2200 years before the Christian era the southern constellations had their original position, the invisible southern pole then lying at the centre of the space free from constellations. He adds, "It is noteworthy that for other reasons this period, or rather a definite epoch within it, is indicated as that to which must be referred the beginning of exact astronomy. Amongst others must be mentioned this--that in the year 2170 B.C. *quam proxime*, the Pleiades rose to their highest above the horizon at noon (or technically made their noon culmination) at the spring equinox. We can readily understand that to minds possessed with full faith in the influence of the stars on the earth, this fact would have great significance."

⁹³ "Chaldean Magic," p. 322

⁹⁴ If Soris was the first monarch of the Fourth Dynasty, the Great Pyramid may possibly have been commenced in his reign, and completed during that of Cheops

⁹⁵ "Life and Work at the Great Pyramid," Vol. iii. p. 338

⁹⁶ M. Vivien de Saint-Martin gives 3893 B.C. as the best date for the epoch of Menes.--"Nouveau Dict. de Geographie Universelle," Art. Egypte

At that epoch the southernmost constellations would be seen in their natural position--standing upright when above the southern horizon at midnight. On those grounds, Mr. Proctor affirms that the period when the old southern constellations were formed must have been between 2400 and 2000 years before the Christian era, He deems it highly probable, moreover, that the year 2170 B.C. may be regarded as the date, not of the beginning of astronomy, but of the introduction of a new astronomical system, the substitution of the use of the twelve zodiacal signs for that of the twenty-eight lunar mansions. Assuming that conclusion to be correct, we have a most remarkable coincidence between the date of the invention of the Zodiac and that of the erection of the Great Pyramid. If it is true, however, as Dupuis supposed, that the Egyptians invented the constellations, the agreement between those dates was probably more than a coincidence. The French writer remarks, "The figures traced in the Zodiac and in the other constellations have not been placed there haphazard: they are the hieroglyphic calendar of the ancient peoples; they are connected with their wants and their climate; and they all have a meaning in their origin, although it may be difficult for us now to discover the sense of all the symbols." Dupuis shows what was the primitive position of the constellations, considered as the astronomical and rural calendar of a people both intellectual and agricultural, and he affirms that it accords perfectly with the agriculture of Egypt, and at the same time with the position of the solstitial and equinoctial points in the heavens at a certain epoch.

Moreover, owing to the difference in the order of agricultural operations followed in Egypt from that in other climates, the rural calendar which fitted the Egyptians could not suit any other people, and therefore he ascribes to them the honour of having invented the astronomical sciences; a conclusion supported, it is said, by the fact that the Egyptians regarded their Zodiac, not only as a rural and meteorological calendar, but as the base of all their religion and of their astronomy.⁹⁷

M. Flammarion appears to doubt whether Dupuis has satisfactorily established his theory of the origin of the constellations,⁹⁸ and the date fixed by Mr. Proctor for the formation of the Zodiac is hardly consistent with that theory. It is possible, however, that whilst the constellations were formed by the Chaldeans long before that date, the zodiacal signs were only then arranged in an order to accord with the climate of Egypt by settlers in this country. Mr. Proctor, after fixing the probable limits of the place where the constellations were formed, at from 35 to 39 degrees north of the equator, says, "The Great Pyramid, as we know, is about 30 degrees north of the Equator; but we also know that its architects travelled southwards to find a suitable place for it. One of their objects may have been to obtain a fuller view of the star-sphere south of their constellations."⁹⁹

This suggestion is a very important one, for it assumes that the constellations were formed before the erection of the Pyramid, and therefore that the date of the latter event cannot have been earlier than that of the former. Mr. Proctor goes further, however, and even suggests that one of the objects which the architects of the Great Pyramid may have had was "the erection of a building indicating the epoch when the new system was entered upon, and defining in its proportions, its interior passages, and

⁹⁷ "Origine de tous les Cultes," Tom. iii. p. 339

⁹⁸ "Histoire du Ciel," p. 153

⁹⁹ "Myths," etc., p. 362

other features, fundamental elements of the new system." The construction of that building implies considerable proficiency in astronomical observation, and hence, says Mr. Proctor, "the year 2170 B.C. may very well be regarded as defining the introduction of a new system of astronomy, but certainly not the beginning of astronomy itself."¹⁰⁰ That year becomes, however, the date of the pyramid itself, and in the suggestion that it was intended to commemorate the substitution of the twelve zodiacal signs for the twenty-eight lunar mansions, we have a strong confirmation of the opinion expressed in these pages that the Great Pyramid was a monument of Sabaism, and that it was erected in honour of Seth, the Agathodaemon of the ancient world, and consecrated to his worship.



¹⁰⁰ Ditto, p. 360

NOTE

ONE of the most curious series of relations found by the Pyramidists is connected with the Great Coffin, or sarcophagus, of the King's Chamber. John Taylor and his followers assert that this coffin is the same in capacity with the Ark and with the Laver of the Hebrew Tabernacle, and that the Molten Sea of Solomon's Temple was just fifty times such capacity, and exactly equal in interior cubic space with the contents of the King's Chamber itself. There is nothing absurd or improbable in there being some such relation between those vessels, if the Pyramid was a temple dedicated to the god Seth. Judging, indeed, from the analogy presented by Hindoo usage, the coffin was "a sacred trough, filled by the Priests on certain festivals with sacramental water and lotus-flowers." This explanation of its use was given to Mr. St. John by some learned Brahmins, who said that the Great Pyramid was a temple, and that if it had an underground communication with the Nile it must have been intended for the worship of Pad Madevi.¹⁰¹

An early English writer, Mr. Shaw, would seem to have been much of the same opinion, as he thought the coffin was intended for the celebration of the mystical worship of Osiris, and he supposed it to have contained images, sacred vestments and utensils, or water for lustration. If for Osiris we substitute Seth that opinion will be near the truth. The so-called King's Chamber, of which an enthusiastic pyramidist says, "The polished walls, fine materials, grand proportions, and exalted place eloquently tell of glories yet to come," if not "the chamber of perfections"¹⁰² of Cheops's tomb, was probably the place to which he was admitted after he had passed through the narrow upward passage and the grand gallery, with its lowly termination, which gradually prepared him for the final stage of the sacred mysteries.



¹⁰¹ Referred to by Col. Vyse, "Operations," etc., Vol. ii. p. 313

¹⁰² This was one of the names of the principal chamber of a tomb. See "Records of the Past," Vol. xii. Egyptian Texts, p. 106

APPENDIX I

The following is Dr. Sprenger's account (taken from Arab and Syrian sources) of Seth and Hermes, in connection with the Pyramids of Ghizeh. He says (as quoted by Col. Vyse in the 2nd vol. of his work, p. 364):--

"In Abul Feda's 'Historia Anteislamica,' edited by Fleisher, p. 16, it is stated, that Syria was one of the earliest inhabited countries, and that the Syriac language was the first that was spoken; that the Sabaeen language was established by Seth and Edris (Enoch); that there was a town called Haran, to which pilgrims resorted, as they did to the two large Pyramids of Ghizeh, one of which was said to be the tomb of Edris, and the other of his son Syabi; where they celebrated as a festival the day on which the sun entered the sign of Aries. In the 'Melelwa Nahil,' MS., 47 in Nic. Cat., Hermes is represented as the pupil of Agathodaemon. In another account, MS. 785, Uri's Cat. Agathodaemon is mentioned as a King of Egypt. The Sabaeans consider the Great Pyramid of Ghizeh as the tomb of Seth; the Second, that of Hermes; and the Third, that of Izabi; while the Copts state that the Great Pyramid is the tomb of Surid; the Second, that of Herjib, or Haukith, his brother; the Third, that of his son."

Dr. Sprenger says, further:--"In the Syrian chronicle of Bar-Hebraeus (translated into Latin by Professor Bruns), Enoch is said to have invented letters and architecture, under the title of Trismigistus, or of Hermes, to have built many cities and established laws, to have taught the worship of God,¹⁰³ and astronomy, to give alms and tithes, to offer up first fruits, libations, etc., to abstain from unlawful foods, and drunkenness, and to keep feasts at the rising of the sun, or new moons, and at the ascent of the planets. His pupil was Agathodaemon (Seth); according to other accounts, Asclepiades, a king renowned for wisdom, who, when Enoch was translated, set up an image in honour of him, and thereby introduced idolatry. The Egyptians are supposed to have been descended from these persons.

According to Hadgi Walfah, they derived their knowledge from the Chaldeans, who are said to have been the Persian Magi, and to have originally come from Babylon. The statues of the Grecian Hermes, which seem to agree in name with the Pyramids (Haram), were not images, but symbols of the deity and of the generative principle of nature in the form of obelisks (see Winkelman, Book i., Cap. i. 1011.) Statues of this kind sacred to Hermes were erected by the Greeks in honour of distinguished heroes; and the same allegorical allusion might have been kept in view when the Pyramids were constructed as tombs. The Egyptian account, however, of Hermes, is very obscure; that person is mentioned in the 'Burham-i- Kati' as the son of Rahman, sun of Isfendiar, and to have arrived from the East.

One of the sons of Aunshirwan has also that title. Hormig is the name of the first day of the month, which is considered propitious for any undertaking; and it is a name of the planet Mercury; and Wednesday (dies Mercurii) was sacred to him: for to most of the planets days were attributed, in which their influence was supposed to govern human affairs, and even Mohammedan superstition assigned to children born on these days various qualities, characteristic of the heathen personifications of the different planets.

¹⁰³ "This agrees with the Biblical statement that in the days of Enos men began "to call on the name of the Lord," Gen. iv. 26

Hermes is mentioned in many astrological treatises as presiding over the sixth climate. An idea, a period of time, or any remarkable occurrence, were frequently connected with ideal persons in mythology, and when any similarity existed received the same appellation. In this manner there were five Hermes; and the fifth was the Oriental Hermes who was worshipped by the Phineatae, and is said to have fled after the death of Argus into Egypt, and to have civilized that country under the name of Thoth. This coincides with the account of Tifashi, which is evidently taken from an Egyptian tradition; reference may also be made to Plato, Philel. 21, 24, Phaedro, p. 340.

Hermes was likewise distinguished by his wisdom; and was reported to have been buried in a great building called Abou Hermes, which, together with another, the tomb of his wife, or of his son, was afterwards named Haraman. These were the two large Pyramids, and the form of their construction was called Makhrut."



APPENDIX II

MASOUDI, who died in the year 967 A.D., professes to relate the Coptic tradition, which says, "that Surid¹⁰⁴ Ben Shaluk Ben Sermuni Ben Termidun Ben Tedresan Ben Sal, one of the kings of Egypt before the Flood, built the two great pyramids; and notwithstanding they were subsequently named after a person called Shed-dad Ben Ad, that they were not built by the Adites, who could not conquer Egypt, on account of the powers which the Egyptians possessed by means of enchantment; that the reason for building the Pyramids was the following dream, which happened to Surid three hundred years previous to the Flood. It appeared to him, that the earth was overthrown, and that the inhabitants were laid prostrate upon it; that the stars wandered confusedly from their courses, and clashed together with a tremendous noise. The king, although greatly affected by this vision, did not disclose it to any person, but was conscious that some great event was about to take place." Soon afterwards the king had another vision, which so much alarmed him that he repaired to the Temple of the Sun, "where, with great lamentations, he prostrated himself in the dust. Early in the morning he assembled the chief priests from all the Nomes of Egypt, a hundred and thirty in number. No other persons were admitted to this assembly, when he related his first and his second vision. The interpretation was declared to announce, 'that some great event would take place.'" The highpriest, whose name was Philimon, or Iklimon, related a dream which he had had a year before, in which the firmament descended till it overshadowed him and the king like a vault as they sat upon the tower of Amasis. "The king then directed the astrologers to ascertain, by taking the altitude, whether the stars foretold any great catastrophe, and the result announced an approaching deluge."¹⁰⁵

The king ordered them to inquire, whether or not this calamity would befall Egypt; and they answered, Yes, the flood will overwhelm the land, and destroy a large portion of it for some years. He ordered them to inquire if the earth would again become fruitful, or if it would continue to be covered with water. They answered that its former fertility would return. The king demanded what would then happen. He was informed that a stranger would invade the country, kill the inhabitants, and seize upon their property; and that afterwards a deformed people, coming from beyond the Nile, would take possession of the kingdom, upon which the king ordered the Pyramids to be built, and the predictions of the priests to be inscribed upon columns, and upon the large stones belonging to them; and he placed within them his treasures, and all his valuable property, together with the bodies of his ancestors. He also ordered the priests to

¹⁰⁴ Surid may be the same as Suphis or Cheops, as in a papyrus said to have been found in the monastery of Abou-Hormeis, Surid is said to have been buried in the eastern (Great) Pyramid, his brother Haukith in the western, and his nephew Karwars in the smaller pyramid. (Vyse, "Operations," etc., vol. ii. p. 332.)-- Surid appears to be given in the list of Manetho, under the name of Soris, as the first king of the fourth dynasty. This king is, however, treated by M. Lenormant as non-historical. (Sec List of the Kings of Egypt, "Histoire Ancienne de l'Orient," tom. ii. p. 430), and he refers to Khoufou (Suphis) the tablet at the mouth of the ancient mine at Sinai, which English Egyptologists ascribe to Soris (Shure). The name of this king is also said to have been found in the tombs near Ghizeh, and in the quarry marks of the northern pyramid of Abou-Seir, which is, therefore, thought to be his tomb. (Sir J. G. Wilkinson, in Rawlinson's "Herodotus," vol. ii. p. 344, 346).

¹⁰⁵ According to Makrizi, fire was to proceed from the sign Leo, and to consume the world.

deposit within them written accounts of their wisdom and acquirements in the different arts and sciences.¹⁰⁶

Subterraneous channels were also constructed to convey to them the waters of the Nile. He filled the passages with talismans, with wonderful things and idols, and with the writings of the priests, containing all manner of wisdom, the names and properties of medical plants, and the sciences of arithmetic and geometry, that they might remain as records, for the benefit of those who would afterwards comprehend them." After describing the construction of the three pyramids, Masoudi, says, "In the eastern (Great) Pyramid were inscribed the heavenly spheres, and figures representing the stars and planets in the forms in which they were worshipped. The king also deposited the instruments and the thuribula with which his forefathers had sacrificed to the stars, and also their writings; likewise, the position of the stars and their circles, together with the history and chronicles of time past, of that which is to come, and of every future event which would take place in Egypt. He placed there, also, coloured basins (for lustration and sacrificial purposes), with pure water, and other matters." After referring to the deposit of the bodies of the priests in the coloured (Third) Pyramid, Masoudi describes the guardians assigned by the king to each pyramid. "The guardian of the eastern pyramid was an idol of speckled granite, standing upright, with a weapon like a spear in his hand; a serpent was wreathed round his head, which seized upon and strangled whoever approached, by twisting round his neck, when it again returned to its former position upon the idol. . . . When everything was finished, he caused the Pyramids to be haunted with living spirits; and offered up sacrifices to prevent the intrusion of strangers, and of all persons excepting those who by their conduct were worthy of admission."

The author then says, that, according to the Coptic account, the following passage was inscribed, in Arabic, upon the Pyramids: I, Surid the King, have built these Pyramids, and have finished them in sixty-one years. Let him, who comes after me, and imagines himself a king like me, attempt to destroy them in six hundred. To destroy is easier than to build. I have clothed them with silk: let him try to cover them with mats."¹⁰⁷



¹⁰⁶ Masoudi says that all these marvellous things were placed within the Pyramids; whilst Makrizi, on the authority of Usted Ibrahim, particularises the subterraneous passages as the depositories. On the margin of one of Makrizi's MSS., we read that the inscriptions of the priests were on the ceilings, roofs, etc., of the subterraneous passages

¹⁰⁷ Col. Vyse, "Operations," etc., Vol. ii. p. 322 seq