

Books of Jeu

Texts in the Bruce Codex

References locating the texts in the Codex are marked within the Introduction to the Bruce Codex, below.

I. The First Book of Jeou

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III. An Unnamed Gnostic Hymn from the Bruce Codex

IV. An Unnamed Gnostic Text from the Bruce Codex

Introduction to the Bruce Codex

Excerpt from the Introduction to the Bruce Codex in:

Violet MacDermot, The Books of Jeu and the Untitled Text in the Bruce Codex, Brill, 1978, p. ix - xxi.

History of the Bruce Codex

This codex, which comprises Coptic, Arabic and Ethiopic manuscripts, is said to have been bought at Medinet Habu in Upper Egypt in about 1769 by the Scottish traveller, James Bruce.' We owe this information to C. G. Woide who made the first copy of the Coptic gnostic texts contained in it. He also first brought them to public notice with an article on the Egyptian version of the Bible, and he gave the biblical citations in his *Appendix ad editionem Novi Testamenti*. After his death his copy of the texts was held by the Clarendon Press, Oxford, under the number MS. Clarendon Press d. 13. In 1848 the codex was acquired by the Bodleian Library, together with Woide's transcript of the gnostic texts. The gnostic manuscripts were catalogued under the number Bruce 96.

M. G. Schwartze was the next to transcribe these texts when he was in England in 1848. On comparing Woide's copy with the originals, he found a number of mistakes, but his death unfortunately occurred before his work was completed. His amended copy became the property of H. Petermann, at whose death the copy finally came into the hands of A. Erman.

In the meantime in 1882 E. Amelineau began to work on the text. Two preliminary communications appeared in 1882 and 1887, and in 1890 an introduction to his translation of the text (Bibl. 2). The latter was published in 1891 (Bibl. 3).

In 1890 Erman and Hanack were instrumental in arranging that Schmidt should work on the manuscript in Oxford, with the support of the Akademie der Wissenschaften of Berlin. With the help of the copies made by Woide and Schwartze, Schmidt was able to distinguish that there were two manuscripts and

some fragments in the one codex. He put the leaves in sequence and made a new transcript of the texts. Schmidt's page order was later followed by the Bodleian authorities when, in 1928, they renumbered the leaves. Schmidt published his edition of the text with a German translation and commentary in 1892 (Bibl. 32). No further editions of the whole text have appeared. In 1905 Schmidt published a revised translation (Bibl. 35). The volume contained translations of the Pistis Sophia as well as the texts of the Bruce Codex, together with commentaries on both codices. Two new editions by Till of this volume have subsequently appeared (see p. 321).

In 1918 an English translation of the manuscript known as the Untitled Text was published by F. Lamplugh (Bibl. 23) This was based on Amelineau's French version.

A transcript and English translation of the Untitled Text was made by C. A. Baynes in 1933 (Bibl. 9). She based her work on the original manuscript, using the published transcript by Schmidt and the copies of Woide and Schwartze for comparison. Her arrangement of the leaves differed from that of Schmidt, in that she placed his five final leaves at the beginning. The Untitled Text was photographed at this time, and photographic reproductions of the leaves were included in this edition of the text. The other manuscript was photographed later.

Description of the Manuscript

The Bruce Codex originally consisted of 78 papyrus leaves (156 pages) of which seven leaves - in existence when Woide made his copy - are now missing. Each page, with the exception of two, is inscribed in one column, on both recto and verso, There are from 27 to 34 lines to a page. Woide noted that the condition of the papyrus was poor, and in the course of a century the subsequent deterioration of the manuscript, as recorded by Schmidt, Baynes and Till, has been considerable.

When acquired the codex consisted of loose leaves, the original order of which had been lost, One leaf alone carried numbers, and Woide was only able to make a page-by-page transcript without distinguishing the documents. In 1886 the authorities of the Bodleian Library caused the loose leaves of the codex to be bound in book form. The leaves were bound without regard to order or sequence. Many were placed upside-down and with the recto and verso reversed Each leaf, was enclosed between two sheets of tracing paper.

It is due to the work of Schmidt that the codex now stands in its present form. The codex consists of two independent manuscripts and some fragments. The first manuscript, to which Schmidt gave the title "The First and Second Books of Jeu, comprised 47 leaves (94 pages) of which three leaves were missing. The second, called the "Untitled Text", contained 31 leaves (62 pages, of which four were missing. Schmidt included the fragments (8 leaves) with the first manuscript.

Each of the two main texts is written in a different hand, and the two manuscripts bear no obvious relation to one another. The first is written in a cursive hand on papyrus of a pale colour. The second is in an uncial script on a darker and more reddish papyrus. Not only are the first and second manuscripts the work of different scribes, but the fragments are in handwriting which differs again from these. At the beginning of the first document Schmidt has placed a frontispiece consisting of a leaf bearing a cross in the form of an ankh sign. Greek monograms occur in relation to the arms of the cross.' The Books of Jeu contain a number of cryptograms and gnostic diagrams. A leaf with a border is placed by Schmidt at the end of the Books of Jeu; this contains the two fragments noted above.

The manuscript, re-bound and with its leaves renumbered, is now unfortunately in very poor condition. The papyrus of many leaves is defective and there are opaque dark spots due to previous mildew. Details of the condition of individual leaves are given in the footnotes on the Coptic text. The writing is so faded as to be almost illegible, even when viewed with ultra-violet light.

The title by which the first two texts are generally known does not appear in the Bruce Codex. It is

derived from a reference to the "two Books of Jeu" in the Pistis Sophia text. The contents of the present texts suggested to Schmidt and others that these treatises were the "Books of Jeu", and originated from a milieu similar to that of the Pistis Sophia. In only one text, the first, is the title preserved; this stands at the end and reads "The Book of the great Logos corresponding to Mysteries".

There are two incomplete copies of the opening pages of the First Book of Jeu. The first copy, after some initial words, runs from page 1 of the manuscript to the foot of page 4 where the text breaks off (Schmidt 39.1-44.5). The second copy with the same initial words begins on page 1a and ends on page 4a (Schmidt 44.6-47.7). After a lacuna, the text begins again on page 5 and reads consecutively to the foot of page 34 (Schmidt 47.9-78.23). Pages 8-34 contain a series of diagrams bearing names of Jeu and numbered from 1 to 28, the 13th being omitted. There is no indication as to whether the series is complete. After a lacuna the text begins again on page 35 (Schmidt 79.7) with the fifth stanza of a gnostic hymn, of which the first four stanzas are missing. The hymn appears to end at the foot of page 38 (Schmidt 82.26). After a lacuna the text begins again on page 39 (Schmidt 83.5) and runs consecutively to the foot of page 53 where it concludes with the title (Schmidt 99.5).

The text of the Second Book of Jeu begins on page 54 (Schmidt 99.6) and runs consecutively to the foot of page 86 (Schmidt 138.4). The end of the text is missing. On the single leaf which follows, page 87 contains a fragment of a gnostic hymn (Schmidt 139.1-140.14), and on page 88 is a description of the passage of the soul (Schmidt 140.15-141.21).

The Untitled Text lacks both beginning and end. According to the pagination of Schmidt, the text runs consecutively from pages 1 to 51 (Schmidt 226.1-264.6). Pages 52-61 are five leaves of uncertain relation to the rest of the text, which Schmidt places at the end (Schmidt 264.9-277.8). In her edition of the text (Bibl. 9) Baynes places these leaves at the beginning, but for the reasons given below the page order of Schmidt and Till has been retained here.

Both texts of the Bruce Codex appear to be compilations, and similar or related "documents" are either grouped together or placed one following another in sequence. Occasionally the present chapter divisions may indicate where one document ends and another begins. This method of composition gives rise to repetitions in the narrative, and to a lack of overall continuity. Thus in the Books of Jeu, Chapters 49-52 appear to be variant accounts of what has already then given in Chapters 42ff. In the Untitled Text, Chapters 6 and 10 may be different descriptions of the same phenomena. As the unplaced leaves forming Chapter 21 contain material similar to that in Chapters 1, 2, 7, and 17, and are perhaps part of a separate version of the whole text, it seems appropriate to piece them at the end of the treatise.

A brief summary of the contents of the Books of Jeu and the Untitled Text is given here for the convenience of the reader. An attempt has been made to indicate the most outstanding motifs in each chapter, but in many cases the selection is necessarily a rather arbitrary one.

Contents

[Links to the texts are provided]

[The Books of Jeu Book 1](#)

Chapter 1-4 Preamble on the teaching of the living Jesus; dialogue between Jesus and the apostles : on crucifying the world; on the understanding which saves from the archon of this aeon; on bringing the word of the Father down to earth, and on raising the minds of men to heaven; on the flesh which is ignorance and non understanding. (The passage is incomplete).

5 Description (by Jesus) of the manner in which his Father moves Jeu, the true GM, to bring forth emanations which fill the treasuries of the light; diagram giving the "type" and the name of Jeu by which he is called; two diagrams, one giving the type of Jeu before he is moved to bring forth

emanation. the other giving the type when he brings them forth.

6 Description (by Jesus) of the manner in which he invoked his Father to move the true God to emanate a small idea from his treasures; diagram representing his "character". Description of the first voice which Jeu the true God, gave forth; diagram (Jeu I) representing the character and type of Jeu; a second diagram enclosing the name of Jeu.

7-32 26 Diagrams (Jeu 2-28), each different, and giving different names of Jeu, his character, the names of three watchers and twelve emanations (some diagrams are incomplete and there are variations of internal arrangement; Jeu 13 is missing; each diagram is accompanied by a stereotyped account of the 12 emanations which were emanated when the Father moved Jeu).

(Lacuna)

Fragment of a gnostic hymn: a hymn of praise to the First Mystery who caused Jeu to establish the 12 aeons, the 24 emanations etc.

33-38 Teaching by Jesus to his disciples concerning the treasures (the beginning is missing; only the 56th-60th treasures remain); the procedures for entering them; diagrams representing their seals of which the names are given; the names to be spoken while holding ciphers in the hand; the drawing bank of the watchers, the ranks and the veils so that the gate into the treasury can be crossed.

39 Inquiry by the disciples why all these places, fatherhoods and they themselves have come into existence; another account by Jesus of the small idea which his Father did not withdraw to himself; the emanating from it of Jesus as first emanation; the three voices given forth from the idea which became all the places; the emanation of the 12 emanations.

Instructions by Jesus to the disciples that they are a rank, that they will proceed with Jesus in all the places, and that will call them disciples.

40 Request by the disciples to be told the name which suffices for all the places in the treasures, so that they are drawn back; reply by Jesus that he will say it to them.

Inquiry by the disciples whether it is the name of the Father of Jesus; reply by Christ that it is not, but that when the name of the great power is said, all the places, ranks, veils and watchers are drawn back. Teaching (by Jesus) of the procedure for invoking the great name, the diagram, seal and cipher. so that the disciples pass to the place of the true God which is outside the places of his Father; warning that the name should not be said continually.

41 Hymn of praise spoken by Jesus who, with his disciples, had proceeded inwards to the 7th treasury; glorifications of his Father, each ending with the question "What now, O unapproachable God?". to which the disciples respond "Amen, amen, amen" three times.

(The title "The great Logos corresponding to Mysteries" is given after the end of the hymn).

The Books of Jeu Book 2

Chapter 42 Teaching by Jesus to his disciples and women disciples on the mysteries of the Treasury of the Light, which after death erase the sins of the soul, and enable it to pass through all the places of the invisible God until it reaches the Treasury of the Light.

43 Warning to the disciples not to give these mysteries to any but those worthy of them, or in exchange for any goods of this world: especially are they not to be given to those who serve the 72 archons or the 8 powers of the great archon, the third power of which is Taricheas, son of Sabaoth, the Adamas; they are only to be given to those who are as the Sons of the Light.

Promise by Jesus to his disciples to give to them the mysteries, but first the three baptisms and the mystery of taking away the evil of the archons, afterwards the spiritual injunction: instructions to those receiving these mysteries.

44 Reproach by the disciples that Jesus had not told them the mysteries of the Treasuries of the Light promise by Jesus to give them the mysteries of all the places of the Treasury of the Light, and that he who performs them needs no other mystery except the mystery of the forgiveness of sins; that those who have received all these will pass through all places to the place of Jeu; promise by Jesus to fulfil the disciples in every mysteries so that they might be called "Sons of the Pleroma".

45 Instructions by Jesus for performing the baptism of water: ritual offering by Jesus of wine and bread in the presence of the disciples; sealing of the disciples with a seal.

Prayer-invocation by Jesus to his Father that the 15 helpers who serve the 7 virgins of the light come and baptise the disciples in the water of life; invocation to Zorokothora to bring forth water in one of the pitchers of wine as a sign: transformation of the wine into water, and baptism of the disciples by Jesus, giving them from the offering and sealing them with a seal; rejoicing of the disciples over their baptism.

46 Instructions by Jesus for performing the baptism of fire: ritual offering of wine and bread with incense; sealing of the disciples with a seal.

Prayer-invocation by Jesus to his Father that Zorokothora Melchisedek come and bring the water of the baptism of fire of the Virgin of the Light, that the Virgin of the Light baptise the disciples and purify them: appearance of a sign in the fire of the incense, and baptism of the disciples, giving them from the offering and sealing them with a seal; rejoicing of the disciples over their baptism.

47 Instructions by Jesus for performing the baptism of the Holy Spirit ritual offering of wine and bread with incense, sealing of the disciples with a seal. Prayer-invocation by Jesus to his Father. calling upon the names of the Treasury of the Light; appearance of a sign in the offering, and baptism of the disciples, giving them from the offering and sealing them with a seal, rejoicing of the disciples over their baptism.

48 Ritual offering by Jesus of the incense of the mystery for taking away the evil of the archons, sealing of the disciples with a seal.

Prayer-invocation by Jesus to his Father that Adamas and his rulers come and take away the evil from the disciples; sealing of the disciples with a seal, and the ceasing of evil in them, rejoicing of the disciples.

49 Another account of a promise by Jesus to give to the disciples the "defenses" of all the places, with their baptisms, offerings, seals, ciphers and names, and the manner of invoking them in order to pass within them. Instructions to the disciples on the coming forth of their souls; promise of entry into the Treasury of the Light. and withdrawal of all the aeons and of the watchers if the disciples have received the mystery of the forgiveness of sins.

50 Another account of a promise (by Jesus) to the disciples about the passage of their souls through the ranks. in each of which they would be given the seal, mystery and name of that rank and pass to its interior, finally reaching Jeu, the father of the Treasury of the Light. Another account of the innermost rank as 12th rank of the 12th great power of the emanations of the true God; prayer-invocation to the true God to send a light-power to the 12 disciples, they having received the mystery of the forgiveness of sins.

Another account of a promise to give to the disciples this mystery with its de fences and its seal.

51 Teaching by Jesus that to the Sons of the Light it is necessary to receive the mystery of the forgiveness of sins: request by the disciples to be given this mystery.

52 Another account of teaching by Jesus to his disciples concerning the coming forth of their soul: defences to be given at each of the 12 aeons in order to proceed upwards; diagrams representing seals of which the names are given: the names to be spoken while holding a cipher in the hand; sealing and prayer-invocation calling upon the archons to withdraw.

Defences to be given at the 13th aeon to the 24 emanations of the invisible God: diagram representing the seal of which the names are given; prayer-invocation calling upon the 24 emanations to withdraw.

A similar procedure at the 14th aeon where is the second invisible God with three archons of the light; teaching on the impossibility of further progress into the Treasury of the Light without having received the mystery of the forgiveness of sins; seal and cipher, and the prayer-invocation to be spoken.

(The end is missing)

Fragment of a gnostic hymn.

Fragment on the passage of the soul through the archons of the way of the midst.

The Untitled Text

Chapter 1 The city; the First Father of the All; the self-originated place: the deep; silence: the first space; the first sound.

2 Coming into existence of the second place called demiurge, logos, understanding (mind), man; the column. the overseer; the Father of the All; the Cross; the monad; the ennead. the 12 deeps; the image of the Father; the incorporeal members out of which Man came into existence.

3 The Father, the second demiurge; the forethought, the creator of the pleroma; the 4 gates, 4 monads, 24 helpers, 24 myriad powers; the overseer. the Setheus; Aphrêdon and his 12 beneficent ones; Adam of the light and his 365 aeons: the rule; the Child; the thought which comes forth from the deep.

4 The deep (containing) 3 fatherhood, the first, the covered one; the second (containing) the table, the logos: the third (containing) the silence, the source, the 12 beneficent ones, the 5 seals. the all-mother; the ennead which completes a decad from the monad.

5 The immeasurable deep (containing) the table; the 3 greatnesses; the sonship called Christ, the Verifier, who seals each one with the seal of the Father; his 12 aspects; the 12 sources; the 12 spaces which produce the Christ. the Fruit of the All.

6 The deep of Setheus; the 12 Fatherhoods surrounding him, each with 3 aspects, making 36 in number; the 12 surrounding his head; the diagram.

7 Man as kinsman of the mysteries; witness of Marsanes and Nicotheus; revelation concerning the triple-powered perfect one.

The only-begotten one hidden in the Setheus; the 12 fatherhoods in the type of the 12 apostles, each making 365 powers in his right hand; the 30 powers in his left hand; the Only One from whom the monad containing all things came; the city or man, crowned by monads; the mother-city of the only-begotten one, of whom Phosilampes spoke; the monad which is in the Setheus like a concept; the creative word, the creative mind, to whom the creation prays as God; blessing from the All to the only-begotten one.

8 The light-spark sent by Setheus to the indivisible pleroma; the man of light and truth; the servant of

the pleroma; sending of the light-spark to the matter below. sending of Gamaliel, Strempsuchos and Agramas as watchers and helpers to those who received the light-spark.

9 The 12 springs and 12 fatherhoods in the place of the indivisible one; the crown in which is every species of life; the crown in which are 365 species, from which all the aeons receive crowns; the god-bearing land in the midst of the indivisible one; the all-mother; the rule in the midst of the all-mother; the only-begotten one to whom blessing is given; receiving of Christhood by the only-begotten one.

10 Another account of the rule which is within each of 9 enneads in which are 3 fatherhoods; the imperishable place called the holy land; the immeasurable deep with 12 fatherhoods above it, 30 powers surrounding each; 365 fatherhoods by which the year was divided; Musanios and Aphrêdon with his 12 beneficent ones; prayers of the mother of all things.

Agitation of the pleroma; drawing back of the veils, re-establishment of the aeons by the overseer; coming forth of the triple-powered one in whom the son was hidden; sending forth by Setheus of the creative word which became Christ.

12 Giving of rank to her worlds by the mother; laying therein of the light-spark; placing of the forefather and 12 beneficent ones, with their crowns, a seal and a source; a rule with 12 fathers and a sonship.

Setting up of the progenitor son in the type of the triple-powered one; making of a world, an aeon and a city; the god-bearing earth; the crown sent by the Father to the progenitor son; the garment sent by the first monad; the veil.

13 Separation of the existent from the non-existent, as "eternal" and "matter"; placing of veils between them: giving of 10 aeons to the mother; giving of the rule with 3 powers, 12 powers and 7 powers to her; setting up of the forefather in the aeons of the mother of all things; giving of powers and glories to the forefather; giving of a sonship and of a power from the aeon called Solmistos to him.

14 Creation of an aeon by the forefather, according to the command of the Father hidden in the silence; wish of the forefather to turn the All to the hidden Father; prayer of the mother to the thrice-begotten one.

15 Setting up of the eternal self-father by the mother; giving of the mystery of the hidden Father to those who fled to the aeon of the self-father; knowledge of the mystery which became Man.

16 Establishment by the mother of her first-born son; her gift to him of a garment containing all bodies; dividing of all matter into species by the progenitor; his giving of law to the species; his bringing them forth from the darkness of matter.

17 Song of praise by the mother of the All to the infinite and unknowable One. who begot Man in his mind; to him who gave all things to Man who wrapped himself in the creation like a garment; prayer of the mother that he give ranks to her offspring; her wish that her offspring should know the changeless One as Saviour.

18 Coming of the light-spark from the infinite one; wonder of the aeons as to where he had been hidden before he revealed himself; song of praise by the powers of the pleroma who saw him; making of a veil for their worlds.

19 Separation of matter into two lands. on the right and on the left, by the Lord of the whole earth; setting of boundaries and veils between them; giving of laws and commandments to those on the right; promise of eternal life. of the knowledge that God is within them, and that they are as gods.

20 Prayer of those begotten of matter that incorporeal spirits be sent to teach them; sending of powers of discernment; establishment of ranks according to the hidden ordinance.

Immersion in the name of the self-begotten one; the source of living water: Michar and Micheu, the powers which are over it; Barpharanges and the Pistis Sophia; Sellao, Eleinos, Zogenethles, Selmelche; the 4 lights : Eleleth, Daveide, Oroiael,

(Lacuna)

21 Account of the Father of the All; his insubstantial members; the son; the city or man portraying the All: likeness of the body of Man to the aeons of the pleroma ; the God-man whom the All desires to know; hymn of blessing and praise to him.