

PAPYRUS OF ANI

PLATE 24

[Chapter 124]

The Transformation Chapters

{ PROLOGUE }

by

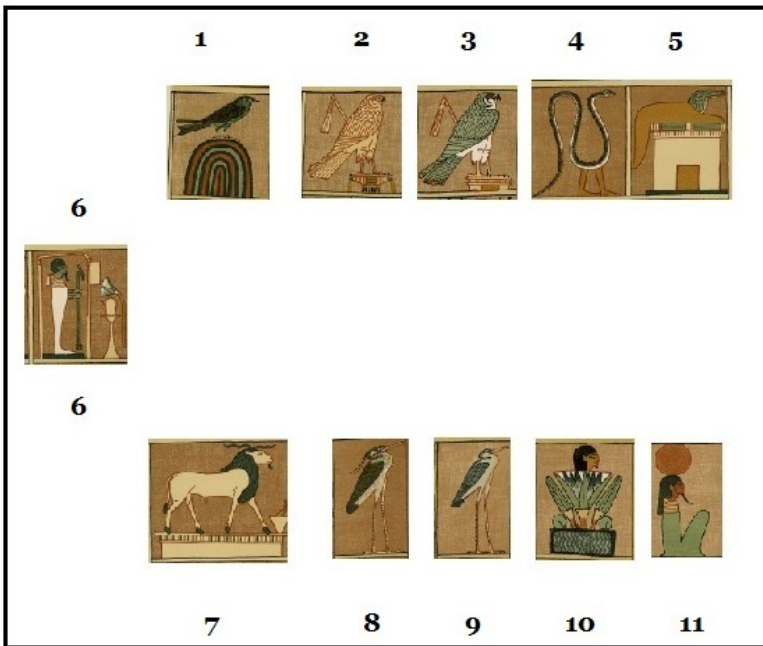
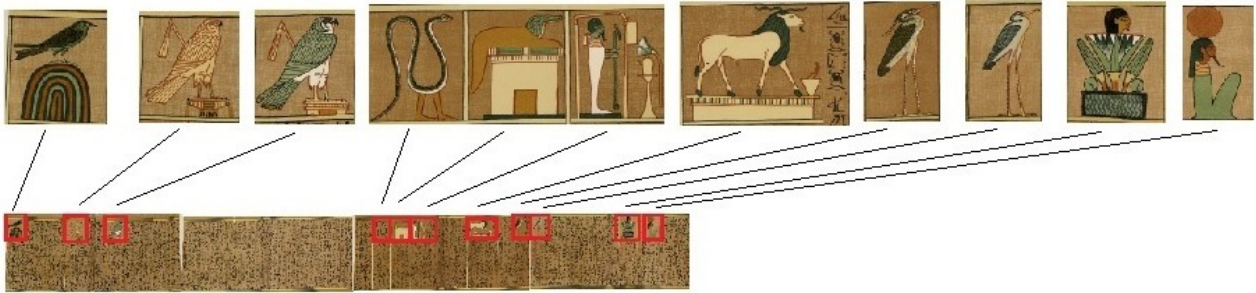
orlando mezzabotta

www.ormezza.it



The logic block enclosing the transformation chapters (Plates 25-28) is by and large the longest of the whole papyrus, running along a sequence of 151 columns. It surpasses even Chapter 17 (145 columns, but definitely shorter, due to the vignettes covering them without interruption from Plate 7 to Plate 10).

There are eleven chapters, each one having its corresponding vignette. This number is indeed interesting since the sixth item of the series directly refers to the god Ptah, the Creator; whereas the remaining ten drawings are only allusions to mythic figures and events. We might then consider the sixth vignette as a sort of hinge dividing two main logic blocks corresponding to different modalities of transformation. We may get a clearer idea looking at the layout of the visual sequence:



This general overview allows us to remark interesting parallels and juxtapositions. The most evident being that of the two falcons of Group A (2,3) and of the two herons of Group B (8,9). There is then a juxtaposition between the two reptilian figures, a serpent and a crocodile (4,5) of Group A and the two human figures (10,11) of Group B. The relation between #1 and #7 is a little more problematical,



since a swallow and a ram may apparently have not much in common. As a matter of fact the swallow resting on what may be looked at as the primordial hill could point to the original moment of creation by the will of Atum, whose energy is the *b3* symbolized by the Ram (and by the small vase with a fluttering flame at his feet – which is in fact one of the possible hieroglyphs for “*b3*”; in many glyphs written as a bird (although with human face); mirroring, thus, the swallow).



But what should be specifically remarked is the juxtaposition of the two main blocks: A[1-5] vs B[7-11]. Anticipating the conclusion of my interpretation I am so bold as to assert that BLOCK A is the material manifestation of the archetypal images of BLOCK B. In their relation to Ptah [6], we might say that BLOCK B is the expression of the god *šj3* (Perception), whereas BLOCK A is *hw* (Authoritative Utterance). A sort of circumstantial “*sḏm.n =f*”. A being the result of B; first “Perception” then “Manifestation”.

We have already mentioned the *b3* of the ram [7] as the symbol of the potential creative energy that manifests itself in the image of the primeval hill. We find then the Benu-bird [8], who is the actual image of creative power; mirrored by the golden falcon [2] that, with its connection with kingly titlature, is the historical representation of it.



They are basically static emblems, whereas the heron [9] and the divine falcon [3] are their dynamic counterparts.

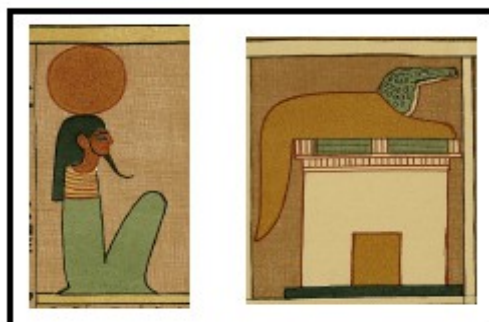


The heron lacks the breeding plumes, the falcon the “golden shine”; as if to specify that they have to work hard in order to change their state.

As for #10, with clear references to Nefertum, he is the image of the coming forth from the primordial waters; whereas the serpent [4] is the animal that emerges from the earth (created later); both related to regeneration: the first one cosmic (the new-born sun, the regenerated soul), the other one earthly (skin moulting).



The same applies to the last two images: Ra [11] as cosmic energy versus the instinctual force of the crocodile/Sobek [5].



They are both related to fertility: that of Ra vs the material one of the god Sobek (the lord of semen, who takes wives from their husbands – as Wnjs says, comparing himself to that god in the entrance/exit corridor of his pyramid).

Thus the psychic/theosophical structure of the whole block may be observed as:

- (1) self-awareness [1 & 7];
- (2) emblematic role [2 & 8] resulting from
- (3) dynamic construction of it [3 & 9];
- (4) eternal rejuvenation [4 & 10];
- (5) cosmic force and fertility [5 & 11].

All of them centred around the figure of Ptah [6]



who is the psychic projection of Ani, claiming his creative power. Having shown his ability to integrate (through what once was probably rooted in shamanistic ritual) the divine qualifications, Ani is then ready to reach the deepest strata of knowledge (Thoth) and to meet Atum in his very essence. That's in fact what happens in the following block (Plate 29, tentatively scrutinized in a previous analysis).

As a matter of fact this “shamanistic” episode is preceded, as a prologue, by an introductory chapter (124, Plate 24) in the course of which Ani must make clear his psychic qualifications in order to continue his progress towards “akhization”.

And it's not a coincidence that in the last lines of that chapter Ani asserts that he is more qualified than all the other gods (meaning probably that he must not be looked at in the same way as the other common deceased). The transformation chapters being thus the verifiable manifestation of his divine abilities.

I doubt that the three gods that appear on the vignette



be “The Council of Osiris” the title of the chapter refers to. They are probably the wardens of the new psychic space Ani wishes to “go down into” (a deeper level of knowledge and existential experience) where he shall meet the gods [the Council] that will judge him in the course of the “negative confession” (Plate 31). In fact in other papyri the gods in front of Ani are the four sons of Horus .



Being the canopic jars that contain Osiris's viscera, that may be a symbol of Ani's inner energies.

So, let us first give a look at this prologue.

PLATE 24 -- CH 124

- 1 Spell for going down to the Council of Osiris.
- 2 Words to be spoken by Osiris Scribe Ani, justified.

3 My Ba has built for me
4 a *strong-Hall* in Busiris, a fruitful grassland in Buto.
5 I have ploughed the field in my form,
6 my palm tree on it, like Min.

7 My abomination, my abomination,
8 I won't eat my abomination.
9 Ordure is my abomination,
10 I will not eat it.
11 That is sacred food [kA's satisfaction] for those who do not know it.
12 I will not come near it with my arms,
13 I will not tread on it with my sandals,
14 since my bread is made from white emmer,
15 my beer from the Nile's red barley.
16 By the *Barque of the Night* and by the *Barque of the Day*
17 they are brought.
18 And I will feed on them under the foliage,
19 since I have knowledge of the beautiful branches.
20 O would that I be granted to glorify, there, the white crown;
21 that the Uraei raise me up!

22 O door-keeper of *He-who-pacified-the-two-lands* [Horus],
23 bring to me those who make offerings,
24 cause that I throw off earthly dross,
25 so that the blessed spirits open their arms to me,
26 and the Ennead be silent, as the Sun-folk speak
27 with Osiris Ani.
28 Guide, hearts of the gods,
29 his sacred state in the sky amongst the divine figures!

30 As for any god or goddess
31 who will move against Osiris Scribe Ani, justified,

32 *He-who-was-at-the-beginning-of-Time*, he who lives on hearts,
33 he shall devour him [that hostile deity] as he emerges from the East;
34 he shall be assigned to those who were before Ra was;
35 he shall be assigned to those who were before the shining of the Sunlight,
36 that does mantle the sky amongst the Great Ones.

37 The share (of offerings) of Osiris Scribe Ani, justified, is there,
38 among the bread and the beer (that are) for your mouths.
39 For I have entered upon the disk of the sun, after having emerged from the Nun (like Ihy);
40 and the followers of the gods speak to me;
41 the disk of the sun speaks to me;
42 the Sun-folk speak to me.

43 May he [*He-who-was-at-the-beginning-of-Time*]
grant that I be respected in the primordial darkness,
44 within Mehet-weret [Primordial Flood, the Great Cow]
45 at the side of him that he entrusted.
46 Since I shall be with Osiris:
47 my mat his mat amongst the Great Ones;
48 he shall address me (with) the speech of the people,
49 and I shall hear and reply to him
50 with the speech of the gods:
51 *"I have come: Osiris Ani, justified, in peace, equipped.*
52 *Cause, then, his desire to ascend!*
53 *I am a blessed spirit, equipped*
54 *more than all the blessed spirits."*

=====

Now, leaving aside the caption [1,2], we may divide the text into six logic blocks:

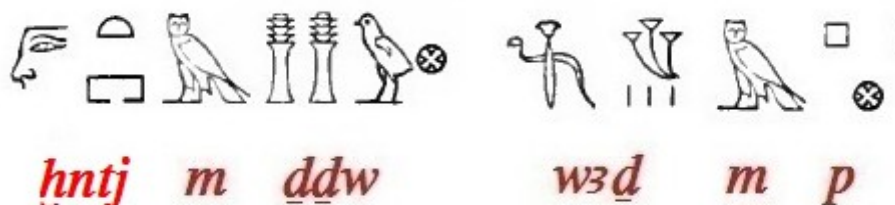
- (1) Ani's statement of his divine constitution [3-6];
- (2) Ani's assertion of the purity, both physical and moral, of his state [7-21];
- (3) Ani's wish to become an Akh [22-29];
- (4) Ani's implicit appeal to the Demiurge/Atum, asking him to get rid of any hostile god [30-36];
- (5) Ani's conviction of being qualified because of the *b3*'s state he has already reached (his capability to travel safely through day and night) [37-42];
- (6) Ani's wish and confidence in a positive meeting with Osiris (integration of Osirian characters) [43-54].

It goes without saying that I consider many of the “*sdm =f*” forms that permeate the text as prospectives, pointing at Ani's desires to reach his intended aim. Having already attained the “*b3* level”, he now wants to ascend to the state of *Akh*.


Let us then give a more specific look at the six logic blocks.

[1]

In verse 3 we may see how Ani's “*b3*” has laid out a sort of “psychic landscape” on his behalf. [f]

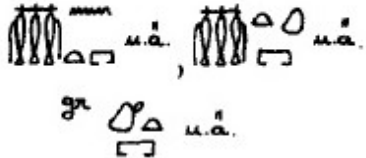


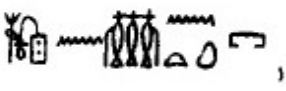
We find in fact two cities: *ddw* (Busiris) and *p* (Buto); the first related to Osiris, the other to Horus. That's a condensed visual image of life's cycle, of death and resurrection, of the father who keeps rejuvenating through the son. The use of “*hntj*” triggers a lot of possible allusions. That may be a Hall, a ceremonial room:

hntj 

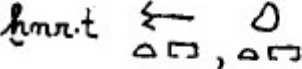
belegt seit M.R.
Vorhalle (eines Gebäudes) 10.
auch als Aufenthaltsort des
Königs 11.

Auch als Ort Heiligtum 12.
Sitz als Bez. des Pylons
des Tempel 13.
griech. χαυτ.
Auch M.R. im Titel 14:





But it may also point to “hnt”

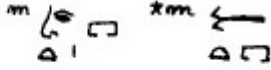
hnt 

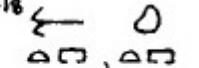
belegt seit M.R.

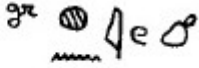
I. das Gefängnis 14.

II. Sperre, Bollwerk,
Festung 15.
auch bildlich gebraucht 16.

III. der abgesperrte Teil des
Palastes 17; auch Archiv o.ä. 18.







which is “imprisonment”, but also a “fortress” and “a locked/secret part of the palace”. All images of the divine Osiris enclosed in his sacred abode. That's why I opted for a neologism: “strong-hall” alluding both at “Hall” and “Stronghold.” As matter of fact “hntj” is also “who/which is in front of” and “Foremost” as well. Once again an oblique allusion to Osiris, Foremost of the Westerners, who comes first, before Horus, his son, brought up (→ w3d) in Buto, where he flourishes (→ w3d): rejuvenation.

The grassland (→ w3d) becomes the field (3ht) of verse 5, ploughed by Ani in his form (m jr w = j)



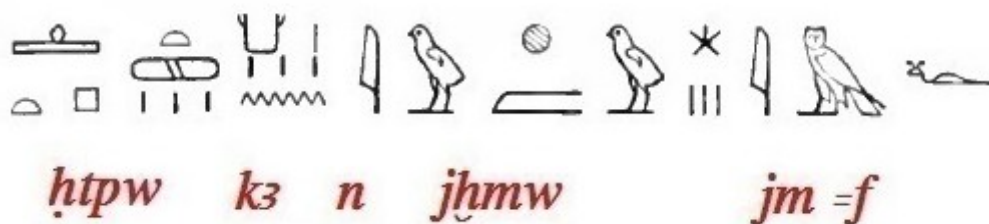
I am of the opinion that this line refers to the psychological work Ani has done on himself (*m jrw =j*), resulting in the integration of the energy of Min, shown as the palm-tree (*m3m3*) standing up on the field as a manifestation of the ithyphallic god:



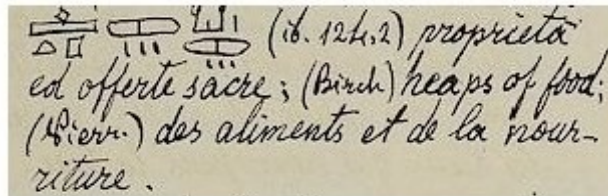
That's the work Ani has gone through in the course of his *b3*'s experience; and it is certainly not a coincidence that it has been the *b3* of verse 3 that set up both the place and its adjacent lot.

[2]

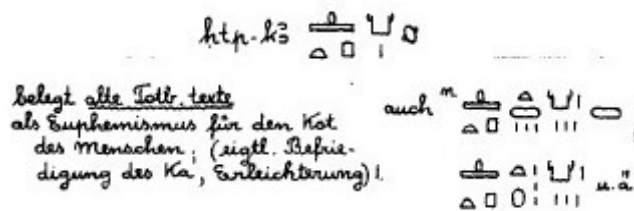
The second block [7-17] deals with nourishment and it is divided into two subsections pointing to (i) disgusting [7-13] and (ii) heavenly [14-17] food. Excrement as foul nourishment is an image that recurs often in religious texts. That's an evident metaphor if not of moral baseness, at least of “inadequate qualification”. The person who eats one's own excrement is someone who has not yet thrown off her/his earthly dross. In this sense verse 11 seems to play cunningly and sardonically with this concept.



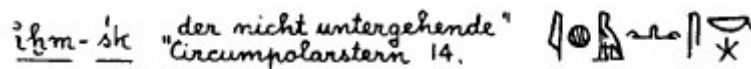
“*htpw*” and “*k3/k3w*” may refer to “offerings” and “food”; if taken together they may point to “heaps of food”, as Simeone Levi elucidates in his dictionary:



But “*htp-k3*” may point to another euphemistic meaning, as explained by WB:



Literally “*ka*'s satisfaction”, idiomatically “men's excrement”; being thus the description of what Ani “will not eat” [10]. That's a sarcastic touch enhanced by the glyph used for “*jhmw*” (those who are ignorant); where we find the N14 determinative (a star), which is normally present in “*jhmw-sk*” (the imperishable stars):

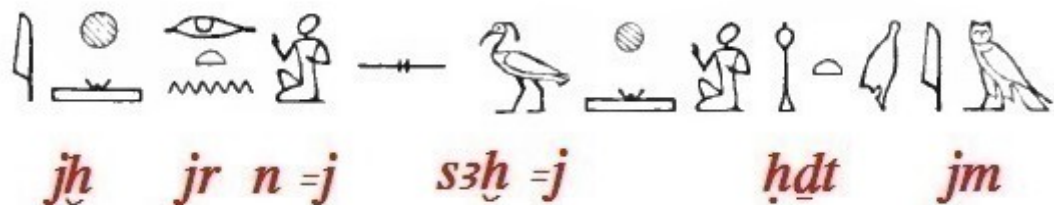


As a matter of fact N14 may also be used as a determinative for “*dw3t*” (otherworld); thus the general image is that of deceased (in the *Duat*) who are not able to distinguish sacred food (*htp & k3w*) from excrements (*htp-k3*). And Ani is certainly not one of them, as he states in the second part [14-17], claiming that he eats only heavenly food. Verses 18,19 remind us not only of the palm-tree [6], but of the vignette of Plate 16, as well:



Plate 16, chapter 59

Line 20 poses problems:



There is a reference to the “white crown” (*hdt*) which is “there” (*jm*). I am thus inclined to link it to the preceding lines, *hdt* pointing then to *Hathor*, under whose branches Ani takes his nourishment. Ani wishes that the Uraei take him up [21] so that he can glorify the goddess wearing the white crown.

That may be also an anticipation of the cosmic character of the next block [22-29], since the foliage and the beautiful branches of 18-19 may indeed allude to the starry vault of the sky, where the blessed spirits (*shw*) dwell, and where Ani wishes to be allotted his own place.

In fact there may be another possible and concomitant reading, interpreting “*jr*” as an imperative, or more properly, an appeal to

the “*hdt jm*” to act on his behalf (*jr n =j*) in view of his “*akhization*” (*s3h =j*). In this perspective the next line [21] could also be an appeal to the Uraei to lift him up.

[3]

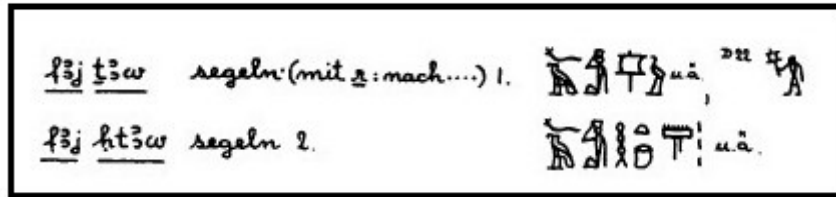
Having thus declared his qualifications Ani expresses his wish to be friendly accepted in the ranks of the heavenly beings [29]. In line 22 there is a reference to “*He who pacified [made content] the Two Lands*”. Now this was an epithet usually applied to the Horus-name of the pharaohs. So we may legitimately infer that Horus is the intended personality: Horus, whose shrine is guarded by the door-keeper Ani appeals to. I am of the opinion that, from a psychological perspective, this is a general image of Horusian energies (rejuvenation), inherent in Ani, which he must release in order to throw away what earthly dross might be still attached to him [24]. That would be an act of purification, preliminary to his heavenly ascension [25]. The door-keeper is in a certain sense Ani's psychological resistance, which he must overcome in order to let free the divine forces of his own inner Horus.

Line 24 is somewhat ambiguous:



The verb “*f3j*” is basically “to raise, lift up, carry” and “*s3tw*” is “ground, floor, dust, earth”. Now, since this line is juxtaposed with the following one [25] talking about blessed spirits who should welcome Ani, the general image may be that of Ani who is able to lift up his “earthly state” to heaven; in other words to overcome his human limits. But, in a more concrete visual interpretation, the glyphs point to Ani carrying away (*f3 =j*) his own dust, his earthly dross.

There may be also a further and subtle allusion. The verb “*f3j*” is sometimes used in connection with the wind determinative (P5 → *t3w*), meaning “to sail”.



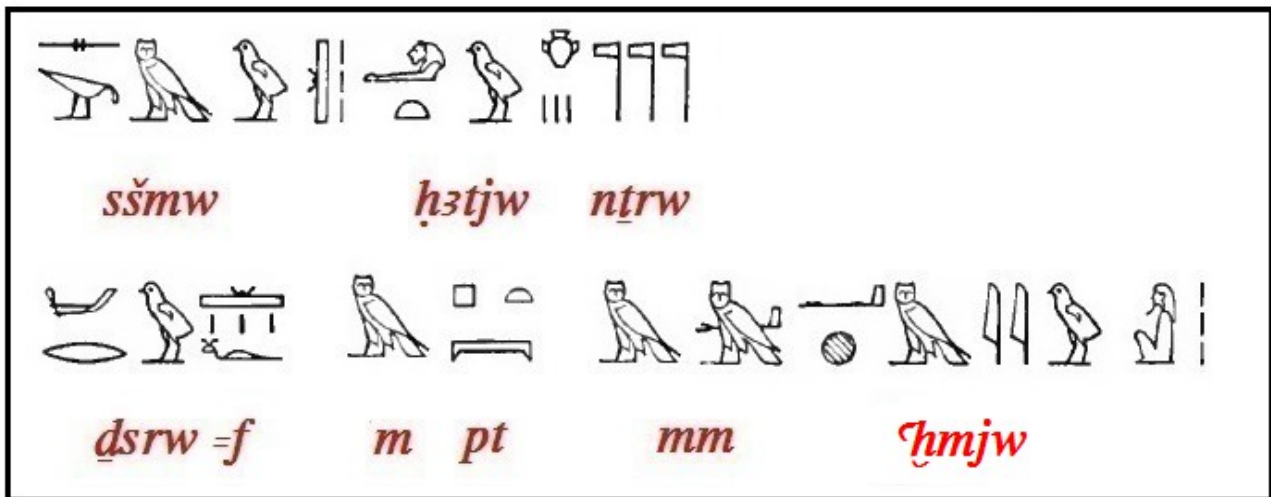
We may thus interpret “*f3j s3tw*” as a sort of metaphorical “ferrying the earth [earthly state] up on high”.

As for the Ennead “being silent as the Sun-folk speak to Ani”, that may allude to the fact that the superior Gods do not object to his ascension. This is not the place to expand on the Sun-folk. Suffice it to say that

“the term Hnmmt had originally a clear religious nature, probably related with deities connected to the idea of renaissance and resurrection; and with the passage through or arrival to heaven.”
 [J.M. Serrano SAK 27]

Which seems to perfectly fit our context.

A further questionable passage is that of lines 28-29.



The general image is relatively simple, dealing with the “sacred state” (*dsrw*) of Ani, who is qualified to dwell in the sky amongst the divine figures (*hmjw* / *hmw*).

It's interesting to note that these “*hmjw*” had originally the aspect of a “falcon” [→Horus]:

$\text{C}^{\text{h}}\text{m}$		heiliges Wesen o.ä. 14.	
$\text{C}^{\text{h}}\text{m}$		belegt 15 seit D.18.	

I. Götterbild:
 ursprünglich das hochende Falken-
 bild, dann allgemeines Wort
 für Götterbild (sowohl Rund-
 bild, Kultstatue 16 als auch
 auf der Wand dargestellte
 Götterfigur 17). u.ä.

The syntactic structure, however, allows multiple perspectives. “*sšmw*” may be read as “leader”, although the plural strokes (unless written for phonetic reasons) pose problems. But let us first try to make clear who this “leader of the hearts of the gods” may be. Is it the force that controls and guides the gods' actions? In that case the sentence is an appeal to this “leader” so that he urge the gods to [implicitly] let Ani reach his “sacred state” (*dsrw = f*). A sort of: “O leader of the hearts of the gods, [let that] his sacred state in the sky [be] amongst the divine figures!” And since there are many gods, each one having his own “leader”, the plural strokes may refer to the several gods.

But if we consider “*sšm*” as verb, “*sšmw*” may be read either as a plural imperative addressed to the hearts of the gods or as a prospective “*sdm = f*”. The possible syntax could then be: “O hearts of the gods, lead his sacred state in the sky...”; or “May the hearts of the gods lead his sacred state...”. In other words the gods are invited to escort and guide Ani's “sacred state in progress” towards the sky.

There is one further nuance that is given by “*sšmw*”. In certain circumstances, it may be read as “portrait, image”:

I^{v} sdm		belegt Königsge- Erscheinungsform der Götter im Amduat u.ä. (im Segs zu ihrer eigent- lichen Gestalt die Ⓛ(Ⓛ) Ⓛ u.ä. heisst): Wesen o.ä. 14.	
---------------------------------------	--	--	--

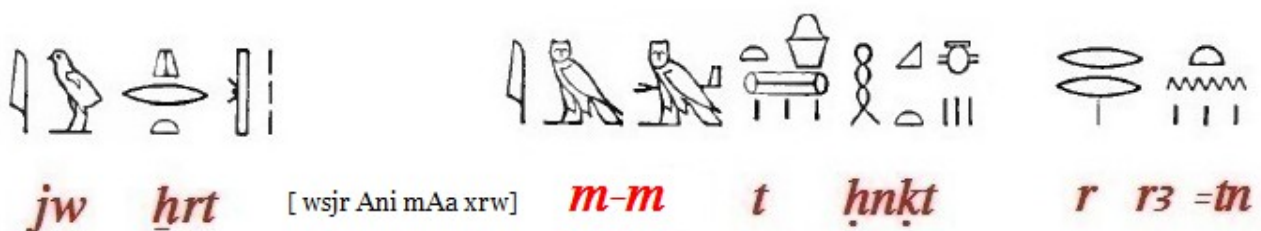
mirroring thus the “*hmw*” that closes our sentence; and showing Ani's sacred state (*dsrw =f*) embraced and heartily welcomed by the specular images of the gods.

[4]

However Ani's progress could of course be crossed by hostile forces (in psychological terms: by inner resistances); and this block deals in fact with this theme. There is an appeal to “He who was at the beginning of time” (*tpj-rnpt*), the *Demiurge*, the Primeval God, in other words *Atum*. Ani begs him to destroy any hostile god or goddess. The images the scribe does make use of are quite impressive. The “castigators” shall be the wild, unleashed energies of primeval chaos, those that existed before the emergence of the primeval Light of the Sun. An image, thus, of complete annihilation.

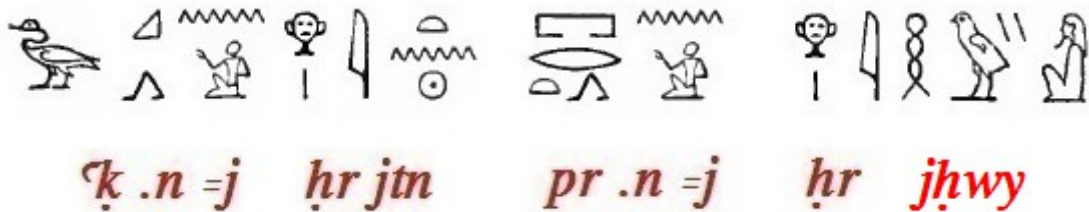
[5]

Once again, if the general meaning of this block is relatively easy to understand, with Ani claiming his qualifications to share the food of the gods [37-38], since he can converse directly with divine beings [40-42]; nonetheless there are some interpretive problems that need elucidations. Let's start with the first two lines:



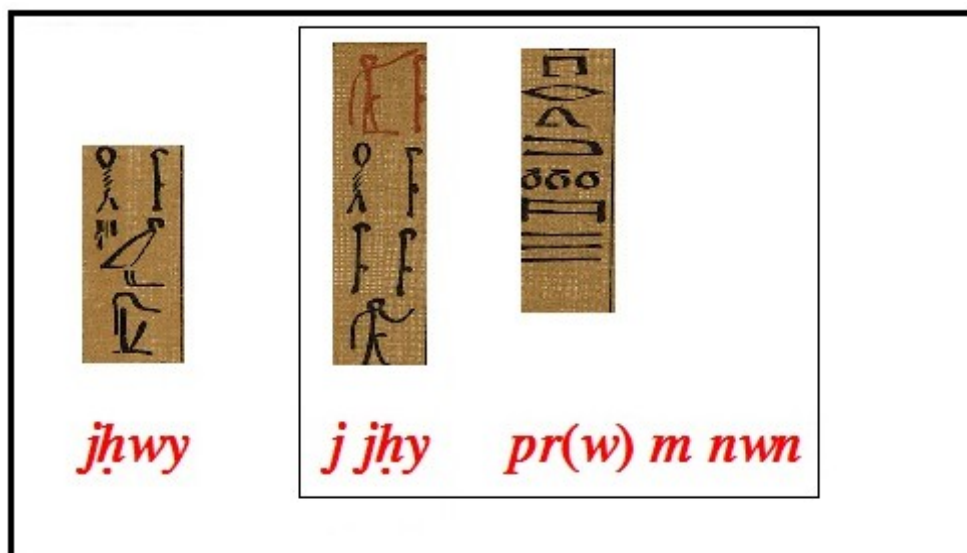
Now the glyph “*jm-m*” may be just a common “*m-m*” or a composite “*jm m*”; in which case “*jm*” may be referred to the share of food of Ani (*hrt*), that is there, among the bread and beer of the gods. As a matter of fact there might be also a scribal nuance, attaching “*jm*” to Ani, as in the well known idiomatic form “*b3k jm*” (this humble servant). Thus Ani presents himself as the “humble” person who nonetheless deserves divine offerings.

“*r r3 =tn*” is somewhat ambiguous. It may be linked with the bread and the beer (*t hnkt*) which go in the direction (*r*) of their mouth (*r3 =tn*). The second plural pronoun (*tn*) poses a problem. It implies a “dialogic context”. It is possible that Ani is addressing the three gods of the vignette, giving thus to “*tn*” a more ample divine connotation, a sort of “bread and beer that are for the mouth of the gods, of whose ranks you three are part”. But there might also be another “side-meaning”. Ani would offer his own share (*hrt*) of bread and beer to the three gods, as a pious act of respect and propitiation. Then comes line 37 which adds quite a lot to the complexity of the text.



The very crux is the enigmatical “*jhwy*” that, judging from the determinative, would seem to be a god. I have to admit my ignorance, since I have not found a god whose name is written like that. However, considering the context and the balanced sentence, we may extrapolate a couple of admissible configurations.

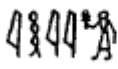
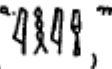
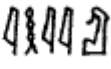
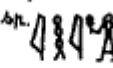







It's possible that the nearest god be the one found in the course of the negative confession (Plate 31), the 36th judge, whose name is “*jhy*” and who came out from the “*nwn*”:



That seems to fit the context that describes Ani who “entered upon/in the solar disk” after having emerged from the primordial waters, like the god “*jh*”. The use of the preposition “*hr*” (which, in certain cases, can be also “in” and “from”) gives the image a further nuance, showing Ani who alights on the surface of the sun and floats on the surface of the primordial waters.


And, of course, “*hr*” could also be read as “by”: thus Ani is seen entering in company of (by) the solar disk and emerging from the waters in company of (by) the god *jh*.

But that is not all:

<p><i>jh</i> </p>	<p>Sigtl. wohl Musikant (s.ä.) 9 ,  u.ä.</p> <p>I. das göttliche Kind der Hathor 10. Seit A.R.  u.ä., </p>
<p><i>jh</i> <u>wr</u></p>	<p>= grosser Jhi" 11. <u>Sa</u> (offl.) , </p> <p>II. als Bereicherung des Horus 12 (<u>Sa</u>) und des Osiris 13. (Lit. Sp.)</p> <p>III. als Priesterbezeichnung (Sp.; <u>Sa</u>) allein 14, oder als:</p>
<p><i>jh</i> <u>wcl</u> 15, <u>wcl</u> <i>jh</i>. 16.</p>	<p>  u.ä.</p>
<p><i>jh</i> <u>nwnw</u> 17.</p>	<p>  u.ä.</p>

We can detect allusions to various gods (Hathor's child, Horus, Osiris) within a ritual atmosphere given by a chanting priest, as if to celebrate the new birth of Ani's in his divine aspect.

Another possible, although somewhat far-fetched side resonance, might point to “*jh*”, the moon:

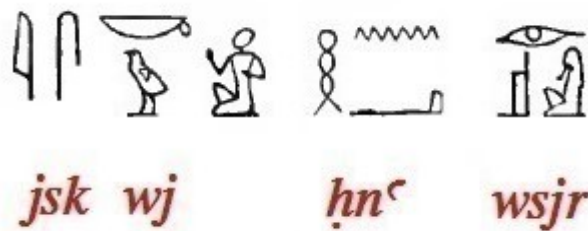
<p><i>jh</i> </p>	<p>der Mond, als Gestirn 7 und als Gottheit 8.</p>
--	--

that would visually balance the disk of the sun (*jtn*). The double strokes of “*jhwy*” might then allude to the double horns of the crescent. However, as I said, that is a highly questionable and dubious interpretation, verging on precarious over-reading.

Now, before turning to the next block we must consider the use of the two “*sdm .n =f*” forms, namely “*ḳ .n=j*” and “*pr .n=j*”. I am of the opinion that they are circumstantial forms used to justify Ani's claim about his acquired divine status. He says that he can share the gods' food because he has already accomplished his task: he has integrated the solar energies (*jtn*) after having emerged from the primordial waters (→ *jḥwy*).

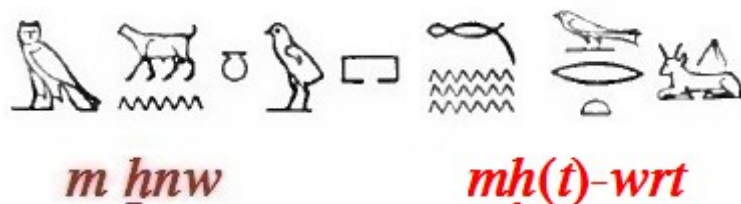
[6]

This last block deals with Ani's self-confidence in his own inner strength. The first lines [43-44] being a variation of the image that has been already shown in line 39. His asking to be feared and respected (*nrw =j*) in the night of primordial darkness (*m kkw smꜣw*) points to his Osirian self-awareness.



Since I am with Osiris:

In lines 43 and 45 there is the use of a 3rd masculine pronoun (*f*) which I assume is referred to the god who appeared in line 32 (*He who was at the beginning of time*); namely the god Ani felt was his protector against hostile deities; the god who has faith in Ani (whom he entrusted → *dhn =f*) and who lets the Great Cow (Mehetweret) stand by his side :



(like the Great Cow shown in Plate 36)



There is in fact the multiple image of Ani who is respected (feared) inside the Great Flood (*m-hnw mht-wrt*) that is in the meantime the Celestial Cow who gave birth to the Sun at the beginning of time; and, being at his side, does protect him.

The image of Ani's identification (or, better: psychic integration) with Osiris [46-47] is enhanced by what we may call a “linguistic morphing”: whereas Osiris addresses Ani using the language of common people [49], Ani answers with the language of the gods [50], showing thus how his status has changed, how qualified he is for the celestial ascension [52]. And in order to make things definitely clear he shall then “stage” his eleven scenes shamanistic performance.

