

# PAPYRUS OF ANI

## PLATE 24

[Chapter 124]



**Ani's Osirian dignity**

**by**

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As already pointed out in my “Narrative structure (rev. 1, page 18)” this chapter comes after a Thothean session (Plates 23-24) [which is the exact repetition of Chapter 18 of Plates 12-14] and precedes the long series of “Transformation chapters” (Plates 25-28). We might say that it works as a sort of prologue to them. In fact the purpose of the whole section is that of asserting how Ani has acquired divine means that make him qualified to be a member of the godly forum. Let us see how it runs:

#### PLATE 24 -- CH 124

1 Spell for descending to the Council of Osiris.

2 Words to be spoken by Osiris Scribe Ani, justified.

##### 1

3 My **ba** has built for me

4 a front-hall in Busiris and (has disposed) a fruitful grassland in Buto.

5 But it was I who ploughed the field according to my forms,

6 my palm tree, like Min, on it.

##### 2

7 What I abhor, what I abhor, [My abomination, my abomination]

8 I will not eat what I abhor [my abomination].

9 Ordure is what I abhor [my abomination],

10 I will not eat it:

11 offerings and nourishments 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 may I be ensured to glorify the white crown,

21 may the Uraei raise me up!

### 3

22 O warden of the door of "*He-who-pacified-the-two-lands*",  
23 bring to me those who make offerings,  
24 cause that I raise up the soil, [the earthly matter]  
25 so that the blessed spirits open their arms to me  
26 and the Ennead raise no objections [be silent] , while the Sun-folk speak  
27 with Osiris Ani.  
28 Guide, hearts of the gods,  
29 his holy form in the sky amongst the godly figures.

### 4

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 may **He** devour him [= the hostile god], as he emerges from the East;  
34 he shall be assigned to those who were before Ra was;  
35 he shall be assigned  
35a to those who were before the brightness of the Sunshine,  
36 (before) the clothing of the sky with the Great Ones.

### 5

37 For the share of Osiris Scribe Ani, justified,  
38 is part of the bread and beer (that is offered) to your mouths.  
39 I have entered upon the disk of the sun,  
39a after having come forth on "*jhy*" (the son of Hathor) [ from the abysmal waters].  
40 The followers of the gods speak to me;  
41 the disk of the sun speaks to me;  
42 the Sun-folk speak to me.

### 6

43 May **He** grant that I be respected  
43a in the primordial darkness,  
44 within the primordial waters -

45 the *Great Flood* at the side of **His** summit -  
 45a (I myself) at the side of **His** brow.  
 46 Since I am with Osiris:  
 47 my mat is his mat among the Great Ones;  
 48 he addresses me (with) the speech of the people,  
 49 and I hear and reply to him  
 50 (with) the speech of the gods.  
 51 [**OSIRIS**]: “Come to me has Osiris Ani, justified, in peace, equipped!”  
 52 [**ANI**] : “It is **you** who has caused his desire to ascend!  
 53 I am a blessed spirit, equipped  
 54 more than all the blessed spirits.”

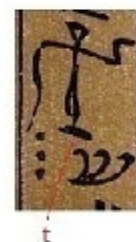
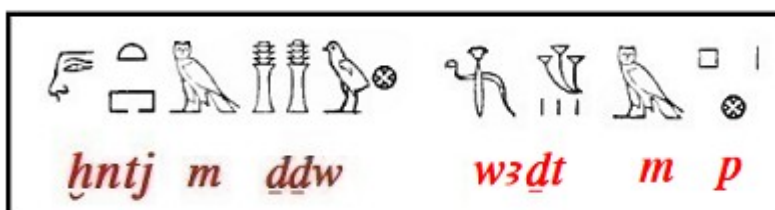
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We can see how the spell is composed of six main blocks:

- (1) Ani's assertion of his personal efforts;
- (2) Ani's repudiation of his earthly dross;
- (3) Ani's appeal to his own Horusian energies;
- (4) Ani's threat against hostile gods;
- (5) Ani's pronouncement of his own divine status;
- (6) Ani's affirmation of his Osirian dignity.

1 [3-6]

Ani has been given the instruments for his divine [= psychic] promotion, as if they were the genetic potentialities of his inner **b3** [3].



There is first “*hntj*” which can be both a sanctuary and a front-hall, in any case a “solemn” place; and then a “*w3dt*”. In Budge's rendering there is only “*w3d*”, but a closer look at the glyphs shows a sign which can be read as a feminine “*t*”, thus a term that points to “greens”. Given the context and the fact that “*w3d*” is also “to make green, to make to flourish” I have opted to see in it a “fruitful grassland”, metaphorically Ani's psychic landscape. Moreover “*p*” (Pe) is one of the two cities (the other was Dep) that merged into Buto, namely Per-Wadjet, which contained a sanctuary of Horus. In our line Buto is juxtaposed to Busiris (*ddw*), namely Per-Usir, which was a centre for the cult of Osiris. Now the juxtaposition Father/Son underlines Ani's regeneration process. Ani's Horusian traits, when rightly exploited, will allow him to manifest his Osirian configuration. In fact, in line 5, using an emphatic “*sdm.n =f*” form (*sk3.n =j*) he makes clear that it was he who took care of the field (given to him) so as to confer solid texture on his psychic substance (*m jr w =j*). The phallic reference to the god Min and his palm-tree [6] being a metaphorical allusion to his own fertility, underlined by an aural pun (*m3m3 =j m mjn*) which can hardly be casual.

## 2 [7-21]

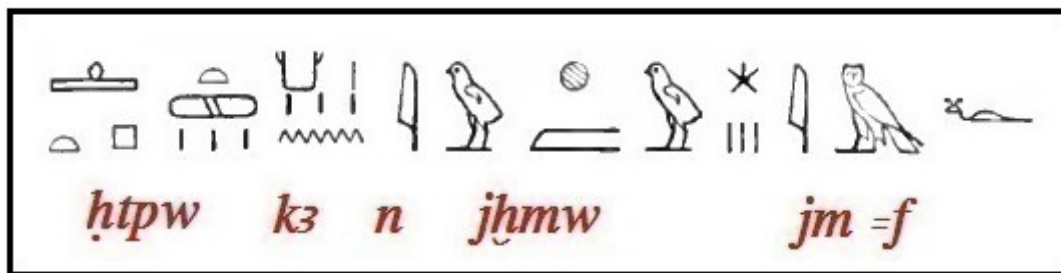
The motif of not eating one's own excrements [7-13] is widely common in religious literature. It goes without saying that it must be read as a metaphor pointing to the superior state the deceased has reached. In our case Ani clearly states that he feeds on divine food [14-19] and he can do that because, as he says, he “has knowledge of the beautiful branches” [19].



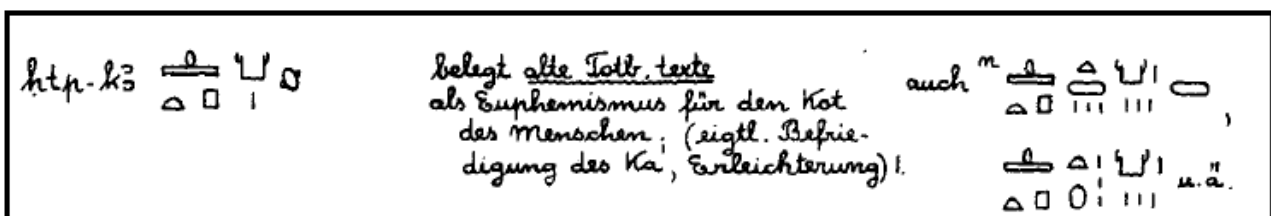
That may be an allusion to the vignette of Plate 16, Chapter 59



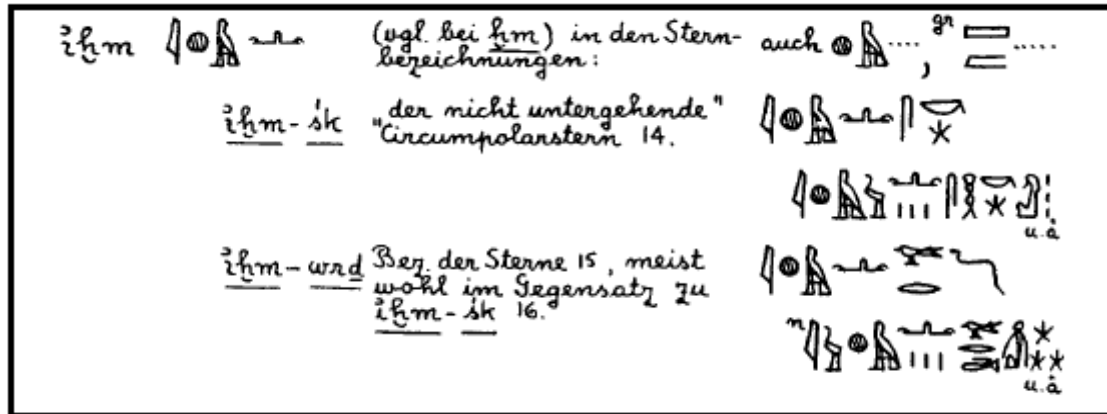
where we see a goddess, enveloped by foliage and branches, offering food and water to Ani. What is important is the “knowledge” he has (the result of his psychic work) of superior states, in contrast with the ignorance of the earthly beings [11]



who, not being able to penetrate the essence of the *k3* (*jhmw jm =f*), cannot but get stuck in its euphemistic expression (faeces):



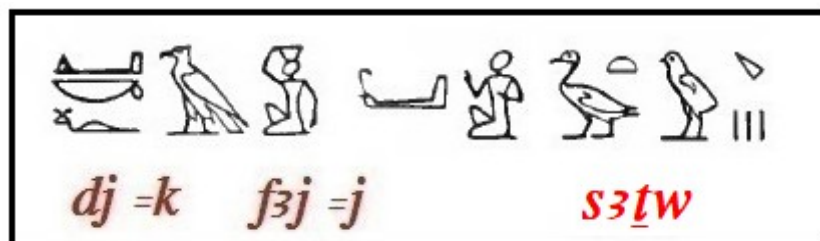
treading on their own excrements [13], the substance of which they have previously eaten [8-10]. It's interesting to note the peculiar graphic rendering of “*jhmw*” with a star determinative instead of the expected D35, as if in the stellar acceptance (*jhmw-sk* or *jhmw-wrd* : indestructible or unwearying stars)



That may be a scribal nuance so as to underline the common people's crass ignorance of higher experiential levels. Last not least it's interesting to take note of the colour of the food, the white of the emmer (*bdt hdt*) and the red of the barley (*jt dšr*), with possible allusions to the white and red crowns of Egypt and to the union of the two lands, which is explicitly mentioned at the beginning of the third block [22].

### 3 [22-29]

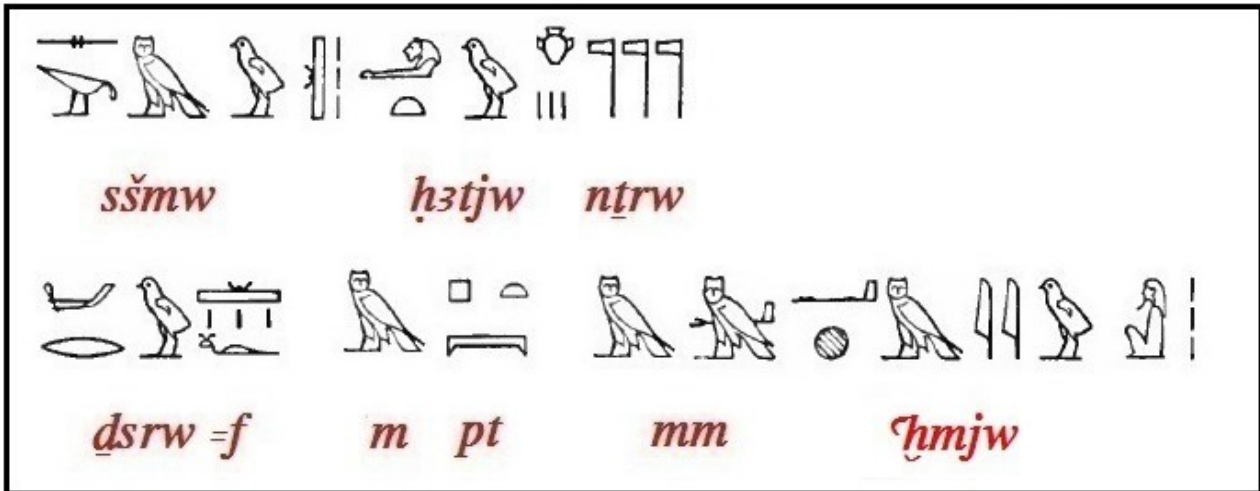
There is in fact a reference to “*He-who-pacified-the-two-lands*” [22], a common epithet of Horus. That is Ani's Horusian energy which must be activated through specific rituals performed by qualified priests, whom, I think, are “those who make offerings” [23]. As for the “warden” of the door of Horus, I am inclined to see in him Ani's own psychic resistance which he must overcome so as to release the Horusian energies. Line 24 is somewhat cryptic:



I read “*s3tw/s3tw*” (ground, earth) as a metaphor pointing to Ani's original earthy constitution which he “raises up/on high” (*f3j*), sky-oriented. It's evident that the pronoun “*k*”, referred to the warden, is also an appeal to his inner Horus, the two characters being in fact the double aspect of a unique psychic figure. The remaining lines [25-29] manifest Ani's wish of



obtaining a benevolent welcome by the heavenly beings. But lines 28-29 need a closer inspection:



The word “*sšmw*” is very ambiguous. It might be a noun, plural, referring to those who guide the hearts of the gods, but its syntactic connection with the following line would be kind of artificial, implying a tacit state of facts. A translation that would sound like: “O guides of the hearts of the gods, [*be*] his (Ani's) holy form (*dsrw =f*) in the sky &tc.” Personally I deem it too elliptical a choice. Thus “*sšmw*” could be a verb with “*ḥꜣtjw nꜥrw*” as subject. I have serious doubts about a prospective “*sdmw =f*”, that's why I would opt for an imperative, the plural strokes pointing to the plural subject. It's an appeal to the “hearts of the gods” so that they guide Ani's “holy form” towards the sky and let him have his place amongst the holy figures (*ḥmjw*), whose glyphs, we must note, are a little bit unorthodox: they should be in fact “*ḥmjw*”

<i>ḥm</i>		heiliges Wesen o.ä. 14.	
<i>ḥm</i>		belegt 15 seit D.18.	

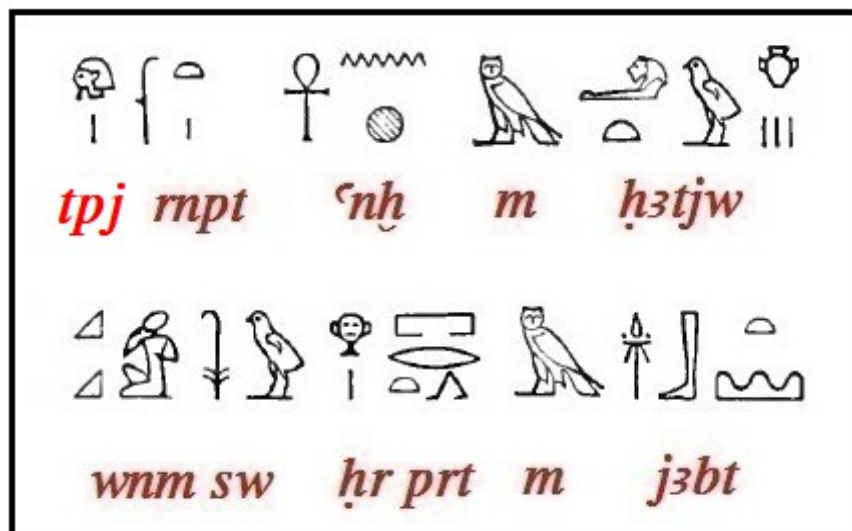
I. Götterbild:  
 ursprünglich das hockende Falken-  
 bild, dann allgemeines Wort  
 für Götterbild (sowohl Rund-  
 bild, Kultstatue 16 als auch  
 auf der Wand dargestellte  
 Götterfigur 17). u.ä.



But what is peculiar is the lexical choice “*ḥꜣtjw ntrw*”. We know that the term “*ḥꜣtj*” is especially referred to the material aspect of the heart, of which the spiritual or intellectual and emotive part is “*jb*”. Thus it seems that Ani's appeal is to the instinctual part of the gods' hearts which could act in an improper way towards him. That would trigger a severe reaction, as shown in the next block.

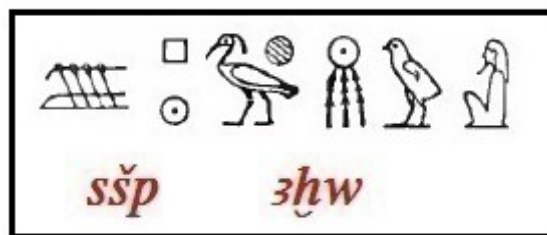
#### 4 [30-36]

The difficult part of this section is the identification of the “punisher” and of the pains inflicted to the hostile gods. Lines 32-33 are the most arduous:



Now “*tpj-rnpt*” is New Year's Day, in symbolical terms the beginning of Creation. As for “*ḥnh m ḥꜣtjw*” that looks like a threatening figure that “lives on hearts”. I can hardly imagine a New Year's Day feeding on hearts, and that's why I come to the conclusion that “*tpj-rnpt*” is the nominalization of the numinous presence of the Beginning, namely Atum emerging from the abysmal waters of Nun, although in a still amorphous shape, not yet differentiated from his chaotic aspect, that of Apophis. Thus any hostile god who will move against Ani [30-31] will be eaten by that Primordial Creature as he (the hostile god) tries to emerge from the East to the light of the Day; in other terms he will be denied his cyclic solar course, Atum being the judge and Apophis the executioner. Note that the hearts recall the “hearts of the gods” of the preceding block.

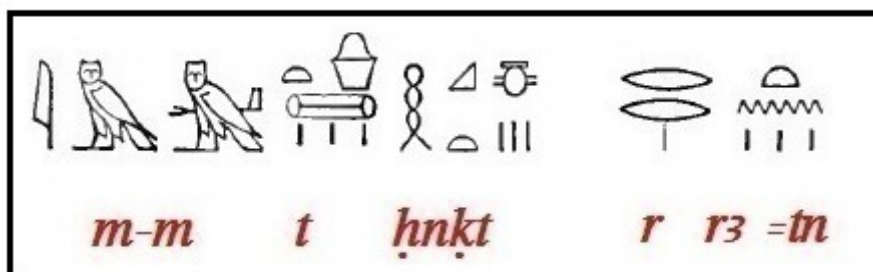
There is, though, a grammatical problem concerning “*wnm sw*”. If we consider line 32 as a topicalized subject then a prospective “*wnm*” would need a pronoun (*wnm [=f] sw*). Thus either we admit an implicit “*f*” or we should treat the verb as a spurious and ambiguous imperative/optative. The primordial tenebrous landscape of the punishment is underscored by the reference to the creatures of Chaos, namely beings that were before the appearance of the radiance of Sun figure [34] and before the vault of the sky had been clothed with the brilliant stars, reflections of the splendour of the Blessed Spirits [35a-36]. In fact “*sšp ʒhw*”



may refer both to the brightness (*sšp*) of the Sunshine (*jʒhw / ʒhw*) and to that of the holy *ʒhw*.

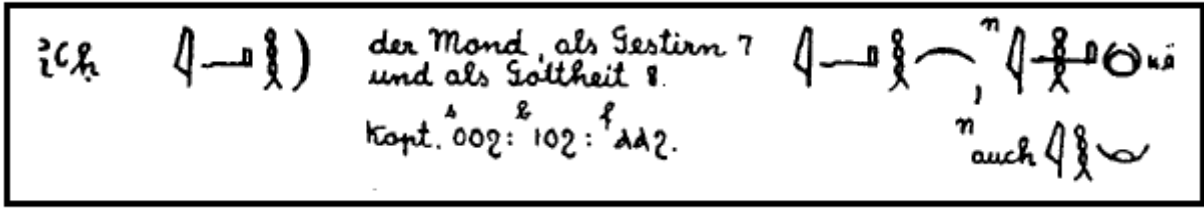
### 5 [37-42]

The previous block worked as a sort of intermission, a theatrical suspense, since line 37 is directly linked to the last line [29] of block 3, Ani having taken his place amongst the godly figures. As such he claims his share of the divine offerings [37-38]. What must be noted in line 38 is the use of the second plural pronoun “*tn*”, pointing to an evident dialogue with divine beings.

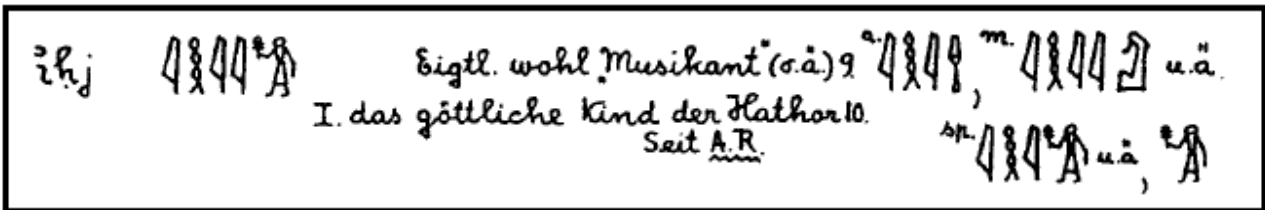


Now, excluding the “warden” (singular) of line 22, I think that Ani is speaking to the three gods of the vignette:

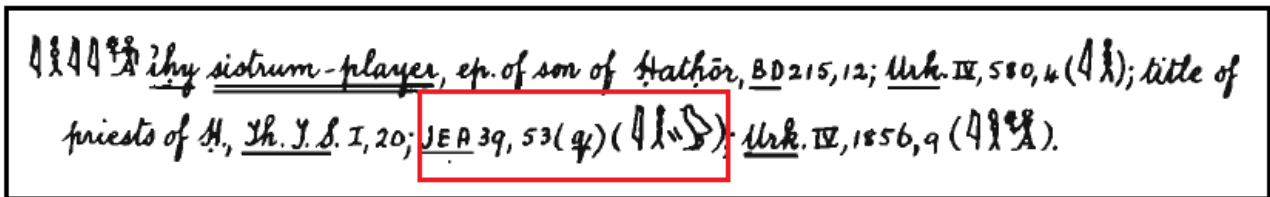




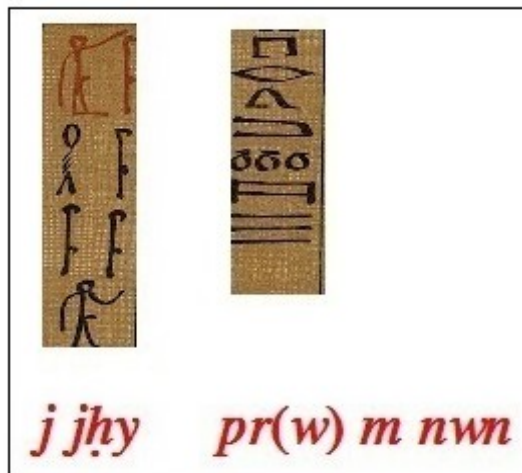
The seated god determinative definitely points to a divine being and there is in fact a god “*jhy*”, son of Hathor:



The word is strictly related to “music”, to Hathor's sistrum and to a priestly sistrum-player (Faulkner, C.D., page 29):



Thus the image could be that of the initiation ritual Ani has gone through in order to become the “son of Hathor”, reaching in fact a divine status. And we should also note that there is a god “*jhy*” in the “negative confession” (Chapter 125, Plate 31), in the 36<sup>th</sup> position:

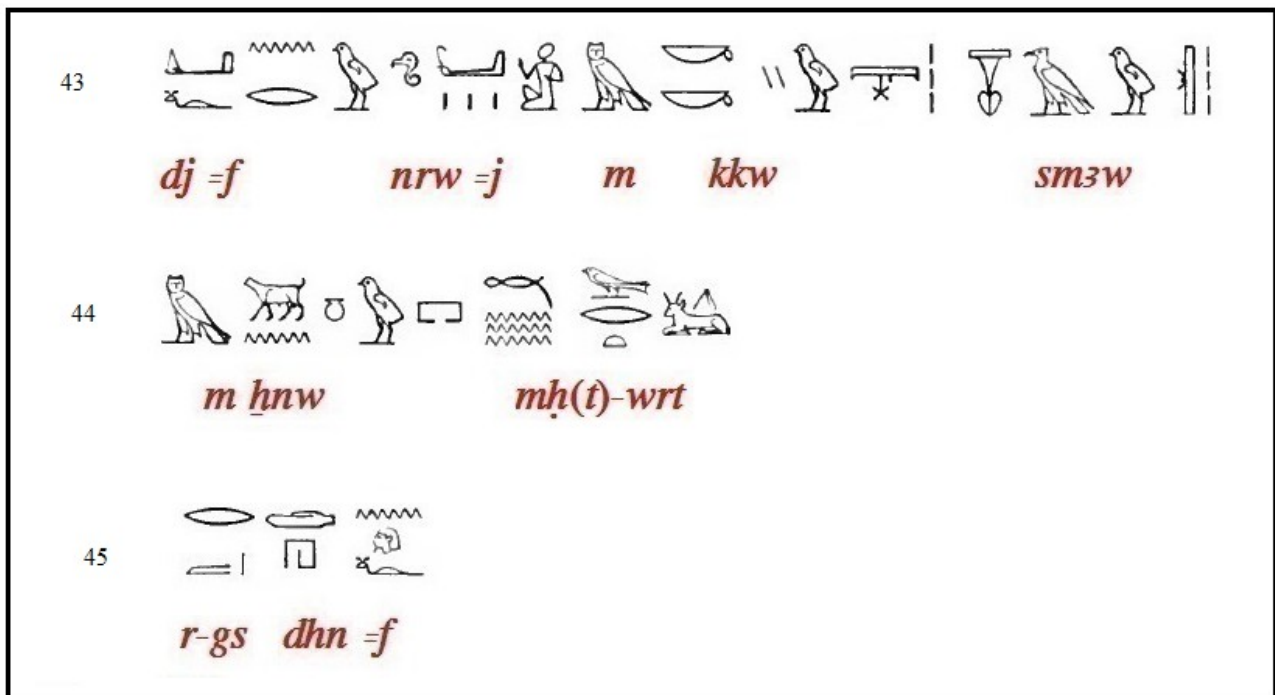


Being a god who emerges from the abysmal waters (*m nwn*) there is a resonance with our context, since Ani's emergence on “*jhy*” (*pr .n =j hr jhy*), as if carried by him and having him under control, may indeed allude to Ani's successful passage through the tenebrous Chaos and be also a reminiscence of Atum's original coming forth. Now, whereas in the Egyptian rendering the hieroglyphs may simultaneously point to the various complementary meanings, the translation is indeed impervious; so I have opted for a paraphrase, not so elegant, but clear enough, I hope, in expressing my somewhat extreme and far-fetched interpretation.

The three remaining lines [40-42] show Ani's divine qualification, underscored by the fact that the heavenly beings speak to him, as if on equal terms. Interesting to note is the stylistic nuance the scribe made use of, beginning each line with the same “*mdw n =j*”, as in a rhythmic cadence regulated by *jhy*, the sistrum player.

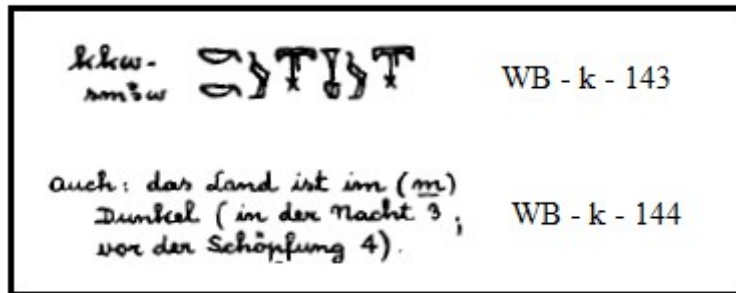
### 6 [43-54]

The first three lines pose some problems:





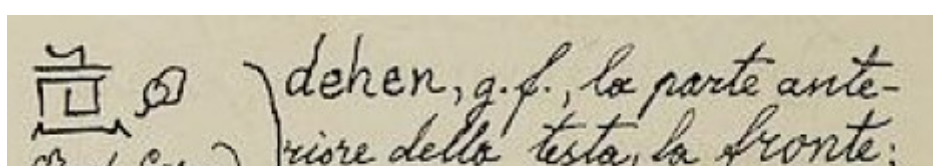
Whom does the pronoun “*f*” refer to? Since he can confer on Ani (*dj =f*) the special power of being respected (*nrw =j*) in the primordial darkness



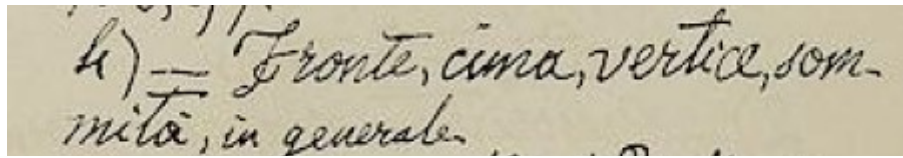
he could be the just met “*jhy pr(w) m nwn*”, but I am more inclined to see in him the “*tpj-rnpt*” of line 32 (He ho was at the beginning of time → in der Nacht vor der Schöpfung), namely Atum. In this particular context, considering the reference to “*mht-wrt*” (Great Flood) it is probably Atum-Ra. In fact the Celestial Cow is also a manifestation of the primeval waters and she gives birth to the sun, which she holds between her horns



waiting for the emergence of the primeval hill. Which can explain the ambiguous “*r-gs dhn =f*” if, following Simeone Levi's dictionary, we read “*dhn*” both as “brow”

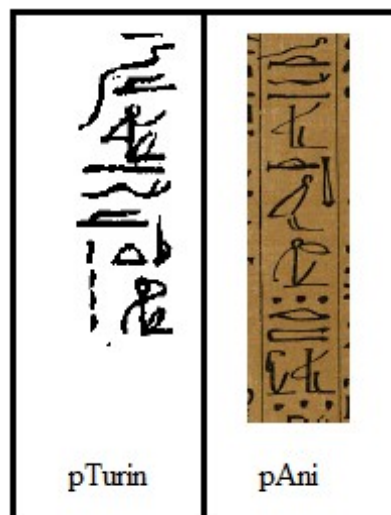


and as “summit”:



Thus the image could be that of *mḥt-wrt*, Great Flood / Primordial Waters, beside Atum's Primordial Hill (*dhn =f*); or/and – probably the dominant figure – that of Ani who is at the side (*r-gs*) of the solar disk which, placed on the head of the Celestial Cow, may be seen like a brow (*dhn =f*). In any case the general symbolism is that of “rebirth” in its solar modality, with Ani wishing power to traverse, in the boat of the sun, both the abysmal and celestial waters. Once again in my translation, questionable as it may be, I took the liberty of amplifying the compact hieroglyphic rendering so as to show the possible multiple reading.

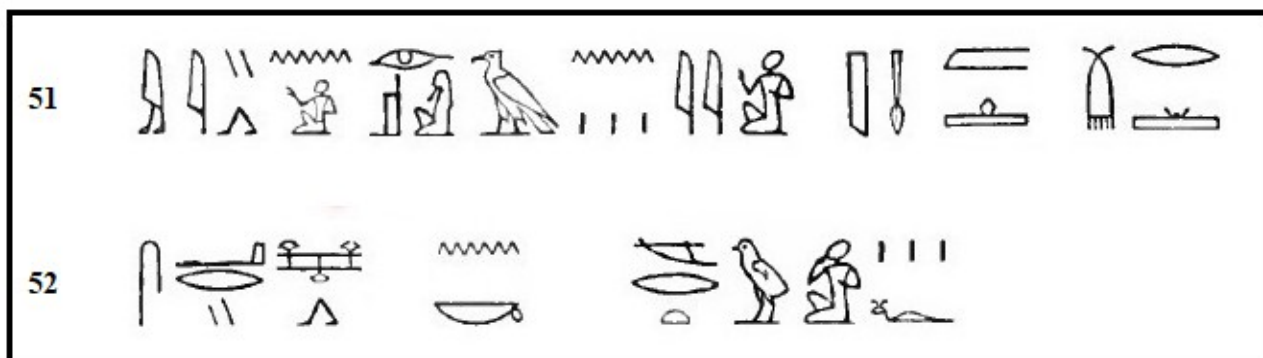
Ani's wish is supported by the awareness of having acquired the Osirian dignity [46-52]. His qualitative transformation is alluded to by a linguistic evidence. Many, if not all other versions of this chapter of *The Book of the Dead* show Ani addressing Osiris with the words of mortal people (*dd =j n =f*), but in our case it is the god who speaks to him (*dd =f n =j*) using the words of mortals (*rmt*) [48]



However Ani replies using the words of the gods (*mdw-ntrw*), showing thus that he has reached the superior knowledge. We should also note the brilliant scribal touch. Ani's final lines [51-54], which he addresses to Osiris, being “speech of the gods”, may be said to be hieroglyphs, the very



“*mdw-ntr*”, stressing thus their solemn stance. As a matter of fact line 51



could be read either as “*jj. n=j*”, thus assigned to Ani; or as “*jj n =j*”, thus assigned to Osiris. Since lines 48-50 refer to a dialogue I'd rather opt for the last choice. Osiris acknowledges Ani's peaceful entrance and his qualification (*pr*). Ani courteously replies crediting Osiris (*s<sup>r</sup>.n =k*), in fact *his* inner Osiris, for his wished (*mrt =f*) promotion . The use he makes of the third person “*=f*” instead of “*=j*” points to a solemn, official presentation. Then, putting aside any sign of false modesty Ani asserts that, as a blessed spirit, his qualifications are superior to those of his peers. And, as said above, in order to justify the validity of his daring statement he begins the series of shamanistic transformations that run through Plates 25-28.

