

# PAPYRUS OF ANI

## PLATES 5-6

(Chapters 1, 22, 21, rubric 72)

Exo }  
Eso } teri(ologi)cal landscapes



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Plates 5 and 6 form a coherent block describing the funerary procession and the entombment of Ani, as clearly shown by the vignettes running without discontinuity all along the framed scene. One might wonder why it is not placed at the beginning of the papyrus as plain logic might expect. In fact it is preceded by a hymn to Ra (Plate 1), a hymn to Osiris (Plate 2) and the scene of the weighing of the heart (Plates 3-4). In my general introduction (The narrative structure of the papyrus of Ani) I considered these three moments as a sort of prologue, a psychological preparation of the deceased for his perilous journey and a mental layout of the desired aims to be reached. As for the psychostasia, that should in fact mark the end of the mission with the official seal of promotion, being placed at the beginning (Plate 3) it assumes a different role: an expression of “wishful thinking” that will be fulfilled at the end of the negative confession of Plate 31:



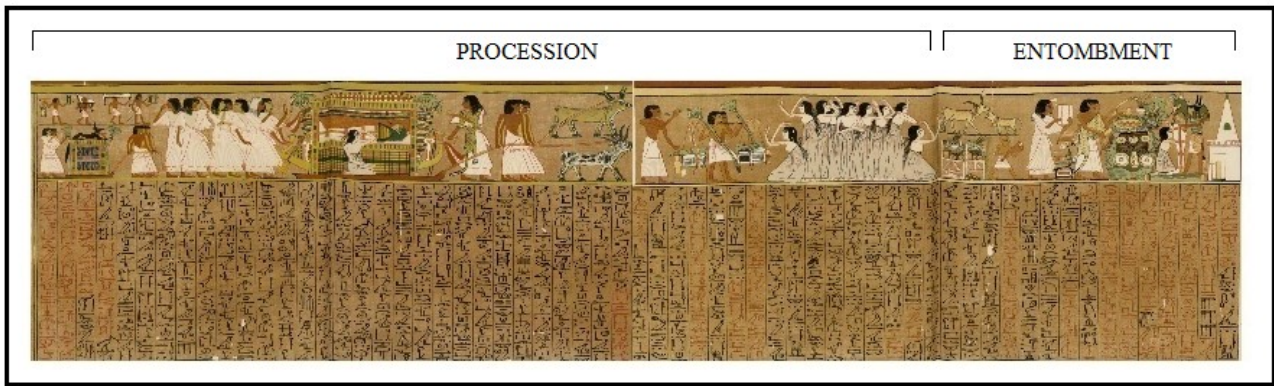
However, if viewed from a diverse perspective, the *weighing of the heart* of Plate 3 may also be seen as the moral judgment of the earthly Ani. Once declared “right and just” he is qualified for the rite of passage which, if successful, will transform his earthly nature into a numinous one. But of course the result is not granted, as can be deduced from the vignette in the last part of Plate 4:



Ushered and sustained by Horus, Ani has just implored Osiris to let him become a member of his retinue, but there is no answer. And that works like a shrewd dramatic suspense. Will he succeed? He has all the papyrus to go through.

Now this double aspect (earthly vs divine) has its visual correspondence in our funerary scene. On the top we see the drawing of a social rite that, no matter how sacred, is confined to exterior practices. Anyone wealthy enough can share that privilege, although its effectiveness is left to debate. “Under” all this runs the text. According to the rubric that concludes the spell, if a person has knowledge of it while still on earth (still living), once dead he will reach the Osirian state. That seems an evident allusion to “initiation”, namely esoteric rites. I deem it obvious, of course, that the knowledge spoken of is not the simple meaning of our text, but its psychic impact and the ritual connotations which for us may be often obscure. We will get to them in due time. For the moment let us stick to the drawings, they themselves not devoid of peculiarities.

The scene depicts (i) the procession, occupying most of the space ( $\frac{3}{4}$  of it); and (ii) the burial rites preliminary to the entombment. The profane and the exterior pomp “visually” more important than the sacred.



At the head of the procession there is a group of wailing women in white gowns, balanced by a group of lamenting men following the bier, they themselves in white garments. As a matter of fact at the leftmost end there are other figures, but in smaller size, so that the immediate visual impact is given by the two balanced white groups forming a sort of sonorous “howling” frame that engulfs the true cortège. This is guided by a team of three figures:

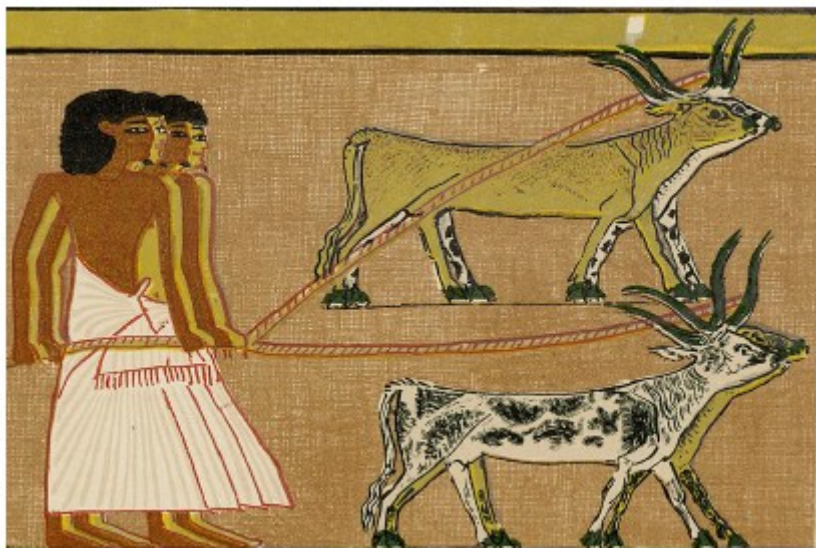


two servants, each one carrying two caskets on a shoulder pole, and a bigger sized man holding a vase and lifting high what looks like a reed. I would not exclude that the group be a representation of the scribal state of the deceased: the caskets holding the colours (black and red thin stripes, probably ink-drops, dribbling down from them); the green bundles on the

top (potential writing reeds); and the vase (that could be a container for cleansing the brushes). As for the caskets, being four they might suggest the “meret chests”, but I think they are too different



if only because there is no trace of the essential symbolic *maat* feathers. Needless to say that these are just wild guesses, waiting for sounder explanations. However what intrigues me most are the shoulder poles. Could they be an allusion to the balance of the “weighing of the heart”? Why two of them, why four caskets? Do they share hidden relations with the two pair of oxen dragging the bier right after them?



One might ask: why that visual solution? Why not a more common formation as for example the one shown in Hunefer’s papyrus:



Why four attendants? A possible answer could be a very practical one. The two yoked pairs might hint at the “weight”, namely at the importance, of such a funerary wagon and at the force that must be exerted to drag it along. But it might also hint at opposing energies which, if not controlled, could endanger the right course of the symbolic journey. And the four attendants could allude to the four sons of Horus, symbolically linked to the above described four caskets, themselves possible, although very oblique, parallels of the four canopic jars. As a matter of fact there might be another consonance; but we’ll deal with it later on.

The procession continues showing Ani’s magnificent bier attended by a *sem*-priest; Ani’s wife wailing beside her husband’s mummy; and then the group of men among whom a white-haired one,



implying perhaps the presence of “Elders” as well. Finally, as said above, a peculiar group of figures drawn in smaller size with respect to the others and placed on two superimposed registers:



On the upper one we can see four servants carrying, besides Ani's chair and bed, his scribal tools (I wonder whether the strange object held on high by the leftmost servant be a "scrolling papyrus roll").



As regards the two "tower-like forms" carried by the first figurine



I have no clear idea of what they might be. Since the servant carries also Ani's staff they should be symbols of power, but they are too big to be "seals" (unless purposely magnified). Ogden Goelet suggests two amulets: Isis-knot and *djed*-pillar. Honestly I don't know.

Then on the lower register, definitely bigger than the upper one, we can see four more servants drawing a sacred shrine with Wepwaut recumbent on its roof and followed by two praying male figures. There is no doubt about the sacred aura of this vignette opposed to the menial and mundane actions shown on the upper register. As for the shrine it was a standard object of funerary processions, coming normally after the bier, as we can see in many other versions:



It seems that sometimes it was used as a container of the canopic jars



but I think that its symbolic value as a netherworld parallel of the earthly procession is once again out of doubt. It might even store the magic tools for the ensuing burial rites or for the divine reassembly of the god-like Ani performed by Anubis in Plate 33, as the corresponding vignette clearly shows:



In fact, in some versions, it's Anubis, not Wepwaut who is over the chest, as in the papyrus of Nebqed:



Now the question: how come that such an important feature is allotted such a reduced presence? If it was a problem of space why not shrink the large howling groups so as to allow the holy shrine be drawn in its proper form? As already anticipated I am of the opinion that the scribe wanted to point out, through an immediate visual comparison, the essential difference between the exterior social rites that can be performed by ordinary people (exotericism) and the esoteric level (reached only by the worthiest) that can perturb and change the most profound psychic structures. As a matter of fact, giving a closer look at the Wepwaut chest/shrine



we can see how it is adorned with the archetypal symbols of Osiris (*djed* pillar) and Isis' knots (*tjt*) in a bracketing mutual embrace. And I think it is not a coincidence that each row shows two *dd*-pillars, which could be an oblique allusion to the city of Osiris, namely "*ddw*" (Busiris)



with its pair of twin *djeds* that will emerge in a specific moment of the spell.

This two-layered perspective is repeated in the second part of the drawing: the entombment vignette.

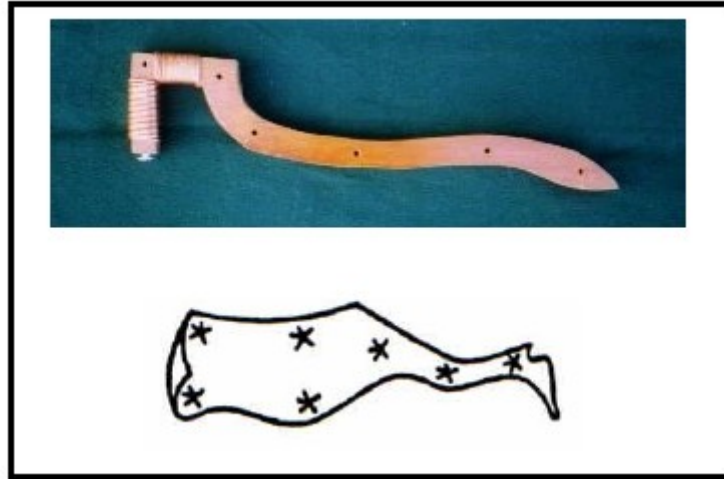


On its left we observe the same graphic disposition of the first part:

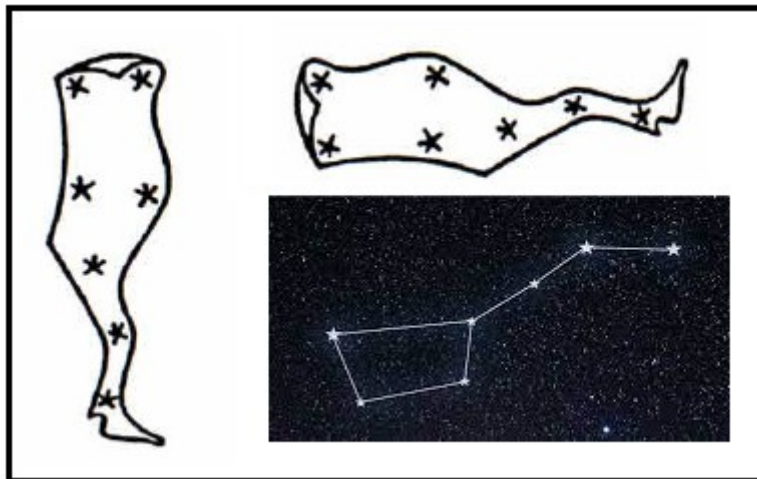


On the upper register we see a wounded calf (alluding to the bull sacrifice) begging comfort from his mother; on the lower one a servant (or the butcher himself) bringing the bull's cut off leg to the priests performing the burial rites: (i) the lector-priest reading the spells; (ii) the *wab*-priest making libations; (iii) the *sem*-priest engaged in the opening of the mouth ritual. Everything done at the presence of Anubis, ready to guide the deceased in his netherworld journey. As regards Ani's wife, whose attendance might be judged not pertinent, we should not forget her constant presence behind her beloved husband in the course of his trials, as if guarding his back, like Isis behind Osiris.

But returning to our vignettes we find once again the contrast between the emotional level of the upper scene, so tenderly portrayed, so "humanly" touching and the sacrificial aura of the lower register. The foreleg is in fact a ritual object of the highest importance, full of mythic and cosmic aspects. Its shape is similar to the adze



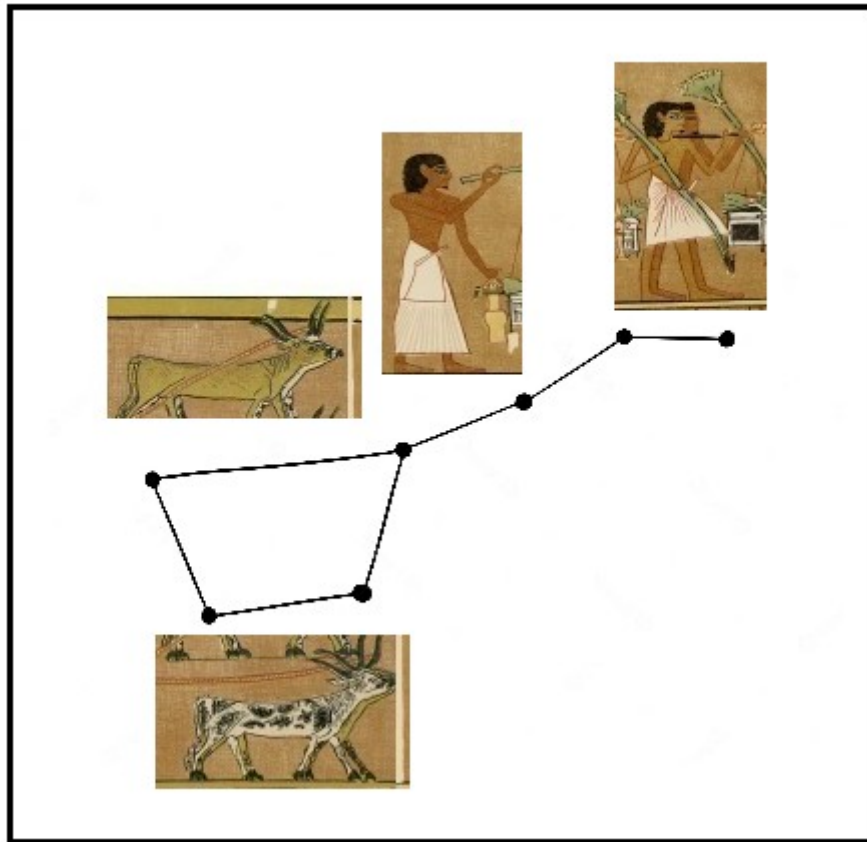
(the magic instrument for the *opening of the mouth* ceremony) itself related to the constellation of Ursa Major,



which for the Egyptians was the cosmic symbol of Seth, Osiris's chief enemy. And this cosmic aspect, as hinted above, might have some relations with the oxen and the three figures at the head of the procession.



Would it be too extreme seeing in the oxen the four stars of the Wain (or the Plough) and in the trio the “beam”?



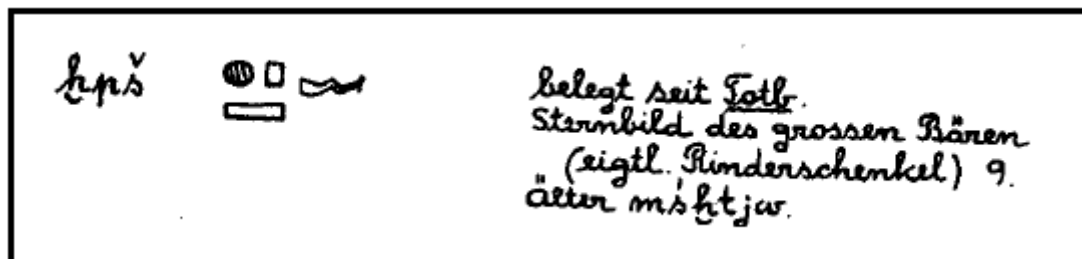
And in that case would it be too untenable looking also at the trio as “s3h”, namely *Orion*”, namely Osiris?



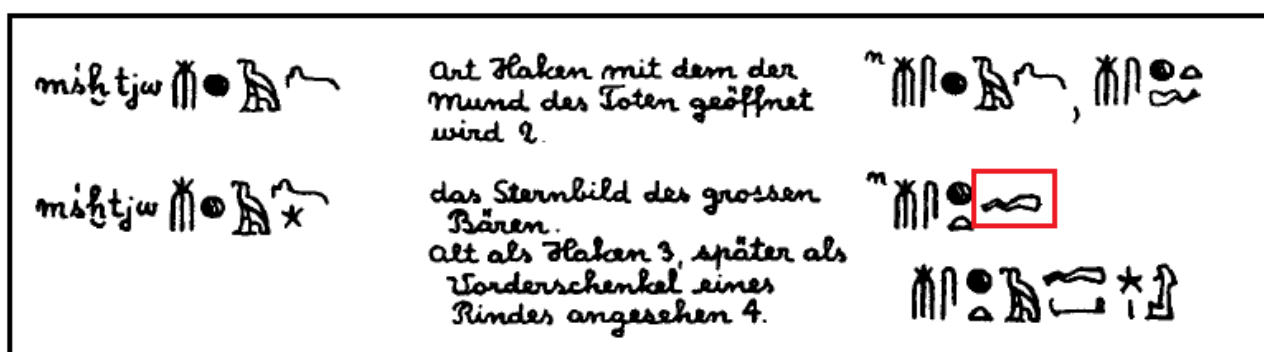
's3h    || 111 \*    belegt seit Sgr.  
 das Sternbild des Orion 1,  
 bes. auch als Hauptstern-  
 bild des Südhimmels 2  
 (im Segs. zum m's'h-tjer  
 des Nordhimmels).

auch || 111 seit m 11 u.ä.  
 seit Sgr. auch 111

That would explain the choice of the shoulder poles, vaguely recalling the poles of the glyph (D61). Now since “*s3h*” is the southern counterpart of the northern Great Bear, namely “*hps*”

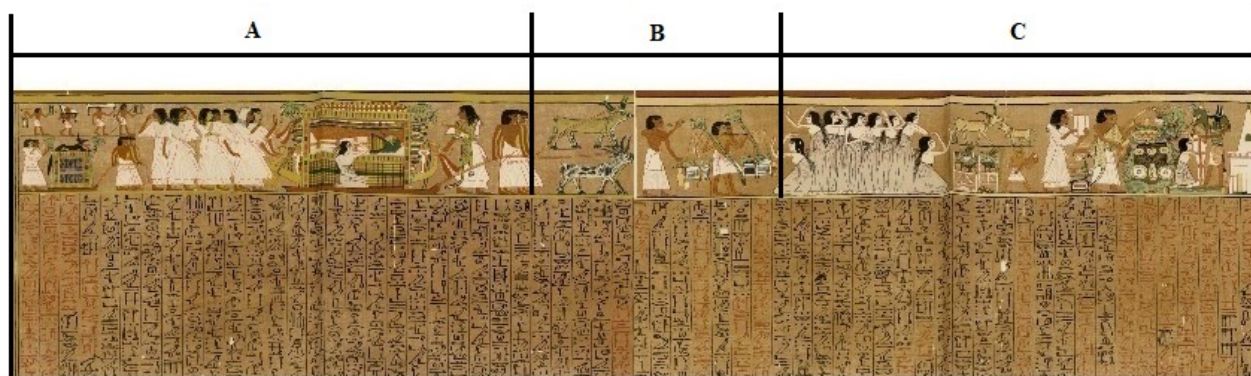


or “*mshtjw*” (which, no surprise, is also the “adze”)

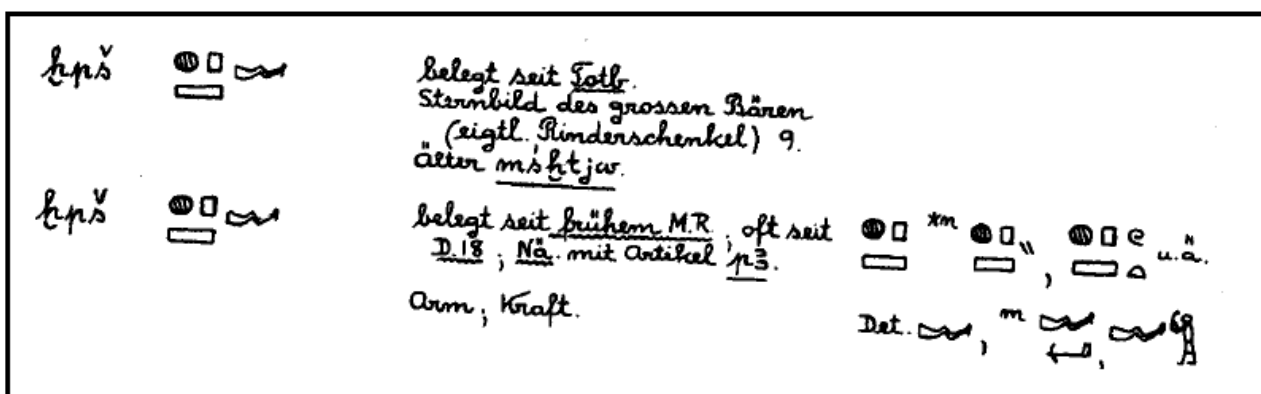


we can pick up from the unique image the two conflicting gods: Seth/*hps* and Osiris/*s3h*.

I am aware how far-fetched this interpretation may be, but I would not discard it as sheer nonsense if only because there is another circumstantial evidence that, no matter how fortuitous, does seem definitely interesting. In fact if we measure the extension of the whole section (61 columns) we see how the “cosmic” image (B) is positioned in the middle of it

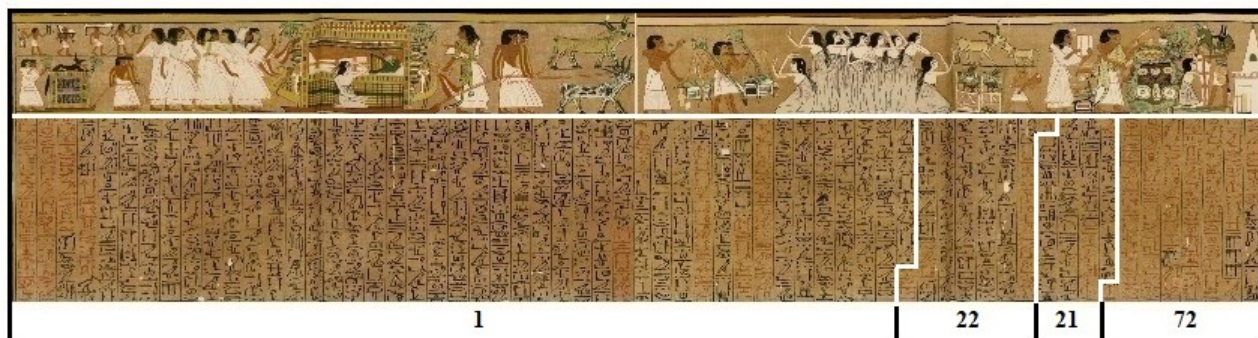


A and C having respectively 25 and 24 columns; and B half of them (12). Now if the cosmic group points both to Seth and Osiris that might be a veiled allusion to the original murder and to the fact that each human demise is a re-enacting of that appalling experience. But as Osiris has been declared “true of voice” (*m3<sup>c</sup> hrw*), namely “justified”, namely made triumphant against his enemies (*sm3<sup>c</sup> hrw r hftyw =f*), by the same token the deceased can share the same destiny through proper rites, those shown at the far East of the plate. In fact the foreleg (*hps<sup>v</sup>*) is both “strength” and “Great Bear”



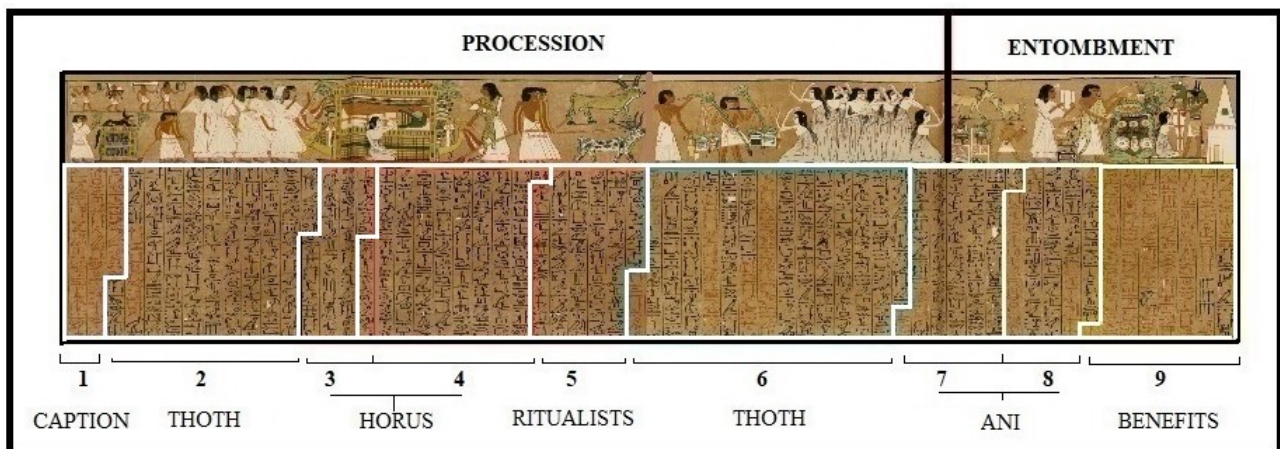
Now the cut out joint of the bull is a symbol of Seth’s defeat, his chaotic instinctual energies being canalized, through the opening of the mouth ritual, towards constructive ends. The *hps*/foreleg/adze allowing the deceased to speak the gods’ language, that is the one running “under the surface” of the showy social stratum of the cortège.

And it’s time now to examine the spell. A morphological description of it would just say that it is composed of four separate chapters (1, 22, 21 and the rubric of chapter 72)



but that would not be of much help in laying out its inner structure. We had better consider the text as a unique coherent block formed by a sequence

of logic components that represent the steps of a ritual scene performed by various characters who introduce themselves and explain their specific functions.



Leaving aside the Caption and the Benefits, that are general indications about the meaning and usefulness of the spell, working thus like prologue [1] and epilogue [9], we see *Thoth* [2] who declares of being the author of Osiris's triumph against his enemies and of being the protector of Horus, the rejuvenated aspect of Osiris; then we see *Horus* who shows his pious and filial duties [3] and advises Ani to invoke Thoth's help so that he might experience both the Horusian and the Osirian states [4]; there is then a reconstruction, made by six priest-like characters, of what looks like a ritual feast vaguely recalling that of *Sokar* or *Kohiak* [5]; with the next section [6] that can be seen as a part of it: the procession in the *henu*-barque lead by Thoth who invites the Netherworld judges to acknowledge the worth of Ani; who, in his turn, asserts that he has reached the Osirian state [7] after his perilous passage in the *Island of Fire* [8].

Although in very vague terms all this may be considered as a sort of abstract of Ani's papyrus, or, from another perspective, a kind of *overture* announcing ritual motives that will be resumed and expanded in accord with specific circumstances and in definite moments of his journey. But there is an important fact that cannot be left unnoticed: the visual absence of the three gods that play such major roles in the spell, namely Osiris, Horus and Thoth. Now, if the last two have their good share of lines, Osiris is totally silent, although Thoth does *directly* address him in his opening speech. As for Osiris's *silence* a good explanation is given by the fact that he is the Lord of it. As for his *absence* one might suppose that it represent the Osirian darkness of Ani at the start of his quest. He has to find and let

come forth the Osiris who is in himself but, for the moment, still hidden in his most obscure depths. Vague echoes of this will resound in Chapter 175, Plate 29.

There might be, though, a simpler explanation of the absence of the three gods if we look at the papyrus in its continuity and see how the block under examination is preceded by a stately vignette of *Osiris* (Plate 4)



whose sacred aura permeates, as it were, the following hieroglyphs, which, as we know, have been created by *Thoth*; so we might say that the text *figures* the god. As for *Horus* we see that he himself is present in the preceding vignette as an escort of Ani and in a protective pose perfectly fitting his monologue, as we shall see. In any case the voices of Thoth and Horus may also be interpreted as Ani's inner urges prodded by his wisdom and knowledge (Thoth) and his rejuvenation desires (Horus); their "visual" absence meaning that they haven't yet been brought to light.

At this point it is time to examine each separate block.

## 1: CAPTION

- 1 The beginning of the chapters
- 2 of the coming forth in the day.
- 3 Hymns of praise, ritual recitations
- 4 for the coming forth and descent
- 5 in the Realm of the Dead.
- 6 Things that are beneficial in the Beautiful West,
- 7 to be said on the day of interment:
- 8 going in after coming forth.

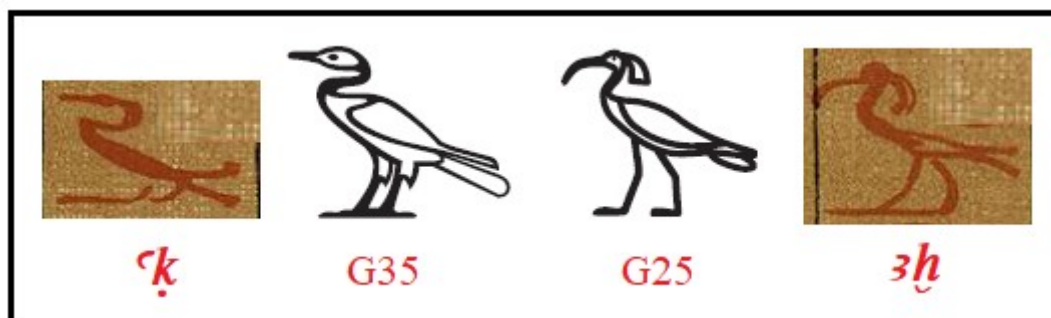
- 9 Utterances to be spoken by Osiris Ani,  
 10 Osiris Scribe Ani.



At a cursory glance it might seem a very plain statement asserting the aim of the next to come spells, the free passage (exit and entrance) through the Realm of the Dead, expressly specified in lines 4 and 8. There are, though, a couple of nuances to be remarked. Whereas for the *coming forth* is used the same verb (*prt*), the *going down* is rendered by “*h3j*” [4] and “*ḳ*” [8]:

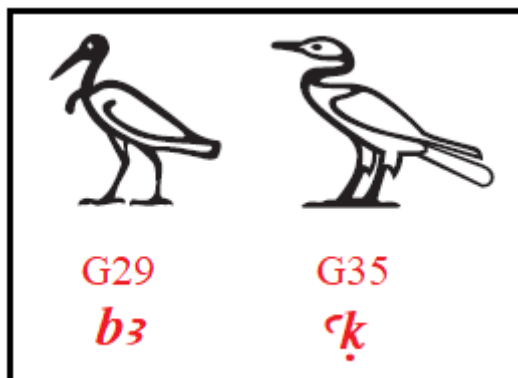


The first verb describes the physical descent into the grave, so that the exit may also be seen as a concrete coming forth: not of the body, of course, but of the *b3*-soul. “*ḳ*” has a different meaning: its “going into” points to “penetration/knowledge”, which can indeed be seen as the second part of Ani’s rite of passage, at the end of which he becomes a blessed spirit (*3h*), a superior state with respect to the basic *b3* (the first degree of the rite). So I would not exclude a word play between “*ḳ*” and “*3h*”, their hieroglyphs being somewhat similar.

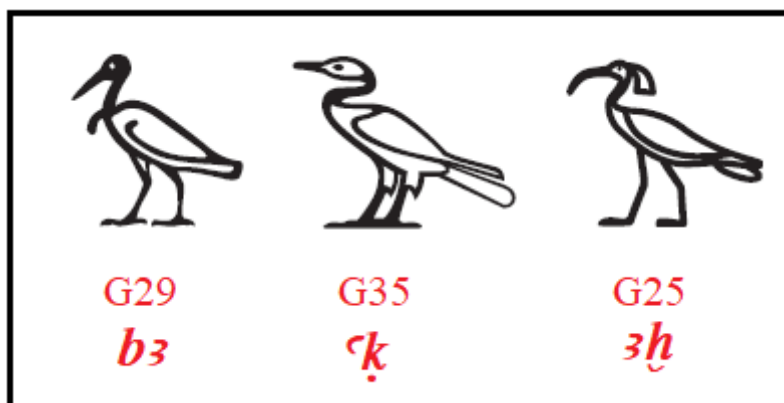


In fact line 8 has probably a further subtle nuance. From a resurrection perspective “going in (*ḳ*) after (*m-ht*) coming forth (*prt*)” looks a little bit unusual. One would expect “coming forth” after “getting in”. Unless *prt* be “birth” and *ḳ* “death”, both referred to the “human” state. Nonetheless

the strangeness remains. But if we look at the line from a bird's view we might be surprised. Since (in my interpretation) the coming forth of line 4 is related to the *b3*; and, since its glyph is G29, we have a bird sequence of G29 – G35: first comes the *b3* then the *ḳ*:



so, following line 8, the “*ḳ*” comes after (*m-ht*) the coming forth (*pri*) of the *b3*. Moreover, since the “*ḳ*” is preparatory to the “*3h*” state, we may envision what looks like a morphing:

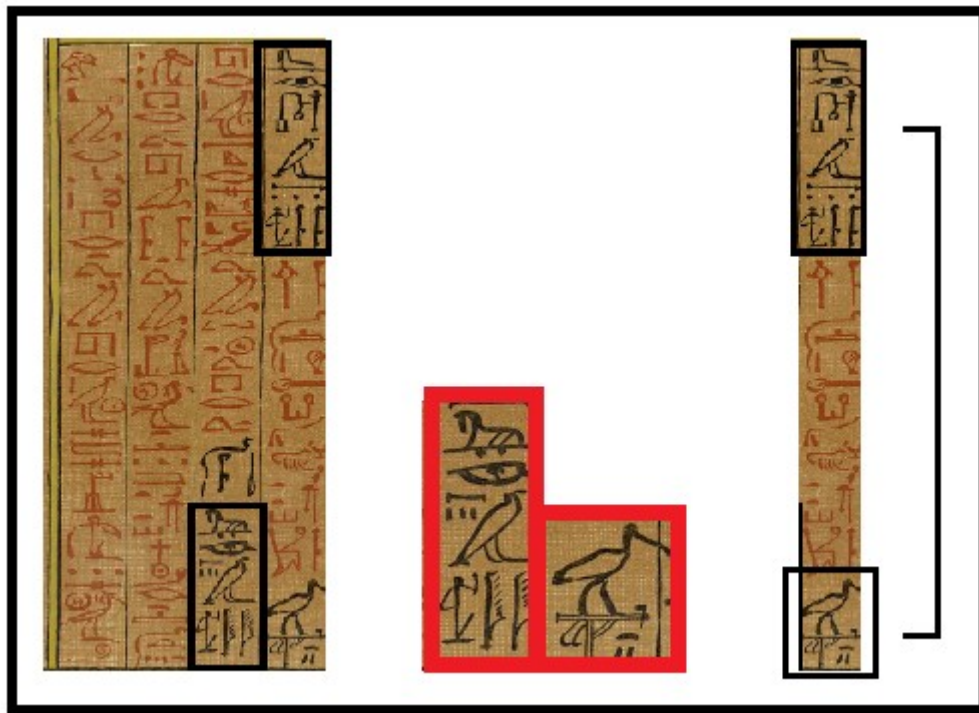


the quantum leap (quail jump?) of a *b3* to an *3h*. (With a jokey wink at Orson Welles’ movie: “F for Fake → F for Fanciful and Far-Fetched!).

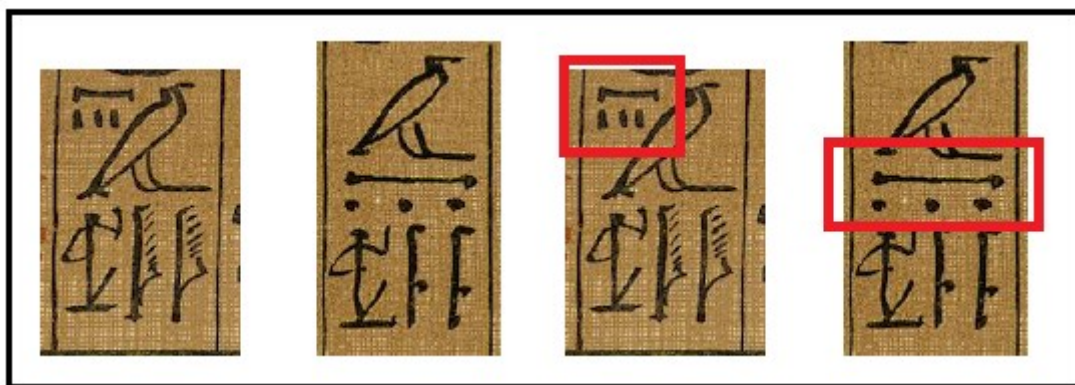
In the last two lines we find another curiosity. The repetition of Ani’s name. The first one “as it is” (*wsjr 3nj*), the second with his scribal function (*wsjr zh3w 3nj*).



And they come one after the other.



Moreover the “*n*” of the first is definitely “reduced” with respect to the second:



Of course it is possible that the scribe had to shrink it for reasons of space. But there might be other motives. Perhaps he wanted to point out that the deceased was not an ordinary Ani (the shrunk rendering at the *bottom*), but an Ani with scribal skills (*up on high*), like those of Thoth, who, by the way, is graphically placed in a very strategic position, near the “reduced” Ani and in the opposite polar axis (in the same column) with the “higher” one. As if Ani, the scribe, while greeting Osiris, be gradually absorbed by the figure of Thoth who, waiting backstage, is now ready to make his entrance.

## 2: THOTH

I think it should be no surprise that Thoth give the start to the spells of the “underground” level, being both the god of wisdom (the light of the mind) and the moon god, who, as such, works as a guiding light in the dark and mysterious landscape (the esoteric plane). But, most of all, he is the one who made Osiris justified against his enemies: thus a basic component of the archetypal pattern of the deceased’s coming forth.



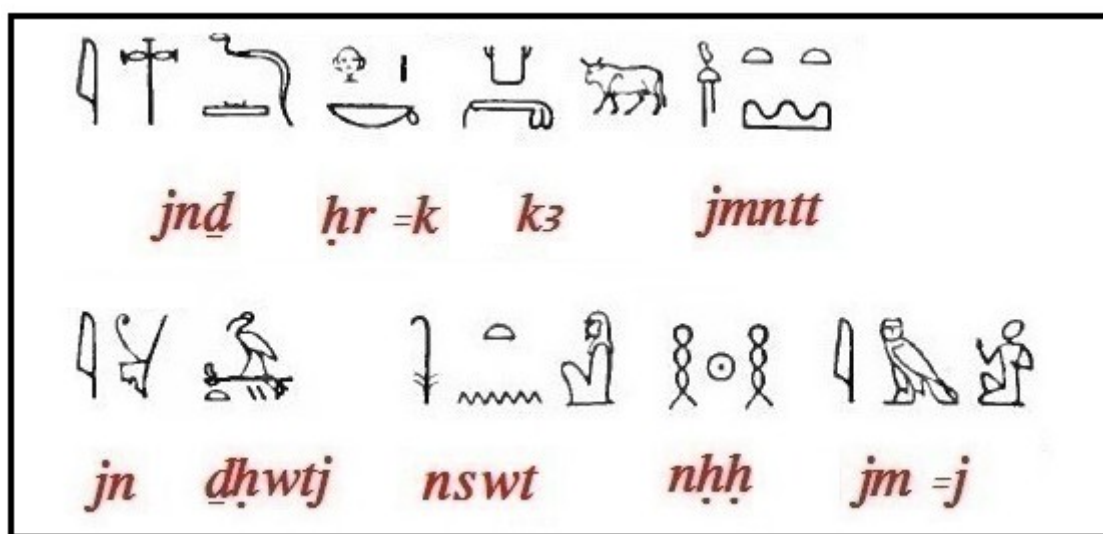
1       “Hail to you, Bull of the West,”  
2       says Thoth, “king of eternity *through* me.  
3       I am the great god at the side of the ship.  
4       I have fought for you.  
5       I am the one -  
6       among those gods of the divine Council -  
7       who made Osiris  
8       justified against his enemies  
9       on the day of the Judgement.  
10      I belong to those of your company, Osiris.  
11      I am (one) of those gods,  
12      children of Nut,  
13      who smote Osiris's enemies,  
14      who imprisoned those who rebelled against him.

15      And I belong  
16      to those of your company, Horus.  
17      I have fought for you,  
18      I have watched over your name.  
19      I am Thoth, who made Osiris

- 20 justified against his enemies.  
 21 on the day of the Judgement,  
 22 in the Great Court which is in Heliopolis.”

❖❖❖

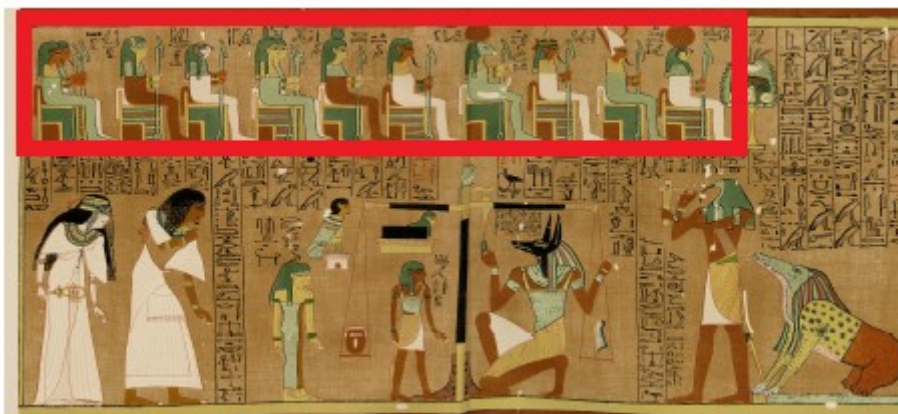
The two sections of the speech are addressed to Osiris (the deceased) and to Horus (the rejuvenated aspect) both under Thoth’s supervision. The text does not pose any problem, but for the initial greeting [1-2]. Let us have a look at the glyphs:



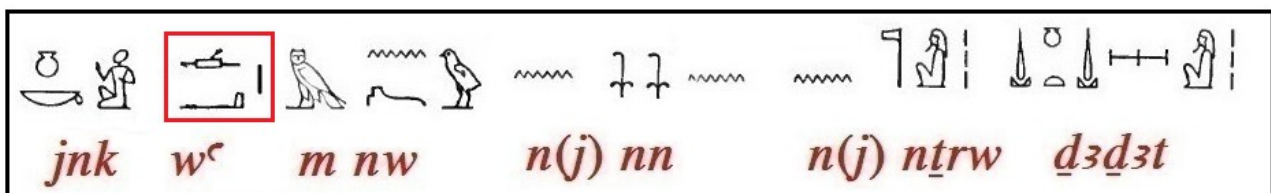
The real crux is in the lower line. As it is a cursory reader might think that the King of Eternity (*nswt nhh*) be Thoth. I myself made that naive mistake in my general introduction, considering then “*jm =j*” as Ani’s concealed Thothian structure. I had assigned the speech to Ani who was reporting Thoth’s words. But “*nswt/nb nhh*” (king/lord of eternity) is a too well known Osirian epithet to have Thoth usurp it. True that being the one who measures time (in his moon aspect) he might have some points, but I’d exclude this be the case. So “*nswt nhh*” could be a second title after the bull of the West (*k3 jmntt*). But “*jm =j*” is indeed ambiguous. Many versions are without it, others have a plain “*jm*” (therein) which makes sense referring to the western region (*jmntt*). Not so with our rendering, which must have then other meanings (leaving aside the possibility that it be an error). That might show Thoth’s concern about Osiris, whom he feels being inside himself, as someone whom he must take care of; as in fact he did. Or the preposition could be an instrumental “*m*”. Osiris has been made

king of eternity “*through* my working / through me (*jm =j*)”. And I am more inclined to consider this reading as the dominant image, if only because this is what is repeatedly asserted in Chapter 18. However the seated man (A1) applied to Thoth might seem to diminish his divine status, so there could be a third interpretation, although a little bit forced. What if the seated man be not a suffix (*=j*), but the ideogram for “man”, giving thus “*jm s*”? It would imply that each human has in himself the archetypal image of “eternity”, the Osiris that becomes Osiris N.

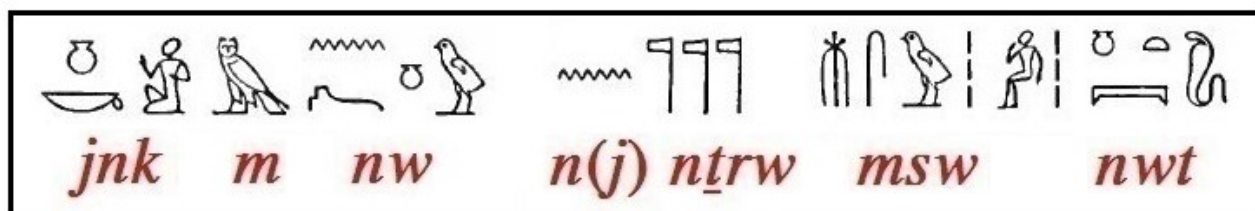
All this said I keep thinking that the instrumental “*jm =j*” has the upper hand, if only for an almost unobservable scribal touch. In lines 5-8 Thoth mentions the day of the judgment held in the court of Heliopolis [21-22] when Osiris was declared *m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw*. That looks like the *weighing of the heart* scene, with the Heliopolitan Ennead portrayed, among other gods, on the upper vignette.



In lines 5-6 Thoth claims that he is “the one god” (*w<sup>c</sup>*), not just “one of the gods” who justified Osiris.



In other words, among those gods who could give negative judgments he is *the one* who stands at his side, making him justified. That is different from his position amongst those gods of lines 11-14, the children of Nut,



who are defenders and protectors of Osiris. In that case he is just “one of them / among them / like them” (*m nw*). As regards their identities, I am of the opinion that they are the stars that adorn Nut’s body



underlining Thoth’s lunar aspect, which might also be seen in relation to the company of Horus of lines 15-18, since, in his cosmic aspect, Horus appears in a plurality of forms (just to cite some planets: *ḥrw-3ḥtj* → Mars; *ḥrw k3 pt* → Saturn; *ḥrw t3š t3wj* → Jupiter). So, called by Thoth, Osiris’s son makes his entrance.

## HORUS

As shown above in the division of the logic sequences, Horus’s speech is itself divided into two sections. First showing his filial piety [3], then inviting Ani to ask for Thoth’s help so that he might become his (Horus’) companion [4].

### 3: HORUS, the pious son

- 1 I am Djadj (he of *Busiris*),
- 2 son of Djadj (he of *Busiris*),
- 3 conceived in *Busiris*,

- 4     born in Busiris.  
 5     I am with the men and the women  
 6     who lament Osiris  
 7     all along the two-banks of the Washer.  
 8     “Make Osiris justified against his enemies,”  
 9     so they say, “O Ra!”



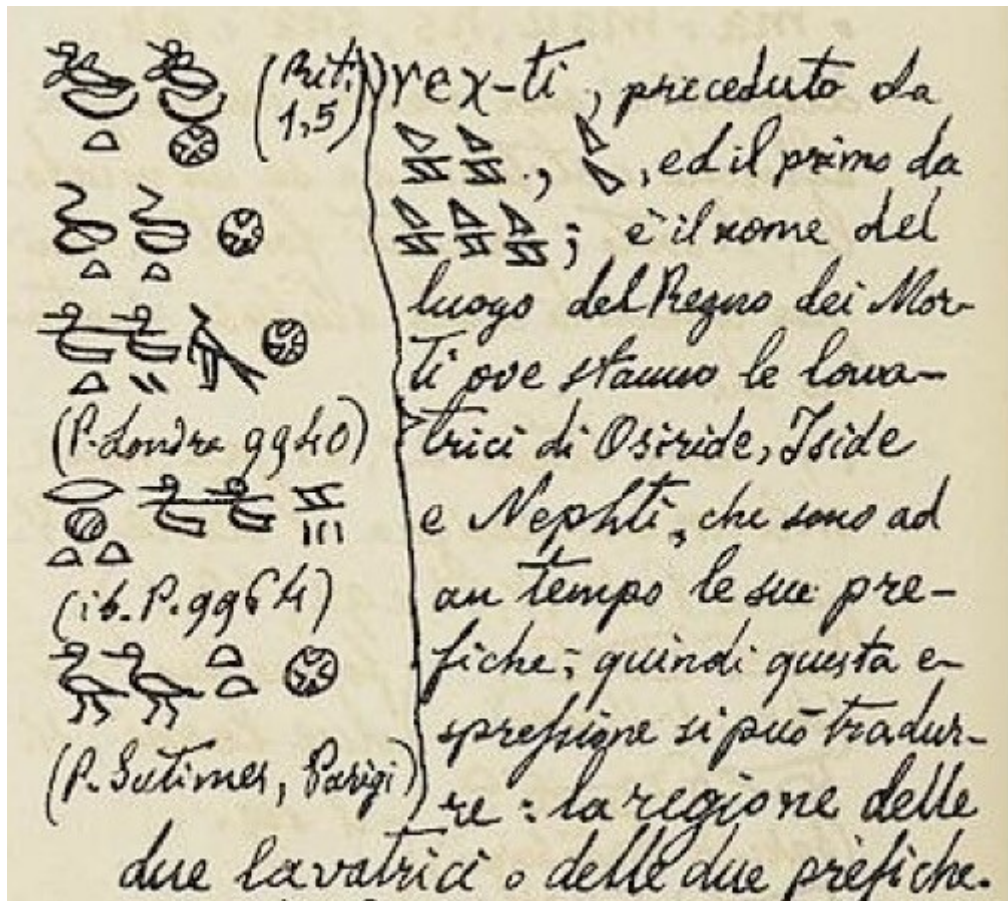
One cannot but remark the Busiris repetitions, both directly (3-4) and indirectly (1-2), the god *Djadj* being a nisba that might refer to the city of Busiris (*ddw*) or to the *djed* pillar itself (he of the *djed*)



which might point to the double aspect of the divine figure, where each pillar refers to Osiris (deceased) and Horus (living son). Their position alluding to dawn (right/east/Horus) and sunset (left/west/Osiris). A theme repeated by the images of conception [3] and birth [4]. It is the hidden potential life genetically programmed for coming forth. A double view also expressed in the piety of the son mourning his father [5-6] like the men and women of the procession (earthly honours),

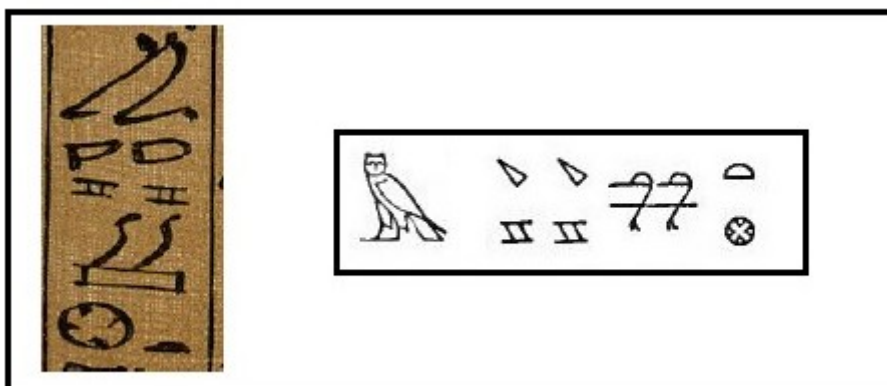


but, more important, like Isis and Nephtys wailing over the corpse of their brother, as suggested by Simone Levi in his interpretation of the word “*rht / rhtj / rhtj*”,

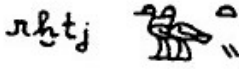


that he considers the place in the Realm of the Dead where Isis and Nephtys mourn and wash the body of Osiris, thus “the place of the two washers or of the two wailing women”.


As a matter of fact that word looks like a portmanteau




that could be read both as “*jdbwj rhtj*” and “*jdbwj rhtt*”. In the first case “*rhtj*” is “the washer”

*rhtj* 


belegt seit M.R.  
 Kopt. ⲣⲁⲛⲧ: ⲣⲁⲛⲧ: ⲣⲁⲛⲧ.  
 der Wäscher 9.  
 oft wie ein Titel (allein 10  
 oder mit Angabe: „Wäscher  
 des....“ 11) vor dem Namen.



but with Z4 (dual strokes), whereas our word shows the determinative O49 (city, region), present in “*rhtt*” (the end of the earth/land)


*rht.t* 

D.18 in der Verbindung:  
 als Ausdruck für „das Ende  
 der Erde“ o.ä. 3.

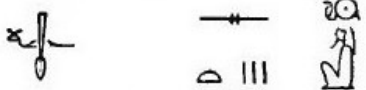


Now the blended word might give the image of a mass of water flowing and washing the banks of a land that extends itself to the end of the known world (*rhtt* probably coming from “*rh*” → to know), which might indeed be Egypt; alluding both to the inundation of the Nile that, according to some legends, was caused by the tears of Isis crying over the corpse of Osiris; and to the ritual washing preparing the mummification: the “washer” being the Nile and the deceased a “giant Osiris” lying upon the two-lands, so that the ritual lament is performed throughout the whole country.

As regards the last two lines [8-9] the text is somewhat ambiguous, but probably on purpose and in fact many other versions show totally different renderings. In our case it works as a sort of hinge between the two parts of Horus’s speech. Let us give it a closer look:



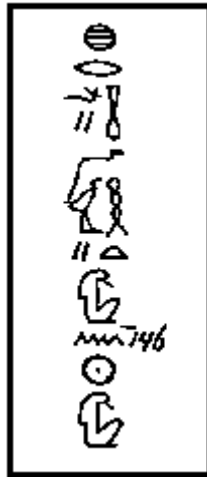
*sm3<sup>c</sup>-hrw wsjr r hftyw =f*



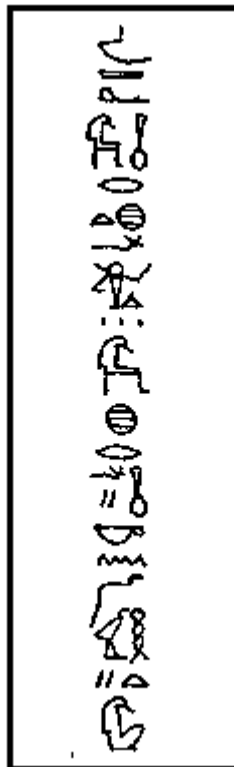
*hrwj =fj st r<sup>c</sup>*



*hrw=fy dhwtj n r*



So I think we should stick to our own version provided it be grammatically correct and semantically acceptable, which I think it is. If only because the following sentence in CT 314 (IV 94, r-s) shares its basic meaning:



“May I be triumphant over my foes – so you shall say to Thoth.” (R. O. Faulkner’s translation) The “*hrw=fy =k*” instead of “*hrw=fy tw*” is a not too common, nonetheless acceptable form.

At this point we can proceed with the second section of Horus’s speech.

## 4: HORUS, tutor and guide

1 “O Thoth, make Osiris  
2 justified against his enemies!”,  
3 so you [=Ani] should say.

4 “Act, O Thoth, on my behalf,  
5 so that I may be with Horus,  
6 on the day of the clothing of the *Teshtesh* (the dismembered one);  
7 of the opening of the caverns for the cleansing of the *weary-hearted*;  
8 of the spreading out of the chapter of the obscure writings in *Rosetau*.

9 May I be with Horus  
10 as the one who protects the left shoulder of Osiris  
11 that is in Letopolis;  
12 and get in and come forth  
13 as the gods who were present  
14 on the day of the chasing away  
15 of the rebels from Letopolis.

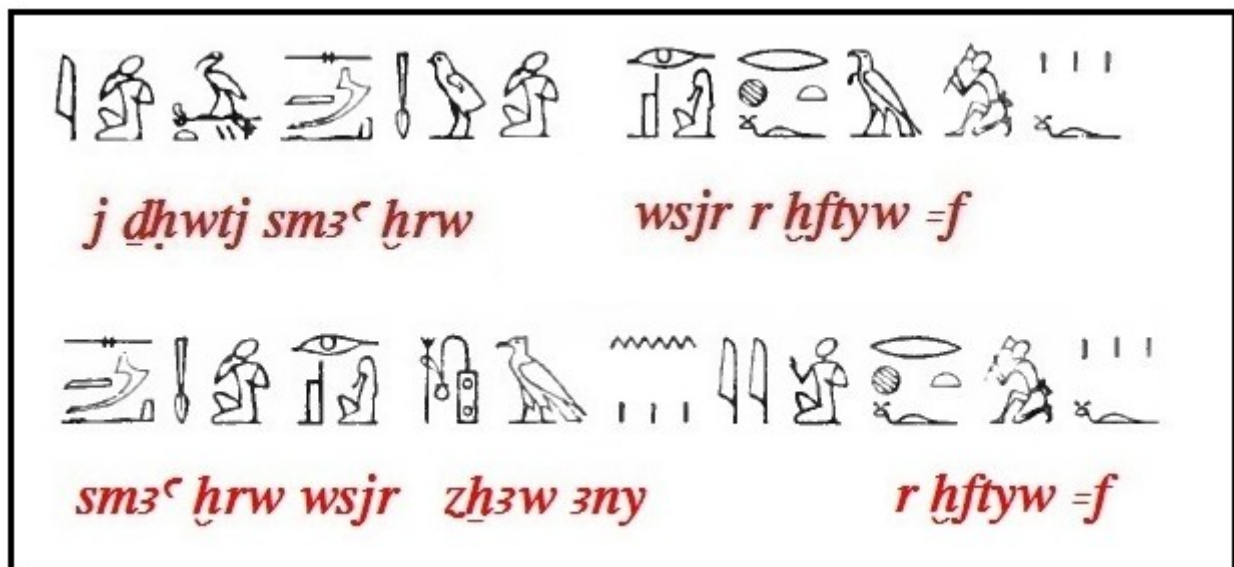
16 May I be with Horus  
17 on the day of the feasts of Osiris,  
18 when offerings are made  
19 during the moon's *snwt*-feast [first quarter]  
20 and the moon's *denyt* feast [last quarter] in Heliopolis.”



I cannot refrain from comparing this speech with the vignette of the previous plate showing Horus as Ani's escort and guide, ushering him towards Osiris:

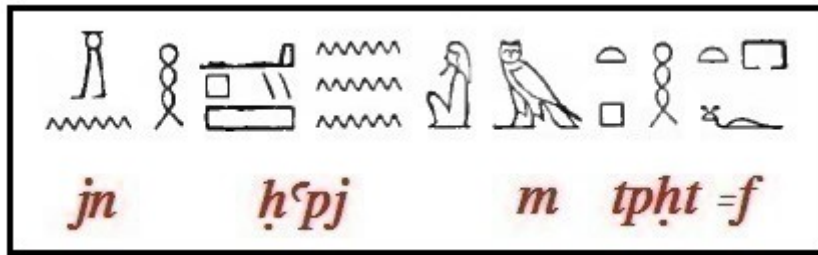


In fact the text is a sort of lesson imparted by Horus to Ani so that he may experience and be witness to the events of the Osirian justification. The first thing to take note of is that the prayer to Thoth [1-3] is exactly the same repeatedly used in the litanies of Chapter 18 (Plates 12-14 and 23-24)



where the god of knowledge gives a first lecture on the secret teachings (see my “Thoth elitarian pas des dieux”). And it is not a coincidence that some images of our text mirror some of that chapter. Prologue aside [1-3], we can see how this section is divided into three parts, each one beginning with a “*wn =j*” (may I be) expressing Ani's wish of standing beside Horus in his filial and royal aspects. Thus we have (A) the ritual [4-8], (B) the militant [9-15] and (C) the cultic perspectives [16-20]; all of them filled with allusions, many so obscure and ambiguous that the risk of being



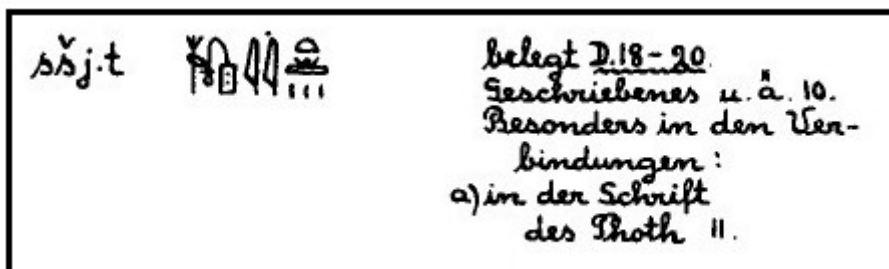


we might see not only a “Nile of tears”, but the awareness of the god’s resurrection and fertility (inundation). And the shared use of a not so common “*tpht*” could be a supporting evidence.

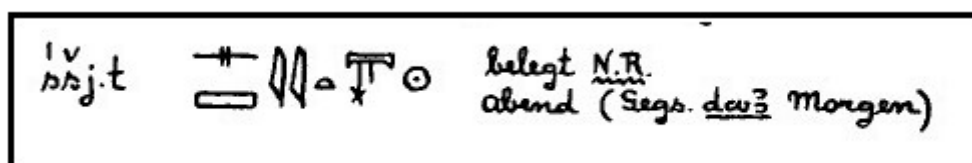
The last moment is the more enigmatic, which should not be a surprise since it deals with *Rosetau*, secret place par excellence:



My highly questionable translation comes from the reconstruction of “*zšyt*” which, as it is, does not seem attested. Considering its proximity to “*zš*” (open, spread out) it might be a passive participle: “what should be wide opened”; thus the entrance (*r3*) of what is in Rosetau, namely its secret pathways that must be unveiled (*zšyt*). With a subtle homophony “*r3-zšyt* → *r3-st3w*”. But there is one more homophony “*zšyt* → *zhjt*”:



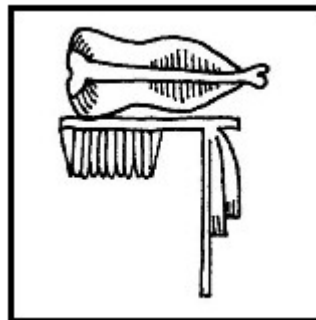
namely “what is written”; and, cherry on top, a resonating “nightfall”,



vaguely hinting at “obscurity”. Within the ritual context all this might suggest the “reading” of the secret utterances by the lector-priest. “*r3*” could indeed be the “spell”, so that “*zš r3*” is the wide-opening of the obscure spell concerning Rosetau. But “*zhjt*” might also allude to the writing in the papyrus, which would then be “scrolled along” (*zš*) in the course of the recitation of the secret utterance. Thus both a physical and a metaphysical action.

### **B: Militant view**

The events presented in the second part [9-15] take place in Letopolis (*hm*), the city of Horus who can appear under various aspects, but in our case, no doubt, he is the protector of his father, or better, of his left shoulder [10]. Such a precise underlining needs be elucidated. I have no idea whether that body part was a relic guarded and worshipped in some Letopolitan temple. I am more inclined to give it a symbolic meaning. Let us start from the emblem of the nome the city is in (2<sup>nd</sup> Lower Egypt):

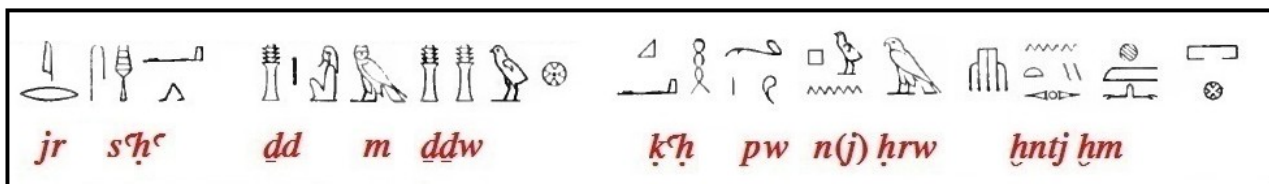


It is a “*hpsš*” (thigh, foreleg) that we know has connections with Ursa Major, the cosmic aspect of Seth and, under the form of the cut off joint of the calf/bull (such as that shown in the vignette),

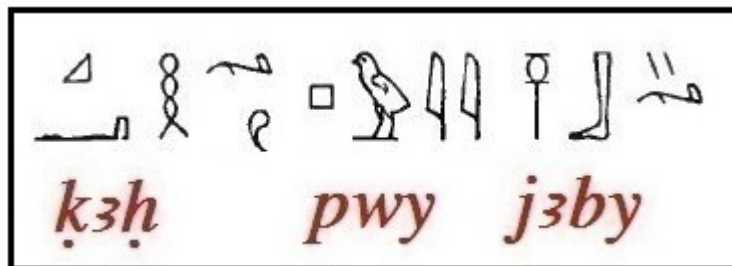


it is the symbol of his defeat; which may have a correspondence with the chasing away of the rebels of lines 13-15. Thus, guarding Osiris' shoulder, Horus takes care that his father do not meet Seth's tragic end.

But to that “*hps*” may be juxtaposed another well known symbol: the *djed* pillar. In one of the litanies of Chapter 18 (Thoth's catechism to Ani) that describes its erection in Busiris (*ddw*), Horus (*hrw hntj hm*) is said to be the one who performed the ritual action, sustaining Osiris's emblem with his shoulder (*kʰ*), namely being his help:

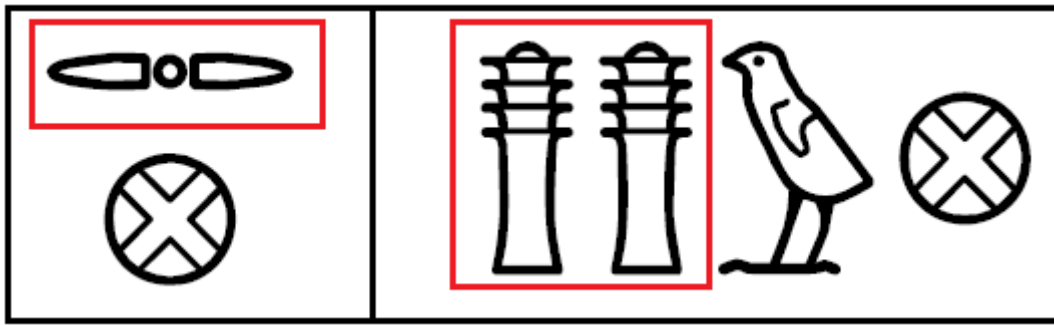


Now the image of the son whose shoulder sustains his father can have a visual resemblance in the double *djed* of *ddw* (Busiris). We should not forget that Horus introduced himself as the Busirite son of the Busirite. And this may also explain the “left” shoulder of Osiris [10]. We should not be misguided by the sinister connotation of our “left”. The Egyptian term is “*j3by*” (eastern):



And East corresponds to the rising sun and to resurrection. Thus we have the juxtaposition of the defeated foreleg and of the victorious shoulder.

In conclusion if in the first part Horus is the pious son reassembling his father's body, here he is both the protector and the royal heir. Guarding the mythic figure of his father he guards the land as well. And I think it is not a coincidence that this mythic and social event take place in Letopolis. In fact its ideogram is probably a double thunderbolt, pairing, as it were, the twin *djed* of Busiris:



In both cases a possible allusion to the father/son aspect and their never-ending continuity. And that is precisely the psychic trait which Ani should integrate, as shown, from a different angle, in the next part.

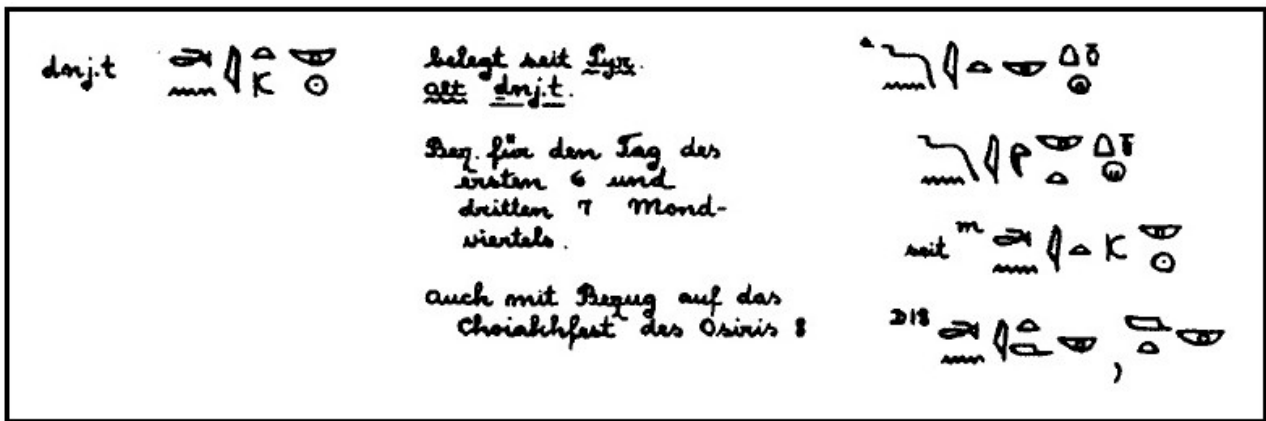
### C: Cultic view

- 1 May I be with Horus
- 2 on the day of the feasts of Osiris,
- 3 when offerings are made
- 4 on the day of the moon's *snwt*-feast [first quarter]
- 5 and of the moon's *denyt* feast [last quarter] in Heliopolis."

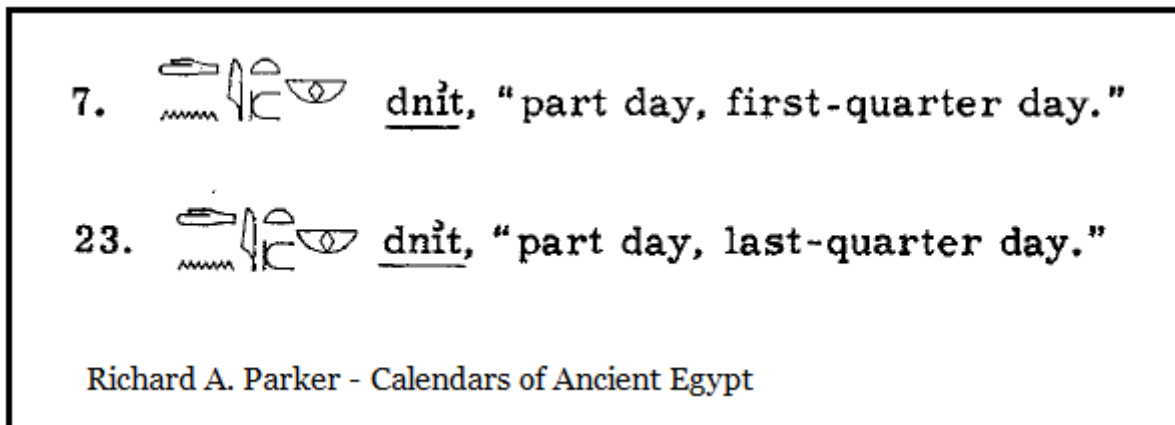
If in the first two sections the figure of Osiris was seen in a passive aspect (reassembled, cured and protected by his son and loyal followers) here we can remark his active qualities from a cultic perspective. The feasts of Osiris [2] are the social comprehension and metabolization of the god's eternal return, in our case manifested by two specific lunar festivals, that of "*snwt*" (the sixth day) [4]

	<p>belegt seit <u>Pyre</u>.        Fest des sechsten Tages des        Mondmonats 4.        Bes. auch als Termin für        feierliche Handlungen        (Baubeginn, Opfer u.ä.) 5.        auch als Zeitpunkt, an dem        das Mondauge voll ge-        macht wird 6.</p>	<p>a auch mit  det.</p>
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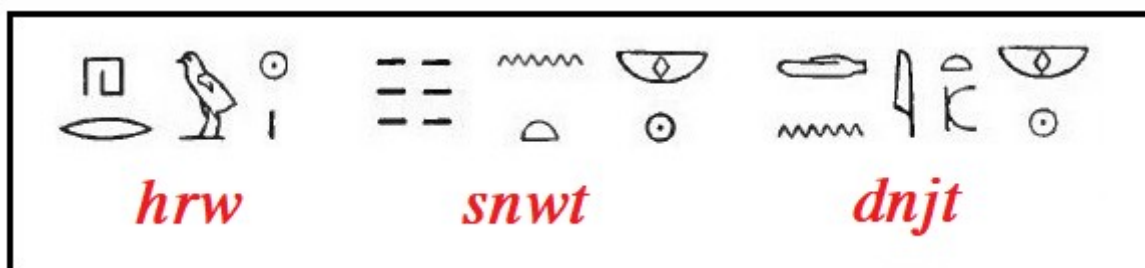
and that of “*dnjt*” [5],



which is a little more problematic since it marks both the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the first quarter and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of the last quarter.

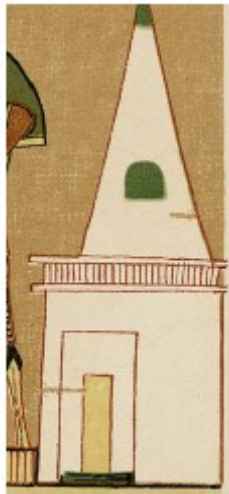


The fact that they follow each other



is probably a way to refer both to the waxing [4] (*snwt* + *dnjt*) and to the waning [5] (*dnjt* by itself) moon, thus as above suggested the eternal return of Osiris; or, from a different perspective, the dawn and sunset of the nocturnal sun. And that may be the reason why the feasts take place in Heliopolis [5], the city of the sun. Moreover I am wondering whether there

might be a visual allusion to the pillar-like tomb at the far right of the vignette:



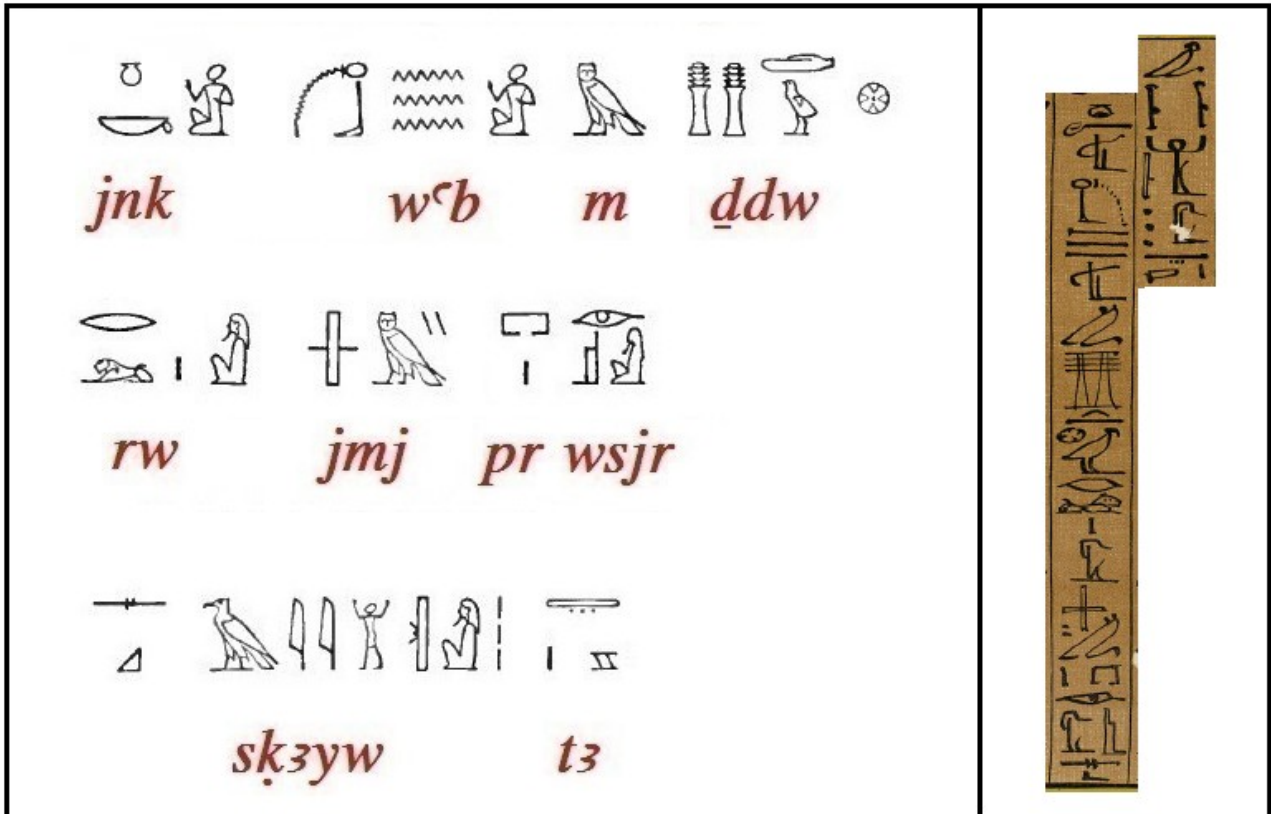
Now this abstract cultic aspect is made manifest in the next logic block. Here we find obscure allusions to fertility rites and to a festival which could be that of *Sokar* or of *Kohiak*, its more complex spin-off. It is, though, an indirect picture made by the celebrants who take part in it, each one specifying his function.

## 5: The six Ritualists

- 1     **I am** the *wab*-priest in Busiris,
- 2     the lion [= force] that is in the house of Osiris,
- 3     and in the gods who raise up the land.
- 4     **I am** he who sees the secrets of Rosetau.
- 5     **I am** he who recites the ritual spells
- 6     for the *b3* in Busiris.
- 7     **I am** the *sem*-priest in his office.
- 8     **I am** the great one, the overseer of the craftsmen,
- 9     on the day the *Henu*-barque of Sokar
- 10    is placed, balanced, on its sledge.
- 11    **I am** he who takes the hoe
- 12    on the day of hacking the earth in Herakleopolis.



As we can see each character introduces himself making use of the first person independent pronoun “*jnk*” (I am) which gives the whole scene a marked ritual aspect in accord with a coherent and well studied sequence that starts with the figure of the *wab*-priest, whose lines [1-3] need a close examination due to their ambiguous rendering:



First an enigmatic god “*rw*” I have never heard of (my ignorance?); then in the last line a “*sk3y*” (active participle) followed by a god determinative with plural strokes giving thus a plural “*sk3yw*” (those who raise up). As far as I know the god determinative cannot be a logogram for “*ntr*”, thus excluding a “*sk3y ntrw t3*”. Now if lines 2 and 3 are qualities of the *wab* we may accept the lion (singular), but the “gods” would pose problems, unless read as a “single” totality. Of course one might cry “scribal error!” and that would do. But I think that matters are a little more complicated since this rendering seems very distant from those of the other versions (at least those I could check) where, besides the *wab*-priest of Busiris, there is a *hm-ntr* (god’s servant) of Abydos; both described in the act of raising up somebody or something. Although I usually stick to the version under

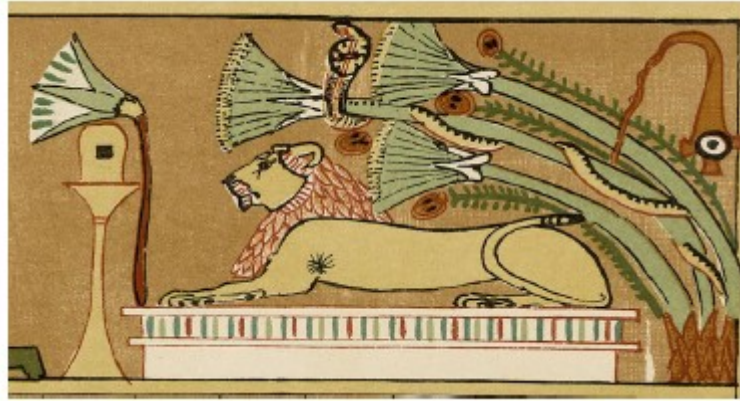
examination I think that in this circumstance a comparative reading might help in understanding the meaning behind our scribe's strategy.

CT 314	pTurin	pHunefer

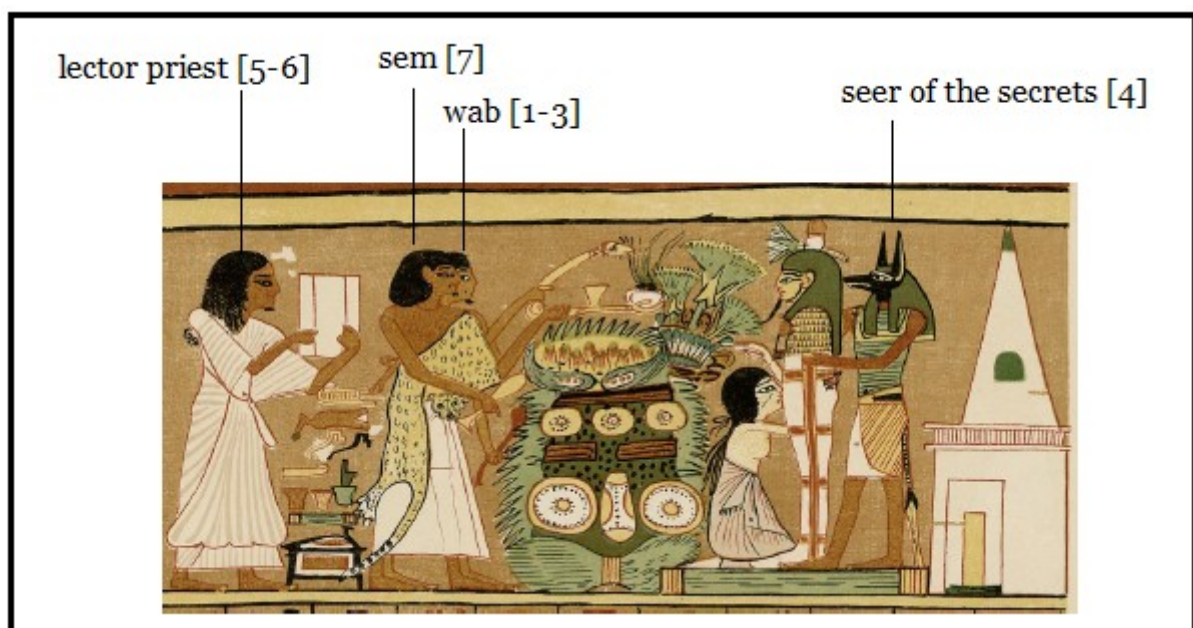
Here we have separate priests making a single action, as said above, one located in Busiris, the other in Abydos, the first housing the temple, the other the tomb of Osiris. In other words an indication of the god's body extended all along Egypt. The image alludes to the coming forth of the original hill (the raising up of the land symbolized by the *hm-ntr*) from the waters of Nun symbolized by the *wab*-priest. In our case these two ceremonial figures are condensed in that of the *wab*, who is not only a priest, but the symbol of resurrection, enfolding, as it were, both the waters of Nun (*wab* → libation) and the divine energies that raise up the land (*sk3yw t3*). “*rw*” may in fact be seen as the force infused (*jmj*) in the land (*pr wsjr*), which can be both Egypt and the Netherworld.

I would not exclude that the scribe used “*rw*” so as to point to a plurality

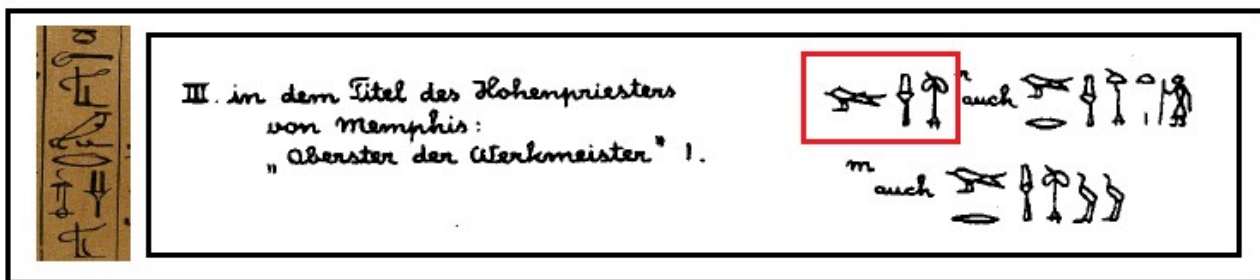
of meanings. First a possible pun of “*rw* → *hrw* (day)” that appears in the other versions, often under the logogram of the sun (N5); which itself may trigger a pun “*rw* / *r̄* (sun)”, both being images of vital force. And, last not least, “*rw*” could also allude to the lion recumbent on *Rosetau*, as it is shown in the last vignette of Plate 10:



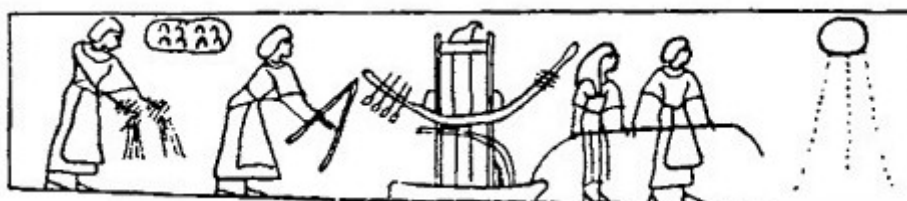
One might ask why our scribe opted for such an unorthodox solution and an answer could be that he invited the reader (or the participant) not to be led astray by the exterior appearance of the rituals, but to concentrate on their inner meaning and integrate the true sense of the symbolic actions, unveiling the archetypal figures hidden behind the celebrants. In fact it could be easy, at a cursory glance, to end the examination after having recognized in the four priests of lines 1-7 the corresponding characters of the vignette;



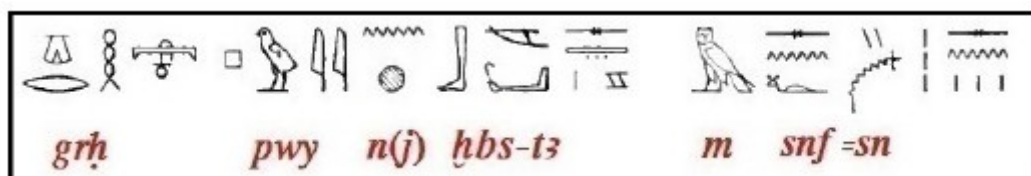
but a more attentive reading could find oblique allusions to specific gods. Thus the above described *wab*-priest could point to “*Atum*” emerging from the waters of Nun; the “seer” to “*šj3*” (perception); the lector-priest to “*hw*” (authoritative utterance) and the *sem*-priest to “*hks*” (magic): three gods acting as helpers of the deceased and shown in many paintings as members of the crew of the solar boat in its netherworld journey. As for the overseer of the craftsmen (*hrp hmwt*) [8] we know that it was the title of the chief priest of *Ptah* in Memphis,



one of whose tasks was that of placing *Sokar* on the *henu*-boat during the god’s festival, as specified in lines 9-10. And one of the rites of this feast was the “hacking of the earth” (*hbs t3*), pointing to a plurality of meanings related to fertility either directly (the hoeing followed by the seeding, as shown in some versions)



or, indirectly, through the bloody image of the slaughtering of Seth’s confederates who tried, unsuccessfully, to hinder Osiris’s rebirth; as recounted in the 8<sup>th</sup> litany of Chapter 18



which, as we know, is a series of invocations addressed to Thoth, asking him to vindicate the deceased as he vindicated Osiris in various places and moments. The fact that in Chapter 18 the place is Busiris, whereas in this case it is Herakleopolis is not so important, the major point being the character who holds the hoe. He could be Thoth, his hacking seen

as a symbol of the opening of the netherworld paths, both physically and metaphysically (the ripping up of the concealed knowledge), so as to clear the way to the *henu*-barque. One might object that the barque was meant to be dragged around the walls of Memphis, but I would not be so strict, if only because it was also used during the *kohiak* feast which celebrated Osiris and had a different function (ancient Egyptians used emblems and symbols as they thought them fit). So I think it is not a coincidence that the hacking of the earth take place in Herakleopolis, in which premises is located Naref, that in Chapter 17 is said to be the entrance of Rosetau, where the deceased will proceed under the assistance of Thoth towards his divine promotion.

## 6: Thoth

Just to avoid misunderstandings: there are no textual evidences sustaining my hypothesis that this speech be assigned to Thoth. As a matter of fact it could be uttered by a neutral officiant, by any friend of Ani or, why not?, by Ani himself, since there might even be a textual clue. When talking about the *b3* the text shows what looks like a “*b3 =j*” (my *b3*)



so that it could be Ani referring to his own *b3*. I am not so sure about this. I think the seated man (A1) be a determinative so as to mark the difference between a “still human” *b3* and a definitely “promoted” one, shown with a god determinative



The reason I am inclined to think Thoth be the speaker comes from the fact that the god himself has asserted, at the very beginning, of having been the one who justified Osiris against his enemies, namely those who might

hinder his vindication. True that the divine beings addressed in this speech do not seem to be hostile, nonetheless they could refrain from helping Ani or be indifferent to his requests. So that Thoth's presence and aid would indeed be important and comply with his soteriological function. In any case the three possible views are not exclusive. They could form a sort of chorus underlining three different, but complementary aspects.

This said let us get to the text.



1      You who make the illustrious *Bas*  
2      come close to the house of Osiris,  
3      make the trusty *Ba*  
4      of Osiris Scribe Ani, justified,  
5      come close, together with you, to the house of Osiris,  
6      so that he may listen to you, [=follow your instructions]  
7      see, as you see,  
8      stand, as you stand,  
9      and sit as you sit.

10     O you who give bread and beer  
11     to the illustrious *Bas*  
12     in the house of Osiris,  
13     give bread and beer, day and night,  
14     to the *Ba* of Osiris Ani, justified,  
15     at the presence of all the gods of the Thinite nome,  
16     he, justified, with you. [= in your company]

17     O you, who open the roads,  
18     who clear the pathways,

19 to the illustrious *Bas*  
20 in the house of Osiris:  
21 open, then, a road for him,  
22 clear, then, the pathways  
23 for the *Ba* of Osiris scribe  
24 accountant of the offerings of all the gods,  
25 Ani, with you, [= in your company]  
26 so that he may enter, in confidence,  
27 so that he may go out in peace  
28 from the house of Osiris,  
29 not pushed back, not hindered.  
30 May he enter in praise, come forth in love,  
31 justified and triumphing.  
32 May his commands be carried out  
33 in the house of Osiris,  
34 so that (even) when he goes his words be with you.  
35 May he become a blessed spirit, together with you, [= in your company]  
36 since no imbalance has been found  
37 and the scale is void of fault.



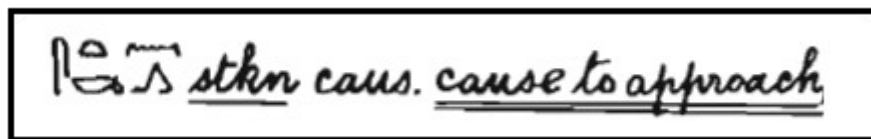
As we can see the speech is divided into three sections each one with its specific sense expressed by a group of divine beings (as the plural pronoun “*tn*” specifies) carrying out precise tasks; in rough terms: (i) ushering the *Bas* through the realm of the dead [1-9]; (ii) making ritual offerings to them[10-16]; (iii) showing them the pathways for going in and out of the realm of the dead in total safety [17-37]. Now each event corresponds to a specific phase of Ani’s psychic development: (i) he should acquire these gods’ qualities; (ii) he should be honoured by them, that is officially acknowledged; (iii) he should be considered fit to be enrolled in their

ranks. And this is perhaps the most important point, since Ani's wish [35] may let us infer that those gods are blessed spirits (*shw*), namely superior beings with respect to the *Bas* they tutor. In fact an allusion to the second level of Ani's rite of passage. A transformation process that can be figured out by subtle textual references.

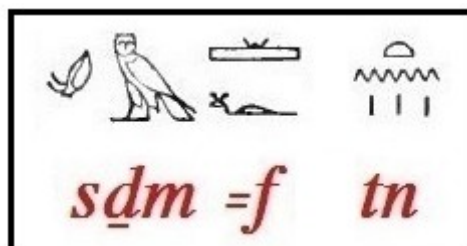
At the very beginning the gods are called "*stknyw*"



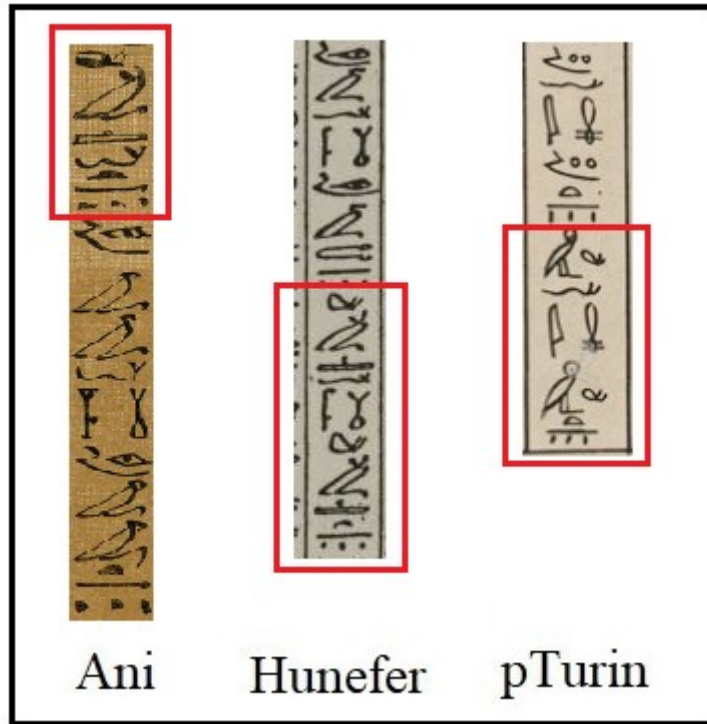
active participle of "*stkn*", a causative verb of "*tkn*" (to approach), thus "cause to approach"



In other words they are not just escorts or officials who "let" the *Bas* approach the "house of Osiris". They exert pressures and work on them so that they gradually reach the Osirian status, seen from its fertility aspect, the "factual effectiveness" which is the typical trait of the blessed spirits. The *Bas* would then become themselves "*stknyw*", being like them and acting like them [6-9]. As regards these lines Ani's version shows a peculiar difference with respect to many of the others where first come "sight" then "hearing"; but, most important, whereas the others say "so that he may hear as you hear" (*s $\underline{d}$ m =f mj s $\underline{d}$ m =tn*), in our case we have



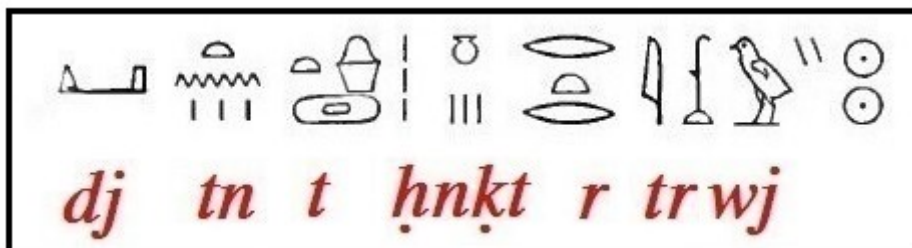
"that he may listen to you". Let us give a look at the various renderings:



The temptation to emend it is at hand, as Budge suggests:

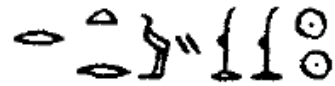


but as usual I prefer to stick to the text. Listening to the instructions and the teachings [6] of the “*stknw*”, Ani can get their knowledge (sight [7]) and act [8] or wait [9] in accord, we may infer, with the seasons and with the cyclicity of the sun’s course as hinted at in line 13 of the next section,



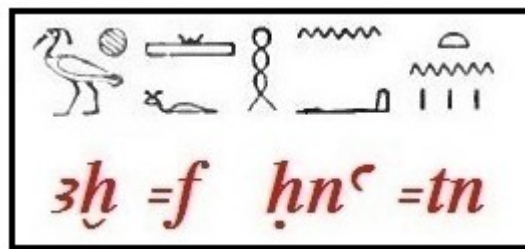
where “*r trwy*” points to “continuity” (day and night) but also to the sun’s double aspect (dual determinative).

I. die beiden Zeiten d.h.  
 Tag und Nacht 1.  
 Besonders in der Verbindung:  
 zu beiden Zeiten, wie ein Ausdruck  
 für: täglich oder immer 2.



So the offerings to Ani's *b3* [10-16] at the presence of the gods of his nome [15], whom he is scribe and accountant of, is not only a symbolic act that acknowledges his promotion [16] (in the company of the *Akhs*), but also an allusion to the seasonal nourishment that, as a blessed and effective (*sh*) spirit, Ani can provide for the wealth of his land.

A quality made even more manifest in the last section [17-37] where the *b3* (that can freely go in and come forth from the Realm of the Dead [17-31]), once reached the state of *sh* [35],



may express wishes and impart commands [32-34] amongst his blessed peers. This wish to become one of them (*hn = tn*) is repeatedly stressed, *once* in each of the first two sections [lines 5 and 16] and *thrice* in the last one [25, 34, 35], as if highlighting the image which the next two blocks turn around.

But before getting to them we should take note of a nuance the scribe played with in line 36:



The most obvious transliteration would give "*nn gm .n =tw wn =f jm*" (no blame of him has been found therein), as shown in WB:

n gm tw wnf (u.ä.) nicht wurde sein Tadel gefunden II (auch mit hr : bei den Leuten 12; mit m : an einem Ort 13).

The fact is that “wn” (blame) should have a sparrow determinative (G37)

wn fault, blame,

in our case not present. Thus we might read the glyphs as “wnf”

wnf belegt seit Lit. M.R. Kopt. <sup>ab</sup> OYNOQ : <sup>a</sup> OYNAQ. Grundbedeutung unbekannt. Det. <sup>a</sup> <sup>n</sup> <sup>gr</sup>

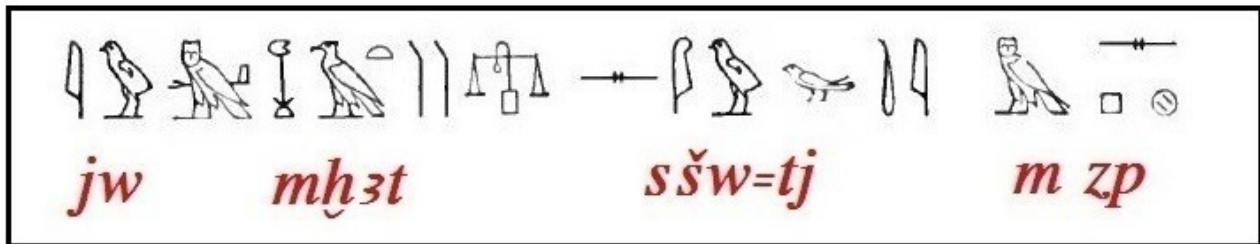
which, although somewhat obscure, is related to “joy”, as Coptic tells us:

OYNOQ [OYNAQ] rejoice; m. joy

Of course “No joy has been found therein” would have no sense. There is though an idiomatic “wnf jb” (to rejoice)

A. vom Herzen und Gesicht.  
wnf jb a) sich freuen, froh sein II. Auch : der Frohe 12 und das Frohsein, die Freude 13. Nä. auch mit h3.tj statt jb 14.

that may enlarge the view, since it is in resonance with the balance (*mḥꜣt*) of the *weighing of the heart* hinted at in line 37

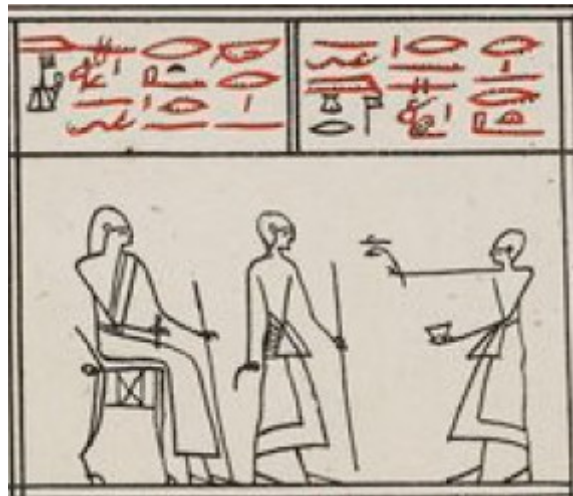


Now the joyful “*wnf-jb*” points to a light-hearted figure and a *light heart* does not balance the scale where the *grave mꜣt* is placed:

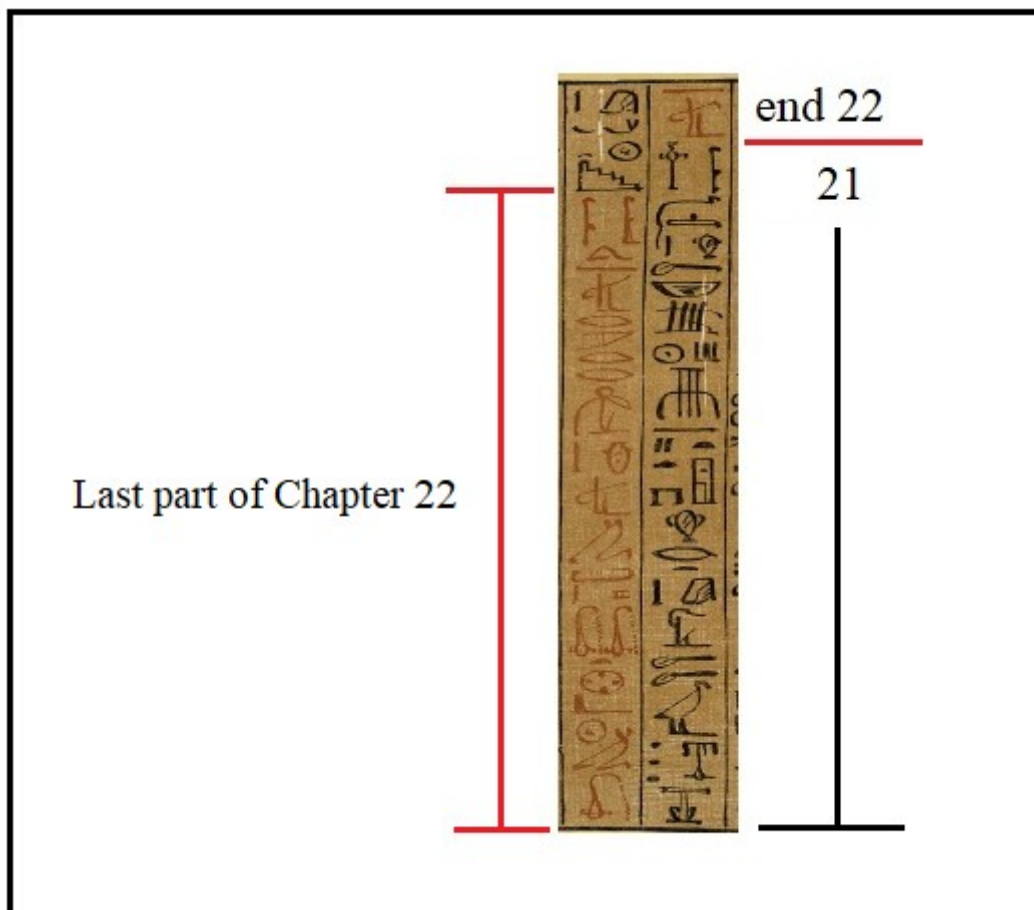


Since “no imbalance” has been found that seems a point in favour of Ani. Far-fetched as it may be I would not exclude this scribal wink, if only because this marks the end of Chapter 1 and the beginning of the next block, full itself of many hermeneutical detours of which this “heartfool” deviousness may work as introduction. In fact its two chapters (22, 21) do not follow each other in accord with a logic temporal sequence, but with what looks like a circumstantial “*sḏm .n=f*”. Both of them deal with the ritual act of the “giving of the mouth”: chapter 21 describing its acquisition, the other making its official display. However our text shows a reverse order, as if the last chapter were a sort of “flash-back”.

But that is just one of the many peculiarities of this last part. For example in the canonical taxonomy (pTurin) both chapters show the same caption: *“r3 n rdt r3 n zj n =f m hrt-ntr”*



whereas in our case it appears only once, as if the two sections be in fact a unique spell. It is not a coincidence that the last part of chapter 22 is written in red ink which usually marks the beginning of a new utterance. A “red” sentence that may be applied to both chapters, being thus a sort of hinge:



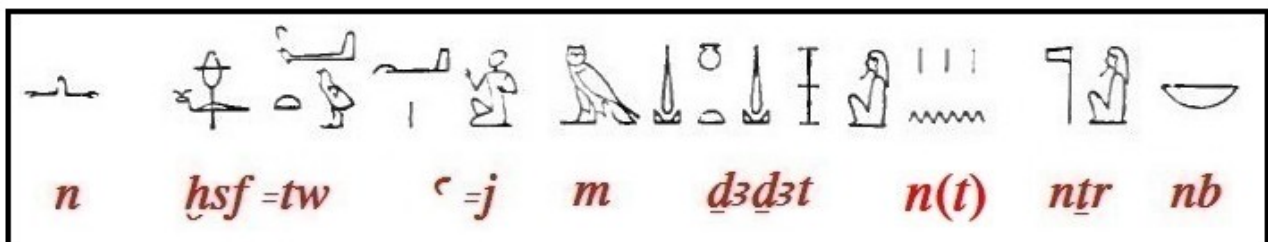
Last not least the text shows not a few imaginative solutions as regards meanings and linguistic choices which defy exclusive interpretations to the point that translations may offer quite different results. And because of this it will be useful to compare Ani's version with some others; not to emend it, of course, but to extrapolate plausible senses and symbolic allusions out of a morphing formation of fecund polysemies.

## 7: CHAPTER 22

Chapter of giving the mouth  
to Osiris scribe accountant  
of the offerings of all the gods  
Ani, justified.  
To him, in the Realm of the Dead.

- 1 I have hatched from the egg
- 2 which is in the land mysterious.
- 3 I have been given the mouth,
- 4 so that I might speak, through it,
- 5 in front of the great god, Lord of the Duat.
- 6 And my status shall not be turned down
- 7 in the Great Council of the gods.
- 8 I am Osiris, lord of *Rosetau*
- 9 (and) Osiris scribe Ani, justified,
- 10 he will share (the place)
- 11 with the one at the top of the terrace [= Osiris];
- 12 (since) according to the wish of my heart,
- 13 I have gone into the Island of Fire,
- 14 that I did quench.

The first thing to remark is that the speaker is Ani, fully invested with the Osirian traits. Although line 8 might suggest that it is the god who speaks, I would exclude that possibility since, as far as I know, Osiris, even when present, is always silent and that is a textual dogma. Furthermore the image of Ani hatching from the egg [1] is a perfect continuation of the previous block in which the speaker (in my interpretation) was Thoth, the god who, in the Hermopolitan theology, laid the cosmic egg out of which hatched the primal light and the world. Since the last image was the perfect balance of the weighing of the heart, meaning promotion, the coming forth from the egg (in fact the grave) [2] is a logical step. And the “giving of the mouth” [3] (which is not the *opening of the mouth*) is a further allusion to Thoth, the creator of language, in this case that of the gods [4-5]. Not just, though, the “*mdw ntr*” that common people may use; but the one that can interface the deceased with Osiris himself [5] and the gods of the Great Council [6-7]. As regards these divine judges there is a subtle nuance our scribe made use of:



We note in fact a graphic oversight concerning “*n*” which, since *d3d3t* is feminine should be “*nt*”. But, most important, instead of the more common “*ntrw nbw*” (all the gods) is used a singular, as if to point out each separate god (*ntr nb*) forming the Council. That may recall (or anticipate) the series of the 42 divine judges of the negative confession

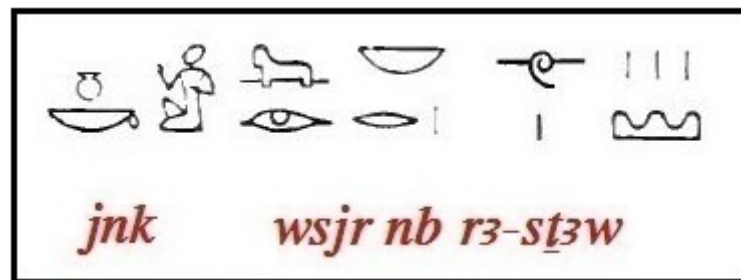


so that “*ʿ=j*” would be not only Ani’s acquired “certificate”, but also his arm (D41/42)



addressing “each god” (*ntr nb*) of each moral and social domain he is head of. Thus we might get a subtextual “my arm” (*ʿ=j*) pointing to (*n*), namely addressing each god (*ntr nb*).

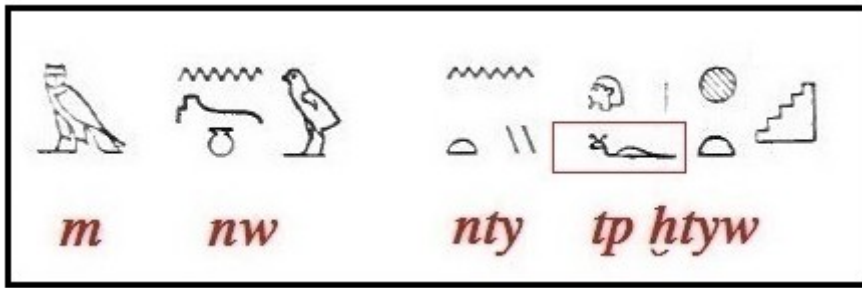
But these are just trifles. From now on things are getting by far more and more complicated. Let us start by line 8 where Ani seems to assert he is Osiris:



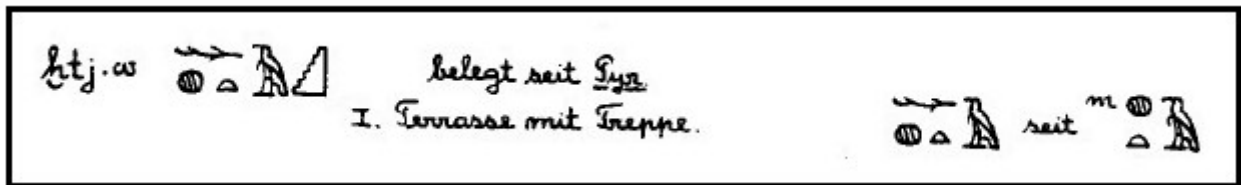
As a matter of fact the graphic rendering of “*wsjr*” does not show a god determinative, normally used for Osiris, but the simple form preceding Ani’s name and function:



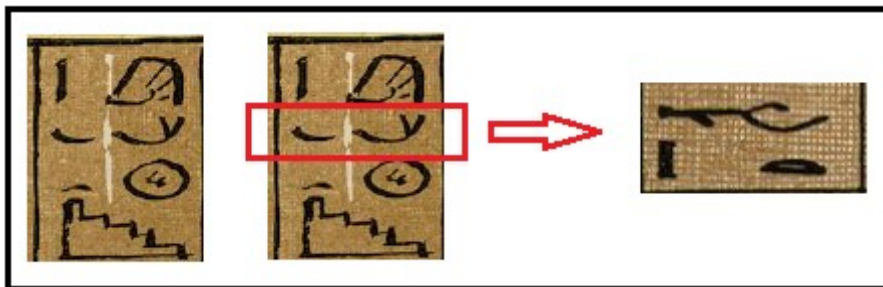
So this “*wsjr*” points to Ani who has become “master” of the “place mysterious” [2], namely *Rosetau* (*r3-st3w*), its “*r3*” resonating with the mouth (*r3*) Ani has been given. Having reached the secret knowledge he can indeed assert his status (*ʿ=j*), symbolically sharing [10] the place of the one “who is atop the terrace” (*nty tp htyw*), namely Osiris:



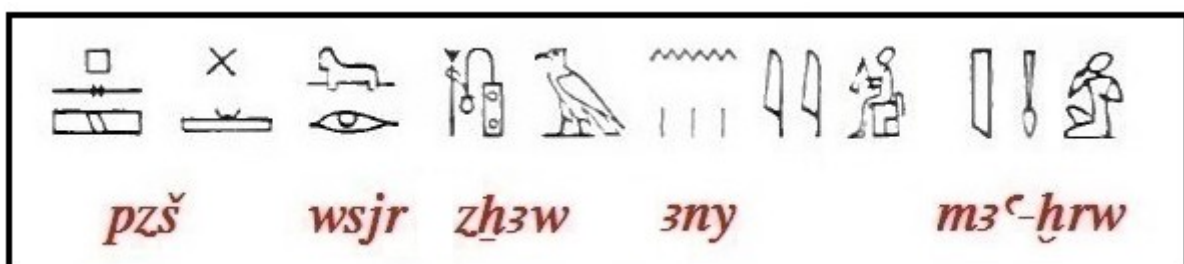
Here we find another apparent defective writing as regards “*htyw*”. The correct word shows a “*ht*” (M3) at the start:



So it would seem that the scribe confused the horned viper with a stick:

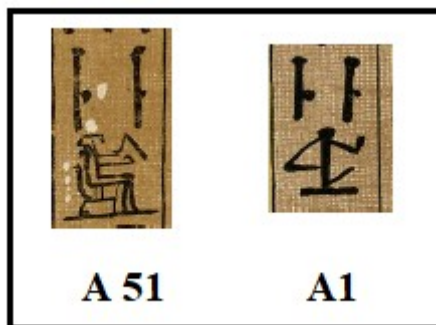


Leaving aside the known magic (Exodus 7, 8-12) I would not exclude an intended pun. As it is we should read “*tp = f*” (upon him, on top of him). That would give the sentence an additional nuance. Although Ani will share the Osirian place, nonetheless the god who is on the dais (*nty tp htyw*) is his superior (on top of him). Just to make clear that Ani should only “integrate” the Osirian character, not identify with him, which would cause a psychic inflation. So that the “shared place” would be that of Ani (the Osirian figure) besides Ani “human” scribe:



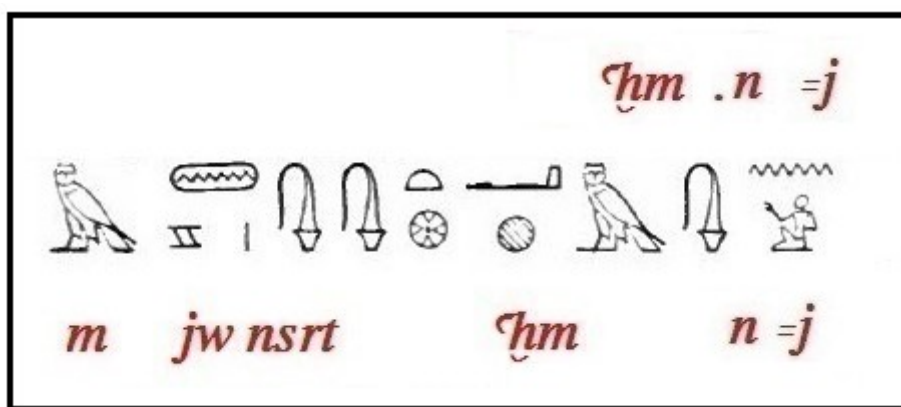
In fact I keep thinking that the label “*wsjr N.*” might be read also as a genitival construction: “*wsjr* of N.”, namely “the potential Osiris of N.”

By the way, we should note how the determinative of Ani is A51 (seated noble), not the more usual A1 (seated man):



so as to remark the human→ divine quantum leap.

The evidence that Ani, although linked with Osiris, keeps having his solid ego is made manifest by the last three lines [12-14] where he recounts, as if re-enacting a flash-back, how he has been given “the mouth”. As I said above I consider them as a sort of hinge between this and the next chapter, especially because they are written in red ink which usually marks the beginning of new sections or very important events. In our case it may also allude to the flames of the “Island of Fire” where his heart (that of the Ani who has not yet been promoted, the Ani who does not speak yet the language of the gods) prompts him to go [12-13]. The last line is somewhat ambiguous



since the verbal form could be either “*hm .n =j*” that would testify Ani’s strength and his victorious result; or a participle (*hm n =j*) referred to the masculine “*jw*” and that could be either active, saying that the island did

“quench itself” because of (*n*) Ani, thus acknowledging his power; or passive, showing the island “quenched” by someone who acted friendly towards (*n*) him. Although in different degrees of importance all three readings are legitimate as we shall see following Ani into that Island of Fire, in the hope to come forth as he does, not lost or consumed by its linguistic intricacies.

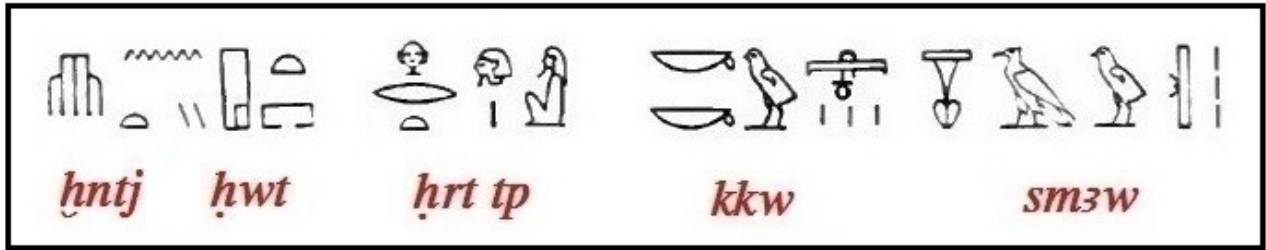
## 8: CHAPTER 21

1 Hail to you, Lord of Light,  
2 Foremost of the supreme temple  
3 and of the deepest darkness.  
4 I have come beside you,  
5 (beside) your effective power  
6 so that you cleanse me,  
7 (with) my arms around you  
8 while you restrain  
9 the gods who were before you.  
10 O, would that you give me my mouth,  
11 so that I may speak through it  
12 and guide the *jb*-heart  
13 in his perilous hour of burning  
14 the evil of the night.

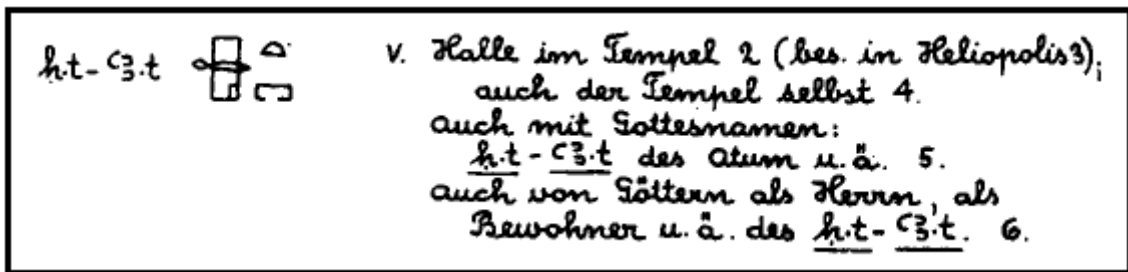


In its general outline this text is very plain. We see Ani asking a mighty *Lord of light* who dwells, as said above, in the Island of Fire to bestow him the gift of a language (the mouth) that will be of help in the course of his perilous journey. It does not say much about the Island, the Lord or the rite of “giving the mouth”. But that should not be a surprise. The spell is not supposed to give informations. Its function is that of reconstructing the emotional environment of a psychic integration. And the vague obscure allusions, the cryptic hints, the ambiguous syntax and defective writings

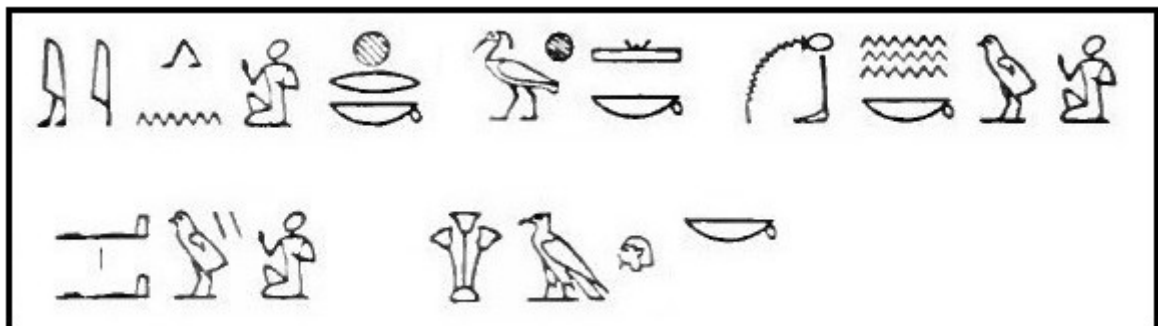
may be a way to underline Ani's laborious efforts. Let us start with the Lord of Light: who is he?



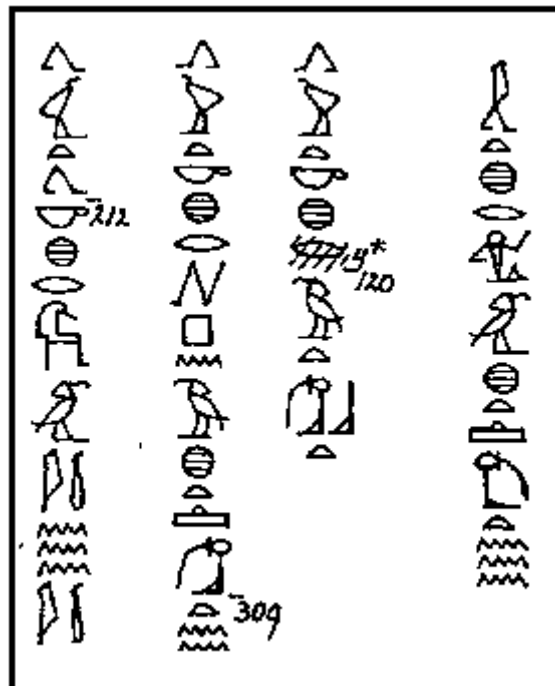
“Foremost of the temple” (*hntj hwt*) is indeed very general, not to say prosaic. Other versions show “*hwt-3*” which makes more sense, being a sanctuary in Heliopolis



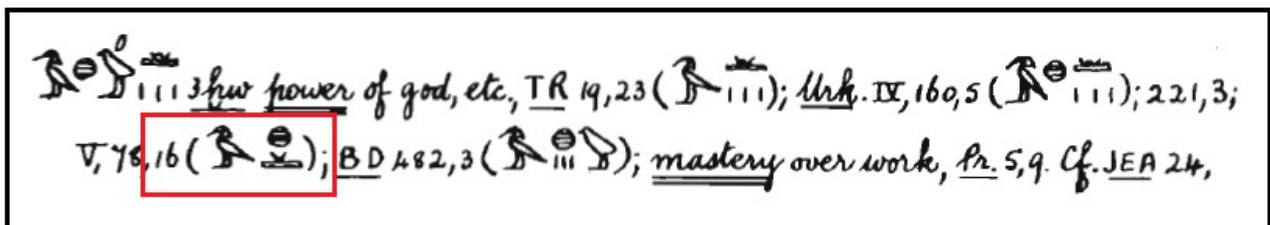
with specific solar traits. Then we have what looks like a defective “*hrt tp*” which, as logic would suggest, should be “*hrj-tp*” (overseer, chief) since there is a male god determinative (A40). But “*hrt-tp*” could be read as an adjective (supreme) giving thus “supreme temple”; and a “foremost of the supreme temple” is a more appropriate image for the Lord of Light. The supreme temple may be the vault of the sky, thus “Foremost of the sky and of the deepest darkness (*kkw sm3w*)”. As a matter of fact it could also be the space atop (*hrt-tp*) that darkness: an image of the Netherworld or of the tenebrous *Nihil*. In conclusion a possible image of the Lord of All, namely Atum or Ra, in his diurnal and nocturnal aspects. Let us see now what comes next:



The most obvious transliteration would give: “*jj .n =j hr =k 3h =k w<sup>c</sup>b.kw* *wy =j h3 =k*”. How should we interpret “*3h =k*”? Perhaps “*k*” could be an accepted although not very common form of “*kw*” (stative) balancing the clear one of “*w<sup>c</sup>b.kw*”. Thus: “I am in a luminous, pure state / luminous, pure.” One may wonder why the scribe did not use the common form; but most of all: has Ani already reached the state of “blessedness”? Let me have some doubts. Purified (*w<sup>c</sup>b.kw*) he can be, but hardly “*3h*”. And in fact other versions (e.g. pNu) assign the two statives (*3h.tj / w<sup>c</sup>b.tj*) to the god. The same with CTs, although in this case it is the god who comes near the deceased

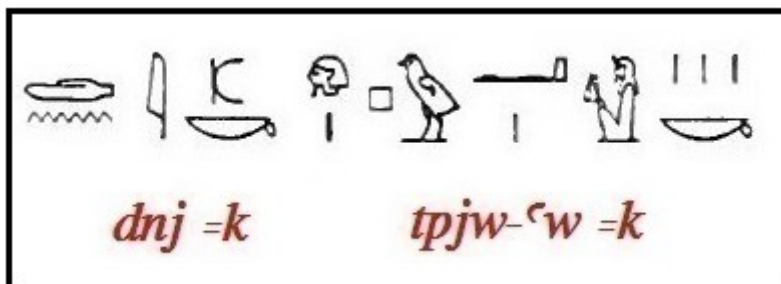


So “*3h =k*” might refer to the effectiveness (*3h*) of the god

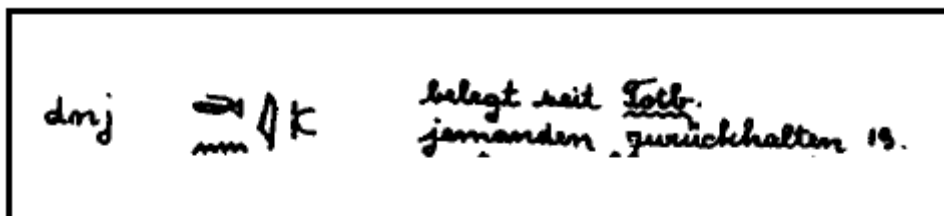


which would give: “I have come near you, (near) your effective power”. And this might suggest another possible reading of “*w<sup>c</sup>b.kw*” that could be parsed as “*w<sup>c</sup>b =k wj*” (so that you may pour water on me / cleanse me). Which would fit the context since Ani’s wish is that of coming out from the Island of Fire in a new state (cleansed of his earthly features) and with

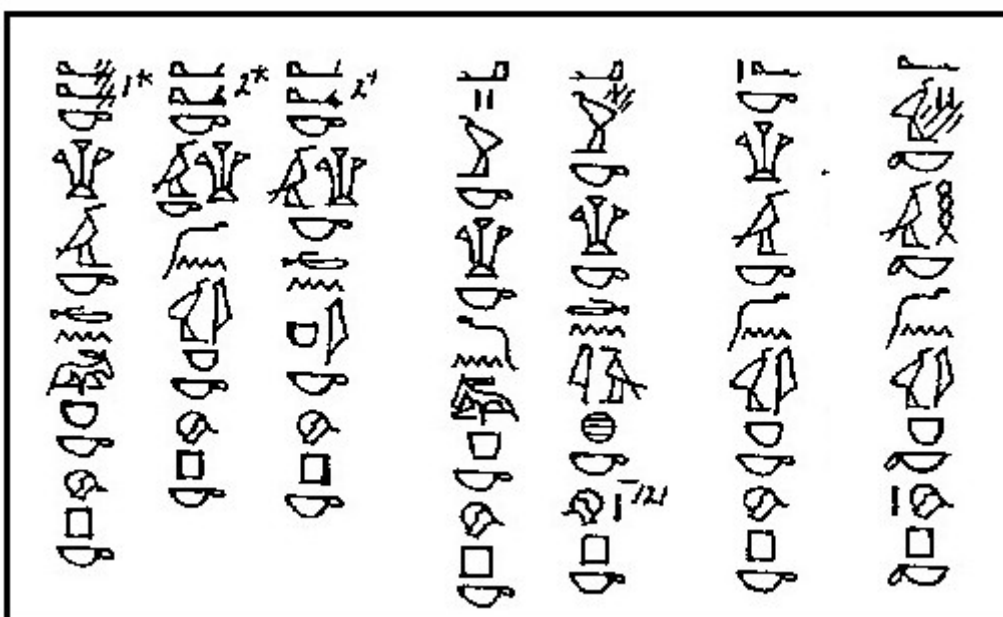
creative effectiveness (mouth → language → authoritative utterance). Seen from this perspective Ani's arms around the god (𓂏.wy =j h3 =k) might be a self-protecting gesture: he clings to the god in order to be shielded from an incoming danger. This is in fact the way I read the next line:



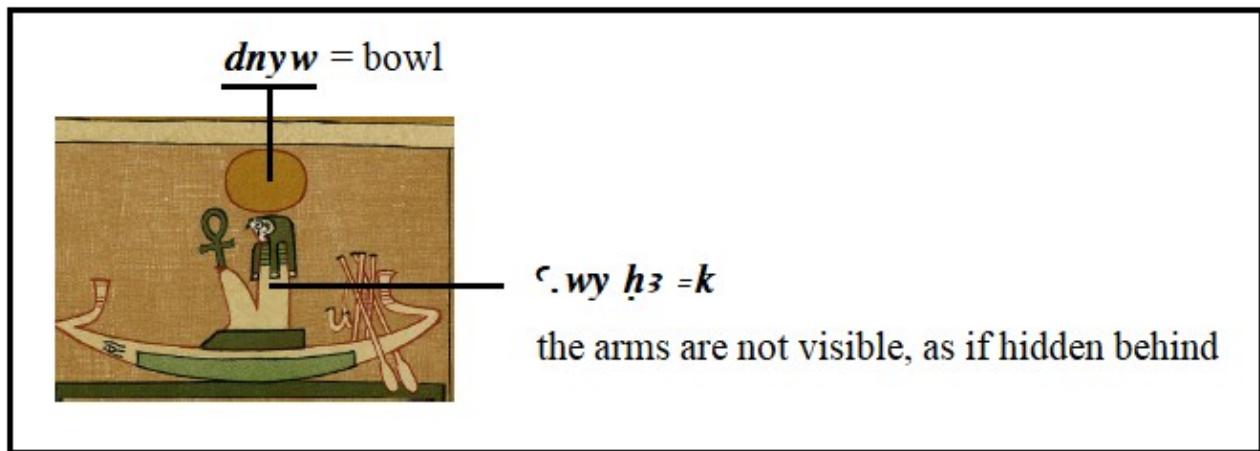
It is the description of Atum/Ra who restrains (dnj)



the antique forces that reigned before his emerging from the abysmal waters of Nun and that he must keep controlling lest they make Chaos reign again. A rendering very different from many of the other versions where the “arms” are those of the god (𓂏.wy =k h3 =k) as in CTs:



themselves not so easy to explain. Faulkner translates: “with your arms (clasped) about you and your bowl (*dneyw =k*) upon you (*tp =k*)”. I’d say kind of cryptic. But it may be an intended riddle hiding the image of Ra:



And that would certainly agree with the Lord of Light. Our scribe, though, preferred to underline the dynamic creative aspect of the god, showing Ani re-enacting the primeval birth under Atum’s control. However this solar aspect would not say much about the gift of the “mouth”, which no doubt is a precise unmistakable Thothean trait. His lunar character entitles him to be a Lord of Light. So, in the CT versions, his “arms clasped behind” could be the wings of the Ibis (and of his *3h* variation); and the “bowl” the full moon upon him (*tp =k*)



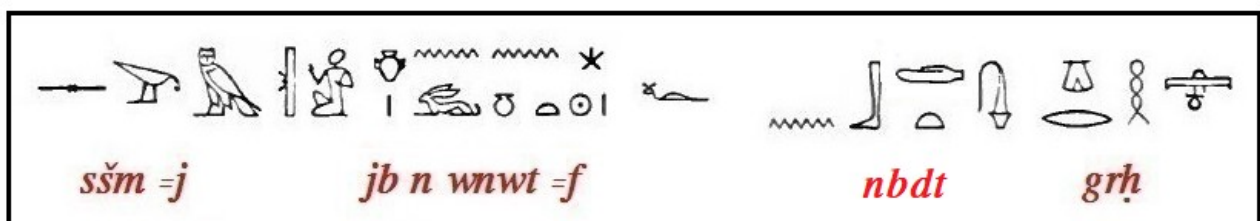
In our case, letting unaltered Ani’s “clinging” for protection, as regards his “damming” (*dnj*) and canalizing the ancestral forces (*tpjw-ϵw*: most probably the snakes and frogs of the Hermopolitan Ogdoad), that might refer to the rules he devised so as to make the world march in accord with the laws of *Maat*. Being a witness to the ordering principles, made active through the god’s words, Ani will learn the divine language. The presence

of Thoth explains also the “Island of Fire” since that was the name of the necropolis located in Hermopolis (*hmnw*), the city of the god, that housed (or was) the primeval hill on which was laid (by the Great Cackler, either a goose or an ibis, that is Thoth’s bird) the cosmic egg Ra hatched from, recalling the beginning of Chapter 22.

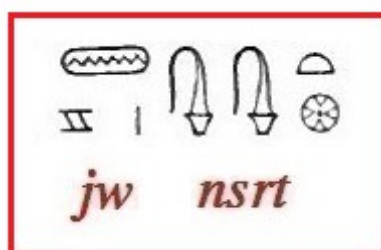
As regards the last lines [10-14], basically Ani’s prayer to be “given the mouth”, they themselves deserve some attention, if only because the first two [10-11] are in red ink, mark of semantic shifts. He has already passed [1-9] through the psychic experience of the original creation, namely that of rebirth, but under the god’s protection. Now he must have the means for walking on his own and in fact he asks for *his* mouth (*r3 =j*) so that he himself may use it:



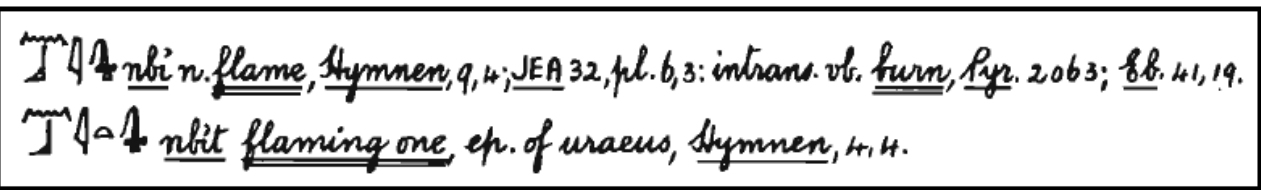
The aim is that of giving right directions to his “*jb*-heart” (shall we call it his psychic structure?) in the course of the perilous journey through the night,



with a syntax that may lead us astray because of a spurious “*nbd*” which could be either a defective writing or a portmanteau word. Let us start with the first hypothesis. Considering the context (Island of fire)



and the Q7 determinative, a plausible emendation could be “*nbj / nbjt*”:


  
 T44 *nbj* n. flame, Hymnen, 9, 4; JEA 32, pl. 6, 3: intrans. vb. burn, Ry. 2063; BB. 41, 19.
   
 T44 *nbjt* flaming one, ep. of uraeus, Hymnen, 4, 4.

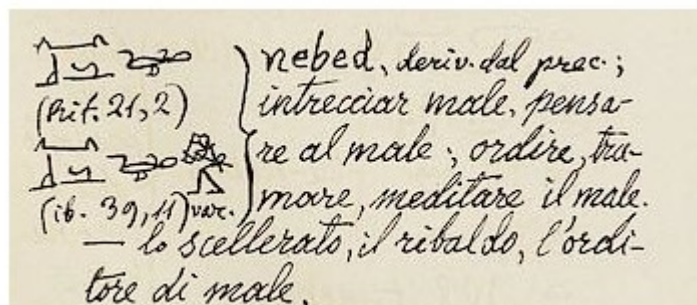
so that “*nbjt grh*” would be “the flame of the night / the Uraeus of the night”, epithets of “*wnwt*”. But “*nbjt*” could be the feminine participle of “*nbj*” (burning, flamed up) that would modify “*wnwt*” suggesting a possible “burning/flamed up hour of the night). In any case the image of the heart when comes the fiery moment (*wnwt nbjt*) of becoming the spitting flame (*nbjt* = Uraeus) that throws light in the dark, burning the night. Thus the victorious aspect of the nocturnal sun: the Osirian trait.

Let us see now the other hypothesis, where the full “*nbd*” appears, but followed by a different determinative (D3 - hair):


  
 T44 *nbd* tress of hair, BD 445, 14.

Blending this with “*nbjt*” the tresses could visually become “tongues of fire”, so that “*nbd grh*” would give the image of “fiery flashes and darts” that, when his hour has come (*n wnwt =f*), Ani hurls against the night.

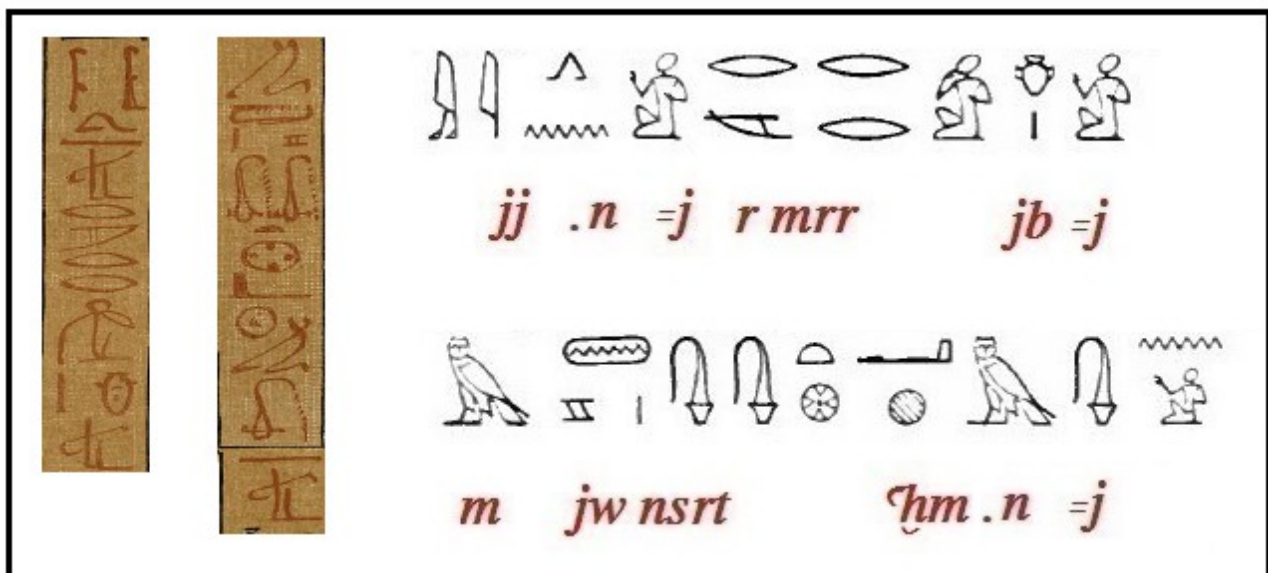
However “*nbd*” could be also read as a verb, a participle of “*nbd*”, which, if we give credit to Simeone Levi (and I do) means “plot, weave, conspire, maneuver with evil intentions”


  
 T44 } *nebed*, deriv. dal prec.;  
 (Pit. 21, 2) } intrecciare male, pensa-  
 T44 } re al male; ordire, tra-  
 (ib. 39, 11) var. } more, meditare il male.  
 — lo scellerato, il ribaldo, l'ordi-  
 tore di male.

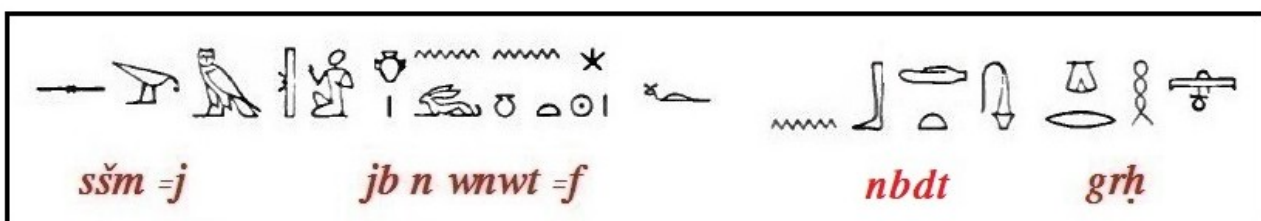
the determinative being the sparrow (G37 = bad) that in our case would mix with the destructive flames. Thus “*nbdt*” could be a feminine passive modifying “*wnwt*”, showing the hour “in danger of being harmed”, the night plotting an ambush against it. Not forgetting that “*nbd/nbd*” might conjure Seth:



a further image of the perilous quest, that however has been a success, if we credit lines 12-14 (in red ink) at the end of the previous chapter, where Ani states that “according to the wish of his heart” (the same “*jb*” we find here) he did “quench” (*hm .n=j*) the Island of Fire:



Now if we compare this ending (Chapter 22) with ours (Chapter 21)



we may have a clearer idea about the reasons that urged our scribe to place the two chapters in a reverse order (22, 21) with respect to the time line of the events. The last image of Chapter 22 portrays an accomplished victory,

it is the end of the game, the fulfilment of Ani's hopes. But since we are at the start of the papyrus, it's no more than wishful thinking. Whereas our chapter (which marks in fact the end of the text of the whole logic block, running a parallel course, but in the underground level, with the funeral procession of the open-air vignettes - the final rubric being just practical considerations), especially the last lines, describe a fiery conflict still in progress, anticipating *in nuce* the series of trials that Ani is going to face in his netherworld journey after the conclusion of the "wordly" burial rites. That is his "real" position, that is the very beginning of his "*pṛt m hrw*".

### 9: BENEFITS (Rubric of CHAPTER 72)

As said above, the rubric that ends the plate is a general reflection about the practical usefulness and the benefits of the rites outlined in the text.



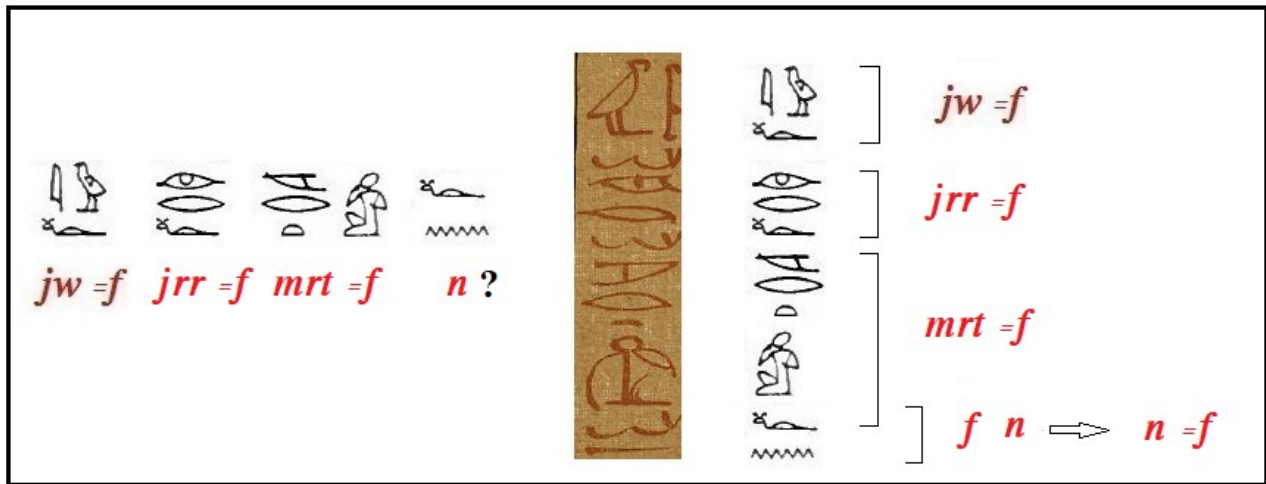
The scribe picked it up from another chapter since it is a standardized formula for sealing many spells. But what is interesting is the space it occupies, directly under the scene of Tjutju's last adieu to her beloved husband, already in the hands of Anubis for his forthcoming descent into the Realm of the Dead. Once again the exoteric show opposed to the secret teaching: the embalming god assuring Ani, who certainly does know the "book", not to worry because...

1 As for him who knows *this* text  
2 (while still) on earth,  
3 either written (on a scroll)  
4 or (painted) on a coffin,  
5 he shall come forth in the day  
6 in whichever form he likes,  
7 and enter in the place  
8 without being hindered.  
9 He shall be given bread,  
10 beer, a great portion of meat  
11 on Osiris's table of offerings.  
12 He shall enter in peace  
13 into the Field of Reeds,  
14 because of the knowledge  
15 of *this* decree  
16 of the one who is in Busiris.  
17 He shall be given  
18 emmer and barley therein.  
19 Happiness shall be beside him,  
20 as it was for him on earth.  
21 He shall do what he likes  
22 [on his behalf]  
23 as those gods who are in the Duat.

24 A proceeding (proven) true  
25 a million times.  
26 It's Osiris Scribe Ani... [who acts].

...

The text does not pose problems but for a dubious writing [21-22] with an intruding “*n*”:



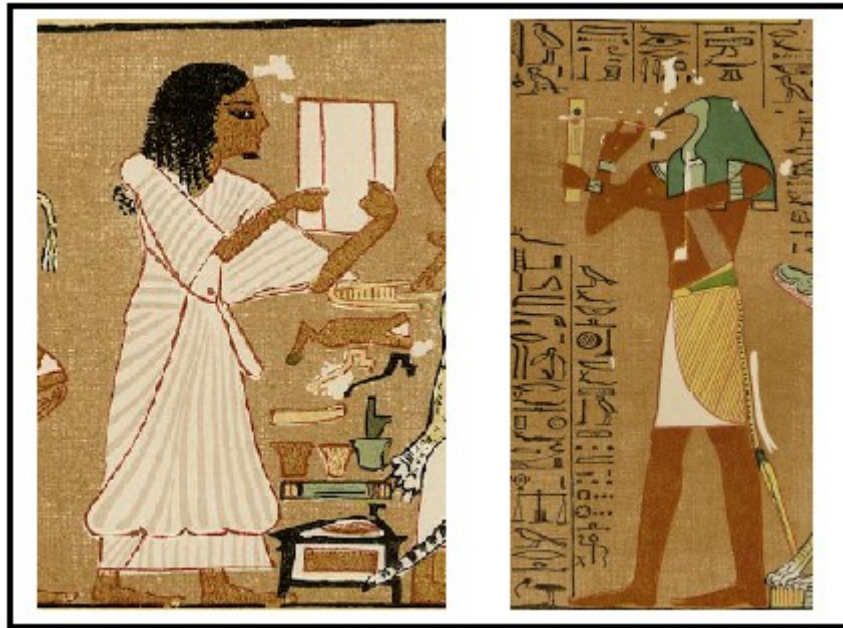
If not an oversight (highly probable) it might be a winking nuance. The apparent metathesis would show the deceased pointing his hand to his breast (*n = f*), as if saying “on my behalf”.

There is then what might be a stylistic finesse. The demonstrative pronouns in lines 1 (*tn*) and 15 (*pn*).

1	
15	

Both refer to textual objects (*mdzt* = scroll / *wd* = decree) themselves in relation with “knowledge” (*rh*); in other words with Thoth, whom we may figure holding up “this” scroll, the “*prt m hrw*” and unfolding it so as to reveal the knowledge (*rh*) of its spells (the instructions of “this” decree). So the speaker of the rubric might be Thoth who would thus end

the speech he did begin at the start of Chapter 1, being then alpha and omega; and of whom the lector-priest of the vignette seems no more than a pale reflection:



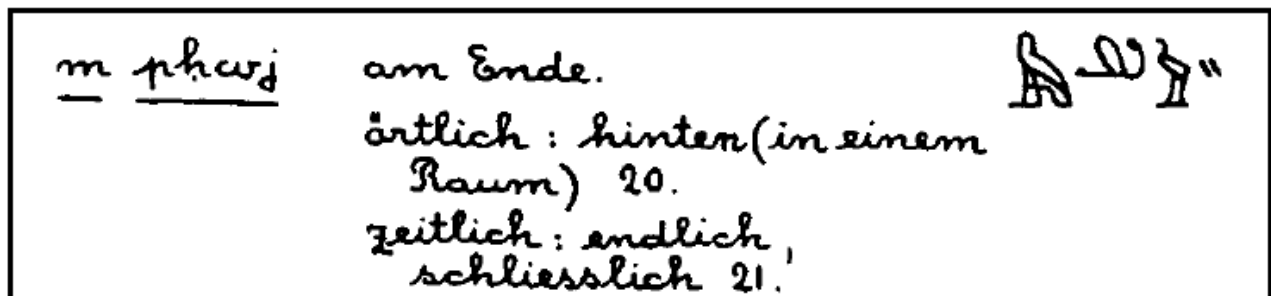
But we cannot close the curtains without focusing our attention on the name of Ani at the very end of the Plate, introduced by a quizzical “*jw*”:



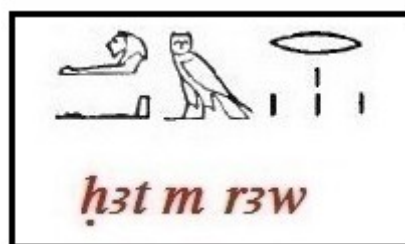
As far as I know a closed sentence composed of “*jw* + definite noun” is hardly if ever acceptable. It is usually followed by an adverbial or verbal

construction. So I would not exclude that this “grammatical absence” might hint at what Ani must do in order to become the “*m3<sup>c</sup>-hrw*” that in this case is absent in the writing; although the A51 determinative (a noble on a chair) may adumbrate Ani’s wish.

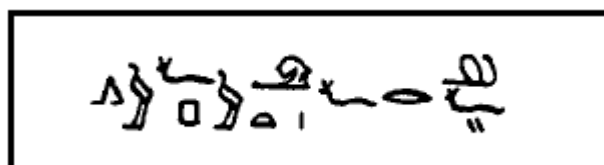
But there may be more scribal tricks. Ani is placed at “the end” (*m ph.wy*)



(*jw= wsjr zh3w 3nj [m ph.wy]*) of the script that starts at “*h3t m r3w*”



recalling the formulaic “*jw =f pw h3t =f r ph.wy =fy*”



appended to the end of tales and teachings, as if saying that the scroll/spell, in its progress, is aimed at Ani, who is its central theme.

Ani, though, is not only at the end of the script, but “at the bottom” of its last column, “under” it, namely “*hrj*”, as if carrying the scroll (*hrj-md3t*): “*jw wsjr zh3w 3nj [hrj-md3t]*”. With a not so vague allusion to “*hrj-hbt*” (lector-priest), implying that he himself can read the text, and “knowing it” [1-3] can follow its directions [12-16] and acquire a divine status [23] in his permanence in the Necropolis (*hrt-ntr*) under which he presently is (*hrj*), as the vignette points out:



hrt-ntr



*jw wsjr*

*zhzw*

*znj*

*hry*