

# PAPYRUS OF ANI

## THE TWO OSIRIAN HYMNS

(Plate 2)



(Plate 19)



by

orlando mezzabotta

[www.ormezza.it](http://www.ormezza.it)

Before delving into the texts of our two Osirian hymns we should take note of their position in the papyrus. The first one (Plate 2) is placed at the very beginning, preceded by a hymn to the sun god (Plate 1); the other (Plate 19) at the middle of the scroll, where, in its turn, it precedes a hymn to Ra. As a matter of fact, just before it, at the end of Plate 18 there is another solar hymn, but it belongs to a different logic block, marking its conclusion. It is the section that in my general introduction I called the “*b3* level”, corresponding to the first part of the papyrus that describes the psychic process at the end of which the *deceased* reaches the status of *b3* that gives him the power to go, unhindered, in and out of the *Duat* (*pṛt-m-hrw*) in accord with the course of the solar disc. But there is another and deeper (or higher) level of “existence”, namely the “*Akh*” level, where the deceased, turned into a blessed spirit, can use his effective power (*3h*) for the benefit of the living, the human earthly beings. The Osirian hymn of Plate 19 marks the beginning of this second section. Thus it should be no surprise that it be followed by another hymn addressed to Ra, where Ani expresses his wish to be promoted to the rank of member of the sun boat (see my review of Plates 20-22: *When the b3 goes m-3h-ing in*), in other words to integrate the inner core of the solar archetype; showing an “Osiris → Ra” sequence opposite to that of the first two hymns (Ra → Osiris). The one to Ra (Plate 1) presents a comprehensive outline of Ani’s ritual proceeding; while that of Plate 2 is an indicative example of Ani’s desire to integrate the Osirian traits, so as to reach the first level of the process of solarization.

## PLATE 2

- 1 The adoration of Osiris Wennefer,
- 2 the great god who resides in the nome of Abydos,
- 3 king of eternity, lord of everlastingness,
- 4 who travels millions (of years) in the course of his lifespan;
- 5 the first born of Nut,
- 6 the seed of Geb,
- 7 the Noble, lord of the Red crown,
- 8 who raises high the White crown;

9 sovereign of gods and people;  
10 he who has seized the sceptre, the flail  
11 and the office of his fathers.

12 Glad you are, you in the desert land [netherworld];  
13 Horus, your son, established on your throne.  
14 You have manifested yourself as the lord of Busiris,  
15 as the ruler who is in Abydos.  
16 Thanks to you the Two-Lands flourish in glory  
17 at the presence of the Lord of All.



18 He who drags towards him(self)  
18a “*he who has not (yet) come into being*”  
19 in his name of *Taharostayanàf*.  
[The realm of the dead where is “He who drags towards him(self)”]

20 The two-lands wipe (a path) for him,  
21 according to the customs,  
22 in his name of *Sokar*.

23 He who is solid of prestige,  
24 great in inspiring awe,  
25 in his name of *Osiris*.

26 He opens the doors of Eternity,  
27 in his name of *Wennefer*.



28 Hail to you, king of kings,  
29 lord of lords, ruler of rulers.  
30 He who took hold of the Two-Lands

31 when still in the womb of Nut,  
 32 he has become the ruler  
 32a of the lands of the Netherworld.

33 Limbs of gold, head of lapis-lazuli,  
 34 turquoise on his arms.  
 35 Divine pillar of millions,  
 36 broad of breast, beautiful of face,  
 37 you who dwell in the sacred land,  
 38 you infuse effective power in the sky,  
 39 strength in the land,  
 39a justification in the Realm of the Dead.

40 The one who sails north to Busiris as a living soul,  
 41 southwards to Abydos as the *benu*-bird;  
 42 He who enters and exits without hindering,  
 43 through every gate of the *Duat*.

44 Oh, may be given to me  
 45 bread in the house of libations, [→ body]  
 46 offerings in Heliopolis, [→ *bꜣ*]  
 47 an established grant of land  
 48 in the Field of Reeds, [→ *ꜣh*]  
 49 emmet and barley therein.

50 To the *kꜣ* of Osiris Scribe Ani.

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The first impression we get from this hymn is an overwhelming feeling of reverence and awe, coming from the imposing figure of this mighty god whom Ani wishes (and is going) to meet in the next scene, at the end of

the *weighing of the heart* rite (Plates 3-4):



A solemn and sacred aura worked out with sapience by the skilful scribe, who divided the hymn into four sections. In the first one (1-17) he glorifies Osiris in his divine everlastingness (2-4) and in his “primogeniture”. Being the first born of the sky goddess *Nut* (5) and of the earth god *Geb* (6) he is the sovereign of the other gods (celestial aspect from the mother) and of the humans (earthly aspect from the father) of the *Two-lands*, wearing the red crown of Lower (7) and the white crown of Upper (8) Egypt. Thus a mythic manifestation of archetypal sovereignty (10-11) transmitted to his son Horus (13), his rejuvenated aspect, who rules the earthly kingdom while he governs the Realm of the Dead (12). A way to underline the completeness of his presence, marked also by his shrine in northern Busiris (14), symbol of his living state; and by his tomb in the South, down in Abydos (15) where his rescue from death begins. In other words the eternal cycle of his existence that takes effective shape in the seasonal death (seeding) and rebirth (harvest) of the grain that make the *Two-lands* prosperous and glorious (16-17).

Then comes a second particularly complex section (18-27) built along a sequence of four mo(ve)ments describing specific aspects of the god

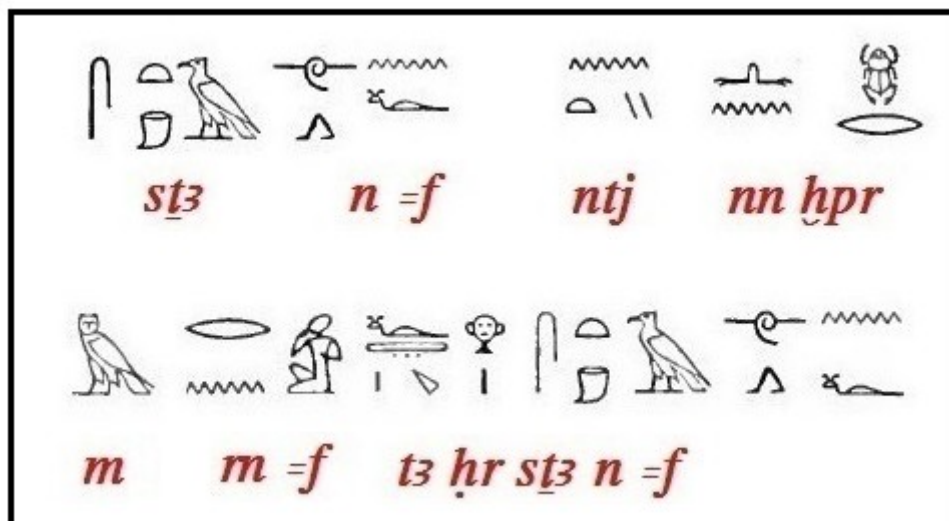
through subtle puns and riddles that will be amply treated in due time. Suffice it to say for the moment that the explicit sense of this section points to the mysterious and enigmatic side of the god as an implicit invitation to look at him with all the care and attention which is needed to transcend the external surface and get into his numinous essence.

The third part of the hymn (28-43) is a sort of repetition of the images of the first section (28-32a), although the god's presence is highlighted by the solemn stateliness of his kingly figure, in the form of a splendid idol (33-36), whose divine nature governs the sky, the earth (37-39) and most of all the netherworld (39a) that he can pass through unhindered (42-43) in his process of rebirth (41) leading to his coming forth as a living *b3* (40).

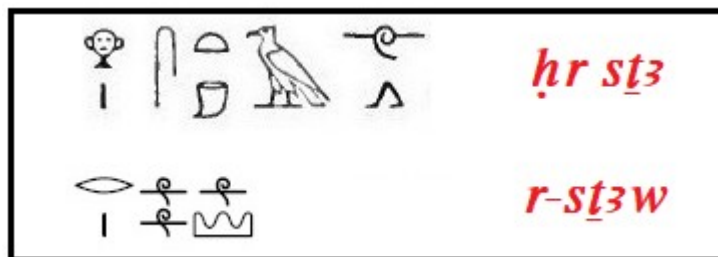
This forms the divine pattern Ani wishes to experience in the last section (44-50) in order to pass through and integrate the three Osirian states:

(i) earthly honours for his divine body (45); (ii) the *b3* state (46), alluded by an implicit reference to the *b3*-souls of Heliopolis; (iii) the *3h* state in the heavenly fields (49). All this aimed to fortifying and enriching Ani's "*k3*", namely the energy of his existential horizon (50).

Now, as I said above, the text does not pose problems for what regards its language but for the third section (18-27) which needs a closer look. It is composed of four images each one describing a specific aspect of the god introduced by the formulaic "*m rn =f*" (in his name) with wordplays and puns which should point out the correspondence between the god's actions or qualities and his name. But if the reconstruction of the last three items is relatively easy to work out [*"sk"* (verb) "*skr* / Sokar", "*wsr*" (adjective) "*wsjr* / Osiris", "*wn*" (verb) "*wnn-nfr* / Wennefer"], as regards the first one, where we find not a name but an epithet, things are not so simple. This is how the text runs:

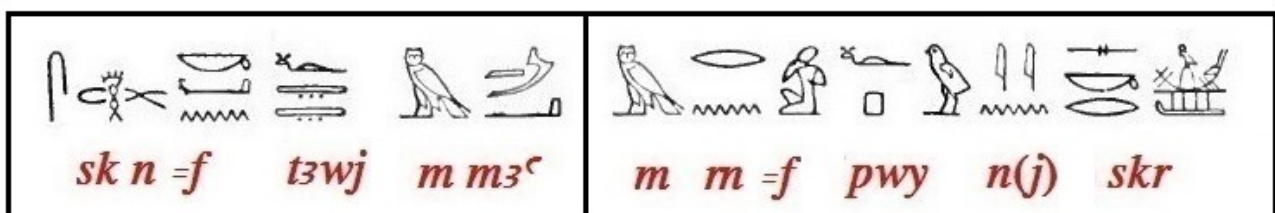


So it seems that the god's name is "*t3 hr st3 n =f*". I confess I have never met such an epithet, but of course that may be due to my ignorance. In any case it needs an elucidation. Let us start by saying that the "*st3 n =f*" at the end plausibly corresponds to the one at the beginning. I see in it Osiris who drags towards himself (*st3 n =f*) "he who has not yet come into being" (*ntj nn hpr*). That may be an allusion to the deceased who has not yet been justified (*mAa-xrw*) or to a living being still inside the womb, but fated to die, namely to be dragged in the realm of Osiris. Considering the context I take the first interpretation as the dominant image. However the problem is: how can this action explain Osiris's epithet, which, I repeat, seems to be used just here? I am of the opinion that the scribe word-played a tricky assonance between "*hr-st3*" (dragging) and "*r3-st3/w*" (*Rosetau*):



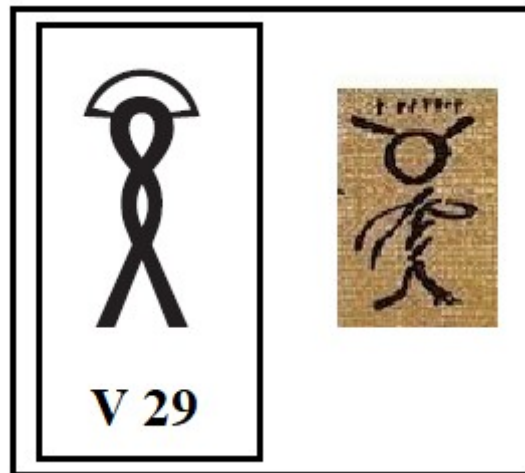
And no doubt *Rosetau* has very strict connections with Osiris. But there is also a subtler wordplay. Once established that "*st3 n =f*" is Osiris we see that the land (*t3*) is over (*hr*) the god (*ntr*). But if "*t3*" is "over" that means that the god is "under", namely "*hrj*". In conclusion we might assemble, with a little bit of creativity, a sort of "*t3 hrj ntr*" (land carrying the god / where the god is), being both Necropolis and the Netherworld. And both "fitting" Osirian metonymies.

Let us now consider the second aspect:

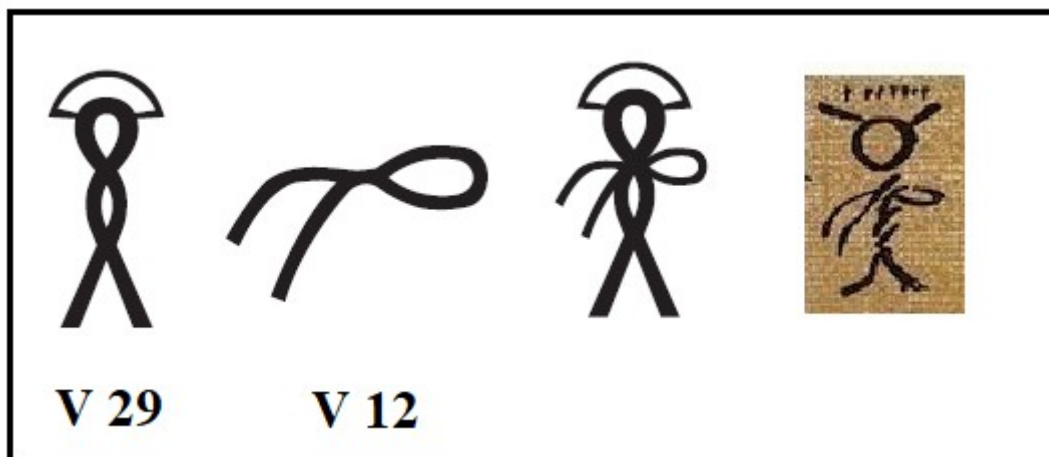


As suggested above in this case we have a direct correspondence between the verb "*sk*" and the god's name "*skr*" (*Sokar*). The problem is that "*sk*"

may assume plenty of meanings according to its determinatives; and the hieroglyphs used in our papyrus do not conform to the common ones, especially for what concerns V29 (*sk*)





that blends with what looks like V12 (rope)








forming thus a sort of portmanteau word:



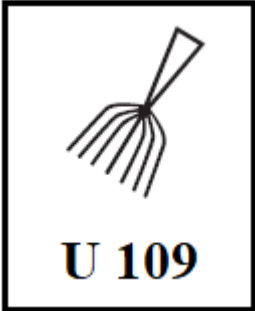
The most similar to it is the verb “wipe, wipe out, wipe away”

 sk wipe, Pr. 372.626.966(det. A); wipe out, Sm. 5, 11.18; 8, 11.16; wipe away, 6, 10;  
sk ht 'w.o. the belly' = pour out o's heart, Pr. 9, 4 ().

and according to Grapow

  belegt seit Pyz.  
 abfegen; abwischen.  
 I. abfegen, abstäuben.  
 a) die Erde abfegen II.  
 dem Bauplatz 12, einen Weg 13  
säubern.  
 seit Pyz. auch   
 später auch 

“to sweep the ground with a broom, to cleanse a pathway”, with U109 (broom) as a determinative



in our case replaced by V12, probably because the scribe wanted to make use of both the meanings. In fact the two of them are related, more or less obliquely, with *Sokar*. As for “sweeping the ground” that might allude to the ritual cleansing of the path which the *henu*-barque of Sokar is dragged along:



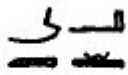
in the course of the procession held on the 26<sup>th</sup> day of the *Khoiak* festival that celebrated the Osirian rebirth. As for “dragging” it is interesting to note that “*sk*” passes into Coptic in that specific acceptance:

ϢΩκ, ϢΕκ-, ϢΟκϛ [ϢΑκϛ], ϢΗκ† *draw, pull, gather, be drawn, also means flow, glide*

What is also to remark is that, on that occasion, participants wore *onion* necklaces; and this may explain the curious rendering of “*sk*”

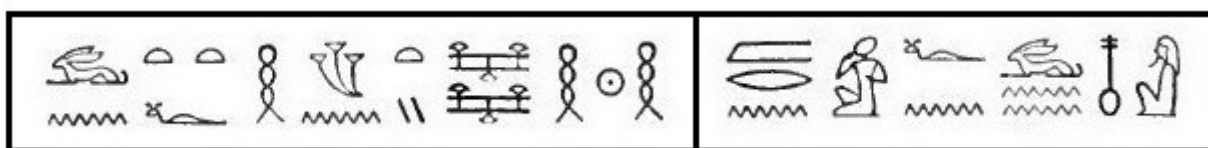


hinting at a vague anthropomorphic figure wearing a necklace (V12). In conclusion everything done in accord with the ritual customs (*m m3c*)

*m3c*        Eigenschaftswort: richtig, wahr, so wie etwas eigentlich beschaffen sein soll

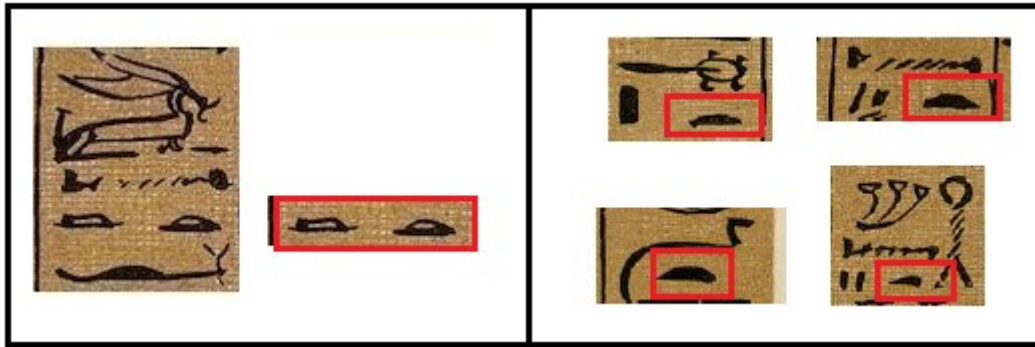
The third aspect is the plainest with its correspondence *wsr/wsjr*. As if, at the end of the ritual procession of the previous passage, Osiris be shown in his manifest form after his rebirth.

But things get tricky again in the last passage:



The problem comes from a spurious “*wntt =f*” (according to Budge’s graphic rendering) which should resonate with Wennefer (*wnn-nfr*),

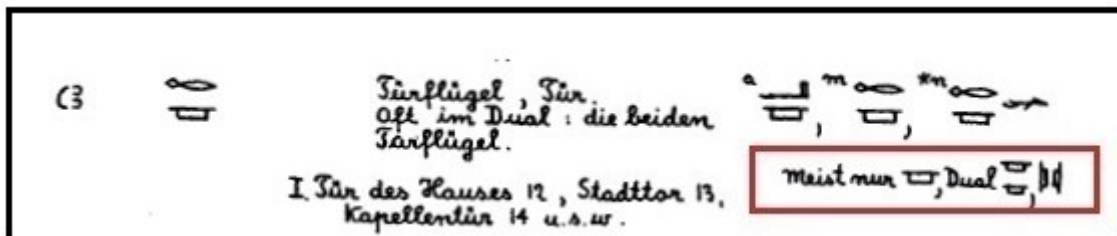
symbol of perfection and completeness. However if we give a closer look at the original writing we may question that solution.



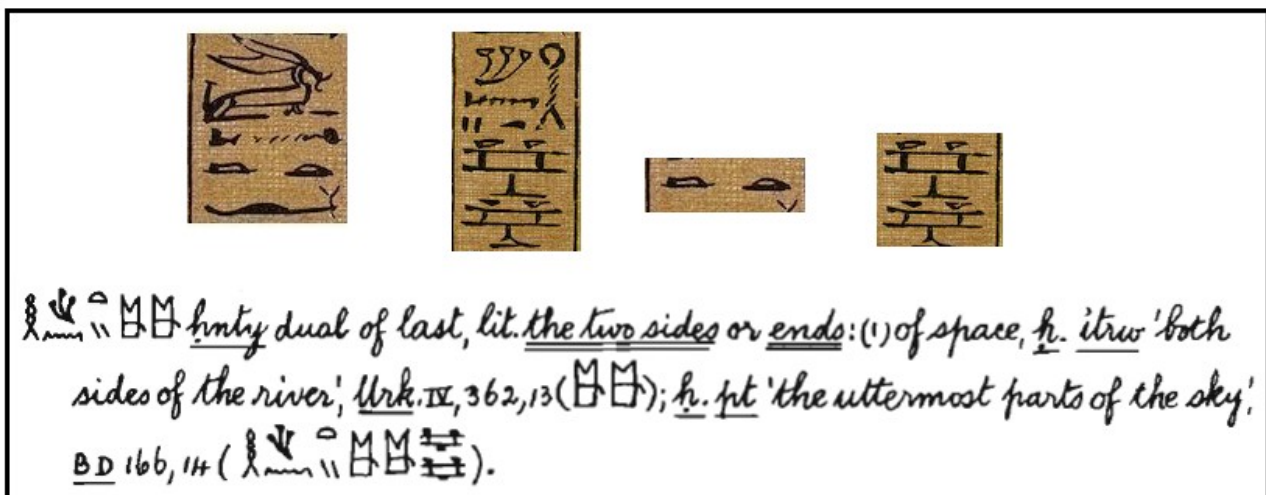
In fact the “t” in our papyrus is always blackened, as shown in some examples at the right. So I would not exclude that the two glyphs be in fact an upside-down rendering of O31 (door leaf), suggesting thus “to open”



the dual rendering of the determinative being an attested fact:



The *dual* wings mirroring the *dual* pillars (*hntj* → the borders) of eternity:

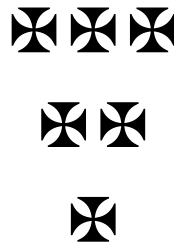


One might of course object about the reverse graphic. That could allude to the fact that whereas the first image (lines 18-19) is a description of “being dragged inside” here the wings open towards infinity (*hntj nhh*), thus a graphic differentiation of going *in* (orthodox) and *out* (revised/reversed).

And I would not exclude another scribal wink, far-fetched as it may turn out. Tempted to read the two glyphs as “*t*” we would thus have the dual “.*tj*” leading to “*wn.tj*” namely *Wentj*,

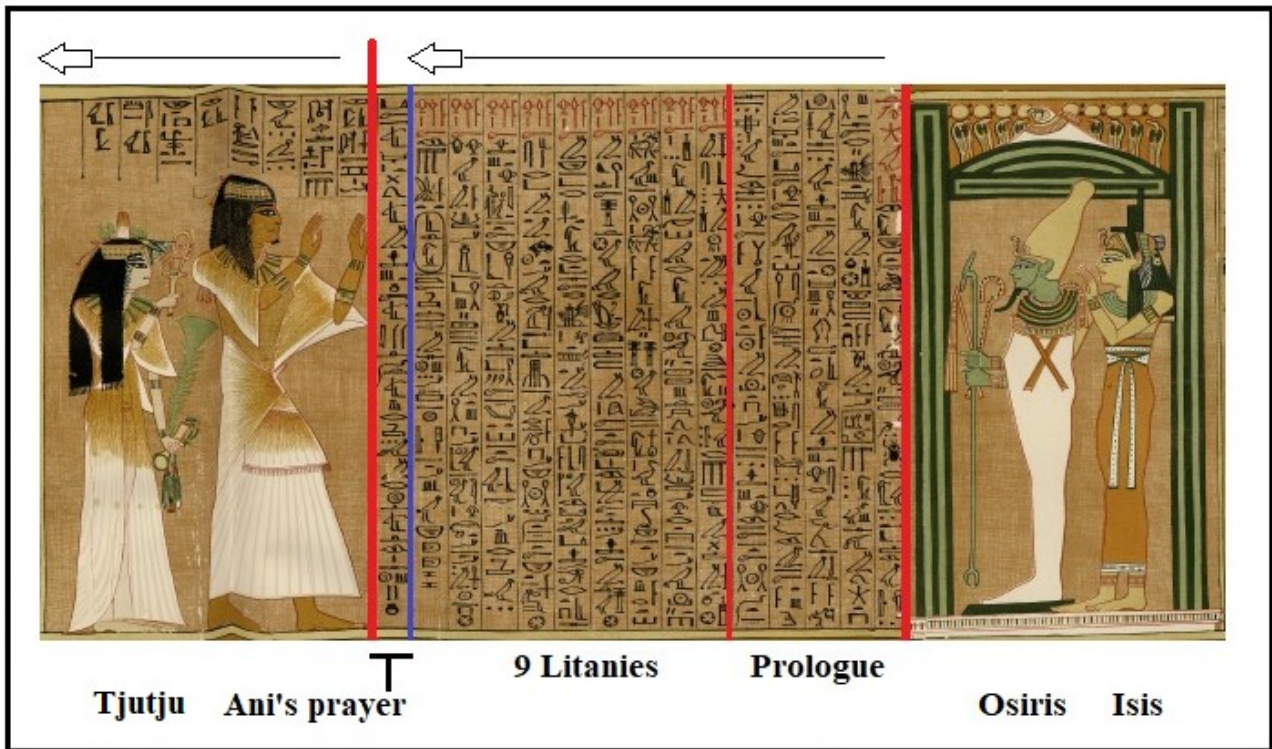


an obscure ancestral god who will be met in the second hymn.



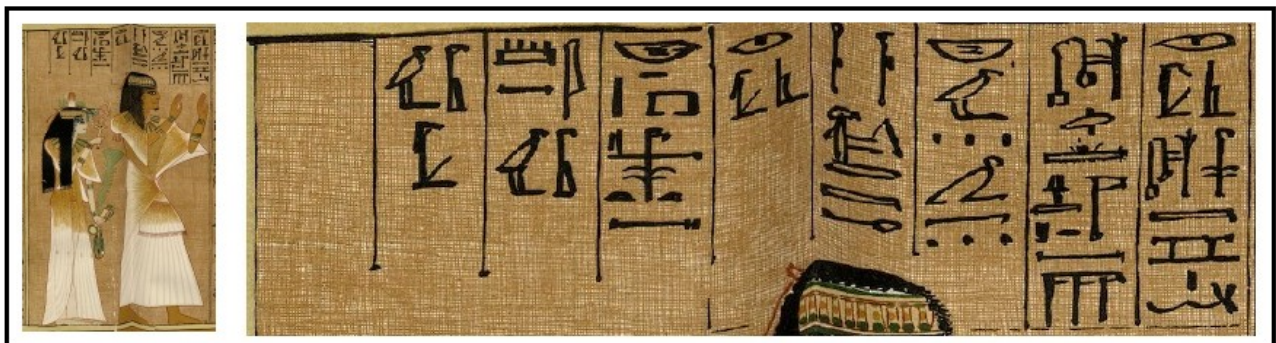
## PLATE 19

If the most eye-catching trait of the first hymn is its outward magnificence and the mystic aura surrounding the Osirian figure, giving the whole a sort of static calmness; this one is marked by a dynamic energy and a terrestrial perspective that seem to contradict the spiritual process of the second part of Ani’s rite of passage which, starting from this plate, should make of him at the end a “blessed spirit”: an “*zh*”. However a closer look will solve this contradiction. But let us see first, though, the hymn in its visual wholeness, that is both the text and the drawings that frame it as in a pious embrace:



Leaving aside for the moment the glyphs over Ani and Tjutju (in fact their names and functions) we see that the very text is divided into three blocks: (i) a prologue describing various numinous aspects of Osiris, invoked to come forth as the dawning sun; (ii) a series of nine litanies, each one contained in a separate column and starting with a formulaic “*jnd hr =k*” (*Hail to you*) in red colour which gives the block its own distinct character; (iii) a final column where Ani asks to be shown a right and safe course.

Compared with this precise meticulous partitioning the above mentioned glyphs over Ani and his wife look somewhat careless,

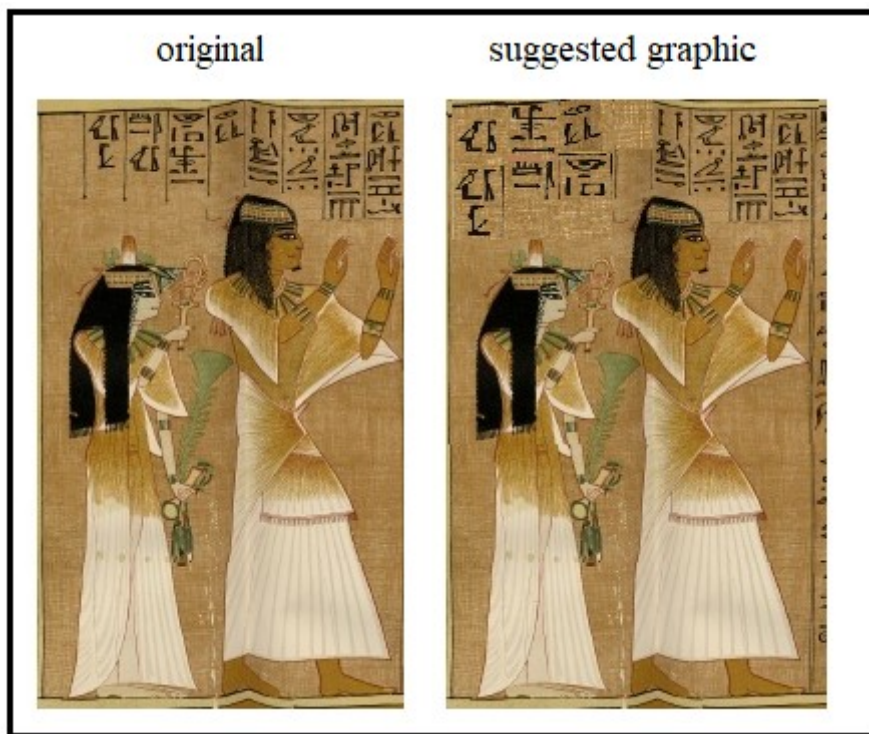


especially the space concerning Tjutju. It would have not taken much effort to write her name in a more harmonious composition, filling thus

the awkward gaps made more evident by the vertical black lines that divide the columns, leaving an unused blank space on the far left. One might wonder why not shift the name to the left and try a new graphic rendering



having thus a more balanced inscription,



the empty column in the middle separating the two names.

Now, since I keep thinking that our scribe (or team) knew what he was doing I tend to exclude scribal carelessness and I am convinced that there were sound reasons behind this graphic arrangement. We can get a better idea if we look at the scroll starting from the previous plate:



blank space. As a matter of fact the glyphs of Ani's name, and of course of Tjutju, are not simple "labels". They look more like a "presentation of credentials" needed for the official passage to the next level. And it is not a coincidence that Tjutju's name (which does not appear in any other part of the papyrus) be written at this precise point. There is in fact a curious and strange resemblance with the vignette of Plate 7 (the beginning of Ani's journey in the Realm of the Dead in view of his *b3* promotion)



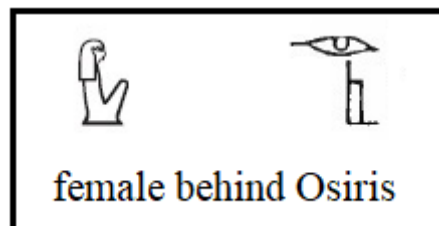
where we see Tjutju as the female aspect of Ani's *b3*. In our case she plays the role of of Ani's "Isis" in his second part of the voyage, his second stage towards transformation. And she is indeed the mirror of the "real" goddess in the juxtaposed vignette:



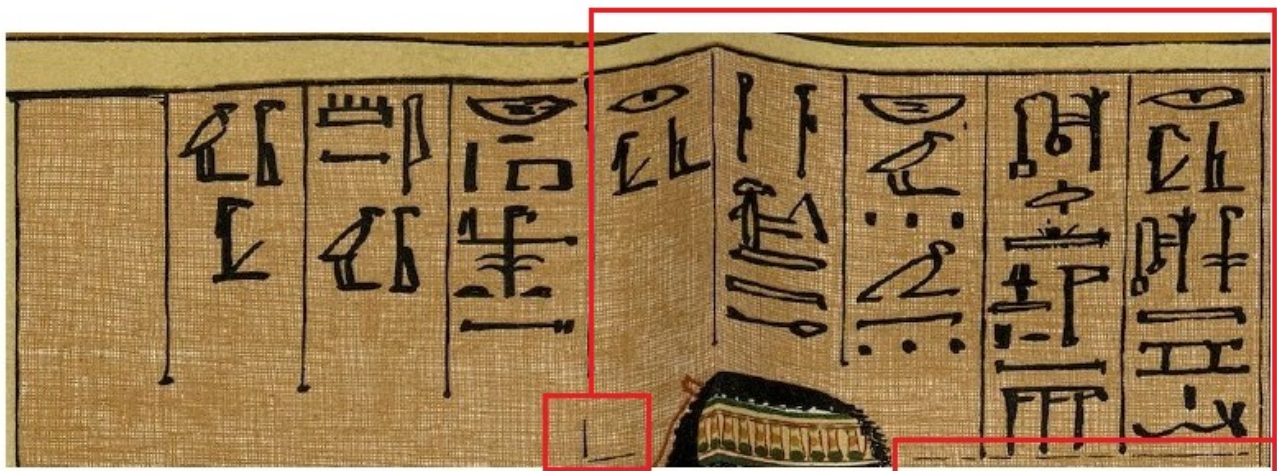
That explains why her name is contiguous to that of Ani's, as if being his sustainer and protectress:



What is to remark is the “*wsjr*” glyph, which in this case has not a god, but a goddess determinative. Of course it is to be excluded that Tjutju herself be “deceased”; so we should read the glyph from a visual perspective, as a sort of rebus:



Thus she is described as the lady of the house (*nbt pr*), songstress of Amun (*šmꜣyt n[t] jmn*), namely Tjutju (*tjwjtjw*). But in that “contiguous” position the “*wsjr*” glyph hides a subtler image. A closer look at the writing shows a virtual rectangle enclosing Ani's name:



We can see in fact a vaguely discernable (perhaps half erased) horizontal line on the right and a sketch of a right angle on the left. Thus Tjutju's "*wsjr*" is inside Ani's space, showing that he has "Tjutju/Isis" (or the *b3* state he has already reached) within himself, thus he is equipped for the beginning of his new adventure. I wonder whether Isis' gesture



be in fact both goodbye and farewell. A gesture that soon after (Plate 30) will become a victorious one:

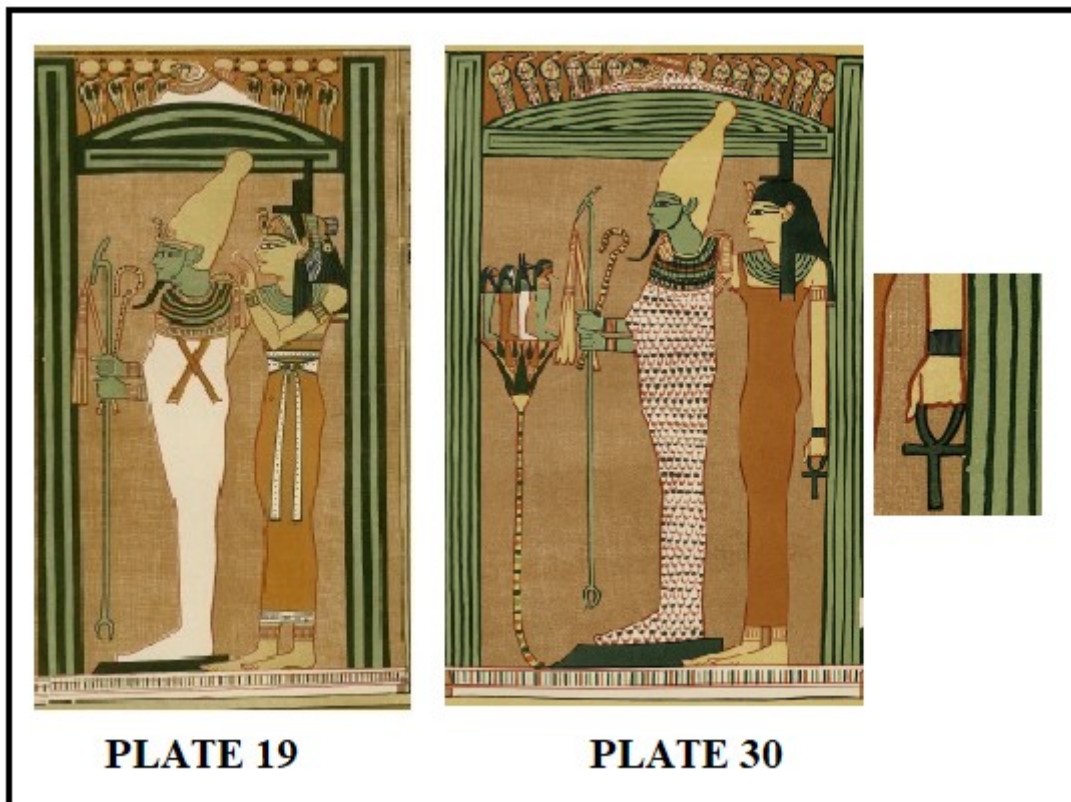


PLATE 19

PLATE 30

So now it's time to get into the very hymn, starting from the prologue:



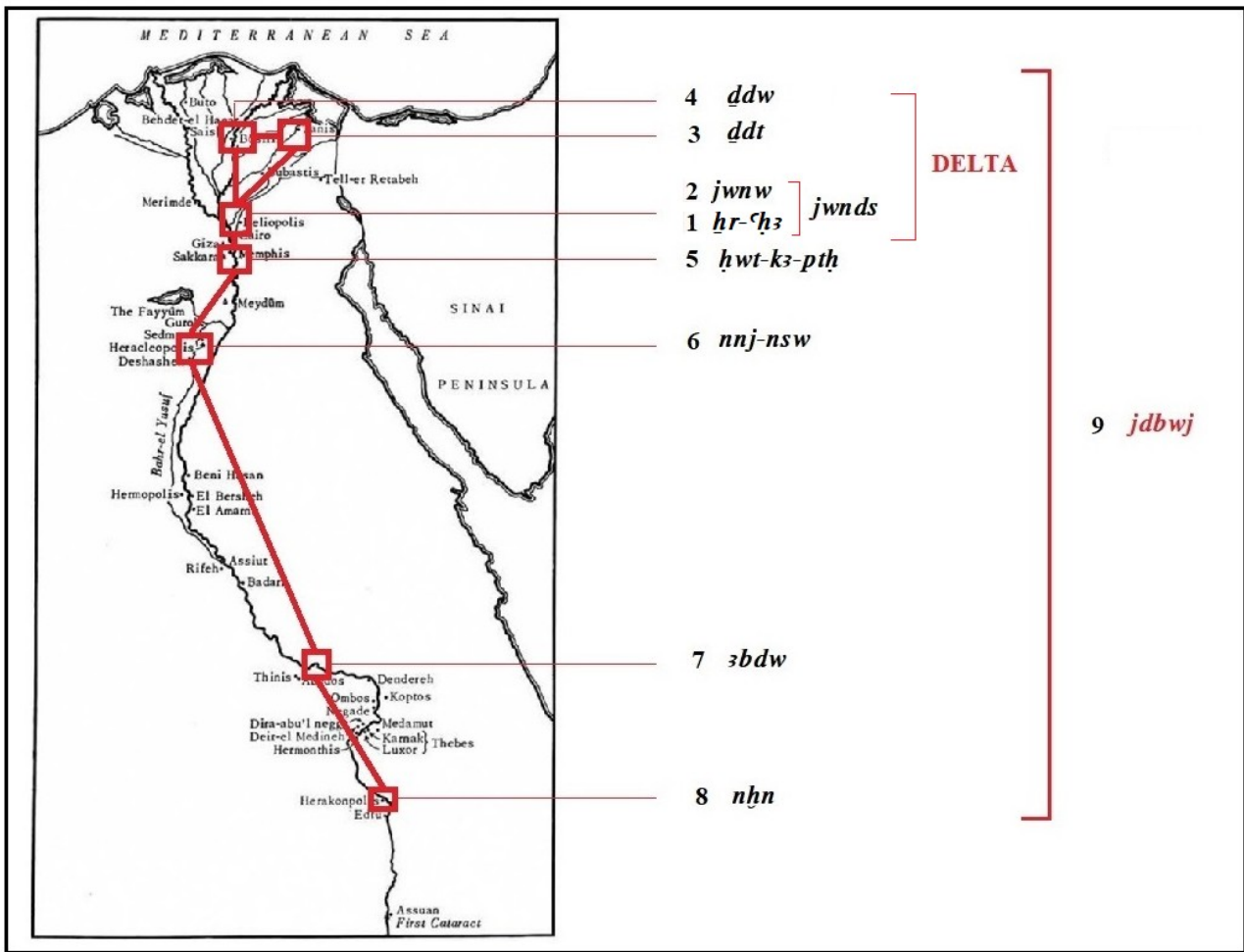
- 1 Adoration of **Osiris**, Lord of Everlastingness.
  
- 2 O Wennefer, Harakhtj
- 3 abundant of forms, great of shapes;
- 4 Ptah-Sokar, (namely) Atum in Heliopolis
- 5 (and) Lord of the *Shetayet*-shrine [Sokar]
- 6 when joining with Memphis [with the *k3* of Ptah]:
  
- 7 the gods who govern the Duat,
- 8 they do protect you
- 9 when you set in the Lower Sky.
- 10 Isis embraces you in peace,
- 11 driving away the Adversary
- 12 from the entrance of your pathway.
  
- 13 Turn away your face from the West,
- 14 so that you may light up
- 15 the Two-Lands in electrum.
- 16 Those who sleep wake up to see you;
- 17 they inhale breath when they see your face
- 18 in the form of the solar disk rising from its horizon.
- 19 And their heart is in peace for what you have done.
- 20 You are Eternity and Everlastingness.



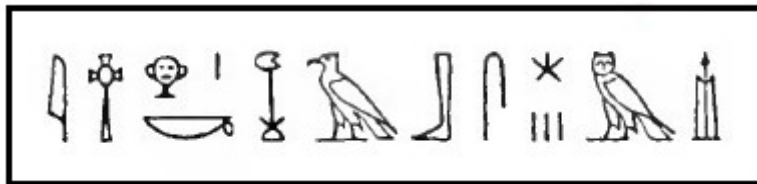
This section is composed of three basic blocks: (i) the numinous aspect of Osiris [2-6]; (ii) his safe passage through the *Duat* [7-12]; his coming forth as the dawning sun [13-20]. The text flows smoothly, but the gods of the first block deserve a closer investigation. Now if there is no doubt about *Wennefer*, a well known Osirian aspect, his relation with *Harakhte*, *Ptah-Sokar* and *Atum* may result ambiguous. One might consider them in their specific individuality, thus three distinct gods who, together with the ones of the *Duat* [7] (or they themselves governing the *Duat*, as in Faulkner / Goelet's translation) help Osiris in his perilous journey. I am more of the opinion that, in this specific context, they be Osirian states, underlining his diurnal and nocturnal solar traits (explicitly shown by the "electrum" of line 15 that unites gold and silver, namely sun and moon). Thus we see the two horizons (sunrise/sunset) of *Harakhte*, whose abundance of forms [3] introduces those of *Ptah-Sokar* who unites the double aspect of the creator who rules the World (*Ptah*) and of the one who rules the Netherworld (*Sokar*); implying the well known triad *Ptah-Sokar-Osiris*, which, in a certain sense, elucidates my questionable translation of lines 4-6. In fact I think that there is just one image, that of *Ptah-Sokar*, shown as *Atum* [4] in his creative aspect (in accord with the Memphite theology) and as *Sokar* under the form of the Lord of the *shetayet*-shrine [5] (read: the necropolis), Memphis being their common place [6]. Now, since the Egyptian name of the city is "*hwt-k3-ptḥ*" (the temple of the *k3* of *Ptah*) I think that their union in Memphis is a possible image of the "*b3*" (*Osiris*) that unites with his "*k3*", resulting in the above mentioned triad. As for *Osiris's* deeds of line 19 I think they refer to the god's victorious journey that becomes the cyclic symbol of eternal existence [20].



At this point we come to the very core of the hymn, the nine litanies, which, through a series of obscure and devious references, outline a symbolic topographical route that starting from the delta (*Heliopolis*, *Mendes*, *Busiris*) and going upstream (*Memphis*, *Herakleopolis*, *Abydos*) down to the southern end of the country, does eventually reach *Nekhen* (*Hierakonpolis*: the city of *Horus the Elder*) where the Nile comes forth from its cavern (8<sup>th</sup> litany) becoming thus a symbol of the origin of the Egyptian kingdom.



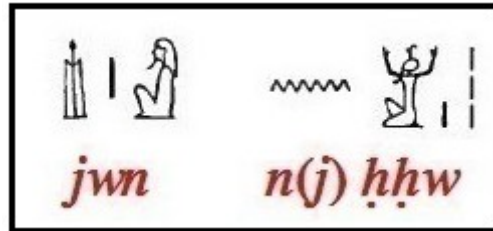
But, as I said, going through this holy route is somewhat impervious; from its the very beginning:



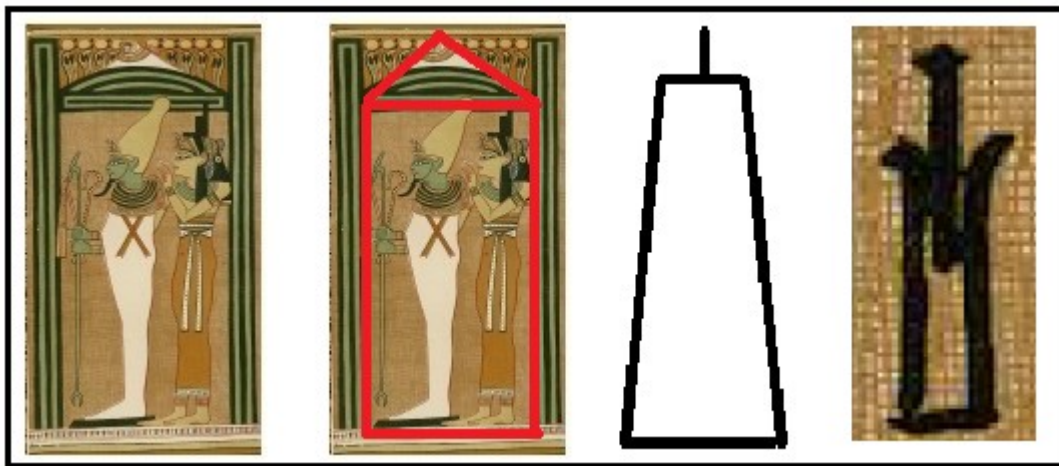
The problem comes from the pillar at the far right. The temptation to read it “*jwnw*” (Heliopolis), as other versions do is very great. But they have the O49 determinative (city) that in our case is not shown. So I am more inclined to see in it just a simple pillar (*jwn*)



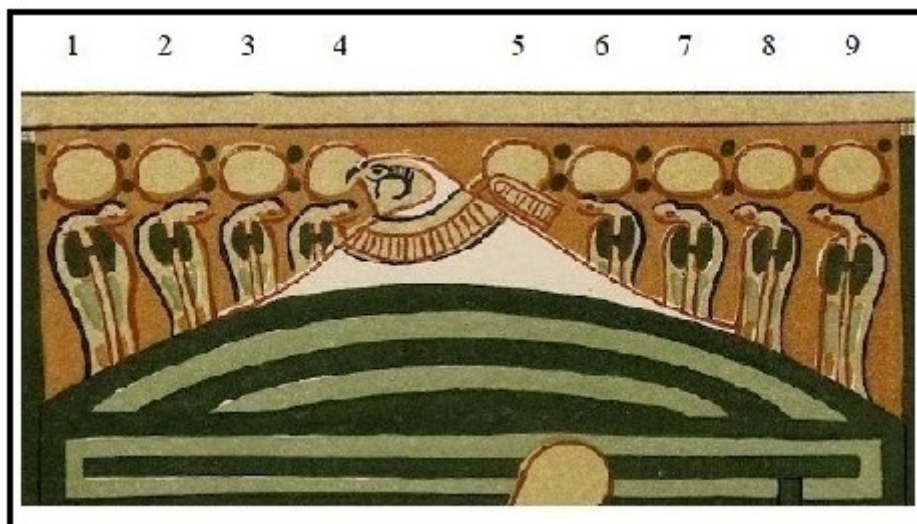
which can metaphorically be a “sustainer of the sky”. Thus an Osirian cosmic aspect (starry sky) displayed in all his solidity (*m jwn*); the pillar of course reminding the *djed*. As a matter of fact in the previous hymn (Plate 2) we find an interesting consonance with Osiris “pillar of millions”



True that in our case there is no god determinative, but I think that the vignette is more than a valid substitute. Not only that. If we look at it with due attention we may pick up some intriguing hints:



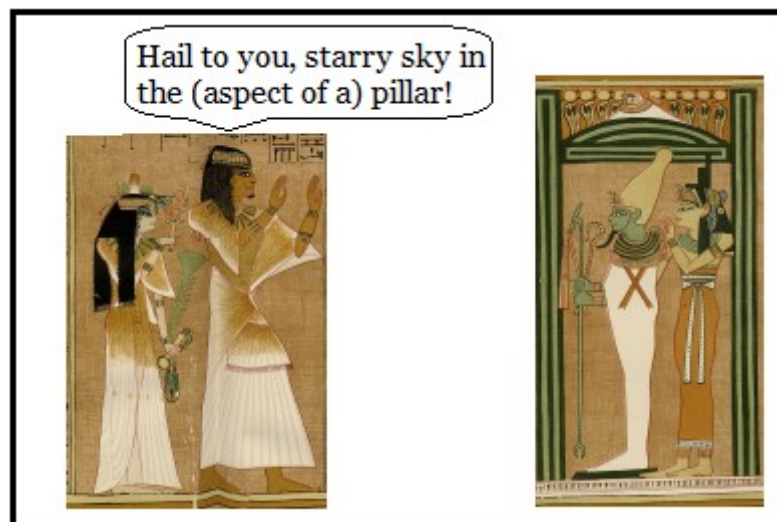
the shrine Osiris is in being vaguely similar to a pillar; but, even more significant are the “nine” uraei over it, the same number of the litanies:



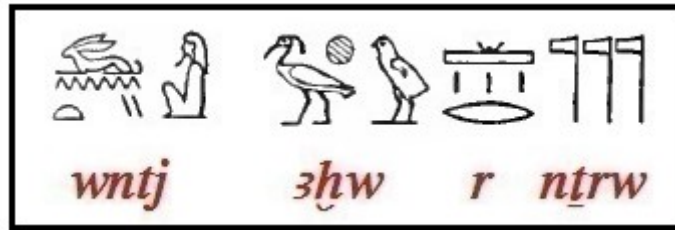
each one carrying what looks like a solar disc, which is a common trait. What is not so common are the four black dots around “seven” of them:



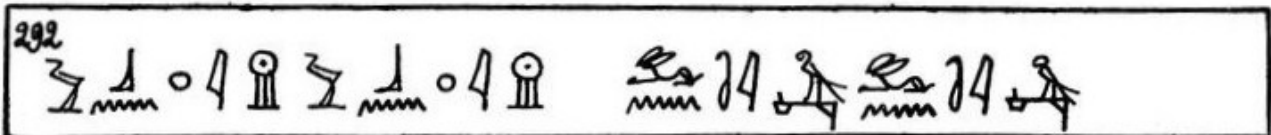
reminding the city determinative (O49). But the dots might also allude to “planets” or “stars”; forming in any case a cosmic image which would indeed comply with the Osirian pillar of the starry sky. So that “*m jwn*” might also refer to the vignette, with Osiris inside (*m*) the virtual pillar (*jwn*) that sustains the nine “uraei-stars”. In this sense the first line might indeed link the two vignettes, as in a comic strip:



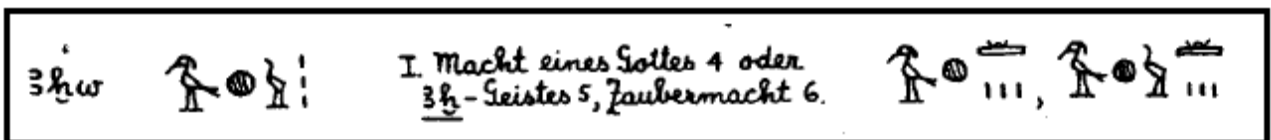
The litany continues with a reference to the “sun-folk” (*hnmmt*) who are legendary celestial beings and to *Kher-aha* (*hr-h*), a city, or better a region, near Heliopolis which was both the cult centre of Osiris-Sepa (a manifestation of the god as “centipede”) and the place where the battle between Horus and Seth was fought (hence its name “battleground”). These two motives are closely connected with the previous line, since they register the passage from the celestial to the sacred earthly plane. The collective firmament (*h3b3s*) morphing into a collective “sun-folk”, who have, though, anthropomorphic traits; becoming more manifest in the god *Wentj* of the next line:



He is a somewhat obscure deity, sporadically appearing in various text (as for example in this luminous aspect in spell 376 of the Pyramid Texts)

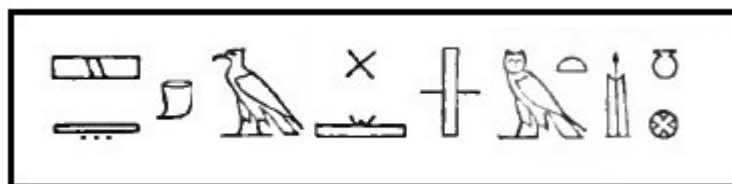


under different guises and functions, sometimes being hostile, sometimes helpful, in any case powerful and glorious as our glyphs describe him. As a matter of fact this writing may be tricky. Strictly speaking it does not say that Wentj is more powerful than the gods, since “*3hw*” with plural strokes is not an adjective (*3h*: effective, beneficial, glorious - so that “*3h r ntrw*” would be “effective/glorious more than the gods”); but it is instead a noun meaning “power”:



Thus, unless it be a possible Late Egyptian rendering, the sense is slightly different. He is the “power” that can go against (*r*) the gods, should they be hostile as sometimes the case is.

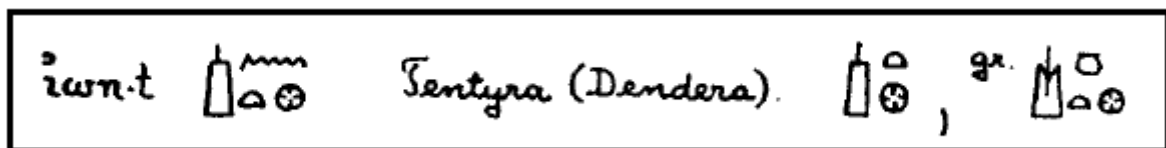
A sort of provocative writing made even more manifest in the last line of this first litany,



with an incommodious and intruding “*r*” asking for elucidations. As usual I exclude a scribal error. So, in order to avoid misunderstandings, let us examine the original glyphs:



Since “*št3*” is masculine we should have “*jmj*”, thus a “mysterious one who is in Heliopolis” which would comply with the Osirian aura, pointing out his concealed nocturnal aspect in the city of the sun. So, what about the “*t*”? Should we assign it to the city and, with some slight adjustments, read it as “*jwt*” (Dendera)?



Although somewhat far-fetched it might have sense. The goddess of the city is Hathor, who is also the Mistress of the West, namely the Realm of the Dead: once again an Osirian connection. But we might read the line as an adjectival sentence; “*jmj*” being a neuter (*what is in*). Thus: “Secret (is) what is in Heliopolis.” Which makes sense, especially in this particular context. There is, though, a further nuance. Since “*jwnw*” contains the above suggested pillar (*jwn*), which contains itself Osiris, the line might also hint at the god of the vignette and at the secrets of his numinous figure. In conclusion: the “erroneous < *t* >” could be a stylistic choice in order to extract multiple meanings from a simple line. Let us then resume this litany:

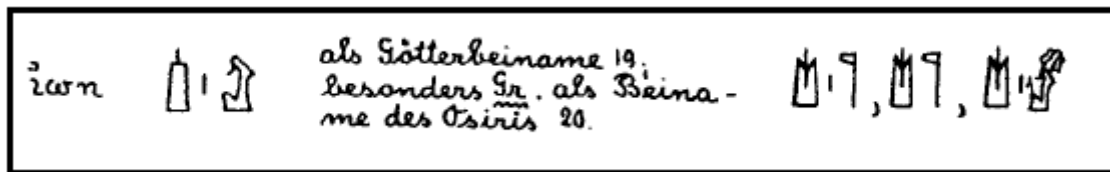
- 1 Hail to you, starry sky in the (aspect of a) pillar, [ *jwn* ]
- 2 people of the sun in **Kheraha** , [ *hrj-š3* ]
- 3 *Wentj*, effective more than the gods,
- 4 mysterious One in **Heliopolis**. [ *jwnw / jwt* ]

Putting all together we might see the description of a descent from the *collective* figure of the starry “*jwn*”, through the *collective* divine beings who dwell both in the sky (sun) and on earth (Kheraha), to the *individual* mighty god (Wentj) who becomes the mysterious *One* who resides, at the same time, both in the solar “*jwnw*” and in “*jwn(t)*” of the Lower sky.

Another form of “*jwn*” makes its entrance, as if receiving the baton, at the beginning of the second litany, itself full of problematic readings,



starting from the plural strokes of the first pillar. Without them the glyph would have been that of a numinous Heliopolitan:

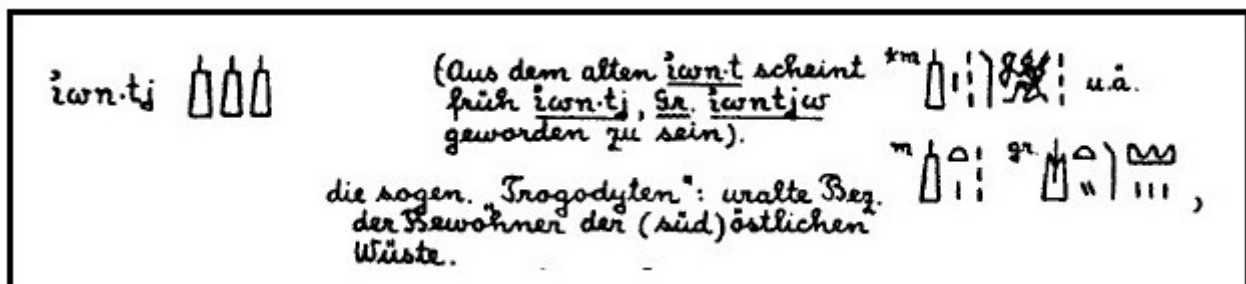


But it seems not to be our case, unless we interpret the plural as a hint at the “abundance of forms” of the prologue [3], more flamboyantly shown by the series of epithets that give shape to the litanies, making of Osiris a “multiform” god. Or may be the anticipation of “trismegistos”!

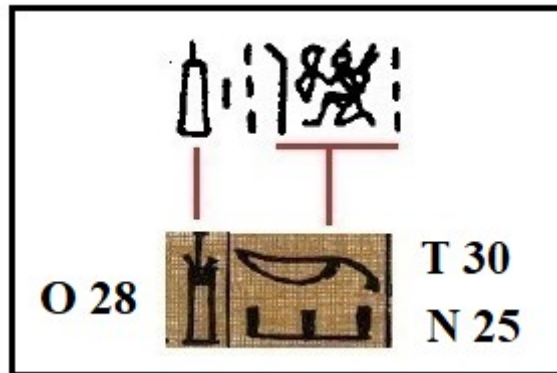
There is, though, a further very interesting suggestion made by J. Assmann (Ägyptische Hymnen und Gebete – p.119) who translates:

Gegrüßet seiest du (sagen) die Troglodyten in *Jwn-ds*  
 [Hail to you (say) the troglodytes in *Jwn-ds*]

reading the plural pillar as *jwntj*



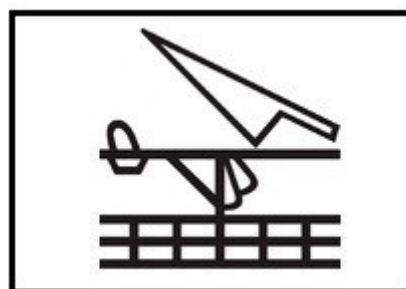
No matter how extravagant, I think it should not be discarded, although, in my opinion, it might be just a side resonance, since the god determinative seems to exclude that immediate reading. However the image could be that of Osiris who was present from ancestral times, when the land was still in a barbarous state. That might also help to explain the unattested “*jwn-ds*”



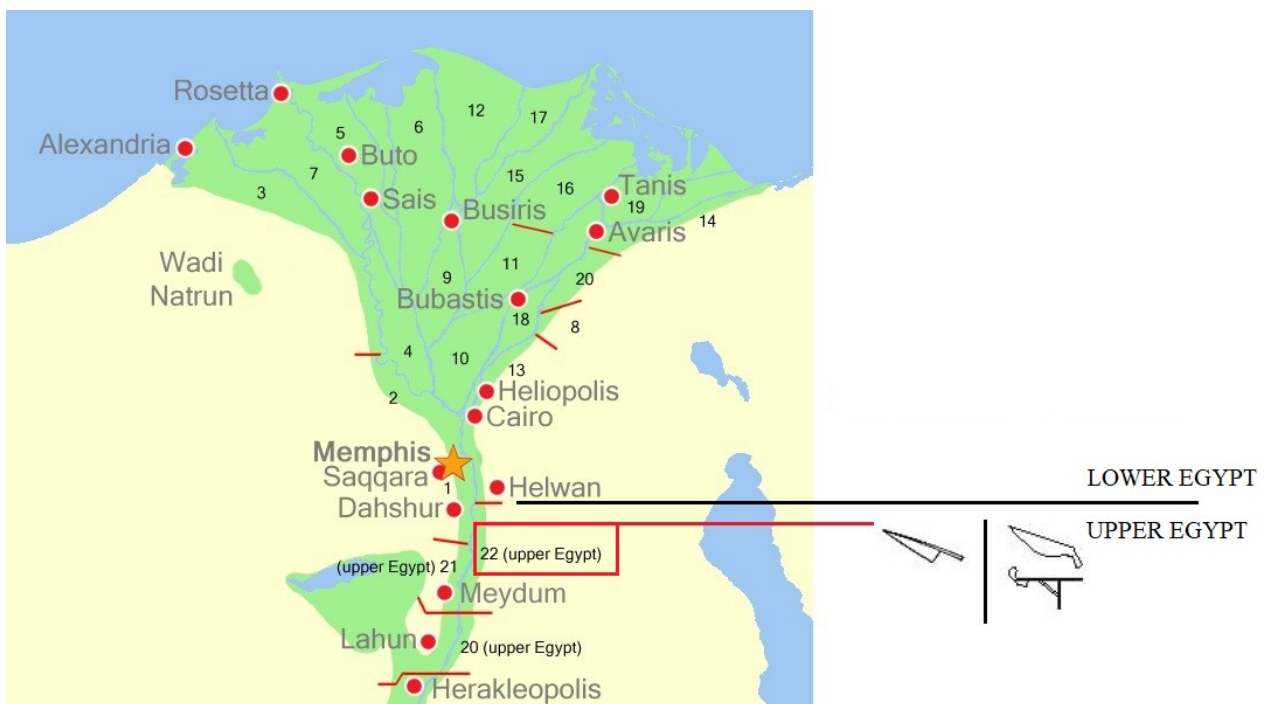
namely the still uncivilised Heliopolitan region (*jwn*: O28) ripped apart by the brutal and bloody fightings (*ds* = knife: T30) of those who lived in desert and strange lands (*h3st*: N25). And perhaps it is not a coincidence that the knife over N25 (desert, foreign land) be somewhat like T29 (place of slaughtering)



So that the compound image might be an allusion to the figure of Osiris the “civilizer”. Although in this specific context I think that “*jwn-ds*” be more a reference to the perilous Underworld that Osiris has to traverse and put under his control. In a certain sense it is his netherworld “*jwnw*”. In fact the knife may trigger a further allusion. It is the sign representing the northernmost nome of Upper Egypt,

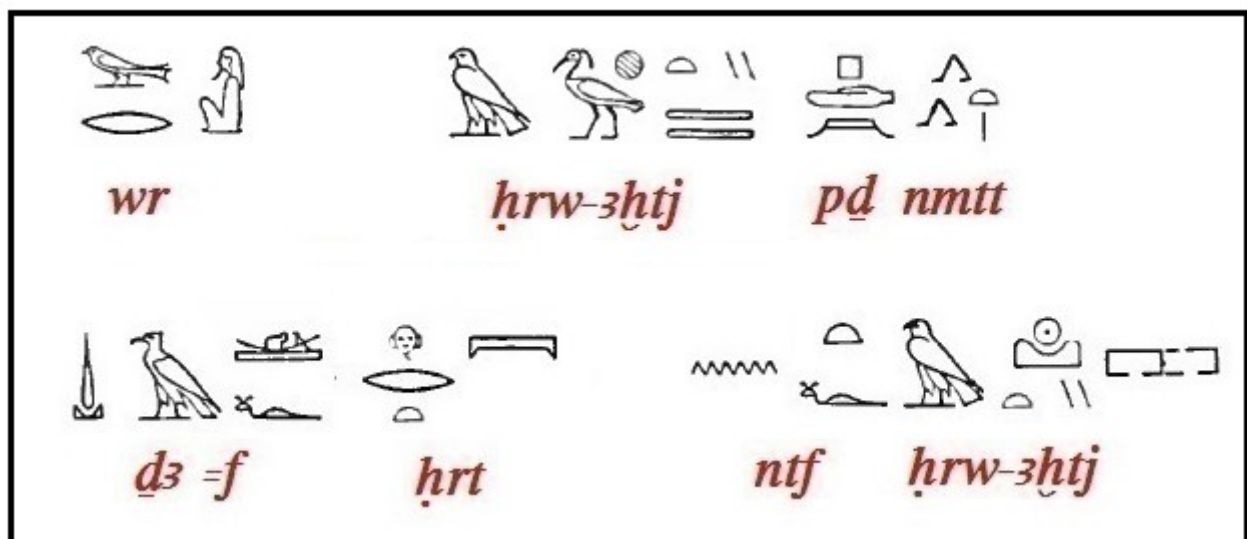


bordering with that of Memphis, the first of Lower Egypt.



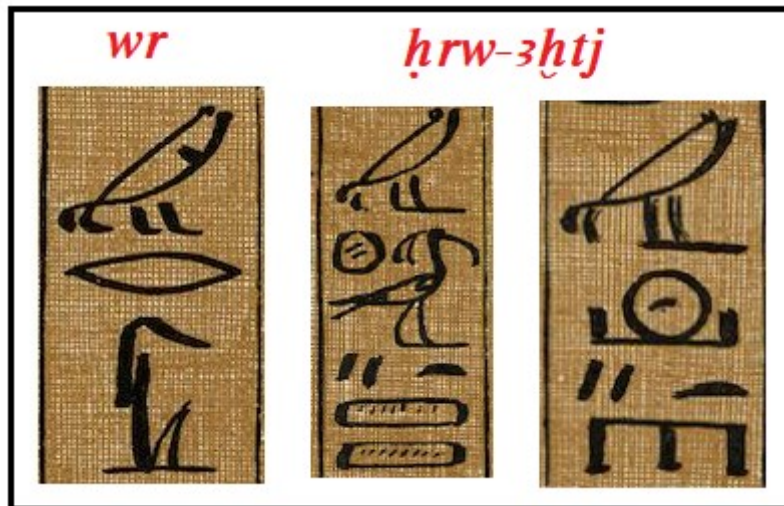
As if marking the point where, leaving the delta region, the southwards journey (metaphorical passage through the netherworld) begins its course.

This litany continues with further nuanced graphic solutions which might pass unnoticed if not given a closer look.



First of all there are the different renderings of the same name "hrw-zhtj": Harakhte (Horus of the two horizons). It is evident that the scribe wanted to show, even graphically, the two different aspects explained by the two

actions: far-striding (*pd nmtt*) and sailing the sky (*dz =f hrt*). In the first case we have the *zh* sign of effectiveness followed by N19 (two strips of land) which may suggest the Two-lands, thus the *north-south* stride; in the other N27 followed by a double O1 (house) forming a compound image of sunrise and sunset, namely the *east-west* course of the sun in the sky. Nonetheless they are a unique figure: the two aspects of the great One (*wr*: a common Osirian epithet). In order to make it clear the scribe used a graphic nuance which can be caught looking at the original writing:



We can see how the swallow of “*wr*” (G36) is almost identical to the hawk of “*hrw*” (G5), which however is usually drawn in quite a different style:



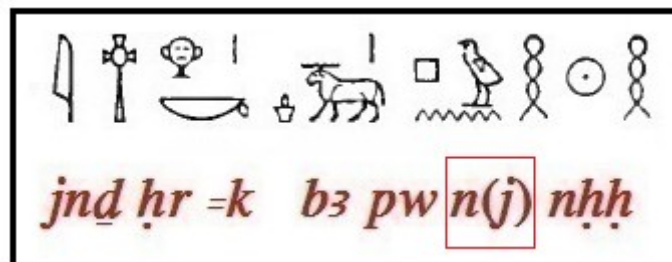
A way to mark the identity of Osiris with the double Harakhte.

All this said we might suggest this tentative “free” translation:

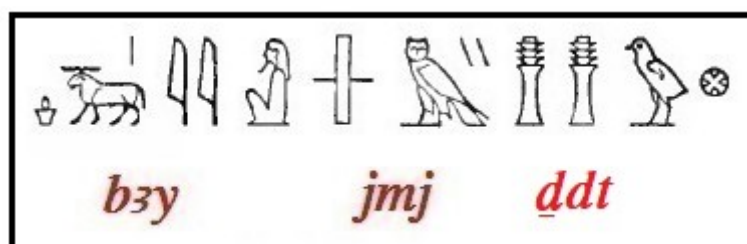
- 1 Hail to you, multiform thrice great Heliopolitan
- 2 in the land of **The Barbarous Pillar**. [ *jwn-ds* ]
- 3 The Great One: *Harakhtj*
- 4 of the two lands, the far striding;
- 5 (and) when traversing the high vault
- 6 he is *Harakhtj* of the two horizons.



In the next litany, the third, we can witness a more outlined description of the Osirian figure, greeted in the first line as the *b3*-soul of Eternity, one of his well known epithets.



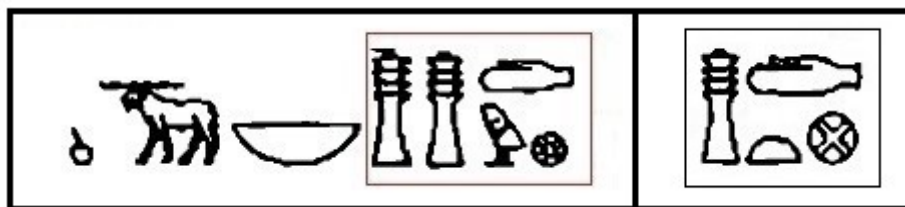
The use of the ram determinative in the *b3* glyph is very indicative since it is a direct allusion to the ram-like god (*b3y*) of the next line



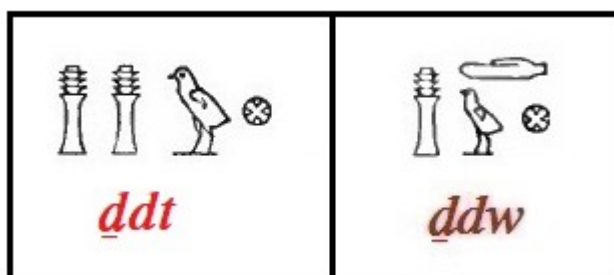
namely *Banebdjedet*, the four-headed ram-god of Mendes (*ddt*), who himself was said to be the *b3* of Osiris.



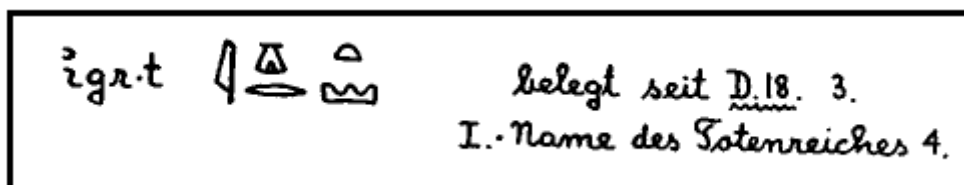
As a matter of fact his four heads are not only allusions to the four cardinal points, thus his total control of the land, but more importantly, symbolic aspects of *Ra, Shu, Geb, Osiris*, namely a metaphorical descent: *sky, air, earth, underworld*. And it is not a coincidence that the city he is lord of (Mendes → ddt) in our case is shown in a particular graphic rendering



with two *djed* pillars instead of the more common version with one *djed* and the feminine “*t*”. Our writing may create a confusion with “ddw”, that is “*Busiris*”, the city mentioned in the following (4<sup>th</sup>) litany

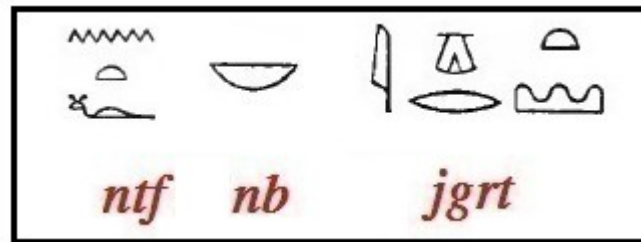


I think that was made on purpose since the two texts are closely linked in describing the gradual passage from an archetypal to an individualized figure. In fact the previous ancestral pillar (*jwn*) becomes here the *djed*, twice shown as to underline the specific Osirian aspect, made explicit by the last two lines that introduce Wennefer (*wnn-nfr*) as son of Nut, the sky goddess and as Lord of “*jgrt*”



namely the “Land of Silence”, or The Realm of the Dead. Thus the four cardinal points centred around Bandedjedet are traversed by an up/down axis, forming in fact the completeness “*wnn-nfr*” points to (the perfect

being / he who will be forever perfect). But what is to be noted is that, for now, he keeps being described through a third-person pronoun (*ntf*)

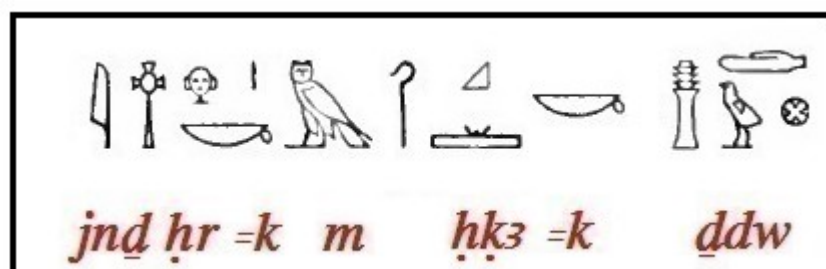


Things will soon change, but for the moment let us stick to this litany:

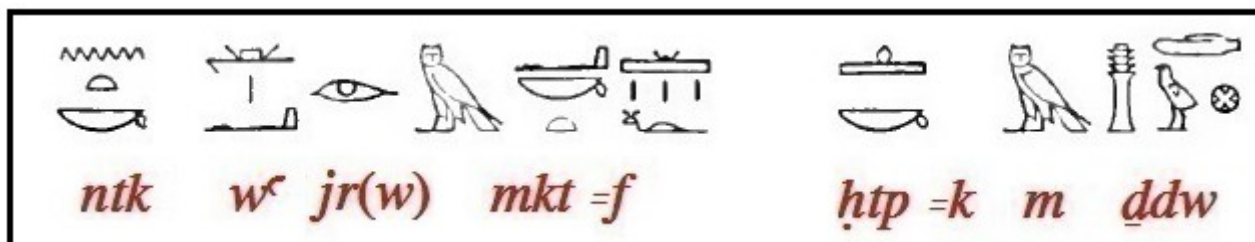
- 1 Hail to you, *b3*-soul of Eternity,
- 2 ram-like god who is in Mendes, [ *ddt* ]
- 3 *Wennefer*, son of Nut,
- 4 who is the Lord of the Land of Silence. [ *jgrt* ]



As said above here (4<sup>th</sup> litany) we shift from *ddt* to *ddw*, from the double to the single *djed*-pillar and in the meantime from the third (*ntf*) to the second-person pronoun: a series of “=k” and “*ntk*”. (As a matter of fact the second-person of the formulaic “*jnd hr =k*” is addressed to a singular “you”; but it is so generic so as to pass almost unobserved). This is a way to underline a more “palpable” individualized form of Osiris with respect to the process begun in the previous litany. In fact “*ddw*” is also “*pr wsjr*” (The house of Osiris → *Busiris*) and the god is shown in his governing office (*m hk3*)



wearing the Red Crown of Lower Egypt. A royal image repeated, as in a slight modified *parallelismus membrorum*, in the next two lines:



This passage recalls lines 12-15 of the hymn of Plate 2:

- 12 Glad you are, you in the desert land [netherworld];  
 13 Horus, your son, established on your throne.  
 14 You have manifested yourself as the lord of Busiris,  
 15 as the ruler who is in Abydos.

In fact the protection (*mkt =f*) that he makes/made (*jr(w)*) may allude not only to his ability of taking care of himself, but also to Horus, his son, known as “*hr-nd-hr-jt=f*” (the protector of his father), who takes Osiris’s office (13) when he goes in the netherworld (*htp =k*); namely in the grave of *Busiris* where his *djed* (his backbone) is alleged to be buried. Thus a unique figure (*wꜥ*) who rules in the meantime both the earthly and the netherworld region. As stated by our litany:

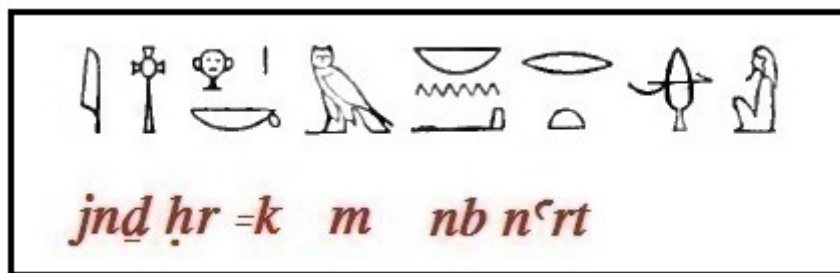
- 1 Hail to you, in your rule of **Busiris**, [ *ddw* ]  
 2 firm the Wereret Crown on your head.  
 3 You are One - who makes his protection  
 4 when resting in peace in **Busiris**. [ *ddw* ]

Not to leave unnoticed the two “*ddw*” that protectively embrace Osiris in his two-layered duty.

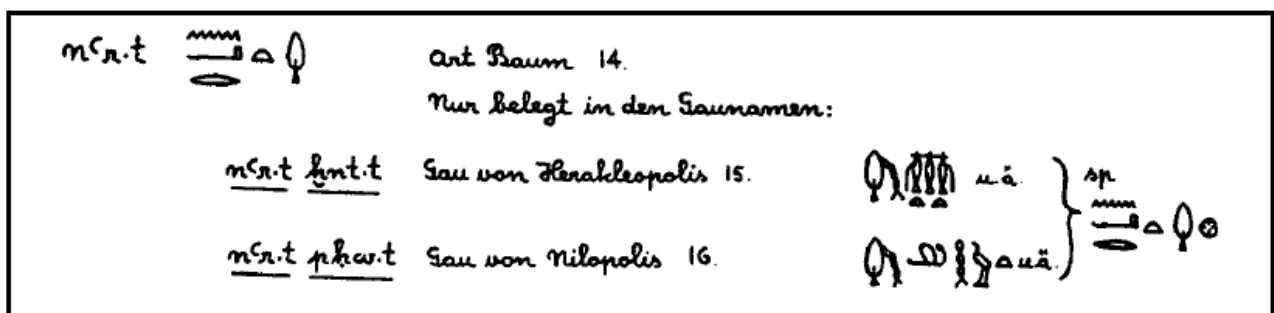
Now the last line of the previous text seems to be an introduction to the netherworld journey which is in fact hinted at by this fifth litany, posing no particular problems for what concerns its syntactic course:

- 1 Hail to you, in the aspect of Lord of *naret*,
- 2 who places *Sokar* on his sledge,
- 3 who drives away the rebels that do evil,
- 4 who grants that the *wedjat*-eye be content in its place.

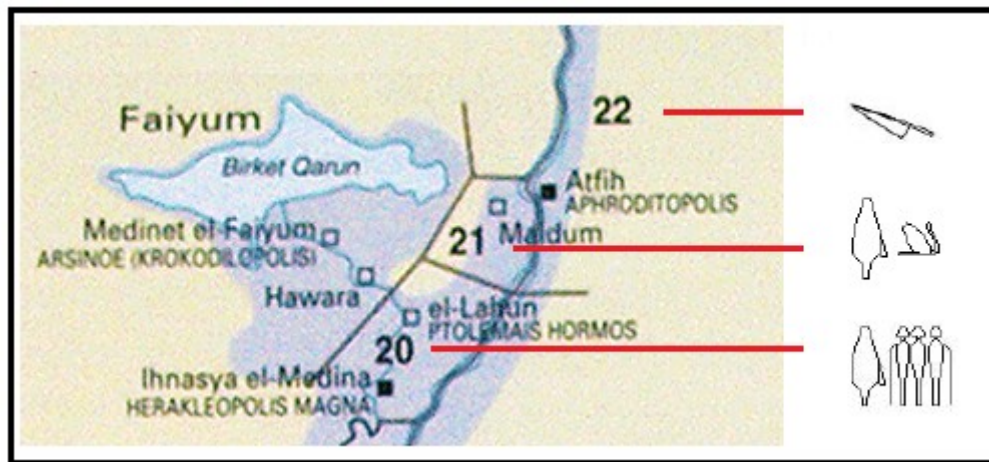
Although lines 2-4 might be read as passives (*Sokar* placed on his sledge etc.), considering the context I am more inclined to interpret the verbal forms as active participles, referred to the might and power of the Lord of that curious *naret* [1] which we are going first to elucidate.



What does “*n'rt*” point to? We know it is a tree (about which scholars seem to have different opinions: some say *sycamore*, some *oleander*; some prefer leaving it as it is). The relation between Osiris and trees is a well known fact, although they are of different species (cedar, acacia, tamarisk) as shown for example in a passage of Chapter 125A (see my annotations of Plate 30). So why that specific “*naret*”? Probably because it is in strict connection with two Upper Egypt nomes: “*n'rt phwt* (21<sup>st</sup>)” and “*n'rt hntt* (20<sup>th</sup>)”



which, in a north-south direction, follow the northernmost one (22nd), that of the knife (see above: 2<sup>nd</sup> litany) bordering with Memphis, the most important city of the first nome of Lower Egypt.



In a certain sense the scene rehearses the victorious ritual “descent”, made evident by the actions described in lines 2-4.

First we see Sokar, the known Memphite chthonic god, put aboard his *henu*-barque



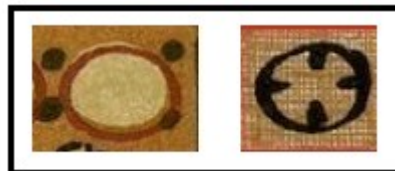
the sledge [2] being the machinery that drags it in the course of the *khoiak*, the ritual feast celebrating the rebirth of Osiris which, in ancient times, took place in Memphis. The events listed in this litany (procession, defeat of the enemies, restoration of order) mirror its ritual steps. One cannot but note a curious resemblance with the Osirian vignette



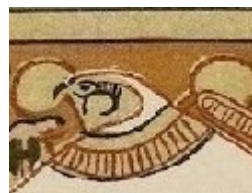
especially for what regards the hawk-head on the top.



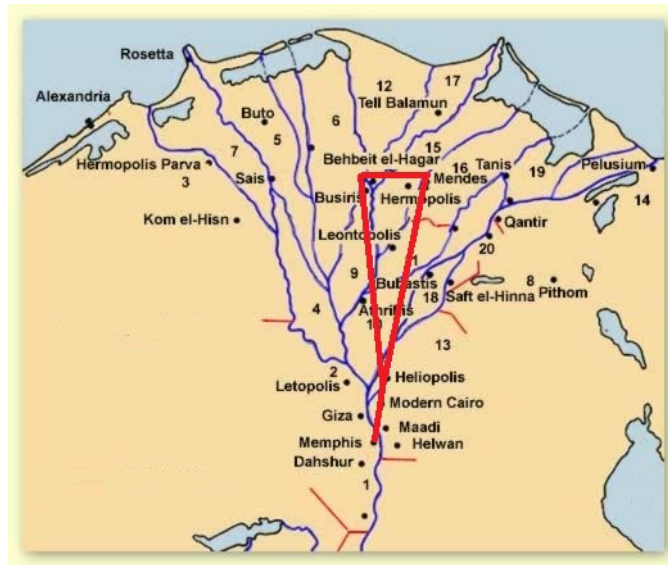
One might also note how the hawk-head on the Osirian vignette stands between two discs that don't have the four black dots which, as already suggested, could be an allusion to the city determinative:



Question: is there a reason behind this “dot-less” composition?



I'd say there might be. The two empty discs could in fact allude to the two not explicitly mentioned *naret* nomes. And also to the not mentioned city where the *khoiak* feast is held: Memphis (*ḥwt-k3-ptḥ*), where Sokar unites with Ptah, forming the compound *Ptah-Sokar* who has been described in the prologue (lines 5-6). As for the correspondence between dotted-discs and cities we will come to it in due time. For the moment let us note how the cities met until now form a triangle looking like a schematic delta,



and, most important, like an upside down pillar, recalling the enigmatic “*jwn-ds*” above described.

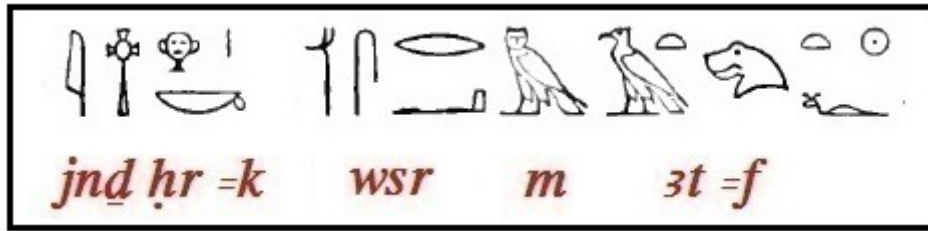


The sixth litany is in a certain sense a continuation of the previous one, the procession of the *henu*-barque having reached the mound of *Naref* located in Herakleopolis (*nnj-nsw*).

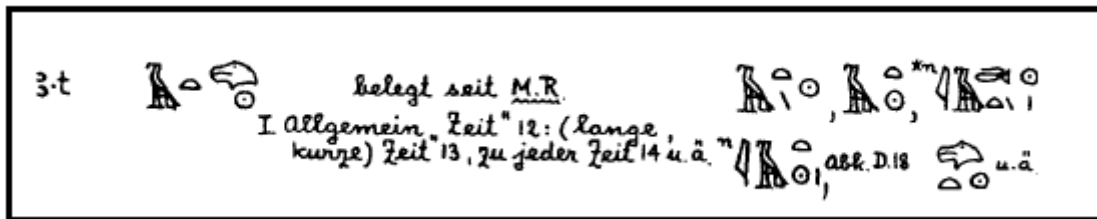
- 1 Hail to you, strong One in his striking power,
- 2 great noble, foremost of **Naref**, [ *n3rf* ]
- 3 lord of Everlastingness, creator of Eternity,
- 4 you are the Lord of **Herakleopolis**. [ *nnj-nsw* ]

This is not the place to expand on Naref. Anyone interested may consult the outstanding monograph by Lucía Díaz-Iglesias Llanos “*Naref and Osiris Naref*”. For what concerns us suffice it to say that it was a sacred place in the Herakleopolitan area, a possible tomb of Osiris (one of his many) and probably because of that the entrance of *Rosetau*, as explained in one of the answers to a question of Chapter 17, asking about a journey to the “Island of Truth and Justice in Abydos”. A journey so similar to that of our litanies (see my annotations of Plates 7-10). And we should take

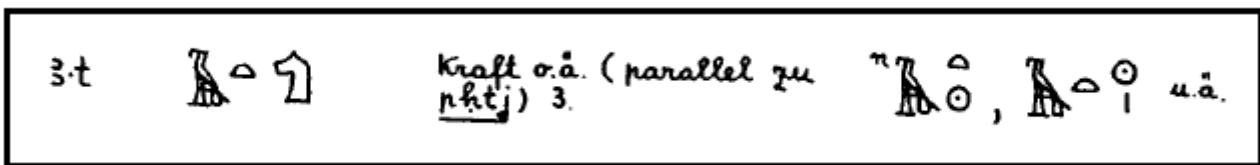
note of a couple of subtle nuances, starting from the first line that looks like a résumé of the last two images of the previous block.



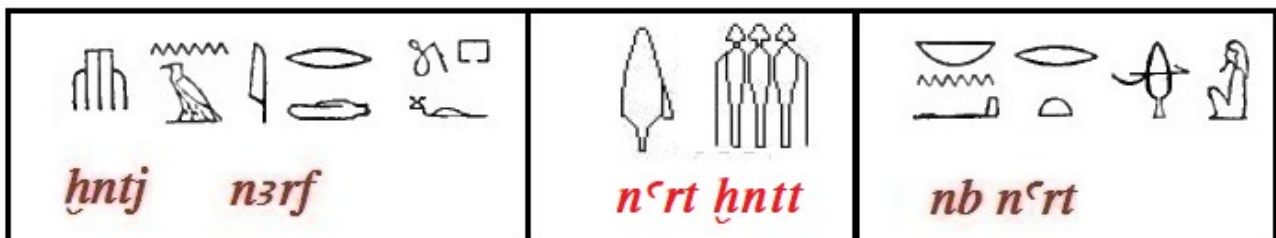
We have “3t” that can be seen both as “moment, instant”



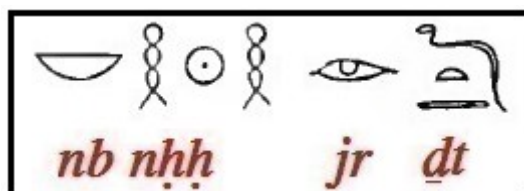
and as “striking power”



so that the compound figure would be Osiris presenting himself (pun *wsr/wsjr*) as a mighty one (*wsr*) who can show all his power (*3t =f*) at the right moment (*m 3t =f*). Adding a vague graphic and phonetic resonance of “*hntj n3rf*” with “*n<sup>c</sup>rt hntt*” and “*nb n<sup>c</sup>rt*” of the previous litany:

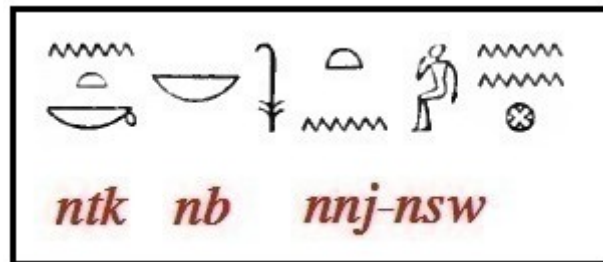


Line 3 may be amusingly tricky:

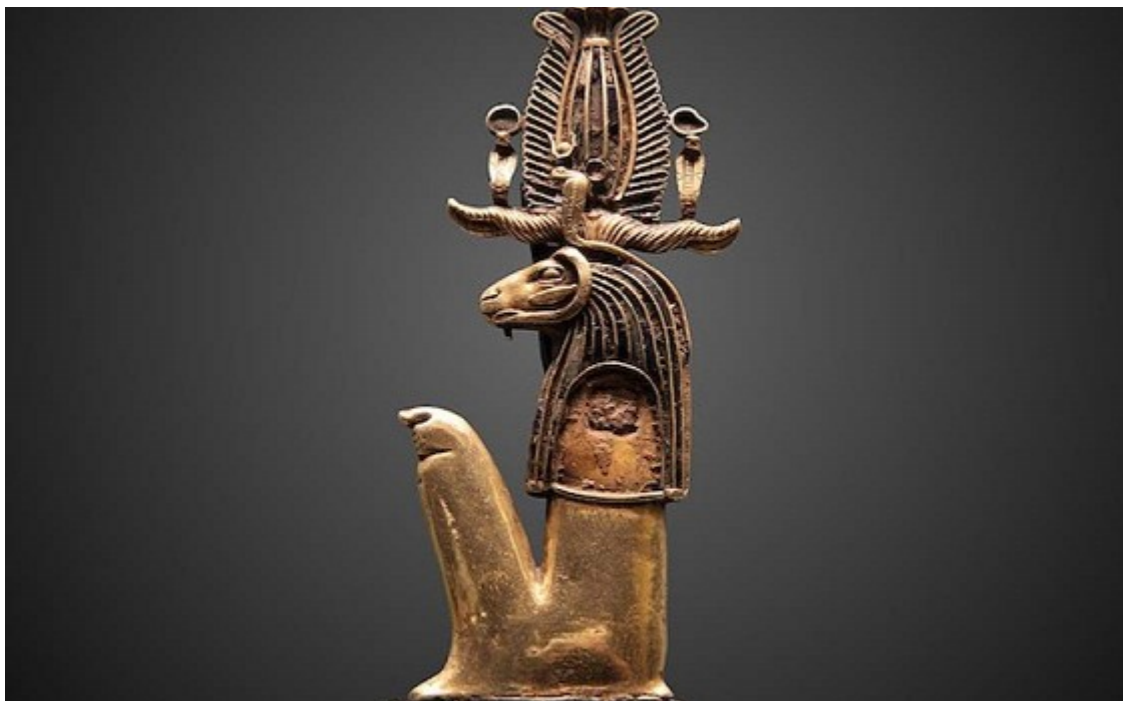


As it is (eye glyph) “*jr*” is an active participle, so “*nb nhḥ*” and “*jr dt*” are two separate phrases. But if we read “*jr*” as a preposition we would have “*nhḥ r dt*” or the reverse and more common “*dt r nhḥ*”; or, leaving aside “*jr*”, a “*nhḥ dt*” all three meaning “forever and ever”. Thus an image of the lord who keeps going from eternity to everlastingness and back to the start; *and* of the lord of “eternity and everlastingness turning around each other”.

As for the last line



the “child” (*nnj*) of the glyph may allude to an objective weakness (Osiris the weary one) which however he can be master (*nb*) of. But there may be a further reference to *Heryshef*, the tutelar deity (*nb*) of Herakleopolis,



who was said to be the *b3* of Osiris, his ram-like aspect recalling that of *Banebdjedet* of the third litany, himself an Osirian *b3*. In this specific context, what is more important is the meaning of his name: “*He who is upon his lake*” (*hrj-š=f*). Now it is not to be excluded that the lake might

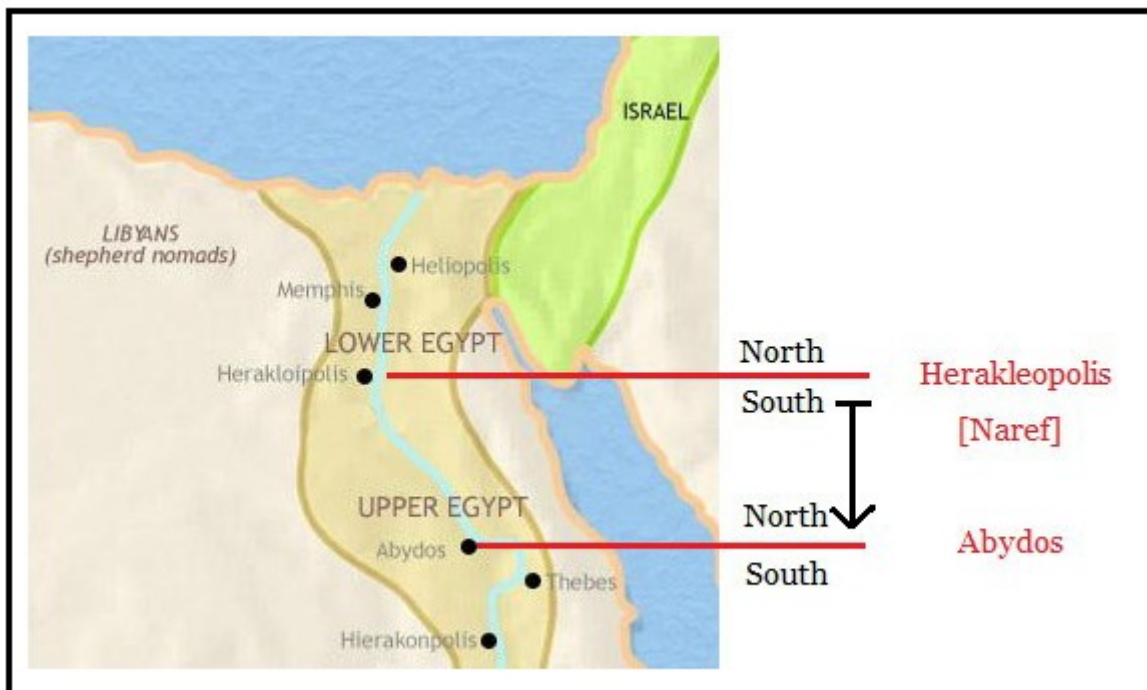
refer to *Rosetau* and to the progress through it, as already anticipated in a corresponding passage of Chapter 17.



It describes Atum’s course towards the “Island of Maatj”:

*As for Rosetau:*  
 the southern Gate [is] Naref,  
 the northern Gate belongs to the Mound.  
*As for the Island of Maatj it is Abydos.*

*Otherwise said:*  
 The way along which moved his father Atum.



That can be indeed the route talked about in the next (7<sup>th</sup>) litany, namely the progress through Heryshef’s “*Rosetau*-like lake”.

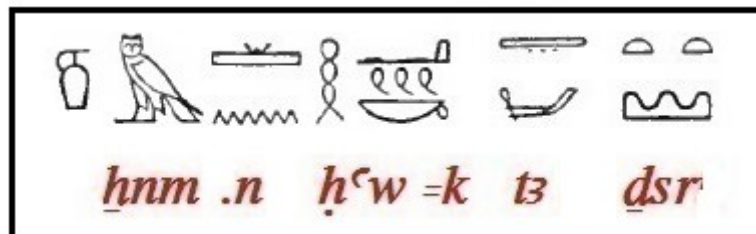


- 1 Hail to you, content with Truth!
- 2 You are the Lord of **Abydos** [ *zbdw* ]
- 3 since your body has joined the sacred land.
- 4 You are one who abhors lies.

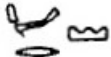
We may note a curious construction. Lines 1 and 4 (their common theme being “truth”: line 1 in positive, line 4 in negative terms) do embrace the middle ones that describe a vague topographic *hieros gamos*. Now I would not exclude that this “bracketing” be a stylistic solution for mirroring the Island of *Maatj* of Chapter 17 (*vide supra*), said in fact to be *Abydos* (the primary cult centre of Osiris in its Netherworld acceptance, balancing the “solar/diurnal” one of *Busiris*). Thus line 1 (Truth) and line 4 (Justice) would correspond to the dual figure of *m3't* → *m3'.tj* (Truth and Justice):



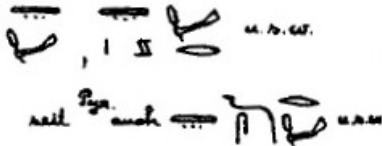
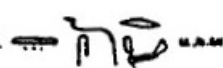
This sacred union with Truth is underlined, by a subtle scribal nuance,

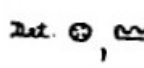


through a “defective” rendering of “*t3 dsr*” (sacred land). Since “*t3*” is masculine the feminine “*t*” (here two of them) looks like an error:

*t3-d3n* 


belegt seit Lyz.  
 Name des Friedhofes 6,  
 (mit Gräbern und  
 anderen Baulichkeiten 7),  
 bes. des von Abydos 8;  
  
 dann auch Name für  
 das Totenreich 9.


  
 u. s. w.  
 seit Lyz. auch 
  
 u. s. w.

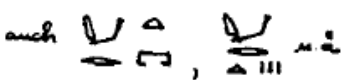
Det. 
  
 u. s. w.

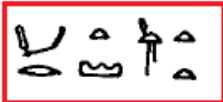
Unless we consider the twin “t”s as part of a determinative.

Another possibility is “*dsrt*”:

*d3n.t* 

belegt seit D. 18.  
 auch mit Artikel t3 1.  
 Name eines Teiles der  
 Nekropole von Theben 2.  
 auch bes. in der  
 Verbindung 3:  
 auch zuweilen wie eine  
 allgemeine Bez. für  
 Nekropole 4.

auch 
  
 u. s. w.


  
 u. s. w.

so “*t3 dsrt*” (land of the Necropolis). But there still would be an unwanted “t”. And I doubt an adjusted “*dsrt jmntt*” (that in the red rectangle) might be considered. Thus the determinative seems to be the best choice. In fact if we look at the original rendering,

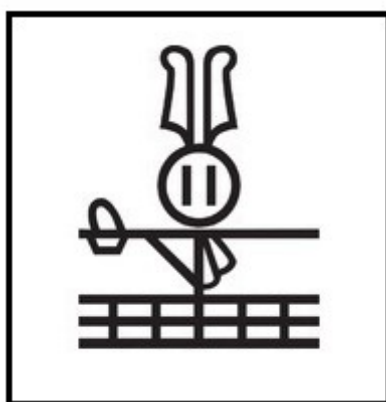


through a Freudian lens, we might pick up a phallic sceptre (*dsr*) and two *breasty* “t”s. Latrin(e) me that, my trinity scholar! would say James Joyce (Finnegans Wake, 215.26). However, leaving aside Goliardic innuendoes, I think that this sexual hint might rightly comply with the holy marriage of line 3; Abydos (sacred city) being the proper finish line. But there are still two litanies, so what about them?



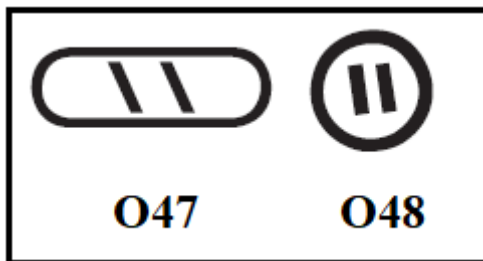
- 1 Hail to you, *He who is in his Barque,*
- 2 he who brings the Nile from its cavern
- 3 when the sunlight shines on his corpse.
- 4 He is the one who is in **Hierakompolis**. [ *nhn* ]

Here we have an evident image of inundation. The Nile is brought out from its source so as to flood the dry land, symbolized by the corpse of Osiris laying on the country in its full extent. An allusion to the god's resurrection and, most of all, to his fertility aspect. It is the passage from the *individual* to the *collective* level. The first seven litanies turned around his personal figure. This one points out his effective action for the benefit of the land. The descent to the source of the Nile and his coming forth are not only a re-enacting of the primordial rise from the abysmal waters of Nun, but have also an historical meaning. In fact Hierakompolis marks the beginning of the foundation of the Egyptian state both in its mythic and in its political aspect. "*nhn*" is the city of Horus the Elder who had the upper hand over Seth the Ombite, reflecting in our case the victory of Horus (Osiris's son and his rejuvenated aspect) over the hostile Sethian forces. And "*nhn*" is in close relation to the pre-dynastic kings. These two concepts are expressed in more specific terms in the last (9<sup>th</sup>) litany. And I wonder whether the symbol of the nome of *nhn* (3<sup>rd</sup> Upper Egypt) may have anything to do with it.

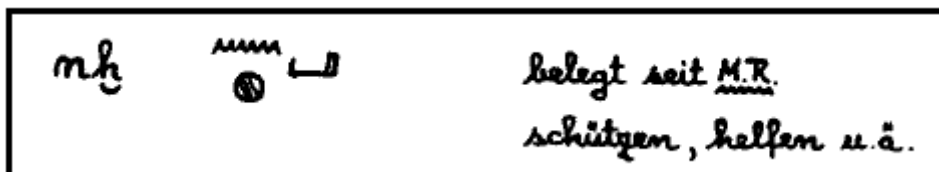


There are in fact the double feathers that may recall Truth and Justice, but also a double-crown atop a region (the circle) inside which are two parallel

strokes that may hint both at the riverbanks and at the Two-lands. It is true that the original meaning of the sign (O48 and its variant O47)



was probably that of a sacred building or a protecting fortress, hence perhaps the linguistic connection with “nh” (to help, to protect);



nonetheless being just a symbol, as time goes by, it may be subject to change. At any rate, as I said, there are striking correspondences with the text of the next to come litany (9<sup>th</sup> and last).

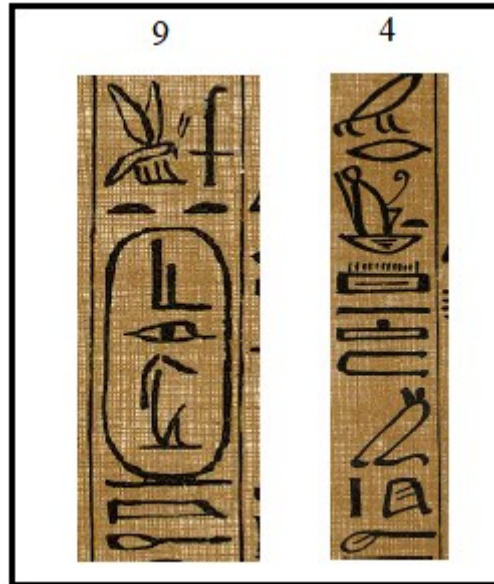


- 1 Hail to you, creator of gods,
- 2 king of **Upper and Lower Egypt**,
- 3 Osiris, justified,
- 4 who founded **the Two-Lands**
- 5 through his excellent deeds.
- 6 That's **He!** The Lord of **the Two Banks!**

The first line might be tricky, since the “Creator of gods” should be Atum. But this is only a resonance. In fact I think that the “created gods” are not those of the Ennead, but the “deceased” whom Osiris does judge qualified.

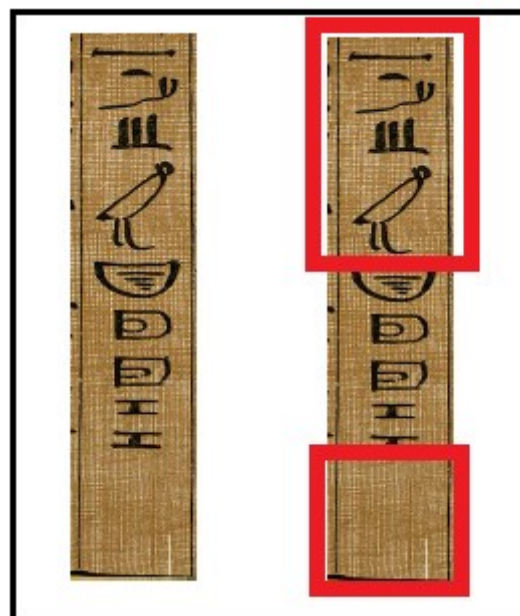
Of course in doing that he “imitates” Atum, the demiurge; since any time he promotes a deceased he does create a new life. Nonetheless he remains Osiris.

Then there is the political trait [2] underlined by the cartouche, that is so different from the parallel kingly image of the 4<sup>th</sup> litany,



where he is shown wearing just the red crown of Lower Egypt and whose main task seems that of self-protection. That was, as said above, his personal level. Here, in contrast, are shown his effective actions [5] for the wealth of the whole nation [4]. In other words his “*sh*” state.

As for the final clause there are a couple of things to be remarked:



The most visible is the blank space at the end of the column. That might have been easily adjusted if the scribe had been willing to. But the blank is an evident signal for showing the end of the litanies.

The other point is “*ntf pw*”. However before treating its specific rendering (the demonstrative “*pw*” following “*ntf*”, not appearing in all the other instances) we should register the presence of the independent pronouns (*ntk / ntf*) taking note of their frequency and of their sequence.

<b>Ø</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ntf</b>	<b>2 3</b>	<b>8 9</b>
<b>ntk</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6 7</b>

Is their position just casual or is there a scribal strategy? It goes without saying that what follows is just a guess (I don’t know how educated), but here it is.

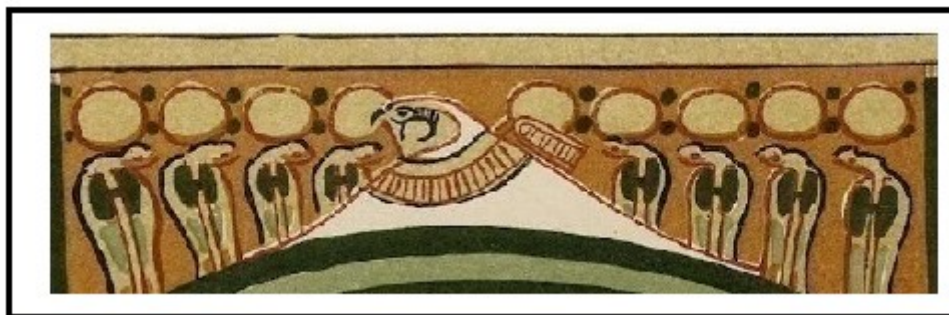
We can see that in 1 and 5 the pronoun is missing. But in 1 Osiris is still not yet defined, being part of a plurality; whereas the 5<sup>th</sup> litany describes a ritual feast where he can be seen as a simulacrum. Furthermore, as pointed out, the lines might be read as passive forms, thus Osiris would be just a “patient” of the occurring events. This could then justify the “absence”.

So we get to “*ntf*” that, being a third-person, underlines a sort of respectful distancing from a mighty figure. In 2 he is the “civilizer”, in 3 the perfect god (Wennefer). The same goes with 8 and 9, symbols of “Creation” and “Kingship”.

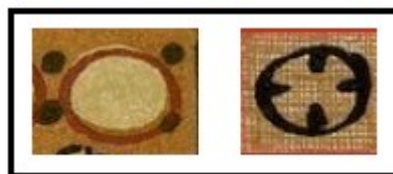
As for the friendlier “*ntk*” it points to the portrait of a definitely outlined subject. In 4 he is shown as a king in his town and in his office. In 6 and 7 he is seen engaged in the netherworld journey: a more “human” figure that can be addressed in a less formal attitude.

And now it's time to go back to the “*ntf pw*” solution. Being the only instance in all the nine litanies it may indeed be a signal to mark their conclusion, made even more explicit by the blank space at the end of the column. However the demonstrative may also be seen as a reinforcement of the preceding “*ntf*”. Osiris is shown not only with a simple “*He is*”. The demonstrative “*pw*” works in fact as a *highlighter*, suggesting a sort of: “That’s *him!* He is the real *HE!*”

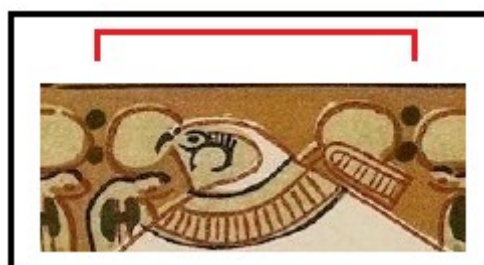
Finally before passing to the last column (Ani’s prayer) we should answer the suspended question about the nine discs of the shrine:



As above pointed out only *seven* of them have four black dots. I’d exclude a relation with the seven just exposed “*ntk/ntf*”, since what is important is the possible “adjusted” similarity with the city determinative,

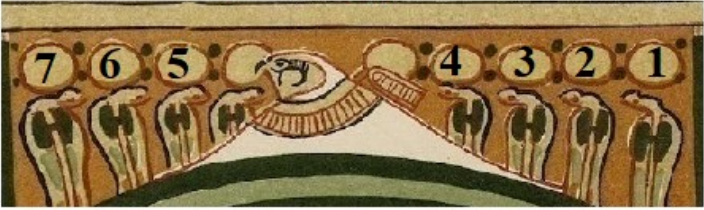


each disc linked to a city. Starting from the first litany we would thus have: (1) Kheraha (2) Heliopolis (3) Mendes (4) Busiris (5) Herakleopolis (6) Abydos (7) Hierakonpolis. Since the reading direction goes leftwards the four dotted discs on the right would correspond to the four cities of the delta, the three on the left to the cities of Upper Egypt. As a matter of fact we might consider the two central discs as a compound image hinting at the city of the compound god *Ptah-Sokar* of *Memphis*.



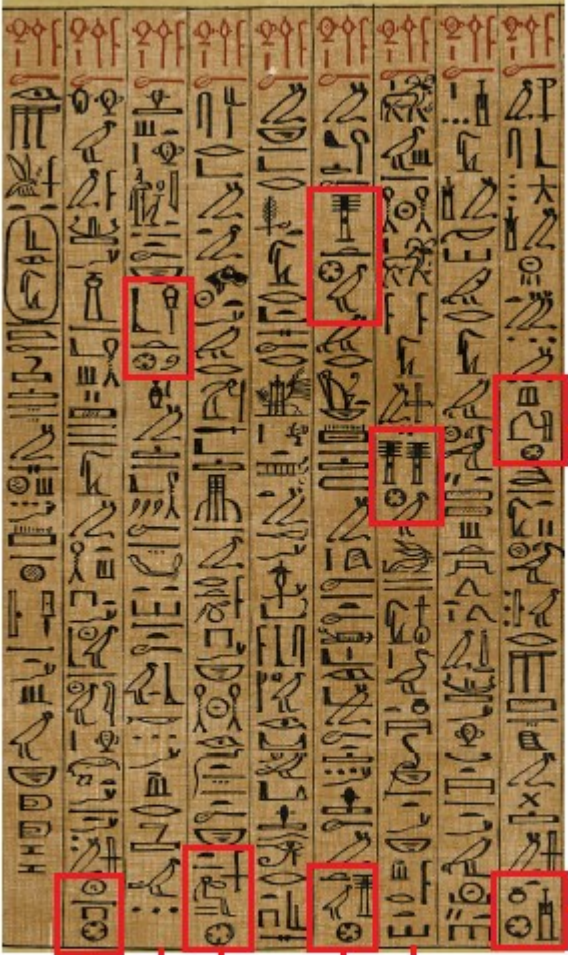
Thus the sequence:

*hwt-k3-ptḥ*

	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
<i>nnj-nswt</i>	5						1	<i>ḥr-ḥꜥ</i>
<i>3bdw</i>	6						2	<i>jwnw</i>
<i>nḥn</i>	7						3	<i>ḏdt</i>
				4	<i>ḏḏw</i>			

A plausible confirmation of dotted discs & cities may be found checking the original script (*ḏḏw* [4], twice written, counts just one single item): seven city determinatives like our seven dotted discs!

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1



*nḥn*

*3bdw*

*nnj-nswt*

*ḏḏw*

*ḏdt*

*ḥr-ḥꜥ*

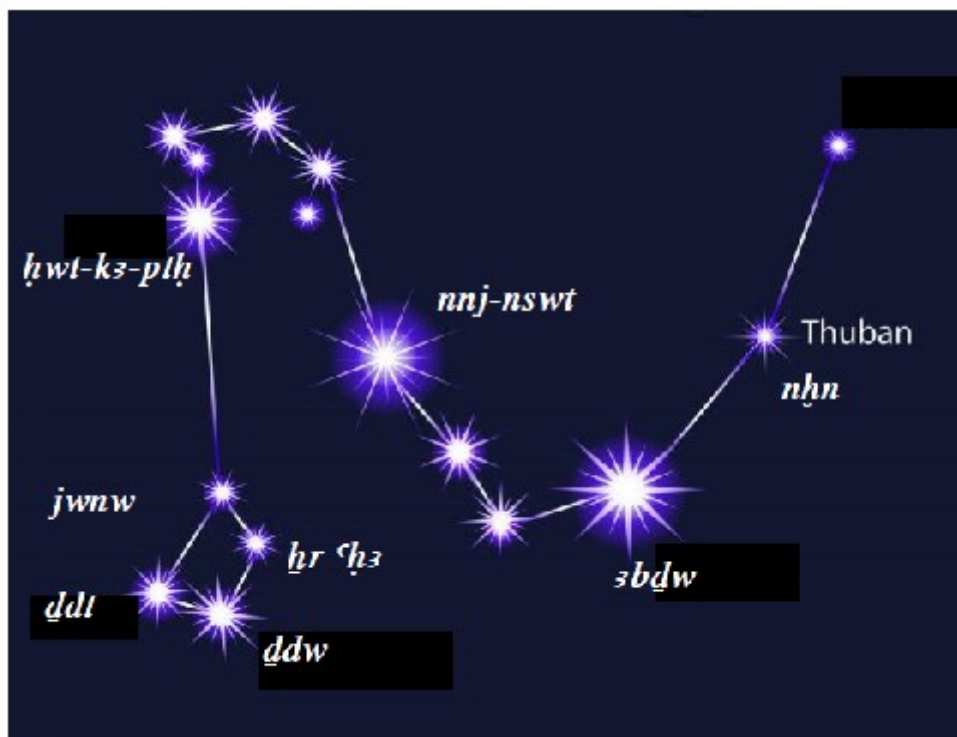
*jwnw*



Now we cannot leave this sequence without taking into account a last working hypothesis that, no matter how extreme, may nonetheless give the litanies a fascinating aura, pointing out cosmic correspondences. There are in fact textual suggestions, some explicit, some subtly concealed, inviting to look at the cities as stellar components of a precise constellation, the “*ḥ3b3s*” (starry sky) of the first litany being quite an obvious clue. In this sense the city sequence would mirror the heavenly course. Thus the seven dotted discs could indeed be seven stars. And that may be a reference to the seven “dots” of *Taweret* who, by the way, appears at the very end of our papyrus (Plate 37) as a protective goddess and female herald of Hathor:

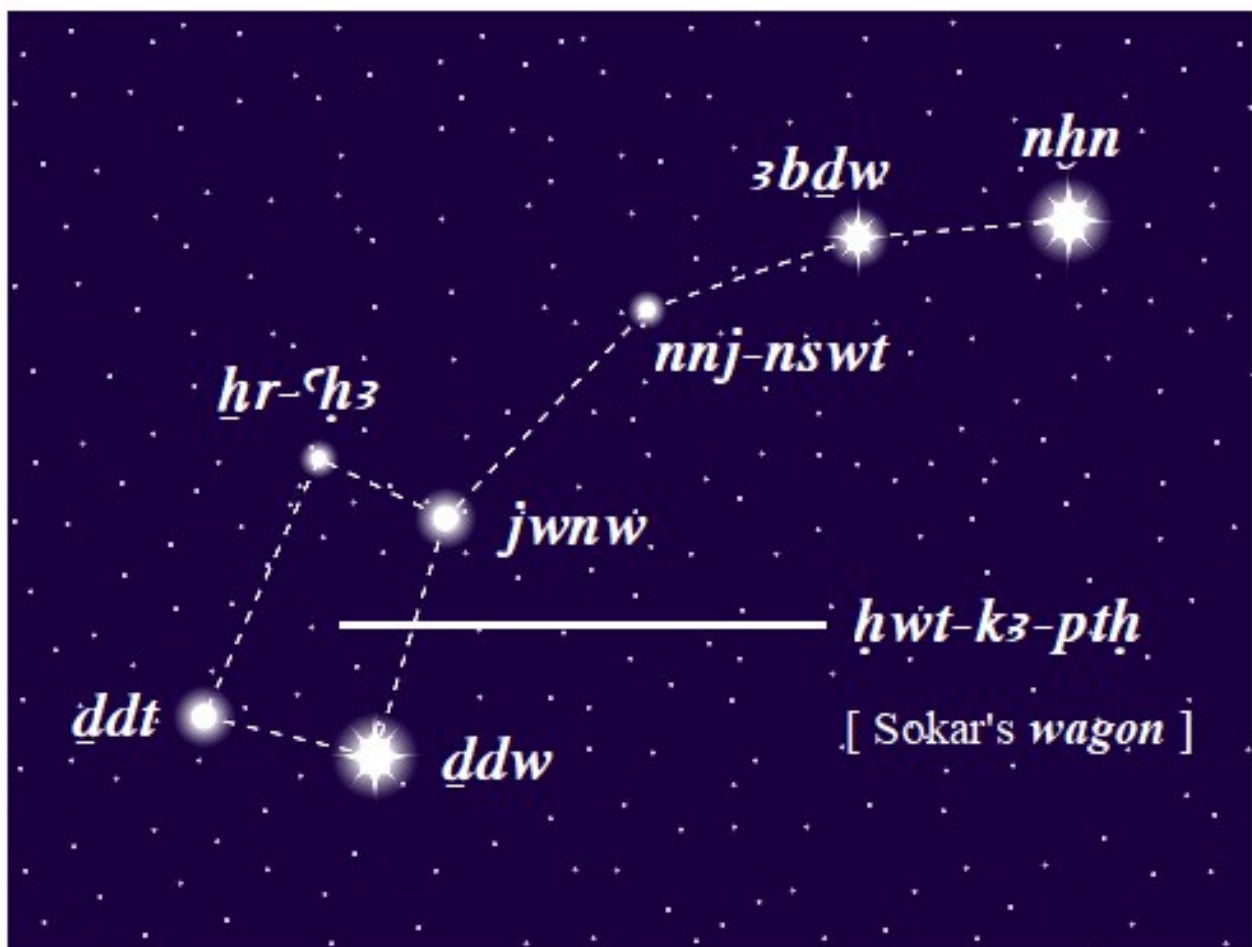


In her astral aspect she is in close connection with the “imperishable stars” of northern constellations. Some say Draco, hence a possible:



Needless to say that this is a hardly acceptable reconstruction. First of all because it follows the Ptolemaic model which probably is totally different from that of the ancient Egyptians; then because the suggested path is too winding with respect to the course of the Nile. The only point in favour of this disposition could be the association of “*nhn*” with Thuban”, the star that in times long past had been the polar one.

There is however a simpler and more valid hypothesis. Taweret, in fact, was also said to represent *Ursa Minor*. Which could suggest this tentative layout:



No doubt that this city/star schema seems definitely more consonant with the course of the Nile. One might also wonder whether the scribe knew in advance that, in due time, *nhn*-Alpha would become Polaris. Lastly we can also note that the two groups of four and three stars mirror the same two groups of the dotted discs (four on the right side and three on the left).

At this point, litanies ended, we can finally scan the last column.

- 1 May you show me a course
- 2 so that I may pass through in peace.
- 3 I am sincere and truthful,
- 4 I do not, wittingly, lie.
- 5 I do not act with duplicity.

It is Ani's prayer to Osiris. Although he knows the waypoints of his upstream journey, namely the Egyptian map defining the steps towards his transformation into a blessed spirit (*ꜥḥ*), for the moment that is just a theoretical knowledge. Through awareness and self-confidence he must integrate the map's psychic energy in order to complete the Osirian state (Wennefer, the perfect existence) letting the solar one come forth. In fact his claim of truthfulness [3-5] is implicitly linked to the seventh litany where Osiris is shown "content with Truth" (mirrored by our line 3) and as "one who abhors lies" (mirrored by line 4). Now that point marks the completion of the individual level and the start of the "beneficial" course as expressed in the last two litanies. That is exactly the "course" intended by our first two lines, which will fulfil the Osirian aspect in Plate 30, whose vignettes are so similar to those of this hymn.



What should be compared are the two drawings of Osiris's body. In our plate it is totally white, with a "X" on his breast that might be a "Z9" and read as the phonogram "swꜣj" (to pass, to traverse). In the other the god is adorned with a very elaborate clothing, vaguely resembling waves, and identical with the one of Plate 4 (the *weighing of the heart* scene):



PLATE 30

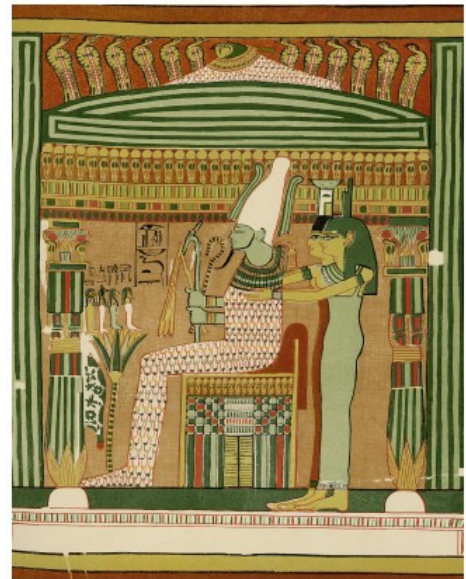
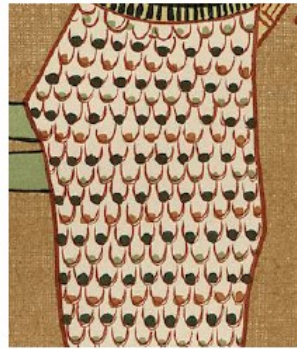
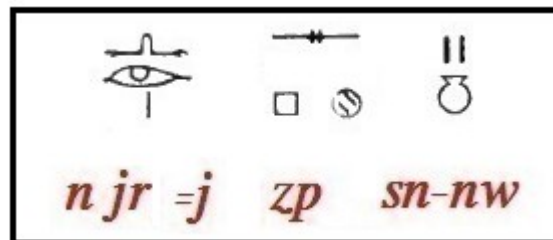


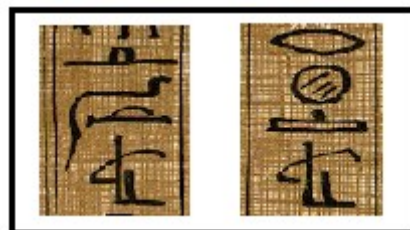
PLATE 4

So that might recall the “traversing” (*sw3j*) of the Osirian landscape up to the moment of “bringing the Nile from its cavern” (8<sup>th</sup> litany [2]), namely the land’s resurrection and the sun’s coming forth (8<sup>th</sup> litany [3]).

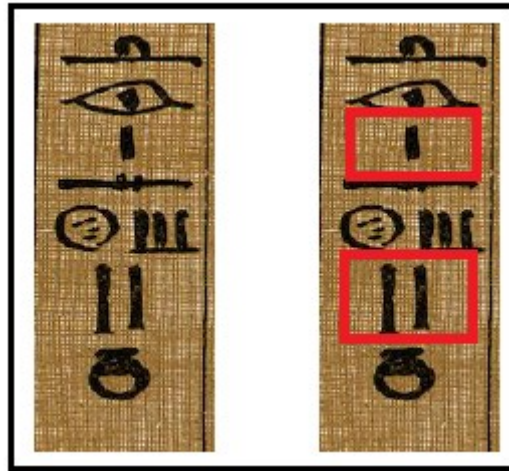
Now, before leaving, a last note on the final statement [5]:



There is a scribal finesse concerning the graphic rendering of the first-person suffix pronoun (=j). Instead of the common and just used A1 (seated man)



our scribe opted for a single stroke (Z1), an admitted variant,



so as to underline the difference between “straightness” (single stroke) and “duplicity” (double). Difference that remains even if we read the line from a different angle: “I do not err twice” (*perseverare diabolicum!*), which in fact would comply with “I do not, wittingly, lie” [4].

