

PAPYRUS OF ANI
PLATES 12-14 & 23-24
[Chapter 18]



THOTH ELITARIAN PAS DE DIEUX

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Although not taken much under consideration like its forerunner (Chapter 17) this spell is nonetheless very important and is present in many versions of *The Book of the Dead*. It plays quite a significant role, were it not for the fact that at the end of it there is a rubric stating that its recitation in a pure state, either by a deceased or by a living person, will assure him protection and safety. Turning around the figure of Thoth, god of knowledge, it seems evident that the psychic integration of the spell will allow the subject (either dead or alive) to reach a deeper experiential state. The spell is composed of a sequence of ten invocations (or litanies) addressed to Thoth, asking him to protect the deceased as he did protect Osiris in specific places, in specific events, at the presence of a Council (*d3d3t*) of specific deities. As a matter of fact there is an eleventh litany, but being a sort of epilogue it does not belong to the mentioned group of ten. Each litany is built following the same pattern, composed of two sections:

(A)

- (i) the invocation;
- (ii) the naming of the locality where the event took place;
- (iii) a more or less obscure allusion to the event.

(B)

- (i) the identification of the gods forming the local Council;
- (ii) the explanation of the event.

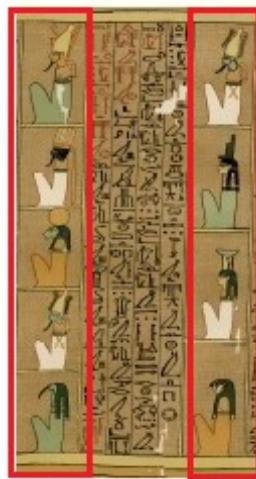
What is interesting to remark is the fact that all the events are said to take place in the night (*grh*), although in some instances that seems hard to comply with the events themselves. I am convinced that the night does not point to a temporal, but to a psychological state. It is the uncertainty about the successful result of the specific trial the deceased has to go through. The localities themselves, directly or indirectly connected to the cult of Osiris, more than topographical areas should be seen as components of an Osirian psychic landscape.

Now the peculiarity of this spell in our papyrus comes from the fact that it appears twice in Plates 12-14 and in Plates 23-24. As I already explained in my “Narrative structure” I am of the opinion that it is not a scribal

oversight (such a macroscopic carelessness would indeed be untenable) but an intended repetition underlining the two different levels of ritual approach: the *bs* experience of the first part of the papyrus; and the *sh* experience of the second part, both of them introduced by the Thothean aspect which represents the esoteric quantum leap the deceased has to execute so as to modify his psychic configuration.

A further peculiarity comes from the missing “A section” of the first litany. Once again, as suggested in my “Narrative structure”, I consider this an intended “decapitation” used as an apotropaic measure so as to avoid an unwanted automatic activation of the powerful magic that permeates this chapter.

As for the double presence we must note that if the text is exactly the same (headless beginning included) with only a few minor and not so significant orthographic variations, the visual exposition is definitely different. In the first version each invocation is inside a closed space limited by two columns of gods



although the gods referred to in the text are those at its right side. Thus the sequence of ten closed spaces may visually underscore the effort and the difficulty of passing from one psychic experience to the next.

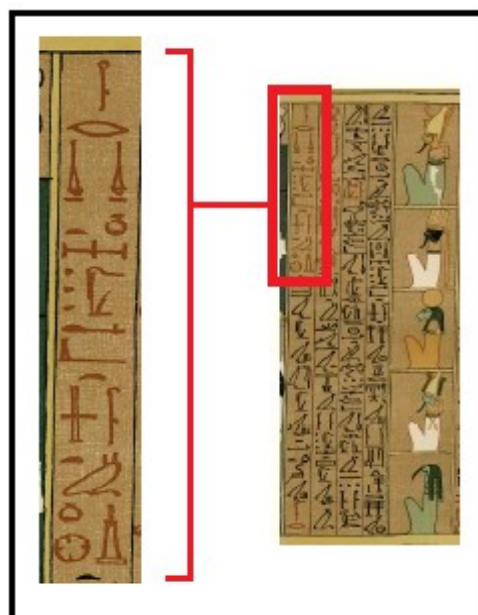


In the other version the text runs smoothly without any kind of interruption and the gods are seated over it, as if accompanying its flowing process.

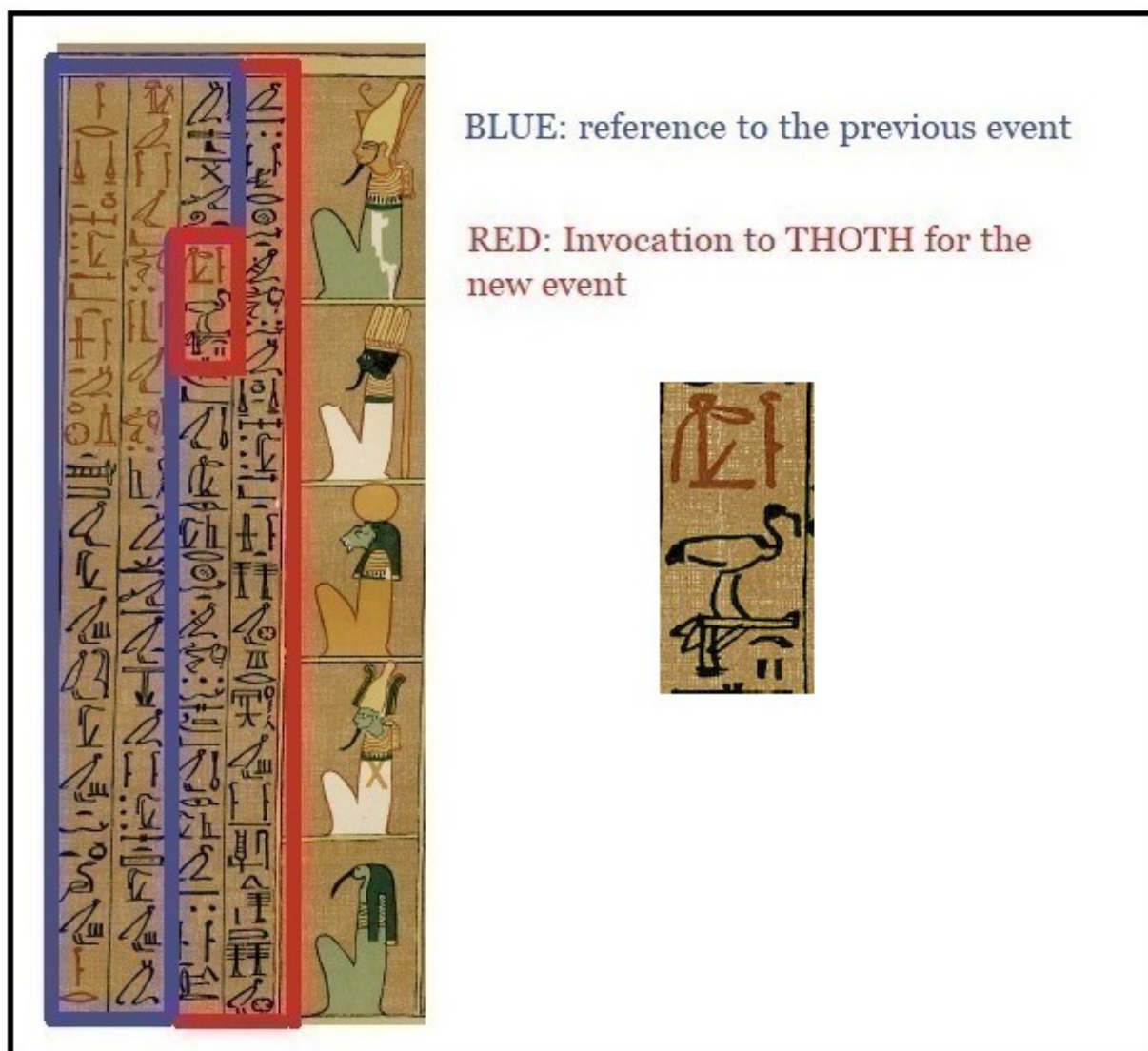


The fact is that whereas in the first instance Ani is at the beginning of his Osirian integration and he is aware of his psychic weakness so that each passage requires a lot of mental and emotional stress; in the other parallel scene he has already reached the *b3* level and has become more confident of his inner strength.

A further thing which must not go unnoticed in the first version is that the text inside each space begins with a rubrum that refers to the Great Council (*d3d3t 3t*) of a specific place. But, quite interesting, the gods referred to are those named in the preceding space. For example, the first litany begins with the second section, namely the elucidation of what has been talked about in the part that is missing (the gods of the Council and the event that took place in Heliopolis)

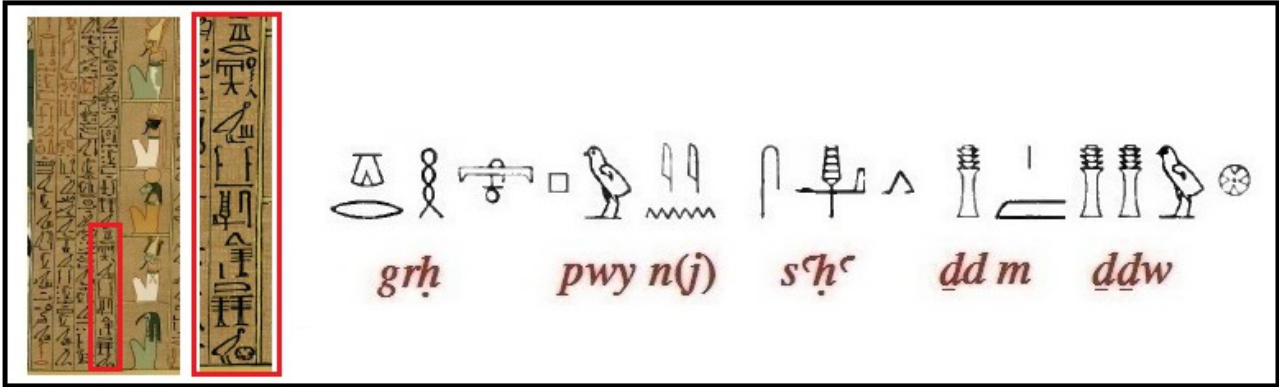


and on the right we can see Atum, Shu and Tefnut who form that Council. Then, in the middle of the text, begins the new invocation to Thoth announcing the following event:

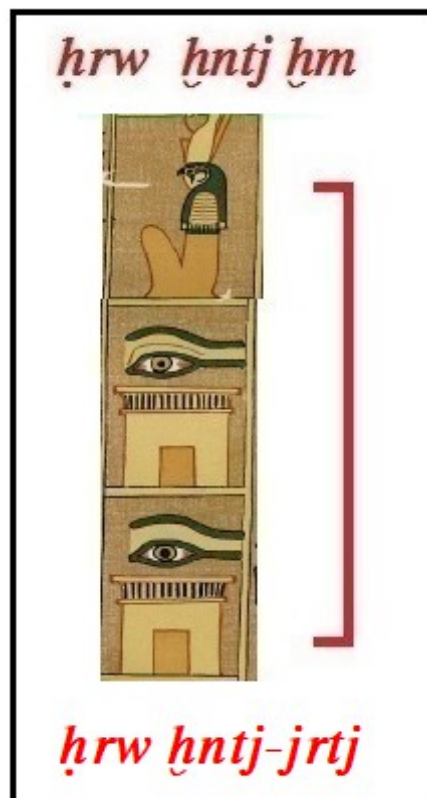


Thus each block starts with a solemn image of a Great Council, inspiring tremor and awe. And the fact that the end of the elucidation is followed by the beginning of new invocation to Thoth is a way to assert that the previous “experience” has had a positive result and the visual “enchained” ritual progress can keep marching in.

There is then to take note of the big image of the *Djed* pillar at the base of the sixth column of gods. That's an apparent deviation from the regular visual pattern. It's true that one of the events deals with the erection of the *Djed* pillar, but that takes place in the first block and corresponds to the second litany:

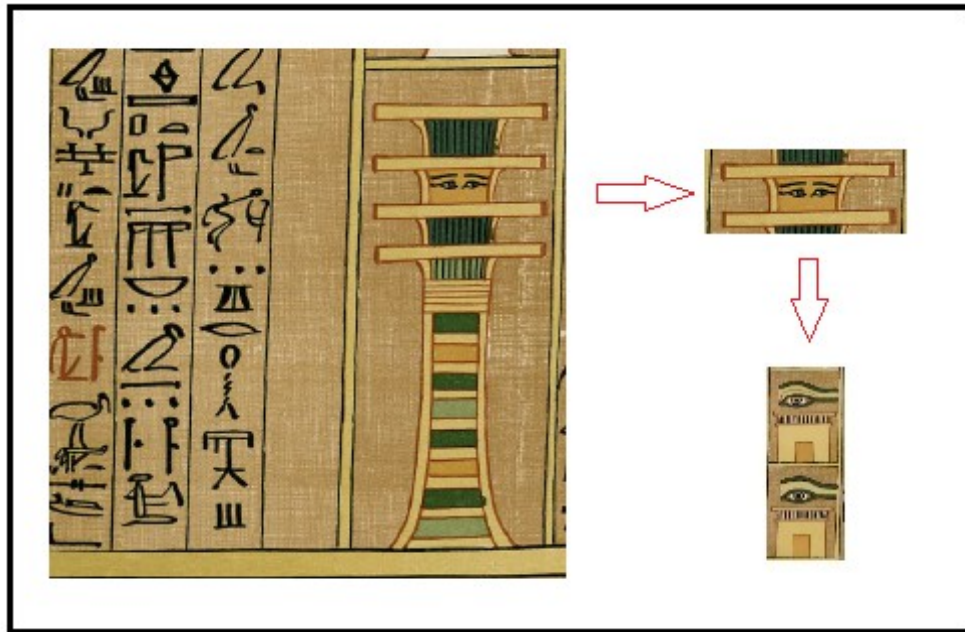


so one might wonder why it was not placed in that specific block; leaving aside the fact that it is a “material” object, whereas all the other images are depictions of gods. True that in column three there is the vignette of a pair of *wedjat* eyes over what seems to be a shrine

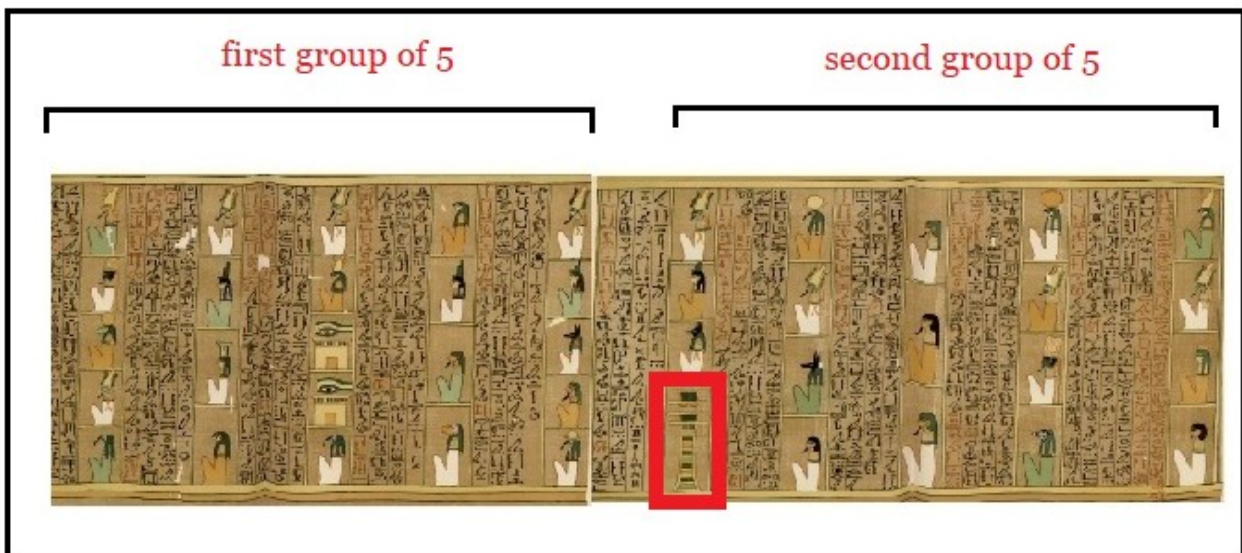


but they most probably are a complementary aspect of the depicted Horus *Khentj-irty*; thus the *Djed* pillar is a “unique” specimen.

One further peculiarity is the blank space, of the same height of the *Djed*, at its left and the pair of eyes which recall those of the above shown vignette of *Horus Khentj-irtj*:



From these series of circumstantial evidences I have come to the conclusion that the *Djed* pillar is at the very core of the text both in the mythic and in the visual aspect of the spell, the Osirian archetype of stability and duration; and the *wedjat* eyes, being those of Horus, the son, point to the continuity of the Osirian mytheme. All the sections of the chapter, in fact, turn around the complementary father/son motif. From a visual aspect the *Djed* pillar is a sort of hinge around which turn two groups of five litanies:



The blank space at the *Djed*'s left side is for Ani to fill with his name (after the successful integration of the Osirian qualities) so as to become indeed an effective *Osiris Ani*. In fact the two groups have specific traits, the first

one dealing basically with the protection of the deceased; the last five litanies with his glorification.

Now, before we start to examine each separate litany it is necessary to focus our attention on that part of the papyrus that precedes them and which constitute a sort of prologue of Chapter 18.



We see the adoring figures of Ani and his wife in two superimposed registers; and then two sem-priests before two separate entrances (of the Realm of the Dead). What is important to remark is that the vignette of Ani and his wife is exactly the same – except for an almost unnoticed, but substantial detail that we shall see in a moment - depicted in the previous Plate.

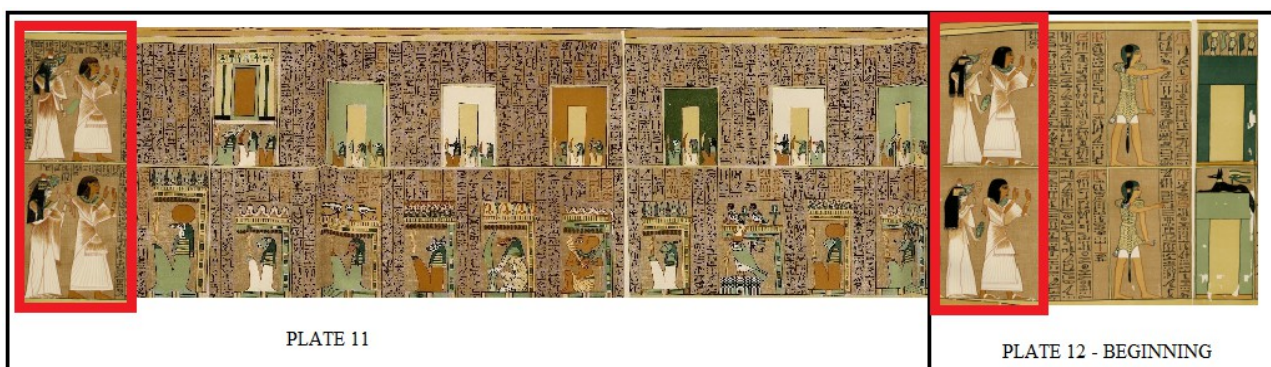


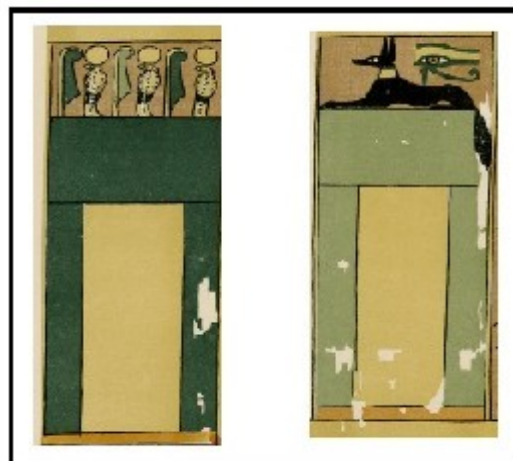
PLATE 11

PLATE 12 - BEGINNING

Now, as I tried to demonstrate in my commentary of Plate 11 [A pseudo-analytic approach] in it we may see the topographical layout of Ani's Osirian configuration; his Osirian potentialities, but still on a personal psychological and imaginative level. To make them manifest he must plunge into the archetypal level, experiencing and integrating the very core of the Osirian figure, which he is going to do in the course of our spell. In fact, if we compare the two “adoring” vignettes



we can note how in that of Plate 12 Ani wears “white” sandals, symbols of purity. That is the result of the successful trials passed through the previous plate. He is now in a position to reach a deeper level of understanding, but he can't do that on his own: his words and prayers to Osiris, shown by the text, are not enough. Since he is the subject of an initiation rite, since he must execute a psychic quantum leap, he needs the helpful assistance of specialized ritualists, the sem-priests, who, from a visual perspective, with their extended arms indicating the doors, seem to be Ani's guides; or, more precisely, one single guide under two different aspects: one who exposes the circumstance, the other who explains it. Let's in fact give a closer look at the two doors:



The upper one shows on its top a series of “feathers” (*m3t* → Truth, Justice) and of Uraei with solar disks. We may read in them emblems of “moral” and “social” aspects; of what is “apparent” to the sight: namely the “exoteric” level. The lower one shows *Anubis* (or *Wepwaut*) and the “visionary” eye of Horus, both in connection with the Netherworld, as a deeper psychic stratum. Let's see now how the texts are expressions of these two complementary themes.

UPPER REGISTER : Ani

- 1 Adoration of Osiris, Lord of Rosetau,
- 2 of the Great Ennead which is in the Realm of the Dead,
- 3 by Osiris Scribe Ani.
- 4 He says: “Hail to you, Foremost of the West,
- 5 *Wennafer*, at the centre of Abydos.
- 6 I come beside you, my heart carrying Truth.
- 7 There's no evil in my person;
- 8 no conscious lie;
- 9 no double crossing.
- 10 May you grant me the bread that is supplied at the presence (of the gods)
- 11 on the offering table of the Lords of Truth;
- 12 the going in and going out the Realm of the Dead,
- 13 without hindering of the *bA*,
- 14 the sight of the solar disk,
- 15 the vision of the moon,
- 16 forever and forever.”

As said above the central theme is the moral aspect of Ani [6-9], his wish of being promoted to a divine status [10-12], gaining the privilege of going in and out of the Netherworld as a qualified *b3* [12-13] and of running, eternally, the cyclic solar course [14-16].

UPPER REGISTER : Iaunmautaf

- 1 Words spoken by *Iaunmautaf* [his mother's pillar].
- 2 He says: "I come to you, Great Council
- 3 in the sky, in the earth, in the Realm of the Dead,
- 4 bringing you Osiris Ani.
- 5 There is no sin of his concerning any god.
- 6 Grant that he be with you, every day."

Ani's wishes [6] and moral traits [5] are repeated by the sem-priest *Iaunmautaf*, whose name (pillar of his mother's) is in accord with the female characters atop the door (the feathers of *Maat* and the Uraei of *Wadjet*).

LOWER REGISTER : Ani

- 1 Adoration of Osiris, Lord of Everlastingness,
- 2 of all the gods of the Councils of Rosetau,
- 3 by Osiris [... *Ani* ...].
- 4 He says: "Hail to you,
- 5 O king of the Realm of the Dead,
- 6 O ruler of the Realm of Silence.
- 7 I come beside you,
- 8 having knowledge of your nature; and I am provided
- 9 with your Netherworldly form.
- 10 Give me a place in the Realm of the Dead,
- 11 at the side of the Lords of Truth;
- 12 and a stable grant of land in the Field of Peace.
- 13 May I receive offerings at your presence."

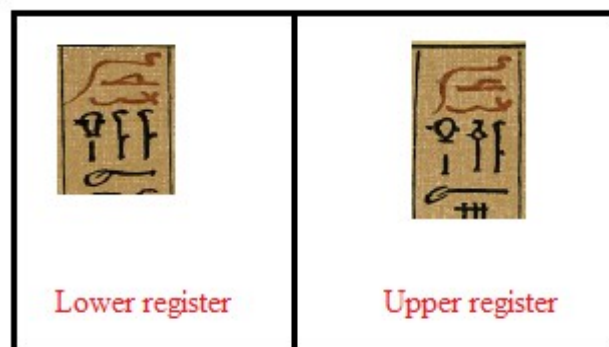
As we can see, whereas Ani's upper utterance has dynamic traits (the free movements of the *bs*, the never-ending cycle of the solar course) here we detect “static” ones (the silence, the resting place, the stable grant of land) which resonate with the solidity of the archetypal forms, that are “eternal”, as Ani points out in the first line, calling Osiris lord of “Everlastingness”. That is made more clear in lines 8 and 9, where Ani asserts he knows the Osirian *nature* (*shrw =k*), although, we may surmise, only in its conceptual form. It is a different “knowledge” he has to be infused with (the offerings of line 13) and he can have it only through a *Thothean* experience.

From a visual standpoint we may observe a peculiarity:

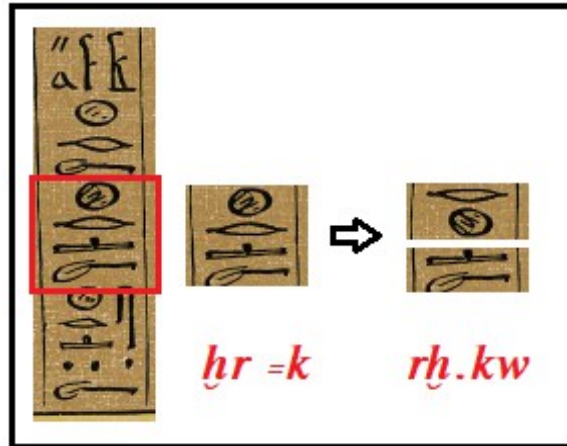


the blank space at the bottom of the first column, which from a logical point of view should be filled with Ani's name, following the commonly written “Osiris” (**wsjr 3nj*). Is it an oversight?

As a matter of fact in the second column there are two further scribal errors: on top a “*jj hr =k*” to be emended in “*jnd hr =k*”, as clearly shown in the version of the upper register:



and on the bottom what seems to be a metathesis “*hr =k → rh =kw*”:



Thus one might conclude that the scribe was somewhat careless. But from my unorthodox standpoint I wouldn't exclude that they all were intended “mistakes”, so as to indicate Ani's “confusion”: his “human” anxiety that makes him stutter (*jj* ↔ *jnd*); his still unstable self-confidence (the missing Ani's name) in front of such a numinous experience; his faltering (*hr*) “knowledge” (*rh*). Instead of a scribal mistake a knowing scribal wink!

LOWER REGISTER : Zamiraf

- 1 Words spoken by Zamiraf (his beloved son).
- 2 He says: “I come to you, Great Council which is in Rosetau,
- 3 bringing you Osiris Ani.
- 4 Give (him) bread, water, breath,
- 5 and a grant of land in the Field of Peace,
- 6 like a follower of Horus.”

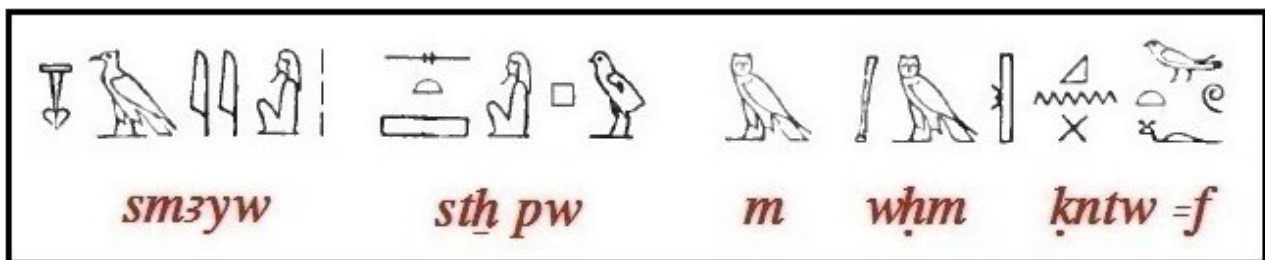
Whereas the *sem-priest* of the upper register had maternal correspondences (his mother's pillar), *Zamiraf* (the beloved son of ***Him***) has fatherly ones. It is the *Horusian* aspect that comes out, the son who is both the image of his father and his protector, as clearly shown in the litanies which now we'll start to play with.

I

- 1 As for the Great Council which is in Heliopolis:
- 2 it is *Atum*, it is *Shu*, it is *Tefnut*.
- 3 As for those who keep guard on the rebels:
- 4 it is the destruction of the companions of *Seth*
- 5 reiterating his violence.

As said above, the head of the first block is missing, but it's easy to reconstruct what happened, namely a confrontation with the violent companions of Seth who have been defeated and imprisoned.

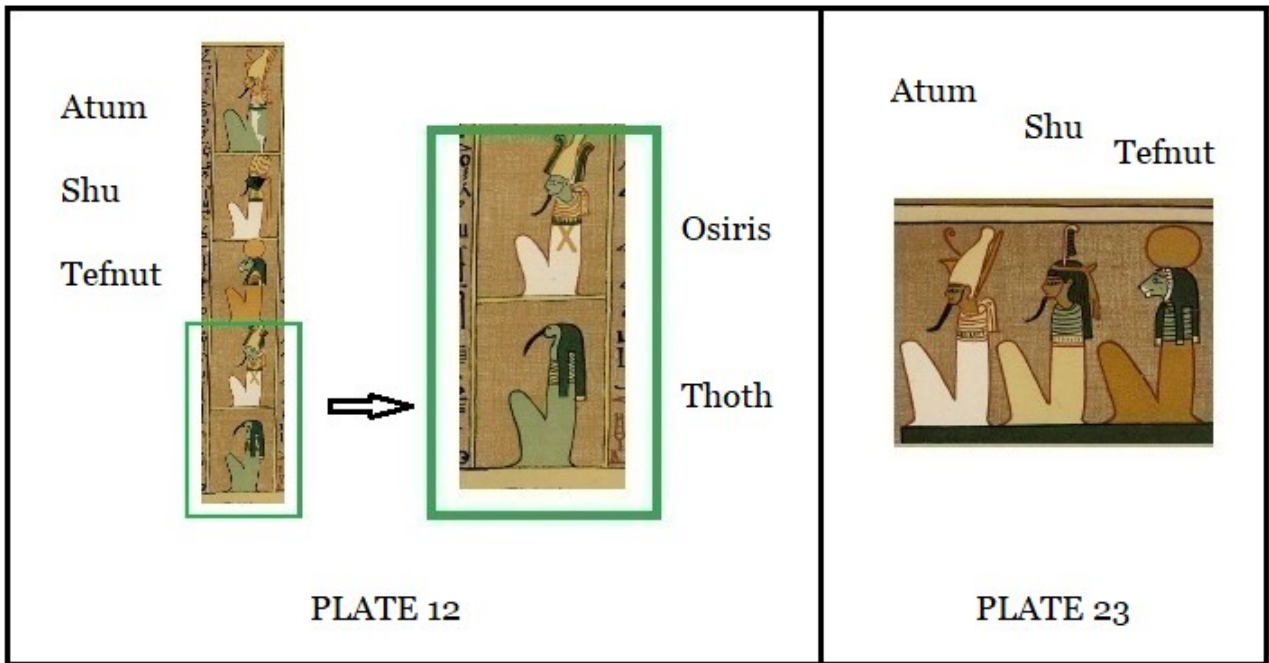
As regards line 5



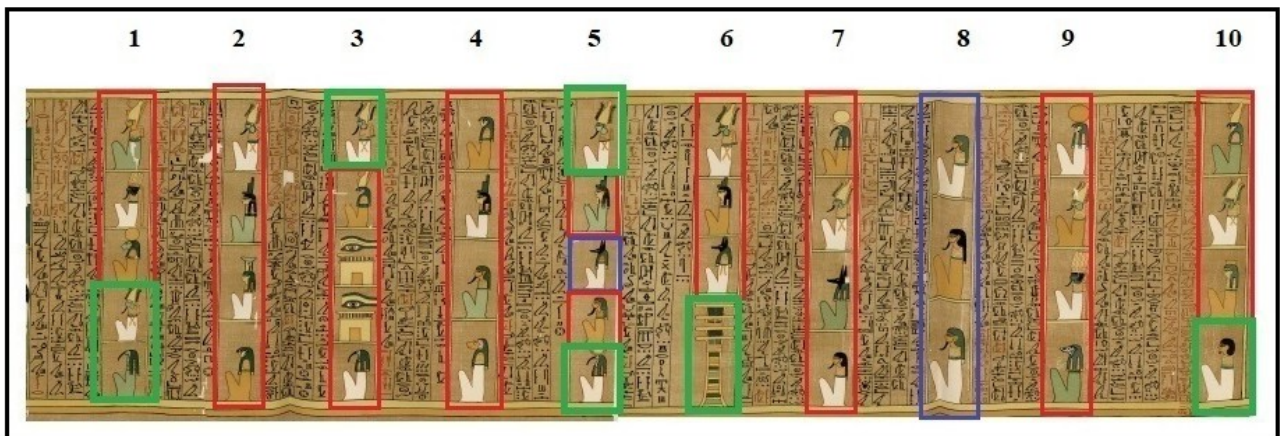
I think that “*m whm kntw =f*” may be referred both to Seth (in his inveterate enmity against Osiris) and to his companions who follow his bellicose behaviour, imitating it.

Now if we consider the place where the battle has been fought (Heliopolis) and the gods who presided it (the great Ennead's summit) we may surmise that this litany works like a trailer, showing the successful result of the confrontation that is going to take place, reflecting the original victory of the sun (*Atum* → Heliopolis) against the forces of darkness (*Apophis* ≈ *Seth*) and, by consequence, the “resurrection” mytheme. And since we know that the followers of Seth were beaten by the followers of Horus, we may also detect the basic pattern of the Osiris/Horus motif.

From the visual perspective there is something interesting to remark: in fact although the text mentions only three gods (*Atum*, *Shu*, *Tefnut*), in the corresponding vignette are added *Osiris* and *Thoth*; whereas in the vignette of the second version (Plate 23) there is only the mentioned trinity:



That may have sense for it is a way of compensating the missing text of the litany, with its appeal to *Thoth* for *Osiris's* protection. In fact, looking at the vignettes we may note how Osiris is always present when Thoth is present (columns 1, 3, 5, 7)



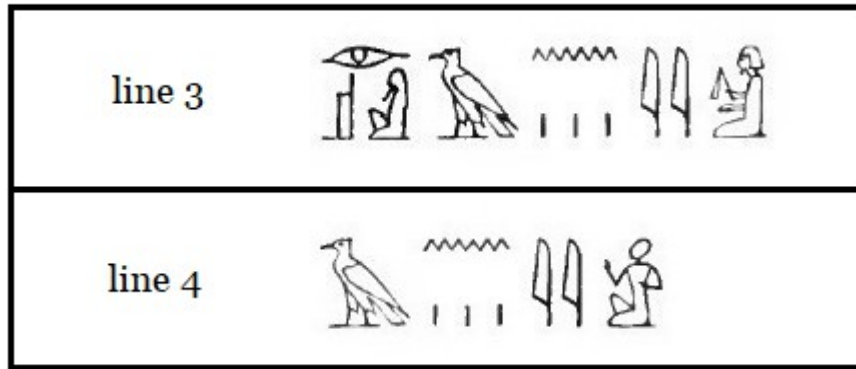
even if they are not mentioned (or only one is: Thoth, column 3) in the corresponding texts. The green squares indicate the textual “impertinent” figures.

II

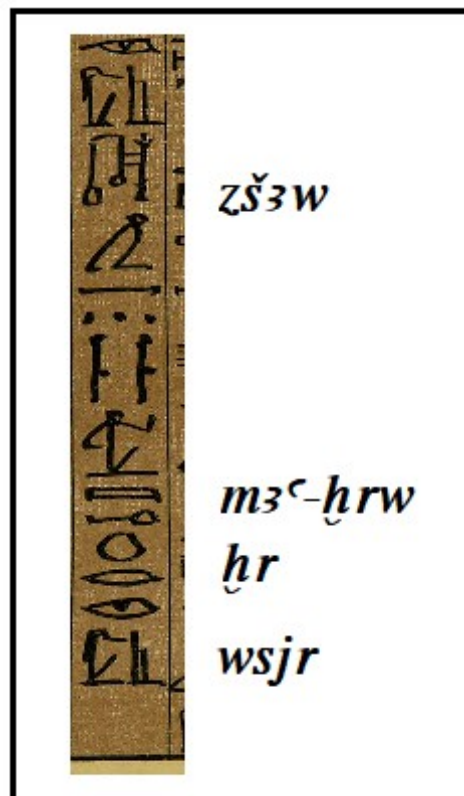
1 O Thoth, who justified
2 Osiris against his enemies,
3 justify Osiris Ani,
4 **Ani** against his enemies,
5 in the Great Council which is in Busiris,
6 on the night of the raising of the Djed pillar in Busiris.

7 As for the Great Council which is in Busiris:
8 it is *Osiris*, it is *Isis*, it is *Nephtys*,
9 it is *Horus*, who protects his father.
10 As for the raising of the Djed pillar in Busiris:
11 it is the shoulders of *Horus Khentj-khem* (the Foremost of Letopolis),
12 as they sustain Osiris wrapped in his vestments.

As said above this seems to be the “aim” of the whole ritual, the erection of the Osirian *Djed* pillar, symbol of duration and stability. It is indeed a family reunion (father/mother/son) during which the archetypal figure is attended and protected by the son, the spouse and the two sisters. Once again the father/son mytheme is made manifest by the image of Horus sustaining his father with his shoulders, as if giving shape to one solid block. It is important to remark that here we have *Horus Khentj-Khem*, namely *Horus Khentj-irtj*. The fact that *Horus Khentj-Khem* is, to be precise, *Horus the Elder (Haroeris)* does not invalidate the image of the son; on the contrary it gives it a stronger archetypal function. But what is even more important is the fact that Horus has here “two eyes on his brow” (*hntj-jrtj*), those mentioned above in the *Djed* vignette of column six; thus he is on a vigilant and sound attitude, somewhat different from the figure of Horus that will appear in the next litany. But before passing to it there is a peculiarity which must be given a closer look into. The name of Ani is mentioned in line 3 AND in line 4, but with slightly different graphic renderings:



The repetition of the name is at least uncommon. Discarding the scribal error, I am of the opinion that the first name is the target (what Ani must become), underlined by the A52 determinative alluding to “dignity”; whereas that in line 4 (A1) shows the present state of Ani, a still “mortal” deceased who must reach a higher “psychic” position. The corresponding text in the second version (Plate 23) is somewhat different:



“*hr wsjr*” is especially significant since it may point to the fact that Ani should be vindicated so that he may stay beside Osiris (*hr wsjr*); but also that Ani is already justified (*m3[◌]-hrw*), having already acquired the *b3* status; that he is now beside Osiris waiting for a further justification that will confer to him the *3h* dignity. Thus, in both versions, there are two different “experiential” levels.

III

1 O Thoth, who justified
2 Osiris against his enemies,
3 justify Osiris Ani, justified, against his enemies,
4 in the Great Council which is in Letopolis,
5 on the night of the evening offerings in Letopolis.

6 As for the Great Council which is in Letopolis:

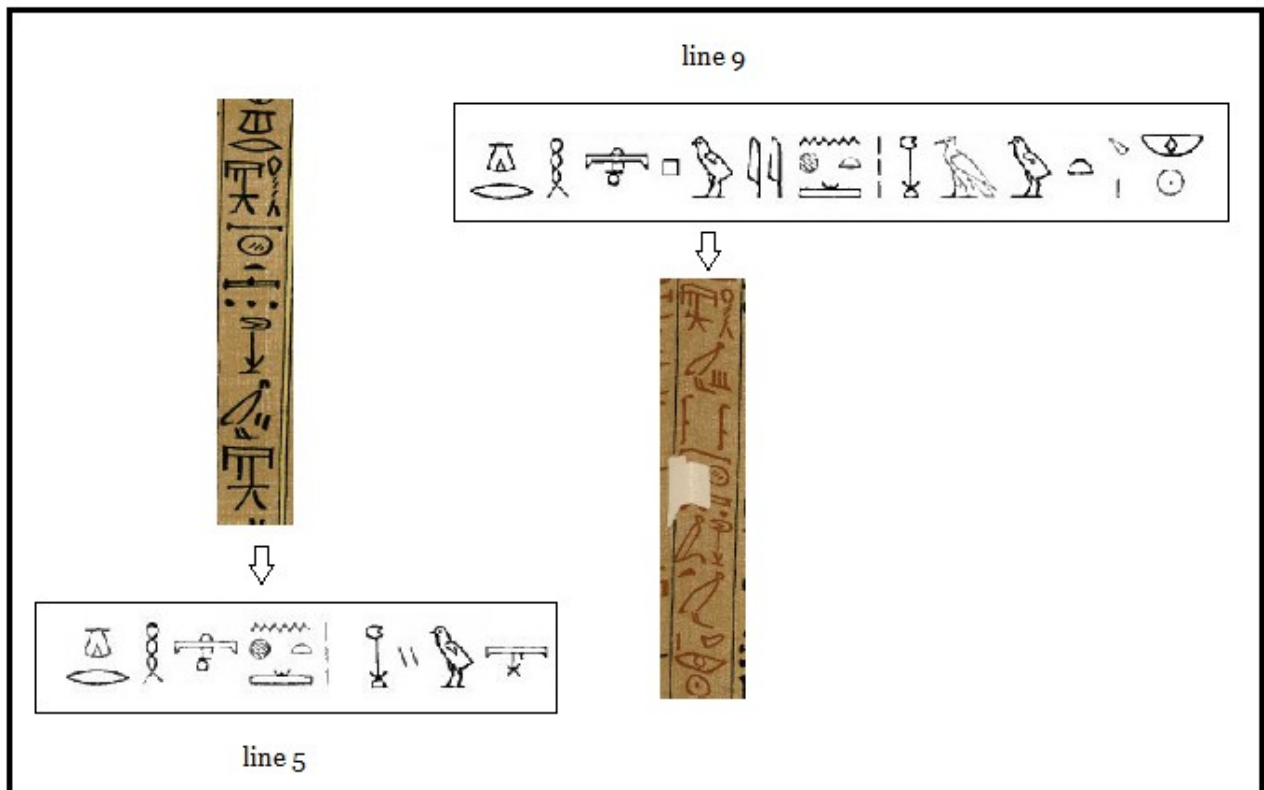
7 (it is) *Horus Khentj-n-irtj*,

8 it is *Thoth* who is in the Council of Naref.

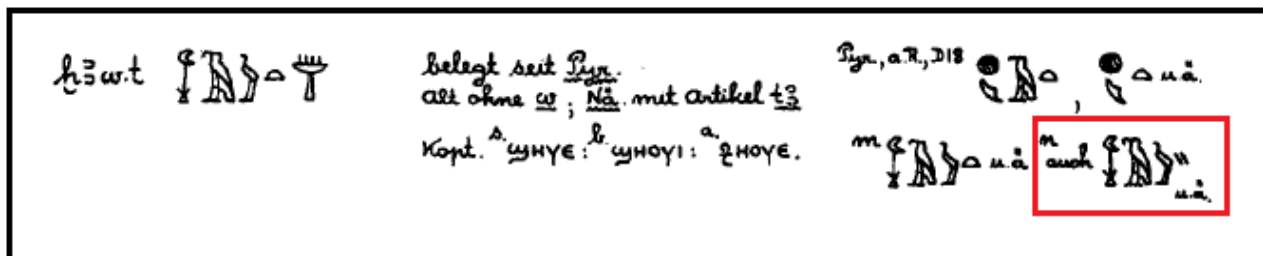
9 As for the night of the things of the offerings-table:

10 it is the dawn of the burial rites of Osiris.

Simple as it may appear this litany poses several interpretive challenges. The talked about event is that of the “evening offerings” [5 & 9]:

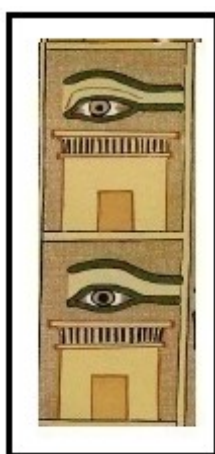


Nonetheless the graphic renderings are slightly different and, being so near, one might ask why? “*h3wy*” of line 5 is “evening”; “*h3wt*” of line 9 is “altar, offerings-table”. It's true, though, that “*h3wy*” may be a New Egyptian rendering of “*h3wt*”:



Thus what in line 5 is the “routine” performance of a ritual offering, the evening meal, in line 9 becomes the knowledge of the things that are offered on the ritual table (could it be the objective correlative of Osiris's corpse?).

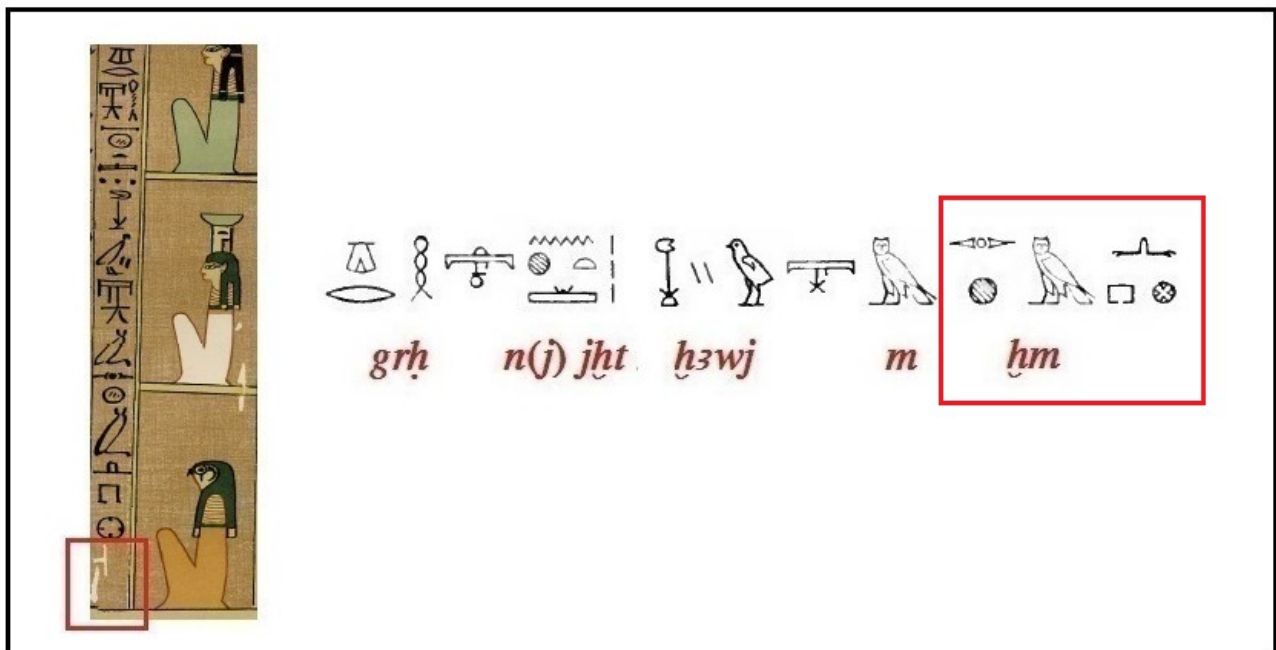
In fact we must note how opposite are the determinatives: in line 5 it is N46b, a variant of N2 (→ night), whereas in line 5 we find W3 (→ feast) and N5 (→ sun, day, daytime), underlining the passage from darkness to light, in a certain sense a festive “*prt m hrw*”. It is not a coincidence that the two gods of the Council are *Horus* and *Thoth*. The first one, in this specific instance, in opposition to *Khentj-irty* (he who has two eyes) of the previous litany is now *Khentj-n-irty* (he who has no eyes), namely “he who is in the dark”. In fact the corresponding vignette



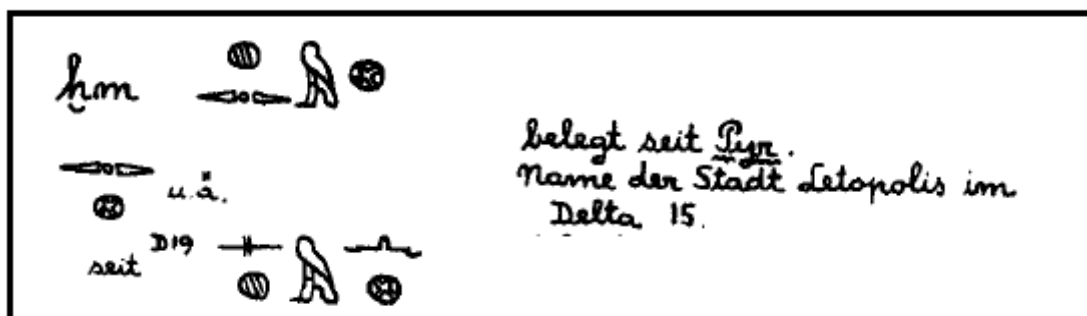
shows the eyes over what probably alludes to the Duat, namely the dark place of the night course of the sun. Which does explain the otherwise cryptic “dawn” of line 10. In other words this is the beginning (dawn) of the Osirian psychic integration, the burial rites being the things (Osirian

traits) put on the offering table; things whose secret state (we may guess) are illuminated by Thoth, the god of knowledge. Now it's interesting to remark how Thoth is specifically referred to as the one “*who is in the Council of Naref*” [8]. This is not the place to expand on the religious importance of that city [see the brilliant *Naref and Osiris Naref: A Study in Herakleopolitan Religious Traditions* by Lucía Díaz-Iglesias Llano]; let it suffice to note that it appears in the 9th litany and is closely connected with the “secreting of ritual forms” (*sštz jrw*). The remarkable fact about that litany is that Thoth is not mentioned amongst the gods of that Council. We'll get to that in due time.

Before proceeding to the next litany we should consider a couple of graphic peculiarities that appear in the last textual colum, namely the unorthodox rendering of “Khem → Letopolis” and the final small blank space



Now, this is the common rendering of the city:



However the O41 determinative (house) that appears in our glyphs seems to point to “holy place, shrine, sanctuary”:

I. heilige Stätte, Kultstätte eines Gottes 10.
 Auch als Teil des Tempels: allerheiligster Ort des Götterbildes 11.
 Gr. auch Kapelle auf dem Tempeldach 12.

II. Seit D.18 auch oft allgemein für Heiligtum, Tempel 13.

gr [house shape] [house shape]
 Det. [house shape] [house shape] [house shape]
 abh. gr [house shape]

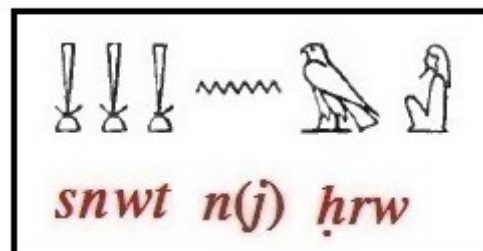
underlining thus that the numinous event (the ritual practice on Osiris's body, the above mentioned “*ht h3wt*”) takes place not just in Letopolis, but in its holy shrine. Could then the blank space, being “unexpected”, put the reader on the alert, suggesting him to look at the unusual “*h3wy / h3wt*” and “*hm* → city / *hm* → sanctuary” from a different angle?

IV

- 1 O Thoth, who justified
- 2 Osiris against his enemies,
- 3 justify Osiris Scribe Ani against his enemies,
- 4 in the Great Council which is in Buto (Pe and Dep),
- 5 on the night of raising up the flagstaffs of Horus
- 6 when it was established for him the legacy
- 7 of the goods of his father Osiris.

- 8 As for the Great Council which is in Buto (Pe and Dep),
- 9 it is *Horus*, it is *Isis*, it is *Imseti*, it is *Hapi*.
- 10 As for the erection of the flagstaffs of Horus:
- 11 Seth does speak to those of his retinue,
- 12 the flagstaffs are raised up against that.

If the previous litany was centred around Osiris through his symbolic presence on the table of the offerings, this one deals with Horus, thus completing the father/son motif. Motif which is repeated in the gods who are in the Council of Buto, a city closely linked to Horus, whom, as a newborn baby, Isis had hidden in the marshes near it so as to protect him from Seth. Here Isis is not the mother of Horus, but the wife of the older aspect of Horus, Horus the Elder, and as such she gave him four children. Two of them, Imseti and Hapi, appear in this Council, in accord to what BD 112 [< CT 157] says, that the “*souls of Pe*” are Horus, Imseti and Hapi. This family reunion points out the continuity of the hereditary traits, clearly expressed in line 7. In this sense we may read the “flagstaffs of Horus”



as the warlike standards raised up [12] against Seth's intended attack [11] against Osiris and Horus, his heir. Metaphorically: the gathering of inner energies in order to repress hostile drives. Otherwise said: the efforts of the deceased towards his vindication.

V

- 1 O Thoth, who justified
- 2 Osiris against his enemies,
- 3 justify Osiris Scribe Ani -
- 4 justified, in peace - against his enemies,
- 5 in the Great Council which is in the watery lands of Rechtj,
- 6 when Isis spent the night
- 7 waking as a mourning woman

8 over her brother Osiris.

9 As for the Great Council which is

10 in the the watery lands of Rechtj,

11 it is *Isis*, it is *Horus*, it is *Imseti*.

The event of this litany is the well known lamentation of Isis over the corpse of her brother Osiris [6-8]. But things are not so simple, both textually and graphically. First of all we must note how, in the second section, the event is not explained; evidently because it needs no elucidations. However the location of the Council (Rechtj) is somewhat obscure.



The coupling of N21 (tongue of land) and N23 (irrigation canal) points to watery regions. Usually N21 stands for “riverbank” (*jdb*) and the common dual (*jdbwy*) refers to the double banks of a river, very often the Nile, thus the term indicates Egypt. In our case, though, there are three tongues of land, thus I am inclined to set aside that reading and see the plural glyphs as an allusion to “watery lands”. And since “*rhty*” is “washerman” I read the whole image as the location (O49) where “washing” takes place. As for “washing” that might allude (i) to the “cleansing procedures” on the corpse; (ii) to the tears of Isis flowing down her two cheeks (dual “*rhty*”), her two riverbanks; (iii) to the “cleansing of the deceased” which will take place in the next two litanies, namely the separation of those who will be qualified and those who will be annihilated. [I wouldn't exclude wordplays with “*rht*” (knowledge), “*rhyt*” (common people) and “*rht*” (amount, number)]. In conclusion a place in the Netherworld, as shown by Simeone Levi, in his dictionary:

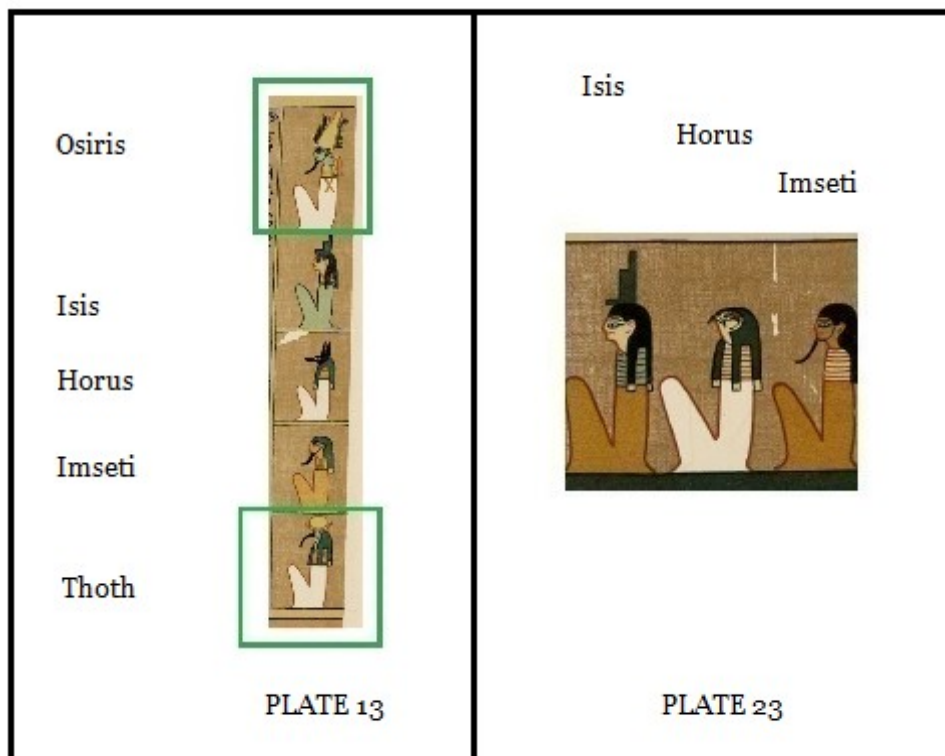
} re xent (?), re-
 xenti (?), Varr.
 di. rx-ti
 (el Birch, 5).
 re xenti (Ait. 35, 3), v. rx-ti
 re xenti (?), 4. sotto rx-ti.

(Ait. 1, 5) re x-ti, preceduto da
 , ed il primo da
 ; è il nome del
 luogo del Regno dei Mor-
 ti ove stanno le lava-
 trici di Osiride, Iside
 e Nephti, che sono ad
 un tempo le sue pre-
 fiche; quindi questa e-
 spressione si può tradur-
 re: la regione delle
 due lavatrici o delle due prefiche.
 (Birch) Region of the dead;
 (Pieri) les régions du lieu ou la
 région des deux corveuses; (De
 veria) idem.
 (Cortevon) la région des rids (les
 marais).

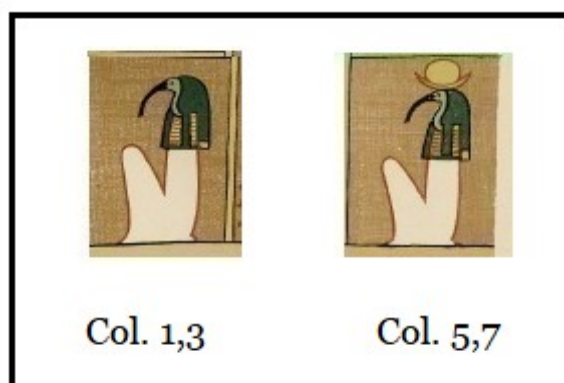
[... it is the name of the region of the Realm of the Dead where the “washers of Osiris”, Isis and Nephtys, who are also his mourners, stand in attendance. Thus this expression may be translated as “the region of the two washerwomen or of the two mourners”...]

This is indeed the “psychic landscape” I talked about at the beginning of these annotations. Isis's wailing is the emotional reaction of the sister/wife waiting for the result of Osiris's trial, taking place in the Netherworld's abysmal waters.

But now we come to the visual ambiguity of the litany. Let's start saying that in the first version we find Osiris and Thoth, who are not part of the Council.

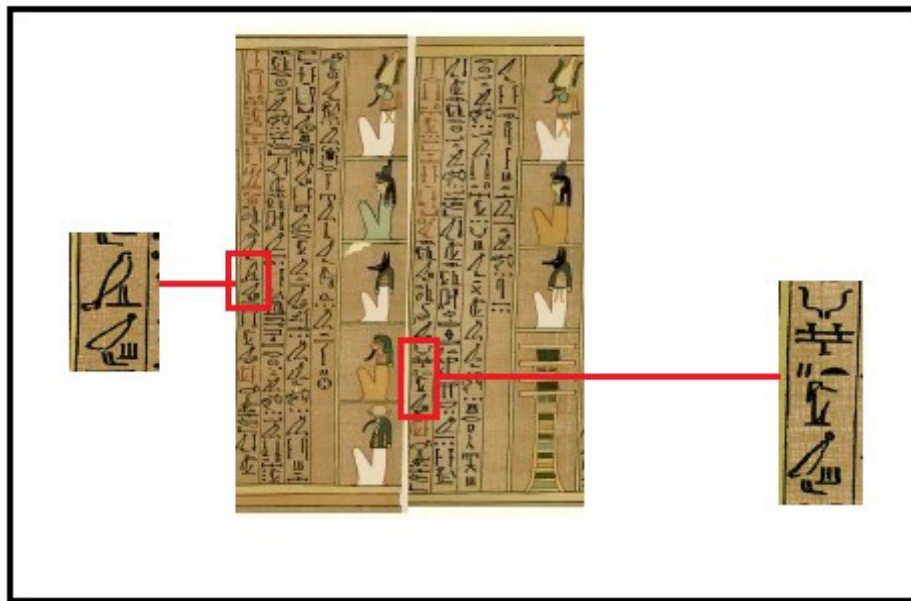


As for Thoth he is shown in his lunar aspect, with the crescent on his head. Interesting to note is the fact that Thoth's vignettes of columns 1 and 3 show him in his ibis headed more common form, whereas in the remaining columns where he appears (5 and 7) he wears the crescent



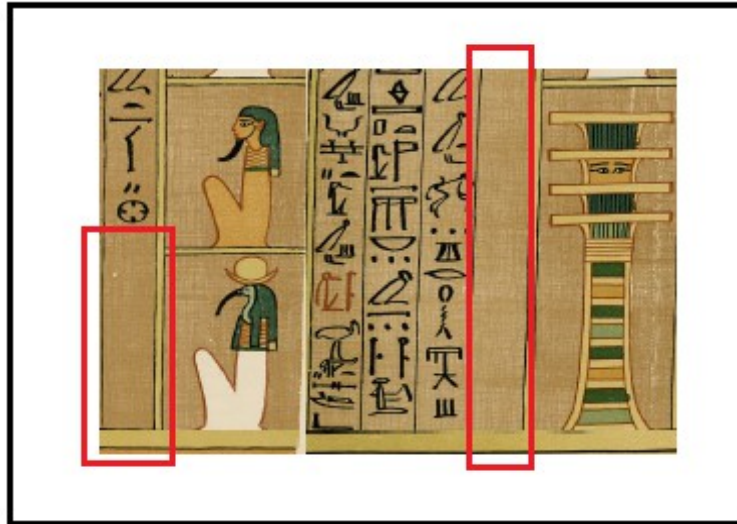
I don't think it is just a stylistic variation, but that the lunar aspect underlines the Netherworld landscape of which "Rechtj" is part of. And where Thoth is, Osiris is with him; thus also justifying the "non pertinent"

figures not mentioned in the text. But the real crux is the image of Horus, who, whereas in the version of Plate 23 is shown in his orthodox hawk aspect, here is depicted as a jackal headed god. Now that might be a gross scribal inattention. It seems that vignettes were drawn separately from the textual part and it's possible that the scribe made a confusion between the glyphs of columns 5 and 6; in this last one, in fact, there is the jackal headed “Wepwaut”, with his corresponding vignette:



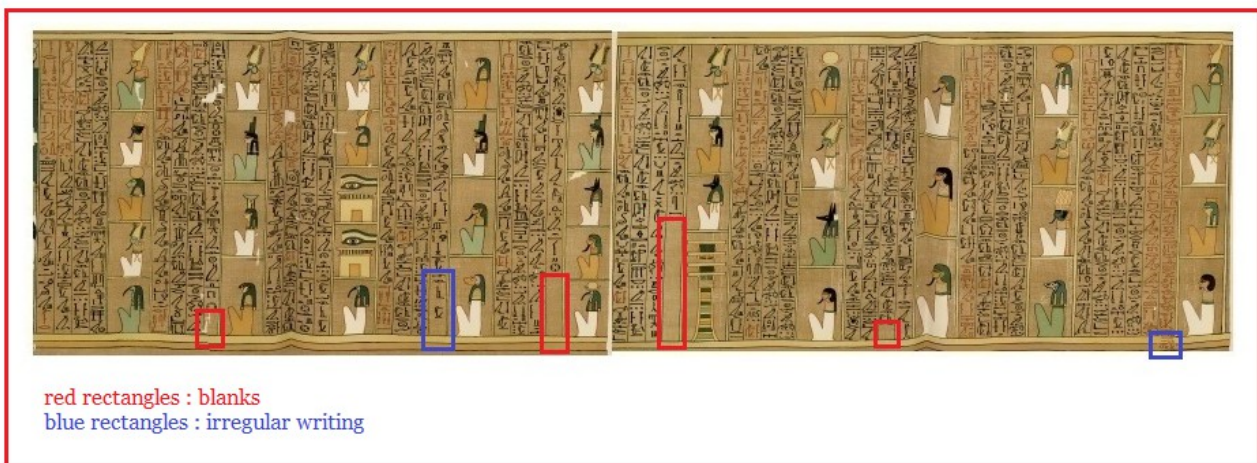
There might be, though, another hypothesis, no matter how extreme. The evident discrepancy between the textual Horus and the Wepwaut-like vignette (let's note how the two jackals are exactly on the same level) might hint at the fact that Horus does psychologically assume the aspect of Wepwaut so as to show Osiris the pathway of vindication, stressing thus his quality of “his father's protector”.

There is now the question concerning the role of *Imseti*. He has been already mentioned in the previous litany together with his brother *Hapi*; but, as far as I know, he is not so great a god. True that he protects Osiris's liver, but that is not such an important organ (like the heart is) and, unless I am wrong, there was not hepatoscopy in ancient Egypt. Perhaps, being under the protection of Isis, in this particular instance (Isis's wailing), he may be instead his mother's comfort. Moreover, being linked to the South (as cardinal point) he may anticipate the city of Abydos of the next litany, where Osiris will be celebrated in the course of the Haker feast. Last not least, let us consider the blank space at the left of Thoth's vignette:



From a textual perspective it comes at the end of the first section of the next litany and we'll deal with it in a very short time. But it may have a visual meaning, especially because it anticipates the other more extended blank space beside the *Djed* pillar, in the following column. It is possible that the alleged orthographic negligence may be an invitation to give a closer look at the image of Thoth, who, as said above, is shown in his lunar aspect, with the crescent on his head.

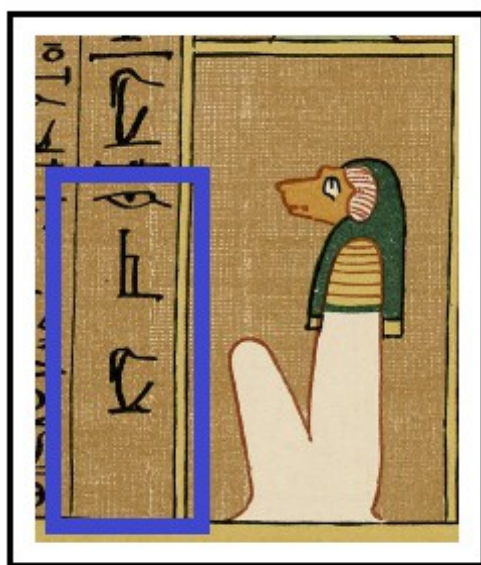
I am aware that I am on the verge of over-reading, especially since the orthography of this chapter shows many irregularities:



They may be clear proofs of scribal carelessness, particularly evident in the final lines of the spell (blue square) where the last glyphs brim over the framed border of the papyrus (in due time I'll give my interpretation of it)



But let us consider the other irregular writing:



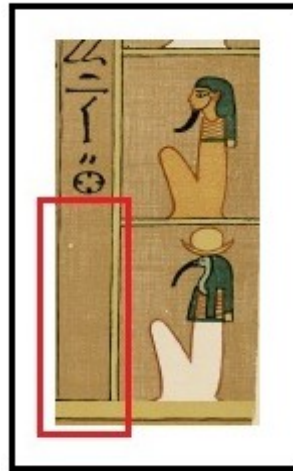
the hieroglyph representing Osiris, but drawn distancing each separate sign. Now, since this is the litany where Isis wails over his dismembered brother [6-8], are we perhaps suggested to see in it an allusion to the god's scattered members?

VI

- 1 O Thoth, who justified
 - 2 Osiris against his enemies,
 - 3 justify Osiris Scribe Ani -
 - 4 justified in peace - against his enemies,
 - 5 in the Great Council which is in Abydos,
 - 6 the night of the *Haker* feast,
 - 7 in the counting of the dead,
 - 8 in the promotion of the *Akh* spirits,
 - 9 in giving form to ritual dances in *Thinis*.
-
- 10 As for the Great Council which is in Abydos,
 - 11 it is *Osiris*, it is *Isis*, it is *Wepwaut*.

This litany does emotionally balance Isis's wailing of the previous one. Here we see Osiris's triumph during the famous *Haker* feast [6], a section of the Mysteries of Osiris which were held at Abydos [5] and which ended with hymns and dances of jubilation [9] celebrating the resurrection of the “vindicated” god. The reference to *Thinis* underscores the sacrality of the event, since that city had been the capital of the first Egyptian dynasties; and, most of all, its local god “Onuris” (*jnj-hrt*) had points of contact with *Haroeris* (Horus the Elder) and was sometimes replaced by *Khentimentiu* who certainly shows affinities with *Wepwaut*, who is one of the Council [11]. Not to mention the wordplay “*tnw* ↔ *tnj*”, namely the Egyptian name of the city (*tnj*) and the “counting” (*tnw*) of line 7. The “counting of the dead” [7] juxtaposed with the “promotion of the *Akh* spirits” [8] does show the separation between the “saved” and the “damned”. Now considering the joyous ritual dances (*jhbw*) [9] it seems obvious that the justification of Osiris/Ani is in progress. Once again, in the second section, there is no need to elucidate the event which has been clearly described in lines 7-9 and which coincides with the beginning of the second group of five litanies, those of Osiris's glorification.

Let us now deal with the blank space at the end of the first part of the litany, just following the city of Thinis:



In addition to the tentative explanation given in the commentary of the previous litany could it be possible that the blank space allude to the emotional suspense, to the waiting for the result of the second part of the ritual which takes place in the next litany, under the survey of Thoth in his “darker” (lunar) aspect?

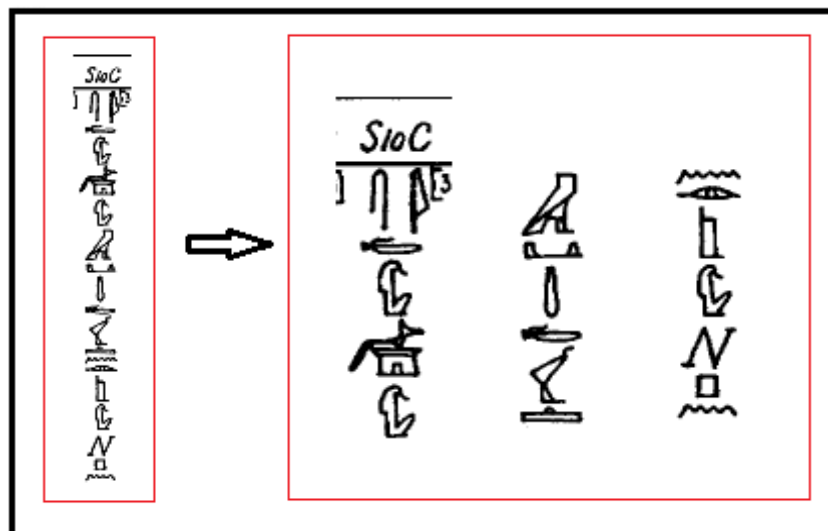
VII

- 1 O Thoth, who justified
- 2 Osiris against his enemies,
- 3 justify Osiris Scribe,
- 4 the accountant of the divine offerings
- 5 of all the gods, Ani,
- 6 against his enemies,
- 7 in the Council that judges the dead,
- 8 the night of inspecting the *Have-nots*.

- 9 As for the Great Council that judges the dead:
- 10 it is *Thoth*, it is *Osiris*,

- 11 it is *Anubis*, it is *Isden*.
- 12 As for the inspection of the *Have-nots*:
- 13 it's the locking up of the offerings
- 14 upon the *bAs* who are the offspring of Impotence.

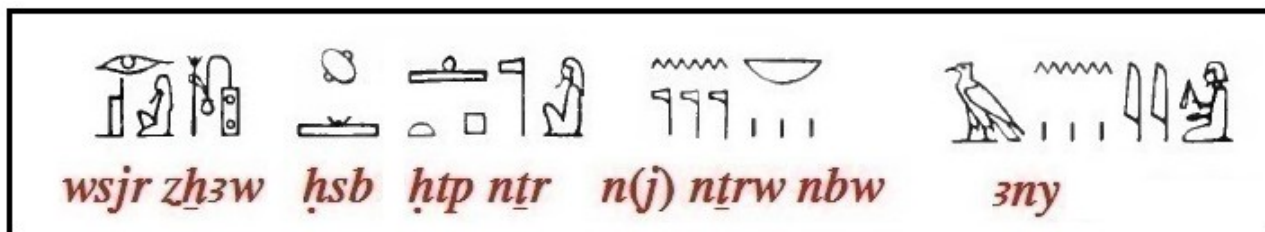
This litany, as suggested above, is closely related to the previous one in a sort of parallelismus membrorum. As a matter of fact we may say that whereas the previous litany described the exterior ritual of Osiris's glorification, condensed in the final hymns and dances, here we plunge into the inner, most secret and perilous aspect of the process, if only considering the explicit presence of Thoth, of Anubis (he who prepares the mummy) and of Isden (or Isdes), an obscure god who is sometimes an aspect of Thoth or Anubis and who has power to give speech to the deceased, as for instance shown in CT 27 (mark the recumbent jackal determinative A16)



[there is an interesting monograph about this god by Diletta D'Antoni: "The God Isdes". (Thesis, University of Bologna, 2015)]

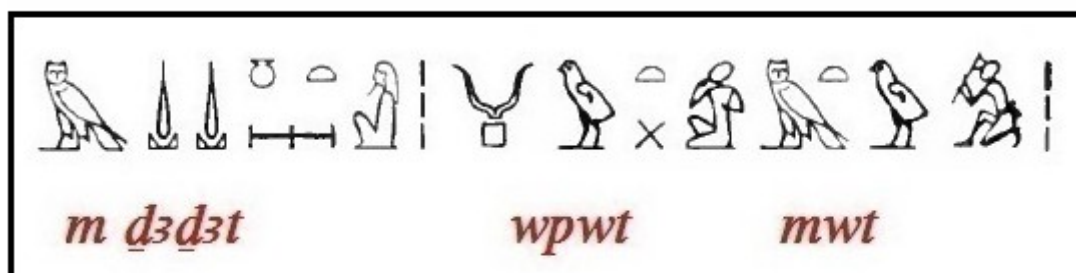
The most important thing to remark is the fact that this is the only occurrence in which there is no explicit mentioning of the location where the event takes place. At any rate, considering the "judging of the dead" of line 7, corresponding to the "counting of the dead" of the same line of the previous litany, we may deduct that we are in the Netherworld where the "not qualified deceased" (*offspring of Impotence*) [14] are not allowed to

receive “offerings” [13], which are the marks of “qualification”. What is interesting is that, leaving aside the 11th litany, which, in my interpretation, is a sort of résumé, this is also the first occurrence where the complete title of Ani is shown, that is with the inclusion of “*hsb ḥtp-nṯr n(j) nṯrw nbw*” (accountant of the divine offerings of all the gods)

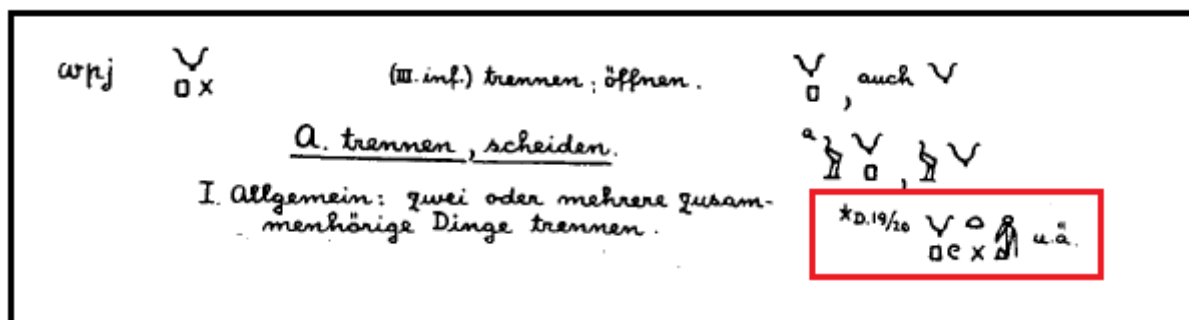


which, put beside the “locked up offerings” of the unqualified deceased, gives the whole an ironically nuanced touch.

We should now give a look at some words needing a closer inspection, as, for example, “*wpwt*” [7]:

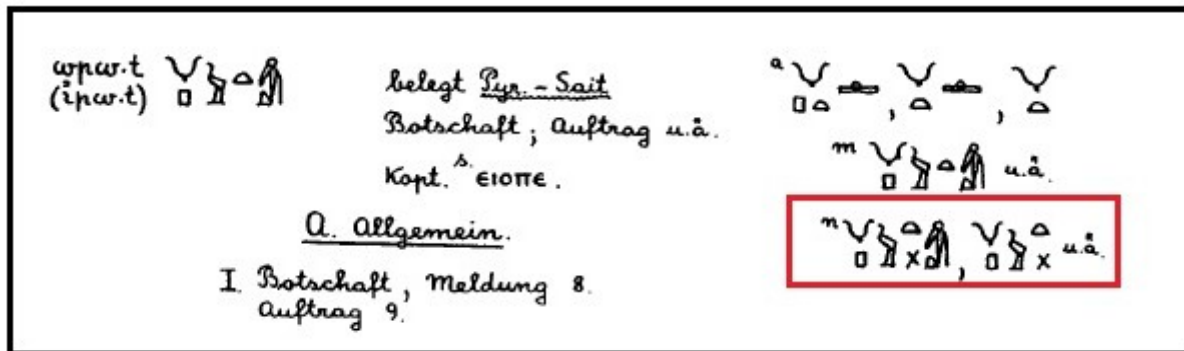


I think it conveys two concomitant images. It may be the verb “*wpj*” (→ to separate, to judge)

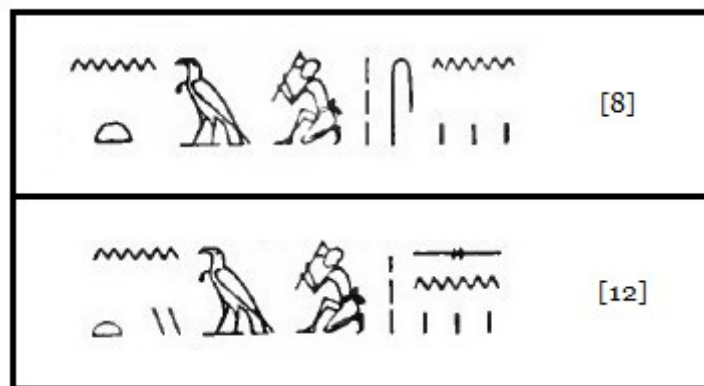


mirroring thus, as above remarked, the counting of the dead of the previous litany. The separation alludes to the “sifting” of those who are not qualified and who will suffer the second death (→ *mwt*).

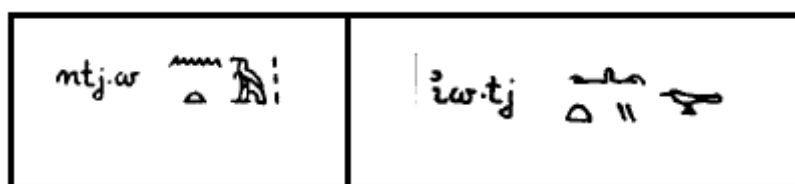
A scene made more evident by the second reading of “*wprwt*”, namely “message”:



It is the official seal of rejection stamped on those who are to be annihilated, who have not the needed “requirements”, the Have-nots [8 & 12], the offspring of Impotence [14]. Their orthographic rendering is definitely ambiguous:



At first sight they should be read “*ntjw sn*” (those who are “them” → the living ones), but considering the determinative A14a (wounded man → dead) the dependent pronoun “*sn*” could be a reference to the dead (*mwt*), sharing in fact the same determinative; thus the selection of those who belong to the ranks of the dead. But, once again, A14a may also be an invitation to look at the glyphs as “those who are no more” (→ the dead), reading “*n*” (N35) as D35 (negation).



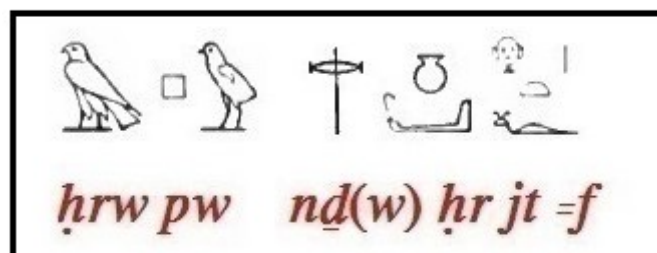
That would give “*jwtjw-sn*”, namely the plural form of the most common “*jwtj-sw*” (→ Have-not). And what they “don't have” are the required qualities. As such they are not worthy of the offerings presented to the gods or to the *b3s* of the qualified deceased [13], that is: “those who are” (*ntjw*) in opposition to “those who are not” (*jwtjw*). In conclusion we could say that the graphic renderings work as amphibolies, since they may be read simultaneously according to the two opposite meanings. No need to say that Ani is going to become “one who is”, selected for the “Akh” state declared in VI,8 (the promotion of the Akh spirits).

VIII

- 1 O Thoth, who justified
- 2 Osiris against his enemies,
- 3 justify Osiris Scribe Ani,
- 4 justified, against his enemies,
- 5 in the Great Council which is in the hacked up field of Busiris,
- 6 on the night of hacking the earth in their blood
- 7 and of justifying Osiris against his enemies.

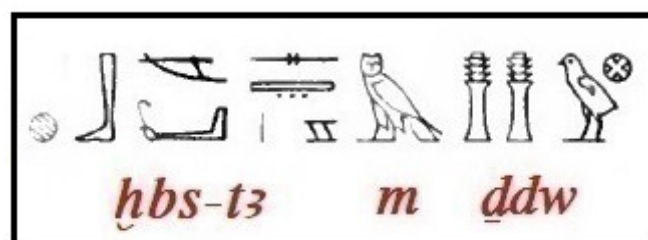
- 8 As for the Great Council which is
- 9 in the hacked up field of Busiris,
- 10 that's the coming of Seth's companions,
- 11 after they had turned their shapes into those of small cattle.
- 12 And then they had been butchered
- 13 in front of those gods
- 14 in order to destroy those who were smeared with blood.
- 15 (Whereas) those under examination
- 16 were given to the ones who are in Busiris.

This litany shows a few peculiarities and some obscure references needing close inspection and perhaps leading, me at least, to far-fetched and extreme interpretations. The general sense is relatively clear to make out. It is the report of the destruction of the followers of Seth in the course of a battle fought in Busiris's premises. That's exactly the location already shown in the second litany, of which the narrated event was the erection of the *Djed* pillar. In that occasion the gods of the Council were Osiris, Isis, Nephtys and last, but certainly not least, Horus in his aspect of “protector of his father”

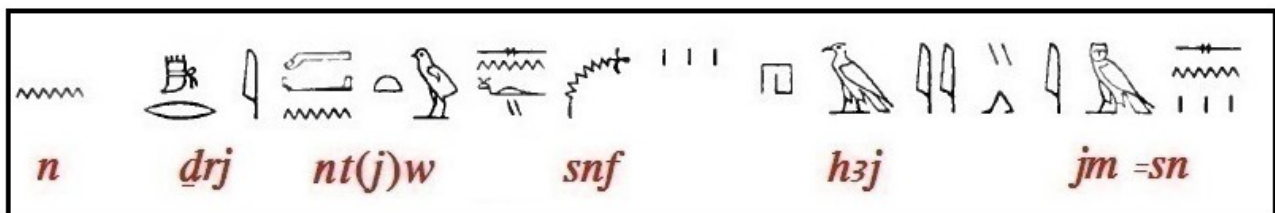


This is very important because in this litany there is no specification of the gods of this Council; there is only a vague reference to them [13]. And what is puzzling is the fact that in the elucidation [8-9] instead of the expected deities there is the description of the event, namely the butchering of Seth's companions. That seems totally out of any logic. Moreover there is no mention of the party that defeats them. That's why I am of the opinion that it is the Horus/Harendotes of the second litany. And his victory is then the symbolic conclusion of the ritual experience ending in fact with the erection of the *Djed* pillar, in other words the attaining of “divine solidity”. The cyclic course (from Busiris to Busiris) has been successfully run. True that there are two more litanies, but, as we will see, they perform a specific figurative task we'll deal with later on.

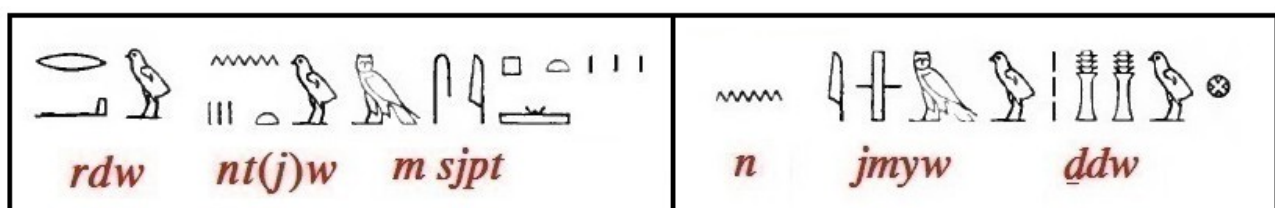
All this said it's now time that we examine the problematic passages, starting from



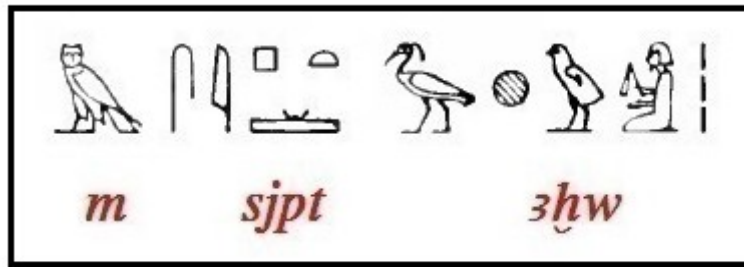
I have no idea whether there are “attested” mythic references to this happening and what its symbolism would allude to. At any rate, in a bloody battle, one would turn into a ferocious animal, not into insignificant beasts. Some say that “*w*” alludes to “goats”. But that does not change my objection, since if “goats” were meant to be bellicose “rams” I am sure the scribe would have used a more precise term. So my hazardous guess is that Seth's companions show their fear and impotence (in front of Horus) and “wolves” as they were turned then into meek “lambs” that surrendered to their destiny, that of being butchered [12]. As regards line 14



I am of the opinion that “*snf h3j jm =sn*” may be read from two different angles, which I tried to show in my translation (smeared with blood). It could be the blood of the defeated gushing out of their wounds and flowing down their bodies; or it could refer to the “blood thirsty” followers of Seth, smeared with the blood of their victims, but punished in a sort of “contrappasso”. The confluence of these two opposing meanings gives the sentence a sarcastic nuance, making scorn of Seth's gang. As for the last two lines [15-16], they themselves pose some problems.



Who are “*ntjw m sjpt*”? The verb “*spj*” has been used in the 7th litany, line 12, referring to the “Have-nots”, namely the “defeated”. Thus it may obliquely hint at the mangled bodies of Seth's companions offered to the inhabitants of Busiris, that is: the companions of Osiris (and the followers of Horus); or, in a more abstract form: those whom the gods [13] decided should be defeated (the followers of Seth) were given to the followers of Horus so that they destroy them. But I am more inclined to compare our “*sjp*” with that of the 6th litany, line 8 “the promotion of the Akhs spirits”



Those who have been judged “qualified” and had become effective citizens of the city of Osiris.

IX

- 1 O Thoth, who justified
- 2 Osiris against his enemies,
- 3 justify Osiris Ani against his enemies,
- 4 in the Great Council which is in Naref,
- 5 on the night of making secret what is to be done. [the ritual]

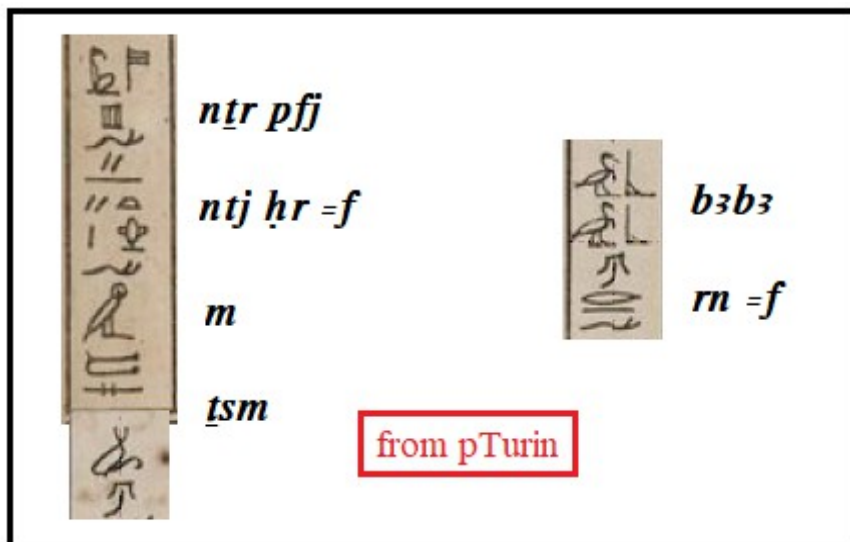
- 6 As for the Great Council in Naref,
- 7 it is *Ra*, it is *Osiris*,
- 8 it is *Shu*, it is *Babi*.
- 9 As for the night of making secret what is to be done:
- 10 one will exist in the course of the interment
- 11 of the arm, of the flanks,
- 12 of the thigh of Osiris Wennefer.

As already said the previous litany marks the end of the cyclic ritual begun in the second block (from Busiris to Busiris). However that was a ritual experienced on a “social level”, from what may be termed an “exoteric” perspective. But here we plunge into a different level of knowledge, the “esoteric” one, reserved only for those who are qualified. It is not a

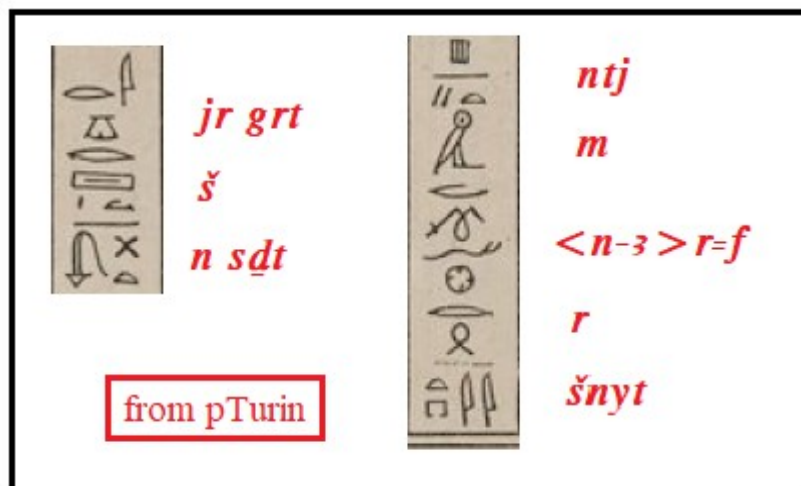
coincidence that the place is “Naref”, which, more than a topographical location, is a region of the psychic landscape, where the “worthy” deceased is taught the secret meaning of the exterior rites, as we may infer from lines 5 and 9-12. But before delving into them let's have a look at the gods of the Council. Ra being the first of the list underscores the importance of this litany. He is juxtaposed to Osiris [7] so as to point out the day ↔ night (light/darkness) antinomy; repeated in the next line [8] with the juxtaposition of “Shu” (god of the air, but also of the sunshine, often termed “son of Ra”) and “Babi” who is a god of the Netherworld. As for this one it's interesting to note that whereas he is usually shown as a baboon, in our case he has the face of a dog



thus, more than his “virility” it is his aspect of “punisher” that is important. In fact there is a passage in the famous Chapter 17 where Babi is shown as a dangerous god having the face of a dog



and who is in control of the Lake of Fire that extends from Naref to Shenit



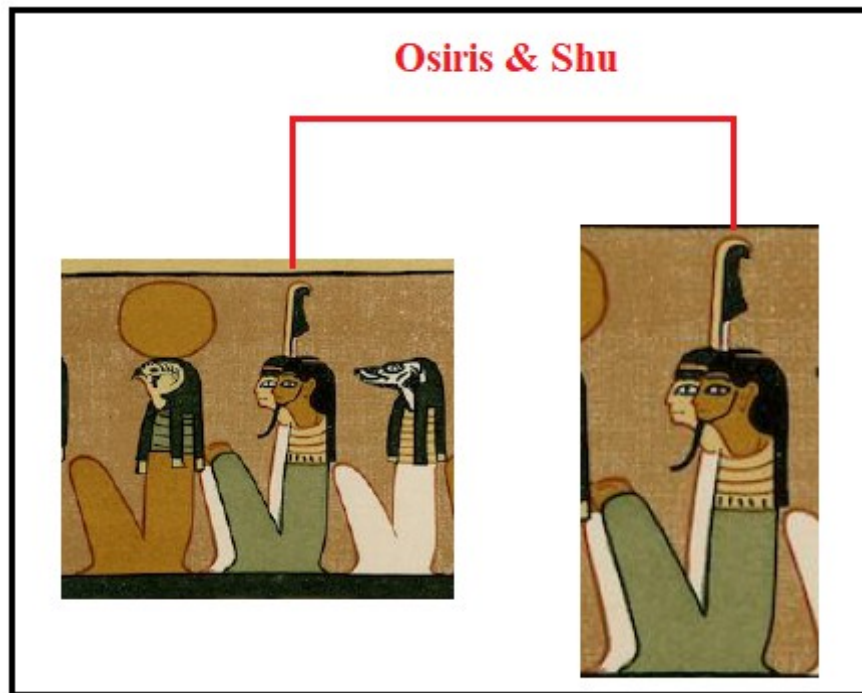
[I use as an example pTurin, since this part of Chapter 17 is missing from Ani's papyrus, although references to Naref are present in two other passages]

In a certain sense he plays the role of Ammit, the devourer of the weighing of the heart scene:



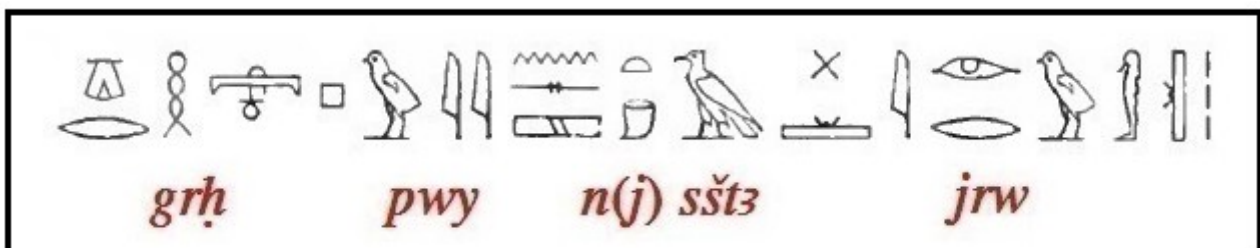
and that may explain why Thoth, who in the 3rd litany [8] was said to be in the Council of Naref seems to be not present here. But although not expressly introduced we may surmise he is there as Master of Secrets, thus in his concealed form (→ *ššt3 irw*).

Remaining in the visual space it's interesting to see the rendering of the second version (Plate 24)



Whereas the figure of Shu (bearded) is the common one, with the feather on his head, the should-be Osiris is definitely perplexing. He looks like a common man. Thus, once again, either the painter was off-track or the human figure in the vignette refers to Ani, an Osiris-Ani in his process of integration of the Osirian qualities, with Shu guarding his back from the possible dangers coming from Babi; or with Babi ready to tear Ani apart should he result “unworthy”.

All this said we can now make a closer inspection of the text, in particular line 5 closely connected with lines 10-12:



Simple as it is “*sšȳ jrȳ*” may allow multiple readings in accord with the meanings we assign both to the verb “*sšȳ*” and to the noun “*jrȳ*”. This last could be read as “shapes, forms”, in connection with the members of Wennefer (arm, flanks, thigh) [11-12] that are buried in line 10 (*ḥr ḳrs*). Thus “*sšȳ*” would allude to the hiding of Osiris's body, so as to protect him from external dangers. However, if this were the case, one might ask:



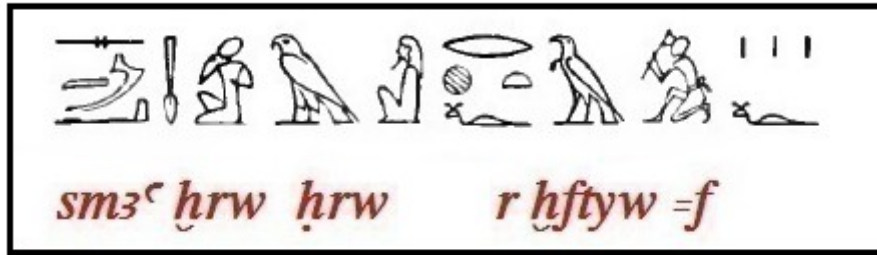
X

1 O Thoth, who justified
2 Osiris against his enemies,
3 justify Osiris Ani,
4 justified beside Osiris, against his enemies,
5 in the Great Council which is in Rosetau,
6 the night of the wake of Anubis,
7 his arms over [=performing] the rituals, attending Osiris;
8 and of the triumph of Horus against his enemies.

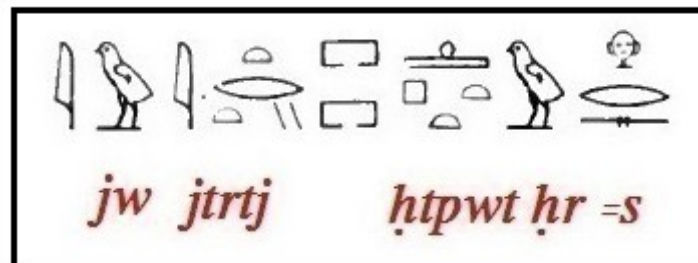
9 As for the Great Council in Rosetau,
10 it is *Horus*, it is *Osiris*, it is *Isis*.
11 Osiris: sweet his heart;
12 Horus: joyful his heart;
13 the Two Sanctuaries content about it.

It is no wonder that the last litany takes place in Rosetau, the Realm of the Dead [5], of which Osiris is the archetypal figure. Here we find many similarities with the previous litany which may be seen as its earthly counterpart, the city/region of Naref being a sort of ritual entrance into Rosetau. We may thus find parallels between the ritual teaching in Naref [IX, 5 & 9] and the funerary attendance of Anubis in lines 6-7. They point to two “experiential levels”: the personal and the archetypal, already

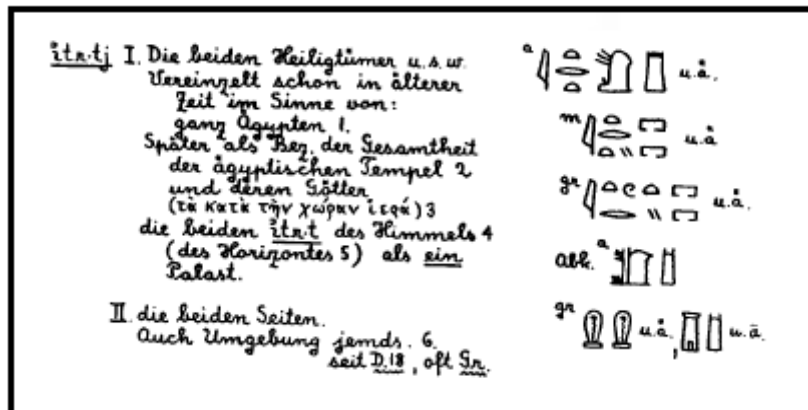
anticipated in the above mentioned morphing “*wnn=tw* → *wnnfr*”, that coincides with Horus's triumph (*sm3^c hrw*) of line 8:



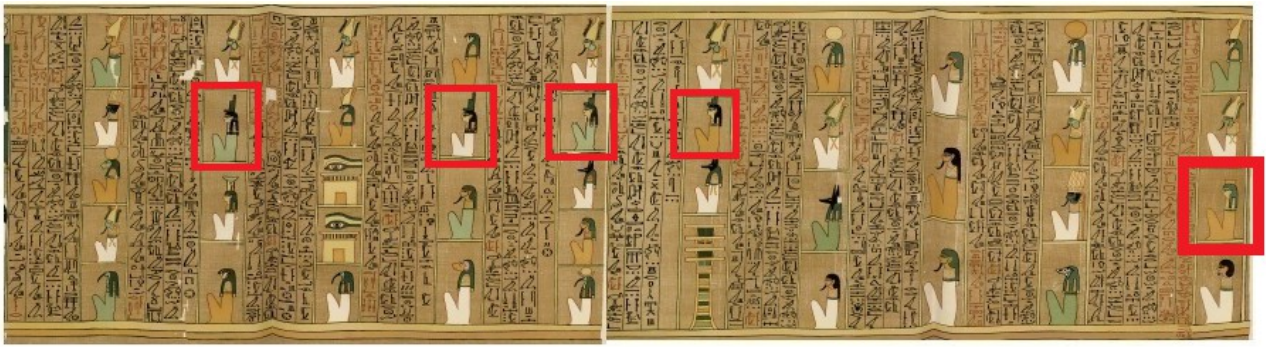
Symbolically it represents the Osirian state the deceased has reached [12], with the benediction of the fatherly figure [11] and the motherly one, Isis, characterized by the image of the “two sanctuaries → *jtrtj*” [13].



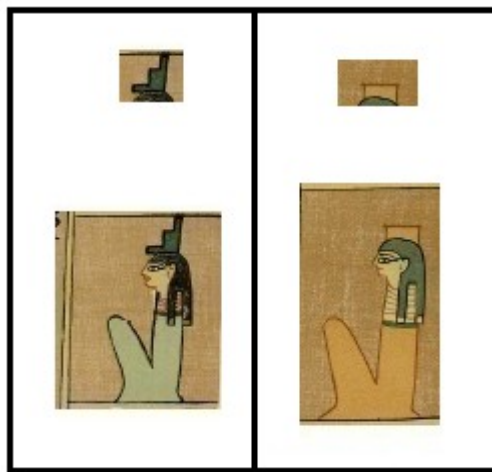
As a matter of fact “*jtrtj*” may have multiple concomitant readings.



It may allude to “ganz Aegypten” (all Egypt → upper & lower), to all the temples and gods of the two regions, but also to the two sides of the sky, to the double horizon (east and west, dawn and sunset, birth → death → resurrection). It is indeed a “motherly” figure; and I think it is not a coincidence that the vignette representing Isis is a little bit different from the most common one:



Whereas in the first four litanies where she appears she wears the usual “throne” head-dress, in the last vignette she shows a different “cap”



which is indeed similar to that of Hathor and which Isis wears in her role of “nursing mother”:



HATHOR



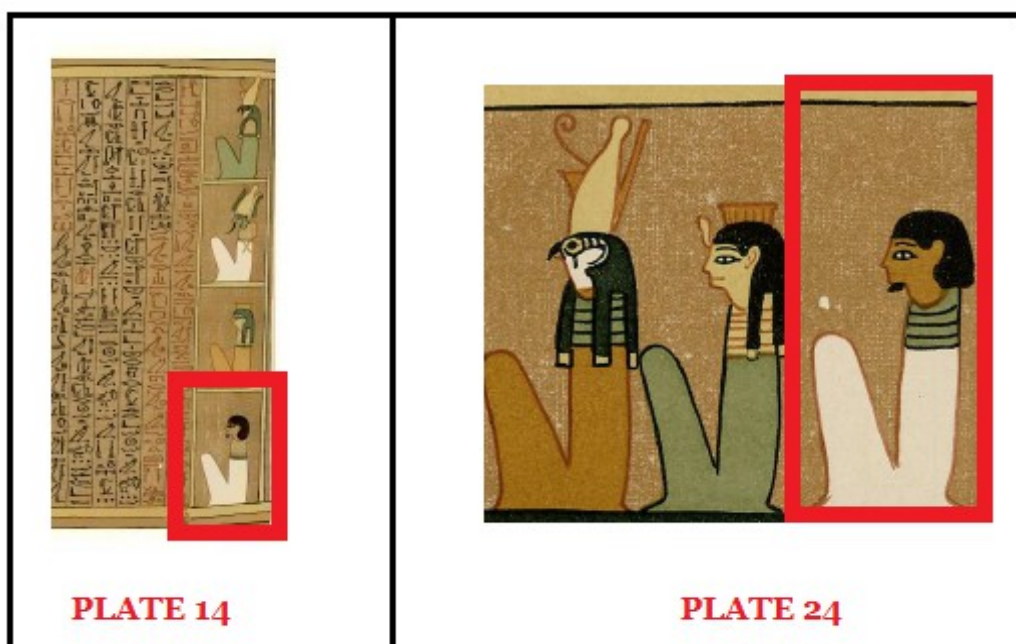
ISIS

It is the successful end of the initiation rite the deceased has gone through. Interesting to note is the fact that the version of Plate 24 shows only two gods, Horus and Isis (with her Hathor head-dress):

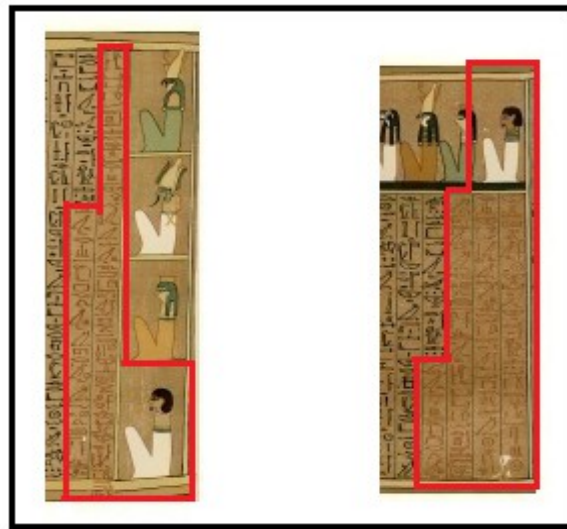


leaving thus out “Osiris”, whom the text places between them. Which would be, indeed, an unforgivable oversight; unless the painter did that intentionally, suggesting that the invisible Osiris be inside the Horusian figure, namely that Horus/Ani has psychically integrated the Osirian seed, being thus in possession both of the diurnal (Horus) and nocturnal (Osiris) aspects.

One final observation about the vignettes concerns the last figure of the last column and of the spread-sheet of Plate 24:



For sure he does not belong to the gods of the 10th litany and being present in both the versions I doubt it is a scribal license. I am of the opinion that he is the “one” referred to in the final rubric:

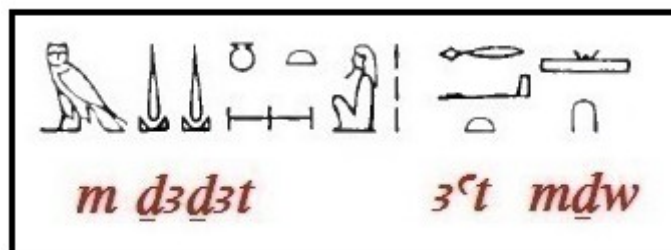


We'll get to it in due time.

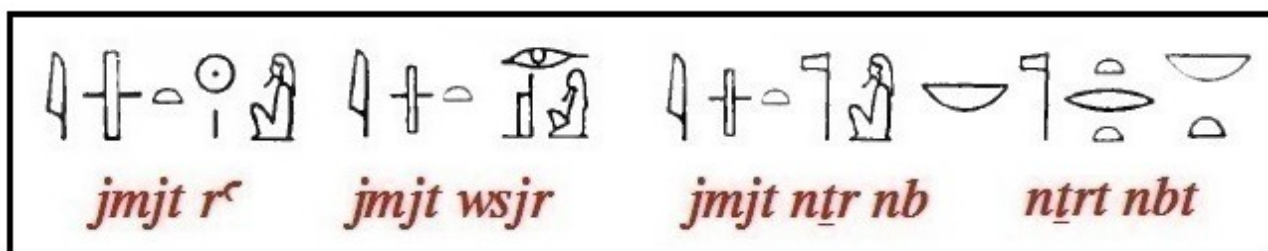
XI

- 1 O Thoth, who justified
- 2 Osiris against his enemies,
- 3 justify Osiris Scribe,
- 4 the accountant of the divine offerings
- 5 of all the gods,
- 6 Ani, justified, against his enemies,
- 7 in the Great Council of the Ten
- 8 which *Ra* is in, *Osiris* is in,
- 9 every god, every goddess is in,
- 10 and in front of the Lord of All,
- 11 that he [Ani] chase away his enemies,
- 12 all the evils that pertain to him.

As already said this is a sort of summary, condensing in a final litany all that happened in the ten previous ones, explicitly expressed in the “Great Council of the Ten”



In fact the last two lines form “in nuce” the basic pattern of the other litanies, the defeat of hostile forces [11] that are built-in parts of every mortal being [12] and by consequence try to hinder any qualitative transformation. There is no “elucidation” block, since everything has already been explained. The “ten” summarizes the already met Great Councils which the various gods in the vignettes were components of, if we read “*jmjt*” as a “reverse nisbe”



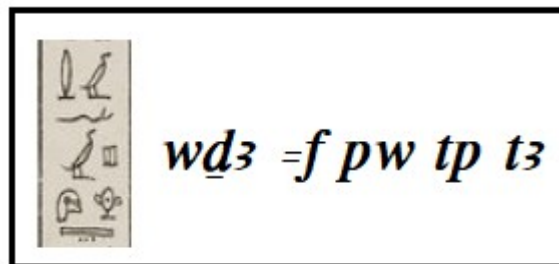
That would certainly make more sense than imagining “Great Councils” inside the various gods, as a cursory reading might suggest. Once again we find here the complete titles of Ani (scribe and accountant of the divine offerings of all the gods) [4-5] that had first appeared in the 7th litany, dealing with the rejection of the “unqualified bAs” [VII, 14]. Moreover, what is to remark is the fact that there are no vignettes of the gods. That should be no surprise, since they have already been shown in the course of the litanies; and the reader (or the deceased) is probably invited to give a recapitulatory look at the sequence of the groups of gods displayed in the spread-out papyrus, fusing them together into the image of the Lord of All [10] (Atum: the god atop the first column in the first litany) who, we may suppose, gives his benevolent look at the progress of the deceased.

RUBRIC

The chapter ends with a rubric which gives directions about the modalities of its vocal rendering. Like similar rubrics it makes clear that if uttered according to the ritual prescriptions it will trigger beneficial effects on a person either after his death, favouring his coming forth by day; or while he is still on earth, making him hale and protecting him from dangers. This double aspect is a way to assert how powerful that spell is. In many versions, as for example that of *pTurin*, the rubric goes along a straight grammatical and syntactic pattern which poses no particular problems, the subject of it being a clearly expressed figure, no matter how generic: a man (*s*) by whom (*jn s*) the spell is recited



and whom the whole passage refers to



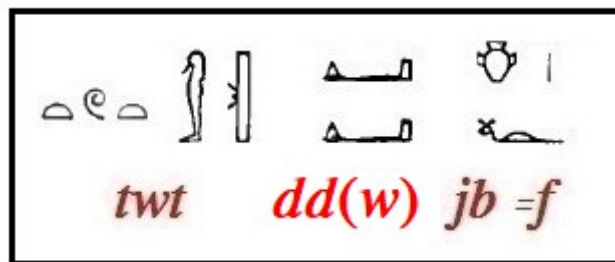
In our case, though, things are a little more complicated, probably for symbolic reasons. Let's see why.



- 1 If this spell is said in a state of purity:
- 2 it's the coming forth by day after the mooring [= death]
- 3 like a statue [= the deceased] who has been given his heart.
- 4 Moreover, if the whole spell is kept being recited over him,
- 5 it is wholeness made for him on earth:

- 6 he will emerge (safe) from any flame,
 7 no wrong doing about him,
 8 nor any evil which pertains to him.
 9 A prescription, a million times true .

Line 3 is very ambiguous:

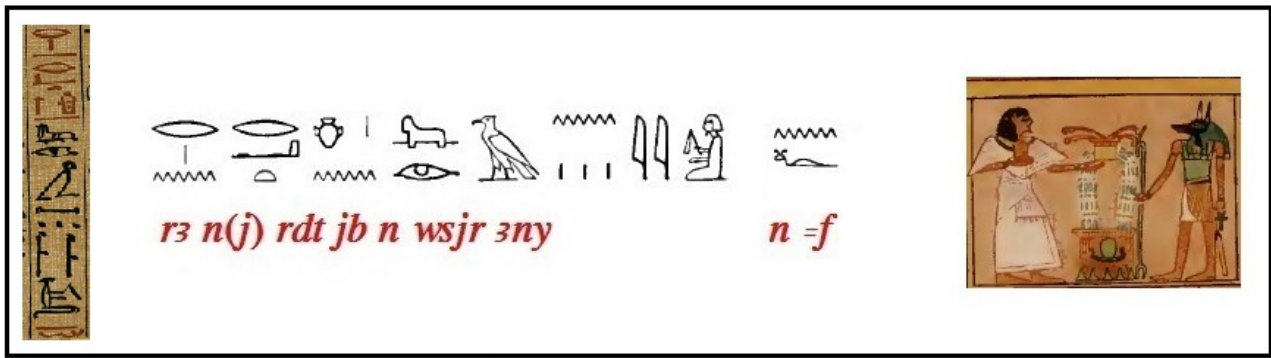


This is remarkably different from the *pTurin* version (representing most of the others)

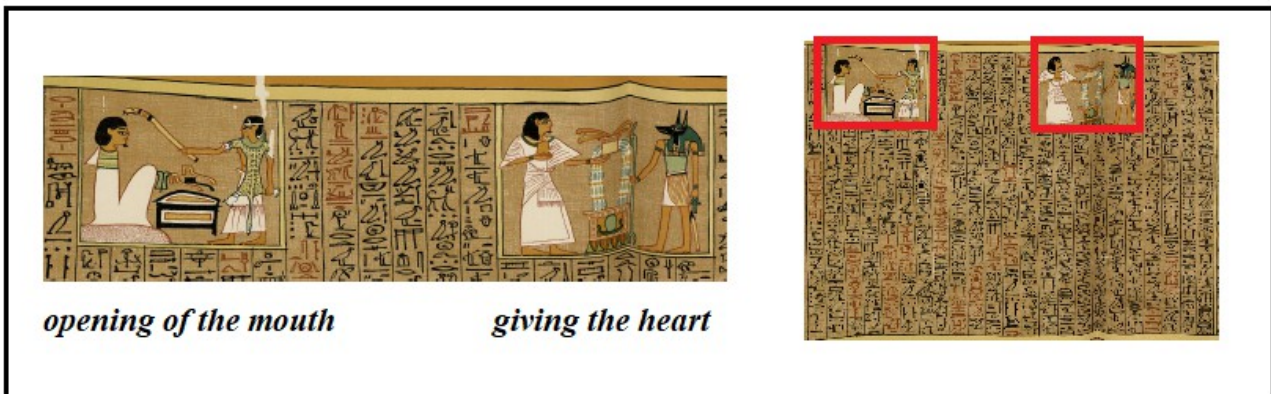


that shows the deceased assuming all the forms his heart desires (*rdj jb =f*). But in our case we have a problematic “*twt*”, which can be read either as “resembling, having the shape” or/and “statue, image”.

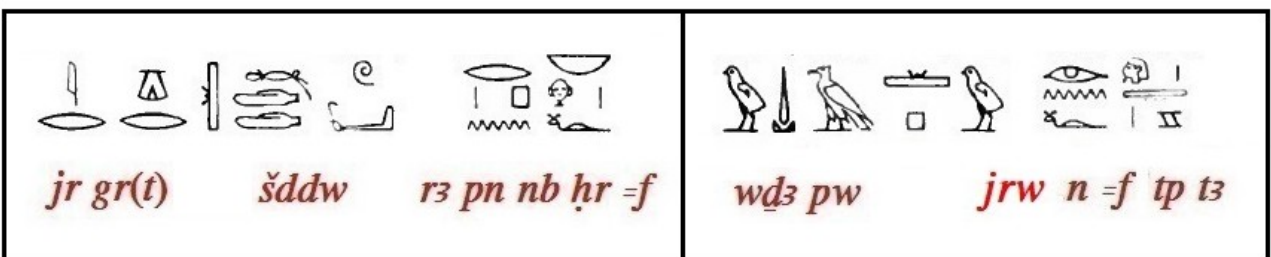
As for “*dd(w) jb =f*” I am more inclined to see in it a passive participle alluding to the “giving of the heart” ritual which will be expressly performed in the next Plate, Chapter 26



Thus “*twt*” may be the statue, namely the deceased, that, given his heart, is by consequence “revived” and can come forth by day. That action is in fact a ritual in strict connection with the “opening of the mouth”, which also appears in the same Plate 15, Chapter 23; its vignette preceding that of the “giving of the heart”.

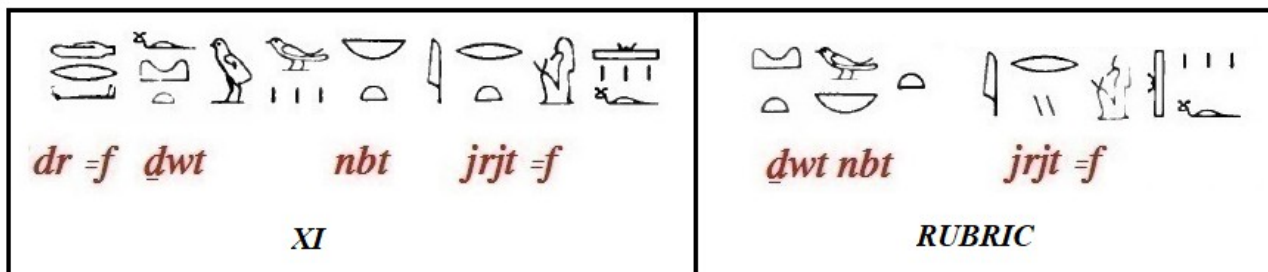


Now this introduces us directly to the ambiguity of the second part of the rubric [4-8].

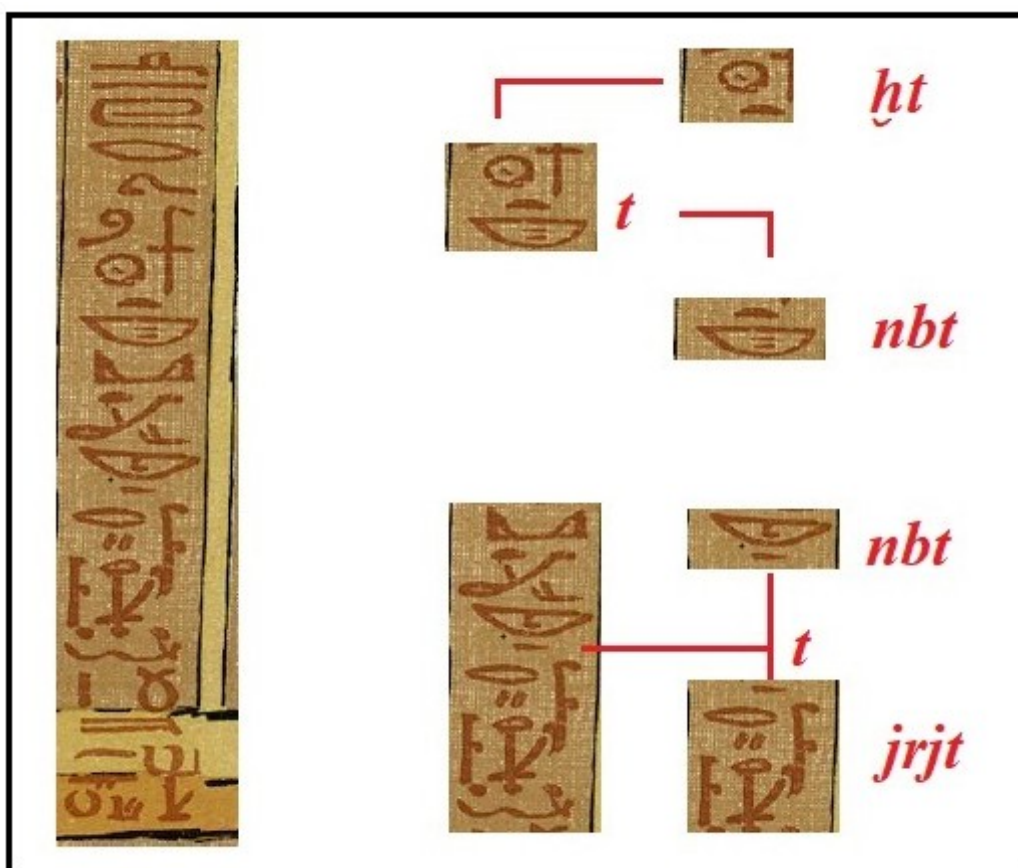


If in the other versions the pronoun “*f*” may be easily referred to the generic “man” (*s*), in our case he can only point to the deceased (*twt*). Of course one might surmise that “*f*” be an allusion to “him” before his death, while he was still on earth (*tp t3*), thus turning “*f*” into a generic reference. That could be an acceptable extrapolation. However I can't help thinking that the subject hinted at can also be the “deceased” himself, in his

“statue” configuration. In fact lines 6-8 describe events that belong specifically to the Netherworld scenery (the flames → Lake of Flames; the wrong doings → Seth's companions; and especially the “evils that pertain to him” [could we say with Hamlet : “which flesh is heir to”?], which is exactly the repetition of line 10 of the previous litany).



The missing “t” in the Rubric is only apparent, as we can reconstruct it from the original rendering:

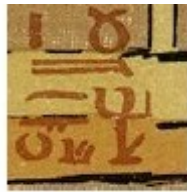


If that's the case “*t3*” would then be not “earth”, but the Netherworld soil that the deceased would traverse, protected by the safety spell recited over him. And since “*wd3*” might resonate with “*wd3*+D54” (to traverse, to proceed)

𓂏𓂏𓂏 wd3 go, set out, proceed, r 'to', Sin. B 282; Westc. 8, 2; 9, 27; 10, 6; 11, 9; Les. 76, 15;
Urk. IV, 9, 8; RB 64, 16; of idol carried in procession, Sint, pl. 6, 274; Urk. IV, 308, 6;

that could point to ritual actions performed both during the funeral cortège and on the deceased's tomb on earth.

As for the validity of the “prescription” (*sš m3c ḥḥ n sp*)



it is amusing to note how it “transcends” the frame of the papyrus



as if its beneficial effects come forth from the very scroll.

And now it's time that we give a closer look at the last vignette which depicts a seated human figure. Having no long beard I exclude he is a god and that's indeed quite interesting. He could be the generic man (*s* → *f*) of the rubric, but his human constitution would be alien to the godly column, an “impertinent” intrusion.

However, if referred to the deceased, namely to Ani, things would get a different light. It is not a coincidence that in the first vignette of the next plate, dealing with the opening of the mouth ritual, we see Ani who looks like (*twt*) our seated man:



True that he is still “human”, but on his way to “numinousness”. And probably that's why, as said above, Isis wears the Hathor head-dress, showing her motherly aspect. In fact she is placed between Osiris and Ani as if playing the role of “go-between” for her brother/husband and her going-to-be “son”, the Horus on top. Horus and Ani, both sons of Osiris and Isis.

