

Dealing with Problematic Texts

A Synoptic Study of the Hypocephalus Turin Cat. 2320

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AS KNOWN, the hypocephalus is an amulet of circular shape, usually in stuccoed linen, linen or cartonnage, more rarely in bronze or papyrus, containing images of deities and texts. It was placed at the head of the mummy for protection, and in order to generate the vital flame of the sun god, in accordance with the magical prescriptions of spell 162 of the Book of the Dead.¹ Its circular shape represents the sun disk, or the iris of the *udjat* eye. It was in vogue in funerary assemblages of the Ptolemaic period, where it is found occasionally also on the calotte of mummy masks in cartonnage.²

Three hypocephali in bronze published by Petrie date to the 30th Dynasty,³ but most examples datable with a certain accuracy belong to the Greek period. A large number of pieces are broadly dated by the museums to the Late/Ptolemaic period, in lack of a more precise appraisal. The assertion that the earliest specimens date back to the 25th Dynasty⁴ is unsupported, being based on the incorrect dating of two Ptolemaic mummy masks,⁵ whose calottes, furthermore, do not present a hypocephalus, but a scarab and a scorpion, with spell 151a of the Book of the Dead and another text. Several specimens discovered in the 19th century probably originate from Thebes or Akhmim, but they were separated from the funerary assemblages to which they belonged, and the information on their origin and context may be lost, or difficult to be traced back. An example of fair quality is the hypocephalus in stuccoed linen Turin Cat. 2320 [Fig. 1], inscribed in black ink on a light brown background,

¹ On this spell: A. WÜTHRICH, *Eléments de théologie thébaine: les chapitres supplémentaires du Livre des Morts*, SAT 16, Wiesbaden, 2010, p. 41-85.

² See: L. GESTERMANN, “‘Gegrüßet seiest Du, Schöngesichtige’ – Zur Bonner Mumienmaske des Imhotep”, in H. Györy (ed.), *Le lotus qui sort du terre. Mélanges Offerts à Edith Varga, BMusHongr*, Supplement 2001, Budapest, 2001, p. 101-112. The term “hypocéphale”, from Greek ὑπό κεφάλην, “below head”, was coined by Champollion (see J.Fr. CHAMPOLLION, *Notice descriptive des monuments Égyptiens du Musée Charles X*, Paris, 1827, p. 121), as a derivation from the expression *hr tp*, which appears in spell 162 of the Book of the Dead to indicate the destination of the amulet. However, the preposition *hr* can mean “at”, “beside”, when referred to the head (cf. A. GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar. Third edition, revised*, Oxford, 1957, p. 128), and in fact the amulet is depicted in mummy masks on the top of head. On this terminological question, see also: J. GEE, “Non-round Hypocephali”, in H. Györy (ed.), *Aegyptus et Pannonia III, Acta Symposii anno 2004*, Budapest, 2006, p. 49-50.

³ W.M.F. PETRIE, *Abydos I, EEF 22*, London, 1902, p. 49-51, pl. LXXVI, LXXVII, LXXIX (3-5).

⁴ E.g.: D. KESSLER, “Kopftafel”, in W. Helck, W. Westendorf (eds.), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie III*, Wiesbaden, 1980, p. 693; A. WÜTHRICH, *Eléments de théologie thébaine*, p. 52.

⁵ T.E. PEET, *The Cemeteries of Abydos II, 1911-1912*, London, 1914, p. 92-93, fig. 52, 54; E. VARGA, “Les Travaux Préliminaires de la Monographie sur les Hypocephales”, *Acta Orientalia* 12, 1961, p. 240; L. MIATELLO, “Ptolemaic Mummy Masks with Spells from the Book of the Dead Concerning the Head”, *JSSEA* 39, 2012-13, p. 65-66, 69-70, 85, fig. 7a-b.

of which the present paper proposes an analysis of the texts. In the 19th century it belonged to the Drovetti collection, and no information on its provenance is available.⁶ The object is in good state of preservation. Especially in the middle there are stains of a brown liquid, probably due to exudation of an embalming substance.



Fig. 1. Hypocephalus in stuccoed linen Turin Cat. 2320. © Museo Egizio Torino. Author's license CC BY 2.0 (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>).

In the instructions of spell 162, the vital flame of the sun is generated by the image of the *Ihet*-cow: either by a statuette in fine gold (*rpy.t m nbw nfr*) placed at the throat, or by a

⁶ According to the records of the Egyptian Museum in Turin, the hypocephali Turin Cat. 2320 and 2321 belonged to the Drovetti collection. The catalogue of the collection mentions generically three hypocephali in cloth: [C. VIDUA], "Collezione Drovetti, a. 1822. Catalogue de la collect. d'antiq. de mons. le chev. Drovetti", in: *Documenti inediti per servire alla storia dei musei d'Italia* III, Firenze, Roma, 1880, p. 284 (no. 168).

drawing on a papyrus placed at the head.⁷ It is possible that in the Third Intermediate and Saite periods the ritual, when performed, envisaged the provisional positioning of the magic object near the mummy's head. A Ptolemaic variant of the spell prescribes a figure of the cow on which images were inscribed,⁸ which is suggestive of the iconography of the hypocephali, where several deities surround the cow goddess.

The practice of inscribing a text around the rim of a circular object dates back to the Old Kingdom, when circular offering tables were inscribed with short utterances containing the name of the owner.⁹ An example from the 5th Dynasty is shown in Figure 2.¹⁰ Circular offering tables inscribed around the rim are attested also in the New Kingdom.¹¹ A text written in a loop suggests its eternal recitation, as eternal is the circuit of the sun (*šn*).



Fig. 2. Circular offering table in alabaster, Cairo EM CG 1304, from the 5th Dynasty tomb of Hetepherakhet in Saqqara (offering chapel in Leiden). Facsimile by Murray (1905).

⁷ See: R.O. FAULKNER, *The Egyptian Book of the Dead*, New York, 1972, p. 125; T.G. ALLEN, *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day*, SAOC 37, Chicago, 1974, p. 157-158; A. WÜTHRICH, *Eléments de théologie thébaine*, p. 42-45.

⁸ See T.G. ALLEN, *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day*, p. 158-159. This text with vignette does not appear in P. Leiden T 20, as indicated by the author, but in the part of the papyrus of Djedhor in Paris (P. Louvre N 3128): see Totenbuchprojekt Bonn, TM 56632, <http://totenbuch.awk.nrw.de/objekt/tm56632>.

⁹ L. BORCHARDT, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches (ausser den statuen) I*, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 1295-1808*, Berlin, 1937, pl. 1.

¹⁰ M.A. MURRAY, *Saqqara Mastabas I*, London, 1905, p. 4, pl. III (4); L. BORCHARDT, *Denkmäler des Alten Reiches (ausser den statuen) I*, p. 4-5, pl. 1. The text recites: "An offering the king gives (to) Anubis, the foremost of the divine booth, who gives the invocation-offerings of the year, the New-year's day, the beginnings of the *Wag*-festival and the festival of Thoth, the beginning of the *Abed*-feast, the beginning of the *Semedet*-feast, and all the feasts, to the dignitary and mouth of Nekhen, the prophet Hetepherakhet".

¹¹ E.g.: circular offering table of Amenhotep son of Amenakht, from Deir el-Medina, Turin Cat. 1762: A. FABRETTI, F. ROSSI, R.V. LANZONE, *Catalogo generale dei musei di antichità e degli oggetti d'arte raccolti nelle gallerie e biblioteche del regno, serie prima - Piemonte I*, Torino, 1882, p. 204; Petrie MSS 3.1.10, <http://archive.griffith.ox.ac.uk/index.php/petrie-3-1-10>.

Eight classes of texts can be identified around the rim of hypocephali:¹²

- a. A text with “I am Amun” and/or “I am the *akh*” as incipit. Turin Cat 2320 belongs to this class.
- b. A text with “I am Djebati” as incipit.
- c. A text with the formula of spell 162 to generate the flame (“O you most hidden of the hidden gods in the sky ...”).
- d. A text devoted to Khontamenti and deities of the Osirian cycle, usually in the *hṯp-di-nswt* formula.
- e. A text with the name of the deceased.
- f. A text with the incipit of spell 162 (“Hail to you, O lion, great of strength ...”).
- g. A text mentioning the deceased and Anubis.
- h. Various inscriptions attested only on one example.

There is a second way to classify hypocephali: by iconographic type. Usually, in the “classic” scheme, images and texts are inserted within a series of registers, separated by horizontal lines. More rarely, central vignettes are depicted in compartments,¹³ occasionally surrounded by a series of vignettes near the rim.¹⁴ The complete type in the “classic” iconographic scheme presents five registers, as in Turin Cat. 2320, with the netherworld represented by the three reversed registers, and the akhet and the day sky signified by the two uppermost registers. Figure 3 illustrates such a scheme, with numbers assigned to each register, from the lowermost to the uppermost one.¹⁵

Some examples have three or four registers. The first who assigned numbers to registers and sub-registers in a hypocephalus was Joseph Smith, or Reuben Hedlock, in 1842.¹⁶ Other numerations were proposed in recent times by Louis Speleers,¹⁷ and Edith Varga.¹⁸ Brigitte Vallée proposed recently the same system of numeration proposed earlier by Varga.¹⁹ In my view, the system being used here has the advantage of the simplicity and completeness, as the lowermost register containing only texts is also considered, and the numeration goes from the netherworld to the day sky, not vice versa. Moreover, the examples are not separated in various groups according to the amount of registers, as in other classifications,²⁰ but simply identified with a code. For example, both the codes “12:45” and “23:45”, with the dots indicating the separation from the netherworld, identify two hypocephali with four registers,

¹² Cf. J. GEE, in H. Gyory (ed.), *Aegyptus et Pannonia III*, p. 45-48.

¹³ E.g., Paris Louvre N 3525A: Totenbuchprojekt Bonn, <http://totenbuch.awk.nrw.de/objekt/tm117770>.

¹⁴ E.g.: Paris Louvre N 3182: Totenbuchprojekt Bonn, <http://totenbuch.awk.nrw.de/objekt/tm117768>.

¹⁵ Cf. L. MIATELLO, “The Hypocephalus of Takerheb in Firenze and the Scheme of the Solar Cycle”, *SAK* 37, 2008, p. 280-284.

¹⁶ See J. GEE, “Towards an Interpretation of Hypocephali”, in H. Györy (ed.), *Le lotus qui sort du terre. Mélanges Offerts à Edith Varga*, *BMusHongr*, Supplement 2001, Budapest, 2001, p. 331.

¹⁷ L. SPEELERS, “Le sens de nos deux hypocéphales Égyptiens”, *BMRAH* 15, 1943, p. 36, fig. 22.

¹⁸ E. VARGA, “Le fragment d’un hypocéphale Égyptien”, *BMusHongr* 31, 1968, p. 6; E. VARGA, *Napkorong a fej alatt*, Budapest, 1998, p. 140.

¹⁹ It is careless that the author deems herself the pioneer of the numerations: B. VALLÉE, “Les Hypocéphales et la Déesse Céleste Nût”, in N. Guilhou (ed.), *Liber Amicorum – Speculum Siderum: Nût Astrophoros. Papers Presented to Alicia Maravelia*, *Archaeopress Egyptology* 17, Oxford, 2016, p. 76, n. 7.

²⁰ See, for example, the iconographic classification proposed in: J. GEE, in H. Györy (ed.), *Le lotus qui sort du terre.*, p. 325-330; J. GEE, in H. Gyory (ed.), *Aegyptus et Pannonia III*, p. 41-45.

but their features are different. As indicated also by the analysis of the texts, the five registers represent cosmographic regions and divine forms associated to the solar cycle.²¹

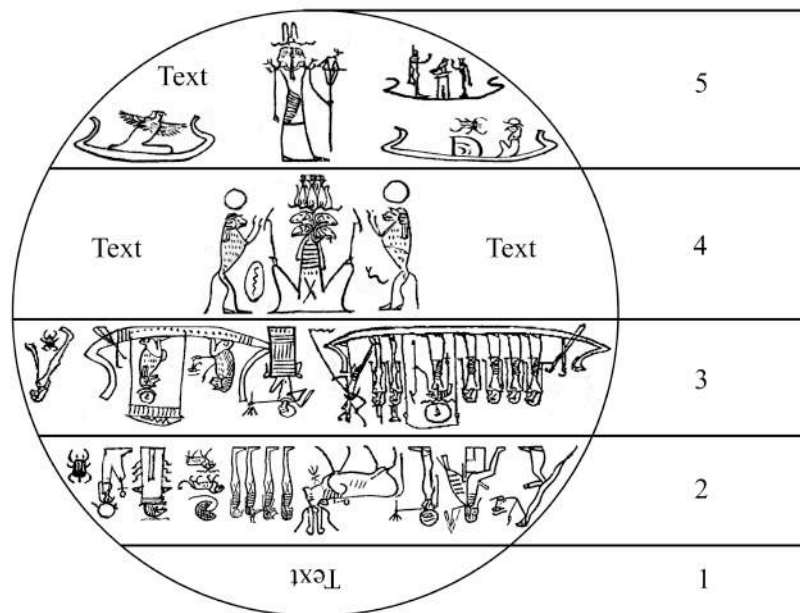


Fig. 3. Iconographic scheme of the “classical” hypocephalus.

- “Register 1” represents the most hidden part of the netherworld, where Osiris and the deceased are buried. It is where Ra regenerates the corpse of Osiris in the *Amduat*, at the sixth hour of the night. The texts make reference to the tomb, the protection of the deceased, and the generation of the vital flame of spell 162 of the Book of the Dead.²²

- In “Register 2” are depicted deities in the netherworld, from Nehebkau in the west to Khepri in the east, with the *Ihet*-cow in the middle. A hypocephalus in a private collection in Buxelles shows the descriptive label: *dwꜣ.t[y] sꜣ* “Inhabitant of the netherworld, protection”.²³

- “Register 3” shows the night barque of the sun god encountering that of the moon (Thoth) at dawn, with the goddess Nut giving birth to Khepri at one end.

- “Register 4” represents the solar rebirth in the *akhet*. It shows the god with four ram heads worshipped by baboons. In Wien ÄOs 253 a/2, one reads: *j bꜣ šps ḥr.(y)-jb ꜣḥ.t*, “O noble *ba* residing in the *akhet*”.²⁴

- “Register 5” represents the day sky. The barque of Khepri and the *ba* of Ra, in the eastern side of the sky, are depicted on one side, and that of a falcon with spread wing on the other. The

²¹ Cf. L. MIATELLO, *SAK* 37, p. 285-287.

²² The generation of the flame is mentioned, for example, in Bologna KS 2025: see M.P. CASARETTI, “Il disco ipocefalo del Museo Civico Archeologico di Bologna”, *Aegyptus* 66, 1986, p. 177, Tav. I.

²³ See A. BURNET, “Cartonnage de momie”, *CdE* 26, 1951, p. 111-112, fig. 14.

²⁴ See E. HASLAUER, “Hypocephali in Wien und im Asasif”, in H. Györy (ed.), *Le lotus qui sort du terre. Mélanges Offerts à Edith Varga*, *BMusHongr*, Supplement 2001, Budapest, 2001, p. 173-175, fig. 1.

label “*ba* of the west” is attributed to the falcon in the hypocephalus Florence 5704.²⁵ In the middle there is usually a bi-faced god, representing Amun-Ra.²⁶

Features of the hypocephali in the Egyptian Museum of Turin are indicated in Table 1.²⁷

Turin, Museo Egizio, Inv. no.	Material	Diameter	Owner	Text around rim	Scheme
Cat. 2319	Bronze	18.5 cm	Padiamun-nebnesettawi	a)	123:45
Cat. 2320	Stuccoed linen	15.5 cm	Petashau	a)	123:45
Cat. 2321	Stuccoed linen	17.5 cm	Paiu(en)hor	b)	123:45
Cat. 2322	Stuccoed linen	17 cm	Hornefer	a)	123:45
Cat. 2323	Stuccoed linen	14 cm	-	b)	23:45
Cat. 2324	Stuccoed linen	14 cm	Nestanetjeretten	c)	12:45
Cat. 2325	Stuccoed linen	14 cm	Pasheri(en)hap (?)	e)	3:4
Cat. 2326	Stuccoed linen	14 cm	-	e)	4
Cat. 1870.5	Linen	19 cm	Psamtek	-	other

Tab. 1. Features of the hypocephali in the Egyptian Museum of Turin.

The example Cat. 2324 is probably dated to the early Ptolemaic Period.²⁸ In the proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Orientalists, held in Leiden in 1883, Conrad Leemans

²⁵ Cf. L. MIATELLO, *SAK* 37, p. 279, fig. 1.

²⁶ See the label “Amun” in the mummy mask Louvre E 26834: L. MIATELLO, *JSSEA* 39, p. 82 fig. 1.

²⁷ On Turin Cat. 2319–2326: A. FABRETTI, F. ROSSI, R.V. LANZONE, *Catalogo generale dei musei di antichità e degli oggetti d'arte raccolti nelle gallerie e biblioteche del regno I*, p. 327-329. Turin Cat. 2319: E. LEOSPO, *Io vivrò per sempre. Storia di un sacerdote nell'antico Egitto*, Genova, 1999, p. 23. Turin Cat. 2321: M.C. GUIDOTTI, “Il corredo funerario”, in Fr. Tiradritti (ed.), *Il cammino di Harwa. L'uomo di fronte al mistero: l'Egitto*, Milano, 1999, p. 107. Turin Cat. 2324: T. MEKIS, “L'équipement funéraire de la prêtresse thébaine Nestaneteretten”, *CdE* 86, 2011, p. 60-66, p. 81, fig. 5.

²⁸ On the probable dating of the funerary equipment of Nestanetjeretten to the beginning of the Ptolemaic period: T. MEKIS, *CdE* 86, p. 72.

considered the hypocephali Turin Cat. 2319-2326,²⁹ on the basis of the brief descriptions in the Catalogue by Fabretti, Rossi, and Lanzone.³⁰ Leemans indicated the existence of another example in Turin, which he labelled with the letter “A”, but his iconographic descriptions show that this latter was in fact the hypocephalus Turin Cat. 2320, which, accidentally, he took into consideration twice.

A hypocephalus belonging to a separate group is the mummy bandage Turin Cat. 1870.5, from Saqqara, dated to the Ptolemaic Period.³¹ Occasionally the disk of the hypocephalus appears on a rectangular cloth, which enveloped the mummy’s head.

The analysis will focus now on the text on the rim and on the iconography and texts in the five registers of the example Turin Cat. 2320.

Text around the rim



jnk 3h m h(3){t}y.w rnnzj snd mk.(t)w jnk jmn n.ty m št3.(yt)zk m <‘t>zk jnk dm nzk m dr.tzk jy.w hr rmy.t n n.ty m j3wšzj nds.w jj(ej) ršf ‘q(ej) m wd3.(t) š<m>iszj d3izj n h3s h3zj ntrzj p.t- š3.w mj.

I am the *akh* in the one who descends, my youngster (= my rejuvenated corpse) who fears protections. I am ‘The hidden one’, who is in your tomb and in your <chamber>.³² I am nonexistent for you with your hand, the comer from the tears³³ for what is in my mound of commoners.³⁴ (I) agree indeed, (I) enter into the udjat eye. I go forth and I ferry across around it. Around me, my god is like Petashau.³⁵

The reading of this text, which is found often around the rim of hypocephali, is problematic. At the beginning of the last century, when few examples of this type of hypocephalus were known, Petrie could not offer even a conditional translation.³⁶ There have been recent

²⁹ C. LEEMANS, “Hypocéphale égyptien (O. 70) du Musée Royal Néerlandais d'antiquités à Leide”, in *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes, tenu en 1883 à Leide, quatrième partie*, Leiden, 1885, p. 93-120.

³⁰ No name is indicated as owner of the (unpublished) hypocephalus Turin Cat. 2325 in A. FABRETTI, F. ROSSI, R.V. LANZONE, *Catalogo generale dei musei di antichità e degli oggetti d'arte raccolti nelle gallerie e biblioteche del regno I*, 1882, p. 329; only the filiation. However, the name of the owner is not completely lost: the reading of the name Pasheri(en)hap seems plausible, as the following facsimile with transcription of the damaged signs indicates:



On this name: H. RANKE, *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen I*, Glückstadt, 1935, p. 119 (no. 2).

³¹ See Totenbuchprojekt Bonn, <http://totenbuch.awk.nrw.de/objekt/tm58342>.

³² For an example of the inversion *t*’ after the preposition *m*, without determinative: *DZA* 21.553.460.

³³ A reference to the tears of the udjat eye, as symbol of the pains of Horus.

³⁴ The spelling *j3wš*, instead of *j3t*, may derive from the cryptographic equivalence between *t* and *š*.

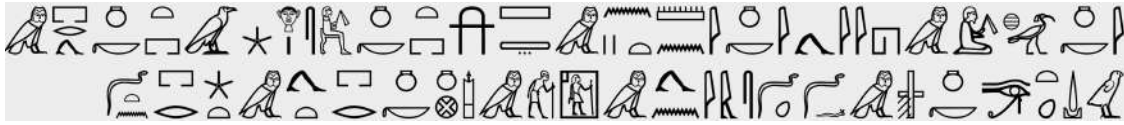
³⁵ Cf. the name *p3- š3* in the Demotic Ostrakon from el-Bahariya, Pisa University O. dem. 482 (second century B.C.): E. BRESCIANI, M. MUSZYNSKI, and S. PERNIGOTTI, *Ostraka demotici da Ossirinco, SCO 27*, Pisa, 1977, p. 29, no. 18. See also the name *p3- š3-jmn*: H. RANKE, *Die Ägyptischen Personennamen I*, p. 103 (no. 14).

³⁶ W.M.F. PETRIE, *Abydos I*, p. 50.

attempts of translation of this text,³⁷ and the present paper aims to give a contribution to its study, by highlighting the difficulties of reading.

Other texts with *jnk 3h* as incipit, as those in the two following examples, are more straightforward.

London, British Museum EA 8445.³⁸



jnk 3h m h(3)y jnk jmn n.ty m št3.(y)t (j)nk šps hr dw3.t (j)nk pri m wd3.t (j)nk jmy dfd=š jy.n(=j) m hw.t-sr-wr m jwnw (j)nk pri.t m dw3.t r d.t.

I am the *akh* descending. I am Amun who is in the tomb. I am the noble in the netherworld. I come forth from the *udjat* eye. I am the one in its iris. (I) have come from the temple of the great noble in Heliopolis. I am the one who emerges from the netherworld for the eternity.

Bruxelles E 6319.³⁹



jnk 3h m h(3)y m dw3.t rdi (j)h.t d.t.f di=š p.t n b3 št3(.yt) n s'h (j)nk pri m wd3.t (j)nk jmn m št3.(y)t j(j)nk 3h.w jqr m js.t r' (j)nk 'q pri m-m jqr.w (j)nk b3 '3 thn.t sšm.w=f (j)nk pri m dw3.t r mr=f jy.n=š prij m wd3.t (j)nk pri m dw3.t hn' r' m hw.t-sr-wr m jwnw.

I am the *akh* descending in the netherworld, giving things to his body. May you grant the sky to the *ba* and the tomb to the mummy. I come forth from the *udjat* eye. I am Amun who is in the tomb. I am the excellent sunshine from the crew of Ra. I enter and come forth among the excellent ones. I am the great *ba* whose form is glass. I come forth from the netherworld according as he desires. I have come and I come forth from the *udjat* eye. I am the one coming forth from the netherworld together with Ra, in the temple of the great noble at Heliopolis.

The first uncertainty of the text in Turin Cat. 2320 concerns the sentence *jnk 3h m h(3){t}y.w rnn=š snđ mk(t.)w (/m=š /m kw)*. At a first analysis, several readings of the second part are possible, as *rnn* is written without determinatives: “I praise the fear in you/others”; “I rejoice, the fear is in you/others”; “my name (*rn n=š*) is fear in you/others”; etc.⁴⁰ Immaterial

³⁷ T. MEKIS, “Two Hypocephali and Some Other Ptolemaic Finds from Theban Tomb (Kampp) -43-”, *JSSEA* 37, 2010, p. 14-15; L. MIATELLO, *JSSEA* 39, p. 54-58, 76-79; B. VALLÉE, “Reconstitution d’un hypocéphale”, *ENiM* 11, 2018, p. 188-189.

³⁸ London, British Museum EA 8445: S. BIRCH, (no title), *PSBA* 7, 1884-5, facsimile before p. 1; photo at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx.

³⁹ Bruxelles E 6319: J. CAPART, “Deux hypocéphales Égyptiens”, *BMRAH* 14, 1942, p. 130, fig. 5; E. VARGA, *Acta Orientalia* 12, p. 238, fig. 1.

⁴⁰ B. VALLÉE, *ENiM* 11, p. 188, proposes “J’entretiens (ou cultive ou renouvelle ?) la crainte parmi les opposants”. However, the reading *kyw*, in a fragmentary example from a private collection, is unsupported, as

components of the deceased were frequently considered as powerful spirits frightening the enemies, but the meaning here is more subtle. Only the examination of the variants, which are shown in Plate 1, can solve the uncertainty. The translation proposed here is “my youngster who fears protections”,⁴¹ with the term *rnn* referred to the rejuvenated corpse of the deceased. The human feeling of fear and respect for the divinity would accompany the deceased at its arrival in the netherworld. Before *rnn* there is *m h(3)y.w*, which can be translated “in the one who descends”, with reference to the corpse of the deceased. In the texts with incipit *jnk 3h* in which *rnn* is missing, as in Bruxelles E 6319, there is simply *m h(3)y*, never *m h(3)y.w*, and the variant of *h(3)y.w* in Paris Louvre N 3524 has the vertical stroke.⁴² The reading “in the descents” is implausible, as the variant *m šmy.w*, in Paris Louvre E 26834 and Bonn L 879, can only be translated “in the one who departs”.⁴³

Noticeably, the hypocephalus British Museum EA 37330, from Abydos, shows the sentence *rnn m snđ nb*, “the youngster through fear of the lord”:⁴⁴



jn k hk3 pwy w b ht.wy psdt hr.ty n r3j jw.tw rnn m snđ nb wsjr hm-ntr d(d)-hr m3 -hrw.

I am this pure Heka of the two bodies of the ennead, which are the uppermost because of my spell, the one who comes, the youngster through fear of the lord,⁴⁵ the Osiris prophet Djedhor justified.

It is therefore plausible to deduce that *rnn* is a noun also in the variant of Turin Cat. 2320. The magical powers of Heka, identified with the *akh* in some variants, were involved in the process of rebirth of the deceased like the young sun god.⁴⁶

Noteworthy is also the variant in Paris Louvre N 3182, in which *rnn* is written with the vertical stroke:⁴⁷



jn {t}k 3h.w sp-snw šps. {t}y h3y k(3).tw rnn3j snđ rn3j snđ rnn3j snđ n nr3k.

I am the very glorious and noble who descends, the thoughts of my youngster who fears my name. My youngster fears, having respect for Your protector.⁴⁸

the double strokes do not appear. The term *k(y)w* “others” is usually written with the quail chick sign (G43): see *DZA* 30.562.490–30.562.550.

⁴¹ Cf. L. MIATELLO, *JSSEA* 39, p. 54-58.

⁴² Paris Louvre N 3524: photo at

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=19626&langue=fr.

⁴³ Paris Louvre E 26834: L. MIATELLO, *JSSEA* 39, p. 82, fig. 1. Bonn L 879: L. GESTERMANN, in H. Györy (ed.), *Le lotus qui sort du terre*, p. 104, fig. 1.

⁴⁴ British Museum EA 37330: W.M.F. PETRIE, *Abydos I*, pl. LXXVII (bottom), LXXIX; photo at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx.

⁴⁵ In Boston MFA 02.766: *jw.tw snđ nb n-gs* “the one who comes fearing the lord beside”.

Boston MFA 02.766: W.M.F. PETRIE, *Abydos I*, pl. LXXVII (top), LXXIX; photo at <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/hypocephalus-131539>.

In Cairo GE 3590: *jw.tw m-m snđ nb rh* “the one who comes thereunder fearing the lord of knowledge”. Cairo GE 3590 (JE 38355): W.M.F. PETRIE, *Abydos I*, pl. LXXVI, LXXIX.

⁴⁶ Cf. G. PINCH, *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, London, 1994, p. 10.

⁴⁷ Paris Louvre N 3182: J.-L. DE CENIVAL, *Le livre pour sortir le jour. Le Livre des Morts des anciens Égyptiens*, Le Bouscat, 1992, fig. on p. 109.

⁴⁸ On *snđ n*, “to have respect for”: *Wb* IV, 182, 10, 14.

Assuming that *rnnzj* means “I praise”, the translation would be:

I am the very glorious and noble who descends ...?... I praise the fear, my name is fear. I praise the fear for Your protector.

The grammatical structure of the incipit is similar to that in the other variants, but with the second hypothesis the presence of *k.tw* is apparently inexplicable. This supports further the reading of *rnn* as a noun, as indicated also by the vertical stroke.

A further interesting variant appears in Bruxelles E 6320:⁴⁹



jnk t(3) 3h.t šps(.t) m-gs.w h(3)y.w rnnzj mwtzk jr-s3 wsjr rš-gm m3' - hrw (n).t.

I am the noble *akh* beside the one who descends, my youngster and your dead person, the one who prepares the protection⁵⁰ of the Osiris Reshgem, justified of Thebes.





As known, the use of the term *mwt* was ordinarily avoided in funerary texts with reference to the deceased, as it was associated to the “second death”, that is, to the damnation.⁵¹ Here the term is used to highlight the initial difference between the corpse of the deceased and the *akh*, whose luminous substance identifies with the sun disk. The reference to the protection of the deceased in this variant supports further the reading *mk.(t)w* “protections”, in the variant of Turin Cat. 2320.

In the hypocephalus on top of the mummy mask of Imhotep, Bonn L 879:⁵²



jnk b3 šps m šmy.w rnnzj h3.t mk.nzn.

I am the noble *ba* in the one who departs, my youngster, the corpse that we have protected.

Further difficulty of reading concerns the sentence: *jnk dm (/dm n) nzk m dr.tzk (...)*. Variants are shown in Plate 2. The reading *jnk dmd* is unfeasible,⁵³ as the hieroglyph after *dm*, or *tm*, is , not , and in several cases there is , or . None of these signs have cryptographic value *d*.

A translation that I have proposed is: “I am sharp (of claws), not because of you with your hand”, in compliance with the powerful features of the lion.⁵⁴ It would account for the variants *jnk dn* “I am one who cuts”, in Paris Louvre E 6195, and *jnk dm nzk*, “I am sharp, you are kind”, in Turin Cat. 2319. A condition of alterity of the divine *akh*, in comparison with the corpse of the deceased (“the son of commoners” in Paris Louvre E 26834 and Bonn L 879), would be expressed here.

⁴⁹ Bruxelles E 6320: J. CAPART, *BMRAH* 14, p. 131, fig. 6.

⁵⁰ On *jr-s3*: *LGG* I, p. 487.

⁵¹ See E. Hornung, *Ältägyptische Höllenvorstellungen*, *ASAW* 59.3, Berlin, 1968, p. 34-36.

⁵² Bonn L 879: L. GESTERMANN, in H. Györy (ed.), *Le lotus qui sort du terre*, p. 104, fig. 1.

⁵³ Reading proposed in: T. MEKIS, *JSSEA* 37, p. 20; B. VALLÉE, *ENiM* 11, p. 188.

⁵⁴ Cf. L. MIATELLO, *JSSEA* 39, p. 54-58. On the epithet *spd nwy* “sharp of claws”, referred to the *ba*: Ph. DERCHAIN, “La Couronne de justification”, *CdE* 30, 1995, p. 232-233.

The alternative hypothesis proposed in this paper, however, is based on the reading *dm/tm/dm-n (wn)* “nonexistent”: “I am nonexistent for you with your hand”.⁵⁵ This phrase would highlight the immateriality of the *akh* of Amun, opposed to the corpse. Such a reading of the negative verb *tm/dm* implies that the two variants indicated above are erroneous.

The hypocephali from Abydos, Boston MFA 02.766, and Cairo GE 3590, show the variant:⁵⁶



jnk dm n nꜥj hr rmy.tw n n.ty m jꜣt,

which can be translated:

I am sharp (of claws), not because of me (as man), in tears for what is in the mound.

With the second hypothesis of reading:

I am nonexistent for me (as man), in tears for what is in the mound.

In both hypotheses, the powerful divine features of the *akh* would clash against the human features of the deceased. The continuation of the formula in these two hypocephali supports further this reading:

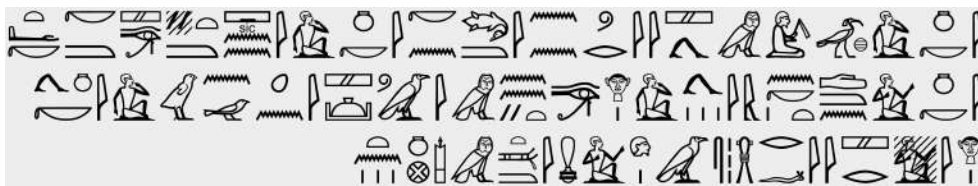


jnd.kw hrꜥj phr.ytꜥf sꜣ.nꜥj m w<d>ꜣ.t sꜣ.nꜥj m wdꜣ.t. (...).

I was sad about me and his course (= situation): I have crept into the *udjat* eye; I have passed into the *udjat* eye. (...).⁵⁷

Clearly, the central theme of this spell around the rim is the powerful nature of the *akh*, which, as luminous transcendent spirit, barely identifies with the corpse of the deceased.

Considering the whole variant text around the rim of Paris Louvre E 26834:⁵⁸



jnk ꜣh m šmy.w rnnꜥj snd mk.(t)ꜣn jnk jmn n.ty m š wdꜣ.tꜣk m <t>ꜣk jnk dm-n n k.t.jy.w hr wdꜣ.t n n.ty m jꜣwšꜥj sꜣ n nds.w jnk hrꜥj šꜣj jrꜥf sꜣ.wꜣs <h>ꜣj mj jtm(.w) m jwnwꜣtn.

⁵⁵ On the nominal construction *tm wn.t*, “nonexistent”: L.H. LESKO, B. SWITALSKI LESKO (eds.), *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian II*, Providence RI, 2002, p. 210.

⁵⁶ Cairo GE 3590 (JE 38355): W.M.F. PETRIE, *Abydos I*, pl. LXXVI, LXXIX. Boston MFA 02.766: W.M.F. PETRIE, *Abydos I*, pl. LXXVII (top), LXXIX; photo at <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/hypocephalus-131539>.

⁵⁷ Boston MFA 02.766: photo at <https://www.mfa.org/collections/object/hypocephalus-131539>. The same sentence appears also in British Museum EA 37330: photo at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx.

⁵⁸ Paris Louvre E 26834: L. MIATELLO, *JSSEA* 39, p. 54-55, p. 82, fig. 1.

I am the *akh* in the one who departs, my youngster who fears our protection. I am “The hidden one”, who is in the lake of your *udjat* eye and in your <chamber>. I am nonexistent for the other (hand), the comer from the *udjat* eye for what is in my mound, the son of commoners. I am my face of child indeed. Its protections (are) around me, like Atum in your (pl.) Heliopolis.

The “other” (*k.t*) is presumably the hand of the deceased. In the variant of British Museum EA 37330, there is *k.ty=k* “your other”. That the hand is taken as symbol of corporality, in opposition to the immaterial hand of the *akh*, is indicated also by a text of two horizontal lines, written in a register usually devoted to the deceased (“register 1”), in the hypocephalus British Museum EA 37907:⁵⁹



dr.t k[.t] jy.w hr rmy.t n n.ty m j3wšzj.

The other hand,⁶⁰ the comer from the tears for what is in my mound.

In the text all around the rim of Paris Louvre N 3526, there is a clear reference to the rejuvenation of the deceased.⁶¹



jnk 3h m h(3)y.w rnnzj snd mk.(t)w jnk jmn n.ty m št3.(y)t=k m 't=k (j)nk tm n=k m dr.t=k jy.wztn jni nhn n=š 'n pri=zj (j)mztn pri 'q m wd3(.t) šmi=zj d3=<j> h3=s h3 wsjr hm-ntr jr.t-hr-rw m3 '-hrw m hw.t-sr-wr m jwnw.

I am the *akh* in the one who descends, my youngster who fears protections. I am “The hidden one”, who is in your tomb and in your chamber. I am nonexistent for you with your hand. You (gods) who come, who bring the youth to him again: I come forth from you (pl.). (I) come forth and enter into the *udjat* eye. I go forth and I ferry across around it, around the Osiris prophet Irethorru justified, in the temple of the great noble at Heliopolis.

Spell 162 of the Book of the Dead identifies the powerful spirit of Amun with the lion. In the hypocephalus Bruxelles 6319,⁶² in the texts at the sides of the image of the god with four ram heads, the *ba* of Amun is called *b3 '3 šf.(y)t rw snty (= snd) '3 nr.t* “Great *ba* of majesty, frightful lion, great of terror”. On the other side of the register: *j b3 wtt hpr.w h3p d.t=š r ms.w=š* “O the *ba* begetting the form, whose body is concealed to its children!”. The

⁵⁹ British Museum EA 37907 (previously 8445a): S. BIRCH, (no title), *PSBA* 6, 1884, facsimile after p. 120; photo at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx.

⁶⁰ On *ky* as post-nominal adjective: *Wb* V, p. 114 (5-7).

⁶¹ Paris Louvre N 3526: http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=19620&langue=fr.

⁶² Bruxelles E 6319: E.A.W. Budge, *Some Account of the Collection of Egyptian Antiquities in the Possession of Lady Meaux*, London, 1896, p. 89-94; J. CAPART, *BMRAH* 14, p. 130, fig. 5.

rejuvenation of the corpse of Osiris is a central theme in a Ptolemaic variant of spell 162 of the Book of the Dead.⁶³ Other Ptolemaic variants of this spell show the epithet of Amun, *h3p sw m wd3.t r ms.wsf*, “He who hides himself from his children in the *udjat* eye”.⁶⁴ The children are presumably the dead persons. In fact, the rejuvenation of the deceased like the sun god involved both its immaterial components and its corpse. As known, the corpse was regenerated by the process of mummification, and its parts deified (Book of the Dead, spell 151a). The deceased was commonly depicted in coffins with the gilded face of a youngster.

In these texts around the rim, the *akh* comes forth from, and enters into, the *udjat* eye. The powerful substance of Amun, as transcendent spirit, is opposed to the corpse, hence its union with the deceased needs the medium of the sun disk (the *udjat* eye), or the mummy mask (the face of child). After the union of the *akh* with the sun, the deceased is paralleled to the god, in Turin Cat. 2320.

These concepts are identifiable also in Paris Louvre N 3524.⁶⁵



jnk hk3 pwy w 'b n h.t n psd.t hr.t n3j jnk 3h m h(3)y.w rnn3j snd mk(t.)w jnk jmn n.ty m (j)3š3j s3 n nds.w hr3j šrj jr3f 'q3j m wd3(.t) šm3j d33j s33s h33j 3s.t-(m-)3h-bjt mj jtm m jwnw.

I am this pure Heka of the body of the ennead, which is the uppermost because of me. I am the *akh* in the one who descends, my youngster who fears protections. I am Amun who is in my mound, the son of commoners, my face of child indeed. I enter into the *udjat* eye. I go forth and I ferry across. Its protection (is) around me, Aset(em)akhbit, like Atum in Heliopolis.

“Register 1”



[1] *h3m.t3k h h3 jp.t dd(.t) ntk p3.*

[2] *j pr '(t)3sn n gr k3 k3.wy t p3 n.ty h33k p3y.t.*

[1] Your path is the room around, the secret chamber,⁶⁶ the stability belonging to you, flying.

[2] O the temple of their house of silence, the *ka*, the two *ka*, and the bread! The one who exists is behind you, the flying one.⁶⁷

⁶³ See T.G. ALLEN, *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day*, p. 158-159.

⁶⁴ Cf. A. WÜTHRICH, *Éléments de théologie thébaine*, p. 71, n. 123; *LGG* V, p. 23.

⁶⁵ Paris Louvre N 3524: Photo at

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=19626&langue=fr.

⁶⁶ On *h3m.t* “path”: *Wb* III, p. 32 (9). In P. Westcar, *jpt.w* are the secret chambers in the sanctuary of Thoth.

⁶⁷ In TT 33 Thoth is the “flying one” (*p3y.w*), “what exists and what does not exist”: *LGG* III, p. 18.

These two sentences are canonical in “register 1” of the “*akh*/Amun type” of hypocephalus.⁶⁸ They are probably abridged versions of a text that has not survived. Variants are shown in Plates 3 and 4. Reference is presumably made to the offering chapel and the burial chamber as paths and elements of stability for the passages of the *ka* of the deceased (first sentence), protected by the ibis god Thoth, “the flying one” (second sentence).

Considering the variants of the first sentence [Plate 3], in British Museum EA 37907 there is simply:⁶⁹



h3m.t=k h dd ntk m-´.

Your path is the room, the *djed*-pillar belonging to you in the hand (?).

In Paris Louvre N 3524:⁷⁰



h3m.t=k hw.t h3 jp.t dd(.t) ntk p3 m-´ pr-hn.w.

Your path is the house around, the secret chamber, the stability belonging to you, flying from the resting house.

A more unclear variant appears in the hypocephalus depicted on the calotte of the mummy mask of Shakheper, Paris Louvre E 26834:⁷¹



š3(.w) mr=k h h3 jp.t dd(.t) nst.

Your pyramid (?) is proper (?). The room around, the secret chamber, is the stability for you.

In the hypocephalus TT Kampp-43, reg. no. 2009.949:⁷²



h3m.t=k h h3 jnk dd(.t) ntk p3 [m-´] pr-th.t.

Your path is the room around. I am the stability belonging to you, flying from the house of the injured one.

⁶⁸ The reconstruction of the text in this part, proposed in B. VALLÉE, *ENiM* 11, p. 187 fig. 2, in a fragmentary example, does not consider the canonical presence of these sentences in similar examples. Certainly the most similar example is not Bruxelles 6319, but Turin Cat. 2320 and other hypocephali with similar text around the rim.

⁶⁹ British Museum EA 37907: photo at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx.

⁷⁰ Paris Louvre N 3524: Photo at

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=19626&langue=fr.

⁷¹ Paris Louvre E 26834: L. MIATELLO, *JSSEA* 39, p. 82, fig. 1.

⁷² TT Kampp-43 2009.949-950: T. MEKIS, *JSSEA* 37, p. 10-11, fig. 1, p. 18-19, fig. 3.

The “house of the injured one” is the temple of Horus.⁷³ In Cairo CG 9448, which belongs to another type of text around the rim (Djebati type):⁷⁴



h3.t-th.t n.t ntr.w nb pw n wsjr ns-mnw (...).

Tomb of the injured one of the gods, this lord of the Osiris Nesmenu (...).

In Boston MFA 02.766, Cario GE 3590, and British Museum EA 37330:⁷⁵



dd(.t) n kw m- 'š(ty).t-th(.t).

You have the stability from the tomb of the injured one.

In Bruxelles E 6320:⁷⁶



hw.t h3 jp.t dd(.t) n=k p3 m nhh s(w)d3 m- ' n.t.

The house around, the secret chamber, is the stability for you, flying forever, prospering with the Town (Thebes).

Considering the variants of the second formula (Plate 4), British Museum EA 37907 shows:⁷⁷



j pr '(.t)=sn n gr k3 k3.wy t t3.

O the temple of their house of silence, the *ka*, the two *ka*, the bread, and the fledgling!

In Bruxelles E 6320:



j pr '(.t)=sn gr n q3.t dw.w t p3 n.ty h3=k{.t} p3 h3{y}m.t=k th.

O the temple of their house of silence, for the height of the mountains and the bread! The one who exists is behind you, flying (along) your path: Tekh (= Thoth).

⁷³ Cf. *hw.t th.t* in the temple of Kom Ombo: D. KURTH, “Die Ritualszene mit den medizinischen Instrumenten im Tempel von Kom Ombo (Nr. 950)”, in M. Schade-Busch (ed.), *Wege öffnen: Festschrift für Rolf Gundlach zum 65. Geburtstag*, ÄAT 35, Wiesbaden, 1996, p. 152, n. 25.

⁷⁴ Hieroglyphic transcription and photo of the example: G. DARESSY, *Catalogue Général des Antiquités Égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Nos. 9401-94049, Textes et dessins magiques*, Cairo, 1903, p. 54-55, pl XIII.

⁷⁵ British Museum EA 37907: photo at

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx.

⁷⁶ Bruxelles E 6320: J. CAPART, *BMRAH* 14, p. 131, fig. 6.

⁷⁷ British Museum EA 37907: photo at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx.

In several variants, the determinative of *p3 n.ty*, “The one who exists”,⁷⁸ is the baboon of Thoth. Paris Louvre E 26834 presents the pun *p3 n t* “the one of Ti(-Thoth)”.⁷⁹

“Register 2”

“Register 2” shows the canonical series of deities: the serpent of Nehebkau, with human legs and arms, offering the *udjat* eye to Min; a goddess with the sun disk in place of her head holds out the lotus flower behind the cow; the four sons of Horus; the trigram “lotus blossom-lion-ram”,⁸⁰ a pylon crowned with ram head; an incense vase; Ra; Khepri.

“Register 3”

The iconography of “register 3” is also canonical. There are two barques depicted prow to prow. One is the night barque of Ra and his crew, with Horus harpooning Apophis at the prow. Nearby is the barque of Thoth as baboon, with another baboon offering the *udjat* eye to him, and, at the prow, a child with the lotus flower in his hand, seating on top of a mat/pillar. At one edge, Nut gives birth to Khepri.

“Register 4”

At the sides of the god with four ram heads worshipped by two baboons, representing the *ba* of the sun god coming into being at dawn, there are two blocks of text of 5 lines each.

Right side:



[1] *jnk b3 mt wt p3 hpr.w nfr-hr h{w}kn m- ' b3*

[2] *n3j m dr.t kn.w jw nb pr.wj n dd3f*

[3] *nfr rr.t šps.t tw(t) pw jw3f m h3i k.ty*

[4] *jw.ty jy r.w3s.t nh3t '3*

[5] *p3 m pr-ms h3p3k p.t('š3.w?).*

[1] I am the *ba*, the muscle begetting the form, the beautiful of face. Rejoice with the *ba*

[2] for me, through the creators! The lord of the two houses belongs to himself,

[3] the beautiful of the noble nurse. This is the image. He is searching for the two other

[4] women who have not come and their spells, the strong one, the great one,

⁷⁸ Cf. *pnty* (LGG III, p. 37) and *n.ty* “The one who exists” (LGG IV, p. 367).

⁷⁹ Paris Louvre E 26834: L. MIATELLO, *JSSEA* 39, p. 82, fig. 1.

⁸⁰ See LGG VI, p. 430 (*srp.t-m3j-srjw*).

[5] the one in the Birth-house.⁸¹ You hide, Pet(ashau?).

The *ba* is the creational force (“the muscle begetting the form”) of the sun god (“the beautiful of face”).⁸² While the *ba* comes into being in the akhet, the corpse of the deceased is hidden in the tomb, like the corpse of Amun. This is indicated also by the variant of Paris Louvre N 3526: *jwz̄f m h̄hi h̄z̄p̄k wsjr jr.t-hr-rw*, “He is searching and you hide, Osiris Ierethorru”.⁸³

Left side:



[1] *j r mn.t šps.w h̄tt b̄z̄(.t) nn jt h̄z̄*

[2] *mw.t m rh̄z̄f h̄pr wd̄z̄.ty h̄pr*

[3] *s(w)d̄z̄.w jn̄z̄f n.ty n̄z̄f pr̄h̄.t jn̄z̄w b̄z̄.ty*

[4] *jw.ty m h̄z̄(.t) r̄šwy.z̄j dg.t hr.t p̄z̄*

[5] *p̄z̄ b̄z̄ pr.t̄z̄w p̄z̄ š n̄z̄j.*

[1] O what carries the glory, the baboon of the bush without father!⁸⁴ Behind (is?)

[2] the mother of his knowledge. The two *udjat* eyes come into being; (they) come into being

[3] made whole. He obtains what is for him, what unfolds by them and the two rams,

[4] which are not in the marshes. My joy (is) what sees the sky, flying,

[5] the ram of their procession, the lake for me.

Only few parallels of the first sentence can be found in known examples.

Louvre N 3104.⁸⁵



j mn r r' šps b̄z̄.t nn nb.

O the one who remains at the Sun, the noble of the bush without lord!

⁸¹ Cf. *nb-pr-ms*: LGG III, p. 631.

⁸² On the epithet “Beautiful of face”: LGG IV, p. 214-217. This epithet of the sun god is found also in spell 151a of the Book of the Dead, occasionally inscribed on the calotte of Ptolemaic mummy masks with the hypocephalus: see L. MIATELLO, *JSSEA* 39, p. 52.

⁸³ Paris Louvre N 3526: http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=19620&langue=fr.

⁸⁴ Probably a reference to the baboons as representation of the Ogdoad. On the baboons worshipping the god with four ram heads as representation of the primeval gods: W.M.F. PETRIE, *Abydos* I, p. 50.

⁸⁵ Unpublished.

Fragment in a private collection, published by Vallée.⁸⁶



j rmn.t šps.w htt hn n(n) nb.

O what carries the glory, the baboon of the plant without lord!

The texts at the sides of “register 4” in the “*akh*/Amun type” of hypocephalus are heterogeneous and written frequently in an unclear style. For example, the hypocephalus on top of the mummy mask of Imhotep, Bonn L 879, presents the following texts.⁸⁷

Right side:



|1| *jnk b3 nw h(y)wz w p3* |2| *hpr b3 hkn n p3 n3j* |3| *n b3zj jw nb.w n dd3f* |4| *htt m r.w n.ty m3 hr hr rnn ms.*

|1| I am the *ba* of their Jubilations, the |2| scarab and the *ba*. Rejoice for this for me, |3| for my *ba*! The lords are for himself. |4| The screaming baboon, with words which are new, is under the face of the youngster, the child.

Left side:



|1| *mhn šps hni h.t3f n nb hn-* |2| *mnm nn <nk>n t3 dr.t3f hpr* |3| *w3.ty jmn.tjt nn nb j w3.t swd3-* |4| *.w jn3f t(w)t n-gs<3j> b3 šps p3.*

|1| (O) the noble Coiled one,⁸⁸ conveying his fire to the lord, |2| creeping in, without injuring the hand of him. |3| The two *udjat* eyes come into being: the west (is) without the lord. O the *udjat* eye made whole! |4| He brings the image beside me, the noble *ba* flying.

In general, the texts in this register contain references to the *ba* of the sun god and images of solar rebirth, represented in the iconography of the god with four ram heads worshipped by the screaming baboons at dawn. This iconography is associated to the young sun god, as indicated also by the term *rnn*, in the mummy mask of Imhotep. In the hypocephalus Mainz

⁸⁶ See B. VALLÉE, *ENiM* 11, p. 186, fig 1 (a).

⁸⁷ Bonn L 879: L. GESTERMANN, in H. Györy (ed.), *Le lotus qui sort du terre*, p. 104, fig. 1.

⁸⁸ *LGG* III, p. 383-384.

Landesmuseum PJG 844, the god with four ram heads has the naked body of a child,⁸⁹ as in the Metternich stela.

“Register 5”

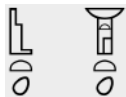
In the uppermost register, forms of the ba of the sun are represented in the barques of the east and west. Near the sun god in the morning barque, with a scarab in the middle worshipped by a baboon, is the label:



j ḥpr

O Khepri!

Near the goddesses worshipping a falcon or ba on a pylon, in a second morning barque:



nb.t-ḥw.t; ʒs.t.

Nephthys; Isis.

On top of the lunette of the register, near the bi-faced god in the middle:



jj.

The utterance (?).⁹⁰

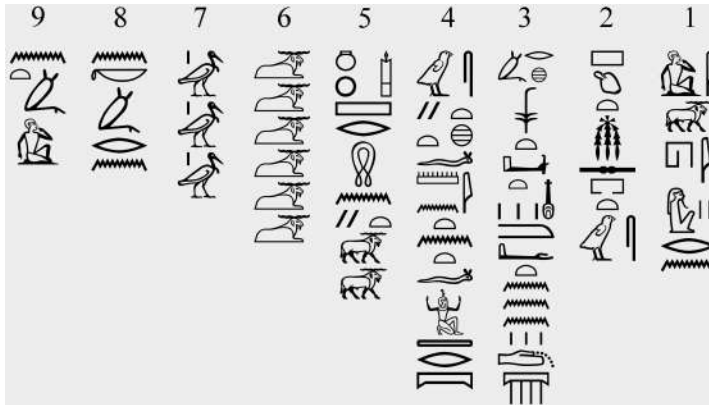
This god, labelled as Amun in Paris Louvre 26834a, is frequently associated with knowledge. In Paris Louvre N 3526: *rḥ.y* “The one who knows”.⁹¹ Paris Louvre N 3104: *jw-rḥ* “Wise”. Turin Cat. 2319: *srḥ.y* “He who makes known”.

A text of nine columns begins on the right side, with the last three columns written on top of the barque of the falcon with spread wings, on the left side:

⁸⁹ See Totenbuchprojekt Bonn, <http://totenbuch.awk.nrw.de/objekt/tm135429>.

⁹⁰ The term *jj* “utterance” appears in PT §667: Cf. J.P. ALLEN, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, Atlanta, 2005, p. 88: “Behold, (the protection of) the utterance is around me!”.

⁹¹ Paris Louvre N 3526: http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=19620&langue=fr.



|1| *j b3 jhy rn*

|2| *jnr hnt mspr.t s(j)w*

|3| *rh m (n)swt nh.t nfr.tw m .t mw jd(.t)*

|4| *swty h.tɛf jmn.(y)t ntf hh t3 r-hr*

|5| *jwnw šr sn̄t n.ty*

|6| *b3.w 8*

|7| *b3.w*

|8| *n=k m rn*

|9| *n mwt.*

|1| O the *ba* of Joy, the name

|2| of stone in front of the Mesperet-sanctuary,⁹² announcing

|3| the knowledge as mighty king, the beautiful things in the chamber of water and scent!

|4| His things and what endures make great. He is the great quantity (= the million), the land before

|5| Heliopolis. Little is the plan, which is

|6| 8 rams

|7| of *bas*

|8| for you, in the name

|9| of the dead person.

Variants of this text are found in other hypocephali, in particular in Turin Cat. 2319.⁹³

The joy of the solar rebirth is frequently mentioned in religious texts, for example in the Book of Day, and the “*ba* of joy” of the sun god is clearly glorified in these formulae.⁹⁴

⁹² On *mspr(.t) n m3wy* “Mesperet of newness”, referred to Edfu: *Wb* II, p. 144 (6); P. WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon. A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfou*, OLA 78, Leuven, 1997, p. 461.

⁹³ Cf. L. MIATELLO, “A Hypocephalus with Odd Iconography and Poor Writing in the Berlin Museum”, *ZÄS* 144, 2017, p. 94. The text appears also in Paris Louvre N 3104 (unpublished), and Paris Louvre N 3524: photo at http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=19626&langue=fr.

A series of rams are offered to the deceased as divine prodigality: as in several other hypocephali, crouched rams are depicted near the falcon god in the barque, which indicates the western sky. Frequently they add up to 8, as the Ogdoad. The *ba* of Amun is the unity that creates the multiplicity (*hh*, lit. “the million”).⁹⁵ As indicated by Jan Assmann, the Theban religion of Amun of the Ramesside period elaborates on the Amarnian concept of “One-and-million”: the *ba* of Amun transforms itself into the multiplicity of the tangible world.⁹⁶ In the Amarnian Great Hymn: “You create millions of forms (*hprw*) from yourself, the One, cities and towns, fields, paths and river”. While Aton creates the multiplicity, Amun is the multiplicity itself, symbolized in the hypocephali by the hypostasis of the numerous rams.

It is interesting to note that a serpent appears under one wing of the falcon in the barque, in Turin Cat. 2320. This serpent is depicted under the wing of the god also in Turin Cat. 2321, 2322, and 2324, but in no other hypocephalus known to me. Such an iconographic detail indicates that all these examples are probably temporally comparable, in spite of the presence of texts on the rim belonging to different classes [Table 1].

Conclusions

The iconography of the hypocephalus, which represents the sun disk and the iris of the eye, for the protection of the head of the deceased and the generation of the vital flame of the sun god, is a microcosm of the regions crossed by the sun in its daily circular path. An analysis of the texts in the example Turin Museo Egizio 2320, whose text around the rim belongs to the “*akh*/Amun type”, has been proposed, considering the variants. In general, the texts in this type of hypocephalus are of difficult reading. Other types of hypocephali present less problematic texts. There is certainly the attempt of increasing the magical content with subtle or concealed meanings, as indicated also by the occasional reference to Heka.

The following concepts have been identified:

- Text around the rim: the *akh* of Amun descends in the netherworld with the rejuvenated corpse of the deceased, solving its opposed nature of powerful transcendent spirit by entering into the *udjat* eye.
- Texts in “register 1”: the offering chapel and the burial chamber are paths and elements of stability for the passages of the *ka* of the deceased, protected by Thoth, “The flying one”.
- Texts in “register 4”: they contain various images of solar rebirth, with references to the *ba* of the sun god as creational force that brings joy, represented by the god with four ram heads worshipped by baboons.

⁹⁴ B. VALLÉE, *ENiM* 11, p. 190, n. 18, proposes the equivalence between *jhy* and *jpy* (hippopotamus goddess), but the beard of the god determinative is very clear, for example, in the hypocephalus Louvre N 3524 (see the photo at http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=19626&langue=fr).

The epithet *b3 jhy* appears often in hypocephali of the *akk*/Amun type, both in “register 4” and in “register 5”. See, in addition, the epithet *jhy n hr* (*LGG* I, p. 539), Khnum’s epithet *nb jhy š3* (*LGG* III, p. 588), and the epithet of goddesses, including Hathor, *nb.t jhy* (*LGG* IV, p. 20).

⁹⁵ On this and other features of the religion of Amun highlighted by Assmann: A. WÜTHRICH, *Éléments de théologie thébaine*, p. 67.

⁹⁶ See J. ASSMANN, “Theological Responses to Amarna”, in G.N. Knoppers, A. Hirsch (eds.), *Egypt, Israel, and the Ancient Mediterranean World. Studies in Honor of Donald B. Redford*, Leiden, Boston, 2004, p. 187-188.

- Texts in “register 5”: the “*ba* of Joy” is glorified in the day sky. Its divine prodigality results in the offering of a series of rams to the deceased, as hypostases of its *ba*. The *ba* of the sun god is knowledge that creates material substance and the multiplicity of the universe.

The text around the rim is presumably related to the epithet of Amun as lion, *h3p sw m wd3.t r ms.w3f*, “He who hides himself from his children in the *udjat* eye”, in Ptolemaic variants of spell 162. The children are probably the rejuvenated corpses of the dead, opposed to the powerful and frightful transcendent spirit of Amun. This would account for the use of the term *rnn* “youngster”, in the text around the rim, in compliance with a Ptolemaic variant of spell 162 of the Book of the Dead presenting the theme of the rejuvenation of the corpse of Osiris like the sun god. Hiding itself in the iris of the *udjat* eye (the hypocephalus), the spirit of the god solves this opposition. Ptolemaic representations of a gilded disk or the nimbus at the head of the deceased identify further the *akh* with the sun disk.⁹⁷ In the text around the rim, the *akh* barely identifies with the corpse of the deceased, which is called “the son of commoners” (*s3 n nds.w*), and even “the dead person” (*mwt*). The sentence “I was sad about me and his course”, in three examples of the 30th Dynasty from Abydos, is further evidence of this concept. When the *akh* enters into the *udjat* eye, the deceased is paralleled to a god, in Turin Cat. 2320. The condition of alterity and fragility of the corpse, therefore, is fleeting, and the sun disk is apparently the instrument through which the deceased is “*akhified*”.⁹⁸ This concept of the corpse as a component that would be bound to a sad destiny without the *akh* and the medium of the sun disk, is presented in this period in combination with the classical concept of the corpse composed of deified parts (Book of the Dead spell 151a).⁹⁹

Interesting religious and philosophical concepts are expressed also in the uppermost register. Multiple rams are hypostases of the *ba* of the sun god and his knowledge, to the benefit of the dead person (*mwt*). The concept of the *ba* of Amun that becomes the multiplicity of the universe was developed by the Theban clergy of the Ramesside period from the solar religion of Amarna. Centuries later, logos, soul, and matter, will constitute the bases of Plotinos’ henosis.

The hypocephalus Turin Cat. 2320 is presumably dated to the early Ptolemaic period, as indicated by the presence of a serpent under one wing of the falcon in a barque, as in the hypocephalus Turin Cat. 2324 (third century B.C.). As this latter, probably it originates from Thebes. Other hypocephali of the Ptolemaic period inscribed on the rim with the “*akh*/Amun type” of text have been found in the Theban necropolis, although this kind of text is present also on earlier examples from Abydos.

⁹⁷ See E. HASLAUER, in H. Györy (ed.), *Le lotus qui sort du terre* 2001, p. 183-184; A. WÜTHRICH, *Eléments de théologie thébaine*, p. 56.

⁹⁸ On the deceased transfigured in light by the *akh*: D.B. Redford (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Egypt*, vol. 1, Oxford, 2001, p. 47-48.

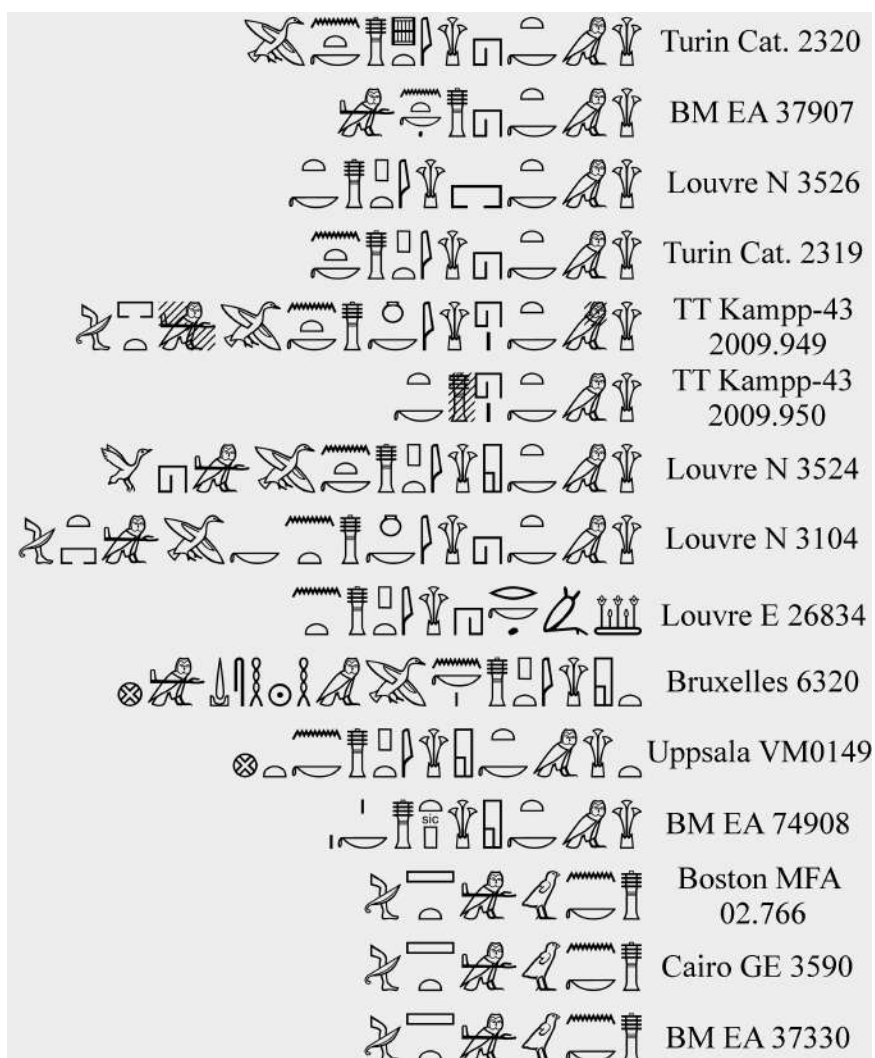
⁹⁹ On the relation between spell 162 and spell 151a of the Book of the Dead: A. WÜTHRICH, *Eléments de théologie thébaine*, p. 52-56.



Pl. 1. Variants of a formula in the text around the rim of hypocephali.



Pl. 2. Variants of a formula in the text around the rim of hypocephali.



Pl. 3. Variants of a formula in “register 1” of hypocephali.

	Turin Cat. 2320
	BM EA 37907
	Louvre N 3526
	Turin Cat. 2319
	TT Kampp-43 2009.949
	TT Kampp-43 2009.950
	Louvre N 3524
	Turin Cat. 2322
	Louvre E 6195
	Louvre N 3104
	Louvre E 26834
	Bruxelles 6320
	Uppsala VM0149
	Boston MFA 02.766
	Cairo GE 3590
	BM EA 74908
	BM EA 37330
	Edinburgh A 1956.48

Pl. 4. Variants of a formula in “register 1” of hypocephali.