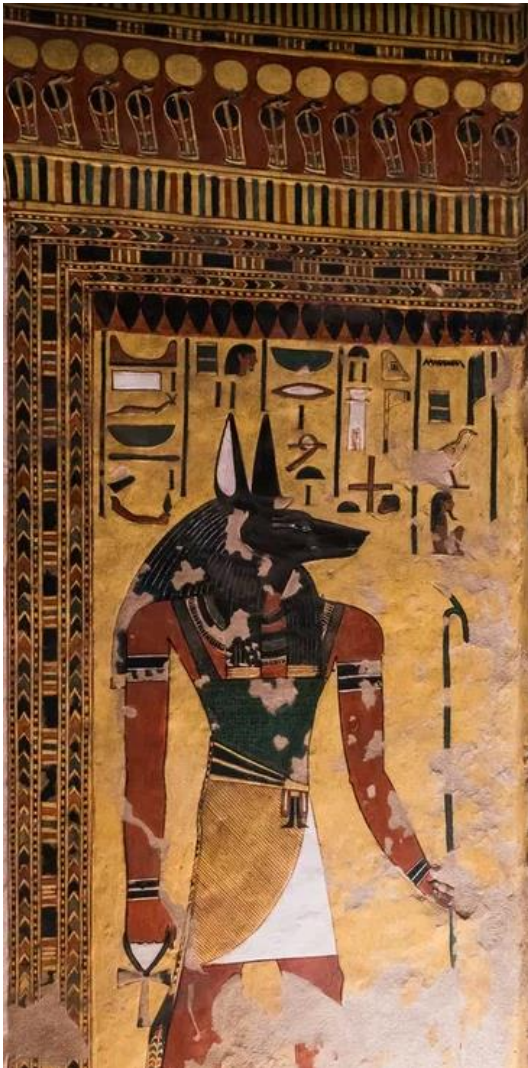


The Egyptian Book of the Dead in the Tomb of Nefertari



Dear readers, the following text on Spell 148 in the tomb of Nefertari opens a series of articles on 'The Egyptian Book of the Dead in the Tomb of Nefertari'.

The Book of the Dead is represented in the tomb by an extensive collection of spells, some of which are fully or partially recorded in written form, while others are represented by their unique illustrations. Five of these spells will be covered in standalone articles; the spells contain the following texts: three on the upper level (Spell 17 in the first chamber, Spells 148 and 94 in the side chamber) and two on the lower level (Spell of gates 147 and Spell of portals 146 in the burial chamber). The articles will examine features of depiction of the spells in the tomb as well as nuances of their decoration, orthography and, presumably, meaning of the papyri in the context the Books of the Dead of the 18th and 19th dynasties. After that there will be an overview text titled 'Canons and mistakes in the tomb of Nefertari', in which I would like to show the features of the writing of signs on the walls of the tomb: how the signs were inscribed; which canons were used by craftsmen for depiction of hieroglyphs; how literate and precise the texts are; what was prioritized and what was of secondary importance.

In this series of articles, I will not cover general introductory topics, such as what the Books of the Dead are, the history of their origin and development, or how the individual spells were designated. There is a wide range of excellent works on these topics. My aim here is rather to talk about

the specific spells of the Book, whose texts are presented in the tomb, to examine certain papyri from that era in which these spells are preserved and to explore how these texts were written and what meaning may lie behind them.

As the series progresses, new ideas may emerge, potentially leading to additional articles on the spells of the Book of the Dead preserved in the tomb of Nefertari. Should this happen, the series will continue to expand. It is also planned to translate these texts into English and present English-language versions of the articles for readers in other countries.

In addition to translations, the articles also provide transliterations of the texts found in the tomb; and for certain particularly complex fragments of the text, summary tables have been provided. This applies to the names of the portal and gate guardians on the lower level, as well as to the names of the bulls, cows and oars. Some of the texts are supplemented by appendices featuring excerpts from the papyri, along with transliterations and other technical information.

All articles are richly illustrated with photographs and drawings. These include photographs from the early Italian expeditions to the tomb of Nefertari, presented in the Museo Egizio (Turin); photographs taken by A. Plaksin during his own expeditions, fragments of the papyri, photographs of museum exhibits, as well as drawings and illustrations from books. My aim was to highlight the details under discussion and to create a sense of tangible connection - a direct encounter with the ideas of the ancient craftsmen and their execution.

I hope you will find this series both valuable and engaging. If you have any questions, comments or well-considered critical notes, please feel free to reach out via the feedback form on the website or by email stellazaytseva@gmail.com. I take full responsibility for any possible mistakes or shortcomings in this work.

My deepest gratitude goes to:

- ✓ Maxim Panov (Novosibirsk, <https://hieroglyphica.com>) for his ample advice on the translations from the Egyptian language in this work;
- ✓ Andrey Plaksin (Moscow, <https://www.nefertaritomb.com>) for providing materials, help and support, suggestions and remarks. Without him, neither this project, dedicated to the tomb of Nefertari, nor these articles would exist;
- ✓ Nikita Khmarenko (Tambov, PochNikita@yandex.ru) for the excellent, very precise and accurate translation of this work into English, for endless patience and attention to my wishes;
- ✓ Dik van Bommel (Netherlands) for the photographs of the Book of the Dead papyri presented on his website www.ushabtis.com. The materials from this site have been of great help to me.

Godspeed, dear readers! And may the Gods of Egypt help us!

Stella

Picture on the first page:

relief of Anubis in the tomb of Nefertari, photo by A. Plaksin



The Egyptian Book of the Dead in the Tomb of Nefertari The upper level. Side chamber G. Spell 148

Stella Zaytseva

Translated by Nikita Khmarenko

Seven holy cows, the bull and four steering oars. Their images occupy the entire southern wall G2 of the side chamber of the upper level, alongside texts with their names. This is how Spell 148 of the Book of the Dead is written in the chamber. Next to them, on the nearby wall there is a figure of the queen raising her hands as a gesture of veneration; she praises these representatives of Duat, who provide the deceased with food in that world and sustain their revived life.

This spell was illustrated in tombs and was often included in the Books of the Dead of those times; and in many papyri it was presented identically to the tomb of Nefertari: images of the cows, the bull and the oars with captions. Sometimes, these vignettes were accompanied by a short message from the Book's owner, and in other papyri, Spell 148 is presented in its full textual version.

The text of this spell is the words that had to be spoken by the deceased in order to gain access to 'the fuel' that would sustain him. It is the speech that Nefertari utters as she approaches the cows, the bull and the oars.

I begin the overview of the spell in the tomb with the full version of this text as it explains the essence and functions of these divine beings. It is presented in the edition of the Book of Yuya; its transliteration can be found in Appendix 1, the excerpt of the Yuya papyrus showing this spell is on the next page.

*Spell for giving provisions to Akh-spirit in necropolis,
placing his Ba-soul on earth,
giving him to exist alive in the everlastingness-neheh,
lest evil things have power over him.
Hail to you, shining in his sun-disk,
living, going out from the horizon.
I know you, I know your name,
I know the names of seven cows and their bull,
giving bread and beer to the living,
giving provision to the Westerners.
May you give me bread and beer,
may you provision me, God's father, Yuya.
May you give him Akh-power so that he may follow you
being under your buttocks.
The House of sustenance, Lady-of-all.
Encircling the sky, Raising the god.
The Hidden One, Who is in front of her place.
The One of Chemmis, Dignity of gods.
Great in her love, the Red-haired One.
Uniting with life, the Bright-red hair One.
Mighty in her name through her crafts.
The bull, the male of the cows.
May you give bread, beer, offerings, provision, Akh-power
to Osiris God's father Yuya in necropolis.*





The papyrus of Yuya. Spell 148

*O Good power of the sky, Opener of the sun-disk, good steering oar of the eastern sky.
 O Shining One, Dweller of the house of images, good steering oar of the western sky.
 O Foremost One, Dweller of the house of reds, good steering oar of the southern sky.
 O Circler, Guide of the Two Lands, good steering oar of the northern sky.
 May you give bread, beer, cattle, fowls, your provisions
 to God's father Yuya, justified, the excellent Akh-spirit in necropolis.
 May you give him life, wholeness, health, joy and endurance on earth,
 may you give him sky, earth, horizon, Heliopolis and Duat
 for he knows this place, make you him like.
 O Fathers of the gods, O Mothers of the gods,
 who are on earth, who are in necropolis!
 May you save me, Yuya,
 from all evil hinderances, from all evil injures,
 from that painful snare of knives,
 from all evil things against me said or done
 by gods, akh-spirits, evil dead-mut
 upon this day, upon this night, in this month, in this half-month,
 in this year and its subdivisions.*

It is a very beautiful, elaborate, grammatically correct and well-written (which is not always the case for the Books of the Dead) spell that uses a variety of magical methods.

The final part of Spell 148 of the Book of the Dead of Yuya tells us about the right way to pronounce it and its efficiency:



*Words spoken by a man before Re,
places he (man) him (Re) at these Gods¹,
written in green on the writing-board.
Given to them offerings in their presence
of bread, beer, meat, fowls, incense,
made for them offerings "Going out at the voice".
This means Akh-spirit before Osiris
This means provisioning of Akh-spirit in necropolis.
This means rescue of a man from all evil things there.
You shouldn't do before all people,
but pieces of your flesh, only your self,
this book of Wennefer.
As for anyone who did this, Re is his steering oar,
his protection in the necropolis, in the sky, on the earth, in every place where he follows to.
A matter a million times true.*

Some technical details concerning presentation of this spell in papyri of the 18th and 19th dynasties. Its almost complete version is presented above, in the papyrus of Yuya: the text of the spell is written and there are vignettes with images of the cows and their names; all that is missing is vignettes with images of the oars and their names. It should be noted that the cows and the bull are depicted here strictly according to the instructions of the spell's epilogue: rendered in green paint together with the offerings brought to them.

Very brief variant of this spell are a vignette with the cows and the bull and a vignette with four steering oars without any inscriptions. Such a vignette could be added to vignettes of other spells of the papyri or be placed in a separate vertical row, thus defining the presence of Spell 148 in the papyri. In the book of Nebseny, as with his spell of gates and portals, there is a combined version of Spell 148: the upper level has a row of eight vignettes with monochrome images of seven cows and bull, along with their names. They also have names of oars and phrases about giving bread, beer and other necessary foods in the necropolis for Nebseny.



The papyrus of Nebseny, frame 4. Spell 148 (fragment)

As mentioned before, in the tomb of Nefertari Spell 148 is presented with images of the cows, the bull and the oars with their names next to them. The wall is fully preserved, all images and hieroglyphs are clearly visible.

Apart from Spell 148, the names of cows, the bull and the oars are also mentioned in Spell 141 of the Book of the Dead. Spell 141 presents a whole list of gods and divine beings, to whom offerings are made by the owner of the Book. The recipients of the gifts include the main gods and their aspects, groups of gods, ways, doors and portals of Duat, night-bark and day-bark of Re; among the recipients of offerings there are seven cows, the bull and the oars.

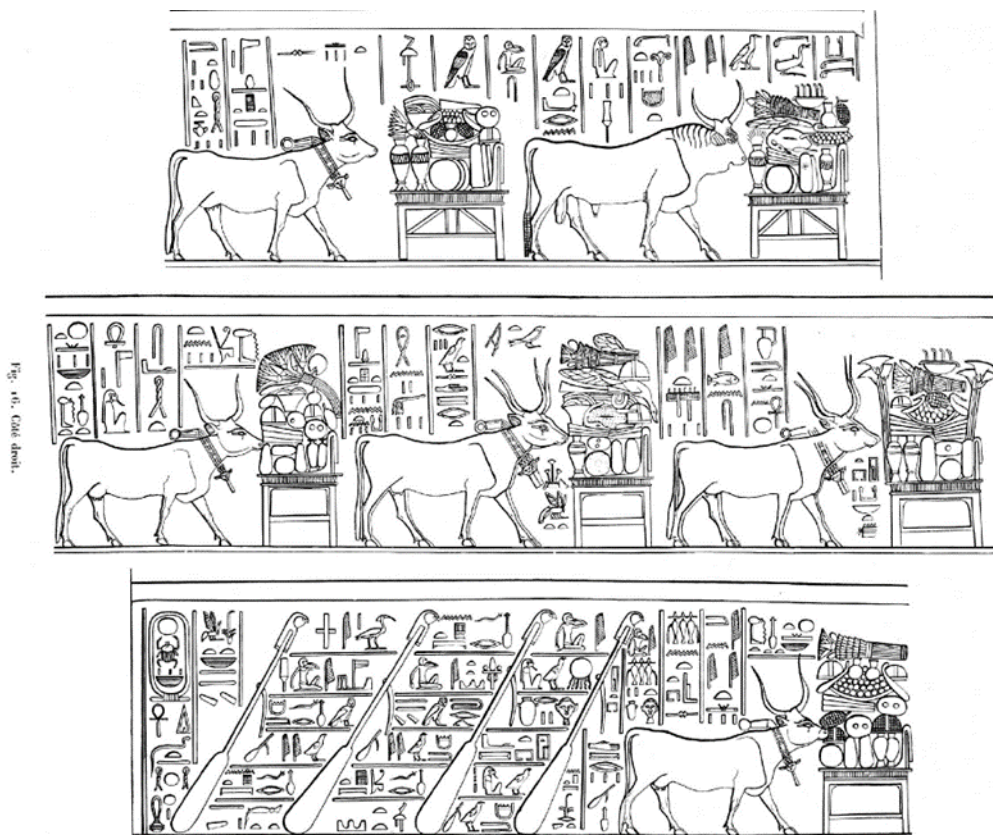
¹ By 'gods' are meant the cows, the bull and the oars.





Spell 148 in the Tomb of Nefertari. Photo by A. Plaksin

Spells 148 and 141 are included in the group of spells of the Books of the Dead, which were placed in the tombs of royalty. In the tomb of Tutankhamun, KV 62, on the side walls of his second shrine, adorned with gold plates, on par with other spells of the Book of the Dead, there are also spells 148 and 141.



Spell 148 on the second shrine of Tutankhamun, KV62.

A. Piankoff. *Chapelles de Tout-Ankh-Amon*, MIFAO LXXII, Le Caire 1951–52, p. 51, fig. 16.



Spell 148 on the shrine of Tutankhamun is presented with images of the bull and five cows; but names are given to all eight cows, two of them have two names each, and they have two pairs of horns. This is how two missing figures of cows were symbolically represented.

Along with ample offerings, made to the bull and each cow (it should be noted that sets of offerings are different varying from one altar to another), there is a text written *ḥtpw-ntr m t ḥnkt ḥt nbt nfrt w3bt* 'divine offerings of bread, beer, everything which is good and pure'. This text is arranged across three levels, and its individual phrases were used to fill those columns which remained empty after the recording of the names of the cows.

Depicted here as well are four oars, each inscribed with its name. On the left, in the lower row, there is a cartouche with the name of Tutankhamun and the text *nsw bity nb t3wy nb-ḥprw-rꜥ di ḥnh dt nḥḥ mi rꜥ* 'King of the the Upper and Lower Egypt, Lord of the Two lands Nebkheperure given life in eternity-djet and everlastingness-neheh like Re'.

To compare names of the cows, the bull and the oars in the tomb of Nefertari, we used texts of spells 148 and 141 in the Books of the Dead of Tui, Amenemheb (Meh), Kha, Yuya, Nu, Neferubenef, Maiherpri, Nebseny, Nakht and Ani along with their names in the tomb of Tutankhamun.

Next, we consider names of the cows, the bull and the oars within the tomb, beginning with the oars.



Spell 148 in the tomb of Nefertari. The steering oars

The description of each oar usually consists of two parts: its unique name and the phrase *hmw nfr n pt mhttt / i3btt / rsyt / imntt* 'a good steering oar of the northern / eastern / southern / western sky.' Since names of particular oars could differ and be transferred from one oar to another in various Books of the Dead, as in the case of the names of gatekeepers, it is better to examine the names of all oars together. For the sake of clarity, I provide images of the oars in the tomb of Nefertari, from the papyrus of Nakht and the papyrus of Ani. In that period the oars were usually depicted symbolically, with only the shape conveyed and without any additional details or decorations. The vignette in the papyrus of Nakht, in which the oars are given faces and painted in different colours, is rather an exception. In Appendix 2 of this text there are excerpts from the papyri with variations in the oars' names.



The steering oars, Spell 148.

Pictured above – the tomb of Nefertari.

Pictured on the left – the papyrus of Ani, frame 36.

Pictured below – the papyrus of Nakht, frame 9



Transliterations of the oars' names:

the oar of the northern sky

the tomb of Nefertari	<i>šhm nfr hmy nfr n pt mhtt</i>
the tomb of Tutankhamon, Sp. 148	<i>3h imy hrt-ntr² šhm nfr hmw nfr n pt mhtt</i>
the tomb of Tutankhamon, Sp. 141	<i>šhm nfr hmw nfr n pt mhtt</i>
pNu, frame 11, Sp. 148	<i>šhm nfr hmw nfr n pt mhtt</i>
pNu, frame 15, Sp. 141	<i>šhm nfr hmw nfr n pt mhtt</i>
pAni, frame 36, Sp. 148	<i>šhm nfr hmyt nfr n pt mhtt</i>
pYuya, Sp. 148	<i>dbn sšmw t3wy hmw nfr n pt mhtt</i>
pYuya, Sp. 141	<i>šhm nfr hmw nfr (n) pt mhyt</i>
pKha, frame 5, Sp. 148	<i>dbn sšmw t3wy hmw nfr (n) pt mhtt</i>
pMaiherpri, Sp. 148	<i>šhm nfr hmw nfr n pt mhtt</i>
Iamenemheb (Meh), frame 12, Sp. 141	<i>šmw hmw nfr n pt mhtt</i>
pNakht, frame 9, Sp. 148	<i>hmw nfr n pt mhtt šhm wn.f itn</i>

the oar of the eastern sky

the tomb of Nefertari	<i>hmy nfr n pt i3btt phr sšm t3wy</i>
the tomb of Tutankhamon, Sp. 148	<i>3hw hry-ib hwt šmw hmw nfr n pt i3btt</i>
the tomb of Tutankhamon, Sp. 141	<i>3hw hry-ib hwt šmw hmw nfr n pt i3btt</i>
pNu, frame 11, Sp. 148	<i>3hw hry-ib hwt šmw hmw nfr n pt i3btt</i>
pNu, frame 15, Sp. 141	<i>3hw hry-ib hwt šmw hmw nfr n pt i3btt</i>
pAni, frame 36, Sp. 148	<i>3hw hrt-tp hwt šmw hmw nfr n pt i3btt</i>
pYuya, Sp. 148	<i>šhm nfr n pt wn itn hmw nfr n pt i3btt</i>
pYuya, Sp. 141	missed
pKha, frame 5, Sp. 148	<i>šhm nfr n pt wn itn hmw nfr n pt i3btt</i>
pMaiherpri, Sp. 148	<i>3h(w) hry-ib hwt šmw hmw nfr n pt i3btt</i>
Iamenemheb (Meh), frame 12, Sp. 141	<i>3hw hry-ib hwt šmw hmw nfr n pt i3btt</i>
pNakht, frame 9, Sp. 148	<i>hmy nfr n pt i3btt sw3d t3wy</i>

the oar of the southern sky

the tomb of Nefertari	<i>hmy nfr n pt rsyt</i>
the tomb of Tutankhamon, Sp. 148	<i>hnty hry-ib hwt dšrw hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
the tomb of Tutankhamon, Sp. 141	<i>hnty hry-ib hwt dšrw hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
pNu, frame 11, Sp. 148	<i>hnty hry-ib hwt dšrw hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
pNu, frame 15, Sp. 141	<i>hnty hry-ib hwt dšrw hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
pAni, frame 36, Sp. 148	<i>hnty hry-tp hwt šy hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
pYuya, Sp. 148	<i>hnty hwt dšrw hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
pYuya, Sp. 141	<i>hnty hry-ib hwt dšrw hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
pKha, frame 5, Sp. 148	<i>hnty hwt dšrw hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
pMaiherpri, Sp. 148	<i>hnty hrw hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
Iamenemheb (Meh), frame 12, Sp. 141	<i>hnty hry-ib hwt dšrw hmw nfr n pt rsyt</i>
pNakht, frame 9, Sp. 148	<i>hmy nfr n pt rsyt psd 3hw hry-ib hwt n hnrw (?) {m}</i>

² The phrase *3h imy hrt-ntr* 'Akh-spirit in necropolis' may not refer to this oar as the names of oars begin with the particle *i* 'O'; and this particle comes before other words, *šhm nfr*. Moreover, in Spell 141 in Tutankhamun the name of the oar also starts with *šhm nfr*.



the oar of the western sky

the tomb of Nefertari	<i>hmy nfr n pt imntt</i>
the tomb of Tutankhamon, Sp. 148	<i>phr m t3wy hmwy nfr n pt imntt</i>
the tomb of Tutankhamon, Sp. 141	<i>dbn sšmw t3wy hmw nfr n pt imntt</i>
pNu, frame 11, Sp. 148	<i>dbn sšmw t3wy hmw nfr n pt imntt</i>
pNu, frame 15, Sp. 141	<i>hn sšmw t3wy hmw nfr n pt imntt</i>
pAni, frame 36, Sp. 148	<i>phr pt sšmw t3wy hmw nfr n pt imntt</i>
pYuya, Sp. 148	<i>3hw hry-ib hwt ššmw hmw nfr n pt imntt</i>
pYuya, Sp. 141	<i>phr pt sšm t3wy hmw nfr n pt imntt</i>
pKha, frame 5, Sp. 148	<i>3hw hry-ib hwt ššmw hmw nfr n pt imntt</i>
pMaiherpri, Sp. 148	<i>phr sšm t3wy hmw nfr n pt imntt</i>
Iamenemheb (Meh), frame 12, Sp. 141	<i>dbn sšm t3wy hmw nfr n pt imntt</i>
pNakht, frame 9, Sp. 148	<i>hmw nfr n pt imntt phr sšm t3wy</i>

All Books of the Dead were written with textual discrepancies and mistakes; it is possible to speak of more or less appropriately written books, and this can be seen in the tables of the oars' names. The names of identical oars do not match in different papyri, and in the Books of Yuya and Kha the name of the oar of the western sky is different in Spells 141 and 148. The writing of the oars' names in the papyrus of Nakht could be worth a separate note. Firstly, the unique name of the oar follows the standard phrase *hmw nfr n pt mḥtt / i3bt...* 'a good steering oar of the northern / eastern / western / southern (etc.) sky' and does not precede it like in other papyri. Secondly, it has oar names which are not found in any other papyri: *sw3d t3wy* 'making two lands green', *psd 3hw* 'giving shine to Akh-spirits'.

However, you can also notice that in the table, the mentioned above pattern 'unique name of the oar + the phrase *hmw nfr n pt mḥtt / i3bt / rsyt / imntt* 'a good steering oar of the northern / eastern / southern / western sky' is preserved in every papyrus in one order or another, but is not preserved in the text of the tomb. In the tomb of Nefertari the pattern is applied only to the oar of the northern sky; the oar of the eastern sky has one atypical name inscribed at the end (according to the information from papyri), whereas the two remaining oars have no unique names.

Translation of the names of the steering oars in the tomb of Nefertari:

- 'Good power, good steering oar of the northern sky.*
- Good steering oar of the eastern sky, Traveller, Guide of the Two Lands.*
- Good steering oar of the southern sky.*
- Good steering oar of the western sky.'*



Spell 148 in the tomb of Nefertari. The cows and the bull

The cows in the vignettes for spell 148 are depicted much more colourfully and elegantly than the oars. As a rule, there are altar tables with ample provisions before them. And in especially exquisitely adorned Books of the Dead, which the tomb of Nefertari definitely belongs to, the cows differ in hair colours according to their names.



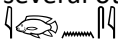
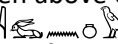
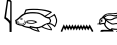

The cows and the bull, Spell 148. Pictured above – the tomb of Nefertari. Photo by A. Plaksin. Pictured on the left – pNakht, frame 9. Pictured below – pMaiherpri



Appendix 3 provides excerpts from papyri with original names of the cows and the bull in the Books of the Dead of the 18th and 19th dynasties as well as a brief analysis of names discrepancies. Here, for the purpose of comparison with the names in the tomb, transliterations of the names of the cows and the bull are given from the shrine of Tutankhamun, Spell 148 and from the Papyrus of Nu, Spell 148 (the names are given in the order in which they appear in Nefertari).

the tomb of Nefertari	pNu, frame 15	the tomb of Tutankhamon
<i>hwt k3w nbt-r-dr</i>	<i>hwt k3w nbt-r-dr</i>	<i>hwt k3w nbt-r-dr</i>
<i>imnyt hntyt st.s{t}</i>	<i>igrt hntt st.s</i>	<i>imnyt hntt st.s</i>
<i>3h-bit s^h(t) ntr</i>	<i>3h-bitt s^ht ntr</i>	<i>3h-bitt</i>
<i>šn(y)t pt wtst ntrw</i>	<i>šnit pt wtst ntr</i>	<i>s^ht ntr</i>
<i>hnmt ^hnh i{in}wnw(t)</i>	<i>hnmt m ^hnh, iwnwyt</i>	<i>hnmt (m) ^hnh, insyt</i>
<i>wrt mrwt.s dšrt</i>	<i>wr(t) mrwt.s dšrt</i>	<i>wr(t) mrwt.s dšrt</i>
<i>shmt rn.s{t} m {imntt} <hmwt>.s{t}</i>	<i>shmt rn.s m hmwt.s</i>	<i>shmt rn.s m hmwt.s</i>
<i>k3 t3y idwt hnty hry-ib hwt dšr(w)</i>	<i>k3 t3y idwt</i>	<i>k3 t3y idwt</i>

The names of the cows in Nefertari and Nu are well-matched, in Tutankhamun the name *s^ht ntr* is transferred to another cow; and the same applies to several examined papyri. For more details see Appendix 3. And the bull in the tomb of Nefertari has one additional inscription *hry-ib hwt dšr(w)* ‘Foremost One, Dweller of the house of reds’, which bulls in all other Books do not possess. The only spell that contains a similar inscription for the bull is the papyrus of Nakht; however, the majority of papyri do not have such a name for the bull and it is also not presented in two inscriptions in the tomb of Tutankhamun. But this very name is recorded in the Books of the Dead for the steering oar of the southern sky, which has no unique name in the tomb of Nefertari. Presumably, the name which was to be assigned for the oar in the tomb, was mistakenly given to the bull by craftsmen.

The cow *hnmt m ^hnh, iwnwyt* ‘Uniting with life, the Dappled-hair One’ on the shrine of Tutankhamun and several other papyri, as well as in the translation given above of the Yuya papyrus, has the second name  *insyt* ‘the Red-haired One’ instead of  *iwnw(t)* ‘the Dappled-hair One’. In the tomb of Nefertari this name is written as , i.e., the signs from both names are combined into a single word, which is clearly incorrect. And it also is highly likely that there was a mistake in the sample. It remains for us to choose which name should be considered correct; I personally preferred *iwnwt*, as this name is written out in full, but the name *insyt* is missing one symbol ; moreover, this cow is illustrated with dappled hair which gives an extra clue.

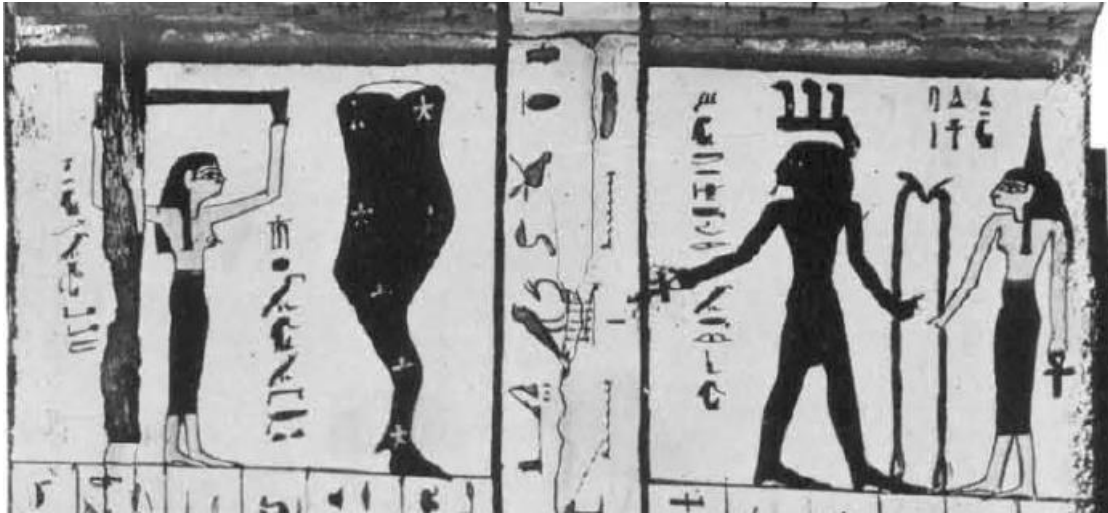
Translation of the names of cows and bull in the tomb with consideration of the erroneous writing next to the bull:

*‘The House of sustenance, Lady-of-all.
The Hidden One, Who is in front of her place.
The One of Chemmis, Dignity of gods.
Encircling the sky, Raising the god.
Uniting with life, the Dappled-hair One.
Great in her love, the Red-haired One.
Mighty in her name through her crafts.
The bull, the male of the cows’.*



Symbolism of the cows, the bull and the oars

What lies behind the symbolic depictions of the cows, the bull and the oars giving provisions to the dead? What 'fuel' was used by the Egyptians to sustain the souls, departing to the underworld? I will share my suggestions, which are based on the correlation of textual contexts and images. I propose to examine the lids of coffins of the noble figures from Asuyt of the 9th-12th dynasties decorated with the tables of decans³ – stars or constellations, whose risings were used to define night hours during the Middle Kingdom. The tables of decans are divided by vertical and horizontal lines. In the vertical line there are four deities (left to right): *nwt* Nut; *mshtyw* Mesekhtyw (Foreleg); *s3h* Orion; *spdt* Sothis.



Fragment of the coffin of the 9-10 dynasties, Cairo J 36320.

O. Neugebauer, R.A. Parker. *Egyptian Astronomical Texts I: The Early Decans*. London, 1960 (EAT I), plate 6 (Coffin 3)



Fragment of the coffin of the Middle Kingdom, Tubingen, Archaeologisches Institut der Universitat. EAT I, plate 8 (Coffin 4)

³ Neugebauer O., Parker R.A. *Egyptian Astronomical Texts I: The Early Decans*. London, 1960, 1.



Inscriptions next to them read (coffin 4):

nwt ꜥ3wy.t 'Nut, raise your arms'

mshtyw m pt mḥtt 'Mesekhtyw in the northern sky'

s3ḥ m pt rsyt⁴ s3ḥ phr⁵ ḥr.k (r) m33 wsir 'Orion in the sothern sky. Orion, turn your face to see Osiris'
spdt di.s ḥnh 'Sothis, gives she life'.

The deity of interest here is Mesekhtyw, depicted second from the left in the form of the front leg of the bull with seven stars placed within it. In the symbolic system of Egyptian deities, Mesekhtyw is the asterism known as the Plough. Perhaps, one could assume that the seven cows in Spell 148 are symbolic representations of the seven stars Mesekhtyw, which are individually depicted within its form and which appear to be the well-known seven stars of the Plough. And that the name of each cow is the definition of each star of Mesekhtyw (the Plough) and an appeal to these stars. And the form of Mesekhtyw which looks like a bull's leg, can be associated with the bull in spell 148, the male of the cows; therefore, there is no additional name defining his traits.

This is further supported by the second form of depiction of Mesekhtyw – not the front leg of the bull, but as the entire bull. In such a form Mesekhtyw is depicted, for instance, on the ceiling of the tomb of Seti I, KV 17, where the bull's figure is labeled *mshtyw*:



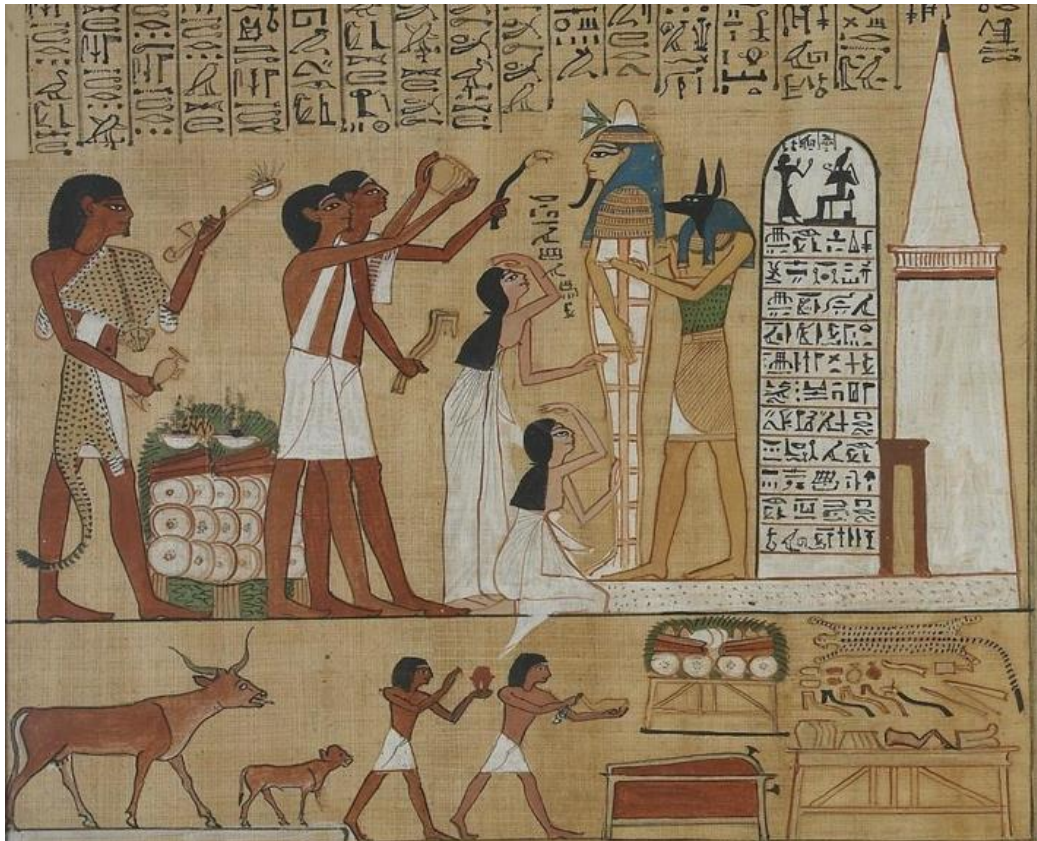
The fragment of the ceiling of the tomb of Seti I, KV 17. Photo by A. Plaksin

I would like to add that the front leg of the bull, in whose form Mesekhtyw was depicted, in particular, in the aforementioned coffins, had the name *ḥpš*, *khepesh*. The front leg of the bull *ḥpš* was a part of the offerings to Gods and the dead, and was also used by priests in the burial process during the complicated multistage ritual of Opening of the Mouth and Eyes. The instrument, which was used in the symbolic Opening of the Mouth, was also called *khepesh*. In the vignette for Spell 1 in the papyrus of Hunefer (frame 5) the process is schematically depicted, where the upper level of the vignette illustrates the ritual of Opening of the Mouth and Eyes, and one of the priests holds the *khepesh* instrument; The lower level depicts offerings to the deceased, among which the *khepesh* leg is carried as part of the offerings. Moreover, a calf whose part was sacrificed, is also depicted without one front leg.

⁴ See the sign in the text of the coffin 2, EAT I, coffin 2, plate 4.

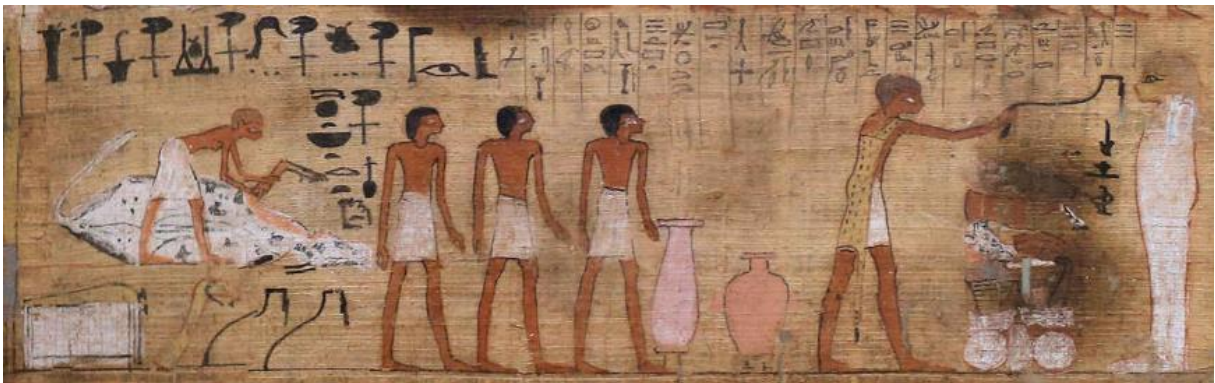
⁵ See the sign in the text of the coffin 2, EAT I, coffin 2, plate 4.





The papyrus of Hunefer, frame 5, vignette to Spell 23

The scene of the burial process in the papyrus of Senhotep:



The papyrus of Senhotep, vignette to Spell 1

The same word *ḥpš*, *khepesh*, was used for the constellation of the Big Dipper; for example, in Spell 17 four sons of Horus are noted (the text is presented in the version of Nebseny's Book of the Dead, frame 14): *ir d3d3t ḥ3 wsir imsty ḥpy dw3-mwt.f kbḥ-snw.f n3 pw nty m-s3 p3 ḥpš m pt mḥtt* 'as for the tribunal (here, the members of the court) near Osiris, they are Imsety, Hapy, Duamutef, Qebehsenuf, who are behind *khepesh* (or the Big Dipper) of the northern sky'. In fact, the concepts of Mesekhtyw and *khepesh* coincide in the context of the Plough asterism.

Thus, we encounter *khepesh* as a necessary ingredient and instrument of the Ritual of Opening of the Mouth and Eyes, as part of the offerings to support the deceased in the underworld and as a constellation of the Big Dipper of the northern sky. And so we have Mesekhtyw-the Plough in the form of a bull and Mesekhtyw-the Plough in the form of *khepesh* with seven stars marked on it.



Is this sufficient to suggest that the seven cows and the bull in Spell 148 are Mesekhtyw and the seven stars? Is it possible to consider these images equal?



I would like to note that there are other versions of identifying the seven stars of Mesekhtyw with the gods of Duat. For instance, Gábor W. Nemes⁶ proposes other identifications based on the text of Spell 17 of the Book of the Dead and Spells 335 and 336 of the Coffin Texts (which served as a foundation for Spell 17 of the Book of the Dead). And A. von Lieven suggests a direct connection between the bull in Spell 148 and the solar deity: 'It is likely that the bull is the sun-god himself'⁷.

I will leave this matter for discussion and research, as well as the matter of symbolism of the oars, which could refer to specific objects in the starry sky; therefore, the arrangement of the oars on 'the northern / eastern / southern / western sky' might not just be a vivid descriptive element, but a direct indication of their physical location in the universe.

⁶ Gábor W. Nemes. The mythological importance of the constellation Msxtyw in mortuary representations until the end of the New Kingdom, ENiM 13, 2020, 1-61.

⁷ Alexandra von Lieven. Book of the Dead, Book of the Living: BD Spells as temple texts. JEA, Vol. 98 (2012), 256.



Conclusion

In this article the Books of the Dead of the next owners are used:

- ✓ *twi* Tui, BM 9913, the early 18th dynasty;
- ✓ *imn-m-ḥb* (*m^cḥw*) Amenemheb (Meh), Louvre N 3097, the 18th dynasty, reign of Amenhotep II;
- ✓ *sn-ḥtp* Senhotep, CGC 40004 (J.E. 95652), the 18th dynasty, reign of Amenhotep II;
- ✓ *m3i-ḥr-pri* Maiherpri, CGC 24095, the 18th dynasty, reign of Thutmose IV;
- ✓ *nb-sny* Nebseny, BM 9900, the 18th dynasty, reign of Thutmose IV;
- ✓ *nfr-wbn.f* Neferubenef, Louvre N 3092, the 18th dynasty, reign of Thutmose IV;
- ✓ *ḥ^c* Kha, Torino Suppl. 8438, the 18th dynasty, presumably reign of Thutmose IV- Amenhotep III;
- ✓ *ywiw* Yuya, CGC 51189, the 18th dynasty, reign of Amenhotep III;
- ✓ *nw* Nu, BM 10477, the 18th dynasty, presumably reign of Amenhotep III;
- ✓ *nḥt* Nakht, BM 10471 (papyrus), BM 10473 (leather), the end of the 18th dynasty;
- ✓ *ḥw-nfr* Hunefer, BM 9901, the 19th dynasty, reign of Seti I;
- ✓ *3ny* Ani, BM 10470, the 19th dynasty.

I'm grateful to the owners of these Books of the Dead for the provided materials.

Photo on page 3 - Hans Goedicke and Gertruda Thausing. Nofretari: Documentation of Her Tomb and Its Decoration. Graz. 1971, fig. 41.

To type hieroglyphs was used JSesh.

List of abbreviations

BD – Book of the Dead

BM – British Museum, London, Great Britain

CGC - Catalogue général des antiquités égyptiennes du Musée du Caire, Le Caire, Égypte

EAT - O. Neugebauer, R.A. Parker. Egyptian Astronomical Texts I: The Early Decans. London, 1960

EniM - Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne

l – linen

JEA - the Journal of Egyptian Archaeology

KV – Valley of the Kings

Louvre - Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

MIFAO - Mémoires de l'Institut Français d'Archéologie Orientale

p – papyrus

Sp. - Spell

Torino – Museo Egizio, Torino, Italia

TT – Theban tomb

Vol. - volume



Appendix 1 of the text 'The Upper level. The Side Chamber G. Spell 148'

Transliteration of Spell 148 in the Book of the Dead of Yuya:

(1) *r n sḏf3 3ḥ m ḥrt-nṯr rdit b3.f tp t3 rdi(t) wnn.f ḥnh r nhḥ
 nj šḥm ḥt* (2) *ḏwt im.f*
inḏ ḥr.k psd m itn.f ḥnh pr m 3ḥt
iw.i {i} rḥ.kwi (3) *tw rḥ.kwi rn.k rḥ.kwi rn n idwt 7 ḥnḥ k3 irw*
ddyw t ḥnkt n ḥnhw (4) *sḏf3yw imntyw*
dd.tn (n).i t ḥnḥ ḥnkt sḏf3.tn n.i it-nṯr (5) *ywiw*
di.tn n.f 3ḥ šms.f tn ḥpr.n.f ḥr ḥpdw.tn
ḥwt k3w nbt-r-ḏr šnit (6) *pt wtst nṯr*
igrtt ḥntt st.s 3ḥ-bitt sḥt nṯr
wr(t) mrt.s ḏsrt ḥnmt m (7) *ḥnh insy(t)*
šḥmt rn.s m ḥmwt.s k3 ʔy idwt
di.tn t ḥnkt ḥtpt ḏ (8) *f3w 3ḥ n wsir it-nṯr ywiw m ḥrt-nṯr*
i šḥm nfr n pt wn itn ḥmw nfr n pt i3btt
i 3ḥw (9) *ḥry-ib ḥwt ḥsmw ḥmw nfr n pt imntt*
i ḥnty ḥry-ib ḥwt ḏsṛw ḥmw nfr n pt rsyt
i dbn sšmw (10) *t3wy ḥmw nfr n pt mḥtt*
di.tn t ḥnkt k3w 3pdw sḏf3.tn (n) it-nṯr ywiw m3ḥ-ḥrw 3ḥ ikr (11) *(m) ḥrt-nṯr*
di.tn n.f ḥnh wḏ3 snb 3wt-ib w3ḥ m t3
di.tn n.f pt t3 3ḥt iwnw dw3t
iw.f rḥ(w) st.tn ir.tn (12) *sw mi*
i itw nṯrw i mwt nṯrw ḥryw t3 imy(w) ḥrt-nṯr
nḥm.tn n.i ywiw
 (13) *m-ḥ sḏbw nb(w) ḏw m-ḥ (n)kn nb ḏw*
m-ḥ šḥt pf mr dmwt
m-ḥ ḥt (14) *nbt ḏwt ḏdt <irt st r.i in>*
nṯrw 3ḥw mwt ḏwt
m ḥrw pn m grḥ pn m (15) *3bd pn m smdt tn (m) rnpt tn*
ḥrt.s ist
ḏd mdw in s ḥft rḥ
di.f sw ḥr nn n (16) *nṯrw*
šs m w3ḏw ḥr ḥny
rḏi n.sn ḥtpt m-b3ḥ.sn
m t ḥnkt iwḏ 3pdw (17) *snṯr irw n.sn prt r ḥrw*
3ḥ pw ḥr wsir
sḏf3 3ḥ pw m ḥrt-nṯr
nḥm s pw (18) *m-ḥ ḥt nbt ḏwt im*
nj.k ir ḥr rmt nbt wpw-ḥr ḥḥw.k ḏs.k
mḏ3t tn nt wnn-nfr
ir ir.n.f nn (19) *rḥ m ḥmw.f*
m mkt.f m ḥrt-nṯr m pt m t3 m bw nb šms.f im
šs m3ḥ ḥḥ n sp



Appendix 2 of the text 'The Upper level. The Side Chamber G. Spell 148'.

Names of the oars in Spells 141 and 148 of the Books of the Dead of the 18th and 19th dynasties

This appendix comprises the names of oars in Spell 141 in the tomb of Tutankhamun and Spells 141 and 148 of the papyri of the 18th and 19th dynasties. The following pages present three vignettes for Spell 148; the vignettes have written names of oars in the papyri of Ani, frame 36; Nakht, frame 9 and Maiherpri. As a rule, when Spell 148 was accompanied by vignettes, they depicted either the cows, the bull and the oars or the cows and the bull. Therefore, we have fewer vignettes with oars than the vignettes with the cows and the bull.

Moreover, the table includes names of the oars from the shrine of Tutankhamun, Spell 141 and from other papyri:

- pNu, frame 11, Spell 148;
- pNu, frame 15, Spell 141;
- pYuya, Spell 148;
- pYuya, Spell 141;
- pKha, frame 5, Spell 148;
- IAmemheb (Meh), frame 12, Spell 141.

Spell 141 starts with the words *wdn t hnkt...* 'giving bread and beer...' and then there is a long list of various deities, who are provided with these offerings, including the names of the oars. That is why there is a preposition 'n' in the majority of the papyri in this place (meaning 'to whom') and this preposition precedes certain names of the oars in this spell.

The order of enumeration of oars in Spells 141 and 148 could vary.

Transliterations of names of the oars are given in the main text.

Drawings of names of the oars, the cows and the bull on the shrine of Tutankhamun in Appendix 2 and 3 - A. Piankoff. *Chapelles de Tout-Ankh-Amon*, MIFAO LXXII, Le Caire 1951–52, p. 17-18.

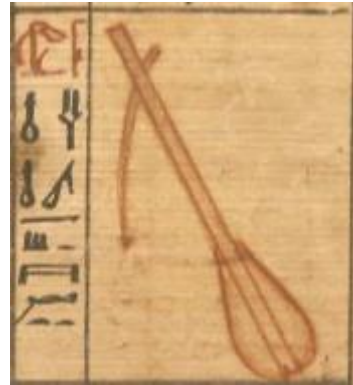


Good steering oar of the northern sky *hmw nfr n pt mht*

pAni, frame 36; pNakht, frame 9



pMaiherpri



pNu, 148



pNu, 141



pYuya, 148



pYuya, 141



pKha, 148



lAmnhb, 141



Tutankhmn, 141



Good steering oar of the eastern sky *ḥmw nfr n pt i3bt*

pAni, frame 36; pNakht, frame 9

pMaiherpri



pNu, 148

pNu, 141

pYuya, 148

pYuya, 141

pKha, 148

IAmmhnb, 141

Tutankhmn, 141

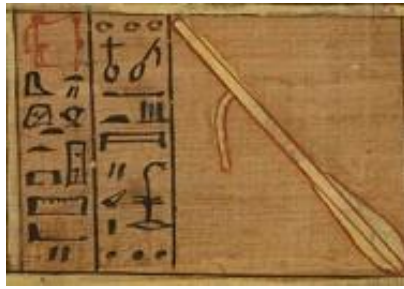


m
i
s
s
e
d



Good steering oar of the southern sky *ḥmw nfr n pt rsyt*

pAni, frame 36; pNakht, frame 9



pMaiherpri



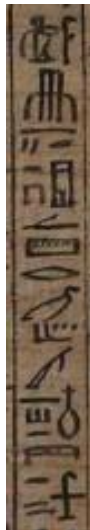
pNu, 148



pNu, 141



pYuya, 148



pYuya, 141



pKha, 148



IAmmhnb, 141



Tutankhmn, 141



Good steering oar of the western sky *ḥmw nfr n pt imntt*

pAni, frame 36; pNakht, frame 9



pMaiherpri



pNu, 148



pNu, 141



pYuya, 148



pYuya, 141



pKha, 148



IAmmhnb, 141



Tutankhmn, 141



Appendix 3 of the text 'The Upper level. The Side Chamber G. Spell 148'.

Names of the cows and the bull in Spells 141 and 148 of the Books of the Dead of the 18th and 19th dynasties

In this Appendix there are images of the names of the cows and bull in Spells 141 and 148. The following pages present 5 vignettes for Spell 148 in the papyri of Yuya, frame 12; Nakht, frame 9, Neferubenef, Maiherpri and Nebseny, frame 5. In the Book of Nebseny, just after the names of the cows and the bull there are names of oars and various wishes.

Moreover, the table contains names of the cows and the bull from the shrine of Tutankhamun in Spell 141 and from other papyri:

- pTui, frame 1, Spell 141;
- pKha, frame 4, Spell 141;
- pKha, frame 5, Spell 148;
- pYuya, Spell 141;
- pNu, frame 15, Spell 141;
- pNu, frame 11, Spell 148;
- pNeferubenef, Spell 148.

For the sake of convenience, the cows are enumerated and these are artificial numbers, since there could be a different order of their presentation in the Books of the Dead.

Spell 141 starts with words *wdn t hnkt...* 'giving bread and beer...' and then there is a long list of various deities, who are provided with these offerings; and the names of the cows and the bull are also mentioned. That is why there is a preposition 'n' in the majority of the papyri in this place (meaning 'to whom') and this preposition precedes certain names of the cows and the bull in this spell.

And now, as to the spelling of the names.

Four out of seven cow names are written identically, while three of them show discrepancies. The name of the cow *3h-bitt s^ht ntr* (Cow 4 in this list) is written as *3h-bitt* in certain papyri, whereas the second part of the name *s^ht ntr*, is written as a standalone name for the cow, which has name *snit pt wtst ntr* in other papyri (Cow 2 in this list). Moreover, while on the shrine of Tutankhamun, in Yuya and Kha the name *s^ht ntr* is written without any changes, the same name in Maiherpri and Nebseny is reshuffled, thus turning into *sh^ct ntr* and *h^ct ntr*. It is also noticeable that in Yuya and Kha these names appear in such a form only in Spell 141, whereas Spell 148 has the names of two cows written in a conventional way as *s^ht ntr*.

As for the name of cow 3, in certain places it is written as *imnyt*, whereas in others as *igrt*; yet again, in the papyri of Yuya and Kha both options of this name appear across two spells. Both of these Books – Yuya and Kha – were the blank-form papyri, i.e., the names were written later; and such mistakes and shortcomings as different names of the same cows in two spells were typical of such kind of the Books. On the whole, these two papyri show a remarkable similarity in the texts and even mistakes; however, in other parts they differ in the details (for instance, in the text of Spell 1). Given that Yuya and Kha both lived at approximately the same time and in the same area (in the area of Thebes), it might be that their papyri were prepared in the same workshop and the same sample was used for certain parts of their papyri. But this, however, is a subject for further research.

The name of the bull was already discussed in the main text; it is identical in all the papyri, except for the papyrus of Nakht.



Cow 1

ḥwt k3w nbt-r-dr 'The House of sustenance, Lady-of-all'

pYuya, frame 12; p Nakht, frame 9; pNeferubenef

pMaiherpri; pNebsey, frame 5



pTui, 141	pKha, 148	pKha, 141	pYuya, 141	pNu, 148	pNu, 141	Tutankhmn



Cow 2

šnit pt wst ntr 'Encircling the sky, Raising the god'

On the shrine of Tutankhamon and in pMaiherpri - *sh^ct ntr*, in pNebseny - *h^ct ntr*, in Spell 141 of pKha and pYuya – *s^cht ntr*.

pYuya, frame 12; p Nakht, frame 9; pNeferubenef



pMaiherpri; pNebseny, frame 5



	pTui, 141	pKha, 148	pKha, 141	pYuya, 141	pNu, 148	pNu, 141	Tutankhmn
m i s s e d							



Cow 3

igrt / imnyt hntt st.s 'The Hidden One / the Silent One, Who is in front of her place'

pYuya, frame 12; p Nakht, frame 9; pNeferubenef

pMaiherpri; pNebsey, frame 5



pTui, 141

pKha, 148

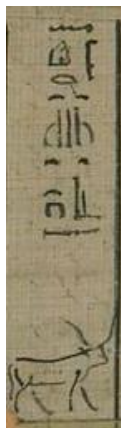
pKha, 141

pYuya, 141

pNu, 148

pNu, 141

Tutankhm



Cow 4

3h-bitt s'ht ntr 'The One of Chemmis, Dignity of gods'

pYuya, frame 12; p Nakht, frame 9; pNeferubenef

pMaiherpri; pNebseny, frame 5



pTui, 141	pKha, 148	pKha, 141	pYuya, 141	pNu, 148	pNu, 141	Tutankhmn



Cow 5

wrt mrwt.s dšrt 'Great in her love, the Red-haired One'

pYuya, frame 12; p Nakht, frame 9; pNeferubenef

pMaiherpri; pNebsey, frame 5



pTui, 141	pKha, 148	pKha, 141	pYuya, 141	pNu, 148	pNu, 141	Tutankhmn



Cow 6

hnmt m 'nh, iwnyt / insyt 'Uniting with life, the Dappled-hair One / the Red-haired One'

pYuya, frame 12; p Nakht, frame 9; pNeferubenef

pMaiherpri; pNebseny, frame 5



pTui, 141	pKha, 148	pKha, 141	pYuya, 141	pNu, 148	pNu, 141	Tutankhmn



Cow 7

shmt rn.s m hmwt.s 'Mighty in her name through her crafts'

pYuya, frame 12; p Nakht, frame 9; pNeferubenef

pMaiherpri; pNebsey, frame 5



pTui, 141	pKha, 148	pKha, 141	pYuya, 141	pNu, 148	pNu, 141	Tutankhmn
						



The Bull

k3 t3y idwt 'The bull, the male of the cows'

pYuya, frame 12; p Nakht, frame 9; pNeferubenef

pMaiherpri; pNebseny, frame 5



Tyи, 141	Xa, 148	Xa, 141	Иyиa, 141	Hy, 148	Hy, 141	Tutankhmn
