

2021

## THE SEVEN SPIRITS (Axw-sfxw) IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION

Radwan Abdel-Rady Sayed Ahmed

*Department of Egyptology-Faculty of Archaeology-Aswan University, Egypt, radluxegy@yahoo.com*

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### Recommended Citation

Sayed Ahmed, Radwan Abdel-Rady (2021) "THE SEVEN SPIRITS (Axw-sfxw) IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION," *Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists*: Vol. 6: Iss. 1, Article 3.

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THE SEVEN SPIRITS  (3hW-sFhW)  
IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION

By

**Radwan ʿAbd ʿEl- Rady Sayed Ahmed**

Assistant Professor in Department of Egyptian Archaeology, Faculty of Archaeology, University of Aswan.

**ABSTRACT**

This paper tackles an important topic in ancient Egyptian religion; the «Seven Spirits». This term is repeatedly mentioned in multiple written forms in religious texts from the Middle Kingdom, the New Kingdom, and the Saite and Late Periods. It seems that these seven deities as creatures or *jinn* were very important in the doctrine of the dead and for their fate in the other world, as evidenced by their frequent mention in religious texts. These deities are named in association with a number of major deities, such as Ra, Osiris, Anubis, Thoth and the four sons of Horus, and they also have a very deep and profound relationship with the deceased and «Big Dipper» group of stars. The texts explicitly disclose their seven names in detail, a number linked to the god Osiris, as they indicate their multiple roles during the deceased's journey in the next world. This study is based on a number of different textual sources and tackles some significant points in ancient Egyptian religion. It attempts to explain and outline:

- The term «Seven Spirits» in ancient Egyptian religion,
- The various written forms of this term,
- The texts in which the Seven Spirits are mentioned from the Middle and New Kingdoms and Late Period, The relationship of the Seven Spirits to other deities mentioned in the same texts, such as Re, Osiris, Anubis, Thoth, Horus and the four sons of Horus,
- The relationship of the Seven Spirits to the symbolism of the number seven in ancient Egypt and its deep connection with the god Osiris, and their association with the group of stars in the northern sky,
- Their relationship with the deceased in the Underworld.

**KEYWORDS:** Ancient Egyptian Religion, The Seven Spirits, Coffin Texts, Osiris.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The term which this paper attempts to examine and interpret consists of two parts: The first part is: 3hw «the spirits» and the second is: sfhw «the seven ones».

The term «Spirits» will first be examined and the second element, «Seven», will then be considered when talking about the connection of these spirits with the number seven, and the symbolic link between this number and the god Osiris and the group of the «Big Dipper» stars in the northern sky.

The term 3h repeatedly occurs in ancient Egyptian religious texts in a variety of writing forms and with various meanings (see references below). Dictionaries of the ancient Egyptian language through its different ages, give examples of this word from the beginning until the last phase of civilization in all its philological forms, as: noun, verb, adjective and adjectival verb.

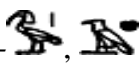
An analysis of the most valuable textual sources and versions of the CT and BD provides detailed information on the «Seven Souls» and: their roles in ancient Egyptian religious thought; their connections with the dead through their journey and their judgment in the Netherworld; their relationship with the other deities in the Underworld; the symbolism of number seven in their names and its significance to the god Osiris; and the idea of everlastingness among the imperishable stars in the northern side of the sky.

## II. EXPLANATIONS OF THE WORD 3h

A detailed search of ancient Egyptian texts and relevant dictionaries for the word 3h in both its singular and plural forms provides two groups of meanings for it with different senses, and of course, in plentiful and distinguished writing forms. These two groups will be mentioned, and then the most relevant meanings for the expression:

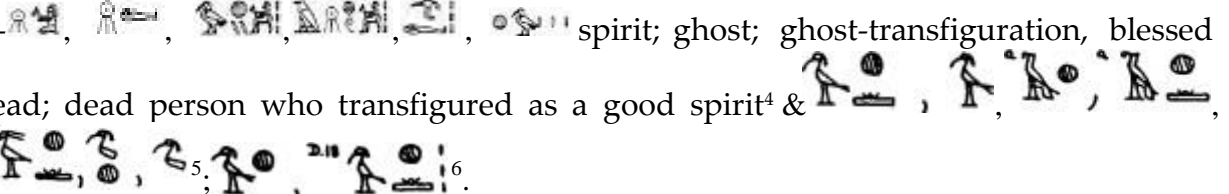



3hw-sfhw (The Seven Akhu) will be focused on in order to provide an accurate translation.

### 1- As noun:

A-  spirit; spirit-like nature<sup>1</sup>.

B-  spirit &  the spirit-state<sup>2</sup>.

C-  spirit; good spirit &  glorious one<sup>3</sup>.

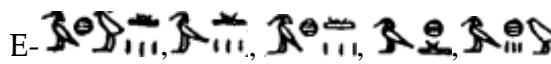

D-  spirit; ghost; ghost-transfiguration, blessed dead; dead person who transfigured as a good spirit<sup>4</sup> &   <sup>5</sup>;  <sup>6</sup>.

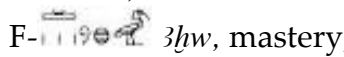
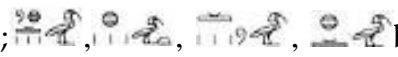
<sup>1</sup>GARDINER 1957: 470.

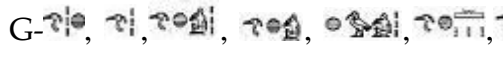
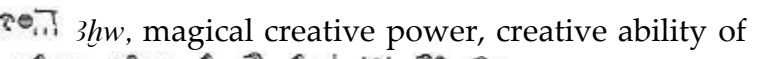
<sup>2</sup>FAULKNER 1991: 4.

<sup>3</sup>LESKO 1982: vol.1, 7.


<sup>4</sup>WB1926: vol.1, 15- 16; WILSON 1997: 15.

E-  *shw*, power of god<sup>7</sup>.  
 <sup>8</sup>.

F-  *shw*, mastery;  benefactions, good, excellent things, glorifications, advantage, efficiency, ability, benefit<sup>9</sup>.


G-  *shw*, magical creative power, creative ability of god or king, power of god, spells &  glorious, creative force, visible power, glory, created glories<sup>10</sup>.

2- as verb:

A-  *sh*, be glorious<sup>11</sup>.


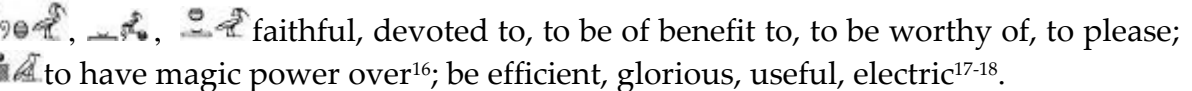
B-  be, become a spirit<sup>12</sup>;  <sup>13</sup>.

3- As adjective and adjectival verb:

A-  *sh*, be beneficial<sup>14</sup>.

B-  Splendid, beneficial, useful, profitable<sup>15</sup>.

C-  to be useful, profitable, excellent, advantageous.

D-  faithful, devoted to, to be of benefit to, to be worthy of, to please;  to have magic power over<sup>16</sup>; be efficient, glorious, useful, electric<sup>17-18</sup>.

Among the previous philological translations of the word *sh*, one may find the required meaning in the category of noun usage. Here, it may be suggested that the meanings in C and E are the most adaptable translations for the term *shw-sfhw*. So, one could give it these two following translations:

- 1- «The seven spirits of the god».
- 2- «The seven powers of the god».

It can be inferred that the above two translations are complementary and not contradictory at all, especially if emphasising that the spirit of a god is synonymous or equal to his power, ability and creative force. G provides this sense as well.

<sup>5</sup> WB 1926: vol.1, 13-15.

<sup>6</sup> WB 1926: vol.1, 15.

<sup>7</sup> FAULKNER 1991: 4.

<sup>8</sup> WB1926: vol. 1, 15.

<sup>9</sup> LESKO 1982: vol.1, 7.

<sup>10</sup> WILSON 1997: 12- 14; WB 1926: vol.1, 13-15.

<sup>11</sup> GARDINER 1957: 470.

<sup>12</sup> FAULKNER 1991: 4.

<sup>13</sup> WB 1926: vol.1, 13.

<sup>14</sup> GARDINER 1957: 470.

<sup>15</sup> FAULKNER 1991: 4.

<sup>16</sup> LESKO 1982: vol. 1, 7.


<sup>17</sup> WILSON 1997: 12-13.

<sup>18</sup> For more reading about *Ax* conception in ancient Egypt: ENGLUND, G., «Akh-Une Notion Religieuse dans L' Égypte Pharaonique», 1987.



**Who were the *3hw-sfhw* «the seven spirits of the god» in ancient Egyptian religion?**

*3hw-sfhw* occur in the religious texts since the Old Kingdom onwards. They were described as a group of minor deities or even genii and as followers and sustainers of certain gods (Re and Osiris). They represented the magical creative powers of the god and were depicted as useful, profitable, beneficial and advantageous to the god, being like accompanying servants. They were also seen as helpful for the good dead, as will be discussed and proven in detail through different textual evidence below.

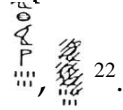
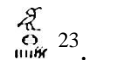
**III. WRITING FORMS**



 *3hw* «The Spirits», minor gods as a designation of certain demons, almost only from Pyramid Texts (PT)<sup>19</sup>, as first occurrence.

 *3hw-sfhw*;  «The Seven Spirits», from M.K.<sup>20</sup>.


 and  *sfhw* «The Seven Ones», without the term «*3hw*»<sup>21</sup>.

*3hw-htpw-sfhw* «The Seven Blessed  
 Spirits».

<sup>22</sup>  
<sup>23</sup>.

 and  *3hw-htpw* «The Blessed Spirits»<sup>24</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> WB 1926: vol.1, 15, also  *3h* is a title for a human personality between *b3* and *k3*; spirit or soul of clarification divine in the human being; spirit as being and as a personality: WB 1926: vol.1, 15.

<sup>20</sup> CT 1947: vol.3, 147b; LGG. I: 45; CT 1951: vol.4, 259a.

<sup>21</sup> CT 1951: vol.4, 258a.

<sup>22</sup> CT 1951: vol.4, 259a.

<sup>23</sup> CT 1951: vol.4, 262b.

<sup>24</sup> CT 1951: vol.4, 263b.



3hw-sfhw «The Seven Spirits» from N.K.<sup>26</sup>

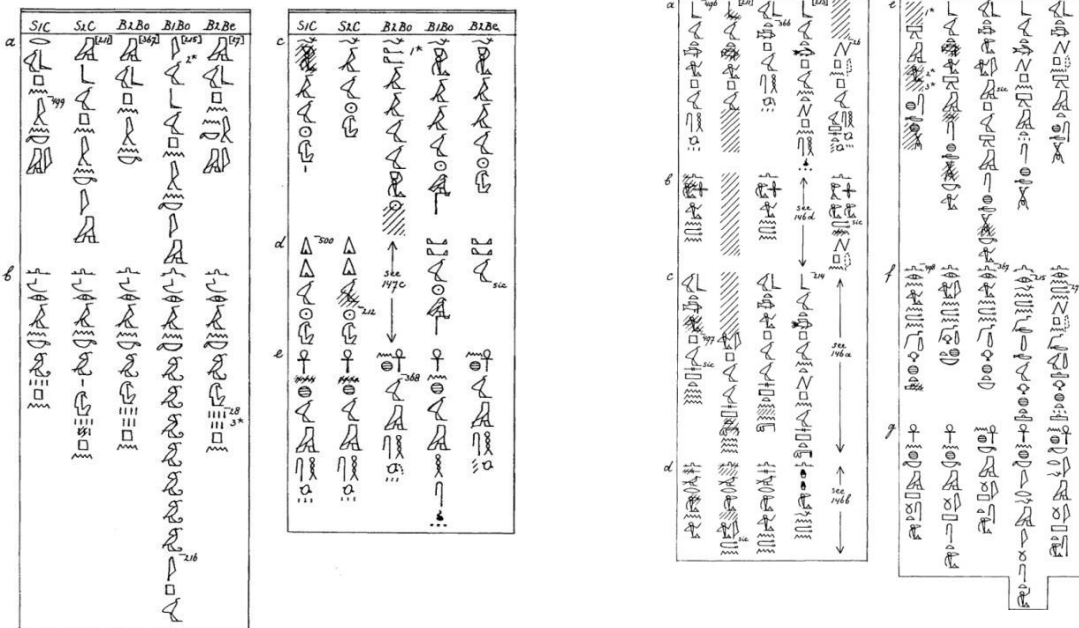
3hw-sfhw «The Seven Spirits» from Saite Period (26<sup>th</sup> Dyn.)<sup>27</sup>.

#### IV. BEGINNING OF APPEARANCE AND CONTINUANCE

The first attestation in religious texts of the terms 3hw-sfhw «The Seven Spirits», 3hw-htpw-sfhw «The Seven Blessed Spirits» and 3hw-htpw «The Blessed Spirits», or even the shortened or abbreviated name for them sfhw «The Seven ones», occur in the Middle Kingdom. They are found especially in the so-called Coffin Texts (CT) of that period and not before this date, and they continue through the following eras until the end of the Late Period. The phrase is mentioned frequently and repeatedly, sometimes with additional words and, of course, in distinguished writing forms, as explained above.

#### V. TEXTS

##### 1- (M.K). Spells 205<sup>28</sup>: «Not to Walk Upside down».



<sup>25</sup> CT 1954: vol.5, 170g.

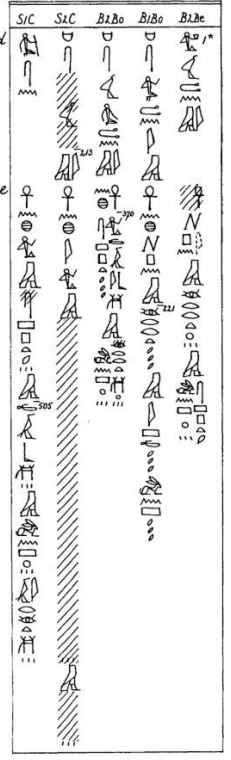
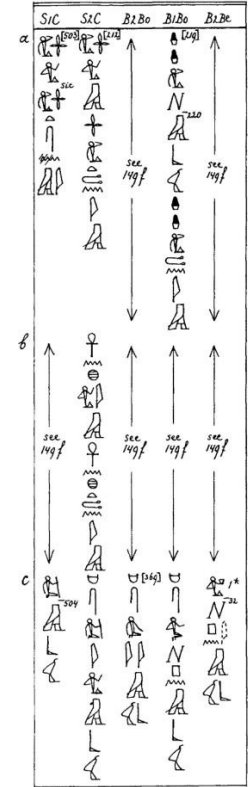
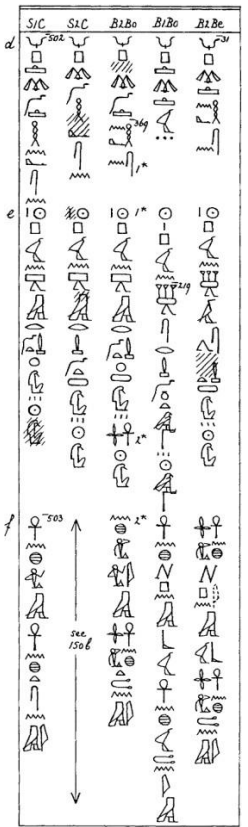
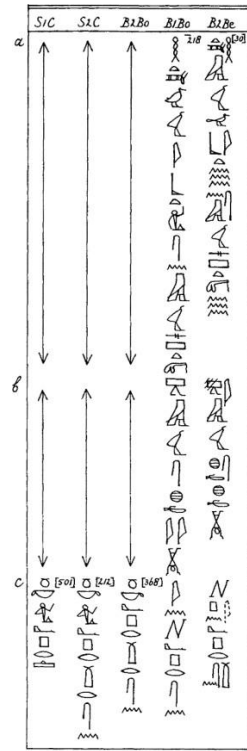
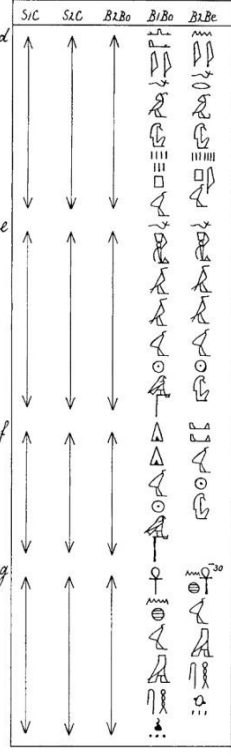
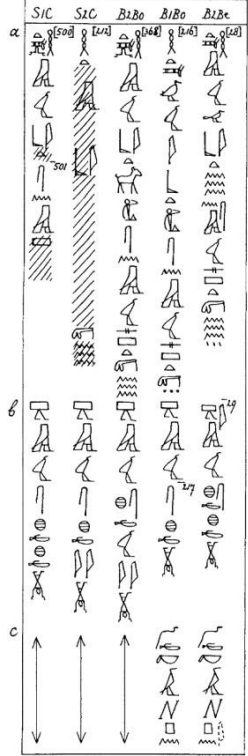
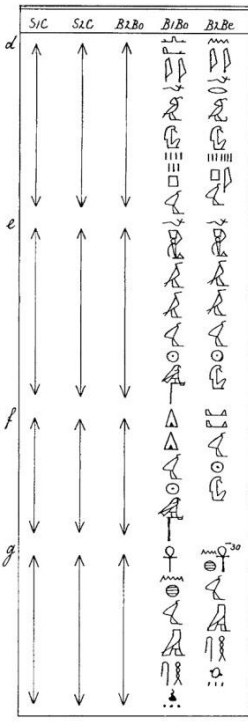
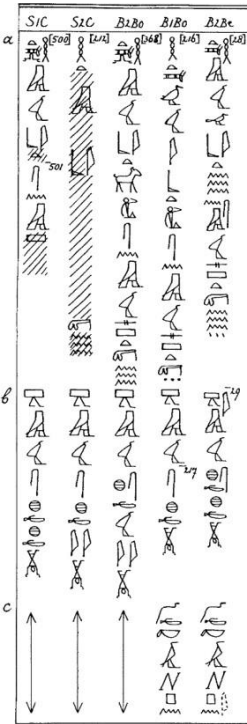
<sup>26</sup> Urk 1906: vol.5, 41, 11; 42, 13; 43, 5 = NAVILLE 1886: 17; LGG. I 2002: 45.

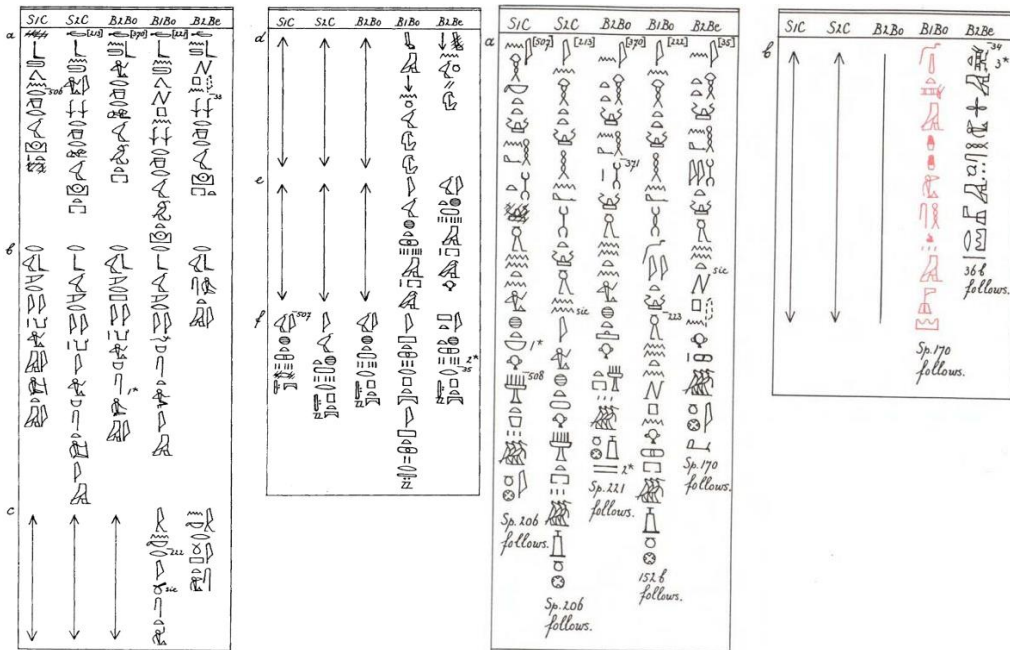
<sup>27</sup> VERHOEVEN 1993: 12 sp. 17 = NAVILLE 1886: 17 col. 9, 11; LGG. I: 45.

<sup>28</sup> CT 1947: vol.3, 146 a-e sp. 205; 147 a-e; 148 a-g; 149 a-f; 150 a-e; 151 a-f; 152 a-b.




  
**THE SEVEN SPIRITS** (3hw-sfhw)
   
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*bwt.i pw ḥsw n wnm.i n.tn bwt.i pw wsšt n swr.n.i n.tn bwt.i šmt šhd n ir.n.i n.tn dd-mdw ḥr ḥt ḥn.k  
 irf m išt r bw pn ii.n.k im n m33 n.k 3ḥw-sḥw ipw f3i.w R<sup>c</sup> di.w R<sup>c</sup> ḥn.w m ḥsw ḥtm.w ibt.sn m wsšt  
 šmi.w šhd  
 ink ḥpr r.sn wp dmd.f ḥn<sup>c</sup>.sn n hrw pw n šmi r d3d3t R<sup>c</sup> ḥn.i m ḥnt.sn im wnm.i wnm.t.sn im ḥms.im bw  
 ḥms.sn im ḥn.i m šspt m d3bw m wnšw i3rrt  
 dbn.i r drw 3ḥt r bw mry k3.i ḥmst ii.k r išt ii.k r išt iw ḥt 7 m Pr-Hr iḥt 3 r pt iḥt 2 r t3in  
 Msktt ḥn<sup>c</sup> M<sup>c</sup>ndt innt.n.i ḥt nbt ḥr ḥ3wwt b3w lwnw*

Faeces is my detestation, and I will not eat for you; urine is my detestation, and I will not drink for you; walking upside down is my detestation, and I will on no account perform the recitation for you.

What will you live on at this place which you have come? They will not look at you those **seven spirits** who lift Re up, who show Re, who live on faeces, who quench their thirst with urine, who walk upside down.

I am one equipped against them, I will sever connection with them on that day of going to the tribunal. I will live on what they live on. I will eat of what they eat of, I will sit in the place where they sit, I will live on cucumbers, figs, *wnšw* and grapes, I will travel around to the limit of the horizon, to the place where my double desires to dwell. What have you come for, what have you come for?

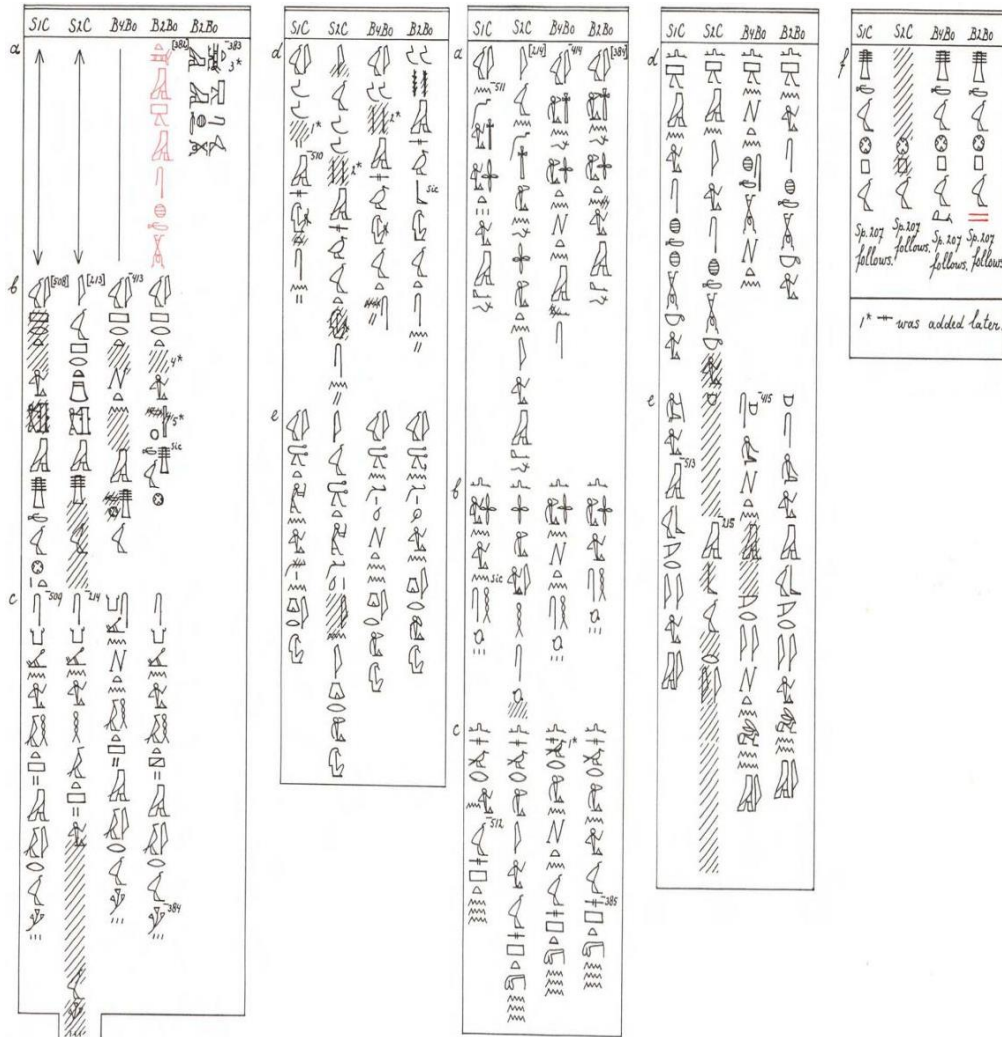
Seven portions are in the House of Horus, three portions are in the sky and two are on earth; it is the Night-bark and the Day-bark which will bring to me all portions from upon the altars of the Souls of On<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>29</sup> FAULKNER 1973: 167-168 sp. 205, n (6-13).



**2. (M.K)**

**Spell 206<sup>30</sup>: «Not to Walk Upside down»**



*iw šrt kd m Ddw*  
*sk3.n.i 3łt 2 m i3rw iw m3m3 2 m s3wty.snyiw*  
*it.n.i ns n igr iw nd wnm.t.i m-<sup>c</sup>.f*  
*n wnm.n.i hsw n swr.n.i wsšt*  
*n šm.n.i šhd hms.i m bw mry.i wnn im Ddw pw*

An obstacle is built in Djedu. I have ploughed two fields of rushes; two dom-palms are their guardians. I have taken away the tongue of the Silent one; I grind my food with it. I will not eat faeces, I will not drink urine, I will not walk upside down, but I will dwell in the place where I desire to be; that is Djedu<sup>31</sup>.

In spells 205 and 206 entitled **Not to Walk Upside down**, one could conclude that the deceased wishes not to eat filth when he is hungry, not drink urine when he is thirsty, and not walk upside down in the realm of the dead as the **seven spirits** do. He wishes to live on cucumber, figs, dom and grapes, and dwell in the place where he

<sup>30</sup> CT 1947: vol.3, 153 sp. 206 a-e, 154 a-f.

<sup>31</sup> FAULKNER 1973: 168 sp. 206.

desires to be in Djedu. Also, for being a virtuous deceased, he deserves to live with the Tribunal of god Re without the punishment of eating and drinking dirty things, and without walking upside down in the netherworld (= lost) because he is a blessed one.

One can find these meanings and more elsewhere in the Coffin Texts of the Middle Kingdom (spell 211), but without mentioning the seven spirits, and also in some spells where they are mentioned (spells 335; 400 and 401), as will be shown below.

### Functions and Roles




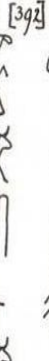



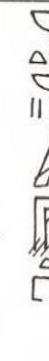
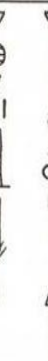



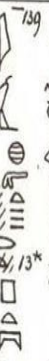

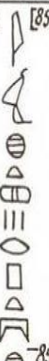





The text of spell 205 gives an important notification that **the seven spirits** are extraordinary creatures, ie. demons, genii or invisible powers (= spirits). They have such powerful strength that they can lift Re or his bark up.

They are his assistants, accompany him all the time and cannot abandon him for a moment or move away from his side at all, because they walk up and down without stopping in order to fulfill their role. That is why they eat excrement and drink urine, for they cannot stop to eat or drink ordinary food and drinks. The blessed dead wishes that these bad things do not happen to him, and that he is not to be obliged to undertake these acts as a punishment in the realm of the dead.

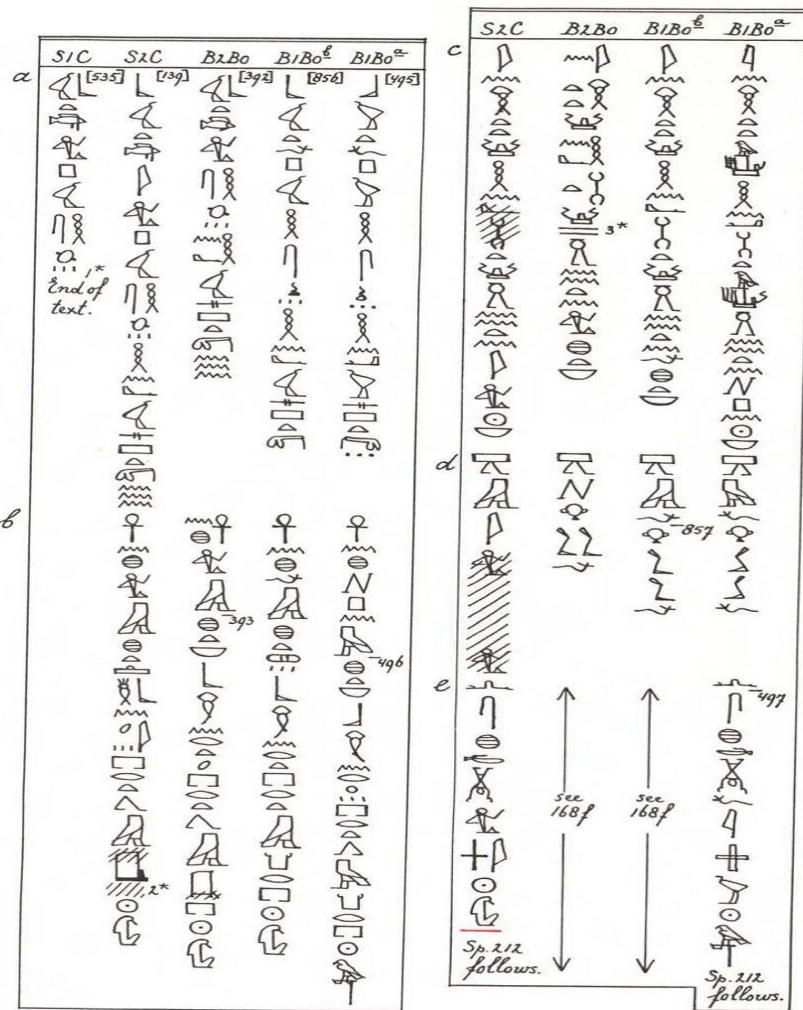
But one can wonder about this point: to whom these things (faeces and urine) which are mentioned with the **seven spirits** belong – themselves or someone else? Here the text is silent! In any case, they eat these horrible things because they are genii, demons or even devils – as is clearly indicated in some of the readings – while human beings hate to eat or drink such dirty things. The blessed dead hope not to live as the **seven spirits** do, but to live on good things from the altars of gods in the netherworld. These meanings can also be found in spell 211, as will be seen below.

**3. (M.K)**

**Spell 211<sup>32</sup>: «Not to Work in the Realm of the Dead».**

	S1C	S2C	B2Bo	B1Bo <sup>b</sup>	B1Bo <sup>a</sup>
c	<sup>534</sup> 	<sup>[38]</sup> 	<sup>[392]</sup> 	<sup>[855]</sup> 	<sup>[494]</sup> 
d					
d		<sup>739</sup> 	<sup>[392]</sup> 	<sup>[855]</sup> 	
e					

<sup>32</sup> CT 1947: vol.3, 166 c-d, 167 d-e, 168 a-e, sp. 211.



*l'nk ng3w sbtyw*  
*nb ht 5 m hwt-nir*  
*iw ht 3 r pt hr R<sup>c</sup>*  
*iw ht 2 r t3 hr Gb*  
*bwt.i pw hsw hn<sup>c</sup> wsšt n<sup>h</sup>.i m ht nbt bnrt prt m k3r R<sup>c</sup>*  
*in Msktt hn<sup>c</sup> M<sup>c</sup>ndt innt n.i r<sup>c</sup>-nb šm.i hr rdwy.i n šhd.i imy R<sup>c</sup>*

I am the bull of the dappled cows, the owner of five portions in the temple; three portions are in the sky with Re, two portions are on earth with Geb.

Faeces and urine are my detestation; I live on the sweet things which are issued from the shrine of Re. It is the Night-bark and the Day-bark which come to me daily; I walk on my feet, I am not upside-down in the presence of Re<sup>33 34</sup>.


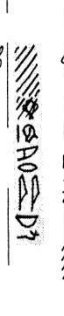
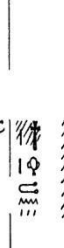
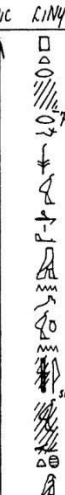


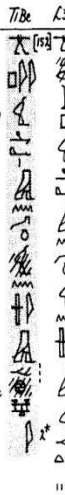
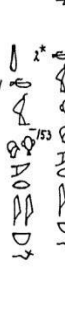

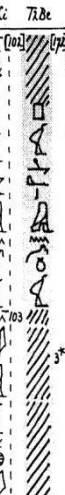
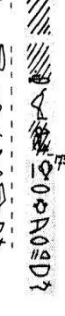
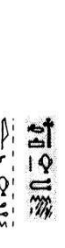
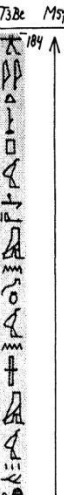



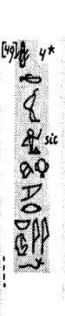
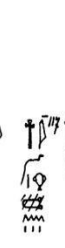


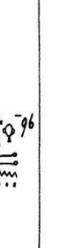



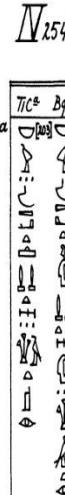
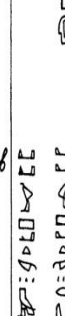
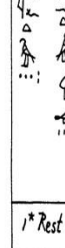
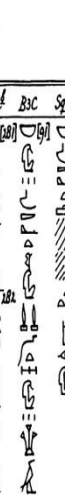
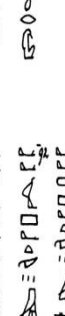






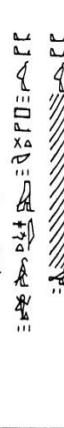







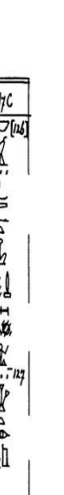
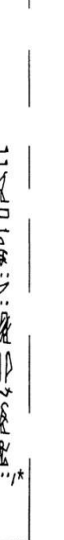

<sup>33</sup> FAULKNER 1973: vol.1, 169 sp. 211.

<sup>34</sup> For more texts of CT about not to eat faeces, not to drink urine and not to walk upside down in the realm of the dead, see also: 170 sp. 213; 171 sp. 214; 171-72 sp. 215; 171-72 sp. 216; 172-73 sp. 217; 173 sp. 218; 173 sp. 220; 174-76 sp. 224.









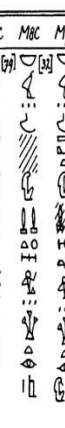




4.(M.K)

Spell 335<sup>35</sup>: «GOING OUT INTO THE DAY FROM THE REALM OF THE DEAD».

M5yC	M1C	L1N4	T3e	L3i	T3e	T3e	M5yC	M1N4	B1H2e						
<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 	<p>a</p>  <p>b</p>  <p>c</p> 

IV 254

Spell 335

T1C*	B1yC	B3C	S1y2	T1C	B1P	B3C	B1y	B1yC	S1yC	S1yC	M1C	M1C	M1C
<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p> 	<p>a</p>	<p>a</p>	<p>a</p>

\* Rest of line (= 7/10 l.) empty.

<sup>35</sup> CT 1951: vol.4, 253 c sp. 335; 254 a-b; 255 a-b; 256 a-c; 257 a-c; 258 a-b; 259 a-c; 260 a-c; 261 a-d; 262 a-b; 263 a-c; 264 a-c; 265 a-e; 266 a-e; 267 a-e; 268 a-d; 269 a-i; 270 a-c; 271 a-g; 272 a-c.



MsvC	MIC	LINV	TiDe	L3Li	TiDe	T3De	MsvC	MINV	BHIDr
[33]	[32]	[31]	[30]	[29]	[28]	[27]	[26]	[25]	[24]
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

MsvC	MIC	LINV	TiDe	L3Li	TiDe	T3De	MsvC	MINV	BHIDr
[33]	[32]	[31]	[30]	[29]	[28]	[27]	[26]	[25]	[24]
⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮	⋮

1\* Traces: 7777.  
 2\* Arranged thus:  
 3\* Arranged thus:  
 4\* 261c precedes.


  
**THE SEVEN SPIRITS** (Arw-sfxw)
   
**IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION**

**IV.162** *Spell 335*

M57C	MIC	L1NY	TiBe	L3Li	TiBe	TiBe	M57C	MINY	BH1Be
↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

1\* 262a precedes.  
 2\* End of line, see the plan on p. 272.  
 3\* 1 now lost, preserved in copy Passalacqua.  
 4\* Publication: *EGP*.  
 5\* *EGP*, probably.  
 6\* 262a precedes.

**IV.162** *Spell 335*

TiC*	B4C*	B3C	Sy4Sy	TiC*	B1P	B4	B4C*	SyC	SyC	M5C	M5C	M5C
↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

1\* See, not - but → or ←.  
 2\* *l* before, probably a corruption of →.  
 3\* The lacuna is too long for 262a. Perhaps the last 4 squares were black and contained the text of 262a.  
 4\* End of l. and side.  
 5\* Beautiful.

**IV.164** *Spell 335*

M57C	MIC	L1NY	TiBe	L3Li	TiBe	TiBe	M57C	MINY	BH1Be
↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

1\* 265b precedes.  
 2\* Very doubtful, possibly 44?  
 3\* Trace 44/1.  
 4\* Lacau's copy gives III.  
 5\* 265c precedes.

**IV.164** *Spell 335*

TiC*	B4C*	B3C	Sy4Sy	TiC*	B1P	B4	B4C*	SyC	SyC	M5C	M5C	M5C
↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

1\* o small, added later?  
 2\* Possibly room for 44.



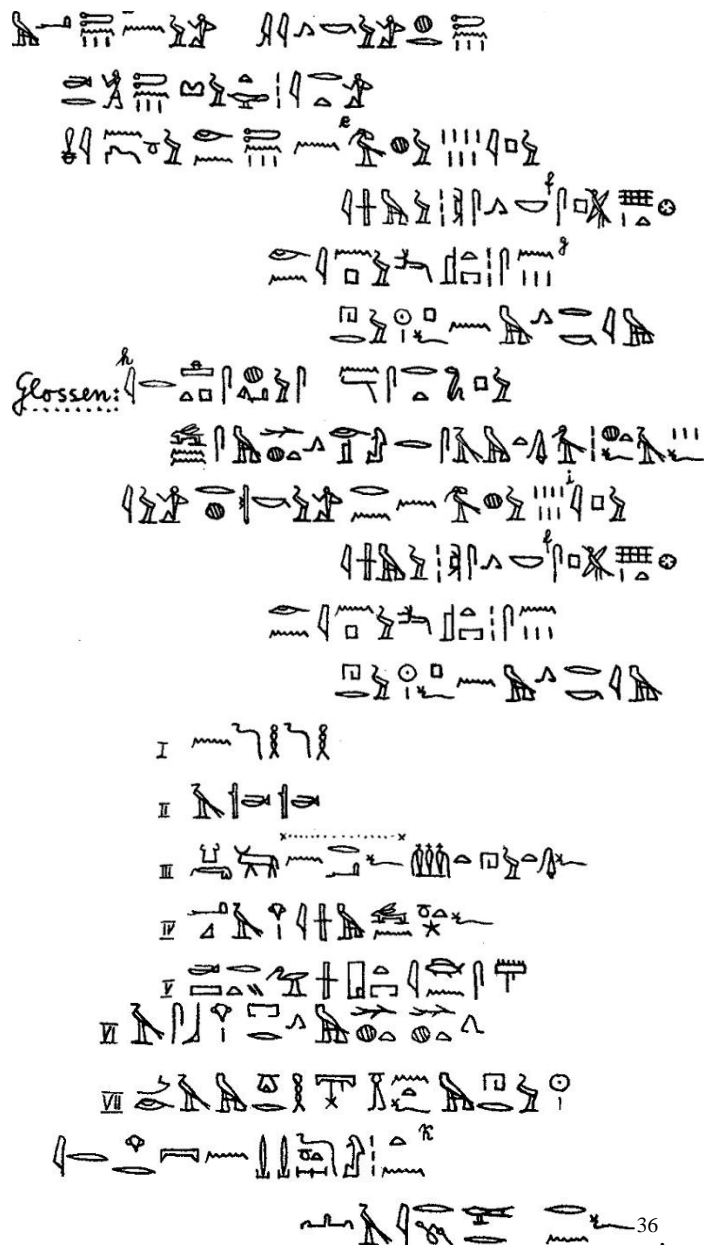
	71c*	29c†	23c	59c‡	71c	217	214	29c*	59c	59c	M1c	M1c	M7c
a	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
b	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
c	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
d	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
e	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→

1\* See the plan on p. 171. 2\* A corruption of 23. 3\* 268 b follows. 4\* See plan on p. 171. 5\* Or etc?

	M1c	L1NY	T1Be	L3Li	T1Be	T3Be	M57c	M1NY	BH1Be
a	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
b	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
c	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
d	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→
e	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→	→

1\* 270 c precedes. 2\* Or 244. 3\* End of l. the entire lacuna of l. 138 seems to be needed for the name 23 etc. 4\* 7\* see p. 171. 5\* 171 d follows.





*ind-hr.in nbw m3't d3d3t h3t Wsir (r)ddw s'c t m isftyw imyw-ht Htp.s hw.s mk.in ii.k hr.in dr.in dwtirt mi  
 nw ir.n.in n 3hw-sflhw ipw imyw sms.w nb-sp3wt ir.n lnpw st.sn hrw pf nmi rk r Htp.s hw.s Nsrt pw  
 wnn.s m-ht Wsir r s3m b3w hftyw.f iw.i rh.kwy rn(w) n 3hw-sflhw ipw imyw smsw nb- sp3wt ir.n  
 lnpw st.sn hrw pf nmi rk im ir hry n d3d3t tn N-3r-wr rn.f Ndhdh 3kdkd K3-n(rdi).f-hnt- hwt.f Km-hr-imy  
 wnw.f Dšrt-hnty-hwt-insy 3sb-hr-pri-m-ht-hti M33-m-grh-int.f-m-hrw  
 ir hry n d3d3t tn N 3r-wr rn.f*

Hail to you, lords of truth, the tribunal which is behind Osiris which put terrors into those who are false when 'those whom it protects are at rest.

See, I have come to you so that you may get rid of the evil which is on me, just as you did for those **Seven Spirits** who follow after the Lord of the Nomes, when Anubis

<sup>36</sup> *Urk* 1906: vol. 5, 39-41, a text from M.K.



prepared their seats on that day of 'come thence' as for 'those whom it protected are at rest' it means 'the fiery serpent'<sup>37</sup>.

It follows after Osiris to burn up the powers of his foes. I know the names of the **Seven Spirits** who are in the following of the Lord of the Nome's, whose seats Anubis made on that day of come thence! As for the chief of this company, his name is '**The Great One is not driven away**'.

(The names of the seven spirits are): *Ndhdh*, *3kdkd*, «**Bull who was not put to his burning**», «**Black-Faced who is in his hour**», «**Bloody one who is Pre-eminent in the Mansion of Red Linen**», «**Radiant-Face who comes out after having turned back**», «**He who sees in the night what he shall bring by day**»<sup>38</sup>.


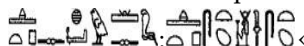
He serves as the chief of this group, where his name is «**The Great One who is not driven away**»<sup>39</sup>.


### Functions and Roles

This long spell has proved that the seven spirits are a group of powerful souls depicted as the followers of Osiris. They always accompany him and they are described together as the tribunal which is behind Osiris. They are the lords of truth and they punish sinners, evil-doers and bad people by putting terror into them.

The text mentions all of their names (7 personalities, in addition to the 8<sup>th</sup> personality as their chief). The deceased must know their names well – as will be clearly mentioned in spells 400 and 401 – keeping them in his heart, and recalling the names from his mind. He shall need to call each member by his own name when he requires help in the Hall of Maat (Justice) for his judgment and justification in the presence of the god Osiris, lord of eternity and ruler of everlastingness.

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<sup>37</sup>  *Htp.s-hw.s* «She is the merciful and the protector one» as a name for a goddess: 1926: vol.3, 194;  «She is satisfied, when she protects» a title for the goddesses Isis, Skhmet or Hathor from M.K. CT, N.K. BD and temples of Greco-Roman Period Dendera, Philae, Edfu & Tod: LGG. V 2002: 579

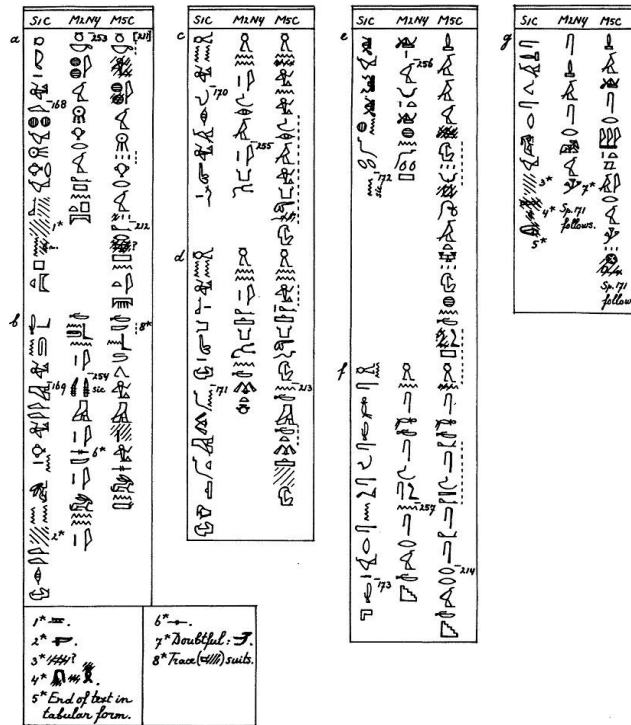
She is also titled in this text as  *Nsrt pw* «this fiery Serpent» who burns the enemies of Osiris, and *Irt pw nt Ra* «this eye of Re» in spell 17 Book of the Dead from New kingdom. Thus, she is one of Re's daughters, who are violent and aggressive goddesses, the protectors of the universal solar being and its manifestations of their father Re, in order to revenge him and destroy his foes to keep the cosmos in balance.

<sup>38</sup> FAULKNER 1973: vol.1, 264 sp. 335, part I-268 n(49-61).

<sup>39</sup> These last two bold underlined phrases in transliteration and translation were found in the copy of spell 335 in: *Urk* 1906:vol.5, 41. I prefer to gather them here in one text so as to not miss any important small details in this valuable text about «**The Seven Spirits**» from M.K.

5. (M.K)

Spell 400<sup>40</sup>: «Spell for [Joining (?)] The Ferry-Boat to the Realm of the Dead, to the Place [Where Osiris Is (?)]»



*ihw-sfhw ipw mhntyw nw pt M33-h3.f mi inn n.i mhnt tw m rn.s K3yt 3h.s n K3yt sbi.t(w) m dw...inirw dr nir in wpwt ii.t(w) r.i ksn.tw Msktt M<sup>c</sup>ndt tw3.f hr.i r[m]n.f hr.i R<sup>c</sup> m htp hms.i m hr-ib.f wd<sup>c</sup> b3 imy 3ht d3.n.i <sup>c</sup>.i hr<sup>c</sup> n Hr ibwt St ink ihhw hry <sup>c</sup>r šnyt dbn.n.i m.i st wn.n.i inn.n.i m33.i K3 inn n.i <sup>c</sup> K3 m dmdw Hnm d3.w wp w3wt.i hnd.ty-š inn.s šdi.s m3s.n.s r rwdw d3i.sr Sht-Brw*

O you **Seven Spirits**, the ferrymen spirits of the sky; O *M3h3f*, come and bring me the ferry-boat in its name of *k3yt*-boat and its power of *k3yt*-boat which is sent from the mountain<

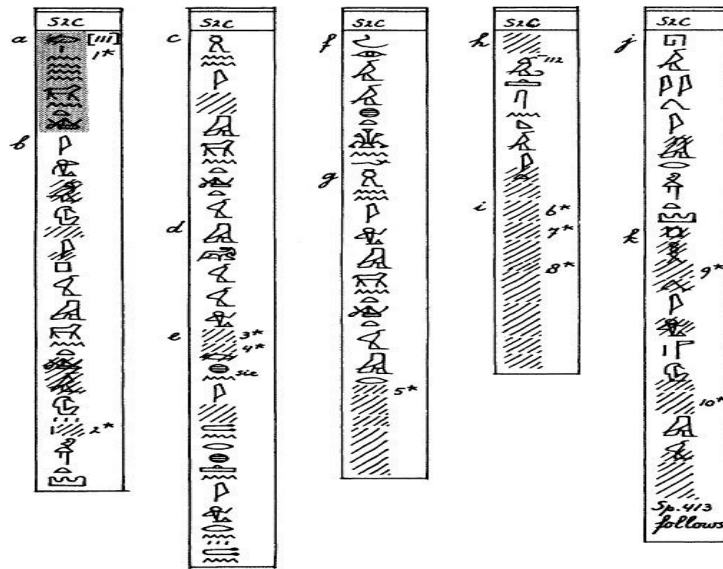
O you gods beside (?) the god, a message have come for me; The Night-bark and the Day-bark are built, flee leans on me and relies on me, and Re is at peace. I sit beside him, and the soul which is in the horizon gives judgment; I have extended my arm over the arm of Horus and the sandal of Seth. I am the twilight which is over the approach of the storm; I travel around<May (something) be brought to me that I may see the bull-snake, may the warrant of the bull-snake bring to me the crowd of Khnum. Those who ferry over are those who open my paths (to) the lake of shanks. She brings and takes away, for she has knelt at the stairway, she crosses over to the Field of Rushes<sup>41</sup>.

<sup>40</sup>CT 1954: vol.5, 170 g; 171 a-f; 172 a-g; 173 a-g sp. 400.

<sup>41</sup> FAULKNER 1977: vol. 2, 43-44 sp. 400, 45, n(17-35).

6. (M.K)

Spell 401<sup>42</sup>: «Spell for A Ferry-Boat».



*i 3hw-sfxw ipw mhntyw [nw] Imnt inn n.i mhnt tw m iwry.i [hr-ntt] rh.n.i in rh.n.i rrw M3-3ht-n.finn n.i mhnt tw [m rn.s K3yt m] 3h.s n K3yt [...] h3i.i im r Imnt s3h.i nir [imy] [...]*

O you [**Seven (?) Spirits**, the ferrymen spirits [of] the West, bring me the ferry-boat when I call out, [because (?) I know you and I know your names.

O *M3-3ht-n.f*, bring me the ferry-boat in [its name of *K3yt*-boat and in] its power of *K3yt*-boat [...]. I will go down in it to the West, I will reach the god who is in [...].

**Functions and Roles**

In spells 400 and 401, one can read about the role of the seven spirits as ferrymen of the sky or ferrymen-spirits of the west. The dead must know their names as they have been read in spell 355. When the deceased calls them by their names, they will come and bring to him the ferry-boat to cross the sky on his journey to the west, where he can join the celestial journey of the god Re in his divine *M<sup>c</sup>ndt* and *Msktt* boats day and night, in order to be one of his companions. Then, he shall descend in the ferry-boat to the underworld, to join Osiris who shall judge him as a blessed dead who deserves to live in the Field of Rushes eternally.

These two texts have undoubtedly proven that **the seven spirits** were assistants and followers of Re and Osiris. They help the good dead in crossing all the hazards and obstacles through the journey of eternity in the west to safely reach the final destination and arrive at the eternal abode in paradise, enjoying all good things in a luxurious stay and an eternal life.

<sup>42</sup>CT 1954: vol.5, 174 b-k sp. 401.

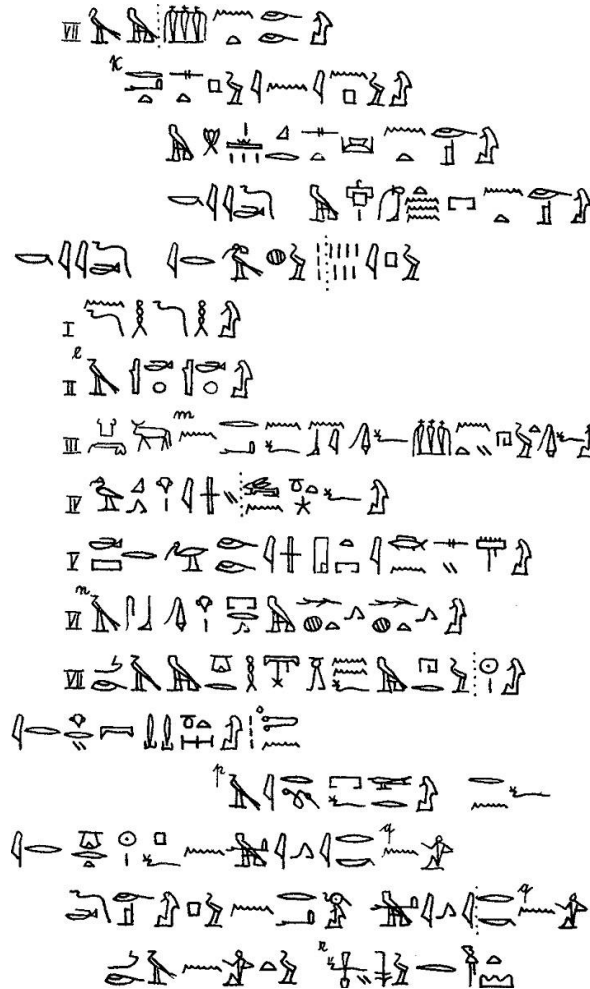
<sup>43</sup>FAULKNER 1977: Vol. 2, 45 sp. 401, 46, n( 1-8).

7. (N.K).

This is spell 17 from Book of the Dead of the New Kingdom [FIGURES 1-4]. It has been found inscribed on a number of sarcophagi from the New Kingdom:

- 1- Cairo 28023, sarcophagus of *Hr-htp*.
- 2- Cairo 28034, sarcophagus of *S3t-B3stt*.
- 3- Cairo 28035, sarcophagus of *Hr*.
- 3- Berlin 9, sarcophagus of *Mniw-htp*<sup>44</sup>.

It is completely transmitted from the Coffin Texts of the Middle Kingdom(= CT IV, spell335, 253c-272a-c).



*ind hr.in nbw m3t d3d3t h3t Wsir ddw sct m isftyw imyw-ht Htp.s-hw.s mk.in wi ii.kwy hr.in dr.in dwt  
nbwt irt [m].i nw ir.n.in n 3hw-sfw ipw imyw sms.w nb-sp3wt ir.n lnpw swt.sn hrw pf nmi rkim ptr  
rf st ir nn n nirw nbw m3t Stj pw hn<sup>c</sup> lds nb imntt*

<sup>44</sup> SETHE & SCHÄFER 1916: 1; 41-49 M.K.; 41-44 N.K.; 44-46 Late Period.

See also: LEPSIUS, R., *Das Totenbuch der Ägypter nach den Hieroglyphischen Papyrus in Turin*, Leipzig 1842, 1969; NAVILLE, E., *Das aegyptische Totenbuch Der XVIII. Bis XX. Dynastie Aus Verschiedenen Urkunden*, 3 Bde, Erster Band, Text und Vignetten, Berlin, 1886, ss. xxiv-xxvi & pls. xxvii-xxx; Zweiter Band, Varianten, Kapitel 17, ss. 29-74, for *3hw-sfw*, ss. 53-57. For more information and details about this spell, see: SAFAA 'ABDEL MONEIM 'IBRAHIM SAYED 2016.

*ir d3dt h3t Wsir (f)msty H3pi Dw3-mwt.f Kbh-snw.f n3 pw nty m-s3 p3 hpš m pt mht ir ddw št m isftyw  
 imyw-ht Htp.s-šhw.s iw.w Htp.s-šhw.s Sbk pw imy mw ir Htp.s-šhw.s lrt pw nt R<sup>c</sup> ky dd Nsrt pw  
 wnn.s m-ht Wsir hr s3m b3w hftyw.f  
 ir grt dwt nbwt irt.i ir.in mk nbw nhh dr h3.f m ht nt mwt.f ir grt 3hw-sfhw ipw I: (f)msty 11: H3pi111:  
 Dw3-mwt.f IV: Kbh-snw.f V: M33-n-it.f VI: Hry-b3k.f VII: Hr-m-hnty-irty rdit st pw in lnpw m s3w  
 krst-ibt nt Wsir ky dd m s3w w<sup>6</sup>bt-pr nt Wsir ky dd ir 3hw-sfhw1: Ndhdh 11: 3kdkd 111: K3-n-rdi.n.f-  
 nby.f-hnty-hwt.f IV: k-hr-imy-wnwt.f V: Dšrt-irty-imy hwt-insy VI: 3sb-hr-pri-m-ht-hti VII: M33-m-  
 grh inn.f m hrw  
 ir hry d3dt tn (N) 3r-pri.f-wr rn.f ir grt hrw pf n mi ir.k n.i dd wsir pw n R<sup>c</sup> [n] mi ir.k n.im33.n.i.tw (m)  
 hsfw sw r lmnt*

Hail to you, lords of truth, and the tribunal that is behind Osiris which puts terrors into those who are false when «those whom it protects are at rest».

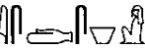

See, I have come to you so that you may get rid of the evil which is on me, just as you did for those **Seven Spirits** who follow the «Lord of the Nome's (= Osiris)», when Anubis prepared their seats on that day of «come thence» there.

What does it mean? These gods, lords of truth, they are Setekh (Seth) and Isds<sup>45</sup>, lord of the west.

The tribunal that is behind Osiris: Imsti, Hapi, Duamutef and Kebehsenuf who are behind the Constellation of the Great Bear in the northern sky. They put terrors into those who are false. They who are behind «those whom it protected are at rest» come, when «those whom it protected are at rest». It is Sobek who exists in water and was made by «those whom it protected are at rest». It is the eye of Re and in another speech it is the fiery serpent which exists after Osiris to burn up the powers of his foes.

«You may get rid of the evil which is on me» means to protect since man descends from the body of his mother, for they are the lords of eternity, where each has a function of these **Seven Spirits**; I: Imsti, II: Hapi, III: Duamutef, IV:Kebehsenuf, V: «who sees his father», VI: «who holds his tree», or «who is beneath his tree», VII: «Horus, whose face has two eyes» or «Horus, who has two eyes in his face».Protection is executed by Anubis, guarding the burial mound (tomb) of Osiris, and in another speech guarding the purification-house of Osiris. As for the **Seven Spirits**, I: *Ndhdh*, II: *3kdkd*, III: «Bull who was not put to his burning», IV: «Black-Faced who is in his hour», V: «Bloody one who is Pre-eminent in the Mansion of Red Linen», VI: «Radiant-Face who comes out after having turned back», VII: «He who sees in the night what he shall bring by day» he serves as the chief of this group, where his name is «The Great One who is not driven away». This Osiris (=deceased) says to Re: coming which you have done to me, I may see you approaching near him in the west.

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<sup>45</sup>  *Isds*, a title for the Ibis bird! by, the sacred symbol of god Thoth or for Thoth himself from Middle Kingdom, and continued in New Kingdom, Saite, Late and Greco-Roman periods. It seems to be equaled or identified in Late Period with  *Isdn* «One who Listens carefully, as a judge?» a title for Thoth from New Kingdom, which continued in the Saite, Late and Greco-Roman periods LGG.I 2002: 558- 61.*Isdn*, *Istn*, uncommon name form for the god Thoth from the end of N.K. and Greco.-Roman. Period; *Isds* also as a name or title for Anubis, Thoth and other gods from *M.k*; WB 1926: vol.1, 133-134.



## Functions and Roles

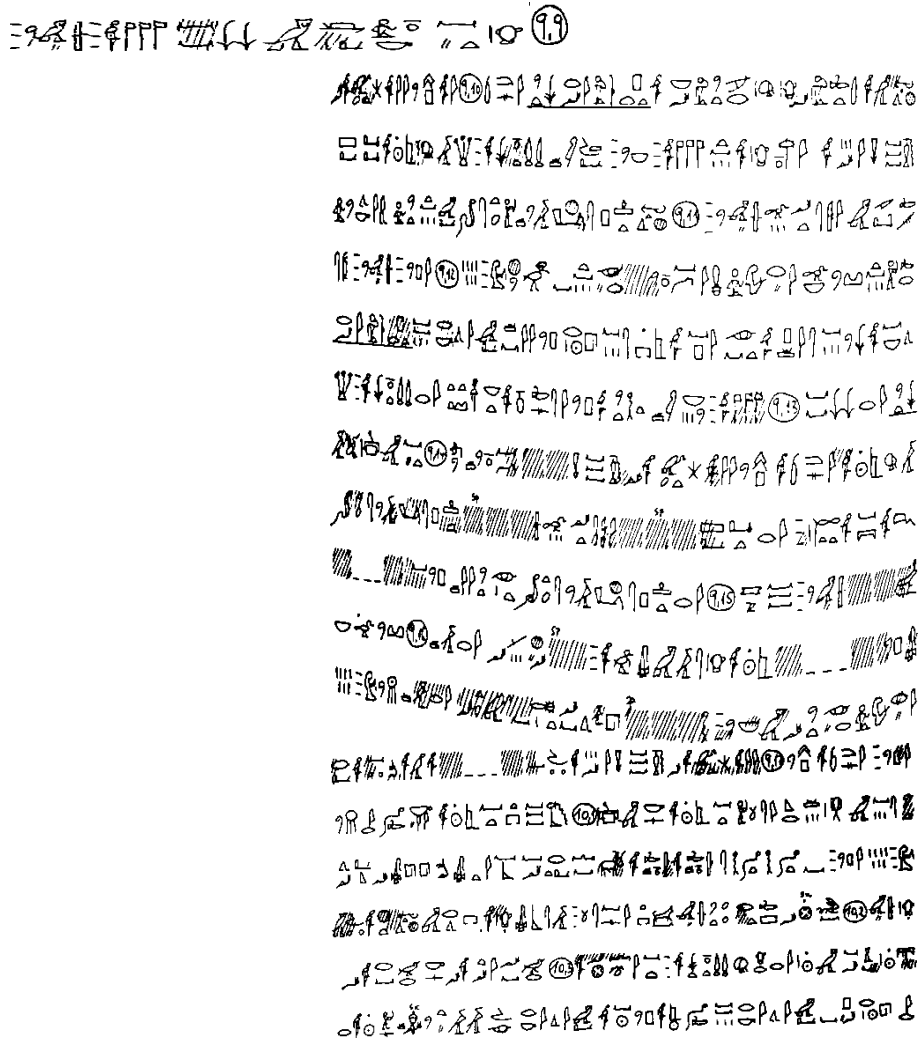
From the *N.K* religious texts onwards, one can notice a new reading of **the seven spirits** in the Book of the Dead (BD). In spell 17 from BD, this is the first time the texts mention the so-called 'Four Children (Sons) of Horus': Imsti, Hapi, Duamutef and Kebehsenuf as the tribunal which is behind Osiris instead of the **seven spirits** in the Coffin Texts (*CT*) of *M.K*.

Not only that, but the texts of the *N.K*, the Saite Period (26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty) and the Late Period, as presented below, place the «Four Children of Horus» as members of the **seven spirits** group; they form the first four, in addition to three newly named figures, except in the text of the Late Period. They are completely different from the **seven spirits** whose names appear in the *CT*.

In the text of spell 17 from BD, one can read that the Four Sons of Horus are the tribunal behind the constellation of the Great Bear in the northern sky. Also, they put terror into sinners, evil-doers and the false or bad dead, and they are protectors as the lords of eternity. They have, in addition, been given functions or appointed by *lnpw* (Anubis) as guards for the tomb of Osiris and his place of embalmment. Similarly, the coffin texts of the *M.K* mention that Anubis is the one who has set their places or has given them their functions (see above: text 335).

These previous roles and functions are mentioned in spell 17 of the BD, with the new group names of the *N.K*, rather than the old group names of the seven spirits in the *CT* of the *M.K*.

**8. (Saite Period, 26<sup>th</sup> Dyn.)<sup>46</sup>.**



*hr-nty ink w<sup>c</sup> m nn nlrw imyw-ht Hr mdt.f hr-tp mrwt nb.f ptr irf swt lms(t)y H3pi Dw3-mwt.f Kbh-snw.f*

*ind-hr.in nlrw nbw m3<sup>c</sup>t d3d3t sw h3 Wsir ddw s<sup>c</sup>t m isftyw imyw-ht Htp.s- h<sub>w</sub>.s*

*mk.tn tw.i ii.kwy dr.tn dw nb iry.i mi nw lll lll ir.tn n 3hw-sfhw ipw imyw šms nb.sn sip irt.n lnpw*

*st.sn hrw pw nm<sup>c</sup>ir.k n.n ptr irf swt ir nn nlrw nbw m3<sup>c</sup>t Thwt pw lsd<sup>s</sup> nb lmn<sup>t</sup>t*

*ir d3d3t swt h3-tp Wsir lms(t)y H3pi Dw3-mwt.f Kbh-sn[w.f] lll lll nw s3h.w nty m-s3 p3 hpš n pt mh<sup>t</sup>t ir*

*dit š<sup>c</sup>[t] lll lll isftyw [imyw-ht] Htp.s-h<sub>w</sub>.s Sbk [pw wr] imy mw ir Htp.s-h<sub>w</sub>.s irt pw lll*

*lll... lll ht pw lll... lll Wsir hr s3m lll hftyw.f ir dw nb iry.i irt.f m nbw lll lll lll h3.f m ht n mwt.f ir*

*3hw-sfhw ipw lms<sup>t</sup>i H3pi Dw3-mwt.f Kbh-snw.f M3-n-[it.f] lll... lll Hr hnt-[irty] rdit.sn m s3w krst*

*nt Wsir ks m s3[w] w<sup>c</sup>bt nt Wsir ky dd ir 3hw-sfhw ipw Ndh<sup>t</sup>dh<sup>t</sup> Škdkd K3-nn-rdit.n.f-nbyt.f-hnt<sup>t</sup>-hh.f*

*k.f-hr-imy-wnw<sup>t</sup>.f Dšrt-irty-imy-hnt-hwt-insy 3sb-hr-pri-m-htht M33-m-grh-inn.f-m hrwir hr[y]-tp d3d3t*

*swt nty N 3ri.f wr.f nit.f ks wr rn.f*

*ir hrw pf nm<sup>c</sup>ir.k n.n dd Wsir pw n R<sup>c</sup> mi ir.k m33 hsf s(w) R<sup>c</sup> r lmn<sup>t</sup>t*

I am one of these gods who are following Horus. He shall speak, on behalf of his beloved lord, what does it mean? Imsti, Hapi, Duamutef and Kebehsenuf.

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<sup>46</sup> VERHOVEN 1993: 12-13, cols. 9 9-17, 10 1-3; Teil 1: Text, 100-102 for a translation with notes.

Hail to you (O) gods, lords of truth, (and) the tribunal which is behind Osiris, which puts terrors into those who are false, and follows when «those whom it protected are at rest».

You behold, I have come to you, (that) you may remove all evil which belongs to me, like what you have done for these **Seven Spirits** who accompany their lord *Sip*<sup>47</sup>. Anubis prepared their seat on that day of coming which you have done to us there, what does it mean? Concerning these gods, lords of truth, it is Thoth and «Isdes» lord of the west.

Concerning the tribunal which is behind Osiris: Imsti, Hapi, Duamutef and Kebehse[uef]. These [...] reach that which is behind the Great Bear-constellation in the northern sky. Concerning putting terrors [...] those who are false, [who are following after] «those whom it protected are at rest». [It is] Sobek [who exists] in water. Concerning «those whom it protected are at rest», it is the eye [...]. It is the flame [...]...[...]. Osiris to burn up [...] his foes.

Concerning all evil which belongs to me, he shall remove with lords of [...] (since) he descended from the body of his mother. Concerning these **Seven Spirits; I: Imsti, II: Hapi, III: Duamutef, IV: Kebehseuef, V: «who sees [his father]», VI: [...], VII: «Horus, whose face has two eyes»**. They are performing as guards of the burial mound (tomb) of Osiris, and in another speech, as guards of the embalmment-place of Osiris. Concerning these **Seven Spirits; I: *Ndhdh*, II: *3kdkd*, III: «Bull who was not put to his burning», IV: «Black-Faced who is in his hour», V: «Bloody one who is Pre-eminent in the Mansion of Red Linen», VI: «Radiant-Face who comes out after having turned back», VII: «He who sees in the night what he shall bring by day»**. Concerning the chief of this group «**One who is not driven away, his great for (of / with) his father**», and in another speech, «**The Great One**» is his name.



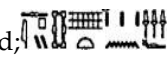

Concerning that day of coming, Osiris (=dead) says to Re: coming which you have done, he may see Re approaching in the west.

## Functions and Roles

In this text, the deceased hope to be one of the Four Sons of Horus (Lords of truth) in order to follow Horus with them, and to be among the beloved of father (Horus). Osiris is their lord, and they accompany him as the **seven spirits**.

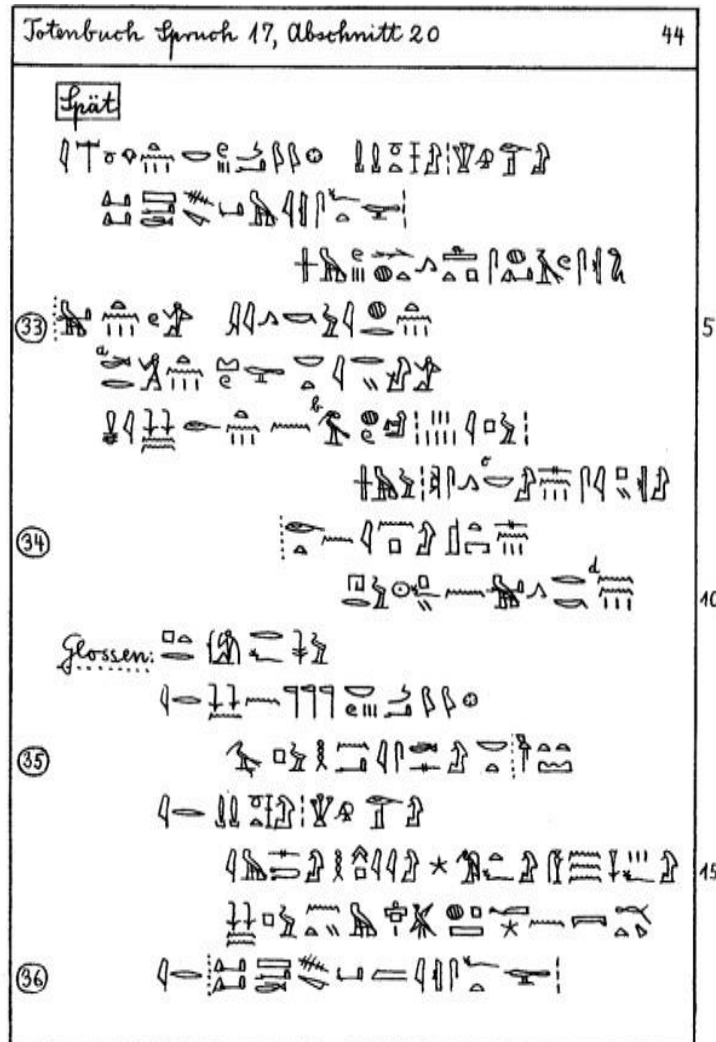
All the previous functions and roles which were mentioned in spell 17 of the BD are repeated here precisely without changes.

In the texts of the *N.K* and the Saite Period, one can observe a significant note; this new group of **seven spirits** is mentioned alongside the *CT* old names in the same text. However, the latter are mentioned after the new group names and the writer separates the new and the old group names with a repeated phrase: *ky dd* «Another speech» or *ky dd ir 3hw-sfhw ipw*

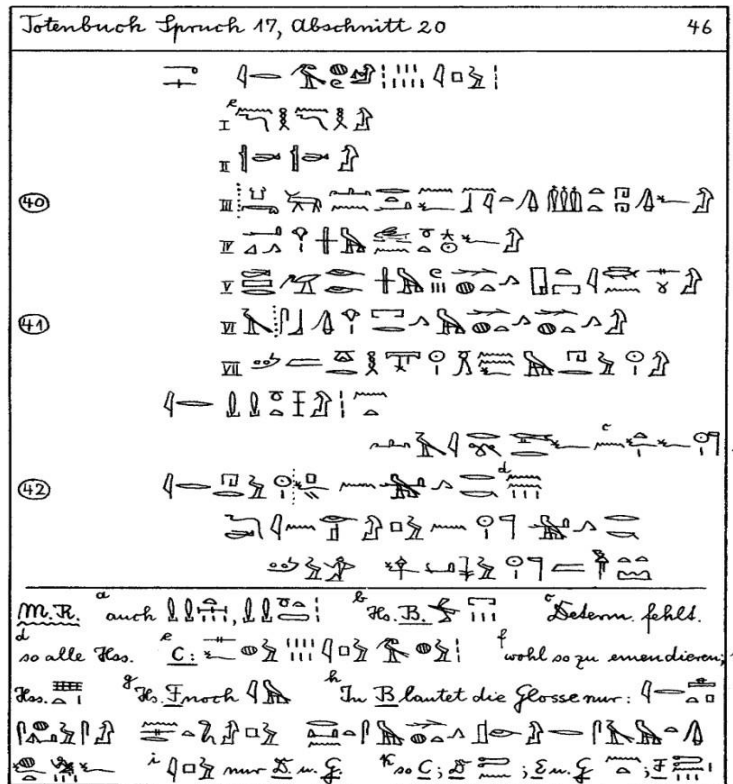
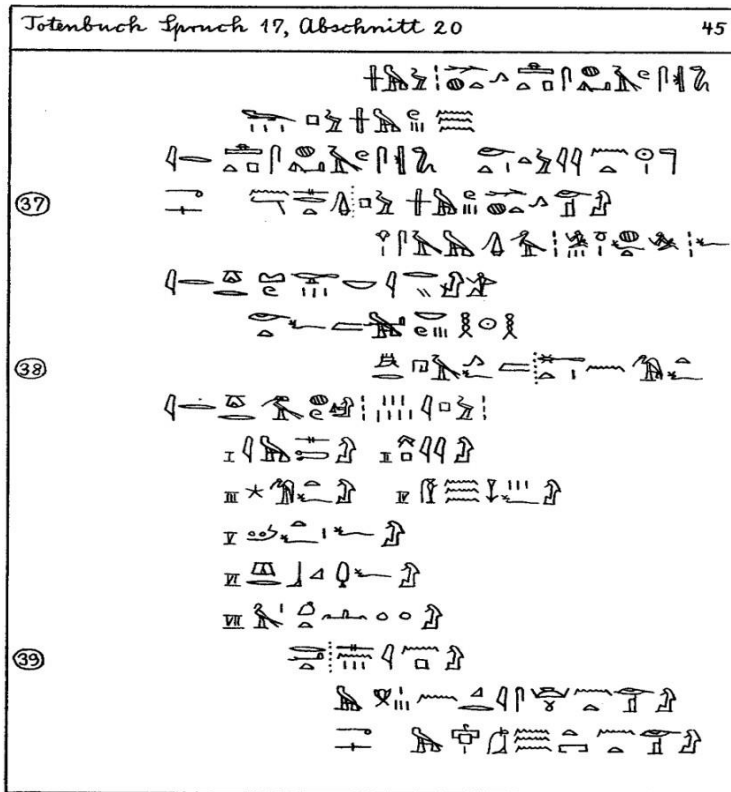
<sup>47</sup> *Sip*  «One who inspects»;  *Sip-3* "The Great Inspector» a title for Osiris or Thoth from Saite Period;  *Sipy-sp3wt-n-shmw.f* «Who inspects the nomes for his images» a title for Osiris in Edfu E.I 1984: 170, 2 and  *Sip-sp3wt-n-hprw.f* «Who inspects the nomes for his manifestations» a title for Sokar-Osiris in Edfu E.I 1984: 87, 16 from Greco-Roman Period; *LGG* 2002: vol.4, 169-171; *WB* 1926: vol.4, 35-36; *WILSON* 1997: 798-99; *FAULKNER* 1991: 212.

«Another speech, concerning (these) **seven spirits**». This has not been put into these texts by accident but the writer has intentionally distinguished, from time to time, between the new and old names of the **seven spirits**.

**VI. (LATE PERIOD)<sup>48</sup>.**



<sup>48</sup> *Urk* 1906: vol.5, 44-46, A text from Late Period.



*ind hr.tn nbw m3ct d3d3t h3 Wsir dd sct m isftyw imyw-ht Htp.s-hw.s mk.tn wi ii.kwy hr.tn dr.in dwnbt*  
*iry.i mi nn ir.tn n 3hw-sfw ipw imyw sms nb.sn sipy irt.n lnpw st.sn hrw pfy nmctir.k n.n ptr rfsw ir*  
*nn n nirw nbw m3ct Dhwtw pw hnc lsdn nb imntt*  
*ir d3dt h3 Wsir lmsi(y) H3pi Dw3-mwt.f Kbh-snw.f nn pw nty m-s3 p3 hps n pt mht ir dd sct m isftyw*  
*imyw-ht Htp.s-hw.s Sbk pw imy mw ir Htp.s- hw.s irt twy nt Rc s3h.s Nsrt pw imyw-ht Wsirhr s3m*  
*b3w nw hftyw.f*



*ir gr (dr) dww nb(w) irt.f m-<sup>c</sup> nbw nhh dr h3.f m ht n mwt.f ir gr 3hw-sfhw ipw I: lmsi(y) II: H3pi III: Dw3-mwt.f IV: Kbh-snw.f V: M3-it.f VI: Hr-b3k.f VII: Hr-ht-n -irty rdit.sn lnpw m s3w n krs(t)-i3t nt Wsir s3h.s m-s3 w<sup>c</sup>bt nt Wsir s3h.s ir 3hw-sfhw ipw I: Ndhdh II: kdkd III: K3-nn-redit.n.f-nbyt-htnt-hh.f IV: k-hr-imy-wnwt.f V: D3rt-irty imy-ht hwt-insy VI: 3sb-hr-pri-m-htht VII: M33-m-grh inn.n.f m hrw ir d3d3t tn N 3ri wr.f n it.f R<sup>c</sup> ir hrw pfy nm<sup>c</sup> ir.k n.n dd in wsir pw n R<sup>c</sup> mi r.k m33 wi hsf sw R<sup>c</sup> mfmntt*

Hail to you (O) gods, lords of truth, (and) the tribunal which are behind Osiris, which puts terrors into those who are false, which follow «those whom it protected are at rest».

You behold, I have come to you, (that) you may remove all evil which belongs to me, like this you have done for these **Seven Spirits** who accompany their lord *Sipy*. Anubis prepared their seat (on) that day of coming which you have done to us, what does it mean? Concerning these gods, lords of truth, it is Thoth and «Isdes» lord of the west.

Concerning the tribunal which is behind Osiris: Imsti, Hapi, Duamutef and Kebehsen[uef]. They are these, who are behind the Great Bear-constellation in the northern sky. Concerning putting terrors into those who are false, they are who are following «those whom it protected are at rest». It is Sobek who exists in water. Concerning «those whom it protected are at rest», it is the eye of Re. She reaches, it is the fiery serpent which follows Osiris to burn up the powers of his foes.

Concerning all evils which are belonging to me, he shall remove them with lords of eternity since descending from the body of his mother. Concerning these **Seven Spirits**; **I: Imsti, II: Hapi, III: Duamutef, IV: Kebehsenuef, V: «Who sees his father», VI: «Who is beneath his tree», VII: «Horus, whose face without two eyes = Horus, The eyeless».** Anubis has placed them as guards of the burial mound (tomb) of Osiris, (and) come as guards of the embalmment-place of Osiris. Concerning these **Seven Spirits, I: Ndhdh, II: kdkd, III: «Bull who was not put to his burning», IV: «Black-Faced who is in his hour», V: «Bloody one who is Pre-eminent in the Mansion of Red Linen», VI: «Radiant-Face who comes out after having turned back», VII: «He who sees in the night what he shall bring by day».**

Concerning this tribunal, «**One who is not driven away, he is great for (of / with) his father Re**».

Concerning that day of coming, this Osiris (=dead) says to Re: coming which you have done, I may see Re approaching in the west.

### Functions and Roles

This text is called «The Four Sons of Horus» as: *3hw-sfhw ipw* «These **seven spirits**» are clearly stated, along with *d3d3t h3 Wsir* «The tribunal which is behind Osiris» without mentioning the other three names which can be read in the *N.K* and the Saite Period texts.

Also, the writer here in the text of the Late Period did not write the separation phrase (*ky dd ir 3hw-sfhw ipw*: Another speech, as for the **seven spirits**) between the new and old group names of the **seven spirits** as with the *N.K* and the Saite Period texts [see TABLE 1]. He may, however, have mentioned it in brief as: *ir 3hw-sfhw ipww* without the repeated expression: *ky dd*.

The same roles and functions in the previous texts were given to them here; see [TABLE 2].

## VII. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE OTHER GODS

The texts connected with the seven-spirits presented in this study outline some of the close relationships they held with a variety of other gods, mentioned in the texts from the Middle Kingdom until the end of the Late Period [FIGURE 5]. The following can be concluded:

### Re:

Spell 205 from the *CT* of the *M.K.* mentions that the seven spirits lift up Re *3hw-sfhw ipw f3i.w Ra* or even, as implied, his sacred bark. It seems that they are considered to be the extraordinarily strong bearers or hidden powerful spirits who move the solar divine bark, and watch over Re in his day and night journey, ensuring the safe linear movement of the bark itself without any slight danger or fault. So, they are guards and protectors of the solar system who guarantee its safety and that it remains in balance and order, of course under the authority of Re and with the blessing of his magical forces to enable them to perform these heavy and difficult duties.

This role is not repeated again in the religious texts in the periods that follow, to the end of the Late Period, but why? It could be suggested here that because the cult of the Osirian circle was expanded widely from the beginning of the Middle Kingdom onwards, this protective role could instead be ensured through the valuable sources found in the Coffin Texts and Book of the Dead rather than the cult of Re, or in tandem with it at times.

### Osiris:

The nature of the relationship of the seven-spirits and the god Osiris is clear from their first occurrence in spell 355 from the *CT* of the *M.K.*, in addition to the texts of the Saite and Late Periods. These texts mention, in a unified and repeated manner, that he is their lord through his name *Wsir* (Osiris) or his titles *nb- sp3wt* «Lord of Nome's» and *Spy* «The Inspector». They always accompany him and follow him all the time at his private tribunal (*CT*, *BD* and late texts).

They are also mentioned as the keepers of his tomb and as the guards of his purification and embalmment place (texts of spell 17 from *BD*, Saite and Late Periods). Moreover, they are called *nbw-m3't* «Lords of Truth» in all the texts of study. This is the same title and role of Osiris in the Netherworld, being the judge of the last day of the dead in the court when they are assessed according to their life-deeds and their fate is decided. Thus, the seven spirits here are the sustainers of Osiris as he performs his sacred and venerable roles in the Underworld.

### Anubis:

Beginning from spell 355 of the *CT* onwards, and in all of the texts under study, one can find the repeated mention and fixed phrasing that the god *lnpw* (Anubis) has made or has granted the seats of the seven spirits *ir.n lnpw st.sn*. Here *st.sn* perhaps means places or roles, duties and functions during his supervision over them. Anubis is one of the main gods who is strongly connected with Osiris, death and the beyond, mummification, guarding the necropolis, and keeping the secrets of the dead,

with his greatest role being the weigher of hearts of the dead for their judgment in the presence of Osiris in the Afterworld [FIGURE 6]. Anubis and the seven spirits are among the most important followers and sustainers of Osiris.

### Setekh (Seth) and Thoth:

In texts of spell 355 (CT), the seven spirits and the gods Setekh (Seth) and Isds (=Thot) (spell 17 of BD) are called *nbw-m<sup>3</sup>t* «lords of the truth / justice»; and for Thot, «lord of the truth» and *nb l<sup>m</sup>ntt* «lord of the West» in the texts of Saite and Late Periods. The appearance of these common titles in the same text clearly proves their close connection and confirms their deep relationship with the otherworld, Osiris and the judgment of the dead in the next world. They are part of the great assembly of gods at the tribunal presided over by Osiris and perform duties for him in the hall of justice under his oversight.

God Setekh (Seth) is considered also as a ruler of the northern sky and has a connection with the Great Bear Constellations<sup>49</sup>. So, he is mentioned with *p<sup>3</sup> hpš m pt mh<sup>t</sup>t* «the Great Bear constellations in the northern sky» in the text of spell 17 (N.K.).

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<sup>49</sup> ALTENMÜLLER 1974: 202.

For more Readings about Ancient Egyptian astronomy, see:

GRIFFITH, F.L., «Ancient Egypt». In Chisholm, Hugh Ed.. Encyclopædia Britannica. 9 11<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge University Press 1911, 39-80; NEUGEBAUER, O. E.,: *Egyptian Planetary Texts*, Transactions, American Philosophical Society, N.S., vol. 32, Part 2, Philadelphia 1942, 209-50; NEUGEBAUER, O. & PARKER, R., *Egyptian Astronomical Texts*; 4vols. 1: *The Early Decans*; 2: *The Ramesside star clocks and the ancient Egyptian constellations*; 3: *Decans, planets, constellations and zodiacs Texts*; 4: *Decans, planets, constellations and zodiacs Plates*, Published for Brown University Press by Lund Humphries; 1<sup>st</sup> Ed. 1960-Brown Egyptological Studies.5, Brown University Press, London, Providence 1960; PARKER, R. A.,: « Ancient Egyptian Astronomy. Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London» *Series A, Mathematical and Physical Sciences*, vol. 276, N<sup>o</sup>. 1257, The Place of Astronomy in the Ancient World, Published by: Royal Society May 2, 1974, 51-65; NEUGEBAUER, O.E., *A history of Ancient Mathematical Astronomy, Studies in the History of Mathematics and Physical Sciences*, vol.1, Springer-Verlage, Berlin, Heidelberg 1975 ; KRUPP, E.C., «Light in the Temples», in: RUGGLES, C.L.N. Ed., *Records in Stone: Papers in Memory of Alexander Thom*. CUP, New York(Cambridge University Press) 1988, 473-499; LAWLORE, R., *Sacred Geometry: Philosophy & Practice Art and Imagination*, Thames Hudson Ltd. London 1989; CLAGETT, M., *Ancient Egyptian Science, a Source Book*, vol. 2: *Calendars, Clocks, and Astronomy*. American Philosophical Society for its Memoirs Series, vol. 214, Philadelphia, USA 1989; RELK, J., «Ancient Egyptian Astronomy: Ursa Major-Symbol of Rejuvenation». *Archaeoastronomy*. 172002–2003, 64-80; RUGGLES, C.L.N., *Ancient Astronomy, an Encyclopedia of Cosmologies and Myth*, ABC-Clio. LLC. Santa Barbara, Canada 2005; LEHMAN, H., *The Language of God in the Universe*; Pillar of Enoch Ministry Books, USA 2006; STEELE, J.M. Ed., *Calendars and Years: Astronomy and Time in the Ancient Near East*, Oxbow Books, Oxford 2007; BAUVAL, R., *The Egypt Code, The Disinformation Co. Ltd.*, USA 2008; SYMONS, S.L., COCKCROFT, R., BETTENCOURT, J. & Koykka, C., 2013. *Ancient Egyptian Astronomy*. [Online database] Available at: <http://aea.physics.mcmaster.ca/>; PRISKIN, G., *The Constellations of the Egyptian Astronomical Diagrams, Égypte Nilotique et Méditerranéenne* 12, 2019, 137-80; SYMONS, S.L., *A Star's Year: The Annual Cycle in the Ancient Egyptian Sky in: STEELE, J.M. Ed., Calendars and Years: Astronomy and Time in the Ancient World*. Oxbow Books, Oxford, 1-33.

### The Four Sons of Horus

Beginning from the N.K. the fusion of the Seven-Spirits with the Four Sons of Horus is found, in addition to the appearance of three other gods that did not exist in the Coffin Texts from the M.K. (*ḥw-sfhw ipw I: (l)msty 11: Ḥpi 111: Dw3-mwt.f IV: Kbh-snw.f V: M3-n-it.f VI: Hry-b3k.f VII: Hr-m-ḥnty-irty*). These form a new group of the Seven-Spirits in the N.K. while preserving the old group names of the traditional Seven-Spirits from the M.K. in the same text: (*ḥw-sfhw I: Ndhdh 11: 3kdkd 111: K3-n-rdi.n.f nby.f-ḥnty-hwt.f IV: k-ḥr-imy-wnwt.f V: Dšrt-irty-imy hwt-insy VI: 3sb-ḥr-pri-m-ḥt-ḥti VII: M33-m-grh inn.f m hrw*)

As for the Four Sons of Horus, it is no wonder that they were found here among the Seven-Spirits because they are servants, guards, and assistants of Osiris, father of the god Horus (father of the Four Sons), so Osiris here is their grandfather and their lord in the Netherworld. They follow him, as shown in spell 17(BD) (*ḥw-sfhw ipw imyw šms.w nb-sp3wt; ḏḏt ḥt Wsir (l)msty Ḥpi Dw3-mwt.f Kbh-snw.f*)

The new group names of the Seven-Spirits, which appear for the first time in spell 17(BD) from the N.K., continue side by side with the old group names in the texts of the Saite and Late Periods that follow.

### VIII. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE DEAD

In Spell 205 of the *CT*, the text mentions that the deceased wishes that the Seven-Spirits will not look at him, because they put fear and terror in the hearts of bad people as a punishment (spell 355 of *CT*). If they look at him, they will take him with them as a sinner, and he will meet a severe fate by eating excrement, drinking urine and walking upside down.

The dead must also know all of their names because he will call them as the ferrymen- spirits of the sky and the west, to send a ferry-boat to cross the sky and allow him to join to the procession of Re. They will then transfer him into the west until he reaches the residence of Osiris to live in his neighborhood and enjoy all the beautiful things in the fields of Iaru as a good and venerable dead (Spells: 211; 400 & 401 of *CT*).

Finally, in the text of the Saite Period, one can read about the close connection among the dead, the god Horus and the Four Sons of Horus. In the beginning of the texts, the dead states that he is one of the gods who are following Horus: *ink w<sup>c</sup> m nn nirw imyw-ḥt Hr*; he means, with «the gods who are following after Horus «the Four Sons of Horus», because he mentions them in the same first two lines: *mrwt nb.f ptr irf swt lms(t)y Ḥpi Dw3-mwt.f Kbh-snw.f*

Then, the traditional text of the Seven-Spirits comes, which connects them with the Four Sons of Horus from the N.K. (Spell 17 of BD). It could be concluded from this text that the dead wishes to be the son of Horus and the brother of his four sons, who comprise with three other gods now a new group of the Seven-Spirits, who accompany Osiris and follow him as his private tribunal: *nirw nbw m3<sup>c</sup>t ḏḏt sw ḥ3 Wsir; ḥw-sfhw ipw imyw šms nb.sn sip; ḏḏt swt ḥ3-tp Wsir lms(t)y Ḥpi DwA-mwt.f Kbh-sn[w.f]*

The text of the Saite Period is the only one since the time of the New Kingdom that mentions the Four Sons of Horus three times in three places of the same text, in the same relative connection and in a close relationship with Osiris, Horus, Four Sons of Horus and the dead [FIGURE 7]. It seems that the dead became a god as a member of this sacred family in the afterworld;

one of the gods (Seven-Spirits) who follow their lord Osiris, so he now has a safe and luxurious fate forever in paradise beside the lord of eternity.

### IX. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SEVEN SPIRITS AND OSIRIS (CONNECTION WITH THE NUMBER SEVEN)

What remains to consider is the relationship between the number seven and the traditional understanding of time and space being cyclic. Number seven symbolizes the creation act from the point of view of the perfection of its potential. Hence, the number seven is symbolic of creative capacity in both its principle and all manifest expressions thereof. The number seven stands for completion, totality and perfection. It also refers to what is holistic.<sup>50</sup>

One can encounter these meanings and more in the texts of this study on the Seven Spirits. We can wonder here, why the number seven is chosen specifically with the Seven Spirits. As has been discussed above, these spirits are the followers, sustainers and tribunal who are behind Osiris, as stated in the religious texts presented here. There are several more associations with the number seven, and its multiples fourteen and twenty one, with Osiris.<sup>51</sup> The seven Spirits are seven as followers and sustainers of Osiris.

### X. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CONSTELLATIONS OF THE «GREAT BEAR» AND THE SEVEN SPIRITS

In the text of spell 17 (BD) from the *N.K.* and the Saite and Late Periods, one can read that the Four Sons of Horus (the main members of the Seven Spirits) exist – as their place – behind the constellation of the Great Bear in the northern sky: *d3d3t h3t Wsir (l)msty H3pi Dw3-mwt.f Kb3-snw.f n3 pw nty m-s3 p3 hp3 m pt mht.*

The Great Bear appears as the representative of the constellations of the northern sky, while Orion is the representative of the constellations of the southern sky and their expanses, according to ancient Egyptian astronomy. The seven stars of the Great Bear were interpreted as a group of seven akhu, at least according to BD chapter 17 in the papyrus of Ani. These seven akhu are associated with Letopolis, while spell 398 (CT) mentions the «seven gods» in connection with the offerings presented in this city. The Great Bear could be considered as a composite of seven deities.

It must be noted that the passage from the papyrus of Ani is a version of the part of BD 17 specifying the names of the seven akhu. The evidence from this papyrus does not stand in isolation, for the group recurs among the deities attending the northern constellations.

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<sup>50</sup> CHENKEL 1966: 423-25; GÓDECKEN 1985: 128-9; LOPRIENO 1986: 1308-12; WILKINSON 2001: 333-34  
See also: SETHE 1916; WILKINSON 1994; WASTON 2002.

<sup>51</sup> MOJSOV 2007: 149-152.



Orion and the Great Bear are viewed as acting in cooperation for the benefit of the deceased. The Great Bear is a composite of seven deities who may be involved in the Opening of the Mouth at Letopolis and who are the guards of the corpse.

In dealing with the Great Bear, it can be noticed that the seven stars were conceived as the seven akhu and a specific link existed between these and Letopolis. It can hardly be a coincidence that seven gods are mentioned in spell 398 in connection with an offering rite in Letopolis, and also that both deal with a ferry crossing to the abode of Osiris<sup>52</sup>.

The Seven Spirits, as seven stars of the Great Bear or even seven gods who are living within it, are all connected with the idea of helping the dead, guarding him from dangers and keeping him safe until he reaches his residence in the Field of Rushes. The Seven Spirits are the gate keepers and ferrymen of the west; they play a subordinate role for both the gods and the dead. They dwelled in the northern sky and were associated with navigation across the winding waterway which led from the northern heaven to the eastern horizon for lifting up the day and night barks of Re. They then make ferry crossings to the west. So, the dead hopes that they come to him when he summons them and calls them by their names to transfer him in a ferry-boat to the Netherworld, where he will rest at the end of his journey as a blessed dead.

## XI. CONCLUSION

After a long search for the suitable meanings of the term *ꜥḥw-sḥw*, especially for the first term *ꜥḥw*, it can be translated as: «*the seven spirits*», synonymous with ideas of power and extraordinary forces. The seven spirits were a group of minor gods or genii and demons that served as followers, assistants and tribunal members behind the greatest and the most important two gods in the religion of ancient Egypt: Re and Osiris.

One can read about them in the religious texts of the O.K. (PT, only for the term: *ꜥḥw* «spirits, ghosts, demons»), the M.K. (CT), the N.K. (BD) and the Late Period (for the term: *ꜥḥw-sḥw*). They were mentioned repeatedly especially since the Coffin Texts (CT) of the Middle Kingdom (when they are most clearly first attested) onwards, then in the Book of the Dead (BD) of the New Kingdom, the religious texts of the Saite Period (26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty) and finally in the Late Period. The term *ꜥḥw-sḥw* was written on the sides of coffins and in papyrus rolls in a variety of distinguished writing forms, in perfect styles which proves the extraordinary skills of the scribes and their supervisors in Ancient Egypt.

Analysis of the major religious texts from different periods reveals valuable knowledge about these «Seven Spirits», in terms of their detailed names, roles, functions, importance to gods and the dead in the afterworld, and their relationships with other gods.

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<sup>52</sup>WILLEMS 1996: 184-86; CT 1954: vol.5, 153- 54; FAULKNER 1977: Vol.2, 35-36; WAINWRIGHT 1932: 159-72; WAINWRIGHT 1932: 373-382.


The Seven-Spirits were strange creatures, like genii, devils, ghosts (spirits) and demons. They eat and drink dirty things like excrements and urine and walk upside down. So, the spells in the *CT* of the *M.K.* must be recited by the good dead so as not to meet this miserable fate and disastrous end for a human being in the next world. They put terrors into the bad dead and sinners by feeding them these detested substances, preventing them from enjoying good foods and drinks, and forcing them to walk upside down in the realm of the dead. The Seven-Spirits were the sustainers of the god Re. They lifted him or his bark up, and resided behind the constellation of the Great Bear in the northern sky.

They were also the followers of the god Osiris, being his gang and companions who help him in his affairs and deeds in the afterworld. Thus, they were called *nbw-m3ʿt* «Lords of Justice» as part of the tribunal of Osiris who follow him to oversee judgement under his control, and put fear in the hearts of the bad dead in the underworld. They were also the guards of the burial-mound or sacred tomb of Osiris and keepers of his sacred embalmment-place or his purification-house. In addition, they help the good deceased to cross the hazards and overcome the obstacles and dangers of the Netherworld by transferring him in a ferry-boat to reach his final destination, the abode of Osiris, in a sound and safe state. Here, he will enjoy a luxurious stay and good things in an infinite life in *Ḥrw* «The Field of Reeds» beside Osiris. Accordingly, they were called: *ḥw-mḥntyw n lmnnt* «Ferryman-Spirits of the West».

The Names of the Seven-Spirits were fixed in the *CT* of the *M.K.* Yet, in the texts of the *BD* of the *N.K.* onwards, an essential change in the order of their names is observed. Their first four names are also now the same names as the four sons of Horus, who of course have a deep connection with Osiris, in addition to there being three new names to complete the seven. Remarkably, the writer of these texts did not omit the old names, but placed them after the new names, preserving traditional religious knowledge for future generations.

There are strong connections among the Seven-Spirits and some gods, as mentioned in the religious texts from the *M.K.*, the *N.K.*, and the Saite and Late Periods: Re, Osiris, Anubis, Thoth, Setekh (Seth) and the Four Sons of Horus. There is also a close relationship between the good dead and the Seven-Spirits. The Seven Spirits are connected deeply with the Great Bear constellations in the northern sky as well, represented as seven stars and seven gods who help the blessed dead in his journey of eternity.

## HOW TO CITE

Abd' El- Rady, R. «The Seven Spirits  (*ḥw-sḥw*) in the Ancient Egyptian Religion»  
*Journal of the General Union of Arab Archaeologists*, vol. 6/1, 2021. Doi: 10.21608/JGUA2.2020.27175.1028  
radluxegy@yahoo.com

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CT = DE BUCK, A., *Coffin Texts*, 7 vols; Chicago (1935-1961).

E = CHASSINAT, E., *Le temple de Edfu*, 15 vols; IFAO, Le Caire (1892-1933).

JEA = *Journal of Egyptian Archaeology*, (London).

LÄ = HELCK, W., OTTO, E., & WESTENDORF, W. (Eds), *Lexikon der Ägyptologie*, 7 vols, Wiesbaden (1972-1975).

LGG = LEITZ, Ch., *Lexikon der ägyptischen Götter und Götterbezeichnungen*, 8 Bde, OLA.110-129, (Peeters Publishers and Department of Oriental Studies), Leuven (2002-2003).

OLA = *Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta*, Louvain.

Urk = Sethe, K., Helck, H.W., Schäfer, H., Grapow, H. & Firchow, O. (Eds), *Urkunden des Ägyptischen Altertums*, 8 vols, Leipzig/Berlin (1903-1957).

Wb = ERMAN, A. & GRAPOW, W. (Eds), *Wörterbuch der ägyptische Sprache*, 7 vols und 5 Bde Belegstellen, Berlin/Leipzig (1926-1963).

WPL = WILSON, p., «A Ptolemaic Lexikon, A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfu», OLA.78, Leuven (Publishers Peeters and the Department of Oriental Studies) 1997

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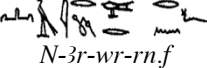
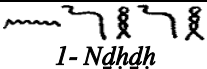
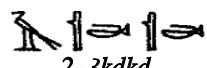
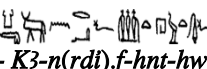

TABLES

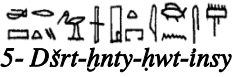
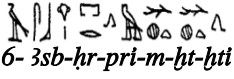

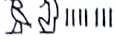
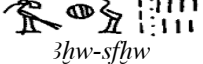
Spell 355 (CT: M.K)	Spell 17 (BD: N.K.)	Saite Period	Late Period
<b>Chief:</b> <i>N-3r-wr-rn.f</i>	<i>[N] 3r-pri.f -wr-rn.f</i>	<i>N 3ri.f wr.f it.f</i>	<i>N 3ri wr.f n it.f R<sup>c</sup></i>
<b>Other Possible</b> <b>Readings:</b> <i>3r-wr, 3r-wr-rn.f, N-3yr-wr-rn.f, N-3r-wr-pr.f-rn.f, N-3r-wr, N-3r-wry-rn[.f], N-3r-wry-rn.f, 3ry-wr-rn[.f], N-3yw3-wr-rn.f, N-3ry-wr-pr, N-3yr-ir.f-rn.f, N-3r-wr-rn-r.f, N-3ry-wr-rn.f, N-3ry-rn.f, N-3r-r-wr, N-3ry-wrt-rn.f, N-3ry-wr, N-3ry-wr-rn.f</i>			
1- <i>Dḥdh</i>	<i>[T]Msty</i>	<i>Ḥmsti</i>	<i>Ḥmst[.i]</i>
<b>Other Possible</b> <b>Readings:</b> <i>Ndhdh, Ndḥdh, Ndḥdh rn.f, Dḥdh, Ndḥd, Ndḥdh[y], Dḥdh, Ndḥndh, Ndḥdh, Ndḥh</i>			
2- <i>3kdkd</i>	<i>Ḥ3pi</i>	<i>Ḥ3pi</i>	<i>Ḥ3pi</i>
<b>Other Possible</b> <b>Readings:</b> <i>Nydyd, Nidyd, Nkdkd rn.f, 3kdkd, Nkdkd, Nkdkdy, Nd, 3kdkdy, 3kdk, Nkdnkdn, Kdnkdn, Ndydy, Nkdnkdn</i>			
3- <i>k3-n-rdi.f-ḥnt-hwt.f</i>	<i>Dw3-mwt.f</i>	<i>Dw3-mwt.f</i>	<i>Dw3-mwt.f</i>
<b>Other Possible</b> <b>Readings:</b> <i>K3-nbi.f-ḥnt-hwt.f, K3-syf-ḥnt-hwt.f, K3-syf-ḥnty-ḥwt.f, K3-n rdi.n.f-ḥnt-hwt.f, K3-n-iwf-ḥnty-hw[.t].fy, K3-n-iw.f-nbi-ḥnt-hwt.f, K3-n-rdi.f-ḥnt-hwt.fy, K3-n-iwf-rn.f-ḥnt-hwt.f, K3-nbi.f-ḥnty-hwt.f, K3-<sup>c</sup>3-iwf-ḥnty-hwt.f, [K3]-n-rdi-nt-ḥnt-[h]wt.f, K3-rdi-nn[...]-ḥnty-hwt[.f], K3-nbi.f</i>			
4- <i>km-ḥr-imy-wnwt.f</i>	<i>Kḥh-snw.f</i>	<i>Kḥh-snw.f</i>	<i>Kḥh-snw.f</i>
<b>Other Possible</b> <b>Readings:</b> <i>ḥk-ḥr-imy-wnwt, ḥk-imy-wnwt.f rn.f, ḥk-ḥr-imy-wnwt.f, ḥk-n-wr-ḥr-imy-wnwt.f, ḥk-ḥr-wnwt.f, ḥk-ḥr-imy-wnwt.fy, ḥk-r-ḥnw-wnwt.f, ḥk-ḥr-imy-dw3t.f</i>			
5- <i>Dṣrt-ḥnt-hwt-insy</i>	<i>M33-n-it.f</i>	<i>M33-n-[it.f]</i>	<i>M33-it.f</i>
<b>Other Possible</b> <b>Readings:</b> <i>Dṣrty-imy-ḥnt-hr-insy, Dsr-imy-ḥnt-insy</i>			
6- <i>3sb-ḥr-pri-m-ḥt sp-sn</i>	<i>Ḥry-b3k.f</i>	Lacuna	<i>Ḥr-b3k.f</i>

<p><b>Other Possible Readings:</b><i>N-[ʔ]sb-ḥr-prr-m-ḥtḥt, Nb-[ʔ]sb-ḥr-prr-m-ḥtḥt, ʔsb-ḥr-pri-m-ḥtḥt, [ʔsb-ḥr]-pr-r-m-ḥty</i></p>			
<p>7-<i>M33-m-grḥ-int.f-m-hrw</i></p>	<p><i>Ḥr-m-ḥnty-irty</i></p>	<p><i>Ḥr-ḥnty-[irty]</i></p>	<p><i>Ḥr-ḥnt-n-irty</i></p>
<p><b>Other Possible Reading:</b><i>M33-m-grḥ-ʔ[si].f-m-hrw-rn.f</i></p>			
	<p>In the same text, the writer mentioned that in another speech <i>ky dd ir ʔḥw-sḥw</i>, they are called:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>Dḥdh</i></li> <li>2- <i>ʔkdkd</i></li> <li>3- <i>K3-n-rdi.n.f-ḥnty-hwt.f</i></li> <li>4- <i>ʔk-ḥr-imy-wnwt.f</i></li> <li>5- <i>Dšrt-irty-imy ḥwt-insy</i></li> <li>6- <i>ʔsb-ḥr-pri-m-ḥtḥt</i></li> <li>7- <i>M33-m-grḥ-inn.f-m hrw</i></li> </ol>	<p>In the same text, the writer mentioned that in another speech <i>ky dd ir ʔḥw-sḥw ipw</i>, they are called:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>Nḥdh</i></li> <li>2- <i>ʔkdkd</i></li> <li>3- <i>K3-nn-rdit.n.f-nbyt.f-ḥntt-hh.f</i></li> <li>4- <i>ʔk.f-ḥr-imy-wnwt.f</i></li> <li>5- <i>Dšrt-irty-imy-ḥnt ḥwt-insy</i></li> <li>6- <i>ʔsb-ḥr-pri-m-ḥtḥt</i></li> <li>7- <i>M33-m-grḥ-inn-m hrw</i></li> </ol>	<p>In another place of the same text, the writer mentioned them <i>ir ʔḥw-sḥw ipw</i> in new names, they are called:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1- <i>Nḥdh</i></li> <li>2- <i>ʔkdkd</i></li> <li>3- <i>K3-nn-rdit.n.f-nbyt.f-ḥntt-hh.f</i></li> <li>4- <i>ʔk-ḥr-imy-wnwt.f</i></li> <li>5- <i>Dšrt-irty-imy-ḥt ḥwt-insy</i></li> <li>6- <i>ʔsb-ḥr-pri-m-ḥtḥt</i></li> <li>7- <i>M33-m-grḥ-inn.f-m hrw</i></li> </ol>


[TABLE 1]: Group-names for the «seven-spirits» in the texts of study

  
**THE SEVEN SPIRITS** (3hw-sfhw)  
**IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION**

Name	Meaning	Function	Number of Spell/Chapter	Reference
 And varieties 3hw-sfhw	The Seven Spirits	-Lifting Re up or his bark. -Sitting with the sinner or bad dead and judge him. -put terror into bad dead by looking at him sharply. - make the bad dead drink the urine, eat the excrements (dirties) and walk upside down.	CT. 205.	De Buck, <i>CT. III</i> (1947), spell 205, 146 (a-e); 147 (a-e); 148 (a-g); 149 (a-f); 150 (a-e); 151 (a-f); 152 (a-b).
 And varieties 3hw-sfhw	The Seven Spirits	- They are the lords of truth. - They are the tribunal behind Osiris. - They put terrors into bad dead. -They destroy the enemies of Osiris.	CT. 335.	- De Buck, <i>CT. IV</i> , spell 335, 253 (c); 254 (a-b); 255 (a-b); 256 (a-c); 257 (a-c); 258 (a-b); 259 (a-c); 260 (a-c); 261 (a-d); 262 (a-b); 263 (a-c); 264 (a-c); 265 (a-e); 266 (a-e); 267 (a-e); 268 (a-d); 269 (a-i); 270 (a-c); 271 (a-g); 272 (a-c).
 <i>N-3r-wr-rn.f</i>	'The Great One is not driven away'.	The Chief or the leader of the Seven Spirits.	CT. 335.	- <i>Urk. V</i> , ss. 39-41, A text from M.K.
 <i>1- Ndhdh</i>	Unknown?			
 <i>2- 3kdkd</i>	Unknown?			
 <i>3- K3-n(rdi).f-hnt-hwt.f</i>	'Bull who was not put to his burning'.			
 <i>4- Km-hr-imy wnwtf</i>	'Black-Faced who is in his hour'.			

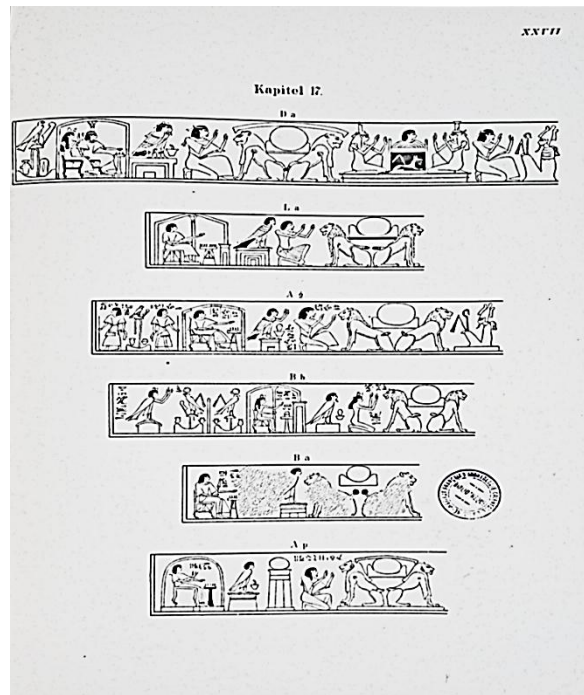
 <p>5- <i>Dšrt-hnty-hwt-insy</i></p>	<p>'Bloody one who is Pre-eminent in the Mansion of Red Linen'.</p>			
 <p>6- <i>3sb-hr-pri-m-ht-hti</i></p>	<p>'Radiant-Face who comes out after having turned back'.</p>			
 <p>7- <i>M33-m-grh-int.f-m-hrw</i></p>	<p>'He who sees in the night what he shall bring by day'.</p>			
 <p>And varieties (see texts). <i>3hw-sfhw</i></p>	<p>The Seven Spirits</p>	<p>-They are the ferrymen of the sky and the West. - They bring the <i>k3yt</i>-ferry boat to the good dead when he summons them by their names to go down and reach the West and cross him over to the «Field of Rushes».</p>	<p>CT. 400 &amp; 401.</p>	<p>- De Buck, CT. V, spell 400, 170 (g); 171 (a-f); 172 (a-g); 173 (a-g). - De Buck, CT. V, spell 401, 174 (b-k).</p>
 <p><i>3hw-sfhw</i> And their detailed seven names as were indicated above and their chief:(N) <i>3r-pri.f-wr m.f.</i> In addition to a new group of names for the first time in the religious texts. Their first four name are the four sons of Horus, and three other different names: I:(T)<i>msty</i> II:<i>H3pi</i> III:<i>Dw3-mwt.f</i> IV:<i>Kbh-snw.f</i> V:<i>M33-n-it.f</i> VI:<i>Hry-b3k.f</i> VII:<i>Hr-m-hnty-irty</i></p>	<p>The Seven Spirits</p>	<p>-Lords of truth. - Lords of the West and eternity. Protectors. -The tribunal behind Osiris. -They put terror into sinner and evil-doer dead. -They dwell behind the Constellation of the Great Bear in the northern sky. -Guards of the burial mound (=tomb) of Osiris. -Guards of the Purification Place of Osiris (=mummification and embalmment).</p>	<p>CT. 335. BD. 17.</p>	<p><b>From New Kingdom sarcophagi, transmitted from CT of Middle Kingdom:(De Buck, CT.IV, spell 335, 253c-272a-c).</b> -<i>Urk.</i> V, 41, 11; 42, 13; 43, 5. -Tb. 17. LGG. I, s. 45. - <i>Urk.</i>V, ss. 1; 41-49 (M.K.); 41-44 (N.K.); 44-46 (Late Period). 41-44, a text from N.K. (Book of the Dead, spell 17). - LEPSIUS1969;NAVILLE 1886;GRAPOW1916: ss. 18-19.</p>


  
**THE SEVEN SPIRITS** (3hw-sfhw)
   
**IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION**

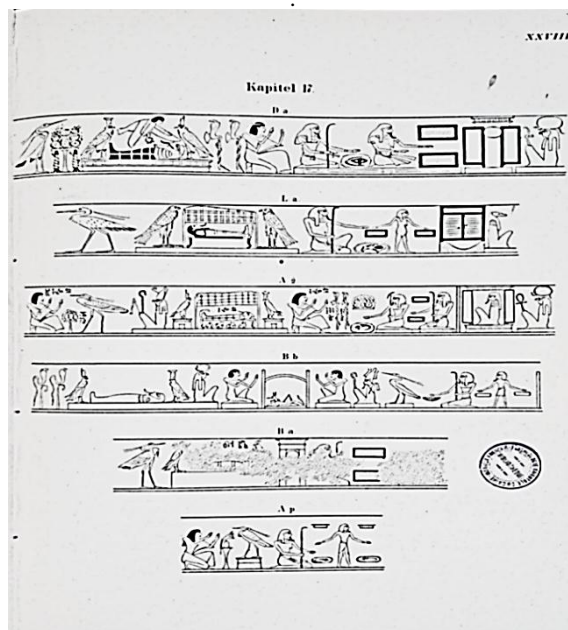
 <p>3hw-sfhw</p> <p>And their detailed seven names with their chief. <b>(A similar text to the previous one).</b></p>	<p>The Seven Spirits</p>	<p>The same functions in the previous text.</p> <p>Besides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-They accompany - as followers- their lord Osiris.</li> <li>- They help the good dead to become one of them (one of the gods who are following Horus, especially: the Four Sons of Horus =his son).</li> <li>-They are connected in close relationship with the great gods in the After world: Osiris, Horus, Anubis, Thoth and Sobek.</li> </ul>	<p>BD. 17. Saite Period. (The 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty) and Later Period.</p>	<p>-VERHOVEN1993: ss. 12-13, cols. 9 (9-17), 10 (1-3); Teil 1: Text, ss. 100-102.</p> <p>- <i>Urk. V</i>, ss. 44-46, a text from Late Period.</p>
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[TABLE 2]: Analytical summary of the study



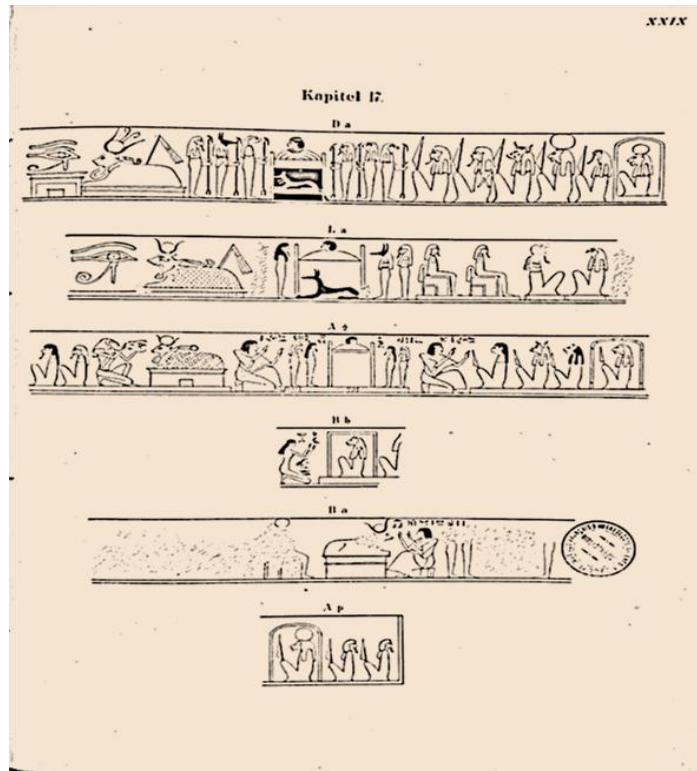


[FIGURE 1]: The «Seven Spirits» in Chap 17 from the Book of the Dead (New Kingdom).  
NAVILLE 1886: pl. XXVII

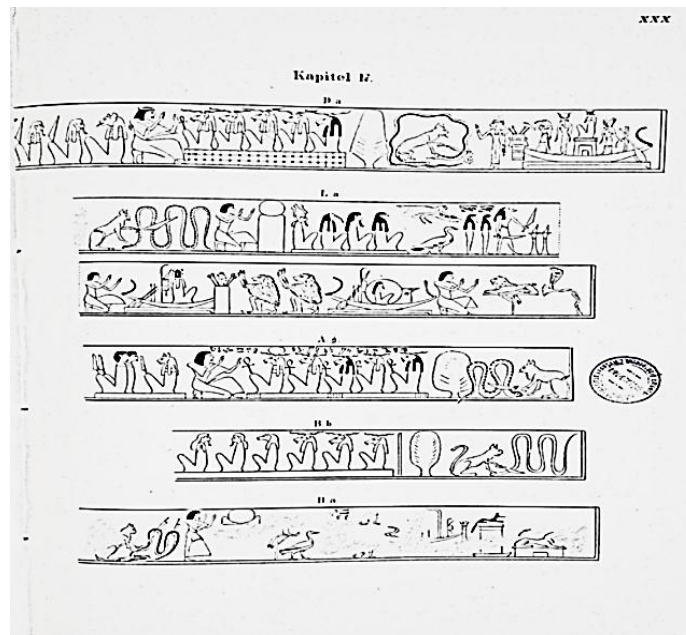


[FIGURE 2]: The «Seven Spirits» in Chap 17 from the Book of the Dead (New Kingdom).  
NAVILLE 1886: pl. XXVIII.

  
**THE SEVEN SPIRITS** (3hw-sfhw)  
**IN THE ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION**



[FIGURE 3]: The «Seven Spirits» in Chap 17 from the Book of the Dead (New Kingdom).  
 NAVILLE 1886: pl. XXIX.

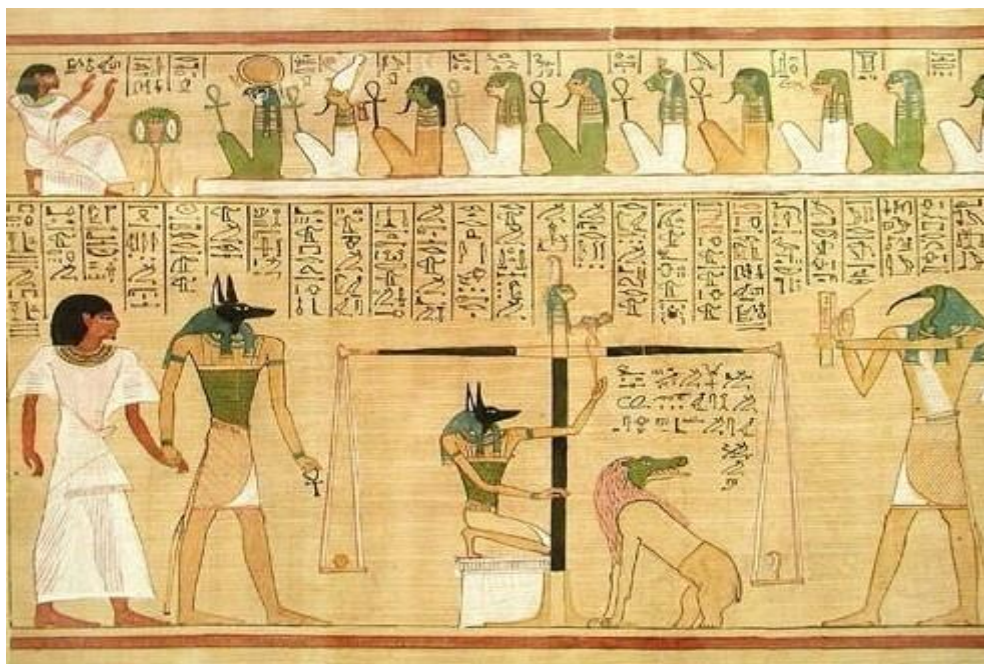


[FIGURE 4]: The «Seven Spirits» in Chap 17 from the Book of the Dead (New Kingdom).  
 NAVILLE 1886: pl. XXX.

For FIGURES: 1-4  
 NAVILLE 1886: ss. xxiv-xxvi & pls. xxvii-xxx; Zweiter Band, Varianten, Kapitel 17, ss. 29-74  
 (for 3hw-sfhw, ss. 53-57).

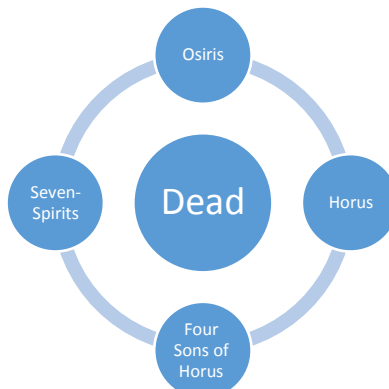


[FIGURE 5]: The Relationship among the Seven Spirits and other gods mentioned in the texts of the study.



[FIGURE 6]: Roles of Anubis and Thoth in the weighing of the Heart as sustainers of Osiris, Book of the Dead for the scribe Hunefer.

<https://courses.lumenlearning.com/suny-hccc-worldcivilization/chapter/ancient-egyptian-religion/>



[FIGURE 7]: The Dead as a member of the Osirian Circle and connection with the Seven-Spirits in the Afterworld according to the text of the Saite Period.

## الأرواح السبعة (آخو-سفخو) في الديانة المصرية القديمة

رضوان عبد الراضى سيد أحمد سيد

أستاذ مساعد بقسم الآثار المصرية - كلية الآثار / جامعة أسوان

### الملخص

ذكر هذا المصطلح بصورة متكررة بأشكال كتابية متعددة في النصوص الدينية من عصر الدولة الوسطى والحديثة والعصر الصاوى والعصر المتأخر. ويبدو أن هذه المعبودات السبعة باعتبارهم مخلوقات غريبة أو جن كانت على درجة كبيرة من الأهمية في عقيدة الموت ومصيرهم في العالم الآخر بدليل الذكر المتكرر لها في النصوص الدينية. ذكرت هذه المعبودات مرتبطة بعدد من المعبودات الكبرى مثل رع وأوزير وأنوبيس وتحوت وأبناء حورس الأربعة وست، كما أن لهم علاقة قوية وعميقة جدا بالمتوفى ومجموعة نجوم «الدب الأكبر». أفصحت النصوص صراحة عن أسماءهم السبعة بالتفصيل، وارتباط ذلك العدد بالإله أوزير، كما بينت أدوارهم المتعددة خلال رحلة المتوفى في العالم الآخر. تستند هذه الدراسة على عدد من المصادر النصية المختلفة.

هذه الورقة البحثية تتناول بعض النقاط في الديانة المصرية القديمة مثل:

محاولة تفسير مصطلح الأرواح السبعة في الديانة المصرية القديمة، الأشكال الكتابية المختلفة لهذا المصطلح. النصوص التي ورد بها ذكر الأرواح السبعة من عصر الدولة الوسطى والحديثة والعصر المتأخر، علاقة الأرواح السبعة بالمعبودات الأخرى الواردة في نفس النصوص مثل رع و أوزير وأنوبيس وتحوت وحورس وأبناء حورس الأربعة، علاقة الأرواح السبعة برمزية العدد سبعة في مصر القديمة، وارتباطه العميق بالمعبود أوزير، وارتباطها أيضا بمجموعة النجوم في السماء الشمالية، علاقتهم بالمتوفى في العالم الآخر.

**الكلمات الدالة:** الديانة المصرية القديمة، الأرواح السبعة، نصوص التوابيت، كتاب الموتى، العالم الآخر، أوزير.