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The hieroglyph and its assimilation with the iconography of the sun god

Mohamed Gamal Rashed¹

A PASSAGE in the ancient Egyptian Coffin Texts (CT I, 167f) shows a unique cryptic writing for the word *swḥ.t* in its five versions, in which it is written with the combined enigmatic sign  or ² instead of its proper and customary ideogrammatic sign ³, which appears as an abbreviated writing⁴ or determinative sign in the numerous attestations of the word.⁵ This interesting combined form of the sign, which I came across while I was preparing a paper on the semantics of the *swḥ.t* egg, leads me to present the current paper.⁶ The hieroglyph or cryptic writing under discussion, representing the young bird inside an egg or surrounded by the circle, are straightforward pictographic renderings of the word for ‘egg’ and its metaphor. The egg, which is expressed by this particular hieroglyph and its variations, is particularly the one which contains the seed of creation or reproduction in the embryo, not any other egg. However, these specific hieroglyphic signs no longer occur in the hieroglyphs, but this sort of hieroglyphic structure exists in some other hieroglyphs. As for the significance of these hieroglyphs, first, it exists obviously in the context of the relevant texts themselves. On the other hand, it is extended in Egyptian myth and religion through the iconography of the sun god inside his disk and the relevant idea,⁷ which is attested frequently from the New Kingdom onwards. This was my early assumption and interpretation of these enigmatic hieroglyphic signs.

¹ My sincere thanks are due to Prof. Dr. Ursula Verhoeven-van Elsbergen (Mainz), for her advice, discussion and reviewing of this paper. The paper was written during a Post-doc. fellowship of the DAAD, which I spent at the Johannes Gutenberg University, Mainz in 2013.

² CT I, 167f (B12C^b; B12C^c; B13C^b; B16C; B20C).

³ It should be noted that the word *swḥ.t* is often determined with this proper iconic sign. However, its various occurrences show some cases in which the word is determined with other signs. For the complete variations of the word *swḥ.t*, and its various determinative signs, and its attestations, accompanying with commentaries, cf. a forthcoming paper for the author in *BIFAO*, entitled: ‘The *swḥ.t*-egg: A semantic study.’

⁴ *Pyr.* 1184b; *Urk.* IV, 276, 1; *Esna*, 225, 18.

⁵ *Wb* IV, 73.1-18; *FCD*, 217; *LGG* VI, 221; R. HANNIG, *Grosses Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch*, Mainz, 1995, 680; R. VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, PÄ 15, Leiden, 2000, 466; H.L. Lesko, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian II*, Providence, 2002, 21; P. WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon: A Lexicographical Study of the Texts in the Temple of Edfu*, OLA 78, Leuven, 1997, 812f.




⁶ The search was made depending on: The Berlin Dictionary (Erman & Grapow), Faulkner, CD, R. VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, and the various other Egyptian language dictionaries; as well as the online Website:


Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae (TLA); <http://aew.bbaw.de/tla/index.html>.

⁷ It may be interpreted as merely an icon of the child sun god inside the disk, which occurs frequently in the Netherworld and funeral sources, i.e. The First hour of LdJ show the daily birth of the sun god in his iconic


This paper aims first to bring these hieroglyphs into focus in order to explain their structure, and to reveal their significance; second, to follow and interpret their assimilation and connection with the iconography of the sun god inside the disk, and to judge the assumption of this hieroglyph as an early metaphoric for the iconography of the sun god (particularly, in his representations in the First hour of the Book of the Day (LdJ), and some of his other similar representations in the Book of the Dead, etc.).

The problematic hieroglyphs' variations

The hieroglyphic enigmatic form  and its variations,  and  occur as a cryptic writing or determinatives for the word *swḥ.t* in the following forms:

A. : P 1049⁸ (= PT 669; *Pyr.* 1967; 169c); CT I 176k (B13Cb; plural); II, 3f (G1T⁹).

B. : CT I 167f.¹⁰

C. : CT III 156b; VII, 147a; 198f (P. Gard. II).¹¹

The reading of the word in these variations has not changed, and is to be read 'swḥ.t', which is approved by its orthography in the variations listed above (type A & C). The use of these¹² signs is of some interest, since such hieroglyphs occur, e.g., in the whole versions of CT I 167f. It also occurs in a few more places in the CT, in addition to its earliest known occurrence in the PT. According to the semantic study of the *swḥ.t* egg which is presented by the scholar in the various Egyptian textual sources, these are the complete attestations of the combined enigmatic signs in the variations of *swḥ.t*. These forms do not occur in the hieroglyphs for any other writing, as far as I knew, except in a variation of the preposition *imy* 'is inside,' which is a metaphoric rendering of the young bird inside the egg.

representation, where he is depicted usually in the form of a child inside the disk getting ready to be reborn [figs. 2-3]; see below.

⁸ The orthographic writing of the word occurs for the first time with this unique determinative in the version of PT 669 in the antechamber of the pyramid of Pepi I. It was given the new spell numbering 1049 (P/A/N 63) according to Leclant's classification and publication of the texts. Its other parallels do not give this sign form. For this writing, cf. J. LECLANT *et al.*, *Les textes de la Pyramide de Pépy I^{er} II. Facsimilés*, MIFAO 118/2, Le Caire, 2010, pl. 10; and for its other parallels, cf. *Pyr.* 1967; 1968d (crushed); 1969c; its variation in the CT (CT VII, 198f), cf. J. LECLANT *et al.*, *Les Textes de la Pyramide de Pépy I^{er} I. Description et analyse*, MIFAO 118/1, Le Caire, 2010, 153; I. PIERRE-CROISIAU, 'Nouvelles identifications de Textes des Sarcophages parmi les <nouveaux> Textes des Pyramides de Pepy I^{er} et de Mérenrê', in S. Bickel, B. Mathieu (ed.), *D'un monde à l'autre Textes des Pyramides & Textes des Sarcophages*, BdE 139, Le Caire, 2004, 266, and fig. 9 (col. 63).

⁹ G1T is an abbreviation for Coffin Turin 15.774 (*Iqr*); PM V, 163.


¹⁰ It occurs with the same writing in the five coffins (B12C^b; B12C^c; B13C^b; B16C; B20C) from El-Bersheh. The ideographic sign here is encountered as a spelling for the word.






¹¹ It is determined with this enigmatic hieroglyph only in three different passages, which are in the versions of the Papyrus BM 10676 (P. Gard. II).

¹² Goldwasser in her definition to the iconic and its relationship to the metaphor, mentioned that the iconic reading when in which the image stands in iconic relationship with the signifier to what called a metaphoric reading, namely transposed reading, where the image stands in a relationship rather than iconic with the signified. She added that since the sign is to said to be iconic when there is a topological similarity between a signifier and its denotata / denoted symbol. The icon is the definition of the image which reflects the relation between the hieroglyphic signifier and its linguistic signified. O. GOLDWASSER, *From Icon to Metaphor*, OBO 142, 1995, 56.

First, it may be important to clarify that the Egyptian scribes or theologians aimed to determine a notion that this particular form of the sign, since it occurs in all copies of *CT* I, 167f, which must not be considered as occasional cases. Furthermore, the PT and CT do not reveal accompanying vignettes; therefore the hieroglyphs were the perfect tool to express their notions excellently, together, in some cases, with the context.

The interpretation of the enigmatic writing

There is no a specific study or interpretation for this sign form except the interpretation of Sethe for its variation in an enigmatic text from the New Kingdom.¹³ Sethe read the egg sign with the bird inside () in the context of his particular text, as *imy* and interpreted as 'is inside / is located inside,' a rendering of this form for the young bird who is inside the egg. Sethe's interpretation and reading of the sign was followed by various up-to-date dictionaries without any other suggested interpretations.¹⁴

The preposition  ,  , ¹⁵ '*imy*' 'inside, located inside'¹⁶ is derived from the preposition *im* in reference to a location.¹⁷ Therefore, it occurs occasionally with this ideogrammatic writing or is determined with the customary egg sign from the Middle Kingdom. Its earliest attestation reveals the combined enigmatic form of the egg sign with the young bird inside, where it occurs on a private statue in Heidelberg from the Thirteenth Dynasty.¹⁸ This enigmatic sign, as a writing for *imy*, is attested again in some texts from Thebes dating to the New Kingdom, which were translated by Sethe;¹⁹ also in its customary form of the egg sign without the bird inside.²⁰ On the other hand, this enigmatic form of the egg sign with the bird inside occurs in the writing of *swḥ.t* in just a few cases in the PT and CT.²¹ The interpretation of Sethe for this sign is significant, and it agrees with its physical form as a place for the embryo, which is located inside, but also this enigmatic writing for

¹³ K. SETHE, 'Die aenigmatischen Inschriften', in Spiegelberg-Northampton, *Excavations in the Theban Necropolis*, London, 1908, 10.

¹⁴ Wb I, 75, 20–22; FCD 18; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 466; D. KURTH, *Einführung ins Ptolemäische; Eine Grammatik mit Zeichenliste und Übungsstücken* I, Hützel, 2007, 255 (n. 104). None of these dictionaries listed this sign as a variation or determinative for *swḥ.t*, except in VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*.

¹⁵ Wb I, 75, 20–22; FCD 18. It derives from the term '*imy*' Wb I, 72, 13–17, 'to be inside, to be resident/located, what is within.' Faulkner translated the word: '*imy*' 'who, which is in' commenting that the sign is a cryptic writing with the meaning of 'in which is,' supporting his interpretation with Sethe's and the use of the sign in the Coffin Texts in the writing of *swḥ.t* 'egg,' *CT* I, 167f, (*imyw swḥ.t* 'Those who are in the egg').

¹⁶ Ebers 56,11–14. It is attested frequently in the medical texts; e.g., Ebers papyrus. About the inverted use of the word '*imy*', cf. J.G. GRIFFITHS, 'The inverted use of *Imy*', *JEA* 28, 1942, 66f.

¹⁷ Wb I, 72, 4–8; FCD 18.

¹⁸ H. RANKE, *Ein wesir der 13. Dynastie*, in *Mélanges Maspero* I, *MIFAO* 66/1, Le Caire, 1934, 362. For the text and its translation cf. Ranke's article. It must be noted that this enigmatic form of the egg-sign does not occur in the CT under '*imy*'. Cf. VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 29f.


















¹⁹ K. SETHE, in Spiegelberg-Northampton, *Excavations in the Theban Necropolis*, 10, and (n. 26; 59); H.W. FAIRMAN, 'An introduction to the study of Ptolemaic signs and their values', *BIFAO* 43, Le Caire, 1945, 91, 119 (n. 1).








²⁰ I.e. in a text, from the New Kingdom, reads '*imy ib n ḥnwtḥ nb(.t) mꜣ'.t*' 'inside heart of his wife'. *Urk.* IV, 46.14; cf. also *Urk.* IV, 49.7.

²¹ The listed above variations with their complete attestations.


‘*swḥ.t*’ meets metaphorically with the mythical and cosmological significance of the egg which can even be understood through the relevant texts, as discussed below.

The structure of the signs and their significance


The hieroglyph or cryptic sign  and its varieties ,  or  under discussion present combinations that were built on the customary iconic egg sign , or its metaphoric replacement, the sign , which occurs and builds on the following combination forms: First, the hieroglyph  is composed of the sign  with the egg-sign . Second, the hieroglyph  is composed of  with the circular sign , in which the hieroglyph  can be seen. Third, the hieroglyph  is composed of the sign  with a circular sign , in which the hieroglyph  can be seen.

The individual signs in the combinations already have several metaphoric connections with the egg: in the first attested combination form which occurs in the PT, the iconic sign  is replaced significantly with a circular sign , which represents ‘circle, round.’ It occurs as a determinative from the Old Kingdom onwards and is common in words from the stem *qd(i)* ‘go round,’ and related or similar words.²² Similarly, it meets typically with the signs ²³ ‘grain of sand, pellet or like’ and ²⁴ ‘iris / pupil of the eye.’ This simple circular form may also replace the sun disk ideogram. Metaphorically, it matches the similar hieroglyphic forms from the Old Kingdom. It has been noted that the terms that are often determined with a sun disk, may also be determined with the sign .²⁵ This circular sign replaces the egg sign in the Pyramid Texts of Pepi I, in its enigmatic form type A, and in its customary form  in the other versions of the same PT spell,²⁶ this replacement occurs metaphorically under their similarities of form, and perhaps their symbolical significance. Mostly, in my opinion, the sign, , which occurs instead of the egg sign, is probably due to faulty copying from the hieratic, regarding their similarities in the form. Therefore, the variations of the CT are due to the same interpretations as well. Otherwise, this sign might be a grain of sand,²⁷ which could be explained through the significance of the relevant passage in the PT,²⁸ However, it does not

²² A. GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, London, 1973, 538.

²³ It occurs as determinative for metal or mineral, often repeated. ex. in  *nbw* ‘gold’; medicaments, incense, etc.: GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, 490.

²⁴ It determines ‘*dfd*’ ‘pupil’ of an eye. as a part of the *wḏ.t* eye: GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, 451; *Wb* V, 572, 10-573, 11; *Grundriss der Medizin* VII/2, 1004; HOFFMANN, ‘Das wort *dfd*’, *GM* 132, 1993, 37f.



²⁵ I.e., the verb *wbn* is determined with the sign  from the PT (WB I, 292.9; 295.5). It occurs also with the iconic egg determinative in CT VI, 292b (B9C^a); compare also, LGG II, 326f; *Edfu* VII, 295, 1-2, where it occurs as an epithet for Hathor.

²⁶ It occurs with its simple form in the texts from the pyramids of Merenre and Pepi II, cf. *Pyr.* 1967; 1968d; 1969c; For the text, see also below.

²⁷ The egg sign also occurs as a determinative for several terms of stone materials, such as: *hrs.t*, it has the meaning of ‘carnelian’, or ‘the jewelry beads of carnelian’ (*Wb* III, 150, 15; FCD 176. I.e. in the pLondon BM EA 10477 (pNu), Tb 108); *ḥ.t*, ‘precious stone or material’ (*Wb* I, 165, 13-21; FCD 38: *Urk.* IV, 665, 13; 401, 13); *drt.t*, ‘precious stone’ for beads (*Wb* V, 598,10; HARRIS, *Minerals*, 139f.), etc. The egg was associated mythically with the carnelian and other stone material, cf. W. WESTENDORF, ‘Beiträge aus und zu medizinischen Texten’, *ZÄS* 92, 1966, 149.

²⁸ It refers metaphorically to the hard shell of the egg containing the newborn god / king, where the related text reveals that the shell of the egg of this newborn king is made of iron/stone (?). Therefore, it explains clearly the use of the grain of sand instead, for its hardness.




deny the significance of ‘pupil’ *dfd*, which meets the primeval egg metaphorically in their circle form, and in their mythical roles, since the pupil and *wdj.t* ‘eye’ are also associated with the creation and rebirth.²⁹


The sign ³⁰ *tj* ‘fledgling, nestling young bird’ appears in combination with the circle sign (in type A & B). This sign was replaced by the sign ³¹ ‘White-fronted goose’ in three occurrences of the CT (type C).³² Both hieroglyphs are associated metaphorically with the egg, as explained below.

The metaphoric significances of the egg

The egg is a germ cell and a metaphor for the mystery of life³³ in its simple function of giving birth, sexual reproduction and the self-impregnating power.³⁴ This metaphor involved the egg in the Egyptian cosmogony, where it was a symbol for the pre-creation status, creation and the primeval ocean, which developed and changed giving the seed of creation in the form of its fledgling, which represents the creator god. This god brings the light/life to the existing world by his own means.³⁵ Simply, an egg was the origin and source of the existence of life.³⁶

²⁹ The pupil is equated with the sun disk, e.g., the magical papyrus of Harris IV, 10-V, 1. It also equates with the disk because it gives the light in the eye (*Dendara* VI, 52, 7-9; IX, 120, 5). Re creates mankind from his tears (Tb 101). The pupil *dfd* is equated metaphorically with the eye *wdj.t*, and the eye of Re *wdj.t n R'*; while the eye is associate with the egg and the creation, etc.

³⁰ Other orthographic writings: ,  *tj(w)*. It also gives the meaning of ‘seed, offspring, child,’ Wb V, 339, 14-340, 18; CT I, 258c; III, 330b; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 744. R. HANNIG, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch, Mittleres Reich und Zweite Zwischenzeit II*, Mainz, 2006, 2712. From the word comes the *nisbe* adjective  *tjy* ‘male’. Wb V, 345, 14-19; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 746. It refers to the male and female young bird or child. Wb V, 344, 12-345, 13; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 746. And to the child god in general, or Horus in particular, in the religious and mythical sources. Wb V, 341, 1 (Horus), 341, 2 (young crocodile); HANNIG, *Ägyptisches Wörterbuch II*, 2712.

³¹ As a determinative in *gb* ‘the *gb*-goose’ from the Old Kingdom, cf. GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, 471; hence semi-phonantic *gb* in *Gb*, the god of earth. Sh. BÉDIER, *Die Rolle des Gottes Geb in den ägyptischen Tempelinschriften der griechisch-römischen Zeit*, HÄB 41, Hildesheim, 1995, 159f. This type may be employed in place of the more exact  in words containing ‘*sj*’. Also, it may be used for the generalized determinative of birds and insects found in hieratic. GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, 471.

³² The original Egyptian source for this papyrus is hieratic, since De Buck determined the bird sign in these attestations with the goose sign ‘*gb*’, I followed his transcription. However, it would be expected too that this sign is ‘*sj*’; in this case it would be normal to occur instead of the ‘*tj*’ since both refer to ‘son / child,’ and even this sign was replaced with the egg sign from the New Kingdom, as it inverted from the Middle Kingdom hieratic affiliations.

³³ BONNET, *RÄRG*, 163, s. v. Ei.

³⁴ I.e. PT 405; 516; 669; CT I 167f/176k; 182g; II 214b; 216b; 217g; 225b; 254c; IV, 53i; V, 337d.

³⁵ cf. G. LEFEBVRE, *Le Tombeau de Petosiris II. Les Textes*, Le Caire, 1923, 38f (nr. 62, Line 5), (nr. 81, Line 67); *id.*, ‘L’Oeuf divin d’Hermopolis’, *ASAE* 23, 65ff; G. ROEDER, *Hermopolis 1929-1939: Ausgrabungen der Deutschen Hermopolis-Expedition in Hermopolis, Ober-Ägypten*, Hildesheim, 1959, 186 (ss.44); BONNET, *RÄRG*, 162-164, s. v. Ei; R.A. CAMINOS, in *LÄ I*, 1185-1188, s. v. Ei; E.A.E. REYMOND, *The Mythical Origin of the Egyptian Temple*, Manchester, 1969, 65f, and 54-70ff.

³⁶ For the cosmogony of the egg and its primeval aspects, cf. S. MORENZ, ‘Das windbefruchtet’ Welt-Ei’, in S. Morenz (ed.), *Aus Antike und Orient: Festschrift Wilhelm Schubart zum 75. Geburtstag*, Leipzig, 1950, 73f; S. BICKEL, *La Cosmogonie égyptienne. Avant le Nouvel Empire*, *OBO* 134, Göttingen, 1994, 234-241ff; D. MENDEL, *Die kosmogonischen Inschriften in der Barkenkapelle des Chonstempels von Karnak*, *MRE* 9,

It has been noted that the egg is equated with the mother's womb in the mythical sources for their association, so it became a metaphor for the womb.³⁷ A child may be born from an egg, and deities in particular are concerned with self-creation and impregnating power.³⁸

Therefore, the Egyptian deity may take the form of a bird that emerges from the egg, e.g., in BD 77, where the deceased equates himself with Horus, saying, 'I am risen as a great falcon who comes forth from his egg.'³⁹ In BD 170, the deceased is also equated with the falcon god Horus, who is in the egg: 'You are Horus in the egg (*Hr m-hnw swḥ.t*). Rise up; you see that the gods and your arm stretch out to the horizon.'⁴⁰ The bird form is known as one of the sun god forms in the religious and funeral sources.⁴¹ That appears in the ram-headed bird that symbolized the dead sun traveling through the netherworld as it is represented on one side of the second shrine of Tutankhamun.⁴²

The metaphoric connection of the sun disk and the sun god with the egg are clearly attested from the CT onwards. The egg may be interpreted as Ur-substance for the sun disk; therefore, the sun god emerges from the egg.⁴³ The creator sun god, according to the Hermopolitan theory of creation, emerged from the primeval egg of the Great Cackler.⁴⁴ The daily sunrise is a simulation in which the cycle of the sun god emerging from his egg is repeated. Thus, this allusion was expressed in the texts, such as those of the CT and BD; where the focal point of the spell is the fact that the sun / sun god in his daily rise is actual; he emerges from his egg. in this sense, CT II, 36c-d reads: '*wbnḥ r'-nb prrḥ m swḥ.tḥ msw.t nṯr prt*',⁴⁵ 'he rises every

Trunhout, 2003, 44ff. J.P. ALLEN, *Genesis in Egypt: the Philosophy of Ancient Egyptian Creation Accounts*, YES 2, New Haven, 1988, 8ff, 13ff.

³⁷ E.g. The spell 148 speaks of the taking shape as a falcon (Horus). It describes the mythical pregnancy of Isis with the seeds of Osiris. Isis speaks '*I have moulded the shape as a god within the egg (i ts ṯrw m nṯr m swḥ.t)*'. She speaks again about her pregnancy '*There is a god within this body (womb) of mine and seed of Osiris is he*'. FECT I, 125ff; R.O. FAULKNER, 'The pregnancy of Isis', JEA 54, 1968, 40ff. As well as the egg is a resemblance for the womb in the magic i.e. in the magical Papyrus of Harris (PM EA 10042 VI, 12); Chr. LEITZ, *Magical and Medical Papyri of the New Kingdom*, London, 1999, 69, Pl. 34 (L.13). cf. Caminos, in LÄ I, 1186, s. v. Ei, and references therein.

³⁸ The creator-god is always identified to be the one who emerges from his egg, i.e. Re, and Amun, Ptah, Atum, etc. E.g. CT II, 33c; 44d; BD 17 (Re). For more cf. MORENZ, in Morenz (ed.), *Aus Antike und Orient*, 71-83; J. ZANDEE, 'The Birth-giving Creator-god in Ancient Egypt', in A.B. Lloyd (ed.), *Studies in Pharaonic Religion and Society, for Gwyn Griffiths*, London, 1992, 169-183ff.

³⁹ Tb (Hornung) 17, 1-2. Even earlier in CT spell 148, Hours takes the shape of the falcon inside the egg inside his mother-womb entitled '*the taking shape as a falcon*'. cf. FECT I, 125ff; FAULKNER, JEA 54, 40ff. It speaks about the fashioning of the god and taking the his falcon shape inside the egg, reads: '*I have moulded the shape as a god within the egg (i ts ṯrw m nṯr m swḥ.t)*'.

⁴⁰ Tb (Naville), Taf. 191 (*Nfr-wbnḥ*); Tb (Hornung) 170, 5-7.


⁴¹ I.e. his iconography as a human deity with falcon head, sometimes he was depicted in this form inside the sun-disk (Tb 133 (Lepsius), LIV; also in the Fifth hour of the Day). cf. LGG IV, 612.



⁴² J.C. DARNELL, *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books of the Solar-Osirian unity: cryptographic compositions in the tombs of Tutankhamun, Ramesses VI and Ramesses IX*, OBO 198, Freiburg, 2004, 189 and n. 106, Pl. 6a.

⁴³ Several CT passages indicate their connection, where the sun-god emerges from the Ur-egg. cf. CT IV 292b-c; VI 323g; 434m-i; Furthermore, the sun-disk and the egg are equating metaphorically in their form, color, etc. For more cf. BICKEL, *La Cosmogonie égyptienne*, 238f; O. GOLDWASSER, '*Itm - The "Golden Egg"*' CT IV, 292-b-c [B9Ca]', in J. Van Dijk (ed.), *Essays on Ancient Egypt; in Honour of Herman Te Velde*, EM 1, Groningen, 1997, 79-84ff; and references therein.

⁴⁴ J. ZANDEE, *De hymnen aan Amon van Papyrus Leiden I 350*, 1947, 13, 69.

⁴⁵ Zandee commented on *prt* as a *sdmtḥ*-Form 'virtual clause of time'. J. ZANDEE, 'Sargtexte, Spruch 80', ZÄS 101, 1974, 73.

day, when he comes out of his egg. The birth of the god comes as the sunrays.’⁴⁶ This is repeated several times, as in *CT* II 44d reads: ‘*psdꜥf wbnꜥf prrꜥf m swḥ.tꜥf msw.t nṯr m prt*’, ‘when he shines, when he rises, he comes out of his egg, which is giving birth to the sun at sun-rise.’⁴⁷ It is attributed to him in *BD* 17: ‘Re who is in his egg, who is shining in his disk, and rises from his horizon.’⁴⁸ It may be concluded that the sun god is inside, and emerges from, the egg and that he shines in the egg disk. Thus, the fledgling depicted inside his egg is a metaphor or image for the child sun god, and is repeating his daily cycle in and out of his egg; he even, as the above text describes, is seen inside his shining disk/egg, which is illustrated by other means in the hieroglyph  under discussion.

On the other hand, since the associations and connections of the egg vary, so that the sign  in the combination of the hieroglyph under discussion, may express some other metaphorical connections. Perhaps, the goose is employed in place of the more exact  in words containing *sz*,⁴⁹ and since *swḥ.t* occurs with rebus instead sometimes, but the goose *gb* is associated as well with the primeval egg since it represents the form of the Great Cackler *ngg-wr*.⁵⁰ There are several attestations for the Great Cackler *ngg-wr* and the cackler *ngg* in the Egyptian myth through the *CT* and *BD*.⁵¹ On the other hand, since these attestations occur within the cosmogony of the egg and its primeval attributes, so that it may indicate a connection with the earth god Geb, who plays a cosmological role as a primordial god and creator, and is occasionally associated with the primeval egg.⁵² *CT* II, 33b (B2L & B1C) identifies the son of Atum with Geb, whereas mythologically it should be Shu. *CT* II, 33b-c (B2L & B1C) reads ‘It is Geb who will live, whom I begot in my name. He knows how to nourish him who is in the egg in the womb for me.’⁵³ Geb was identified as one of the great gods, and older than the primordial deities, *CT* IV, 86o reads ‘who (Geb) is older than the great One.’⁵⁴ So that, he was depicted as an ithyphallic god, similar to Atum, the creator god,

⁴⁶ J. ZANDEE, *ZÄS* 101, 64. Also cf. S. BICKEL, ‘Un hymne à la Vie: Essai d’analyse du Chapitre 80 des Textes des Sarcophages’, dans *BdE* 106/1, Le Caire, 1994, 84.







⁴⁷ J. ZANDEE, ‘Sargtexte, Spruch 81’, *ZÄS* 101, 1974, 80.

⁴⁸ *Tb* (Hornung) 17, 209-211.

⁴⁹ FAIRMAN, *BIFAO* 43, 90f n. (m); GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, 471.

⁵⁰ It is associated with the primeval egg in *CT* III, 207h, 208e. The Great Cackler associates with creation and the Hermopolitan view and with the primeval egg from the New Kingdom, ‘*swḥt n ngg-wr*’ ‘The egg of the great cackler.’ Amun associates with the primeval egg as one who was inside the egg from the New Kingdom onwards: i.e. cf. J. ASSMANN, *Sonnenhymnen in thebanischen Gräbern*, *THE* 1, Mainz, 1983, 140 (text 101, 3), 241 (text 173, 30-32), 282 (text 206, 19), 290 (text 212a, 10), 345 (text 249b, 6). Also, Amun identifies with the Great Cackler, and the smn of Amun, etc., cf. A. EISSA, ‘Zur Etymologie des modernen Namens vom grossen Amuntempel in Theben: “Karnak”’, *GM* 144, 1995, 31-41.

⁵¹ I.e. *BD* 54; 56; 57; H. KEES, *Der Götterglaube im alten Ägypten*, 1956, 351; S. MORENZ, *Ägyptische Religion, Die Religionen der Menschheit* 8, Stuttgart, 1960, 187f; EISSA, *GM* 144, 32-3 and n. 14. cf. also *Wb* II, 350, 13-14; *LGG* IV, 367.






⁵² Some of the variation of the name of the earth-god Geb show the egg-sign, i.e.  (pJumilhac XVI,7);  (Urk. VI, 83, 19). cf. *Wb* V, 164, 6, 10-11; *LGG* VII, 303-306; BÉDIER, *Die Rolle des Gottes Geb*, 161. Bedier collected the various variations of the name with the egg sign. she commented that the egg sign gives the phonetic value ‘g / k’ in his name. For the mythical and cosmological roles of Geb, cf. W. BARTA, *Untersuchungen zum Götterkreis der Neunheit*, *MÄS* 28, 1973, 94-100; Bedier, *Die Rolle des Gottes Geb*, 161ff. Fairman commented on the egg sign with the phonetic ‘gb’ in  *Gb* the name of Geb, that it occurs by false analogy because it was imagined that since the egg sign could be substituted for  *sz* son, it could therefore be substituted for  in . FAIRMAN, *BIFAO* 43, 116.

⁵³ *CT* II 33b-c (B2L & B1C); cf. *FECT* I 84; BARTA, *Untersuchungen zum Götterkreis der Neunheit*, 97.

⁵⁴ *FECT* I 232.

and the accompanying inscription describes him as the creator of the world.⁵⁵ His connection with the primeval egg is approved through several other attestations as well.⁵⁶

The assimilations / similarities with other hieroglyphs

Such combination forms of this enigmatic egg sign  and its variations also bring to mind some similar hieroglyphic forms, which may have no direct association with this particular egg sign, but have similar hieroglyphic structures and significance. Perhaps, they help by bringing the sign's symbolic significance to light. First, in respect of its idiomatic classification, it meets with the ideogram signs of  'a pregnant woman' and of  'a woman giving birth.' In the case of the sign ⁵⁷, as ideogram or determinative in *msl*, 'give birth, be born'⁵⁸ and a determinative in *msw.t*, 'birth';⁵⁹ it represents a woman who is seated, while the child comes forth from her vulva, and his head and arms are shown out of her body. The most noticeable issue in this sign is how the hieroglyph determines and expresses the act of giving birth through the child's head emerging from the body. Similarly, the egg hatching as a birth-giving act may be represented through the depiction of the embryo in its complete fledgling form; it is clearly to be seen inside its egg being ready to break forth. It was expected here a hieroglyph depicting 'a fledgling coming from a broken egg.' Such a sign does not exist in the hieroglyphs, or illustrations, but the allusion or notion often appears in the texts, as already noted.⁶⁰ However, the hieroglyphs or iconic signs under discussion are still in the cycle of pregnancy, and the giving birth has not happened yet, but may be involved as well.⁶¹ On the other hand, it seems to be more similar to the hieroglyph  of 'a pregnant woman' in *'iwr* 'conceive, bear.' This sign also appears within the same icon in the sun god's birth representations in the first hour of LdJ, particularly, the depiction of the pregnant goddess, who will give birth to the sun god in this hour. It even varies in the form (namely the pregnant goddess) between this abbreviated hieroglyphic form [Osorkon II; fig. 3], and its form with



⁵⁵ BARTA, *Untersuchungen zum Götterkreis der Neunheit*, 98. So that he be may identified with the one who is inside the egg as well.

⁵⁶ cf. LGG VII, 303-306; BÉDIER, *Die Rolle des Gottes Geb*.



⁵⁷ GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, 448.

⁵⁸ FCD 116; Wb II, 137, 4-138, 17; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, 458.

⁵⁹ FCD 117, Wb II, 140, 16-141, 1.

⁶⁰ The hieroglyphs under discussion still have the customary iconic value for 'egg,' while specifically, it determines the fledgling in embryo inside an egg. It may be considered as a hieroglyph for the embryo, who has got his bird-form, being ready to go forth (?). A significance which is interpreted through some relevant phrases, such as *sd swḥ.t* 'breaking the egg' by the fledgling to go forth. Wb IV, 374, 3. The philological significance of this phrase occurs in positive and negative sequence. cf. Wb IV, 373, 8 and 374.1-2.170.2-5; FCD 233; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 512; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, 868. Also in Wb IV, 374, 5:  *sd m swḥ.t*, 'break the egg' or 'Germinating life destroyed' inside the egg before comes forth. cf. HANNIG, *Grosses Handwörterbuch Ägyptisch-Deutsch*, 680. For the verb  *sd*, 'to break (something in pieces),' Wb IV, 373, 8 and 374, 1-2. It is attested from the PT onward in the context of bowls, or dishes being broken, especially in the ceremonies, e.g., 'breaking the red bowls' (Wb IV, 374, 1-2). Cf. VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 587f: 'to break' in CT I 154f, 156d; II, 127a; VI, 305f; 'be broken' CT IV, 330d?; VII, 95e?; 110k; 'break out' IV, 181g *sd-n-i m swḥ.t*.

⁶¹ I.e. in the passages that are discussed here, i.e. CT II, 36c; 44d emphasizing on the hatching or coming forth from the egg. Several other mythical and religious sources describe the creation of the creator god who emerges from the egg. This notion was illustrated also in the texts of the tomb of Petosiris at Tuna el-Gabel. cf. G. LEFEBVRE, *Le Tombeau de Petosiris* II, 38, nr. 62, Line 5; K. SETHE, *Amun und die Acht Urgötter von Hermopolis*, Leipzig, 1929, ss.160; ROEDER, *Hermopolis*, 186 (ss.44c).

the sun god inside the disk / egg / womb [Ramesses VI; figs. 1-2]. It seems to be clear that the depiction of the pregnant goddess' in the tomb of Ramesses VI was developed from its hieroglyphic origin . This depiction is an icon of the goddess, who became pregnant with an embryo inside her womb in the form of the disk / egg / womb. It even presents another iconic combination of this hieroglyph of the pregnant woman and those under discussion , in which the embryo's bird form appears in the human form of the sun god, who has taken his complete child form ready to be born (break forth).

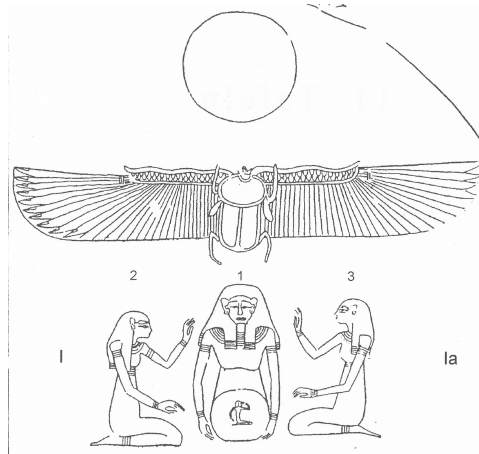


Fig. 1. The birth giving of the new sun, sun god at the beginning of the First hour of LdJ. Tomb of Ramesses VI, Valley of the Kings, Thebes (A. Piankoff, *Ramesses VI*, fig. 130).

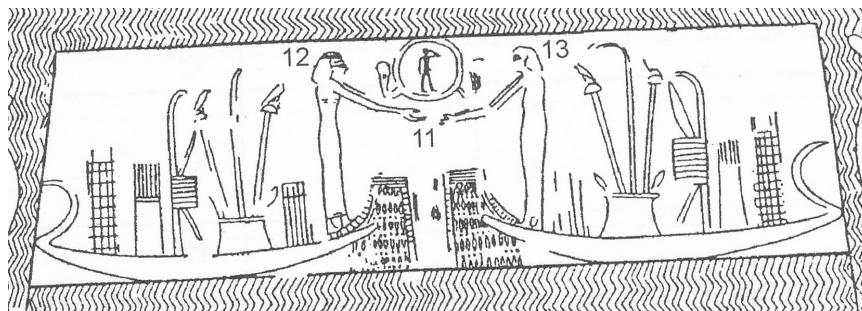







Fig. 2. The transferring of the sun-god within the disk between his two barks. First hour of LdJ, Tomb of Ramesses VI, Valley of the Kings, Thebes (A. Piankoff, *Ramesses VI*, fig. 130).







In respect of another metaphorical, and similar, combination, the ideogrammatic writing  as a variation of the name of Hathor is considered to be a perfect comparable example. The sign is a combination of the hieroglyphs  'h.t' 'house' and  'Hr' as the name of Horus⁶², to be read *H.t-Hr* and meaning 'house of Horus' in association with the falcon child god


⁶² GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, 494.

Horus.⁶³ The name indicates, in this form, Hathor as Horus' mother which may be clarified by the Egyptian understanding of the mother 'h.t' as 'house' or 'town,' from which the child comes and belongs to.⁶⁴ This form presents a similar icon of ours. Similarly, this combination continues and appears in the hieroglyph .⁶⁵ The connection with the hieroglyph of the nest is not limited to their hieroglyphic structures, but it appears metaphorically in the mythical and religious significance of the egg as a symbolic place for the embryo, together with the nest where the egg is placed and the fledgling grows up. It is attested from the Old Kingdom onwards and means 'nest,' 'a swamp of birds' or the marshland where the birds' nests might be found.⁶⁶ Sometimes, it occurs in the metaphoric sense within the Egyptian myth linked to the child god Horus, who grew up in a bird's nest in the Delta, which is known as the nest of Chemnis where Horus was nursed by Hathor, etc.⁶⁷ It is attested in this sequence from the PT to the Graeco-Roman Period at Edfu. It occurs in other places, where it is associated with the primeval egg and Hermopolis.⁶⁸ In the literary sources, the word 'nest' occurs occasionally instead of 'egg,' e.g., in a titulary inscription of Thutmose III, who stated that 'I am the one who is still in his nest (*imy sšf*).'⁶⁹

⁶³ The written form and meaning of Hathor's name is mythically interpreted in CT Spell 148, where Horus took his falcon shape inside the egg / womb of his mother Isis, and the mythical connection between Isis and Hathor as mother of the child-god Horus, etc..

⁶⁴ K. SETHE, *Urgeschichte und älteste Religion der Ägypter*, Leipzig, 1930, 120. In his commentary on the PT 408 (Pyr. 714b), where the word *swḥ.t* is determined with the sign . He mentioned that it is expected since the Egyptian myths – especially from the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts onwards – reflects the Egyptian understanding of the 'swḥ.t' egg as a living-place of the embryo. For Hathor's name as 'House of Horus' cf. K. SETHE, *Überzeugung und Kommentar zu den Altägyptische Pyramidentexten III*, Glückstadt, 1937, 315f. cf. also, *LGG V*, 75-79.

⁶⁵ Other vars.  'sš' 'nest', other orthographic writings, i.e.   . *Wb III*, 483, 12 and 484, 14-23; LESKO, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian II*, 79; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 548f. The 'three ducklings in nest' sign  occurs as a determinative in *sš* 'nest'; sometimes the sign  takes the place of the three ducklings sign. GARDINER, *Egyptian Grammar*, 473. *Wb III*, 483, 12-484, 14; LESKO, *A Dictionary of Late Egyptian II*, 79. For 'sš' in the meaning of 'marshland or a swamp of land,' cf. *Wb III*, 484, 1-14; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 548.

⁶⁶ From which the word  *sš*(:) 'a bird or nestling' is derived. *Wb IV*, 280, 14.

⁶⁷ *Wb III*, 484, 17-22; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Dictionary*, 921.

⁶⁸ WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Dictionary*, 921.

⁶⁹ *Urk. IV*, 157, 3 (Karnak); compare also *Urk. IV*, 1328, 13-15 (Amenhotep II, Karnak).

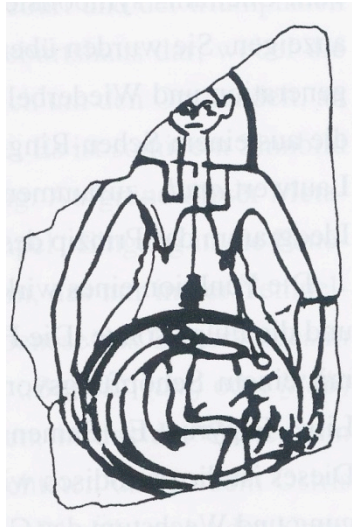


Fig. 3. Ostracon from the Egyptian museum (CG 25074).


The main hieroglyphs under discussion in this paper together with that of Hathor and the nest reveal obvious similarities in their hieroglyphic structures, which are continued in their mythical significance in connection with the embryo or nursed fledgling. Similar to our theme or hieroglyphs where the hieroglyphic structure and their mythical significance: the nest, Hathor, and the egg are symbolic places, where the embryo, later a bird or child is nursed. Mythically, Horus is the child god, son of Hathor, who was inside the egg inside the womb of his mother Isis, and was nursed in the marsh nest at Chemnis. He is attributed with *'imy sšf'*⁷⁰ in the sense of 'in his cradle,' an epithet which, together with the one that describes him as *'imy swḥ.t'* 'who is inside his egg' (i.e. CT spell 148), concludes this mystery and the association between the three previous hieroglyphs. The egg has the significance of the place of the bird, or the god, in embryo.⁷¹ So, the theologians may be influenced by these two other hieroglyphs and their mythical backgrounds to produce the enigmatic hieroglyph for the egg with the young bird inside.





Its metaphoric connection with the sun disk and the god is not limited to their hieroglyphic form, in which the hieroglyph ☉ 'sun disk,' reveals a similar hieroglyphic form. This sign indicates the sun disk and the sun god as an ideogrammatic writing of his name, and as an icon or depiction.⁷² The sun god Re appears in various forms in the numerous and varied Egyptian religious and funeral sources. The sun disk and the child form are the relevant forms for his daily rebirth, where he is occasionally depicted in his child form inside the disk, while in other cases in his child form or as the disk only. In his daily journey, where the theme is the god's birth / rebirth, i.e., the First hour of LdJ depicts the child sun god inside his disk, and again inside his disk/egg inside the goddess' womb [fig. 2-3], while the accompanying texts

⁷⁰ Wb III, 484.18-22; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Dictionary*, 921.



⁷¹ According to the Late Egyptian mythical texts, it even appears in its writing variation in the PT (Pyr. 714b), where it was determined with the sign ☉. The notion of the god who was inside the egg and emerges from it, is already clarified by numerous Egyptian sources. cf. LEFEBVRE, *Le Tombeau de Petosiris*, II, 38, nr. 62, Line. 5; SETHE, *Amun*, ss. 160; ROEDER, *Hermopolis*, 186 (ss.44c); SETHE, *Überzeugung und Kommentar* III, 315f.

⁷² See below.

describe his birth.⁷³ The metaphoric connection of the sun disk and god with the egg has been already noted above, in which it was clarified mythically and cosmologically that the sun god emerges from the egg. Therein lies the fact that the depiction of ‘the sun disk with the child god inside’ is metaphorically developed from the customary iconic egg sign and its enigmatic form . That comes through its mythical significance in the daily birth of the sun god, and its cosmological significance as a metaphor for the cosmos from which the creator god / sun god is emerging.

The customary egg sign occurs in a similar hieroglyphic combination, which appears in the Graeco-Roman cryptographic writing of ‘the child in the temple’: ⁷⁴ and  ‘*pr-ms*’ ‘House of birth’⁷⁵ which is composed of the *bxnt* sign  and the child sign  respectively.⁷⁶ It shares the same notion and occurs under the theme of the child god within his own cosmos. The mythical significance of the egg as a mother womb and germ cell, a place for the embryo and the cosmos, is associated with the temple that represents the primeval hill and the origin of the cosmos; this symbolic significance appears clearly in the Graeco-Roman religious sources.⁷⁷ That may interpret this Graeco-Roman cryptographic writing as being developed from the same metaphoric symbolical significance of the egg and its cosmogony.⁷⁸


The textual attestations

The relevant passages in the PT and CT, where the word ‘*swḥ.t*’ is written or determined with one of these enigmatic hieroglyphs, may reveal some of their significance. The first occurrence of this hieroglyph is in PT 669 at the pyramid of Pepi I (type A: ).⁷⁹ However, this enigmatic form of the egg sign does not appear in the spell's versions of PT of Merenre and Pepi II,⁸⁰ but it occurs again with the hieroglyph (type C: ) in the CT's version of this spell (CT VII, 198f).

⁷³ See below.

⁷⁴ Fr. DAUMAS, *Valeurs phonétiques des signes hiéroglyphiques d'époque Gréco-Romaine* III, Montpellier, 1990, 521; Fr. DAUMAS, *Mammisis*, 514; *Dendara* VII, 53, 8; D. BUDDE, *Das Götterkind im Tempel, in der Stadt und im Weltgebäude*, MÄS 55, Mainz, 2011, 5f, 349f and references therein.

⁷⁵ BUDDE, *Das Götterkind im Tempel*, 5f, 349f. For the various writings and meaning as well as the related attestations, see Budde, and fig. 6 here. This cryptograph was known as one of the ten cult objects of Hathor in Dendara, cf. BUDDE, *Das Götterkind im Tempel*, 2ff.

⁷⁶ It also occurs in two of its occurrences with the sign  instead of the child, in which it reads *ḥt-swḥ.t* ‘House of the egg.’ BUDDE, *Das Götterkind im Tempel*, 352f, 402f.

⁷⁷ For the mythical origin of the temple, and his connection with the egg, cf. E. REYMOND, *The Mythical origin of the Egyptian temple*, New York, 1969, 63ff and reference therein.




⁷⁸ cf. BUDDE, *Das Götterkind im Tempel*, 402f.

⁷⁹ This spell is numbered: 1049 (P/A/N 63), according to Leclant, its parallel PT 669, and its variation in the Coffin Texts (CT 682 & CT 989), cf. LECLANT *et al.*, *Les Textes de la Pyramide de Pépy I^{er}* I, 153; II, pl. 10 (col. 63; for the spell cols. 60-63).

⁸⁰ It is determined with the simple circular sign instead of the egg sign; cf. Pyr. 1967; 1968d (crushed); 1969c; FEPT Supplements, 50 (1967; 1969c). The metaphorical association between the two signs has been pointed out above. The enigmatic hieroglyph of the egg sign is not attested even in the other attestations of the word *swḥ.t* in the PT of Pepi I, cf. Pyr. 714b; 1184b, where its customary iconic egg sign is attested.

The PT 669 describes the ascension and birth/rebirth of the deceased king, who is breaking forth from his egg. The texts are highly relevant to the daily rebirth of the sun-god in the first hour of LdJ. PT 669⁸¹ reads:

‘Recitation. He whom the great heat foretold has come forth from the interior Akhet and has seen the arrangement of the festival calendar and the making of the braziers on the birth of the gods on the five epagomenal days on your arms, Great-Breasted One in front of the inductees. [May you find him there at the beginning of your document among those who have made their names. N has been given birth] by his mother Begetter in a rebirth in the nest... “Look, he is tied together; he has developed; look, he has developed. so, with what can we break his egg?” said the gods. Then Sokar of Spread (Lake) will come for him, having smelted his harpoons, carved his prongs, [and struck the two ferules of] his [two shafts]. He is the one who will break his egg and unite his metal (bands), and the god will proceed to his activity, with sharp teeth and long nails, the god's leaders. Look, N has developed. Look, N is tied together. Look., N's egg has been broken for him...’⁸²



Its traditional CT version in CT VII, 198f, reads:  ⁸³ ‘*sd=f swḥ.t*’ ‘he will break the egg.’⁸⁴ The texts express and stress the meaning of the egg's hatching by the deceased, who got his complete form ready for the giving birth; the text describes the hatching act, so that the enigmatic egg sign with the young bird inside not just determines the word, but is also an allusion to the newborn in bird form. The hieroglyph (type C: ) occurs in two other passages in the same version/source (P. Gard II),⁸⁵ where the theme of the mythical birth from the egg / womb is continued. The deceased is equated with the god Re in CT spell 207, reading: ‘*iwr.ty*⁸⁶ *R^c ms(w)*⁸⁷ *tn wī im(y) swḥ.t* *ms(w)tn wī snḥn(.w)tn wī*’ ‘The birth of Re,

⁸¹ Unfortunately, the version of Pepi I of this text is partly destroyed, Leclant published the facsimile of these texts, cf. LECLANT *et al.*, *Les Textes de la Pyramide de Pépy I^{er}* II, pl. 10, col. 63. Carrier gives a translation for the text of Pepi I, but unfortunately, it is still not clear enough, since the original text is mostly destroyed. cf. Cl. CARRIER, *Textes des Pyramides de L'Égypte Ancienne II. Textes de la pyramide de Pépy I^{er}*, Paris, 2009, 862f. For its parallel in the Pyramid of Pepi II. Cf. FEPT 284f; S. MERCER, *Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 292f.

⁸² J.P. ALLEN, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, Leiden, Boston, 2005, 265f (N 347 = P 431). As the original version of Pepi I for this spell is much destroyed, I relayed on Allen's translation of its version at Pepi II.


⁸³ CT VII, 198f (P Gard II).

⁸⁴ FEPT III, 98.

⁸⁵ CT III, 156b and VII 147a. CT III, 156b shows the word in its correct writing in the other versions, except in the versions G1T & A1C, in which it was replaced by the abnormal writing  instead. This abnormal writing is not appropriate for the word *swḥ.t*, though it is determined with its proper iconic sign. Perhaps, it is a miswriting influenced with its metaphoric connection with the fledgling and its writing *tj*. Harco Willems commented on this abnormal writing  on the Coffin of Heqata (A1C), Cairo JdE 36418): The egg determinative is rendered in its usual, much smaller size, so that the bird now appears outside it. H. WILLEMS, *The Coffin of Heqata (Cairo JdE 36418)*, OLA 70, Leuven, 1996, 458 (g). May I suggest a near interpretation to that of Willems, since the scribe draw the hieroglyphs of the bird in a large size too big to be enclosed in the circular sign or the egg, but not vice versa, so that it was left as it, while the iconic determinative of the egg settles the meaning; another interpretation is simply that the scribe forgot to draw the outer line of the egg around the young bird.

⁸⁶ For its meaning and interpretations according to the various versions of the passage, cf. WILLEMS, *The Coffin of Heqata*, 457f (b).

⁸⁷ For the special meaning of *msi* is: ‘bear, give birth “schaffen”’, cf. ZANDEE, in Alan B. Lloyd (ed.), *Studies in Pharaonic Religion and Society*, 169.


The verbs which occur in *CT* I, 167f/176k reveal some of this allusion in the adapted meaning of the word *swḥ.t*,⁹⁴ and its associated meaning with *ṯ.w*, since the egg doesn't grow up but obviously its embryo (later, the fledgling) does. In the case of *CT* I, 167f, the causative verb *snḥn*⁹⁵ 'to make young, nurse child' is used, while in *CT* I, 176k, the verb *snḥḥ*⁹⁶ 'to rejuvenate oneself' or 'let grow old, age'⁹⁷ appears instead. In both cases, the verb *šd*⁹⁸ 'bring up, nourish' occurs with *ṯ.w*, which has the same meaning as the verb *snḥn*. The relevant meanings of these three verbs in the *CT* reveal their main and usual use, which is to describe the growing status of a fledgling or child.⁹⁹ That is, the verb *snḥn* occurs in *CT* III, 157a 'snḥn-tn wi' 'May you nurse me,'¹⁰⁰ describing the deceased, who would be nursed after hatching from his egg. It occurs again in *CT* VI, 247k in this meaning describing the deceased as the child who is nursed by Isis.¹⁰¹ Again *CT* VI, 370m obviously describes the fledgling in this case 'The fledglings were nursed before she was nursed.'¹⁰² The verb *snḥḥ* is determined with the sign  that emphasizes its meaning of 'let grow old, age.' It also occurs in the *CT* VII, 21b, reading 'I am rejuvenated and I am hale, for I am one who went forth from the belly.'¹⁰³ It also describes the fledgling's status after issuing from his egg, and follows it in the order of the stages. So it seems to be more appropriate with the fledgling (or embryo) rather than the egg, which may reveal the same significance in 'snḥn.t-ṯ swḥ.wt-ṯ'. Perhaps the verb *šd(i)* 'bring up, nourish,' which occurs with *ṯ.w* in *CT* I, 167e, 176k, supports this meaning as well.¹⁰⁴

These hieroglyphs appear under the cosmogony of the egg as well; *CT* VII, 147a-b, reads: 'ṯ(w) ntr m-ḥnw swḥ.t Ḥpr qd(w) m-ḥnw [...]' 'The god is knit together within the egg,

⁹⁴ The other relevant texts discussed here reveal the use of some other verbs and preposition which often occur with the *swḥ.t*, the preposition *imy* (*CT* III, 156a) and *m-ḥnw* (VII, 147a) and the verb *šd* (VII, 198f, and PT 669 (Pepi I: new spell 1049 P/A/N [col. 63])).

⁹⁵ *Wb* IV, 169.11-14; FCD 233; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 511f (has the meaning of 'hatch eggs' in our attestation, and of 'nurse child' in others); WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, 868.

⁹⁶ *Wb* IV, 170.2-5; FCD 233; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 512; VAN DER PLAS, *Coffin Texts World Dictionary*, 258; WILSON, *A Ptolemaic Lexikon*, 868.

⁹⁷ Van der Molen prefers this meaning in *CT* I, 176k, since it is determined with the sign . VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 512; VAN DER PLAS, *Coffin Texts World Dictionary*, 258, gives the meaning of 'educate' in the case of *CT* I, 167f and some other *CT* occurrences for the verb *snḥn*.

⁹⁸ *Wb* IV, 564.17-565.15 'to suckle or educate'; FCD 273; VAN DER PLAS, *Coffin Texts World Dictionary*, 284, gives other occurrences for the verb in the *CT* therein; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 640. Van der Molen gives in addition other meanings for this verb from our attestation examples, where it means 'save, carry out, celebrate, and take or remove,' cf. related pages 638-640.

⁹⁹ cf. the preceding footnotes. For their *CT* attestations, cf. VAN DER PLAS, *Coffin Texts World Dictionary*, 258, 284.

¹⁰⁰ cf. *FECT* I, 168.

¹⁰¹ *FECT* II, 211.

¹⁰² *FECT* II, 282.

¹⁰³ *FECT* III, 11.

¹⁰⁴ It occurs in several other passages of the Coffin Texts with the same meaning. For its occurrences and meaning, cf. VAN DER PLAS, *Coffin Texts World Dictionary*, 284; VAN DER MOLEN, *A Hieroglyphic Dictionary of Egyptian Coffin Texts*, 640.

Khepri is formed inside [the nest].¹⁰⁵ It clearly indicates the creator sun god, who was knit inside the egg (disk), he takes his solar form or iconography as Khepri. Khepri is the morning manifestation of the sun god; he appears in the form of a scarab inside or pushing the disk/egg in the religious sources from the New Kingdom onwards.¹⁰⁶ Again under the same theme in CT II, 3d-4b, 'It is I who I am Shu, whom Atum created on the day that he developed. I was not built in the womb, I was not tied together in the egg (*n qd-ı m h.t n ts-ı m swh.t*), I was not conceived in conception. My father Atum sneezed me in a sneeze of his mouth, together with my sister Tefnut.'¹⁰⁷ Shu describes his creation as his father Atum sneezes him, not to be built inside the womb or fashioned within the egg. The CT 76 spell describes Atum as the creator god, who impregnates himself as one who was inside the egg. The enigmatic egg sign, Type A, occurs in one version only of CT II, 3f (G1T); which may be interpreted to be no more than a scribe's temporary imagery, or copying from the other attestations for the sign in this form, since the sense of this passage is even to deny this method of creation for Shu, as the following passage reveals that Shu was sneezed by his father Atum.

The texts discussed above related to this enigmatic sign in the writing of *swh.t* are classified under the metaphoric mythical and cosmological themes where the symbolic significance of the egg is adapted. The egg is a metaphor for the cosmos and creation from which the creator god comes forth from his egg; while mythically the deceased is born from the egg as a germ cell for the life circle. This enigmatic egg sign, and its variations in the PT and CT's writings of *swh.t*, present an earlier allusion to the representations of the daily birth of the sun god from the New Kingdom (LdJ and BD), which appears even in the context of the related texts of the PT and CT, as has been pointed out. By other means these hieroglyphs fulfill the functional purpose of the accompanying vignettes of the New Kingdom 'mythical birth'.

The assimilation with the iconography of the sun-god inside the disk

The iconography of the sun god as a child or human god with a falcon's head or a scarab in the disk, which is known well in the funeral and religious sources from the New Kingdom onwards reveals an interesting assimilation with the hieroglyphs under discussion.

¹⁰⁵ BICKEL, *La Cosmogonie égyptienne*, 238. Faulkner's translation reads: '*ts(w) ntr m-hnw swh.t qd(w) hpr ntr m-hnw [...]*' 'The god is knit together within the egg, the god is formed and having come into being inside [the nest].' cf. FECT III, 78.

¹⁰⁶ In some other places in the Coffin Texts, the egg is a metaphor for the sun disk, particularly in morning sun and shining of the sun god as Re or Khepri. CT VII, 510 reads '*I posses the egg of Re and my dignity is like that of Re when he appears in the early morning.*' FECT III 185, again in CT VII, 310b, cf. FECT III, 139. In the New Kingdom, a hymn for Amun in TT 183(8) equates him with Re, and then Khepri who is inside the egg: '*R'w shd fdıt [...] m-Hwt-hrw, Hprı imy swh.tzf*' '[...] Re, when he lights the netherworld [...] as Hathor. Khepri, who is inside his egg'. ASSMANN, *Sonnenhymnen in thebanischen Gräberern*, 241 (Text 173.30-32); for the sun-god / Khepri in the scarab form inside the egg and their assimilations and association with these hieroglyphs, see below.

¹⁰⁷ ALLEN, *Genesis in Egypt*, 18; cf. FECT I, 77; J. ZANDEE, 'Sargtexte, Spruch 76', ZÄS 100, 1973, 60, 65.

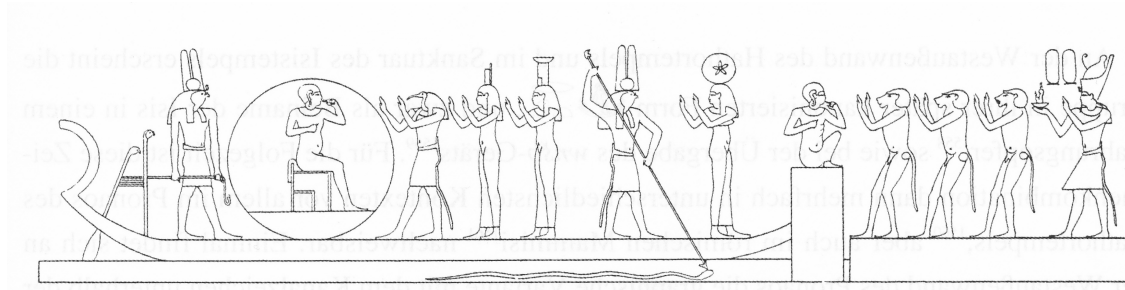


Fig. 4. The child sun-god inside his disk on his daily bark among his company. The First hour of the Book of the Day, Temple of Edfu (*Edfou* IX, Taf. 70).

The first hour in the LdJ, as in the tomb of Ramesses VI,¹⁰⁸ takes place in the east and represents the birth of the new sun from the body of Nut and may be relevant to our theme. The first scene, particularly under the sky goddess' body, shows the goddess¹⁰⁹ depicted as a pregnant woman holding a disk, in which the sun god is seated as a newborn child [fig. 1].¹¹⁰ The sun disk was represented several times inside the body of Nut as a blank disk during the god's nightly journey, before he reaches the birth moment, when he is depicted as a newborn child inside the disk.¹¹¹ The final hour of LdN and the first hour of LdJ are concerned with the same physical phenomenon 'sunrise,' the rejuvenation of the sun god in his nightly and daily journeys.¹¹² The main theme of the first hour of the day is entitled 'She who lifts up the beauty of Re' appearing through the scene described above and the accompanying text is the daily rebirth of the sun god.¹¹³ However, the central figure of the scene is the goddess Nut, who gives birth to the newborn sun god [fig. 1]; or it represents the aged sun god¹¹⁴ as a self creator, shown in his older form in the process of refashioning or giving rebirth to himself,¹¹⁵

¹⁰⁸ Ramesses IV in corridor C and in the Sarcophagus Hall; similar compositions in sarcophagus chambers in the tombs of Ramesses IX (KV 6) and of Osorkon II at Tanis, though it represents the divine figure holding the disk without the child.

¹⁰⁹ Piankoff interpreted the figure here as the goddess Nut, since it occurs in the version of the tomb of Osorkon: A. PIANKOFF, *BSAC* 16, 1961/62, 266; *id.*, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI* I, 389; SCHÄFER, *Kunst*, 126f and Abb. 17. Dorman suggests it represented the sun god himself, as discussed below.

¹¹⁰ PIANKOFF, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI* I, 389 and fig. 130; M. MÜLLER-ROTH, *Buch vom Tage*, OBO 236, Fribourg, 2008, 70ff, Abb. 13 and Taf. I, XVII, XXII and XXIII. For the comparable versions in the tomb of Ramesses IX, Osorkon II, cf. MÜLLER-ROTH, *Buch vom Tage*, 70ff. A Graeco-Roman version of the LdJ's scene appears in the temple of Edfu representing the child sun-god sitting on the disk on his bark, accompanied with his crew in the bark [fig. 4]: Edfou IX, Taf. 70; BUDDE, *Das Götterkind im Tempel*, 288f, Abb. 60.

¹¹¹ PIANKOFF, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI* I, figs. 131-132.

¹¹² DORMAN, *Faces in Clay*, 121f. To compare the two hours cf. PIANKOFF, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI* I, 389ff and 409f, and figs 130-131; Müller-Roth, *Buch vom Tage*, 69ff.

¹¹³ DORMAN, *Faces in Clay*, 122; PIANKOFF, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI* I, 389f and figs 130; MÜLLER-ROTH, *Buch vom Tage*, 70ff, and 100f. The text of the First hour of LdJ is highly relevant to that of PT 669 and its traditional version in the CT discussed above. For the accompanying texts of Ramesses VI, cf. PIANKOFF, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI* I, 389ff; for the accompanying texts of Ramesses VI and Osorkon II and related commentary, cf. MÜLLER-ROTH, *Buch vom Tage*, 100ff.

¹¹⁴ My understanding of CT I, 167f, 176k, where the hieroglyphs in discussion occur, is that the dead regenerates himself in his offspring or fledglings, who are inside the eggs or have already come forth, see above.

¹¹⁵ DORMAN, *Faces in Clay*, 122f; MÜLLER-ROTH, *Buch vom Tage*, 75f; Piankoff interpreted the figure here as the female goddess Nut giving birth the newborn sun: PIANKOFF, *The Tomb of Ramesses VI* I, 389. Dorman identified this figure as the sun-god in the form of the potter, who is refashioning himself by the means of the potter's wheel: cf. P.F. DORMAN, *Faces in Clay*, MÄS 52, Mainz, 2002, 123.

since the aim of this scene is the renewal and rebirth of the sun god. The earliest indications of the rebirth of the sun go back to the PT (compare Pyr. 698d; 705c; 1382e). Perhaps, PT spell 416 is highly relevant to this of LdJ, in which the text identifies Pepi I with the Potter (the creator as Khnum), the breaker of the complete egg which contains the life, he was also born to the goddess Nut. It reads 'Pepi is your oxen's caretaker, the one in charge of your Meskhenet. Pepi is your potter on earth, the breaker of the complete egg, to whom Nut has given birth. He has come having fetched for you the enclosure he potted for you on the night of your birth and the day of your Meskhenet: it is a beer jar.'¹¹⁶ Pepi I is identified with the newborn sun or sun god who comes in connection with the egg as he breaks forth from the complete egg.

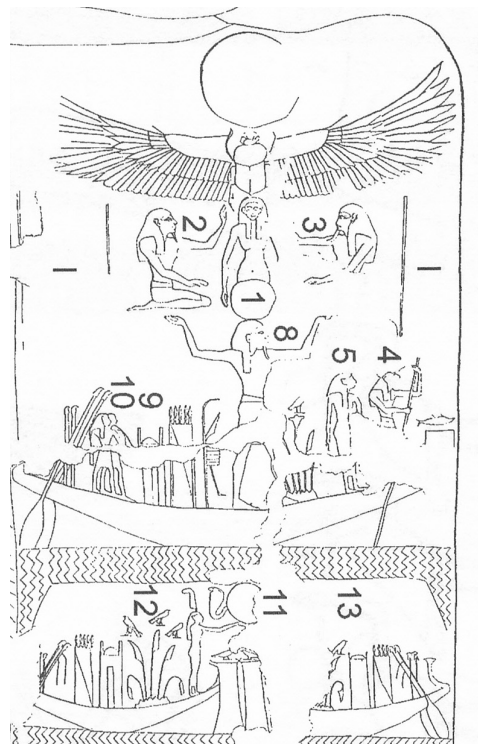


Fig. 5. A Late Period version of the birth giving of the sun god. The First hour of LdJ, Osorkon II (Muller-Ruth, *OBO* 134, Taf. XXIII).

The notion of the sun's rebirth is repeated again through the same hour of the LdJ in the scene below the bark of Shu. It represents the two barks of the day and night with Isis and Nephthys standing on their prows [fig. 2]. They transfer the disk from the bark of the night to that of the day; while inside the disk is a representation of the sun god as an ithyphallic standing child,¹¹⁷ enveloped by the coiled serpent Mehen 'mḥn' 'the Enveloper',¹¹⁸ as the inscribed caption

¹¹⁶ ALLEN, *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts*, 159 (P 464); cf. FEPT 190f.

¹¹⁷ PIANKOFF, *The Tomb of Ramesses VII*, 389 and figs 130; MÜLLER-ROTH, *Buch vom Tage*, 80ff.

¹¹⁸ MÜLLER-ROTH, *Buch vom Tage*, 81. The primary function of the god Mehen, as it appears here and in the religious Beliefs of the New Kingdom Netherworld literature. He is an immense coiled serpent who stands on the night bark of Ra, and he guides the passage of the sun god in his netherworld journey. P.A. PICCIONE, 'Mehen, Mysteries, and Resurrection from the Coiled Serpent,' *JARCE* 27, 1990, 43ff. About the mḥn serpent,

above the prows indicates. The Cairo ostrakon CG 25074¹¹⁹ shows a similar representation of the LdJ's first scene, and represents an ithyphallic child within the womb of Nut, while the goddess' womb has taken the form of the disk or the egg [fig. 3]. The hieratic inscription accompanying the newborn indicates that he is the sun god: 'R' 'q(=w) m itm=f' 'Re, having entered into his disk.'¹²⁰ This inscription enhances a connection with the Late Period Sarcophagi, Address 61. The main section of the address describes Re at the beginning and the end of his journey through the Netherworld. Re enters as an old man and emerges as the scarab that is transformed into the flaming child (*sd.ty*). On the sarcophagus of Nectanebo II¹²¹ in a version of Address 61, an important new sentence has been added to the New Kingdom text: 'It is he who is the Flaming child, the egg who emerged before him (*ntf sd.ty swḥ.t pr hnt=f*).'¹²²

Similarly, the version La of BD 17 shows a mummiform god sitting within a great solar disk in his bark [fig. 6].¹²³ The identity of this deity is not clear, but its parallel in the reverse of La and in pAni, is identified with the sun god Khepri. The god's iconography in pAni is provided with the Double Crown and the name 'Atum' is added in front of him. The sun god here is thought to depart from the horizon in the sun bark on his celestial course accompanied with his followers.¹²⁴ The first scene of BD 17b shows a picture of the rising sun being adored by the deceased [La],¹²⁵ in accordance with the words: 'i R' imy swḥ.t.f psd m itm=f wbn m 3ht=f' 'O Re, who is in his egg, shining in his disk, rising in his horizon.'¹²⁶ This concept appears and is repeated several times in other, comparable, religious and funeral sources,¹²⁷ where the

cf. also: CT VI, 77d-1; 387n; 389a; 390k-n; Tb 131 (Allen), 107; LGG III, 383-384b (23); H. RANKE, *Das altägyptische Schlangenspiel*, Heidelberg, 1929, 14-22.

¹¹⁹ G. DARESSY, *CGC*, Ostraca (Cairo, 1905), 15 and pl. 15. It seems to be a sketch from the previously mentioned scene of the first hour of LdJ.

¹²⁰ C. MANASSA, *The Late Egyptian Underworld: Sarcophagi and Related Texts from the Nectanebid Period*, ÄAT 72, Wiesbaden, 2007, 99. I followed Manassa's reading and translation of this inscription; however the other reading agrees with our assumption as well. On her side, she pointed out that 'The hieratic inscription accompanying the child is not legible in the Daressy's published photograph. Daressy mistakenly transcribes the hieratic label as 'R' šri, the young or newborn Re', which has been followed in subsequent publications and literature. But a collation of the original in Cairo reveals that the child is labeled as: R' 'q(=w) m itm=f 'Re'. For the other translation cf. DARESSY, *Ostraca*, 15 and pl. 15; HORNING, *MDAIK* 37, 1981, 223; MÜLLER-ROTH, *Buch vom Tage*, 72, and Abb. 14; BUDDE, *Das Götterkind im Tempel*, 401 (n. 586), 405 (n. 615), and Abb. 100; L. TROY, *Patterns of Queenship in Ancient Egyptian Myth and History*, Uppsala, 1986, 31, fig. 15.

¹²¹ JENNI, *Sarkophag des Nektanebos II*, 32; MANASSA, *The Late Egyptian Underworld*, 99.

¹²² MANASSA, *The Late Egyptian Underworld*, 99f. For Re as the flaming child, see DARNELL, *The Enigmatic Netherworld Books of the Solar-Osirian unity*, 319-21ff and references therein.

¹²³ Tb 17 (Naville), XXX. 1.a.

¹²⁴ H. MILDE, *The Vignettes in the Book of the Dead of Neferrenpet*, EU 7, Leiden, 1991, 40f, fig. 12.

¹²⁵ MILDE, *The Vignettes in the Book of the Dead of Neferrenpet*, 38, fig. 9.

¹²⁶ cf. BD (Allen) 17b (S1); *Urk.* VI, 56,1 (BD 17; For its Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts' version cf. *Urk.* VI, 55,1). For the various versions of the text, cf. G. LAPP, *Totenbuchtexte. Synoptische Textausgabe nach quellen des Neuen Reiches, I: Totenbuch Spruch 17*, Basel, 2006, 204-207.

¹²⁷ I.e., the BD, and Netherworld books, and the mythological papyri of the Twenty-first Dynasty, which describe the sun-god's journey, i.e., in the mythical papyrus of *Her-ouben* (Twenty-first Dynasty), the newborn sun god is represented as child encircled by the serpent *sd-m-rj* in the form of the disk upon the horns of the sky goddess. A. PIANKOFF, 'Les deux papyrus mythologiques de Her-ouben au musée du Caire', *ASAE* 49, Cairo, 1949, 129ff, pl. VI; *id.*, *Mythological papyri. Texts*, New York, 1957, 71-74, fig.4. A similar scene on the Uppsala 228 sarcophagus depicted the sun god in human form with a ram's head seated on the disk laid between the two horns of the sky goddess. E. HORNING, *OBO* 46, 1982, 99, Abb. 9; U. VERHOEVEN, 'Das kind im Gehörn der Himmelskuh und vergleichbare Rinderomotive', *OLA* 150, Leuven, 2007, 1902f and Abb.2. Many

iconographies of the sun god vary between the newborn child, human god, and/or the scarab-form¹²⁸, sitting inside a great sun disk¹²⁹ or not,¹³⁰ or even instead as a great blank disk.¹³¹ Some other iconographies and representations of the sun god with similar mythical themes are interesting.¹³²

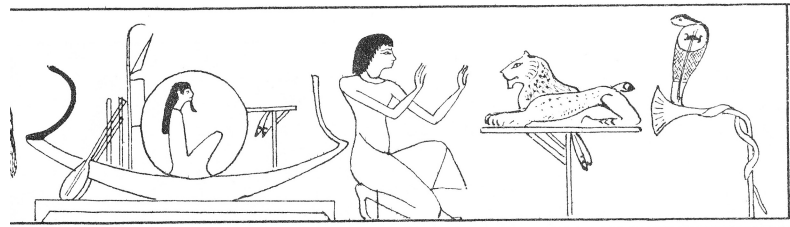


Fig. 6. The sun-god inside the sun-disk on a bark, BD 17 (H. Milde, *EU* 7, 41, fig. 12 [La, in reverse]).

Conclusion

The enigmatic hieroglyph ☉ and its variations in discussion represent a metaphor for the egg in its mythical and cosmological significance, in which always the egg and its embryo are meant in some way. This hieroglyph is a simple allusion to the significance of the egg as a germ cell for life in which the new life is clearly seen. Therefore, the egg was a central symbol for the Egyptians; its roles are varied in mythical, cosmological, magical, or literal significance, so that this enigmatic hieroglyph was a perfect reference to many of these roles. Its structure and symbolism are interpreted below.

This structure is well known in the Egyptian hieroglyphs; which is confirmed by other hieroglyphic signs that are more correct in use and their significance has already been clarified. Some of these signs even reveal several levels of associations with the egg and the

comparable scenes were discussed by Schäfer in which the newborn sun god has various iconographies. About the iconographies of the sun god in his journey, cf. H. SCHÄFER, 'Altägyptische Bilder der auf- und untergehenden Sonne', *ZÄS* 71, 15ff, and Abb. 11-14, 22-25; VERHOEVEN, *OLA* 150, 1899-1910ff, and Abb.2, 4. Compare also, the final scene in the Netherworld books: E. HORNUNG, 'Zu den Schlusszenen der Unterweltbücher,' *MDAIK* 37, 1981, 217-226, and Abb. 1-10.


¹²⁸ The sun-god in his manifestation as Khepri is also depicted in the form of the scarab inside the disk, e.g., in the Litany of Re: cf. M. MINAS-NERPEL, *Der Gott Chepri*, *OLA* 154, Leuven, 2006, 235-246, Abb. 91, 94; and 244 (The deceased is identified with the three manifestations of the sun god (Ra, Khepri, Atum) in the ninth litany), and 463ff (for the various iconographies of the sun-god).


¹²⁹ Tb 133 (Lepsius), LIV: The vignette represents the falcon-headed sun god, wearing his disk with the uraeus and carrying scepter and ankh. He is seated inside a great sun disk on a throne in the middle of his bark. For other versions, cf. MILDE, *The Vignettes in the Book of the Dead of Neferrenpet*, 160-163.




¹³⁰ Tb 136 (Lepsius), LVI: Similar to Tb 133, but the sun god is depicted without the shrine or the sun disk.

¹³¹ Tb 130 (Naville), CXLIV: The dead is standing between two identical barks of the sun god, each bearing a great sun disk (Night and Day bark). cf. MILDE, *The Vignettes in the Book of the Dead of Neferrenpet*, 152f, fig. 44.


¹³² A representation in the final picture depicts the sun god as a child on the sun disk, as he comes forth from the egg / disk. The representation is preceded by a litany addressed to the souls of the divinities, and reads: 'This great god comes forth from the two mounds which are in the Netherworld. This god becomes a form of forms of the Exalted Earth.' 'I come forth from my mounds! I am born, my disk is established.' PIANKOFF, *The Tomb of Ramesses VII*, 131f, and fig 28; HORNUNG, *MDAIK* 37, 233f, and Abb.7, compare also Abb. 8 and Taf. 38b.

hieroglyph  under discussion; for example, the hieroglyphs for Hathor's name; signs for the nest; the pregnant and birth giving seated woman.


The hieroglyph  and its enigmatic variations occur first just for the word 'egg' in the PT and CT, but it continues by rebus as an enigmatic writing for the preposition *imy* 'is inside' during the Middle and New Kingdom. The egg sign occurs as a writing for the preposition *imy* rendering the description meant by this form that of the bird who is inside the egg.

The written variations of this enigmatic hieroglyph  (vars.  and ) represent several metaphorical connections of the egg as early as the Old Kingdom; such as its connection with the sun disk and the sun god, the pupil or iris, stone materials, the child god, etc. These connections and associations are interpreted and approved by the symbolic roles of the egg, which are continued, developed and interchanged in different ways with other symbols in Egyptian religion and myth through time.

The egg sign was entered in other combinations, which gives particular symbolical significance regarding its metaphor, for example: the enigmatic or cryptographic writing for the child inside the temple (the house of birth), rendering its metaphorical significance as a place for the child.

The related texts of the hieroglyph  and its variations, where they occur in the PT and CT have mythical and cosmological significance for birth / rebirth and the circle of creation. Therefore, these particular enigmatic forms of the egg sign by no means express its metaphor for these themes, so that the enigmatic form of the sign plays the functional part of the vignettes which appear with the mythical and funeral texts in the New Kingdom.

The fictional allusion, which is expressed in this enigmatic hieroglyph and is interpreted in the relevant texts, is still popular in inherited Egyptian aphorisms.

The allusion of this hieroglyph is transferred into its illustrated copies in the iconography of the sun god in his daily rebirth, particularly in the LdJ and BD. This association or assimilation of the iconography of the sun-god inside his disk with the hieroglyph  is significant, and it can be confirmed and interpreted through the metaphorical association of the sun disk and sun god with the egg. It has been already noted that the sun god's birth is symbolized in his coming forth from his egg, which is attested from the CT, if not earlier. Therefore, their connection is even approved in the textual attestations of this enigmatic hieroglyph. The child sun god is personified in the young bird inside the egg, while the sun disk and/or the womb is equated with, and embodied in the egg.

Other iconographies and representations of the sun god, which appear in the religious and funeral sources from the New Kingdom onward, could be interpreted under the same allusion and concept, or other similar allusions.

A conclusion that the hieroglyph under discussion present somehow in the metaphoric identity of the Egyptian hieroglyphs, religion and myth, in which a theme, that begins with the hieroglyph and ends in religion and myth, has always existed.

Résumé :

Cet article étudie la signification de l'hiéroglyphe de l'œuf figurant un oisillon à l'intérieur et de ses variantes. Il examine les questions liées à sa signification ; la composition du hiéroglyphe en comparaison avec des hiéroglyphes similaires ; ses connexions métaphoriques avec d'autres hiéroglyphes, ses associations et le symbolisme de la cosmogonie de l'œuf ainsi que de son rôle mythologique.

L'objectif principal de cet article est de mettre en évidence l'assimilation de ce hiéroglyphe avec l'iconographie du dieu soleil enfant à l'intérieur de son disque dans la première heure du *Livre du Jour* et du *Livre des Morts*. Cette assimilation est examinée au moyen des différents textes apparentés, de l'idée du dieu soleil enfant qui émerge de son œuf et de la ressemblance métaphorique du disque solaire avec l'œuf.

Abstract:

This paper deals with the significance of the enigmatic hieroglyph of a young bird within an egg, and its variations. It presents related matters of its significance; hieroglyphic structure in comparison with similar hieroglyphs; its metaphorical connections with similar hieroglyphs and the signs in its combinations as well as its symbolism to the cosmogony of the egg and its mythical role.

One of the main aims of this paper is to reveal the assimilation of this hieroglyph with the iconography of the child sun god inside his disk in the First hour of *Book of the Day*, and *Book of the Deads*, etc. This assimilation is approved and interpreted here through the various related texts, and ideas of the sun god who emerges from his egg and the metaphorical resemblance of the sun disk to the egg.

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