

Waking up Gods, Waking up Creation

The Egyptian Morning Hymn

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Temple of Ra, San Francisco

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Imagine
for a
moment...



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The Morning Hymn – What is it?

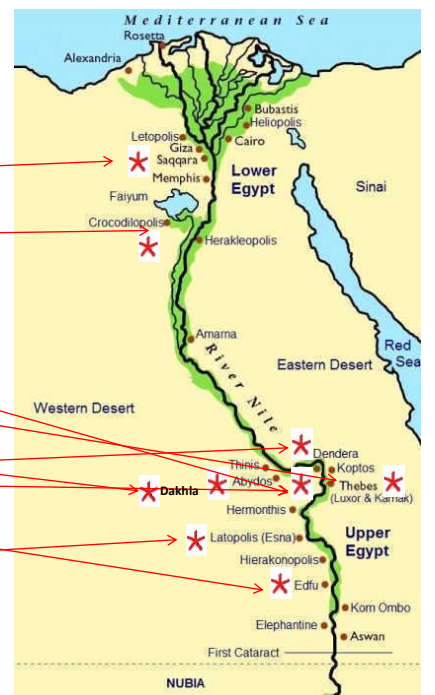
A hymn or litany with a core of words used across much of Egyptian history to great deities (mostly) at dawn and form parts of the funerary rituals.

The core words are “Be Awake! Be at Peace! May you awake in Peace! May your/N’s wakening be in peace!” with numerous variations and some changes across time.

The Morning Hymn ranges from very simple versions to elaborate ones with dozens of stanzas and opening and closing verses.

The Hymn over Time and Space

- Timeline
- ~ 2350 BCE: Old Kingdom – Pyramid Texts
- ~ 1840 BCE: Middle Kingdom – Investiture Ritual
- ~ 1250 BCE: New Kingdom – Temple Offering Ritual
- ~ 900 BCE: 3rd Intermediate Period – Temple Statue Ritual
- ~ 500 BCE: Persian Period – Hibis
- 3rd – 1st Centuries BCE: Ptolemaic Period – Edfu, Dendera, Hathor at Deir el Medina
- 1st – 4th Centuries CE: Roman Period – Esna



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History – Old Kingdom - 1

- Pyramid Text 81

PT 81 (WPMNNtJpWd)

- 1 dd-mdw zp 4 hr wnhw 2
- 2 56a rs.t m htp rs t3jt m htp rs t3jtt m htp
- 3 56b jrt hrw jmt dp m htp jrt hrw jmt hwwt nt m htp
jrt hrw jmt dp m htp rs jrt hrw jmt hwwt nt m htp

“Words spoken: 4 times over 2 strips of cloth:

May you awake in peace.

May Tait awake in peace. May Tait awake in peace.

Eye of Horus who is in Dep, in peace.

Eye of Horus who is in the Mansions of Neith, in peace”.

Source: Allen, *A New Concordance of the Pyramid Texts*

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PT 81

	W	T	P	N	Nt	Jp	Wd	
	B/N 12	B/N 12	B/Sw A 20	B/Ne B 17	B/Ne B 21	B/N A 66	B/Ne B 15	
1		*1				?	?	3 56b
2								
3								

History – Old Kingdom -2

- Pyramid Texts 270, 359, 573, 576

PT 573 (PMN)

- | | | |
|---|-------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 1478a | rs.k m htp hzmnw m htp |
| 2 | 1478b | rs.k m htp hrw j3btj m htp |
| 3 | 1478c | rs.k m htp b3 j3btj m htp |
| 4 | 1478d | rs.k m htp hrw 3htj m htp |

PT 576 (P)

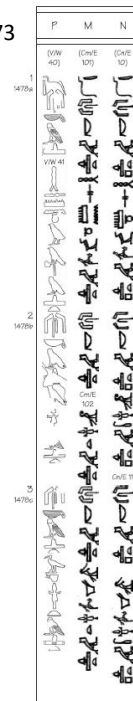
- | | | |
|---|-------|---------------------------------|
| 6 | 1502a | rs.k m htp |
| 7 | 1502b | rs jsjr m htp rs jmj ndjt m htp |

“May you awake in peace.

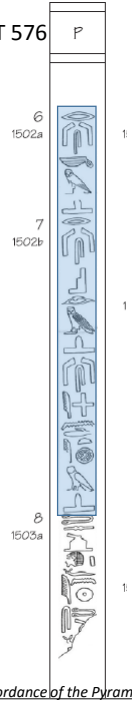
May Osiris awake in peace. May he who is in Nedit awake in peace”.

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PT 573



PT 576



Source: Allen, *A New Concordance of the Pyramid Texts*

History – Middle Kingdom

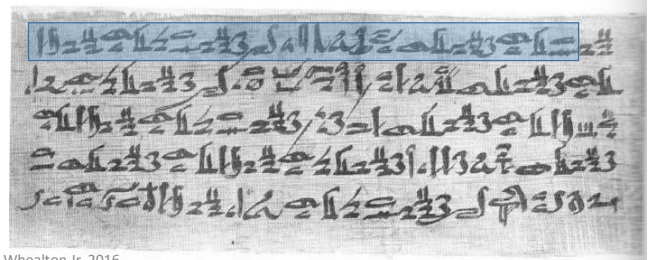
- Investiture Ritual – a.k.a. “Hymns to the Crowns”
- Primary Temple Deity is Sobek Shedty – Horus, but the crowns are awakened here.

rs.ꜥ m ꜥtp
rs nbt ꜥꜥbs m ꜥtp
rswt.ꜥ ꜥtp.ti

May you awake in peace.
May the Lady of Khabes awake in peace:
Your awakening is at peace.



a Zeichen unklar. Erman liest das Zeichen der Sykomore mit Fragezeichen, s. dazu jedoch Kol. 3.1
b wohl in Erwartung der Dualstriche liest Erman eine Fehlstelle.

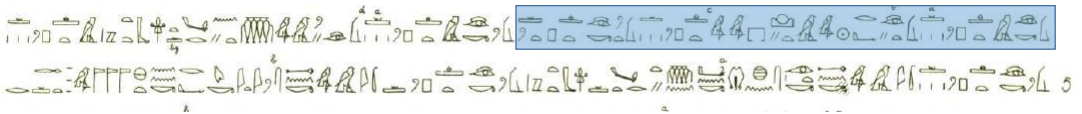


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Transliteration: Bommas, *Das ägyptische Investiturritual*

History – New Kingdom

Chester Beatty IX, Recto 6, 4-5:



- Two 19th Dynasty Manuscripts of the Temple Offering Ritual – a.k.a. Ritual of the Royal Ancestors
- Scene 43: “Censing for Ra”
- Phrasing is similar to the Middle Kingdom examples. Crowns are also addressed, besides forms of Ra.
- Describes incense as ‘singing’
- Tacke suggests the performance was in the afternoon, and expresses the wish for the God to return and wake peacefully in coming days.

*rs.k m ḥtp
rs.ti r' ḥr-ḥtī m ḥtp
rswt.k ḥtp.ti*

May you awake in peace:
Awake, Ra-Horakhty, in peace,
Your awakening being peaceful!

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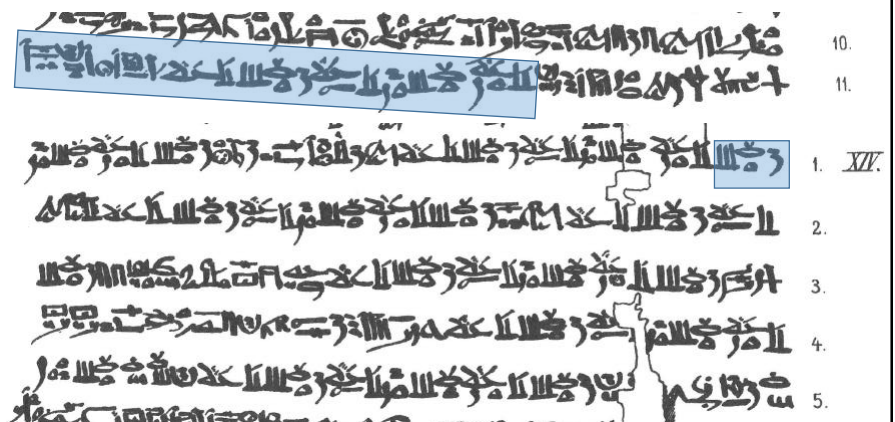
Transliteration and translation: Tacke, Das Opferritual des ägyptischen Neuen Reiches, Band II, 164-168, transliteration inferred from translation and notes.

History – Third Intermediate Period

- 22nd Dynasty Temple Statue Ritual a.k.a. Ritual of Amun
- Embedded in a hymn structure – Utterances 37, 38, 39
- No actual ritual actions (offerings, purifications, etc.) are mentioned

rs.ti ḥtp.ti
rs = k m ḥtp
rs imn-r^c nb nswt-t̄.wi
m ḥtp

Be awake! Be in peace!
May you awake in peace!
May Amun-Ra, Lord of the Thrones of the Two Lands awake in peace!



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Transliteration: Braun, *Pharao und Priester – Sakrale Affirmation von Herrschaft durch Kultvollzug*

History – Late Period

- Persian Period Temple of Hibis, Dakhla Oasis
- 10 Stanzas with Rubric Introduction.
- First graphic hints at performance practice

rs [.tj] htp.ti rs.k m htp
 rs imn m 'nh m htp rs
 hr imi sp3wt stj t3wi k3 3' nwn 'nh-dt
 m rn.f n r' r'-nb
 m htp

May you be awake! May you be at peace!

May you awake in peace!

May Amun awake in life and in peace!

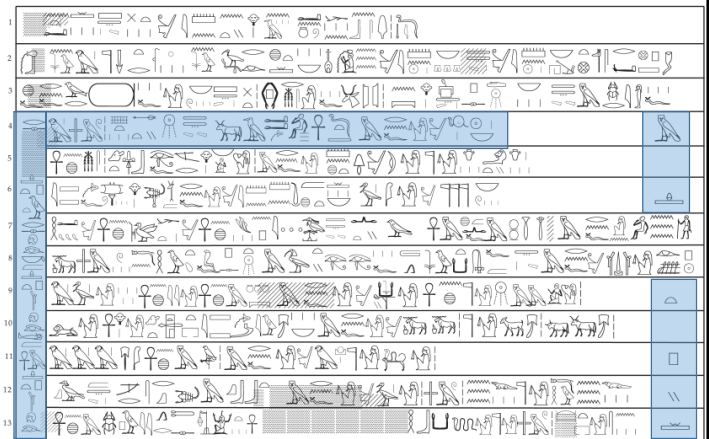
May you awake:

Horus who is in the districts, who illumines the two lands,

Bull who ejaculates Nun, who lives eternally,

in his name of Re, every day. -

In peace!



Pl. 3. Invocation Hymn (after Davies, *Hibis* III, Pl. 31).

Sources: Klotz, *Adoration of the Ram*; Lorton, D. (1994). The Invocation Hymn at the Temple of Hibis. *Studien Zur Altägyptischen Kultur*, 21, 159–217. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25152696>

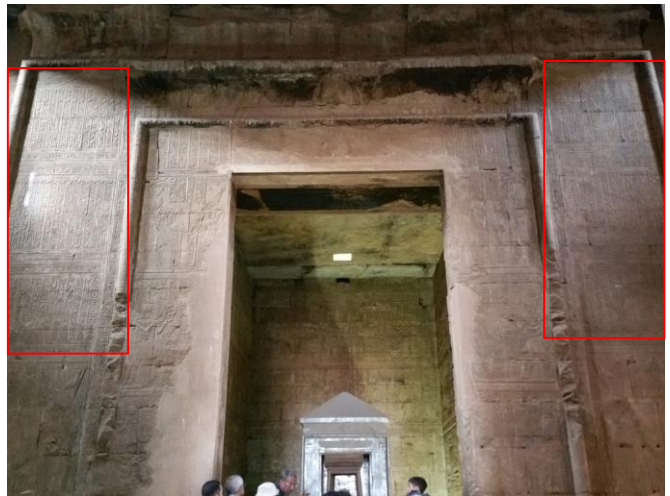
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History – Ptolemaic Period



Temple of Hathor at Deir el Medina

- Long and Elaborate Versions, as well as very short ones
- Systematic Wakening of Deities, Insignia, Body Parts of Deities, and the Temple itself
- Not always performed at Dawn



Temple of Horus at Edfu

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History – Ptolemaic Period (cont)

- Performance Practice structure present in elaborate versions

rs.ti ḥtp.ti

rs.k nfr m ḥtp

rs ḥr bhdti m nḥ

...

rs

ḥr bhdti nṯr ʔ nb pt

šnbt šps ḥri-ib wiʔ.f

m ḥtp rs.k ḥtp.t(i)

Awake! Be at Peace!

May you awake beautifully in peace.

May Horus Behdety awake in life.

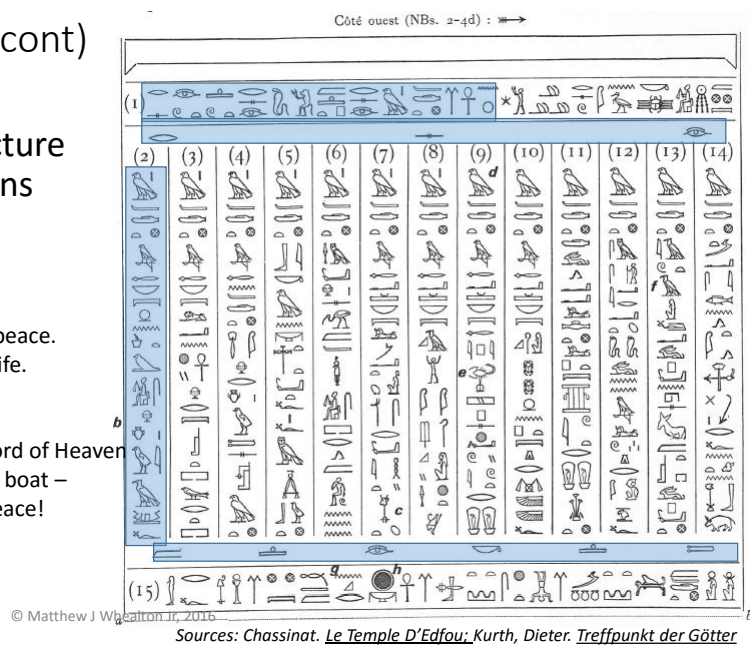
...

Awake

Horus Behdety, Great God, Lord of Heaven

Noble Falcon, within his solar boat –

In peace! May you awake in peace!



History – Roman Period

- At Esna –
Complex
Morning Hymn.

rs.k nfr m htp

šw hnti iwntw tšw n 'nh hnti ihwt nbw(t)

...

rs hnmw nbtw m htp

rs.ti htp.ti rs.ti m htp

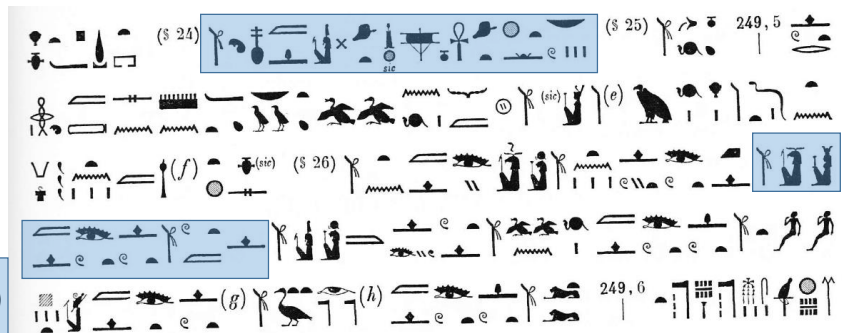
May you awake beautifully in peace,
Shu, Foremost of Heliopolis, Breath of Life within all things.

...

May Khnum and Nebtu awake in peace:

Be awake! Be at peace! May you awake in peace. © Matthew J Whealton Jr, 2016

Sources: Sauneron. *Le Temple d'Esna*; Sauneron. *Les Fetes Religieuses d'Esna*



History Summary

- Wide range of dates and locations
- Wide range of uses – funerary, investiture, Daily Temple and Offering Rituals, Night rituals for Osiris, etc.
- Many variations around a core set of phrases
- Attested in Temples, tombs, and in hieratic papyri

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Building A Hymn – Variations in Structure

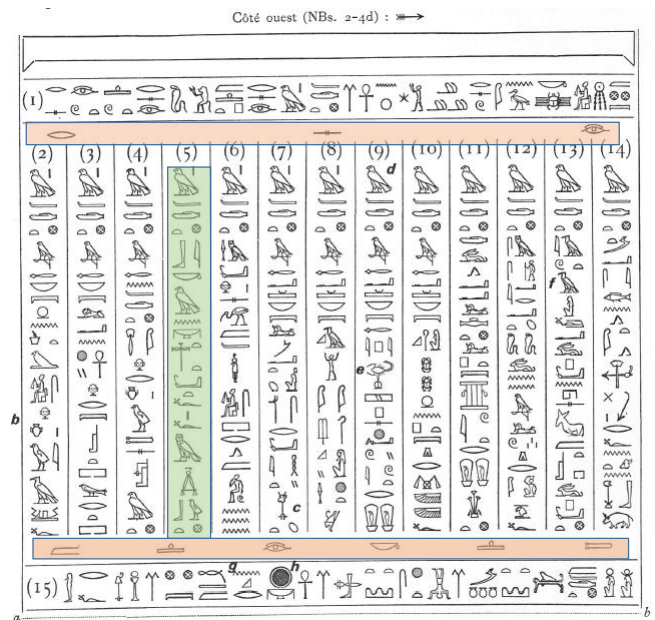
- From very simple to very elaborate
- Sometimes embedded in other types of hymns or spells
- Sometimes the Morning Hymn provides the structure for long litanies with internal ordered structure
- Performance may be hinted at by the ‘wrapping’ of multiple litany stanzas inside a repeated frame consisting of a few words. Perhaps to indicate a choral part with drone for the frame and a solo decant for the stanzas?

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Performing a Hymn – Hints from the texts

rs hr bhd̄ti bik nd̄ti it.f m dbꜣ m htp rs.k htp.t(i)

- Single common framing text
- Multiple invocations inside the frame
- We know there were choruses in Temples.
- Perhaps the Chorus sang the frame part, holding a long note while a solo voice or priest sang the changing invocation.



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Reconstructing the Words of the Hymns

- For Horus Behdety:

rassáta! ḥatpáta! rassák náfir ma ḥátap! rassá ḥáru baḥdáti ma ‘ánaḥ!

rassá

ma ḥátap!

ḥáru baḥdáti náṯur ‘á’i níbu pú’at šánbat šipsásu

Typical scholarly pronunciation:

Restee, heteptee, resek nefer em hetep

Res heru behdetee em ankh

Res heru behdetee netcher ah-ah neb

pet shenbet shepses

- For Isis:

rassáti! ḥatpáti! rassáṯ náfrat ma ḥátap! rassá Úsit ma ‘ánaḥ!

rassá

ma ḥátap!

Úsit ‘ás’at rínu wírat ḥik’áw níbat ‘ánaḥ ma hárwu pin náfir su‘ánḥat ḥáḥu

How to Sing the Morning Hymn

- See [handout for pronunciation key](#)

A short – form morning him for a God:

rassáta! ḥatpáta! rassák náfir ma ḥátap!

rassá [God Name] ma ‘ánaḥ!

rassá [God Name] ma ḥátap!

Be Awake! Be at Peace!

May you awake beautifully in peace!

May [God Name] awake in life!

May [God Name] awake in peace!

A short – form morning him for a Goddess:

rassáti! ḥatpáti! rassát náfrat ma ḥátap!

rassá [Goddess Name] ma ‘ánaḥ!

rassá [Goddess Name] ma ḥátap!

Be Awake! Be at Peace!

May you awake beautifully in peace!

May [Goddess Name] awake in life!

May [Goddess Name] awake in peace!

Singing a Hymn Together

You can hear a recording of a longer version on the Healing Hearts at Wounded Knee Global Ceremony site:
<http://healingheartsatwoundedknee.com/morning-hymn-for-seven-goddesses/>

rassáti! hatpáti! rassát náfrat ma hátap! rassá Úsit ma ‘ánaḥ!

rassá

ma hátap!

Úsit ‘ás’at rínu wúrat hik’áw níbat ‘ánaḥ ma hárwu pin náfir su‘ánḥat ḥáḥu

rassáti! hatpáti! rassát náfrat ma hátap! rassá hat-ḥára ma ‘ánaḥ!

rassá

ma hátap!

ḥat-ḥára níbat hínu pásḡat ma nábu ḥanúwat mafík’it ‘ab’á nis naṡúru

rassáti! hatpáti! rassát náfrat ma hátap! rassá Níyit ma ‘ánaḥ!

rassá

ma hátap!

Níyit ‘áryat pú’at tá’ dú’at máw ḡáwu níbat nú’wat sá:ḥat pú’at maḥáita ma náfris

rassáti! hatpáti! rassát náfrat ma hátap! rassá Bu’ístit ma ‘ánaḥ!

rassá

ma hátap!

Bu’ístit mí’wat naṡúru ‘áryat ‘atámu ḥanúwat náfrat šípsat wásrat

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