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### PROTECTING OSIRIS. FORMAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE COFFIN TEXTS SPELLS 1076 AND 1077

*W. Sherbiny*

PhD in Egyptology (Universiteit Leuven – Belgium)

Independent Scholar

[wael.sherbiny@gmx.com](mailto:wael.sherbiny@gmx.com)

One of the main episodes of the Osirian myth is the infamous assault of Seth on his brother Osiris. Their father, the god Geb, took all the precautions to protect the body of his murdered son from any future attack by Seth. A well-protected building housed the dead body, where Geb appointed powerful guards to protect the body of Osiris. Fortunately, few coffins from the Middle Kingdom (2055–1650 BC) preserved for us a strikingly interesting record of these apotropaic beings both in word and image. The standard publication of the Coffin Texts gathered the names of these guardians in two spells with numbers 1076 and 1077. Yet, lack of sufficient documentation and predominant textual bias in previous studies caused a great deal of confusion regarding these guardians as far as their number and visual representation are concerned. This contribution addresses these formal issues and analyzes the arrangement of the names and depictions of the guardians in these coffins. The close scrutiny revealed some hitherto undocumented features in the original sources.

**Keywords:** Apotropaic deities, body positions, Book of Two Ways, cobra, Coffin Texts, demons, geckos, iconography, lizards, names, Osiris, snakes, ritual, temple cult

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## Introduction

References to the Coffin Texts spells 1076 and 1077 (henceforth CT 1076 and CT 1077) abound in the Egyptological studies of the apotropaic deities and demons<sup>1</sup> in ancient Egypt. CT 1076 and CT 1077 are *not* spells in the true sense of the word. Each contains only a set of names of certain apotropaic deities or guardian-demons [cf. Lucarelli 2010]. For purely practical considerations, the editors of *The Egyptian Coffin Texts* gathered the names under two headings giving them sequential spell numbers in their text edition. Both “spells” never occur on the same coffin. They form part of the so-called Book of Two Ways, which is a composition consisting of texts and drawings attested on the insides of few coffins from the Middle Kingdom (2055–1650 BC) [Sherbiny 2018; for the dating proposals and further references, see Sherbiny 2017, 20–22]. All these coffins came from Deir El Barsha<sup>2</sup> cemetery of the ruling families and high officials of the fifteenth province in Upper Egypt at that time.

Although several coffins preserve only the names of the beings in questions, only two include depictions. The textual and iconographical elements of CT 1076 and 1077 usually enjoy a diachronically historical value for scholars studying protective demons from the later periods. Yet, the interest in these two “spells” has been (and still is!) marred by confusion and contradicting views. The following paragraphs will address this problem and clarify some points of documentary nature, adding few hitherto unpublished details in the process<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The word “demons” is used here conventionally without delving into the issues of definition and terminological discussions. For more on these points, see for instance [Bonnet 1952, 146–148; te Velde 1975; Klostergaard Petersen 2003; Kurth 2003; Kousoulis 2011; Lucarelli 2013, 11–14; Beck 2015, 89 and 91f; Quack 2015; Bennett 2017]. Note also that some reservations have been voiced in the literature on the use of the word “supernatural” in describing these entities [Lloyd 2011, 103–105]. For recent general remarks and assessment, see [Quack 2022, 36–40].

<sup>2</sup> The common form used in Egyptological literature is “Bersheh”. However, the actual pronunciation of this toponym by the locals is “Barsha”, with front slightly open first vowel; see also [Peust 2010, 24].

<sup>3</sup> The author would like to thank Mr. Sameh Abdel Mohsen, the photographer in the Cairo Museum, who took the photographs presented in **Figs. 3, 4, 6, 10, 11, and 18**.

## Modern History

The names of the guardians of CT 1076 surfaced for the first time in Egyptological literature in the beginning of the twentieth century as attested on two coffins in the Cairo Museum, namely CG 28083 and CG 28085<sup>4</sup> [Lacau 1904, 196, 211 + pls. LV–LVI]. The year 1961 witnessed the publication of three more variants of CT 1076 [de Buck 1961, 346c–374h + plans 1–3 and 7]. The same monograph introduced, for the first time, CT 1077 as attested on four coffins [de Buck 1961, 347i–348d + plans 4 and 8–11]. Still, more than half a century later, another variant of CT 1076 finally saw the light of day [Sherbiny 2017, 320, 322, pl. 13]. Notably, scholars prior to the publication of the seventh volume of *The Egyptian Coffin Texts* treated the arrangement of (what came to be known since 1961 as) CT 1076 in a balanced manner, despite the dearth of the sources with which they worked. An appreciation of this observation will become clear in the course of the discussion below. However, a considerable number of more recent studies paid little attention to both iconography and disposition of the textual elements. Several discussions of the pictorial-textual segments of the so-called Book of Two Ways present striking examples of such pitfalls. A case in point is the treatment of CT 1076 and CT 1077.

## Contextual outline

Before going any further, we need first to briefly introduce these beings whose names are collected in CT 1076 and CT 1077. Who are they? And what do they precisely do?

Their adjacent texts inform us that they are collectively called the “Kneeling ones” (*m3sw*) or “the Squatting ones” (*m3stjw*) (CT 1073 and 1183 [de Buck 1961, 342a–345a and 520a–h]), and function as gatekeepers (CT 1053 and 1081 [de Buck 1961, 306c and 354b]). We also learn that the god Geb placed them in Rosetau in order to protect his son Osiris from any possible attack by Seth (CT 1079 [de Buck 1961, 35b–d]). Rosetau is a region that contains all modes of passage and travel, i.e. by water and by land (e.g. CT 1035, 1072, 1078, 1184, and 1185 [de Buck 1961, 282a, 339d–341b, and 521a + f respectively]). It transpires from the texts that the body of Osiris is kept in a

<sup>4</sup> Later, the editors of the Chicago Coffin Texts Project assigned to these coffins the sigla B1C and B3C respectively.

certain building, to which a ritualist (i.e. the text protagonist) hopes to get access [e.g. de Buck 1961, 343d–344a, 350c–351a, 352a–b; 354e–355b, 520d–g, 520k–l, and 521c–d; see also Sherbiny 2017, 317, 328f, and 337ff].

The texts state that the guardians have hidden or mysterious faces and carry dangerous weapons, namely certain throw sticks (CT 1073 and 1183 [de Buck 1961, 342a–b and 520a–b]). Perhaps these apotropaic beings could be seen as precursors of the deities of the hourly vigil ritual from later periods [Assmann 2002, 242; and generally see now Pries 2011, 10ff].

The ritualist has to fulfill two requirements to reach his destination. He needs to: a) know the *names* of the dangerous guardians (CT 1079 [de Buck 1961, 351e]), and b) learn the necessary magical *utterance* to address them (CT 1081 [de Buck 1961, 354b]). Not only does this knowledge grant him a safe passage, but it also guarantees an eternal life with Osiris (CT 1079 and 1081 [de Buck 1961, 351e–f and 354a–b]). The required utterance (i.e. the *real* spell) is transmitted in all the sources. First, the ritualist addresses the protective deities mentioning their general designation and epithets (CT 1073 and CT 1183 [de Buck 1961, 342a–b and 520a–b]). Then, he introduces himself and states the purpose of his visit imploring them to grant him a safe passage to the abode of Osiris (CT 1073, 1075, 1079, 1183–1185 [de Buck 1961, 342c–345a, 346a–b, 348f–351a, 520c–l, and 521b–e]). It does not take long before we learn that the building in question is a temple (*ḥwt-ntr*) [de Buck 1956, 193g; 1961, 355g]. Such procedures of the ritualist’s self-legitimization before guardians at entrances are well-known in the Osirian cult space with its extremely restricted access protocols [cf. von Lieven 2007, 175; 2012, 258f and 266].

### The general layout

We are concerned here with the first condition, namely the crucial knowledge of the guardians’ names. We start with a quick survey of how their names are transmitted on the sources. References to the coffins will follow the standard code system proposed by the editors of the Coffin Texts. The letter “B” refers to the provenance of all the coffins, namely Deir El Barsha, and the last letter to the current location of each source, i.e. “Be” for Berlin, “Bo” for Boston, “C” for Cairo,

“L” for London, and “P” for Paris (for details see [de Buck 1961, IX–X; Lesko 1979, 7]).

The guardians’ names are positively attested in *ten* sources. Two coffins offer only a running text (B2Bo and B4Bo), while the other *eight* adopt the form of a plan (B1C, B3C, B4C, B6C, B9C, B1L, B2L, and B2P). Although one extra source has a schematic plan (B3L), the part that usually contains the names is lost. There are seven additional coffins, which are customarily excluded from any discussion of the “Kneeling/Squatting ones”. This is simply because these coffins do not record the guardians’ names. The seven sources are in the form of a plan (B1Be, B5C, B12C, B13C, B16C, B17C, and B1P). A closer inspection of the layout and drawings shows that they follow the same layout of the other eight coffins. How, then, are the guardians of Osiris revealed or “concealed” in the available sources?

Four different strategies are discerned:

1. *Names occur without images*: The names gathered in CT 1076 are attested in three illustrated sources (B3C, B4C, and B6C), and in two other coffins having only text columns (B2Bo and B4Bo). Besides, CT 1077 is attested in four sources in the form of a plan (B9C, B1L, B2L, and B2P).

2. *Both names and images are present*: B1C is the only source that contains the guardians’ names of CT 1076 together with their depictions (though some are now lost).

3. *Only images occur without accompanying legends*: The single example here is B5C.

4. *Neither names nor depictions are recorded*: Six sources follow this pattern (B1Be, B12C, B13C, B16C, B17C, and B1P).

The general layout of the guardians’ segment in the illustrated sources is usually in the form of a rectangle or square. The geometric shape is divided into registers and narrow horizontal bands reserved for texts. The names and/or images of the guardians occupy two registers which either follow each other, or are separated by other text bands.

In the majority of the sources (B1C, B3C, B4C, B6C, B9C, B12C, B13C, B16C, B17C, B1L, B2L, B3L, and B2P), the two registers reserved for the guardians assume a *central position* surrounded from above and below by horizontal text bands (**Fig. 1**). Both CT 1076 and 1077 follow the same design with the main difference represented in the height of the registers. While the sources of CT 1076 attempt to

have two equally spaced registers, the coffins with CT 1077 opt for an asymmetrical design. The upper horizontal text band has CT 1074 (a label referring to the land ways of Rosetau) followed by the short CT 1075 (a real spell). The lower text bands mirror the same order, where the horizontal text of CT 1078 (a label indicating the water ways of Rosetau) precedes the long CT 1079 (a real spell)<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> It has been once suggested that the passage [de Buck 1961, 351b–f] belonged originally to CT 1073 and the Coffin Texts editors mistakenly attached it to CT 1079. The adduced argument was that: “Die Worte stehen unten links direkt an ST 1073” [Backes 2005, 330]. This remark is clearly based on the arrangement of the texts in B3C. Here, [de Buck 1961, 351b–f] is written in the last four horizontal lines in the rectangle of CT 1074–1079 (**Fig. 1**). However, the arrangement of the text in B1C, for instance, leaves no room for doubt that [de Buck 1961, 351b–f] is part of CT 1079 as was published by de Buck. CT 1079 in this coffin was assigned one line number (610), with each horizontal line running alphabetically, i.e. 610a, 610b, 610c, and so forth. Although a great deal of the text is now lost, the passage in question follows [de Buck 1961, 351a] of CT 1079 and in the same line, i.e. line number 610c [de Buck 1961, 351a–d, and note 5].

Moreover, the two sources with running texts, B2Bo and B4Bo, unequivocally prove that [de Buck 1961, 351b–f] belongs to CT 1079. For the arrangement of the texts in these two sources, see [Sherbiny 2017, 319]. In B2Bo the last word of CT 1073 ends in line number 147 where the rest of the column is left blank (!). CT 1074 follows in the next column (line 144). Interestingly, [de Buck 1961, 351b–f] continues in the same column (line 155) where the last word of [de Buck 1961, 351a] ends. Similarly, CT 1073 in B4Bo ends in the middle of line 122 to be followed after a double separation mark by CT 1074. Here again, [de Buck 1961, 351b–f] follows the last word of [de Buck 1961, 351a] and in the same column (line number 130) without even a separation mark.

Thus, both illustrated *and* purely textual sources clearly show that no misplacement occurred here. The passage [de Buck 1961, 351b–f] comes in its original sequence and place. After all, the entire section, including CT 1073 and 1079 is concerned with the “Kneeling/Squatting ones”, and the division into separate spells here is simply a modern invention. Such segmentation does not always (or necessarily) reflect separate semantic units. For this reason, [de Buck 1961, 351b–f] does not only belong to CT 1079, but it also equally serves as a general colophon to *all* its previous utterances addressed to the “Kneeling/Squatting ones, i.e. CT 1073, 1075, and 1079. Notably, few sources (B3C included!) continue the theme of this colophon in CT 1081.

Only three coffins have a different arrangement (B5C, B1Be, and B1P) where the rectangle is divided into two halves (**Fig. 2**). The upper half has horizontal text bands occupied by CT 1184. In fact, the Coffin Texts editors lumped here two textual elements together in one spell. The two clearly differentiated elements are: a) real spell referred to here as CT 1184a [de Buck 1961, 520i–l], which is a variant of CT 1075, and b) a variant of CT 1074, designated here as CT 1184b [de Buck 1961, 521a]. A large register reserved for half of the guardians follows. The same order occurs below. The register reserved for the rest of the guardians occupies the lower part of the rectangle preceded by text bands. These latter represent CT 1185 in the text edition and consists of two parts mirroring CT 1079 (= CT 1185a [de Buck 1961, 521b–e]) and 1078 (= CT 1185b [de Buck 1961, 521f]). In other words, the two registers of the guardians in these three sources are no longer sandwiched between the other text bands. While both names and images are absent in B1Be and B1P, the guardians are depicted in B5C.

### **The numerical problem of CT 1076**

These two registers of the names/images of the “Kneeling/Squatting ones” used to perplex many researchers over the past sixty years. The main points of disagreements are the number of the guardians and the disposition of their names.

As for their number, many believe (and this is the majority)<sup>6</sup> that they are *ten* beings in total. This also corresponds to the way the editors of the Coffin Texts understood these textual elements, since they broke the text into ten separate passages, each represents a separate name as follows:

1. “He who spits out the inundation” (*bš-hꜥpj*) [de Buck 1961, 346c],
2. “He who places himself” (*dd-sw*) [de Buck 1961, 346d],
3. “He who bestows the *kas*” (*nḥb-k3w*) [de Buck 1961, 347a],
4. “He who eats his fathers” (*wnm-jtw.f*) [de Buck 1961, 347b],
5. “He who eats his mothers” (*wnm-mwwt.f*) [de Buck 1961, 347c],

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<sup>6</sup> For instance [Lacau 1904, 196; Kees 1977 [1956], 296; Piankoff 1974, 22; Barguet 1986, 639; Carrier 2004, 2244f; Quirke 2016, 467f; Leitz (ed.) 2002, II, 837; V, 958].

6. “He who opposes Seth while he is angry” (*hsf-stš-špt*) [de Buck 1961, 347d],

7. “He who begets the bull of Heliopolis” (*wtt-k3-jwnw*) [de Buck 1961, 347e],

8. “He who swallows the *hh*-waters” (*ʿm-hhw*) [de Buck 1961, 347f],

9. “Falcon-faced one who emerges from Uto” (*hr-n-bjk-pr-m-w3dyt*) [de Buck 1961, 347g], and

10. “Four-faced one who emerges from the Akhet” (*fdw-hrw-pr-m-3ht*) [de Buck 1961, 347h].

However, other researchers expressed different opinions. One translation suggested that we have here *nine* guardians [Faulkner 1978, 146], while others maintained that they are *eight* [Backes 2005, 83; Assmann & Kucharek 2008, 341]<sup>7</sup>. The number was lowered to *seven* by other researchers [Altenmüller 1975, 96].

Yet, a more radical view went even further and contended that CT 1076 is about *one* deity with a string of epithets. The third guardian, Nehebkau, played here a crucial role. According to one interpretation, only few names were explained as epithets of Nehebkau [Barta 1982, 388]. These are the fourth, fifth, and seventh passages mentioned above (i.e. “He who eats his fathers”, “He who eats his mothers”, and “He who begets the bull of Heliopolis”). It was not long before *all* the names from the fourth till the tenth were believed to be epithets of Nehebkau [Goebis 2003, 40; 2008, 323f]. This theory bypassed any mention of the first couple of names (*bš-hʿpy* and *dd-sw*), and explained CT 1076 as if it were revolving around a single deity, namely Re-Nehebkau [Goebis 2008, 110]. According to this reading of the evidence, the terminology expressed in three passages, such as eating fathers and mothers and swallowing *hhw* (translated here as “millions” or “many”), gave rise to a comparison with the cannibal hymn in the Pyramid Texts. Cosmic-astronomical interpretations coupled with similar cannibalistic description of Nehebkau from other texts were believed to give further support to this thesis [Goebis 2003; 2008, 110]. We will come once more to this view below.

<sup>7</sup> Lesko translated the last two passages of CT 1076 with two independent sentences, and did not write them within quotes as he did with the preceding eight names [Lesko 1972, 83]. This gives the impression that he probably understood here eight names as well.



All these interpretations leave us in confusion. How many are those “Kneeling/Squatting ones” then? Are they ten, nine, eight, or seven? Or are all the textual elements of CT 1076 not more than epithets of a single being?

The process of reading the passages of CT 1076 [de Buck 1961, 346c–347h] as a *continuous text* can easily lead to regarding all the separate textual elements as description of one or more beings depending on where we draw a border line between a name and an epithet. Taken in sequence, some of (or even all) the textual elements can represent any number of beings the translator wants them to be. However, and contrary to the purely textual sources, we are fortunate to have more aiding tools at hand. A closer look at the drawings and exact position of the texts in the coffins allows these ancient sources to speak for themselves.

### **CT 1076 according to B1C**

One fact has to be borne in mind from the outset, though. None of the sources in the form of a plan yields an “ideal” version. Hence, piecing together the information derived from all the variants helps in uncovering the general design. CT 1076 in B1C offers a rare opportunity in this respect. It is the only source which combines both textual and iconographical presentation of the guardians. Examining the drawings and arrangement of the textual elements in this source is enough to call into question most of the conflicting views mentioned above. A detailed description of iconography based on Lacau’s old plans [Lacau 1904, *pl. LV*] has appeared recently in print [Quirke 2016, 467f]. Therefore, it will not be necessary to offer here an elaborate account. The following remarks depend on examining the original, and include few hitherto unpublished details.

Pierre Lacau had already recognized that each of the two registers contained originally five figures together with the legends recording their names. This brings the total number of the guardians to *ten* corresponding to the line numbers 77–86 [Lacau 1904, 196]. According to Lacau, only seven figures and seven names are preserved. The surviving images and names have the following distribution: three images and four names (out of the original five) in the upper register, and four images and three names in the lower. The editors of the Coffin Texts followed suite and assigned ten line numbers to the legends

(including the lost ones), namely lines 599–608 [de Buck 1961, 346c–347f+ 347, n. 2]. Thus, they also maintained that ten guardians originally occupied the two registers.

As for the upper register, the plans of Lacau and de Buck suggest that only three figures are preserved here. However, parts of the fourth and fifth figures are still clearly visible today (**Fig. 3**). All five figures are almost identical. They have human bodies colored entirely in red and facing right with black scarabs as their heads<sup>8</sup>. Each being holds a gecko/lizard in the right hand and a cobra with extended hood in the left. The five hybrid figures are depicted in a peculiar body position. This strange posture is loosely described by some scholars as semi-sitting without visible seat.

The upper part of the fourth figure is preserved with its red coloring. The same applies to the black scarab. Faint traces of the reptiles in his hands can still be detected. As for the fifth guardian, only few

<sup>8</sup> One argument has been once voiced stating that the insect here has a negative connotation for it lives on the dead bodies. A reference was even made to the vignette of BD 36 where a supposedly similar insect is depicted [Minas-Nerpel 2006, 100]. However, this seems highly unlikely. The detailed depiction of the insect in B1C contradicts this identification, especially when compared with other Egyptian drawings of scarabs [Meeks 2010, 287]. Besides, exactly the same insect is depicted again in B1C where it is accompanied by CT 1098 [de Buck 1961, 381–385 and *plan 1*: lower register right; Lacau 1904, *pl. LV*: lower register right] in a context where the scarab certainly has a positive connotation. That some of the vignettes of BD 36 *mistakenly* depict a scarab is now clear from Meeks' detailed study of the determinatives of ꜥpšꜣyt in the BD documents themselves [Meeks 2010, 289f and pertinent endnotes]. While this negative description fits well the ꜥpšꜣyt insect mentioned in BD 36 [Keimer 1933, 114–118; Osing 1992, 475; Minas-Nerpel 2006, 133f; Meeks 2010, 289f], it does not do justice to the drawings in B1C where scarab is the most likely identification of the insect. That the scarab-headed beings themselves function as protectors of Osiris rather than his enemies makes identifying the insect with ꜥpšꜣyt less sensible. Besides, ꜥpšꜣyt is nowhere mentioned in the entire Coffin Texts. Apart from the general meaning of ꜥpšꜣy and ꜥpšꜣyt given in [Hannig 2006a, 150], a detailed discussion of the lexical and written forms of ꜥpšꜣyt and *hpr* is now found in [Meeks 2010, 286–288 (*hpr*), 289f (ꜥpšꜣyt), and generally 294ff]. For remarks on the written forms of scarab glyphs in older inscriptions, see [Collombert 2010, 83].

traces survived. His red torso and half of the gecko/lizard in his right hand are still recognizable. In short, all five figures of the upper register are present, albeit in varying degrees of preservation.

The depictions of the guardians in the lower register break the visual monotony of the afore-mentioned five. Here, only four figures survived (**Fig. 4**). They are hybrids with human body and animal head.

The first being is ram-headed (= guardian 6) in the same semi-sitting position, but with knees more bent towards the body. Contrary to all figures here, this being is facing left and holds two cobras with inflated hoods. Both cobras face left as well. One cobra is held in his left hand, while the other emerges from his mouth and is grasped by his left hand. This guardian is entirely in red except for his hair and the wavy horizontal horns which are black.

The three following figures face right and have human bodies with animal heads. They are also depicted in the same semi-sitting position. The second hybrid (= guardian 7) has a feline head with body colored in blue. The head is red<sup>9</sup> with black mane along the back of the head and neck. Only one *red* arm is depicted holding a red gecko/lizard from its head with its tail resting on the floor. Two peculiar elements protrude from behind his neck and lower back. They are both colored red (not indicated in the hitherto published plans!), which is also the color used for his face and arm. Could they be stylized representations of two other body parts of this guardian, such as ruff at the back of the neck and tail? The third figure (= guardian 8) seems to have a feline head as well. It is colored white, not yellow as in the previously published plans. Yellow is only the background color of all the surfaces of the inner walls of this coffin [Lacau 1904, 198]. His two arms are depicted in a peculiar position, and nothing is shown in his hands.


The fourth figure (= guardian 9) has a position similar to the second one, while his body and arm are blue. The head is red with black mane along the neck. It was suggested that he has jackal's head [Quirke 2016, 467], but this is uncertain. The front part of the face is partly effaced, which hampers identifying its species. Contrary to the

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

<sup>9</sup> Lacau's plan correctly indicates the head color [Lacau 1904, *pl. LV*]. This information is unfortunately absent from de Buck's plan [de Buck 1961, *plan I*].

hitherto published drawings of this being [Lacau 1904, *pl. LV*; de Buck 1961, *plan I*], his red ear is large and *round*, not pointed. This guardian seems to hold a reptile in his hand. In spite of the discoloring, a faint red outline is still detectable indicating the contour of what seems to be an expanded hood of cobra. As for the fifth figure (= guardian 10), some traces of red and white color are still visible, but the general shape is damaged beyond recognition.

The decorators of this coffin identified each guardian by writing his name next to his image. Although not all the names survived in B1C, they are attested in the same positions in the other sources in the form of a plan (B3C, B4C, and B6). The names can also be additionally verified by checking the purely textual sources (B2Bo and B4Bo). This runs in contrast to what was once suggested that the depicted guardians in B1C are anonymous, and that the names gathered in CT 1076 are not associated with the drawings [Guilhou 2009, 10]. Of special interest here is the caption written after the name of the first guardian in the upper register “He who spits the inundation” (*bš-hꜥꜣj*), which reads: “this is his name” (*rn.f ꜣj*)<sup>10</sup>.

The four names preserved in the upper register are as follows (**Fig. 5**): 1) “He who spits out the inundation”, 2) “He who places himself”, 3) “He who bestows the *kas*” (Nehebkau), and 4) “He who eats his fathers”. The ram-headed guardian in the lower register is 6) “He who opposes Seth while he is angry”. This is followed by 7) “He who begets the bull of Heliopolis”, and 8) “He who swallows [...]”. The name of the ninth guardian is entirely lost, while only two hieratic signs are partially visible from the name of the tenth, which have hitherto remained unpublished, namely  (“[...] the Akhet”)<sup>11</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> Note that some studies show little appreciation of this short textual element in B1C, and consider it an error deviating from the original wording of a hypothetical *Urtext* [Backes 2005, 208].

<sup>11</sup> At first sight one would tend to consider the roundness of the sun disc as . But the absence of the two horizontal ticks representing the ears as well as the distance between the beard and chin (both are characteristics of the hieratic sign  in B1C) militate against this reading. On the other hand, the vertical line next to the right side of the circular shape suggests that it is the right mountain peak of . It follows that the sign below is the feminine ending  rather than the human beard.

### **CT 1076 according to B3C and B6C**

All these names are excellently preserved in B3C. Although this coffin does not offer an exemplary version of CT 1076, it confirms the sequence and position of each guardian (**Figs. 6–7**). The space between the names of the five guardians in the upper register is unproblematic. There is even a larger space between the names of the fourth and fifth guardians. Since all the five names in this register consist of two words, each name could easily fit in one short text column.

Contrary to the upper register, the names in the lower register show variation in structure and length. The first two names in this register are written in four short columns without a dividing space. Here, one name ends (*hsf-stš-špt*) and the other follows it in the same column (*wtt-k3-jwnw*). Both Lacau and the Coffin Text editors assigned one single line number to these four short columns, 60 and 412 respectively [Lacau 1904, 211; de Buck 1961, 347d–e]. This state of affairs probably led some researchers to consider all the first four columns in this lower register as a name of a single entity instead of two [Backes 2005, 83; Assmann & Kucharek 2008, 341].

Fortunately, the variant B6C still preserves the first three names in this lower register (**Fig. 8**)<sup>12</sup> [see also Sherbiny 2017, 320 and *pl. 13*]. The space between these textual elements consolidates the view that the first and second names belong to two different guardians. Regardless of the confusion caused by the first four short columns of the lower register in B3C, the order of the names and their disposition correspond with those encountered in B1C.

### **The guardians of CT 1076**

The iconographic and textual evidence in the sources of CT 1076 makes clear that the names, number, sequence, and position of the “Kneeling/Squatting ones” follow a fixed pattern (**Fig. 9**) as follows:

a) *five* entities in the upper register: **1** = *bš-hšpj*, **2** = *dd-sw*, **3** = *nḥb-k3w*, **4** = *wnm-jtw.f*, **5** = *wnm-mwwt.f*, and b) *five* beings in the

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<sup>12</sup> Two minor corrections are introduced in **Fig. 8** to the hieroglyphic transliteration published in [Sherbiny 2017, 322]. First, two more chisel marks could now be deciphered in the name of the sixth guardian (*hsf-stš-špt*). Second, the determinative of *wtt* ( $\overline{\omega}$ ), which was mistakenly omitted earlier, is now inserted in its place.

lower register: **6** = *hsft-stš-špt.(w)*, **7** = *wtt-k3-jwnw*, **8** = *ʿm-hḥw*, **9** = *hr-n-bjk-pr-m-w3dyt*, and **10** = *fdw-hrw-pr-m-3ht*.

Admittedly, this result in itself is not new and is accepted by many scholars (see footnote 6 above), but the other divergent opinions discussed above, which have been, and are still around<sup>13</sup>, necessitate presenting the original sources anew, unfiltered through the previous text editions.

It is also noteworthy that none of these names is attested elsewhere in the Egyptian texts save *nḥb-k3w* [Leitz (ed.), IV, 273–276] and *ʿm-hḥw* [Leitz (ed.) 2002, II, 111].

### The guardians of Osiris according to B5C

As stated above, the “Kneeling/Squatting ones” are depicted twice in the sources. In addition to B1C, the coffin B5C furnishes us with representations of the guardians but differs from B1C in two main aspects. First, its state of preservation supersedes B1C, since *all* the images are still perfectly preserved. Second, it only has wordless images. Hence, no CT spell number was assigned to these silent drawings. This absence of textual elements caused the guardians’

<sup>13</sup> That the arrangement of those divine guardians in CT 1076 continues to perplex researchers to this day is a matter worthy of note. A recently published description of the “Kneeling/Squatting ones” in B1C confused once more the exact order of these beings [Backes 2020, 371–372]. Following the published plan of *The Egyptian Coffin Texts* [de Buck 1961, plan 1], it was assumed that seven beings are still visible in this source. The first three guardians correspond correctly to their order in the original (1= *bš-hʿpj*; 2= *dd-sw*; 3= *nḥb-k3w*). After this point, both the placement and sequence of the guardians are disrupted. Guardian 4 (*wnm-jtw.f*) was claimed to be the first guardian in the lower register [Backes 2020, 372: “in der Rehei darunter...”], followed by guardian 5 (*wnm-mwwt.f*). The third and fourth positions in the lower register were thought to be occupied by the guardians 6 (*hsf-stš-špt*) and 7 (*wtt-k3-jwnw*).

As pointed out above, the place of guardians 4 and 5 (the latter’s name is lost in B1C!) is in the upper register, not the lower. Furthermore, the guardians 6 and 7 occupy the *first* and *second* positions in the lower register, not the third and fourth. One notices also that guardian 8 (*ʿm-hḥw*) is completely absent from this description, while his place is given to guardian 6 (*hsf-stš-špt*). This recent presentation of the evidence is at variance with the order of the guardians in B1C, and the rest of the sources of CT 1076 for that matter.

images in B5C to fall from grace in the scientific research. The iconographical information was simply left out of consideration [a noted exception is Quirke 2016, 475f]. This destiny is shared with B1Be, B12C, and B17C, which were all published before the 1960s, but omit the names and images of the “Kneeling/Squatting ones” [Schack-Schackenburg 1903, *pl. 9* (= B1Be); Lacau 1904, *pl. LVII* (= B12C); Janssen 1957–1958, 73, *pl. VIII* (= B17C)].

Although B5C differs from the general design of B1C and the other sources in the form of a plan (**Figs. 1–2**), the comparison is highly instructive. The entire layout of B5C is arranged in a retrograde direction where the surrounding texts and the sequence of images run from left to right.

The upper register (**Fig. 10**) depicts five similar figures facing right. This is exactly the case with the five guardians in the parallel upper register of B1C. These five beings are represented in the same semi-sitting position, but their knees are less bent than their counterparts in B1C. This gives them the appearance of being rather in a semi-standing position. Similar to B1C, the bodies of all five figures are colored red, which is left unrecorded in de Buck’s plan of B5C [de Buck 1961, *plan 14*]. Instead of the scarab-headed beings of B1C, all figures in B5C have human heads with each having a scarab above his head. No more reptiles appear in their hands as in B1C, but two wavy staves topped by scarabs in the hands of each guardian.

As in the other sources with CT 1076, the lower register contains five guardians (**Fig. 11**). Apart from the black color of hair of the sixth guardian, they were left in outline without coloring. The compartment starts with a hybrid being sitting on a block seat. Similar to the sixth guardian in B1C, this is a ram-headed deity with human body. He has horizontal wavy horns and faces right, opposing the direction of the other beings in the same register, exactly as guardian 6 in B1C. Again, no animals held in the hands, and we find instead, a short wavy staff in the left hand topped by a scarab, in addition to an unclear item in his other hand.

The three remaining figures differ starkly from their counterparts in B1C. They all seem to be hybrids of different animals. It is not easy to identify the animal species here. They stand on their hind legs facing left, and each one of them holds a wavy staff with his both

hands. A scarab surmounts the staff of the first being, while the staves of the other two guardians end with a coil at their uppermost ends.

The most intriguing guardian in the entire group is the last one. Since the parallel image in B1C (i.e. guardian 10) is almost entirely lost, this depiction in B5C is the *only* image that survived of this guardian from ancient Egypt. He has a purely human form. Although he is standing with his body facing left, his head is turned backward to the right<sup>14</sup>. He has short hair and wears only a short kilt. Similar to his five fellow guardians in the upper register, he holds two wavy staves, one in each hand. A scarab surmounts each staff.

Although all the ten figures depicted in B5C are anonymous, identifying them with the ones represented in B1C seems the most plausible option. Not only do they correspond in number with those of CT 1076, but they also share many pictorial characteristics with the parallel images in B1C. The images of B5C and B1C are apparently variants of the same model.

We may then proceed to identify each of the ten depicted guardians in B5C. Thus, the first five guardians in the upper register, in all likelihood, are: **1.** *bš-hꜥpj* **2.** *dd-sw*, **3.** *nḥb-k3w*, **4.** *wmm-jtw.f*, and **5.** *wmm-mwwt.f*. The same would apply to the five guardians in the lower register: **6.** *hsf-stš-špt*, **7.** *wtt-k3-jwnw*, **8.** *ꜥm-ḥḥw*, **9.** *ḥr-n-bjk-pr-m-w3dyt*, and finally **10.** *fdw-ḥrw-pr-m-3ḥt*.

### The invisible guardians

One has also to bear in mind that B5C is not unique in not recording the names of the “Kneeling/Squatting ones”. Six other sources in the form of a plan (B1Be, B1P, B12C, B13C, B16C, and B17C) went even further. They do indeed have the two registers reserved for the names and/or the images of the guardians. Yet, they dispense with the names *and* iconography. The absence of the pictorial and textual representations of the apotropaic deities in these sources cannot be

<sup>14</sup> This posture reminds one of the names of the celestial ferryman “He-who-sees-behind-him” / “He-whose-face-is-behind-him” Mahaf/Herefhaf (*m3-h3.f / ḥr.f-h3.f*) in the ferrymen spells and its related texts e.g. [Sethe 1910, 192: *Pyr. 1227a*]. Herefhaf is even once explicitly said (in the Pyramid Texts spell 519) to be a gatekeeper of Osiris [Sethe 1910, 171: *Pyr. 1201a*; Bidoli 1976, 47f], which is exactly the same function of our “Kneeling/Squatting ones”.



taken as an evidence of these guardians' actual absence. All these sources refer to the guardians in the surrounding texts. Notwithstanding the presence of enough space in all the sources that can accommodate names or images of the guardians, the two compartments reserved for these beings were just left empty in all the six sources (Fig. 12). Apart from any practical considerations that might have led to the absence of the names, an intentional process of concealing them cannot be excluded [cf. Obbink 1925, 113ff; Lacau 1926, 69ff; Brunner-Traut 1975, 281ff; Kuhlmann 1977a, 680].

This strategy was not always observed with the other deities in the so-called Book of Two Ways in these very sources, where their names are usually recorded (for instance as in B13C [de Buck 1961, 287d, 269d, and 312b] and B1P [de Buck 1961, 499d-j, 509a, and 516a]). At any rate, the similarity in the design of these six sources to the previously discussed ones suggests that the unrecorded guardians here were possibly the same ten of CT 1076.

### **The intricacies of CT 1077**

As stated earlier, CT 1076 was not the only version that transmitted the names of the “Kneeling/Squatting ones”. An alternative set of names is positively attested in four other sources, namely B9C, B1L, B2L, and B2P. This version includes different names from those encountered in CT 1076. The guardians here differ also in number from the ten of CT 1076. For these reasons, these names were grouped separately as CT 1077. The alternative guardians' names, most probably, fell prey to a certain degree of corruption during their history of transmission. They contain some obscure words and suffer from spelling inconsistencies in the sources. Besides, none of the names occurs elsewhere in the Egyptian texts. Hence, translating the guardians' names is a real challenge and is mostly open to different interpretations. CT 1077 is even less fortunate than CT 1076 since none of its sources yields depictions of the guardians<sup>15</sup>. Nor do we have variants

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<sup>15</sup> The image of the ram-headed guardian in CT 1076 (= guardian 6: “*ḥsf-stš-špt*”) was once thought to be the depiction of the first guardian in CT 1077 [de Buck 1961, 347i: “*ḥšš-ḥrw-sdm-d3dwt*”; Guilhou 2014, 64]. This view was obviously influenced by Barguet's misleading sketch accompanying his translations of CT 1076 and CT 1077 [Barguet 1986, 637]. Barguet's drawing reproduces the iconography of B1C, but the legends he added

in the form of purely textual sources that could be used for comparison, as is the case with CT 1076. Nevertheless, the guardians here share the same destiny of those mentioned in CT 1076 as far as their number is concerned.

### The numerical problem of CT 1077

Due to the absence of a variant with purely text columns, Adriaan de Buck divided the names of CT 1077 into seven passages [de Buck 1961, 347i-k + 348a-d]. This decision influenced most translators who understood here a total of seven guardians [e.g. Piankoff 1974, 22; Barguet 1986, 639; Carrier 2004, 2246–2247; Backes 2005, 142; Assmann & Kucharek 2008, 341f]. Others thought that they are eight [Lesko 1972, 83], six [e.g. Leitz (ed.) 2002, II, 217, 219, 248; V, 26, 686, VII, 626] or five [Faulkner 1978, 146].

Yet, and in a similar scenario to that of CT 1076, some went to the other extreme and maintained that CT 1077 is not more than a name of a single guardian followed by a string of his epithets [Minas-Nerpel 2006, 99]<sup>16</sup>. In fact, any attempt to find a way out of this perplexing situation should consider the layout of the textual elements in each source instead of focusing solely on the texts.

### The textual arrangement of CT 1077


The names of CT 1077 are arranged in two registers that differ in size. Even here two designs are discerned. The sources B1L, B2L, B2P have a large upper register and a considerably narrow lower one (Fig. 13–15), while the opposite is found in B9C. In both cases, the upper register contains only one name, and the rest of names are gathered in the lower. Since most of these names are relatively long, the narrowness of the lower register in B1L, B2L, and B2P was not a

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on the drawing indicating the position of the spells are incorrect. Barguet's sketch claims that the guardians in the upper register represent those of CT 1076, while the ones in the lower belong to CT 1077. In fact, and as explained above, all the images in *both* registers in B1C represent the guardians of CT 1076 (Figs. 3–5).





<sup>16</sup> Here the author states: “Es ist von einem vielgesichtigen Dämon die Rede, dessen verschiedenen Epitheta jedoch nicht ganz klar sind”, where she apparently considers *all* the names in the lower register as epithets of the sole guardian in the upper [de Buck 1961, 347i: “*š3-ḥrw-sdm-d3dwt*”].


practical choice. It was evidently inadequate for accommodating the constituents of each name in an orderly manner. This led to an imbalanced arrangement of the textual elements that makes it difficult to distinguish between the last word of a name and the first of the subsequent one. The names are usually written in short columns following each other. In some cases, the hieratic signs of a single name are somehow distanced from each other, spreading across the narrow compartment. The inconsistent spelling of names in the variants was probably due to the scribes' attempts to interpret an already-garbled or ill-understood text.





Fortunately, B9C has a straightforward layout with a clear delineation of the guardians' names (**Fig. 16**). In contrast to the other three variants, the upper register is narrow and nicely accommodates the name of the first guardian, which is written in horizontal line. The lower register is large and contains the rest of the names. Each name occupies a single column clearly separated from the other names. Moreover, the god-determinative  follows a short space after each name in the lower compartment. The organization of the texts in B9C clearly indicates that the lower register has *five* guardians. This means that the “Kneeling/Squatting ones” according to B9C are six beings in total: one in the upper register and five in the lower. This interpretation can be extended to the other three sources as well (for B2L as an example, see **Fig. 17**).

### **The opaque names of CT 1077**

Building on this result, and without delving too much into the philological complexities, one point might be briefly singled out. A certain murky term pops up in the names of three guardians and is interpreted differently by scholars. It is  which appears in both singular and plural forms. One view is that it refers to a type of snakes, or cobras, and reads here *d3d* or *d3dt* [e.g. Lesko 1972, 83; Piankoff 1974, 22; Faulkner 1978, 146; Meeks 1981, 438; van der Plas & Borg-houts 1998, 324; Carrier 2004, 2246f; Backes 2005, 142; Hannig 2006b, 2821]. Others read *d3d-wtt* as a certain goddess [van der Molen 2000, 817f]. The differences between the four variants suggest a corruption in the text. Perhaps it is about a word for cobra in its defensive posture, or simply a misinterpretation of an old and obscure word?

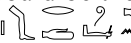


Yet, another view understands here two words: *d3d* and *j<sup>c</sup>rt*, with a participle followed by the known word for cobra. The resulting rendering is “He who beheads the cobra” [Leitz (ed.) 2002, II, 219], which has the advantage of producing a grammatically clear formation. However, this reading might be semantically problematic. In case these dangerous snakes are used as weapons in the hands of the guardians threatening any intruder, killing the snakes would deprive the guardians of this powerful weapon. Neither the depicted cobras in B1C, nor the guardians’ names of CT 1077 show the animal beheaded or harmed in any way. Besides, none of variants writes a determinatives of the rare verb *d3d* “to cut throat” or “strangle” (e.g. , , , )<sup>17</sup>. Hence, one wonders if *d3dt* could be a description of the cobra as “She who strangles”?<sup>18</sup> Perhaps a rendering of *d3d* with “grasp tightly (?)” could make better sense? Anyhow, the matter has to be left open.

The relevance of this term to our discussion lies in the fact that  forms the last part of the names of three guardians (i.e. the first, second, and fifth). The Coffin Text edition clearly considers it part of the name of the first two guardians [i.e. de Buck 1961, 347i and 347j]. Yet, it received a separate passage number separating it from the name of the fifth guardian (*dwn-rd*) [de Buck 1961, 348c].

This decision seems to be influenced by the arrangement of the words in B1L, B2L, and B3L. Two factors seem to have motivated this choice. First, none of the three sources (**Figs. 13–15**) writes any part of  in the same column of *dwn-rd*. This is, however, not the case in the names of the first and second guardians, since some signs of  are written directly after their names. As for the first guardian [de Buck 1961, 347i],  follows directly his name in B1L and B2L, while  follows in the second column. The same goes for the second guardian in B1L.

<sup>17</sup> See, for instance, [Sethe 1908, 210: *Pyr. 402a*; Erman & Grapow (eds.) 1931 [1971], 527:10; de Buck 1938, 240b; Meeks 1981, 437; van der Plas & Borghouts 1998, 324; van der Molen 2000, 818; Hannig 2003, 1493; 2006b; 2821].

<sup>18</sup> The strangling here may be a metaphorically dangerous epithet of the snake, rather than a reference to a “constrictor” snake *per se*, see footnote 21 below.

The second reason could be the noticeable distance separating the two short columns of  and  in B2L (**Fig. 14**). This space might have indeed made the impression that they are names of two different entities. Hence, the Coffin Texts editors were cautious here and left the matter somehow open. Obviously, this state of affairs has led subsequent scholars to believe that CT 1077 is about seven beings. However, the layout of B9C, as mentioned above, demonstrates that  belongs to the name of the fifth guardian.

### The guardians of CT 1077

Notwithstanding the apparent difficulties, one may now venture to introduce the six guardians of Osiris whose names are gathered in CT 1077 with a tentative rendering as follows:






– The upper register:


1 = “He whose faces are numerous, he who hears, who tightly-grasps (?) the cobras” (*ḥr̄w-sdm-d3d-j̄rwt*)<sup>19</sup>.

Or: “He whose faces are numerous, he who hears<sup>20</sup> the *d3dt*-snakes”<sup>21</sup> (*ḥr̄w-sdm-d3dwt*).

– The lower register:

<sup>19</sup> Cf. [Leitz (ed.) 2002, II, 219].

<sup>20</sup> One view postulated that  in B9C is a corruption of  [Faulkner 1978, 147, n. 1 (Spell 1077)]. But  could be also an abbreviated form of *hnr* “imprison” or *jth/rth* “restrain”. The sign  is a frequently attested writing of  $\text{—}\rangle$  due to their similarity in hieratic [e.g. Erman & Grapow (eds.) 1926 [1971], 148: 24–25; Erman & Grapow (eds.) 1929 [1971], 295f; Gardiner 1957, 519 (U 31); Borghouts 2010, II, 29f (D19–20) and 143 (U31)]. Both signs frequently alternate in the Coffin Texts as well, e.g. CT 50 [de Buck 1935, 229a]; CT 149 [de Buck 1938, 232a]; CT 317 [de Buck 1951, 119e]; CT 441 [de Buck 1954, 298a]; CT 499 [de Buck 1956, 83c]; and CT 857 [de Buck 1961, 59h]. Hence, a possible translation could be: “He whose faces are numerous, who restrains the *d3dt*-snakes”. Barguet rendered “...qui-serre-le-cobra” [Barguet 1986, 639]. Another reading has been also suggested: “...der (?) der Djad-Schlange vorsteht” where  was interpreted as *hntjw* “the foremost of” [Backes 2005, 142].

<sup>21</sup> A rendering of *d3dt* as a “constrictor snake” was once proposed [Meeks 1981, 438]. However, it would be extremely rare to find Boidae snakes (mainly the rock python: *Python sebae*) in Dynastic Egypt [Keimer 1947, 26–36; Störk 1984, 648; Boessneck 1988, 115f; Stegbauer 2019, 106]. The word  in B9C is probably corrupted.

2 = “He whose mouth(s) are numerous, who tightly-grasps (?) the cobra” (ʿš3-r3-d3d-jʿrt)<sup>22</sup>.

3 = “He who passes by, who-belongs-to-the-cow (?)”<sup>23</sup>.

Or: “He who encounters Him-who-belongs-to-the-cow (?)” (hpy-jhtj (?))<sup>24</sup>.

4 = “The one with enduring transformability”<sup>25</sup> (w3h<sup>26</sup>-hpr(w)).

Or: “He who lays down Khepri”<sup>27</sup> (w3h-hpr(j)).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. [Leitz (ed.) 2002, II, 217]. Most translators read here “He whose mouths are numerous, the *d3dt*-snake (or the cobra)” [e.g. Barguet 1986, 639; Backes 2005, 142; Nyord 2009, 217, n. 2029]. A rendering with a direct genitive was proposed as well: “Celux au nombreuses bouches de serpent-djadet” [Carrier 2004, 2247]. B9C does not write the feminine ending after the cobra sign. Similar writings of *jʿrt* “cobra” without phonograms are rare in the CT, and mainly appear in plural or dual formations [e.g. de Buck 1938, 52h/Sq1C; 1951, 80g/B2Bo, 207a/M8C, 327t/B1L; 1956, 55c/B2L, 225k/B2L; 1961, 267d/B2P].

<sup>23</sup> Other scholars translated here: “Der in der Art einer Kuh angreift (?)” [Backes 2005, 142 and n. 392], and “celui qui affronte les Deux Vaches (?)” [Carrier 2004, 2247]. Although this latter rendering with a feminine dual ending  $\text{𓆎𓆏}$  is a possibility, the absence of a graphic dual indication in all the sources makes it less likely (already [Faulkner 1978, 147, n. 2 (Spell 1077)]).

<sup>24</sup> The reading *hpy-k3tj* was once suggested [Piankoff 1974, 22], but this is incomprehensible. Since the word “bull” *k3* is masculine, a dual with the feminine ending *tj*, or even a *nisbe* formation, is grammatically inconceivable.

<sup>25</sup> So Schenkel, who reads the name as *w3h-hpr(w)* “Der mit dauerender Gestaltfähigkeit” [Minas-Nerpel 2006, 100]. Cf. the spelling of *hprw* “form” without its plural strokes as  $\text{𓆎}$  in the CT 714 [de Buck 1956, 343m]. Another rendering is: “Entsehend Dauerhafter” [Backes 2005, 142]. For further analysis of *hpr* and *hprw*, see [Buchberger 1993, 213ff; Osing 1976, 550–562].

<sup>26</sup> The biliteral sign  $\text{𓆎}$  in B1L was once read as *sk* “celui qui essui Khepri” [Carrier 2004, 2246f]. However, the clear  $\text{𓆎𓆎}$   $\text{𓆎𓆏}$  *w3h* in the variant B2L (which is the outer coffin of the same person!) invalidates this reading. For more on the sign, see [Collombert 2010, 156: § 300].

<sup>27</sup> Only B1L writes the god-determinative here. This could be either a reference to the god Khepri or misunderstanding by the scribe. The god-determinative  $\text{𓆎}$  in B9C most likely refers to guardian 5, as in the other four names in the same register [de Buck 1961, 347j–348d/B9C] (Fig. 16), and *not* to the god “Khepri” as was once suggested [Minas-Nerpel 2006, 99 and in the table on p. 100].

5 = “He who stretches the leg<sup>28</sup>, who tightly-grasps (?) the cobra” (*dwn-rd-d3d-jꜣrt*)<sup>29</sup>.

6 = “He who catches the multitude” (*h3m-ꜣ3rt*).

### Reductionist theories

Coming back once more to the theory of considering the names of the last seven guardians in CT 1076 (i.e. guardians 4–10) as epithets of Nehebkau or Re-Nehebkau [Goebis 2003, 40; 2008, 110 and 323f], some notes can be deduced from the previous discussion.

In CT 1076, Nehebkau appears as *one of* the guardians without any special traits placing him in a hierarchically privileged position compared to the other members of the “Kneeling/Squatting ones”. He is simply the *third* in a group of ten armed gatekeepers who safeguard Osiris. In the illustrated sources B1C and B5C (**Figs. 3 and 10**), Nehebkau is almost *identically* depicted as the rest of the guardians in the upper register. It is hardly conceivable that the guardians 4 and 5 in the upper register, and the other five (guardians 6–10) in the lower (**Figs. 1–2; 4, and 11**), are all simply personified epithets of one of their fellow guardians in the middle of the upper register.

That some names of the guardians use cannibalistic terminology does not automatically justify considering them here as epithets of Nehebkau. Additionally, this theory does not offer an explanation of the absence of Nehebkau and cannibalistic expressions from the parallel version of CT 1077<sup>30</sup>.

As pointed out earlier, similar problem is encountered in considering all the names in the lower register of CT 1077, i.e. guardians 2–6, (**Fig. 17**) as epithets of the first guardian in the register above [Minas-Nerpel 2006, 99]. Nevertheless, these hypotheses are of interest in their own right; since they strive to decode the possibly encrypted message in the sources, and offer attractive interpretations. Such analyses, however, need first to take a closer look at the available sources and avoid any eclectic approach before embarking on painting the big interpretive picture.

<sup>28</sup> B2P uses the dual *rdwj* “two legs” [de Buck 1961, 348b].

<sup>29</sup> Cf. [Leitz (ed.) 2002, VII, 526].

<sup>30</sup> A recent dissertation on Nehebkau and other ophidian deities did not discuss this interpretation. Nor was there mention of Nehebkau in CT 1076, apart from listing the different orthographic forms of his name [Massiera 2013, 302f].

By realizing, for instance, that *five* beings occupy the upper register of CT 1076, a more meaningful link might be established with some passages in the cannibal hymn of the Pyramid Texts. There also, *five* beings are encountered. They perform violent butchering acts, including the decapitation (*d3d*) of their victims [Sethe 1908, 209f; *Pyr.* 401a–403b; cf. Goebis 2004, 147–149]. Their actions find parallels in the slaughtering rituals [Eyre 2002, 86ff]. It is exactly this role that the “Squatting ones” (*m3stjw*) play as a group of frightening butchers protecting the abode of Osiris in another spell transmitted only on some of Deir El Barsha coffins [de Buck 1935, 196d–e; cf. Zandee 1960, 166f]. Leaving the details aside, these guardians are deliberately mentioned in these sources. Both CT 1076 and CT 1077 go one step further by introducing them in word and image.

From a purely formal perspective, and despite the evocative names of some guardians in CT 1076 and CT 1077, their surrounding texts, arrangement of the individual words, and iconography, all refer to a *group* of beings, not only one entity.

### Pictorial and textual modalities




Close examination of B1C and B5C reveals a considerable disparity between words and images. Although the texts identify the guardians collectively as the “Kneeling ones” (*m3sw*) or the “Squatting ones” (*m3stjw*), this description does not correspond to the depicted body positions. None of the figures is shown kneeling or squatting, contrary to the assertions of some scholars [e.g. Zandee 1960, 204; Backes 2005, 330; Lucarelli 2012, 87]. The preserved images show three main body positions. Four guardians are depicted *standing*, i.e. guardians 7–10 in B5C, (**Fig. 11**), while one being is clearly *sitting* on a block seat, i.e. guardian 6 in B5C (**Fig. 11**).


The rest of the preserved images represent a total of fourteen beings, i.e. guardians 1–9 in B1C (**Figs. 3–4**) and 1–5<sup>31</sup> in B5C (**Fig. 10**). They all have human bodies and appear in a semi-sitting position, with bent knees and feet on the ground. Although the bending angle of their knees varies slightly in some figures, they all seem to represent an intermediary moment between sitting and standing (guardians 6 in B1C,

<sup>31</sup> Although the lower parts of guardians 4 and 5 in B1C are missing, there is no room for doubt that they were similar to guardians 1–3 in the same register.






and 1–5 in B5C). In some images the posture is even closer to sitting without a visible seat (guardians 1–5 and 7–9 in B1C).

This posture is sometimes compared with the hieroglyph of a “child sitting (on lap) with hand to mouth”  [e.g. Gardiner 1957, 443 (A17); Assmann 1977, 93f; Teotino 2022, 607]. But since none of the figures shows a hand-to-mouth gesture, a better candidate is the sign derived from the hieratic determinative of *hmsj* “sit”  or  <sup>32</sup> [Möller 1909, no. 31; Gardiner 1957, 443 (A17\*); Goedicke 1988, 2a–b (17/31); Borghouts 2010, II, 15 (A17\*), n. 2]. This sign features frequently in the Coffin Texts in different forms [e.g. van der Molen 2000, 334] which have not yet found their way to the standard paleographical works<sup>33</sup>.

As for the determinative  of the word *m3stjw* CT 1073 in B1L (line number 423 [de Buck 1961, 342a/B1L], transliterated as *(ḥ)st*), it is mostly influenced by the determinative of the word *g3h* “be weary” earlier in the same passage, not a sign representing the guardians’ posture. Few lines later (line 434), the same source writes *m3stjw* in CT 1081 without this determinative [de Buck 1961, 354b/B1L].

At any rate, the depicted posture of the guardians in B1C and B5C does not visually render what is alluded to in their collective appellation. Hence, it cannot be described as sitting, squatting, or kneeling in the true sense of the word. Nor are they crouching or cowering, for that matter<sup>34</sup>. We may, therefore, describe the guardians’ unnatural

<sup>32</sup> Perhaps a closer hieroglyphic transliteration of the *hmsj* hieratic sign could represent a sitting man  or , rather than a child (!). However, one has to keep in mind the difference between the hieratic and hieroglyphic repertoires. Otherwise we would run the risk of inventing hieroglyphic signs unrecorded in the Egyptian texts [cf. van der Moezel 2018, 58ff].

<sup>33</sup> Under the column “Funerary”, Goedicke cited only one form of  (A17a) from pGardiner II [Goedicke 1988, 2b], leaving out other interesting forms in the same papyrus completely unnoticed.

<sup>34</sup> A quick glance at the basic definitions of these body positions in any dictionary should suffice to prove the point. For instance, *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary* gives the following senses. The word *kneel* received the definition: “to bend the knee and rest on the knee, to support oneself on the knees (one or two)” [Gove (ed.) 1976, II, 1249]. As for *squat*, one reads: “to sit on one’s haunches, to crouch on the ground with legs fully drawn up, to sit cross-legged, to take a balanced position with knees fully bent and heels raised” [Gove (ed.) 1976, III, 2215]. The meaning of *crouch* is: “to bend low,

position *conventionally* (together with other researchers) as “semi-sitting”<sup>35</sup>.

Other points of difference between texts and images are noticed. When the texts confirm that the guardians’ faces are mysterious or hidden [de Buck 1961, 342a and 520a], they appear with different faces and heads in the drawings. Most of them have animal heads (*all* the guardians in B1C: **Figs. 3–4**; and guardians 6–9 in B5C: **Fig. 11**). Yet, other guardians have human heads and faces (guardians 1–5 and 10 in B5C: **Figs. 10–11**). A good example of the discrepancy between word and image is the ninth guardian in CT 1076. Although he is called falcon-faced, this is not how his face is pictorially rendered in both B1C and B5C (**Figs. 4 and 11**)<sup>36</sup>.

The guardians’ weaponry is another case of discrepancy between textual and visual modes of expression. Contrary to the texts that mention a certain type of throw sticks [de Buck 1961, 342b and 520b], the guardians of B1C hold cobras and geckos/lizards in their hands instead (**Figs. 3–4**). But they appear with wavy staves surmounted by scarabs in B5C (**Figs. 10–11**). This suggests that both modes of depictions may eventually allude to a type of serpent-wands [cf. Ritner 2006, 205ff; Quirke 2016, 258, 263, and 375f]? Perhaps the scarabs surmounting some of the staves in B5C indicate (in addition to – or apart from – whatever cosmic and cosmogonic considerations) the symbolic mutability of the staves.

On a side note, the way the geckos/lizards are held by the guardians has attracted the attention of several scholars. Most of the theories focused mainly on the way the guardians in the upper register in B1C

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to stoop with limbs close to the body, to lie close to the ground with legs bent, to bend or bow severely” [Gove (ed.) 1976, I, 543f]. Finally, *cower* is described as “to crouch down/ squat” [Gove (ed.) 1976, I, 526].

<sup>35</sup> Interpreting this curious body position is usually a matter of speculation [e.g. Hornung 1963, II, 122; Manassa 2007, I, 226, n. 129; Taylor 2010, 203]. Cf. the description of similar postures in the late statues as well [e.g. Daressy 1905, pl. LX (CG 39273); 1906, 318f; Bothmer 1960, 19, pl. 15: fig. 36; Leclant 1961, 113ff, pls. XXXIV–XLII; Eigner 1984, 141f, fig. 110 (misquoting Bothmer’s plate number as “fig. 13” instead of pl. 15); Clère 1986, 102].

<sup>36</sup> Indeed, it has been once suggested that the genitival structure in this guardian’s name (*hr n bjk*) is probably not about his physical description [Nyord 2009, 169, n. 1311].

hold these reptiles (**Fig. 18a**). According to one view the geckos/lizards are held in an upright position at the root of the tail as a sign of their vividness, aggressiveness, and readiness to attack [Lucarelli 2012, 87]. Others speculated that the animals could have been desiccated serving a symbolic function [Guilhou 2009, 5]. In fact, the drawings on the same coffin show two other ways in which the geckos/lizards are held. In contrast to the first given guardians of CT 1076 in B1C (**Fig. 3**), the guardian “He who begets the bull of Heliopolis” (guardian 7) in the lower register is depicted grasping the reptile from his head (**Fig. 18b**). Furthermore, another apotropaic deity in the same composition [de Buck 1961, 312b/B1C] is shown holding this reptile from the middle of his body (**Fig. 18c**)<sup>37</sup>. These gestures speak in favor of subduing, restraining, and eventually having control over the animal itself [cf. Ritner 1993, 128, n. 583]. As a result, the reptile becomes obediently helpful to his master, but dangerous to the latter’s opponents. Similar opinions in this direction have been recently expressed as well [Quack 2022, 171, n. 66; Teotino 2022, 611–613].

As a corollary, the visual expression here is not simply a pictorial rendering of the textual description. The iconography had probably a rich repertoire with diverse models as well as a margin of artistic and imaginative freedom. This should not come as a surprise due to the fluid and mysterious nature of these super powerful entities and their ability to alter their perceptible forms.






### Discrepancy at issue

Despite the similarity of the surrounding texts, the discrepancy between the guardians of CT 1076 and CT 1077 is the real crux<sup>38</sup>. Nevertheless, upon comparing the pictorial and textual material, one cannot help but notice some commonalities between the two groups. By and large, the following brief and tentative remarks may suggest possible ways of reducing this striking disparity between CT 1076 and CT 1077.


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<sup>37</sup> Cf. for instance, other apotropaic entities holding geckos/lizards on the MK tusks [Quirke 2016, 251, 361, and *pl.* 5].

<sup>38</sup> It was once hypothesized that an original archetype had the two sets of names combined. Then, a choice was made later of certain names from that original exemplar that eventually materialized in two dissimilar versions [Backes 2005, 142].


The most salient stumbling block manifests itself in the upper registers of both versions with stark divergence in the guardians' names and number. While CT 1077 has only one being, CT 1076 presents five. One wonders if the name of the sole guardian in the upper register of CT 1077 is in fact a reference to a group of beings rather than a single entity. As stated above, this is the only textual element that does not write the god-determinative in B9C. Taking into account the apparent corruption and orthographic discrepancies between the few variants of CT 1077, an originally plural reading could also be surmised: "Those whose faces are numerous, who restrain/hear the *Djadet*-snakes/ who tightly-grasps (?) the cobras" (*š3w hrw rthw/ sdm<w> d3dwt/ d3dw jrwt*). A writing with the plural ending  [Edel 1955, § 272] could be understood<sup>39</sup> in  and  of B1L (Fig. 13), and  and  of B9C (Fig. 16) [de Buck 1961, 347i]. This would also dispel the doubt that was once expressed in interpreting the *unexpected* plural ending in B9C as *hntjw* "foremost ones" [Backes 2005, 142; see footnote 20 above]<sup>40</sup>.

By casting a glance at the images in B1C (Fig. 3) and B5C (Fig. 10), a similar situation is noticed. All the five guardians hold cobras in the former and "serpentine" staves topped by scarabs in the latter. As stated earlier, these beings are scarab-headed in B1C, but human-headed surmounted by scarabs in B5C. This may highlight, among other things, a constant mysteriousness and transformability of their faces and staves. Perhaps these two features stood behind a) using the plural *d3dwt/jrwt* "*Djadet*-snakes/cobras", and b) referring to

<sup>39</sup> Similar formation is already used in the same section describing the "Kneeling/Squatting ones", e.g. *nḥw*  in [de Buck 1961, 342b and 520b].

<sup>40</sup> Note also that guardians can also be referred to as snakes. A notable example from the so-called Book of Two Ways itself is found in the guardians and gatekeepers *hḥ3ww ftt* [e.g. de Buck 1961, 278c, 304, 468e, and 518a; Sherbiny 2017, 142f]. Now the guardians in the upper register of CT 1076 and CT 1077 seem to be connected to the land ways of Rosetau. And one of the old designations of the snake in Egyptian texts is "son of the earth" (*z3-t3*) [Erman & Grapow (eds.) 1929 [1971], 410: 16–17]. Since the "Kneeling/Squatting ones" were installed by Geb, the earth god par excellence, the reference to snakes here may not come as a surprise. For an overview of the benevolent role of the serpents, see [Stegbauer 2019, 100ff].

the multitudinousness of faces ( $\text{ḥ}3w \text{hrw}$ ) in the parallel version of CT 1077. Besides, the iconography in B1C and B5C accentuates the identity of the five figures. This repetitive motif might have also played a role in using the indistinguishable plural in CT 1077 instead of listing the individual guardians' names.

As for the number of beings in the lower register, both versions are in agreement. As discussed above, each has five beings. Two guardians hold cobras in their hands in B1C (guardians 6 and 9) (**Fig. 4**). It is exactly in the names of their parallel guardians in the other version (guardians 2 and 5) that a reference to snake ( $\text{ḥ}3$  ) turns up (**Fig. 17**). Moreover, the first guardian in this register in CT 1076 (guardian 6) is depicted with a cobra sprouting from his *mouth* (**Fig. 4**). Notably, the name of his counterpart in CT 1077 (guardian 2) refers to this body part as well “He whose *mouth(s)* are numerous” (**Fig. 17**).

The next guardian's name in the same register in CT 1076 and CT 1077 (guardians 7 and 3 respectively) contains a word related to a bovine animal. While “bull” is clearly written in CT 1076, an unclear word that may read “cow” is found in CT 1077. Could the latter be the result of a misinterpretation of a garbled version of the former?

In addition, the name of the third guardian in CT 1076, “He who swallows the *ḥḥ*-waters” seems to have primeval/cosmogonic undertones similar to his parallel one in CT 1077, “He who lays down Khepri”  $w3ḥ\text{-}ḥpr(j)$ .

This leaves us with the last guardian. CT 1077 presents him as “He who catches the multitude” ( $\text{ḥ}3m\text{-}\text{ḥ}3t$ ). The only preserved image of his counterpart in CT 1076 is the purely anthropomorphic figure (guardian 10) in B5C (**Fig. 11**). As we observed above, his posture with his head looking backwards recalls the name of the ferryman Mahaf/Herefah ( $m3\text{-}ḥ3.f / ḥr.f\text{-}ḥ3.f$ ). This latter plays a paramount role in the net spells (CT 473–480), where his catching activity<sup>41</sup> in a fishing context is very much feared [see Bidoli 1976, 12f, 28f, 47ff]. A similar situation is found in CT 1015 where a catching net is also

<sup>41</sup> The verb  $\text{ḥ}3m$  “catch fish” and its derivatives feature prominently in the net spells that usually start with an address to the celestial ferryman [e.g. de Buck 1956, 3g, 3i, 4a, 10f, 17d–e, 23j, 28a, 31k, 34i, 35f, 36e, 37l–m, 38t, 43n; cf. Bidoli 1976, 37; 52, note g; 53, note i].

used, but for trapping birds this time. The fowler in question is a guardian of a watercourse who has two faces [de Buck 1961, 233j-l; cf. Erman & Grapow (eds.) 1929 [1971], 127: 2; Borghouts 1971, 138f; Goebis 2008, 263f; Nyord 2009, 166, n. 1268].

A contextual relation can also be established between this fowler and the ferryman mentioned earlier [Bidoli 1976, 47 and 50]. In spite of the impalpability of several passages in the text, a *four-faced* being features in the scene [de Buck 1961, 233p and 234h; cf. Nyord 2009, 166, n. 1270]. This latter reminds us of another *four-faced* being that turned up in PT 519 [Sethe 1910, 177: *Pry. 1207b*]. As stated earlier (see footnote 14), this spell is addressed to the ferryman who is described there as the guardian of Osiris.

In all these texts, references to the number and/or movement of faces (i.e. heads) represent the common denominator. Now the name of the last guardian in CT 1076 (i.e. guardian 10) is “four-faced one who emerges from the Akhet” (guardian 10). If we add the allusions to the catching net gleaned from the name of “He who catches the multitude” to the seemingly pictorial rendering of Mahaf/Herefhaf in B5C, a link might be established between *h3m-š3t* and his parallel guardian *fdw-hrw-pr-m-3ht*. While one version focuses on the guardian’s physical appearance (CT 1076), the other turns the spotlight on his activity (CT 1077).

Bringing all these threads together from the different sources of both versions, one gets the impression that CT 1076 and CT 1077 could be about one and the same group of beings. They might be simply two sides of the same coin.

While some sources *seemingly* disclose the guardians (CT 1076), other coffins present them in a different guise (CT 1077). Yet a third group of sources shroud them all in secrecy (**Fig. 12**). Thus, the difference in the names between the two versions might be explained as two different sets of *epithets* and attributes of the same beings rather than their *true* names [cf. Lacau 1926, 69ff; Bonnet 1952, 504; Kuhlmann 1977b, cols. 697–699]. After all, a multiplicity of epithets, names, and visual forms is a well-known feature of denizens and members of the divine world [Hornung 1971, 77ff and 114ff].

Admittedly, these thoughts are hypothetical and cannot be ascertained. Yet, if these hypotheses were correct, they would solve the

puzzling discrepancy between CT 1076 and CT 1077. For the time being, the matter has to remain within the realm of speculation.

## Conclusions

The previous paragraphs examined the formal features of the general textual and pictorial arrangement of a group of liminal entities represented on few Middle Kingdom coffins. The picture that emerges from the previous discussion can be summarized in the following points.

The guardians of Osiris, referred to as the “Kneeling ones” or the “Squatting ones”, are attested in two different arrangements with varying degrees of textual and iconographic expression. Apart from two names, all the guardians’ appellations are not attested elsewhere in the Egyptian texts. Contrary to the conflicting views regarding the actual number of these beings, close examination of the sources clarifies the matter. The first arrangement of the guardians represents a group of ten beings whose names are gathered in CT 1076. The second version has six entities whose names differ from the first group and represent CT 1077.

Moreover, the attempts to interpret some of the guardians’ names as epithets of one being, or even lumping few names together, proved to be problematic. Such endeavors are textually-biased and invariably deal with the names in CT 1076 and CT 1077 as if they were real spells. Hence, they proceed and deal with the separate names as a continuous text with less or no consideration for the actual arrangement of the textual and iconographical elements on the coffins.

Close scrutiny of the perfectly preserved drawings in B5C leaves little room for doubt that the depicted beings are the iconographic variants of the ten “Kneeling/Squatting ones” that are partly lost in B1C. Not only does B5C furnish us with another pictorial version of the guardians of CT 1076, but it also has the *only* preserved image of the guardian “Four-faced who emerges from the Akhet” (*fdw-hrw-prm-3ht*). Furthermore, the last word of this guardian’s name in B1C turned out to be still partially visible, and was not completely lost as the previous text editions suggested.

The same goes for the images of the guardians of CT 1076 in B1C, where few previously unnoticed iconographic details in the

published plans have just emerged into the light. For instance, considerable parts of the depictions of “He who eats his fathers” and “He who eats his mothers” proved to be still clearly discernible. Besides, the faded outline of a cobra held in the hand of the guardian “Falcon-faced who emerges from Uto” is also noticed.

The previous remarks have generally brought to the fore the significance of taking into consideration both images and arrangement of textual elements when approaching such pictorial-textual sources. A balanced treatment of all these formal matters can pave the way for future research with an interpretative orientation on solid ground.

Finally, one of the hitherto unanswered questions is: How are the two different names of CT 1076 and CT 1077 related to each other? They are clearly attested in the coffins as two groups that consciously differ in their individual names and number. The group of CT 1076 predominately features on several coffins from all the time periods of the Middle Kingdom. They are attested on the earliest datable examples from the late Eleventh and early Twelfth Dynasty (i.e. B2Bo, B4Bo, and B6C) down to the late Twelfth Dynasty (i.e. B5C). However, CT 1077 had a somehow short life-span in the surviving record, for it appeared solely on a handful of coffins from the second half of the Twelfth Dynasty. However, these dates do not give us an idea about the date of the texts and images themselves. The date of texts and images on the one hand, and the date of objects on which these texts and images are attested on the other (i.e. coffins in this case), are two different things.

Regardless of the discrepancies between the guardians' names of CT 1076 and CT 1077, both versions share the plurality of their communal appellation as the “Kneeling/Squatting ones” (*m3sw/m3stjw*) [cf. te Velde 1975, 980]. None of the surrounding texts specifies their number. Hence, from a purely formal point of view, they could possibly be two casts playing the same role, regardless of their individual names and total number. Perhaps it is about two versions or traditions (of one and the same group?) drawn from the depths of the large and age-long repository of the Osirian temple cult.



**FIGURES**

Label referring to land ways (CT 1074)
Real spell (CT 1075)
(Guardians)
(Guardians)
Label referring to waterways (CT 1078)
Real spell (CT 1079)

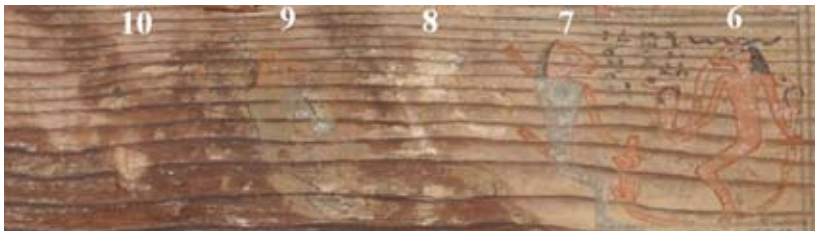
**Fig. 1.** The general layout of the illustrated sources with CT 1076 and 1077

Real spell (CT 1184a = var. 1075)
Label referring to land way (CT 1184b = var. 1074)
(Guardians)
Real spell (CT 1185a = var. 1079)
Label referring to waterways (CT 1185b = var. 1078)
(Guardians)

**Fig. 2.** The general layout of the illustrated sources of CT 1184–1185



**Fig. 3.** The depictions of the five guardians (1–5) of the upper register in BIC (CT 1076)  
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**Fig. 4.** The depictions of the five guardians (6–10) of the lower register in BIC (CT 1076)  
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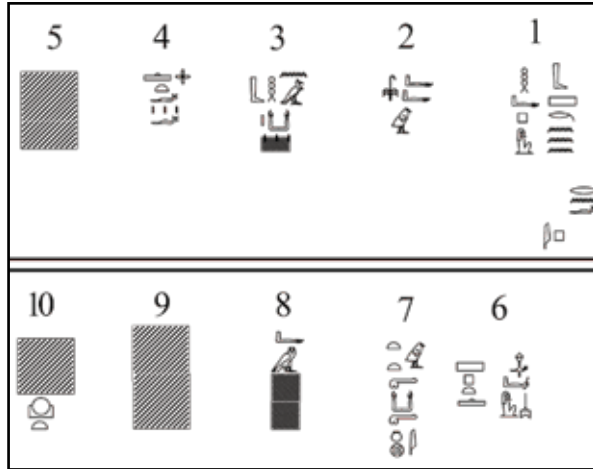


Fig. 5. The guardians' names of CT 1076 in B1C



Fig. 6. The guardians' names of CT 1076 in B3C  
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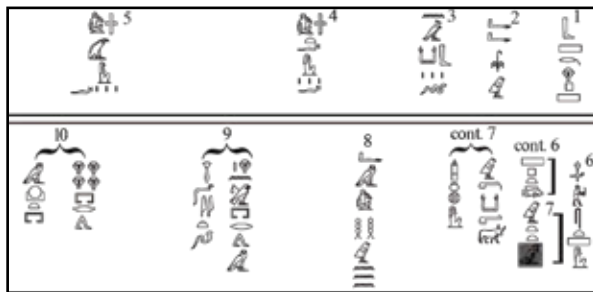
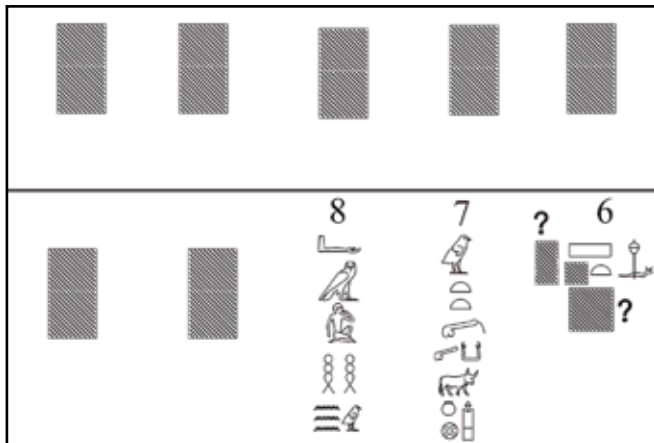
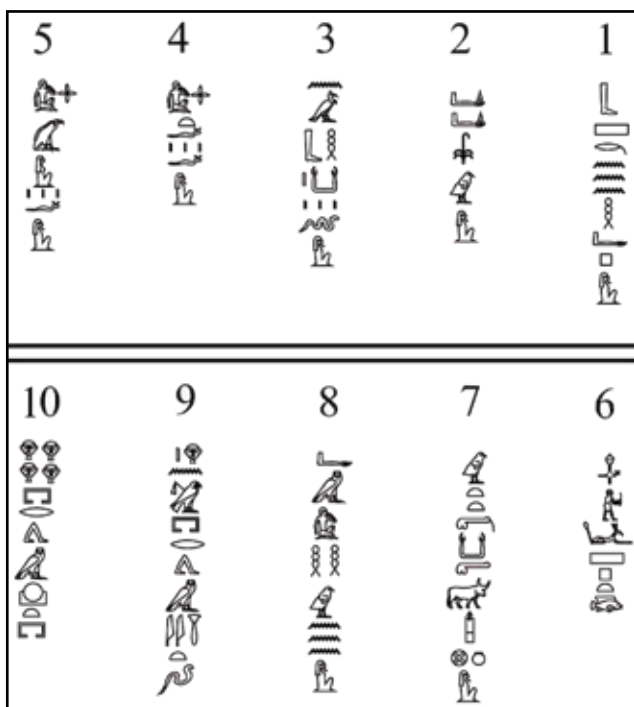


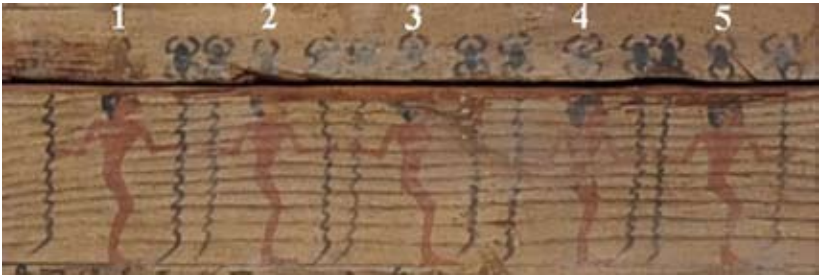
Fig. 7. The guardians' names of CT 1076 in B3C



**Fig. 8.** The guardians' names of CT 1076 in B6C



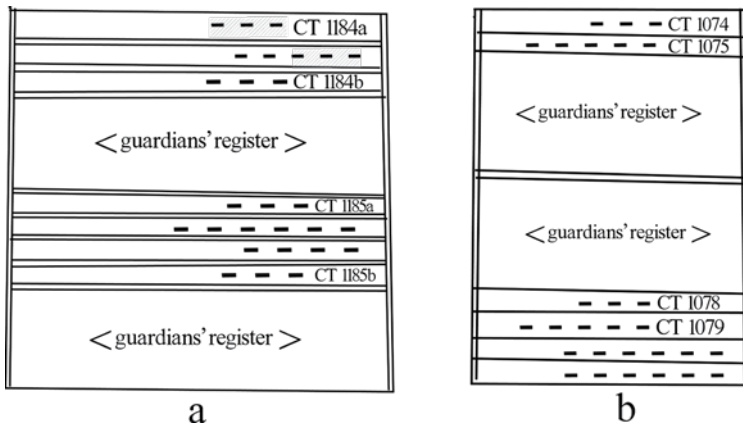
**Fig. 9.** The general disposition of the guardians' names of CT 1076 according to the sources in the form of a plan



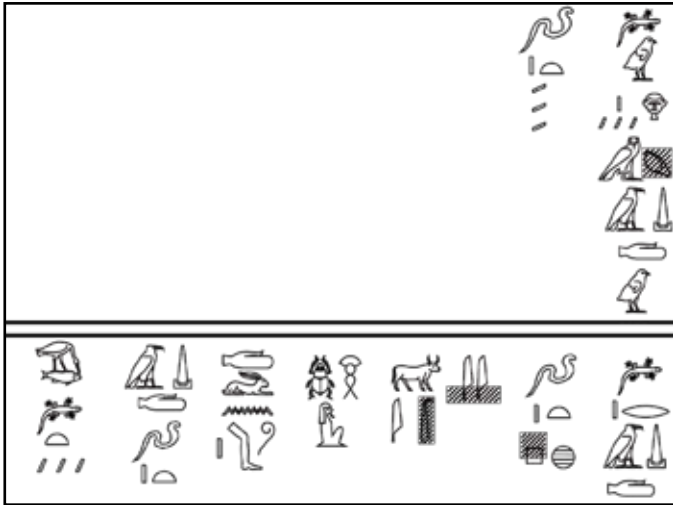
**Fig. 10.** The five guardians (1–5) of the upper register in B5C  
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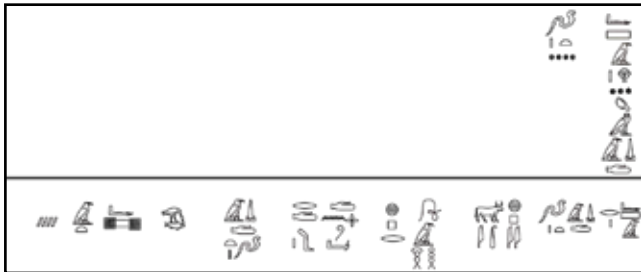
**Fig. 11.** The five guardians (6–10) of the lower register in B5C  
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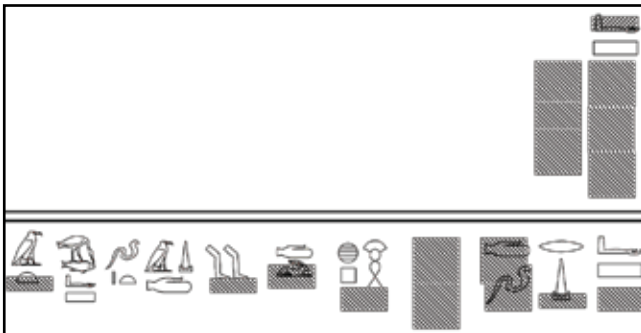
**Fig. 12.** The layout of B1Be (a) and B17C (b) with empty registers that usually contain the names and/or images of the “Kneeling/Squatting ones”



**Fig. 13.** The arrangement of the guardians' names of CT 1077 in B1L



**Fig. 14.** The arrangement of the guardians' names of CT 1077 in B2L



**Fig. 15.** The arrangement of the guardians' names of CT 1077 in B2P

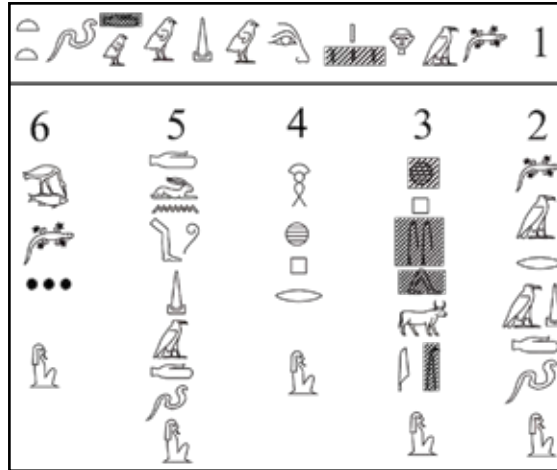


Fig. 16. The arrangement of the guardians' names of CT 1077 in B9C

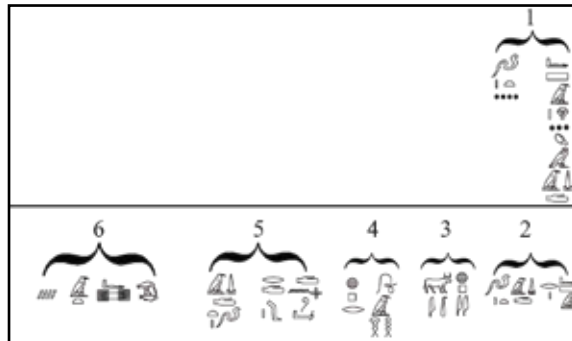


Fig. 17. The general arrangement of the guardians' names as attested in B1L, B2L, and B2P (exemplified here by B2L)

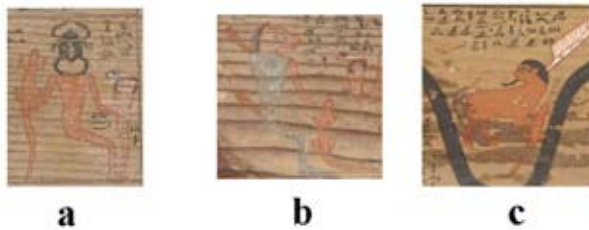


Fig. 18. The different ways of holding the geckos/lizards as depicted in B1C  
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*В. Шербіні*

### **ЗАХИСТ ОСІРІСА. ФОРМАЛЬНІ МІРКУВАННЯ ЩОДО ВИСЛОВІВ 1076 ТА 1077 ТЕКСТІВ САРКОФАГІВ**

Одним із головних епізодів міфу про Осіріса є сумнозвісний напад на нього його брата Сета. Їхній батько, бог Геб, вжив усіх заходів, щоб захистити тіло свого вбитого сина від майбутнього нападу Сета. У добре захищеній будівлі зберігалося мертве тіло, куди Геб призначив потужну охорону, щоб охороняти тіло Осіріса. На щастя, кілька саркофагів

Середнього царства (2055–1650 рр. до н. е.) зберегли для нас вражаюче цікаві записи про цих апотропеїчних істот як у словах, так і в зображеннях. Стандартна публікація “Текстів саркофагів” зби́рала імена цих охоронців у двох заклинаннях під номерами 1076 і 1077. Проте відсутність достатньої документації та переважна текстова упередженість у попередніх дослідженнях викликали велику плутанину щодо цих охоронців відносно їхньої кількості та візуального відтворення. Пропонована робота розглядає ці питання та аналізує розташування імен і зображень охоронців у першоджерелах. Це дослідження також дозволило виявити деякі досі незадокументовані першоджерела.

**Ключові слова:** Тексти саркофагів, Осіріс, демони, іконографія, Книга Двох шляхів, Середнє царство, саркофаги, змії, храмовий культ, імена, положення тіла, зв’язок між словами та зображеннями

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