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Book of the Dead [39]

From Shouting to Structure

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## Preface

The past decade has seen an increase in interest in the *Book of the Dead*, chiefly through the efforts of the Egyptologists at the University of Bonn, but also due to other initiatives.<sup>1</sup> However, in-depth studies on individual *Book of the Dead* chapters have been much less in vogue, although they were not uncommon in the first half of the 20th century. Any progress to be made in this respect highly depends on the availability of a representative number of published versions; this is the reason for the surge in *Coffin Texts* studies of the latter decennia.<sup>2</sup> Thanks to the recent steady stream of invaluable Bonn editions of individual *Book of the Dead* manuscripts, solid textual ground is becoming increasingly often available. This monograph is an attempt to deal with a chapter whose contents is particularly dense on account of its highly oral, discursive character.<sup>3</sup>

I owe many thanks to Dr Irmtraut Munro for making several unpublished copies of *Book of the Dead* mss. available to me. Equally, this research would not have been possible without the library and facilities of the Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten (NINO) of the University of Leiden.

Leiden, October, 2006

<sup>1</sup> E.g., excellent bibliographies like S. Gülden & I. Munro, *Bibliographie zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch* (Wiesbaden, 1998 = Studien zum Altägyptischen Totenbuch, 1), I. Munro, *Spruchvorkommen auf Totenbuch-Textzeugen der Dritten Zwischenzeit* (Wiesbaden, 2001 = SAT, 5). See also e.g., S.G.J. Quirke, *Owners of Funerary Papyri in the British Museum* (London, 1993 = Occasional Paper, 92).

<sup>2</sup> In the past occasionally mixed feelings have been expressed by scholars about this subject; cf. the critical remarks by G. Haeny, *GM* 9 (1974), 60.

<sup>3</sup> This research was not undertaken as a typical *Book of the Dead* study, but as part of preliminary work on a monograph on Apopis. It does not meet the criteria of a true text-edition.

## 1. Introduction

*Book of the Dead* [39] is a spell whose title announces that it is directed against a being called Rerek, who is known as a dangerous serpent in the Netherworld, chiefly from Middle Kingdom funerary spells. Unexpectedly, after a few words the text proves to be an invocation against Apopis, who is a much more fundamental and better known cosmic adversary. This being, usually represented as a gigantic python,<sup>4</sup> is the arch-enemy of the sun god and the opponent of the creation, in Egypt mostly attested under the name 'Apep' (*ꜥꜣpp*). 'Apopis' is the Greek transcription and the usual denomination, and this will also be used in this monograph, except in the case of literal translations of passages. Apopis is known from the early Middle Kingdom onwards, and through time a good 130 other names can be found for him. He is comparable to the Babylonian Tiamat, the Biblical Leviathan, the Indian Vṛtra, and similar primeval serpents in other mythologies. Why Rerek in the title masquerades as Apopis in the body of the text is certainly a matter to be addressed.

The spell itself consists of a series of injunctions against Apopis by N (= ego, the deceased owner who had the text written on his *Book of the Dead* scroll) and a variety of gods, including a brief timid reply by the monster itself. In fact, there is much shouting but little structured narration in this spell. There is also mention of a few cosmic locations, and the ultimate purpose is the act of binding and molesting the serpent-monster in order to let the sun boat pass on without hindrance. Even with this limited repertoire, the text of *BD* [39] contains a considerable number of facts about Apopis and takes a mid-stand between traditions of the Middle and New Kingdoms. In fact, regardless of its textual form, it is one of the few pre-Ptolemaic monographs on Apopis.<sup>5</sup> To subject the spell to systematic investigation, certain research questions are in order:

- to what extent can gods, actions and locations mentioned in the text be made to serve as antecedents for reconstructing the events? - This point is taken up in Section 4.1-2.
- what is the relationship between Rerek and Apopis? - This is dealt with in Section 5.1.
- how is the order of events in *BD* [39] to be reconstructed? - This is dealt with in Section 10, with details prepared in Sections 7 through 9.
- what is the message of the text? - This is taken up in Section 10.4.

As to the textual transmission, *BD* [39] has no predecessors in the *Coffin Texts* corpus. It mainly

<sup>4</sup> With a length of 120 cubits according to *Esna* III [206] 11; this traditional number is also the length of the serpent's mountain in the early source *CT* II, 376.b. 'Long of tail' Apopis is called in *pap. Bremner-Rhind*, 29.23.

<sup>5</sup> The others are *CT* II [160] (= *BD* [108] and [149], part 4); *CT* V [414]; *BD* [7].

survives in papyri from the 18th dynasty through the Ptolemaic period but occurs on a Late Period tomb wall in Saqqara as well;<sup>6</sup> as usual, the early (i.e. Dynasty 18) sources are textually the most reliable. Published versions of *BD* [39] are available in the three classical standard editions of this corpus, by R. Lepsius (1839<sup>7</sup> – one Ptolemaic text), Éd. Naville (1886<sup>8</sup> – 4 versions: two 18th Dynasty [his Ca, Lb], two Ramesside [his Pb, Ba]), and E.A.W. Budge (1891<sup>9</sup> – same as Naville's Ca). Since then many new versions have been brought to light, although not all are available in publication.<sup>10</sup> On the basis of some of these, translations have appeared by P. Barguet (1967), T. Allen (1974), R. Faulkner (1985) and E. Hornung (1993), 107–110;<sup>11</sup> the latest translation of the chapter, based on a Saite version, is by U. Verhoeven (1993).<sup>12</sup> Hornung also provided a brief and acute commentary and earlier, more extensive, treatments have appeared by Ét. Drioton (1942 = 1957), and, in his wake, by R.T. Rundle Clark (1978).<sup>13</sup> These last two are concerned with the outward form and function rather than with the contents of this chapter. *BD* [39] certainly deserves a fresh approach, which is what the following purports to be.

The texts of the six main versions selected here from various periods are much less than what is actually available, even though a considerable amount is still unpublished (chiefly from the post-Ramesside period). However, for the present purpose, which is to analyze its contents, a selection must suffice, with major attention being given to early (18th Dynasty) mss. As matters stand, the six leading versions selected below give a fairly representative picture of the vicissitudes of the text through time. In the footnotes other mss. are quoted in the case of significant variations; minor details are omitted. Late variants are generally disregarded.<sup>14</sup>

For the sake of easy reference the spell has been broken down into 81 paragraphs, consisting of clauses (mostly single, sometimes pairs) and phrases (a few). No attempt has been made at metrical analysis. These 81 paragraphs have been divided over 14 sectors of unequal length which contain cohesive chunks of information, emitted by the speakers. The hieroglyphic transcription is in columns, which sometimes means the re-arrangement of signs in a ms. originally written in horizontal lines.

For the sake of clarity, the mss. have received a double code: Xxx/Yyy. The abbreviation before the slash is the present location of the ms. After the slash the abbreviated name follows of the erst-while original owner.

The relevant basic mss. used for the present edition are:

6 Of Bakenrenef, in Saqqara; see R. Lepsius, *Denkmaeler*, vol. VIII, Dritte Abteilung, Blatt 266.d–f.  
7 R. Lepsius, *Todtenbuch*, pl. XVIII.  
8 E. Naville, *Todtenbuch*, II, 107–110.  
9 E.A.W. Budge, *Book of the Dead*, 104–108.  
10 Cf. Gülden & I. Munro, *Bibliographie Totenbuch*, 99–100. They also refer to a version mentioned by A. Piankoff, *Chapelles Tout-ankh-Amon*, fasc. 1, unnumbered final page ('conclusion'), but this is probably Piankoff's misprint for 29. In addition, S.G.J. Quirke, *Owners*, 88.  
11 P. Barguet, *Livre des morts*, 81–82; T.G. Allen, *Book of the Dead*, 46–47; R. Faulkner, *Book of the Dead*, 60–61; E. Hornung, *Totenbuch*, 107–110.  
12 U. Verhoeven, *Totenbuch Iahthesnacht* I, 132–135.  
13 Ét. Drioton, "B. La dérouté d'Apophis," *Théâtre* (1942), 68–77 = *Pages d'Égyptologie* (1957), 285–294; R.T. Rundle Clark, *Myth and Symbol*, 209–212.  
14 Such as the two extracts from *papyrus Milbank*, translated by T.G. Allen, *Book of the Dead Chicago*, 122.

Dynasty 18:	Third Intermediate Period:
1 Cai./Iahm. = <i>linen shroud Cairo</i> JdE 96810 (owner: Iahmose Henut-Tjemhu): Munro (1994). <sup>15</sup>	4 Cai./Gatsh. = <i>pap. Cairo</i> JdÉ 95838 (owner: Gatsheshni): Naville (1914). <sup>16</sup>
2 Par./Mes. = <i>pap. Louvre</i> E.21324 (owner: Mesemnetjer): Naville (1886 – his Ca). <sup>17</sup>	Saite period:
	5 Col./Iah. = <i>pap. Köln</i> 10207 (owner: Iahthesnakht): Verhoeven (1993). <sup>18</sup>
Ramesside period:	Persian-Ptolemaic period:
3 Krak./Ptahm. = <i>pap. Kraków</i> MNK IX-752/1–4 (owner: Ptahmose): Luft (1977). <sup>19</sup>	6 Chic./Nesush. = <i>pap. Chicago</i> OI 9787 (owner: Nesushutefnut): Allen (1960) <sup>20</sup> (his R).
Other relevant manuscripts, quoted only in the footnotes, are:	
Dynasty 18:	Ramesside period:
Par./Neferub. = <i>pap. Louvre</i> III 93 or 3092 (owner: Neferubenef): Naville (1886) (his Pb). <sup>21</sup>	Berl./Nakhta. = <i>pap. Berlin</i> 3002 (owner: Nakhtamun): Naville (1886) (his Ba); Munro (1997). <sup>22</sup>
Cai./Ipu = <i>linen shroud Cairo</i> JdE 96806 (owner: Ipu): Munro (1994). <sup>23</sup>	
Cai./Mont. = <i>linen shroud Cairo</i> JdE 96806 (owner: Montuhotep): Munro (1994). <sup>23</sup>	
Cai./Tetish. = <i>linen shroud Cairo</i> JdE 96805 (owner: Tetisheri): Munro (1994). <sup>23</sup>	
<?>/Senim. = <i>linen shroud</i> , loc. unknown (owner: Senimen): Dorman (1991). <sup>24</sup>	
Lond./Iahm. = <i>pap. British Museum</i> EA 73669 (owner: Iahmose). Unpublished. <sup>25</sup>	
Cai./Hatn. = <i>pap. Cairo</i> , temp. n. 25/1/55/6, verso (owner: Hatnofret). Unpublished. <sup>26</sup>	
Berl./Mahu = <i>linen shroud</i> , Berlin P 10476 (owner: Mahu). Unpublished. <sup>26</sup>	

15 I. Munro, *Totenbuch-Handschriften Cairo*. Transcription on pl. 4 of the Tafelband, photograph on pl. 2 of the Textband, notes on pp. 5–6 of the same volume. – Linen shroud with vertical text, columns running from right to left. Text of *BD* [39] begins at col. 58.  
16 Naville, *Katseshni*, pl. XXX. – Papyrus, horizontal text; *BD* [39] takes page/column 29, lines 8–33.  
17 Naville, *Todtenbuch*, I, LIII. – Papyrus with text in columns, running from left to right.  
18 U. Verhoeven, *Totenbuch Iahthesnacht*. Transcription on pp. 29\*–30\* of vol. II, photograph on Beilage 8 of vol. III, annotated translation on p. 132–135 of vol. I. – Papyrus, horizontal text; *BD* [39] starts at col. 22, line 9.  
19 U. Luft, *ZÄS* 104, on pl. 2. Additional remarks on the ms. by M.H. van Es, *ZÄS* 109, who also mentions a supplementary part of the ms. in Paris. – Papyrus with vertical text, columns running from left to right. For the sake of simplicity the two fragments of the papyrus are here called 1 and 2, conforming to Tafel I and Tafel II in the publication. *BD* [39] occupies cols. 4 foll. of the 2nd fragment.  
20 T.G. Allen, *Book of the Dead Chicago*, pl. XX. – Text running from right to left; *BD* [39] takes the full 43 horizontal lines of column 28.  
21 Fully published by S. Ratié, *papyrus Neferoubenef*, 38; pl. XII, top.  
22 Naville, *Todtenbuch*, II, 107–108. Full edition in I. Munro, *Totenbuch Nacht-Amun*, Tafel 18; p. 14.  
23 I. Munro, *Totenbuch-Handschriften Cairo*, Tafel 13 (and p. 17 – Ipu), 20 (and p. 24 – Montuhotep), 31 (and p. 39 – Tetisheri).  
24 P. Dorman, *Tombs Senenmut*, pl. 36.b and 37.b; p. 78 (fragments B and C).  
25 From photographs in the Ägyptologisches Seminar of the University of Bonn, kindly provided by Dr I. Munro. Mentioned in S. Quirke, *Owners*, 86, no. 4 (not quoting *BD* [39]; identification due to I. Munro).  
26 From photographs, courtesy of the Ägyptologisches Seminar Bonn.