

THE KNOT IN EXAMPLES OF RELIGIOUS TEXTS

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ABSTRACT

The knot was one of the most important symbols in ancient Egyptian texts, including the Pyramid texts, coffin texts or the Book of the Dead. This paper looks closely at the knot in Ancient Egyptian texts. It signified a symbol of life, flourish and sovereignty in the pyramid and coffin texts as well as The Book of the Dead. It also represents a symbol for the beginnings of life in the doctrines of creation in Ancient Egyptian believe. It appears in solar myths symbolizing the light of the sun and its daily cycle. For these reasons, the knot was used in amulets as a symbol of protection and conservation of the body.

الملخص

تقدم العقدة رمز ذو أهمية كبيرة في النصوص المصرية القديمة ، حيث ظهرت في نصوص الأهرام وامتون التوابيت كذلك في كتاب الموتى كرمز للحياة والقوة والازدهار والسلطة. هذا بالإضافة الى أنها تتعلق بالأساطير حيث ظهرت كرمز لبداية الحياة في نظريات الخلق، كما ظهرت في الأساطير الشمسية لترمز لقوى الشمس والدوره اليومية لها . بالإضافة الى ذلك استخدمت العقدة في التمانم كرمز للحماية وحفظ الجسد.

KEYWORDS

Knot, magical power, pyramid texts, coffin texts, Book of the Dead, amulets.

الكلمات الدالة

العقدة، نصوص الأهرام، نصوص التوابيت، كتاب الموتى، التمانم.

INTRODUCTION

The researcher dealt with the Knot topic in the religious texts of Ancient Egypt. Many text spells refer to the role of the Knot in the revival and resurrection, as well as granting power in the other world. The researcher will mention these spells are presented chronologically as much as possible. Ancient Egyptians believed that illnesses were caused by an opposing power and that magic was necessary to treat them¹. That is why the Ancient Egyptian language stated the knot. This paper examines the knot in religious texts as previous studies

¹Andrews, C., *Amulets of Ancient Egypt*, British Museum, 1994, 44; Ogdon, J.R., *Knots and Ties, Note on Ancient Ligatures*, DE 7, 1987, 29-36 ; Pinch, E., *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, London, 2006, 108.

focused on the artistic forms of the knot, its attestations and its religious symbolism without including religious texts.

- Wendrich, W., Entangled Connected or Protected?, The Power of Knots and Knotting in Ancient Egypt in Szpakowska, K (ed.), *Through a Glass Darkly: Magic, Dreams and Prophecy in Ancient Egypt*, Swansea, 2006, 23-270.
- Ogdon, J.R., Studies in Ancient Egyptian Magical Through III: Knot and Ties Notes on Ancient Ligatures, in: *DE* 7, 1987, 29-36.

The Knot is closely related to ancient magic, the untying and the tying. It was also a tool in quick magical powers. Girdle knots tied around the waist were a standardized fashion item, as depicted.¹ Seven knots were often applied to the neck of the child to help carry them and make wearing them easy.² The blood of Isis was a replica of the knot found in a belt and which was then considered a charm for preservation and protection.³ In addition to that, the spell “s3” is a symbol of protection and a hieroglyphic sign that represents a folded twined mat.⁴ It is made of the papyrus plant.⁵ The sign “s3” represented a many-looped rope knot and it was employed in such words as “s3w” “magical” s3w.⁶ The tit knot related to the goddess Isis; it was tied in a band made of fabric and seemed to have functions that were also protective. It is regularly depicted as a red object and mostly red stone, such as jasper.⁷ The Knot also tied into myths and religious doctrines of the ancient Egyptians. It occurs thus in religious texts as a symbol of creation and beginning of the universe. The Chapter 50 of the Book of the Dead mentions:⁸



iw ts tst h3 tp.i in swty psdt m wsr.(f) tpy n hpr(t) hnnw
 “The knot is tied behind me by Seth while the Ennead was still strong before the uproar started.”⁹

One of the paragraphs in the legend of Horus Letopolis and the spotted serpents mentions that knotting the heads of the serpents was considered to be responsible for the sickness, as referred to in paragraph 360 of Ebers’s papyrus.¹⁰ It was also mentioned in spell 14 of Leiden’s papyrus,¹¹ in association to the treatment of headaches.

¹Szpakowska, K., *Through A Glass Darkly , Magic ,Dreams and Prophecy in Ancient Egypt*, Swansea, The Classica Press of Wales, 2006, 250-251, 254 .

²Turner, J.C., & Van de Griend , P., *History and Science of Knots*, World Scientific Publishing, London, 1996, 66; Staehelin, E., ‘Knoten’, in: *LÄ* III , Cols . 459-46. .

³Ogdon , J.R., *Knots and Ties*, *Note on Ancient Ligatures*, DE 7, 32 ; Pinch , E., *Magic in Ancient Egypt*, 108 ; Staehelin, E., ‘Bindung und Entbindung Erwägungen zu Papyrus Wescar 10.2’, in: *ZÄS* 96 (2), 1970, 125-139 .

⁴Szpakowska, K., *Magic, Dreams and Prophecy*, 255 .

⁵Lurker, M., *Mo ‘jam alm ‘bwdat walrmwz fī Misr al-Qadīma*, p. 149.

⁶Ogdon , J.R., *Knots and Ties* , *Note on Ancient Ligatures*, DE 7, 32

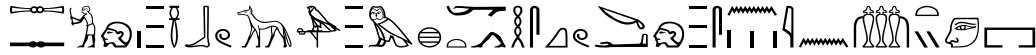
⁷Szpakowska, K., *Through A Glass Darkly, Magic, Dreams and Prophecy in Ancient Egypt*, 250.

⁸*BD*, L, B 158 (2-3).

⁹Szpakowska, K., *Through A Glass Darkly, Magic, Dreams and Prophecy in Ancient Egypt*, 256.

¹⁰Wreszinski. W., *Der Ebers Papyrus*, Leipzig, 1913, 102.

¹¹Borghouts, F., *The Magical Texts of Papyrus Leiden, pap. I 348*, OMRO, leiden, 1971, 18 – rt, 8,7-9.



ts tpw s3bw m-ht hsk tpw.sn in hnty-imntyw
 “Knotting spotted serpent heads after cutting their heads in front of the Westerners”.¹

Pyramid Texts:

The Knot bore significant symbolism in pyramid texts, especially giving life back to the deceased. It assisted the dead in its ascension to heaven, as well as being a protection against dangers. In passages 2097a-b of spell 690 of the Pyramid Texts, the deceased’s bones were knotted like the bones of Osiris, in order to be resurrected once more:²



ii N pn h3t m ntr ts ksw.f m wsir is m-ht 3ht.f
 “This King (N) came provided as the god. So, his bones are knit together as Osiris following his serpent.”³

There are other passages (399c, 401a) of the Pyramid Texts, spell 273, in which a part mentions the power of the deceased and his ability to knot ropes. It refers clearly to the magical power of knotting the ropes of magic.⁴



(W) pw nb htpt ts k3w in hm^c wpwt imy kh3w
 “It is He the King N the owner (possessor) of offerings. He who knots ropes, It is the Grasper of Topknots who is in Khaw”⁵.

In addition, passages 472a-b of spell 305 introduces the knotting of the ladder and especially its steps by the gods Re and Horus consecutively for the deceased to ascend the steps of the ladder to the other world in peace.⁶



dd mdw ts m3kt in R^c hft Wsir ts m3kt in hr hft it Wsir
 “Recitation: A ladder is knotted together by Re before Osiris. The ladder is knotted together by Horus before my father, Osiris.”⁷

¹ Azzām., *al-ta'āwīz al-sehrīa qed al-amraḍ fi 'aṣr al-dawlah al-ḥadītha*, p. 63.

“It is believed that there is a mistake from the writer of papyrus where he wrote the word “s3Aw” jackal instead of the words to mean spotted serpents, as no myth appeared that links Horus Letopolis with the jackal whereas there is a myth that tells the story of Horus letopolis destroying the spotted serpents”. See also: Wb, III, 420 (7).

² PT, 690 (pyr 2097 a-b).

³ Faulkner, R.O., *AEPT*, 298 (Pyr 2097a -b).

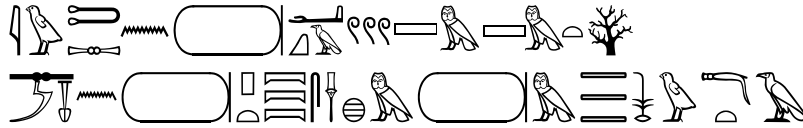
⁴ PT, 273 (pyr 399 c , 401, a).

⁵ Faulkner put a term for it in his dictionary the translation Head-dress to mean head cover in addition to putting a translation in top-knots in his book about pyramid texts to mean head apex to mean the knot itself. For more review: Faulkner, *CDME*, 59 *FEPT*, 81.

⁶ PT, 305 (Pyr 472, a-b).

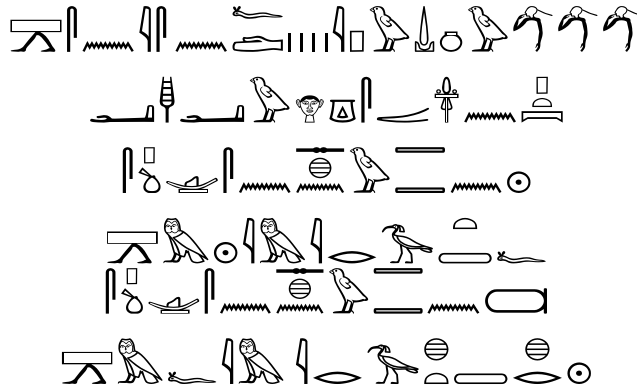
⁷ Faulkner, R.O., *AEPT*, 298 (Pyr 472a – b).

Similarly Pieces like ropes or threads from *šmšmt* plant were knotted to grant the king power and sovereignty in the hereafter:¹



*iw ts n (W) ʿK3w šmšmt sm3 n (W) p.w.t šhm (W) m t3w
rsyt mhyt*
“King W tightened ropes of *šmšmt* plant; King W united the
heavens, so that King W owns the power over southern and
northern lands.”²

The deceased also knotted reed to make a boat that he used to cross through the Netherworld. There, the deceased are blessed with an eternal life, Passage 1209a-f of Spell 519 states:³



*šm.sn is n fdw ipw d3nw ʿhʿiw hr gs i3bt n pt sp.sn
šhnwy n Rʿ šm Rʿ im ir 3ht.f sp.sn šhnwy n (m) šm f
im ir 3ht hr Rʿ*

“They go to these four youth who stand on the eastern side of heaven. They are knotting (tying) the ends of reeds for Re’s boat in which he goes to the horizon (or by Re’s boat to the horizon). They tie the ends of the reed boat for this King, and that this King shall go with it to the Horizon before Re.”⁴

The Spell 519 of the Pyramid texts pointed at knotting the tie of *mdh* in swamps of “Akhbet” for the trip that the deceased shall go on for entertainment and relaxation.⁵



¹PT, 319 (pyr 514 a-b).

²Faulkner, R.O., *AEPT*, p.101 (Pyr 514a –b).

³PT, 519 (Pyr, 1206, a-f).

⁴Faulkner, R.O., *AEPT*, 192 (Pyr 1206a –f).

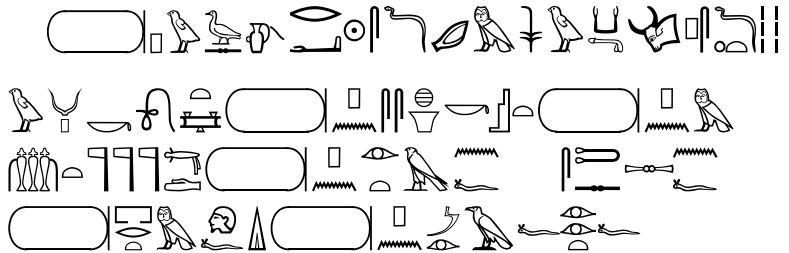
⁵PT, 519 (Pyr, 1213 c, 1214 a-c).



*m*swt *n*wt *n*w *s3h3h* *i*w *N.w.t* *m*rwt *sht-htp* *n* *3st-wrt*
tst mdh.¹ (*s*) *m*

3hbit in.n.s d3i.s idt.s² tp-^cwy s3.s hrd nhn
“They are those who Nut bore. May they flourish The Nt
crowns of the canals of the field of offerings and for the Isis
the Great One, who ties fillets of mdh in the swamps of
Akhbet”³. She brought leopard hide and burned incense
before her newborn baby (Horus).”

In addition, that King knotted the magic coming out of his head. He used it for protection for himself and to facilitate all ways to him. He did this to stand out among the thrones of gods, get the eyes of Horus and get the ability of vision back and grant eyesight:⁴



(*P*) *p*w *s3 hnmw* ... (*i*) *r^c sdm sw* (*i*) *k3 psdwt wp.k w3t*
(*P*) *pn sshwt.k⁽⁵⁾(sic)* (*n*) *3swt* (*P*) *pn m hnty ntrw šdi* (*P*)
pn irt hr n.f sts n.f (*P*) *prt m tp.f di P pn m33.f*
irty.f(y)

“It is King P son of Khnum... O Re, listen to him. O Bull of Ennead, open the pathways to this King P, enlarge the place of the King (P) before the Gods. This King who stands out before the Gods may he take the eye of Horus after he has knotted what comes out of his head and give him eyes to see”⁶.

¹The tie of “*Mdh*” the tie of ta band to ornament the head which owners of graves and their children and spouses wore. They wear a band that ends at the back of the head with a knot where two flowers come out of papyrus and two long ribbons hang down from it. It is believed that they are made of gold. look up: Staehelin, E, ‘Untersuchungen Zür Ägyptische Tracht im Alten Reich’, in: *MÄS*, 8, 1966, s.146 ; Abdel Aziz, *taqsat al sšš w3d mondh aqdm al’ošwr waḫata nihayet al-dawlah al-ḫadītha*, 93.

²Gardiner, A.H., *EG*. Sign List, D46.

³Faulkner, R.O., *AEPT*, 193 (Pyr 1213a – c); Abdel Aziz, *taqsat al sšš w3d mondh aqdm al’ošwr waḫata nihayet al-dawlah al-ḫadītha*, 6.

⁴*PT* 524 (Pyr 1238, 1240a).

⁵he student believes that the word meant is “*sḫw*” which literally means horizontally, so the King prevails over the thrones of Gods “bil tool wi bil ard-بالطول وبالعرض” meaning horizontally and vertically, in other words become eternal as a king in the other world. View: Faulkner, *CDME*, 240.

⁶Faulkner, R.O., *AEPT*, 196-197 (Pyr 1238c–1240 a).

Coffin Texts

In the Coffin texts, the knot awarded protection against hindrances and termination of evil. It was also a symbol of power and sovereignty, as well as eternity and creation. It was related to funereal rites and granting abilities to help the deceased reach the hereafter. It is also connected to the Osirian myth.

Many paragraphs of the Coffin Texts indicate the role of the Knot in protecting the deceased from evil and the hindrances that he might face in the other world. Spell 50 of the coffin texts reads:¹



*smn b3.k m ddt ts hk3.(k)//// s3.(k)////rdi s3.k m-hnw
ht-ntr*

“Your soul is established in Djedu, and you have knotted together your magic and protection about you, your protection in the Sacred Booth.”²

Horus knotted bonds around Seth to exterminate evils and hindrances he faces in the other world – in coffin texts. These bonds bear the concepts stated previously. Spell 67 states:³



wd^c s3r.w.k hr im(y) pr.f is shn mdwt.k stš hnbtj

“O, Horus, may your desires adjudge, you who are at his house and who knots bindings around Seth of Hnb.”⁴

In another spell, the knot appears to be related to power and sovereignty. The text refers to tying or knotting together the entourage for the deceased:⁵



Ink ʿb n.f hhw ink ts n.f šnwt

“I am he for whom myriads are assembled for him. I am he whom the entourage is knit for him”⁶

The spells of the Coffin texts also indicate that the Two Lands were knotted for the father of the deceased King Osiris, Atum. The expression states here “*ts t3wy*”⁷, instead of “*sm3 t3wy*”, in a rare case to express the unity and possession of the Two Lands. The text reads:⁸

¹CT, 50, (CT I 225).

²Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, I, 47 (CT I 225).

³CT, 67 (CTI 288 – 289).

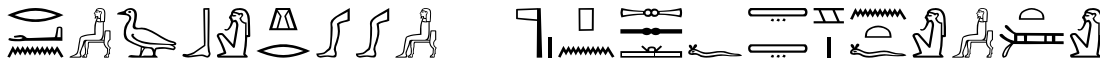
⁴Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, I, 63 (CT I 288-289).

⁵CT, 75 (CT I, 393).

⁶Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, I, 74 (CT I 393).

⁷About *ts-t3wy* and its various meanings view: Faulkner, *CDME*,307; *Wb*, V, 398 (20).

⁸CT, 76 (CT II 2).



rdi n.i Gb hr rdwy ntr pn ts.f t3wy n it.i tm

“I have set Geb under the feet of this god. He will knit up the two lands for my father, Atum.”¹

The knot is also related to eternity, as it starts the creation for the Ancient Egyptians. In passage 3 of spell 76,



n kd.i m ht n ts.i m swht

“I was not created in the body and I was not knotted in the egg.”

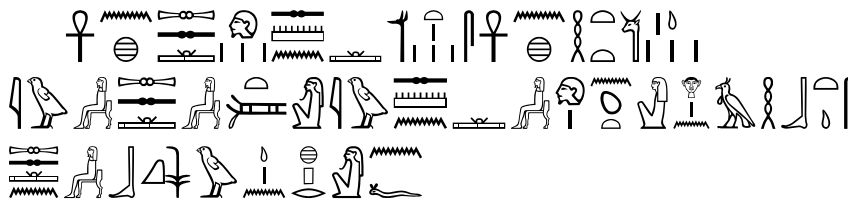
In addition, Paragraph 25 of Spell 79 indicates that Shu was in the eternal water “Nun” before knotting “Akr”, which means before earth was shaped and creation started.² The paragraph reads:



n m3t. n.f Gb hr rdwy.f šw m-hnw niw tst 3kr Gb

“That he hasn’t seen or viewed Geb under his feet. Shu³ was in the eternal water/ Abyss whereas Akr and Geb had not been knotted together yet.”

The spell 80 of Coffin Texts refers to knotting the body members together to conserve and revive them.⁴



nh ts(w) tpw smn(w) wsrwt s^cnh ht.wt iw ts.i tm

iw smn.i tp n 3st hr nhbt.s ts.n.i bksw n hpr.(i) n.f

“I am the Living One who knits the heads and stabilizes necks and nourishes throats. I knot Atum and make firm the head of Isis above her neck, and I knit together the spine of Khopei for him.”⁵

This is a reference to the events included in the myth of Osiris; the deceased that embodies the eternal god Osiris revives the throat and stabilizes the head of Isis on her neck. It also

¹Faulkner,R.O., *AECT*, I, 77 (CT II 2).

²*CT*, 79 (CT II 25).

³Faulkner,R.O., *AECT*, I, 82 (CT II 25).

⁴*CT*, 80 (CT II 37).

⁵Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, I, 84 (CT II 37).

involves the knotting of the vertebrae of the spine to return or erect the spine once more and revive the body.¹



*sn .wi it.i tm pr.f m 3ht ts.i tp.f s^cnh.i i^crt.f smn.i tp n
3st hr wsrt.s s3k ksw Wsir*

“My father Atum kisses me when he goes forth from the horizon. I knit his head. I revive his serpent and make firm the head of Isis on top of her neck and collected the bones of Osiris”²

The deceased also announces his knowledge of the names of the dead around him, that of the gate guards, as well as those of the protective gods giving care to the god, Osiris, he whose bones are knotted to return him to life once more. Thus, life is returned to the deceased, so that he can rule over the hereafter just like the god Osiris.³



*rh.n.i rn.tn n mwt.i n shm stš im tst ksw wsir r^c nb tst
ksw.i r^c nb*

“I recognized your names and shall not die nor shall Seth possess power on me if Osiris’s bones are knotted together every day. So, may my bones be also knotted together every day.”⁴

The knot was also associated to recovering the senses for the Ancient Egyptians. For example, in Passage 123 of spell 531 the text states:⁵



*(ind) hr.k nfr hr nb m33wty ts n inpw sk3 (n) pth skr
and the God Ptah Sokar grows (becomes exalted).⁶*

In another passage of a different spell the knot is connected to the rituals of the funeral:⁷



*tsw šn(y) n 3st n šn n nbt-ht dmd hh(w) bt(w) in.(f) n
hns itj n.f sm3-t3wy*

¹CT, 80 (CT II 41).

²Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, I, 84 (CT II 41).

³CT, 251 (CT III 349)

⁴Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, I, 194 (CT III 349) .

⁵CT, 531 (CT VI 123).

⁶Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, I, 154 (CT VI 123) .

⁷CT, 562 (CT VI 162).

“The hair of Isis was knotted with that of Nephtys to unite the millions that fled and that to whom (the people) who arrive are brought. He took to him (united to him) the two lands (owned the two lands).”¹

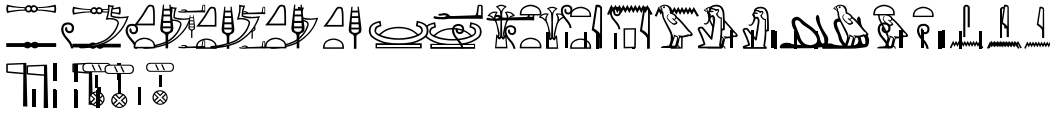
By tying the hair of Isis to that of Nephtys, millions of people are united in the other world so that the deceased attains their position, power and sovereignty over the other world in peace. Passage 126 of Spell 532 reads that the braids/ plaits of hair were knotted on the day of cutting the locks of hair. In this passage, there is a clear sign of rituals during funerals by grabbing the hair and knotting it together:²



ts n.i sti m iwnw hrw pw n hsk s3wti

“My braids³ were knotted on iwnw that (special) day by cutting locks of hair.”⁴

Boat ropes were loosened in preparation for the trip to the other world and for the deceased to embark in peace and safety.⁵



ts m3kt h^c m3kt wh^c(w) h3tt (in) inpw plwy⁶

wh^cw.s(y) sic in ntrw nhn

“I wish your knot (set) the ladder as the front of the boat (bow warp ropes/ tresses) have been loosened by Anubis; that their hind parts have been loosened by the gods of Nekhen.”⁷

The knot was tightened behind the deceased or around him to grant him control and security. It contributes to conserving the land and protecting it from dangers for Re to rise once more, then light radiates in the afterword and fills the place.⁸



*dd mdw iw (tst) h3 tp.i m pt s3 - t3 in R^c r^c nb smn.f tsw
r nny.i hr mnty.f(y) hrw pw y hsk s3mt iw ts tst h3 tp.i
in stš psdt m wsr.f tp n hprt hnnw*

¹Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, I, 169 (CT VI 162).

²*CT*, 532 (CT VI 126).

³The word *sti* is derived from *swty* meaning locks of hair according to Faulkner’s translation. See Faulkner, R.o.,*AECT.*, II,155. The word means braids or plaits.

⁴Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, I,155 (CT VI 126).

⁵*CT*, 550 (CT VI 148).

⁶look up :-BH2c)-*CT*, 550 (CT VI 148).

plwy wh^c in ntrw

⁷Faulkner,R.O., *AECT*, I, 163 (CT VI 148).

⁸*CT*, 640 (CT VI 261).

“I tightened the knot behind my head in heaven and guarded the land by Re; Re shines every day, and he tightens the knot for the weak (inert) at the feet on the day of cutting locks of hair and I have tied the knot behind my head by Seth by whose power the Ennead became the precedent before the uproar/ noise happened.”¹

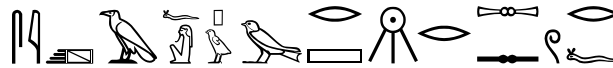
The funereal ornaments were knotted around the neck to decorate it in the other world.²



ts n.f h^c.f r h^h.f iw dšrt m nht.f

“He knots the funereal ornaments to his neck, and the red crown embodies his power.”³

The deceased regularly boasts about his recognition and knowledge of things and his hidden magical powers in the Divine Judgment. In the text, the deceased is referred to.⁴



si3.f pwN wrš r ts rf

“He knows that he the deceased N will spend the day knotting things to Himself.”⁵

The Knot played a part in conserving beauty, welfare and happiness for ancient Egyptians. The spell 753 highlights this in paragraph 382.⁶



ts.n.i ts n ht-hr n wpsš pt m nfrt

“I tightened the knot for Hathor to spread (fill the sky with) your beauty.”⁷

The Knot has a significant role in granting secret powers to the deceased to guide him in the other world to secrets pathways and hidden entrances:⁸



ḳ3 imyt.sny hr w3t š3t imyt wpt R^c imnt ts 4 ipw n mht-wrt hr.sn iw.i gr rh.kwi w3t ipw š3t

¹Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, II, p.218 (CT VI 216).

²*CT*, 660 (CT VI 281).

³Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, II, p.230 (CT VI 281).

⁴*CT*, 627 (CT VI 246).

⁵Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, II, p.210 (CT VI 246).

⁶*CT*, 753 (CT VI 382).

⁷Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, II, p.287 (CT VI 382).

⁸*CT*, 759 (CT VI 388).

“I will enter ... to occupy on the secret pathways that are on top of the vertex of the God Re. Hidden are these four knots of the Celestial Bull because of them and I know the secret entrances.”¹

Seth may have been released from his bonds to protect the "Sun bark". The deceased restores his powers and strength during the trip. The text states: ²



ts tswt wtt whs sfhwt stš m 'b3t m sfh stš m wd3t
 “Knots have been tightened for that who has no bark.
 Moreover, Seth has been released from His binding ropes and
 He has also been released from the eyes of Horus.”³

The spell 882 of the Coffin Texts likened the protection the deceased attained. It provided by knots to Horus against Seth with when he crossed or surpassed Him:⁴



ts.i w^c tp.i snh hr k3s stš d3.f sw

“My only knot is on (over) me. In addition, Horus knots the rope of Seth when he crosses (ferries across) it”.⁵

The deceased addresses the Great Serpent Bull God begging him to curl himself in his coils asking him to grant him protection:⁶



i k3 n^cw wr šnt m k3b(w).k inn.k k3b(w).k r.k

“O great snake bull, curl yourself with your coils (folds). You will bring your folds to you.”⁷

Other paragraphs of the spell describe the origins of creation and exiting of life from the egg of the Great screamer Amon-Re⁸.



ts ntr m hnw swht kd-hpr m hnw (sšy)⁹

¹Faulkner,R.O., *AECT* , II , 291 (CT VI 388).

²CT, 841 (CT VII 46).

³Faulkner,R.O., *AECT* , III , 29 (CT VII 46).

⁴CT, 882 (CT VII 93).

⁵Faulkner,R.O., *AECT* , III , 47 (CT VII 93).

⁶CT, 885(CT VII 98).

⁷Faulkner, R.O., *AECT* , III , 49 (CT VII 98).

⁸Allen, J.P., *Genseis in Egypt*, USA, 1988, 48.

⁹Faulkner suggested the word Ss to mean “nest”... also the researcher the word Ssy. Look up 78, AEPT and also Faulkner.R.O,*CDME*, 246

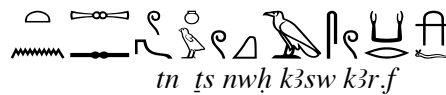
“The God has been knotted within the egg and has been created within the nest”.¹

The spell 995 points to the two knots of Ibis as a sign of myth of creation of crying Ibis. It also points to the role of the knot in protection, guarding and strengthening according to ancient Egyptian concepts.²



“They are the two knots of Ibis. O Re-Atum I have seen (viewed) both of your children, may he talk and guide them to the middle of the East”.³

The deceased tightened his ropes together to erect his lodging in the afterlife.⁴



“It is he the deceased who knots the ropes and bonds of his shrine.”⁵

The Book of the Dead

Some signals to the knot appeared in the Book of the Dead to affirm the meaning in both Pyramid and Coffin texts. It symbolizes the ascension to heaven and ensures safety, security and protection. Some of the most famous attestations appear in Chapter 50 of the Book of the Dead:⁶



r3 n tm ʕk r nmt-ntr dd mdw in N dd.f iw ts tst diw (sp5) h3 tp.i in s3 pt n mn.n.f
ts tst r nny hr mnty.f(y)

"A spell for not entering the sacrificial hall of the god, a recital by the Honoured Scribe of Ptah's temple Nb Sni Honoured Master. The knot was tied (recited) five times behind me by the Heaven Guard and he has tightened the knot on his thighs."⁷

Furthermore, the Book of the Dead bore a signal for the myths of creatures where the knot was tightened before the noise happening, in other words before the start of creation. There was also a reason to grant honesty, flourishing, life and power according to the ancient

¹Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, III,78 (CT VIII 147).

²CT, 995 (CT VII 210).

³Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, II, 103 (CT VI 210).

⁴CT, 1099 (CT VII 388).

⁵Faulkner, R.O., *AECT*, III, 154 (CT VII 388).

⁶BD, L, A, 157 (3-4)

⁷Faulkner, R.O., *BD*, 65.

Egyptian opinion and it signalled creation through sound and the myth of the Great Crier/Screamer. Chapter 50 of the Book of the Dead states the following:¹



*iw ts tst h3 tp.i in swty psdt m wsr.s (sic) tpy n hprrt hnnw swd3t.tn ink iti t3wy
ts tst {h3 tp.i} in nwt*

“I tightened the knot behind me by Seth by whose power (due to his strength) the Ennead has become the precedent. When he made you healthy... I have possessed the two lands while knotting the knot behind me by Nut.”²

In this chapter, Seth and Nut become responsible for granting health, life, flourishing and sovereignty on the two lands by helping the deceased tying knots (behind or towards him). In an indication to solar myths, the knot express the ropes being tied at the front and back of the solar boat and that points to the start of the trip in Chapter 100 where the Spell reads:³



wsr .n.i 3hw n (3st) ts.n.i k3w hsf.n.i 3pp

“I supported the strength of Isis and tightened the ropes and kept Aapp away”⁴

The Chapter 156 presents the tit knot. It is an amulet which was made of red jasper and has the role of granting powers, security, protection, and health to the deceased. The chapter reads:⁵



*r3 n tit nt hmnt ddt n 3h dd mdw in ntry m3^c-hrw snfwt nt 3st 3hw nt 3st hk3w nt
3st wd3 (im) s3 n wrw*

“It is a spell for the Tit Knot of Red Jasper. It is for your Akh (soul); recited by the Justified (true voiced). It's the blood, power and charm of Isis. It is the health and protection for the Great ones.”

Discussion;

The knot was related to magic and knotting as well as legends, religious doctrines and creation stories, where they were bound by Seth before the occurrence of noise and chaos.⁶

¹BD, ch.L, B, 158, (2-4).

²Faulkner, R.O., BD, 65.

³BD, ch.c, 76, (6-7).

⁴Faulkner, R.O., BD, 98.











⁵BD, ch. CL VI, 16, (B, I-2); Faulkner, R.O., BD, 155.

⁶BD, I, B, 158 (2-3).

These are what bind to creation. The bones of the deceased were also knotted, similarly to those of Osiris to come back to life,¹ referring to the relation between the knot and the start of creation. The strength of the deceased was signalled to by his ability to knot ropes². The ladder was also knotted for the deceased to use to ascend to heaven³. The threads of “šmšmt” plants were knotted to grant the king power and sovereignty.⁴ The deceased knotted reed stems that would carry him to horizon where he was granted eternal life, where the sun rises and lightens up life.⁵ The king also knotted the magic that came out of his head to use it in protection and facilitate ways and routes and to retrieve the ability of vision.⁶ Passages of Pyramid texts mentioned tying the “mdh” in akhbit swamps for the trip made entertainment for the deceased.⁷ Horus tied the bonds to exterminate evils and obstacles that he faces in the hereafter⁸.

The Coffins Texts mention that two lands were bonded together for the father of the deceased. The expression “*ts t3wy*”⁹ was used. The knot was also related to eternity and resurrection.¹⁰ The knot also had a role in conserving beauty, happiness¹¹ and protection against dangers¹² and evils as well as life and power¹³ if used in amulets.¹⁴

After reviewing the texts, the author has identified the different meanings of the knot and its determinatives in the following table:

Text	Determinatives	Meaning	Transliteration	Word
Pyr 2097 Pyr472a Pyr1214a CT VII147 Pyr 1206c		are knit, tied knots	<i>ts</i>	
CT VI 148 Ch. 100 Ch. 50		Knotted Tied/ tightened	<i>ts</i>	
CT V 162		Knot	<i>ts</i>	
Pyr 514a		Tightened	<i>ts</i>	
CT II 2 CT I 225 CT II 3 CT II 37 CT II 41 CT VII 46		Knotted	<i>ts</i>	

¹PT 690 (Pyr 2097a-b).

²PT 273 (Pyr 399,C-401,a).

³PT 305 (Pyr 472,a-b)

⁴PT 319 (Pyr 514,a-b)

⁵PT 519 (Pyr 1206 a-f)

⁶PT 524 (Pyr 1238 a-1240a)

⁷Stahelin, E., Bindung und Entbindung, Erwägungen zu *Papyrus Westcar* 10, 2, 1970, 127.

⁸CT, 50 (CT I, 225).

⁹CT, 76 (CT II, 2).









¹⁰CT, 80 (CT II, 37).

¹¹CT, 753 (CT IV, 882).

¹²CT, 882 (CT V, 93).

¹³BD, Ch., L.B., 158(2-4).

¹⁴BD, Ch., LVI, p. 16(B1-2).

Text	Determinatives	Meaning	Transliteration	Word
CT VII 123 CT VII 126				
Pyr 1214 CT III 349 CT II 25		are knotted	<i>tst</i>	
BD LA		Knot	<i>tst</i>	
Pyr 1206c		Knotting	<i>šp</i>	
CT 288-289		Knotted bindings	/ <i>šhn</i>	

Conclusions

The knot has significant attestations. It was related to magical powers, as well as its tightening and loosening. It was regularly used in amulets for this reason. The knot appeared in Pyramid texts and was related to myths and religious doctrines as an attestation of creation and start of life. It was also connected to beginning the journey of ascension to heaven, as well as granting the king power and sovereignty. It was also a symbol of safety, security and amusement. In the coffin texts, the knot became a symbol of protection against evil, unity of the two lands, eternity, beginning of creation and resurrection. It was also connected to reviving senses, myths such as the Osirian myth and legend of Horus and Seth, as well as the doctrines of creation. It was also related to funerary rites. It was also used in jewellery to ornament the deceased and preserve beauty and freshness. In the Book of the Dead, the knot refers to creation, prosperity and beginning of life. It also granted protection and security and was a guide to the deceased in the hereafter.

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