

**Spells 33 and 423 from the Pyramid Texts:  
Translation and Commentary**

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## Introduction

PT 33 and PT 423 display so much common ground that a very close relationship is immediately recognizable – but they also exhibit significant differences: enough to warrant different spell numbers. This combination of common roots and diverse developments holds a special promise for sampling and examining the work of the ancient Egyptian editors of these texts.

*This paper follows the model of a previous publication: “Spells 224 and 225 from the Pyramid Texts: Translation and Commentary” (hereafter: PT 224/5-1). That publication is available for download on the same locations as the present paper. The remainder of this Introduction is an exact copy from the Introduction to PT 224/5-1.*

## Translation

My original plan was to simply use the most acclaimed modern translation: that of James P. Allen.<sup>1</sup> I began with writing out Allen’s translations in adjacent columns, marking the differences between versions. One problem I encountered was, that some differences in his translations did not correspond with differences in the original hieroglyphic texts. In other words: the same word or expression in ancient Egyptian was sometimes translated in different ways – even when there was no difference in context. In a study that focuses on the differences between text versions, such inconsistencies should clearly be avoided.

On further working with the texts, I found there were some other areas as well in which I disagreed with Allen. Some of these points are purely on grounds of personal preference; when a matter of grammar is involved, it will (mostly) be explained in the notes to the translations.

When we are studying versions of a text in translation, it is obviously important that the translations follow the text close enough to allow this. This means that I will stay as closely as possible to the literal meaning of the text, provided I can avoid invalid expressions or word orders. In “standard” translations, one has more room for making small adaptations to the text, to prevent an over-technical translation. An example: *šm.f jw.f* means literally: “he goes (and) he comes”. In a standard translation, one would prefer to translate as follows: “he goes (and) comes” – or even: “he comes and goes.” But for the present exercise, we have to stick to the more literal translation. As will be the case with “this NN”, for *NN pn* and the like – much as I regret it.

## Conventions

In the table with translations, the first row gives the following information:

- PT number following Allen’s New Concordance;
- between ( ): the spell number in Allen’s translation;
- the pyramids in which this spell version appears, with underlined the pyramid from which the actual text for this translation has come.

The texts have been split into numbered sections, roughly corresponding with Allen’s stanza’s. The first column gives the section number; numbers between ( ) refer to sections that are displaced.

For the first version (the 2<sup>nd</sup> column), all grammatical particulars are discussed in notes which follow immediately on the table. For subsequent versions, only new or changed matters are treated. All fully preserved versions from each spell are included in the comparison.

For selected words, a transliteration is included in the text.

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<sup>1</sup> James P. Allen: *The Ancient Egyptian Pyramid Texts* (2005) (hereafter: *Allen 2005*).

The commentary deals with anything other than grammar and the translation of individual words. For the first version to be discussed, the text is fully shown and commented on. For subsequent versions, only deviations from the foregoing text(s) are shown and discussed.

The spells are referred to with PT-number and a letter for the pyramid from which a text is drawn, such as PT 224-W = the Unas-version of PT 224. When the letter is omitted, all versions of a given spell are meant.

In grammatical terminology, I will mostly follow Allen (relative *sḏm.f*, relative *sḏm.n.f*, suffix participle, old perfective).

Words between [ ]: word, erroneously omitted by the scribe.

Words between ( ): not written in Egyptian, but added to clarify the sense.

Words followed by a (?): meaning uncertain.

[...] = word of unknown meaning.

[.....] = section untranslatable.

## 1. PT 33 and PT 423: Translation

PT 33 and PT 423 occur in the following kingly pyramids:

	Unas	Teti	Pepi I	Merenre	Pepi II
PT 33 (§ 24-25)			33-P <sup>a</sup> B/Ne i 20–24  33-P <sup>b</sup> B/Ne i 51–56		33-N <sup>a</sup> B/Ne B ii 17-20 (233-235, 237)  <u>33-N<sup>b</sup></u> B/Ne B iii 39-43 (351-355)  33-N <sup>c</sup> B/Ne B v 104-108 (562-564+2)
PT 423 (§ 765-7)			<u>423-P</u> B/Wg 31–34		<u>423-N</u> B/Wg 37–41

*Table 1 Locations of PT 33 – PT 423*

Underlined: spells, preserved completely.

On a ritual level, these are texts to accompany the presentation of water and natron to the deceased. On a magical-religious level, they seek to transform the deceased into a god: more specifically into the god Osiris. This objective of transformation is pursued partly through wordplay, partly by means of mythical associations with Osiris.

Both spells were used in the burial chamber, but at very different places. All instances of PT 33 were part of the offering texts on the north wall, while PT 423 was on the west wall, in what Hays refers to as Group D: “Horus Resurrects”.<sup>2</sup> The latter group is mostly *not* concerned with offerings.

<sup>2</sup> Harold M. Hays: “The Organization of the Pyramid Texts”, 2012 (hereafter: *Hays 2012*), p. 385.

## 1.1. The different versions in translation, side by side

(Underlining serves to point out differences between versions.)

#	PT 33 (N 125) P <sup>a</sup> -P <sup>b</sup> -N <sup>a</sup> -N <sup>b</sup> -N <sup>c</sup>	PT 423 (P 7) P	PT 423 (N 6) N
1	(§ 24a) Osiris-NN! Take <sup>a)</sup> ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) this cool water <sup>b)</sup> of yours, that you may be refreshed <sup>c)</sup> (when you come) before Horus: (this) in your name of “The one who comes <sup>d)</sup> as <sup>e)</sup> ( <i>m</i> ) the cool water.”	(§ 765a) <u>Q</u> Osiris-NN! Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) this cool water of yours, that you may be refreshed (when you come) before Horus: (this) in your name of “The one who comes as ( <i>m</i> ) the cool water.”	(§ 765a) Osiris-NN! Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) this cool water of yours, that you may be refreshed (when you come) before Horus: (this) in your name of “The one who comes as ( <i>m</i> ) the cool water.”
(4)		(§ 765b) Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) your natron <sup>n)</sup> ( <i>ntri</i> ), that you may become godly ( <i>ntri</i> ), for <u>your mother Nut</u> has made that you will be as ( <i>m</i> ) a god ( <i>ntr</i> ) to your opponent, (this) in your name of “God” ( <i>ntr</i> ).	(§ 765b) Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) your natron ( <i>ntri</i> ), that you may become godly ( <i>ntri</i> ), for <u>your mother Nut</u> has made that you will be as ( <i>m</i> ) a god ( <i>ntr</i> ) to your opponent, (this) in your name of “God” ( <i>ntr</i> ).
2	(§ 24b) Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) the outflow that comes <sup>f)</sup> from you, for Horus has made the gods gather ( <i>hm</i> <sup>g)</sup> to you <u>at the place in which<sup>g)</sup> you go</u> ( <i>šm.k im</i> ),	(§ 766a) Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) the outflow that comes from you, for Horus has made the gods gather ( <i>hm</i> <sup>g)</sup> to you <u>at every place in which you have gone</u> ( <i>šm.n.k im</i> ).	(§ 766a) Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) the outflow that comes from you, for Horus has made the gods gather ( <i>hm</i> <sup>g)</sup> to you <u>at every place in which you have gone</u> ( <i>šm.n.k im</i> ).
3	(§ 24d) and Horus has made <u>Horus’s children</u> recognize ( <i>ip</i> ) <sup>h)</sup> you <u>at the place in which you became immersed</u> ( <i>mḥ.n.k im</i> ). <sup>i)</sup>	(§ 766c) Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) the outflow that comes from you, for Horus has made <u>his children</u> recognize ( <i>ip</i> ) you <u>at the place in which you [became] immersed</u> ( <i>mḥ[.n].k im</i> ). <sup>m)</sup>	(§ 766c) Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) the outflow that comes from you, for Horus has made <u>his children</u> recognize ( <i>ip</i> ) you <u>at the place in which you became immersed</u> ( <i>mḥ.n.k im</i> ).
4	(§ 25a) Osiris-NN! Take ( <i>m-n.k</i> ) your natron ( <i>ntri</i> ), that you may become godly <sup>j)</sup> ( <i>ntri</i> ), for <u>Nut</u> has made that you will be as <sup>k)</sup> ( <i>m</i> ) a god ( <i>ntr</i> ) to your opponent, (this) in your name of “God” ( <i>ntr</i> ).		
5	(§ 25c) Horus shall recognize ( <i>ip</i> ) you ( <i>kw</i> ) yearly <sup>l)</sup> , rejuvenated <u>in your name</u> of “The rejuvenated waters.”	(§ 767a) Horus shall recognize ( <i>ip</i> ) you ( <i>kw</i> ) <sup>o)</sup> yearly, rejuvenated <u>in this name of yours</u> of “The rejuvenated waters.”	(§ 767a) Horus shall recognize ( <i>ip</i> ) you ( <i>kw</i> ) yearly, rejuvenated <u>in this name of yours<sup>q)</sup></u> of “The rejuvenated waters.”
6		(§ 767b) A ba is Horus, and he recognizes ( <i>ip</i> ) his father in you, (this) in his name of “Horus, ba of [his] father (Osiris).” <sup>p)</sup>	(§ 767b) A ba is Horus, and he recognizes ( <i>ip</i> ) his father in you, (this) in his name of “Horus, ba of [his] father (Osiris).”

Table 2 The complete versions of PT 33 and PT 423

### 1.1.1. Notes on translation

#### PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, Section 1

- a) For my translation of *m-n.k* as “take” rather than “receive”, see my paper *Some remarks about Allen’s translation of the verb Szp in the Pyramid Texts* ([www.egyptology.nl](http://www.egyptology.nl)). The general considerations given there with respect to providing the deceased with offerings hold true, not just for *šzp*, but also for *m-n.k*.
- b) Allen: “waters.” The word *kbh* (cool water) is here referred to with *ipn*, meaning that it is treated as a plural, as is customary in Old Egyptian with fluids.<sup>3</sup> In English, it seems however better to translate in the singular.<sup>4</sup>
- c) *kb n.k*: adjectival predicate with following dative, subject left unexpressed.<sup>5</sup> Literally: “(so that) it will be cool to you.”
- d) *pr*: active perfective participle, used as a noun.<sup>6</sup>
- e) *m*: as. The sense is, that the deceased will come as (in the shape of) the waters of the Inundation, to spread fertility over the land – as Osiris does. (For the function of *m* in this type of sentence, see also note *k*) below.)

#### PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, Section 2

- f) *pr*: active perfective participle, used attributively.
- g) Both in PT 33 and in PT 432, in section 2 and 3, the phrase concerning the place where the deceased went / became immersed, ends with the adverb *im*: therein. This addition serves to lend a special emphasis to the location where it happened; a literal translation would be “the place where you went / where you became immersed *therein*.”  
Allen’s translation in 423 (“every place *in which* you have gone / *in which* you (...) immersed”) captures this better than his choice in 33 (“*where* you go / *where* you (...) immersed”).

#### PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, Section 3

- h) “Recognize”, not “allot” as Allen has (see also *New Readings*, p. 12, s.v. PT 423).
- i) *mḥ.n.k* is relative *sḏm.n.f* (*Inflexion* § 780).

#### PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, Section 4

- j) In the translation, I use the word “godly” here instead of “divine” to reproduce as closely as possible the somewhat hypnotizing effect that the recurrent use of *ntr* here has in the Egyptian original.
- k) “...that you will be as a god.” The translation “...that you will be a god” is just as good: the Egyptians did not distinguish between “to be” and “to be as” in the same strict way as we do. I nevertheless prefer to translate “as a god,” because the text includes the preposition *m*.

#### PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, Section 5

- l) As already Sethe remarks, the writing of  is reminiscent of  or  (*Komm. III*, p. 414), but he regards it as an epithet of Horus, and hence finds no suitable translation. It seems to me though that “yearly” will do just fine, meaning in this context: at the occasion of the yearly Inundation.

#### PT 423-P, Section 3

- m) The actual text has *mḥ.k*: relative *sḏm.f*. This has to be an error: see the discussion of this section on page 12 below.

#### PT 423-P, Section 4

- n) Natron: Allen has here “natron water,” but there is no indication that something other than just “natron” is meant. (So too: *New Readings* p. 238, s.v. PT 423.)

<sup>3</sup> Elmar Edel: “Altägyptische Grammatik” (1955), (hereafter: *EAG*), § 286 + Nachträge

<sup>4</sup> So too Timofey T. Shmakov: “*New Readings in the Pyramid Texts*”: updateable working version, update of 26.07.2015. (Hereafter: *New Readings*.), p. 238, s.v. PT 423.

<sup>5</sup> See J.F. Borghouts: *Egyptisch* (1993) (hereafter: *B.*) § 94, b3; Alan Gardiner: “*Egyptian Grammar*” (1957) (hereafter: *G.*) § 141.

<sup>6</sup> James P. Allen: “The inflexion of the verb in the Pyramid Texts”, 1984 (hereafter: *Inflexion*), § 780



PT 423-N, Section 5

- q) The N-text has a duplication of *m rn.k* (“in your name”): an obvious copying error: a dittograph. (Allen however translates as: “rejuvenated in your identity, in your identity of the rejuvenated waters.”)

### 1.1.2. Translation inconsistencies Allen

#	PT 33 (N 125) <u>N</u> <sup>b</sup>	PT 423 (P 7) <u>P</u>	PT 423 (N 6) <u>N</u>
2	<i>hm<sup>c</sup></i> = <u>gather</u>	<i>hm<sup>c</sup></i> = assemble	(not separately translated) <sup>12</sup>
3	<i>ip n.k</i> = allotted to you	<i>ip n.k</i> = take account of you	(not separately translated)
4	<i>ntri</i> = <u>natron</u>	<i>ntri</i> = natron-water	(not separately translated)

Table 3 Translation inconsistencies Allen in PT 33 - PT 423

Underlined: the translation that I have adopted.

For *ip* in section 3, I have selected “recognize”: see note *h*) on page 6 above.

<sup>12</sup> As a rule, Allen translates only one version of every spell. Variants are specified in a separate chapter, without repeating the rest of the spell.

## 2. PT 33 and PT 423: Commentary

Crucial to understanding this spell is the concept of the “outflow”<sup>13</sup> (PT 33: in section 2; PT 423: in sections 2 & 3). What is referred to is the fluid that emanates from a decomposing body – in this case: the body of Osiris. Within the Pyramid Texts, this fluid is sometimes described as foul, something to be avoided (PT 412, § 722), but sometimes as life-bringing water (so in the present spell). This conflicting vision corresponds with an equally conflicting vision in the Pyramid Texts on the fate of Osiris himself. Mostly this fate is described as desirable, but sometimes as detestable.<sup>14</sup>

The life-bringing aspect of the outflow relates to the simple observation that a decaying body moisturizes the soil – and in an arid land as Egypt, the significance of moisture in the soil was all too apparent. Most of the needed moisture came of course from the Inundation. In one conception of the Inundation, a picture of a gigantic decaying body may have figured: the body of a god, lying deep in the south, dispensing the fluids of the Inundation. This may have been the ground for identifying Osiris with the Inundation.

There are many illustrations of Osiris’s association with crops, and the fertility of the land. His skin is sometimes depicted green: the color of vegetation. Or black: as the fertile black earth of Kemet, the land of Egypt. There are depictions of Osiris’s recumbent body from which corn sprouts. Sometimes, a bin in the shape of the silhouette of Osiris, filled with earth, was placed in the tomb, with corn seeds in it that would sprout in the dark.<sup>15</sup> All these images represent “life originating from death:” an outcome that the deceased hopes will be his own fate.

(Note the gap between the picture of Osiris’s decaying body on the one hand, and his bodily<sup>16</sup> resurrection through Isis’s magic on the other. And yet, there is only *one* Osiris, and the king hopes to become *that* Osiris. This illustrates once more the multifacetedness of the ancient Egyptian magical-religious concepts.

Western (post-Greek) thinking would have been able to reconcile these pictures by postulating that the body of Osiris decayed on earth, while his resurrection, with a supernatural body, occurred in the Hereafter. The ancient Egyptians however did nothing of the sort: they just let the two images stand side by side.)

### 2.1. PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>

This is the full text of the only completely preserved version of PT 33:

- 1 Osiris-NN! Take this cool water of yours, that you may be refreshed (when you come) before Horus: (this) in your name of “The one who comes as the cool water.”
- 2 Take the outflow that comes from you, for Horus has made the gods gather to you at the place in which you go,
- 3 and Horus has made Horus’s children recognize you at the place in which you became immersed.
- 4 Osiris-NN! Take your natron, that you may become godly, for Nut has made that

<sup>13</sup> Otherwise also translated as “efflux.”

<sup>14</sup> See the discussion of PT 224-W, section 1, in *PT224/5-1*, page 10-11.

<sup>15</sup> See Bonnet, *Realexikon* p. 391-392, s.v. Kornmumien. Such an object was also discovered in the tomb of Tutankhamun (# 288a).

<sup>16</sup> Bodily enough to beget a son: Horus.

you will be as a god to your opponent, (this) in your name of “God”.

- 5 Horus shall recognize you yearly, rejuvenated in your name of “The rejuvenated waters.”

### Commentary per section

PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, section 1

*Osiris-NN! Take this cool water of yours, that you may be refreshed (when you come) before Horus: (this) in your name of “The one who comes as the cool water.”*

The deceased king is here identified as the god Osiris-NN, in analogy to e.g. the god Re-Atum, or (much later) Amun-Re.

*Take this cool water of yours....*

This identifies the ritualistic purpose of this spell: the presentation of water to the deceased.

*....(when you come) before Horus....*

This is one of many spells in the Pyramid Texts where Horus is *the* god: the one to whom the deceased initially has to present himself, upon his demise.

*....in your name of....*

Allen translates “in your name of” consistently as “in your identity of.” This points – quite correctly – to the fact, that for the ancient Egyptians the name of a person was part of his identity. It is just a matter of personal preference, that I translate literally.

*....“The one who comes as the cool water.”*

Here, “the cool water” is the water of the Inundation which refreshes the land after the scorching heat of summer. The deceased is here equated with the Inundation, and by virtue of that with Osiris.

PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, section 2

*Take the outflow that comes from you, for Horus has made the gods gather to you at the place in which you go...*

The one from whom “the outflow” came was Osiris. Addressing the deceased as the one from whom the outflow comes is again a means of identifying him with Osiris, which is a means of conferring Osiris’s fate on him.

What is being presented to the deceased is however cool water: see section 1. Referring now to this water as “the outflow” means, that the one can be substituted for the other. This means that the sentence can also be read as follows: “Take this cool water, for Horus has made (....)”

*....for Horus has made the gods gather to you at the place in which you go...*

The gods have been told – by Horus, in his capacity as *de facto* the chiefest of the gods – to meet the deceased in the Afterlife, to pay him homage.

PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, section 3

*...and Horus has made Horus’s children recognize you at the place in which you became immersed.*

*... Horus has made Horus’s children ....*

This is not a very elegant formulation, to put it mildly. It seems that it was the editor's intention to enhance the spell's effectiveness by adding yet one more instance of Horus's powerful name – at the expense of esthetics.

....*recognize you*....

Seth slew Osiris unseen – presumably because he dared not do it in the open. So Osiris was suddenly lost, and had to be found again. Mostly it is Isis who finds him, but in this version of the myth it's Horus's children. They recognize him, when they find him.

....*at the place in which you became immersed*.

The one who became immersed (meaning: drowned) was Osiris. Addressing the deceased as “the one who became immersed” again serves to identify him with Osiris. The fate of the deceased is thus linked again to that of Osiris, which helps bring about the ultimate objective: resurrection from the dead, as happened to Osiris.

So Horus's children have come to the deceased's aid, as they once did for Osiris after he drowned (in one of the many versions of the myth).

The fact that they *helped* Osiris is not explicitly mentioned: even admitting that Osiris was in need of help was avoided.

(The fact that in a spell which accompanies the presentation of water to the deceased, Osiris's death is referred to as drowning, is not a mere coincidence: it weaves one more thread in the tapestry of allusions and associations around water, fertility and rebirth.)

The verb *mhi* (here translated with immerse), actually refers to a person coming into direct contact with a lake, a river, or the sea. Translations therefore vary from simply being in the water, to swimming, or drowning.<sup>17</sup> It seems that to the desert-dwelling Egyptians, all contact with a larger body of water was inherently upsetting. Allen translates the verb *mhi* here with “immerse.” This is a good choice, because it conforms to the Egyptian custom of using veiled references to Osiris's death.

Nevertheless, what in this version of the myth happened to Osiris was, that he drowned.<sup>18</sup>

The order of the narrative in sections 2 and 3 is remarkable:

- Horus has told the gods to meet Osiris / you in the Afterlife;
- Horus's children have found (and saved) Osiris / you;
- Osiris / you drowned.

This is the inverse of the course of events, which was drowning first, then being saved, and only then meeting the gods in the Afterlife. The reason for this appears to have been a desire to assert first and foremost the happy ending, before dwelling on the depressing episode of the actual drowning.

PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, section 4

*Osiris-NN! Take your natron, that you may become godly, for Nut has made that you will be as a god to your opponent, (this) in your name of “God”.*

Short as this section may be, it accomplishes two goals of prime importance: it turns the deceased into a god, and it bestows on him the fate of Osiris.

Central to the first objective is a pun: the word here used for natron resembles the word for divine or godly. To the Egyptians, a pun was always a serious matter: a similarity in the name of things pointed for them to a meaningful link between the things in question. Invoking the

<sup>17</sup> See the TLA: lemma-no. 73740. (TLA = Thesaurus Linguae Aegyptiae: aaew.bbaw.de/tla)

<sup>18</sup> One more instance in the Pyramid Texts that refers to this version of the myth is PT 364, § 615. Another common variant of the tale is, that Osiris was found by Isis, “lying on his side” (see e.g. PT 478, § 972, PT 482, § 1008). This means that Seth had struck him down, leaving his corpse lying on the ground.

pun establishes a bridge between the two, over which the lightning bolt of Heka (Egyptian magic) transforms reality into a pre-determined shape. Taking the natron will thus turn the deceased into a god. But the goddess Nut has also made that the he will be a god: "...for Nut has made that you will be as<sup>19</sup> a god..." And she does so "in your name (= in your identity) of "God." This one caps and seals it: the deceased is a god.

The second objective is realized through the now familiar process of identification, here performed in duplicate.

1. *Osiris-NN!* → The deceased is Osiris.
2. *Your opponent:* the opponent is, as always in an Osirian context, Seth.  
Seth is your opponent.  
Seth is the opponent of Osiris.  
You are Osiris.

Therefore, Osiris's fate (rising from the dead) will be the deceased's fate.

(For the position of this section in the spell at large, see 2.4 "Water and natron" on page 16 below.)

PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>, section 5

*Horus shall recognize you yearly, rejuvenated in your name of "The rejuvenated waters."*

....shall recognize you....

Recognize: here in the sense of "acknowledge": establishing that the king's identity is that of Osiris.

*"The rejuvenated waters."*

A circumscription of the Inundation. "Yearly" refers to the fact that the Inundation reappears every year.

## 2.2. PT 423-P

PT 423-P and 423-N are almost identical. PT 423-P has in the first section "O Osiris-NN" instead of "Osiris-NN". Further, the two versions have each one error:

PT	Section	Content	Probable cause
423-P	3	"You <u>are</u> immersed": relative <i>sḏm.f</i> instead of relative <i>sḏm.n.f</i> .	Spelling error
423-N	5	Twice "in your name."	Dittograph

Table 4 Errors in PT 33 and PT 423

This paragraph treats the differences between PT 423-P and PT 33-N<sup>b</sup>.

PT 423-P, section 4

(This section, which stands at position 4 in PT 33, stands in PT 423 on position 2.)

*Take your natron, that you may become godly, for your mother Nut has made that you will be as a god to your opponent, (this) in your name of "God".*

<sup>19</sup> For this translation, see note *k*) on page 6 above.

In PT 33, this section begins with a vocative: “Osiris-NN!” Leaving this out in PT 423 results in a better integration of this section into the spell as a whole (see 2.4 “*Water and natron*” on page 16 below).

....*your mother Nut*....

Nut – who is Osiris’s mother – is now referred to as “your mother Nut:” one more identification of the deceased with the god Osiris.

PT 423-P, Section 2

*Take the outflow that comes from you, for Horus has made the gods gather to you at every place in which you have gone.*

PT 33 has: for Horus has made the gods gather to you at the place in which you go. As explained on page 10 above, this is about the gods meeting the king in the Afterlife – which is a completely lucid part of a logical narrative. So why this change?

at the place in which you go → at every place in which you have gone

This amounts to a double feat of intensifying the content:

- from “a” place to “every” place,
- and from “go” (= once) to “have gone”(= many times),

but it does so at the expense of logic: the editor here sacrificed logic for the benefit of a more intensified, and therefore – from a magical-religious point of view – more effective text. These texts were above all magical-religious spells, with just one purpose: to achieve safe passage for the king to the Afterlife. All available means had to be marshaled for that, all other considerations abandoned. In the face of a possible reinforcement of the text, literary value meant nothing, and even logic was expendable. Intensifying the text was of overriding importance, for this meant mustering more drive, more energy as input for the pursuit of the text’s magical goal.

PT 423-P, Section 3

*Take the outflow that comes from you, for Horus has made his children recognize you at the place in which you [became] immersed.*

*Take the outflow that comes from you...*

In PT 33, “Take the outflow that comes from you” is only used in section 2, not in section 3. Repeating it in section 3 is a way to further intensify the text.

....*Horus has made his children recognize you*....

On this point, PT 33 has the more intensified text: “*Horus has made Horus’s children recognize you*” – a fine example of sacrificing literary value for more effectiveness of the text.

....*in which you [became] immersed*.

In all other versions of this spell where this particular bit is preserved,<sup>20</sup> the verb *mh* (immerse) has the form of a relative *sdm.n.f.* Only in PT 423-P is it a relative *sdm.f.* Allen’s translation (“in which you are immersed”) shows that he accepts this writing on face value. This means however that the event of being immersed is depicted as something which is *now* happening, and for an indefinite period of time. Considering that we are here talking about the event of the deceased’s / Osiris’s drowning, this is no less than shocking.<sup>21</sup> Osiris’s

<sup>20</sup> In addition to the versions here discussed: PT 33-P<sup>a</sup> and PT 33-N<sup>a</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> In a literal sense, the text is at this point about the deceased, not about Osiris. This spell is however so charged with associations between the deceased and Osiris, that the editor could no longer safely differentiate between the two. If he would at this point portray the deceased as “immersed” *at this moment*, he would automatically bestow that fate on Osiris, too.

death – if it has to be mentioned at all – has to be presented as something which was part of a series of events that took place in a distant past, and that has long since reached a happy and lasting conclusion.

The only possible explanation for this writing is, that it is a spelling error. That is why I translate – as in the other variants of this section – “*in which you [became] immersed*”.

(PT 423-P, section 4)

(Follows in PT 423 immediately on section 1: see the discussion on page 12 above.)

PT 423-P, section 5

*Horus shall recognize you yearly, rejuvenated in this name of yours of “The rejuvenated waters.”*

“You” is here the older pronoun *kw*, as in PT 224-W.<sup>22</sup> (In PT 33, it is *tw*.) Sethe regards this as an indication that PT 423 was perhaps older than PT 33.<sup>23</sup> The inadequacy of this argument has already been discussed in PT224/5-1.<sup>24</sup>

PT 423-P, section 6

*A ba is Horus, and he recognizes his father in you, (this) in his name of “Horus, ba of [his] father (Osiris).”*

For the translation of this intriguing sentence, see note *p*) on page 7 above.

For the position of this section in the spell at large, see 2.5 “Section 6” on page 16 below.

<sup>22</sup> See PT224/5-1, p. 10 (s.v. Section 1).

<sup>23</sup> *Komm. III*, p. 413.

<sup>24</sup> See PT224/5-1, p. 10 (s.v. Section 1).

### 2.3. The identification with Osiris

An important mechanism in ancient Egyptian religious magic is the concept of identification. A priest may force a change of identity by means of weaving a web of identifications. The present spell is built around a series of such identifications, which seek to establish that the deceased changes identity: he becomes Osiris, so that Osiris's fate will be his.

The following table shows all these identifications.

#	PT 33	PT 423
1	<i>Osiris-NN!</i> NN has assumed the name, and thus the identity of Osiris.	(identical to ←)
	... <i>in your name of "The one who comes as the cool water."</i> The cool water = the Inundation = Osiris. You = Osiris.	(identical to ←)
2	<i>Take the outflow that comes from you...</i> "The outflow" comes from Osiris; You = Osiris.	(identical to ←)
3	–	<i>Take the outflow that comes from you...</i> "The outflow" comes from Osiris; You = Osiris.
	<i>Recognize you at the place in which you became immersed</i> "Became immersed" means: has drowned; The one who has drowned = Osiris. You = Osiris.	(identical to ←)
4	<i>Osiris-NN!</i> NN has assumed the name, and thus the identity of Osiris.	–
	–	<i>Your mother Nut</i> Nut = the mother of Osiris. You = Osiris.
5	<i>Your opponent</i> In an Osirian context, "the opponent" is always Seth, Osiris's arch-enemy. Your opponent = Seth → you = Osiris.	(identical to ←)
	<i>In your name of "The rejuvenated waters."</i> "The rejuvenated waters" = the Inundation. The Inundation = Osiris. You = Osiris.	(identical to ←)
6	N/A	<i>A ba is Horus, and he recognizes his father in you</i> Horus's father = Osiris. You = Osiris.

Table 5 Identifications of the deceased with Osiris, in PT 33 – PT 423

(Section 4 from PT 423 for this comparison moved to the same location as in PT 33.)

So, literally every section contains at least one identification of the deceased with Osiris: PT 33 has 7 in total, PT 423 has 9.

## 2.4. Water and natron

With the exception of section 4 and section 6, every section of these spells holds at least one clear reference to water. The following table gives an overview:

#	PT 33	PT 423
1	Take this cool <u>water</u> ----- In your name of "The one who comes as the cool <u>water</u> ."	Take this cool <u>water</u> ----- In your name of "The one who comes as the cool <u>water</u> ."
2	Take the <u>outflow</u> that comes from you	Take the <u>outflow</u> that comes from you
3	----- The place in which you became <u>immersed</u>	Take the <u>outflow</u> that comes from you ----- The place in which you [became] <u>immersed</u>
4	–	–
5	In your name of "The rejuvenated <u>waters</u> ."	In your name of "The rejuvenated <u>waters</u> ."
6	N/A	–

*Table 6 Associations with water in PT 33 – 423*

*(Section 4 from PT 423 for this comparison moved to the same location as in PT 33.)*

Section 4 is concerned with natron, not with water.

There are several indications to support the suggestion that section 4 did not originally belong to this spell. First of all, it has been inserted at different points: in PT 33 after section 3, in PT 423 after section 1. This betrays a degree of arbitrariness that would be consistent with this section having been an outside element.

Furthermore, in PT 33 this section begins with the vocative "Osiris-NN": as one would expect at the beginning of an independent spell.

It may therefore originally have been an independent spell, dedicated to the presentation of natron, like e.g. PT 34 and PT 35.

On the other hand, the presentation of water *and* natron in one spell is also attested: see PT 32. The text of that spell deals only with water, but the concluding ritual instruction is: "cool water and two pellets of natron."

A ritual purification required the use of both. Before partaking in a ritual, rinsing the mouth with a watery solution of natron was compulsory.<sup>25</sup>

## 2.5. Section 6

Section 6 has no connection with either water or natron, and it is only present in PT 423, not in PT 33. So why was it added, and why only in PT 423?

This section follows on section 5, a section that undoubtedly belongs to the core of this spell: in its mention of the Inundation, it immediately harks back to section 1. Let us therefore take a closer look at the connection between sections 5 and 6.

When we substitute in both sections all references to Osiris with his name, and we eliminate all non-essential adjuncts, this is what we get:

<sup>25</sup> See e.g. PT 109: "Osiris-NN, take Horus's Eye which purifies his mouth; 2 (!) bowls of natron."

Step	PT 423-P section 5	PT 423-P section 6
0	Horus shall recognize you yearly, rejuvenated in this name of yours of "The rejuvenated waters."	A ba is Horus, and he recognizes his father in you, (this) in his name of "Horus, ba of [his] father (Osiris)."
1	Horus recognizes you in your name of The Inundation	Horus recognizes his father in you, in his name of "Horus, ba of [his] father (Osiris)."
2	Horus recognizes you in your name of Osiris.	Horus recognizes Osiris in you, in his name of "Horus, ba of Osiris."
3	Horus recognizes you as Osiris.	Horus recognizes Osiris in you.

*Table 7 Comparative analysis of sections 5 and 6, PT 423*

This analysis shows that in essence, these two sections proclaim the same message. So whatever else may have been on the editor's mind, it was a rational addition.

But why was it only added to PT 423, and not to PT 33?

As mentioned on page 4 above, all instances of PT 33 occur in a context of offering spells, while PT 423 is part of a group which is primarily concerned with resurrection. Section 6 serves to reinforce the spell as a whole, but it has in itself no connection with offerings. It seems then that section 6 was added to PT 423, to ready PT 33 for re-use in a different context.

### 2.6. Textual intensifications in PT 33 – PT 423

In the discussions per section, the term “intensifying” has been used regularly. In the table below, only those bits of text have been written out that – when compared to other variants of the same section – show a reinforced, or intensified, text.

#	PT 33 (N 125) P <sup>a</sup> -P <sup>b</sup> -N <sup>a</sup> -N <sup>b</sup> -N <sup>c</sup>	PT 423 (P 7) P	PT 423 (N 6) N
1	..... ..... ..... ..... ..... .....	O ..... ..... ..... ..... ..... .....	..... ..... ..... ..... ..... .....
2	..... ..... ..... ..... .....	..... ..... ..... .....every place in which you have gone.	..... ..... ..... .....every place in which you have gone.
3	..... Horus has made Horus’s chil- dren .....	Take the outflow that comes from you, ..... .....	Take the outflow that comes from you, ..... .....
4	..... ..... ..... ..... .....	..... ..... .... your mother Nut..... ..... .....	..... ..... .... your mother Nut..... ..... .....
5	..... ..... ..... .....	..... ..... ..... .....	..... ..... ..... .....
6		A ba is Horus, and he recog- nizes his father in you, (this) in his name of “Horus, ba of his father (Osiris)”	A ba is Horus, and he recog- nizes his father in you, (this) in his name of “Horus, ba of his father (Osiris)”

Table 8 Textual intensifications in PT 33 – PT 423

(Section 4 from PT 423 for this comparison moved to the same location as in PT 33.)

If we assume that intensifications, when once applied, would in later versions not be removed again, then this picture would not be consistent with a sequential development: neither from PT 33 to PT 423, nor the other way around. It would however be consistent with a separate development for each version from a common original in the original pool of texts from which the Pyramid Texts were derived.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>26</sup> For this concept of an original pool of texts, see Hays 2012, p. 80, and Allen 2005, p. 4, s.v. “Editorial History.”